

SEA04 / 16 DAYS



VIETNAM + LAOS

Dragon Bays & Golden Blessings

Private waters, living traditions and a sunrise above Laos.

16 DAYS / 15 NIGHTS / PRIVATE

Travel in November-February • Tailored to your party

THE JOURNEY

Some places stay with you.



Begin among the limestone landscapes of Vietnam and finish in the golden light of Laos. This private pairing combines a two-night bay charter with Luang Prabang's heritage, a personal Baci welcome and a hands-on introduction to rice farming. There are waterfalls, rescued bears, an ethical elephant encounter and a private Mekong boat journey before the railway carries you into Vang Vieng's mountain country. A planned balloon flight adds a gentle sense of wonder, while Vientiane supplies an illuminating final look at contemporary Laos. The experiences are varied and substantial, with private guiding and carefully timed connections. One night in Hanoi after the cruise protects the cross-border flight, and the itinerary remains adaptable for different ages and walking preferences.

SEVEN MOMENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

- Northern Vietnam's heritage and limestone waterways
- A private two-night Bai Tu Long charter
- A host-led Baci ceremony in Luang Prabang
- Living Land rice farming and Kuang Si waterfalls
- Rescued bears and a no-riding elephant encounter
- Private Mekong cruising to Pak Ou
- Planned private ballooning and scenic rail journeys

DESIGNED TO CONNECT BEAUTIFULLY

The shape of your journey

Hanoi • Ninh Binh • Bai Tu Long Bay • Luang Prabang • Vang Vieng • Vientiane

YOUR NIGHTS, IN ORDER

DAYS 01–02	Hanoi
DAYS 03–04	Ninh Binh
DAYS 05–06	Private bay cruise
DAY 07	Hanoi
DAYS 08–12	Luang Prabang
DAYS 13–14	Vang Vieng
DAY 15	Vientiane
DAY 16	Departure

BEST TRAVEL MONTHS

November–February

November and early February make an attractive balance. December and January can be cool or misty in northern Vietnam. Laos is generally drier in this period; balloon visibility and operation remain weather-dependent.

MADE FOR

Couples, friends, culturally curious 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

- Arrive Hanoi and depart Vientiane.
- Hanoi–Luang Prabang uses a published direct route on a suitable day.
- Rail connects Luang Prabang, Vang Vieng and Vientiane; seats are confirmed within the release window.
- Ballooning and private elephant visits are requested with the operators and confirmed for your party.



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

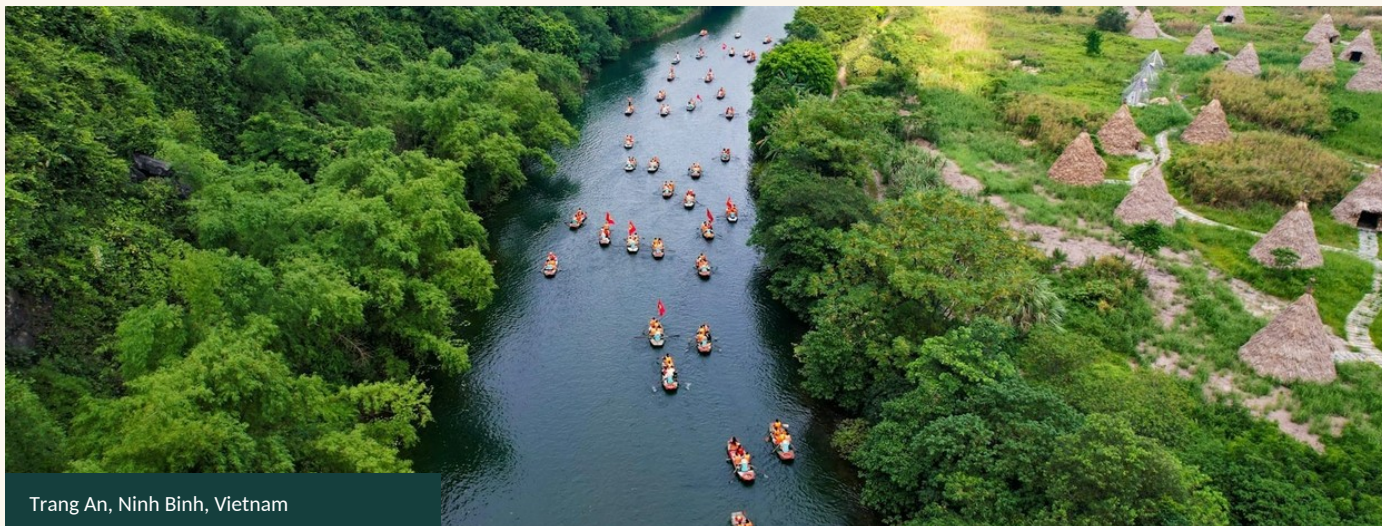
Hanoi: a city revealed in layers

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



Trang An, Ninh Binh, Vietnam

DAY 03

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 04

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 05

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 06

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



DAY 07

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 08

Hanoi to Luang Prabang: a graceful change of pace

Enjoy breakfast and a final Hanoi experience fitted around your flight: a small craft studio, a quiet café or an unhurried neighbourhood walk. Transfer privately to the airport for the published Hanoi–Luang Prabang route. Your start date is chosen around a suitable service, with any alternative connection agreed before booking.

Arrive in Laos and meet your local team after immigration and baggage collection. Continue privately to a heritage-style hotel or a more secluded riverside retreat selected for your preferences. The afternoon programme stays flexible because the most practical direct flight may arrive later in the day.

Enjoy your first Lao dinner when arrival time allows. Your guide introduces local customs and the coming days of temples, farming and river life. If you arrive early, a gentle peninsula walk is a pleasant first encounter; the substantive heritage visits are reserved for tomorrow.

Overnight: Luang Prabang | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Kuang Si Falls, Laos

DAY 09

Luang Prabang: living traditions and a Baci welcome

Begin with the morning market and the town's everyday food traditions, then visit the former Royal Palace museum and Wat Xieng Thong. Your guide explains the architecture, royal history and living Buddhist traditions. Any observation of morning alms is quiet and respectful, without interrupting participants or using flash.

After lunch, meet a textile or craft specialist for an introduction to the distinct communities of northern Laos. Visit the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre when open, or use a prearranged artisan session as the alternative. Allow time to browse contemporary work and ask questions.

Join a Baci ceremony arranged with willing local hosts and an experienced ceremony leader. White threads, spoken blessings and shared goodwill create a personal welcome; participation follows the hosts' customs. Enjoy dinner afterwards. A Phousi viewpoint visit can be added if the steps and timing suit you.

Overnight: Luang Prabang | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 10

Rice farming, turquoise falls and rescued bears

Visit the Living Land community farm for a prebooked rice experience. Learn how seedlings, irrigation, harvesting and processing connect to the Lao table, joining light tasks suited to the season and your comfort. Participants can try the muddy stages or observe from the field edge; children receive age-appropriate involvement.

After lunch, continue to Kuang Si. Walk the lower forest paths and visit the public viewing area of the Tat Kuang Si Bear Rescue Centre, where rescued bears illustrate a conservation story. Follow the path to the waterfalls and enjoy the turquoise pools, with swimming only in permitted areas when conditions allow.

Return to Luang Prabang for dinner and an optional short browse of the evening craft market. This is a full day, so the walk remains moderate and the upper, steeper waterfall trail is optional. Bear viewing follows sanctuary rules and is distinct from a specially booked care tour.

Overnight: Luang Prabang | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Luang Prabang, Laos

DAY 11

A private Mekong boat, sacred caves and artisan hands

Board your private riverboat after breakfast and cruise upstream along the Mekong. Watch the changes along the banks while your guide explains the river's role in transport, farming and trade. Visit Pak Ou's lower Buddha cave; the additional steps to the upper cave are optional.

Enjoy lunch aboard or at a suitable riverside venue, then continue with a prearranged craft stop. A village or workshop visit may focus on weaving, paper-making or another locally practised skill. Your guide checks that hosts are available and that the stop adds a worthwhile encounter rather than a shopping obligation.

Return to town in the late afternoon. After time to refresh, enjoy dinner with Lao specialities matched to your dietary preferences. The journey takes place on the navigable Mekong stretch around Luang Prabang, with exact landing points selected for water levels and the day's operating permissions.

Overnight: Luang Prabang | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 12

Walking alongside an elephant conservation story

Join a prearranged private visit with an ethical elephant operator such as MandaLao, subject to its private-tour availability. Meet the specialist team and learn the individual stories of the elephants before walking through a suitable forest setting under their guidance. There is no riding, and interactions follow the operator's welfare approach.

Enjoy lunch as arranged with the experience, then return to town. Spend the later afternoon with a textile specialist or at a small weaving studio, seeing how fibres, colour and technique become a finished cloth. A shorter elephant walk can be selected for suitable families.

Dinner is arranged in Luang Prabang. Trails can be muddy, and the provider assesses age, mobility and conditions before confirming participation. The experience is a thoughtful wildlife encounter in a managed care setting, with the elephants' needs determining the rhythm of the visit.

Overnight: Luang Prabang | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Nam Song, Vang Vieng, Laos

DAY 13

By rail to Vang Vieng's limestone country

After breakfast, transfer to Luang Prabang's railway station for a reserved-seat journey on the Laos-China Railway. Your team handles station transfers and prepares the passenger details required for ticketing. The final train and seat category are confirmed when the booking window opens.

Meet your driver at Vang Vieng and check into your hotel. After lunch, take a gentle introduction to the Nam Song landscape, with a private local boat ride when river conditions allow and a short village-lane walk. Limestone cliffs, fields and river life offer a striking contrast to the royal town.

Enjoy dinner with mountain views where available. Your guide confirms the weather assessment and pickup arrangements for tomorrow's planned balloon flight. A quieter evening is useful before the early start, while the day still includes rail scenery, time on the river and an introduction to the countryside.

Overnight: Vang Vieng | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 14

Above the valley, then into village life

Rise early for a planned private hot-air-balloon experience with an established licensed operator. Drift over the limestone country when the pilot judges conditions suitable, then return for breakfast. Private charter availability, loading limits and the operator's age, height and fitness requirements are checked before confirmation.

Explore the valley by private vehicle with short, moderate walks. Visit Tham Chang if open and suitable, then meet a local host for a farming or village-life encounter. A stop beside a permitted lagoon gives time to enjoy the landscape; swimming remains optional and conditions are checked.

After time to refresh, enjoy dinner. Ballooning is weather-dependent: if it cannot operate, use the morning for a longer countryside walk, a craft visit or a gentle river outing. Your proposal confirms the operator's cancellation arrangements. There is no requirement to climb the strenuous hilltop viewpoints.

Overnight: Vang Vieng | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Pha That Luang, Vientiane, Laos

DAY 15

Vientiane: sacred spaces and contemporary Laos

Take the train south to Vientiane after breakfast, with private transfers at both ends. On arrival, settle into your hotel and enjoy lunch. This efficient connection makes room for a meaningful city afternoon without relying on an all-day drive.

Visit Wat Si Saket and Haw Phra Kaew, then continue to the COPE Visitor Centre when open for an introduction to the continuing human impact of unexploded ordnance and the work of rehabilitation. Your guide adapts the discussion to children and to the interests of your party.

Finish with a stroll beside the Mekong and dinner in a carefully chosen restaurant. The riverfront reveals the city's relaxed evening rhythm. Museum closures and the train timetable may change the visit order; the private guide keeps the historical and contemporary stories connected throughout the day.

Overnight: Vientiane | Meals: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

DAY 16

A thoughtful farewell

Enjoy breakfast and a final quiet moment in Vientiane. 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 Wattay 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](#)

MIDASIA ROUTES

USA / Canada: +1 307 650 2452

sumit@midasiaroutes.com • midasiaroutes.com

International WhatsApp: +91 87509 70676 | +968 9632 1788

USA · 1309 Coffeen Avenue, STE 1200, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801, USA

India · B/176-Greenfields, Delhi-NCR, 121003, India

Thailand · Phaya Thai Plaza, BTS Phaya Thai, Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400, Thailand

Central African Republic branch enquiries: contact our main team.

Facebook / midasiaroutes Instagram / midasia_routes