



VIETNAM

BIKE, HIKE & KAYAK NORTHERN VIETNAM
BY BIKE, FOOT & KAYAK
11-DAYS

Adventurous travellers will revel in this trip to Vietnam, a geographically diverse country that offers some of the best playscapes in South East Asia. Our adventure kicks off in Hanoi, where we explore the bustling old quarter on foot and in rickshaws. We spend a few days on mountain bikes snaking along dirt roads that carve around steep mountains, through remote villages and alongside fertile meadows. To add a burst of culture, we trek into the Nam Cang Village to see the colourful Red Dao hill tribe. The wow factor continues in Halong Bay where we slip into sea kayaks and paddle amongst rugged limestone cliffs that rise out of the sea. This 11-day ramble is loaded with culture, nature and activity and is a sure bet to satisfy all of your adventure cravings.

Day 1

HANOI

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival into the Hanoi airport a BikeHike Adventures representative will greet you and transfer you to a comfortable hotel. Depending on your time of arrival, you'll likely have free time to relax, get adjusted and explore a bit of Hanoi's bustling Old Quarter. In the evening you'll meet your guide and enjoy a savoury spread of Vietnamese dishes followed by a visit to the Water Puppet Theatre for a performance of this ancient traditional art form.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Dinner



Day 2

HANOI

HIKING & RICKSHAW RIDING

After a hearty breakfast we'll set off to explore some of Hanoi's historic sites, such as The Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, One Pillar Pagoda and the 11th century Temple of Literature. After lunch, we'll visit the Ethnology Museum and then we'll ride in rickshaws, touring the historic 36th Street Old Quarter--it's a shoppers and photographers delight as the streets are alive with shops and vendors making and selling everything imaginable. We'll have dinner before preparing for this evening's 9:30 pm night train to Lao Cai. The air-conditioned sleeping berths have 4 beds.

Accommodation: Train

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

BikeHike Adventures

For more details call BikeHike Adventures at 1-888-805-0061 or 1-604-731-2442 email info@bikehike.com or surf us at www.bikehike.com

Day 3

LAO CAI - NAM CANG

MOUNTAIN BIKING

We'll arrive into Lao Cai early in the morning and then have breakfast in a restaurant near the train station. We then depart for Cam Duong. Once in the mountains, we'll begin our cycling adventure to Thanh Phu village. We'll ride through a spectacular landscape of verdant mountain scenery and over a couple of small passes. Lunch will be served in a local home. From here, we'll continue a scenic ride crossing the valleys through villages, rice fields and across a hanging bridge to Nam Cang village. We'll check into the tranquil and comfortable Nam Cang Riverside Lodge, built and owned by a Red Dao Minority family. The rooms are simple here, but comfortable and there is a shared bathroom for tonight. Nam Cang is located in the most remote area of Sapa and here we'll experience the Red Dao women wearing some of the most colorful and diverse costumes of all Vietnam's ethnic groups. Herbal bath, local medicine and embroidery are some of the things that the Red Dao are very skilled at. We'll explore the village and learn how the local villagers make writing paper from rice, silver jewelry and embroidery. We'll follow a Red Dao lady to the jungle to collect herbs which are used for their famous herbal medical treatment. This evening, enjoy dinner in the peaceful mountain atmosphere with lots of opportunities to interact with the locals.

Biking Distance: 50km / 31mi

Ascent: + 800 m (2300 ft)

Accommodation: Homestay

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

NAM CANG RIVERSIDE LODGE -

HILLTOP ECOLODGE

HIKING

We'll wake up to the sound of nature and then head for a traditional breakfast, served just a few feet from the river. Afterwards, we'll set out on foot, walking along a quiet dirt road and eventually reach a trail that winds through a beautiful terraced rice valley. We'll cross over a stream on a suspension bridge, and have spectacular views of the rice paddies surrounding us. If we're lucky, there will be water buffalo plowing through the muddy fields which will make for some great photo opportunities. Our hiking route is also through bushes of tropical plants with some steep paths leading up the mountainside. We'll arrive to Nam Nheu village at noon, and have the chance to visit another Red Dao village. Here our driver and vehicle will be awaiting to transfer us our accommodation in a mountain ecolodge, where we'll check in and then have lunch. This afternoon is free time or for those who want to explore further, head out on a two hour walk to Thanh Kim village with your guide.

Hiking Distance: 21km / 13 miles.

Ascent: + 1480 m (4884 ft)

Descent: - 550 m (1815 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Day 5

GOLDEN STREAM VALLEY - SAPA

HIKING

Today enjoy a relaxing morning with no activities. Breakfast will be served at our lodge and at 10am we'll check out and drive to Ta Van village, inhabited by the Dzay people, in the center of the Golden Stream Valley. The view is stunning from the road, with wide valleys and traditional villages dotted among terraced fields bordered by the impressive Fansipan mountain. Here we'll meet Mrs Sung, a local H'mong woman, who will introduce us to the valley and her village. We'll walk through Ta Van village and then onwards to Lao Chai, a village of Black H'mong people. The walk is mostly downhill in a spectacular setting of rice terraces and impressive mountain views. Once in Lao Chai, we'll meet Mrs. Sung's family and learn about their daily lives and fascinating culture. We'll then enjoy a light home-cooked lunch with them. Later in the afternoon, our hosts will teach us their traditional batik skills and indigo dying. Afterwards, we'll walk back to the main road to meet up with our driver who will drive us to our hotel in Sapa. From the rooms of our hotel, we'll have great views of the surrounding mountains and valleys. For those who want to treat themselves to foot massages before dinner, it is highly recommended here. Overnight at a comfortable hotel.

Hiking Distance: 10 km / 6 mi

Ascent: +1011 m (3316 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 6

BINH LU - SAPA

BIKING

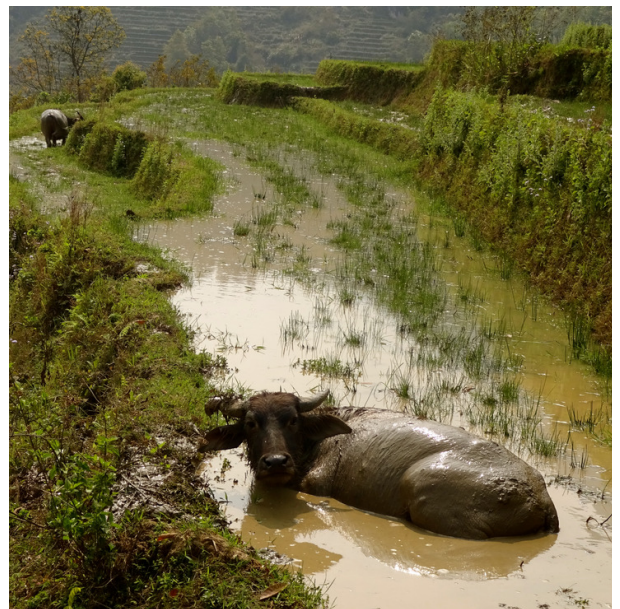
This morning we switch gears and spend the day on mountain bikes. First we transfer by vehicle to Silver Waterfall, and then we have a tough 3km/2mi climb to Heaven's Gate. We'll ride over Tram ton Pass, the highest in all of Indochina and the views of the Hoang Lien Valley are dramatically beautiful. Then we free-wheel 26km/16mi downhill to Binh Lu Junction. The Binh Lu area is dotted with the villages of many hill tribes including Thai, Dzao, H'Mong, Lu and Nung. After lunch we'll cycle our last stretch to a Thai village where we'll stop to explore a Fairy Cave. We then jump back into our van and drive over the pass back to our hotel in Sapa. Dinner is on your own tonight.

Biking Distance: 40km / 25 m

Ascent: + 1770 m (5807 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 7

SAPA - TA PHIN VALLEY - HANOI

HIKING

This morning we start with a hearty buffet breakfast at our hotel. Then we set off on foot, for a day of hiking from Sapa to Ta Phin Valley. We'll walk through the town of Sapa for about 20 minutes until we reach a dirt road that leads to Ma Tra, a Black H'mong village. Our trekking route is through a beautiful mountainous landscape with vegetable gardens and rice terraces dominating the landscape. We'll have some time to visit local families and learn about their traditional fiber processing. Then we continue our hike to Ta Phin village of the Red Dzao tribe. This is one of the most scenic valleys in all of Vietnam. We'll break for lunch here before exploring the village. We'll then transfer back to Sapa and we'll have some free time to explore the town, the local market and the sloping streets with all of the colourful handicrafts. In the late afternoon, we'll return to Hanoi by vehicle with an estimated arrival back to our hotel about 10pm.

Hiking Distance: 15km / 10mi

Ascent: + 1240 m (4068 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 8

HANOI - HALONG BAY

JUNK BOAT & SEA KAYAKING

We'll be picked up and transferred to a restaurant for breakfast. Then at 8am we'll depart for a drive to Halong Bay through the Red River Delta with a coffee stop on the way. Upon arrival into Halong Bay, a World UNESCO Heritage Site, we'll transfer to a luxury Junk, a traditional Vietnamese boat, and enjoy a welcome cocktail on board. We will start cruising while everyone checks into their cabins. For lunch, we'll feast on fresh local seafood while cruising to the boundaries of Halong Bay. Our course is away from the populated, touristy areas and into the more authentic reaches of Halong Bay. Once we reach Bai Tu Long we'll put into sleek two person kayaks and paddle among the incredible karst formations for one or two hours. We'll then return to the junk boat where everyone can enjoy an aperitif on the sundeck. Dinner is a buffet, served on board featuring an array of salads, seafood, meat and fresh fruit. Overnight on-board the Junk Boat in air-conditioned cabins with en-suite bathrooms.

Accommodation: Boat

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9

HALONG BAY

JUNK BOATING & SEA KAYAKING

For those interested in an early morning tai chi session, there will be one happening on the sundeck at 630am, along with coffee and tea. Breakfast begins at 7am. After breakfast we'll transfer to a smaller boat, for a cruise further to explore the hidden nooks of the archipelago and into the area that we will start our kayaking. Then we have a good chunk of the day to paddle kayaks on the calm emerald waters, past limestone karsts and floating houses, and small sandy beaches that are taken away in the high tide. We'll have a traditional Vietnamese lunch served on our support boat today. We'll return to our junk boat mid-afternoon where everyone can refresh before relaxing on the sundeck, enjoying the dramatically beautiful scenery. The evening is at leisure to relax under the starlit sky before retiring to the comfort of our cabin. Overnight again on the Junk Boat.

Accommodation: Boat

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10

HALONG BAY

JUNK BOATING

This is our last morning in Halong Bay, so we wake up early to make the most of it. There will be another 630am tai chi session for anyone who'd like to participate. Then we'll hop on bamboo boats and visit a secluded floating village surrounded by the mountains. We spawn our way between a series of floating homes and small rowing boats, all that serve the local's everyday lives as vehicles, shops, fishing utilities and overnight shelter. We return to the junk boat for 9am and then start cruising back to the pier in Hongai. Brunch will be served along the way. Our driver will be awaiting us here and will transfer us by vehicle back to Hanoi. We should make it back into Hanoi at about 430pm. There will be free time for last minute shopping and exploration of Hanoi before meeting for our farewell dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11

HANOI

DEPARTURE

We'll pick you up at your hotel and transfer you to the airport for your journey home.

Meals: Breakfast



TRIP INCLUSIONS

Trip Includes

All accommodation (twin shared), meals as indicated, all internal transportation, 21-speed mountain bikes, airport transfers and English-speaking guides.

Not Included

International airfare, airport departure taxes, gratuities, meals not indicated and items of a personal nature.

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