

The Gems of Vietnam (12 days / 9 nights)

**** Based on 4-star hotels (land only)

Day 01	Depart Johannesburg
Day 02	Arrive Hanoi (D.): On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Vietnam's capital is a stylish and gracious city that retains a unique olde-worlde charm and boasts some of Asia's most striking colonial architecture. The many lakes and parks here make for a relaxing atmosphere. Enjoy a Welcome dinner.
Day 03	Hanoi (B. L. D.): A morning tour commencing with a visit to Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum...an incredibly impressive memorial to the Vietnamese leader. Then on to Ho Chi Minh's former residence. Now to One Pillar Pagoda and the gorgeous West Lake with its beautiful Tran Quoc Temple...the oldest of all pagodas in Hanoi. Next to the Temple of Literature...built in 1070 in honour of Confucius. Then to the old quarter of Hanoi and a ride around town in a delightful pedicab. The Old Quarter has the original street layout and architecture of old Hanoi.
Day 04	Hanoi – Halong Bay (B. L. D.): After breakfast, a drive to Halong Bay (taking about 3.5 hours, travelling through the unspoiled lush countryside, with village and farm scenes to delight you. Then, arrival at Halong Bay, where you embark on a cruise... Halong Bay is a UNESCO world heritage area and one of the most impressive landscapes on earth. 12h15: Embark ation 12h45: Cruise departs 13h00: Lunch is serv ed with welcome drinks 13h30: A breathtaking cruise along Halong Bay. Great photo opportunities of starkly-shaped islands, like Dog island, Incense Burner island, Fighting Cock island and so on. You visit Sung Sot cave and have a swim at Titov beach...or you can climb the steps to the view tower. The sunset views are sublime...camera ready! 19h30: Dinner is serv ed. Relax, drinking or fishing at your pleasure before over-nighting on board
Day 05	Halong – Hanoi – Danang – Hoi An (Brunch D.): The day begins early, as you wake up to scenes of this UNESCO World Heritage Site...one of the most impressive landscapes on earth... 09h00: Enjoy a buffet lunch whilst cruising back towards the pier. Tuck in an enjoy a good meal in preparation for a return (with a refreshment stop en route) to Hanoi 11h00: Arrive back at the pier; disembark. Return to Hanoi for a late afternoon flight to Danang. On arrival, you are met and transferred to Hoian, where you check into the Hotel. The ancient town of Hoian was declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1999. There are numerous art and craft shops and tailors, who produce made-to-measure clothes for a fraction of the Western price. Internet cafés, bars and restaurants have opened along the riverfront. The town is also famed for its unique lanterns.
Day 06	Hoian (B. L.): After breakfast, visit Hoian's ancient town, with its fascinating fish market, Chinese temples, Vietnamese houses and the Japanese Bridge.
Day 07	Hoian (B.): After a leisurely breakfast, a full day free for your own activities. The centre of Hoian is very small and pedestrianised, so you will be walking around most of the time.
Day 08	Hoian – Danang – Ho Chi Minh City (B. D.): Today a flight to the former Saigon, where you are met and transfer to the hotel. Ho Chi Minh City was the 'Pearl of the Orient' during the 40's and 50's. The tree-lined boulevards, French colonial architecture and street cafes are prominent reminders of the city's recent past. Sightseeing includes the Reunification Palace...currently a museum, used to be the official residence of the Presidents of the former South Vietnam government. On to Thien Hau Pagoda. See the Saigon Central Post Office...a prominent feature of Ho Chi Minh City. Next door is the Notre Dame Cathedral...a late 18th century basilica built for French colonialists. Later to the War Crimes Museum.... containing exhibits relating to the American phase of the Vietnam War, and is a major tourist attraction.
Day 09	Ho Chi Minh City (B. L. D.): A morning excursion to the legendary tunnel network of Cu Chi District, known as the 'Iron Triangle' during the Vietnam War. The digging of the 215-kilometre tunnel system began in 1946, during the anti-French resistance and continued until the end of the Vietnam War in 1975.
Day 10	Excursion To My Tho (B. L. D.): Enjoy a full-day excursion to My Tho, 75km south of Ho Chi Minh City, a peaceful town on the banks of the Mekong River. The tour includes a cruise on the Mekong River, a visit to orchards and a local home, a sampan ride on palm-shaped creeks, a taste of seasonal fruit and honey tea. Later visit Vinh Trang Pagoda... Later, enjoy a lunch consisting of Mekong specialities. Return to Ho Chi Minh City and enjoy a farewell dinner.
Day 11	Depart Ho Chi Minh City (B.): Spend time at leisure until a transfer to the airport for your departure flight.
Day 12	Arrive Johannesburg

Cost: From USD 3,040 per person sharing, USD 730 for single supplement

