

HANOI & HA LONG BAY WEEKEND TRIP

WEEKEND OVERVIEW

Unsurprisingly, Ha Long Bay is Vietnam's number one most visited attraction, and we for one know why! With thousands of towering limestone pillars and tiny islets topped by rainforest that rise from the emerald waters, the national park is like something out of a movie. Designated as a World Heritage Site in 1994, this unique expanse of land has been shaped by more than 500 millions years of tropical downpours and dense jungle growth - offering you a surreal experience like no other.

No trip to Vietnam would be complete without seeing the famous Ha Long Bay, but this weekend trip offers so much more! You will stay overnight on-board a cruise ship, where you will get to enjoy your 360-degree surroundings, taking in many of the 1,600 islets looming above you. We will make several stops around the bay, with the chance to go kayaking and watch the sun set on the top deck!

As part of the four day trip you will also have plenty of time to explore the capital city Hanoi! You will spend two of the three nights staying in a hostel right in the heart of the Old Quarter, where everything is on your doorstep.

You will join a group street food tour where you can learn about the culture and history, all while filling up on the flavours that made Hanoi one of the best destinations for food lovers.

On top of this, you will also have a full day's tour around Hanoi! During the guided tour you will visit Tran Quoc Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh Complex, have a large traditional lunch (8 dishes!), before continuing to visit the Temple of Literature and last but not least Hoa Lo Prison Museum.

This jam packed long weekend trip will has something for everyone!

While cruising around Ha Long Bay you will get to take part in many activities, including:

- Discovering Dog Island, Dinh Huong Islet and also the famous Kissing Rocks
- Head into the depths of Sung Sot Cave
- Hike to the top of Titov Island to enjoy the stunning panoramic views of the bay
- Jump in and go for a swim
- Enjoy a sunset drinks party on-board the top deck of the boat
- Join in a traditional Vietnamese cooking class
- Go kayaking to Luon Cave
- Watch the sun rise behind one of the many islands
- For those interested, go late night squid fishing

Each weekend trip starts on Friday and finishes on the Monday evening, costing just **£275 / \$349 per person.**

The following are included within this fee:

- Accommodation
- Most meals
- Overnight Ha Long Bay cruise
- Guided tours around Hanoi
- Airport transfers Hanoi

START DATES

We will be running the Hanoi & Ha Long Bay Cruise trip on the following dates:

10th January 2025 – 13th January 2025
7th February 2025 – 10th February 2025
7th March 2025 – 10th March 2025
11th April 2025 – 14th April 2025
9th May 2025 – 12th May 2025
13th June 2025 – 16th June 2025
11th July 2025 – 14th July 2025
8th August 2025 – 11th August 2025



12th September 2025 – 15th September 2025
10th October 2025 – 13th October 2025
7th November 2025 – 10th November 2025
12th December 2025 – 15th December 2025

9th January 2026 – 12th January 2026
13th February 2026 – 16th February 2026
13th March 2026 – 16th March 2026
10th April 2026 – 13th April 2026
8th May 2026 – 11th May 2026
12th June 2026 – 15th June 2026
10th July 2026 – 13th July 2026
7th August 2026 – 10th August 2026
11th September 2026 – 14th September 2026
9th October 2026 – 12th October 2026
13th November 2026 – 16th November 2026
11th December 2026 – 14th December 2026

We can add additional weekend trips if there is enough interest from volunteers. There is a minimum of 2 participants.

BOOKING YOUR PLACE

You can simply add this weekend trip when applying for any of our programmes in Vietnam under 'Optional Extras'.

If you have already signed up for one of our volunteer programmes in Vietnam and would like to add this weekend trip, you can simply request this within your My Trip account.

Places on our weekend trips are non-refundable and non-transferable between volunteers.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 – ARRIVING INTO HANOI & FOOD STREET TOUR

After a short plane ride from Ho Chi Minh City (not included in the programme fee), you will be met by our local team in Hanoi.

You will make the short journey to your hostel

in the heart of the famous tourist hotspot called Old Quarter.

You will have time to freshen up before heading out on a guided group street food tour at 6pm. Not only will you get to learn all about the culture and history of Hanoi and see some of the best sights in the Old Quarter, but you will get to try many local cuisines!

The expert guide will show you all of the best food stands and local restaurants in the area, where they will carefully choose very unique and authentic dishes for you try. These can include Bun Cha (grilled pork with vermicelli), Banh Cuon (steamed rice pancake), Pho Bo (beef or chicken noodle soup), Nem Ran (fried spring rolls), Banh Mi (Vietnamese bread) and more! Vegetarian options and other dietary requirements can be catered for.

The rest of the evening will be free for you to soak in the atmosphere.

DAY 2 – HA LONG BAY CRUISE

The local co-ordinator will pick you up from the hostel after breakfast at around 9am. We will then make the journey to Ha Long Bay taking advantage of the highways, taking just two hours to arrive.

Upon arrival at the harbour, you will board the boat and receive a welcome drink before heading to the short orientation and cruise briefing.

As we set sail to begin the journey into the jigsaw of islands, everyone will sit down to enjoy a delicious Vietnamese lunch consisting of seafood and other appetizing favourites.

It's now time to take in the splendid views as the boat cruises towards the southeast of Ha Long Bay. We will pass by Dog Island, Dinh



Huong Islet and the famous Kissing Rocks.

At around 3pm we will explore the depths of Sung Sot Cave – one of the biggest cave systems in the bay. You will be impressed by the Stalactites that have formed over millions of years and be surprised by the breath taking panoramic views across the bay when you exit!

The next stop will be at the popular Titov Island, arriving around 4:30pm. You can hike to the top of the hill for another stunning view across the bay and also jump in for a quick swim.

Once everyone is back on board, it's time to have the sunset party on the top deck! You can enjoy the stunning sunset whilst enjoying a cocktail / mocktail and enjoying the company of everyone else.

After the sun has set, you can take part in a traditional Vietnamese cooking class on the sundeck under the experienced chef's guiding. Everyone will sit down for a delicious meal just after 7pm and then the evening is free for you to enjoy your surroundings under the starlit sky.

For those of you interested, you can take part in some late night squid fishing.

DAY 3 – HA LONG BAY CRUISE & HANOI

A light breakfast will be served at 7am whilst we make the journey to Luon Caves.

You will be able to enjoy a 45 minute kayak ride around the caves and surrounding bay area, giving you a close up and unique view of this amazing area.

We will then start making our way back to the harbour. Everyone will enjoy a farewell lunch that is served on board before checking out and paying for any bills.

We will take the shuttle bus back to Hanoi, arriving in capital around 2:30pm.

The rest of the afternoon and evening is free for you to do as you please.

DAY 4 – HANOI TOUR & DEPARTURE

You will be picked up after breakfast from the hostel at around 8am. Today we will be visiting all of the main attractions Hanoi has to offer on a full day guided tour.

Our first stop will be the Tran Quoc Pagoda located on Golden Fish Island. It is one of the oldest Buddhist temple's in Hanoi, built in the 6th century.

Everyone will then visit the Ho Chi Minh Complex, which is widely regarded as the must-see place when travelling to Vietnam. The complex played a vital part in the modern day history of the country and is also the final resting place of President Ho Chi Minh – the most iconic leader of Vietnam who lead the country to independence and reunification. You will have the opportunity to walk around the gardens, see the embalmed body of Ho Chi Minh and also see the two houses where he lived and worked.

At around 11am we will then visit a local museum before stopping to enjoy a delicious and large 8 dish lunch!

After lunch we will continue the tour by visiting the Temple of Literature and also visit the Hoa Lo Prison Museum – which was a historic place during the Vietnam War.

The tour will finish around 4pm and the local team will arrange private transportation back to the airport.



ACCOMMODATION

While staying in Hanoi you will stay in a basic but clean and comfortable hostel that is located in the heart of the Old Quarter. Everything you need is right on your doorstep and the area is the main tourist hotspot for Hanoi, providing an amazing atmosphere. You will be sharing your room with 5 others, but in some circumstances you may stay in larger dorms of 12.

When on the Ha Long Bay cruise, you will stay on board the cruise ship, giving you a unique perspective of the bay and a unique experience. You will share your room with 1 or 2 others.

The rooms are modern and clean, but please still expect basic conditions. You will be sharing the room with other volunteers and we can arrange a single room for an additional fee – please get in touch.

MEALS

You will be provided with meals as outlined below. The majority of meals will be typical Vietnamese cuisine, but there will be plenty of opportunities to get some western comforts while in Hanoi for a small additional expense.

Any drinks or snacks will be at your own expense – apart from the welcome drink when you first hop on-board.

Day one – Dinner included

Day two – Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day three – Breakfast and lunch included

Day four – Breakfast and lunch included

TRANSPORT

Flights to and from Hanoi (Noi Bai International

Airport, HAN) must be arranged independently and at your own expense. You should expect to budget between £90 and £150 and there are generally two airline options; Vietnam Airlines and Vietjet Air.

We strongly recommend that your flight arrive into Hanoi before mid-afternoon on Friday and your flight back to Ho Chi Minh on Monday is for the late evening to allow you to maximise your time on the trip and enjoy the guided tours in full.

Please book your flights in advance and upload the flight details within your My Trip account.

Your return flight back into Ho Chi Minh City must ensure you are back at the accommodation before the 10pm curfew so you are fully prepared to volunteer the following day. The local team will be strictly enforcing this.

The Mighty Roar cannot be held accountable for any activities missed as a result of late arrivals or flight delays.

If you want to take part on this amazing trip and the dates fall on your last weekend in Vietnam then you can still take part! Please arrange your return flight from Vietnam from Hanoi for either late evening on the Monday or on Tuesday – if leaving on Tuesday you will need to pay for one more night at the hostel.

