

American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Hanoi – Halong Bay – Hai Phong - Hanoi

Standard Tour #1 (7 nights / 9 days)

Day 1

Depart via scheduled airline service to Hanoi, Vietnam

Day 2

Hanoi (D)

Arrive at Hanoi. Meet your MCI Vietnamese Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motor coach for a transfer to the hotel. Along the way to the hotel, we will enjoy a brief orientation tour of Hoan Kiem Lake, the French Quarter and Old Quarter of Hanoi, time permitting. This evening we will attend a Water Puppets performance at the Municipal Water Puppets Theater and a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

The Vietnamese nation was born among the lagoons and marshes of the Red River Delta around 4000 years ago and for most of its independent existence has been ruled from Hanoi, Vietnam's small, elegant capital lying in the heart of the northern delta. Given the political and historical importance of Hanoi and its burgeoning population of three million, it's still a surprisingly low-key city, with the character of a provincial town.

Day 3

Hanoi (B,L,D)

Following breakfast at the hotel, we will enjoy a city tour with visits to the Temple of Literature, Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and Presidential Palace, Ho Chi Minh Stilt House, One Pillar Pagoda and the famous "Hanoi Hilton" prison.

We will have lunch at a local restaurant in Hanoi.

The afternoon will be spent at our leisure and prepare for this evening performance.

Evening Concert at Hanoi Opera House as part of the American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Day 4

Hanoi / Halong Bay (B,L,D)

This morning will start with breakfast in the hotel, followed by hotel checkout. ***We will then visit a high school or college class (providing that school is in session) and will participate in a cultural exchange and enjoy lunch with the students.***

We will then drive north to the Bac Ninh Province where we will visit a local village and enjoy a traditional performance at the Communal House.

We will then continue to travel along the Red River Delta, arriving in Halong Bay in the late afternoon.

The Ha Long bay, dotted with 1,600 limestone islets rising from emerald waters, is the best known natural wonder of Vietnam. Because of their precipitous nature, most of the islands are uninhabited and unaffected by a human presence. The site's outstanding scenic beauty is complemented by its great biological interest. The islands feature endless numbers of beaches, grottoes, and caves. Ha Long means "where the dragon goes into the sea". According to a legend, as a great dragon who lived in the mountains ran towards the sea, its tail gouged out



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valleys which later filled out with water, leaving only bits of land over the surface, the many tiny islets

Day 5 **Halong Bay** **(B,L,D)**

After breakfast, we will spend most of the day discovering Halong Bay by private boat. The 6-hour cruise will pass many beautiful islands and will stop at one of the most gorgeous caves on the bay. We will swim (weather permitting) in the gulf of Tonkin, of the South China Sea

Lunch will be served on the cruise

We will return to the mainland in the afternoon

Evening performance at Theatre in Ha Long City as part of the American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Day 6 **Hanoi / Hai Phong** **(B,L,D)**

Our day will begin with breakfast at the hotel. We will then check out of the hotel and depart for a 90-minute drive to Hai Phong City, the third largest city in Vietnam

Upon our arrival in Hai Phong, we will check into our hotel and have a brief tour of the city

We will have some time to relax in the afternoon

Evening performance at the Hai Phong City Theater as part of the American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Hai Phong is northern Vietnam's main port, and an important industrial and commercial center. 105km from Hanoi, Hai Phong is a beautiful city with much of the central colonial quarter still preserved. Many streets are bordered by flame flower trees, giving the city its other name "city of flame flowers"

Day 7 **Hai Phong / Ninh Binh / Hanoi** **(B,L,D)**

We will start the day with breakfast at the hotel. We will then leave Hai Phong for Ninh Binh, a 4-hour drive

Once in Ninh Binh we will visit rice fields, caves via boat, and a temple in the local village

We will drive back to Hanoi in the late afternoon

Day 8 **Hanoi** **(B,L,D)**

In the morning we will visit the Old Quarter of Hanoi and a local market, where we will have an hour to spend shopping

In the afternoon we will visit the Hanoi University

Evening performance at Hanoi University as part of the American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Day 9 **Depart for home** **(B)**

Breakfast will be served upon awakening. Transfer to Hanoi's International Airport for return flight

Arrive home in the evening of the same day

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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