



Southeast Asia Odyssey

On an engaging journey through four unique Southeast Asian nations, we gain an appreciation for the diversity of this most intriguing region. Exploring Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand, our small group experiences sublime natural beauty, encounters spectacular ruins, and mingles with gracious local people.

Itinerary

Created on Aug 7, 2026

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Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1: Depart U.S. for Hanoi, Vietnam

DAY 2: Arrive Hanoi

We arrive in the Vietnamese capital and transfer to our hotel.

DAY 3: Hanoi

Our tour of this French-accented city begins at the serene Temple of Literature (c. 1070); and Hoa Lo Prison, the infamous “Hanoi Hilton” of the Vietnam War. Then we explore Hanoi’s Ancient Quarter, a dense warren of street vendors, where tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4: Hanoi/Ha Long Bay

We depart this morning on a full-day excursion to Ha Long Bay, a breathtaking waterway in the Gulf of Tonkin dotted with 2,000 islands and islets and surrounded by jagged limestone cliffs and hidden caves. Here we board a traditional “junk” for lunch and an afternoon cruise through this fairytale seascape of a UNESCO site.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5: Hanoi/Ninh Binh

This morning we tour Ba Dinh Square, the national landmark complex of cultural and historic sites. We visit the revered Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, the French colonial Presidential Palace, and thousand-year-old One Pillar Pagoda, a Buddhist retreat. This afternoon we travel by coach to Ninh Binh, capital of Vietnam’s Red River Delta and UNESCO site known for its majestic landscapes. After settling in at our resort, we take a sunset walking tour through the peaceful countryside.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6: Ninh Binh

Our day begins with a traditional sampan ride through Tam Coc, marveling at the stunning limestone mountains and vivid green rice paddies as we pass through secret grottos. We then coach to the citadel of Hoa Lu, Vietnam’s ancient capital, where we visit the two temples here.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7: Ninh Binh/Hanoi/Siem Reap, Cambodia

A travel day today as we return to Hanoi for this afternoon's flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia's second-largest city and gateway to Angkor Wat. Tonight, we enjoy dinner at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8: Siem Reap

We make our first visit to the temples at the Angkor Wat complex, a small-scale city built between the 9th and 13th centuries and now a UNESCO site. This morning, we explore stunning 12th-century Angkor Wat itself, considered the world's largest religious structure. After lunch, we discover the restored 12th-century temple complex at Preah Khan, along with Angkor Thom, site of Bayon Temple, an imposing stone edifice of 54 towers each carved with four enigmatic faces.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 9: Siem Reap

This morning, we visit 10th-century Banteay Srei, the "citadel of women" dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva and known for its delicately carved pink sandstone. We then travel via *tuk-tuks* (auto rickshaws) to Ta Prohm, the mystical, decaying Buddhist shrine where the giant roots and limbs of banyan trees have overtaken the labyrinth of ruins here. After lunch together, this afternoon is at leisure. Tonight, we enjoy dinner at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10: Siem Reap/Luang Prabang, Laos

After a morning at leisure, we enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and then visit Satcha Handicrafts, a development project for young adults to learn traditional Cambodian crafts. From here we head to the airport for our late afternoon flight to Luang Prabang. Upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel where we enjoy dinner together this evening.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11: Luang Prabang

We set out on a walking tour of this ancient royal city this morning, beginning with the Old City, a UNESCO site, where we tour the beautiful 16th-century Wat Xieng Thong temple complex, and the National Museum, set in the former royal palace. Then we embark on a half-day cruise along the Mekong, lifeblood of Southeast Asia. We visit the Pak Ou Buddha Caves, housing hundreds of Buddhist icons, then enjoy lunch on board before stopping at a village that makes "Saa paper" from the bark of the mulberry tree. Tonight we have dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 12: Luang Prabang

This morning we get an inside look at the lives of local farmers as we travel to a communal rice farm. We learn about the climate and work necessary to grow rice and try our hands at some of the rice farming activities; we also see the other trades practiced here, including bamboo weaving, blacksmithing, and sugar cane processing. After a lunch of traditional Laotian specialties at the farm, we return to our hotel, where we have the afternoon and evening free, with dinner on our own.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 13: Luang Prabang/Chiang Mai, Thailand

Our day begins early with a time-honored tradition: the “tak-bat,” where hundreds of saffron-robed monks collect alms from their fellow Buddhists. After this moving experience, we return to our hotel for breakfast before transferring to the airport for our mid-day flight to Chiang Mai. Upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel where we have dinner together tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 14: Chiang Mai

Our Thailand touring begins with a cooking class at an organic farm located just outside the city, where we pick the fresh vegetables and herbs to be used in our lunch dishes. After enjoying the fruits of our labors, we visit Chiang Mai's Doi Suthep temple, said to contain relics from the Lord Buddha and offering stunning views over the city. We return to our hotel this afternoon to enjoy time on our own before we set out to visit Chiang Mai's vibrant night market, full of food, flowers, gifts, and everything in between. Dinner is on our own tonight with numerous options to enjoy Thailand's iconic street food.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 15: Chiang Mai

A tour highlight is in store today as we visit an elephant sanctuary. We enjoy a walk into the forest to witness these gentle giants grazing and socializing in their natural habitat, then help the *mahout* (elephant keeper) to prepare food for the animals. We enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before we return to Chiang Mai for a free afternoon. Dinner is at a local restaurant tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 16: Chiang Mai/Bangkok

Late morning, we depart for the airport and our flight to Bangkok. Upon arrival, we visit the Jim Thompson House, which highlights the Southeast Asian art collection of the American who helped to revive the Thai silk industry. Late this afternoon we check into our hotel where we enjoy dinner together this evening.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 17: Bangkok

We set out to explore sprawling Bangkok, in all its colorful, tumultuous, and modern splendor. We begin our discovery of the Thai capital today as we explore Wat Pho Temple, home of the legendary Reclining Buddha. Covered in gold leaf, this icon measures some 49 feet tall by 151 feet long. Wat Pho is also the home to Thailand's largest collection of Buddha images, and the complex is known for being the birthplace of traditional Thai massage. Next, we visit the Bangkok Flower Market, a riot of multicolored blooms located in Bangkok's Old City. After this full day of touring, we have the evening at leisure for dinner on our own.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 18: Bangkok

We begin our touring today at the Grand Palace, an immense complex of ornate buildings, halls, and gardens spreading along the bank of Thailand's main river, the Chao Phraya. The original palace was built in 1782 by King Buddha Yodfa Chulaloke, the first king of the Chakri Dynasty, after he moved the nation's capital to Bangkok from Thonburi. It is here that we see the elaborate Temple of the Emerald Buddha, with its venerated 31-inch-high statue carved from a single piece of jade. We finish our Bangkok touring with a walking tour of the Talat Noi district, one of Bangkok's oldest neighborhoods and now an emerging cultural hub. Tonight we celebrate our Southeast Asia odyssey at a farewell dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 19: Depart for U.S.

Today we transfer to the airport for our return flights to the U.S.

Meals: Breakfast

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