



solo connections





Vibrant Vietnam
14 Days
Fully Escorted
26 November – 09 December 2021

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Saigon
- Mekong Delta
- Cu Chi Tunnels
- Hoi An
- Cooking Class
- Hue
- Imperial Citadel
- Hanoi
- 2 Night Halong Bay Cruise

INCLUDES:

- Economy class airfares including taxes*
- **Private single rooms** in quality accommodation
- **Meals** as per itinerary - 12 Breakfasts, 8 Lunches, 6 Dinners
- **Sightseeing** tours and transfers by private vehicle
- **Tour Host** – travels with group from/to Brisbane
- Local English speaking guide
- Tipping (Guides & Drivers)

EXCLUDES:

- Any meals other than mentioned above
- Items of a personal nature i.e. laundry, drinks, phone calls, etc
- Travel Insurance
- Visa

From \$5,139* per person

Terms and Conditions apply. Price is per person Sole Use and subject to availability. Price is correct as at 04 June 2020. Based on Economy class Singapore Airlines airfare. Tour requires minimum number of passengers to depart. Prices may fluctuate if surcharges, fees, taxes or currencies change. Solo Connections is constantly striving to improve our itineraries and inclusions. If such improvements can be made, or unforeseen circumstances beyond our control make changes necessary, we reserve the right at any time to vary itineraries and to substitute inclusions of equal value. Beverages, additional meals, hotel mini bars, laundry, phone calls, any items of personal nature not included. Further booking conditions apply, please check all prices, availability and other information with your travel agent at time of or before booking. Package cancellation fees apply. Denise Marie Falsay trading as Solo Connections. ATAS Accredited A11424. ABN 92 582 582 996



Day 1 – Friday 26 November 2021
Depart Brisbane– Arrive Saigon (via Singapore)

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This morning meet with your Tour Manager at Brisbane International Airport for our flight to Singapore and ongoing to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).

Welcome to **Vietnam**. This country is full of contrasts. From huge modern cities to hill-tribe villages anything seems possible in this fascinating country.

When we arrive at Tan Son Nhat international airport, our local guide will be waiting and transfer us to our hotel for a light dinner before settling in for the night

Accommodation: Sonnet Saigon or similar (3 nights)

Day 2 – Saturday 27 November 2021
Cu Chi Tunnels

B-L

This morning after breakfast we visit **Cu Chi Tunnels**. Synonymous with the Vietnam War and a testament to the determined spirit of the Vietnamese, the underground network of passages at Cu Chi is a fascinating trip out of the city.

We then continue on to visit **Reunification Palace**. Formerly named the Presidential Palace, this important city landmark was assured its place in history on 30th April 1975, when the first North Vietnamese tanks rumbled past, signalling the Fall of Saigon and ultimately the end of the Vietnam War. Across the street from the cathedral is the city's striking French colonial-era post office. The **Museum of Vietnamese History** is housed in yet another fine example of Sino-French architecture. Dating back to the 1920s, it contains an excellent series of exhibits dating from the Bronze Age to the Nguyen dynasty, the last ruling family of Vietnam.

The final stop today is the unforgettable **Jade Emperor Pagoda**. With the pungent smell of incense hanging heavy in the air and an interior packed full of ornate carvings and fierce-looking statues, this Taoist temple is one of the most atmospheric places of worship in the city. Lunch today will be at a local restaurant.

We can choose to be transferred back to the hotel after our visit or alternatively be dropped off at **Ben Thanh market** for personal exploration and a spot of souvenir hunting. Dinner is at leisure this evening.

Day 3 – Sunday 28 November 2021
Mekong Delta

B-L

This morning after breakfast we begin the day by exploring Ben Tre, one of the lesser-visited provinces in the **Mekong Delta**. We will cruise along the **Ham Luong River** visiting small factories that provide an insight into how the local economy works. Stops may include a brickworks, where bricks are still painstakingly made by hand, a salt refinery, a coconut processing workshop where you can sample fresh coconut and see how every single part of this versatile nut is turned into food and other products, and a mat weaving house, where straw mats are woven using a hand loom – you can even have a go at weaving yourself!



We then stop at a peaceful village for a short walk to see more of local life in the community before travelling by **xe loi** (a design of cyclo used only in the Delta) through fruit orchards before stopping at a **riverside restaurant** for a delicious lunch. The lunch will feature local specialties such as elephant ear fish and river shrimp. After lunch, there will be time to explore the garden or wander along the riverbanks with your guide before taking a rowing boat along narrow canals back to the main boat.

We return to the pier in **Ben Tre** and transfer back to Ho Chi Minh City. This evening is at leisure and our tour manager will let us know their plans for dinner and you may join them if you wish.

Day 4 – Monday 29 November 2021
Saigon – Danang – Hoi An

B-D

Today we will transfer to Saigon Airport for the short flight to **Da Nang**. Once in Da Nang we'll be met by our local guide and transfer to our hotel in Hoi An.

Upon arrival at our hotel, we will check in and have time to refresh before meeting for dinner.

Accommodation: Belle Maison Hoi An or similar (3 nights)

Day 5 – Tuesday 30 November 2021
Cooking Class

B-L

We'll start the today with a walk around the local food markets before taking a short boat ride to **Tra Que herb village**. Take a short stroll around the vegetable garden and listen to the history of the village. Then join gardening activities in preparing the land, fertilizing with seaweed, raking the ground, sowing, watering, picking vegetables... Enjoy a foot soak before preparing lunch with a local family. Learn how to make 'Tam Huu' (spring rolls) and 'Banh xeo' - a local pancake speciality. After lunch bid farewell to your host family before taking the boat back to Hoi an ancient town.

This afternoon, time to explore the old town of **Hoi An**. Visit the Hoian market by the Hoai River and some famous points including old China trading houses, temples, and traditional houses in a mixture of Vietnamese, Japanese and Chinese styles. If you're wanting to order tailor-made clothing or shoes today is your opportunity to order for collection tomorrow afternoon!

Day 6 – Wednesday 1 December 2021
Hoi An

B-L

This morning, we will visit **My Son Holy Land** to discover with the old Cham towers and shrines built 2000 years ago. Take the chance to wander through crumbling towers and listen to the culture and history of might the **Champa Kingdom** once upon a time.

We will be back to Hoi An in time for lunch and the rest of the afternoon is at leisure to explore the alleyways and wonderful shops in Hoi An.



Day 7 – Thursday 2 December 2021
Hoi An - Hue

B-D

This morning after breakfast, we leave Hoi An and travel via the scenic **Hai Van pass**, (about 3.5 hours) to Hue.

Check in to our hotel, have some lunch (own arrangements) and freshen up before taking a boat ride along the **Perfume River** to the **Thien Mu Pagoda**. Consisting of seven stories, the pagoda is the tallest religious building in Vietnam.

Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Moonlight Hotel Hue or similar (1 night)

Day 8 – Friday 3 December 2021
Hue - Hanoi

B-D

This morning we will visit the **Imperial Citadel**. Built between 1804 and 1833, this heavily fortified structure is still very much the heart of modern-day Hue and despite a chequered history, the fortress remains superbly intact. There will be time for exploration before moving on to **Long An Palace**. We'll then transfer to Hue airport for our flight to Hanoi.

On arrival in Hanoi we'll be met by our guide and transfer to our hotel.

Early evening we will make our way to a local restaurant for dinner.

Accommodation: Thang Long Opera Hotel or similar (3 nights)

Day 9 – Saturday 4 December 2021
Hanoi City Tour

B-L

This morning after breakfast we will enjoy an orientation of **Hanoi**, with its tree-lined streets resplendent with French colonial architecture, including the exquisite, recently restored Opera House.

We'll take a **cyclo** (rickshaw) ride through Hanoi's Old Quarter, a network of narrow alleys and shop houses also known as "The 36 Streets." This is a wonderful place to watch the local life, and peruse items from fabrics to crafts to exotic medicines.

Pass **Hoan Kiem Lake**, also known as the 'Lake of the Restored Sword' after the legend that surrounds it, en-route to one of the city's many fascinating museums. We'll visit the **Temple of Literature**, a serene retreat from the busy streets outside. Built in 1070 and dedicated to Confucius, it became Vietnam's first university.

After lunch at a local restaurant we move on to the Ho Chi Minh complex, his simple house-on-stilts and the One-Pillar pagoda near Ba Dinh Square where the most solemn ceremonies of Hanoi take place.

We return to the hotel and have the evening at leisure. Our tour manager will discuss dining options with the group.



Day 10– Sunday 5 December 2021
Hanoi

B-L

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before we visit the **Museum of Ethnology**, which give an overview of 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. In here we'll learn about the fascinating cultural diversity of this ancient land.

Driving through **Colonial Hanoi** we see the Opera House and other local sights. We go inside the infamous **Ho La Prison** ("Hanoi Hilton"), where Senator John McCain and Douglas "Pete" Wilson were once imprisoned.

After lunch at a local restaurant we have the rest of the day to shop or simply relax and enjoy the hotel facilities.

Dinner this evening is at leisure and our tour manager will discuss options with the group.

Day 11 – Monday 6 December 2021
Hanoi – Halong Bay

B-L-D

You might like to wake up early this morning and join an exciting scene of hundreds of locals as they do their morning exercises of **Tai Chi Quan**, jogging, martial arts, classical dance and so on, on the lake's edge.

We'll then travel to Halong to board the vessel which will be our home for the next two nights. Lunch will be served as we sail out through **Bai Tu Long Bay**. During the afternoon we'll visit **Vung Vieng** fishing village which is one of the biggest villages in Halong Bay. We'll also make a stop at the Pearl Village.

Back on board enjoy happy hour as the sun sets, then a cooking demonstration before dinner is served. You might like to try your luck squid fishing over the back of the boat this evening!

Accommodation: Era Cruise (2 nights)

Day 12– Tuesday 7 December 2021
Halong Bay

B-L-D

You might like to start the day with some Tai Chi on the sundeck early this morning. Breakfast will be served afterwards. Today enjoy the scenery of the bays as you cruise around. You might like to try kayaking if you're feeling energetic. If not, grab your camera and a deck chair and enjoy the passing scenery.

Day 13– Wednesday 8 December 2021
Halong Bay – Hanoi/Depart Hanoi

B

Tai Chi anyone? Or early light breakfast? This morning make a stop at **Thien Canh Son caves** which are quite magnificent and worth the climb (steps)! We'll then check out of our cabins and enjoy brunch as we sail back into the pier. Our coach will be waiting for us to transfer us back to Hanoi Airport and our flight home.

Day 14– Thursday 9 December 2021
Arrive Brisbane