Northern Vietnam Highlands & Ba Be Lake Adventure – 7 Days

7D / 6N	Moderate	Private	USD 1,149 / pax
Duration	Difficulty	Tour Type	Starting From

This 7-day private tour explores the remote beauty of Northern Vietnam, from the dramatic terraced rice fields of Hoang Su Phi and the geological wonders of Ha Giang Stone Geopark to the tranquil waters of Ba Be Lake. Engage with diverse ethnic communities through homestay experiences and discover unique cultural traditions in an off-the-beaten-path adventure.

DESTINATIONS & ROUTE

Hanoi → Ha Giang

TOUR OVERVIEW

Overview: Northern Vietnam Highlands & Ba Be Lake Adventure

This seven-day private journey takes travelers deep into the less-explored regions of Northern Vietnam, offering a unique blend of natural splendor and cultural immersion. Beginning in Hanoi, the expedition ventures into the majestic landscapes of Ha Giang province, renowned for its breathtaking terraced rice fields and formidable karst formations. The tour culminates with exploration of Ba Be National Park, home to one of the world's most impressive freshwater lakes. Throughout the trip, guests will have opportunities to connect with local ethnic communities, experiencing their daily lives and ancient customs firsthand.

Tour Highlights

Trek through the stunning terraced rice fields of Hoang Su Phi, a UNESCO-recognized landscape.

Discover the rich cultural traditions and daily life of Man Ta Pan and Tay ethnic minority groups.

Explore the geological marvels of Dong Van Karst Plateau Geopark and the historic H'mong King Palace.

Journey along the dramatic mountain roads connecting Ha Giang, Dong Van, and Meo Vac.

Experience traditional homestay hospitality with local families in Hoang Su Phi, Tien Thang, and Ba Be.

Enjoy a scenic boat trip on Ba Be Lake, visiting Puong Cave and Dau Dang Waterfall.

Kayak through the tranquil waterways and lagoons surrounding Ba Be National Park.

Witness the unique customs and distinctive clothing of the Lo Lo, Pu Peo, Hmong, Dao, Tay, and Nung communities.

Route Summary

The adventure starts with a transfer from Hanoi to the scenic Hoang Su Phi area, followed by explorations of its terraced fields and local villages. The journey continues through Ha Giang city, then into the dramatic landscapes of Dong Van and Meo Vac, home to the H'mong King Palace and various ethnic groups. The final leg of the tour focuses on Ba Be Lake and its surrounding national park, with activities like boating and kayaking, before returning to Hanoi.

Who This Tour Suits

This itinerary is ideal for individuals or small groups seeking an authentic and active exploration of Vietnam's remote northern territories. It caters to those with an interest in soft adventure, local culture, and stunning natural scenery, particularly solo travelers eager to engage with diverse ethnic minorities and experience traditional homestays away from typical tourist routes.

Practical Information

The tour includes private car transfers, trekking excursions, and boat trips, ensuring comfortable and varied travel. Accommodation ranges from hotels to traditional homestays, providing a genuine local experience. Meals are provided as specified, focusing on local cuisine. Participants should be prepared for varying terrain and be open to engaging with different

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* Enjoy a scenic boat trip on Ba Be Lake, visiting Puong Cave and Dau Dang Waterfall.
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DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 — Hanoi to Hoang Su Phi & Chay River Valley Arrival

Meals: Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Hoang Su Phi | Transport: Car

The journey begins with an early morning departure from Hanoi, heading towards the remote and picturesque Hoang Su Phi region in Ha Giang province. As the private vehicle navigates through the dramatic northern landscapes, travelers will witness a transformation in scenery, from bustling cityscapes to expansive terraced rice fields carved into steep hillsides and impressive rock formations within deep canyons. This region is celebrated for its breathtaking natural beauty and the resilience of ethnic minority communities who meticulously cultivate these fields. A stop for lunch is planned en route to break up the travel.

Upon arrival at Pan Hou Village Ecolodge, situated in the serene Chay River Valley, there will be ample opportunities for photography, capturing the tranquil charm of the surroundings. After checking in, guests will be introduced to local culinary traditions, with a dinner featuring regional specialties such as bamboo tube rice (Com Lam), fresh carp, and other unique dishes. The evening concludes with an overnight stay, allowing for relaxation amidst the peaceful environment of Hoang Su Phi.

Activities: Travel by private car from Hanoi to Hoang Su Phi.
Observe terraced rice fields and rock formations during the drive.
Enjoy a local lunch en route.
Check into Pan Hou Village Ecolodge.
Dine on regional delicacies like bamboo tube rice.
Overnight stay in Hoang Su Phi.

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Day 2 Hoang Su Phi Terraced Fields & Man Ta Pan Culture

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Homestay in Hoang Su Phi | Transport: Trekking

A refreshing morning in Hoang Su Phi starts with a traditional upland breakfast. Around 8:00 AM, a guided trekking excursion commences, leading to Nam Hong village. This gentle walk offers a harmonious blend of agricultural scenes and natural beauty, with captivating views of the terraced rice fields that define this region. The local guide will provide insights into the remarkable craftsmanship and daily lives of the residents.

Midday, a delightful lunch is served at the home of a Man Ta Pan ethnic minority family, offering a direct cultural exchange. The afternoon features a return journey to Pan Hou via Giang Thuong, continuing the immersion into the local way of life. Along the route, guests can admire the stunning vistas of mountains and dense bamboo forests. The day concludes with a peaceful overnight stay in the natural setting of Pan Hou.

Activities:
Enjoy a traditional upland breakfast.
Embark on a guided trek to Nam Hong village.
Observe terraced rice fields and local crafts.
Have lunch at a Man Ta Pan ethnic minority home.
Walk through Giang Thuong, appreciating mountain and bamboo forest views.
Relax overnight in Pan Hou.

Day 3 Hoang Su Phi to Ha Giang & Tay Village Immersion

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Home-stay in Tien Thang Village | Transport: Car

The day begins with a nourishing breakfast and the crisp morning air of Hoang Su Phi. The journey then continues towards Ha Giang city, a captivating mountainous region known for its diverse ethnic communities. The drive offers continuous scenic beauty, showcasing more of Northern Vietnam's unique landscapes. Lunch will be taken at a local restaurant upon reaching Ha Giang city, providing a brief respite.

Following the meal, the adventure proceeds to Tien Thang village, situated just outside the city. This village is home to the Tay ethnic group, who are recognized for their strong cultural identity, vibrant traditional attire, and distinctive architectural styles, particularly their traditional stilt homes. Guests will have the opportunity to observe and learn about their unique way of life. The evening culminates with an overnight stay in the tranquil atmosphere of a traditional Tay stilt home in Tien Thang Village, offering an authentic cultural experience.

Activities:
Depart Hoang Su Phi for Ha Giang city.
Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in Ha Giang.
Travel to Tien Thang village, home of the Tay ethnic group.
Observe Tay cultural traditions and architecture.
Spend the night in a traditional Tay stilt home.

Day 4 Ha Giang to Dong Van Karst Plateau & H'mong King Palace

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Hotel in Dong Van | Transport: Car

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After an early breakfast, the expedition sets off towards the dramatic landscapes of Dong Van and Meo Vac. These remote destinations are characterized by rugged mountains and charming hill tribal communities, promising an engaging day of exploration. The drive itself is an integral part of the experience, offering spectacular views of the unique karst topography. A well-deserved lunch break is scheduled, followed by an opportunity for a short rest.
In the afternoon, the journey leads to Sa Phin, where the renowned H'mong King Palace awaits. This historically significant site, a testament to impressive craftsmanship, was constructed over eight years and features more than ten buildings adorned with sacred animal motifs like dragons and phoenixes. Visitors are encouraged to immerse themselves in the local culture by trying on the vibrant, distinctive clothing of the hill tribe people, posing against the stunning alpine backdrop for memorable photographs. The day concludes with a return to the hotel in Dong Van, allowing for relaxation after an invigorating day of sightseeing and cultural discovery.

Activities: Travel from Ha Giang to Dong Van and Meo Vac.
Enjoy lunch and a short break.
Visit the H'mong King Palace in Sa Phin.
Explore the architectural details and history of the palace.
Opportunity to try on traditional hill tribe clothing.
Return to Dong Van for overnight stay.

Day 5 Meo Vac to Ba Be Lake & Ethnic Minority Encounters

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Homestay in Ba Be | Transport: Car, Trekking

The day begins with a hearty breakfast in preparation for the scenic journey to Ba Be Lake. At 8:00 AM, a dedicated driver will transport guests to Ba Be National Park, revealing the untamed beauty of Vietnam's tropical forest in the Northeast. Along the way, there's an opportunity to observe the rich cultural heritage of the Lo Lo and Pu Peo ethnic minorities in Meo Vac. These communities are steadfast in preserving their historical traditions and are easily recognized by their distinctive attire.
The afternoon features a trek along the rocky and winding highland roads leading towards Ba Be. Despite the challenging terrain, this segment of the journey offers invaluable chances to interact with individuals from various ethnic groups, including Hmong, Dao, Tay, and Nung, gaining deeper insights into their daily lives and cultural practices. Upon arriving in Ba Be in the late afternoon, a private haven awaits for relaxation. As the day's last sunlight touches the water, Ba Be Lake glistens, creating a serene evening atmosphere. Guests will spend the night at a comfortable homestay in Ba Be, experiencing local hospitality.

Activities: Depart Meo Vac for Ba Be National Park.
Observe Lo Lo and Pu Peo ethnic minorities.
Trek along highland roads to Ba Be.
Interact with Hmong, Dao, Tay, and Nung ethnic groups.
Arrive at Ba Be Lake in the late afternoon.
Overnight stay at a homestay in Ba Be.

Day 6 Ba Be National Park Boat Trip & Kayaking

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: Homestay in Ba Be | Transport: Cruise, Kayaking

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7D / 6N	Moderate	Private	USD 1,149 / pax
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The day starts actively with a captivating boat trip commencing at 8:00 AM. Cruising along the Nang River, visitors will be primarily drawn to the stunning Puong Cave, a prominent geological feature located in the park's northwestern sector. This impressive cavern extends approximately 300 meters in length and reaches over 50 meters in height, offering a unique natural spectacle. Following the cave exploration, the boat proceeds to Dau Dang Waterfall, characterized by a series of rapids stretching nearly a kilometer along the Nang River, showcasing the raw power of nature. After these adventures, a leisurely lunch is provided, followed by time to unwind and perhaps take a rejuvenating nap.
In the afternoon, the itinerary includes a visit to Widow Island, a small, cone-shaped islet nestled near the southern center of Ba Be Lake. Kayaks are readily available on board the boat, allowing guests to navigate independently through the intricate network of tiny streams and lagoons around the lake. This provides a closer and more intimate experience with the serene aquatic environment. The day concludes with a return to the homestay in Ba Be for another tranquil overnight stay.

Activities: Embark on a boat trip on the Nang River.
Explore Puong Cave.
Visit Dau Dang Waterfall.
Enjoy lunch and relaxation.
Visit Widow Island.
Kayak through streams and lagoons of Ba Be Lake.
Return to homestay for overnight stay.

Day 7 Ba Be to Hanoi Departure

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch | Stay: NA | Transport: Car

The final day of the trip begins with a relaxed breakfast, allowing guests to savor the last moments in the peaceful Ba Be region. Before departing, there will be an opportunity to bid farewell to the host family, expressing gratitude for their hospitality and the memorable cultural experience. Subsequently, the group will embark on the final road trip, transferring from the northern village back to the bustling city of Hanoi.
During the return journey, travelers can continue to admire the gorgeous scenery unfolding outside the window, including meandering paths, local ethnic minority peoples' stilt homes, expansive palm tree plantations, and verdant tea gardens. Upon arrival in Hanoi, guests will be dropped off at their hotel or at the airport for their onward flight, marking the conclusion of this immersive Northern Vietnam adventure. Please note that accommodation in Hanoi for this night is not included in the tour package.

Activities: Enjoy a leisure breakfast.
Bid farewell to the homestay family.
Transfer by private car from Ba Be to Hanoi.
Observe scenery, stilt homes, palm trees, and tea gardens en route.
Drop-off at hotel or airport in Hanoi.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

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INCLUDED

- v Six breakfasts and seven lunches as specified in the itinerary.
- v All necessary transportation, including private car transfers, boat cruise, and guided trekking.
- v Twin or double sharing accommodation in hotels and local homestays.
- v Local English-speaking tour guide stationed for in-tour activities.
- v Entrance fees to all listed attractions in Vietnam.

NOT INCLUDED

- x International airfare to and from Vietnam.
- x Early check-in or late check-out at accommodations.
- x Surcharges for peak season travel or compulsory gala dinners.
- x Visa arrangements for Vietnam.
- x Personal expenses such as tips, laundry services, and gratuities.
- x Meals and beverages not explicitly mentioned in the itinerary.

PRICE INCLUDES

- v Six breakfasts and seven lunches as specified in the itinerary.
- v All necessary transportation, including private car transfers, boat cruise, and guided trekking.
- v Twin or double sharing accommodation in hotels and local homestays.
- v Local English-speaking tour guide stationed for in-tour activities.
- v Entrance fees to all listed attractions in Vietnam.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Tour Code: IMP-134AC3D18D6D