

SEA03 / 12 DAYS

VIETNAM

Where the Mountains Keep Their Stories

A deeper north, from village paths to a private bay.

12 DAYS / 11 NIGHTS / PRIVATE

Travel in October–November • March–April • Tailored to your party

THE JOURNEY

Some places stay with you.



Let the north reveal itself through its people. This journey gives the highlands proper time: a walk through the Muong Hoa Valley, a conversation about indigo and embroidery, and an introduction to the distinct traditions of Hmong, Red Dao and Giay communities. It then changes scale, moving from terraced slopes to the lowland waterways of Ninh Binh and the conservation work of Cuc Phuong. Two private nights on Bai Tu Long Bay create a luminous final chapter. Hanoi frames the journey with history, food and contemporary craft. The walks are moderate and supported by a vehicle; village encounters are arranged with willing hosts. This is a culturally rich private exploration, with comfort chosen carefully in each setting and no need to hurry through the north on the way somewhere else.

SEVEN MOMENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

- Hmong and Giay village encounters in Muong Hoa
- A prearranged Red Dao embroidery introduction
- Moderate guided terrace and village walks
- Hanoi's living streets, citadel and water puppetry
- Trang An's limestone waterways
- Cuc Phuong's conservation projects and forest trails
- A two-night private Bai Tu Long finale

DESIGNED TO CONNECT BEAUTIFULLY

The shape of your journey

Hanoi • Sa Pa • Muong Hoa Valley • Ta Phin • Ninh Binh • Cuc Phuong • Bai Tu Long Bay • Hanoi

YOUR NIGHTS, IN ORDER

DAYS 01–02	Hanoi
DAYS 03–05	Sa Pa
DAY 06	Hanoi
DAYS 07–08	Ninh Binh
DAYS 09–10	Private bay cruise
DAY 11	Hanoi
DAY 12	Departure

BEST TRAVEL MONTHS

October–November • March–April

October and November often suit highland walking and the bay. March and April are also rewarding. The highlands can be cold or misty in winter; the best rice colours follow the local harvest rather than a fixed date.

MADE FOR

Culture-focused couples, friends, active families & solo travelers

*Your own travel dates. Your own companions.
Private guides and vehicles, with walks, rooming
and dining adapted to you.*

CONNECTIONS THAT RESPECT YOUR TIME

- Begin and end in Hanoi, with no domestic flights required.
- Sa Pa is reached by private road transfers with comfort breaks.
- Markets are incorporated only when your dates match their operating days.
- The final Hanoi night separates the cruise from your international departure.



Tran Quoc Pagoda, Hanoi, Vietnam

DAY 01

Your private welcome to Hanoi

Arrive at Noi Bai International Airport, where your Midasia Routes representative meets you in the arrivals area after immigration and baggage collection. A private vehicle, chilled drinking water and assistance with your luggage make the transition to your hotel easy. Airport fast-track assistance can be requested where the airport permits it.

After settling in, meet your local guide for a personal introduction to Hanoi. Depending on your landing time and energy, enjoy a short neighbourhood walk, a riverside pause or a first taste of the city in a relaxed café. Your guide confirms food preferences, walking comfort and the experiences that matter most to you.

A thoughtfully chosen welcome dinner introduces regional flavours. The evening remains gentle after your international journey; a late arrival means dinner and orientation are adjusted to your flight. Your first night is a comfortable beginning, with the details of tomorrow already taken care of.

Overnight: Hanoi | Meals: Welcome dinner, arrival time permitting

DAY 02

Hanoi: a city revealed in layers

Begin beside Hoan Kiem Lake as the city wakes, then explore the Old Quarter with a guide who can explain the street trades, communal houses and everyday etiquette. Pause for Vietnamese coffee before entering the Temple of Literature, where courtyards, stone stelae and shaded gardens introduce the country's scholarly traditions.

After lunch, visit the Thang Long Imperial Citadel and follow the story of Vietnam's successive capitals. Continue through the French Quarter, stopping for architectural details and street scenes rather than a hurried checklist. Museum and monument visits are reordered around their weekly closures.

An early evening water-puppet performance brings rural legends to life. Finish with a guided tasting of carefully selected Hanoi dishes, with seated alternatives for travelers who prefer a restaurant to street-side dining. Your private vehicle is available between the walking sections.

Overnight: Hanoi | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Sa Pa region, Vietnam

DAY 03

From Hanoi to the northern highlands

Travel from Hanoi towards Sa Pa after breakfast in your private vehicle, stopping for refreshments and lunch along the way. This is a substantial road day, so your guide keeps the schedule comfortable and leaves demanding walks for the following mornings. The final approach reveals successive layers of mountain scenery.

After checking in, enjoy a short orientation walk in a quieter part of town or along an accessible valley-edge path, depending on visibility. Meet your highland guide, who introduces the Hmong, Red Dao and Giay communities represented in the region without treating them as interchangeable cultures.

Dinner is arranged at your accommodation or a carefully selected restaurant. Review tomorrow's walking route and choose the length that suits you. A private car remains available for the village days, allowing the itinerary to combine meaningful time outdoors with comfort and flexibility.

Overnight: Sa Pa | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 04

Muong Hoa: fields, footpaths and local voices

Begin a moderate guided walk in the Muong Hoa Valley, linking field paths and small settlements rather than following the busiest roadside circuit. Your local guide explains the seasonal work in the terraces and introduces Hmong and Giay traditions through conversations with willing residents.

Stop for a village lunch, then continue to a prearranged household or craft encounter. Learn about indigo, weaving or the preparation of local food according to the host's interests and availability. Allow time for questions and photographs with consent, with a vehicle rendezvous if you prefer a shorter walk.

Return to your hotel to refresh before dinner. The day is rich in encounters, but the exact paths depend on weather and the agricultural season. Rice terraces may be green, golden, flooded or fallow; your guide helps you understand the landscape as it is, not as a fixed postcard.

Overnight: Sa Pa | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Sa Pa region, Vietnam

DAY 05

Red Dao craft, hill villages and a mountain afternoon

Visit the Ta Phin area with a local guide for an introduction to Red Dao embroidery and village life. A prearranged artisan encounter makes time for the details: stitching, motifs, materials and the work required to finish a garment. Shopping is optional and payments go directly to the people whose work you choose.

After lunch, follow a moderate countryside walk through fields and hamlets, with stops for viewpoints and tea where appropriate. If your dates align with a suitable weekly market, we can reshape this day around it; a market is never promised on a day when it does not operate.

Return to Sa Pa for dinner and a quiet evening. A herbal-bath experience can be discussed with a reputable provider if it suits your preferences; it is an optional wellbeing experience, not a medical treatment. The main focus remains on meeting people and understanding the region.

Overnight: Sa Pa | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 06

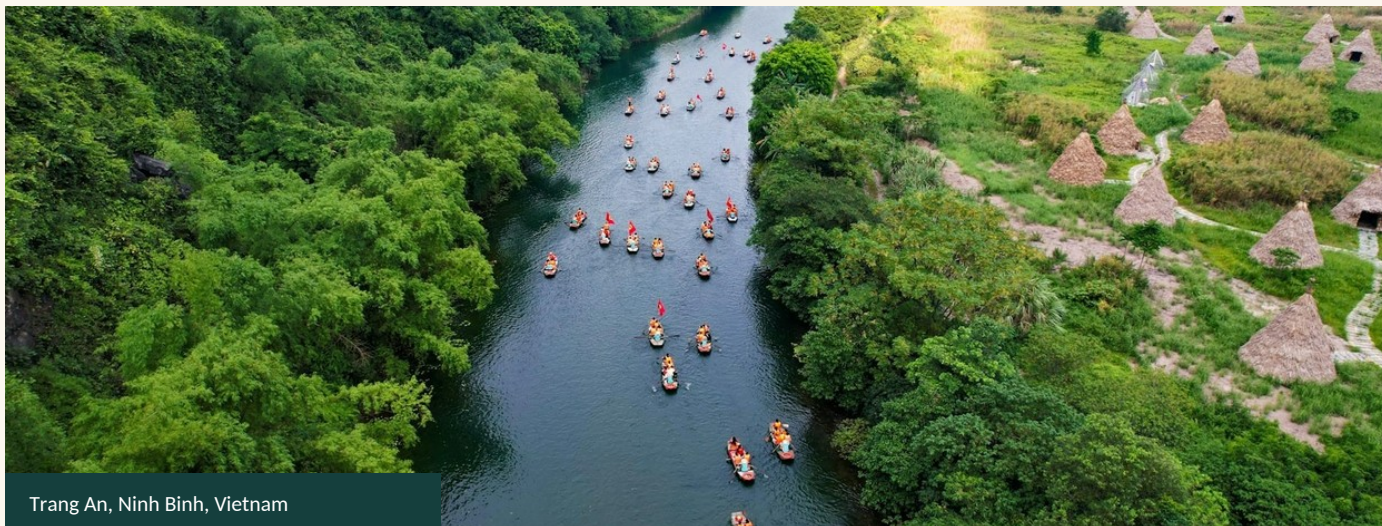
Highland farewell, Hanoi by evening

Enjoy breakfast in the mountains and a final short viewpoint stop if visibility is good. Leave Sa Pa by private vehicle, with your guide arranging regular comfort breaks and lunch. Keep your camera close for the changing landscape, but expect most of the day to be devoted to the road journey.

Arrive in Hanoi and check into your hotel. If there is time and you feel refreshed, take a gentle neighbourhood walk or visit a café to compare the flavours of northern Vietnamese coffee. The schedule does not depend on arriving early enough for a museum admission.

Dinner is arranged close to the hotel. Tomorrow's programme returns to the countryside in a different setting, so tonight is an opportunity to enjoy city comforts, organise your photographs and prepare for the next chapter without an additional evening transfer.

Overnight: Hanoi | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Trang An, Ninh Binh, Vietnam

DAY 07

Ninh Binh: temples, waterways and limestone towers

Leave Hanoi after breakfast in your private vehicle, reaching the countryside in time to explore the temples of Hoa Lu, Vietnam's early capital. Your guide connects the stone gateways and surviving shrines with the rise of an independent Vietnamese kingdom, then introduces the surrounding village landscape on a gentle walk.

After a local lunch, board a rowboat at Trang An for a scenic route through limestone scenery, low caves and quiet stretches of water. The boat route is chosen according to water levels and visitor access. Life jackets are provided, and the boat is reserved for your party where the local operating rules permit.

Settle into a countryside retreat. Before dinner, a short village-lane walk offers a closer look at gardens, rice cultivation and daily routines. Enjoy regional dishes and views of the surrounding karst landscape; the steeper viewpoints are optional, not required to enjoy the day.

Overnight: Ninh Binh | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 08

Cuc Phuong: a living forest and a conservation story

Drive to Cuc Phuong National Park for a prearranged conservation visit. At the Endangered Primate Rescue Center, a centre guide explains the care of rescued langurs and other primates and the pressures facing them in the wild. Viewing follows the centre's welfare rules; this is a rescue setting, not a promise of wild-animal sightings.

After lunch, explore a suitable forest trail with a nature guide. Look for butterflies, birdlife and the changing textures of the forest, keeping to a moderate route selected for the season and your fitness. A visit to the turtle conservation area can be added when staff and access are available.

Return to Ninh Binh for dinner. Families can shorten the forest section and spend more time on the interpretation activities. The guide carries the day's timings so there is room to ask questions, take photographs and enjoy the forest without racing from one stop to another.

Overnight: Ninh Binh | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Ha Long Bay region, Vietnam

DAY 09

Your private voyage into Bai Tu Long Bay

Depart Ninh Binh after breakfast for the coast, travelling by private vehicle with a comfort stop before boarding. Meet the crew of your exclusively chartered small boat and settle into your cabin. A safety briefing covers the tender, kayaking and the day's permitted anchorage before lunch is served.

Cruise into Bai Tu Long's limestone seascape. The planned charter follows an authorised three-day route, with an afternoon excursion around the Cong Do area or an equivalent approved location. Depending on conditions, take a guided kayak outing or use a tender to enjoy the scenery without paddling.

Return for a Vietnamese cooking demonstration and sunset on deck, then enjoy dinner prepared aboard. Your boat is private to your party, while the protected bay and visitor sites remain public. The captain may change the precise stop sequence for weather, permissions and harbour instructions.

Overnight: Private bay cruise | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 10

A full day among islands, caves and floating homes

Enjoy breakfast with the limestone islands close to your boat, then set out with the crew for a cave visit such as Thien Canh Son when included in the authorised sailing plan. Your guide explains the rock formations and the changing relationship between fishing communities, tourism and the protected bay.

Lunch is followed by a guided visit around Vung Vieng or the charter's approved floating-village area. A tender or local rowing boat brings you closer to the water. There is also time for a sheltered kayak excursion; less active travelers can remain aboard or join the scenic tender alternative.

As the boat reaches its overnight anchorage, enjoy the changing light from the deck. Dinner is served at a pace that suits your party. Two nights aboard allow a richer exploration than a single-night visit, without turning every hour into an organised activity. Swimming, if offered, depends on authorised locations and conditions.

Overnight: Private bay cruise | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Hanoi, Vietnam

DAY 11

Back to Hanoi, with time to look closer

Wake to the bay and enjoy breakfast as your boat returns towards its authorised harbour. A final short excursion may be offered by the captain before brunch and disembarkation. Your driver meets you for the private transfer to Hanoi; lunch timing is coordinated with the cruise service.

Check into your hotel and refresh before a gentle late-afternoon encounter with contemporary Vietnamese craft. Depending on opening hours, meet a lacquer specialist or a small independent gallery team, learning how traditional materials are used in modern work. This is also valuable breathing space between the water and tomorrow's flight.

Dinner is arranged in Hanoi, with time to discuss the next stage with your guide. The city overnight intentionally protects the onward connection: no international flight is booked immediately after a weather-dependent bay cruise.

Overnight: Hanoi | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 12

A thoughtful farewell

Enjoy breakfast and a final quiet moment in Hanoi. If your flight allows, your guide can arrange a short market visit or a stop for last-minute locally made gifts; this is fitted around check-out and airport formalities, never around an optimistic connection.

Your private driver transfers you to Noi Bai International Airport. The team assists with luggage and check-in orientation within the areas open to local representatives. Your international flight, onward baggage arrangements and any airport assistance are reconfirmed before departure.

Leave with the memories of people met, food shared and landscapes explored. A beach extension, a different onward destination or extra nights can be arranged when we customise the journey. International flights are quoted separately unless your personal proposal expressly includes them.

Overnight: Departure | Meals: Breakfast, flight time permitting

PRIVATE TRAVEL, PERSONAL CARE

Make this journey yours.

Travel as a couple, with family or friends, or on your own with a private guide. We begin with the experiences you care about, then shape the room choices, dining, walking and daily pace around you. A birthday, a photography interest, a quieter village stay or a few extra beach nights can become part of your personal proposal.

Your welcome & support · Personal arrivals-area meet and greet; private airport transfers; luggage assistance; coordinated local handovers and a named planning contact. Fast-track services are requested only where permitted and available.

Your comfort & experiences · Well-chosen luxury or boutique accommodation, private vehicles and local guides, meals shown in the programme, site entries and the described private boat and activity arrangements are included in the bespoke quotation.

Your flights & thoughtful extras · The quotation itemises scheduled domestic and regional flights, baggage, rail travel and private charters. International flights to and from the journey, visas, insurance, personal purchases, gratuities and unlisted extras are separate unless expressly included.

Your confirmed proposal · Route planning was reviewed in September 2026. Your final dated proposal confirms the hotels, flights, boats, rail seats, host visits, activity suitability and any seasonal substitutions before you commit.

[Enquire about this journey](#)[Speak with our Asia expert](#)

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