

Far East

Japan | China | Vietnam | Cambodia

Escorted Touring Holidays 2024 – 2025



distantjourneys
Your Time to Explore



Japanese girl in traditional kimono, Japan

“A Warm Welcome Awaits”



I am delighted to introduce our Far East 2024/25 brochure, showcasing meticulously designed and insightful tours that allow you to truly explore Japan, China, Vietnam and Cambodia with Distant Journeys.

Culturally unique and scenically beautiful, there is nothing quite like a holiday to Japan. Alongside soaring skyscrapers and neon lights, treasured ancient traditions, like the graceful geisha and the art of the tea ceremony, still hold their place in daily Japanese life. The countries of Vietnam and Cambodia are the very essence of South East Asia, with rich cultures, diverse and friendly people and spectacular landscapes. And, with thousands of years of intriguing history and archaeological discoveries to modern cities and the rare Giant Pandas, it's easy to see why China remains one of the world's favourite travel destinations.

As Distant Journeys celebrates its 10th birthday in 2024, I am reminded of what Andrew, Richard and I set out to do from the very beginning. Our aim is simple – to make every moment of your holiday as memorable as it should be.

With over 80 years of experience between us, and the support of an immensely passionate and knowledgeable team, both here in the UK and overseas, we have created an exciting style of flexible

touring holidays that meet exceptional standards and unbelievable value. Operated at a leisurely pace and providing you with unrivalled flexibility and value for money, we tailor our itineraries to the tastes of UK travellers.

The exceptional quality of our touring holidays means that Distant Journeys has been a winner on 18 occasions at the prestigious British Travel Awards, and was also awarded a 'Platinum Trusted' rating by independent reviews provider Feefo, for consistently delivering an excellent level of customer service.

We are so proud our customers love what we do, and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank every single one of you for the loyalty and trust shown over the years. It has been our absolute honour to create these holidays of a lifetime for you, and we look forward to helping you plan your next adventure soon.

And, for those of you who haven't travelled with Distant Journeys yet, a very warm welcome. Our friendly travel professionals are experts in the destinations we visit and would love the opportunity to share their passion with you at any time.

With best wishes for the season ahead,

Simon Whittle
Managing Director

OUR DISTANT JOURNEYS...

Some of my favourite memories from my time in Japan are from those little pockets of unexpected experiences that tend to stick with you. I remember stumbling across a little sushi restaurant on a side street in Kanazawa, totally unplanned, and despite the language barrier, having the most wonderful time (and sushi!) with a husband and wife chef team. The Japanese people are some of the most polite and humble you will ever meet. Of course, seeing sights such as Mount Fuji up close are truly unforgettable too.



Liz Reddy
Head of Product

OUR DISTANT JOURNEYS...

I have been fortunate enough to visit many countries, but Vietnam and Cambodia stand out for many reasons. From beautiful landscapes to vibrant, bustling cities, you can really immerse yourself in their culture and fascinating history. I love Asian food, so cooking authentic local cuisine was a highlight and an absolute must! Watching the sunrise over Angkor Wat is a truly unforgettable experience that will stay with me forever.



Calum Hughes
Reservations Team

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Why Choose Distant Journeys?



Award-winning holidays

Our aim is to offer exceptional value for money without compromising on the quality of your holiday. Our success is evident, with Distant Journeys winning at the prestigious British Travel Awards 18 times.



Meticulously designed tours

Many years of planning go into every detail of our holidays, and each element is carefully chosen with our customers' enjoyment in mind.



Personal knowledge and expert advice

Distant Journeys has a team of professional travel specialists with personal knowledge of the countries we visit, our selected hotels and the experiences offered.



Freedom to explore

Our holidays operate at a relaxed pace to give you plenty of time to fully explore and savour each area, as well as giving you some time to unwind. Many of our tours also have Freedom Days, to spend as you wish.



Hand-picked hotels

We only select accommodation which meets the high standards of quality, service and location our guests have come to expect.



Once in a lifetime experiences

From exciting rail journeys and cruises to exploring lesser-known gems, our holidays feature many incredible experiences which provide memories to cherish forever.



Expert Tour Managers and local guides

Our Tour Managers and local guides are all greatly experienced in their field, and have the right balance of organisational skills and local knowledge, coupled with warm, friendly personalities.



Personalise your travel arrangements

Flying from regional UK airports, typically at no extra cost, upgrading your flight and extending your holiday are just a few of the ways in which you can personalise your tour so it's perfect for you.



Book with confidence

Distant Journeys are fully bonded by the Civil Aviation Authority and The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited, meaning you can book in confidence, knowing your money is 100% safe.



Clockwise from top: Mount Fuji, Japan; Giant Panda, Chengdu, China; Authentic Japanese cuisine; Ninh Binh, Vietnam

Price Promise ✓

Early booking offers

Our philosophy is simple – the earlier you book the better the offer you will receive.

No last minute discounts

Distant Journeys never discount our holidays at the last minute, so you can be confident you will never see your holiday at a lower price than you paid.

No additional charges

Irrespective of any additional costs incurred by Distant Journeys as a result of currency fluctuations, air fare increases or other costs associated with your holiday, surcharges will never be added once you have confirmed a booking.

Price match

We want you to have the peace of mind when booking a Distant Journeys holiday that you are receiving the best possible price. So, if you see the same holiday cheaper, not only will we match that price, we will also give you £200 off the price of a future holiday with Distant Journeys.

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.

YOUR LOCAL GUIDE SAYS...

Vietnam is home to friendly locals, delicious food and beautiful scenery. The city tours are brilliant for first-time visitors, covering history, culture and local life, and for a more in-depth and immersive experience, I recommend a bike tour of the many local villages too.



Nguyen Ngov Qui
Vietnam

YOUR TOUR MANAGER SAYS...

The Very Best of Japan tour includes so many interesting local experiences, but with a good degree of freedom and flexibility to allow a true appreciation of the country. Japan is safe and clean, its people are kind and the food is very good!



Sachiko Takigawa
Japan



Holiday Styles To Suit You

Although our love of travel unites us, we all have our own individual requirements when it comes to how we travel. It's your holiday, and with Distant Journeys you can choose the style of holiday that suits you.

Classic Tours

Our Classic escorted tours are a great way to travel and experience a country's scenery, culture and sights with a group of like-minded people, guided by a friendly and knowledgeable Tour Manager and local guides who will bring the destination to life. Your carefully crafted touring itinerary includes a variety of wonderful activities and sightseeing excursions, many meals, and accommodation in top-quality hotels throughout. With our Classic tour groups, good company and camaraderie is guaranteed.

Solo Tours

Join a small group of like-minded travellers as you explore Vietnam & Cambodia. You will be accompanied by a Tour Manager, dedicated to taking away any worries and ensuring you get the best from every moment of your well-deserved holiday. And at the end of a busy day, retreat to the privacy of your own hotel room, safe in the knowledge that there's no single occupancy supplement to pay. Our range of included activities and sightseeing will create friendships forged through shared experiences, and memories to last a lifetime.

Private Tours

If you would like to travel to China or Vietnam & Cambodia with a group of friends, as a family, or if you are celebrating a special occasion as a couple, our private touring holidays provide affordable exclusivity for groups of any size. Enjoy the same expertly-crafted itinerary and hand-picked hotels, but with the exclusivity and convenience of your own friendly and knowledgeable guides, your own private vehicle and your own choice of departure date. Private Tours give you the flexibility to shape the holiday to suit you.

Ha Long Bay, Vietnam

Exceptional Value

We are passionate about what we do, passionate about the countries we visit, the experiences we include, the service we offer and the value for money we deliver to our guests, without compromising on the quality of your holiday experience.

With Distant Journeys, value for money means we will provide you with the opportunity to discover Japan, China, Vietnam and Cambodia in comfort and style, with so much flexibility and so many experiences included in the itinerary, without it costing the earth.

So much included



Return international flights from the UK on award-winning scheduled airlines, with all on-board meals and drinks included



Choice of regional UK airports on selected tours



Carefully selected hotels offering quality and comfort. Daily breakfast is included in addition to a selection of other meals



Overseas transfers and transport in modern air-conditioned coaches



Porter service for your luggage



All pre-payable airport and resort taxes. All the entrance fees to the many incredible places and monuments you will visit



Experienced Tour Managers or local guides on all escorted tours



Once in a lifetime experiences



Visits to lesser-known hidden gems



Travelling on a Private Tour? You'll enjoy all the same inclusions, travel in your own vehicle and have the convenience of our knowledgeable local guides



Chinese lanterns

CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL...

Our tour of Vietnam and Cambodia was superb. Not only was the itinerary excellent, but, being a fairly new tour, any small glitches or requests for change were handled immediately and very efficiently by our Tour Manager, Angie Carpenter. She is so good as well as being very knowledgeable and becomes your great friend through the tour. The hotels were also superb and were clearly well chosen, with very comfortable accommodation and delicious food! The local tour guides were very knowledgeable and made each and every one of our daily trips so enjoyable and fun. I can without any hesitation thoroughly recommend not only this tour, but also Distant Journeys who are magnificently efficient, handle all issues or requests without any problem, and are a lovely team to interact with.

Mr Mumford – The Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL...

Amazing tour with excellent tour guide and local guides who checked the weather and tweaked our Mount Fuji day so we actually saw the mountain in good weather. Japanese people are very friendly, helpful and the local cuisine is delicious. Well worth a visit to this amazing historical country.

Mrs Milburn – The Very Best of Japan

CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL...

The meticulous organisation, scope of places and sights visited, the expertise of the local guides, and particularly the superb management and assistance provided by our overall tour guide, made the Very Best of China tour a wonderful experience.

Mr Wood – The Very Best of China



Japanese hospitality

Award-winning Customer Service

Great customer service is at the heart of everything we do, and we never lose sight of what matters most – you, our valued customers. We are with you every step of the way; before, during and after your tour. We recognise our guests are individuals, with different requirements, tastes and needs, and we tailor our support accordingly.

Our commitment to excellence has won us many awards, which recognise the superb customer service and high standards throughout the entire experience of booking and travelling with Distant Journeys. We are determined to continue to exceed expectations when it comes to our guests and their well-deserved holiday.

A team of dedicated travel experts

Our Travel Experts are friendly, well-travelled individuals with a passion for the destinations we visit, and love to share their experience and knowledge with you. We have travelled on our tours and visited the places you will visit, so we can offer advice from personal experience and give you practical recommendations.

Experienced Tour Managers and knowledgeable local guides

Distant Journeys' personally-selected Tour Managers work tirelessly to ensure your tour runs smoothly. They use their experience, local knowledge and organisational skills to make sure our guests can relax, knowing they are accompanied by a friendly and resourceful presence who is always on hand to help.

Local guides play an invaluable role when touring Vietnam, Cambodia, Japan and China too; sharing their knowledge of the culture, traditions and language of their country to provide helpful insights into the places we visit and first-hand recommendations to help guests feel truly immersed in their tour.



Hand-Picked Hotels

Distant Journeys appreciate the hotels in which you stay are an integral part of your holiday, which is why we take great care in hand-picking all the accommodation featured in our itineraries. Location and quality are always paramount considerations, and we always strive to provide the best of both.

Hotel ratings

You can be confident the hotels featured in this brochure have been carefully selected for their location, quality, facilities and level of service. We understand from many years of experience that accommodation ratings may vary from country to country. We therefore provide our own ratings, which are based on the expectations of guests from the United Kingdom, alongside the official hotel rating.

Location, location, location

Relax in the knowledge that every hotel has been carefully chosen to make the most of each destination you visit. In Japan, guests stay at the Fuji Marriott Hotel Lake Yamanaka. Set close to beautiful Yamanaka Lake, the largest of the Fuji Five Lakes, it is surrounded by the unforgettable landscapes of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, and is perfectly placed to take in the incredible views of Mount Fuji.

Character and charm

Some hotels are more than a place to rest and, in many destinations, we select hotels for their history, character and charm. When staying in Phnom Penh, Cambodia you will enjoy a stay at Palace Gate Hotel & Resort. When you arrive, the first thing you will notice is their lovingly-restored French colonial villa. This incredible centerpiece, is complete with ornate columns and intricate examples of Cambodian tile making. The space now houses the hotel's fine dining restaurant, Mealea.

In China, we stay in the ancient city of Pingyao, at the fascinating Yunjincheng Hotel. Some 300 years old, the building was originally two houses with courtyards which were beautifully converted into an exceptional boutique hotel. Almost as if you were stepping into a museum, every area of the hotel – the courtyards, the lobby and the guestrooms – tells a story of its rich history.

OUR HEAD OF PRODUCT SAYS...

If guests opt to extend their holiday with our trip to Laos, they will stay at Le Palais Juliana Hotel, which is one of my favourites. It feels like a real retreat, a hidden gem despite being just a short distance from the city of Luang Prabang. Upon arrival, you step into a sanctuary flanked by a leafy forest, which levels you with a sense of peace and tranquility. Welcome drink in hand, you'll stroll out to its relaxing pool area and take a deep breath of fresh air, it's just a great place to enjoy after a tour of Vietnam & Cambodia.



Liz Reddy
Head of Product



Palace Gate Hotel & Resort, Phnom Pehn, Cambodia



Buddhist monks, Luang Prabang, Laos

Freedom & Flexibility

Imagine being able to enjoy all the benefits of travelling with a group of like-minded people: the fun, the camaraderie, the friendships, the hassle-free organisation – and at the same time being able to personalise your holiday so that it's perfect for you.

When it comes to having the freedom to tailor your holiday to suit your tastes and wishes, the flexibility provided by Distant Journeys cannot be beaten.

Fly from your local airport

To get your journey off to the best possible start, on the majority of our tours, Distant Journeys offer flights from London Heathrow or Manchester at no extra cost. Dependent on your choice of airline, other regional airports may also be available for a supplement.

Flight upgrades

If you would like to treat yourself to a little more comfort on your international flights, Premium Economy and Business Class upgrades are available on selected routes. See pages 92-93 for more details.

Freedom Days

For an escorted tour to be truly memorable, we believe you should have the freedom to customise your touring experiences to match your interests. That is why the vast majority of Distant Journeys tours have a number of Freedom Days for you to spend as you please, with many activities and excursions to choose from.

Extend your holiday

Distant Journeys offer a series of spectacular holiday extensions to finish off your holiday adventure. Holiday extensions are dependent on your choice of destination and itinerary, and include a four-day tour of the Mekong Delta, a magical trip to Luang Prabang in Laos, or a homebound city stopover in Dubai or Singapore – or a relaxing stay on Sentosa Island.

Once in a Lifetime Experiences

When you travel with Distant Journeys, you can be confident that all the must-see sights will be included, along with several extra special experiences to make your holiday as memorable as it should be.

The geishas of Japan

Instantly recognisable and incredibly gracious, nothing is more synonymous with Japan than the geisha. Take a peek into this secretive world – enjoy a traditional Japanese meal, a kaisei, whilst being entertained by a maiko (apprentice geisha), who will perform their traditional art of singing and dancing.

Unforgettable Cruises

Sail Vietnam's picturesque bays

When visiting Vietnam, enjoy a leisurely cruise to discover UNESCO recognised Ha Long and Lan Ha Bays, with backdrops straight from a picture-perfect postcard. Depending on your choice of tour, our overnight option is aboard the charming La Regina Legend, and our two-night cruise, on the impressive Au Co.

Meander the Mekong

When on our Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia tour, you will also explore the vast and verdant Mekong Delta over four leisurely days, cruising the mighty Mekong River on board an elegant, hand-built ship, viewing tranquil waterways, discovering local villages and enjoying the ship's traditional charm and comfort.

Discover the Yangtze

On our Very Best of China tour, you will experience an unforgettable three-night cruise along the spectacular Yangtze River, with plenty of time to sit back and view ever-changing vistas or to explore a selection of the river's ancient waterside towns and the remarkable engineering feat of the Three Gorges Dam.

Explore the temples of Angkor Wat

A visit to the immense Angkor complex of temples is a journey to one of the great wonders of the world. From the 9th to the 15th century Cambodian 'god-kings' attempted to surpass the religious monuments of their ancestors. This culminated in the world's largest religious building, and Cambodia's most recognisable landmark, the famous five spires of Angkor Wat.

China's ancient city of Pingyao

Stay in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Pingyao, a tiny ancient city, often overlooked by travellers. Pingyao's superbly preserved architecture and city walls, elegant courtyards and ancient temples, along with the vibrancy created by the 30,000 people residing within its walls, plus, the absence of cars within the city walls transports you to a bygone era. Embrace the enchantment of this lesser-known destination, a fantastic addition to any touring itinerary.



Clockwise from top: Angkor Wat, Siem Reap, Cambodia; Au Co cruise, Ha Long Bay, Vietnam; Maiko, Japan; Pingyao, China





Clockwise from above: Fushimi Inari Shrine, Kyoto; Miyajima Island, Hiroshima; Traditional Japanese food



Your holiday includes

 Return economy flights with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, London Stanstead, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle or Glasgow, inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty. Alternatively, fly direct to Tokyo with Japan Airlines from London Heathrow – a supplement, from £250 per person, will apply


 Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portage and applicable taxes

 Meals worth £584 per person, with daily breakfast, three lunches and four dinners

 Unforgettable experiences including:

- ★ Sightseeing tours in Tokyo, Takayama, Kanazawa, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Miyajima Island and Nara
- ★ Learn how to make sushi
- ★ Spend two nights near Lake Yamanaka
- ★ View Matsumoto Castle and visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Himeji Castle
- ★ Visits to a miso and a sake factory
- ★ Explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Shirakawa-go
- ★ Discover the Japanese gardens of Kenroku-en and Koraku-en
- ★ Watch a Maiko performance
- ★ Ride the Bullet Train
- ★ Visit historical Bikan Chiku, Kurashiki

 Services of experienced Tour Manager and local guides

 All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout

 Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.

The Very Best of Japan

 20 days  from £6,195pp  March – November 2025

From the kimono-clad geisha who grace Kyoto's streets, to Tokyo's modern neon-lit metropolis, what makes Japan so unique is its ability to hold on to age-old customs and timeless traditions, yet entwine them seamlessly into modern-day living.

With stunning landscapes and delicious regional cuisines, a plethora of historic shrines and temples, it's no wonder Japan is considered one of the world's great touring destinations.

Our leisurely 20-day tour has been carefully crafted to blend this fascinating mix of ancient and modern along with all of the country's major attractions. Add to this the magnificent beauty of the Japanese Alps, picturesque gardens, ancient castles and unique Japanese experiences, this popular tour combines the very best this country has to offer.

With quality accommodation, all breakfasts and many other meals included, our Very Best of Japan tour really does offer exceptional value for money.





Tokyo Tower, Tokyo



Sushi

The Very Best of Japan

Days 1 to 5: UK - Tokyo - Lake Yamanaka

Day 1: Depart UK

Depart with Emirates from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, London Stanstead, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle or Glasgow, to Tokyo via Dubai. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Alternative airline – Japan Airlines

Should you prefer, fly direct to Tokyo from London Heathrow with Japan Airlines for a supplement, from £250 per person return.

Day 2: Tokyo, 3 nights

On arrival into Japan's metropolitan capital, we transfer to the centrally-located Keio Plaza hotel. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 3: Tokyo

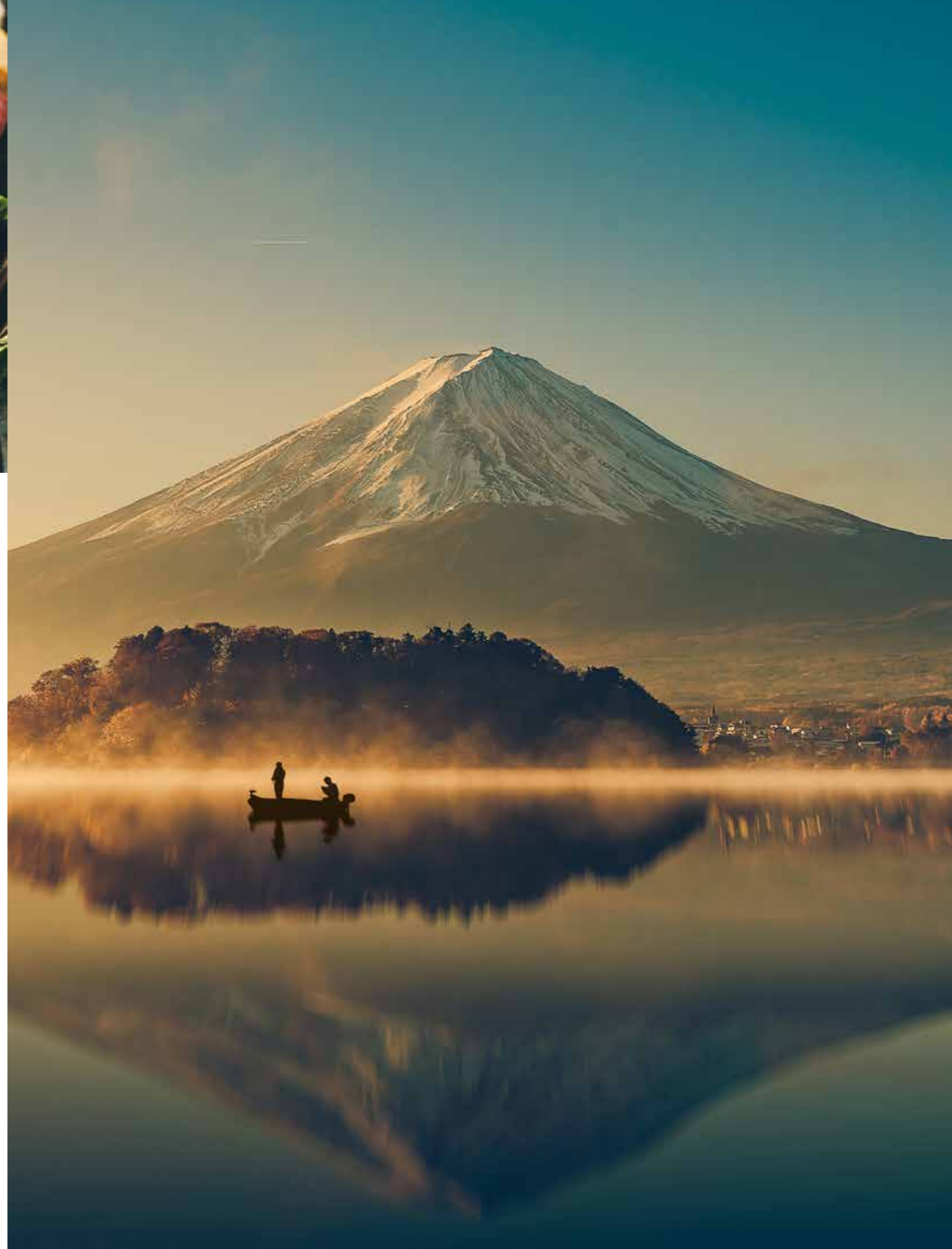
We start our Japanese adventure in the district of Asakusa, home to Tokyo's oldest temple, Sensoji, founded in AD645. The approach to the temple is through the Kaminarimon Gate, which leads to the Nakamise, a shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional local snacks and tourist souvenirs for centuries. We make our way to a local restaurant where we will learn the art of Japanese sushi-making, before enjoying our own culinary creation for lunch. We finish our day with a visit to the Tokyo National Museum. This evening, enjoy a welcome drink with your Tour Manager and fellow travellers. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 4: Tokyo

After breakfast, we make our way to Tokyo Tower. Standing at 333m, it's 13m taller than the Eiffel Tower, which was the inspiration for its design. Although surpassed in height by Tokyo Skytree in 2012, Tokyo Tower remains a beloved symbol of the city. After a brief photo stop at the impressive Imperial Plaza, we make our way to Japan's most famous Shinto Shrine, Meiji Jingu. Dedicated to Emperor Meiji, the shrine sits in a large forest area that contains more than 100,000 trees, gifted by the people to their beloved emperor. We return to our hotel, where the remainder of the day is at leisure. This evening there is the opportunity to see Tokyo from a different perspective with an optional dinner cruise along the Sumida River. **Breakfast included**

Day 5: Lake Yamanaka, 2 nights

This morning we head to Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, famous for its hot springs and views of what is easily Japan's most iconic image, Mount Fuji. Our first stop is Lake Ashi, a crater lake formed over 200,000 years ago. We board our boat for a short cruise on this beautiful lake before taking a cable car into the Owakudani Valley. The result of a volcanic eruption over 3,000 years ago, the area is still active with many sulphur vents and bubbling hot springs. We continue our journey through picturesque landscapes to the area known as Fuji Five Lakes, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our home for the next two nights is the Fuji Marriott Hotel Lake Yamanaka. After settling into our accommodation, there is free time to relax before we dine together in the hotel's restaurant. **Breakfast and dinner included**



Mount Fuji and Lake Kawaguchi



Kiyomizu-dera Temple, Kyoto



Geisha, Kyoto



Kenroku-en Garden, Kanazawa

The Very Best of Japan

Days 6 to 12: Mount Fuji - Takayama - Shirakawa-go - Kanazawa - Kyoto

Day 6: Mount Fuji and Fuji Five Lakes

Tour Highlight

Mt. Fuji, or Fuji-san as it is more affectionately known, can be a little shy, but fingers crossed a clear sky will reward us with some impressive views. Our first stop is the small, but delightful, Kubota Icchiku Art Museum. Kubota revived the lost art of Tsujigahana silk dyeing and the museum exhibits several of the artist's stunning kimono creations, which depict themes of nature, the cosmos and the seasons. Our next stop a visit to the Oishi Tsumugi craft museum which demonstrates a 300 year old method of weaving, unique to this region. Following a lunch of Hoto noodles, we continue to the Fuji-san World Heritage Centre which showcases traditional artwork and videos of this sacred mountain. Our final stop is the shores of Lake Kawaguchi where there is time for a stroll along this picturesque lake. This evening we dine together in our hotel. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 7: Takayama, 2 nights

This morning, we begin our journey towards the majestic Japanese Alps. We stop at Matsumoto castle, the oldest existing castle in Japan, for a fabulous photo opportunity and continue to a miso factory, to discover how this staple Japanese food is made. Afterwards, enjoy a spectacular journey through the mountains to Takayama. Our hotel for the next two nights is the centrally-located Takayama Green Hotel. Alternatively, you may wish to experience a stay in a traditional Japanese inn (a Ryokan) for the evening. **Breakfast and dinner included**

Stay in a traditional Ryokan

Overnight from £115 per person



During our time in Takayama, for those who want to experience traditional hospitality, there is an opportunity to spend a night in a Ryokan, a traditional Japanese inn. Enjoy delicious local cuisine, relax in your yukata (casual kimono) and maybe even try the onsen, a hot spring bath. Please call for details.

Day 8: Takayama

Tour Highlight

Takayama is best explored on foot and we begin our day with a visit to the morning market. Afterwards, we make our way to the Takayama-Jinya, which served as government headquarters under the Tokugawa shogunate of 1692 to 1871. We end our morning in the heart of Takayama's picturesque old town, lined with traditional houses, shops, restaurants, sake breweries and cafes. Our afternoon is at leisure to enjoy this delightful area. Perhaps sample some of the many delicious delicacies, try some locally-brewed sake, or visit one of the many museums, such as the Festival Floats Exhibition Hall. Tonight, there is the opportunity to dine on Japan's famous Hida beef, a variety of wagyu beef local to this area. **Breakfast included**

Day 9: Shirakawa-go & Kanazawa, 2 nights

Today we head to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Shirakawa-go. The villages, mostly cut off until as recently as the 1960s, are today famous for their traditional style of housing, the Gassho-Zukuri, which means 'like praying hands'. We continue to Kanazawa and the Omicho Market, a lively food market famous for its abundance of fresh seafood, which has been in operation since 1721. Later, we visit Nomura Samurai House, a restored samurai residence. Finally, arrive at the Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel where we will stay for the next two nights. **Breakfast included**

Day 10: Kanazawa

Following breakfast, we visit the delightful Kenroku-en garden, considered by the Japanese as one of the top three gardens in the country. The name Kenrokuen means the 'garden combining six', referring to the six attributes all gardens should include: seclusion, antiquity, spaciousness, human ingenuity, water and scenic views. The city is also famed for gold leaf and it is used in abundance. We visit a local establishment to learn about gold leaf production, and decorate our own chopsticks in gold leaf – we even have the opportunity to purchase a gold leaf ice-cream. We head to the Higashi Chaya area of the city with its lovely neighbourhood of beautifully-preserved geisha houses. Many have now been converted into restaurants or teahouses, although some are still open to the public. The afternoon is free to continue exploring Kanazawa at your own pace. There is a plethora of museums and local arts and crafts to explore. Alternatively, you have the option to join an afternoon tour which visits the Kutani Pottery and Kagayuzen Kimono Centre. **Breakfast included**

Day 11: Kyoto, 3 nights

This morning, we make our way to Kanazawa Station for our train journey to Kyoto. The capital of Imperial Japan for over 1,000 years, Kyoto is Japan's cultural capital. This afternoon, we head to Arashiyama and its famous Bamboo Grove, where there will be plenty of time to wander through the impressive towering alley of Bamboo. Our hotel for the next three nights is the Kyoto Tokyu Hotel.

Tour Highlight

The distinctive white face, red lips and elaborately decorated hairstyle of the geisha is an enduring image portrayed throughout the globe. Yet the world in which they live remains a mystery. Tonight, we have arranged a traditional Japanese meal, a kaisei, where we will be joined by a maiko, our apprentice geisha, who will perform traditional song and dance. **Breakfast and dinner included**

Day 12: Kyoto

Tour Highlight

We begin our day of sightseeing at the impressive UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kinkaku-Ji Temple. Fondly referred to as the Golden Pavilion, this richly decorated golden temple is a truly beautiful sight to behold. Our next stop is another UNESCO World Heritage Site, the rock garden of Ryoanji Temple. The garden's fifteen stones are cleverly arranged so that there is always one rock that is hidden from view. Our final and third UNESCO World Heritage Site of the morning is Kiyomizu-Dera Temple. Founded in AD778, the most famous feature of the temple is its wooden veranda, standing some 13 metres above the ground. Later, we head to Gion, Kyoto's famous geisha district, before taking part in a traditional tea ceremony. Tonight, there is an opportunity to experience a Japanese barbecue at a local restaurant. **Breakfast included**



Kurashiki



Fushimi Inari Shrine, Kyoto

The Very Best of Japan

Days 13 to 16: Kyoto - Hiroshima - Miyajima Island - Kurashiki

Day 13: Fushimi Inari Shrine

Today, we head out of the city to the Fushimi Inari Shrine, famous for its tunnels of more than 10,000 closely-spaced torii gates, each of which has been individually donated. We finish our morning with a visit to a sake brewery to learn about the brewing and production process of this famous Japanese rice wine. Later, we return to the city for an afternoon at leisure. If you prefer, you can join an optional tour of Sanju-Sangendo, with an opportunity to paint and take away your own paper fan. Tonight, there is the option to try Japanese shabushabu at a local restaurant. **Breakfast included**

Day 14: Bullet Train, Hiroshima, 2 nights

After a leisurely breakfast, we transfer to the station for our ride on Japan's iconic Bullet Train. Running at speeds of up to 200 miles per hour, the train smoothly whisks us across the country to our next port of call, Hiroshima. Hiroshima is perhaps best known for being the place where an atomic bomb was dropped during the Second World War. This afternoon, we talk to a local about their recollection of the attack, visit the Memorial Peace Park and its moving museum, as well as the Atomic Bomb Dome. After a thought-provoking day, we transfer to the Rihga Royal Hotel, ideally located for exploring the city. We stay here for the next two nights. Tonight, we have the opportunity to visit a local Okonomiyaki pancake restaurant. **Breakfast included**

We Recommend

Okonomiyaki Pancakes

With some 2,000 Okonomiyaki restaurants in Hiroshima alone, this dish is adored by locals.



Day 15: Miyajima Island

A morning visit takes us to the peaceful and pretty island of Miyajima, famous for its giant torii gate, part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Itsukushima Shinto Shrine. After viewing the shrine, there is plenty of time to wander around the city's pretty streets. Our afternoon has been left at leisure, but we highly recommend a stroll to Hiroshima Castle, Shukkeien garden and Orizuru Tower, which are all within easy walking distance of our hotel. **Breakfast included**

Day 16: Kurashiki, Overnight

Travel to the old merchant settlement of Kurashiki, whose main draw is its beautiful willow-lined canal. Many former storehouses have been converted into museums, boutiques and cafes, providing the perfect backdrop for a leisurely stroll. This afternoon we visit Korakuen Garden, another of Japan's top three gardens. It is most aptly described as a "strolling garden", due to its variety of views from the pathways which wind through the pond, stream, lawns and teahouse. We return to Kurashiki for an overnight stay at the Kurashiki Royal Art Hotel. Tonight, there is an opportunity to dine at a local restaurant. **Breakfast included**



Torii Gate, Miyajima Island



Himeji Castle



Japanese tempura



Todaiji Temple, Nara

The Very Best of Japan

Days 17 to 20: Himeji Castle - Osaka - UK

Day 17: Himeji Castle, Osaka, 2 nights

Tour Highlight

Today we journey to our final destination, Osaka, via the city of Himeji, famous for Japan's finest surviving feudal castle, Himeji Castle. The first fortifications of this UNESCO World Heritage Site were completed in the 1400s. Gradually enlarged over the centuries, the castle complex, as it survives today, is over 400 years old and is an imposing and majestic site. After exploring the castle and grounds, we make our way to Osaka. Our home for our final two nights is the delightful Nikko Osaka Hotel. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 18: Nara

Our sightseeing today takes us to Nara, Japan's first permanent capital. One of the first sights we will experience is the thousands of sacred deer that roam freely through the city, and have learned to bow for treats! We visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Todaiji Temple. Founded in AD745, the vast temple took over 15 years to complete. The main hall houses a colossal bronze Buddha statue and remains the world's largest wooden building. After a morning of sightseeing, we return to Osaka, where our afternoon has been left free to relax or possibly purchase some last-minute souvenirs. **Breakfast included**

Day 19: Depart Osaka

Our day is at leisure until we travel to Osaka Airport for our evening flight to the UK. All flights with Emirates will travel via Dubai. Alternatively, if choosing Japan Airlines, you will fly to the UK via Tokyo. **Breakfast and in-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 20: Arrive UK

After 20 spectacular days, we arrive into the UK, bringing our incredible Very Best of Japan tour to an end. **In-flight meals and drinks included**



Nara Park

Departure Dates & Prices

2024 Departures

21 Sep 2024	£5,895pp	SOLD OUT
28 Sep 2024	£5,995pp	SOLD OUT
12, 19 Oct 2024	£5,995pp	SOLD OUT
26 Oct 2024	£5,895pp	SOLD OUT
02 Nov 2024	£5,895pp	SOLD OUT

2025 Departures

22 Mar 2025 [^]	£6,595pp	
24, 25 Mar 2025	£6,595pp	SOLD OUT
27, 28 Mar 2025	£6,595pp	
30 Mar 2025	£6,595pp	SOLD OUT
01 Apr 2025	£6,595pp	SOLD OUT
09, 10, 11 May 2025	£6,195pp	SOLD OUT
17 May 2025	£6,195pp	
20 Sep 2025	£6,395pp	
11 Oct 2025	£6,395pp	
18 Oct 2025	£6,395pp	
01 Nov 2025	£6,395pp	

[^]This date uses some alternative hotels. Please call for further details.

We may have more dates and prices, as well as Special Offers, available on our website. For more information, visit distantjourneys.co.uk/VBOJ

Prices

Prices are per person based on two people sharing a twin or double room.

Single occupancy supplement
£1,595

Deposit

£1,000 per person if travelling Economy Class, £1,950 per person if travelling in Premium Economy, and £3,750 per person for Business Class.

Flight upgrades

Emirates upgrade to Premium Economy* from £1,195 per person or Business Class from £4,145 per person return.

Japan Airlines upgrade to Premium Economy from £1,295 per person return, or Business Class from £3,495 per person return.

*Only available on certain flights.

Important information

Prices and flight upgrades are subject to fuel surcharges and the availability of flights. The correct price will be confirmed before you book.

Full Booking Conditions are available on pages 96-99.

Call to book

Our award-winning travel experts are happy to answer any questions you may have, and to help you book your holiday with Distant Journeys.

Call FREE on 0800 141 3743

Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.30pm **Saturday** 9.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday Open in peak season. See website for details.

Should you prefer, please feel free to email us with your enquiry.
Email: enquiries@distantjourneys.co.uk





Your holiday includes

- ✈️ Return economy flights with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, London Stansted, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow and any domestic flights within China. Inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty
- 🏠 Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portorage and applicable hotel taxes
- 🍴 Meals worth £584 per person, with daily breakfast, fifteen lunches and nine dinners
- 🌍 Unforgettable experiences including:
 - ★ Sightseeing tours in Beijing, Pingyao, Xi'an, Chengdu, Shanghai and Suzhou
 - ★ The Great Wall
 - ★ Visit the Forbidden City and Summer Palace
 - ★ Stay in the UNESCO World Heritage site of Pingyao
 - ★ View the Terracotta Warriors
 - ★ Cruise on the Li River
 - ★ Visit the Giant Panda Breeding Research Institute
 - ★ Three-night cruise on the Yangtze River
- 📖 Services of an experienced local Tour Manager and local guides
- 🚆 All domestic rail travel in Standard Class carriages
- 🚗 All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout
- 🔒 Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.

Clockwise from above: Chinese fisherman; Colourful rice straw hats; Giant Panda, Chengdu

The Very Best of China

📅 23 days 💷 from £4,695pp 🌐 April – October 2025

It's not surprising China is considered one of the world's most fascinating and exciting touring destinations. Ancient palaces and modern skyscrapers sit side by side, and peaceful river cruises are combined with high-speed journeys on bullet trains.

Those with a love of history and food will be in their element, and when we visit the giant pandas of Chengdu, scale the Great Wall or explore the renowned gardens of Suzhou, we will see first-hand what makes China so special.

Our leisurely 23-day tour covers all the country's major attractions with a perfect blend of included sightseeing tours and Freedom Days to spend as you please. What's more, you will discover less-visited cultural gems such as Pingyao, with its superbly preserved architecture and town walls, and experience an unforgettable three-night cruise along the spectacular Yangtze River. This relaxing cruise allows plenty of time to sit back and view ever-changing vistas or to explore a selection of the river's ancient waterside towns and the remarkable engineering feat of the Three Gorges Dam.

With quality accommodation, all breakfasts and many other meals included, the Very Best of China tour really does offer exceptional value for money.





Forbidden City, Beijing



Bronze Lion, Beijing

The Very Best of China

Days 1 to 4: UK - Beijing

Day 1: Depart UK

Depart from the UK airport most convenient for you with Emirates at no extra cost. Choose from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, London Stansted, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow, all via Dubai. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 2: Beijing, 4 nights

Arrive into the wonderful city of Beijing and transfer to the Park Plaza Wangfujing Hotel, conveniently located in central Beijing. Previously known as Peking, China's capital city is a historical treasure trove, boasting over 3,000 years of tumultuous history. However, it's not only this city's ancient monuments that attracts visitors. Its imposing socialist monuments of the 1950s along with the explosive growth of modern buildings and infrastructure, make Beijing an unmissable showcase of China old and new. This evening, enjoy a welcome drink with your Tour Manager and fellow travellers, to become acquainted and learn more about our adventure ahead. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 3: Beijing

Today, our sightseeing tour of Beijing begins in Tiananmen Square. Measuring around 440,000m², it was here that Chairman Mao declared the founding of the People's Republic of China. We continue to the nearby Forbidden City, the world's largest palace complex and home to China's best-preserved collection of ancient and ornate buildings. We have plenty of time to explore the Forbidden City, prior to lunch in a nearby restaurant. In the afternoon, we explore the Temple of Heaven Park, which is the site where, during the Ming and Qing dynasties emperors prayed for a good harvest. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 4: Beijing and The Great Wall

Tour Highlight

China's most iconic sight and greatest engineering triumph, the Great Wall weaves its way through 4,000 miles of northern China's landscapes. This morning, we travel northeast from the city to the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall, famous for its Ming-era guard towers and the fantastic views of the surrounding mountains. We take a short cable car ride to the wall, and have ample time to stroll along part of it, and take in the spectacular landscapes. Following our memorable visit and lunch we return to our hotel in the afternoon to relax. This evening, we will enjoy a classic imperial dish from Beijing: Peking Duck, served with plum or garlic sauce, scallions and pancakes. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**



The Great Wall of China, Beijing



Pingyao



Cormorant fishing, Guilin



Terracotta Army, Xi'an

The Very Best of China

Days 5 to 10: Beijing - Pingyao - Xi'an - Chengdu

Day 5: Beijing

Following breakfast, we spend the morning exploring the halls, pavilions, temples, gardens, corridors and bridges of the Summer Palace. The Palace was the playground for the royal family as they escaped the suffocating heat of the summer. We marvel at this masterpiece of traditional Chinese landscaping, which has been designed according to the principles of feng shui. We return to our hotel around midday where the remainder of our day is free to spend as we please. In the evening, there is a chance to experience an exciting Acrobatic show. **Breakfast included**

Day 6: Pingyao, 2 nights

This morning we experience the benefits of China's huge investment in its infrastructure, as we board our bullet train to Taiyuan. On arrival, we enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, which specialises in Jin cuisine and a multitude of noodle dishes. En route to Pingyao, we stop to visit the Chang family mansion, the former home of one of the richest merchants in the Shanxi Province. Covering a total area of more than 600,000m², the compound has over 4,000 rooms, 50 buildings and 13 gardens. Its courtyards feature some of the country's most elaborate examples of Qing Dynasty decorative architectural features. Later in the afternoon, we make our way to Yun Jin Cheng Mansion, a charming boutique hotel in the centre of Pingyao, whose courtyards and rooms have been lovingly decorated to reflect the history of its surroundings. This evening enjoy an authentic dinner in a local restaurant. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 7: Pingyao

Tour Highlight

Not many UK visitors can lay claim to having visited Pingyao, which is surprising because this UNESCO World Heritage Site is China's best preserved ancient walled town and is a true highlight. The city was at its peak during the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644) and, incredibly, Pingyao has managed to keep its imposing town walls and watchtowers, elegant courtyards and ancient temples largely intact. What's more, 30,000 locals still reside in the old town, which creates the vibrancy of this living and breathing community. This morning we explore the streets of Pingyao, including visits to its fine temples, government buildings and the Rishengchang Financial House Museum, which began life as a humble dye shop before transforming into China's first bank and pioneering the use of paper cheques as a form of payment.

With a visitor pass allowing free entry to many more of Pingyao's delights, your afternoon could be easily spent further exploring the town. Alternatively, you may wish to make the short journey to the Shuanglin Temple for an optional tour of this astonishing Buddhist temple, with its impressive complex of ancient halls and intricately carved statues. **Breakfast included**

Day 8: Xi'an, 2 nights

We say farewell to Pingyao and board our 'bullet train' to Xi'an, one of China's most famous cities with a long and fascinating history. A considerable amount of its ancient city has managed to survive alongside its modern developments. We make a stop to explore the magnificent city walls, which date back to the Ming dynasty around 1370, to enjoy incredible views of Xi'an old and new from our vantage point on top of the 12m-high wall. We reach the Holiday Inn Big Goose Pagoda Hotel later in the afternoon, where we stay for the next two nights. One of the delicacies in Xi'an is its fantastic dumplings, which are similar to dim sum. This evening, enjoy sampling a selection of dumplings – each are handmade into a variety of shapes and with a selection of delicious fillings. **Breakfast, boxed lunch and dinner included**

Day 9: The Terracotta Warriors

Tour Highlight

Discovered in 1974 by a group of farmers drilling a well, the Terracotta Army is one of the most famous and spectacular archaeological discoveries in the world. Today we explore the pits containing the terracotta soldiers, which have stood guard since 246 BC when Emperor Qin Shi Huang commissioned the work for his mausoleum. Each life-sized warrior has been crafted with individual facial features and clothing and are arranged in battle formations alongside their horses and chariots. We also visit the equally fascinating Qin Shi Huang Emperor Tomb Artefact Exhibition Hall, which contains many artefacts including a pair of bronze chariots and horses, which are displayed with some of the original weaponry. After lunch, we visit the Small Wild Goose Pagoda, before returning to our hotel. Later, perhaps enjoy an evening of traditional music and dance at the Tang Dynasty show including dinner. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 10: Chengdu, 2 nights

After breakfast, we make our way to the train station before boarding our high-speed train to Chengdu, in the Sichuan Province, renowned for its teahouse culture and its most famous inhabitants – the Giant Pandas. On arrival early afternoon, we transfer to our hotel, the charming Tibet Hotel and our home for the next two nights. Later, we take a gentle stroll through Wangjianglou Park which is often filled with dancing, song and tai chi. The park is also home to some of the city's favourite local teahouses, where we stop to sample the local brews and perhaps mix with the locals over a game of Mahjong. **Breakfast and boxed lunch included**



Yangtze River cruise



Shibaozhai Pagoda, Yangtze River

The Very Best of China

Days 11 to 14: Chengdu - Guilin - Yangshuo

Day 11: Chengdu and Giant Pandas

Tour Highlight

With over 80% of the world's Giant Panda population found in Sichuan Province, it's little surprise to find the area taking the lead in conservation projects to save these endangered species. The panda is the national symbol of China, and today we visit the Giant Panda Breeding Research Institute, which is home to around 120 giant and 76 red pandas. The project allows us to see these loveable and rare creatures, at close quarters in a near-natural habitat setting. Following lunch at the Breeding Centre we return to our hotel to relax and freshen up. Later in the afternoon, we explore the bustling stalls and shops of the Wide and Narrow Alleys, two ancient streets restored in Ming and Qing architectural styles. We enjoy dinner in one of the local restaurants, serving traditional dishes, cooked with distinctive Sichuan flavours. Later, we recommend venturing to the Sichuan Opera for a one of a kind cultural performance, including acrobats, dancers, puppets and the amazing 'face-changing' mask spectacle. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 12: Guilin, Overnight

Following breakfast, we travel to Guilin by train. Upon arrival our waiting coach will take us to the Sheraton Hotel, ideally situated in central Guilin and overlooking the Li River. In the evening, there is an opportunity to take an optional Lakes and Rivers cruise. **Breakfast and boxed lunch included**

Day 13: Li River & Yangshuo, 2 nights

Tour Highlight

The countryside through which the Li River flows is a photographer's dream. During our morning cruise including lunch onboard, we glide serenely between verdant hills, enjoying iconic scenes of wallowing water buffalo and farmers tending their crops against a backdrop of limestone peaks. Our cruise terminates in Yangshuo, where we meet our waiting coach and head to Yangshuo Resort. Our home for the next two nights enjoys an idyllic and peaceful location on the banks of the Yulong River and is a perfect place to relax and unwind. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 14: Yangshuo Freedom Day

Although our day has been left at leisure to soak up the wonderful surroundings, we have the opportunity to enjoy a selection of fantastic optional activities. Why not take a gentle bike ride along the banks of the Yulong River? Alternatively, you may prefer to float downstream on a bamboo raft or join a small cookery class, where you will visit a local market to choose ingredients, before creating a selection of local dishes. In the evening, there's also a chance to experience the enchanting Impression Liu Sanjie show, where six hundred performers take to the Li River to deliver a spectacular light show with illuminated karst peaks as a backdrop. Whatever you choose to do – enjoy!

Breakfast included



Giant Panda, Chengdu



Suzhou



Yuyuan Gardens, Shanghai

The Very Best of China

Days 15 to 18: Yangtze River Cruise - Shanghai

Day 15: Yangtze River Cruise, 3 nights

Following a leisurely breakfast, we transfer to the train station to embark on the next stage of our exciting adventure around this fascinating country. Our bullet train whisks us to Chongqing later in the afternoon where we board either the MV Century Victory or MV Century Oasis to begin our fabulous three-night cruise along the Yangtze River. Our accommodation is in well-proportioned Deluxe Cabins, all with private en-suite facilities and balcony. Whilst on board, all our meals are included along with a modest selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks during lunch and dinner. Following dinner and our safety briefing, enjoy a drink at the Captain's welcome party, as the cruise sets sail. **Breakfast, boxed lunch and dinner included**

Yangtze River Cruise Cabin Upgrades

Prices from £295 per person



Distant Journey guests are accommodated in Deluxe Cabins, with an option to upgrade to Superior Cabins, or for something really special an Executive or Presidential Suite. Please call for details

Day 16: Yangtze River Cruise

For early risers you may have the opportunity to practise the art of Tai Chi with a professional trainer on the sunshine deck. Alternatively, enjoy a leisurely breakfast before our visit to the 'ghost city' of Fengdu. It is known for its diverse Chinese traditions, ghost culture and integration of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. In the afternoon you are free to enjoy the various onboard activities and lectures available or simply relax on the sundeck and watch the world glide by! **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 17: Yangtze River Cruise

The Three Gorges comprise the most spectacular landscapes of the magnificent Yangtze River. In the morning, we sail through the first of these gorges – Qutang Gorge, arguably the most majestic before continuing through Wu Gorge to admire its breathtaking natural beauty. Following lunch, we join smaller boats and visit Shennv Stream to experience the natural charm and serenity of the area up close. Later we return to the ship in time to freshen up prior to our Captain's Farewell dinner. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 18: Shanghai, 4 nights

All good things must come to an end and after breakfast we disembark the ship in Maoping and board our coach for a morning excursion to the remarkable Three Gorges Dam – the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. During our visit, we will truly appreciate the immense scale of this hydroelectric project which cost an estimated \$37 billion to complete. We continue to Yichang for lunch and afterwards enjoy a stroll through the riverside gardens and visit the city's museum, prior to our flight to Shanghai later in the evening. Upon arrival, we transfer to the Jinjiang Tower Hotel, where we spend our final four nights in China. **Breakfast and lunch included**



Pudong, Shanghai



Jing'an Temple, Shanghai



Traditional Chinese street food



Li River, Guilin

The Very Best of China

Days 19 to 23: Shanghai - Suzhou - UK

Day 19: Shanghai

Shanghai is China's most glamorous and prosperous city, where Chinese and Western cultures run side-by-side. This morning our sightseeing tour begins with a walk along the Bund, on the banks of the Huangpu River. The Bund perfectly encapsulates the diversity of Shanghai, with the grandiose Art Deco architecture of the city's former banks and trading houses on one side of the river, and the futuristic skyline of Pudong on the other. We continue to the charming Old Town, which is the original centre of the city and retains many of its original temples, alleyways and buildings. Our morning ends in Yuyuan Gardens. Taking 18 years to build during the Ming dynasty, the gardens survived wars and rebellions, and today are a fine example of classically styled Chinese Gardens. Following lunch in one of the city's restaurants we explore the impressive collection of Chinese artefacts housed in the Shanghai Museum. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 20: Suzhou

Tour Highlight

We embark on a full-day tour to Suzhou, a city famed for its culture and elegance, and home to many artists and scholars, drawn to the city by its UNESCO-listed classical gardens. Our first stop is to explore one of China's most famous gardens – the Humble Administrator's Garden, with its bamboo islands, many ponds, humpback bridges and beautiful pavilions. Enjoy a relaxing cruise along the ancient canals of the old city before lunch. In the afternoon, visit the Master of the Nets Garden, which is relatively small, but gives the impression of being much larger thanks to its ingenious use of space. Suzhou embroidery is considered to be one of the four major regional styles of Chinese embroidery, and our final stop of the day is a visit to a silk factory to see how incredible images are brought to life with fine, highly detailed stitching. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 21: Shanghai Freedom Day

A Freedom Day in Shanghai to spend as you please. Take an optional cruise on the Huangpu River, or explore the former French Concession area on a walking tour. Whatever you wish to do, our Tour Manager will be very happy to help. This evening, we bid farewell to China and our new-found friends in style, with a dinner of authentic Shanghaiese cuisine. **Breakfast and dinner included**

Day 22: Depart Shanghai

The day is ours until it's time to depart for the airport in the late evening. For convenience, all our rooms have been reserved until 6pm. Our flights to our chosen UK airport operate via Dubai. **Breakfast, and in-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 23: Arrive UK

Today we arrive into our chosen airport bringing an end to our incredible adventure. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Departure Dates & Prices

2025 Departures

09 April 2025	£4,695 per person
07 May 2025	£4,695 per person
10 September 2025	£4,695 per person
08 October 2025	£4,695 per person

Private Touring

The same expertly crafted itinerary and hand-picked hotels, combined with the exclusivity and convenience of your own friendly and knowledgeable guides, your own private vehicle and your own choice of departure date.

Private Touring Supplements

2 guests	£1,495 per person
3-5 guests	£995 per person
6-9 guests	£495 per person
10-15 guests	£195 per person
Single occupancy supplement	£95 per person

We may have more dates and prices, as well as Special Offers, available on our website. For more information, visit distantjourneys.co.uk/VBOC

Prices

Prices are per person based on two people sharing a twin or double room.

Single occupancy supplement
£1,195

Deposit

£1,000 per person if travelling Economy Class, £1,950 per person for Premium Economy and £3,750 per person for Business Class.

Flight upgrades

Emirates upgrade to Premium Economy* from £1,195 per person or Business Class from £4,145 per person return.

*Only available on certain flights.

Yangtze River Cruise Cabin Upgrades

Superior Cabin £295 per person. Executive Suite £695 per person. Victory, Oasis or Presidential Suite £1,725 per person. Single supplements will apply.

Visa information

A valid China Tourist visa is required to travel to China. For more information on applying for your visa and the associated costs, please refer to our Important Information on pages 94-95.

Important information

Prices and flight upgrades are subject to fuel surcharges and the availability of flights. The correct price will be confirmed before you book.

Full Booking Conditions are available on pages 96-99.

Call to book

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Sunday Open in peak season. See website for details.

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Clockwise from above:
Ha Long Bay; Vietnamese cookery class; Forbidden City, Hue

Highlights of Vietnam

📅 15 days 💷 from £3,595pp 🌐 September 2024 – March 2025

A land of staggering natural landscapes and vast cultural diversity – a journey through Vietnam is compelling. With so many varied experiences across the length and breadth of the country, Vietnam has fast become one of South Asia's gems.

You will experience all the must-see attractions of north, central and southern Vietnam; discover the ancient history of the country through its temples and pagodas; enjoy bustling moped-filled cities with streets full of vendors; tantalise your taste buds with the renowned flavours of Vietnamese cuisine and have time to relax whilst enjoying some of Asia's finest scenery.

Highlights include the Imperial Citadel in Hue and the Cu Chi Tunnels, and we have also included a very special two-night cruise on Vietnam's most famous natural beauty, Ha Long Bay. Watching the sun set over the towering limestone formations is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

You can take the opportunity to explore more of this fascinating country by extending your holiday with a fascinating three-night guided tour of the Mekong Delta.

If you like the idea of travelling as a couple, or even with a small group of friends, then why not consider Highlights of Vietnam as a Private Tour? You'll have the same expertly crafted itinerary and stay in the same hand-picked hotels, yet have the exclusivity of your own vehicle and guide.



Your holiday includes

-  Return economy flights with Singapore Airlines via Singapore from London Heathrow or Manchester (selected dates), inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty. Alternatively, fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow – a supplement, from £100 per person, will apply. All domestic flights within Vietnam are also included
-  Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portage and applicable taxes
-  Meals worth £386 per person, with daily breakfast, five lunches and all meals on board the Au Co cruise
-  Unforgettable experiences including:
 - ★ City sightseeing tours in Hanoi, Hoi An, Hue and Ho Chi Minh City
 - ★ Learn to cook Vietnamese dishes
 - ★ Explore the intriguing Cu Chi Tunnels
-  All-inclusive cruise on board the Au Co:
 - ✓ Two-night cruise around Ha Long Bay and Lan Ha Bay
 - ✓ All land excursions and selected on-board experiences
 - ✓ All meals
 - ✓ Welcome drink
-  Services of experienced Tour Manager and local guides
-  All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout
-  Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.



Hanoi



Traditional Vietnamese market



Hoi An Old Town

Highlights of Vietnam

Days 1 to 9: UK - Hanoi - Ha Long Bay - Hoi An

Day 1: Depart UK

Depart with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow. Flights with Singapore Airlines from Manchester are available on selected dates, please speak with one of our travel experts for more details. No matter which airport you choose, there will be no additional cost. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Alternative airline – Emirates

If you prefer, you may fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow for a supplement, from £100 per person.

Day 2: Hanoi, 3 nights

Those flying with Singapore Airlines to Hanoi will travel via Singapore. After clearing customs, we transfer to our hotel, the delightful Pan Pacific Hanoi, which will be our home for the next three nights. This evening, our Tour Manager will host a welcome drink so we can get to know our fellow travellers and learn more about the adventures which lie ahead. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 3: Hanoi

Our day in Hanoi begins with a morning cyclo tour through the Old Quarter. Cyclos are a traditional form of transport in Vietnam, similar to a rickshaw, and our journey will take us through streets full of charming colonial architecture, past Buddhist temples and pagodas, and along the ancient commercial streets named after the original businesses that were once housed here. We visit the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, the final resting place of Bac Ho, or Uncle Ho, before viewing the 11th century Temple of Literature and The One Pillar Pagoda, a historic Buddhist temple. Our day concludes with a visit to the fascinating Ethnology Museum, together with a traditional water puppet show. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 4: Hanoi Freedom Day

Today has been left free so you can continue to enjoy the delights of the city at your own pace. Budding photographers may wish to join a tour to capture the city's many incredible photographic opportunities. Or maybe take a cookery class and learn the secrets of Vietnam's delicious cuisine. Alternatively, take a full-day excursion to 'Ha Long Bay on Land', Ninh Binh. **Breakfast included**

We Recommend

Ninh Binh

A mesmerising region known as 'Ha Long Bay on Land'. The best way to get a sense of this UNESCO-protected area is by taking a paddleboat tour along its shimmering rivers.



Day 5: Ha Long Bay, 2 nights

Tour Highlight

Known for its emerald waters and thousands of towering limestone islands topped by rainforest, Ha Long Bay has become one of Vietnam's must-see destinations. We travel to Ha Long, where we board our first class vessel, the Au Co, for a spectacular two-night cruise around this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Enjoy lunch as we cruise the waterways, and visit the floating village of Cua Van, situated in the heart of the bay. Back on board, end the day on deck watching the sun set, followed by dinner. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 6: Lan Ha and Ha Long Bays

Start your day, if you wish, with a Tai Chi lesson on the sun deck before cruising through the lesser-known, but no less dramatic, Lan Ha Bay. We arrive at Cat Ba Island and cycle a short distance to Viet Hai Village, nestled in the heart of Cat Ba National Park, where we learn about community life. Later, we visit Trinh Nu Cave to view its stunning array of stalactites and stalagmites. This evening we enjoy a buffet barbecue on deck with our fellow passengers. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 7: Hoi An, 3 nights

Following breakfast, we visit Sung Sot Cave, Ha Long's largest and most famous cave. Back on board, spend time soaking up the scenery, or join a traditional Vietnamese Tea Ceremony, as we cruise back to the mainland. We board our waiting coach and travel back to Hanoi for our flight to Da Nang. Upon arrival, we continue to the town of Hoi An and the fabulous Bel Marina Hoi An Resort, home for our next three nights. **Breakfast included**

Day 8: Walking tour of Hoi An

Tour Highlight

Once a major trading port, historic Hoi An is a delightful UNESCO World Heritage Site of grand architecture, Chinese warehouses, Dutch and French colonial houses and Japanese temples. The best way to explore Hoi An is by foot. During our walking tour we visit the Chua Ong Pagoda, Phuc Kien Assembly Hall, Tan Ky House and the 17th century Japanese Bridge. We finish with a boat trip on the Thu Bon River. The remainder of our day is at leisure. Relax by the hotel pool, or maybe join an optional lantern making class. **Breakfast included**

Day 9: Hoi An Freedom Day

Today has been left free, so you may choose how to spend your day. Perhaps visit the local community of Tra Que Village and learn about the techniques used by its farmers, then enjoy a delicious lunch made from locally-farmed ingredients. Alternatively, you may prefer to take a cookery class at a local organic farm, visit the enchanting temples of My Son, or simply relax and enjoy your hotel's facilities. **Breakfast included**

We Recommend

Tra Que Village

Experience the Vietnamese countryside and meet the farmers of Tra Que Village, where organic vegetables are produced using traditional methods.





Cu Chi Tunnels



Cookery class

Highlights of Vietnam

Days 10 to 13: Hue - Ho Chi Minh City - Cu Chi Tunnels

Day 10: Hue, 2 nights

This morning we begin our spectacular drive over the Hai Van Pass. This 19km stretch of road climbs 3,000ft (914m), following the Vietnamese coastline. Arriving in Hue this afternoon, we visit the elaborate Minh Mang Tomb and continue to Thien Mu Pagoda, before cruising back to the city along the Perfume River. Our hotel for the next two nights is the Eldora Hotel, centrally located for exploring the city. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 11: Hue's Imperial Citadel

Originally the settlement of the Cham people, the Imperial city of Hue was capital of Vietnam during the Nguyen Dynasty and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After breakfast, we visit the Imperial Citadel modelled on the Forbidden City in Beijing. Many of the buildings, as well as the citadel, were destroyed by war, but these are slowly being rebuilt and restored. We then visit Ngoc Son, the former residence of Princess Ngoc Son. Our afternoon is free to spend as we please. Perhaps travel to the local village of Thanh Tien to learn the craft of paper flower making, a tradition the local residents have been practicing for over 300 years. **Breakfast and lunch included**

We Recommend

Thanh Tien

Learn the craft of paper flower making in the local village of Thanh Tien, where residents have been practicing this local tradition for over 300 years.



Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City, 2 nights

It's an early start this morning as we journey to the airport for our flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Visit the city's Central Post Office and the Notre Dame Cathedral, and explore the War Remnants Museum. A stark, and often graphic representation of the impact of the Vietnam War, the museum provides a fascinating insight into this country's history. We finish the day with a stroll along Dong Khoi Street to the Saigon Opera House. Our home for the next two nights is the perfectly-located Liberty Central Riverside Hotel. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 13: Cu Chi Tunnels

Tour Highlight

This morning we head out of the city and travel to the countryside which was once the stronghold of the Viet Cong. We visit the Ho Chi Minh Agricultural Village, where we join a Vietnamese cookery class, and continue afterwards to the Cu Chi Tunnels. This vast underground network of tunnels was used by the Viet Cong, and at its peak, the tunnel system in the district of Cu Chi covered more than 250km. Our visit provides a fascinating insight into how the Viet Cong lived and fought the war. **Breakfast and lunch included**



Imperial Citadel, Hue



Vietnamese street seller



Vietnamese water puppets



Fishermen, Mekong Delta

Highlights of Vietnam

Days 14 to 15: Ho Chi Minh City - UK

Day 14: Depart Vietnam

As our flight departs in the evening, there is further time to explore Ho Chi Minh City or to purchase any last-minute souvenirs. We head for the airport to embark on our return flights with Singapore Airlines via Singapore or Emirates via Dubai. **Breakfast and in-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 15: Arrive UK

This morning we arrive into our chosen airport. Filled with amazing memories to cherish, our Vietnamese adventure comes to an end. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Holiday Extension

Why not extend your holiday with a tour of the Mekong Delta?



4 Days From £725

In a region known as the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam, discover floating markets, cone-hatted farmers working the fields and small villages surrounded by rice paddies alongside one of Asia's greatest rivers.

Please see pages 74-75 for more details.

Homebound Stopovers from only £295 per person

If you would like to explore somewhere new on your way home, a stopover is a perfect way to make your journey more relaxing and to experience a wonderful new place.

Singapore – M Hotel

Two nights from £295 per person
Occupying a great location in Singapore city centre, M Hotel is a modern, stylish hotel offering a warm welcome and a range of services alongside comfortable, contemporary accommodation.



Sentosa Island – Rasa Sentosa Resort

Two nights from £495 per person
Stop over in style at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, a beautiful beachfront resort on Singapore's Sentosa Island, only 20 minutes from downtown Singapore.



Dubai – Marriott Hotel Al Jaddaf

Two nights from £345 per person
Located within easy reach of Dubai Mall, the Marriott Al Jaddaf is the perfect alternative to a beachside hotel and a great location from which to explore downtown Dubai.



Your stopover includes return airport transfers, two nights accommodation and daily breakfast.

Departure Dates & Prices

2024 Departures

30 September 2024	£3,595pp
03 November 2024	£3,595pp
11 November 2024	£3,595pp

2025 Departures

12 January 2025	£3,795pp	SOLD OUT
26 January 2025	£3,795pp	
03 February 2025	£3,795pp	SOLD OUT
09 February 2025	£3,795pp	
03 March 2025	£3,795pp	SOLD OUT
09 March 2025	£3,795pp	

Private Touring Supplements

2-3 guests	£495pp
4 guests	£395pp
5 guests	£295pp
6-8 guests	£195pp
9-16 guests	£95pp
17+ guests	No extra charge

We may have more dates and prices, as well as Special Offers, available on our website. For more information, visit distantjourneys.co.uk/HOV

Prices

Prices are per person based on two people sharing a twin or double room.

Single occupancy supplement

2024 departures £795
2025 departures £895

Deposit

£1,000 per person if travelling Economy Class, £1,950 per person if travelling in Premium Economy, and £3,750 per person for Business Class.

Private Touring

The same expertly crafted itinerary and hand-picked hotels, combined with the exclusivity and convenience of your own friendly and knowledgeable guides, your own private vehicle and your own choice of departure date.

Flight upgrades

Singapore Airlines upgrade to Premium Economy from £1,395 per person return, or Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Emirates upgrade to Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Important information

Prices and flight upgrades are subject to fuel surcharges and the availability of flights. The correct price will be confirmed before you book.

Full Booking Conditions are available on pages 96-99.

Call to book

Our award-winning travel experts are happy to answer any questions you may have, and to help you book your holiday with Distant Journeys.

Call FREE on 0800 141 3743

Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.30pm **Saturday** 9.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday Open in peak season. See website for details.

Should you prefer, please feel free to email us with your enquiry.
Email: enquiries@distantjourneys.co.uk





NEW

Classic Vietnam & Cambodia

📅 15 days 💷 from £3,795pp 🌍 October 2024 – March 2025

Vietnam and Cambodia are two countries offering a magical combination of culture, history and tradition, and bustling with life and adventure. Spectacular landscapes give way to verdant rice paddies, stretching as far as the eye can see. From vibrant cities to tranquil villages, your experiences will be varied and memorable.

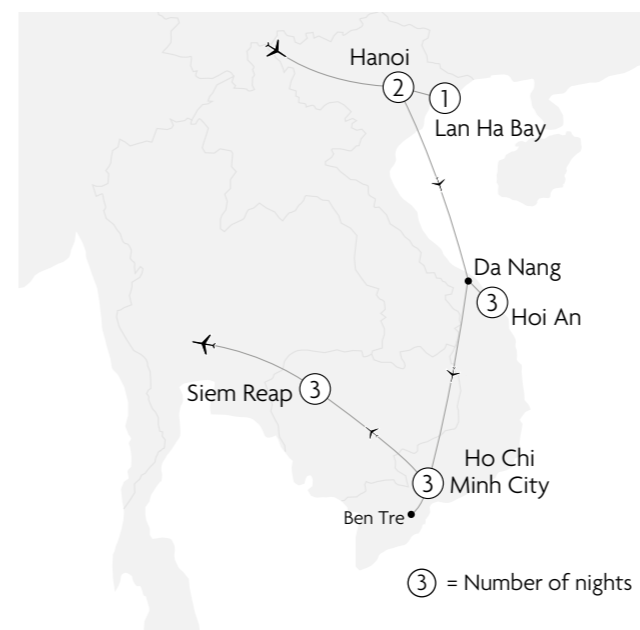
Join Distant Journeys on our 15-day Classic Vietnam & Cambodia tour and you'll see all the highlights of these two incredible touring destinations.

Your journey starts in Hanoi, before an overnight cruise on Vietnam's famed Lan Ha Bay, a true tour highlight. Explore the old merchant streets of Hoi An, view the tunnels of Cu Chi, delight in the Mekong Delta and be awed by Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex. Throughout your journey there will be many opportunities to interact with local communities, try delicious Vietnamese and Cambodian cuisine and learn traditional crafts handed down through generations.

With a choice of UK departure airports, all international flights, quality hotels, full daily breakfast and many memorable experiences included, our Classic Vietnam & Cambodia tour provides you with an amazing itinerary, at an unbeatable price.

Our Classic Vietnam & Cambodia tour may be taken as either a group tour or a private tour.

Clockwise from above: Rice paddy farmland, Vietnam; Community village, Cambodia



Your holiday includes

- Return economy flights with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow or Manchester (selected dates), inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty. Alternatively, fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow – a supplement, from £200 per person, will apply. All domestic flights within Vietnam & Cambodia
- Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portage and applicable taxes
- Meals worth £351 per person, with daily breakfast, four lunches, one dinner and all meals on board the La Regina Legend
- Unforgettable experiences including:
 - ★ City sightseeing tours in Hanoi, Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh City
 - ★ Explore the intriguing Cu Chi Tunnels
 - ★ Visit the Mekong Delta to meet local farmers and the communities of the Delta
 - ★ Magnificent temples of Angkor Wat
 - ★ Aspara dance show
- All-inclusive cruise on La Regina Legend, Lan Ha Bay:
 - ✓ Overnight cruise on Lan Ha Bay
 - ✓ All land excursions and selected on-board experiences
 - ✓ All meals
 - ✓ Welcome drink
- Services of experienced Tour Manager and local guides
- All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout
- Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.



Flower seller, Hanoi, Vietnam



Vietnamese egg coffee



Lan Ha Bay, Vietnam

Classic Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 1 to 9: UK - Hanoi - Lan Ha Bay - Hoi An - Ho Chi Minh City

Day 1: Depart UK

Depart from London with Singapore Airlines. Manchester flights may be available on selected dates, at no extra cost. Please call for details. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Alternative airline – Emirates

If you prefer, you may fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow, for a supplement, from £200 per person return.

Day 2: Hanoi, 2 nights

Our Singapore Airlines flight travels via Singapore. On arrival in Hanoi and after clearing customs, we head to the Silk Path Hotel. Later, enjoy a welcome drink with our Tour Manager and fellow travellers. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 3: Hanoi

Our exploration of Hanoi begins with a visit to a local coffee shop to try the iconic Vietnamese egg coffee. Our next stop is the Temple of Literature, the oldest university in Hanoi, designed to honour the Chinese scholar, Confucius. We then venture to the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, which dates back to the 7th century. We enjoy a flavoursome lunch with a cookery demonstration of local dishes, like Bún Cha (pork with spring rolls and noodles) before exploring the Old Quarter, on a cyclo (rickshaw) ride. Our day draws to a close at the Vietnamese Women's Museum, before returning to our hotel. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 4: Lan Ha Bay, Overnight

Tour Highlight

This morning, we make our way to Lan Ha Bay, which forms part of the greater Ha Long geography. Known for the dramatic karsts (limestone rocks) that rise out of the emerald green waters, the bay is one of Vietnam's most popular natural attractions. Our vessel is La Regina Legend. Once on board, enjoy a tasty Vietnamese lunch while taking in the impressive scenery as we cruise into the bay. This afternoon, we visit the Light and Dark Cave, known for its pristine beauty. We explore the bay by local boat or kayak and there is also an opportunity for swimming. We return to La Regina for sunset and dinner. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 5: Hoi An, 3 nights

An early wake-up call for a rejuvenating sunrise Tai Chi lesson sets the tone for the day. Enjoy a light breakfast, as we sail to Trung Trang, one of the most impressive caves on Cat Ba Island. As we return to the mainland a buffet brunch is served. Once back on dry land, our waiting transfer will take us to Hanoi Airport for our flight to Da Nang. On arrival, we transfer to Hoi An and the Silkotel Hotel, where we will spend the next three nights. **Light breakfast and brunch included**

Day 6: Hoi An

After breakfast, it's time to explore Hoi An, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We embark on a half-day walking tour of this historic town, exploring the residences of olden-day merchants, bustling community halls and labyrinthine alleys. Our morning finishes with the opportunity to learn the fundamental techniques of Qigong, Tai Chi and traditional Vietnamese martial arts. Our afternoon is at leisure. Perhaps, continue to stroll the streets of the old town, or maybe take an optional excursion to the ancient Cham capital of My Son. **Breakfast included**

Day 7: Hoi An Freedom Day

On our Freedom Day, we have a number of activities for you to choose from. First is a lantern-making class, where you discover how to craft the exquisite silk lanterns seen on every street corner in Hoi An. Alternatively, head for My Son, the former capital of the Cham civilisation. Or you may prefer to visit a local organic farm where you enjoy local tea and explore over fifty medicinal herbs, fruits, and flowers, before enjoying a delicious lunch with local dishes. **Breakfast included**

We Recommend

Lantern Making

Found on just about every street corner, learn how to make one of Hoi An's iconic silk lanterns.



Day 8: Ho Chi Minh City, 3 nights

After breakfast, we head to the airport for our flight to Ho Chi Minh City, followed by a transfer to the Liberty Central Riverside Hotel, where we will stay for the next three nights. Often referred to by its former name, Saigon, the city is a cosmopolitan metropolis where the past is entwined with modern skyscrapers. The remainder of the day is ours to enjoy at leisure. Our hotel is ideally located in front of the Saigon River and only a short stroll from Nguyen Hue walking street, perfect for an afternoon stroll. **Breakfast included**

Day 9: Ho Chi Minh City & Cu Chi Tunnels

We leave the city behind us this morning as we head for the Cu Chi Tunnels. We watch a brief film about the life of the Viet Cong soldiers during the war and then explore the narrow tunnels that were so integral to the conflict, being living quarters, supply routes and hospitals. Following lunch, we return to the city for our afternoon of sightseeing. We start with the Reunification Palace, a former stronghold of the South Vietnamese Government then make our way to the city's Central Post Office. Our day finishes with a visit to the War Remnants Museum, which provides thought-provoking insight about the war and its impact on human life. **Breakfast and lunch included**



Vietnamese woman, Mekong Delta



Local rice farmer, Cambodia

Classic Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 10 to 13: Mekong Delta - Siem Reap - Angkor Wat

Day 10: Mekong Delta

Leaving the city behind us, we drive towards the Mekong Delta, home to a maze of floating markets and villages surrounded by rice paddies. Boarding a motorised sampan (a traditional wooden boat) we take our time to view life in the Delta. As well as fishing, the Delta is home to many cottage industries. Visit a local Coconut Candy factory, observe traditional mat-making and explore tranquil villages. We have lunch in a local restaurant, before boarding our rowing boats for a journey along a small canal, witnessing daily life as we pass by. We return to Ho Chi Minh City for our final night. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 11: Siem Reap, 3 nights

Enjoy time at leisure until we transfer to the airport for our flight to Siem Reap. Upon arrival, we make our way to the Borei Angkor Hotel, where we stay for the next three nights. The rest of the day is ours to relax and enjoy as we please. **Breakfast included**

Day 12: Angkor Wat

Tour Highlight

A tour highlight today as we explore the famed temple complex of Angkor. We begin with a visit to striking Angkor Thom, the last capital of the Khmer Empire. We meander the beautiful Elephant Terrace followed by seeing the iconic Bayon temple up close. A 12th-century vestige, the stone towers are adorned with over 200 serenely smiling faces. We then visit Ta Prohm, an almost untouched temple, dating back to 1186. The sprawling stone halls are overrun with the roots of gargantuan banyan trees. Following lunch, we make our way to the iconic Angkor Wat. The temple complex is considered the largest religious building in the world. Dating back to the 12th century, Angkor Wat took an estimated three decades to build. We explore the well-preserved complex, admiring the bas-reliefs that surround the temple, telling tales of battles and celebrations, including the famed Churning of the Sea of Milk. Our expert guide will unpack all the hidden secrets of the temple, giving us a deeper insight into this mystical place. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 13: Siem Reap Freedom Day

Today is ours to do as we please. Explore the city or perhaps take an optional excursion. Our first recommendation is Tonle Sap Lake, home to a tiny community who live in houses built on wooden stilts. Or perhaps visit Trei Nhoar Community Village. This trip provides an insight into local Siem Reap country life, allowing visitors to get a taste of local culture, including a home-cooked meal. On our final option, we learn the art of morning almsgiving before walking to a nearby pagoda to give offerings to the monks and receive a blessing in return. We then visit a local home to learn more about Khmer life and enjoy an authentic Khmer lunch. No matter which option you choose, the proceeds of these tours go directly to the community visited. As our final evening approaches, we visit a nearby restaurant together for dinner accompanied by a Khmer classical dance performance. **Breakfast and dinner included**



South Gate, Angkor Wat, Cambodia



Hanoi, Vietnam



Street vendor, Vietnam



Hoi An, Vietnam

Classic Vietnam & Cambodia

Day 15: Siem Reap - UK

Day 14: Depart Siem Reap

Enjoy the chance to relax before our homeward journey or perhaps make your way to the shops and markets for some souvenirs. We head for the airport to embark on our return flights with Singapore Airlines via Singapore or Emirates via Bangkok and Dubai. **Breakfast and in-flight meals included**

Day 15: Arrive UK

After two weeks of incredible memories, our journey draws to a close as we arrive back in our chosen UK airport, ready to regale friends and family with tales of our Classic Vietnam and Cambodia adventure. **In-flight meals included**

Holiday Extension

Why not extend your holiday with a visit to Luang Prabang in Laos?



4 Days From £895

The UNESCO World Heritage town of Luang Prabang is a gem of the tiny land-locked country of Laos. Step back in time and discover its unique magical charm for yourself.

Please see pages 76-77 for more details.

Homebound Stopovers from only £295 per person

If you would like to explore somewhere new on your way home, a stopover is a perfect way to make your journey more relaxing and to experience a wonderful new place.

Singapore – M Hotel

Two nights from £295 per person
Occupying a great location in Singapore city centre, M Hotel is a modern, stylish hotel offering a warm welcome and a range of services alongside comfortable, contemporary accommodation.



Sentosa Island – Rasa Sentosa Resort

Two nights from £495 per person
Stop over in style at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, a beautiful beachfront resort on Singapore's Sentosa Island, only 20 minutes from downtown Singapore.



Dubai – Marriott Hotel Al Jaddaf

Two nights from £345 per person
Located within easy reach of Dubai Mall, the Marriott Al Jaddaf is the perfect alternative to a beachside hotel and a great location from which to explore downtown Dubai.



Your stopover includes return airport transfers, two nights accommodation and daily breakfast.

Departure Dates & Prices

2024 Departures

25 October 2024 **£3,795** per person

2025 Departures

17 January 2025 **£3,895** per person

14 February 2025 **£3,895** per person

07 March 2025* **£3,895** per person

*This departure stays at the Cozy Savvy Boutique Hotel, Hoi An

Private Touring Supplements

2 guests **£495** per person

3 guests **£395** per person

4 guests **£295** per person

5-14 guests **£195** per person

15-19 guests **£95** per person

20+ guests No extra charge

We may have more dates and prices, as well as Special Offers, available on our website. For more information, visit distantjourneys.co.uk/CVC

Prices

Prices are per person based on two people sharing a twin or double room.

Single occupancy supplement
£695

Deposit

£1,000 per person if travelling Economy Class, £1,950 per person if travelling in Premium Economy, and £3,750 per person for Business Class.

Flight upgrades

Singapore Airlines upgrade to Premium Economy from £1,395 per person return, or Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Emirates upgrade to Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Private Touring

The same expertly crafted itinerary and hand-picked hotels, combined with the exclusivity and convenience of your own friendly and knowledgeable guides, your own private vehicle and your own choice of departure date.

Visa information

A visa is required for travel to Cambodia. For more information on applying for your visa and the associated costs, please refer to our Important Information on pages 94-95.

Important Information

Prices and flight upgrades are subject to fuel surcharges and the availability of flights. The correct price will be confirmed before you book.

Full Booking Conditions are available on pages 96-99.

Call to book

Our award-winning travel experts are happy to answer any questions you may have, and to help you book your holiday with Distant Journeys.

Call FREE on 0800 141 3743

Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.30pm **Saturday** 9.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday Open in peak season. See website for details.

Should you prefer, please feel free to email us with your enquiry.
Email: enquiries@distantjourneys.co.uk





NEW EXCLUSIVELY FOR SOLO TRAVELLERS

Clockwise from above: Traditional Aspara dancers, Cambodia; Mekong Delta, Vietnam

Discover Vietnam & Cambodia

📅 18 days 💷 from £4,495pp 🌍 November 2024 – March 2025

Vietnam and Cambodia are a delight at every turn. Cities alive and pulsating with pockets of history from its colonial past. Tranquil villages where traditions have been handed down generation after generation and rice paddies stretching out as far as the eye can see.

Ancient temples and religious sites, towering karsts dotting the landscape and delicious local cuisine combine to create a heady mix to delight in and discover.

We explore the cities of Hanoi & Ho Chi Minh City, walk the quaint streets of Hoi An's old merchant quarter and marvel at the temples of Angkor Wat. We meet local fishermen in the mighty Mekong Delta, explore wondrous Mai Chau and learn the fascinating history of the Cu Chi Tunnels. Along the way we interact with local villagers, communities and farmers. Learn the traditions of batik, go out into the rice fields, practice Tai Chi to the backdrop of Lan Ha Bay on our overnight cruise and visit the home of a local Cambodian chef.

Travelling with a Tour Manager throughout and designed with the solo traveller in mind, join Distant Journeys on an adventure of a lifetime to discover the enchanting magic that these two countries offer in abundance. Plus, no single supplement means our Discover Vietnam & Cambodia tour provides incredible value too.



Your holiday includes

- Return economy flights with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow or Manchester (selected dates), inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty. Alternatively, fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow – a supplement, from £200 per person, will apply. All domestic flights within Vietnam & Cambodia
- Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portage and applicable taxes
- Meals worth £504 per person, with daily breakfasts, nine lunches, six dinners and one brunch
- Unforgettable experiences including:
 - ★ City sightseeing tours in Hanoi, Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh City
 - ★ Interact with local communities in Mai Chau
 - ★ Lantern making in Hoi An
 - ★ Visit Tra Que Community Village to learn traditional farming methods
 - ★ Explore the Cham sculpture museum
 - ★ Discover the intriguing Cu Chi Tunnels
 - ★ Visit the Mekong Delta
 - ★ Magnificent temples of Angkor Wat
 - ★ Cambodia cookery class at local chef's home
 - ★ Enjoy a performance at Cambodia's Phare Circus
- All-inclusive cruise on La Regina Legend, Lan Ha Bay:
 - ✓ Overnight cruise to Lan Ha Bay
 - ✓ All land excursions and selected on-board experiences
 - ✓ All meals
 - ✓ Welcome drink
- Services of experienced Tour Manager and local guides
- All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout
- Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.



Temple of Literature, Hanoi, Vietnam



Lan Ha Bay, Vietnam



Mai Chau, Vietnam

Discover Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 1 to 9: UK - Hanoi - Mai Chau - Ha Long Bay - Hoi An

Day 1: Depart UK

Begin your journey with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow. For flights from Manchester on selected dates, and at no extra cost, please call us. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Alternative airline – Emirates

If you prefer, you may fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow for a supplement, from £200 per person return.

Day 2: Hanoi, 2 nights

Your Singapore Airlines flight to Hanoi operates via Singapore. Upon arrival in Hanoi, we transfer to the centrally-located Silk Path Hotel, where we spend the next two nights. The afternoon is free for us to relax or to take a stroll around Hoan Kiem. In the evening, we meet our Tour Manager and fellow travellers for a welcome dinner. A great opportunity to get to know each other and learn about the upcoming adventures. **In-flight meals and drinks and dinner included**

Day 3: Hanoi

Today begins with an orientation tour of Hanoi, passing landmarks like Ba Dinh Square, the Presidential Palace, Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, and the National Assembly building. Next, we visit the revered One Pillar Pagoda, a Buddhist temple from the 11th century, before heading to the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's oldest university, dedicated to Confucius. Lunch offers an introduction to bun cha, a famous Vietnamese dish. In the afternoon, observe the preparation of a Vietnamese egg coffee, an iconic local beverage, and enjoy a cyclo (rickshaw) ride through the bustling Old Quarter. We also visit the Ngoc Son Temple, known as the 'Place Touched by Morning Sunbeams'. Our day comes to an end with a traditional water puppet show at Hanoi's Thang Long Theatre, before we return to our hotel for the evening. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 4: Mai Chau, 2 nights

Today, we journey to Mai Chau, with winding mountain roads revealing breathtaking panoramas. The Mai Chau valley presents an idyllic location; expansive rice paddies, and grand limestone mountains dotted throughout with tiny villages and bustling communities. An afternoon walking excursion through the valley introduces us to local hill tribe communities, verdant rice fields and serene rural terrain. Our hotel for the next two nights is the Mai Chau Mountain View Resort. **Breakfast and dinner included**

Day 5: Mai Chau

Tour Highlight

Following breakfast, we head for Bao La commune – a village developing sustainable tourism in the local community. We are guided through the village, learning about the project's goals and engaging in some farming activities. Later, stop at a local family's home for a cookery class featuring traditional dishes from the White Thai community. Lunch will be served at the family's home. In the afternoon, we experience farming life and join local residents in planting rice in the fields. Enjoy a drink of tea with the family before returning to our hotel. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 6: Hanoi, Overnight

This morning, we travel to Pa Co village, home to the H'mong people. We take a walk around the village and witness daily life in the community. There's an opportunity to visit a family home to learn the traditional methods of making batik and indigo dyeing. We return to Hanoi and the Silk Path Hotel for our overnight stay in the city. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 7: Lan Ha Bay, Overnight

Tour Highlight

Bid farewell to the city's hustle and bustle as we travel to Ha Long. Here we board La Regina Legend for a voyage through UNESCO World Heritage Site, Lan Ha Bay, part of the Ha Long Bay geography. Enjoy a buffet lunch, while cruising through the bay's towering limestone cliffs and emerald waters. We also visit an impressive cave to discover its intriguing stalagmite and stalactite formations. Moored for the evening in the most spectacular of locations, relax on the deck with a cocktail before dinner. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 8: Hoi An, 3 nights

Our day begins with Tai Chi on the sun deck as the sun rises. We visit the impressive caves of Trung Trang on Cat Ba Island, before our return to the mainland. We travel to Hanoi Airport for our flight to Da Nang. Upon arrival, we are transferred to our hotel in Hoi An, the Silkotel Hotel. Perfectly located for exploring Hoi An's ancient Old Town, this is our home for the next three nights. **Light breakfast and brunch included**

Day 9: Hoi An

Tour Highlight

Today we explore Hoi An, a charming former trading port. Our walking tour includes visits to iconic landmarks – Chua Ong Pagoda, built in 1653; Phuc Kien Assembly Hall; Tan Ky House, a 200-year-old ancestral home; and the famous 17th-century Japanese bridge. One of Hoi An's most famous symbols is the silk lantern. Brought by Chinese and Japanese merchants in the late 14th century, they have been made in Hoi An for over 400 years. This afternoon, we learn about how these beautiful pieces of art are made. This evening there is the opportunity to join an optional walking food tour and enjoy iconic dishes at the town's most famous eateries. **Breakfast and lunch included**

We Recommend

Street Food Tour

Discover the delights of Vietnamese cuisine including 'Bánh bao bánh vac' – a white rose dumpling, only found in Hoi An.





Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Mekong Delta, Vietnam



Angkor Wat, Siem Reap, Cambodia

Discover Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 10 to 16: Tra Que - Ho Chi Minh City - Mekong Delta - Siem Reap - Angkor Wat

Day 10: Tra Que

This morning, we visit Tra Que village, known for its expansive organic vegetable farm. Explore the farm and observe the traditional farming techniques used to cultivate crops and engage in hands-on activities. After our gardening experience, relax with a herbal foot bath and massage, followed by lunch. On our return to Hoi An we visit a community development where they craft soap from recycled cooking oil. The afternoon is ours to spend at our leisure. Perhaps join our excursion to My Son, the former capital of the ancient Cham civilisation. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 11: Ho Chi Minh City, 3 nights

It's time to say goodbye to the delights of Hoi An and, following breakfast, we head to Da Nang for our departure flight to Ho Chi Minh City. En route, we visit the Cham Sculpture Museum, which houses an extensive collection of Champa sculptures dating from the 7th to 15th centuries. Upon arrival in Ho Chi Minh City, transfer to the Liberty Riverside Hotel for a three night stay. After settling in we enjoy our first evening in the city together with dinner at a local restaurant. **Breakfast and dinner included**

Day 12: Cu Chi Tunnels & Ho Chi Minh City Tour Highlight

We head out of the city this morning and towards the famous Cu Chi Tunnels, a former Viet Cong stronghold. Watch a short video before viewing the tunnels and learning more about how the tunnels served various roles, from living quarters to supply routes and makeshift hospitals. Next, we visit an organic farm to learn about farm-to-table practices and savour an organic lunch with fresh ingredients. Back in the city, we visit the War Remnants Museum with graphic yet important exhibits depicting wartime hardships. We also explore the Reunification Palace, and the Central Post Office, a remarkable work by French architect Gustave Eiffel. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 13: Mekong Delta

This morning, we travel to My Tho, gateway to the Mekong Delta. Here, we board a wooden sampan and travel the Mekong to Tan My and Thoi Son Islands. These islands are home to numerous floating fish farms, some of which have been anchored for decades. Next, we board a traditional rowing boat for a serene journey through narrow canals shaded by water coconut trees. Exploring by bicycle, we visit a local garden, verdant with fresh seasonal fruits. Here, we will enjoy grapefruits, coconuts, bananas, durian, jackfruits and longans. Lunch will be a spread of Mekong delicacies in a local family's garden, where we watch the host prepare banh khot, a popular and delicious local dish. Afterwards, another gentle bike ride through the tranquil island's backstreets awaits before returning to the mainland. Today's adventure over, we return to the city and our hotel. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 14: Siem Reap, 3 nights

Our time in Vietnam comes to a close this morning, but new adventures are waiting for us in Cambodia. Transferring to the airport, we board our flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia. On arrival, we are met by our Cambodia guide and driver and transferred to the delightful Borei Angkor Hotel, our home for the next three nights. This evening, we venture to Phare, also known as the Cambodian circus. An entertaining evening featuring a group of talented young artists, who showcase incredibly artistic forms of storytelling to offer a unique insight into Cambodian culture and everyday life. **Breakfast included**

Day 15: Angkor Wat Tour Highlight

Today, we embark on a journey through time as we explore the remarkable remains of an ancient civilisation. Our day begins by visiting Angkor Thom, the last capital of the Khmer Empire. In this monumental site, we encounter the sprawling Elephant Terrace, the Terrace of the Leper King, and the mystical Bayon. Next, we visit Ta Prohm – one of Angkor's largest temples. Surrounded by jungle, its maze of stone passageways is overgrown with roots and branches of massive banyan trees. Following lunch, we visit Angkor Wat, arguably the world's largest religious structure, constructed with a volume of stone matching the Cheops pyramid in Egypt. It boasts symmetrical towers inspiring the modern Cambodian flag and is certainly a highlight of the trip. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 16: Siem Reap

A culinary voyage awaits today, as we are introduced to Khmer cuisine. Upon arrival at a local chef's residence, expect a warm welcome from today's cooking instructor. We journey to the nearby market, where vibrant stalls reveal the unique ingredients central to Khmer gastronomy. Guided by our expert, we learn to prepare and cook some of Cambodia's most cherished dishes, before enjoying a lunch of our creations. The afternoon is ours to enjoy at our leisure. Spend the afternoon hunting for souvenirs, or perhaps join an optional excursion to explore some of the many non-profit organisations and social enterprises in Siem Reap, including HeroRats, Theam's House Gallery and the Royal Independence Garden. As our final evening approaches, we dine together one last time and share the memories of our adventures. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

We Recommend

Siem Reap social enterprises

Meet the hero rats, discover local Cambodian artist's paintings & sculptures and visit the Royal Independence Garden.





Mekong Delta, Vietnam



Bayon Temple, Angkor Wat



Fish seller, Cambodia

Discover Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 17 to 18: Siem Reap - UK

Day 17: Depart Siem Reap

As our Indochina adventure comes to a close, maybe indulge in some final souvenir hunting in Siem Reap. Later today we return to Siem Reap Airport for our Singapore Airlines flight, via Singapore, to the UK. For those travelling with Emirates, your return flight will operate via Bangkok and Dubai.

Breakfast, in-flight meals and drinks included

Day 18: Arrive UK

After 18 incredible days filled with unforgettable memories, our Vietnam and Cambodia adventure comes to a close as we arrive into our chosen UK airport. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Homebound Stopovers from only £395 per person

If you would like to explore somewhere new on your way home, a stopover is a perfect way to make your journey more relaxing and to experience a wonderful new place.

Singapore – M Hotel

Two nights from £395 per person

Occupying a great location in Singapore city centre, M Hotel is a modern, stylish hotel offering a warm welcome and a range of services alongside comfortable, contemporary accommodation.



Sentosa Island – Rasa Sentosa Resort

Two nights from £695 per person

Stop over in style at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, a beautiful beachfront resort on Singapore's Sentosa Island, only 20 minutes from downtown Singapore.



Dubai – Marriott Hotel Al Jaddaf

Two nights from £545 per person

Located within easy reach of Dubai Mall, the Marriott Al Jaddaf is the perfect alternative to a beachside hotel and a great location from which to explore downtown Dubai.



Your stopover includes return airport transfers, two nights accommodation and daily breakfast.

Departure Dates & Prices

2024 Departures

06 November 2024* **£4,495** per person

2025 Departures

05 February 2025 **£4,695** per person

05 March 2025 **£4,695** per person

*This departure stays at the Emm Hotel, Hoi An

We may have more dates and prices, as well as Special Offers, available on our website. For more information, visit distantjourneys.co.uk/DVC

Prices

Prices are per person based on one person in a twin or double room.

No single occupancy supplements apply.

Deposit

£1,000 per person if travelling Economy Class, £1,950 per person if travelling in Premium Economy, and £3,750 per person for Business Class.

Flight upgrades

Singapore Airlines upgrade to Premium Economy from £1,395 per person return, or Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Emirates upgrade to Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Visa information

A visa is required for travel to Cambodia. For more information on applying for your visa and the associated costs, please refer to our Important Information on pages 94-95.

Important Information

Prices and flight upgrades are subject to fuel surcharges and the availability of flights. The correct price will be confirmed before you book. Full Booking Conditions are available on pages 96-99.

Call to book

Our award-winning travel experts are happy to answer any questions you may have, and to help you book your holiday with Distant Journeys.

Call FREE on 0800 141 3743

Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.30pm **Saturday** 9.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday Open in peak season. See website for details.


Should you prefer, please feel free to email us with your enquiry.
Email: enquiries@distantjourneys.co.uk






Your holiday includes


 Return economy flights with Singapore Airlines, via Singapore from London Heathrow, or Manchester (selected dates), inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty. Alternatively, fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow – a supplement, from £200 per person, will apply. All domestic flights within Vietnam & Cambodia

 Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portage and applicable taxes


 Meals worth £669 per person, with daily breakfasts, six lunches and all meals on board the Au Co and Pandaw Mekong River cruise

 Unforgettable experiences including:


- ★ City sightseeing tours in Hanoi, Hoi An, Hue, Ho Chi Minh City and Phnom Penh
- ★ Learn to cook Vietnamese dishes
- ★ Explore the intriguing Cu Chi Tunnels
- ★ Magnificent temples of Angkor Wat


 All-inclusive cruise on the Au Co, Ha Long Bay:

- ✓ Two-night cruise around Ha Long Bay and Lan Ha Bay
- ✓ All land excursions and selected on-board experiences
- ✓ All meals and welcome drink

 All-inclusive cruise on the RV Bassac Pandaw, or the RV Mekong Pandaw, Mekong River:

- ✓ Three-night cruise on the Mekong River between Vietnam and Cambodia
- ✓ All land excursions and selected on-board experiences
- ✓ All meals and selected alcoholic and soft drinks

 Services of experienced Tour Manager and local guides

 All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout

 Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 96-99.

Clockwise from above: Repairing fishing nets, Vietnam; Boy on Water Buffalo, Cambodia

The Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

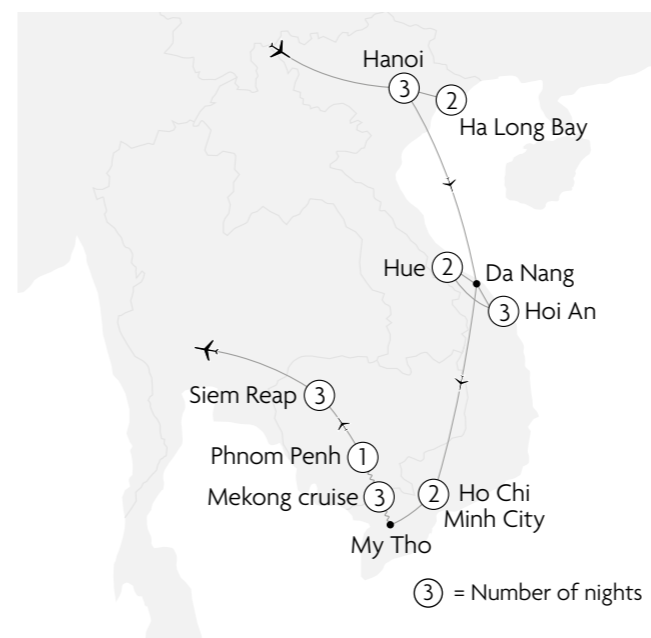
 22 days  from £5,345pp  September 2024 – March 2025

Vietnam and Cambodia are the very essence of Indochina, and are a magical part of the world to explore. Ancient and modern worlds collide to create a truly thrilling adventure; the hustle and bustle of local markets, phenomenal landscapes, archaeological treasures and tranquil villages.

With gastronomic delights, friendly people and so much of their unique character and traditions still in evidence, Vietnam and Cambodia are a joy to discover on Distant Journeys' Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia escorted tour.

As you would expect from Distant Journeys, you'll find a number of once-in-a-lifetime experiences within our itinerary. There is a very special two-night cruise on Vietnam's breath-taking Ha Long Bay, and you'll explore one of Asia's most awe-inspiring landmarks, Angkor Wat in Cambodia. What's more, a wonderful three-night cruise on the mighty Mekong is also included – a relaxing and delightful way to experience and explore this region as we travel between Vietnam and Cambodia.

You can, if you prefer, travel on our Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia tour as a Private Tour. Providing exclusivity and convenience, our Private Tours allow you a wider choice of departure dates, the privacy of your own vehicle and driver, and knowledgeable local guides.





Temple of Literature, Hanoi, Vietnam



Hoi An, Vietnam



Ha Long Bay

The Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 1 to 10: UK - Hanoi - Ha Long Bay - Hoi An - Hue

Day 1: Depart UK

Depart with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow. Flights with Singapore Airlines from Manchester are available on selected dates, please speak with one of our travel experts for more details. No matter which airport you choose, there will be no additional cost. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Alternative airline – Emirates

If you prefer, you may fly with Emirates via Dubai from London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow. Supplements for Emirates start at £200 per person.

Day 2: Hanoi, 3 nights

All flights with Singapore Airlines to Hanoi travel via Singapore. After clearing customs, we transfer to our hotel and our home for our first three nights in Vietnam, the Pan Pacific Hanoi. Early evening, enjoy a welcome drink with your Tour Manager and fellow travellers, so we may become better acquainted and learn more about our adventure ahead. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 3: Hanoi

Hanoi is an immediate assault on the senses, and we begin our morning tour with a cyclo (similar to a rickshaw) ride through the Old Quarter. Packed with charming colonial architecture, Buddhist temples and pagodas, the ancient commercial streets are named after the original businesses that were housed here. We visit the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, the final resting place of 'Uncle Ho', before viewing the one pillar pagoda and the 11th century Temple of Literature. Later we visit the Ethnology Museum for a unique insight into the 54 ethnic groups that make up the Vietnamese people, together with a traditional water puppet show. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 4: Hanoi Freedom Day

Today offers us the freedom that this wonderfully old-fashioned city deserves. With the full support of our Tour Manager, perhaps enjoy the delights of Hanoi at your own pace, joining one of many local photographic tours, or indulging in a specialist cookery class to explore the five fundamental tastes of Vietnamese cuisine. We can also help arrange a full day excursion to 'Ha Long Bay on Land', Ninh Binh. **Breakfast included**

Day 5: Ha Long Bay, 2 nights

Tour Highlight

Ha Long Bay is one of Vietnam's must-see destinations, famed for its emerald waters, staggering limestone islands, and untouched rainforests. Once in Ha Long, we travel in style on our first-class vessel, the Au Co, for a stunning two-night cruise around this UNESCO World Heritage Site. After enjoying lunch whilst cruising into the bay, we head to the fascinating floating village of Cua Van, with a population of just over 700, to see how these remarkably independent people live. The day ends with dinner on deck, watching the sun set over this dazzling paradise. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 6: Lan Ha and Ha Long Bays

Why not start your day with a Tai Chi lesson on the sun deck, before we cruise through the spectacularly serene Lan Ha Bay? Once arriving at Cat Ba Island, we venture on a short cycle ride to Viet Hai Village, where we learn about community life in the heart of Cat Ba National Park. Trinh Nu Cave, with its stunning array of stalactites and stalagmites, is our next destination at the heart of the picturesque Ha Long Bay. The evening is reserved for a delicious on-board barbecue with fellow passengers. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Day 7: Hoi An, 3 nights

After breakfast we head to Ha Long's famous Sung Sot Cave, before returning to the mainland whilst soaking up the beautiful panoramas. Once there, we take the awaiting coach back to Hanoi, before flying to Da Nang. After landing, we journey to archaic Hoi An, settling into the first-class Bel Marina Hoi An Resort, where we stay for the next three nights. **Breakfast included**

Day 8: Walking tour of Hoi An

Tour Highlight

A famed UNESCO World Heritage Site of grand architecture, the once major trading port of Hoi An is a fascinating time-warp of Japanese temples, Chinese warehouses, and Dutch and French colonial houses. We embark on a tour of Hoi An by foot, encompassing the beautiful Chua Ong Pagoda, symbolic Phuc Kien Assembly Hall, pristinely preserved Tan Ky House, and the 17th century Japanese Bridge. We also take a scenic boat trip along the Thu Bon River, before offering some afternoon downtime to unwind by the hotel pool, or join an optional lantern making class, for creative types amongst us! **Breakfast included**

Day 9: Hoi An Freedom Day

Today offers an opportunity to relax and enjoy the hotel's facilities, or alternatively head out for some further exploration of the area. It may appeal to you to take a cookery class, or visit the captivating Hindu temple ruins of My Son, constructed as early as the 4th century. Alternatively, visit Tra Que Village and learn about community farming techniques, before enjoying a fresh and tasty lunch made from locally-farmed produce. **Breakfast included**

We Recommend

Tra Que Village

Experience the Vietnamese countryside and meet the farmers of Tra Que Village, where organic vegetables are produced using traditional methods.



Day 10: Hue, 2 nights

This morning we are treated to a spectacular drive over the Hai Van Pass along the Vietnamese coastline, a 19km stretch of road climbing to 3,000ft (914m) above sea level. This afternoon we visit the majestic Minh Mang Tomb, before continuing to the iconic seven-storey Thien Mu Pagoda, where resident monks continue to practice. We cruise back into Hue city along the Perfume River, before arriving at our hotel, the centrally situated Eldora Hotel, where we spend two nights. **Breakfast and lunch included**



Imperial Citadel, Hue, Vietnam



Vietnamese cuisine

The Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 11 to 14: Hue - Ho Chi Minh City - Cu Chi Tunnels - Mekong River

Day 11: Hue's Imperial Citadel

Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and originally the settlement of the Cham people, the Imperial city of Hue was capital of Vietnam during the Nguyen Dynasty. After breakfast at the hotel we visit the Imperial Citadel, modelled on the Forbidden City in Beijing. The Citadel was sadly destroyed in the war, but, along with many surrounding buildings, is being slowly restored. Soon after we visit the dazzling former residence of Princess Ngoc Son, before taking time in the afternoon to do as we please. You may want to travel to the local village of Thanh Tien to learn the 300-year old craft of paper flower making. **Breakfast and lunch included**

We Recommend

Thanh Tien

Learn the craft of paper flower making in the local village of Thanh Tien, where residents have been practicing this local tradition for over 300 years.



Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City, 2 nights

We rise early today to catch our transfer to the airport, where we fly to Ho Chi Minh City. After checking in at the upmarket Liberty Central Riverside Hotel, our accommodation for the next two nights. We visit the one remaining stronghold of Catholicism in the city, Notre Dame Cathedral, and explore the War Remnants Museum – a graphic depiction of war in Vietnam. We also visit the city's perfectly preserved French colonial Central Post Office, and take a stroll along Dong Khoi Street to the delicately featured Saigon Opera House. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 13: Cu Chi Tunnels

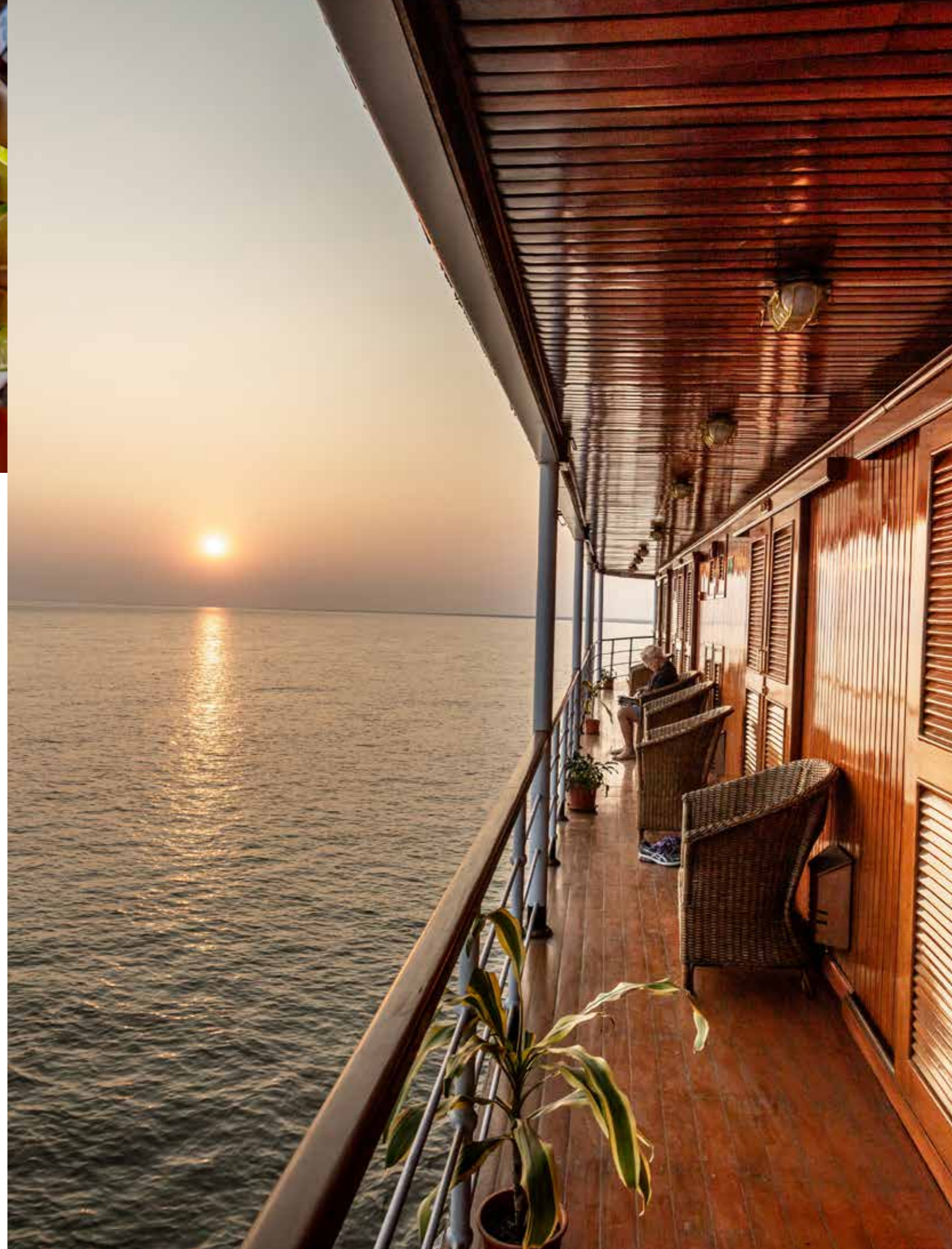
Tour Highlight

After breakfast we journey into the stunning countryside – once the stronghold of the Viet Cong, who fought against the US and South Vietnamese governments in the Vietnam War. We visit the Ho Chi Minh Agricultural Village, where we join a Vietnamese cooking class, and continue to the Cu Chi Tunnels – a vast, 250km underground network used by the Viet Cong as hiding spots, for communication, and as supply routes during the war. Our visit provides a captivating insight into how the Viet Cong lived and fought. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 14: Mekong River Cruise, 3 nights

Tour Highlight

Our fabulous three-night cruise between Vietnam and Cambodia begins when we head to My Tho, gateway to the Mekong Delta, to embark our vessel, the RV Mekong Pandaw, or RV Bassac Pandaw. These elegant, hand-built cruise ships are traditionally-styled in brass and teak and customised to navigate the flowing waters of the Mekong Delta and river. After a delicious lunch, we disembark to travel by sampan (traditional wooden boat) through mangroves and bamboo forests to Ben Tre, known for its fruit orchards. This area is rich in birdlife, which we can savour as we journey slowly through the tranquil waterways before arriving at a local village which specialises in making local products. We learn how these specialities are made and of course try them for ourselves! Back on board, this evening we will be entertained by a Vietnamese Cultural Group whose performance highlights life on the Mekong Delta. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner PLUS selected onboard drinks included**



Pandaw Mekong River Cruise



Mekong Delta, Vietnam



Rice paddy, Chau Doc, Vietnam



Royal Palace, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 15 to 20: Mekong River - Phnom Penh - Siem Reap

Day 15: Con Phuoc, Mekong Delta

Enjoy a relaxing morning sailing through the Mekong Delta, glean insights into life along this mighty waterway as we go. After lunch, we head ashore to Con Phuoc Island. Here we spend time with the local crafts-people who weave bamboo baskets in the traditional way. After showing off their skills, we try to master the art ourselves before taking a tuk-tuk ride through the peaceful village, meeting more of the local community along the way. Once back on board the RV Indochina Pandaw, or RV Bassac Pandaw, there's time to freshen up before a delicious dinner is served in the light, airy restaurant. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner PLUS selected onboard drinks included**

Day 16: Chau Doc – Sam Mountain – Vietnam / Cambodia Border

This morning we dock alongside the picturesque border town of Chau Doc and travel by sampan to its famous floating markets. Although Vietnam's main religions are Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism, there is a community of Vietnamese Muslims in Chau Doc, and we visit a local village to meet members of this community and observe their lifestyle. Next, we board minivans for a short drive to beautiful Sam Mountain, location of Phuoc Dien Tu, otherwise known as Hang Pagoda. We climb the 400 steps to the top of the pagoda, proclaimed an 'official historic monument' in 1980. Later, we return to our vessel and cruise the local canals before we drop anchor on the Vietnam / Cambodia border to go through immigration formalities. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner PLUS selected onboard drinks included**

Day 17: Phnom Penh, Overnight

After a wonderful three days cruising the Mekong River, our time on board the RV Mekong Pandaw, or RV Bassac Pandaw has sadly come to an end, and we disembark in Phnom Penh, where we visit the striking Royal Palace – the official residence of Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni – built in 1866. We also have the privilege of viewing the Silver Pagoda, whose floor is covered with 5,000 silver tiles, and the magnificent, near life-size Buddha, made from solid gold and encrusted with almost 10,000 diamonds.

Despite the splendour and the optimism that you will no doubt observe in Cambodia, there is no escaping its dark recent history, in which Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime (1975-79) cost thousands of innocent people their lives. To learn more about these troubled times, we first visit Tuol Sleng (also known as S-21), the former high school turned prison where captives of the Khmer Rouge were held, before their fate at the Killing Fields awaited them. Today it is a museum, where the haunting faces of some 17,000 people who passed through its gates are displayed. Only seven survivors lived to tell the tale. From here we journey on to the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek, where a memorial provides an emotive yet chilling tribute to the fallen. This afternoon's visit is a sobering and powerful cultural experience, providing us with an important insight into the resilience and spirit of the Cambodian people. Later in the afternoon we arrive at the Palace Gate Hotel, for our overnight stay. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 18: Siem Reap, 3 nights

Tour Highlight

Our journey to Siem Reap begins with transfers to the airport. It is here, that we explore Asia's most famous and highly anticipated landmark, the temples of Angkor. This amazing monument was originally constructed as a Hindu temple dedicated to the God, Vishnu. This afternoon we visit the South Gate of Angkor where the statues of good and evil line the entrance, and the richly decorated Bayon, adorning the face of the Buddhist King Jayavarman VII. The afternoon sees us visit 10th century Hindu Temple, Phimeankas, the Terrace of Elephants and the Terrace of Leper Kings, located inside the walled enclosure of the Royal Palace of Angkor Thom. After an epic day, we finish with a sunset cruise along the moat of Angkor Thom. Our final three nights in Cambodia will be spent at the Borei Angkor Resort & Spa. **Breakfast included**

Day 19: Angkor Wat and Ta Prohm

Tour Highlight

Angkor Wat is synonymous with Cambodia, and the temple's famous five spires are featured on the country's national flag. For early risers amongst us, there is the opportunity to experience sunrise over this epic temple, at an additional cost. Following breakfast, we return to Angkor Wat, the world's largest religious monument, to fully discover this enchanting temple, which features high classical style Khmer architecture. Spread across a massive site, we weave throughout the bewitching temple grounds, experiencing the alchemy of such incomprehensible designs. We close the morning's adventure with a visit to the temple of Ta Prohm, where tree roots hold this spectacular shrine together. The afternoon is reserved for your own leisure, though the evening offers the option to visit the Phare Circus, which supports the development of Khmer youth through a programme of arts and performance. **Breakfast included**

Day 20: Siem Reap Freedom Day

Our Tour Manager will be on hand to help us make the most of this Freedom Day in Siem Reap. Having spent time exploring the city's most iconic attraction, Angkor Wat, you may wish to indulge in other experiences in and around the city, particularly those linked to social enterprises formed to support the local people. How about learning to cook traditional Khmer cuisine, or visiting one of the city's thriving local markets? You may choose to explore a neighbouring village, where you can interact with locals and discover more about their rural daily lives. Or perhaps it is time for you to simply relax and unwind? The choice is yours. **Breakfast included**

We Recommend

Visit a local village

Learn about life in a local village. Spend time with the community and try your hand at a few traditional skills.





Angkor Wat, Siem Reap, Cambodia



Aspara dancers, Cambodia



Ta Phrom, Angkor Wat, Cambodia

The Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia

Days 21 to 22: Siem Reap - UK

Day 21: Depart Siem Reap

Take the opportunity to relax before the homeward journey, or squeeze some last-minute souvenir shopping around Siem Reap before we depart for the airport. Our flights operate via Singapore with Singapore Airlines or Bangkok and Dubai with Emirates. **Breakfast, and in-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 22: Arrive UK

After 22 amazing days full of unforgettable memories, our incredible adventure comes to a close as we arrive into our chosen UK airport this morning. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Holiday Extension

Why not extend your holiday with a visit to Luang Prabang in Laos?



4 Days From £895

The UNESCO World Heritage town of Luang Prabang is a gem of the tiny land-locked country of Laos. Step back in time and discover its unique magical charm for yourself.

Please see pages 76-77 for more details.

Homebound Stopovers from only £295 per person

If you would like to explore somewhere new on your way home, a stopover is a perfect way to make your journey more relaxing and to experience a wonderful new place.

Singapore – M Hotel

Two nights from £295 per person
Occupying a great location in Singapore city centre, M Hotel is a modern, stylish hotel offering a warm welcome and a range of services alongside comfortable, contemporary accommodation.



Sentosa Island – Rasa Sentosa Resort

Two nights from £495 per person
Stop over in style at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, a beautiful beachfront resort on Singapore's Sentosa Island, only 20 minutes from downtown Singapore.



Dubai – Marriott Hotel Al Jaddaf

Two nights from £345 per person
Located within easy reach of Dubai Mall, the Marriott Al Jaddaf is the perfect alternative to a beachside hotel and a great location from which to explore downtown Dubai.



Your stopover includes return airport transfers, two nights accommodation and daily breakfast.

Departure Dates & Prices

2024 Departures

30 September 2024	£5,345pp
03 November 2024	£5,345pp
11 November 2024	£5,345pp SOLD OUT

2025 Departures

12 January 2025	£5,595pp SOLD OUT
26 January 2025	£5,595pp
03 February 2025	£5,595pp SOLD OUT
09 February 2025	£5,595pp
03 March 2025	£5,595pp SOLD OUT
09 March 2025	£5,595pp

Private Touring Supplements

2 guests	£1,495pp
3 guests	£1,295pp
4 guests	£1,195pp
5-8 guests	£995pp
9-16 guests	£895pp
17-19 guests	£395pp
20+ guests	No extra charge

We may have more dates and prices, as well as Special Offers, available on our website. For more information, visit distantjourneys.co.uk/VBOVC

Prices

Prices are per person based on two people sharing a twin or double room.

Single occupancy supplement

2024 departures £1,295
2025 departures £1,395

Deposit

£1,000 per person if travelling Economy Class, £1,950 per person if travelling in Premium Economy, and £3,750 per person for Business Class.

Flight upgrades

Singapore Airlines upgrade to Premium Economy from £1,395 per person return, or Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Emirates upgrade to Business Class from £3,595 per person return.

Private Touring

The same expertly crafted itinerary and hand-picked hotels, combined with the exclusivity and convenience of your own friendly and knowledgeable guides, your own private vehicle and a choice of departure dates.

Visa information

A visa is required for travel to Cambodia. For more information on applying for your visa and the associated costs, please refer to our Important Information on pages 94-95.

Important Information

Prices and flight upgrades are subject to fuel surcharges and the availability of flights. The correct price will be confirmed before you book. Full Booking Conditions are available on pages 96-99.

Call to book

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Call FREE on 0800 141 3743

Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.30pm **Saturday** 9.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday Open in peak season. See website for details.

Should you prefer, please feel free to email us with your enquiry.
Email: enquiries@distantjourneys.co.uk



Vietnam Holiday Extension



Mekong Delta from only £725 per person

Floating market, Vietnam

To the south of Ho Chi Minh City, the Mekong River unravels, spreading into innumerable tributaries, alive with floating markets and small villages surrounded by rice paddies. View Buddhist temples and mangrove forests teeming with bird life as you immerse yourself in Vietnamese life alongside one of Asia's greatest rivers.

Available with our Highlights of Vietnam tour



See pages 40-47

This itinerary follows on from Day 14 of our Highlights of Vietnam tour.

Day 14: Can Tho, 2 nights

After bidding a fond farewell to our travelling companions, we leave Ho Chi Minh City this morning and head to the idyllic small town of Cai Be, famous for its rural floating community. Our waiting boat will take us through the lazy waters before we disembark to pay a visit to some cottage workshops and home industries making sweet treats and local artefacts. Later, we board a sampan where our guide will expertly row us through a maze of narrow canals before we enjoy a cookery demonstration of banh xeo, a Vietnamese speciality, followed by a late lunch. We travel back to Cai Be by boat before our onward drive to Can Tho. Our home for the next two nights is the delightful Can Tho Ecolodge. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 15: Chau Doc

After breakfast, we drive to Chau Doc, on the border with Cambodia. Home to verdant forests, bustling riverbanks and striking Khmer temples, Chau Doc is a melting pot of many cultures. We cruise on the Bassac River, past floating fish farms, to a local village, where we hear about the lives of the local minority ethnic Cham people. Sam Mountain is the highest mountain in the Mekong Delta, and we visit one of its many impressive temples. After lunch we travel by sampan through waterways flanked by mangroves to Tra Su Forest, an eco-reserve and ecological haven, with more than 100 species of water birds and colonies of bats. Our busy day ends with a climb to a vantage point with breath-taking views over the forests below, before returning to Can Tho. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Rice fields, Mekong Delta, Vietnam

French colonial-style house in Binh Thuy village, Can Tho

Day 16: Ho Chi Minh City, Overnight

An early start today as we visit Cai Rang floating market. Boats teeming with fruit, vegetables and household goods ply the waters which bustle with activity. We then cruise to a lush orchard, where we disembark to stroll through the tropical fruit gardens and enjoy the natural beauty. Vietnam's French colonial past is reflected in its striking architecture; a notable example of which is Binh Thuy. Built in 19th century, this grand house's classical French style is blended with design guided by the principles of Eastern feng-shui. Binh Thuy was used as the filming location for 'The Lover', a film based on the novel of the same name by French novelist Marguerite Duras. Later, we arrive at Ho Chi Minh City for an overnight stay at the Liberty Central Saigon Riverside Hotel. **Breakfast and lunch included**

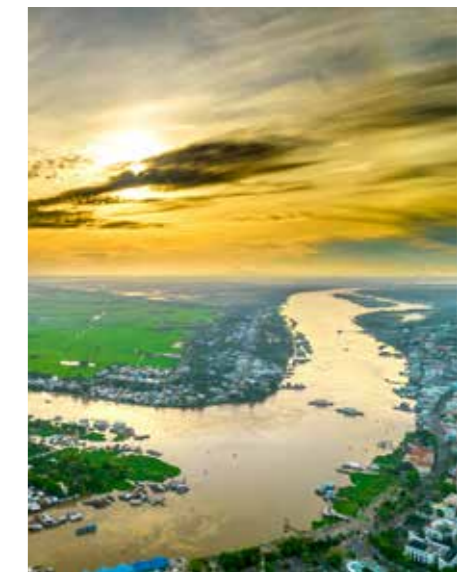
Day 17: Depart Ho Chi Minh City

As our flight departs in the evening, there is further time to explore Ho Chi Minh City or to purchase any last-minute souvenirs. Our flights operate via Singapore with Singapore Airlines. **Breakfast and in-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 18: Arrive UK

This morning we arrive into our chosen UK airport. Filled with amazing memories to cherish, our Vietnamese adventure comes to an end. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Above: Traditional 'sampan', wooden boat
Below: Cham Village, Chau Doc, Vietnam



Mekong Delta, Vietnam

2024 Departures

All dates **£725** per person

2025 Departures

All dates **£745** per person

Your Mekong Delta holiday extension includes

Coach travel to and from Can Tho, two nights accommodation in Can Tho and one night accommodation in Ho Chi Minh City, daily breakfast, three lunches, all sightseeing as outlined in the itinerary, services of a local guide and all transfers.

Single occupancy supplement from £225

Laos Holiday Extension



Luang Prabang from only £895 per person

Old Town, Luang Prabang

Situated in northern Laos, surrounded by jungle clad mountains, and on the confluence of two rivers, the Mekong and the Khan, the UNESCO World Heritage town of Luang Prabang offers an abundance of magical charm. Discover the gentle nature of the Laotian people, view the ornate beauty of ancient temples and enjoy the serenity of watching Buddhist monks in their saffron coloured robes walk the streets for ‘alms’, in this former royal capital.

Available with our **Classic Vietnam & Cambodia** (pages 48-55) **Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia** (pages 64-73) tours.



This itinerary follows on from our Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia and Classic Vietnam & Cambodia tours.

Day 1: Luang Prabang, 3 nights

Today, we travel to Siem Reap Airport for our flight to Luang Prabang in northern Laos. On arrival we will be met and transferred to our hotel, Le Palais Juliana, where we will spend the next three nights. The remainder of the day is at leisure. Our hotel is located just 10 minutes from the main town. This evening, perhaps take a walk around the night markets or enjoy one of the many restaurants serving delicious Laotian cuisine. **Breakfast included**

Day 2: Luang Prabang

Tour Highlight

It's an early start this morning to witness one of Luang Prabang's most special daily rituals, the 'giving of alms'. An important religious act, linked to monks begging for their daily food as a way to demonstrate humility, each morning a daily procession of around 300 young Buddhist monks walk silently through the streets whilst local residents present them with food. Whilst this is part of daily life in Luang Prabang, for those that wish, your guide will be more than happy to show you the best way to interact with the monks should you wish to partake.

Pak Ou Caves, Luang Prabang

We return to our hotel for breakfast before embarking on our morning of sightseeing. We begin with a visit to Wat Xieng Thong, one of the country's oldest temples, before a visit to the former Royal Palace, which today houses the National Museum. We finish our morning with a climb to the top of Phousi Hill (328 steps). Meaning 'sacred mountain', we wander slowly, taking advantage of several resting places and enjoy the magnificent panoramic views across the city and surrounding landscape. The remainder of the day is at leisure. Relax and enjoy the hotel pool or, maybe take an optional tour to nearby Kuangsy waterfall, followed by the Tat Kuang Si Bear Rescue Centre. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Buddhist monks during their daily rituals

Day 3: Luang Prabang

Unknown to many, Laos was bombed on average every eight minutes for nine years, from 1964 to 1973. More bombs fell on Laos than used by all countries involved in World War II. Our morning begins with a visit to the small but moving UXO centre (Unexploded Ordnance Programme). The centre provides an insight into the problems faced by several provinces due to unexploded bombs from this period and the work being done to improve safety. We finish our morning with a visit to the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre, which celebrates the diverse ethnic cultures and people of Laos.

With an afternoon at leisure, maybe take an optional excursion. Take a cruise to Pak Ou Cave to view the hundreds of tiny buddha statues or visit Living Land Farm; where you can experience the life of a rice farmer. Alternatively, you may prefer to learn about bamboo weaving, or visit Heuan Chan Heritage House, where you can learn about family culture, tradition and Laos cuisine. **Breakfast included**

Day 4: Luang Prabang – UK

With our adventures drawing to a close we depart for the airport this morning for our flight to Bangkok, Thailand. Here we will connect with our return flight to the UK. Operating via Dubai, we will arrive at our chosen airport the following morning. **Breakfast included**

Above: Imperial Palace, Luang Prabang
Below: Traditional Laotian food



Royal Palace Museum, Luang Prabang

2024 & 2025 Departures

All dates **£895 per person**

Your Luang Prabang holiday extension includes

Flight from Siem Reap to Luang Prabang, and Luang Prabang to Bangkok (for our flight to the UK), three nights accommodation in Luang Prabang, daily breakfast, one lunch, all sightseeing as outlined in the itinerary, services of a local guide and all transfers.

Single occupancy supplement from £275



La Regina Legend exterior



Above: Princess Suite; Below: Jacuzzi



View from deck



La Corona restaurant

A designated UNESCO World Heritage Site, both Ha Long Bay and Lan Ha Bay have been shaped by nature for centuries.

A must for any tour of Vietnam, one of the best ways to experience this wondrous phenomena is on an overnight cruise. There is something quite magical about watching the sun set in the bay, or waking up to the quiet tranquillity, surrounded by the impressive karsts strutting out of the emerald green waters.

When travelling with Distant Journeys on both the 'Classic Vietnam & Cambodia' and 'Discover Vietnam & Cambodia' tours, we cruise overnight on La Regina Legend, also known as Queen of the Bays. The vessel itself is a glamorous ship that effortlessly blends history with modern comfort. Expect wood detailing and brass fixtures throughout, tempered with ornately decorated paintings.

The Journey

A cruise on La Regina Legend is a combination of the bay's most magnificent scenery, local attractions and onboard amenities. This unforgettable journey begins in La Regina's private lounge, where we are welcomed with a refreshing drink before joining our ship. As La Regina sets sail, prepare to embark on an adventure. We discover magnificent caves, take to the water in local boats or kayaks and enjoy a refreshing dip in the emerald-hued waters.

Cabins

The decor found throughout extends to your cabin, offering spacious accommodation and everything you need for a comfortable evening on board.

Cabin Facilities

- Twin or queen-size beds
- Private en-suite bathroom
- Tea and coffee facilities
- Air-conditioning and heating
- Complimentary mineral water

Life on board

Life on board La Regina Legend invites you to relish the outdoors. Breathe in the refreshing bay air from your private balcony or any of the open-air viewing spots. Inside the ship, discover plush seating and dining areas that offer both comfort and splendid bay views through expansive glass windows.

When not off on excursions, your ship provides a haven of tranquility. Relax on deck, pamper yourself with spa treatments, engage in a peaceful sun deck Tai Chi session or a taste of adventure. Don't miss the chance to try your hand at squid fishing!



Tai Chi on the sun deck

Dining

Enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner aboard as you marvel at the picturesque bay views. There is an extensive wine and drinks list to enjoy throughout your stay, and Happy Hour awaits at sunset on the first day.

Inclusions

- All-inclusive dining, with complimentary breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Welcome drink
- Selection of excursions and activities



Au Co exterior



Above: Bedroom; Below: View from Au Co deck



Sun deck



Drinks on board

An undoubted highlight of both Distant Journeys' Highlights of Vietnam and Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia tours is our wonderful two-night cruise along on the emerald waters of Ha Long Bay, on board the Au Co.

Situated in the Gulf of Tonkin, in Vietnam's north east, Ha Long Bay is a natural wonder known locally as the 'dragon descending to the sea', and is one of Vietnam's must-see destinations. Towering limestone peaks topped by untouched rainforest rise from the water and hundreds of tiny islands and grottos are studded throughout the bay. This extraordinary area was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994, and it is truly spectacular.

Offering a small and friendly cruise experience and a personal service by the dedicated crew, our cruise takes place over three leisurely days, allowing plenty of time for both exploration ashore and relaxation on board the Au Co, an impressive vessel, whilst taking in the majesty of Ha Long Bay.

The Journey

There is ample time to discover Ha Long Bay's beautiful islets, beaches, villages and grottos, and enjoy many activities including swimming, snorkelling, kayaking, and trekking. We will take in the natural beauty of both Ha Long and Lan Ha Bays, with the opportunity to cycle to a remote village on Cat Ba Island, and experience the floating village of Cua Van in the quiet early morning hours. Sunbathe on the pristine white sands of Three Peach Beach and swim in its secluded, jade-coloured waters.

Deluxe Cabins

The Au Co has just 32 cabins. Our accommodation on board is a deluxe cabin featuring natural hardwood flooring and handcrafted furnishings. A private balcony is perfect for soaking up the breath-taking views of Ha Long Bay.

Cabin Facilities

- Twin or queen-size beds
- Private en-suite bathroom with toilet, washbasin and shower
- Tea and coffee-making facilities
- Individually controlled air-conditioning
- Complimentary drinking water throughout the cruise
- Bathrobes and deluxe toiletries

Life on board the Au Co

When cruising, the spacious sun deck is at the heart of life on board, where guests can dine, sunbathe and enjoy the range of onboard activities. The covered outdoor Lan Ha Bar is a particularly inviting space to relax with a drink surrounded by the natural beauty of Ha Long Bay.

You may begin your day with an early morning Tai Chi session on the sun deck. Learn the gentle movements of this ancient martial art whilst enjoying the morning sun and fresh breezes of Ha Long Bay. Take part in a fun Vietnamese cookery lesson; relax in the spa and open-air jacuzzi or lose yourself in a book from the well-stocked library. In the evening, an authentic song and dance performance by the ship's entertainers offers an insight into the different ethnic groups within Vietnam.



Chef preparing meal

Dine in one of the world's most scenic locations

Superb food is a highlight of any cruise, and on board the Au Co you will enjoy restaurant-quality dining in one of the most scenic places on earth. The talented team of chefs skilfully combine the best of Vietnamese and western flavours to produce an array of locally-caught seafood and seasonal fresh produce.

The Terrace Deck Restaurant has striking Art Deco-style furnishings, which enhance its elegant ambience. Enjoy a beautiful breakfast buffet spread, a casual lunch and a multi-course dinner, with a delicious evening barbecue on the sun deck being the highlight of your second night on board Au Co.

Au Co Inclusions

- All-inclusive dining, with complimentary breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Welcome drink
- Selection of excursions and activities



Pandaw River Cruise Mekong River



RV Bassac Pandaw exterior



Above: Double Cabin; Below: Enjoying the sunset on deck



View from deck



On board hospitality

Not only is our Mekong River cruise one of the stand-out highlights of our Very Best of Vietnam & Cambodia tour, it is the perfect way to experience the mighty Mekong River and the rich culture of the Mekong Delta.

The Mekong River remains, as it has for thousands of years, a thriving and busy trade route, lined with small towns, local villages and colourful river markets. The brown waters of the river contrast with the vivid greenery of the countryside and the bustle of life. Travelling through six different Asian countries before it reaches the vast delta of Vietnam and the South China Sea, its waters attract river vessels of all sizes, from rowing boats and simple sampans to traditional long-tail boats and commercial barges.

There is no better way to discover the richness of the people who call the Mekong home than to take to the water. Our vessels, RV Mekong Pandaw and RV Bassac Pandaw, are hand-finished in brass and teak by craftsmen, traditionally-styled with a colonial era charm that reflects the original 1930's design. Cruising between Vietnam's Mekong Delta and Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, over three nights and four days, discover the wonders of one of Asia's mightiest rivers for yourself.

The Journey

Journeying on the lower Mekong River and Delta all the way to the bustling city of Phnom Penh in Cambodia, the shore excursions have an emphasis on experiencing local life, with plenty of opportunities to interact with local people and their fascinating culture.

View ancient temples, pagodas and Buddhist monasteries, visit a local village and learn about life on the Mekong. Experience the hustle and bustle of the colourful floating markets and learn about the crafts of local industries. You will also discover an area rich in biodiversity and birdlife, mangroves, bamboo forests and fruit orchards.

Your Stateroom

Staterooms on board both vessels exude colonial-era character combined with contemporary comforts. All staterooms are outside cabins, with direct access to the promenade deck.

Stateroom Facilities

- Twin or queen-size beds
- Private en-suite bathroom
- Unlimited mineral water
- Kimonos, slippers and spa-branded amenities

Life on board

Life on board is mostly enjoyed al fresco. The Promenade and Observation decks have comfortable lounging chairs, where guests can sit and watch from a great vantage point as life goes by on one of Asia's great rivers.

Throughout the Mekong River cruise, the emphasis is mainly on peace and tranquility. A number of on-board activities reflect the traditions and cultures of the area, such as a themed dinner and a performance by a local dance group.

Dining

Dining is a relaxed, casual affair with a great choice of local cuisine and international favourites, all cooked with locally-sourced supplies where possible.

Breakfast is served buffet-style, while lunch features a buffet, plus soup, salads and a dessert table. Dinner is by waiter service and the team of talented chefs are always happy to cater to any dietary requirements. There is an extensive wine list, and whether you would like a refreshing cocktail or a chilled local beer, there's something to suit all tastes.

Inclusions

- All-inclusive dining, with complimentary breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Selected wines, beers, spirits and non-alcoholic beverages during meals
- Selection of excursions and activities



Chef preparing meals



Century River Cruise Yangtze River



MV Century Victory



Above: MV Century Oasis, Deluxe Cabin
Below: MV Century Victory, Pavillion Café



Yangtze River



MV Century Victory lobby

The Yangtze River is the third longest river in the world. Beginning its journey high on the Tibetan plateau it flows some 3,900 miles through China to Shanghai and the East China and Yellow seas. It is known by the Chinese as the Chang Jiang, meaning long river and is one of the many included highlights on our Very Best of China Tour.

Cruising between Chongqing and Yichang our cruise covers the popular Three Gorges region – Qutang Gorge, arguably the most majestic. Over three days, we'll navigate the Yangtze's jade-green waters as we witness picturesque landscapes, lush hillsides and ancient temples. The Yangtze's charming banks steeped in fascinating history and breathtaking natural beauty just waiting to be explored.

Our vessels, MV Century Victory and MV Century Oasis, offer an elegant sailing experience, coupled with attentive onboard service. Onboard, you will find large and spacious communal areas, two dining rooms and a balcony in every cabin, ensuring your Yangtze River cruise offers a comfortable and relaxing journey, filled with unforgettable moments and stunning scenery.

The Journey

Journeying east along the river from Chongqing, prepare to witness a tapestry of cultural landmarks and breathtaking landscapes, through a selection of included and optional shore excursions. As we wind our way along the Yangtze, be amazed by the river's impressive gorges, Qutang whilst learning about the diversity of ancient Chinese traditions and the country's fascinating history.

Your Stateroom

The staterooms aboard both vessels have been meticulously crafted to ensure a comfortable stay. Each balcony cabin offering panoramic sliding doors allowing guests to take in the passing scenery.

Distant Journeys' guests will be accommodated in spacious Deluxe Cabins. Cabin upgrades are also available.

Stateroom Facilities

- Twin or double-bed
- Private en-suite bathroom
- Private balcony
- Unlimited mineral water
- Bathrobes, slippers and bathroom amenities

Yangtze River Cruise Cabin Upgrades

Prices from £295 per person



Distant Journey guests are accommodated in Deluxe Cabins, with an option to upgrade to Superior Cabins, or for something really special an Executive or Presidential Suite. Please call for details

Life on board

Immerse yourself in life on board from the comfort of your private balcony or venture out to one of the expansive observation decks where panoramic views await. An abundance of activities can be enjoyed on board, from presentations on traditional Chinese medicine to authentic Tai Chi lessons. For a touch of tranquillity, retreat to the Reading Room where you can lose yourself in the pages of a captivating book while we cruise the shores of the Yangtze.



MV Century Oasis, Top observation deck

Dining

On both vessels, meals are served in the main dining room. Served buffet style, breakfast, lunch and dinner offer a wide variety of western and Chinese cuisine for guests to sample. Whilst dining, a selection of house wine, local beer and soft drinks will be available at no extra charge.

For guests upgrading to a Superior Cabin, or an Executive or Presidential Suite, dining will be in the Pavilion Restaurant.

The final night of the cruise brings all guests together to enjoy the Captain's Farewell Banquet.

Inclusions

- All-inclusive dining, with complimentary breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Tea and coffee served throughout the day
- Selected house wines, local beers and non-alcoholic beverages during meals
- Selection of excursions and activities
- Bottled water in rooms

Japan Hotel Directory



Hiroshima – Rihga Royal Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Rihga Royal Hotel is set in the heart of Hiroshima, close to many poignant monuments dedicated to those lost in the 1945 bombing. Guest rooms are elegant and welcoming, with spectacular views of Hiroshima city and in the south, views out to Seto Inland Sea in the distance, and Hiroshima Castle in the north. There's a heated indoor pool and jacuzzi, perfect for unwinding, and the hotel boasts six fantastic restaurants and two bars, ideal for a pre-dinner sake.



Kanazawa – Hotel Nikko Kanazawa

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

With its central location, close to Kanazawa train station, Hotel Nikko Kanazawa is perfectly located for exploring the city. Guest rooms which start at the 17th floor provide views of the city allowing guests to take in the classic architecture of this historic Japanese town. The hotel provides an array of on-site dining offerings. These include La PLAGE for fresh local seafood, a Cantonese restaurant with a dim sum master chef, a French marché-inspired restaurant featuring live cooking, and a British-style bar, bakery and lounge complete with views of Kanazawa's charming cityscape.



Kanazawa – Hyatt Centric Kanazawa

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Hyatt Centric Kanazawa offers guests the chance to discover Kanazawa's unique cuisine and heritage, including the city's authentic art, shops, restaurants and hidden gems. Its guest rooms feature sleek designs which make use of natural light, local artwork and distinctive touches, while the 24-hour fitness centre is set up with all the latest equipment. Guests can also enjoy local cuisine and innovative cocktails at FIVE – Grill & Lounge while admiring sweeping city views from the open-air rooftop bar.



Kanazawa – Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

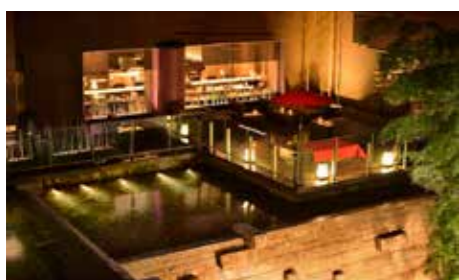
The Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel is a modern hotel in a great location, with a chic yet relaxed atmosphere. Guest rooms are stylish and well-equipped, with added extras such as complimentary Japanese tea set, slippers, nightwear and many toiletries, and in-room massages can be booked at Reception. The Marais D'or restaurant is a western style all-day restaurant which uses the best local ingredients including seafood, fresh vegetables, and wagyu beef, while Kincharyo restaurant serves a Japanese-style breakfast. Drinks are available in the cosy lounge bar.



Kurashiki – Kurashiki Royal Art Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

The Royal Art Hotel is situated close to the attractions of the cultural city of Kurashiki, and within walking distance of Kurashiki Bikan historical quarter, known for its traditional, white-walled 'kominka' houses. Kurashiki is the hotel's Japanese restaurant, offering a truly authentic dining experience, where you'll sit and dine in a kotatsu: a traditional covered table on the floor with a heater underneath. Hachikengura offers French-style cuisine and a handful of other European dishes. Comfortable guest rooms have all been carefully decorated.



Kyoto – Kyoto Tokyu Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Contemporary yet influenced by traditional Japanese design, the Kyoto Tokyu Hotel enjoys a great location amongst the narrow streets of downtown Kyoto. Throughout the hotel, there are some wonderful spaces to relax, including the tranquil Zen garden. Tankume Kitamise is the hotel's top-billed restaurant featuring Kyoto-style dishes that reflect the seasons, and all-day dining can be enjoyed at Kazahana, serving a buffet breakfast and a wide variety of international dishes, and the hotel also has a Chinese restaurant and three bars on site.



Lake Yamanaka – Fuji Marriott Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Situated just a short drive from Lake Yamanaka, the largest of the five Fuji lakes, the Fuji Marriott Hotel enjoys magnificent views of Mount Fuji and is surrounded by the beauty of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park. Guest rooms are comfortable and well equipped and amenities include a spa, tennis courts and its own 'onsen' – a Japanese hot spring bath. At the Grill & Dining G restaurant, chefs prepare a variety of local specialities and Western favourites in the open kitchen, whilst you enjoy spectacular views from the restaurant's large windows.



Osaka – Hotel Nikko Osaka

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Hotel Nikko Osaka is a stylish and modern hotel facing the tree-lined Midosuji Avenue, the city's main shopping boulevard, and is directly connected to Subway Shinsaibashi Station. During your stay there are many restaurants to choose from, offering a wide range of cuisine such as Japanese, Chinese and French. The lounge on the 31st floor features beautiful views of Osaka city, whilst a traditional Japanese-style breakfast buffet is served at Benkay restaurant. Well-designed guest rooms are comfortable and spacious.



Takayama – Hotel Associa Takayama Resort

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Located in the hills just a short distance from Takayama's old town, the surrounding forest backdrop of Japan's Northern Alps provide a fabulous setting for Hotel Associa Takayama Resort. Guest rooms are tastefully decorated and the resort also boasts both indoor and outdoor onsen bathing, with the outdoor onsen looking out over the surrounding mountain range. Local Japanese cuisine is served at Ka-un and Rosiere restaurants, while grilled Hida beef and fresh seafood can be savoured at Mine Teppanyaki.



Takayama – Takayama Green Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Takayama Green Hotel is situated in the heart of Hida Takayama, and preserves traditional culture and the spirit of 'Omotenashi' hospitality, providing characterful and cosy rooms along with two different rejuvenating natural onsen (hot springs). Dining choices encompass Japanese cuisine at Ryokutei or Shirakawago restaurants, buffet-style and French dishes at the Green Court, Chinese specialties at Tenkyoro Restaurant, tasty treats at Patisserie Bal Ange, or opt to relax at Kinoka Lounge and Bar.



Tokyo – Keio Plaza Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Keio Plaza Hotel, opened in 1971 as Japan's first skyscraper hotel, set in the district of Shinjuku, enjoys a prime position and has 47 floors in the main tower and 35 floors in the south tower. Guest rooms are well equipped and comfortable, and there are eleven restaurants ranging from Japanese teppanyaki and sushi to French and Italian cuisine. For a quintessentially Japanese experience, the hotel even has its own 'sho-fu-an' – a room dedicated to the Japanese tea ceremony.

China Hotel Directory



Yun Jin Cheng Mansion, Pingyao



Beijing – Park Plaza Wangfujing

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

The Park Plaza Wangfujing Hotel is a modern oasis, ideal for making the most of your time in China's capital. Centrally located in the heart of Beijing's bustling and developing cultural, commercial, business and entertainment district, the hotel is within walking distance of Tiananmen Square and Wangfujing shopping street. Bloo Dining offers Asian and international cuisines. Light refreshments and drinks can be enjoyed at First Lounge Bar.



Pingyao – Yun Jin Cheng Mansion

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

With traditional Chinese architecture and surrounded by lovely courtyards, be transported back to the Ming and Qing period with a stay at the Yunjincheng Hotel. Located in the heart of this ancient town, this boutique property is full of character and charm. The hotel's restaurant serves regional Chinese cuisine, whilst the local coffee shop is located opposite the hotel and provides an ideal spot to relax with a drink and observe local life.



Xi'an – Holiday Inn Big Goose Pagoda

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

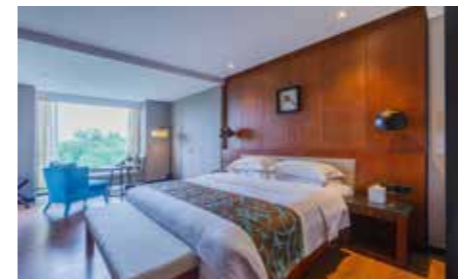
The hotel offers modern rooms, and its facilities include a fitness centre and swimming pool. Green Café Restaurant provides an international buffet whilst the Chinese Food Hall offers Cantonese and authentic Shaanxi cuisine.



Guilin – Sheraton Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Situated on the banks of the Li River, this hotel offers views of its gardens and the river. The hotel benefits from a central location with Elephant Trunk Hill and Zhengyang Pedestrian Street on its doorstep. Within the hotel, the swimming pool and sauna are the perfect place to relax. The hotel has a choice of restaurants specialising in Chinese and Western cuisines.



Yangshuo – Yangshuo Resort Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Situated by the Yulong River with beautiful views of the nearby mountains, the Yangshuo Resort Hotel provides complimentary bicycles, an outdoor pool, garden and sun terrace. Riverside Restaurant serves western food, while the Chinese Restaurant offers local and Cantonese food. Enjoy tea at the Ancient Ferry Restaurant or a drink in the Dragonfly Bar.



Chengdu – Tibet Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Close to the Old Town, the Tibet Hotel resembles Lhasa's Palace, with ceilings decorated with gold frames, inlaid with lotus and turquoise. Throughout the hotel the Tibetan theme is abundantly apparent, from the pictures adorning the walls to the delicious cuisine on offer. You can also take advantage of the hotel's special holy spa, offering massage treatments.



Shanghai – Jin Jiang Tower Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Ideally situated on Huaihai Road, the Jin Jiang Tower boasts spectacular views over the city. Guest rooms are spacious and offer fine furnishings. The hotel provides a choice of dining options serving a wide variety of cuisines including western dishes. Guests can also enjoy the hotels indoor swimming pool, spa and sauna.

Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos Hotel Directory



Can Tho, Vietnam – Can Tho Eco Lodge

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Can Tho Ecolodge stands on the tranquil banks of the Ba Lang River, surrounding a freeform swimming pool. The thoughtfully-designed guest accommodation takes the form of thatched bungalows, each made with sustainable building materials and boasting first-class amenities such as a panoramic balcony overlooking its tropical expanse and a natural wooden bathtub. The Restaurant at Can Tho Eco Lodge offers up a diverse menu of local delicacies made from the freshest ingredients. Every dish is sourced from local surroundings, including produce from the hotel's own organic garden.



Hanoi, Vietnam – Pan Pacific Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Offering views of the West Lake, Truc Bach Lake and Red River, the Pan Pacific Hanoi offers an oasis of calm in a busy city and features contemporary rooms with modern furnishings and Vietnamese designs. Ming Restaurant serves authentic dim sum, Pacifica offers a buffet of international cuisines, The Pastry Corner offers delicious homemade cakes and pastries for breakfast on-the-go; or simply kick back with a drink at The Summit Bar, located on the roof top, enjoying panoramic city views.



Hanoi, Vietnam – Silk Path Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

The hotel's location within Hanoi's Old Quarter provides guests with an excellent base from which to explore this fascinating area of the city, alongside the charm of the French Quarter. The hotel guest rooms are tastefully decorated with everything you need for a comfortable stay. A choice of several restaurants gives guests a choice of Vietnamese, Mediterranean and international cuisines to dine on. There is also a piano bar, fitness centre and jacuzzi.



Hoi An, Vietnam – Emm Hotel Hoi An

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Built around a spacious courtyard garden and with its French-colonial and Vietnamese-inspired architecture the Emm Hotel Hoi An offers a comfortable base from which to explore. Hoi An's Old Quarter is just a short stroll away. En-suite rooms are modern and bright. Guests can dine in the hotel restaurant which serves local, Asian and western cuisines, take a dip in the swimming pool and enjoy pool bar, which also serves lights snacks.



Hoi An, Vietnam – Silkotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Hoi An has a rich history dating back to the 15th century and the Silkotel is within walking distance of its renowned and well-preserved Old Town, an ideal location from which to explore. With elegantly-designed rooms, equipped with modern essentials, guests will enjoy a comfortable stay. Chiffon Restaurant features Vietnamese and international dishes, while the Pool Bar and Lobby Bar are the perfect places to unwind. The hotel also offers a swimming pool, spa and fitness centre.



Hoi An, Vietnam – Bel Marina Hoi An Resort

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Located in Cam Pho district, the Bel Marina Hoi An Resort is in the heart of Hoi An and located on the banks of Thu Bon River, just a short stroll from Ha My Beach and the city centre. The hotel is a perfect blend of European and Asian style. Guest rooms are modern and well-equipped, with balconies or patios, parquet flooring and air-conditioning. The large swimming pool comes complete with a swim-up bar, whilst dining choices range from Vietnamese to international favourites.



Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam – Liberty Central Saigon Riverside Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

As the name suggests, Liberty Central Riverside Hotel is centrally-located with spectacular views of Saigon River. An infinity swimming pool right next to the rooftop Vertical Sky Bar, a great spot for signature cocktails, makes the most of its surroundings. The modern, comfortable guest rooms have all the expected amenities, and there's a rejuvenating Spa and fitness centre. Dining options include Central Restaurant, overlooking the waterfront and offering local dishes and signature seafood, and The Bistro, which is perfect for local craft beers and light bites.



Hue, Vietnam – Eldora Hotel

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Eldora is a boutique hotel in the heart of Hue, just a short walk from the Citadel, Trang Tien Bridge and Dong Ba market. With a distinctive French atmosphere it blends the elegance of Vietnam's colonial past with many modern amenities, and well-appointed bedrooms feature distinctive Renaissance elements, bright decor and wooden flooring. The hotel offers an indoor swimming pool with sun terrace, and the elegant Eldora Restaurant serves a selection of western, Asian and local cuisine. Head to the Skyline Bar for a nightcap overlooking the Hue skyline.



Luang Prabang, Laos – Le Palais Juliana

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Le Palais Juliana Hotel in Luang Prabang, Laos offers a peaceful escape and a memorable stay. Just 10 minutes from the city centre, the hotel is hidden away in its own leafy sanctuary. Guests can expect comfortable, well-equipped rooms with a wide range of amenities as well as shuttle services to popular attractions such as the night market, Mount Phousi and the Royal Palace Museum. There's also a delicious collection of Laotian, Thai, and international cuisine available at the hotel's Chaonang Restaurant.



Mai Chau, Vietnam – Mai Chau Mountain View Resort

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Mai Chau Mountain View Resort is nestled in the peaceful and picturesque valley of Mai Chau. Patchwork rice paddies, magnificent mountains and untouched forests create a stunning backdrop for the spacious accommodation. All rooms have a terrace with mountain views and are fully-equipped with modern facilities. Guests can take a dip in the swimming pool and savour authentic Vietnamese and cuisine at the hotel's restaurant.



Phnom Penh, Cambodia – Palace Gate Hotel & Resort

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Palace Gate Hotel & Resort is situated in the heart of Phnom Penh, adjacent to the Royal Palace in Daun Penh, with views of the Tonle Sap River. The resort is built around a lovingly-restored French colonial villa, showcasing intricate Cambodian design, and the space is now home to the hotel's fine dining restaurant, Mealea, serving up both French and Khmer cuisine. Guest rooms are decorated in traditional Angkorian style and the spectacular swimming pool is a great place to relax.



Siem Reap, Cambodia – Borei Angkor Resort & Spa

Local rating: ★★★★★ Distant Journeys rating: ★★★★★

Borei Angkor Resort & Spa is nestled within manicured gardens in the heart of Siem Reap, just a few minutes from the city's many attractions. Deluxe guest rooms are spacious, each with a private balcony, and classic Cambodian architecture blends with contemporary décor, delicately finished with wood, silks and Khmer crafts. There is an outdoor swimming pool and dining options include Ox Club, offering contemporary European cuisine, and all day dining, indoors and al fresco at Bakan Restaurant, with a huge selection of freshly prepared Khmer and western cuisines.

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