



107 BTY ASSOCIATION VIETNAM TOUR

21 APRIL – 05 MAY 2024

Visit beautiful Vietnam and join us to walk in the footsteps of more than 50,000 Australians who served during the Vietnam War on this emotional journey to the former battlefields. Our tour takes in all the key Australian sites, plus some American sites as well as allowing you to discover many of Vietnam's cultural treasures and experiencing its vibrant culture and mouth-watering cuisine. This tour is perfect for first time visitors to Vietnam who wish to discover the modern Vietnam while also gaining insight into its turbulent past.

PART ONE: 7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS

DAY 1 SUNDAY, 21 APRIL 2024

ARRIVE HO CHI MINH CITY

Welcome to our very special tour! On arrival you will be transferred from the airport to our centrally located Ho Chi Minh City hotel. This evening is at leisure to soak up the hustle and bustle of this vibrant city.

OVERNIGHT: Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 2 MONDAY, 22 APRIL 2024

HO CHI MINH CITY

(B, L, D)



This morning, we will visit the Reunification Palace for a guided tour of the former headquarters of the South Vietnamese Government and residence of the presidents. The history of Ho Chi Minh City lies hidden within its colourful maze of small alleys. We will discover a secret chamber that was once used by the VC as a place to hide, store medicine, money, and important documents during the war. Housed in what used to be a street-food restaurant that supported the VC, we will enjoy a cup of coffee with the owner and learn more about the site's intriguing past and walk in the footsteps of the VC as we explore the small corners of

the chamber - a first-hand look at how they were able to escape the American soldiers. We will enjoy lunch at a historic local restaurant followed by a sombre visit to the War Remnants Museum. This afternoon we will visit the famous Ben Thanh Market. Tonight, we will enjoy a sumptuous Vietnamese welcome dinner at the former residence of the US Ambassador of South Vietnam. In the early 1960s, Mr. Henry C. Lodge aided in conducting a mission to overthrow the South Vietnamese Government.

OVERNIGHT: Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 3 TUESDAY, 23 APRIL 2024

CU CHI TUNNELS

(B, L)

This morning, we depart Ho Chi Minh City for a 2-hour drive northwest to the Cu Chi tunnels, an immense network of connecting underground tunnels used by the VC as hiding spots during combat. Originally dug in 1948 for the guerrillas to shelter from French air and ground sweeps, the tunnels also served as living quarters, communication and supply routes, and housed hospitals, food and weapons caches throughout the Vietnam War. We will visit the underground villages for a better understanding of the tunnels' history, the hardship of life in the tunnels and the Vietnamese resilience during combat. After lunch, we will return to Ho Chi Minh City and enjoy an evening at leisure.

OVERNIGHT: Liberty Central Saigon Centre Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 4 WEDNESDAY, 24 APRIL 2024 HO CHI MINH CITY – VUNG TAU (B, L, D)

This morning we depart Ho Chi Minh City for a 2hr drive towards Ba Ria - Vung Tau where we will visit Back Beach (Bai Sau), the former site of an Australian logistics group and the Peter Badcoe Club. The area is now a public beach and houses a massive war memorial to honour its past. Walk up to the top of the VG Memorial and overlook the Badcoe area. Also visit Front Beach areas, Bao Dai Summer House and the airport area. Many will remember it as the home of 'Wallaby Airlines' and our 'hueys.' Spend time in the bustling town centre and the market area where the large antenna on "Radar Hill" is still visible. This evening we will have dinner together at a local restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Grand Palace Hotel or similar, Vung Tau

DAY 5 THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024 LONG TAN

(B, L, D)

This morning we will visit Long Tan village to encounter the Long Tan Cross, the towering memorial that marks the site of the village's namesake battle. Marvel in the panoramas of rubber plantations that flank the battleground and imagine the rich and troubled history still tangible on these grounds. We will hold a private and discreet commemorative service to acknowledge Anzac Day. The journey continues at The Horse Shoe Hill – former Australian Fire Support Base and the Long Phuoc Tunnels, which linked the village to the surrounding rubber plantation areas, and the adjacent museum. After lunch, we will stop at Ap My An and learn about the battle of Bribie. We will visit Long Hai hill (also known as Minh Dam secret zone) which was the main base of Viet Minh & Viet Cong during the French war &



American war with many natural caves as medical cave and head quarter cave. We will visit the massive VC memorial where they warship more than 2000 local soldiers died in the war. We will enjoy dinner as a group tonight.

OVERNIGHT: Grand Palace Hotel or similar, Vung Tau

DAY 6 FRIDAY, 26 APRIL 2024 NUI DAT

(B, L)

Today we continue our travels to Ba Ria, a picturesque town in the Vung Tau Province along the southern coast. The first stop is Nui Dat - where Australian soldiers set up the base between 1966 to 1971. We will visit the old bunkers, Kangaroo pad, SAS hill (Nui Dat hill) and Luscombe air field. We will visit a village in Hoa Long where rice paper is still produced by hand, taking the opportunity to talk with the locals to gain insights into their daily life. We will also visit the former 1st Australian Task Force Base at Nui Dat which is now a clearing surrounded by rubber plantations before returning to Vung Tau where the afternoon and evening are at leisure to explore this delightful seaside country town.

OVERNIGHT: Grand Palace Hotel or similar, Vung Tau

DAY 7 SATURDAY, 27 APRIL 2024 VUNG TAU – BINH BA – NUI LE – HO CHI MINH CITY (B, L)

After breakfast, we will drive to Binh Ba to visit the memorial of 33 NVA (North Vietnamese Army) Regiment located where a big battle between Australian soldiers and the NVA took place on 06 June 1966. Our last stop is the site of Nui Le (Le Mountain), where the last battle between Australian soldiers in Vietnam took place before returning to Australia. We will have a lunch at local restaurant and drive back to Ho Chi Minh City where the evening is at leisure.

OVERNIGHT: Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 8 SUNDAY, 28 APRIL 2024 DEPART HO CHI MINH CITY (B)

This morning, those who will not be continuing with our tour will farewell the group and be transferred to the airport to meet onward flight arrangements.

PART TWO: 7 NIGHTS / 8 DAYS

DAY 8 SUNDAY, 28 APRIL 2024 HO CHI MINH CITY – HUE (B, L, D)

This morning we will transfer to Saigon airport for an early morning flight to Hue. Once the imperial capital of the Nguyen Lords, from the 17th to the 19th centuries, Hue's splendid emperors' tombs, ancient pagodas and the remains of the Citadel contribute to its undeniable royal charm. We will take a short walk (weather permitting) to explore the Imperial Citadel at the centre of the Complex of Hue Monuments— inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage site.

As we enter through the towering main gate, we can appreciate the magnificent architecture and gardens while our guide explains the events and intrigue surrounding the former royal court. Despite being heavily bombed during the Vietnam War, there are some incredibly well-preserved sections intact and others that are being carefully restored. We then drive to the Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's best-preserved religious monument. Built in 1601, the seven-storied tower pagoda, perched on a hill overlooking the Perfume River, is one of Vietnam's most recognisable icons.

OVERNIGHT: Eldora hotel or similar, Hue

DAY 9 MONDAY, 29 APRIL 2024 HUE – HOI AN (B, L, D)

Today we will follow the traces of the 1968 Tet Offensive, a battle for control of the city, including a visit to the old Shell Gas Station, the former MACV Compound, Tran Cao Van Street, Girl's High School, Hue University, Treasury, Public Health Building, Provincial Capital Building area and the Church of the Redemptorist. We then pass by the Citadel, with its ramparts and towers, and visit sites specific to the northern battle. We then transfer from Hue over the Hai Van Pass before checking into our central Hoi An hotel.

OVERNIGHT: The Hoi An Historic Hotel or similar, Hoi An



DAY 10 TUESDAY, 30 APRIL 2024 HOI AN (B)

Between the 15th and 19th centuries, Hoi An known then as 'Faifo', was a prosperous trading port, attracting Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish ships amongst others. Today, this World Heritage ancient town is recognised for its well-preserved architecture, pedestrian-only streets and distinctive local cuisine, allowing visitors a glimpse of its illustrious past. Hoi An's narrow lanes are ideal for a guided walking tour of its many sights

including: the old merchant houses with influences from Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese architecture; the 400-year-old Japanese Covered Bridge, first built in the 1590s by the Japanese community to link them with the Chinese quarters across the stream; the Assembly Hall of the Chaozhou Chinese Congregation with its intricate woodcarvings; and the colourful market with stalls brimming with local specialties including silk. The afternoon and evening are at leisure to explore.

OVERNIGHT: The Hoi An Historic Hotel or similar, Hoi An

DAY 11 WEDNESDAY, 01 MAY 2024 HOI AN – DANANG – HANOI (B, L, D)

Today we will transfer to Danang airport for an early morning flight to Hanoi. Hanoi has over 1,000 years of history making the capital city charming with many tourist attractions. We start with a visit to Thang Long Royal Citadel and then visit the underground war bunker in the same compound that played an important role in the American war, especially during the 12 days and nights of the Hanoi - Dien Bien Phu air battle in 1972. This afternoon we have some time at leisure to explore the Old Quarter and the charming streetscapes of Hanoi.

OVERNIGHT: Silk Path Hotel or similar, Hanoi

DAY 12 THURSDAY, 02 MAY 2024 HANOI (B, D)

Today, we will start with a visit to see the One Pillar Pagoda, the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Presidential Palace. We then continue to the Hanoi Hilton where American POWs were kept and then on to Truc Bach and Huu Tiep Lakes in Ngoc Ha village where many B52 planes were shot down. We will end the day with a visit to the extensive Army Museum. This repository of Vietnam's military history includes rooms full of war propaganda, photographs and documents from China, France, and the US wars. Tonight, we will have dinner at



KOTO restaurant, a social enterprise created by an Australian Vietnamese who has won an Order of Australia medal for his work in supporting disadvantaged youth; a glimpse into the future of Vietnam and with some warm hospitality.

OVERNIGHT: Silk Path Hotel or similar, Hanoi

DAY 13 FRIDAY, 03 MAY 2024

HANOI – HALONG BAY

(B, L, D)



This morning we will make the journey east to tour the magnificent Halong Bay. The 2 ½ -3-hour drive will take us through the scenic landscape of the rural northeast to the check in point for our cruise. At approx. 12:30 upon boarding we will be given a short briefing about your cruise itinerary and safety regulations whilst enjoying a welcome drink. We will enjoy a delicious lunch on board as we take in the magnificent scenery. With 1969 limestone and dolomite islets sprinkled over an area of 1500 square kilometres,

Halong Bay offers a wonderland of karst topography. In the evening we will enjoy dinner, before retiring for the night.

OVERNIGHT: Paradise Elegance Cruise or similar, Halong Bay

DAY 14 SATURDAY, 04 MAY 2024

HALONG BAY – HANOI

(B, L)

This morning, we will enjoy a small breakfast on board, before we will continue exploring the islands, beach coves, caves and floating villages in the area. Upon disembarking we will be transferred back to Hanoi. On our journey back, we will have the chance to visit Dong Trieu ceramic village for short break. Afternoon arrival in Hanoi where we will check in to our hotel. This evening is at leisure to enjoy one final night in Hanoi.

OVERNIGHT: Silk Path Hotel or similar, Hanoi

DAY 15 SUNDAY, 05 MAY 2024

DEPART HANOI

(B)

This morning after breakfast, we will check out of our hotel and be transferred to Hanoi Airport to meet onward flight arrangements.

The journey may be over, but the memories will last a lifetime.

Please note: This itinerary is an indication of the sites that may be visited on the tour. The order of each day may be adjusted to allow for personal requests, local events, weather conditions, etc.