

STS 09.35.13

(13D/12N Program)

Luang Prabang - Vientiane - Hanoi - Halong - Danang - Hoi An - Hue - Ho Chi Minh City - Cu Chi - Tay Ninh - My Tho



Day 1: Arrival in Vientiane (-, -, -)

Meet on arrival at Vientiane Wattay airport and transfer to your hotel. Have an afternoon city tour of the major sights of the capital. Visit the famous and most sacred sculpture of That Luang Stupa, built by King Setthathirath in 1566, this great sacred stupa is considered as the Laos' national symbol. The next stop is Wat Sisaket, one of the oldest and most interesting pagodas in Vientiane, featuring remarkable frescoes and 6,840 Buddha statues. Continue visiting the former royal temple of Ho Prakeo which once housed the famous Emerald Buddha Image and contains some of the finest Buddhist sculptures and artifacts in the country. The final stop is the imposing Patuxay Monument, well known as Vientiane's own Arc de Triumph. Stay overnight in Vientiane.

Day 2: Vientiane - Luang Prabang (B, -, -)

Transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Luang Prabang. Enjoy a sightseeing tour of the well-preserved traditional city, famed with its 32 historical temples built before the era of French colonization and the lovely Royal Palace. Explore the impressive stupa of Wat Visoun and That Makmo. Then take walk to the nearby Wat Aham, one of the city's major tutelary shrines, dedicated to Deveta Luang (spirit) Pu Gneu Ya Gneu (ancestors). Continue visiting the

shrine of Wat Mai, famous for the five-tiered, timber-framed roof. Next, walk 328 steps uphill to the summit of Phousi Mount for an enjoyable exploration of the sacred, gilded Wat Chamsi stupa as well as a beautiful sunset view of the city and the Mekong River. In the evening explore the lively Street Night Market, where visitors can find all kinds of snacks and bargain for hill tribe weavings and woodcarvings. Stay overnight in Luang Prabang.

Day 3: Luang Prabang - Pak Ou caves - Luang Prabang (B, -, -)

Enjoy a unique sight of the early morning ritual parade of saffron-clad monks collecting offerings of alms (ubiquitous sticky rice) from the faithful residents and visitors, and from there have a leisurely stroll around the nearby morning market, where you will see such diverse offerings as dried buffalo skin, local tea and saltpeter among the chickens, vegetables and hill-tribe weavings. Then pay visits to the city's oldest temple of Wat Sene and the magnificent Wat Xiengthong with its roofs sweeping low to the ground, which represent the classical architecture of Luang Prabang temple. Next, board a traditional river boat cruising upstream the Mekong River for the sacred Pak Ou Caves. Enjoy the beautiful mountain landscape, the tranquil countryside along the journey. On arrival, explore the mysterious Pak Ou Caves, crammed with thousands of gold lacquered Buddha statues of various shapes and sizes. Drive back to Luang Prabang and drop into Ban Xang Khong village to see how traditional Sa paper is made. Stay overnight in Luang Prabang.

Day 4: Luang Prabang - Hanoi (B, -, -)

Visit the National Museum (former King's Palace) where displays a collection of personal artifacts of the Royal Family. Then drive to the famous hand-weaving village of Ban Phanom. Spend last minutes for your own discovery of the town and stroll around the shopping area. Transfer to the airport to catch a flight to Hanoi. Arrive at Noi Bai airport in Hanoi. Pick up and transfer to your hotel for check-in. Enjoy an evening water puppet show, a theatrical genre reflecting the agricultural civilization of thousands of years ago. Stay overnight in Hanoi.

Day 5: Hanoi - Bac Ninh - Halong (B, -, -)

Have a morning sightseeing tour of Hanoi with cultural and historical highlights, comprising Lake of Restored Sword, Ngoc Son Temple, the Temple of Literature, the Ethnology Museum (closed on Monday) and a downtown pedicab ride (1 hour) round the old quarters of Hanoi, a collection of narrow streets, each named after the product sold. In the afternoon depart a scenic drive for Halong. Stop over at Phu Lang ceramic village. The old pottery village of Phu Lang is a must-see site for tourists in the region, not only because you can meet and make friends with the locals and make original gifts for friends and relatives, but its natural surroundings are also worth visiting. Stay overnight in Halong.

Day 6: Halong - Hanoi - Hoi An (B, L, -)

Embark a traditional-style wooden boat at a nearby wharf for a 4-hour cruise around the wondrous



Laos - Vietnam by Air

Buddhist Monks - Luang Prabang

Halong Bay, a World Heritage site listed by UNESCO in 1994. Visit some magical grottoes, marvel at odd-shaped islands and relax in the best scenic beauty of Vietnam. Lunch of fresh seafood is served on board. Transfer to Noi Bai airport for an evening flight to Danang. Pick up on arrival at Danang Airport and transfer to Hoi An, known as Faifo to early Western traders and recognized by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage in 1999. Stay overnight in Hoi An.

Day 7: Hoi An (B, -, -)

In the morning, have a walking tour of the ancient town centre. Stroll around the Japanese and Chinese Quarters to visit a number of temples, pagodas, communal houses, traditional shops, local markets and other places of interest and watch local daily activities, handicraftsmen at work and a lively show of traditional dancing and music. Afternoon relax on the beach or enjoy hotel facilities. Stay overnight in Hoi An.

Day 8: Hoi An - Danang - Hue (B, -, -)

In the morning, relax on the beach. In the afternoon, depart for Hue via the Pass of Ocean Clouds and the scenic fishing village of Lang Co. Along the way stop to visit the stone-carving village of Non Nuoc and the Museum of Cham Sculpture (closed on Monday) with the World's finest collection of some 300 Cham

sculpture exhibits dating from the 7th to the 15th centuries. Optional with surcharge: Enjoy a Hue folk show on a barge on the Perfume River in the evening. Stay overnight in Hue.

Day 9: Hue (B, -, -)

Enjoy a full day tour of Hue, a former imperial city of Vietnam ruled by 13 Nguyen dynasties. Explore the Royal Citadel, built in 1804 on a site chosen in accordance with geomancy. The tour of Imperial City features Flag Tower, Noon Gate, Nine Dynastic Urns, Nine Holy Cannons, Thai Hoa Palace (Palace of Supreme Harmony), and Forbidden Purple City. The next stop is the lively Dong Ba market. In the afternoon pay visits to the elaborate mausoleums of King Tu Duc (ruled 1848 - 1883). Then, drop into Thien Mu Pagoda, one of the oldest ancient architectural structures for religious worship in Hue, and from here take a boat cruise along Perfume River returning to you hotel. Stay overnight in Hue.

Day 10: Hue - Ho Chi Minh City (B, -, -)

Transfer to Phu Bai airport for a morning flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Pick up on arrival at Tan Son Nhat Airport and transfer to hotel. Have an afternoon sightseeing tour of Ho Chi Minh City. Visit the History Museum (closed on Monday), the Reunification Palace (the

former Presidential Palace), the Central Post Office, then have a short walk along the shopping Dong Khoi Street from Notre Dame Cathedral to the Municipal Theatre. Drive to bustling Cho Lon (Chinatown). Drop into the lively Binh Tay wholesale market before visiting Thien Hau Temple, dedicated to the Goddess of the Sea. Stop over at a lacquer workshop on the way back to your hotel. Stay overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 11: HCMC - Cu Chi - HCMC (B, -, -)

Drive 70 km to Cu Chi, famed for its elaborate network of over 200 km of three-story underground tunnels hand-dug by local people during the Vietnam War. Crawl down a tunnel to feel the underground life, and then test your marksmanship with an AK rifle at a local rifle range (optional with surcharge). Rest of the day is at your leisure. Optional with surcharge: Enjoy a sunset boat cruise upstream the Saigon River to the Binh Quoi Tourist Village for a folk show and dinner. Stay overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 12: HCMC - My Tho - HCMC (B, L, -)

Drive 75km to My Tho, a peaceful town on the bank of the Mekong River. On arrival board a private boat for a boat cruise along one of the Mekong River's main tributaries to an islet. Once at there, visit some local homes and orchards where you can taste

seasonal fruits and honey tea and enjoy a performance of traditional southern singing. Continue with a horse-drawn cart ride along village lanes and a sampan ride through palm-shaded creeks. Lunch of Mekong specialties is served at local restaurant. Stay overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 13: Departure from Ho Chi Minh City (B, -, -)

Spend last minutes shopping before check-out. Transfer to the airport for departure flight.



Buddhist Monks - Luang Prabang