

American Celebration of Music in Vietnam

Hanoi – Halong – Saigon – Cu Chi – Tay Ninh

Standard Tour #3 (8 nights / 10 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 **Halong Bay / Saigon** **(B,L,D)**

The day will begin with breakfast at the hotel, followed by checkout. We will travel to the Halong airport and depart on a flight to Saigon

Upon our arrival, we will drive to our hotel in Saigon. Along the way to the hotel, we will enjoy a brief orientation tour of Saigon, the Notre Dame Cathedral, Central Post Office, Reunification Palace, and Ben Thanh Market
In the evening we will have dinner and time to relax



Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) is the heart and soul of Vietnam. It's a bustling, dynamic and industrious centre, the largest city in the country, the economic capital and the cultural trendsetter. Yet within the teeming metropolis are the timeless traditions and beauty of an ancient culture

Day 7 **Saigon / Mui Ne** **(B,L,D)**

After breakfast, we will take a 4-hour drive to the seaside resort of Mui Ne

We will have the entire afternoon free to enjoy the sandy beaches

We will spend the evening in Mui Ne



Mui Ne has long been considered the "Hawaii" of Vietnam. It boasts shady roads under coconut trees, a beautiful beach and cliffs battered by the waves of the sea. The typical scenery of Mui Ne lies in the moving lines of golden sand caused by the wind and when they are seen from afar they look like moving waves. Mui Ne is an ideal place for rest and relaxation. Visitors can certainly enjoy swimming in the blue water of the sea, climbing the sand dunes or relaxing by a swimming pool. In fact this oasis entertainment people of all ages, and furthermore, provides an endless inspiration to the artists' creation

Day 8 **Mui Ne / Saigon** **(B,L,D)**

In the morning we will visit the Fairy Spring Falls and Reclining Buddha in Mui Ne. As well, we will have a chance to view the breath-taking sand dunes. If we feel adventurous, we may also try "sand sledding" (protective foot-wear is a necessity)

We will then head back to Saigon, visiting a local fishing village along the way

Evening performance at the Saigon Conservatory as part of the American Celebration of Music in Vietnam



Day 9 **Saigon** **(B,L,D)**

Early in the morning we will depart for Cu Chi to visit the tunnels, where we will have the opportunity to go into the underground tunnels

We will continue on to Tay Ninh to visit the Cao Dai Temple, where a prayer



service is held every day at noon. Caodaism was founded in the 1920's by using a combination of teachings from Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and other religions into one religion to promote peace

We will have lunch and then travel back to Saigon

We will then have free time in the afternoon, where we may choose to explore the city, relax, or pick up some last minute souvenirs

Farewell Dinner and overnight

Day 10

Depart for home

(B)

Breakfast will be served upon awakening. Transfer to Saigon'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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