



## Vietnam & Cambodia Discovery

Go Beyond Tour | 21 Days | Physical Level 3

Hanoi – Hoang Su Phi – Halong Bay – Hue – Hoi An – Saigon – Mekong Delta  
– Siem Reap

Discover two fascinating countries. Hike through the verdant rice terraces of Hoang Su Phi and taste the street food in Hanoi. Your journey ends with an unforgettable exploration of the Angkor Wat complex by tuk tuk.

- Taste Hanoi's delightful cuisine
- Hike lush rice terraces
- Kayak on stunning Halong Bay
- Learn traditional farming techniques in Hoi An
- Tour Saigon by a vintage Vespa
- Discover Angkor by tuk tuk
- See local life on Tonle Sap



### Vietnam and Cambodia Discovery tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless land only is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated on your itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Vietnam and Cambodia visa fees for New Zealand passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

*The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.*

### Go Beyond Tours:

Venture off the beaten track to explore fascinating destinations away from the tourist trail. You will discover the local culture in depth and see sights rarely witnessed by other travellers. These tours take you away from the comforts of home but will reward you with the experiences of a lifetime. These tours include:

- Walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

### Physical Level 3:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

'Vietnam and Cambodia Discovery' is rated as a **physical level 3** tour. A good level of fitness is required as you need to be comfortable walking for 2-3 hours and covering longer distances. Walking or other activities such as cycling will be at a gentle pace and will involve straightforward terrain.

- There will be both short and long periods of walking whilst sightseeing
- In Hoang Su Phi you will be hiking up to 5 hours each day
- In Hue and the Mekong there will be bicycle tours of the local areas which can involve cycling over uneven ground
- On some days, there will be long periods of driving, particularly between Hanoi and Hoang Su Phi
- Throughout the itinerary you will be required to get on and off varying sizes of boats often without assistance

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

### Country Profile: Vietnam and Cambodia

**Vietnam** is a country of breath-taking natural beauty with an incredible modern-day history that quickly becomes addictive. It has experienced war and a bloody revolution in the past 100 years, but the revolution now underway is peaceful and prosperous. The speed of the modern-day changes is making Vietnam the absorbing and gripping place that it is today.

Vietnam has something to offer everyone, so whether you are a culture vulture, thrill seeker or just looking to relax and take in the beaches, Vietnam will not disappoint.

**Cambodia** is blessed with unspoilt beaches and beautiful colonial cities like Phnom Penh, Battambang and Kep. In Siem Reap, the breathtaking temples of Angkor are regarded as the heart and soul of Cambodia. Many visitors may never intend to go beyond these magnificent temples; however, they will soon become captivated by other parts of this friendly country.

### Joining Your Tour

The tour is 21 days in duration including international flights. Please note that depending on flight schedules passengers may arrive/depart on Day 2.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on day one in Hanoi and end the tour on Day 19 in Siem Reap. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

### Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

- The Notre Dame Cathedral will be under renovation until 2023. During this time, we are unable to enter the Cathedral; however can view it from the outside
- The uppermost level of Bayon Temple will be undergoing restorations from January 2020 and may last several years. During this maintenance period passengers will be unable to access this area but can continue to enjoy the impressive architecture from the lower two levels.

## Itinerary – Vietnam and Cambodia Discovery

### Day 1-2: Arrive Hanoi

Meals included: Dinner

Fly overnight to Hanoi, where you will be met at the airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide or National Escort. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer 45 minutes to your hotel and check into your room or store any luggage if your room is not ready yet. There is no sightseeing today.



### Destination Information

**Hanoi** - With a population of approximately four million, Hanoi is a charming and richly historic city of lakes, shaded boulevards and leafy open parks. The centre is an architectural museum piece housing groups of ochre coloured buildings holding the air of provincial French towns of the 1930s, a “Paris of the Orient” as people have called it.

### Day 3: Hanoi

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Start your morning with a wander through Ba Dinh Square and visit the Ho Chi Minh complex, passing the final resting place of Uncle Ho and the Humble House on Stilts. Next, learn about Vietnam’s ethnic minorities at the Ethnology Museum before visiting the Confucian Temple of Literature. Take a walking tour of Hanoi’s exciting Old Quarter before taking a light stroll along Hoan Kiem Lake, a great place to people watch. Sightseeing in central Hanoi involves approximately 4 hours on foot. This evening, take a walking tour of the city’s unique street-side night life and food vendors. Taste the varied flavours of Vietnamese street food such as Pho Cuon and barbeque beef.



*In case of rain, the street food tour itinerary may include a visit to a covered noodle stall.*

*The Ethnology Museum is closed on Mondays and on Vietnamese New Year, if your visit falls on these days you will go to the Vietnamese Women’s Museum as an alternative.*

### Destination Information

**Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum** – is a large memorial, located in Ba Dinh Square. It is the final resting place of Ho Chi Minh, who announced Vietnam’s independence in the same location in 1945.

**Ethnology Museum** –At the Ethnology Museum you will learn about the minority groups of Hanoi, including the black and red H’mong hill people. The museum is made up of an inside and outside area. The outside area displays traditional Vietnamese houses.

**Temple of Literature** – Dating back to 11th century, the Temple of Literature has long played an important centre for Confucianism and scholarly learning.



**Day 4: Hanoi - Hoang Su Phi**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast travel approximately 9 hours to Hoang Su Phi, one of northern Vietnam's emerald green rice terrace areas, stopping en route for lunch. The rest of the day is at leisure to begin exploring.

In Hoang Su Phi you will be staying in a local eco lodge. Please be aware that accommodation here is basic and the hot water for showers is solar powered so may not always be reliable.

*You will need to pack a smaller bag for your 3 night trip to Hoang Su Phi. Main luggage will be left in safe storage at the hotel in Hanoi and picked up your return.*

**Destination Information**

**Hoang Su Phi** – Home to spectacular rice terraces, lush valleys and rugged mountains, Hoang Su Phi is an explorer's dream and Sapa's lesser known, but equally spectacular counterpart.

**Day 5: Panhou**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast, hike for approximately 4 hours today to visit Tay village, through the spectacular countryside, you will walk over some uneven surfaces and at times at an incline. You will walk along the Chay river, pass through the dam, enjoy rice paddies and mountain scenery while walking to Tay Village where you can discover more local culture. Enjoy lunch at the one of the houses of the Tay people, before walking back to the lodge.

*Please ensure you have sturdy and comfortable walking shoes as mountain trails can become slippery in wet weather.*

**Day 6: Panhou**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today leave Pan Hou with your guide to explore the nearby mountains through rice terraces. Walk through a local market before hiking along the trail and see a panorama view of terrace paddies fields. By necessity, the local people have sculpted the mountainside and use its water courses to grow rice. These laborious adjustments, which enable them to live in the heights, offer you some unique landscapes to contemplate. In crop season, their fields look like pieces of curved mirror. Later in rice season, they have various green and yellow colours with different tones which made them a vivid picture. After a few hours of trekking, take a break in a village of the Red Dao for lunch. Then we continue our discovery of the local vegetation while trekking back to Panhou.



*Today's walking time will total to a duration of approximately 4-5 hours.*

**Day 7: Hoang Su Phi – Hanoi**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Travel 9 hours back to Hanoi and enjoy the rest of your day at leisure.

**Day 8: Hanoi – Halong Bay**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive 4 hours today from Hanoi to Halong, where you will take an overnight cruise to the far-most corners of the bay. Boarding your boat could involve navigating your way over and through other boats, moored between it and the dock, sometimes without handrails, ladders or assistance from staff.

Enjoy lunch onboard as you cruise out into the bay, stopping to anchor for an afternoon of activities (which are subject to change due to cruise selection and weather conditions). Sightseeing includes visiting underground caves on the islands, which require climbing up and down steps inside and outside of the caves. End the day on deck with a drink in hand to watch the sunset over the bay followed by a freshly prepared dinner, before retiring to your cabin for the night.



*You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for your trip to Halong Bay. Main luggage will be left in safe storage at the hotel in Hanoi and picked up on your return.*

*Please note: Weather conditions such as mist, fog, wind, rain and storms may delay the departure time of your cruise, or in some cases your cruise may be cancelled. Notifications of any delays or cancellations may not be known until your group's arrival in Halong Bay. If your cruise is cancelled after your arrival in Halong Bay, you will have lunch in Halong City and return to Hanoi. If notification of the cruise cancellation is given prior to your departure for Halong Bay an alternative day trip will be arranged to Hoa Lu and Tam Coc or 'Halong Bay on Land', an area located approximately 2 hours from Hanoi. Our guides will make every effort to inform the group at the earliest possible moment should there be any itinerary changes.*

**Destination Information**

**Halong Bay** - Compared to the landscape of the limestone islets of Guilin in China and Krabi in southern Thailand, Halong Bay shares a common border with China in the north and harbours some of the most stunning scenery in Vietnam. Unique rock sculptures jut out dramatically from the clear emerald waters of the Gulf of Tonkin and numerous grottoes have created an enchanting, timeless world, looking out onto the horizon with the sails of the junks and sampans completing the picture.

**Day 9: Halong Bay – Hoi An**

Meals included: Brunch, Dinner

Start your day on deck with a relaxing Tai Chi session whilst you admire an amazing sunrise over the karst scenery. Spend the morning sailing through Halong Bay. After brunch return to Hanoi for your 1 hour and 20 minute flight to Danang. From here, drive to Hoi An.



### Destination Information

**Hoi An** - Perhaps more than any other place in Vietnam, Hoi An retains the feel of centuries past. Once known as Faifo, Hoi An was an influential port along the Silk Road. For over 500 years merchants from China, Japan, France and Portugal settled in the prosperous town resulting in a distinctive blend of culture, cuisine, religion and architecture. In 1999, the town was declared a UNESCO World Heritage listed site for having the most unique architecture in Southeast Asia.

### Day 10: Hoi An

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Hop on your bike today and wheel through the scenic rice paddies outside Hoi An. Pay a visit to local farmers where you can try your hand at traditional farming techniques – look out for water buffalo! Enjoy a calming boat ride to a peaceful fishing village, where you can try making a fishing net and go paddling in unique bamboo basket boats.



### Day 11: Hoi An - Hue

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Enjoy a leisurely afternoon walk past Chinese traders' houses, local artists and the 16th century Japanese Bridge. Drive for 3 to 4 hours to Hue, stopping en route at the Museum of Cham Sculpture. This journey will take you over the scenic Hai Van Pass.



### Destination Information

**Museum of Cham Sculpture** – Located on the Han River, the Museum of Cham Sculpture is the world's largest collection of Cham architecture. The Cham people are an ethnic group of South East Asia, living in Cambodia and Vietnam.

**Japanese Covered Bridge** - First constructed in the 1590s to link the Japanese and Chinese quarters of the town. This iconic pink hued bridge has been restored to its former splendour.

**Hue** – was the former imperial capital of Vietnam and the imperial palace is based on the Forbidden City in Beijing.



**Day 12: Hue**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Cycle through Hue for a tour of the imperial sights. The tour lasts from around 8:30am and 4pm stopping for lunch and at the sites, the roads are mostly flat. Start at the imperial City, then continue to Phu Mong Garden House, part of Hue's legacy from the Nguyen Dynasty. Return to your bike and stop at Thien Mu Pagoda which overlooks the Perfume River. Drive to Tu Duc Tomb, a sprawling compound with lakes, waterways and walkways connecting different memorials.

**Destination Information**

**Imperial Citadel** - A walled fortress accompanied by cannons, artilleries and surrounded by a moat for protection. Inside the Citadel are numerous gates, courtyards and the Forbidden Purple City.

**Thien Mu Pagoda** - This seven-storey octagonal tower built on a hillock, overlooking the Perfume River is Hue's oldest and most beautiful pagoda.

**Day 13: Hue - Saigon**

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Spend the morning at leisure before transferring to Danang for your 1 hour flight to Saigon. This evening, you will be driven around Saigon on the back of a vintage Vespa with an experienced driver. Stop for a cocktail before tasting mouth-watering dishes in Chinatown, District 4 and the backstreets of Saigon.

**Destination Information**

**Saigon** - Saigon is one of the world's truly cosmopolitan cities with a history, culture and style obtained from colonial France, ancient China and the art deco era. Once the main port of Cambodia's Mekong territory, Saigon became the capital of France's Cochinchina and later the capital of the Republic of Vietnam. It remained the capital of South Vietnam until reunification at the end of the American War in Vietnam in 1975, when the capital was moved to Hanoi.

**Day 14: Saigon**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning drive 2 hours to discover the amazing network of the Cu Chi Tunnels. Sightseeing here involves 2 hours on foot on uneven mud paths through the bush and, if you choose, crawling through some of the tunnels. Continue to Reunification Palace, the Central Post Office, pass the Notre Dame Cathedral before visiting the War Remnants Museum. Sightseeing in central Saigon will be approximately 3 hours.



*Please note: The Notre Dame Cathedral will be under renovation ongoing renovations until 2023. During this time we are unable to enter the Cathedral; however we can view it from the outside.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Cu Chi Tunnels** - the tunnels of Cu Chi are an immense network of connecting underground tunnels located in the Cu Chi district of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam, and are part of a much larger network of tunnels that underlie much of the country. The Cu Chi tunnels were the location of several military campaigns during the Vietnam War, and were the Viet Cong's base of operations for the Tet Offensive in 1968. The tunnels were used by Viet Cong soldiers as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches and living quarters for numerous North Vietnamese fighters.

**Reunification Palace** - Built on the site of the former Norodom Palace, is a landmark in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. It was designed by architect Ngô Viết Thụ and was the home and workplace of the President of South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. It was the site of the end of the Vietnam War during the Fall of Saigon on 30th April 1975, when a North Vietnamese Army tank crashed through its gates.

**Central Post Office** - Located next to the Notre-Dame Cathedral. The Central Post Office building was constructed in the late 19th century. It counts Gothic, Renaissance and French influences and was designed by Auguste Henri Vildieu and Alfred Foulhoux, but is often erroneously credited as being the work of Gustave Eiffel.

**Notre Dame Cathedral** - Influenced by French design and built between 1863 and 1880, the red brick exterior and 60-meter bell towers overlook downtown Saigon.

**War Remnants Museum** - Comprised of numerous buildings displaying military equipment, photographs and artefacts relating to the Vietnam War from 1961-1975. This museum illustrates a harrowing period in this nation's history.

#### **Day 15: Saigon - Mekong Delta**

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Head south for 2 hours to Ben Tre, gateway to the Mekong Delta. Here, you will take a boat ride on the river, observing daily life and the beautiful scenery, passing by the mangrove and palm trees along the river bank. Visit a handy brickkiln, a coconut processing workshop and a candy workshop. Continue boating through the winding natural canal whilst discovering the rural countryside. Visit a farmer's house making sleep mats. Take a bicycle on paths to a local house for lunch and continue on a rowing boat along the canal. Ride on coconut tree-shaded paths through the village, and stop at Mr. Sau Khanh's house – a local man who has collected a lot of ancient ceramics, potteries like bowls, vases and sculptures originally from Asia.



*You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for your trip to the Mekong Delta. Main luggage will be left in safe storage at the hotel in Saigon and picked up on your return.*

### Destination Information

**Mekong Delta** - Although primarily rural, the Mekong Delta is a densely populated area where life progresses around its fertile banks. The Mekong Delta is the 13th longest, and the 10<sup>th</sup> largest, by volume alone and people live, trade, travel and even go to school on the riverbanks. The rice which is cultivated in the many farming lands is said to be enough to supply the entire country with a little extra.

### Day 16: Mekong Delta - Saigon

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Travel to the Cho Lach district, stopping to visit Vinh Bac bonsai and a flower village. Pay a visit to Cai Nhum Cathedral before returning to Saigon.



### Day 17: Saigon – Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning transfer to the airport for your 1 hour and 20 minute flight to Siem Reap, gateway to the Angkor complex. This evening, watch a performance by the PHARE Cambodian Circus, an NGO which teaches street children to become internationally renowned circus artists.



### Destination Information

**Siem Reap** – Known as the gateway to Angkor, the architecture in Siem Reap is heavily influenced by Chinese, French and Khmer styles. Siem Reap literally translates as 'Defeat of Siam', a reference to a historical battle between the Khmer people and the Thai Siam people.

### Day 18: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

What better way to see the world famous Angkor Wat Complex than from the back of a traditional tuk tuk. You will explore Angkor Wat, the centrepiece of the Complex, before visiting Angkor Thom and the Bayon. Lastily, visit Ta Prohm, atmospherically buried deep in the jungle. Two people plus one guide can travel in each tuk tuk. The complex can get very hot so always bring water with you and wear comfortable, light clothing. You will tour the Angkor Complex for approximately 5 hours.



*Please note: The Central Tower of the Angkor Wat complex is closed on Buddhist holidays and on all other days has a limited number of visitors allowed at any given time, under regulations from UNESCO. If you wish to visit this tower, you will be required to wait in the queue alongside all other visitors. The ability to do this will be determined upon the groups' schedule.*

#### Destination Information

**Angkor Wat** - Surrounded by a 190-meter moat and taking 30 years to build, Angkor Wat represents the Khmer civilisation at its grandest. With its fascinating decorative flourishes, extensive bas-relief and multiple tiers, it is the best-preserved temple within the complex.

**Angkor Thom** - This fortified city is flanked by a row of 54 stone figures on each side, which leads you through a 23-meter imposing stone entrance gate to the various temples inside.

**Bayon** - Beautifully crafted central towers, decorated with four opposing faces representing King Jayavarman VII. Bayon's stone galleries display extraordinary bas-reliefs incorporating over 11,000 figures.

**Ta Prohm** - Swallowed by the jungle where Strangler Figs and Kapok Trees have entwined themselves around the ruins. Undoubtedly, the most atmospheric ruin at Angkor with several towers, closed courtyards and narrow corridors to explore.

#### Day 19: Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast this morning, head to the floating villages of Siem Reap. The Tonle Sap is the largest fresh water lake in southeast Asia and is home to a very different lifestyle, which can be observed from your boat. In the high water season, you will travel to Kompong Khleang a unique village on stilts. In the lower water season you will visit a local library project which promotes education and take a traditional ox cart ride through the fields. Continue to the less visited Beng Mealea, a temple over run by the jungle.



#### Destination Information

**Beng Mealea** - Dating from the 11th century, this sprawling temple covers over one square kilometre. Largely overrun by vegetation and constructed in a distinctly Angkor Wat-style, Beng Mealea precedes and may even have served as a 'prototype' for Angkor Wat.

#### Days 20-21: Depart Siem Reap

Meals included: Breakfast

Any time before your flight is free at your leisure today. You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight. Fly to New Zealand, arriving home the same or following day.

Late check-out is not included in our South East Asia group tours. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.



## Vietnam & Cambodia Discovery Travel Information

### Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to Vietnam and Cambodia and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. We will supply you with all paperwork if applicable and submit the visa application on your behalf. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into New Zealand.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa. Currently a visa is required for New Zealand Passport holders. Your travel consultant will inform you if any changes are applicable prior to your departure.

### Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

### Evenings at Leisure

To give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on selected Go Beyond range; we have carefully balanced special highlight meals with evenings at leisure so that you can explore the many culinary delights that Southeast Asia has to offer. Alternatively, you can use this time to enjoy the facilities of your hotel. Your National Escort will be happy to provide you with advice about good places to eat and assist in the booking of transportation to get you there (at your own expense).

### Eating in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia is home to an incredibly rich food history. The local cuisine is known for its intense flavours, spices and some of the freshest ingredients you can find. In general, meals include either rice or noodles and are packed full of flavour. Lemongrass, ginger, lime leaves, coriander, fish sauce and soy sauce are used in most local dishes. Whilst Southeast Asian food has a reputation for being hot and spicy, each region actually has its own distinct characteristics. Cambodia, for example, is perhaps best known for its fresh ingredients and medley of flavours.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from dinner on the day of your groups' arrival until breakfast on your day of departure. When dining in Southeast Asia, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may



serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. Dining in Southeast Asia is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude. Please refer to your travel guide for more information on Southeast Asian cuisine, including information for travellers with restricted diets.

Those with dietary requirements will be well catered for - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

We recommend that when it comes to Asia food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

## Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between New Zealand and Southeast Asia. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note that double bed requests can be made at time of booking but can't be guaranteed.

## Transport

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. **However, mini buses may be used for smaller groups (under 10 passengers).**

Roads in Southeast Asia have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

**Seatbelts:** Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Southeast Asia and therefore the local people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason, some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.

**Air:** Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on internal flight sectors.

## Development in Southeast Asia

Although Southeast Asia is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in New Zealand. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in New Zealand; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

## Vietnam and Cambodia public holidays

If you are travelling within the below Cambodian and Vietnamese Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded.

**Vietnam:** Tet Holiday is between 21<sup>st</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Reunification Day is on 30<sup>th</sup> April every year, International Labour Day is on 1<sup>st</sup> May every year and National Independence Day is on 2<sup>nd</sup> September every year

**Cambodia:** Cambodia Khmer New Year is 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> April, the King's birthday is 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> May, and the Water festival is between 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance

## Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides instead of a National Escort.

## Tipping Policy

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you.

It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

### Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

### Exchanging Cash

US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout Vietnam and Cambodia, however other currencies such as New Zealand Dollars can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. US Dollars should be from the new series from the year 2003 onwards. Old series notes can be difficult to exchange. We suggest for your convenience that you ensure your US Dollars are from the new series to avoid any difficulties exchanging money during your trip.

We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

### Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU\$350 per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

### Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

## Appropriate Dress

Vietnam and Cambodia have many religions, cultures and histories. Please be considerate of the local beliefs and customs and dress with consideration.

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, non-revealing clothing. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques.

## Cultural Difference

Religious sites and homes throughout Southeast Asia – for Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory, so each customer can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend shoes that easily slip on and off and carry a pair of thick socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces. The following itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

## Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your Doctor or local Health Centre for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Safetravel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz)

Wendy Wu Tours is committed to always providing a safe and healthy environment for all passengers. We work closely with our airline partners to take effective measures to protect you from contracting and spreading COVID-19, in accordance with legal requirements and government guidelines.

Please follow the link [here](#) for more details on our COVID vaccination policy.

## COVID Safe

Your safety and well-being will always be our Number one priority which is why we've instituted the most stringent COVID health and safety protocols on all of tours. As we continue to monitor current restrictions and operational impacts, these protocols will evolve, and we will provide detailed guidelines for your particular tour prior to departure. For further details please go to the following link [here](#)

### Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz) as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

### After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

**Last updated: April 2022**