

Trekking The Northern Trails Of Vietnam

(Hanoi – Ha Giang – Ba Be)

(Issued date: 17 Jan 2023)

Itinerary Overview

Day	Destinations/Activities	Meals
Day 1	HANOI – HA GIANG	L/D
Day 2	TREKKING IN HA GIANG	B/L/D
Day 3	QUAN BA – DONG VAN	B/L/D
Day 4	DONG VAN – MEO VAC	B/L/D
Day 5	MEO VAC – BAO LAC	B/L/D
Day 6	BAO LAC – BA BE NATIONAL PARK	B/L/D
Day 7	TREKKING IN BA BE'S JUNGLE	B/L/D
Day 8	BOAT TRIP ON BA BE LAKE	B/L/D
Day 9	BA BE LAKE – HANOI	B/L

Note*: B: Breakfast / L: Lunch / D: Dinner

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1

HANOI – HA GIANG

Your guide will pick you up at your hotel in Hanoi at around 8am. We will set out towards Ha Giang via Tuyen Quang, passing countless tea plantations, mountains and ethnic minority villages along the way.

You will have lunch at a local restaurant in Tuyen Quang, before arriving in Ha Giang around 18:00. Time permitting, you can explore the town and meet the local people before you're served dinner and stay overnight in a local Tay house.

Physical activities: 3-5km hike

Meal: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Local Tay house

Day 2

TREKKING IN HA GIANG

Today you will begin your trekking adventure by setting out from the homestay in the morning and trekking for about 6 to 8 hours to the village of Lung Vai. Along this trek, you'll get to take in the beauty of the terraced rice paddies, majestic mountains and serene palm-tree forests. You'll also run into people from many different ethnic groups along the way, such as Man and Dao, who are generally more than happy to stop and interact with travellers for a short while.

You'll enjoy a picnic lunch amidst nature before continuing to the remote village of Khuoi My. En route there will be many farmers working in the fields, and if we have the time you can even join in for some farm work if you so desire.

Finally, we move on to Ban Tha Village, where our driver will pick you up and drive you to Nam Dam, where you can enjoy a home-cooked local meal and spend the night in a homestay operated by a Dzao family.

Physical activities: 15-17km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Homestay in Ha Giang

Day 3

QUAN BA – DONG VAN

As we set out from Ha Giang after getting our permit from the immigration office, your journey to Dong Van will be filled with spectacular landscapes in the form of a series of long passes. En route you will stop for lunch at the small and beautiful mountain village of Tam Son, before heading to the majestic "King of the H'mong Palace", a fortress built by a local chief, Vuong Chin Duc, who allied himself with French forces against the Viet Minh. Built in the 1900's, this palace was designed in the style of ancient Chinese architecture dating to the Qing era, and it was made from materials such as solid stone blocks, wood and terracotta tiles.

You will stop for lunch in the mountain town of Dong Van, before heading out on a 3.5 hour trek to the highest mountain in Dong Van where you can enjoy some truly breath-taking panoramic views. We'll also visit H'mong, Lo Lo and Giay ethnic villages in this incredible, untouched frontier region.

Rounding out the day, you will be driven back to Dong Van for dinner and a night in a hotel.

Physical activities: 5-7km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel in Ha Giang

Day 4 DONG VAN – MEO VAC

After breakfast, you will get to explore Dong Van Old Quarter, before making the trek up to Pu Lo fortress which was built in 1890 and evacuated in 1945. From here you can enjoy spectacular views of the entire region, before climbing 8 km to the top of Ma Pi Leng Pass, through a gigantic maze of limestone peaks, stone forests, and canyons before descending into the valley of Meo Vac. Tonight we will overnight in Meo Vac.

Physical activities: 8km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Overnight in Meo Vac

Day 5 MEO VAC – BAO LAC

Breakfast at the hotel and then we start trekking around the villages of Meo Vac. This will be a great day spent in the mountains north of Bao Lac, where we visit the villages of the Lo Lo, a small minority which has carefully kept its tribal customs. We'll have dinner and stay the night in Bao Lac.

Physical activities: 5-7km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Overnight in Bao Lac

Day 6

BAO LAC – BA BE NATIONAL PARK

Before leaving Bao Lac you will visit the Bao Lac market, which is a special market that is only held 1 day of the week. In fact, it is probably one of the most photogenic places you'll visit in northern Vietnam. After lunch in Bao Lac, you will then drive on a bumpy road along the river and rice fields. We'll arrive in Ba Be in the late afternoon, and enjoy dinner and an overnight stay in a Tay house on the Ba Be lakeshore.

Physical activities: 5-7km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Tay house

Day 7

TREKKING IN BA BE'S JUNGLE

This is set to be a wonderful day of trekking! Your tour guide will take you to Coc Toc Village where you can meet the Tay community, who have become very skilled at fishing in the lake and live on a diet that is very much centred on fish.

Next you will set out to cross Pe Lu Stream, before hitting some rough, steep terrain that will give you a little bit of a workout. As you gain altitude, though, you will be rewarded for your efforts with spectacular views of the verdant rolling countryside. Pressing on ever higher we will stop for a picnic lunch in a H'mong ethnic village, where your guide may introduce you to some of the local H'mong people.

In the afternoon, your guide will take you through mountains and valleys to see the stilt houses and a school of the Dzao ethnic people, before moving on again to visit another H'mong ethnic village, where you will stay to have a tasty dinner in local homestay and spend the night at a gorgeous and comfortable Dzao house.

Physical activities: 15-17km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Dzao house

Day 8

BOAT TRIP ON BA BE LAKE

You will have a tasty breakfast at the homestay, and the opportunity to try on some traditional Dzaio ethnic clothing for some memorable photos before saying your farewells and setting out for another fulfilling day of trekking. You will take some slightly gentler trails compared to the previous day, visiting a black H'mong ethnic village before descending through the thick and beautiful forest with some spectacular views to visit Dau Dang Waterfall which lies on the border of the two provinces of Bac Kan and Tuyen Quang.

After viewing the waterfall, your guide will take you to have lunch with 'Mr Pirate' who was the main actor in "Ba Be Lake Pirate Movie". After this, you will take a relaxing motorboat trip up the river to visit the breath-taking Puong Cave, a huge limestone structure that spans the river and is home to thousands of bats (of 18 different species) which flit between the many stalactites and stalagmites. You will then pass over Ba Be Lake and visit An Ma temple in the boat, before heading to Mr Linh's homestay for dinner and a restful night's sleep.

Physical activities: 5-7km trek

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Overnight at a homestay

Day 9

BA BE LAKE – HANOI

After breakfast, we will stroll along the riverfront, and visit the lovely Pac Ngoi Village where most Tay people live in traditional houses. You can hike to the upper reaches of the lake, in an area marked by massive limestone cliffs and mountains. Later, your driver will take you to amazing Hua Ma cave and up onto a pass where you can take amazing photos of the terraced fields. After lunch in a local restaurant, you will continue your journey back to Hanoi.

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: N/A

Inclusions & Exclusions

INCLUSIONS	EXCLUSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Private door-to-door pick-up-off services ➤ All private transfer and transportation ➤ English speaking guide as per program ➤ Breakfast (B) Lunch (L) & Dinners as mentioned (L/D) ➤ All sightseeing tickets and travel permits ➤ Accommodation at hotels/ homestays/ junk boat as mentioned ➤ No extra charge after confirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal expenses ➤ Tips and Gratuities ➤ Travel insurance ➤ International flight and taxes ➤ Beverage

Important Information

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call the travel consultant whom you deal with and then our hot line contacts. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please send us a detailed message and contact information by email to the agent and to info@indochinatreks.com, we may check and return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

Our all travel consultants use WhatApps. Please ensure that you have the contact number. It's best to buy a local sim-card upon arrival. Most hotels offer free wifi. So it's very easy to contact in urgent case.

Emergency contact numbers

Mr. Kelvin Do: +84 986759655

Ms. Thuy Pham: +84 984654964

Combo Trip

If you book small group tour option, please note that the tour combines with our other tours. As such, some travel companions on your tour may have previously been travelling together with us. Likewise, some travel companions may be continuing together on another tour after your trip concludes.

You can start the tour on any date (please contact our consultant in advance to avoid peak dates or holidays) and customize itinerary with extra days/activities at any destination.

Internal Flights

For all internal flights, we would use Vietnamairlines, Vietjesair, Jestar, Cambodia Angkorair or Laos Airlines. Most domestic flights in Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar, airlines would use small 70 seat ATR72 for short distances. Most airlines in Vietnam use the Airbus A321. 20kg for checkin luggage and 7kg for hand-bag is included in the price.

International flights before/after the tour must be booked by yourself before travelling date.

Accommodation

We would use different hotel categories and you can select any basing on your budget. So your travel companions would not stay at your hotel. A Hotel Voucher will be provided once your tour is confirmed with all hotel details.

Packing List

Conservative Dress

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

Note*: Please pack clothing for the season in which you will be travelling. From Dec-Feb weather can be cold, so please pack warm clothing. From May-Nov it is the wet season, so please bring waterproof clothing.

Documents

- All tickets (required)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Required visas
- Hotel & Tour Vouchers
- Meeting sign (with your names and flight details that we will use for transfers)

Train Travel

Train travel in Vietnam is very basic and train cleanliness is often not a priority for train staff. Sleeper trains normally have 4 seats per compartment, which convert into sleeping bunks (two upper and two lower). A sheet, pillow and blanket are provided, although many people prefer to bring their own sleeping sheet. At times, passengers of different genders may be required to share a sleeper train berth and/or share a compartment with people not travelling in your group. For short distance - 3 hours (as Hue to Danang or vv), you will do the trip on soft/hard seat carriage.

Simple food is available on the train but many people like to stock up on freshly baked bread, cheese and fruit prior to departure. Water should also be bought before the journey.

Train journeys in Vietnam are an experience and allow you to get a real taste of Vietnam.

Airport transfers

All airport transfers are included in the tour price. You should provide us your arrival/departure flight details and we will arrange things basing on the information. A meeting sign with your name and all flight details will be sent to you. Please be ready at the lobby at pointed time for pickup.

Driver/guide should always be present at the airport before your arrival time. If you could not find the driver, please contact your travel consultant who you deal with. For any reason that airport transfer could not be arranged, please take the taxi to the hotel. We will refund the money then.

Travel insurance

Travel insurance is not included in our tour price. When travelling with us, you are suggested to buy insurance that covers all medical coverage, cancellation, personal liability, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

Trip Specific Safety

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Be aware that petty theft can be an issue in some towns and cities especially late at night. A common tactic is opportunists on motorbikes that drive by and snatch bags. Please always leave valuables and passports etc in your hotel in safety boxes if available and only carry with you enough cash to spend for the day. Bags should always be carried over the neck and not left to sit on your shoulder.

Warning

Please do not buy gems unless you know what you are doing. Even if genuine you should not expect to be able to sell them at home. If you fall victim to a gem scam, we are unable to assist you.

Visas and Entry Requirements

Please note that visas for Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. For the most up to date information please check your Governments Foreign Ministry website or with you travel agent as rules do change.

CAMBODIA - Visas can be obtained at the Cambodian border or Siem Reap Airport for approx. \$35 USD very easily. Please have *at least* 2 passport photos with you as well.

VIETNAM - As of March 2017, a select 80 nationalities are now eligible to enter Vietnam with an E-Visa. Please contact your Foreign Ministry or Vietnamese consulate to see if your nationality is eligible. Please note that you should ONLY apply for a Vietnam E-Visa if you are entering Vietnam by international airport - either Noi Bai International Airport (Hanoi) or Tan Son Nhat International Airport (Ho Chi Minh City).

If you are entering Vietnam by land border, please apply for a regular visa for Vietnam. Many of the land borders we travel through do not accept the Vietnam E-Visa. Please view this link to apply E-Visa:

<https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/web/guest/trang-chu-ttdt>

LAOS - Visas are issued upon arrival in Laos. You will need two passport size photographs and approx \$35. Tourists are generally admitted to Laos for 15 days with a visa on arrival or for 30 days with a visa issued at a Lao embassy. Please bring visa photos with you.

Please be aware that you will require four clean pages (minimum) in your passport and at least six months validity.

Tipping

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$3-\$5 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service.

Electricity

Indochina Countries use 220V, and a mixture of flat 2-pin, round 2-pin or 3 pin plugs. It is recommended to bring a universal plug adapter.