

Grand Tour of Southeast Asia: Vietnam, Cambodia & Thailand

Pre-departure information for your tour



Passport, visa & entry requirements

- In order to enter Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand (and Laos on the tour extension), U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of return.
- We recommend having at least three blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- There is no visa required for U.S. or Canadian citizens traveling to Thailand.
- U.S. and Canadian passport holders must obtain a visa to enter Vietnam and Cambodia (plus Laos on the tour extension). You must obtain your Vietnam visa in advance by purchasing an electronic visa online via the [Vietnam Immigration Department](#), by applying directly to the Vietnamese consulate, or by using a visa provider, such as our partner company, [VisaCentral](#). You may choose to obtain your Cambodia visa at the port of entry (you will need \$30USD and two passport-sized photos), by purchasing an electronic visa online via the [Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), by applying directly to the Cambodian consulate, or by using a visa provider, such as our partner company, [VisaCentral](#). For the tour extension, you can choose to obtain your Laos visa at the port of entry (you will need \$50USD and two passport-sized photos), by purchasing an electronic visa online via the [Laos Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), or by applying directly to the Laos consulate.
- If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact each country's consulate for your specific entry requirements.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to [goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements](#) and searching the code GAS.

Tour pacing & mobility

- On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 3.5 hours daily across uneven terrain, including paved roads, dirt paths, and stairs.
- Travelers should be healthy enough to participate in all included walks without assistance. Adding optional excursions may

increase the total amount of walking on your tour.

- You should feel comfortable managing your own luggage at times, as well as getting in and out of small boats.
- Go Ahead Tours and the Tour Director who accompanies your group are unable to provide special, individual mobility assistance to travelers on tour. The responsibility of the Tour Director is to ensure the group as a whole enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and they cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing, individualized assistance to any one traveler.
- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer Experience Team.

Tour Director

- You will have four separate Tour Directors on this tour: one in Vietnam, one in Cambodia, one in Thailand, and one in Laos on the tour extension.

Transportation & arrival information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead Tours arrive in Hanoi and depart from Bangkok. A representative from Go Ahead Tours will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. Please remain in the arrival hall, as the representative might be escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost.
- A one-night Hā Long Bay cruise, a ferry from Ko Samui Island to Serat Thani, and other small boat rides—as well as flights from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap, Siem Reap to Bangkok, Bangkok to Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai to Ko Samui, and Serat Thani to Bangkok—are included in the price of your tour.
- Flights from Bangkok to Vientiane and Luang Prabang to Bangkok, as well as a train ride from Vientiane to Luang Prabang, are

included in the price of the tour extension.

- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

Baggage allowance

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include on-tour flights in addition to your round-trip flights to and from tour. Please note that your included on-tour flights may have more restrictive baggage limits.
- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag.

Clothing & packing tips

- We recommend packing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that can be easily layered to accommodate varying temperatures, as well as a light jacket or rainwear.
- A sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers is recommended for sightseeing.
- Waterproof shoes or sandals, a swimsuit, sunscreen, and insect repellent are recommended for outdoor activities.
- Binoculars are handy for a closer look at local wildlife and scenery.
- A small bottle of hand sanitizer may be helpful when facilities are not readily available while on the road.
- You may want to pack dressier attire if you plan to visit a high-end restaurant or attend a special performance.
- It is preferable not to visit temples or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).

Health

- At least 60 days prior to departure, check

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with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

- Please be sure to take proper care with sun exposure, as the sun can be especially strong in some of the areas you are visiting.
- Temperatures in this region can exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius), especially during the summer months. Drinking plenty of water, limiting your alcohol intake, and using proper sun protection is extremely important in order to prevent the effects of dehydration and heat stroke.
- There are inherent risks associated with water activities, particularly for those with pre-existing medical conditions. Discuss your planned activities with your doctor or healthcare provider for the best advice on participation.
- Drink bottled water only. Refrain from drinking tap water, including when brushing your teeth. On the tour extension, we recommend you bring a reusable water bottle so you can utilize water stations at various Lao businesses as part of their Refill Not Landfill Project to limit your consumption of single-use plastic bottles.
- Avoid eating fresh fruits and vegetables unless they are cooked or washed in clean water and peeled.
- Bring a small first aid kit, including antacids, anti-diarrhea medication, motion sickness medication, and any prescription medications in your carry-on bag.
- If you have medication that you take daily, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour and any possible delays encountered.
- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies, please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to your departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements and searching the code GAS.

Cuisine

- Flavorful Vietnamese cuisine relies on mint, coriander, cinnamon, ginger, lime, lemongrass, and Thai basil. Foods are cooked minimally, from lightly grilled meats to blanched vegetables. Seafood, often flavored with ginger, is popular, as are chicken, duck, and pork. Don't miss dishes like spicy beef noodle soup and banh mi—a baguette filled with paté, cold cuts, and pickled vegetables.
- International influence is evident in the Khmer cuisine of Cambodia, where full flavor is created through the mix of herbs and spices such as sweet basil, Asian coriander, mint, lemongrass, and pepper. The base of almost all Cambodian dishes is rice or noodles, served with a curry, soup, or vegetable stir-fry. Grilled freshwater fish is popular, and the fermented fish paste known as prahok is a traditional seasoning.
- Traditional Thai cooking uses market-fresh ingredients seasoned with a mix of herbs, spices, and condiments, such as chili peppers and fish sauce. The main staple is rice.
- On the tour extension, sticky rice is the most popular and most important element in Laotian cuisine. No matter where you go, you'll find this traditional dish. Travelers should also try green papaya salad and larb—meat or seafood mixed with fresh herbs.

Electricity & air conditioning

- Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand operate on 230 volts.
- Vietnam uses Types A, E, or F plugs with two flat pins, two round pins, or three round pins, respectively.
- Cambodia uses Types A, C, or G plugs with two flat pins, two round pins, or three flat pins, respectively.
- Thailand uses Types A, B, C, or O plugs with two flat pins, two flat and one round pin, or two or three round pins, respectively.
- Laos (on the tour extension) uses Types A, B, C, E or F plugs with two flat pins, two rounded pins, or three flat pins, respectively.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on

using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.

- The strength of the air conditioning in Asian hotels is often not as strong or as cool as what you might be used to in the U.S. or Canada. When air conditioning is available, it is usually regulated seasonally and controlled centrally by the hotel.
- Your hotels may provide hairdryers, irons, and other small appliances. However, these amenities cannot be guaranteed.

Connectivity

- Wi-Fi is available in most hotels, though some charges may apply.
- There is no Wi-Fi on any of the motor coaches.
- Please contact your mobile service provider for information on roaming charges.

Time zones

- All destinations visited are 11 hours ahead of Eastern Time (ET).
- When it's 9am in New York, it's 8pm on tour.

Currency

- You will use the Vietnamese dong in Vietnam, Cambodian riel (or U.S. dollar) in Cambodia, and the Thai baht in Thailand (plus the Lao kip in Laos on the tour extension).
- In Cambodia, U.S. dollars are accepted everywhere, though change may be given in riel. Most hotels, restaurants, shops, taxis, buses, and airlines list their prices in U.S. dollars, but small transactions (less than a dollar) are usually conducted in riel. Always carry small amounts of riel for motorcycle taxis, snacks, and other small purchases.
- Better rates of exchange are usually available overseas, although it's worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive.
- We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks as needed.
- You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees.

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- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.
- International banks and businesses primarily accept debit and credit cards that work with the EMV chip system. If you do not already have at least one debit or credit card with a chip in it, we strongly recommend requesting one from your bank prior to your tour.

Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of \$10USD to \$12USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of \$3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD per local guide.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.

Purchasing excursions on tour

- Most optional excursions will be available for purchase while you are on tour.
- Your Tour Director will only accept cash (in USD only), Visa, or MasterCard as payment for excursions.
- Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged.
- Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See page four of your tour itinerary for more information.
- International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary, without advance notice, to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to our website for Terms & Conditions, dates, and prices.