

Elite Vietnam & Cambogia - 20 days / 19 nights

Private tour with Italian and/or English speaking guide

CODICE: VTN _CIA_000

Itinerary:

Day 01 March '20: HANOI - ARRIVAL.

Arrive in **Hanoi** Capital, a city of a thousand years of history. Upon arrival at **Noi Bai International Airport** in Hanoi meet your tour guide. The guide will give you the very first introduction of the destination and escort you to your hotel in the city center for check-in. Note: Hotel check-in time is 14:00. Early check-in is not available. Overnight in **Hanoi**.

Day 02 March '20: HANOI CITY (B/L)

After a good breakfast at the hotel, we start the city exploration. The first site will be the Mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh,



a site of pilgrimage. The memorial building was built from materials gathered all over Vietnam (Monday & Friday afternoon, outside visit only). Next, visit the **Temple of Literature** which was constructed in 1070 under Ly Thanh Tong's dynasty, first in honor of Confucius and now to celebrate the sages and high-ranking scholars of Vietnam. Continue to the interesting **Vietnam History Museum** which displays a collection of nearly 7,000 objects that vividly depict the long process of Vietnam development from early inhabitance until the August Revolution in 1945. Take a cyclo-ride (rickshaws) around the **Old Quarter** streets which were named after the specific goods once offered for sale at these places. Stop at **Hoan Kiem Lake** to learn about the legend of the lake and visit the **Ngoc Son Temple**. Next in the

schedule is a **Water Puppet show** - a uniquely Northern Vietnamese art form depicting scenes from rural life and episodes of national history. Overnight in **Hanoi.**

Day 03 March '20: HANOI - PU LUONG (B/L/D)

Pu Luong Retreat is located in Pu Luong region which offers travellers a new, unique and off- the-beaten track adventure. Pu Luong Region is unknown amongst most tourists and contains all the highlights of Northern Vietnam such as: stunning rice terrace fields, scenic rivers and Mai Chau's remote traditional villages of ethnic minorities. These ethnic minorities, who retain their unique cultural heritage and way of living, will offer a very new experience. Following a delicious breakfast at the hotel, we take a 4.5 hour drive to **Pu Luong**. After the first 3 driving hours, the breathtaking mountain road starts appearing, offering a panoramic view of the whole valley. Arrive at Pu Luong retreat in time for a

delicious lunch. Then, free time to explore the beautiful retreat with its captivating panoramic views and tranquil setting. In the afternoon, you will be transferred to a suspension bridge over the Cham River, where you'll begin your walk in search of stunning water wheels. Come close to each wheel and discover how water is moved from river to handmade bamboo aqueducts via simple constructions of all sizes. This 2.5 km walk will take about 1.5 hours. Arriving at a local fisherman's house, you have a short rest to gear up for the rafting adventure (1,5 hours - 2km) with Mr. Dinh and his team. Floating along the calm river, enjoy the view as well as learn how to paddle and steer your handcrafted rafts. After arriving at scenic Tan Lap Bridge, disembark and drive back to Pu Luong Retreat for dinner. Overnight in **Pu Luong**.



Day 04 March '20: PU LUONG - NINH BINH (B/L)

Get up early to hear the sound of nature and breathe the fresh air. After breakfast at the Lodge, continue to descend into the beautiful valley facing the Retreat where you will walk around tumbling rice terraces. Trek through small paths shrouded in vegetation that slowly reveal a picturesque village sitting at the base of a towering mountain. You won't resist shooting photos with your camera! Continuing to the base of the valley, weave between roads and farmland, villages and wild fields, ponds and rivers, mountains and open lands. Savour the ever-changing scenery as you trek to a beautiful spot and have plenty of chances to interact with the locals. Then you will be transferred back to Pu Luong



Retreat for lunch. This enthralling trekking is around 4 km long and will take 3 hours. In the afternoon, after 3 driving hours, you will arrive in **Ninh Binh** province. This province hosts typical rural villages of the Northern region with a rich culture, vast green paddy fields, expanding mountains and poetic rivers that flow to the horizon. Arrive in **Ninh Binh** city in late afternoon. Overnight in **Ninh Binh City**.

Day 05 March '20: NINH BINH -UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE - HOMESTAY IN HANOI (B/L/D)

Remotely located among the amazing Karst Mountains of Ninh Binh province, Nham valley & Bird Valley have always



been the perfect place for nature lovers. Rowing boats through caves and riding on ox carts are the highlights of this excursion. Breakfast at the hotel before starting your journey with a 2-kilometre ox cart ride from **Bich Dong** to **Nham Valley**, through the countryside, rice fields and green mountain scenery. Get off the ox cart and take a rowing boat along crystal-green canals. Explore Fairy (Hang But) and Fish caves (hang Cá) along the way. This one hour rowing boat trip will bring you closer to the nature. After such interesting time, enjoy lunch with Vietnamese food at a local restaurant. Relax for a while before visiting **Hoa Lu** and the remains of **Dinh & Le Kings' Temples**. Hoa Lu was Vietnam's former capital before it was moved to **Thang Long** (the present Hanoi) in 1010. Transfer to Hanoi suburb, you will reach Stork Island Village in **Hai**

Duong Province in the afternoon. This land is famous for the litchi fruit. Check in home stay in a typical local house then take a rowing boat trip on the lake around the island and enjoy the countryside scenery at sunset amongst the call and flap of thousands of birds. In the evening, after dinner with local specialties, you will have a tea party and chat with the local hosts to learn more about their life and culture. Overnight in **local home**.

Day 06 March '20: DEPART TO HALONG BAY (B/L/D)

Wake up in the morning and, together with your host, stroll to the open-air market to explore the bustling village atmosphere, chat with friendly villagers and buy some food for your breakfast. After breakfast, farewell to the friendly family, drive to **Ha Long Bay** – a *UNESCO World Natural Heritage* – where thousands of spectacular limestone islets and grottoes rise from the clear emerald **Gulf of Tonkin**. Upon arrival, have a welcome drink on board prior to your checkin. Lunch with fresh seafood will be served while the boat is cruising through many stone islets, floating villages, small beaches. Visit a floating fishing village, talk and meet the local villagers before swimming or enjoying free time at your own on the sundeck. Dinner will be ready by the time the boat anchors off at a quiet designated overnight area. Overnight on board in **Ha Long Bay**.

Note: Itinerary is subject to change without prior notice according to weather conditions or local administration regulations.

Day 07 March '20: HALONG BAY- NIGHT TRAIN TO HUE - (BRUNCH).

Breakfast is served while the junk boat cruises around **Ha Long Bay**, passing by many islets named after their shapes such as Dog, Incense Urn, Fighting Cock, Finger, etc. Stop for a while to explore the **Surprise Cave** - one of the most beautiful caves of the bay. The junk boat then continues cruising towards the wharf. Disembark at about 11.00AM, your driver is ready to bring you back to **Ha Noi**. Check in a small but clean hotel for bath and quick relax before taking a **night train to Hue**. Overnight on train in soft sleeper **AC cabin**.

Day 08 March '20: HUE (B/L)

If you are a history lover, **Hue** will easily be on the top of your Vietnam must-see list. This capital of Nguyen emperors is packed with temples, tombs, palaces, pagodas or their remains (which survived the damage of the successive armies). Upon arrival in Hue in the morning, your local tour-guide and driver meet and transfer you to your hotel in the city centre; drop luggage and start exploring the historical city. Firs, visit **Thien Mu Pagoda** on the bank of the scenic **Perfume River**, then have lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch, visit the **Imperial Citadel** where the Kings of Vietnam's last feudal dynasty ruled from 1802 to 1945, including the Flag Tower, Nine Holy Cannons, Ngo Mon Gate, Thai Hoa Palace, Nine Dynastic Urns, **Forbidden Purple City**, etc. The tour ends at your hotel at about 5.00PM. Overnight in **Hue City**.





After breakfast, check out from the hotel and visit the **Tombs of King Khai Dinh & King Minh Mang**. In complete contrast to Emperor **Minh Mang's** stylish creation, the tomb of **Emperor Khai Dinh** appears at first to be an unprepossessing



concrete construction. Its interest lies within the uneasy combination of Vietnamese and European features and the use of fragments of ceramics and glass for decoration. Continue travel to Hoi An via Da Nang with a stop on the way to enjoy local specialties — Bún Thị Nướng (Grilled pork with fresh noodles). Another stop is at Hai Van Pass, which translates as "Pass of the Ocean Clouds," and offers spectacular scenery. Hoi An retains a sense of charm and history that have largely survived the destruction of successive wars. Hoi An Ancient Town is an exceptional well-preserved example of a South-East Asian trading port dating from the 15th to the 19th century. Its buildings and its street design reflect the influences, both indigenous and foreign, that have

combined to produce this unique heritage site. Sample central Vietnam dishes in a local restaurant. Mid afternoon, take a guided walking tour around **Hoi An Ancient Town**. Visit the **Japanese covered bridge**, **Chinese assembly hall**, a typical Vietnamese merchant's house, an interesting museum and a local market. There are numerous art galleries, souvenirs and tailor shops where you can get some express made-to-order clothes. The next visit is to a **lantern craftsman's home** in the old streets. Here you will have a brief introduction to the history, shape and color of the lanterns as well as the stages of making them. You can try to make and decorate one on your own, and keep it as a souvenir of your time in Hoi An. Overnight in **Hoi An**.

Day 10 March '20: HOI AN – SIDECAR TO COUNTRYSIDE (B/D)

Enjoy a lovely breakfast at the hotel then spend the morning lazily stretching on a sun lounger by the palm-fringed infinity pool or perhaps return to the **Ancient Town** for some last-minute souvenirs. Afternoon: explore the picturesque countryside of Hoi An by vintage sidecar, and gain a unique perspective from which to photograph the area's lush rice fields and single-craft villages that date back from when Hoi An was a prosperous port city in the Middle Ages. Meet your guide at your hotel at about 3pm, transfer to **Thu Bon harbour**, embark on a boat and start cruising along the green river to **Kim Bong Carpentry village**. This is a very interesting village where you can see the woodcarvers and carpenters at work. With only simple, little tools, the talented, patient local people produce lovely examples of ancient architecture, wooden furniture and shipbuilding. After strolling in the village, continue the fascinating boat cruise on the **Thu Bon River** for sightseeing of natural landscapes and catching up with water life activities. On the stunning river dotted with green islands, day by day, local fishermen earn their living. You will get to learn more about traditional fishing tools and techniques that the locals have been employing here for centuries. Enjoy a **BBQ** feast arranged on the bank of a small island while watching the sun setting down behind the mountains afar. Back to the boat for a cruise back to Hoi An town while the last sun's rays linger to the peaceful scenery and fill your eyes with the multitude of colours and reflections of Hoi An town at dusk. The trip ends at your hotel around 7pm.

Day 11 March '20: HOI AN (B, L)

After breakfast, visit Tra Que Organic Vegetable Herbs Village

You will have a chance to experience the traditional farmers lifestyle.

Upon arrival, enjoy a special welcome drink, then start learning and doing farming with local farmers: visit the village,

learn about the history of the **Tra Que Herb Village** and the riparian ecosystem of the village. Experience what is like working on an Organic farm by planting, watering vegetables and riding a buffalo.

After farm work, you will relax with Head-Shoulder-Foot massage then discover how to make **rice paper**: you will be taught how to wash the rice, soak the rice and grind the rice by traditional methods. Learn to make rice paper and enjoy your finished products.

Finally, you will learn how to cook some delicious Vietnamese dishes such as spring rolls and local pancakes. Enjoy a lunch consisting on what you have cooked, plus some extra dishes.

In the afternoon: After lunch, depart to visit to the **Sanctuary of My Son**. It is a cluster of abandoned and partially ruined Hindu temples in



Vietnam, constructed between the 4th and the 14th century by the kings of Champa. The temples are dedicated to the worship of the god Shiva, known under various local names, the most important of which is Bhadreshvara. At the end of the day return to hotel, free time for dinner and overnight in Hoi An.



Day 12 March '20: HOI AN - HO CHI MINH (B/L)

After breakfast, you will be free until boarding a domestic flight to **Ho Chi Minh City** – Vietnam's undisputedly commercial headquarters. Located on the bank of the Saigon River, **Ho Chi Minh City**, or **Saigon**, is Vietnam's major port and the largest city yet still retains wide downtown avenues flanked by pristine colonial mansions. After meeting our guide at **Tan Son Nhat Airport**, start the city tour: **Cholon market**, the narrow streets of **China town**, the **Reunification Palace**, **Notre Dame Cathedral**, the **Old Central Post Office**. Your tour guide can drop you off at **Ben Thanh Market** for shopping at your request. Overnight in **Ho Chi Minh City**.

Day 13 March '20: HO CHI MINH – MEKONG PRIVATE CRUISE (B/L/D)

This morning we will take you on a journey among several Mekong Delta's significant destinations. **Mekong Delta** is Vietnam's biggest rice bowls with three rice crops per years and is the major contributor to Vietnam and nearby



countries' food basket. Upon arrival in **Cai Be**, embark on a private sampan, check in your private cabin and start cruising. From the sampan, observe life as it plays out on shore - people going about their daily activities against picturesque landscapes - while your attentive crew serves tea and seasonal fruit. Before arriving at **Sa Dec**, stop at various spots along the river for a look into some of the industries of the region including a brick factory where everything is made by hand; then pass monkey bridges and tiny villages to visit a **Cao Dai** temple. Arrive in **Sa Dec** and stroll to the outdoor market. Visit one of the highlights of the charming town, the ancient house of **Huynh Thuy Le**, a real-life character in the celebrated novel and film "The Lover" by Marguerite Duras. Lunch is served on board while cruising towards **Can Tho** along a

narrow canal teeming with life. Explore the countryside by local rowboat. The last stopover before sunset is at an ancient house (a "Nha Co" in Vietnamese), dating back to the 19th century. The owner will welcome you and a candlelit dinner is served in this authentic countryside setting. After dinner return on board while the boat continues its cruise towards the Hau River. Overnight in **en-suite cabin on private sampan**.

Day 14 March '20: EXPLORE BUSTLE FLOATING MARKET – RETURN CHAU DOC (B/L)

Wake up early at 6:00 am for a visit to the famous **Cai Rang Floating Market** which operates daily starting from 5:00 am. Arriving at the market's core, you will see dozens of colourful boats laden with fresh produce from all over the Delta. Note the long poles with produce hung on top advertising the products on offer. After some time to view the market from several different vantage points, you will slowly cruise back to the resort taking in scenes of stilt homes, women doing laundry in the river and children playing on its banks. Go ashore for a closer view of rural life, including stops at a small noodle workshop and a tropical fruit orchard. Breakfast is served on board while the sampang navigates towards the market among local barges loaded with fruits and vegetables from the Delta, making for some stunning photos. Continue cruising towards **Can Tho** city and disembark at the private jetty. Your tour-guide is waiting for you to transfer to Chau Doc. On the way, stop at **Rung Tram Tra Su**. Check in hotel and free time at your leisure for the remainder of the day. Overnight at hotel in Chau Doc.

Day 15 March '20: CHAU DOC - PHNOM PENH. (B, L, D)

After breakfast, departure by boat to **Phnom Penh** with a stop for immigration and customs formalities along the river. Arrival in Phnom Penh and meeting with the guide. Transfer and accommodation with check in at 14:00 (or earlier if rooms are available).

At mid-afternoon you will be picked up and transferred to **Choeung Ek, the Killing Fields**. What nowadays became a peaceful stretch of countryside is the same place where, during the Khmer Regime, over 10,000 people were executed. The remains of some of them are stored in a memorial to remind people of the atrocities that the Khmer Rouge inflicted on other Khmers. Proceed to the **Toul Sleng**, a museum that testifies the bloody Khmer Rouge regime and the tragic genocide perpetrated against the Cambodian population itself, guilty of being able to read and write, wear glasses, be teachers, doctors, professionals, or just being able to speak foreign languages; it is estimated that about three million people out of twelve were tortured and killed over four



years until 1979. Lunch at a local restaurant and dinner at the hotel. Overnight in Phnom Penh.



Day 16 March '20: PHNOM PENH HIGHLIGHTS (B, L, D)

Breakfast at the hotel. You will be picked up in hotel and transferred to the **Royal Palace** to visit the incredibly solid silver-floored **Silver Pagoda** where you will be amazed by the thousands of silver tiles that cover the floor and by the biggest golden Buddha statue of Cambodia. The Silver Pagoda is located in the Royal Palace Compound.

Then visit the **Raung Damrei Museum** and shop at the **Central Market**.

Lunch in a local restaurant.

In the afternoon visit the **Wat Phnom pagoda**, a 15th century stupa. Wat Phnom stands 27 metres above the ground, on a small hill, and marks the central point of Phnom Penh City.

After visiting the pagoda, move on to the **Independence Monument**: it is in the shape of a lotus-shaped pagoda, adorned with a Naga (snake) motif which is recurring in Cambodian culture and history from the past to the modern-day. A bronze statue of Late King father Norodom Sihanouk was built to mark the first anniversary of his death. Accommodation, dinner and overnight in Phnom Penh.

Day 17 March '20: PHNOM PENH - SIEM REAP. (B, L, D)

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure from the capital by crossing the **Japanese bridge** and heading towards the provincial capital of **Kampong Thom**, located halfway between Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. After about an hour there will be a



brief stop at the village of **Skhun**, famous for its giant spiders, which will be served to those who are willing to try them, dipped in sauces. You will be surrounded by sellers with baskets, kept in the sun so that the delicious food won't get cold, offering the delicate arachnids, which can be purchased in small bags and eaten one by one, like french fries. Later, head towards **Sambor Preikuk**, the most important pre-Angkorian archaeological complex in the country, the ancient capital of the kingdom of Chenla, precursor of the Khmer one. There are more than one hundred highly suggestive and rarely visited temples, divided into three monasterial complexes: the South group of **Prasat Yeay Poan**, the central group of **Prasat Tor** and the North group of **Prasat Sambor**. The latter includes the most important buildings and an incarnation of

Ivahiva. Lunch in a simple local restaurant and then drive around three hours on an excellent road. The landscape is splendid, the sceneries reflect rice paddies, villages, scenes of real life in the Cambodian countryside not visible unless you travel this route by land. This was once the Royal Route, passing by Kampong Kdei on the Spean Praptos stone bridge, dating from the Khmer period and built by King Jayavarman VII. Arrival in **Siem Reap** in the late afternoon. Accommodation, dinner and overnight in Siem Reap.

Day 18 March '20: ANGKOR WAT - ANGKOR THOM COMPLEX - TA PROHM. (B, L, -)

Breakfast at the hotel, then transfer to visit the **South Gate of Angkor Thom Temple:** marvel at the wonder of the eerie **Bayon, Baphoun, Phimeanakas,** the **Elephants terrace** and the **terrace of the Leper King.** Then visit the **Ta Prohm Temple** which, unlike most of the other Angkor temples, hasn't been restored but it has been left just how it was founded; the photogenic and romantic combination of trees growing out of the ruins and the jungle surroundings have made it one of Angkor's most popular temples with visitors. Lunch at local restaurant.

In the afternoon, visit the famous **Angkor Wat**, built by king Suryavarman II in the early 12th century as his state temple and capital city. The largest and best-preserved temple of the whole site, it is the only one to have remained a significant religious center—first Hindu, then Buddhist—since its foundation. Free dinner.

Overnight in Siem Reap.

Day 19 March '20: KBAL SPEAN (TREKKING) - BANTEAY SREY & ROLUOS GROUP. (B, L, -)

After breakfast pick up from the hotel and transfer to visit Kbal Spean, an ancient Angkor ruin that is located a 90-

minute bumpy ride from Siem Reap, on the same route of the **Banteay Srey**. Reaching the temple requires a moderately easy 45-minute uphill walk through the woods.

Then it's a half an hour journey to reach **Banteay Srey**, one of the most unusual temples of Angkor, Cambodia. It lies 20 km north of the main group. It is built largely of red sandstone, which is covered with elaborate and deeply carved decoration. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon visit to the **Roluos Group**, a collection of monuments representing the remains of Hariharalaya, the first major capital of the Angkorian-era Khmer Empire. It has become known as the 'Roluos Group' due to its proximity to the modern town of Roluos.





Free dinner. Overnight in Siem Reap.

Day 20 March '20: SIEM REAP. DEPARTURE DAY (B, -, -)

Breakfast in hotel and free time until transfer to the airport accordingly with your flight departure time. Departure day.

END OF SERVICES

Pricing: in US Dollars per person for shared twin/double

Number of Persons	9-12pax	13-15pax	SGL Supp
Standard (3*)	1930	1835	575

SUPPLEMENT SERVICES			
German Speaking guide	20 USD/day/group		
Italian / Spanish guide	25 USD/day/group		

Accommodation:

City	Standard (3*)	Room type	Website		
Hanoi	Chalcedony	SUP/Deluxe	http://www.chalcedonyhotel.com		
Mai Chau	Mai Chau Nature	Traditional stilt house	https://naturabungalow.com		
Ninh Binh	Bai Dinh hotel	Deluxe	http://www.baidinhhotel.com/		
Halong	Renea Cruise	Deluxe	https://reneacruiseshalong.com/		
Night train to Hue	Air-conditioner 4berths, soft sleeper				
Hue	Romance hotel	SUP/Deluxe	http://romancehotel.com.vn		
Hoi An	Hoi An Field Boutique resort	Garden View	http://www.hoianfieldvilla.vn/		
Ho Chi Minh City	Emm Hotel Saigon	Superior	http://emmhotels.com/en/hotels/e mmhotel- saigon		
Mekong Cruise	Le Cochinchine	Charter Cruise	http://www.lecochinchinecruise.co m/		
Chau Doc	Chau Pho	Deluxe	http://chauphohotel.com/		
Phnom Penh	The House Asian Urban Hotel	Superior	https://maads.asia/teahouse		
Siem Reap	G & Z Bliss d'Angkor Suites	Deluxe	www.gzblissdangkor.com		



Price includes

- Accommodation in a shared twin or shared double room.
- Meals as mentioned (B= Breakfast, L= Lunch, D= Dinner).
- English speaking guide
- Transfers as mentioned by private air-conditioned vehicle
- Tours as mentioned in itinerary
- Traditional show in Pu Luong
- Package 2days-1night on board in Halong bay
- Boat trips cruise on rivers
- Night train ticket from Hanoi to Hue
- Entrance fees for mentioned visits
- Water & cold tissue in car
- Government taxes
- Express boat from Chau Doc to Phnom Penh
- Private charter 2days-1nights cruising along Mekong river

Price does not include

- Other services not mentioned in the program
- International flights
- Personal expenses
- Tips, Travel insurance
- Bank transfer fee if any

TERM & CONDITION

- Deposit and Payment: 30% of total invoice should be deposited at the time of booking for guarantee. Final payment no later than 7days in advance of arrival date.
- Cancellation: If cancelling less than 15 days, the deposit is non-refundable. After final payment is received, a cancellation fee of approximately 75% applies. This percentage may be less depending on the date of cancellation. A cancellation fee of 100% is applicable within 03 days of travel.
- *Pricing:* All prices are shown in USD and are current at the date of printing this itinerary. If there is a dramatic fluctuation in the exchange rate or the price of services provided, which are beyond the control of Ciao Travel, Ciao Travel reserves the right to adjust tour prices accordingly, even though the balance of payment had been made already. This would only happen in unusual circumstances.
- Itinerary Validity and Content: This itinerary is valid until 30th Sept 2019, unless otherwise specified. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. Ciao Travel shall not be liable for any injury, damage or loss caused by any inaccuracy. Ciao Travel reserves the right to change tour arrangements or accommodations due to safety or security reasons, and will endeavour to provide alternative arrangements of the same standard as that originally booked.
- Special Requirements: Please advise Ciao Travel of any special requirements such as Special Meals, Medical Requirements etc., as soon as possible. If you get motion sickness, it is imperative that you bring with you motion sickness pills as our tours involve travelling by coach and boat.
- Travel Insurance: We strongly recommend you buy a travel insurance before departure in your country. Insurance covers cancellation fees payable for airline tickets, accommodation, loss of deposit, luggage etc.
- Clients' Responsibilities: It is your responsibility to obtain passports, health certificates or other
 travel documents where required for the tour. It remains your responsibility to ensure that these
 documents are in order and to meet any additional costs incurred as a result of failure to comply
 with such requirements. It is also your responsibility to obtain any vaccinations that may be
 required to travel.