



Southeast Asia Odyssey

Engaging, diverse, intriguing...This just begins to describe Southeast Asia and our small group odyssey. We cruise the Mekong through Laos; explore the spectacular – Angkor Wat – and the sublime – Ha Long Bay; and engage with local farmers and hill tribespeople on this comprehensive, well-paced adventure.

With an Post-Tour Extension: Singapore

Itinerary

Created on Apr 3, 2024

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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 late this evening, then transfer to our hotel.

Accommodations: Meliá Hanoi

DAY 3: Hanoi

Our tour of this French-accented city begins in Ba Dinh Square at the revered mausoleum and home of Ho Chi Minh. Next: historic One Pillar Pagoda, a Buddhist retreat; the serene Temple of Literature (c. 1070); Hoa Lo Prison, the infamous “Hanoi Hilton” of the Vietnam War; and Hanoi’s Ancient Quarter, dense with street vendors, where we enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

Accommodations: Meliá Hanoi

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 limestone cliffs and hidden caves. Here we board a traditional “junk” for lunch and an afternoon cruise through this fairytale seascape of an UNESCO site.

Accommodations: Meliá Hanoi

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5: Hanoi/Da Nang/Hoi An

We fly this afternoon to Da Nang, then continue on to Hoi An and our riverside hotel. We get our first glimpse of the Old Town and its colorful lanterns as we dine together this evening.

Accommodations: Hotel Royal Hoi An – MGallery

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6: Hoi An

An easy boat ride on the Thu Bon River brings us to the colorful ancient port of Hoi An. We tour the lively daily market and stroll the shop- and gallery-lined back streets and alleyways of Old Town, now a UNESCO site. Tonight’s small group highlight: an interactive Vietnamese cooking class, followed by dinner.

Accommodations: Hotel Royal Hoi An – MGallery

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7: Hoi An/Da Nang/Siem Reap, Cambodia

We see local life up close this morning as we take a walking tour of a nearby farming settlement. Later we visit the acclaimed Cham Museum, then transfer to the airport for the flight to Siem Reap, arriving this evening.

Accommodations: Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

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. We travel via *tuk-tuks* (auto rickshaws) to Angkor Thom, the last Khmer capital, and Bayon Temple, an imposing stone edifice of 54 towers each carved with four enigmatic faces. We also explore 12th-century Ta Prohm, the mystical, decaying Buddhist shrine where the giant roots and limbs of banyan trees have overtaken the labyrinth of stone rooms and hallways. Later we tour stunning 12th-century Angkor Wat itself, the world's largest temple.

Accommodations: Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9: Siem Reap

Today's highlights include the restored 12th-century temple complex at Preah Khan; and 10th-century Banteay Srei, the "citadel of women" dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva and known for its delicately carved pink sandstone.

Accommodations: Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10: Siem Reap/Luang Prabang, Laos

This morning we visit Les Artisans d'Angkor, a development project for young adults to learn traditional crafts. Late this afternoon, we fly to Luang Prabang.

Accommodations: MyBanLao Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11: Luang Prabang

Our introduction to Laos begins early today with a time-honored tradition: the "tak-bat," where hundreds of saffron-robed monks collect alms from their fellow Buddhists. Later we set out to explore this ancient royal city; our walking tour features the Old City, a UNESCO site, where we tour the beautiful 16th-century Wat Xieng Thong temple complex; and the National Museum, formerly the royal palace. We return to our hotel for an afternoon at leisure then enjoy dinner in a family restaurant set in a village outside the town and styled like a traditional Laotian stilted bamboo house.

Accommodations: MyBanLao Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 12: Luang Prabang

This morning we visit an elephant sanctuary – a community-based eco-project – in the scenic Nam Khan River valley. Then we learn about the lives of local farmers firsthand as we travel to a communal rice farm, where we enjoy lunch before joining in such farm-based activities as bamboo weaving, blacksmith work, and sugar cane processing.

Accommodations: MyBanLao Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 13: Luang Prabang/Mekong River Cruise/Pakbeng

We begin a tour highlight today as we board a private riverboat for an upstream voyage on this remote stretch of the Mekong. Along the way, we stop to visit villages of ethnic hill tribes, and the Pak Ou Buddha Caves, housing hundreds of Buddha icons. We enjoy lunch on board our boat, a traditional wooden river cruiser with unobstructed views of the Mekong's lush banks. Upon arrival in Pakbeng, we check in at our hotel, where we dine tonight.

Accommodations: Le Grand Pakbeng

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 14: Pakbeng/Mekong River Cruise/Chiang Rai, Thailand

Back on board our riverboat today, we cruise past wild and diverse mountain scenery, stopping to visit a small village. After crossing the border into Thailand, we transfer to our hotel in Chiang Rai.

Accommodations: The Riverie by Katathani

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 15: Chiang Rai

At this morning's Thai cooking class, we prepare the feast that we'll enjoy for lunch today. Then we pay an afternoon visit to Wat Rong Khun, the unusual "White Temple" celebrating Lord Buddha's purity. Tonight: Chiang Rai's lively night market, where we can select dinner on our own from the many food stalls.

Accommodations: The Riverie by Katathani

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 16: Chiang Rai/Bangkok

Today we visit the Doi Tung Royal Villa and Gardens, the former home of the king's mother who led efforts against the heroin trade. Late today we fly to Bangkok.

Accommodations: Royal Orchid Sheraton

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 17: Bangkok

We discover the Thai capital at the colorful Flower Market; Wat Pho Temple, home of the gold-leafed Reclining Buddha; and the splendid Grand Palace complex, where we visit the revered Temple of the Emerald Buddha.

Accommodations: Royal Orchid Sheraton

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 18: Bangkok

This morning's visit to the Jim Thompson House reveals the prized Southeast Asian art collection of the American who revived the Thai silk industry. Tonight we celebrate our southeast Asia odyssey at a farewell dinner.

Accommodations: Royal Orchid Sheraton

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

This tour itinerary was generated for Southeast Asia Odyssey on Apr 3, 2024. Please visit the Southeast Asia Odyssey page at <https://www.odysseys-unlimited.com/tours/asia-the-far-east/southeast-asia-odyssey/> for the latest and most accurate information.