



18 Days

Vietnam

North to South Expedition

This expedition will take you from North Vietnam to South Vietnam, through the jungles, lagoons, cities, and spiritual sites of this diverse country. Despite the conflict Vietnam has faced in the past, its complex and rich cultural heritage has shaped it in the amazing country that we see today.

It is 'Tour de Vietnam' season as we cycle between stops, allowing us to travel quickly and get our adrenaline pumping, whilst still taking in the incredible sights that surround us. If that seems exciting, it's only the beginning of the thrilling adventures that await us here...



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1-2

Arrive in Hanoi

Fly from the UK overnight to Noi Bai Airport, Hanoi, where we are met on arrival by our local STC Expedition Leader. We transfer first to our accommodation to freshen up and have a welcome briefing. The rest of the afternoon is ours to explore Hanoi and find a restaurant for our first traditional meal.

Day
3

Cycle to Dong Ngac village

Get set, go! Our expedition kicks off today with a cycling tour to Dong Ngac Village. This is a beautifully rustic place that remains untouched by modern urbanization. Our tour passes through flower villages and we stop to enjoy lunch with a local family in their home, a fantastic opportunity to learn about the unique culture and lifestyle of the people in northern Vietnam. Return to Hanoi to overnight.

Day
4-6

Trek Pu Luong Nature Reserve

What better way to see Pu Luong Nature Reserve than a 3 day trek, overnighting in traditional homestays along the way. The route winds through picturesque villages, rice paddy fields, beautiful waterfalls and rugged jungles.

Our journey through the reserve is a perfect opportunity to soak up the Mai Chau culture, home of the ethnic Thai People. Parts of the journey will be made atop traditional bamboo rafts, floating down the river.

Day
7

Ninh Binh

Having reached the end of our trek, we transfer to Ninh Binh. Here we will admire this spectacular World Heritage Site from the water as our guide row, row, rows the boat past limestone karst peaks submerged in rivers and rice paddy fields in Trang An.

Day
8-9

Ha Long Bay overnight cruise, overnight train to Hue

Transfer to Tuan Chau to start our two day cruise of picturesque Bai Tu Long Bay. We enjoy a fresh seafood lunch as we sail through the bay. There may also be opportunities to go kayaking, squid fishing and swimming for an even more immersive experience. A relaxing evening, watching an incredible sunset and settling down for a night on board the ship is in store for us.

To stretch our minds and sea legs, we begin day 9 with Tai Chi. Our cruise continues around the spectacular Bai Tu Long Bay and we visit Thien Canh Son cave before eventually heading back to shore. We return to Hanoi for dinner and catch an overnight train to Hue.





Day
10

Hue jeep & cycle tour

Our morning begins with a jeep tour through Hue and on to the Vietnamese countryside. We pass seemingly endless rice paddy fields, green forests and emerald lakes. We spend the afternoon cycling and sailing on Chuon lagoon, before learning how to catch shrimp and fish in nets. Return to Hue to overnight.

Day
11

Cycle Hue to Hoi An

Today is one of the more challenging days in our expedition. We set off on a scenic 100km+ cycle from Hue to Hoi An, stopping for lunch along the way. Although covering a long distance, there will be an opportunity to tailor our route to visit sites of interest and we will have plenty of support along the way. Overnight in Hoi An.

Day
12

Hoi An & My Son Temples

Taking a step back in time, we visit some of Vietnam's breath-taking UNESCO World Heritage sites. Firstly, we explore My Son Sanctuary, which was once the capital of the ancient Champa Kingdom. We also try our hand at pottery making at the Thanh Ha ceramic village before a walking tour of Hoi An Ancient town.

Day
13

Ho Chi Minh City

Catch a morning flight from Da Nang to Ho Chi Minh City and enjoy a guided city tour.

Day
14-15

Cat Tien National Park

Our next adventure is to hike and canoe through Cat Tien National Park, overnighing in a jungle lodge. This beautiful area is home to a large variety of wildlife and hopefully we will spot lots during our canoe bird watching tour; perhaps a cheeky gibbon or two as well!

Our journey will also take us past a local temple where we can learn about the importance of spiritual life here. Return to Ho Chi Minh in the afternoon of day 15.

Day
16-17

Cycle to Mekong Delta

Gearing up with our bikes and helmets for our final few days cycling, we begin heading towards the Mekong Delta and the province of Ben Tre, before circling back to Ho Chi Minh. Not only will we encounter beautiful scenery, but we will also visit tropical orchards, cruise along Mekong river to discover its floating markets and stop at a coconut-candy and handicraft workshop.

Day
18

Depart Ho Chi Minh

After breakfast we complete the last leg of our journey as we head to Tan Son Nhat International Airport for our return flight back 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:



Fitness is important at this grade, which compares to extended walking in mountainous terrain such as the Lakes or Snowdonia, for up to three to five days in a row. It is likely that significant sections of a trip will involve walking and trekking with some days up to eight hours. Some of the trip could be at altitudes of up to 4,500m, but the itinerary will be designed with appropriate acclimatisation in mind. Be prepared for significant possible variations in temperatures throughout the tour. There is not usually time to 'get fit' on these treks, so a two to four-month fitness improvement programme would ensure you get the most out of the trip.

Culture shock rating:



Students joining trips at this level will find the comforts of home are more of a rarity – or viewed another way, a welcome luxury. English is unlikely to be widely spoken and the food will be quite different to home, perhaps for extended sections of the trip. You should observe local customs so not to cause offence. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty and accommodation in some locations is likely to be basic. Whilst a challenge, destinations and trips at cultural level 4 are also a fantastic opportunity to see a very different part of the world.



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