



# **VIETNAM - CAMBODIA**

## **Journey Through Indochina**

**October 12-25, 2024**  
**14 Days / 12 Nights**

 **WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL**  
**OF GREATER HOUSTON**  
*Global Perspectives, Local Conversations*





# Vietnam-Cambodia

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## ITINERARY

<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>Sat, Oct 12, 2024</b>	Leave USA.	
<b>DAY 2</b>	<b>Sun, Oct 13, 2024</b>	Arrive in Hanoi, Vietnam	Hanoi
<b>DAY 3</b>	<b>Mon, Oct 14, 2024</b>	Hanoi sightseeing	Hanoi
<b>DAY 4</b>	<b>Tue, Oct 15, 2024</b>	Hanoi sightseeing	Hanoi
<b>DAY 5</b>	<b>Wed, Oct 16, 2024</b>	Ha Long Bay Cruise	Cruise
<b>DAY 6</b>	<b>Thu, Oct 17, 2024</b>	Cruise - Fly to HCM City	HCM City
<b>DAY 7</b>	<b>Fri, Oct 18, 2024</b>	HCM City sightseeing	HCM City
<b>DAY 8</b>	<b>Sat, Oct 19, 2024</b>	Mekong Delta Cruise	HCM City
<b>DAY 9</b>	<b>Sun, Oct 20, 2024</b>	HCM City sightseeing	HCM City



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## ITINERARY

<b>DAY 10</b>	<b>Mon, Oct 21, 2024</b>	Fly to Siem Reap, Cambodia	Siem Reap
<b>DAY 11</b>	<b>Tue, Oct 22, 2024</b>	Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom sightseeing	Siem Reap
<b>DAY 12</b>	<b>Wed, Oct 23, 2024</b>	Siem Reap sightseeing continues	Siem Reap
<b>DAY 13</b>	<b>Thu, Oct 24, 2024</b>	Fly to Phnom Penh - sightseeing	Phnom Penh
<b>DAY 14</b>	<b>Fri, Oct 25, 2024</b>	Departure	



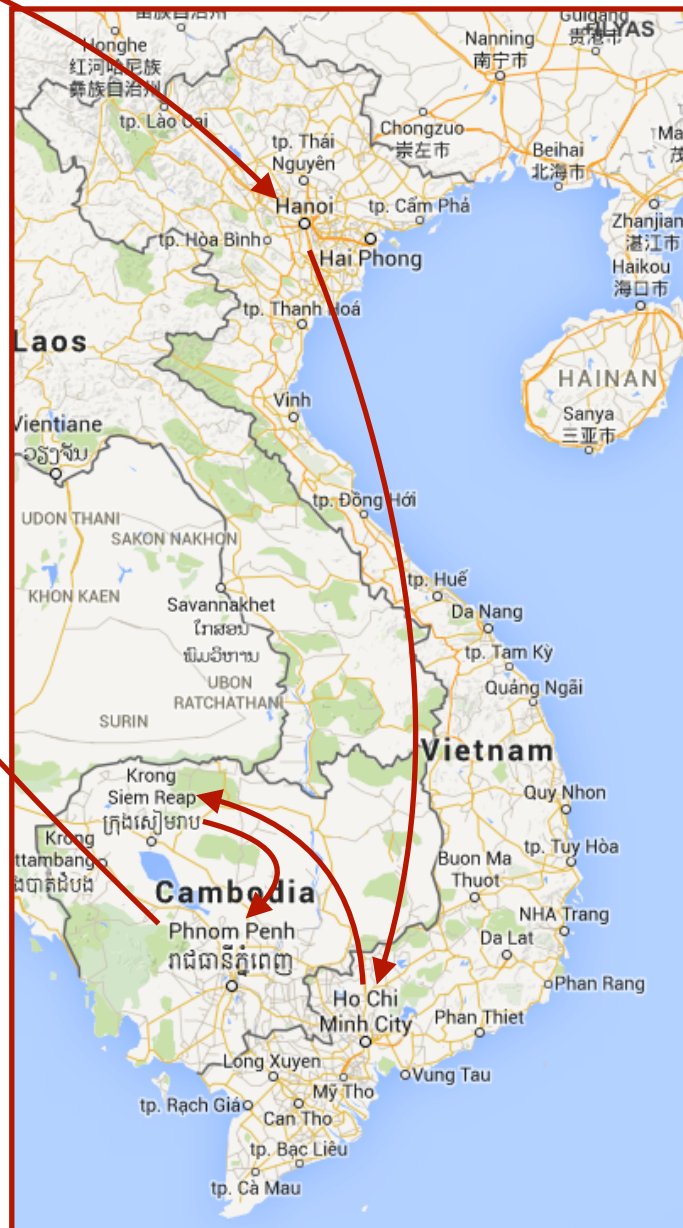


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## MAP TRAJECTORY





## **HIGHLIGHTS**

**Visit of Ho Chi Minh Complex in Hanoi.**

**Old Quarter of Hanoi.**

**A Day in Vietnamese Countryside.**

**Vietnamese Water Puppet show.**

**Visit “Hanoi Hilton”.**

**Ha Long Bay overnight cruise.**

**Reunification Palace in HCM City.**

**Mekong Delta Cruise.**

**Cu Chi Tunnel tour.**

**Angkor Wat & Angkor Tom.**

**Circus show in Seam Reap.**

**Cambodian Haute Cuisine dinner in Phnom Penh.**

**Mekong River sunset cruise in Phnom Penh.**

**Visit of “Killing Fields” in Phnom Penh.**

**Aspara dance show at the National Museum in Phnom Penh.**

**Delicious food in both countries.**





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## INCLUDED

12 nights' accommodation in five-star hotels.

One night cruise of Ha Long Bay on a traditional junk.

Private English speaking guides and private transportation.

Daily breakfast. Other meals as indicated in the itinerary;  
including Welcome and Farewell dinners.

Mekong Delta cruise.

Traditional Vietnamese water puppet show at the Thang Long Theater.

Show at the Phare Ponleu Selpak Circus.

Visit to the floating village, Kompong Phluk.

Mekong River Sunset cruise in Phnom Penh.

Aspara dance show at the National Museum.

**One domestic flight in Vietnam / one domestic flight in Cambodia / flight  
between HCM City and Phnom Penh.**

Local taxes and service charges.

## NOT INCLUDED

International airfare.

Visa fees where necessary.

Drinks with included meals, except drinking water and tea or coffee for  
breakfast.

Gratuities for guides and drivers.

Personal expenditures like phone calls, laundry, medical expenses.

Travel insurance.



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## SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

Suggested flights are on Eva Air via Taipei:

**12 Oct**      **Houston to Taipei**  
**BR 51**      **dep: 1:00 am / arr: 6:15 am on 13 Oct**

**13 Oct**      **Taipei to Hanoi**  
**BR 397**      **dep: 9:00 am / arr: 11:05 am**

**25 Oct**      **Phnom Penh to Taipei**  
**BR 266**      **dep: 12:35 pm / arr: 5:10 pm**

**25 Oct**      **Taipei to Houston**  
**BR 52**      **dep: 9:20 pm / arr: 10:15 pm**

**Economy class: \$1,510**

**Premium economy: \$2550**

**Business class: \$6,524**

**per person, including taxes, surcharges and fees  
as of April 8, 2024**

**Fares may change based on availability.**





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## ACCOMMODATIONS

**HANOI / 3 nights**

**Pan Pacific Hotel**

<https://www.panpacific.com/en/hotels-and-resorts/pp-hanoi.html>



**HA LONG BAY CRUISE / 1 night**

**Indochine Premium Cruise**

<http://indochinecruise.com/indochine-premium-cruise-ha-long-bay.html>







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## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

**HO CHI MINH CITY / 4 nights**

**Le Meridien Saigon**

**<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/sgnmd-le-meridien-saigon/>**



**SIEM REAP / 3 nights**

**Shinta Mani Angkor Bensley Collection**

**<https://shintamani.com/angkor/>**





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## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

**PHNOM PENH / 1 night**

**Hyatt Regency Phnom Penh**

**<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/hotel/cambodia/hyatt-regency-phnom-penh/pnhrp>**







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## Program Details

### **Day 1: Sat, Oct 12**                      **Leave Houston**

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We will leave Houston for Hanoi, Vietnam.

### **Day 2: Sun, Oct 13**                      **Hanoi Arrival**

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Upon arrival, we will meet our guide at the airport and we will be transferred to our hotel in Hanoi.

Rest of the day at leisure.

### **Overnight in Hanoi**

**Meals: None**

### **Day 3: Mon, Oct 14**                      **Hanoi - A Day in the Countryside**

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This is our day in the countryside.

We will depart Hanoi for a 2hr drive to the Tho Ha Village in Nho Quan passing by sleepy villages and picturesque countryside landscapes. We will continue to Dong Tam Hamlet to see local agricultural activities such as catching crabs, fishing and transplanting and watering vegetables.

After an hour or so, we will return to the hamlet in time for a cooking class and lunch with a local family where sweet potato cakes and grilled fish are on the menu.

After lunch, board a rowboat at the Nha Le Pier and enjoy a trip to the 900m (2,953ft)-deep Galaxy Grotto, so named for the sea of stalactites growing from the ceiling above, like so many stars.

We will return to Hanoi in the late afternoon. We will have welcome dinner at a nice local restaurant.

### **Overnight in Hanoi**

**Meals: B-L-D**



## **Day 4: Tue, Oct 15                      Hanoi**

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With its bustling boulevards, contrasting with the ancient pagodas and soul-soothing lakes, Hanoi is one of Asia's most vibrant cities. The city has been inhabited since 3000 BC, and it has been the most important political center or the capital of different governing powers since 1010.

During our full-day tour of the city, we will visit the Ho Chi Minh Complex, including the Presidential Palace, Ho's former stilt-house residence and the Ho Chi Minh Museum.

We will continue our tour with the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university, dating back to 1070.

Our tour will end with a visit to the Hoa Lo Prison, which was used by the French colonists for political prisoners, and later by North Vietnam during the Vietnam War, when it was sarcastically known to the American prisoners of war held there as the "Hanoi Hilton." The prison was demolished during the 1990s, though the gatehouse remains a museum.

In the afternoon, we will visit the Museum of Ethnology. It features large pavilions representing the way of life of Vietnam's 54 ethnic minorities. After the museum, we will drive back to central Hanoi for a cyclo tour through the famed Old Quarter known for its '36 streets of 36 wares' named after the original 36 artisan guilds that date as far back as the 13th century.

We will have our dinner at a popular restaurant in the Old Quarter of Hanoi and then watch a traditional Vietnamese water puppet show, a uniquely northern Vietnamese art form said to have originated in the flooded rice fields of the Red River Delta.

**Overnight in Hanoi**

**Meals: B-L-D**





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### **Day 5: Wed, Oct 16                      Hanoi - Ha Long Bay Cruise**

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In the morning, we will drive from Hanoi to Tuan Chau Harbor to board our cruise boat for Ha Long Bay cruise. (Estimated driving time 2 hrs 30 mins.)

Boarding time is at 12:15 pm. Upon boarding guests are greeted with a welcome drink and gather in the dining room for a comprehensive safety and boat orientation briefing followed by itinerary details.

After the briefing and check in we have a bit of free time till lunch is served at 1:00pm. Lunch is a multi-course Vietnamese and Western set menu.

During lunch we cruise through the Ha Long Bay, through the most beautiful and quiet areas including Incense Burner, Kissing Rock.

In the afternoon we will visit one of the spectacular caves in these rock formations; Surprise cave or Luon cave. After the happy hour from 6:00 till 7:00pm, dinner will be served at 7:30pm.

Dinner is a sumptuous buffet featuring an array of salads, seafood, meat dishes, seasonal fresh fruits and deserts.

After dinner guests can relax in the dining room and lounge or on the upper deck and enjoy the second happy hour from 9:00 till 10:00pm. Board games and playing cards are available. Also, everyone can try their luck at squid fishing from the boat with help from the crew.

### **Overnight on Board**

**Meals: B-L-D**

### **Day 6: Thu, Oct 17                      Ha Long Bay - Hanoi - HCM City**

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In the morning coffee, tea and breakfast pastries are on offer from 6:45am. Tai Chi lessons are led by our Tai Chi master at 7:00am.

Then we will leave the boat at 7:45 for a walking tour of Titov Beach Island. We will spend about one hour on the island, allowing time for a climb up the steps to the peak for a



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brehtaking 360 degree view of the Bay (there is also an expansive viewing deck half way up). After the climb there is time left to relax on the beach and have a swim if you like. Back on board it's time for final packing and freshening up before enjoying a full breakfast buffet, including traditional Vietnamese Noodles (Pho). After breakfast guests may relax in the dining room and lounge or on the deck enjoying the Bay view's before disembarkation at 11:00am.

We will transfer back to Hanoi airport for our flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Upon arrival, our guide will meet us and we will be transferred to our hotel.

### Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City

Meals: B-L-D

Ho Chi Minh City, under the name Saigon, was the capital of the French colony of Cochinchina, and later of the independent state of South Vietnam from 1956 to 1975. It was renamed Ho Chi Minh City by the Hanoi Government after the war. Today Ho Chi Minh City, home to nine million people, is very much the heart of Vietnam's market economy. And yet despite all the city's modernity, its core is still adorned with wide, elegant boulevards and historic French colonial buildings. Cholon, Saigon's Chinatown, houses dozens of elegant temples and pagodas.

### Day 7: Fri, Oct 18

### Ho Chi Minh City

Today we will explore Ho Chi Minh City's turbulent past and well-preserved cultural treasures. We will visit the Reunification Palace, where the Vietnam War ended on April 30th, 1975, during the "Fall of Saigon," when a North Vietnamese army tank crashed through the palace gates.

Our next stop is the War Remnants Museum, the largest war museum in Vietnam, which exhibits weaponry, photography of the use of Agent Orange and reconstructed POW camps. We will enjoy the classic 19th century French architecture of the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Old Post Office. We will continue to Giam Lac Pagoda, the city's oldest, dating back to 1744, and the Southern Women's Museum.





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As a fun ending to our tour, we will stroll through the Ben Thanh Market and see an extensive selection of goods, ranging from shoes to beautiful silk ao dais (traditional Vietnamese dresses). Bargaining is the norm.

**Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City**

**Meals: B-L-D**

**Day 8: Sat, Oct 19**

**Mekong Delta Cruise**

We will leave our hotel at 8 am to drive to Cai Be - Phu An, where we will board the Cai Be Princess at around 10 am. The crew welcomes us aboard with cold towels and a refreshing drink while the Cai Be Princess Sampan sets off for its leisurely cruise on the busy waterways of the Mekong Delta.

On the river, all sorts of boats ply the water, from small fishing boats to cargo barges loaded with fruit and vegetables. Observe local life from the comfort of your sampan as it plays out on the riverbanks, while your attentive crew serves you tea and seasonal fruit. At Tan Phong Islet, board a small row boat to better explore the canal's hidden mangroves.

Return to your sampan to visit an ancient house built in the 19th century.

We'll make stops along the way to explore local cottage industries including the making of coconut candy and puffed rice (the local equivalent of popcorn).

Our cruise ends at Le Longanier Restaurant. Lunch is served in this exquisite colonial-style villa set in a lush tropical garden by the river and surrounded by fruit trees, giving us a sense of privileged life during old times.

After lunch, at around 2:30 pm, take a short walk along a small canal towards the Ba Bon Bridge from where we will drive approximately 2 hours back to Ho Chi Minh City.

\*Note: Actual itinerary may vary depending upon river tide, arrival time or other conditions.

**Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City**

**Meals: B-L-D**



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**Day 9: Sun, Oct 20                      Ho Chi Minh City**

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After breakfast, we will drive about 50 minutes to the Cu Chi Tunnels.

Upon arrival, we will watch a short documentary on their construction. Our guide will take us through the maze of tunnels, viewing displays of various mantraps and the remains of an American tank, as well as numerous craters left by 500-pound bombs dropped by B52 bombers.

We will return to Ho Chi Minh City to continue exploring the city's past through the Vietnam History Museum and Cholon, a Chinese-influenced district that is home to many beautiful temples and pagodas.

Rest of the day at leisure. We can explore the dining options on our own.

**Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City**

**Meals: B-L**

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**Day 10: Mon, Oct 21                      HCM City - Siem Reap**

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After a leisurely morning, we will be transferred to the airport for our flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Upon arrival, our guide and driver will take us to our hotel.

Rest of the day at leisure.

**Overnight in Siem Reap**

**Meals: B - D**





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### **Day 11: Tue, Oct 22      Siem Reap – Angkor Thom, Bayon and Angkor Wat**

The name Siem Reap literally means “Defeat of Siam,” which is today's Thailand, and refers to the centuries-old conflict between the Siamese and the Khmer peoples. Today the small town of Siem Reap serves as a gateway to the world-famous Angkor temples.

The last and the most enduring capital city of the Khmer Empire, Angkor Thom was established in the late 12th century by King Jayavarman VII. With their grandeur of scale and extraordinary delicacy in detail, the temples of Angkor rank among humankind's supreme artistic expressions.

We will start our tour with the South Gate, with its huge statues depicting the “churning of the ocean of milk,” then visit Bayon Temple, the last state temple to be built in Angkor, its 54 towers decorated with more than 200 smiling faces of the bodhisattva Avolokitesvara. Angkor Thom is enclosed by a square wall and encircled by a moat. In the center of the walled enclosure are the city's most important monuments, including the Bayon, the Baphuon, the Royal Enclosure, Phiemanakas and the Terrace of Elephants.

In the late afternoon and at sunset, we will explore the most famous of all the temples on the plain of Angkor: Angkor Wat. The complex covers 200 acres and is comparable in size to the Imperial Palace in Beijing. Its distinctive five towers are emblazoned on the Cambodian flag. The 12th century masterpiece is considered the prime example of classical Khmer art and architecture. The five towers symbolize Meru's five peaks, the enclosed wall represents the mountains at the edge of the world, and the surrounding moat is regarded as the ocean beyond. First a Hindu, then a Buddhist temple, Angkor Wat is the largest religious monument in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After dinner, we will enjoy a show at Phare Ponleu Selpak Circus.

**Overnight in Siem Reap**

**Meals: B-L-D**



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### **Day 12: Wed, Oct 23      Siem Reap – Kompong Phluk - Banteay Srey**

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After rising early this morning, we will drive to Ta Prohm Temple, the setting for the movie “Tomb Raider.” Built in 1186, Ta Prohm was dedicated to King's Jayavarman VII's mother. Its dark gray sandstone towers and courtyards have an aura of reverence and mystery. Navigating through its narrow passages, immense kapok trees, and jungle-covered ruins is an unparalleled experience and one of the highlights of Angkor.

We will then visit the floating village, Kompong Phluk, to observe the daily doings of a village built on stilts on Tonle Sap. After lunch, we will travel through the typical Khmer countryside to explore the exquisite Banteay Srey, a 10th century temple dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva. The temple's modern name, Banteay Srey, the “citadel of the women or beauty”, most probably comes from its intricate wall carvings. This is the most Indian of all the temples in Angkor and in the words of H.W. Ponder, is a fairy palace in the heart of an immense and mysterious forest. Then we will continue our tour with Banteay Samre, mid-12th century Hindu temple, now extensively restored.

**Overnight in Siem Reap**

**Meals: B-L-D**

### **Day 13: Thu, Oct 24      Siem Reap - Phnom Penh**

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After breakfast, we will be transferred to the airport for a short flight to Phnom Penh. Upon arrival we will drive 16 km to the south of Phnom Penh to visit Choeung Ek, known as the “Killing Field,” the site of a mass grave of victims of the Khmer Rouge, killed from 1975 to 1979. After the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, 8,895 bodies were discovered there. Many were former political prisoners who were kept by the Khmer Rouge in their Tuol Sleng Detention Center. After remembering such an intense and dark part of history, we will return to the city center.

Our guide will take us for a city tour. Situated on the banks of the Tonle Sap and Mekong River, Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia, was once known as the “Pearl of Asia” for its beauty. We will visit the highlights of this bustling, vibrant city, starting from the Royal Palace, a pagoda-style compound with a beautiful garden, built in 1866 by King Norodom. We will continue our tour with the Silver Pagoda, where the royal family worshipped, in the southern part of the palace. It houses many national treasures, including gold and jeweled Buddha





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statues. Most notable is the small "Emerald Buddha" of Cambodia, made of crystal, and a life-size gold Maitreya Buddha, decorated with 9,584 diamonds, the largest one weighing 25 carats. The pagoda was inlaid with more than 5,000 silver tiles, but only a small area of these tiles is on display. Later, we will go to the National Museum, an exceptional example of traditional architecture, built in 1917. We will admire the exhibits of Khmer art objects and sculptures before leaving for Wat Phnom, a pagoda built in 1373 to house Buddhist relics washed ashore by the river.

Later this afternoon, we will enjoy an hour-long sunset cruise on the Mekong River and Tonle Sap. Great views of the city's rapidly changing skyline will open up in front of us, together with scenes from the floating villages we will pass.

After a spectacular Aspara (Cambodian traditional dance) show at the National Museum, we will enjoy our dinner at Malis Restaurant, which serves haute cuisine Khmer style! This trendy restaurant has taken traditional Khmer recipes and given them a modern twist.

**Overnight in Phnom Penh**

**Meals: B-L-D**

**Day 14: Fri, Oct 25**

**Departure**

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Transfer to the airport for our return flight.

### **Contact Us**

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