



## **Vietnam The Hidden Charm!**

Vietnam is by far one of the most dramatic and dynamic countries in the Southeast Asia. The name 'Vietnam' translates to as Southern Viet and the Capitol of the country is Hanoi the second largest city in Vietnam with first being Ho Chi Minh. It is also the 8<sup>th</sup> populous Asian country. The Vietnamese are known for their patriotism towards their country as well as their countrymen and also for their hospitality. There are numerous packages available to visit Vietnam and an extensive range of itinerary available for combination to visit. An ideal combination for a short visit is about 4 days which combines visits to Hanoi and Halong Bay or Ho Chi Minh and Halong Bay. Halong Bay is a must must visit without which the trip to Vietnam would always be incomplete. It is voted as the second natural wonders of the world with an area covering of 3000 km<sup>2</sup> which consists of solid rock limestone formations with Emerald green water surrounding them.

Catch the glimpse of Halong Bay. One of my lifetime favorite shot.

I visited Hanoi from Singapore with a good deal from an LLC tiger airways, but the best way to go is through the national airline Vietnam Airlines. There are numerous flights available to Hanoi from various countries. The international airport is No Bai with [Vietnam visa on arrival](#) options for almost all countries. But I would suggest you have a visa before hand in order to save time and avoid long queues for visa on arrivals and Immigrations.

Vietnam was once ruled by the French so on arriving the heart of the city Hanoi you can see a strong influence of the French colonies which are still preserved in the Hanoi old quarters. Many [hotels in Hanoi](#) offer good packages with an average of around 80\$ per night. They also arrange for the city tour as well as Halong Bay cruise packages and the most recommended way is to book through the hotel and avoid booking in advance on other websites to save money. They give a good deal and also arrange a fantastic customized tour. I had booked the tour with the Hanoi View hotel which offered me a very good package for a couple with 2 nights in Hanoi and an overnight cruise stay at Halong Bay complete with transfers and city tour costing only 700 USD. Not to forget the food on board. My hotel stay in Hanoi which is booked by [Đặt khách sạn](#).

Places to visit in Vietnam:

1. Hanoi

Hanoi is the Capital city of Vietnam and the most crowded. You can see the crazy traffic here which many of you might not have experienced. It has a good vibrancy and a strong French influence. Within Hanoi there are plenty of wonderful places to visit as part of the city tour which are the water puppet show, Hom kiem lake, Ho Chi Minh mausoleum, the presidential and government buildings showcasing the history of Vietnam and the great freedom fighter and president Ho Chi Minh.

I was amazed to see the body of this great man Ho Chi Minh still preserved in the mausoleum building. The surrounding was really colorful. A visit to the old quarters is highly recommended. A visit to Vietnam without the local mouth watering delicacies is incomplete. Vietnamese cuisines are world famous. I

was happy to see an Indian restaurant though. Shopping for local handicrafts and artifacts is worth and inexpensive.

2. Tam Coc River

One of the most interesting and beautiful river I have ever seen. It on the outskirts of Hanoi.

3. Halong Bay

Halong bay is a 4 hour drive from Hanoi and the most beautiful place for which Vietnam is famous. There are many cruise lines which offer packages for overnight cruise in the middle of the enchanting sea. They provide you pick and drops from the hotel as well as food on board with Halong bay excursions. It was a lovely and never forgetable experience we had here. Halong bay was just a memorable experience.

4. Ho Chi Minh City

It is the largest city in Vietnam formerly known as Saigon with good industrialization and infrastructure. It's the economic center of Vietnam. You can find good shopping malls with all luxury brands. It's the modern face of Vietnam. Other lovely places to visit include Sapa, Dalat, Da Nang, Phu Quoc, Hoi An giving extensive views of the beauty of Vietnam. Dalat is a beautiful old French hill station as well as Sapa is famous for both its fine, rugged scenery and also its rich cultural diversity. Hoi An is a trading port with a UNESCO world heritage listed old city. Vietnam is definitely a must visit place once a lifetime. After visiting Halong bay I really feel to visit again soon!