



This 7-day educational tour of Vietnam has been specifically designed for students from The Utahloy International School in China.

Beginning in the Vietnamese Capital of Hanoi, we will visit all of the city's main attractions before journeying deep into a provincial hill tribe region to visit the White Thai minority people where we will undertake a challenging two day community project. As the trip is designed to be of an educational value, a significant component of the itinerary is concerned with the social, historical and cultural understanding of Vietnam in particular the rapid social changes the country is currently undergoing.

Most importantly, this trip is designed to be highly enjoyable and features several inclusions to provide students with a very memorable and fulfilling introduction to one of the friendliest countries in Asia.

ITINERARY

This itinerary is correct at the time of printing. From time to time there may be slight changes due to uncontrollable circumstances. Your group leader will advise you of any changes at the initial group meeting.

YOUR TOUR LEADER & LOCAL GUIDES

Your tour leader and local guides are probably the people who most influence the success of your holiday. We

employ professionals who have led groups of people throughout all areas of Vietnam for several years. They all speak fluent English and Vietnamese so you can communicate with the people you meet along the way. All have been chosen because of their ability to deal sensitively with your needs as a foreigner in these wonderful and at times, most foreign of countries.

Day 1 Arrive Hanoi (Sunday 28 February 2010) We arrive at Hanoi International Airport then take a bus ride to our centrally located hotel. Our tour leader will run through the itinerary and answer any questions you may have. (-)

Flight: 28 February VN918 QUANGZHOU-HANOI 20:30 - 21:25

Day 2 Hanoi (Mon 1 March) We take to the streets of Hanoi by cyclo (a rickshaw propelled by a cyclist) to explore some of the city's fascinating sights. We delve into the Old Quarter travelling through narrow meandering lanes packed with silver, silk and embroidery. Following this we will have lunch and then visit the infamous Hanoi Hilton Prison Museum that once held U.S. pilots shot down during the American War in Vietnam. There will be a short time this afternoon for independent exploration before we enjoy a performance of Hanoi's famed Water Puppet Troupe to learn something about Vietnam's folklore and rural legends. (B, L, D)



Day 3 Mai Chau (Tue 2) After breakfast we depart for our 4-hour bus journey through stunning scenery that takes us to Mai Chau, home of the White Thai ethnic minority group near the Laotian border. The White Thai maintain a traditional lifestyle, live in long houses on stilts and carry out unusual religious and ceremonial practices (such as singing and dancing to welcome in the rice harvests). Upon arrival in Mai Chau district we settle into our homestay, a traditional long house on stilts.

This afternoon we begin a 2-day community project. This will take the form of practical building and some substantial laboring tasks as we construct a house, school or similar type structure to assist a needy community in this remote region.

Our host family will prepare a delicious evening meal as we listen and learn about the local customs and folklore of the regions inhabitants. *Please note: While Mai Chau is truly one of the trip highlights, the facilities are quite basic. A thin mattress, pillow and mosquito net will be provided in each long house. Toilets are basic and showers are cold. Good quality walking shoes are necessary in Mai Chau. A local cook will prepare all meals. (B, L, D)*

Day 4 Mai Chau (Wed 3) We continue our community project and will learn of the rituals of the local White Thai inhabitants, gain an understanding of their sense of community and see how the villagers have adapted to their environment. While in the village, we will have the opportunity to enjoy a dance performance by some of the local indigenous people from around the surrounding villages. It is further hoped that students may be able to reciprocate by offering a performance, song or folk dance from their country. (B, L, D)



Day 5 Hanoi (Thu 4) This morning we complete our house building around lunch time and make the return journey to Hanoi. After freshening up we enjoy dinner at KOTO Restaurant - a local charity restaurant run by former street kids. (B,D)

Day 6 Hanoi (Fri 5) This morning we visit the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum now a pilgrimage sight for locals. Here we will learn about the life of Ho Chi Minh, nationalism, communism and finally the reunification of the country. We explore the central shopping areas, the Temple of Literature - Vietnam's first university and take in a performance of Hanoi's famed water puppet troupe. We also take part in a 'hands on' cooking demonstration hosted by a chief with a passion for Vietnamese cuisine. Students will have the opportunity to prepare and cook their own meal.(B, L, D)

Day 7 Depart Hanoi (Sat 6) We will explore the city further today then there is a short time for final shopping. Your tour leader will escort you to the airport today and wave you farewell as you make the return journey to Guangzhou. (B)

Flight: 06MAR VN 918 HANOI-GUANGZHOU 17:05 – 19:30

SUMMARY

Grading: Easy. Anyone with reasonable fitness should be able to take part. There are no real physical difficulties. The trekking is easy to moderate.










Accommodation: Hotel accommodation is on a twin or triple share basis for students and a single room basis for staff (maximum of 3 single rooms). A single supplement is available at cost should you choose not to share. Hill tribe long house accommodation is communal

Hotels used: Golden Key (Hanoi), village home stays (Mai Chau)






Transport: Modern air-conditioned bus, cyclo

Group size: Minimum 24 students plus 3 staff

Tour Inclusions:

-  All accommodation and transport on route
-  International return economy flights and taxes on Vietnam Airlines
-  Domestic transfers
-  Local group Leader throughout the tour
-  Local English speaking guides where required
-  All sightseeing and entrance fees for museums, attractions and sights as described in the itinerary
-  Daily breakfast, 4 lunches, 5 dinners
-  Vietnam departure tax
-  Water with all included meals

Tour Exclusions:

-  Vietnam Visa (must be obtained before departing China)
-  Travel insurance
-  Mai Chau community building costs (approximately US\$2,500 per group)
-  Tips for local guides and drivers
-  2 Lunches, 1 dinner