Vietnam Rail Journey: Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City & Halong Bay – 15 Days

15D / 14N	Easy	Private	USD 887 / pax
Duration	Difficulty	Tour Type	Starting From

Embark on a comprehensive 15-day rail adventure across Vietnam, journeying from the historical capital of Hanoi to the vibrant Ho Chi Minh City. This tour combines scenic train travel with immersive cultural experiences, including a Halong Bay cruise, visits to ancient imperial cities like Hue and Hoi An, relaxation on Nha Trang's beaches, and exploration of the Mekong Delta's waterways.

DESTINATIONS & ROUTE

Hanoi → Ha Long → Hue → Da Nang → Hoi An → Nha Trang → Ho Chi Minh City → My Tho → Mui Ne

TOUR OVERVIEW

Overview of Your Vietnam Rail Journey

This extensive 15-day tour invites travelers to discover Vietnam's diverse landscapes and rich cultural heritage primarily by train. Beginning in the northern capital of Hanoi, you will explore ancient temples, museums, and traditional craft villages before venturing to the breathtaking Halong Bay for a scenic cruise. The journey continues south by rail, stopping in the former imperial city of Hue, the charming ancient town of Hoi An, and the coastal resort city of Nha Trang. The adventure culminates in the bustling metropolis of Ho Chi Minh City, with an excursion into the fertile Mekong Delta.

Tour Highlights

Experience the convenience and scenic views of long-distance train travel across Vietnam.

Explore Hanoi's historical landmarks, including the Temple of Literature and Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum.

Enjoy a six-hour cruise through the stunning limestone karsts and grottoes of UNESCO-listed Halong Bay.

Discover the imperial grandeur of Hue, visiting royal tombs, pagodas, and the historic Citadel.

Wander through the charming, lantern-lit streets of Hoi An Ancient Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Relax and unwind on the beautiful beaches of Nha Trang, known for its clear waters.

Delve into the vibrant local life and agricultural landscapes of the Mekong Delta with a boat trip.

Visit traditional craft villages such as Bat Trang for pottery and Dong Ky for carpentry.

Route Summary

The journey begins in Hanoi, the capital, before heading east to Halong Bay for a cruise. Returning to Hanoi, the tour proceeds south by overnight train to Hue, then travels overland to Danang and Hoi An. From Hoi An, a day train takes you to the coastal city of Nha Trang. The final leg involves an overnight train to Ho Chi Minh City, with a day trip to My Tho in the Mekong Delta before departure.

Who This Tour Suits

This itinerary is ideal for active travelers interested in experiencing Vietnam's culture, history, and natural beauty through a mix of rail travel and guided excursions. It offers a balance of structured sightseeing and leisure time, appealing to those who appreciate diverse experiences from bustling cities to serene natural wonders and tranquil beaches.

Practical Information

The tour spans 15 days and 14 nights, incorporating various modes of transport including private transfers, coach trips, boats, and several overnight and day train journeys. Accommodation is provided in hotels, with one night spent on a soft-sleeper train. Meals are included as specified in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner), and local English-speaking guides

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accompany sightseeing activities. Please note that prices vary based on group size and chosen hotel standard.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

* Spend most of your time moving between destinations by train
* Visit Hanoi capital, blending rich history, French colonial architecture, bustling markets, and delicious street food
* Exploring Halong Bay on an overnight cruise to immerse yourself in its stunning natural beauty, tranquil nights on the water.
* Hue Old Capital to visit ancient citadels, royal tombs, pagodas, and the serene Perfume River.
* A UNESCO World Heritage Site Hoi An ancient town, blending Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and French influences.
* Nha Trang: Relaxing on one of the best beach destinations in Vietnam
* Ho Chi Minh City is the biggest city in Vietnam with nightlife and street food
* Discover the local life in Mekong Delta

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 — Hanoi Arrival & Initial City Exploration

Meals: D | Stay: Hanoi hotel | Transport: Airport transfer, local transport

Upon your arrival at Noi Bai International Airport, a representative will greet you and provide a transfer directly to your hotel for check-in. The afternoon offers an opportunity for an introductory city tour, if time permits, to begin understanding Hanoi's historical significance. This may include a visit to the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first national university established in the 11th century, offering insights into ancient education and architecture. You might also explore Hoa Lo Prison, a poignant site detailing Vietnam's wartime history, and Quan Thanh Temple, an ancient Taoist temple with a rich spiritual heritage. The evening concludes with an overnight stay in Hanoi.

Activities: Airport pickup, hotel check-in, Temple of Literature visit, Hoa Lo Prison visit, Quan Thanh Temple visit

Day 2 — Hanoi Historical Sites & Journey to Halong Bay

Meals: B,L | Stay: Halong City hotel | Transport: Private vehicle

The morning begins with a deeper exploration of Hanoi's key historical landmarks. You will visit Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum (note: closed on Mondays, Fridays, and throughout October-November), the revered resting place of Vietnam's revolutionary leader, along with his former residence. Nearby, discover the iconic One Pillar Pagoda, an architectural marvel. The itinerary may also include the Army Museum, showcasing Vietnam's military history, and a return visit to the Temple of Literature if not fully explored on day one. A local restaurant will host lunch before the afternoon's journey. In the afternoon, a scenic drive of approximately 180 km will take you east from Hanoi to Halong City, preparing you for the next day's bay adventure. You will spend the night in Halong City.

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Activities: Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum visit, Ho Chi Minh Residence visit, One Pillar Pagoda visit, Army Museum visit, Temple of Literature visit, drive to Halong City

Day 3 Halong Bay Cruise & Return to Hanoi

Meals: B,L | Stay: Hanoi hotel | Transport: Boat, private vehicle

This morning is dedicated to experiencing the breathtaking beauty of Halong Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Area renowned for its outstanding natural beauty. You will embark on a six-hour cruise, navigating through the bay's iconic landscape of approximately 3,000 limestone islands. These dramatic formations are dotted with numerous caves and grottoes, creating a mesmerizing seascape. A fresh seafood lunch will be served on board as you take in the panoramic views. In the afternoon, after your unforgettable bay experience, you will drive back to Hanoi. The evening allows for relaxation after a day of exploration, with an overnight stay in Hanoi.

Activities: Halong Bay cruise, seafood lunch on board, drive back to Hanoi

Day 4 Traditional Craft Villages & Overnight Train to Hue

Meals: B,L | Stay: Overnight on train | Transport: Private vehicle, overnight train

Today, you will venture outside Hanoi to explore several traditional craft villages. The morning begins with a departure for Dong Ky village in Bac Ninh province, where you can observe the intricate work of traditional carpentry. The journey continues to Dong Ho village, famous for its distinctive folk paintings known for their naive art style. Following this, you will drive to Gia Lam to visit Bat Trang pottery village, a long-standing center for ceramics where you can see artisans at work. Lunch will be provided at a local restaurant. In the evening, you will be transferred to Hanoi railway station to board an overnight train bound for Hue, settling into a soft sleeper, 4-berth compartment for the journey.

Activities: Visit Dong Ky carpentry village, visit Dong Ho painting village, visit Bat Trang pottery village, board night train to Hue

Day 5 Hue Imperial City & Perfume River Exploration

Meals: L | Stay: Hue hotel | Transport: Private vehicle, boat

Your train arrives at Hue railway station around 09:30. Upon arrival, you will be driven to begin your exploration of Hue's imperial past. The morning includes visits to the elaborate tombs of emperors Tu Duc and Khai Dinh, showcasing unique architectural styles and royal histories. A local restaurant will serve lunch. Afterward, you will transfer to your hotel for check-in and a brief rest. The afternoon features a serene boat trip on the Perfume River, offering picturesque views as you make your way to the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda, a historic seven-story pagoda. Following the boat trip, you will drive to visit the magnificent Imperial Citadel, the former seat of the Nguyen Dynasty, for an in-depth tour. You will spend the night in Hue.

Activities: Arrive in Hue, visit Tu Duc Tomb, visit Khai Dinh Tomb, boat trip on Perfume River, visit Thien Mu Pagoda, visit Imperial Citadel

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Day 6 Scenic Pass to Danang & Hoi An Ancient Town

Meals: B,L,D | Stay: Hoi An hotel | Transport: Private vehicle

The morning begins with a picturesque drive from Hue to Danang, crossing the renowned Hai Van Pass. This route offers spectacular panoramic views of the coastline and mountains, passing through charming red-tiled villages nestled amidst fruit orchards. In Danang, you will visit the Cham Museum, home to an impressive collection of Cham sculpture and artifacts. The afternoon continues with a drive to explore Marble Mountain, a cluster of five limestone and marble hills, each named after one of the five elements. You will also see China Beach before proceeding to Hoi An. Upon arrival, you will transfer to your hotel. The evening is dedicated to discovering Hoi An, a historic town that flourished as a prosperous seaport from the 16th to 18th centuries, showcasing a unique blend of architectural influences. You will stay overnight in Hoi An.

Activities: Drive across Hai Van Pass, visit Cham Museum, visit Marble Mountain, visit China Beach, transfer to Hoi An, explore Hoi An Ancient Town

Day 7 Leisurely Exploration of Hoi An

Meals: B | Stay: Hoi An hotel

Today is designated for independent exploration and leisure in Hoi An. With no scheduled activities, you have the freedom to immerse yourself in the charm of this UNESCO World Heritage site. You might choose to stroll through the ancient town's narrow streets, admiring the well-preserved traditional houses, assembly halls, and the iconic Japanese Covered Bridge. Explore local markets, browse artisan shops for custom-made clothing or souvenirs, or simply relax at a riverside café. This free day allows for a personalized experience of Hoi An's unique atmosphere and historical beauty at your own pace. Breakfast is included at your hotel.

Activities: Free time to explore Hoi An Ancient Town

Day 8 Hoi An to Danang & Day Train to Nha Trang

Meals: B | Stay: Nha Trang hotel | Transport: Private vehicle, day train

The morning offers additional free time at your leisure in Hoi An, allowing for last-minute souvenir shopping or a final walk through the ancient town. Afterward, you will drive to Danang for lunch at a local restaurant, savoring regional cuisine. Following lunch, you will be transferred to Danang railway station to board a day train bound for Nha Trang. This scenic train journey provides views of the Vietnamese countryside as you head south. Upon arrival in Nha Trang, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for accommodation. You will spend the night in Nha Trang, ready to enjoy its coastal attractions.

Activities: Free time in Hoi An, drive to Danang, lunch in Danang, board day train to Nha Trang, transfer to Nha Trang hotel

Day 9 Nha Trang Cultural Sites & Beach Leisure

Meals: B,L | Stay: Nha Trang hotel | Transport: Local transport

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Your day in Nha Trang begins with cultural exploration. In the morning, you will visit Long Son Pagoda, a prominent Buddhist temple known for its large white Buddha statue seated atop a hill, offering panoramic views of the city. Following this, you will explore the Po Nagar Cham Tower, a sacred Hindu site dating back to the 2nd century AD. This complex, built between the 7th and 12th centuries, remains an active place of pilgrimage for both Cham and Vietnamese Buddhists, showcasing ancient architecture and spiritual significance. The afternoon is dedicated to leisure, providing ample time to enjoy Nha Trang's beautiful beach. You can relax on the sand, swim in the clear waters, or simply soak up the coastal atmosphere. You will stay overnight in Nha Trang.

Activities: Visit Long Son Pagoda, visit Po Nagar Cham Tower, free time at the beach

Day 10 Nha Trang Beach Relaxation

Meals: B | Stay: Nha Trang hotel

Today is a full day dedicated to relaxation and enjoyment of Nha Trang's stunning coastal environment. With no scheduled activities, you have the freedom to spend your time as you wish. Many visitors choose to indulge in sunbathing on the sandy beaches, take refreshing swims in the ocean, or explore the underwater world through snorkeling. Nha Trang is renowned for its clear waters and vibrant marine life, making it an excellent spot for water activities. You can also explore local eateries, enjoy fresh seafood, or simply unwind by the sea. Breakfast is provided at your hotel, and you will spend another night in Nha Trang.

Activities: Free time for sunbathing, swimming, snorkeling

Day 11 Nha Trang Leisure Day

Meals: B | Stay: Nha Trang hotel

Another day of leisure awaits you in Nha Trang, offering more opportunities to enjoy the city's beautiful beaches and amenities. This free day allows for continued relaxation, whether you prefer lounging by the pool, strolling along the coastline, or trying out local cafes and shops. It's a perfect chance to recharge and soak in the tropical atmosphere. For those seeking more activity, optional excursions like island hopping or mud baths can be arranged independently. Breakfast is included at your hotel, and you will have your final overnight stay in Nha Trang.

Activities: Free time for sunbathing, swimming, snorkeling

Day 12 Nha Trang to Ho Chi Minh City by Overnight Train

Meals: B | Stay: Overnight in Ho Chi Minh | Transport: Private vehicle, overnight train

The morning and early afternoon in Nha Trang are free for you to enjoy at your leisure. You might choose to have a final swim, do some last-minute shopping, or simply relax before your onward journey. In the late afternoon, you will be transferred to Nha Trang railway station. Here, you will board an overnight train bound for Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's largest metropolis. You will settle into a soft sleeper, 4-berth compartment for the journey, providing a comfortable way to travel south while resting. You

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will spend the night on the train as it makes its way to Ho Chi Minh City.

Activities: Free time in Nha Trang, transfer to railway station, board night train to Ho Chi Minh City

Day 13 Ho Chi Minh City Arrival & Flexible City Tour

Meals: B | Stay: Ho Chi Minh City hotel | Transport: Local transport

Upon arrival in Ho Chi Minh City, you will be transferred to your hotel for check-in. The morning is designated as free time, allowing you to settle in, relax, or begin exploring the immediate vicinity of your accommodation independently. In the afternoon, a city tour is scheduled, designed with flexibility in mind. You can discuss your preferences with your local guide to tailor the sights you wish to prioritize. Potential attractions include the historic Reunification Palace, a symbol of Vietnam's reunification; the bustling Binh Tay Market, offering a glimpse into local commerce; and the thought-provoking War Remnants Museum, which provides a powerful insight into the Vietnam War. After the tour, you will return to your hotel for an overnight stay in Ho Chi Minh City.

Activities: Arrive in Ho Chi Minh City, hotel check-in, free morning, flexible city tour (Reunification Palace, Binh Tay Market, War Remnants Museum)

Day 14 Mekong Delta Excursion to My Tho

Meals: B,L | Stay: Ho Chi Minh City hotel | Transport: Coach, boat

Today features a full-day coach trip to My Tho, a prosperous town in the Mekong Delta, located approximately a two-hour drive from Ho Chi Minh City. Your journey begins with a visit to Vinh Trang Pagoda, a beautiful temple featuring a unique architectural blend of Vietnamese, Khmer, and French influences. My Tho is renowned for its extensive orchards and vast rice fields, showcasing the agricultural heartland of Vietnam. You will enjoy a boat ride on the Mekong River, navigating its waterways. This boat trip includes a visit to an island orchard, where you will have lunch en route, experiencing local flavors. The excursion continues with a visit to a snake farm before you drive back to Ho Chi Minh City in the late afternoon. You will spend your final night in Ho Chi Minh City.

Activities: Coach trip to My Tho, visit Vinh Trang Pagoda, boat ride on Mekong River, visit island orchard, lunch on island, visit snake farm, return to Ho Chi Minh City

Day 15 Ho Chi Minh City Departure

Meals: B | Transport: Airport transfer

Your final day in Vietnam is free for leisure activities until it's time for your departure. Depending on your flight schedule, you might have time for some last-minute souvenir shopping, a final Vietnamese coffee, or simply relaxing at your hotel. At the appropriate time, you will be transferred from your hotel to Tan Son Nhat International Airport (Ho Chi Minh City) for your onward flight. This concludes your 15-day rail and cultural journey through Vietnam.

Activities: Free time, transfer to Tan Son Nhat International Airport for departure

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WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- v Hotel accommodation & daily breakfast
- v Private transfer and transportation on tour
- v Entrance fee and private boat trip
- v Meals as indicated (no drinks)
- v Sightseeing with local English speaking guides
- v Train tickets HAN/HUI; DAD/NHA; NHA/HCM (soft sleeper, 4 berth compartment)

NOT INCLUDED

- x All international airport taxes
- x International flights & Domestic flights
- x Early check in and Late check out
- x Other meals with drinks
- x Travel insurance
- x Other service not mentioned above

PRICE INCLUDES

CANCELLATION POLICY

Tour Code: IMP-C84A50C6847D