

**Highlight**

- City tour of Hanoi
- Kayaking in the amazing Halong Bay
- Trek & homestay in Sapa

**Itinerary at a glance**

- Day 1:** Arrival in Hanoi
- Day 2:** City tour of Hanoi
- Day 3:** Kayaking Halong Bay
- Day 4:** Kayaking Halong Bay
- Day 5:** Cruise/drive back to Hanoi  
Overnight train to Lao Cai
- Day 6:** Trek in Sapa
- Day 7:** Trek and home stay in Sapa
- Day 8:** Overnight train back to Hanoi
- Day 9:** Free time
- Day 10:** Departure

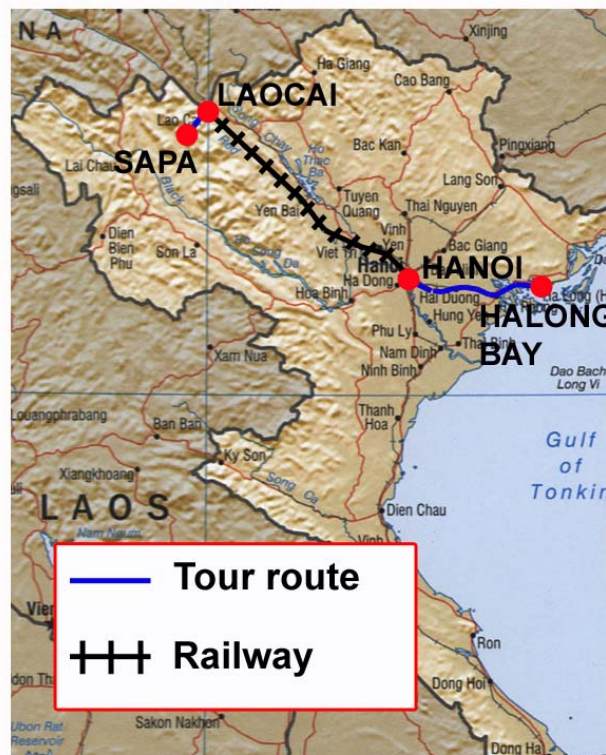
**Trip note**

- Duration:** 10 days, 9 nights
- Group size:** 08 persons
- Arrival:** Hanoi
- Departure:** Hanoi
- When:** Year round
- Activities:** Kayaking, Trekking, Culture expedition
- Grade:** Introductory
- Transportation:** AC vehicle, Junk, Overnight train, Kayak
- Accommodation:** 4 nights hotel, 2 nights junk, 2 nights train, 1 night homestay
- Tour guide:** English or French speaking tour guide
- Meals:**
  - Day 1: Welcome dinner
  - Day 2: Breakfast, Lunch
  - Day 3-4: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
  - Day 5-6: Breakfast, Lunch
  - Day 7: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
  - Day 8: Breakfast, Lunch
  - Day 9-10: Breakfast



**Note on client safety**

we reserve the right to deviate from this itinerary for any reasons, including road and weather conditions, frequency of visits to a village, or for any other factor which may influence client safety.



**Tour cost**

Please contact our **Customer Service** at [info@activetravel.asia](mailto:info@activetravel.asia) or call +84 97 980 0588 (24/7 LiveHelp)

**Inclusion:**

- AC vehicle as in the itinerary
- Overnight train two way to Lao Cai
- Hotels based on twin shared
- Twin shared AC cabin on junk
- Water puppet show
- Kayak
- Home stay permission
- English or French speaking guide
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Water & Snack
- Entrance & Sightseeing fees

**Exclusion:**

- Travel insurance
- Visa
- Tips
- Personal expenses

### Food

All meals, which are indicated in the itinerary, are included in the price of this trip. While in big towns we will enjoy Vietnamese cuisine in fine restaurants. Once we travel away from big towns, the emphasis will be on healthy and nutritious fresh local produce.

### Hotel & homestay

In cities we use the finest 3-star hotels with centre location. Please contact us if you prefer higher hotel categories. Homestay in villages is simple in term of bedding condition and amenities. We will sleep on beds with mattress, clean sheet, pillows and mosquito nets. Toilet is usually western style.

### The junk

The beautiful Chinese junk functions as a hotel and we would share it with other travelers. We will get twin shared cabin with AC and restroom.

The next day when we go kayaking a smaller wooden boat will support us the whole day.

### The kayak

On this trip we use hard-cell, tandem kayak. Paddle, life-jacket and dry bag are available

### The trekking day

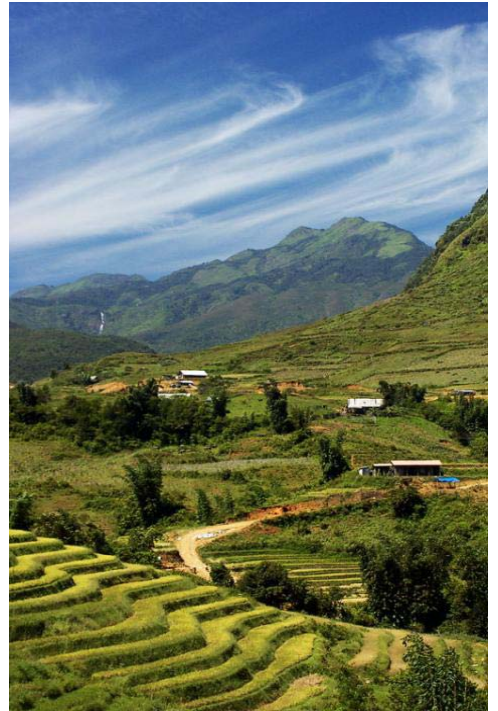
A typical trekking day start at about 8.30 am after breakfast. Lunch times can vary depending on the terrain. We aim to reach the next overnight stop by 4.30 or 5. During the trek we will have short breaks for rest, snack and photographing.

### ATA tour guide

The tour will be led by one of our tour guides who is experienced in guiding trekking tours in Vietnam. He has been carefully trained in this field and is fully licensed in tour guiding by the government. In addition, he has been trained in first-aid by SOS International and he knows how to deal with difficult situations. You will have a great time traveling with him.

### What to bring

Trekking boot, sun block, hat, anti-insect repellent, sunglasses, sleeping bag (optional), rain coat, flashlight, toiletries, original passport,



## Detailed Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrival in Hanoi

Arrival in Noi Bai airport. You'll be greeted at the airport and transferred downtown to check into your hotel. Depending on your arrival time, you may have time to explore a little of downtown and enjoy a stroll around Hoan Kiem Lake.

In the evening, enjoy a special Water Puppet show and have welcome dinner with local delights.

Overnight Hanoi.

#### Summary:

Transfer: 45 mins  
Transportation: AC vehicle  
Activities: Water puppet show  
Meal: Welcome Dinner  
Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

### Day 2: City tour of Hanoi

After breakfast in the hotel you will take an interesting guided city tour of Hanoi including Ho Chi Minh complex (the mausoleum, the house & garden and the museum) and One Pillar Pagoda, a unique ancient architecture. After here we move to Temple of Literature, the site of Vietnam's first university, dates back to 1070. Its peaceful gardens and pavilions offer a relaxing respite from Hanoi's busy streets. Lunch in local restaurant.

In the afternoon, we enjoy a relaxing cyclo tour in the ancient part of Hanoi. Walking down some small and lively street to see busy local market then join locals for green tea or coffee in local café. Free time for shopping. Overnight in Hanoi

" Cyclo is three wheeled rickshaws, operated by pedal-power, with a seat attached to the front.

#### Summary:

Activities: Full-day city tour  
Transportation: AC vehicle  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch  
Accommodation: Hotel in Hanoi

### Day 3: Kayaking Halong Bay

Leave Hanoi for Halong Bay at 8.30am.

On the way we will have a short break for refreshment at a handicraft centre. Upon arrival in Halong City we board a wooden boat for a fine seafood lunch and a short cruise to Thien Cung Cave. After a short exploration of the cave we start our kayaking time paddling through an amazing area of limestone islets. We will pass a floating village to reach Luon Cave, which is a tunnel thrusting through a mountain. Paddling through the tunnel to explore a beautiful secluded lagoon. We will meet the mother boat, a junk in Chinese style, in front of the cave.

Aboard the junk for dinner and overnight in AC, private cabin.

#### Summary:

Transfer Hanoi – Halong: 3.5 hrs  
Transportation: AC vehicle, Boat, Kayak  
Activities: Kayaking 2.5 hrs, Cruising  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Accommodation: Twin shared cabin

### Day 4: Kayaking Halong Bay

After breakfast we start paddling to Van Chai Floating village and then continue paddling to Dark Cave. Tide permitting, we explore this amazing cave by kayak. The cave is a 200m long, dark tunnel thrusting through a limestone mountain. The tunnel is the only entry to a secluded and beautiful lagoon. Lunch on support boat in front of the cave. After lunch we paddle to Ba Trai Dao Lagoon, along a stunning and fairly rough sea channel, to explore its beautiful beaches. Continue paddling to Lan Ha Bay, which is smaller than Halong bay but much more interesting with lots of secluded beaches. Cruise back to Halong Bay for dinner and overnight on mother boat

#### Summary:

Activities: 5 hr kayaking  
Transportation: Boat, Kayak  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Accommodation: Twin shared cabin





Meals: Breakfast, Lunch  
Accommodation: Hotel

**Day 7: Trekking & home-stay**

After breakfast you begin your trek around 9am. You first descend the valley on tarmac then hit a beautiful dirt path which runs through rice terraces and minority villages. You will have a break in Lao Chai Village to visit the local H'mong minority group. You'll stop beside a stream and enjoy a picnic lunch. After lunch you continue trekking to Ta Van village, home of the Dzay hill tribe. You will spend the night with a Dzay family. Your dinner will be cooked by your local guide and the hosts.

**Summary:**

Transportation: On foot  
Activities: 5-hr intermediate trek  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Accommodation: Home stay

**Day 5: Halong Bay – Hanoi – Take overnight train to Lao Cai**

Breakfast on the junk and enjoy the sundeck of the junk while she navigates amazing rock formations of Bai Tu Long Bay to get back to Halong City. Lunch on the junk before reach Halong Harbor for a drive back to Hanoi. On the way back to Hanoi we will have a stop in Dong Trieu Town for refreshment and visiting to a ceramic factory.

Arrive in Hanoi we then have time to shop around the Old Quarter and have dinner before being transferred to Hanoi Railway station to catch the night train to Lao Cai (9.30pm – 5.30am). Overnight on train

**Summary:**

Transfer Halong – Hanoi: 3.5 hrs  
Transportation: AC vehicle, Junk, Overnight train  
Activities: Sightseeing  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch  
Accommodation: AC, soft sleeper cabin on train

**Day 6: Trekking Sapa**

Arrival in Lao Cai and take a 1.5 hour drive up the stunning mountain range sculpted with tiered rice terraces to the charming little town of Sa Pa, which nestles at 1632 meters. Lots of sightseeing en route. After checking into your hotel you'll have free time to explore the town and its great market.

After a lunch of Vietnamese food in a local restaurant you'll take a 3 hour trek down the valley to visit a H'mong hill tribe village. Return to Sapa and overnight in hotel.

**Summary:**

Transfer Lao Cai – Sapa: 1.5 hrs  
Transportation: Bus (or van), On foot  
Activities: 3-hr easy trek

**Day 8: Sapa – Lao Cai – Overnight train to Hanoi**

Breakfast at the home stay. We say goodbye to the hosts and head to the main road where you will be transferred back to Sapa town. Lunch in local restaurant and then spend the rest of the day for shopping or walking the beautiful Ham Rong Park. In the late afternoon you will be transferred to Lao Cai for overnight train back to Hanoi.

**Summary:**

Transfer village – Sapa: 35 mins  
Transfer Sapa – Lao Cai: 1.5 hrs  
Transportation: Bus (or van)  
Activities: Sight seeing  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch  
Accommodation: AC, soft sleeper cabin on train

**Day 9 Free day in Hanoi**

Arrive in Ha Noi 4.30 am. Check into your hotel. You'll welcome this free day to relax and recover from your journey north. Lots of time to explore more of Ha Noi and pick up some of those last minute souvenirs. Overnight in hotel

**Summary:**

Activities: Free time  
Meals: Breakfast  
Accommodation: Hotel

**Day 10: Departure**

Breakfast and free until you are transferred to the airport for the flight to onward destination.

**Summary:**

Transfer Hanoi –Airport: 45 mins  
Transportation: AC vehicle  
Meals: Breakfast

## Holiday Extensions

### Minority markets in Sapa:

*Nothing can prepare you for the riot of color and activity at the regional minority markets that can be found dotted around the Sapa region. Make sure you've brought enough film or your camera's batteries are fully charged, as they are a photographer's delight!*



#### **Pha Long Market – Saturday**

Open from 6am to midday

Very rural market, ethnic groups include, the H'mong, Tou Zi, Pa Zi and Tou Lao. Along the road can be found several Nung and Mong villages, often consisting of traditional houses constructed with baked earth tiled roofs.

#### **Can Cau Market – Saturday**

Saturday morning 6am to midday

In the middle of paddy and corn fields. Visitors are generally H'mong groups from highland villages. The local H'mong are the famous variegated or Flower H'mong due to the intricate and colourful nature of their costumes. Travel is often made by horseback as a way of carrying the heavy loads to and from market.

#### **Muong Hum Market – Sunday**

Every Sunday from 6am to 1pm. This market is the biggest cardamom market in the region, pre-dating the French and serves as a meeting point for the ethnic groups living in the mountains; including the Giay, Dao, White H'mong and Ha Nhi. Those who live in the upper reaches of the mountains such as the Mong or Red Dao come down to sell specific products such as cardamom and mountain plants. In Muong Hum, it's worth taking a sip of the local brew - here it's paddy rice brandy from the Dao village of San Lung. It's become quite a famous tippie.

#### **Muong Khuong – Sunday**

Big market with a variety of ethnic groups, Mong, Dao, Nung and others, including visitors from as far away as China come to sell their products. Pa Zi

women can be found selling traditional incense made from bark and resin of scented trees.

#### **Bac Ha Market – Sunday**

From 9am to lunchtime

The biggest ethnic market in Lao Cai province. Here you will be able to find, buffaloes, horses, blacksmiths, saddlers, traditional medicine doctors, clothing and local artifacts. Frequented by H'mong, Dao, Tay, Nung and Phu La. Be sure to arrive by 9am as the market finished around lunchtime.

#### **Binh Lu & Tam Duong Market – Sunday**

Binh Lu and Tam Duong market is located on the other side of Sapa, passing the 1900 meter Tram Ton pass, Viet Nam's highest mountain pass and considered the most beautiful stretch of road in the country. The town is bustling with activity as the local hill tribes gather for their weekly market day, amazing tribal markets in Binh Lu where thousand of Thai Kadai language groups such as Tai Lu, Tai Laos, White Tai, and H'mong - Yao group (black Yao, Yao Lantien..), Giay, Khomu.. comes to buy and sell their own produces.

#### **Coc Ly Market – Tuesday**

Off the beaten track. Several groups of Mong, Dao, Tay, Nung and Phu La groups can be found in this secluded mountain market. Return back by boat down the river Chay and marvel at the untouched natural beauty of the region.

#### **Hue & Hoian: 3 or 4-day tour, fly from Hanoi to Hue and overland to Hoian.**

Vietnam's former imperial city, Hue, is one of the main cultural, religious and educational centers of Vietnam. Hue became the nation's capital under the Nguyen Dynasty when Emperor Gia Long, the first of the Nguyen emperors, chose the location for the imperial city in 1802. The elaborate mausoleums of the Nguyen emperors, more like palaces than tombs, are scattered around the rural areas surrounding the city. The mausoleums of emperors Tu Duc, Khai Dinh and Minh Mang are particularly impressive being extravagant complexes of pavilions, temples, courtyards and lakes. A leisurely cruise by dragon boat up the Perfume River is a good way to see many of Hue's attractions.

Once known as Faifo, Hoi An was one of the orient's major trading ports in the 16th and 17th centuries. After the Thu Bon River linking Hoi An to the sea silted up ocean going ships were no longer able to sail into town and trade moved 30km up the coast to Tourane, known nowadays as Danang.

Despite the passing of 200 years and the ravages of weather and war, the centre of Hoi An remains much the same as it was in its heyday. A walking tour is the best way to see the wooden-fronted houses that once belonged to the town's prosperous merchants, the Japanese-covered Bridge and the wonderful market. Hoi An is one of the best places in Vietnam to shop for souvenirs at bargain prices including silk, handicrafts, antiques and paintings.

## ACTIVELY EXPLORING HIDDEN LANDS