



173 De Tham, Ward Pham Ngu Lao, District 1, HCM City, Vietnam
Tel: 84.8.6.291.4468 Fax: 84.8.6.291.4469 www.mekongstours.com
Tri Nguyen : 091.601.1649 – tringuyen@mekongstours.com

CULTURE DISCOVERY

(FIELD TRIP STUDY IN VIETNAM)

///

INDEX

1. INTRODUCTION
2. OBJECTIVES
3. ORGANIZATION PROCESS
 - a. REGISTRATION
 - b. IN CLASS STUDY
 - c. FIELD TRIP ITINERARY
4. SITE DESCRIPTION
5. SERVICE AND PACKAGE PRICE

///

1. Introduction

Western Travel is tour operator for international tourists to visit Vietnam and a travel specialist for international students to be in Vietnam to do practical research in such subject of agriculture, cultural, biology, arts, economic, business and volunteer. Each of travel study program would be a combination of leisure holiday, study, research so that students would get much valued information than they expected.

The cultural study exploration is a special subject for international student to explore and discover the Vietnamese people not only in life but also in their business model. The cultural study will bring the students to explore the influence of Chinese, French and American.

With the objectives of creating the difference in special study tour, western travel would like to invite you to take part in the trip with major touristy attractions during your trips to Vietnam, a country with many white exotic sandy beaches, charming cities and friendly people. Though a lot of modern developments have been done, Vietnam still keeps its own unique cultural and natural environment which brings a great chance to those who love the Asian beauty of nature like Ha Noi; the charm of ancient citadels like Hue and Hoi An; the variety of places to explore, including the cool, romantic central highlands-home like Dalat; the booming busy cities like HoChiMinh City and the magnificence of the sea and islands like Ha Long Bay.

Vietnamese people, the offspring of the legendary Dragon and Fairy always look forward to the future, keeping the past, cherishing the present and wishing to extend their hospitality to all people around the world coming to Vietnam. The healthy cuisine of Vietnam is internationally known, with colors and flavors unique to the region. Traditional folk arts such as water puppetry and opera are still practised, and the fine arts embody Asian and European styles.

Come and see Vietnam to enjoy and discover her spectacular nature, the friendliness of the local inhabitants

and relax in the comfort of world class hotels on our package tours. It is also a good opportunity to strike up acquaintance with different people from all over the world.



We hope you enjoy visiting our website and that it will inspire you to visit the fascinating Vietnam we offer – we are sure you will not be disappointed
Your partner in Vietnam,

Western Travel, an experienced tour operator will provide you with many interesting and safe tour packages, tailor-made programs in study exchange. Western Travel aims at good quality and excellent service at affordable prices. We use fully insured means of transportation, well-trained guides, central hotels and renowned restaurants.

2. Objectives

- Creating the new attractive field trip for students to explore the culture of the Vietnamese
- Globalizing study environment for the students
- Bringing students to a new mind of Vietnam
- During the tour, students will have chance to do social work by helping poor people such a work of house roofing, teaching English children at primary school and helping school in repairing equipment and school painting and decoration
- Having chance to learn history and culture of the Vietnamese
- Leisure holidays in Mekong Delta and Vietnam Discovery particularly
- Practical research by the guidance and help of experts and local people and professors at University
- Study real life of the Vietnamese throughout the country
- Find out the needs and inquiries of study exchange of the Vietnamese
- Understanding potential development of Vietnam
- Many impressive and exciting topics for discussion to help students master location, life, study environment, business of Vietnamese people
- Others

3. Organization Process

a. Registration Form

PART I. University Information					
Faculty				Address	
Phone		Fax		Email	
Dean		Mobile		Email	

PART II. Student Information					
Name in full		Mobile		Email	
Study's major			Year of study		
Home's address				State	

b. In Class Study

Topics for discussion	Book	Time	Presented by
- Overview of The Vietnamese culture - Influence of The Vietnamese Culture - Vietnamese civilization	Vietnamese culture by Vietnamese author	Week 1	Professors at University of social sciences and humanity
- Overview of History in Vietnam from Nguyen Dynasty to 1975	Vietnamese author		
- Vietnamese Film	Recommended by Winona State University		
	Vietnam by Western Author	Week 2	Professor at Winona State University
- Film about Vietnam	Recommended by Winona State University		
<p>Note: These activities below will be in class study – Once or Twice per each week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open discussion with the Vietnamese students - Practical field trip with professors and Vietnamese students 			

c. Field Trip Itinerary – to discover real life of the Vietnamese in region

Day 1: City Tour – Explore history

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Visit historical museum and City Zoo
- ❖ 11:00: Visit War Museum
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 14:00: Visit Independence Palace, Notre Dam Cathedral, General Post Office

- ❖ 16:00: Viewing Ben Thanh Traditional Market (US Trading Model)
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner

Day 2: China Town – History and Culture of Chinese and Vietnamese Community

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Visit Thien Hau Temple
- ❖ 9:30: Chinese wholesale market
- ❖ 11:00: Visit Ngoc Hoang Pagoda
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 14:00: Visit Handicapped house to learn how handicapped people making handicraft and furniture
- ❖ 16:00: Personal time at hotel
- ❖ 19:00: Boat Dinner – Cruising on Saigon River

Day 3: Cu Chi Tunnel and Cao Dai Temple – Historical and Religion Site

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 7:00: Head for Cu Chi Tunnel
- ❖ 8:30: Visit Tunnel System
- ❖ 10:00: Leave for Tay Ninh
- ❖ 12:00: Visit Cao Dai Temple to learn the presentation of Cao Dai Monks
- ❖ 13:00: Lunch
- ❖ 14:30: Visit Black Lady Mountain
- ❖ 17:00: Drive back City
- ❖ 19:00: Dinner at Rotary Hotpot Restaurant

Day 4: Mekong Delta Exploration – Countryside Discovery – River View and Fruit Garden

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 7:30: Hotel Check out
- ❖ 8:00: Head for Ben Tre
- ❖ 9:30: Boat trip on Mekong River
- ❖ 10:00: Tour to the Village and Island Discovery
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch on island
- ❖ 14:00: Ben Tre City Tour
- ❖ 17:00: Home Stay check in
- ❖ 19:00: Gala Dinner with villagers with traditional music show

Day 5: Ben Tre - Chau Doc

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at home stay
- ❖ 7:30: Home Stay Check out
- ❖ 8:00: Head for Chau Doc
- ❖ 12:00: Hotel check in
- ❖ 13:00: Lunch
- ❖ 14:30: Chau Doc Traditional Market exploration
- ❖ 15:30: Visit Sam Mountain by bicycle taxi
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner

Day 6: Chau Doc Discovery – Can Tho City

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 7:30: Hotel check out
- ❖ 8:00: Boat trip to floating fish farm and Khmer Village
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 13:30: Leave for Can Tho
- ❖ 15:00: Visit Stork Garden
- ❖ 17:00: Hotel Check in
- ❖ 19:00: Boat Dinner on Mekong River

Day 7: Can Tho – Da Nang City

- ❖ 5:00: Breakfast box to take boat trip to Floating Market
- ❖ 8:00: Hotel check out
- ❖ 8:30: Leave for HCM City to flight to Da Nang (VN Airline: 11:00)
- ❖ 12:30: Hotel Check in
- ❖ 13:00: Lunch in Da Nang City
- ❖ 14:00: Free at leisure by China Beach
- ❖ 19:00: Dinner by the beach

Day 8: Da Nang – Hoi An Discovery

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Visit Stone Sculpture Village and Ngu Hanh Son Mountain
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 13:00: Visit Hoi An Ancient Town

- ❖ 15:00: Cyclo Tour around ancient town
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner at Fullmoon Town

Day 9: Da Nang and Hue City

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Walking Tour (Independence Exploring the City)
- ❖ 11:30: Hotel check out
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 13:30: Drive to Hue
- ❖ 17:00: Hue Hotel check in
- ❖ 19:00: Dinner at Royal Restaurant

Day 10: Hue – City - King’s family to explore the architecture design of the king’s tomb

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Boat trip on Huong River
- ❖ 9:30: Visit Thien Mu Pagoda
- ❖ 11:00: Visit Minh Mang Tomb
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 14:00: Visit Tu Duc Tomb
- ❖ 16:00: Visit Khai Dinh Tomb
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner with specialties in Hue

Day 11: Hue Exploration

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 7:30: Hotel Check out
- ❖ 8:00: Visit Hue Citadel
- ❖ 11:00: Flight to Ha Noi
- ❖ 12:30: Hotel check in
- ❖ 14:00: Free at leisure
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner

Day 12: Ha Noi City

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Ha Noi City Discovery
- ❖ 9:00: Visit Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum

- ❖ 10:30: Van Mieu Temple
- ❖ 12:30: Lunch
- ❖ 14:00: Cyclo tour around Hanoi old town
- ❖ 17:30: Dinner
- ❖ 19:00: Watching Water Puppetry Show

Day 13: Ha Long Bay

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Head for Ha Long Bay
- ❖ 12:00: On board
- ❖ Kayak and visit fishery village and pearl feeding farm
- ❖ 19:00: Dinner

Day 14: Ha Long – Sapa City

- ❖ 6:00: Practice Tai Chi
- ❖ 9:30: Brunch
- ❖ 10:30: Cruise check out

Day 15: Sapa City (Lunch on the way and Dinner at camping site)

- ❖ 11:00: Head for Sapa
- ❖ 15:00: Sapa hotel check in
- ❖ 19:00: Camping fire with minority people

Day 16: Sapa City Tour

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Sapa Tour
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 13:30: Sapa Tour
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner

Day 17: Sapa – Lang Son

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 7:30: Hotel check out
- ❖ 8:00: Head for Lang Son
- ❖ 12:30: Hotel check in

- ❖ 13:30: Lunch
- ❖ 14:00: Free at leisure
- ❖ 18:30: Dinner

Day 18: Lang Son – Ha Noi

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 7:30: Hotel check out
- ❖ 8:00: Visit Frontier gate and Frontier market
- ❖ 12:00: Lunch
- ❖ 13:30: Drive back Ha Noi
- ❖ 18:00: Hotel check in
- ❖ 19:00: Dinner

Day 19: Ha Noi

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Visit Ethnology museum
- ❖ 10:00: Visit Universities in Hanoi
- ❖ 13:00: Lunch
- ❖ 14:00: Visit Handicapped shelter where the kids making painting and handicraft
- ❖ 19:00: Dinner with distinguished guests from City and Government

Day 20: Free at leisure for shopping and Flight's confirmation

- ❖ 6:00: breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Guide the shops for group to go for shopping and confirmation for flight
- ❖ 8:30: Free for shopping

Day 21: Program summary and End of Service

- ❖ 6:00: Breakfast at hotel
- ❖ 8:00: Program summary
- ❖ 10:00: Hotel check out and head for airport for flight back home

4. Site Description



HCM City

Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnamese: *Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh* pronunciation, formerly named **Saigon** (Vietnamese: *Sài Gòn* pronunciation is the largest city in

173 De Tham, Ward Pham Ngu Lao, District 1, HCM City, Vietnam
 Tel: 84.8.6.291.4468 Fax: 84.8.6.291.4469 www.mekongstours.com
 Tri Nguyen : 091.601.1649 – tringuyen@mekongstours.com

Vietnam. It was once known as **Prey Nokor**, an important Khmer sea port prior to annexation by the Vietnamese in the 17th century.

Under the name Saigon, it was the capital of the French colony of Cochin-china and later of the independent state of South Vietnam from 1955 to 1975. In 1976, Saigon merged with the surrounding Gia Định Province and was officially renamed Hồ Chí Minh City after Ho Chi Minh (although the name *Sài Gòn* is still commonly used).

The city center is situated on the banks of the Saigon River, 60 kilometers (37 mi) from the South China Sea and 1,760 kilometers (1,090 mi) south of Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam.



Cu Chi Tunnel and Tay Ninh Cao Dai Temple

CU CHI, Vietnam -- The rattle and pop of automatic weapons greet a visitor. Young women in the black pajamas of the Vietcong flit through the woods. A man in green fatigues picks his way down a narrow trail, leading a small platoon of foreign tourists.

This is the site of the Cu Chi tunnels, one of the most famous battlegrounds of the Vietnam War. Today it is one of the country's prime tourist attractions, part of a new industry of war tourism. Sometimes, these spots seem to be memorials to wartime propaganda as much to the war itself.

Following the man in green fatigues, the tourists arrive at an open-sided hut, where the women in black show them to their seats. There, on a big-screen television set, the Vietnam War plays on: B-52's drop strings of bombs, villagers run for cover, communist guerrillas fight back



Just outside Tay Ninh and 60 miles northwest of Ho Chi Minh City is the **Great Temple** or **Holy See**, the center of the intriguing Cao Dai sect. Cao Dai is a syncretist Vietnamese religious movement that incorporates aspect of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and even Catholicism.

The **Cao Dai Temple** (as it is more commonly known) was begun in 1933 in a unique architectural style that reflects its blended traditions. Most people visit on a day trip from Ho Chi Minh City.

Cao Dai (a.k.a. **Dao Cao Dai** or Caodaism) is a syncretist Vietnamese religious movement with a strongly nationalist political character. Cao Dai draws upon ethical precepts from Confucianism, occult practices from Taoism, theories of karma and rebirth from Buddhism, and a hierarchical organization (including a pope) from Roman Catholicism.

In 1919 **Ngo Van Chieu**, an administrator for the French in Indochina, received a communication from the supreme deity during a table-moving séance. Chieu became the prophet of the new religion, which was formally established in 1926. Caodaists believe this ushered in *Tam Ky Pho Do* or the Third Period of Salvation, a period marked by direct revelation between heaven and earth. Caodaism is the *Dai Dao* or great religion of this period.

The Great Temple was built between 1933 and 1955. A Cao Dai army was established in 1943 during the Japanese occupation of Indochina. After the war the Cao Dai was an effective force in national politics; it first supported, then opposed, Premier Ngo Dinh Diem. In 1955–56 Diem disbanded the Cao Dai army and forced the sect's pope, Pham Cong Tac, into exile.

China Town



The western part of Ho Chi Minh city is dominated by Cholon (Chinatown), a thickly settled district rife with teahouses and pagodas and the famous Binh Tay Market. Cholon spans across, and consists of, Districts 5 & 6 of Ho Chi Minh City. Incorporated in 1879 as a city 11 km from Saigon, it had expanded and became coterminous with Saigon by the 1930s. On April 27, 1931, the two cities were merged to form Saigon-Cholon by the French colonial government. By 1956, the name Cholon was dropped from the city name and the city was known primarily as Saigon. During the Vietnam War, soldiers and deserters from the United States Army maintained a thriving black market at Cholon, trading in various American and especially army-issue items.



Cholon is a sizable district bordered by Hung Vuong to the north, Nguyen Van Cu to the east, the Ben Nghe Chanel to the south, and Nguyen Thi Nho to the west. Cholon is the predominately Chinese district of Saigon and probably the largest Chinatown in the world. Cholon exists in many ways as a city quite apart from Saigon. The Chinese began to settle the area in the early 1900s and never quite assimilated with the rest of Saigon, which causes a bit of resentment among the greater Vietnamese community. You'll sense the different environment immediately, and not only because of the Chinese-language signs. Cholon is where you might have found dark, exotic opium dens and brothels in the French colonial time, the same opium dens and brothels that greeted American troops.

Mekong Delta



Ben Tre – Four Holy Islands

Bến Tre is wedged between the two main branches of the Tiền Giang River, which is itself one of the two main branches of the Mekong. The province's northern boundary is formed by the Tiền Giang's main course, while the province's southern boundary is formed by the Tiền Giang's largest branch (which breaks away from

the Tiền Giang just upriver from Bến Tre province). Between the Tiền Giang and its main branch are two smaller branches, passing through the middle of Bến Tre.

The entire province is criss-crossed with a network of smaller rivers and canals. The extensive irrigation that this provides makes Bến Tre a major producer of rice, but also means that the area is prone to flooding. The Climate Change Research Institute at Can Tho University, in studying the possible consequences of climate change, has predicted that 51% of Bến Tre province can be expected to be flooded if sea levels rise by 1 meter. Bến Tre province is, on average, only 1.25 metres above sea level.

Can Tho – Cai Rang Floating Market



Cai Rang Floating Market - 6 kilometres from Can Tho in Mekong river; Phong Dien Floating Market 20 kilometres southwest of Can Tho, the best floating market in the Mekong Delta; Phung Hiep Market close by Can Tho (Soc Trang direction). Bustling floating markets on the Hau River at Con Khuong, Con Son and further afield, Con Tan Loc in the more prosperous Thot Not District.

Cai Rang is the largest floating market in the Mekong and the traders are more motorised, but the markets at Phung Hiep and Phong Dien are more relaxed and less crowded.

Floating Market in Can Tho City is one of the three biggest in the Mekong Delta. The shops and stalls at these markets are boats of different sizes.

Cai Rang Floating Market is open all day but it is busiest from sunrise to about 9am. The main items sold there are farm products and specialties of Cai Rang Town, Chau Thanh District and neighboring areas. Every boat has a long upright pole at its bow on which samples of the goods for sale are hung.

During the early morning market hours, larger sized boats anchor and create lanes that smaller boats weave in and out of. The waterway becomes a maze of hundreds of boats packed with mango, bananas, papaya, pineapple, and even smuggled goods like cigarettes. Sellers do not have to cry out about their goods because their goods can be seen in a distance and their cries would not be heard in the vastness of the river and the noise of boat engines. Small boats that sell beer, soft drinks and wine go among the other boats to serve market-goers and visitors. Sellers tie their goods to a tall pole so that buyers can see from a distance what they are selling.

Each boat is loaded with plenty of seasonal goods. Activities at the market are also an occasion for tourists to study the cultural aspects of southerners.

To visit Cai Rang Floating Market, visitors can join a tour of the Mekong Delta. On the way to Can Tho, visitors can stop to visit My Tho and take a boat trip to visit orchards, bee farms and coconut candy establishments in Ben Tre.



Chau Doc – Sam Mountain, Floating Fish Farm and Khmer village

Chau Doc sits at the junction of a tributary linking the Bassac and Mekong Rivers and the Bassac River itself. An incredibly friendly and bustling little city, it has a color scheme to match its ambience, with bright pastel hues of green, blue and purple adorning many of the newer shop fronts. If you are arriving here from Cambodia, be prepared for the shock into technicolor paradise.



Chau Doc locals are known for being very warm and approachable -- even the *xe dap loi* drivers, as pestering as they are, are friendly.

English is spoken in most of the foreigner-targeted guesthouses and hotels, and most restaurants have an English menu.

A highlight of a visit to Chau Doc is a boat trip on one of the small paddleboats that collect near the western end of the park. For a few hours they'll paddle you around the many floating raft houses and fish farms. Doing this at dawn can be very photogenic and rewarding.

Da Nang City



Đà Nẵng is the fifth most populated city in Vietnam, with an area of 1,255.53 km² and a population of 887,069 according to the 2009 census. Women make up 50.7% of Đà Nẵng's population.



As of the 2009 census, Đà Nẵng's average annual population growth rate was given as 2.6%, the highest in the North and South Central Coast regions and the sixth highest in the country, behind Binh Duong (with 7.3%), Ho Chi Minh City (3.5%), Kon Tum (3.1%), Binh Phuoc (2.9%), and Gia Lai (2.7%). Đà Nẵng's crude birth rate was recorded at 18.6 live births per 1000 persons; the crude death rate was measured at 6.7 per 1000 persons. Life expectancy at birth was estimated at 77.4 years for women and 72.4 years for men, or 74.8 years overall. The infant mortality rate was measured at 11.0 infant deaths per 1000 live births, less than two points above the nation's average for urban areas. In the same census, the city's immigration and emigration rates were measured at 10.06% and 2.4%, respectively, for a net migration rate of 7.7%. Đà Nẵng's population is estimated to reach one million inhabitants in 2014.

The city has the highest urbanization ratio among provinces and municipalities in Vietnam, containing only 11 rural communes, the fewest of any province-level unit in Vietnam. As of 2009, 86.9% of Đà Nẵng's population lived in urban areas; average annual urban population growth was 3.5%.



Hoi An Ancient Town

Archaeological finds and excavations have shown that there was a port and trading centre of the local Sa Huynh people along the Thu Bon river as early as the 2nd century BC. This continued to expand, and by the 15th century Hoi An (known in Vietnam and abroad under various names - Fayfo, Haifo, Kaifo, Faifoo,

Faifo, Hoai Pho) was already the most important port of the powerful Champa Kingdom. It continued after the Vietnamese absorption of the Champa Kingdom in the same capacity, becoming one of the most important centres of mercantile, and hence cultural, exchange in South-East Asia, attracting ships and traders from elsewhere in Asia and from Europe, especially during its most flourishing period from the late 16th century to the early 18th century. It was through Hoi An that Christianity penetrated Vietnam in the 17th century.

It retained its role as the main port of the central region throughout the 19th century, when the Nguyen dynasty kings operated a "closed trade policy." By the end of the century, the rise of other ports on the coast of Vietnam, in particular Da Nang, and silting of its harbour, led to the final eclipse of Hoi An. As a result of this economic stagnation, it has preserved its early appearance in a remarkably intact state

Hue – Citadel

The Citadel Complex of Hue, set up by Nguyen Dynasty from 1805 to 1945, is now one amongst the relics of the Hue ancient Capital – the World Cultural Heritage, capturing much of tourists' attention.

The poetic and beautiful Hue of Vietnam was chosen to be the capital of the Southern Kingdom under Nguyen Lords' Dynasty, and officially became the nation's capital under Tay Son Dynasty, King Quang Trung. The citadel palace complex is located on the North bank of Huong River (Perfume River), inside Hue city. It is a huge complex covering an area of 520ha and comprising three circles of ramparts, Kinh Thanh Hue (Hue Capital Citadel), Hoang Thanh (Royal Citadel) and Tu Cam Thanh (Forbidden Citadel). It was said to be protected by the two sand dunes: The Con Hen and Con Da Vien on the Perfume River, as "dragon on the left, tiger on the right". If you are in Hue, please join us in this small journey exploring the beautiful feudal palace, the inspiration for numerous artists ever stepping inside!

The very first stop-over is the exterior circle, the **Kinh Thanh Hue (Hue capital citadel)**, which started to be constructed in 1805 under the reign of Emperor Gia Long and was completed in 1832 under the sovereignty of Emperor Minh Mang. Over the past 200 years, it has still maintained original with nearly 140 small and large constructions. With a square shape, it is almost 10km in circumference, 6m high, 21m thick, with 10 entrances. On the top of the walls, 24 bastions are established for defensive purposes. Besides, the Citadel has an ancillary gate connecting the Tran Binh Bastion called the Tran Binh Mon (Peaceful protector Gate).



Now we get further into the second circle, the **Hoang Thanh (Royal citadel)**, also the most important part of the Citadel, which was built in 1804 but totally completed in 1833, under King Minh Mang's reign. The Citadel, which is more than 600m long for each side, was built with bricks of 4m high, and 1m thick. Around the citadel is a protecting trench system. Tourists can get access to the Imperial Citadel through four entrance gates. In the past, Ngo Mon Gate was only reserved for the King. Royal Citadel consists of more than 100 fascinating architectural works divided into numerous sections:



Ha Noi – Van Mieu Temple and Ha Long Bay

Hanoi has been inhabited since at least 3000 BC. One of the first known permanent settlements is the Co Loa citadel (Cổ Loa) founded around 200 BC.

Hanoi has had many names throughout history, all of them of Sino-Vietnamese origin. During the Chinese domination of Vietnam, it was known

as **Tổng Bình** and later **Long Đỗ**; literally "dragon's belly"). In 866, it was turned into a citadel and was named **Đại La**.

Emperor **Lý Thái Tổ** made **Thăng Long** (today Hanoi) the capital city in the 11th century

In 1010, **Ly Thai To**, the first ruler of the **Lý Dynasty**, moved the capital of **Đại Việt**, the *Great Viet*, then the name of Vietnam) to the site of the **Đại La Citadel**. Claiming to have seen a dragon ascending the **Red River**, he renamed it **Thăng Long**, English: *Ascending dragon*) - a name still used poetically to this day. It remained the capital of Vietnam until 1397, when the capital was moved to **Thanh Hóa**, also known as **Tây Đô** (English: *Western Capital*). **Thăng Long** then became **Đông Đô** (English: *Eastern Capital*).

Van Mieu:



The **Temple of Literature** (Vietnamese: *Văn Miếu*) is a temple of Confucius in Hanoi, northern Vietnam. The compound also houses the **Imperial Academy** (*Quốc Tử Giám*). Although several Temples of Literature can be found throughout Vietnam, the most prominent and famous is that situated in the city of Hanoi, which also functioned as Vietnam's first university. The temple was first constructed in 1070 under King **Ly Nhan Tong** and is dedicated to Confucius, sages and scholars.

The **Imperial Academy** was the first national university of Vietnam. It was constructed in 1076 during the reign of King **Lý Nhân Tông** for training the talented men, including crown princes, for the nation. For nearly 1000 years, it has preserved its ancient architectural style of many dynasties and precious relics at the sanctuary. The various pavilions, halls, statues and stelae of doctors are places, where many offering ceremonies, study sessions and strict exams of the **Dai Viet** took place.

The temple was reconstructed during the **Tran** (1225 – 1400) and subsequent dynasties. Through the years, the temple have been destroyed various times by wars and other disasters, and have gone through several major restoration works in 1920, 1954, and 2000. Today the site is one of the important historical and cultural sites of Hanoi and the country and still used for organizing cultural and scientific events. In honour it is featured on the back of the 100,000 Vietnamese **đồng** bank-note

Ha Long Bay



Ha Long Bay is located in the northeastern part of Vietnam and constitutes part of the western bank of **Bac Bo Gulf**, including the sea area of **Ha Long City** and **Cam Pha Town** and part of **Vân Don** island district. It abuts **Cat Ba Island** in the southwest. Toward the west is the shore with a 120 km-long coastline. It is located within 106o58' -107o22' east longitude and within 20o45' - 20o50' north latitude. The site is 1553 sq. km with 1969 islands of various sizes, of which 989 have been named.

The islands in Ha Long Bay are mainly limestone and schist islands most lying in the two main areas: the southeastern part of Bái Tử Long Bay and southwestern part of Hạ Long Bay. These islands represent the most ancient images of a geographical site having a tectonic age of from 250 million to 280 million years. They are the result of many times of rising and lowering processes of the continent to form a karst. The process of nearly full erosion and weathering of the karst created the unique Hạ Long Bay in the world. In a not very large area, thousands of islands with different forms look like glittering emeralds attached to the blue scarf of a virgin. The area where many stone islands concentrate has spectacular scenes and world-famous caves and is the center of Ha Long Bay Natural Heritage, including HaLong Bay and a part of Bái Tử Long Bay.

The area is recognized as the World Natural Heritage that is the area of 434 sq. km with 775 islands. It looks like a giant triangle with Đầu Gỗ Island (in the west), Ba Hầm Lake (in the south) and Cống Tây Island (in the east) as its three angle points. The nearby area is the buffer area and areas classified as national beauty spots in 1962 by the Ministry of Culture and Information.

Viewed from above, Hạ Long Bay looks like an extremely vivid huge drawing. This is a wonderful and skilful masterpiece of the Creation and of nature that turns thousands of dumb soulless stone islands into fantastic sculptural and artistic works of various graceful shapes, both familiar and strange to human beings. Thousands of islands emerging uneven in the fanciful waves look strong and magnificent but also mild and vivid. Amidst these islands we feel as if we were astray in a petrified legendary world. There are many names given to islands according to their shapes and forms. This one looks like somebody heading toward the shore: Hòn Đầu Người (Human Head Island); that one looks like a dragon hovering above the sea surface: Hòn Rồng (Dragon Island); another looks like an old man sitting fishing: Hòn Lão Vọng; some look like big sails struggling amidst the wind to set off for the sea: Hòn Cánh Buồm (Sail Island); then two islands look like a pair of chicken lovingly playing with each other above the sea: Hòn Trống Mái (Male and Female Chicken Island); and amid the vast sea stands an island like a big incense burner like a ritual offering to Heaven: Hòn Lư Hương (Incense Burner Island). All are so real that people are taken aback by them. Those stone islands have experienced unpredictable changes over time and they take different shapes from different angles of view. Here, we come to realize that they are not dumb inanimate things but are vivid and soulful.

Inside the stone islands are various breath-taking caves, such as Thiên Cung, Đầu Gỗ, Sừng Sốt, Trinh Nữ, Tam Cung and others. These are really magnificent palaces of the Creation on earth. Long ago, Hạ Long Bay has been called by the great national poet Nguyễn Trãi: “a wonder of the earth erected towards the high sky”. Many men of letters from all over the world have been taken aback at the grandiose scenery of Hạ Long. They seem to get puzzled and incompetent as their treasure of vocabulary is not rich enough to depict the splendor of this place.

Hạ Long Bay is also attached to glorious pages of Vietnamese history, with famous sites such as Vân Đồn, a bustling trade port in the 12th century, charming Bài Thơ Mountain, and not very far away from here is the Bạch Đằng River which witnessed two famous naval battles of the Việt’s ancestors against invaders. Also, Hạ Long is one of the cradles of human kind with the glorious Hạ Long culture in the late Neolithic age, discovered at such archeological sites as Động Mang, Xích Thổ, Soi Nhụ and Thoi Giếng.

Hạ Long is also home to great biodiversity with typical eco-systems like mangrove forest, coral and tropical forest. It is also home to thousands of plants and animals of numerous species, for example shrimp, fish and squid. Some species are particularly rare and can be found no where else.

With such special values, at the 18th Session of UNESCO’s Council of World Heritage held on 17 December 1994 in Thailand, Hạ Long Bay was officially placed on the list of the World Natural Heritage.

In 2000, UNESCO recognized it as the World Heritage for the second time for its geographical and geomorphologic values. This confirms the global premier value of Hạ Long Bay.

Sapa Town – Lao Cai Province



The Northwestern part of Vietnam is one of the most interesting and beautiful areas of South East Asia. Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups and the area around Sapa is an exciting place to see the lives, culture and costumes of the Vietnamese ethnic minorities. In this part of the country the minorities still dress in their traditional colorful clothing – especially the women. Each group has its own distinct color and style of dress. On this tour you will go by train to Sapa and visit some of the minority people in the Sapa Valley and experience the colorful Sapa market where some of the different ethnic groups come into town to sell their products.

Before the 1990s, the town's economy was mainly based on small size agriculture. Tourist arrival between 1995 and 2003 grew from a total of 4860 to 138,622. On average, this cohort is made of 79% Vietnamese and 21% foreigners.

Lang Son Province



History of the province is the history of Lang Son town. Ancient history is traced to the Bronze Age. This period is marked by the trade route that existed between China and India that passed from the Red River Delta through Nanning to Guangzhou, 7000–9000 years ago the limestone caves of the province were inhabited by early settlers of the Bac Son culture.

The Dinh kings (968-980) encouraged the growth of trade in the region and requested to the Sung emperors of China that they establish trade relations at Yong Zhou, The

Chinese Annals have revealed that the Vietnamese trades perfumes, elephant ivories, rhinoceros horns, gold, silver and salt in return for Chinese fabrics. Later, under the Ly Dynasty an extensive market was established at Vinh Binh on the Ky Cung River.

During the reign of the Ming Dynasty, during the period 1527 and 1592, Lang Son was vastly fortified in view of its strategic importance at the border, which are seen even now; a citadel of this dynasty is located to the west of the Lang Son town on a lime stone rock outcrop.

Lang Son was one of the 13 original provinces in northern Vietnam that were created under the reign of Emperor Minh Mang in 1831; since the establishment of the Nguyen Dynasty in 1802 until then, northern Vietnam had been under the rule of a viceroy.

5. Service and Package Price

Service	Number of Student	Full package in USD per a student for 5 weeks in Vietnam
<p>A. Included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transportation (High Class Standard Bus and Van) with 2 bottle of water per student per day on way - Airport pick up and send off service - Experience tour guide and Translator - In Class and Field Trip Study - Printing document - Tour Entertainment (Entrance ticket, boat trip, etc) - Accommodation (hotel with 2 star standard, home stay) - Meal (B/ L/ D) with one unit of drink at each meal - Gala party with traditional music show - Domestic Air Ticket - Water Puppetry Show - Gift and Donation for charity activities to help poor people in the countryside - Tour Insurance - Service of Charge <p>B. Excluded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VAT tax - Personal expenses and Shopping - International Air Ticket and VISA Fee - Tip for Guide and Driver and Driver's assistant - Others not listed on INCLUDED above 	<p>Group (15 – 20 students)</p> <p>- Min 15 students</p>	<p>- 3,200USD</p>

- WESTERN TRAVEL -

ALWAYS CREATE THE DIFFERENCE IN TOURS AND STUDY PROGRAMS