



20 Days

Vietnam

Minorities and Marble Mountains

Travel with us through the spectacular scenery and waterscapes of Vietnam on a journey which allows us to meet with local women from every walk of life. We will discover the key roles women have had in Vietnam's fascinating history and try our hands at the traditions which still endure today. With a five day trek through the Pu Long Nature Reserve, a night aboard a traditional junk in Halong Bay and days spent exploring the cities, towns and villages of Vietnam, this adventure has it all. Experience this amazing country through the eyes of local women along the way.

**A WOMAN'S
PERSPECTIVE**



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1-2

Arrive in Hanoi & explore

Upon our arrival in Hanoi, we will meet our Trip Leader at the airport and then transfer to our hotel to freshen up. This evening we will enjoy dinner at a local home where we will be able to begin learning about the role of women in everyday life in Vietnam. On day 2 we will meet with the Women's Union in the village to connect with the locals. Afterwards, we will visit the local markets to find ingredients for a Vietnamese lunch and experience the fine art of haggling! In the afternoon we take a visit to the Women's Museum, which features fascinating displays on the history of women in Vietnam and their changing roles through time and ethnicity. Our final stop will be the Trung Sisters' Temple to learn all about these fierce leaders.

Day
3

Cruise and rowing in Bai Tu Long Bay (Halong Bay)

Today we will embark on a cruise of Bai Tu Long Bay, rowing with the ladies of Bai Tu Long where we will learn about the lives of fisherwomen here. After what is set to be an excellent day we will be rocked to sleep on a traditional junk boat where we spend the night.

Day
4

Bai Tu Long Caves

After a day and night at sea we will have to get our land legs back as we spend today exploring the spectacular caves around Bai Tu Long. In the afternoon we return to Hanoi.

Day
5

Street vendors of Hanoi

This morning we rise early to visit the local market and see how local women start their working day. The rest of the morning will then be free to discover the city. After lunch we explore the local street food (maybe we'll skip the live snakes!) and chat with the women working here about their lifestyles.

Day
6

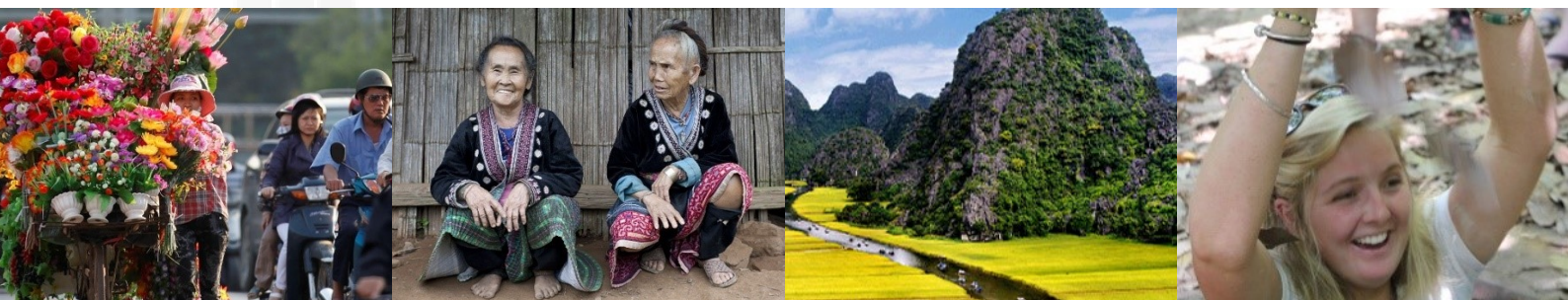
Transfer to Mai Chau & Trek to Don Village

Today we will leave the hustle and bustle of Hanoi and transfer to Mai Chau, nestled in beautiful rice paddy fields. Here we meet with local Thai minority women to hear about their way of life and see how those of ethnic women vary. Afterwards we will trek through the beautiful scenery for around three hours to Don Village where we will work with the hill-tribe and join in a basket weaving class. We will spend this evening in a homestay in the village.

Day
7-8

Trek to Hieu & Nua Villages

Today we stretch our legs once more with a 5-6 hour trek to Hieu village where we spend time with the locals here and explore the village. We will spend the night in a homestay in Hieu Village. Our 5-6 hour trek the following day will take us to Nua Village where we meet more Thai minority women. Our group will be split into teams as we learn to cook some traditional Thai dishes and host a Thai MasterChef challenge, regardless of who wins, the outcome will undoubtedly be delicious! We will spend the night in a homestay in Nua Village.





Day
9-10

Hike to Son village, Ton village & transfer to Ninh Binh

Today we climb deeper into the Pu Long Nature Reserve, passing through several ethnic villages on our way to Son Village. On arrival, we will find our stop for the night which is in a village homestay. After a few days trekking, we have an easy day through rice paddies and the Pu Long jungle, trekking for approximately 2.5 hours, before reaching our next stop of Ton Village. From here we transfer to Ninh Binh, stopping to visit the town of Muong Khen on the way. Upon our arrival we explore the sights of Ninh Binh.

Day
11-12

Boat trip Trang An & night train to Danang, Marble Mountains

This morning we enjoy a boat trip through Trang An, a UNESCO World Heritage site and visit the ancient Vietnamese capital of Hoa Lu. Afterwards we visit a local embroidery store to see how the local women produce their wares here. This evening we board the night train to Danang.

On day 12 we have the opportunity to explore the stunning Marble Mountains of Danang and the cave entrances and Hindu and Buddhist sanctuaries which they are home to. In the afternoon we enjoy another Vietnamese cookery class before transferring to Hoian.

Day
13

Visit to Huong Tra Que village

We rise early this morning to visit the local fish market, an experience which is sure to wake us up first thing in the morning! After a late breakfast we cycle to Huong Tra Que village. Aptly named after a type of local vegetable, we will join farmers in their daily work before stopping to join them on a well deserved lunch. Later, we help the local women planting rice before returning to Hoi An for the evening.

Day
14-15

Meeting with a local teacher & relax in Hoi An, fly to Saigon

This morning we will have the opportunity to meet with a local female teacher to discuss her work and women's access to education in Vietnam. The rest of the day will be spent free at our leisure; after a busy few days an afternoon on the beach will be well deserved! Day 15 sees us take a short flight to Saigon (1h40m). After checking in to our new hotel we enjoy a walking tour of the city with its surprisingly French colonial style buildings and boulevards.

Day
16

Saigon historical sites & business woman talk

This morning we visit some of the historical sites and countless temples of Saigon. After lunch we meet with a local businesswoman to understand the pressures of working in business in the city and how it compares to the life of rural women.

Day
17-18

Off the beaten track in Vinh long

On the morning of day 17 we travel to Vinh Long where we spend the night in a local homestay. Over the course of the two days we are able to work in a fruit garden with local women, visit the local markets and take a cruise around the canals of the Mekong Delta. On the afternoon of day 18 we return to Saigon.

Day
19-20

Visit to Cu Chi Tunnels

Today we visit the sobering war memorial of the Cu Chi Tunnels to learn about the history of the Vietnamese war and life below the ground. On day 20 we wave farewell to our Trip Leader and Vietnam ready for our return to the UK.

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase if your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



t: 01392 660056 | e: schools@thestc.co.uk | w: www.thestc.co.uk