

VIETNAM'S HIGHLIGHTS SOUTHBOUND – TRIP NOTES

TRIP CODE: TAGVC112

Valid until 31 Dec 2025

Overview

Embark on an unforgettable journey through Vietnam's most iconic destinations. Begin in Hanoi, the nation's charming capital, where history and vibrant street life blend seamlessly. Cruise through the breathtaking limestone karsts of Halong Bay before taking an overnight train to Hue, the former imperial capital.

Explore the grandeur of the Imperial City and glide along the scenic Perfume River. Continue to Hoi An, a UNESCO-listed town, where you'll stroll through its atmospheric streets and enjoy free time to soak in its timeless beauty.

Fly to Ho Chi Minh City, a dynamic metropolis rich in history. Venture into the legendary Cu Chi Tunnels and explore the lush Mekong Delta, immersing yourself in its fascinating rural charm. This journey perfectly balances history, culture, and natural wonders, leaving you with lasting memories of Vietnam's diverse beauty.

Detailed itinerary

Day 1: Hanoi - Arrival

Xin chao! Welcome to Vietnam!

Upon your arrival at the airport, our driver will greet you and transfer you to your centrally located hotel for check-in.

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam is a city of rich history and culture, where you can experience the fusion of ancient traditions and modern life. It is known for its beautiful landscapes, delicious food, and bustling streets full of energy. The place is filled with sights and sounds that make it one of the liveliest cities in Asia.

After checking in, you are free to unwind and explore the city at your own pace. Consider a leisurely stroll through the bustling Old Quarter, where vibrant street life and local shops await, or find some peace by Hoan Kiem Lake, a serene spot perfect for reflection amidst the city's lively atmosphere.

At 6:00 PM, meet with your tour guide for a group briefing, where you'll complete any necessary procedures and receive an overview of the days ahead. Afterwards, feel free to join your fellow travelers for dinner and enjoy some social activities together.

Meals included

No meals are included on this day

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hanoi

Special notes

Please note that the standard hotel check-in time is 14:00. However, we will do our best to assist with early check-in if rooms are available. If your room is not ready, you can store your luggage at the hotel and explore the city while waiting. For guaranteed early check-in, we recommend booking pre-trip accommodation.

The group meeting scheduled for today is important. If you're running late or unable to attend, kindly inform your travel agent or the hotel reception. You can check the meeting location at the hotel reception or look for a note in the lobby.

Day 2: Hanoi - city sightseeing

For early risers, start your day by joining the locals around Hoan Kiem Lake for morning activities such as Tai Chi, aerobics, traditional music dance, or badminton. You might even enjoy a light back-flapping massage from the friendly locals – a fun and unique experience!

After breakfast, set off on a guided city tour to discover Hanoi's rich history and culture. Begin with the Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, which honors the leader of modern Vietnam. The site includes the Mausoleum, Presidential Palace, Uncle Ho's house on stilts, and the Ho Chi Minh Museum. Nearby is One Pillar Pagoda, a symbol of Hanoi that has stood for almost a millennium, perched atop a single stone pillar and surrounded by peaceful gardens.

Next, head to the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first National University, founded in 1076 and functioning until 1802. Admire the impressive architecture and wander through the tranquil courtyards, where you'll find nearly a hundred large stone stelae engraved with the names of top scholars who passed the Royal examinations and earned their Doctor Laureate title.

In the afternoon, enjoy free time to explore Hanoi at your leisure. You can delve deeper into the Old Quarter for some shopping or take part in optional activities like a cooking class to master traditional Vietnamese dishes, or embark on an adventurous motorbike and food-tasting tour of the city.

Included activities

- Ho Chi Minh Memorial complex
- Temple of Literature

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hanoi

Optional activities

- Hoa Lo Prison: US\$ 2
- Water puppet show: US \$4
- Hanoi cooking class: US \$55

Day 3: Halong Bay cruise

Start your day with breakfast at the hotel. Around 9:00 AM, you'll be picked up for the journey from Hanoi to Halong Bay. Upon arriving at the pier around noon, complete the boarding procedures, then set off on a cruise through the breathtaking landscapes of Halong Bay.

Famous worldwide, Halong Bay is a natural wonder featuring thousands of limestone islands that emerge dramatically from emerald waters, shaped by millennia of wind and water erosion. The bay is home to pristine beaches, charming floating villages, fascinating caves, and stunning vistas, making it an absolute must-visit destination for travelers exploring Vietnam. As you cruise, enjoy a delicious lunch while taking in the awe-inspiring scenery of towering limestone formations.

In the afternoon, you can engage in thrilling activities like kayaking among the karsts to get a closer look at the breathtaking natural wonders. Alternatively, opt for a relaxing swim in the clear waters

of one of the area's beautiful beaches. As the day winds down, enjoy the captivating sunset during a lively happy hour on the top deck.

The cruise will then head to the overnight anchorage, where you can enjoy the tranquility of the surroundings. Relish a delightful dinner on board and spend the night surrounded by the mesmerizing islands, beneath a star-filled sky.

Included activities

- Halong Bay cruise & sightseeing
- Halong Bay kayaking/swimming
- Overnight aboard

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Accommodation

- Overnight on board

Special notes

Bring with you just enough for 2 days and one night. Packing list should include passport, some money for drinks, swimming wear, sun cream, sunglasses and, of course, your camera. A light bag should be enough and your main luggage can be left in the hotel's storage.

Day 4: Halong Bay cruise – Hanoi – night train to Hue

Start your day early to witness the stunning sunrise over Halong Bay. After breakfast, board a rowing boat to glide through the clear waters, exploring a natural tunnel and a charming floating village, immersing yourself in the peaceful beauty of the bay.

Return to the main boat and continue your cruise through the enchanting landscapes of Bai Tu Long Bay and Halong Bay, with a delicious lunch served on board.

Arrive back at the harbor in the early afternoon (around 11:00 – 11:30, depending on the boat and tide). Disembark and head back to Hanoi.

Enjoy some free time in Hanoi to explore, shop, and have dinner. In the evening, at 8:00 PM, you will be transferred to the train station for an overnight journey to Hue.

Overnight on the train in an air-conditioned soft sleeper cabin.

Included activities

- Boat rowing & floating village
- Halong Bay boat cruise and sightseeing

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Accommodation

- Overnight train – AC cabin

Special notes

The overnight train from Hanoi to Hue takes approximately 13 hours, with accommodations in a shared cabin for four people. Depending on the group's arrangement, you may share the cabin with passengers of different genders or those not part of the group.

Each cabin is equipped with comfortable soft sleepers, and air conditioning, and can be locked from the inside. Toilets are available at both ends of the carriage, and a dining car at the end of the train offers simple meals and drinks. The train travels at around 60 kilometers per hour and might be a bit noisy for those not used to train rides, so consider bringing earplugs - or perhaps a bottle of vodka may be a great help :)

Day 5: Hue – Imperial city

Arrive in Hue around 9:30 AM. A short transfer will take you to your hotel, where facilities are available for freshening up before the official check-in time. Take this opportunity to explore the area and get acquainted with your surroundings.

Hue, located in central Vietnam, is a city of great historical importance, once serving as the imperial capital. It offers a fascinating glimpse into Vietnam's royal past, set against a backdrop of beautiful natural scenery.

In the afternoon, embark on a guided tour of the Hue Imperial City. Built between 1804 and 1832, this vast complex was the political and royal center of Vietnam. Enclosed by over 10 kilometers of fortified walls and a protective moat, it houses the Royal City and the Purple Forbidden City, which were the private quarters of the royal family. Despite the damage from past conflicts, the remaining structures, pagodas, and monuments continue to reflect Hue's rich heritage.

Back to the hotel and the evening is free for you to explore or relax at your leisure.

Included activities

- Hue - Guided tour to the Imperial City

Meals included

No meal included today

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hue

Day 6: Hue – Perfume River cruise

This morning, after breakfast, you'll embark on a tranquil boat cruise along the Perfume River, one of Hue's most scenic natural landmarks. Your journey will take you to the Thien Mu Pagoda, an iconic symbol of Hue. Built in 1601, this ancient seven-story pagoda stands on a verdant hill overlooking the river. Revered for its spiritual significance, the pagoda offers a serene atmosphere and breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding landscape, making it a must-visit destination in Hue.

After returning to the hotel, the rest of the day is yours to explore Hue at your own pace. You might want to visit the bustling Dong Ba Market, the largest in the city, where vibrant stalls offer a diverse range of fresh produce, specialty foods, and souvenirs. This is a perfect place to try "Banh Khoai," a crispy pancake that is one of Hue's famous delicacies.

For a more adventurous experience, consider a motorbike tour through Hue's countryside and hidden backstreets, which provides a thrilling way to discover the area's lesser-known relics and natural beauty.

Included activities

- Perfume River cruise
- Thien Mu Pagoda

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hue

Optional Activities

- Bicycle rent: US\$ 2
- Country & back streets by motorbike ride with driver: US\$ 25

Day 7: Hoi An ancient town

Travel through picturesque rural landscapes, mountains, and lagoons as you make your way to the UNESCO World Heritage city of Hoi An. Along the way, stop at the pristine Lang Co Beach and cross the famous Hai Van Pass, the highest mountain pass in central Vietnam, which offers breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding scenery.

Hoi An, located along the tranquil Thu Bon River, was a major trading port from the 15th to the 19th century, attracting merchants from Asia and Europe. Today, Hoi An's well-preserved architecture, rich traditions, and distinctive lifestyle, combined with excellent tourist services, have made it one of the most beloved destinations in Vietnam.

In the afternoon, enjoy a guided walking tour through Hoi An's ancient town. Wander its charming streets, lined with traditional architecture and lively markets, while your guide shares insights into the town's history and culture.

Afterward, enjoy free time to explore the town at your own pace. Hoi An is a culinary haven, famous for its local specialties. Be sure to try dishes like "Cao Lau," a unique noodle dish exclusive to Hoi An, and "White Rose," delicate dumplings filled with shrimp or pork.

Hoi An is also a shopper's paradise, known for its handcrafted souvenirs and custom tailoring services, offering quick turnarounds for bespoke clothing, from suits and dresses to traditional Vietnamese attire, crafted by skilled local tailors. Don't miss the opportunity to explore these establishments and have the latest fashion styles made just for you.

Included Activities

- Hoi An walking tour

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hoi An

Optional Activities

- Hoi An Memories Show: US\$ 30

Day 8: Hoi An ancient town

Enjoy a relaxing day to explore the charming town of Hoi An at your own pace.

Stroll through the streets, browsing local shops, or find a cozy spot on a lantern-lit balcony at a local café, enjoying a café au lait or a cold beer while watching the world go by.

You might also consider renting a bicycle to cycle through the scenic countryside or head to the nearby beach. Alternatively, take a serene boat cruise along the Thu Bon River to admire the peaceful surroundings. For something more interactive, why not join a cooking class and uncover the secrets of preparing delicious Vietnamese dishes?

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hoi An

Optional Activities

- Hoi An Cooking class: US\$ 35

Day 9: Hoi An –Ho Chi Minh City

Transfer to the airport for a short morning flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Formerly known as Saigon, this Vietnam's largest metropolis is a vibrant blend of old and new, East and West. The city buzzes with bustling traffic, a fast-paced lifestyle, towering skyscrapers, and an electrifying nightlife.

This afternoon, embark on a city tour to explore Ho Chi Minh City's key highlights. Begin with the War Remnants Museum, featuring extensive exhibits on Vietnam's recent wars. Next, visit the historic Independence Palace, formerly the Presidential Palace of South Vietnam.

Continue to the Notre-Dame Cathedral, a stunning neo-Romanesque church, notable for its two towering bell towers and beautiful stained-glass windows. Adjacent to the cathedral, explore the iconic Central Post Office, reminiscent of a 19th-century railway station. Stroll along Dong Khoi Street - formerly Rue Catinat - made famous by Graham Greene in his book *The Quiet American*, and pass by the City Hall, originally the Hôtel de Ville, and the Saigon Opera House, an elegant venue for cultural performances.

Conclude your tour at Ben Thanh Market, the city's central market, brimming with local produce, vibrant sounds, enticing aromas, and beautiful souvenirs, offering a true taste of local life.

The evening is yours to experience Saigon's dynamic nightlife at your leisure.

Included activities

- War Remnant Museum
- Reunification Palace
- City sightseeing

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Day 10: Ho Chi Minh City – Cu Chi tunnels

Take a drive out of the bustling center of Ho Chi Minh City to visit the Cu Chi Tunnels, one of Vietnam's most renowned historical sites and a significant relic of the war.

This vast underground network stretches over 200 kilometers, with narrow tunnels connecting hideouts, shelters, fighting bunkers, hospitals, schools, and living spaces, all ingeniously designed with air filters, airtight covers, booby traps, and sentries. The tunnels served as a stronghold for the Viet Minh and Viet Cong during both the First and Second Indochina Wars, from 1948 to 1975.

Take a walk through the labyrinth of tunnels, nestled beneath tropical vegetation, gaining insight into how the Viet Cong lived and fought during the war. You'll even have the opportunity to crawl through the tunnels, experiencing firsthand the conditions they endured and learning about the incredible resilience and determination of the Vietnamese people during the conflict.

Drive back to the city and the remainder of the day is free for you to relax or explore at your leisure.

Included activities

- Cu Chi Tunnels

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Optional activities

- Rooftop cafe experience: US\$ 20

Day 11: Mekong Delta explore

Set off from Ho Chi Minh City for an exciting day trip to the enchanting Mekong Delta, often referred to as the "rice basket of Vietnam". Over thousands of years, the Mekong River has shaped this region, leaving behind fertile alluvial soil and creating a landscape rich in evergreen rice paddies, tropical orchards, and scenic mangroves that line the waterways.

Hop aboard a traditional wooden boat for a peaceful cruise along a small river, where you'll witness local life unfolding along the riverbanks. Next, visit a lush orchard to enjoy freshly picked tropical fruits. Explore traditional workshops, where you'll learn about the local craft of coconut candy making, pop rice production, and the art of weaving sleeping mats.

Take a motor cart ride through shady paths, passing coconut groves, expansive rice fields, and vibrant vegetable farms, offering a glimpse into the daily life of the people in this tropical paradise.

Your lunch today features a variety of Mekong Delta specialties, such as elephant ear fish, prawns, and crispy banana flower cake. Afterward, enjoy a peaceful sampan ride along winding creeks, surrounded by lush water coconut mangroves.

Drive back to the city and enjoy free time at your leisure. As tonight marks your final evening in Ho Chi Minh City, why not join your fellow travelers for a memorable farewell dinner and enjoy the time together.

Included activities

- Mekong River cruise
- Motor cart ride through villages
- Sampan boat rowing

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City - Departure

Today marks the end of your trip, with no scheduled activities. Use this time to relax, do some last-minute shopping, or enjoy a leisurely stroll. After checking out, you'll be transferred to the airport for your departure flight. Safe travel and looking forward to seeing you again soon!

Meals included

- Breakfast

Special notes

The hotel's check-out time is 11:00 AM. If your departure flight is later and you'd like to extend your room stay, please let us know in advance so we can arrange it for you. Alternatively, you can store your luggage at the hotel and use the public restroom. If you plan to extend your stay in Ho Chi Minh City, we can help organize post-trip accommodations and activities. Additionally, if you're interested in exploring other countries in the region, feel free to browse our tour list for set departure dates that can complement your current trip.

Trip Style: Comfort

This style highlights the best of each destination while ensuring a high level of comfort. Accommodations are typically 3 & 4-star tourist standard, with the option to enhance your experience with a homestay for a more authentic local feel. Most activities are included, though you'll still have free time to explore at your own pace. Transportation on this trip is provided in comfortable, modern vehicles, with air-conditioned trains or flights used for longer distances. In addition to some included meals, you'll have the opportunity to explore and savor local cuisine on your own.

Joining & group size

Group tours allow you to meet and connect with others, adding fun and enriching your local experiences. During the trip, and at certain locations, you may join other travelers for specific activities. To ensure quality, group sizes are limited to no more than 16 people, except on larger cruisers or public transportation.

Most day tours and excursions are directly organized and operated by Travel Authentic Asia. Occasionally, some activities may be conducted by our trusted local partners, following agreed-upon standards. In such cases, Travel Authentic Asia guarantees the quality of your trip and takes full responsibility for addressing any issues or complaints with our local service providers on behalf of our customers.

Physical Grading: 2/5

This tour is suitable for most fitness levels. Nothing is too challenging.

Price inclusions

Meals: 10 breakfast, 3 lunches, 1 dinner

Transport: Domestic Flight, Bus, Train, Boat

Accommodation: Hotels (9 nights), Overnight boat (1 night), Overnight train (1 night)

Included activities: Hanoi: Ho Chi Minh Memorial complex, Temple of Literature; Halong Bay: Halong Bay cruise & sightseeing, Halong Bay kayaking/swimming, Boat rowing & floating village, Overnight aboard cruise; Hue: Royal Citadel & Forbidden city, Perfume River boat cruise, Thien Mu Pagoda; Hoi An: ancient town walking tour; Ho Chi Minh City: War Remnant Museum, Reunification Palace, City sightseeing, Cu Chi Tunnels tour; Mekong delta: Mekong River boat cruise, Motor cart ride through villages, Sampan boat rowing

Price exclusions

Visa, International flights in and out the country, Laundry, Personal expenditures, Travel Insurance, Tips, Other than mentioned in the trip notes & itinerary.

Optional activities

In addition to the activities included in the day-to-day itinerary, you may also pursue your own interests and adventures during your free time by participating in optional activities, where available.

Please note that optional activities are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Travel Authentic Asia, nor are they included in the price of the trip. Participation in any optional activities is at your own risk. It is important to understand that your decision to participate is entirely yours and does not form part of your contract with Travel Authentic Asia. For some optional activities, you may be required to sign a waiver or receipt.

Dossier & Itinerary Disclaimer

These trip notes have been compiled with the itinerary and are updated regularly with the most reliable info on local travel facts. For the itinerary, though trying very much to adhere to the route, we cannot say that the local travel conditions stay unchanged so, a certain level of flexibility is requested in case of any alteration need to be made to fit with local circumstances.

Please ensure that you read well and have a copy of these trip notes before your departure in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Tour guide

During your trip, you will be guided by tour guides specific to each region. This ensures you receive the benefit of their deep knowledge of the area's history, culture, and hidden gems, making your experience richer and more authentic. Their familiarity with local customs and practices will enhance your understanding and connection to the destination.

Tour guides will manage all organized activities, including pickups and drop-offs when necessary. However, they may not accompany you at all times, giving you the freedom to explore independently when desired.

For your peace of mind, our operations team and 24/7 customer care service are always available. You can reach us easily via phone, WhatsApp, or Messenger to ensure any concerns are promptly addressed.

Meals on tour

When traveling with Travel Authentic Asia, you'll have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of delicious cuisine unique to each country you visit. While some meals are included in the trip price, you will also have the freedom to choose where, what, and with whom to dine, based on your own budget and preferences. This flexibility allows you to explore local food at your own pace.

Your tour guide will offer restaurant suggestions throughout the trip, and group members are welcome to dine together or explore their own culinary choices for privacy and personal enjoyment.

Transportation

Most of the vehicles used during the trip are air-conditioned and designed for tourist comfort. For short distances or specific activities, we occasionally incorporate local transportation options, such as taxis, tuk-tuks, or cyclo, to offer a more authentic travel experience.

In certain cases, domestic or regional flights may also be arranged to save time or accommodate long-distance travel efficiently.

For overnight train journeys, we use local trains with air-conditioned, 4-berth compartments featuring lockable doors. These cabins are shared with fellow travelers or, occasionally, with other

passengers not part of the group. During peak travel seasons, when availability is limited, 6-berth compartments may be provided as an alternative.

Accommodations

Our accommodations on this trip are typically 3- or 4-star hotels, offering comfortable stays throughout the trip. The standard check-in time is 14:00 PM. If the group arrive early in the morning, we will arrange a day room for showering and luggage storage. While we always strive to have rooms ready upon our arrival, if we arrive close to the standard check-in time, this isn't always possible, meaning that check-in may not be immediate at some hotels.

In larger, more populated cities, hotel rooms tend to be smaller compared to those in smaller towns, and some rooms may not have windows due to high population density. Although hotels are of the same standard, facilities may vary slightly depending on the location.

Single Travelers

On our joined group trips, you will typically share a room with another group member of the same gender. However, if you are traveling alone and there is no one else available to share the room with, you may be required to pay a single supplement. Alternatively, you have the option to pay for a single supplement in advance to ensure that you have your own room throughout the trip. Please note that single supplements are not available for overnight trains or local homestays.

Start-Ending-points

Starting point:

La Casa Hanoi Hotel

17 Pham Dinh Ho Street, Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi

Tel: +84 243 333 5656, +84 981 121 619

Located in the charming French Quarter of Hanoi, the hotel is just a short distance from the lively heart of the city, easy access to Hoan Kiem Lake and other popular attractions. With air-conditioned rooms and en suite bathrooms, the hotel offers a comfortable and relaxing stay.

Notes: If local conditions require a change to the starting hotel, we will select an alternative of the same standard and notify you via email at least one month before your arrival to ensure you arrive at the correct location.

Arrival complication

If you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact your starting-point hotel and leave a message for your tour guide.

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be greeted by our representative holding a sign with your name and our company logo in the arrival hall. Please note that neither the driver nor the representative will request additional payment. If you cannot locate our representative or have concerns about your transfer, contact our hotline at +84 903432999 or +84 912221442 for immediate assistance.

To ensure a smooth airport transfer, please provide your flight details at least 14 days before your departure. If the transfer (included in the tour price or booked as an extra service) or any portion of your trip is missed due to a flight schedule change without prior notice, no refund will be issued. Any additional costs incurred to rejoin your group will be your responsibility.

If you need to arrange your own taxi from the airport to the starting-point hotel, metered taxis are available at the airport's ground-floor exit gates. Alternatively, you can approach airport taxi service counters managed by uniformed staff. To ensure a safe and reliable service, seek assistance from airport security or staff. Avoid unsolicited offers from taxi touts claiming to have metered taxis parked outside the airport.

Ending point

Royal Hotel Saigon

133 Nguyen Hue – District 1 – Ho Chi Minh City

Phone: (84-28) 3822 5914 - 3822 5915

Centrally located in the tourist hub of Saigon – Ho Chi Minh City, from the hotel it is convenient to find restaurants, bars, and other tourist venues. It is within walking distance of many of the area's main attractions such as Ben Thanh Market, Reunification Palace, Post office, and so on.

Money

The official currency of Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). According to government regulations, all prices for goods and services must be quoted in VND. Foreign currencies can only be exchanged through authorized exchange bureaus or used with special permission.

In practice, USD is widely accepted in tourist areas and is often considered a secondary currency. Other foreign currencies, such as EUR, AUD, and GBP, are also accepted in some locations, though less commonly. In tourist hotspots, establishments like restaurants, bars, travel agencies, and souvenir shops may accept both USD and VND, with prices sometimes displayed in both currencies. However, outside tourist areas or in remote regions, only Vietnamese Dong is accepted. During your trip, it's best to carry a mix of VND and USD for convenience. Ensuring that any bills, particularly USD, are in good condition without tears or excessive wear, as damaged bills may be rejected. Vietnamese Dong (VND) can be easily withdrawn from ATMs, which are widely available on street corners throughout the country. Having both currencies on hand ensures you are well-prepared for transactions in both tourist hubs and more remote areas.

Tipping

Tipping is not compulsory, but it is greatly appreciated. If you are satisfied with the service provided, offering a tip is a meaningful way to show your appreciation. It is especially significant to those who take care of you during your travels and helps inspire excellent service. Tipping should be given directly to the recipient.

Here are some suggested tipping amounts based on local practices and feedback from previous travelers:

Local Restaurants: If dining alone, a tip of around US\$2 is appropriate. In more upscale restaurants, tipping ranges from 10% to 15% of your bill. For group dining, a collective tip of US\$5 to US\$8 is suggested, depending on the group size.

Drivers: For a single traveler, a tip of US\$5 is recommended. For a group, a total tip of US\$10-15 per day is appropriate.

Tour Guides: Tipping for guides depends on the level of service, and US\$2-4 per person per day is typical for group tours. Free to tip more as you see fit. The amount is entirely up to your discretion based on service quality.

Visas

Visas are the responsibility of the individual traveler. Visa requirements vary depending on your nationality and destination. Generally, most countries require that your passport be valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay. Upon arrival, you may be asked to show return tickets and proof of sufficient funds to cover your stay.

Travel Authentic Asia offers e-visa and visa-on-arrival services, which can be arranged by booking the additional service when you make your tour reservation or by contacting us via email.

For more details, please visit our website at: <https://travelauthenticasia.com/travel-guides/vietnam/how-to-get-a-visa-for-vietnam.aspx>

What to bring

What you need to bring will depend on the trip style, the countries you are visiting, and the time of year. Generally, we recommend packing as lightly as possible. You'll be expected to carry your own luggage on excursions, though you won't be walking long distances with it. We suggest keeping the weight under 20kg/44lbs.

You can choose to carry your luggage in a backpack or suitcase, but with wheels is most convenient. An overnight bag or a small backpack with a shoulder strap is useful for carrying essentials like water and a camera on day trips.

Depending on the season and the activities included in your trip, be sure to bring appropriate clothing. In winter (November to February), North Vietnam can be cold, so warm clothing is necessary. During other times of the year, light and comfortable clothing will be sufficient. If your trip involves trekking, make sure to bring trekking shoes or sandals. You'll find that most items can be purchased locally at reasonable prices, so there's no need to pack everything; only bring the essentials.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for this trip. However, we recommend consulting your doctor for up-to-date medical travel advice before departure. It's a good idea to bring along a basic First Aid kit, hand sanitizers, antibacterial wipes, and any personal medications or medical items you may need during your journey.

Safety and Security

Before departure, we encourage you to seek advice on international travel safety and familiarize yourself with potential situations you may encounter during your trip. Traffic can be more chaotic than what you're accustomed to at home, so take your time to adjust to the new environment. Your tour guide and locals are great resources to learn how to navigate local traffic safely.

For added security, we recommend using a neck wallet or money belt to store your passport, air tickets, travelers' cheques, cash, and other valuables. Only carry the amount of money you'll need for the day, and leave the rest in the hotel's safe. We also suggest using a lock to secure your luggage.

While the cities visited are generally safe during the day, we advise caution when wandering at night. It's best to stay in small groups and take taxis to and from restaurants or on evening excursions.

In certain situations, your tour guide has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the itinerary for safety reasons.

If engaging in water activities in oceans, rivers, or open water, be aware that waves and currents can be unpredictable. All participants should be able to swim and have experience in open water, and we recommend seeking local advice before entering the water.

For more information, please visit our website's travel guides.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is mandatory for all Travel Authentic Asia travelers and must be obtained independently. It is your responsibility to carefully review your insurance policy before traveling to ensure it provides adequate coverage for personal accidents, medical expenses, evacuation and repatriation, baggage loss, and cancellation or curtailment of your trip. Please note that any local travel insurance included in sightseeing tickets at certain sites is limited and does not replace comprehensive travel insurance. Travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must confirm that their chosen insurance policy covers these conditions. If such conditions are not covered, it is understood that the traveler assumes full financial responsibility for any issues or costs arising from treatment or complications related to their pre-existing medical condition. Travel Authentic Asia is not liable for any problems, delays, or expenses resulting from such conditions.

Responsible travel

At Travel Authentic Asia (TAA), we operate with a strong commitment to Responsible Travel. We believe that both tour operators and travelers play a vital role in making the world a better place. By traveling responsibly, we not only contribute to the advancement of tourism but also enhance the overall travel experience.

Responsible travel is not an abstract concept; it is reflected in the actions, behavior, and appearance we exhibit every day during our travels. With small efforts, each of us can make a significant difference in the places we visit.

Issues on your trip

While we always strive to provide the best possible holiday experience, we understand that travel can sometimes present challenges due to local conditions or unforeseen circumstances. If something goes wrong, the best way to address the issue is by discussing it with your tour guide or one of our travel consultants or customer care personnel. This allows us to resolve the problem and minimize any negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We acknowledge that there may be situations where a tour guide or our local partners may not be able to resolve an issue to your satisfaction. If that occurs, please feel free to reach out directly to our travel consultant or management team via chat or email, and we will do our best to assist you.

Trip review & feedback

After traveling with us, your feedback is invaluable in helping us improve our services and ensure a better experience for you and future travelers. You are the best person to tell us what we need to do to meet your expectations. Therefore, your comments and suggestions are highly appreciated.