



Vietnam and Bangkok
Designed for Dr. David Lipani
December 27, 2008 - January 13, 2009



Program Itinerary

December 27, 2008

Departure on an international flight.

December 28, 2008

Arrival in Hanoi. After a short rest, set out to take a one hour **Cyclo ride** around Hanoi's old streets. Relax as you weave through the narrow alleys of Hanoi's ancient Old Quarter, glimpsing everyday life. We will take you past **Hoan Kiem Lake** stopping at **Ngoc Son Temple**. This evening attend a traditional **water puppet show**, a uniquely northern Vietnamese art form especially designed for depicting scenes from rural life and many episodes of national history. Dinner at **Wild Rice Restaurant**.

December 29, 2008

This morning enjoy a city tour of Vietnam's capital. Hanoi is a unique city with tree-lined boulevards, French colonial architecture, peaceful lakes and oriental temples. The city tour includes such sights as **Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum**. Enjoy the architectural and historical aspects of "Uncle Ho's" final resting-place. Continue your visit to see Ho Chi Minh's 'house on stilts', his home from 1954 until 1969. The

wooden ethnic minority style house is surrounded by quiet and peaceful gardens. Sitting to one side of the Mausoleum is the One Pillar Pagoda, founded by King Ly Thai To in 1049 the structure has become an important symbol for the people of Hanoi. Journey to the **National Fine Arts Museum**, located in colonial France's former Ministry of Information has an eclectic mix of contemporary Vietnamese art, religious pieces, lacquer-ware and sculptures. Continue to the **Temple Of Literature**. Vietnam's first university constructed in 1070, its gardens and well-preserved architecture offers a relaxing glimpse into Vietnam's past.

After lunch at a **local restaurant**, continue to the **Hoa Lo prison** (known as the "Hanoi Hilton" during the American war). Continue to visit the Buddhist **Tran Quoc** Pagoda on West Lake (one of the oldest in Vietnam) and **Quan Thanh** Temple (Taoist, dating from the Ly Dynasty). Later visit the **Museum of Ethnology** to enhance your understanding of Vietnam's diverse culture through its unique presentation of objects and dress from daily life.

December 30, 2008

Leave Hanoi by road for **Halong Bay**. Enjoy the journey through the rich farmlands of the Red River Delta and the scenery of rice fields, water buffalo and everyday Vietnamese village life. Arrive in Halong and board the **Huong Hai** or **Bai Tho** traditional sailing junk. While cruising the exquisite waters sample the regions fresh seafood. Visit the recently discovered Surprise Grotto with its great views, and on the next island see the yawning mouth of **Bo Nau Cave**. Alternatively journey to **Dau Go Cave** and nearby see the famous stalagmites and stalactites



of Thien Cung Cave. Enjoy a swim in the emerald waters of Halong Bay at any spot that you wish to visit. Watch the sun set over the bay while enjoying a delicious dinner. Overnight on board the junk.

December 31, 2008

After breakfast cruise by **Monkey Island** before arriving in **Cat Ba**. Cat Ba offers a stunning variety of landscapes and ecosystems, including offshore coral reefs, sandy beaches, and mangrove swamps. Optional activities include kayaking and hiking. Lunch on board.

January 1, 2009

Happy New Year! After breakfast drive to Cat Ba National Park with a stop at the **Trung Trang** cave. Trek to **Viet Hai village**. You have a picnic lunch before taking a boat back to Cat Ba. Dinner at the hotel.

January 2, 2009

Today transfer back to Hanoi. This evening board an overnight train to the Imperial City of Hué.

January 3, 2009

The ancient city of **Hué** has somehow avoided the current economic frenzy which grips most Vietnamese cities. A small, peaceful city of lakes, canals, lush greenery and magnificent historical monuments, Hué has maintained a unique cultural identity.

Arrive Hué in the morning, pick up and transfer to the hotel for check in.

After check in, you will experience two of the city's defining landmarks accessed by boat on the **Perfume River**. Modeled on the Forbidden City in Beijing, the **Imperial Citadel** was built by the Nguyen Emperors who resided within its moated walls for 150 years. The **Thien Mu Temple** rises majestically

over the tranquil river, and is both an historic site and a living religious center. The blue Ford Austin kept on the grounds took Thich Quang Duc to Saigon in 1963. This revered monk from Thien Mu caught the attention of the world's media when, in protest of the repressive Diem regime, he committed an act of self-immolation which was relayed to television sets around the world.

Lunch at local restaurant.

Later visit the **Dong Ba** market for a glimpse of daily life. In the late afternoon visit Mr. Phan Thuan An in his traditional house. Considered an expert on the history of Hué, Phan Thuan An will lead a discussion on his native city and its illustrious past. Dinner at his home.

January 4, 2009

The hills surrounding Hué are studded with the mausoleums of the 13 Nguyen Emperors who established their capital here.

Today you will study the development of Imperial funerary architecture by comparing and contrasting two very different examples. The **Tomb of Emperor Tu Duc** is resplendent in traditional architecture, while that of **Khai Dinh**, known as the 'Puppet Emperor' due to his affiliation with the French, is designed with a colonial flair.

Leave Hué this afternoon and traverse the beautiful **Hai Van (Cloudy) Pass** en-route to **Hoi An**. En route visit the historically significant **China Beach**. Check into the hotel upon arrival in Hoi An.

January 5, 2009

Hoi An is simply a jewel of a town. In a country so ravaged by war, this UNESCO World Heritage Site has miraculously remained unscathed. The historic district is a rich architectural fusion of Chinese, Japanese, European, and Vietnamese influences reflecting the international status of this important port. Hoi An was the gateway through which many new ideas entered Vietnam, including both Buddhism and Christianity. After a comprehensive study of this fascinating, ancient city, continue on to **Danang**.



This afternoon, you visit beautiful **Non Nuoc Beach** and the **Cham Museum**, which contains the finest collection of Cham sculpture in the world. In Danang you will visit the **Marble Mountains**, five sacred hills containing dozens of Buddhist shrines.

January 6, 2009

Transfer from your hotel for a half day trip to the capital and religious centre of the former Champa Kingdom. **My Son**, 40km southwest of Hoi An, sits in a lush green valley with dozens of red brick towers and sanctuaries dating from the seventh through the thirteenth centuries. Your guide will take you through the museum and the holiest of sites before returning to your hotel.

January 7, 2009

Board a morning flight to **Ho Chi Minh City**. Still affectionately called Saigon by residents and visitors alike, Ho Chi Minh City is an amazing and intoxicating blend of old and new. In the afternoon you will have a tour of this fascinating city. Highlights will include the former **Presidential Palace**, complete with underground bunkers, the **History Museum** and **Notre Dame Cathedral**. Later meet with a former UPI photographer, Mr. Hoang Van Cuong, who will provide a personal account of his work, and of war photography during Vietnam in the 60's and 70's Following your discussion with Mr. Cuong visit the **Museum of War Remnants**. Previously known as the Museum of War Atrocities, this museum is housed in the former U.S. Information Services Building. Dinner at Indochine Restaurant.

January 8, 2009

This morning journey out of the city center to vast network of underground tunnels at **Cu Chi**. You will see secret trap doors, and underground kitchens, living quarters and meeting rooms. Return to Saigon for lunch.

Dinner at Ngon restaurant before returning to Saigon.

Cu Chi Tunnels

The first tunnels were dug here by anti-colonial Viet Minh during the 1940s; however it was the Viet Cong who expanded this labyrinth of narrow burrows, creating the network we see today. During the American war, as the conflict is referred to in Vietnam, the villages around Cu Chi supported a substantial VC presence. Faced with American attempts to neutralize the situation, the rebels literally dug themselves out of harm's way. By 1965 over 250 kilometers of tunnels made subterranean Cu Chi resemble something like Swiss cheese! Tunnels could be as small as 80 centimeters wide and in many cases were 4 levels deep. They included latrines, meeting rooms, wells, and even rudimentary hospitals in which makeshift operations were carried out by flashlight. In many instances the instruments used were crudely fashioned from remnants of military ordnance.

January 9, 2009

Morning transfer to the airport. Flight to **Bangkok**, the capital of the Kingdom of Thailand. Meet your local guide and transfer to your hotel. Free evening.

January 10, 2009

Begin your exploration of this fascinating city at the **Grand Palace**, where you visit the main sites including the magnificent throne halls and the emerald Buddha. We then continue to visit **Wat Po**. Bangkok's oldest temple is home to the magnificent reclining Buddha as well as the first school of traditional medicine and Thai massage and is also regarded as Thailand's first University.

Later experience an exhilarating boat ride along the bustling **Chao Phraya River** and the quiet Klongs (canals) in a long-tail boat. Be taken back in time to a more traditional way of life, far removed from Bangkok's modern skyscrapers. Visit the **Royal Barge Museum** to witness the beautiful barges used by the King on state occasions. And **Wat Arun**, the magnificent temple of Dawn with its 79-meter pagoda or 'prang', built in the Khmer style.

January 11, 2009

After a free day enjoy a special seafood dinner at **Supatra River House**. Formally the home of Khunying Supatra Singholaga, a leading advocate of women's rights, this beautiful two-storey traditional Thai house is located on the banks of the Chao Phraya River with a spectacular view of the Grand Palace and Wat Arun. The décor is contemporary, blending perfectly with the traditional architecture, and the views of the River, Grand Palace and Wat Arun are spectacular.

January 12, 2009

Transfer to the airport for your return flight.

Program includes:

- Round trip transatlantic airfare on regularly scheduled flights D.C. – Hanoi/Bangkok – D.C.
- All programming as listed above
- Services of a full-time CSA On-site Coordinator upon arrival in Vietnam
- Accommodation in superior tourist class hotels: students in twins, faculty in singles
- Breakfast daily, dinners as listed above
- All transportation (coach, train), as listed above
- Accident and sickness insurance
- Liability insurance

Program does not include:

- Passport and visa fees when applicable
- Airline fuel surcharges if applicable
- Drinks with dinners
- Additional meals
- Personal expenses including laundry, mini-bar charges and telephone calls
- Any other item not listed above

Please note that visits are subject to availability and the order may be changed.

Price:

Based on 20 participants: \$4,144

