





Cultural Treasures of

Hong Kong, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos & Thailand



A Twenty-Two Day Sample Itinerary



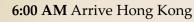
A S I A TRIP SUMMARY

DAY 01 NEWARK/HONG KONG

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1:10 AM Depart Newark via Cathay Pacific Airlines flight # 899

DAY 02 HONG KONG/HANOI



5:30 PM Depart Hong Kong
via Cathay Pacific Airlines (operated by
DragonAir) flight # 5295
6:35 PM Arrive Hanoi

DAY 03-04 HANOI

DAY 05 HANOI/HALONG BAY

DAY 06 HALONG BAY/HANOI/DANANG/ HOI AN



5:10 PM Depart Hanoivia Vietnam Airlines flight # 175**6:25 PM** Arrive Danang

DAY 07-08 HOI AN

DAY 09 HOI AN/DANANG/CAN THO



12:30 PM Depart Danangvia Viet Jet Air flight # 702**2:00 PM** Arrive Can Tho

DAY 10 CAN THO (MEKONG DELTA)/SAIGON

DAY 11 HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON)

DAY 12 HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON)/SIEM REAP



12:00 PM Depart Saigonvia Vietnam Airlines flight # 38251:00 PM Arrive Siem Reap

DAY 13-14 SIEM REAP

DAY 15 SIEM REAP/LUANG PRABANG



4:50 PM Depart Siem Reap via Vietnam Airlines flight # 930 **6:50 PM** Arrive Luang Prabang

DAY 16-17 LUANG PRABANG

DAY 18 LUANG PRABANG/CHIANG MAI



1:15 PM Depart Luang Prabangvia Lao Airlines flight # 6352:15 PM Arrive Chiang Mai

DAY 19 CHIANG MAI

DAY 20 CHIANG MAI/BANGKOK



12:35 PM Depart Chiang Mai via Thai Airways flight # 107 **1:45 PM** Arrive Bangkok

DAY 21 BANGKOK

DAY 22 BANGKOK/HONG KONG/NEWARK



11:50 AM Depart Bangkok via CathayPacific Airlines flight # 7503:35 PM Arrive Hong Kong



6:20 PM Depart Hong Kong via Cathay Pacific Airlines flight # 890 **9:00 PM** Arrive Newark



ASIA





DAY 01 NEWARK/HONG KONG



1:10 AM Depart Newark via Cathay Pacific Airlines flight # 899 direct service for Hong Kong. Total flying time: 15 hours, 50 minutes. **Set your watch 12 hours ahead**.

Hong Kong has become a world-class city by fusing Chinese traditional with Western customs. At its foundation, quite literally, is the ancient art of fung shui, the belief in luck provided by the elements of wind (fung) and water (shui). Neither village houses nor the landmark Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank headquarters gets built without approval from a fung shui master.

Religion also influences everyday life. The city is dotted with temple - bright and dazzling structures like the one at Wong Tai Sin, as well as small personal shrines laden with incense and offerings.

DAY 02 HONG KONG/HANOI

6:00 AM Arrive Hong Kong, the Jewel of the Orient and one of the world's most exciting destinations. With its unique blend of 20th-century commercialism and centuries-old Chinese culture, it offers visitors a dazzling and unforgettable experience.

After completing custom and immigration formalities you will be met outside the baggage claim area by your guide and escorted to a waiting vehicle. Your guide will be holding a sign marked **'Your Name'**.





Enjoy the day exploring Hong Kong. Your tour and transfers are compliments of Alluring Asia.

Begin with a ride on the Victoria Peak Tram to Victoria Peak where you will enjoy spectacular views of Hong Kong and the New Territories.

Travel past cliff side mansions to Repulse Bay - Hong Kong Island's most popular beach.

At Aberdeen, ride in a sampan for an up-close look at the brightly decorated trawlers which double as floating homes for Aberdeen's fishermen and their families. This sheltered harbor is surrounded by hillsides decked with woodlands, Chinese cemeteries and residential towers.

Visit Wong Tai Sin Temple. The Temple Complex is a gloriously colorful spectacle, founded on the lower slopes of the Kowloon Hills more than half a century ago. Crucial family decisions are often resolved by reference to the deity, and the temple's host of fortune-tellers have helped make this the territory's most popular temple.

WONG TAI SIN TEMPLE



Continue to the Avenue of Stars, modeled after the Hollywood Walk of Fame, this Victoria Harbour attraction honors the film icons of the Hong Kong Film Industry.

Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. The cost of lunch is payable directly to the restaurant.

At approximately **2:30 PM** return to the Hong Kong Airport.



5:30 PM Depart Hong Kong via Cathay Pacific Airlines (operated by DragonAir) flight # 5295 direct service to Hanoi. Total flying time: 2 hours, 5 minutes. **Set your watch back 1 hour.**



6:35 PM Arrive Hanoi, Vietnam. You will be met at the International Arrivals Hall by our Fast Track Immigration Representative who will be holding a sign marked **'Your Name'**. You will be assisted with immigration and custom clearance and escorted to your guide who will be waiting outside the Arrivals Terminal. Transfer by private vehicle to the Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel.

At the Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel, reservations for a Grand Premium Room have been confirmed for the following 3 nights. The hotel is a French colonial-style building that has stood proudly since 1901. The hotel has a rich history and a century-long tradition of welcoming ambassadors, writers, heads of state, and entrepreneurs. Features include 363 rooms and suites, a beautiful interior garden, excellent French cuisine at Le Beaulieu and Hanoi specialties at the Spices Garden.

Hanoi has a great deal of charm, with ochre-colored colonial style buildings, tree-lined boulevards, elegant squares and verdant public parks. Hanoi means "within a river bend". Established as a defensive citadel in the 8th century, Hanoi has had at least 7 name changes. In the past Hanoi was first chosen by King Ly Thai To as the capital of the country and was named Thang Long (Ascending Dragon) in 1010. Through several successive dynasties, it remained as the country's capital city, the heart and soul of the whole nation, and has borne a variety of names, including Dong Kinh (Eastern Capital) from which the Europeans derived the name they eventually applied to all of northern Vietnam, Tonkin. The city was finally named Hanoi (the city in a bend of the river) by Emperor Tu Duc (Nguyen Dynasty) in 1831. From 1902 to 1953, Hanoi served as the capital of French Indochina.

Overnight: Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel – Grand Premium Room





DAY 03 HANOI

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch - 🕕

This morning hit the streets of Hanoi for a special street food tour with your guide. First, drive to a local market to learn about and taste some of the ingredients used in the local cuisine and to watch the buying and selling rituals of a Vietnamese market.

Next, enjoy a Vietnamese Cà Phê (coffee) with the locals at a Hanoian favorite, Cafe Lam, one of the many sidewalk cafes in the historic French Quarter. Your guide will give you an overview of the Vietnamese food scene, particularly in Hanoi. Then, drive to Truc Bach Lake for a snack of Pho Cuon, a grilled beef and rice noodle roll. Lunch with your guide at one of Hanoi's best cafes. Enjoy bun cha and seafood spring rolls at Bún Cha Le Van Huu.

Enjoy a leisurely afternoon.

This evening you may wish to dine at Ly Club - a French colonial-style restaurant located in the core of city. Ly Club is an elegant and cozy place, specializing in Vietnamese and Western cuisine. Your guide can assist with reservations.

Overnight: Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel – Grand Premium Room



HANOI STREET FOOD TOUR

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DAY 04 HANOI

Meals Included: Breakfast - 🚯

At **6:15 AM** you can walk to Hoan Kiem Lake to witness and/or participate in a Tai Chi exercise. It's a great chance for you to take pictures of local people and enjoy the sunrise from the western side of Hoan Kiem Lake.

Return to the hotel for breakfast.

At **9:00 AM** meet your guide in the lobby of the Sofitel Metropole.

Spend the day exploring Hanoi. Visit the outside of Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, an imposing monument made of generous amounts of marble and granite. This is where the preserved body of "Uncle Ho" can be viewed.

Visit the One-Pillared Pagoda, known as the Temple of Love. In the form of a lotus, it emerges from the water and rests on a single stone pillar. It contains a statue of the Goddess of Mercy with its legendary "thousand arms and a thousand eyes."

HO-CHI

HO CHI MINH MAUSOLEUM

Visit the Temple of Literature, which dates back to 1070 and is dedicated to the cult of Confucius. The Temple of Literature was the first university of Vietnam.

Complete your day with a cyclo tour through the Old Quarter. In the early 13th century guilds evolved from the collection of tiny workshop villages which clustered around the walled Palace. Artisans and guilds lived and worked together to produce and sell a wide variety of items. As time progressed this area became a collection of narrow streets each named after the product sold, including Silk Street and Gold Street.

This evening enjoy a traditional Vietnamese water puppet performance. Witness an ancient art form the way it was meant to be seen. Vietnamese water puppetry dates back more than a thousand years and the stories and tales offer a rare insight in to life in the countryside. The puppeteers who remain hidden knee-deep in water behind a bamboo screen skillfully maneuver their puppets with a series of underwater strings and pulleys. Dragons spout fire as water snakes are chased by irate farmers and inquisitive children. All the while traditional music and a compeer keep the audience enthralled.

Afterwards you may wish to dine at the upscale La Verticale. The restaurant offers a great selection of French and Vietnamese fusion. You can enjoy the delicacies in a villa built during the 1930s based on French and Indochina architecture. If interested, your guide can assist with making reservations.

Overnight: Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel – Grand Premium Room



HIGHLANDS COFFEE



DAY 05 HANOI/HALONG BAY

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner 🚯

At approximately **8:30 AM** be ready in the lobby of the Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel in preparation for your overland journey to Hon Gai. The drive takes approximately 3 ¹/₂ hours.

Situated in the North-East region of Vietnam, Halong Bay is made up of a dense cluster of 1,969 limestone islands of various sizes, 989 of which have been given names. Viewed from above, Halong Bay resembles a geographic work of art. While exploring the bay, you feel lost in a legendary world of stone islands. Halong has been proven by scientists that it was one of the first cradles of human existence in the area at such archeological sites as Dong Mang, Xich Tho, Soi Nhu, and Thoi Gieng. It is also a region of highlyconcentrated biological diversity with many ecosystems of salt water-flooded forests, coral reefs, and tropical forests featuring thousands of species of animal and plant life. Specially, the 18th meeting of the Committee of the World Heritages of UNESCO (in Thailand on December 17th, 1994), officially recognized Halong Bay as a natural heritage site of worldwide importance.

Upon arrival at Tuan Chau Island, board Paradise Peak, a traditional wooden junk with 8 stately suites. Start cruising out to the mystic bay to see the amazing karsts with different formations. Enjoy a seafood lunch onboard.

In the afternoon, discover some of the treasures disseminated across the Bay of the Descending Dragon, fascinating caves, pristine beaches, picturesque floating villages and fantastic rock formations rising up out of emerald water.

While onboard you can attend the chef's cooking demonstration and try your skills in the art of traditional Vietnamese cooking.

Watch the sunset over the enchanting Halong Bay while cruising to your overnight anchorage location.

Overnight: Paradise Peak – Superior Suite



DAY 06 HALONG BAY/HANOI/DANANG/HOI AN

Meals Included: Breakfast 🌐

Enjoy the sunrise, the lapping waves, the fresh sea air, the gentle breeze or get up at your leisure.

Greet the new day with some Tai Chi exercise as the sun rises over the bay. Enjoy breakfast before visiting a beautiful limestone grotto to admire its many unique rock formations. Finally enjoy Halong Bay's awe-inspiring beauty as you cruise back to the dock.

At approximately **10:30 – 11:00 AM** arrive at Tuan Chau Island. After disembarking the junk you will be met by your driver and escorted to a waiting vehicle for your transfer Hanoi airport, arriving approximately **2:30 – 3:00 PM**.



5:10 PM Depart Hanoi via Vietnam Airlines flight # 175 direct service to Danang. Total flying time: 1 hour, 15 minutes. **6:25 PM** Arrive Danang. You will be met outside the baggage claim area by your guide and escorted to a waiting vehicle for your transfer to the Nam Hai. Your guide will be holding a sign marked '**Your Name'**.

At the Nam Hai Resort reservations for a One Bedroom Beach Front Villa have been confirmed for the following 3 nights. Located 7 miles from Hoi An on the Central Coast the harmony between architecture and nature is evident at The Nam Hai. Set amid lush landscaping and unobstructed ocean views the Nam Hai provides guests with a culturally inviting experience combined with all the charms of true Vietnamese hospitality. The hotel is sprawled across 35 hectare and has a total of 60 elegant Villas and 40 Pool Villas each set within landscaped gardens with unobstructed views across the South China Sea and on to the misty Cham Islands.

This evening you may wish to dine at Fullmoon Towns. The restaurant is designed as a miniature 'Hoi An Town' with preserved old houses and a Japanese Pagoda. Your guide can assist with any reservation requests.

Overnight: Nam Hai Resort – One Bedroom Beach Front Villa

HALONG BAY



DAY 07 HOI AN

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning meet with a chef at Hoi An's local and colorful market. Enjoy a tour of the market where you will learn about the various Vietnamese spices and ingredients. After the market tour enjoy a private cooking class with demonstration and hands-on experience at Brother's Café (gourmet Vietnamese Cuisine). Learn how to prepare various Vietnamese dishes.

In the afternoon, enjoy a walking tour of the ancient town centre. Visit the former merchants' houses that are a combination of Vietnamese, Japanese and Chinese style; the 400 year-old Japanese Covered Bridge constructed in 1593; Sa Huynh Museum located near the Japanese covered Bridge, which contains exhibitions from the earliest period of Hoi An's history and the colorful market with its stalls brimming with tropical specialties. The market is a good place to buy silk to have made into fine garments if you are interested. Continue walking through the small alleys to soak up the atmosphere of a bygone era age.

Originally a Champa port, the town has a distinct Chinese atmosphere with low-tiled-roof houses and narrow streets. The town is divided into 5 quarters or 'bangs', each of which would traditionally have had its own pagoda and supported one Chinese clan group. The Chinese, along with some Japanese, settled here in the 16th century and controlled trade between island Southeast Asia, East Asia (China and Japan) and India. Portuguese and Dutch vessels also docked at the port. During the Tay Son Rebellion (1771-1788) the town was almost totally destroyed.

This evening you may wish to explore the Cargo Club where you can sample a selection of Ms Vy's family recipes and other local dishes. Your guide can assist with reservations.

Overnight: Nam Hai Resort – One Bedroom Beach Front Villa



DAY 08 HOI AN

Meals Included: Breakfast 🚯



This morning visit the extraordinary ruins of My Son, located in a 'remote' jungle. My Son was formerly the center of the Cham Kingdom and has now been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. Over 20 wellpreserved monuments remain.

Enjoy the afternoon at leisure.

Overnight: Nam Hai Resort - One Bedroom Beach Front Villa





DAY 09 HOI AN/DANANG/CAN THO

Meals Included: Breakfast 🕀

At approximately 10:15 AM be ready in the lobby of the Nam Hai Resort in preparation for your transfer to the Danang airport.



12:30 PM Depart Danang via Viet Jet Air flight # 702 direct service to Can Tho. Total flying time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

2:00 PM Arrive Can Tho. You will be met outside the baggage claim area by your guide and escorted to a waiting vehicle for your transfer to the Victoria Can Tho Hotel. Your guide will be holding a sign marked 'Your Name'

At the Victoria Can Tho Hotel, reservations for a Deluxe Room have been confirmed for the evening. The hotel lies on the banks of the Hau River, set amidst beautiful gardens.

The Mekong Delta is the richest agricultural area in Vietnam. The Mekong River is known to the Vietnamese as Cuu Long, meaning "Nine Dragons". After making its long journey from the Tibetan Plateau, the river splits into numerous small winding tributaries, wide flowing streams and low lying island to form the Mekong Delta. The region is referred to as Vietnam's "rice Bowl" from where farmers produce coconuts, sugar cane, a variety of fruit, fresh seafood and of course rice. Blending into the patchwork of rice paddies are small villages and towns resting on the river bank, where urban dwellers ply their bustling commercial trade.

Enjoy the balance of the day at leisure.

Overnight: Victoria Can Tho Hotel – Deluxe Rooms

CAI RANG FLOATING MARKET



DAY 10 CAN THO (MEKONG DELTA)/SAIGON

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch 🕧

At approximately **6:30 AM** be ready in the lobby of the Victoria Can Tho to experience the sights and sounds of the Mekong Delta coming to life.

Visit the colorful Cai Rang floating market where a colorful display of boats carrying fresh fruits and vegetables converge to sell goods. Watch sellers tie their goods to long poles so that prospective buyers can see them and view hundreds of boats of all sizes, filled with local produce, tropical fruits and just about anything else that local shoppers could want, as they jockey for the best position.

Continue exploring by bike and enjoy a sightseeing tour of Can Tho, the largest city in the Mekong Delta.



Pause for lunch at a local restaurant.

Afterwards, begin your overland journey to Saigon. The drive will take approximately 4 hours.

Saigon is the name of a river flowing through the city. This river gave birth to the Saigon - Cho Lon Port and the most buoyant riverside city in Southeast Asia as early as the 18th Century. Today Ho Chi Minh City is the largest city in Vietnam and one of the three biggest municipalities in the country (the others being Hanoi and Haiphong). Although the city is commonly called Ho Chi Minh City, many of its citizens, even officials, still refer to the downtown area as Saigon.

At the Park Hyatt Saigon reservations for a Park Room have been confirmed for the following 2 nights. Located at Lam Son Square in the centre of Ho Chi Minh City, the 9-storey Park Hyatt Saigon hotel is within walking easy distance of the main tourist sights, restaurants and parks.

This evening you may wish to dine at Hoi An Restaurant, one of the most gorgeous and spacious dining venues in the city. This restaurant specializes in the intricate cuisine of the eponymous central coast town, which was influenced by progressive waves of settlers (Chinese and French) or perhaps you would like to stroll along Dong Kohi Street to experience the hustle and bustle life of Saigon. Your guide can assist with any restaurant reservation requests.

Overnight: Park Hyatt Saigon – Park Room





DAY 11 HO CHI MINH CITY (Saigon)

Meals Included: Breakfast 🚯

At 8:30 AM be ready in the lobby of the Park Hyatt in preparation for a full-day of exploring.

Journey to the Cu Chi Tunnels. The main "highway" is thronged with bicycles, green paddy fields where local peasants work and children lead buffaloes, and people making their way to the market. It's hard to believe that you are entering what was a war zone of immense strategic importance. Cu Chi is famous for its 120 miles of underground tunnels, used by the Vietcong forces to fight both the French and the Americans. The Cu Chi tunnels will give you a fascinating insight into the tenacity and courage of the Viet Cong forces during the war.

Return to Saigon and visit the historical Post Office with its notable decorated ceiling designed by Gustaf Eiffel of Tower fame, the Notre Dame Cathedral, circa 1880 and the former Presidential Palace, once the headquarters for the Saigon government during the American War in Vietnam. Continue to the War Remnant Museum. The museum comprises a series of eight themed rooms in several buildings, with period military equipment located within a walled yard. The military equipment include a UH-1 "Huey" helicopter, an F-5A fighter, a BLU-82 "Daisy Cutter" bomb, M48 Patton bomb, and an A-1 attack bomber.

Complete your touring with a visit to the outside of the Opera House, the City Hall and the Rex Rooftop Bar (located at the top of the Rex Hotel). The Rooftop Bar was made famous and popular by American troops during the Vietnam War when its conference room hosted a daily press conference, by the MACV, derisively named The Five O'clock Follies. The Rooftop Bar was a well- known hangout spot for military officials and war correspondents.

This evening you may wish to dine at the Temple Club, one of the most atmospheric and romantic spots in town. The Temple Club is an old Chinese Temple (1900s) with original wood and masonry. The cuisine is standard Vietnamese from all parts of the country.

Overnight: Park Hyatt Saigon – Park Room

CU CHI TUNNELS





DAY 12 HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON)/SIEM REAP

Meals Included: Breakfast 🚯

At approximately **9:15 AM** be ready in the lobby of the Park Hyatt in preparation for your transfer to the airport.



12:00 PM Depart Saigon via Vietnam Airlines flight # 3825 direct service to Siem Reap. Total flying time: 1 hour.

1:00 PM Arrive Siem Reap, Cambodia. You will be met at the International Arrivals Hall by our Fast Track Immigration Representative who will be holding a sign marked **'Your Name'**. You will be assisted with immigration and custom clearance and escorted to your guide who will be waiting outside the Arrivals Terminal. Transfer by private vehicle to the Grand Hotel D'Angkor.



SIEM REAP

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At the Grand Hotel D'Angkor reservations for a Landmark Pool Room have been confirmed for the following 3 nights.

For over 75 years, a visit to the ancient Angkor temples has been synonymous with a stay at Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor. Now sensitively restored, the hotel's renewed elegance and modernity complement the mystery and grandeur of Angkor as never before.

The hotel has 119 guestrooms, each tastefully appointed with Art Deco-style furnishings and Cambodian objet d'art. Standard room amenities include twice daily housekeeping service, air-conditioning with individual thermostat control, two-line telephone in the bedroom and a telephone in the bathroom, safe, hairdryer, satellite television with in-house movie channels, minibar, coffeemaker, and wake-up call service with tea or coffee delivery.





This evening, you will be taken by Tuk Tuk, a small open-sided taxi common in Cambodia, to cruise around the suburb of Siem Reap town and for a blessing ceremony by Buddhist monks for happiness, prosperity and safety for your journey.

You may want to consider dining at FCC Angkor Restaurant and Bar. The restaurant is set in the tranquil Old French quarter, amongst mature trees alongside the Siem Reap River. FCC Angkor offers an extensive menu of moderately price international, fusion and locally-inspired contemporary fare. Your guide can assist with reservations.

Overnight: Grand Hotel D'Angkor – Landmark Pool Room





DAY 13 SIEM REAP

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch - 🕕

At approximately **5:30 AM** depart the Grand Hotel D'Angkor.

Enjoy sunrise at the incredible Angkor Wat Temple Complex.

Angkor Wat is one of the largest temple complexes in the world. The Temple is dedicated to the god Vishnu, from whom the Emperor was considered a reincarnation. Essentially a three-layered pyramid, Angkor Wat has 64 meter high towers at the corners of each storey. The marvelous bas-relief of Angkor Wat's outer wall of the lower picture gallery depicts scenes of the Ramayana. Angkor Wat represents the high-point in the evolution of Khmer architecture. The ruins seen today represent successive capitals constructed by a dozen kings between the 9th and 12th centuries. Central to the civilization of Angkor was belief in the God-King, an originally Indian concept, which was adopted by Jayavarman II when he became Angkor's first king in 802.

At approximately 8:30 AM return to the hotel for breakfast.



After breakfast travel outside the city to explore the picturesque Ta Prohm Temple. The Temple is overgrown and the roots of the trees are , pushing between the huge stone blocks of the temple – a sight you will remember forever.

Ta Prohm was built by Jayavarman VII as a shrine for his mother and as a monastery devoted to its upkeep. A stele referred to the temple as a monument "whose limbs are adorned with gold and resplendent with gems". The magnificent roots of a tree pushing between the huge stone blocks of the temple have been left that way intentionally, at the suggestion of French art conservators Bernard Groslier and George Coedes, who devoted years to the understanding and preservation of the treasures at Angkor. The sight of the tree's powerful embrace of the stone evokes feelings a visitor will very likely remember forever.

This afternoon drive about 45 minutes into the countryside, stopping en route to visit a local village. Enjoy a 90 minute boat ride on Tonle Sap Lake, also known as the Great Lake of Cambodia. You will see many communities of floating houses and boats, including schools, markets, police stations, children playing and swimming, and fresh water aquariums with different fish species displayed. The living conditions in this area are extremely basic. Clean, fresh drinking water is a luxury for a few villages.

After the boat ride transfer to an eco-tourism site where you can enjoy a cocktail and watch the sunset over Tonle Sap Lake.

This evening you may wish to dine at Viroth's Restaurant (a delightful garden restaurant). Enjoy delicious Khmer food in a sophisticated setting. Your guide can assist with any reservation requests.

Overnight: Grand Hotel D'Angkor – Landmark Pool Room





DAY 14 SIEM REAP

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch 🛖

This morning visit Banteay Srei, the birthplace of Khmer classical style architecture. This is a small temple complex with impressive carvings.

Also visit Banteay Samre, one of the most complete sites at Angkor, due to restoration using the method of "anastylosis". The name Samre refers to an ethnic group of mountain people who inhabited the region at the base of Phnom Kulen and were probably related to the Khmers. No inscriptions have been found for this temple, but the style of most of the architecture is of the classic art of the middle period similar to Angkor Wat. The proportions of Banteay Samre are splendid. A unique feature is an interior moat with laterite paving, which when filled with water must have given an ethereal atmosphere to the temple.

Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

This afternoon visit the impressive Angkor Thom (which means Great City). Angkor Thom is the cultural home of the Khmer (Cambodian) people and one of the ancient wonders of the world. This vast network of Wats (temples) dating back to the 7th century is the center of some of the most important structures, statues, and carvings produced in the name of the Buddhist and Hindu religions. The Great City covers an area of four square miles. The total length of the wall surrounding the city is 7.5 miles. Incorporated into the wall are a number of earlier buildings: Baphuon and Phimeanakas. The city is dominated by a mania for colossal size, punctuated with enormous numbers of towers and reliefs.

Board an elephant near the Bayon and enjoy a 20-30 minute ride to the South Gate of Angkor Thom.

The Bayon is an awesome sight. At first glance, the complex seems a shapeless mass of stone. Suddenly, further scrutiny reveals a face, enigmatic and silent, watching with half-closed eyes. Soon, another face is made out, and another, and still yet another, until they are all around - silent, heavy, and impressive, staring from a primitive remote past.

Afterwards embark on a rowing boat and enjoy a sunset cruise around Angkor Thom. Hi-Tea is served on board. Visit Prasat Chrung Temple.

Overnight: Grand Hotel D'Angkor – Landmark Pool Room





DAY 15 SIEM REAP/LUANG PRABANG

Meals Included: Breakfast



At **10:00 AM** be ready in the lobby of the Grand Hotel D'Angkor in preparation for some exploring and your transfer to the Siem Reap airport.

Walk along the road in front of the King's Residence to see the Main Shrine, where the local people usually worship. Buying jasmine and lotus flowers to worship is very important for Cambodians.

Continue to one of the city's lively open markets, Psar Chars, also called the "Old Market", where anything and everything is for sale!

Visit Wat Bo, a large, highly respected pagoda, founded in the 18th Century. Like the Silver Pagoda in Phnom Penh, the vihear of Wat Bo contains unique wall paintings that are said to be late 19th Century. Look for the daily-life market scenes such as an opium smoking Chinese merchant, the colonial era French officer at the market and the French soldiers attending a traditional dance performance. Also of interest is the large collection of Buddha statues located behind the main Buddha.

Pause for lunch at a local restaurant. Cost of lunch is payable directly to the restaurant.

Afterwards transfer to the Siem Reap airport.



4:50 PM Depart Siem Reap via Vietnam Airlines flight # 930 direct service to Luang Prabang. Total flying time: 2 hours.

6:50 PM Arrive Luang Prabang, Laos. You will be met at the International Arrivals Hall by our Fast Track Immigration Representative who will be holding a sign marked '**Your Name**'. You will be assisted with immigration and custom clearance and escorted to your guide who will be waiting outside the Arrivals Terminal. Transfer by private vehicle to the Belmond La Residence Phou Vao. The drive takes approximately 10 minutes.

LUANG PRABANG





At the Belmond La Residence Phou Vao reservations for a Mountain View Room have been confirmed for the following 3 nights.

Positioned atop a hill, with stunning mountain views, La Résidence Phou Vao is an unforgettable place to stay. Its calm, tranquil ambience echoes that of the sleepy World Heritage town of Luang Prabang — former royal capital of Laos. The hotel is known for its wonderful French-influenced local cuisine. Relax, soak up the atmosphere and enjoy stepping back into a more gracious era.

Laos, also known as the "Land of a Million Elephants," is one of the most unknown and least developed countries of Indochina. Maybe this is due to the fact that it is the only Southeast Asian country without access to the sea, or maybe because Laos has never played a significant role in the world history and had disappeared in the 19th century from the maps for a considerable time.

Laos is a country of soft voices. Uncomplainingly the Lao people bowed to their fate during the Vietnam War when the American pilots dropped most of their bombs on Laos - overall more than Germany was bombed with during World War II.

The Laotian people are predominantly Buddhist and are very friendly and hospitable people. The national religion of the Laotian people is Theravada Buddhism, which was introduced into Laos in the 14th Century. Thus, about 2,000 ancient pagodas in Laos are not only worshipping places but also sociocultural institutions.

Luang Prabang is rich in cultural heritage, known as the seat of Lao culture, with monasteries, monuments, traditional costumes and surrounded by natural beauty.

According to the Luang Prabang legend, the first name of Luang Prabang was Muang Swa, named after King Khun Xua around the 8th Century. Later known as Xieng Dong and Xieng Thong. During the reign of King Fa Ngum between 1354 and 1372 A.D. Xieng Dong and Xieng Thong cities were renamed Luang Prabang in the name of the gold image of Buddha, The Phrabang. Luang Prabang was the capital of the Lane Xang Kingdom from 1354 A.D. The capital was then transferred to Vientiane city in 1560 A.D.

This evening enjoy a baci ceremony where gentle villages offer their foreign visitors tidings of good luck for their travels. After the ceremony, enjoy beautiful classical and folk dances, and take part in Laos' social dance "**Lamvong**" with the local people. You're also invited to try some local Laotian food such as sticky rice, local canapés & tea.

Overnight: Belmond La Residence Phou Vao – Mountain View Room



LUANG PRABANG



DAY 16 LUANG PRABANG

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

At 7:00 AM transfer to the serene Wat

Sibounheaung; a nearly century old temple. Your guide will prepare offerings such as fruits, candles and incense sticks to offer to the monks before enjoying a morning blessing ceremony that is believed to bring health, happiness and longevity. Here you can witness the evening chanting, and learn more about a Buddhist monk's life by interacting with a young monk. You will learn about the influence of Buddhism in daily local life.

Then visit the morning Phosi Market, where you will see such diverse offerings as dried buffalo skin, local tea and saltpeter among the chickens, vegetables and hill-tribe weavings.

Return to the hotel for breakfast.

Later this morning visit Wat Visoun, known as the 'Watermelon Stupa' on account of its stupa's unusual spherical shape. Also visit Wat Xieng Thong Temple. Wat Xieng Thong is situated on the banks of the Mekong River and was constructed in 1559/1560 A.D. by King Say Setthathirath. Wat Xieng Thong is the most beautiful among all monasteries of Luang Prabang and represents the typical Lao art style. Here you will see many old and beautiful religious artifacts of the period between the 16th & 20th centuries and some ancient masterpieces of Lao art. Afterwards, visit the National Museum (the former Royal Palace), which houses the collections of valuables including the famous Prabang Buddha statue and gifts received from foreign dignitaries.

Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

This afternoon visit the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre, a non-profit museum and resource center dedicated to the ethnic cultures of Laos. Its goal is to promote understanding, appreciation, and preservation of Laos' ethnic cultures.

Complete your day by climbing the 328 steps up to the top of Mount Phousi for an enjoyable exploration of the sacred, gilded stupa. Enjoy the breathtaking panoramic view of the Mekong River and city at sunset.

This evening you may wish to dine at L'Elephant Restaurant, which serves authentic French and Laotian cuisine, prepared with local market ingredients and the freshest produce from its own gardens. Your guide can assist with making reservations.

Overnight: Belmond La Residence Phou Vao – Mountain View Room



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DAY 17 LUANG PRABANG

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch 🕧

Drive overland along the Mekong River bank to visit the mysterious Pak Ou Caves. Pak Ou Caves are located at the junction of the Mekong River and Ou River. The caves consist of two caves Tham Thing; the lower cave and Tham Phum. Here you will find numerous Buddha images of various styles, ages and sizes.

Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant along the banks of the Mekong River.

After lunch enjoy a 2 hour downstream cruise on the Mekong River to Luang Prabang. The river is the national highway of Laos. Cruise past forested banks and riverside villages. The craggy mountain scenery is breathtaking with overhanging cliffs above the swift flowing river. En route, traditional Lao villages are barely visible behind a screen of foliage. Slender canoes bobbing by the shore and bamboo poles and floats mark the location of nets and fish traps.

Visit Ban Muangkeo where you will see the locals collecting river weed to make one of the most distinctive snacks of Luang Prabang.

You'll also stop to visit the charming spot of Ban Xieng Mene. The small district of Xiang men houses several temples worth visiting, including Wat Xiengmen and the once-important temple of Wat Long Khoun. Neither the most awe-inspiring nor grand of temples but definitely worth taking a look at.

Overnight: Belmond La Residence Phou Vao – Mountain View Room

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PAK OU CAVES



DAY 18 LUANG PRABANG/CHIANG MAI

Meals Included: Breakfast 🕕

At 8:30 AM depart the hotel and drive to Ban Xang Khong Village, famous for their beautiful weaving. There are a number of homes to visit where you can see weaving and dyeing. Those with an understanding of the ikat process of fabric dyeing (threads tied and dyed prior to weaving) will be interested to add "mut mee" (the Lao word for ikat) to their vocabulary.

Samples of a wide variety of natural dyes and the colors obtained are on display, as are all the steps from feeding the silkworms through reeling the silk thread from the cocoons, cleaning, degumming, spinning and finally to weaving. They have an extensive selection of weavings on display and most are for sale. You can view some of the traditional pieces being made – some with silks subtly colored with natural dyes, others, with chemical dyes which give stronger colors.

In addition to the silk weaving, you can visit a small papermaking facility. Handmade paper is produced and turned into carry bags and gift boxed.



1:15 PM Depart Luang Prabang via Lao Airlines flight # 635 direct service to Chiang Mai, Thailand. Total flying time: 1 hour. Chiang Mai (New City) was founded in 1296 by King Mengrai as the capital of the first independent Thai state, Lanna Thai (Kingdom of One Million Rice Fields). It became the cultural and religious center of the northern Tai, those who had migrated from southern China to dwell in Thailand, and remained so throughout the turbulent period of recurring Burmese attacks. The Burmese finally captured Chiang Mai in 1556 and occupied it until King Taksin retook the city in 1775, driving the Burmese forces back to near the present border. Burmese influence on religion, architecture, language, cuisine, and culture, remains strong. The city stands on the Ping River, a major tributary of the Chao Phraya River.

2:15 PM Arrive Chiang Mai, the second largest city in Thailand and the center of folk art.

After clearing customs and immigrations you will be met outside the baggage claim area by your guide and escorted to a waiting vehicle for your transfer to the Four Seasons Chiang Mai. Your guide will be holding a sign marked **'Your Name'.**

At the Four Seasons Chiang Mai reservations for a Lanna Pavilion have been confirmed for the following 2 nights. The Four Seasons Chiang Mai is a celebration of Thai Culture. From the ceaseless activity of daily life to the verdant Mae Rim Valley swathed in green. Set amidst 20 acres of landscaped gardens and observed lily ponds, lakes and terraced rice fields, the natural setting whispers adventure to some and respite to others. The Resort's architecture respectfully reflects the style of the "Lanna" Kingdom, an agricultural empire of foothill villages unified in the 13th-century under King Mengrai.

Lanna - which means "a million rice fields" - represented the heyday of northern Thai culture. Borrowing from the neighboring customs of Laos, Burma and Yunnan, China, its people developed distinctive traditions that have become synonymous with rustic Thai-style charm. From elevated teak houses to stenciled red lacquerware, they remain the signature of the north today.

Overnight: Four Seasons Chiang Mai – Lanna Pavilion





DAY 19 CHIANG MAI

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch 😗

At **8:30 AM** be ready in the lobby of the Four Seasons Chiang Mai in preparation for a full day of exploring Thailand's hilltribe villages. Travel 3 hours to Thaton.

Visit the Pa Dong tribe. The Pa Dong relies on farming rice, tea and tobacco cultivation. Certain Pa Dong females 'elongate' their necks from an early age with brass, which is coiled around their necks to give a brass ring effect. The greater number of coils is believed to enhance physical beauty and increase aesthetic appeal. Wearing the coiled brass rings is considered an "honor" and is a privilege awarded to females who are born on a full moon.

You will also visit an Akha (Akha, Ekaw) and Lahu hill tribe village. Akha villages are distinguished by their carved wooden gates with guardian spirits. The Akha live in raised houses, within which one small room is set aside for paying respect to ancestors.

"Lahu" means "hunter" and the Lahu (Mussur) pride themselves on their skills in hunting and trapping. They are also famous for their knowledge of herbal medicine. The Lahu are an independent people, physically larger than the members of the other tribes, but rather than their greater stature leading to aggressiveness, they love entertainment and the easy life.

You will then visit a Palong Village. Attractions of this village are the women who wear waisthoops. This practice is believed to uphold legendary mysteries.

Overnight: Four Seasons Chiang Mai – Lanna Pavilion





DAY 20 CHIANG MAI/BANGKOK

Meals Included: Breakfast 🚯

At approximately **10:30 AM** be ready in the lobby of the Four Seasons Chiang Mai in preparation for your transfer to the Chiang Mai airport.



12:35 PM Depart Chiang Mai via Thai Airways flight # 107 direct service to Bangkok. Total flying time: 1 hour, 10 minutes.

Bangkok, Thailand's major gateway, casts an irresistible spell of enchantment. To the Thais it is Krung Thep, "**City of Angels**", and you'll find it truly a magical place, one that captivates the imagination. More than anywhere else in the country, Bangkok expresses Thailand's uncanny ability to blend the old with the new. This lends a thrilling sense of discovery to one's sightseeing and adds an element of surprise when exploring what is the Orient's most fabled city. **1:45 PM** Arrive Bangkok, Thailand - one of the most "Oriental" cities in the Asean World. Formerly the fabled Kingdom of Siam, Thailand earns its reputation as "the Land of Smiles".

After collecting your luggage you will be met outside the baggage claim area by your guide and escorted to a waiting vehicle for your transfer to the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Your guide will be holding a sign marked **'Your Name'.**

At the Mandarin Oriental Hotel reservations for a Deluxe River View Room have been confirmed for the following 2 nights. The hotel is located on the east bank of the Chao Phraya River. For more than 130 years distinguished travelers have followed the legendary Chao Phraya River, through the heart of Bangkok, to the doors of one of the world's most luxurious hotels, Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok. The hotel is a paragon of contemporary luxury and rich in history.

Good restaurants in Bangkok include the Mandarin Oriental's Sala Rim Naam (riverside restaurant that features a set Thai Dinner and Thai Classical Dance Performance) or one of the Mandarin Oriental Hotels fine restaurants – Le Normandie, China Club or Lord Jim's.

Overnight: Mandarin Oriental – Deluxe River View Room



DAY 21 BANGKOK

Meals Included: Breakfast 🚯

This morning visit Wat Pho (Reclining Buddha) in time to experience the monks early morning chanting ritual (chanting starts at **9:00 AM**). After this uplifting and often private experience visit the temple grounds and the famous 45-metre Reclining Buddha. Wat Pho is the oldest and biggest temple with the largest number of pagodas (95 in all) in the city. Also, it was the first open university of Thailand which offered courses in several branches of knowledge like literature, astrology, medicine and massage.

Continue to The Grand Palace, Thailand's most important landmark, where you will be awed by the grandeur and majesty of the building and its throne halls. Note the detailed ornamentation. The Royal Chapel is Thailand's most important and sacred Wat. Marvel at the mysterious Wat Phra Keo (Emerald Buddha), the most revered Buddha image in Thailand. The exquisite temple contains an image of Buddha carved from a single piece of jade.

Board a long-tail boat and travel along the Chao Phraya River. Observe the Thai lifestyle – the contrast between luxurious condominiums and ruined houses along both sides of the River.

Visit the Royal Barge Museum which houses ceremonial King's barges decorated with multi-color glass, gilt and stucco.

Visit Wat Arun, 'Temple of Dawn'. This monumental 86-meter Khmer-style prang, one of the largest religious monuments in the country, towers above the Chao Phraya to form Bangkok's most impressive and famous landmark. Wat Arun symbolically represents the Buddhist universe, with its trident-capped central tower indicating Mount Meru and the four smaller towers depicting the four worldly oceans. Reflective beauty comes from thousands of multi-glazed Chinese porcelains embedded into the structure by Buddhist devotees.

This evening you will be transferred to Sirocco Restaurant, located on the 63rd floor of The Dome at Lebua. Sirocco is the world's highest alfresco restaurant and one of Bangkok's most coveted dining choices. Enjoy breathtaking views of Bangkok and the Chao Phraya River. Live Jazz music featuring vocalists of international repute adds to the captivating ambiance. Transfers to/from the Mandarin Oriental to Sirocco will be included. **Cost of dinner is payable directly to the restaurant**.

Overnight: Mandarin Oriental – Deluxe River View Room

TEMPLE OF DAWN



DAY 22 BANGKOK/HONG KONG/NEWARK

Meals Included: Breakfast 🚯

At 8:00 AM be ready in the lobby of the Mandarin Oriental in preparation for your transfer to the Bangkok Airport.



11:50 AM Depart Bangkok via Cathay Pacific Airlines flight # 750 direct service to Hong Kong. Total flying time: 2 hours, 45 minutes. **Set your watch 1 hour ahead.**

3:35 PM Arrive Hong Kong. You will have a 2 hour, 45 minute layover and change of planes.



6:20 PM Depart Hong Kong via Cathay Pacific Airlines flight # 890 direct service to Newark, New Jersey. Total flying time: 15 hours, 40 minutes. **Set your watch back 12 hours**.

9:00 PM Arrive Newark.







THE SOFITEL LEGEND METROPOLE HANOI







The Metropole is an award-winning French colonial-style hotel located in the heart of Hanoi. The first Sofitel Legend property offers 364 rooms & suites, complemented by a choice of three restaurants (French, Vietnamese and Italian), three bars, seven function rooms, a heated swimming pool, health club, the luxurious Le Spa du Metropole, complimentary wifi and for hotel guests a daily tour of the recently opened war-time bomb shelter and Path of History guided by hotel's Ambassador of History.

Sofitel Legend Metropole Hotel

15 Ngo Qyen St.	
Hanoi, Vietnam	
Telephone:	(011 84 4) 3826-6919
Fax:	(011 84 4) 3826-6920

http://www.sofitel.com



PARADISE PEAK - VIETNAMESE JUNK







The Paradise Peak is the latest masterpiece in Halong bay, a sumptuous floating hotel that has redefined the boundaries of Five Star cruising by providing a supreme level of luxury to its prestigious passengers.

In all aspects, Paradise Peak seems to mirror the splendour and majesty of the surrounding scenery offered by Halong Bay. Paradise Peak does not only offer a unique travelling experience, it allows you to dream with your eyes wide open.

Similar to Paradise Luxury vessels in appearance, Paradise Peak offers in total 8 stately suites for an infinite comfort and care. All facilities have been designed with the utmost elegance and the crew composed to ensure a guest service worthy of the most remarkable grand hotels.

Designed to offer you exceptional services, Paradise Peak features the most spacious spa facilities and the very first and only library and fitness room of Ha Long Bay

http://paradisepeakcruises.com/



THE NAM HAI RESORT







Located 7 miles from Hoi An on the Central Coast the harmony between architecture and nature is evident at The Nam Hai. Set amid lush landscaping and unobstructed ocean views the Nam Hai provides guests with a culturally inviting experience combined with all the charms of true Vietnamese hospitality. The hotel is sprawled across 35 hectare and has a total of 60 elegant Villas and 40 Pool Villas each set within landscaped gardens with unobstructed views across the South China Sea and on to the misty Cham Islands.

The Nam Hai, Hoi An Hamlet 1, Dien Duong Village Dien Ban District Quang Nam Province, Vietnam Telephone: (011 84 510) 3940-000 Fax: (011 84 510) 3940-999

http://www.thenamhai.com



VICTORIA CAN THO







The only luxury hotel in the centre of the Mekong Delta, the four star Victoria Can Tho Resort blends colonial-style architecture with the natural beauty of the river.

Close to Can Tho town, but a quiet retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city, the resort lies on the banks of the Hau River, set amidst gardens with a plethora of exotic plants.

Victoria Can Tho Resort Cai Khe Ward Can Tho City Vietnam Tel: + 84 710 381 0111 Fax: + 84 710 382 9259

http://www.victoriahotels.asia



PARK HYATT - SAIGON







Located at Lam Son Square in the centre of Ho Chi Minh City, the 9-storey Park Hyatt Saigon hotel is within walking distance of main tourist attractions, restaurants and parks.

This luxurious colonial style room features wood floors, separate work area, high-speed Internet access, white marble bath with walk-in rain shower and one king bed with plush feather pillows and duvets. Pampering amenities include luxurious bathrobe, yukata, slippers and bathroom amenities. Each room offers a city or stunning pool view.

The Park Hyatt Saigon

2 Lam Son Square, District 1 Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam Telephone: (011 84 8) 3824 1234 Fax: (011 84 8) 3823 7569

http://www.saigon.park.hyatt.com



RAFFLES GRAND HOTEL D'ANGKOR







Since the early 1930s, a visit to the ancient temples of Angkor has been synonymous with a stay at Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor.

The luxury Siem Reap hotel offers personalized pampering at the award-winning Raffles Spa, as well as an array of fine dining choices, from exotic Khmer cuisine at the Restaurant Le Grand to the Elephant Bar where fine wine, champagne and cocktails, including the signature Airavata is served. For a one-of-a-kind dining experience, opt for private dining at one of the magnificent temples of Angkor.

Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor

1 Vithei Charles de Gaulle, Khum Svay Dang Kum Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia Tel: +855 63 963 888 Fax: +855 63 963 168



LA RESIDENCE PHOU VAO







Positioned atop a hill, with stunning mountain views, La Résidence Phou Vao is an unforgettable place to stay.

Its calm, tranquil ambience echoes that of the sleepy World Heritage town of Luang Prabang—former royal capital of Laos—spread out below.

This Orient-Express hotel is known for its wonderful Frenchinfluenced local cuisine and an open-air spa beside a water lily pool. Relax, soak up the atmosphere and enjoy stepping back into a more gracious era.

La Résidence Phou Vao 3 PO Box 50, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR Tel: (+856-71) 212194 or 212530 Fax: (+856-71) 212534

http://www.residencephouvao.com



FOUR SEASONS - CHIANG MAI







The Four Seasons Chiang Mai is a celebration of Thai Culture. From the ceaseless activity of daily life to the verdant Mae Rim Valley swathed in green. Set amidst 20 acres of landscaped gardens and observed lily ponds, lakes and terraced rice fields, the natural setting whispers adventure to some and respite to others. The resort's architecture respectfully reflects the style of the "Lanna" Kingdom, an agricultural empire of foothill villages unified in the 13th-century under King Mengrai.

The Four Season's Chiang Mai

Mae Rim, Samoeng Old Road Mae Rim, Chiang Rai, Thailand Telephone: (011 66 53) 298 181 Fax: (011 66 53) 298 190

www.fourseasons.com/ChiangMai



THE MANDARIN ORIENTAL - BANGKOK







The hotel is located on the east bank of the Chao Phraya River. For more than 130 years distinguished travelers have followed the legendary Chao Phraya River, through the heart of Bangkok, to the doors of one of the world's most luxurious hotels, Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok. The hotel is a paragon of contemporary luxury and rich in history.

The Mandarin Oriental Bangkok

48 Oriental Avenue Bangkok, Thailand Telephone: (011 662) 659 9000 Facsimile: (011 662) 659 0000

www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok/