

Discover Vietnam:

Beautiful Countryside, Bustling Cities and Welcoming People

March 8 - 23, 2010



SV SAGINAW VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY

Call Osher Lifelong Learning Institute to register for this trip (989)964-4475 www.svsu.edu/olli



This 16-Day Trip Includes:

- Air from Detroit to Hanoi/Saigon airports with airport transfers. Ground transportation from SVSU to the Detroit airport.
- 14 nights of deluxe lodging: eleven nights in hotels, two nights on the Victoria Express train in a superior cabin, and one night on a deluxe boat.
- 35 Meals
- Two domestic flights within Vietnam, two train transfers, admission fees for all activities and boat cruises.
- National escort guide and all gratuities for the service team
- Pre-trip Vietnamese dinner at SVSU, and at least one pre-trip class at SVSU



Our Trip Host:

This trip will be escorted by Clarence Rivette, an adjunct business professor at SVSU with eighteen years of leadership and global experience in business and the military. He has held President and CEO positions in U.S. and international companies involved in operations in Korea, Canada, Israel, United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. He is currently President for Wirt Financial & Leasing Services.



Our Vietnamese Guide:

Viet Nguyen, owner of Viet Orient Tours, is one of the foremost tour guides in Vietnam and throughout Southeast Asia. His clients range from university professors and student groups, adventure and leisure travelers, to museum and art societies. Speciality tours have included Vietnam Veterans and Hollywood movie stars. His success comes from bringing Western standards of hospitality and service to the adventure travels of Southeast Asia.



Itinerary

March 8 -23, 2010

Day 1: Mar 8 - Depart SVSU

Leave SVSU via motorcoach for early afternoon flight from Detroit to Saigon.

Day 2: Mar 9 - Arrive in Saigon in Late Evening

Upon arrival, welcomed by Viet Nguyen and transferred to the hotel. *Overnight at Royal Park hotel.*

Day 3: Mar 10 - Flight to Hanoi and Free Time

After a good night's sleep to recover from jet lag, we will have a late breakfast before the short afternoon flight to Hanoi. You'll be free after check-in to relax. We'll gather for a welcome dinner at a Vietnamese restaurant. *Overnight at Zephyr hotel. (B,D)*

Day 4: Mar 11 - Tour of Hanoi

Tour the charming city of Hanoi and its historical landmarks. We will visit the Memorial Site of Ho Chi Minh, which offers an overview on the life of Vietnam's Father; the 1000-year old Temple of Literature, which was also the 1st University of Vietnam; and the Fine Art Museum of Vietnam, where the exhibits feature traditional and influenced Vietnamese art. Lunch is at the Hoa Sua training school restaurant with Chuck Searcy, a war veteran who returned to Vietnam to contribute to its reconciliation and rebuilding. Chuck's presentation gives us an overview of the changes and developments of this once war-torn country. In the afternoon, we visit the Vietnam ethnology museum to learn about the indigenous cultures of 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. This evening's dinner is at the colonial-styled restaurant of Wild Rice. *Overnight at Zephyr hotel. (B,L,D)*

Day 5: Mar 12 - Hanoi/Sapa

After breakfast at the hotel, we will ride by cyclo through the old quarter to discover this 1000-year old and well-preserved section of Hanoi. We see the traditional piped houses which have maintained their architectural styles and commercial activities along the narrow streets. You can take pictures of the smiles, conical hats, and French-colonial villas harmoniously set along the tree-lined boulevards and parks. After lunch at a local restaurant, we have free time for shopping and relaxing at the hotel. In the evening we board the train for an overnight trip to Sapa in the Northwestern mountain range, referred to as the Vietnam's Tonkin Alps. *Overnight on the Victoria Express Train – superior cabin with 4 berths. (B, L, D)*

Day 6: Mar 13 - In Sapa

Arrive at the train station in the early morning. Transfer to the hotel for breakfast, followed by a hike into the villages of hill tribes to learn about the local life and customs of various ethnic groups of Hmong and Dao. Return to town for lunch at a local restaurant before further exploring the town. This evening we join the local tribes who come into town every Saturday evening for the "Love Market". *Overnight at the Victoria Sapa hotel. (B, L, D)*



Day 7: Mar 14 - Excursion to Bac Ha Sunday Market

Depart in the morning for Bac Ha Town where hundreds of flowered Hmong people come for a bartering market session every Sunday. This is a great opportunity to witness this traditional old-time trading method. After lunch, hike into the tribal villages before heading back to Sapa. The balance of the day is free for leisure at the pool. *Overnight at Victoria Sapa hotel. (B, L, D)*



Day 8: Mar 15 - Sapa/Hanoi

You will be free in the morning until check-out, and then we transfer back to Lao Cai City, which borders on China and is a very commercial town. We'll have an orientation tour of the city including the old temple and the border gate to experience the Chinese side. Board the train for the overnight return to Hanoi. *Overnight on the Victoria Express Train – superior cabin with 4 berths. (B, L, D)*

Day 9: Mar 16 - Hanoi/Halong

Arrive at Hanoi station in the early morning. After a short break for breakfast, we'll travel 160 km to Ha Long Bay with a coffee break en route at the Sao Do handicraft village. Upon arrival at the dock, board the deluxe junk and start the cruise to explore the bay and enjoy the spectacular view of thousands of limestone rocks rising up from the emerald water. Disembark the junk for a walk on the beach and climb to the top for a panorama of the bay. Fresh seafood dinner is served on board the junk. *Overnight on the Deluxe Junk. (B, L, D)*



Day 10: Mar 17 - Halong/Hue

Continue cruising in the bay and exploring the grottos until noon. We say farewell to our crew members and transfer directly to the airport for the late afternoon flight to Hue. Transfer to the hotel for check in. *Overnight at the Saigon Morin hotel. (Brunch)*



Day 11: Mar 18 - World Cultural Heritage in Hue

After breakfast, begin the tour of this UNESCO town. We visit the Imperial city and Royal mausoleums of King Tu Duc and Khai Dinh for an overview on the past regal lifestyle of the Nguyen emperor. Lunch will be in town and feature Hue-style food. Enjoy the boat cruise on the Perfume River as we visit the oldest Thien Mu buddist temple. The balance of the day is free to enjoy the pool or explore. This evening's dinner is hosted at the home of a former Mandarin of Nguyen Dynasty. We will be received by the family members who will give us a briefing on this special wooden house, and cook a traditional dinner for us. *Overnight at Saigon – Morin hotel. (B, L, D)*

Day 12: Mar 19 - Hue/Hoian

Take a scenic drive to the ancient town of Hoian, which is also a world cultural heritage. En route we stop for a brief visit at the sandy beach of Lang Co and the Hai Van pass where a panorama of the long coastline can be viewed. After lunch at a local restaurant, continue to Danang city to visit the Cham Museum that houses the finest collection of sandstone sculptures, representing the lost Hindu-influenced ancient civilization of Champa. We then head to Hoian and check in into our resort on China Beach. This evening we have dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight at Palm Garden Resort. (B, L, D)*

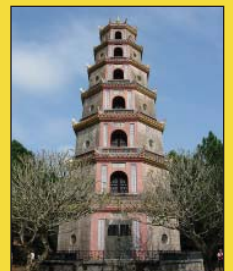
Day 13: Mar 20 - Exploration of Hoian

Our morning walking tour of Hoian includes the local markets and historic temples and houses that feature the inter-cultural influences on this charming town. We join the cooking lunch at Chef Vy's school which features the best local cuisine, followed by an optional visit to the tailors' to purchase made-to-fit suits and dresses. Return to the hotel in time to relax at the beach. Our dinner will be at Streets International and hosted by Dr. Neal Bermas, who teaches at New York University and is the founder of this organization which helps local children with job training. We will interact with our host to further understand his goals. *Overnight at Palm Garden Resort. (B, L, D)*



Day 14: Mar 21 - Tour of the Ancient Cham's Holy Land

Early departure from our hotel to My Son, 50 Km South West of Hoian, the site of the most important Cham intellectual and religious center, dating back to the late 4th century. My Son is considered to be Champa's counterpart to the grand cities of South-East Asia's other Indian-influenced civilizations: Angkor (Cambodia), Bagan (Myanmar), Ayuthaya (Thailand) and Borobudur (Java). You will hike in the valley to view the ruins of temples and sculptures describing the religious life of the lost ancient civilizations. Return to the hotel to relax. This evening dinner is on our own. *Overnight at Palm Garden Resort. (B, L)*



Day 15: Mar 22 - Danang – HCMC

We take the early morning flight to HCMC, popularly called Saigon. This city has undergone many rapid changes since the Vietnam War and remains the most bustling city of Vietnam. Our tour of the city includes these historic landmarks: the former presidential palace, war museum, and the trading Chinese district. Our final dinner cruise on the Saigon River is a nice conclusion to your Vietnam experience. *Overnight at Grand hotel. (B, L, D)*

Day 16: Mar 23 - Departure

Early morning transfer to the airport for the flight back home. Arrive in Detroit by mid-afternoon and transfer via motorcoach to SVSU. (B)



About Our Lodging

Our lodging will be at deluxe hotels including one in the heart of Hanoi and one in Ho Chi Minh City. In Sapa, we'll enjoy the only luxury hotel in North-Western Vietnam, and in Hue we'll stay at one of the oldest hotels in Vietnam which has been lovingly restored to its century-old glory. In Hoian we'll spend three nights right on China Beach at a lovely resort with five acres of tropical gardens. We'll minimize travel time by spending two nights on the Victoria Express Train in a superior sleeper cabin, and a trip highlight will be spending a night on a deluxe junk (ship).

Why This Trip Really is a Value

Does this trip seem expensive? Unlike many packages, this one doesn't have any hidden costs, plus it has many extras and upgrades other providers don't offer. For example, all meals are included except for two dinners. Your gratuities are covered and we'll even provide local beer and soft drinks at all meals. You won't have a large credit card bill upon your return unless you go on a major shopping excursion!



Trip Sponsor

This educational international travel experience is offered by the SVSU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. OLLI was established in 2001 as an educational resource for mid-Michigan residents who are 50 years of age or better. The Institute offers classes, educational excursions, and social opportunities. For more information about membership call 989-964-4475 or visit our website www.svsu.edu/olli

General Information

Trip Cost:

- \$4,795 OLLI members ■ \$4,845 Non-members
- Single Supplement \$910

Price Includes:

Round trip air from Detroit to Vietnam and all domestic flights within Vietnam; all ground, rail and water transportation in Vietnam; motorcoach transportation from SVSU to Detroit airport; meals as specified, soft drinks and local beer; accommodations as outlined; English-speaking Vietnamese escort; all admission fees; gratuities; late check-outs on three days; Vietnam visa; pre-trip dinner and class. Not included: travel insurance and personal items.

Payment Schedule:

\$300 will hold your spot, a second payment of \$2,200 is due by October 15, and the balance (\$2,295) is due by December 15, 2009. Call the SVSU-OLLI office at (989) 964-4475. Or register on-line at www.svsu.edu/olli.

Trip Insurance:

It is highly recommended that you purchase insurance. You will be sent insurance information upon receipt of your initial deposit, or you may purchase insurance on your own from your own provider.

Activity Level:

You should feel comfortable walking up to one mile on un-even surfaces.

Weather:

Expected March highs in Vietnam range from the 70s north to low 90s in the south. Precipitation is minimal in March.

How to Register for the Vietnam Trip

- Call (989)964-4475
- Register online www.svsu.edu/olli
- Mail payment to:

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