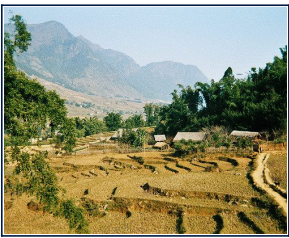




VIETNAM - NORTH VIETNAM OUTBACK - 4N / 5D



ITINERARY

From trekking in national parks to navigating small canals, this adventure will show you the beautiful temples, caves and untouched villages of northern Vietnam.

Day1: Hanoi - Ninh Binh (B)

Drive from Hanoi to Ninh Binh, stopping en route at various handicraft workshops dotted throughout the countryside. After lunch in a local restaurant board a boat to explore the incredible scenery of Tam Coc. Also known as 'Halong Bay on Land' this beautiful natural setting boasts endless rice paddies surrounded by towering limestone karst mountains. Transfer onto small rowing boats to navigate the canals that meander through the yellow and green fields. Pass by local villagers and see glimpses of how they live their daily life among such spectacular scenery. Also visit a workshop to see how intricate embroidery is produced by hand, a tradition that has been practiced by the local inhabitants for thousands of years.

Overnight at Emeraldalda.



Day 2: Ninh Binh - Cuc Phuong. (B/L/D)

Drive to Cuc Phuong National Park, the largest in Vietnam and one of the most important biodiversity sites in the country. From here start a seven kilometre trek through the park keeping a look out for the diverse species of flora and fauna including the 1000-year-old Wang Hsie tree. Explore a prehistoric cave where human skeletons and stone tools dating back 7,500 years have been found. Also visit the Endangered Primate Rescue Center to observe langurs, lorises, and gibbons. After lunch in the national park, start the drive to Hieu with a stop at a mysterious fish stream. Then, taking just what you need for the night in a small backpack, either walk or take a 'xe-om' motorbike taxi for the remaining five kilometres to the guest house. The rest of your belongings can be left in the car with the driver. Overnight at Les Bains d'Hieu.

Day 3: Cuc Phuong - Mai Chau (B/L)

After breakfast enjoy the fresh morning air with a walk up the mountain to see the village and the views over the valley. Start the drive to Mai Chau, with stops to admire more vistas and a visit to a factory where bamboo chop sticks are made. On arrival in Mai Chau visit a local family who will invite you into their house for a home cooked meal. As you sample their cuisine and their hospitality, the family will tell you all about their life and culture. Carry on to the Mai Chau Eco Lodge and enjoy the rest of the afternoon at your own leisure. Overnight at Mai Chau Ecolodge.

Day 4: Mai Chau - Duong Lam (B/L/D)

In the morning visit some of the remote and untouched villages that surround Mai Chau. Take this opportunity to enjoy the breathtaking scenery and learn more about the local culture. After lunch, drive to Duong Lam, an ancient village set in the middle of beautiful rice fields. It is home to picturesque old houses built of wood and laterite stone that have been preserved in their original state. Wander along the narrow alleyways, stopping to chat with the locals, and visit some of the temples that were built in honour of the two kings born in the village.

Overnight at Moongarden Homestay

Day 5: Duong Lam - Hanoi (B)

Check out and start the drive back to Hanoi. Along the way, stop at Thay Pagoda, an 11th century Buddhist temple maintained in good condition by the local monks.