



Grand Tour of Southeast Asia: Vietnam, Cambodia & Thailand

22 days | 26 days with Laos & Bangkok extension

Asia is home to some of the world's oldest civilizations. In the continent's southeastern reaches, well-preserved culinary traditions, temple complexes, historical sites, and cultural heritage come together against a natural backdrop that dazzles with its mighty rivers, emerald rainforests, and unspoiled islands. Spend three weeks exploring historic, spiritual, natural, and modern treasures in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand alongside your fellow travelers and we're pretty sure you'll feel forever changed. For even more of the region's rich offerings, extend your tour and explore Laos, a less-traveled corner of this spectacular continent.



Your tour package includes

- 19 nights in handpicked hotels
- 1 night aboard a cruise ship
- 19 breakfasts
- 6 lunches
- 7 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 cooking lesson
- 1 tasting
- 17 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 6 on-tour flights
- 1 ferry transfer

Included highlights

- Hạ Long Bay cruise in Vietnam
- Vietnamese cooking lesson
- Cù Chi tunnels in Ho Chi Minh City
- Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex
- Chiang Mai night market in Thailand
- ChangChill elephant sanctuary in Thailand
- Khao Sok National Park in Thailand

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 3.5 hours daily across uneven terrain, including paved roads, dirt paths, and stairs.

Group size

12-22

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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Travel day

Board your flight to Hanoi today.

Hanoi → 3 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Hanoi

Welcome to Vietnam! Transfer to your hotel to settle in.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Hanoi

Included meals: breakfast, welcome lunch

Join your Tour Director and fellow travelers on a guided exploration of Hanoi. Vietnam's capital city is known for its centuries-old architecture, as well as its rich, cultural heritage, which includes a mix of Southeast Asian, Chinese, and French influences.

- Pass Ba Đình Square, where Ho Chi Minh—the revolutionary leader and president of North Vietnam—read the Proclamation of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
- Wander through the 11th-century Temple of Literature, a walled complex that's dedicated to the Chinese philosopher Confucius and was the site of Vietnam's first university.
- Visit the site of Hỏa Lò Prison—sarcastically nicknamed the “Hanoi Hilton” by American detainees—where the late U.S. Senator and presidential contender John McCain was held as a POW for more than five years during the Vietnam War.
- Tour the museum that occupies the remaining prison structure, and learn about POWs' harrowing experiences in captivity.
- Board a bicycle rickshaw and ride through the busy Old Quarter, an area that's rich with Vietnamese architecture, green spaces, locally owned shops, and street food vendors.
- Pass Đồng Xuân Market (one of the largest wholesale markets in the north of Vietnam), the Hanoi Opera House (built in the early 1900s by a pair of French architects), and Hoàn Kiếm Lake (its name, which translates to Lake of the Restored Sword, derives from a legend that was set there).

Get to know your Tour Director and fellow travelers at a welcome lunch served with beer or wine. Then, enjoy free time for the rest of the day in Hanoi or add an excursion.
+ Vietnamese Home-Hosted Dinner

Day 4: Free day in Hanoi

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Hanoi or add an excursion.
+ A Day in Ninh Binh

Ha Long Bay → 1 night

Day 5: Ha Long Bay cruise

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Transfer to Ha Long Bay and embark on a luxurious, overnight cruise aboard a small ship. As you explore this striking setting and UNESCO World Heritage site by boat, you'll pass by many of its nearly 2,000 limestone islands and islets, most of which are uninhabited and unaffected by human presence.

- Once on board the ship, enjoy a welcome drink, followed by an included lunch served with beer or wine.
- Cruise past notable natural features, including Fighting Cocks Islet, Thien Cung Cave, and Dau Go Cave.
- Climb aboard a small tender with a guide from your ship and motor across the water to Sung Sot Cave—the largest and, according to many, most beautiful cave in the bay.
- Get back on board your tender for a ride to your next stop, Tung San Pearl Farm, where you'll learn how pearls are grown using traditional Vietnamese methods and new Japanese technology.
- After visiting the pearl farm, if you'd like, paddle a kayak along the waters of Ha Long Bay to enjoy up-close views of the water and scenery.
- Return to your ship to enjoy a Vietnamese cooking demonstration, then sit down for an included dinner served with beer or wine.

Ho Chi Minh City → 3 nights

Day 6: Ti Top Island & flight to Ho Chi Minh

City

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

Join a sunrise lesson in Tai Chi—a gentle form of exercise that originated in China as a martial art—on the ship this morning, if you'd like. Then, hop into a small boat and make your way to Ti Top Island for time spent swimming or hiking to the top of the island to enjoy stunning views of Hạ Long Bay.

After enjoying an included lunch, disembark your cruise ship later this morning and board a flight to Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Ho Chi Minh City, War Remnants Museum & Củ Chi tunnels

Included meals: breakfast

Join your Tour Director this morning for a guided exploration of Vietnam's largest city, formerly known as Saigon. There's much to discover in the city, including museums that detail its wartime past, as well as French colonial architecture, modern skyscrapers, and ornate temples.

- Witness Vietnam's progression from French colony to unified, independent nation as you enter the Reunification Palace, which was once the seat of South Vietnam's government.
- Make your way to the French Colonial district, stopping en route to view architectural highlights including the General Post Office, City Hall, and Saigon Notre-Dame Basilica.
- Wander among popular Bến Thành Market's 1,500 stalls, whose vendors sell everything from food to cosmetics, and stroll along Lê Công Kiều, a street known for its treasure trove of antiques.
- Take a self-guided tour of the War Remnants Museum to get the local perspective on the Vietnam War.

Spend the afternoon learning more about the history and impact of the Vietnam War.

- Travel by coach to the Củ Chi Tunnels, then join a local guide for a tour of the vast underground network built and used by Viet Cong guerrilla troops to transport supplies and communications, house soldiers, and mount surprise attacks against American and South Vietnamese forces.
- See secret trapdoors, underground kitchens, living areas, and meeting rooms.

Please note: Your guide will advise you of the length and level of difficulty of each tunnel before entering. Those preferring to remain above ground will have ample opportunity to view excavated areas. Good walking shoes and sun protection are recommended, as are clothes that can get slightly dirty.

Day 8: Free day in Ho Chi Minh City

Included meals: breakfast

Enjoy a free day in Ho Chi Minh City or add an excursion.

+ Traditions of the Mekong River Delta

Siem Reap → 3 nights

Day 9: Flight to Siem Reap

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Fly to Siem Reap, Cambodia, and get settled in your hotel.

Sit down this for an included dinner, served with beer or wine.

Day 10: Sightseeing tour of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom & Ta Prohm

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

Today, you'll experience some of Southeast Asia's most iconic sites, including Angkor Wat, the world's largest religious monument.

- Rise early today and watch the sun rise over Angkor Wat—a UNESCO World Heritage site that was built as a Hindu temple and became a Buddhist temple, all in the 12th century.
- Follow along as your Tour Director guides you and your fellow travelers through different areas of the temple—and climb a set of steep, narrow stairs to a third-story viewing area if you'd like.
- Depart Angkor Wat and enjoy an included lunch at a local restaurant.
- Continue along with your Tour Director to Angkor Thom, the ruined capital complex of the Khmer Empire that dates back to the late 12th and early 13th centuries.
- View the Terrace of the Elephants, the striking, ornamental wall from which King Jayavarman VII looked out over his victorious returning army; the Terrace of the Leper King, which is home to an androgynous statue whose meaning remains somewhat mysterious; and Bayon, the staggeringly detailed state temple of King Jayavarman VII.

- Depart the Siem Reap area and enjoy sunset at Ta Prohm, a temple that has largely been reclaimed by the jungle and served as a filming location for the 2001 movie “Lara Craft: Tomb Raider,” starring Angelina Jolie.

Day 11: Tonlé Sap lake cruise & Cambodian Landmine Museum

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Continue your exploration of Siem Reap with your Tour Director as your guide.

- Take a cruise on the Tonlé Sap—a vast lake and river system whose name means “Great Lake”—en route to Kompong Khleang, a large, floating village whose homes are built on towering stilts.
- Enter the Cambodian Landmine Museum, an organization dedicated to the removal of landmines and unexploded ordnance, or UXO, from Cambodia.
- Watch a short film about Aki Ra, a former Khmer Rouge child soldier who founded the museum.
- Take a guided audio tour of the museum to learn about the organization's de-mining projects and community development initiatives.
- Learn how the revenue from your visit supports relief projects for those harmed by landmines and UXO.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening served with beer or wine.

Bangkok → 2 nights

Day 12: Flight to Bangkok

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Board your flight to Bangkok, Thailand, this morning. Then, enjoy free time for the rest of the day.

Rejoin your group for an included dinner this evening.

Day 13: Sightseeing tour of Bangkok

Included meals: breakfast

Join your Tour Director for a sightseeing tour of this bustling capital city set on the banks of the Chao Phraya River.

- Explore the sprawling Grand Palace complex, which was built in 1782 for the king of Siam.
- Pass by the Wat Phra Kaew temple complex, or Temple of the Emerald Buddha, which is the spiritual core of Thai Buddhism and a pilgrimage site for devout Buddhists.

- Step inside the Temple of the Reclining Buddha, or Wat Pho, to see the famous, 150-foot-long gilded statue depicting the passing of the Buddha into nirvana (it's the biggest Reclining Buddha statue in the city).

Spend a free afternoon in the city or add an excursion.

+ Markets of Bangkok

Chiang Mai → 3 nights

Day 14: Flight to Chiang Mai, Doi Suthep & night market visit

Included meals: breakfast, tasting

This morning, fly to Chiang Mai, a city in mountainous northern Thailand that dates back to the 13th century and was the capital of the Lanna Kingdom until the middle of the 16th century. Then, set out to visit some of the region's most impressive temples and historic sites.

- Visit Doi Suthep, the regal mountain overlooking the city and home to some of the most deeply loved symbols in the kingdom.
- Take a cable car to Wat Phra That Doi Suthep, a major temple and pilgrimage destination during the important Buddhist holidays of Makha Bucha and Vesak.
- Opt to take a one-hour hike down a well-marked trail with many stairs, or ride the cable car back to the base of the mountain.

Tonight, join your Tour Director to explore the Chiang Mai Night Bazaar, a sprawling complex just outside the old city's ancient walls. You're in for what's arguably the best night market experience in Thailand, with vendors selling everything from street food to clothing to antiques. Because prices here aren't fixed, the market is a beloved spot among bargain hunters.

- Sample various regional cuisine specialties made by local vendors.
- Enjoy free time to shop and taste more street food at your leisure.

Day 15: Sightseeing tour of ChangChill elephant sanctuary & Buddhist monk visit

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

Drive through the countryside and visit ChangChill, an organization at the forefront of elephant welfare and responsible tourism in Chiang Mai.

- Hear how the organization works with the non-profit animal-rights organization World Animal Protection to create a safe living environment for the elephants and an educational experience for visitors.

- Learn about Asian elephants as you watch them roam freely during a hands-off elephant exploration walk.
- Help staffers prepare medicine and food for the gentle, giant residents.
- Chat with the mahouts, or elephant caretakers, and enjoy an included vegetarian meal overlooking the elephants' natural bathing spot.

This afternoon, visit the Wat Suan Dok Buddhist temple, where you'll meet a resident monk to discuss Buddhism and learn how the monks of the temple live.

Day 16: Free day in Chiang Mai

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Chiang Mai or add excursions.

- + Mae Kampong Hill Tribe: Village Visit & Hike
- + Traditional Thai Cooking Class & Dinner

Ko Samui Island → 2 nights

Day 17: Flight to Ko Samui

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

This morning, fly to Thailand's second-largest island, Ko Samui, which is known for its palm-fringed beaches, coconut groves, and lush, mountainous rainforest. Settle into your hotel upon arrival.

This evening, enjoy an included dinner served with beer or wine.

Day 18: Free day on Ko Samui

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day exploring Ko Samui or add an excursion.

- + Mu Ko Ang Thong Boat Cruise & Snorkeling

Khao Sok → 2 nights

Day 19: Ferry to Surat Thani & transfer to Khao Sok National Park

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Travel by ferry this morning to Surat Thani, known as "the province of a thousand islands" and the gateway to Thailand's natural wonders. Upon arrival in Surat Thani, transfer to Khao Sok National Park, an unspoiled area where towering limestone cliffs, lush forests, and teal water meet. The park is home to the world's oldest evergreen rainforest, plus 50 mammal species, more than 300 bird species, and countless varieties of reptiles and insects.

After settling into your hotel, sit down for an included dinner this evening served with beer or wine.

Day 20: Khao Sok National Park & Cheow Lan Lake cruise

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

Take to the water this morning for a full day in Khao Sok National Park, exploring the stunning Cheow Lan Lake aboard a traditional long-tail boat.

- Admire dramatic and jungle-topped limestone cliffs and karsts as you cruise along the lake's turquoise waters.
- Keep an eye out for wildlife, including long-tailed macaques and gibbons.
- Set off on a short hike to one of the park's many impressive caves.
- Enjoy an included lunch at a floating restaurant followed by free time to swim, canoe, or just relax and take in the majestic scenery.

Bangkok → 1 night

Day 21: Flight to Bangkok

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Return to Surat Thani and board a flight back to Bangkok.

Tonight, join your fellow travelers at a local restaurant for a celebratory farewell dinner served with beer or wine.

Flight Home

Day 22: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport to board your early morning flight home or continue exploring in Laos and Bangkok.

+ Laos & Bangkok extension

Compared to popular spots like Thailand, Laos remains a somewhat hidden gem when it comes to traveling in Asia—and that's just one reason you're sure to love it. This tiny country in Southeast Asia packs a huge punch when it comes to history, scenery, and culture. Get to know its capital city, Vientiane, then travel by train to its cultural and artistic hub, Luang Prabang, whose sought-after shops and charming cafes will make you feel right at home.

Vientiane → 1 night

Day 22: Flight to Vientiane & sightseeing tour of Xieng Khuan

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Fly to Vientiane—Laos's capital and largest city. Then, pay a visit to the Xieng Khuan, a unique sculpture park situated along the Mekong River.

- View some of the more than 200 Hindu and Buddhist statues scattered around the open-air park's lush grounds.
- Learn how yogi-priest-shaman Luang Pu designed the park to reflect his interest in both Hinduism and Buddhism.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening served with beer or wine.

Luang Prabang → 2 nights

Day 23: Sightseeing tour of Vientiane & train ride to Luang Prabang

Included meals: breakfast

Set off on a guided tour of Vientiane alongside a local guide this afternoon.

- Visit the golden Pha That Luang—a.k.a. the Great Stupa—which was built in the 16th century and is considered the most important Buddhist monument in Laos.
- See the Patuxai Monument, an intricately designed war monument and triumphal arch built between 1957 and 1968 in memory of Laotian soldiers who died during World War II and the war of independence from France.
- Continue on to Wat Si Saket, the oldest temple in Vientiane, which is home to almost 7,000 Buddha images.

Later, take a train to Luang Prabang and enjoy a free evening.

Day 24: Walking tour of Luang Prabang

Included meals: breakfast

Join your Tour Director on a walking tour to discover Luang Prabang—a city that's rich with architectural and artistic heritage and that once served as the country's royal capital.

- Pass by Wat Mai Suwannaphumaham, the largest Buddhist temple in the city.
- See how Laotian royalty once lived during a visit to the Royal Palace Museum.
- View the Phra Bang statue, the country's most important and sacred Buddha image.
- Wander along the Mekong waterfront and enjoy free time to pop into local shops and restaurants.

Spend a free afternoon in Luang Prabang or add an excursion.
+ Laos Buffalo Dairy Farm & Dinner

Bangkok → 1 night

Day 25: Flight to Bangkok

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Fly back to Bangkok today and join your group for a farewell dinner served with beer or wine.

Flight Home

Day 26: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport to board your early morning flight home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: goaheadtours.com/GAS | 1-800-597-0350

Day 3: Vietnamese Home-Hosted Dinner

\$75/\$85* (3.5 hours, departs in the evening with dinner)

Get a taste of authentic local flavors with a home-hosted dinner at Ms. Nga's house in Hanoi. Listen to her stories of everyday life and enjoy the opportunity to tour her home. Then, dine on regional specialties, like Vietnamese vegetable soup, spring rolls, fried fish or chicken, sautéed vegetables, and papaya salad. Finish the meal with tea and peanut candy before saying your goodbyes.

Day 4: A Day in Ninh Binh

\$115/\$125* (8 hours, Departs in the morning, includes lunch)

Travel south of Hanoi to Ninh Binh's Tam Cốc village, where you'll board a row boat and be transported to another world—often referred to as “Hạ Long Bay on Land”. Wind your way along its rivers, past towering mountains that seem to jut out of the surrounding rice paddies. Cruise along the peaceful waters until you reach Bích Động (translation: Green Pearl Grotto), and visit the ornate pagoda surrounded by lotus flowers. Afterward, return to the village and sit down for an included lunch before returning to Hanoi.

Day 8: Traditions of the Mekong River Delta

\$85/\$95* (11.5 hours, departs in the morning, includes lunch)

Journey south to the Mekong Delta town of Bến Tre to board a boat for a winding introduction to life on the river. Begin with a visit to an artisan brick kiln business and learn the importance of brick production in the area and how the bricks' design has remained unchanged for centuries. Continue cruising to a coconut plantation, where you can try your hand at picking young coconuts and see how coconut candy is made while enjoying a tasting of other tropical fruits, tea, and honey. Next, you'll stop and visit local women at a straw mat-weaving workshop and enjoy a demonstration of traditional straw weaving. Step off the beaten trail for a moment and travel by either motor cart or bike along a back road to a local family's home, where you'll enjoy an included lunch and learn about their lives. Afterward, stroll along the canal, then travel by motor and paddle boat back to the pier.

Day 13: Markets of Bangkok

\$79/\$89* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Make your way outside of central Bangkok to explore the city's vibrant market culture. Begin with a ride through canals and villages on a long-tail boat, then arrive at the Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, whose stalls themselves are boats. Peruse food and goods sold by locals, then sample a local specialty food and enjoy free time to explore the market. Then, travel to the Maeklong Railway Market, known as the “umbrella pull-down market” thanks to its location along an active train line, where vendors regularly pick up their stalls to allow trains to pass.

Day 16: Mae Kampong Hill Tribe: Village Visit & Hike

\$65/\$75* (6 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

The Mae Kampong Hill Tribe lives in Northern Thailand, where members of the community continue to practice and share their storied traditions. Today, you'll explore their village alongside a local guide. Begin the day with a hike through the mountains surrounding the village. You'll stop to view a waterfall as you hear about the beauty of the area from your guide. Continue into the village to learn about the traditional ways of life during a tea tasting. Farmers in the community have produced tea for over 200 years, and the area's fertile farmlands were one of the main reasons the villagers chose to live here. Then, enter the home of a village resident and get to the heart of traditional Thai cuisine during a home-hosted lunch. After enjoying some free time, travel back to Chiang Mai. Please note: We recommend travelers wear comfortable clothing and sturdy walking shoes. The hike is 60–90 minutes long uphill through the mountains. Travelers should be prepared for muddy and/or wet conditions during the rainy season.

Day 16: Traditional Thai Cooking Class & Dinner

\$95/\$105* (5 hours, departs in the afternoon, includes dinner)

This evening, take part in a Thai cooking class outside of Chiang Mai in a secluded village known for its stunning rice fields. Start with a visit to the local market, where your guide will introduce you to a wide variety of fresh produce. Then, head to the culinary school, where you'll try your hand at preparing local dishes alongside professional chefs. Afterward, join your fellow travelers on the terrace and enjoy the meal you cooked for dinner. Return to your hotel in Chiang Mai with a souvenir cookbook in hand so you can recreate these delicious dishes once you return home.

Day 18: Mu Ko Ang Thong Boat Cruise & Snorkeling

\$95/\$105* (10.5 hours, departs in the morning, includes breakfast & lunch)

White-sand beaches, beautiful vistas, and thriving wild and marine life await in Mu Ko Ang Thong National Marine Park. Start the morning at Nathon Pier, where you'll board your boat and enjoy a light breakfast before cruising to Ko Wau Ta Lap island. Upon arrival, what you do is up to you—perhaps walk to the viewpoint for sweeping views of the surrounding islands, pay a visit to Lotus Cave and view the stalagmite and stalactite formations inside, go for a swim, snorkel, or just relax and take it all in. Feast on a buffet lunch aboard your boat before cruising to Talay Nai, where you'll have more time to swim or sunbathe. Return to Nathon Pier and board your minibus back to your hotel.

Extension excursion options

Day 24: Laos Buffalo Dairy Farm & Dinner

\$115 (3 hours, departs in the afternoon, includes

dinner)

Today, learn about one of Laos's socially responsible businesses and how it helps support the local community. Set off on a guided tour of the Laos Buffalo Dairy farm—the only buffalo dairy farm in the country—and hear how local farmers come here to learn sustainable farming practices. Enjoy the opportunity to feed the buffalo, learn how they're milked, and taste the homemade cake of the day, paired with ice cream. Finish the day with an included dinner paired with local beers in the farm's café. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at goaheadtours.com/terms