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Craig
travel

EXPERIENCE VIETNAM

JOURNEY LEADERS: NICK AND PAM CANNON
MARCH 5-21, 2024 | 17 DAYS | 31 MEALS

A fishing vessel during sunset in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam

In the heart of Southeast Asia lies Vietnam, a land where ancient traditions and natural wonders intertwine to create a sensory journey like no other. Our adventure begins in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's largest urban centre, which houses the renowned mausoleum of the country's first president, the historic One Pillar Pagoda, and the magnificent Temple of Literature.

From there, we will venture to the charming coastal town of Hoi An, where our luxurious beachside resort awaits. Strolling through the lantern-lit streets of Hoi An, you will be captivated by the scent of incense mingling with the alluring aromas of street food. Continuing our journey to the north, we arrive in Hanoi, the capital city, where the bustling streets of the Old Quarter offer a glimpse into the city's rich history, ancient pagodas, and colonial architecture. In Sapa, vibrant hill tribes and terraced rice fields will paint a picturesque scene, inviting you to immerse yourself in the rich cultural tapestry of the region. Relish in the breathtaking panoramas from Heaven's Gate, as it unveils nature's majestic spectacle from the highest road in the land. As our journey nears its end, we will embark on an overnight cruise along the mystical waters of Ha Long Bay, revered by many as one of the most beautiful landscapes in Southeast Asia.

Crafted with the seasoned traveller in mind, this expedition moves at a leisurely pace, allowing ample time to experience the splendour of this untouched land. Every step of the journey has been meticulously planned, ensuring that we venture through lands that are truly off the beaten track.

Tour Highlights

- Overnight cruise in stunning Ha Long Bay
- Three nights in a luxurious beach resort in Hoi An, including touring and free time in this quaint seaport town
- Bustling Ho Chi Minh and the Cu Chi tunnels
- Experience the hill tribes and magical landscapes of Sapa, in northern Vietnam
- Three nights in Hanoi, with its classical buildings and memories of Ho Chi Minh

Journey Leaders

Escorting this upcoming journey to Vietnam will be **Nick and Pam Cannon**. Nick and Pam, who are inveterate travellers, have explored the United Kingdom, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Mediterranean. As two of our most popular leaders, they have escorted cruise and tour groups to various destinations, such as Panama, Alaska, South Africa, Europe, and South America, in the past few years. With their warm and caring personalities, as well as their passion for travel, they are sure to enhance your travel experience. They cannot wait to join you on this adventure and make unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime!



Inclusive Features

- Return economy airfare plus internal domestic flights
- Accommodations in deluxe hotels as indicated or similar
- 31 meals included as noted in the itinerary (B - 14 breakfasts, L - 10 lunches, D - 7 dinners)
- Baggage handling at hotels for one piece of luggage per person
- Gratuities for all included services
- Services of your journey leaders plus our professional guide in Vietnam
- Vietnam e-visa fees for Canadian passport holders
- All current taxes, surcharges and fees
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

MAR 5, Tuesday

Depart Canada

Tour members from across Canada gather in Toronto and Vancouver late this evening for the overnight flights via Hong Kong to Ho Chi Minh City.

MAR 7, Thursday

Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Upon arrival at Saigon Tan Son Nhat airport, we will be met and transferred to our hotel for the next three nights. The afternoon will be free to rest or explore until we gather for our welcome dinner at the hotel. Nearby, you can visit the Nguyen Hue Pedestrian Street, the restored Post Office and the famous Ben Thanh Market, all within a 10-minute walk.

Liberty Central Saigon Citypoint Hotel (3 nights)

D

MAR 8, Friday

Ho Chi Minh City

Cu Chi, a district outside Saigon, unveils a network of intricate tunnels, built as a defence against the French. Learn about the ingenuity and unwavering resolve of the Viet Cong, whose stories echo through these tunnels. After lunch, visit the former Presidential Palace, now a museum, including the bunkers that were the headquarters for the Saigon Government during the "American War". Continue to the History Museum, which houses an excellent display tracing the origins of the indigenous Vietnamese. If time permits, we will see Notre Dame Cathedral, the restored central Post Office, and visit the bustling Ben Thanh market.

BL

MAR 9, Saturday**Mekong Delta**

Set off on a scenic drive to the Mekong Delta, passing lush rice fields en route to My Tho and making a stop at the Vinh Trang Pagoda. Embark on a boat ride along the Tien River to Qui (Tortoise Islet), where fishing ports and boat-building workshops dot the landscape. Stroll through fruit gardens and enjoy a snack while listening to the melodies of Southern Vietnamese folk music. Our exploration continues as we visit the Bee House, a family-owned beekeeping site, followed by a rowboat ride along the water palm creek of Cai Coi. Hop on a "xe loi," a motorized rickshaw, and traverse through gardens, vegetable fields, and rice fields until reaching our lunch spot. BL



The Mekong Delta is known as the country's "rice bowl"

MAR 10, Sunday**Ho Chi Minh / Hoi An**

Take a flight north to the historic town of Hoi An. Situated between the famous De Vong River and the pristine shores of Cua Dai Beach, our resort is one of the finest in the area. There will be time this afternoon for a swim or a stroll along the beach. As the evening approaches, we will dine at a local restaurant.

Victoria Hoi An Beach Resort (3 nights)

BD

MAR 11, Monday**Hoi An**

In a country ravaged by war only a generation ago, Hoi An managed to remain untouched. As we wander through the storied cobbled streets of this ancient seaport, we are transported to an era when it stood as one of Asia's busiest ports. Our guided walk leads us to visit former merchant homes, temples and art galleries, as we absorb the atmosphere of one of Vietnam's most colourful marketplaces. BL



Sapa's spellbinding landscapes

MAR 12, Tuesday**Hoi An**

Venture to the heart of rural Hoi An and catch a glimpse of the daily life of a local fishing village, the thriving wildlife, and the abundant water palm groves. Skilled craftsmen harvest these palms to create traditional roofing for houses. The lush groves and meandering water channels create a peaceful retreat. Enjoy a guided tour through the villages, shaded from the sun by a canopy of bamboo thickets, passing by local homes, and flourishing vegetable and fruit gardens. In the afternoon you can unwind in our resort or explore the charming streets and shops of Hoi An. BL



The iconic Tran Quoc Pagoda in Hanoi

MAR 13, Wednesday**Hoi An / Hanoi**

Leaving behind our rural paradise, we head for the capital city of Hanoi. Upon arrival, we are greeted by our local guide and embark on a thrilling rickshaw ride through the capital to the Ancient Quarter, also known as the 36 Corporations District. This captivating maze of streets in the old town center offers a myriad of traditional crafts, including votive paper-making, bamboo products, furniture, and more.

AIRA Boutique Hotel (2 nights)

BD

MAR 14, Thursday**Hanoi**

You may choose to take a stroll and observe locals partake in Tai Chi, callisthenics, and friendly games of badminton or ping pong. A visit to the Hang Be Market is a must for street food and traditional fabrics. Our exploration begins with the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university. At the Museum of Ethnology, we will delve into the rich heritage of Vietnam. Continuing to the complex dedicated to the late Ho Chi Minh, encounter his mausoleum and the stilt wooden house where he resided. Discover the One-Pillar Pagoda, an ancient Buddhist temple and the Tran Quoc Pagoda, the city's oldest dating back to the 6th century. Nestled in Hoan Kiem Lake, the enchanting Ngoc Son Temple awaits. BL



Hoi An's historic canal network, a UNESCO gem

MAR 15, Friday**Hanoi / Sapa**

Journeying through mystical landscapes we ascend into the mountains towards the former French Hill Station of Sapa. Leaving the lowland behind, the scenery undergoes a breathtaking transformation where diverse ethnic communities such as the H'Mong and Giay thrive. By mid-afternoon, we will have free time to take in the sights of the city. **BB Hotel Sapa** (3 nights) BLD

MAR 16, Saturday**Sapa**

Departing early, we travel through spectacular mountain scenery to the secluded village of Pho Long, where the lively Saturday market attracts the H'Mong, Dao, and Nung hill tribes to buy, sell, and socialize. Step into the lively market, where vibrant colours ignite the scene, intermingling with tantalizing aromas of spices and fresh fruits. Following lunch at a local restaurant, we make our way back to Sapa to explore the enchanting community of Cat Cat. This remarkable enclave, renowned for its artistry and cultural heritage, invites visitors to witness the legacy of craftsmanship and immerse themselves in age-old traditions. BL

MAR 17, Sunday**Sapa**

Today enjoy a full day tour with lunch, exploring the settlements of Dao, Giay and H'mong in the Lao Chai and Ta Van Ray districts. This area is celebrated for its diverse and welcoming ethnic communities, filled with rich traditions. Be captivated by the mesmerizing terraced rice paddies, gracefully cascading down the hills. Afterwards, we will explore the countryside, visiting the Silver Waterwall and Heaven's Gate, the highest road in all of Vietnam. BL

MAR 18, Monday**Sapa / Hanoi**

Make the most of your free morning in Sapa by unwinding or exploring the city on foot, or perhaps take a cable ride to the summit of Fansipan, Vietnam's highest mountain at 3,143 meters. Marvel at the incredible views that encompass you from all directions. In the early afternoon, we gather for the return drive back to Hanoi.

AIRA Boutique Hotel (1 night) BD

MAR 19, Tuesday**Hanoi / Ha Long**

Journey to the legendary Ha Long Bay, Vietnam's eighth wonder of the world. Three thousand spectacular chalk and limestone outcroppings, cliffs, arches, and coves form a dragon's tail across the bay. Aboard a modern cabin cruiser, we navigate through the area whose name translates as "Where the Dragon Descends into the Sea". We will stop at an islet to climb through a series of caves and grottoes, showcasing some of the world's most impressive stalactite and stalagmite formations. Take a refreshing swim in the bay or simply relax and sunbathe on the deck. **Stellar of the Sea Cruise** (1 night) BLD

MAR 20, Wednesday**Ha Long / Hanoi**

Early this morning there is the chance to practice Tai Chi on the sundeck whilst the sun rises over the bay. A buffet breakfast is served as the boat continues cruising, allowing guests a last chance to enjoy the beautiful views of this unique seascape. After brunch on board, we debark and return to Hanoi for our last night and a special farewell dinner of Vietnamese specialties at the Wild Lotus Restaurant (or similar).

AIRA Boutique Hotel (1 night) BLD

MAR 21, Thursday**Hanoi / Canada**

Enjoy a final relaxing morning before we transfer to the airport for our flights back to Canada via Hong Kong. Those travelling via Vancouver will arrive home the same day, while Toronto-bound passengers will overnight in Hong Kong and arrive home on Friday. B

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Book With Confidence

For peace of mind, your deposit for this journey is fully refundable until:

November 29, 2023



**Book and deposit by November 1, 2023
and save \$200 per person**



CT Rating 3.5 - Challenging: Members can expect a busy itinerary in a region known for hot and humid conditions—high temperatures can exceed 30°C. The program includes free time during which members will have opportunities to explore on their own and try some local restaurants. The hill country (Sapa) includes walks involving steps and rough terrain. The boats in Ha Long Bay do not have elevators. Members must be fully mobile and physically active to fully enjoy this journey.

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars per person

Land Only (Join / Leave hotel).....	\$4,225
Toronto	\$6,575
Montreal / Ottawa	\$6,825
Halifax	\$6,925
St. John's	\$7,025
Winnipeg/ Regina / Saskatoon	\$6,555
Calgary / Edmonton	\$6,475
Victoria	\$6,375
Vancouver	\$6,195
Single Supplement.....	\$1,295

All prices include internal flights. International airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features for details. Tour price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room at hotels. Prices are based on a minimum of 20 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective June 2023 and are subject to change due to factors beyond our control.

Note: Visas are required to visit Vietnam. The estimated cost of an e-visa is **included** for Canadian passport holders. In some instances, individuals will be required to obtain their own Visa (with our assistance).

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

**Final payment will be due November 30, 2023
Deposit is \$700 per person**

To reserve your spot on this tour, complete the enclosed enrollment form, indicating the tour you wish to join and your home city, and forward it with your deposit to:



Experiencing Our World

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