

Northern Vietnam: Hanoi to Pu Luong Cycle



trip highlights

Cycle through Mai Chau valley surrounded by rice fields and karst mountains

Ride into Pu Luong Nature Reserve past traditional villages and terraced landscapes

Traverse limestone landscapes, forested hills and river valleys

Begin and end in Hanoi, experiencing Vietnam's capital and cultural centre



Trip Duration	5 days	Trip Code: CNV
Grade	Moderate	
Activities	Cycling	
Summary	4 days cycle, 4 nights hotel	

welcome to World Expeditions

For over 50 years, we've been creating high-quality, expedition-style adventures for active travellers with a curious spirit. From our very first trek in the mountains of Nepal to pioneering remote routes across all seven continents, our journeys are built for those who want to truly explore – not just visit.

At the heart of what we do is a simple philosophy: take the paths less travelled.

This means travelling with care, supporting local communities, minimising our impact, and unlocking experiences that most travellers will never have.

If you're ready to go further and dig deeper, we invite you to join us on the Northern Vietnam: Hanoi to Pu Luong Cycle, a journey that captures the essence of a unique adventure.

why travel with World Expeditions?

Our guided cycling trips in Vietnam combine carefully designed routes with the support of experienced local guides and a dedicated crew. Each journey is fully supported, with logistics, accommodation, meals and transport managed throughout, allowing a smooth and structured travel experience. Riding through rural landscapes, villages and key regional highlights, the presence of guides provides local insight, cultural context and on-road support, while vehicle backup and luggage transfers ensure comfort and flexibility. Backed by World Expeditions' operational expertise, these trips offer a reliable and well-supported way to explore Vietnam by bike.



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World Expeditions will endeavour to arrange for single travellers to share accommodation with another participant of the same gender, however if we cannot match you up a single supplement will be applicable. If you prefer not to share, a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. Please refer to our website for the additional cost.

the trip

Cycle through the diverse landscapes of northern Vietnam, travelling from the energy of Hanoi to the peaceful valleys of Mai Chau, Pu Luong and Ninh Binh. After leaving the city behind, the journey begins with a scenic ride through rice paddies and traditional villages, offering an early glimpse into rural life before arriving in the Mai Chau Valley. The adventure builds as you tackle more challenging terrain en route to Pu Luong Nature Reserve, with rewarding climbs and descents through remote countryside, passing terraced rice fields and minority communities. An overnight stay in a local homestay provides a chance to unwind and experience the quieter rhythm of the region. From Pu Luong, enjoy a memorable descent before continuing toward Ninh Binh, a region often referred to as “Halong Bay on land” for its striking limestone karst formations rising from the surrounding paddies. Your final day offers a more relaxed ride through this distinctive landscape, followed by a guided boat journey through caves and hidden lagoons. Returning to Hanoi, the trip concludes with a farewell dinner — an opportunity to reflect on a rewarding journey through some of Vietnam’s most varied and visually striking regions.

at a glance

DAY 1	JOIN HANOI TO MAI CHAU (60–70KM / 37–43.5MI)
DAY 2	CYCLE MAI CHAU TO PU LUONG NATURE RESERVE (60–70KM / 37–43.5MI)
DAY 3	CYCLE PU LUONG TO NINH BINH (60KM / 37.3MI)
DAY 4	CYCLE NINH BINH TO HANOI (25KM / 15.5MI)
DAY 5	HANOI DEPARTURE

what’s included

- All meals as specified in the itinerary: 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 3 dinners
- All biking gear (mountain bike, helmet, 10L pannier, water cage)
- Good quality hotel accommodation and local homestay-style accommodation in Pu Luong
- Support vehicle for luggage, equipment and transfers
- Sightseeing and boat trip in Ninh Binh
- Experienced local cycling guides
- Mechanical support during cycling days
- Water, soft drinks, snacks and fruit on cycling days
- Souvenir water bottle, drawstring backpack, t-shirt and cycling jersey

Local cash payments are becoming increasingly popular with many operators in the adventure travel industry. The policy seems to benefit the tour operators, more than the local economies or travellers, as it avoids local taxes and transfers the cost and risk of cash handling to travellers. In accordance with our Responsible Travel practices we have chosen a policy not to ask for such payments.

what’s not included

- International flights
- Airport transfers
- Visas
- Travel Insurance (compulsory)
- Personal expenses
- Meals not listed as included
- Tips and gratuities
- Any items not listed as included

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trip dates

2026 16 Jul - 20 Jul
16 Aug - 20 Aug
16 Sep - 20 Sep
15 Oct - 19 Oct
16 Nov - 20 Nov
27 Nov - 01 Dec
16 Dec - 20 Dec
27 Dec - 31 Dec

2027 21 Jan - 25 Jan
25 Feb - 01 Mar
22 Mar - 26 Mar
22 Apr - 26 Apr
19 Aug - 23 Aug

important notes

Note: - It is possible to upgrade to an e-Bike. Please enquire for further details.

Note: - Vietnam's TET (Lunar New Year) holiday dates vary each year in February. Omitted dates may overlap with these periods.

fast facts

Countries Visited:
Vietnam

Visas:
Yes*

Vaccinations:
Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Private Groups:
Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:
A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local leader

Advice for people with limited mobility
This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

*Ask our staff for more information.

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Join Hanoi to Mai Chau (60-70km / 37-43.5mi)

Leaving Hanoi, a transfer takes you into the foothills of northern Vietnam where the landscape quickly shifts from urban density to rural mountains. After breakfast and bike fitting, riding begins among the villages of the Muong people, with quiet roads weaving through rice paddies and forested hills. The route climbs steadily along a mix of paved roads and cross-country tracks, passing limestone karst formations and opening views toward the Hoa Binh Reservoir. A series of climbs and descents leads into the Mai Chau Valley, where steep mountains surround wide expanses of rice fields.

Accommodation: Mai Chau Eco Lodge or similar

Total ascent: 500-700m / 1640-2297ft

meals: B,L,D

DAY 2 Cycle Mai Chau to Pu Luong Nature Reserve (60-70km / 37-43.5mi)

A sustained climb leads out of Mai Chau Valley, gaining elevation toward a more remote plateau. As the road rises, views extend across terraced hillsides and layered mountain landscapes, marking the transition into a quieter region of northern Vietnam. The route then follows shaded paths alongside streams before entering Pu Luong Nature Reserve. After a flatter section through rice fields and small villages, a second shorter but steeper climb leads to the lodge, set within the reserve's forested valleys.

Accommodation: Amigo Pu Luong Resort or similar

Total ascent: 500-700m / 1640-2297ft

meals: B,L,D

DAY 3 Cycle Pu Luong to Ninh Binh (60km / 37.3mi)

The day begins with a steep descent through Pu Luong's terraced landscapes, dropping into the valley below. From here, the route follows a quieter cross-country track, passing through bamboo forest and more remote sections of the countryside. After a short transfer, cycling resumes toward Ninh Binh, where the landscape shifts to limestone karst formations rising sharply from rice paddies. This region, often compared to Ha Long Bay, offers a distinct change from the mountainous terrain of previous days. Tonight, we come together for our farewell dinner to celebrate the journey we've shared.

Accommodation: Ninh Binh Hidden Charm Hotel & Resort or similar

Total ascent: 500m / 1640ft

meals: B,L,D

DAY 4 Cycle Ninh Binh to Hanoi (25km / 15.5mi)

The day begins with a relaxed ride through Ninh Binh's countryside and historic landscapes. The route passes limestone formations and rural villages and is relaxed, with time to stop and take in the surrounding scenery. Cycling is followed by a 1.5hr boat journey through river caves and narrow lagoons, offering a different perspective of the region. After lunch, a transfer returns us to Hanoi by 6pm and we end the day with a farewell dinner.

Accommodation: Le Jardin Hotel Haute Couture or similar

meals: B,L

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thoughtful travel

Our World Expeditions adventures are grounded in a deep commitment to regenerative travel, going beyond minimising harm to actively restoring and enriching the places we visit. We partner closely with local communities, ensuring that our trips support cultural preservation, fair livelihoods, and community-led initiatives. Each expedition is designed to protect and regenerate natural ecosystems through low-impact practices, climate action, and education that fosters respect for biodiversity. We prioritise meaningful connections between travellers and place, encouraging a sense of stewardship that lasts well beyond the journey. By embedding sustainability into every layer of our operations, we aim not only to explore the world responsibly but also to leave it healthier, more resilient, and more vibrant for future generations.

trip grading Moderate

These adventures involve cycling for up to 6 or 7 hours a day at a steady pace, days may be shorter depending on the days route, which will be anywhere from 25 - 70 km, typically 40-50 kms. You will need a good level of fitness and be in good health. The more time you can spend on a bike to help you prepare, the better. Be prepared for potential variable weather conditions. Suggested preparation; 1 hour of aerobic exercise, three to four times a week and extended periods of exercise during the weekend will accustom you to regular exercise. This trip is not a race. There will be a support truck following the group on all cycling days should you choose to load your bike and watch the scenery pass from your private air conditioned group vehicle.

DAY 5 Hanoi departure

The trip concludes after breakfast in Hanoi with time for independent exploration or onward travel. The capital offers a mix of historic architecture, markets and cultural sites reflecting Vietnam's long history. Travellers may choose to extend their stay or explore further regions. Arrangements conclude after breakfast.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

cycling

We believe that cycling is one of the best ways to see a country. Our cycling trips have been well researched to take you on the best route which usually means a combination of tarmac and dirt roads, the odd main road but generally smaller secondary roads. And sometimes even the occasional hill! All of this so that you can see the incredible scenery and landscapes, view the main sights and along the way eat delicious food, stay at unique accommodation and discover the incredible people.

Generally we supply you with geared (21-27) mountain or touring bikes and support vehicle which will follow the group on almost all sections of the ride. All equipment and luggage will be carried by the support vehicle. You will need to carry a small day pack with your camera, sunscreen and water. It is important to remember that these cycling journeys are not designed to be a marathon event. No one needs to feel under pressure to ride. If at any point you do not wish to ride the vehicle is always available for you and your bike to be transported. Usually we stop every 10 to 20kms for a rest. This will be the time to recover your breath and replenish your fluids and energy with water and snacks.

Remember that cycling involves some physical exertion, so you cannot expect that you will not feel tired. A little bit of preparation will go a long way. Cycling, of course, is an active pursuit and to maximise your own personal protection in case of a tumble or fall, the wearing of a bicycle helmet is compulsory at all times whilst cycling.

country information

Vietnam is a country of remarkable cultural richness and natural beauty, stretching over 1,600km (1025 mi) kilometres from the cool mountains of the north to the tropical waterways of the Mekong Delta. Its landscapes are wonderfully diverse, ranging from terraced rice fields and forested highlands to limestone karsts, sandy beaches and bustling river systems. Cities such as Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City offer a lively mix of French colonial heritage, modern energy and traditional Vietnamese charm. Vietnamese culture is shaped by a long history of regional influences, including Chinese, Cham and French traditions, blended with a strong national identity. Buddhism, Confucian values and ancestor worship all play a role in daily life, reflected in temples, family rituals and the country's strong sense of community. Food is a highlight of any visit, fresh, fragrant and regionally distinct, with northern, central and southern kitchens each offering their own memorable flavours. Travel in Vietnam is increasingly smooth thanks to good infrastructure, reliable domestic flights and well-connected transport networks. While major cities are vibrant and fast-paced, much of the countryside remains relaxed and deeply traditional. With its friendly people, rich cultural heritage and striking variety of landscapes, Vietnam offers a rewarding and engaging travel experience for visitors.

climate

Vietnam's climate can vary markedly from region to region due to its extreme latitudinal span. You can go from soaring temperatures and extreme humidity in Ho Chi Minh City to cool and mild conditions in Dalat to frosts and even occasional snow in the mountains of the north. Generally two distinct seasons prevail in Vietnam: from November to April, the temperatures are

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adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. In remote and developing countries do not expect standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information on our website, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

usually fairly cool, especially in the north of the country. In the mountain areas temperatures can be as low as 0°C (32°F) and there can be a constant light drizzle. Hotter temperatures and heavy monsoon rains characterise the months from May to October, although you can experience rain at any time. The hottest months of the year are June, July and August. Southern Vietnam's weather patterns are more constant with a rainy season from May to October and a relative dry season from November to February. The temperatures in the south can rise as high as 35°C (95°F) from March to May.

dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

equipment provided



We provide high-quality, modern equipment designed for comfort and reliability. Please provide your height to your consultant prior to departure to ensure the correct frame size is reserved for you.

Mountain Bike

The Trek Marlin is standard for this trip. It is a lightweight and versatile hardtail mountain bike, well suited to Vietnam's diverse touring terrain. Its stable handling and front suspension fork provide added comfort and control on rough roads, gravel tracks, and uneven rural paths, making it a reliable choice for riders who want flexibility across surfaces.

The Giant electric bike E+ Fathom is equipped with hydraulic disc brakes and powerful motors, these allow you to enjoy mountainous terrain without physical strain is available as an upgrade. Please request at time of booking.

Maintenance & Adjustments

Our bikes are used by different riders throughout the season and may require slight adjustments before you commence. At least one additional replacement bicycle is supplied for each group as a backup. Basic tools are provided, and emergency on-call support is always available.

Personal Comfort & Safety

Saddles & Pedals: You are welcome to bring your own saddle or clip-in pedals; our team will gladly fit them for you. If you have a saddle you are comfortable with for long distances, we highly recommend bringing it.

Gel Seat Covers: These are highly recommended for added comfort and are well worth the small investment.

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Helmets: Standard cycling helmets meeting international safety requirements are provided. However, for the best fit and personal comfort, we recommend bringing your own.

Support Vehicle & On-Route Assistance

A dedicated support vehicle accompanies the group throughout the journey, positioned to provide assistance as required. This ensures consistent on-road support across all stages of the ride. The support team provides mechanical assistance for minor repairs and adjustments, as well as water, snacks and scheduled rest stops. There is also the option to transfer in the vehicle if needed, allowing flexibility to manage fatigue or varying riding conditions.

accommodation on the trip



Accommodation is in carefully selected 4–5 star properties that offer a high standard of comfort, service and location. These hotels are typically centrally located or well positioned for easy access to key areas, allowing you to make the most of your time both on and off the bike. Where possible, properties are chosen for their character and atmosphere, reflecting the destination while still delivering consistent quality.

pre and post tour accommodation

If you would like to extend your stay in Vietnam we would be more than happy to assist with your pre or post tour arrangements. Please ask your reservations consultant for further details.

what you carry

A support vehicle is used to transport your gear and you will have access to this at certain times of the day. However you may want to carry with you a small bag to put into the panniers (provided on your bike) containing, your camera, water proof jacket, sun screen, snacks and water.

non exclusive trips

Please note that this trip is not exclusive to World Expeditions clients and is operated by our partners in Vietnam. Groups are pleasantly informal, usually comprising of a range of nationalities and are aimed at healthy, active participants looking for an adventurous holiday.

vehicles & safety

During the course of your trip, we will use a variety of vehicles, all of which are fit for purpose and the conditions encountered. It should be noted that laws governing transportation safety may differ from those in your home country and whilst wherever possible, vehicles with seatbelts are provided, on occasion some vehicles may not have seat belts fitted.

visas

If you have a valid Australian, New Zealand, Canadian or United States passport, you are eligible to apply online for an E-visa. This can be a single-entry or multiple-entry electronic tourist visa, valid for a maximum of 90 days. It allows you to enter Vietnam via the port of entry indicated in the visa approval notice only. Apply for an E-visa through the Vietnamese Government's e-visa portal <https://www.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/>

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United Kingdom – British Nationals can enter Vietnam for up to 45 days without requiring to apply for a visa. For stays longer than 45 days a visa must be obtained prior to arrival in Vietnam, apply for an E-visa online through the online portal <https://www.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/>

E-visas are issued for stays of up to 90 days of entry only and are valid for multiple entries. A Vietnam eVisa typically requires 4-6 working days for processing.

For stays longer than 90 days, please contact the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Vietnam.

To apply for an E-Visa for Vietnam, you must make sure that:

Your passport is valid for at least 6 months following arrival date and has at least 2 blank pages;

You have a soft copy (ideally JPEG format) of a passport-size photo;

You have a soft copy (ideally JPEG format) of your passport personal data page which must be full and clear;

You have an exact entry port;

You have a credit/debit card to make payment online for E-visa fee.

From 15 April 2026, all foreign nationals entering Vietnam via Tan Son Nhat Airport (SGN), Ho Chi Minh City, are required by the Vietnamese Government to complete a pre-arrival digital card online generating a QR code for immigration. This can only be done 72hrs before arrival. This does not replace visa requirements and transit passengers not passing through immigration are exempt.

From July 1, 2026, passengers entering, exiting, or transiting through Vietnam are required to complete health declarations and quarantine procedures in accordance with the guidance of the Ministry of Health.

Passengers may submit their health declarations electronically or in paper form within 7 days prior to entry. The Health Declaration section will be updated from 1 July 2026 on: prearrival.immigration.gov.vn

Proof of vaccination or other preventive measures may be requested at the border. Please carry vaccination records with you.

Please bear in mind that visas may be required for countries you are visiting en route or transiting through on the way to your destination. It is important that you check the requirements of all countries you will visit. Visa costs and requirements do change regularly so we suggest you check with your travel agent or World Expeditions reservations consultant. It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary visas.

webinars & events

Catch a Webinar – Live or On Demand - to learn more about a particular trip. Make sure the trip you choose is right for you. Watch them live, so you can ask our presenters a question, or catch the recording later at your leisure and watch it On Demand. Visit our website or keep an eye on our newsletter for upcoming presentations.

private groups

The adventures that you see on our website are just a starting point. We operate many of our trips, which means we can be flexible and create an itinerary to suit your interests and dates. Talk to our team, you'll be surprised how much more affordable it can be when you get a group of friends, colleagues, a club – you name it, to travel with you!

subscribe to our e-newsletter

Never miss another deal or spot on an exciting new trip! Be part of our adventure community, head to our website to subscribe to our free newsletter.



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social networking

Connect with our community @

FACEBOOK: @worldexpeditions

facebook.com/worldexpeditions

INSTAGRAM: @worldexpeditions

Follow us at [instagram.com/worldexpeditions](https://www.instagram.com/worldexpeditions)

YOUTUBE: World Expeditions

Subscribe to our channel at [youtube.com/worldexpeditions](https://www.youtube.com/worldexpeditions)

Share the love

Use the hashtag #WorldExpeditions on your best travel photos and videos to be featured.

trip availability

We operate small group adventures, which means availability is always worth checking early. Check trip availability online or call our team who might be able to dig a little deeper for you to find what you want, when you want.

Many adventures require services that, if not available at the time you book (like an internal flight or permit) could mean the trip is unavailable. So, book early to avoid missing out on your dream adventure.

how to book

Check trip availability and book your tour online, or call or visit one of our offices. To book a trip, you will need to complete a Booking Form (online or request a PDF) and pay a non-refundable deposit. Please note that when booking our tours to not confirm any additional arrangements until all services related to your tour are confirmed by your dedicated Reservations Consultant.