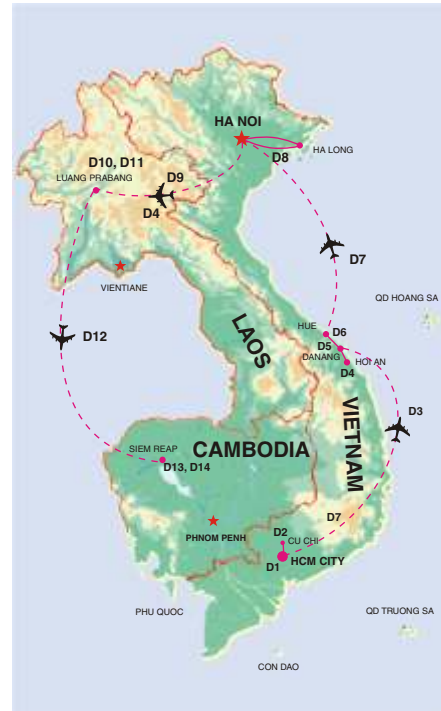


**STS 09.39.14**

**(14D/13N Program)**



**Ho Chi Minh City - Cu Chi - Danang - Hoi An - Hue - Hanoi - Halong - Luang Prabang - Siem Reap**

**Day 1: Arrival in Ho Chi Minh City (B, -, -)**

Saigontourist representative will greet and pick you up at Tan Son Nhat airport. Transfer you 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 Ho Chi Minh City.

**Day 2: Ho Chi Minh City - Cu Chi - Ho Chi Minh City (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 3: Ho Chi Minh City - Danang - Hoi An (B, -, -)**

Transfer to Tan Son Nhat airport for a morning flight to Danang. Pick up on arrival at Danang Airport and transfer to hotel in Hoi An. Stop over in Danang to visit the Museum of Cham Sculpture (closed on Monday) with the World's finest collection of some

300 Cham sculpture exhibits dating from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the five sacred hills known as the Marble Mountains with numerous caves and Buddhist shrines and the stone-carving village of Non Nuoc. On arrival in Hoi An ancient town, transfer to your hotel for check-in. Rest of the day is at your leisure. Stay overnight in Hoi An.

**Day 4: 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 5: Hoi An - Hue (B, -, -)**

This morning relax on the beach or enjoy hotel facilities. Afternoon depart for Hue and admire beautiful landscape on the road over the Hai Van Pass or explore the 6,280-metre-long Hai Van Tunnel, the longest highway tunnel in Southeast Asia. Arrive in Hue, widely known for its magnificent monuments built under the Nguyen Dynasty (1802 - 1945). Transfer to your hotel. Stay overnight in Hue.

**Day 6: Hue (B, -, -)**

Enjoy a full day tour of Hue, a former imperial city of Vietnam. Explore the Royal Citadel, built in 1804 on a site chosen in accordance with geomancy. 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 your hotel. Stay overnight in Hue.

**Day 7: Hue - Hanoi (B, -, -)**

Transfer to Hue Airport for a morning flight to Hanoi. Pick up on arrival at Noi Bai airport and transfer to your hotel. Have an afternoon 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. Stay overnight in Hanoi.

**Day 8: Hanoi - Halong (B, -, -)**

Depart a morning drive to Halong, 170km from Hanoi. On arrival embark a traditional-style wooden boat at a nearby wharf for a 5-hour cruise around the wondrous 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. Stay overnight in Halong.

**Day 9: Halong - Hanoi - Luang Prabang (B, -, -)**

Start a morning drive back to Hanoi via Bac Ninh, a cradle of traditional culture in the Red River Delta. Visit Phu Lang ceramic village. This old pottery village is worth visiting not only because you can meet and



# Secrets of World Heritages

Batong Temple - Siem Reap

make friends with the locals and make original gifts for friends and relatives, but its natural surroundings are also attractive. Proceed to Noi Bai airport to catch an afternoon flight to Luang Prabang, listed in 1995 as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Pick up on arrival at Luang Prabang airport and transfer to your hotel. Stay overnight in Luang Prabang.

**Day 10: Luang Prabang (B, -, -)**

In the morning visit the National Museum (former King's Palace) displaying a collection of personal artifacts of the Royal Family. Continue to visit 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. In the afternoon explore the impressive stupa of Wat Visoun and That Makmo. Then take walk to the nearby Wat Aham, built in 1818 in classic Luang Prabang style, 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 stroll round the night

**NB: B: breakfast, L: lunch, D: dinner.**

market, where visitors can find all kinds of snacks and bargain for hill tribe weavings and woodcarvings. Stay overnight in Luang Prabang.

**Day 11: 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



Buddha Statues in Pak Ou Cave - Luang Prabang

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. 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. After the river trip, drive to Ban Xang Khong village to see how traditional Sa paper is made, and then the famous hand-weaving village of Ban Phanom. Stay overnight in Luang Prabang.

**Day 12: Luang Prabang - Siem Reap (B, -, -)**

Transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Siem Reap. Arrive at Siem Reap airport in the afternoon. Pick up and transfer to your hotel. Then walk uphill to the top of Phnom Bakheng Hill to enjoy a panoramic view of the western Baray and Angkor Wat at sunset. Stay overnight in Siem Reap.

**Day 13: Siem Reap (B, -, D)**

In the morning visit Ta Prohm, one of the most beautiful temples in the area, a filming site of Lara

Croft's adventures in "The Tomb Raider". Next, visit the ancient capital of Angkor Thom (12<sup>th</sup> century), comprising the South Gate with its huge statues depicting the churning of the ocean of milk, the Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, the Elephants Terrace, the Terrace of the Leper King and the famous Bayon Temple, unique for its 54 towers decorated with over 200 smiling faces of Avlokitesvara. In the afternoon explore the famous 12<sup>th</sup>-century temples of Angkor Wat, with their five distinctive towers emblazoned on the Cambodian flag. Angkor Wat's five towers symbolize Meru's five peaks - the enclosed wall represents the mountains at the edge of the world and the surrounding moat, the ocean beyond. In the evening enjoy a buffet dinner with a presentation of Khmer dancing & music. Stay overnight in Siem Reap.

**Day 14: Departure from Siem Reap (B, -, -)**

Morning pay visits to "Les Artisans D' Angkor - Chantiers Ecoles" and a local market. Transfer to the airport for departure flight.

**Note: The tour itinerary is sometimes subject to small modifications depending on weather and road conditions, flight schedules, hotel room availability.**