Asia

Vietnam Through the Lens with Learn Photography Canada






trip highlights

- Explore the vibrant streets, hidden alleyways and iconic landmarks of Hanoi
- Photograph the colourful Quang Ba Flower Market at sunrise
- Journey through the spectacular Ha Giang Loop and Dong Van Karst Plateau
- Capture authentic portraits of Vietnam's diverse ethnic minority communities
- Cruise the emerald waters of the Nho Que River beneath towering limestone cliffs
- Visit the magnificent Ban Gioc Waterfall and Nguom Ngao Cave
- Photograph the UNESCO-listed landscapes of Ninh Binh and Trang An
- Spend a night aboard a boutique cruise in the tranquil Bai Tu Long Bay
- Capture sunrise over mist-shrouded limestone islands from the deck of your cruise
- Visit the vibrant Incense Village of Quang Phu Cau, one of Vietnam's most photogenic craft villages



Trip Duration	13 days	**Trip Code:** VTL
Grade	Adventure touring	
Activities	Photography, Adventure Touring	
Summary	11 nights in hotels, 1 night aboard the Bai Tu Long Bay cruise	

welcome to World Expeditions

Since 1975 we have run expedition-style adventures for active travellers, from our first trek in Nepal to remote routes on all seven continents.

Our philosophy is simple: take the paths less travelled. That means small groups, local crew, low impact, and routes most travellers never see.

Everything you need to know about the Vietnam Through the Lens with Learn Photography Canada is in these notes.

why travel with World Expeditions?

When planning travel to a remote destination, many factors need to be considered. Our extra attention to detail and seamless operations on the ground ensure that you will have a memorable trip in Vietnam. We take every precaution to ensure smooth logistics. Our guides and vehicles are the best available and to ensure the smooth operation of all trips, our partners in Vietnam & Cambodia continually work with us to improve our itineraries to ensure we are taking the 'paths less travelled'. Our adventures have always sought to benefit the local peoples we interact with, safeguard the ecosystems we explore and contribute to the sustainability of travel in the regions we experience.

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Single travellers are required to pay for their own room on this departure operated by our local partner

the trip

Discover Vietnam through your camera on an unforgettable 13-day photography expedition designed for photographers of all levels. Wander the bustling streets of Hanoi, capture colourful flower markets before sunrise, explore the breathtaking mountain passes of Ha Giang, meet ethnic minority communities, photograph Ban Gioc Waterfall and the dramatic limestone landscapes of Ninh Binh, then finish aboard a traditional cruise through the peaceful waters of Bai Tu Long Bay.

Throughout the journey, you'll receive expert photography coaching and guidance from Learn Photography Canada, helping you refine your technique, develop your creative vision, and make the most of every photographic opportunity whether you're capturing dramatic landscapes, vibrant street scenes, or intimate cultural portraits.

Every day has been carefully planned around the best photographic light, combining landscapes, documentary photography, street scenes, portraits, and authentic cultural experiences.

about your leader/escort

Learn Photography Canada offers some of Canada's best hands-on, and online photography courses. Our unique, interactive teaching style, coupled with our incredible customer support, and our dedication to each student's learning and growth sets us apart from our competition. Our mission is to create a space for photographers to learn, without judgement or pressure, and reach their photography goals, whatever they may be.

at a glance

DAY 1	XIN CHÀO! WELCOME TO VIETNAM.
DAY 2	HANOI OLD QUARTER & STREET PHOTOGRAPHY
DAY 3	DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY IN HANOI
DAY 4	HANOI TO HA GIANG
DAY 5	HA GIANG LOOP & DONG VAN KARST PLATEAU
DAY 6	MEO VAC & CULTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY
DAY 7	MEO VAC TO CAO BANG
DAY 8	BAN GIOC WATERFALL & NGUOM NGAO CAVE
DAY 9	CAO BANG TO HANOI
DAY 10	HANOI TO NINH BINH – TRANG AN & HANG MUA
DAY 11	BAI TU LONG BAY CRUISE
DAY 12	BAI TU LONG BAY TO HANOI
DAY 13	INCENSE VILLAGE & DEPARTURE

what's included

- → 12 nights' accommodation in twin/double rooms with daily breakfast
- → 1-night Bai Tu Long Bay cruise (shared twin/double cabin)
- → All ground transportation in air-conditioned vehicles throughout the trip
- → English-speaking local guides
- → Airport transfers
- → Boat trips as outlined in the itinerary
- → All entrance fees for included sightseeing
- → Meals as per the itinerary:

12 breakfasts
11 lunches (including one brunch on the cruise)
7 dinners
2 bottles of mineral water per person per day during transfer and sightseeing days

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trip dates

2027 14 Oct - 26 Oct

fast facts

Countries Visited:
Vietnam

Visas:
Required*

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

Private Groups:
Available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local bi-lingual leader

Advice for people with limited mobility
Not suitable

*Ask our staff for more information.

- sightseeing & entry fees as listed in itinerary
- Government taxes and service charges

Many adventure operators ask travellers to hand over cash on the ground. It avoids local taxes and shifts the cost and the risk of carrying cash onto you.

We do not ask for local cash payments on this trip.

what's not included

- International or domestic flights
- Visa fees
- Drinks and additional bottled water
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Personal expenses (laundry, phone calls, etc.)
- Early check-in or late check-out
- Optional activities and excursions
- Additional transfers due to emergencies
- Peak season surcharges (if applicable)

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Xin chào! Welcome to Vietnam.

Upon arrival at Noi Bai International Airport, you will be met by your local English-speaking guide and transferred to your hotel in Hanoi. Vietnam's capital is a fascinating blend of ancient traditions, French colonial architecture, bustling streets, and vibrant local culture.

The remainder of the day is at leisure to recover from your journey or begin exploring the city's lively streets at your own pace.

Accommodation: MK Premier Boutique Hotel (or similar).

meals: NIL

DAY 2 Hanoi Old Quarter & Street Photography

Today you'll immerse yourself in the vibrant heart of Hanoi, wandering through the historic Old Quarter where every narrow lane offers unique street photography opportunities.

After lunch at a local restaurant, continue exploring iconic locations including Train Street and Long Bien Bridge before photographing the city's energetic nightlife as thousands of scooters fill the neon-lit streets. End the day with a delicious Vietnamese street food dinner while capturing the atmosphere that makes Hanoi so unique.

Accommodation: MK Premier Boutique Hotel (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

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thoughtful travel

The environments we travel through are fragile. It is our responsibility as visitors to minimise the impact of our presence. World Expeditions were the proud recipients of the inaugural Australian National Travel Industry's Environmental Achievement award for our Responsible Travel Guidebook. This detailed guide to responsible and sustainable travel is provided to all World Expeditions clients before they travel. Please ask your consultant if you have not received your copy of our award winning book. Alternatively, you may like to download a copy from our website www.worldexpeditions.com

Elephant Welfare

For centuries throughout Asia the elephant has been revered, as well as utilised for the purpose of logging. However in the late 80s the use of elephants in the logging industry was banned because of over-logging, and so mahouts turned to the tourism industry for income. As a result elephant tourism experiences have popped up throughout Asia and it can be difficult for travellers to resist the temptation to ride these beautiful and incredibly intelligent creatures. In recent years there has been much research into the impact of tourism activities on elephants' well-being. From the brutal taming of baby elephants called 'the crush' to ongoing confinement and the mere fact that the elephants spine is not meant to carry heavy weights there are many instances where incorrect management results in a negative impact for the elephants. Because of this World Expeditions discourages travellers from riding on the back of elephants and we do not include elephant rides in our itineraries throughout our global program and across all World Expeditions brands. There are a few carefully selected elephant orphanages and sanctuaries in South East Asia and India that we include in some of our itineraries because we believe their operations put the elephants' well-being before the tourist experience.

DAY 3 Documentary Photography in Hanoi

Begin before sunrise at the famous Quang Ba Flower Market before continuing to Dong Xuan Market and Hoan Kiem Lake, where locals gather for their morning tai chi.

Following breakfast, enjoy some free time before another afternoon photography session exploring Hanoi's cafés, colonial architecture, hidden alleyways, and authentic street life. Finish the day with a refreshing local beer while reviewing another outstanding collection of images.

Accommodation: MK Premier Boutique Hotel (or similar).

meals: B,L

DAY 4 Hanoi to Ha Giang

Leave the city behind as you journey into the spectacular mountain landscapes of Ha Giang, one of Vietnam's most breathtaking regions.

Photographic stops along the way include tea plantations, terraced rice fields, traditional villages, and winding mountain roads before arriving at Quan Ba Heaven Gate in time for golden hour.

Accommodation: Hmong Village Ha Giang (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 5 Ha Giang Loop & Dong Van Karst Plateau

Travel through the UNESCO-listed Dong Van Karst Plateau Geopark, stopping at dramatic viewpoints including Tham Ma Pass and the Lung Cu Flag Tower near the Chinese border.

Continue across the spectacular Ma Pi Leng Pass while photographing dramatic mountain scenery and remote ethnic minority villages.

Accommodation: Hoa Cuong Dong Van Hotel (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 6 Meo Vac & Cultural Photography

Cruise the emerald waters of the Nho Que River beneath the towering Tu San Canyon before spending the day photographing the people and cultures of northern Vietnam.

If timing permits, visit one of the colourful local tribal markets for exceptional documentary and portrait photography opportunities.

Accommodation: Hoa Cuong Meo Vac Hotel (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 7 Meo Vac to Cao Bang

Today's journey showcases some of northern Vietnam's most rugged and least-visited scenery. Wind through dramatic valleys, limestone mountains, rivers, and remote countryside before arriving in Cao Bang.

Enjoy a relaxing evening preparing for another spectacular day of photography.

Accommodation: La Maison Boutique Hotel (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

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adventure travel

Adventure travel involves the unexpected. In remote regions conditions change, and itineraries may be altered at short notice.

Flexibility gets you far more out of the trip than a fixed plan will.

If you are unsure whether this trip suits you, talk to us before you book.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, 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.

DAY 8 Ban Gioc Waterfall & Nguom Ngao Cave

Visit the magnificent Ban Gioc Waterfall, Vietnam's largest and most spectacular waterfall located on the Chinese border.

Continue to Nguom Ngao Cave, renowned for its remarkable limestone formations, before stopping in the traditional blacksmith village of Phuc Sen to photograph artisans practicing centuries-old techniques.

Accommodation: La Maison Boutique Hotel (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 9 Cao Bang to Hanoi

Depart Cao Bang and travel south to Hanoi, with stops for photography and lunch along the way. Tonight's stay in the capital breaks up the journey before continuing to Ninh Binh tomorrow.

Accommodation: Hanoi hotel, to be confirmed.

meals: B,L

DAY 10 Hanoi to Ninh Binh – Trang An & Hang Mua

Depart Hanoi at approximately 7:00 AM and travel directly to Trang An. Explore its spectacular limestone karsts and tranquil waterways by boat before continuing to Hang Mua for panoramic views and photography. Overnight in Ninh Binh.

Accommodation: Lalita Boutique Hotel & Spa (or similar).

meals: B,L

DAY 11 Bai Tu Long Bay Cruise

Travel to beautiful Bai Tu Long Bay and board your overnight cruise.

Spend the afternoon photographing towering limestone islands, emerald waters, traditional fishing boats, and hidden coves before enjoying sunset and dinner onboard surrounded by one of Vietnam's most spectacular landscapes.

Accommodation: La Regina Classic Cruise (or similar).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 12 Bai Tu Long Bay to Hanoi

Photograph sunrise over Bai Tu Long Bay before returning to Hanoi. This evening offers one final opportunity to capture the city's vibrant nightlife, rooftop views, and bustling streets. Accommodation: MK Premier Boutique Hotel (or similar).

meals: B

DAY 13 Incense Village & Departure

This morning visit the famous Incense Village of Quang Phu Cau, where colourful bundles of incense create one of Vietnam's most iconic photographic scenes.

Return to Hanoi for lunch and a final photography session exploring hidden cafés, alleyways, and authentic street life before transferring to the airport for your onward flight.

Trip concludes with an airport transfer.

meals: B,L

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

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suggested extensions

- Sapa Retreat by Train
- Angkor Wat Extension
- Angkor Wat Cycle

country information

Stretching over 1,650 km (1025 mi) from north to south along the eastern coast of mainland Southeast Asia, Vietnam is a country of immense beauty and geographic diversity. The main features of Northern Vietnam are mountains, forests, the vast Red River Delta, and the beautiful Gulf of Tonkin coastline with its labyrinth of waterways and islands. Central Vietnam is made up of agricultural plains wedged between the Truong Son Mountains and the South China Sea, making for some dramatic mountain passes overlooking ocean vistas. The fertile waterways of the Mekong Delta dominate the south, and over 3,200 km of coastline and countless islands fringe the country. The country's rich cultural identity has been steeped in the traditions of its ancient civilizations and shaped by the influences of occupation, war and communism. Since the relaxation of political and economic controls that began in the late 1980s, Vietnam has experienced both exposure to capitalist liberalism and a return to many traditional cultural practices. The country is a mosaic of different cultures, with over 50 ethnic groups officially recognised. The lingering impact of socialism is evident here, especially in the capital of Hanoi, where faded propaganda artworks adorn billboards throughout the city, but there's never been a better time to visit this fascinating and beautiful country. There's so much to love about Vietnam: lush mountains and great rivers, sandy beaches and tropical islands, chaotic cities and bustling markets, ancient towns and sleepy villages, tranquil lakes and peaceful pagodas, crumbling ruins and grand imperial palaces, lively culture and sophisticated cuisine, and above all, the humble nature and determined spirit of its people, that rises above the country's dark and complex history.

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 HCMC 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 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

Tell us at least one month before departure and we can cater for vegetarian diets and most medically recommended diets, including allergies and intolerances. Options are limited in remote locations. Some alternatives cost more or are not available, and on some trips you may need to bring your own food. We cannot guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip. Travellers with severe allergies must carry their own medication and be able to self-administer it.

accommodation on the trip

Hotels: in cities and large towns you will be accommodated in 3 to 4 star properties that are generally well located, atmospheric and reliable and where we have seen a good track record with traveller satisfaction over many years.

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what you carry

In your daypack you will need to carry extra warm clothing (depending on the altitude, location and weather), a rainjacket, water bottle, camera gear, valuables and personal items such as sunscreen, lip-eze etc. All group gear and your luggage is moved by our team.

vehicles & safety

We use a range of vehicles, each chosen for the route and the conditions.

Transport safety laws differ from those at home. We use vehicles with seatbelts wherever they are available, but some vehicles will not have them 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://thithucdientu.gov.vn/

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://thithucdientu.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-arrvival a 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.

You may also need visas for countries you transit on the way. Check the requirements for every country on your route.

Visa costs and rules change often, so confirm with your Reservations Consultant or travel agent. Obtaining your visas is your responsibility.

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carbon footprint & climate action

We measure the estimated carbon emissions of our trips to better understand their environmental impact and identify opportunities to reduce emissions, rather than relying on carbon offsets.

Our Carbon Labels, calculated with independent carbon consultancy ecollective, estimate emissions from accommodation, meals, ground transport, activities and guiding. International flights are not included and can represent a significant proportion of your overall travel footprint.

You can help reduce your travel emissions by choosing direct flights where practical, flying economy and taking fewer, longer trips.

Learn more under Climate Action in the Responsible Travel section of our website.

webinars & events

Join a live webinar to hear about a trip from the people who run it, and ask your questions directly. Can't make it live? Watch it on demand.

Upcoming sessions are on our website and in our enewsletter.

private groups

The adventures you see on our website are just the starting point. We can tailor an itinerary around your interests, preferred dates and group.

Whether you're travelling with friends, family, colleagues, a club or community, talk to our team about creating an adventure that's uniquely yours.

subscribe to our e-newsletter

New trips, new departure dates and offers, straight to your inbox. Subscribe free on our website.

social networking

Follow @worldexpeditions on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Tag #WorldExpeditions on your trip photos and videos to be featured.

trip availability

We run small groups, so places go early. Check availability online, or call our team, who can often find options the website does not show.

Some trips depend on services we cannot confirm until you book, such as internal flights or permits. Booking early is the surest way to get the departure you want.

how to book

Book online, or call or visit one of our offices. You will complete a Booking Form and pay a non-refundable deposit.

Please do not book flights or make any other arrangements until your Reservations Consultant has confirmed every service on your trip.