



WENDY WU TOURS

Tour Dossier

CLASSICAL VIETNAM 16 DAYS

This document was designed to be read in conjunction with our other pre-departure information provided after you have made a booking with Wendy Wu Tours. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour. All passengers should read this dossier to confirm their ability to complete the tour. This is not your final Itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.

Tour Grade - Comfortable Paced Tour

This is defined in our brochure as the following: "Whilst you will encounter extensive walking throughout the tour, these programmes are comfortably operated to appeal to most people. Generally these tours are shorter in duration and visit the mainstream tourist attractions."

This is the easiest pace of tour which Wendy Wu Tours offers in Vietnam. Anyone with a reasonable level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course, our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for those who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Group Size

In most cases the group size will operate with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 18 passengers. This is the absolute maximum due to the number of beds aboard the Halong Bay junk boat.

Itinerary Changes

1. Vietnam Airlines' domestic flights are subject to frequent changes. For this reason we have indicated morning, afternoon or evening flights only in the section below. Your Local guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.
2. Order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

Tipping

If there are less than 10 people in your group, please allow US\$60 each for tipping (i.e. \$20 for Saigon, \$5 Nha Trang, \$15 Hoi An/Hue and \$20 Hanoi).

If there are more than 10, please allow US\$50 each (for the entire tour).

This amounts listed above *do not include hotel portage* so if you would like your luggage to be carried to your hotel room this will be at your discretion.

NB: Times and distances listed in this section are approximations only.

Day 1: New Zealand/Saigon. You will be met at Saigon airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer (¾ hr drive) to your hotel and check-in to your rooms. There is no sightseeing today. At some point today, when the whole group has arrived, a tour introduction will be held in the hotel. There will not be food or drinks served at this meeting; it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in Vietnam.

Day 2: Saigon

Sightseeing in downtown Saigon and the Cholon district involves approx 4 hrs walking over the whole day. Watch your valuables while in market area. There are some graphic images in the War Remnants Museum, which some people may find confronting.

Day 3: Mekong Delta day trip (My Tho).

We have an early rise this morning to drive 2hrs (80kms) to city of My Tho, where we will pick up the local Mekong Guide (it is a govt regulation that every foreign group be accompanied by a Mekong Guide) then continue 5 mins drive to the docks. You will travel by motorised, wooden boat between the islands and perhaps smaller, paddle boats in the canals. Sightseeing involves hopping on and off the boats, often on unsteady and slippery surfaces, sometimes without handrails or assistance, and 1hr

walking across the islands. Approx 2 hrs later, return to docks, have lunch and drive back to Saigon.

Day 4: Cu Chi Tunnels/Tay Ninh.

Remember to take insect repellent today as mosquitoes are more common in the Cu Chi district. Transfer 2hrs (75 kms) to Cu Chi; actually an outer suburb of Ho Chi Minh City. Sightseeing here involves 2 hrs walking on uneven mud paths through the bush and, if you choose, crawling through some of the tunnels. It is important to follow your Guide's directions to leave on time as to arrive at Tay Ninh in time to see the midday service. Transfer 1hr (60kms) to Tay Ninh to the 'Holy See' and watch most of the Cao Dai service. Then transfer (10mins drive) to have lunch - the meal is simple but this is the only suitable restaurant in the area. Transfer 3hrs (100kms) back to Saigon.

Day 5: Saigon/Nha Trang.

Transfer (45mins drive) to Danang airport for the morning flight to Nha Trang (flight duration 1hr 10mins). Drive 25mins from the airport to your hotel and check-in. Sightseeing at the Cham Towers involves ½ hrs walking over uneven ground and steps.

Day 6: Nha Trang.

You will need to be able to board your group's boat without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff. This could involve climbing over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock. These 'cruise boats' are old fishing boats which have had benches and seats fitted for tourist groups. They are quite basic but have ample room for our group to sit, relax while cruising and eat lunch. The deck has a roof providing shade. We will return to the hotel in the mid afternoon.

Day 7: Nha Trang/Hoi An.

Transfer to the airport for morning flight to Danang (flight duration 1hr 10mins); the closest airport to Hoi An. En route their will be easy sightseeing in Danang at Cham Museum and China Beach. At the Marble Mtns there are over 500 uneven stone steps up and it can get extremely hot. If you are unable to complete this activity, or choose not to go with the group – you will need to remain with the driver/coach because the group will descend on the other side of Marble Mtn and reboard the coach there. Watch your step inside dark and damp caves.

Day 8: Hoi An.

At least 2 hrs walking around Hoi An Old Town, then your afternoon is at leisure.

Day 9: Hoi An/Hue.

Drive 3 ½ hrs (approx 135kms) over the Hai Van (*Cloudy*) Pass north to Hue. This is a winding and sometimes steep, scenic road along the coast. In Hue, sightseeing at the Citadel involves 1 ½ hrs walking through the palace complex – it can get very hot here and often rains in the afternoon, so you may need sun and/or rain protection. Afterwards, transfer (5mins drive) to the hotel.

Day 10: Hue.

This morning is easy sightseeing around Hue, involving at least 3hrs walking. There are steep and uneven steps without handrails at the Thien Mu Pagoda and Khai Dinh Tomb. If you are unable to complete this activity, or choose not to go with the group – you will be able to wait with the driver/coach, or explore as far as you are able then return to the parked coach on your own. There are steep and uneven steps without handrails at the Tomb of Tu Duc

Day 11: Hue/Hanoi.

Easy sightseeing at the Dong Ba markets this morning – watch your valuables while in the market area. Transfer (½ hr drive) to the airport for an afternoon flight to Hanoi (flight duration 1hr). From Noi Boi airport, transfer (1hr drive) to the hotel and check-in.

Day 12: Hanoi.

Both men and women must dress respectfully for the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, with covered shoulders and knees. Sightseeing in central Hanoi involves approx 4 hrs walking at the Ho Chi Minh ‘quarter’ and Temple of Literature and Old Quarter. When visiting the Mausoleum you must be quiet, show respect and will not be allowed to carry cameras, mobile phones, etc (usually your Local Guide will offer to hold these for you).

[NB: Your Local Guide will confirm the menu for tomorrow’s seafood lunch and dinner on board the junk boat tonight, so please mention any food allergies or dislikes to them again today.]

Day 13: Halong Bay overnight Junk Boat.

This morning, drive 3 ½ hrs (170kms) to Halong City and port, including a 20min rest stop. As it is so popular, there are usually a crowd of boats at the docks – please be reassured that the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing. Boarding your junk boat could involve climbing over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock – sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff. The junk boats have been recently built and modelled on the traditional ‘junk’ which was both home and working vessel for fishermen in the Orient for centuries. They usually hold about 20 dining (or 18 max for overnight) passengers, have an enclosed dining area and open deck on the upper deck. We have lunch and dinner onboard and cruise around the bay. We anchor the night in Halong Bay.

[N.B: Itinerary in Halong Bay is subject to change due to local conditions.]

Day 14: Halong Bay/Hanoi.

After breakfast continuing cruising the bay before an early lunch. Then return to docks before midday. Drive back to Hanoi.

Day 15: Depart Hanoi.

Anytime before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight.

Day 16: New Zealand.

Arrive home.

Updated 5th January 2009