



North Thailand and Vietnam: An Adventure with Graeme Hugo

31 March - 18 April 2025 ex MEL

Begin your adventure in Thailand, exploring the vibrant city of Bangkok with its sacred temples and the opulent Grand Palace. Journey to Kanchanaburi to reflect on the poignant history of the Death Railway, then visit Chiang Rai's stunning White Temple and the revered Doi Suthep in Chiang Mai. Experience the unique elephant camp, where you can interact with these gentle giants in a captivating setting. Transition to Vietnam, starting in Hanoi's lively Old Quarter and sailing through the breathtaking landscapes of Ninh Binh. Cruise the majestic Halong Bay before immersing yourself in Hue's imperial heritage and Hoi An's charming streets. Experience the historic Cu Chi Tunnels and the vibrant life of the Mekong Delta, concluding your journey in Saigon, where the rich tapestry of culture and history comes alive.

\$8,995
* per person Twin Share
Ex MEL

\$1,925
* Single Supplement



INCLUSIONS

- Return Economy Airfares + Taxes
- 17 Nights Accom. in 4/5* Hotels
- Transport in private vehicle
- 18 x Breakfast Daily,
- 1 x Brunch, 8 x Lunch /
- 7 x Dinner
- Services of English-speaking local guides
- Admission fees as per itinerary

HIGHLIGHTS

- White Temple
- Hell Fire Pass
- Elephant Camp
- Halong Bay Cruise
- Long Bien Bridge
- Boat-ride on the Mekong River
- Markets in Hoi An



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TERMS & CONDITIONS: *All prices quoted are per person twin share in AUD. Single supplement applies. Credit card surcharges apply. A non-refundable deposit of AUD\$1500 per person is required to secure the tour. Prices are subject to change due to fluctuation of exchange rate, surcharges and taxes, up until payment in full is received to our office. The itinerary is subject to change if beyond our control or that of the suppliers or airlines. Prices are correct as at 1 October 2024. Travel insurance is highly recommended. Deposits required at the time of booking or by 15 November 2024. Final, non-refundable payment is due by 22 January 2025. Norfolk Select T/A Go See Touring ABN: 93367 366 822. ATAS Accreditation No: A10619

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Day 1 Monday 31 March 2025 Bangkok Arrival

Welcome to the start of your wonderful Thailand holiday with Graeme Hugo. Arrive at Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport, transfer to Eastin Grand Sathorn with English Speaking guide.

Accommodation: Eastin Grand Sathorn (Superior room), Thailand – 2 nights

Day 2 Tuesday 1 April 2025 Bangkok [B]

Breakfast at hotel. Morning at leisure. PM Private Half Day City Temples and Grand Palace tour (13.00-17.00).

This tour includes three of the most unusual Buddhist temples in Bangkok: Wat Trimitr, the golden Buddha. Wat Pho, the Reclining Buddha, and the last one at Wat Pha Kaew, the temple of the Emerald Buddha.

The half-day tour starts with visiting the first temple, Wat Trimitr with its invaluable Golden Buddha (5 1/2 tons of solid gold). Wat Po, the most extensive temple in Bangkok, with its colossal Reclining Buddha and the Chedis of the Kings. The Grand Palace was the seat not only of the king and his court but also contained within its crenellated walls the entire government administration. The architecture is vibrantly Thai though there are some European designs as well. Brilliantly coloured and gilded, and decorated with intricate detail, the overall effect is dazzling. The palace served as the official residence of the kings of Thailand from the 18th to the mid-20th century. The most famous building on the palace grounds is Wat Phra Kaew (Temple of the Emerald Buddha), regarded as the most sacred Buddhist temple (wat) in Thailand. Construction of the temple began when King Rama I moved the capital from Thonburi to Bangkok in 1782. Unlike other Thai temples, it does not contain living quarters for monks; rather, it has only richly decorated holy buildings, statues, and pagodas. The main temple building is the central booth, which houses the Emerald Buddha. Though green in colour, the Buddha is carved from a single piece of jade, and though only 17 inches tall, is the most revered object in Thailand. Also within the grounds are several palaces, used for various occasions: the Funeral Palace, Reception Palace, Throne Hall, Coronation Hall, and the Royal Guest House. The majority of halls and palaces can be viewed from the outside only, but the exteriors are captivating enough to please. Please note, A strict dress code applies. The Grand Palace, with the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, is Thailand's most sacred site. Visitors (both Thai and Foreigners) must be properly dressed before being allowed entry to the temple. Men must wear long pants and shirts with sleeves (no tank tops). No sandals or flip-flops. Women must be similarly modestly dressed. No see-through clothes, bare shoulders, etc.

Day 3 Wednesday 2 April 2025 Bangkok – Kanchanaburi [B/L/D]

Breakfast at the hotel. Depart to Kanchanaburi, visit Thailand Burma Railway Centre. You'll then visit the world-famous Bridge over the River Kwai before take a trip by train on the historic death Railway. After Lunch you will transfer to the Resotel pier where you will the complete the journey to the River Kwai Resotel by long tail boat. Dinner at your hotel followed by a 45-minute presentation of Mon Dance. Dinner and Overnight at River Kwai Resotel.

Accommodation: River Kwai Resotel (Superior room), Thailand – 2 nights

Day 4 Thursday 3 April 2025 Kanchanaburi [B/L/D]

Breakfast at the hotel. You'll visit Hell Fire Pass Memorial. This Australian built complex consists of a memorial site located with Konyu Cutting (Hellfire pass), Memorial walking Trail and a modern Museum. After lunch the coach will transfer to hotel. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner at the hotel.

Day 5 Friday 4 April 2025 Kanchanaburi-Bangkok-Chiang Rai [B/D]

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to Bangkok for Flight to Chiang Rai. Arrive Chiang Rai, transfer from Chiang Rai Airport to The Riverie by Katathani. Dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation: Overnight at The Riverie by Katathani (Deluxe Garden)- 1 night

Day 6 Saturday 5 April 2025 Chiang Rai – Chiang Mai [B/L/D]

Breakfast at the hotel. Depart for Chiang Mai, this morning will visit at the White Temple which was completed in 1998. Then visit long Neck in Chiang Rai. Lunch at the local restaurant enroute to Chiang Mai. Once in Chiang Mai check in at Empress Premier Hotel. Evening transfer for Kantoke Dinner.

Accommodation: Smile Lanna Hotel, Thailand – 3 nights

Day 7 Sunday 6 April 2025 Chiang Mai [B/L/D]

Breakfast at the hotel. Visit Mae Sa Elephant Camp, visit the Elephants doing darts and Paintings. Lunch at local restaurant. Afternoon, visit Warorot market, the famous market in Chiang Mai.

Day 8 Monday 7 April 2025

Chiang Mai Departure- Hanoi Arrival

[B]

Breakfast at the hotel. Visit Chiang Mai's Buddhist temples showcase a mixture of styles that reflect the varied heritage of Northern Thailand. Elements of Lanna Thai, Burmese, Sri Lankan, and Mon have all been used. Intricate woodcarvings and protective serpent staircases add a flamboyance that reflects an awesome reverence for the Buddhist religion. The city of Chiang Mai has many beautiful and historic Buddhist temples and this tour visits the most interesting, such as the 600-year-old temple of Wat Pra That Doi Suthep, near the summit of Doi Suthep. After a drive up the mountain's winding road, the final climb to the site is via a magnificent Naga (dragon-headed serpent) staircase of 306 steps. Inside is an intriguing copper-plated chedi topped by a five-tier gold umbrella that contains partial relics of Lord Buddha. On a clear day, there are incomparable views over the city of Chiang Mai. Other temple visits on this tour include Wat Suan Dok whose large central stupa contains a Buddha relic and where the ashes of Chiang Mai's Royal Family are interred; Wat Chedi Luang where the Emerald Buddha was once enshrined; Wat Phra Singh, housing a very sacred 1,500 years old Buddha image. Lunch at local restaurant. Return to the hotel and afternoon day at leisure.

Day 9 Tuesday 8 April 2025

Chiang Mai Departure- Hanoi Arrival

[B]

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to Chiang Mai Airport. Arrive in Ha Noi airport. Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by the guide and move to the hotel.

Accommodation: Hanoi, Vietnam- 2 nights

Day 10 Wednesday 9 April 2025

Hanoi

[B/L]

Full day Hanoi City Tour. This morning you will be met at your hotel by your guide at 8am to begin your city tour with an orientation drive past some of Hanoi's unique sites including Long Bien Bridge, St Joseph's Church & the Opera House. Continue with a walking tour through the fascinating Old Quarter - 36 ancient streets where you can observe the daily bustle of life around the markets where peddlers continue to trade as they have done for centuries. We then visit the Ho Chi Minh Quarter, dedicated to the father of modern Vietnam - Uncle Ho, to see his mausoleum, the Presidential Palace, his 'house on stilts' and the One Pillar Pagoda. A short drive to take a look at the Citadel & Flag Tower which was made a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2010. After stopping for lunch at KOTO restaurant continue your tour with a visit to the Temple of Literature - Vietnam's first university now dedicated to Confucian worship. From here you shall visit the Women's Museum. This gives you a fascinating insight into the lifestyle, culture and customs of Vietnamese women. Also visit Tran Quoc and Ngoc Son Temples and then the "Hanoi Hilton" - the nickname given to the place where U.S pilots shot down over North Vietnamese airspace were imprisoned during the Vietnam War - now converted into a small museum. Return to your hotel where your tour ends. (Lunch included).

Day 11 Thursday 10 April 2025

Hanoi - Ninh Binh

[B]

Full day Hoa Lu & Trang An Landscape Complex. This morning you will be met at 8am at your hotel by your guide for your 90km drive south to Hoa Lu, the ancient capital of Vietnam dating back to the 10th century. Visit the famous sanctuary of Dinh Tien Hoang, a former emperor of the Dinh Dynasty, and the temple dedicated to the Le Emperor. Following the demise of the Le dynasty the capital was moved to Ha Noi. After lunch we visit the Trang An Landscape Complex. A spectacular landscape of limestone karst peaks permeated with valleys, many of them partly submerged and surrounded by steep, almost vertical cliffs. Exploration of caves at different altitudes has revealed archaeological traces of human activity over a continuous period of more than 30,000 years. Recently awarded UNESCO world heritage status we take a small boat through this magnificent area before transferring to your hotel in Ninh Binh for check-in.

Accommodation: Ninh Binh, Vietnam - 1 night

Day 12 Friday 11 April 2025

Ninh Binh- Halong Bay

[B/L/D]

Marvel at the towering limestone karsts and vast paddy fields as you make your way from Ninh Binh to Halong City, the gateway to Halong Bay. Dotted with 3,000 limestones karsts, Halong Bay is one of Vietnam's stunning natural wonders. Board a beautifully appointed junk boat and begin to cruise the impressive emerald waters of Halong Bay. Enjoy a sumptuous lunch before stopping to explore the many secluded corners of the bay. In the evening, retreat to your private cabin, or relax on the main deck or at the bar.

Accommodation: On board, Vietnam - 1 night

Day 13 Saturday 12 April 2025

Halong Bye- Hanoi- Hue

[Brunch]

Rise early to enjoy a Tai Chi lesson on the sundeck, or choose to relax and take in your final moments in this majestic location before feasting on a delicious buffet brunch. After disembarkation, drive back to Hanoi for your onwards flight to the former imperial capital of Hue, situated on the banks of the Perfume River.

Accommodation: Hue, Vietnam - 1 night

Day 14 Sunday 13 April 2025

Hue-Da Nang- Hoi An

[B]

Half day Hue Imperial City. This morning you will be met at your hotel at 8am by your guide for a half day city tour of Hue. We start by viewing the tomb of the fourth emperor of the Nguyen Dynasty Tu Duc which is set beautifully amongst lakes & frangipani trees. Continue with a stop at Bunker Hill which overlooks the Perfume River with panoramic views of the plains that stretch towards the mountains in the west & then a brief stop at the Tiger Colossium. Next, we explore the impressive home of the Nguyen Dynasty emperors - the Citadel. Graded as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1993, much of the Citadel was destroyed during the Tet Offensive in 1968 but is gradually being restored. We finish with a short drive to the much-revered Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's oldest and most beautiful. After your own lunch, you will leave Hue for Hoi An. The guide and driver will take you over the beautiful Hai Van Pass - Vietnam's geographical and psychological boundary between north and south. The peak of the pass lies perpetually shrouded in clouds. Upon arrival, transfer to hotel for check-in. This evening is free for you to explore Hoi An at leisure.

Accommodation: Hoi An, Vietnam- 2 nights

Day 15 Monday 14 April 2025

Hoi An

[B]

Half day walking tour. In the afternoon, you will begin your walking tour of this UNESCO world heritage site. Hoi An was once Vietnam's most active trading centre and over many centuries the Old Town has been largely preserved. The architecture of the city reflects the influence of Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, French and British traders. Hoi An is also the town where French Missionary Alexandre De Rhodes introduced Catholicism to Vietnam as well as the Romanised script that has become the standard Vietnamese script. Today you will be guided on a walking tour through the streets of enchanting Hoi An. You will visit a traditional ancient house, the Hoi An Museum, a Chinese Assembly Hall, Chau Ong pagoda and the Japanese Covered Bridge. The tour will end in Hoi An Ancient Town where you can enjoy more time at your leisure.

Day 16 Tuesday 15 April 2025

Hoi An- Da Nang- Saigon – Cu Chi Tunnels

[B]

After breakfast, take a short drive to Danang for your flight to Saigon. Upon arrival at Saigon airport, your guide and private car will pick up and begin your journey out to Cu Chi Tunnels. On arrival you will watch a short DVD explaining the history of the tunnel network. Following this you will be guided through the famous tunnels as used by the communist guerrillas during the Vietnam War. The tunnel network stretches over 250km and extends to three levels underground providing you with a remarkable insight into the hardships, courage, determination and terror of a guerrilla war. The tunnels were used by Viet Cong soldiers as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches and living quarters for numerous North Vietnamese fighters. The tunnel systems were of great importance to the Viet Cong in their resistance to American forces, and helped to counter the growing American military effort. The vast majority of the network has been recreated above ground however you will have the option to head underground & experience what life was like below the surface. Return to Saigon and check-in at hotel.

Accommodation: Saigon, Vietnam – 1 night

Day 17 Wednesday 16 April 2025

Saigon- Mekong Delta- Can Tho

[B/L]

An early morning departure from your hotel takes you to Cai Be, deep in the heart of the Mekong Delta. Join your wooden boat excursion on the charming Mekong Queen to explore the Mekong Delta's unique market and, also the symbol of the region, Cai Be floating market. This is not the biggest floating market, but it is good to understand the life of the river, one of the tourist magnets of the Mekong Delta. Just only 2 hours away from Saigon, beautiful countryside sceneries and surprisingly hospitable people are waiting for you. Board our traditional boat at the local Cai Be pier and start cruising along the floating market while sampling our tropical fresh fruits, letting the cool breeze touch your hair, you will find the place a truly destination to spend the day relaxing. You will be surprised by the way the locals trade and advertise their products. Disembark the boat temporarily to explore deeper about the local life by visiting the town's business and craft factories. Have fun with a leisure sampan ride through canals before we transfer you to an ancient house where a delicious home hosted lunch with Mekong's specialties awaits. After lunch, continue to cruise upstream the Mighty Mekong toward Vinh Long. Along the way, you will observe the typical Mekong Delta rural local life with stops at a local brick & pottery making factory and a floating fish farm before we take you back to the mainland where your car already waiting to take you to Can Tho for overnight.

Accommodation: Can Tho, Vietnam – 1 night

Day 18 Thursday 17 April 2025

Can Tho- Saigon

[B]

Can Tho is a university town on the confluence of three rivers in the heart of the delta. The Mekong Delta was once part of the Khmer Kingdom, and today many ethnic Khmers still live here. You make an early start this morning to visit the floating markets of Cai Rang which are in full swing at 0700. You'll take a small boat and explore the waterways, which are packed with people who have come from the surrounding rural areas to sell all manner of fruits and vegetables. It's a lively and colourful scene. Return to Saigon by mid-afternoon for check in to your hotel.

Accommodation: Saigon, Vietnam – 1 night

Day 19

Friday 18 April 2025

Saigon Departure

[B]

Saigon City Tour. Today you will be met at your hotel by your guide for a morning walking tour through the heart of Saigon's famous and historic city landmarks including Dong Khoi Street, the Rex Hotel, Municipal Theatre, Hotel de Ville, Nguyen Hue Boulevard, Post Office & Notre Dame Cathedral. You will then join your vehicle and drive to the site of the former US Embassy (now the US consulate) before visiting the impressive Reunification Palace and War Remnants Museum. Later travel to Binh Thanh district and visit Ba Chieu local wholesale market in the East of Saigon, before visiting the Ngoc Hoang (Jade Emperor) Pagoda. This popular 124-year-old pagoda, houses a number of intricate sculptures and woodcarvings. Return to your hotel where your tour ends.

Enjoy these last moments in Saigon before you transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

Key: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner