



**Hope** COLLEGE  
Global Travel Program

# HIGHLIGHTS OF Vietnam



**June 5 – 20, 2024**

Hosted by Dr. Fred Johnson III and Ian MacNeil







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**Hosted by**



**Dr. Fred Johnson III**

Dr. Fred Johnson III, Guy Vander Jagt '53 Professor of History, has taught history at Hope College since 2000. His primary field is 19th century U.S. history, specifically the Civil War. His other areas of study include the U.S. in the 20th century, the U.S. military, foreign policy and African history. He is an award-winning public

speaker, a member of Toastmasters International and the National Speakers Association. Along with teaching in the classroom, Fred has led many May Terms to Vietnam. He is looking forward to experiencing this country and this culture with you.

**616.395.7592 • johnson@hope.edu**



**Ian MacNeil**

Ian is the director of the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP) at Hope College. He is a lifelong learner, an avid birdwatcher, and a huge movie fan. His college thesis was written on the use of popular music soundtracks in Vietnam War films, and he cannot wait to bird internationally for the first time. Ian is

thrilled to meet you, humbled to experience the rich and difficult history of Vietnam with you, and ready to make this a trip you will never forget!

**616.395.6250 • macneil@hope.edu**



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**Tour Cost**

\$5,400 per person from Chicago, based on double occupancy

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**JUNE 2024**

**05, Wednesday & 06, Thursday**

### Depart Grand Rapids

Today's the day! We meet at Hope College for our transfer to Chicago for our connecting flights to Vietnam. While in the air, we cross the International Dateline, losing a day. (meals in-flight)

**07, Friday**

### Arrive in Hanoi

Welcome to Vietnam! After a long journey, we collect our luggage and meet our driver and guide for our transfer to the hotel where we have time to refresh and explore before our group dinner at a local restaurant this evening. (D)

**08, Saturday**

### Hanoi

We have the morning to continue exploring Hanoi before we have the opportunity to take a Cyclo trip around the Old Quarter. Seated in the front carriage of bikes, you'll be immersed in the exciting and bustling city. There is time to look around for souvenirs with the many shops in town. Following, we visit Hoa Lo prison, which was built by the French and used during the Indochina War. The prison was used not only to house Vietnamese

patriots, it was later used during the war to hold American pilots that were shot down. We have time to walk through the museum, learning about its complex history through its displays. This afternoon we visit the Peace House Project before having the rest of the day at leisure. (B, L)

**09, Sunday**

### Ninh Binh, Hanoi

Early this morning we get picked up at the hotel by our guide to depart for Ninh Binh province with breaks to stop and stretch our legs. Upon arriving, we visit Hoa Lu', the ancient capital of Vietnam between 968 and 1010. While here we learn about the history of the Vietnamese feudal system under different dynasties. Following, we explore Thung Nham Bird Garden. This popular garden lets us immerse in the wild environment with must-see friendly native birds. This afternoon we have time to relax in the local village before we return to Hanoi for an independent evening. (B, L)

- ❶ Ninh Binh Province
  - ❷ Cat Cat Village
  - ❸ Cyclo trip, Hanoi Old Quarter
- Cover: Tran Quoc Pagoda, the oldest Buddhist temple in Hanoi

**10, Monday**

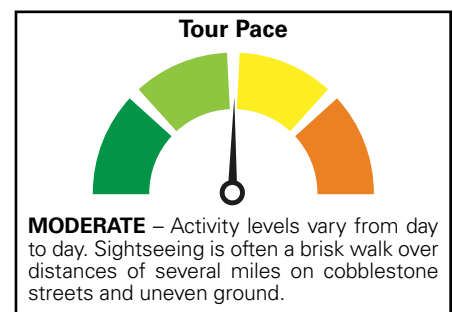
### Lao Cai, Sapa

This morning we visit one of Hanoi's Buddhist temples before starting our drive to Sapa. With breaks to stretch, explore, and have an independent lunch en route, we stop in Phu Tho Province and Lao Cai before arriving. (B, D)

**11, Tuesday**

### Cat Cat Village, Ha Giang

Take a visit to Cat Cat Village, home of the Black H'Mong people. Surrounded by mountains, and terraced farms, we continue exploring the village's natural beauty by cooling off at the Cat Cat Waterfall. While in the village, we visit the local H'Mong families to learn about their captivating culture. This afternoon we drive to Ha Giang Province. (B, L)







**12, Wednesday**

### **Yen Minh, Dong Van**

We transfer to Dong Van, stopping in Yen Minh to explore another local village before continuing our drive. Right before arriving, we stop outside of the district center to visit the Vuong family house. The home once belonged to the King of H'Mong ethnic people. The building's highly impressive architecture represents the ancient value of the Chinese. Upon arriving in Dong Van, we enter the Dong Van Geopark. Due to its stunning landscapes paired with the colorful traditional clothing of ethnic minority people, Dong Van is a paradise full of photo opportunities. Being Vietnam's first Global Geopark, we look out into one of the most rugged yet amazing landscapes in Vietnam. (B, D)

**13, Thursday**

### **Lung Cu, Ma Pi Leng, Ha Giang**

Today's adventures bring us into the highest mountains of Dong Van, where we see the Lung Cu Flag Tower Pole, a significant landmark for the Vietnamese people. This area is the northernmost point in the country. Following, we drive back to Ha Giang city, stopping along the way to Ma Pi Leng as well as seeing H'Mong sites. We check into our hotel and have the afternoon at leisure. (B, L)

**14, Friday**

### **Hanoi**

Driving back to Hanoi today, we check into our hotel upon arriving and have the rest of the day to unwind after full days of adventure! (B, L)



**15, Saturday**

### **Hue, DMZ, Da Nang**

This morning, we have an early departure to the Hanoi Airport for our flight to Hue. After arriving, we drive to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) which is the area around the former border between North and South Vietnam. While here, we visit La Vang Holy Land, which has a Cathedral and the battlefield of Khe Sanh on historic Route 9. We also see Rock Pile Hill, a well-known site along Route 9. We continue to the Khe Sanh combat base next. Khe Sanh is a base camp attacked by the North Vietnamese Army in 1968. This afternoon, we arrive at our hotel and have a group dinner this evening. (B, D)







**16, Sunday**  
**My Lai, Da Nang**

After breakfast, we visit the My Lai Massacre site which sheds light on the horrific events of the Vietnam War. A sobering experience, we will see the Lai Massacre Memorial and Museum before visiting Hoi An and driving back to our hotel in Da Nang. (B, L)

**17, Monday**  
**Ho Chi Minh (Saigon)**

We visit the Center for Agent Orange Victims in Da Nang before transferring to the airport for our afternoon flight to Ho Chi Minh. After arriving, we check into our hotel to refresh before our group dinner this evening. (B, D)

**18, Tuesday**  
**Cu Chi Tunnels, Ho Chi Minh**

With an early departure, we get picked up at the hotel and depart to Cu Chi Tunnels. Along the way, we visit with a local family as they teach us how to make authentic rice paper. After arriving, we have a short introduction including a video about the construction and use of the tunnels during the war. Following, we get to spend time exploring the remaining tunnel system which includes living areas with kitchens and bedrooms. They even constructed weapon factories, field hospitals, and command centers, showing how people were able to survive in the tunnels. The rest of the evening is independent to explore the amazing city of Ho Chi Minh and pick a local restaurant for dinner. (B, L)

**19, Wednesday**  
**Ho Chi Minh City**

After visiting Thao Dan Project Center, we explore the Reunification Palace and War Museum's historically significant sites. The afternoon is at leisure, use the time to unwind from a full week, or snag your last couple of souvenirs to remember your time in Vietnam before our group dinner this evening. (B, D)

**20, Thursday**  
**Return Home**

This morning is independent until we transfer to the Ho Chi Minh Airport for our departing flight home. (B)

- ❶ Dong Van Geopark
- ❷ My Lai
- ❸ Cu Chi Tunnels
- ❹ Reunification Palace, Ho Chi Minh City
- ❺ Ha Giang Province



*Reserve your spot today!*



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