

Code SESI **Singapore to Hanoi**

## Tour Dossier Introduction

**Dossier Last Updated:** 05-02-2014

**Tour Code:** SESI

**Duration:** 34 nights / 35 days

**Joining City:** Singapore

**Departure City:** Hanoi

**Nearest Joining International Airport:** Singapore Changi Airport (SIN)

**Nearest Departing International Airport:** Hanoi Noi Bai International Airport (HAN)

Please check this document just before departing in case of last minute changes to your tour.

## Tour Documents

 PDF Document  Web Page

-  [Packing List for Adventure Tours](#)
-  [Joining Letter for Tours Beginning in Singapore](#)
-  [Optional Excursions Guide for Tours to Asia and Russia](#)
-  [Asia Pre Departure Booklet](#)
-  [Cambodia Dossier](#)
-  [Malaysia Dossier](#)
-  [Singapore Dossier](#)
-  [Thailand Dossier](#)
-  [Vietnam Dossier](#)

## What's Included

- > Rickshaw City Tour of Melaka
- > Full Day Trek in the Cameron Highlands
- > Penang Heritage Walk
- > Entry and Guided Tour of the Grand Palace
- > Guided Tour of Angkor Wat
- > Entrance to the Genocide Museum & Killing Fields
- > Guided Tour of the Cu Chi Tunnels
- > Mekong Delta Overnight Excursion
- > Hike up Marble Mountain
- > Visit Hai Van Pass
- > Halong Bay overnight stay on a junk boat
- > Guided tour & entrance to caves

- 28 nights in hotels, hostels & guesthouses, 2 nights on overnight buses, 1 nights in homestays, 2 nights on overnight trains, 1 JUNK
- 12 breakfasts, 1 lunches, 2 dinners
- Travel by local public bus, train, boat, taxi, on foot
- Tucan Travel Tour Leader, English-speaking local guide(s) on excursions

## What's not Included

- International flights and departure taxes
- Domestic flight taxes if applicable
- Tips on included excursions, visas, travel insurance, personal items and single rooms.
- Airport transfers and pre and post tour accommodation
- Spending money – budget for meals, snacks, drinks, limited souvenirs, laundry, tips and any extras
- Optional excursions - Please see our optional excursions guide on the dossier page for a comprehensive list of optional activities and excursions available on this tour.

## Detailed Itinerary

### Day 1 to 1 - Arrive Singapore

The first day of your tour is simply an arrival day with no pre-organised activities. In order to allow time to relax and see some of the sights you may wish to add pre tour accommodation. On arrival please ask at the reception for information on when the pre departure meeting will be held.

Singapore may be small in size, but its larger-than-life attitude and modernisation will ensure your visit here is truly unforgettable. A major international hub, the city will house travellers and business people from all over the world at any given time. You would be forgiven for thinking you should be donned in a suit clutching a briefcase as you lose yourself between the ultra-modern high rise buildings. Like any major city, the shopping is excellent here (although not always cheap). There are many historical and cultural sights to see if you are after an insight into the tradition of this fascinating country. Visit Little India and Chinatown for a glimpse into the old way of life of the city. You may want to don your best travelling garb and try a traditional Singapore Sling at the Long Bar in the famous Raffles Hotel. Steeped in history, this spectacular colonial style hotel is beautiful to see as you make your way to the bar which is more relaxed than you may think as it is a must to throw your peanut shells on the floor! Singapore restaurants are not the cheapest you will come across in South East Asia but if you hit some of the market food stalls or the hawker centres you are sure to delight in an amazing selection of fresh, scrumptious food.

### Day 2 to 3 - Melaka

Melaka is one of Malaysia's most popular destinations and was an important trading port several hundred years ago. The historical city centre has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Portuguese settled here in the 16th century and their influence can be seen in much of the architecture around the city. There are many attractions in Melaka, from temples to churches, and mosques to museums. The destination is famous for its traditional Chinese Nyonya cuisine, which you can sample from one of the traditional Peranakan shop houses.

**Included Excursions:** Rickshaw City Tour

### Day 4 to 5 - Kuala Lumpur

We arrive in Malaysia's lively capital, Kuala Lumpur. A major tourist hub, 'KL' (as it is usually referred) is modern, slightly congested, and it offers all the creature comforts of your average major city. High rises abound, shopping is excellent (and one of the city's major attractions) and its bustling day-to-day goings-on provide an insight into Malay business culture. There are many things to do here - both cultural and indulgent. During your time here, why not check out Berjaya Times Square in the Bukit Bintang area, the biggest mall in Asia - where the 8th floor houses a mini theme park consisting of several roller coasters and white-knuckle rides. You could also visit the tallest twin tower building in the world, the Petronas Towers. There are also many colonial buildings to visit if you feel the need to step back in time and take a break from the modern high rises.

### Day 6 to 7 - Cameron Highlands

Named after William Cameron, a British colonial government surveyor who discovered the plateau during in 1885, the Cameron Highlands is a highland region around 1500 metres above sea level. There are many things to do and see here, including: a butterfly farm, strawberry farms, rose gardens, a Chinese temple and vegetable farms. You also have a jungle trek amongst the cool, refreshing forest air. The region's fertile mountain slopes make it one of the best places in the country to grow tea, and there are many tea plantations. The Cameron Highlands is also a major supplier of vegetables to Malaysia and Singapore.

**Included Excursions:** Full day Jungle Trek

### Day 8 to 9 - Penang

We make for Penang. We will stay in Georgetown, which is the island's capital. Georgetown possesses a unique charm, blending old and new cultures. Peddlers exhibit their goods surrounded by modern buildings. Old buildings stand side-by-side with new businesses. Take a rickshaw tour and introduce yourself to this lively town or perhaps visit the 65-storey Kompleks Tun Abdul Razak (KOMTAR), a prominent Penang landmark, which houses Government departments, commercial offices, department stores, shops and restaurants.

**Included Excursions:** Penang Heritage Walk

### Day 10 to 10 - Langkawi

Made up of 99 islands, Lankawi is a paradise nestled in north Malaysia. Here we relax on the beach, enjoy the beautiful waters and bury our feet in the sand. Until 1986, the islands were thought to be cursed until they were developed into a popular destination for tourists.

### Day 11 to 13 - Ao Nang

The gateway to the Southern Gulf of Thailand, Ao Nang is the perfect getaway. Here you can relax on quiet deserted beaches, go snorkelling or learn how to dive. There are options for trekking or if you simply want to take in the surrounds you can go island hopping and visit many pristine beaches and natural caves.

Hire a local longtail boat and visit hidden coves and tropical beaches around neighbouring islands. If you're after something a bit more energetic, hire a speedboat to , the small uninhabited islands, which offers fantastic snorkelling and vivid turquoise waters.

### Day 14 to 15 - Bangkok

Thailand's capital, Bangkok, a crazy and chaotic city! Known in Thai as Krung Thep Maha Nakhon pronounced or Krung Thep "city of angels" for short, Bangkok was a small trading post at the mouth of the Chao Phraya River during the Ayutthaya Kingdom. Bangkok is now the gateway to South East Asia for most travellers and international backpackers come and go and the streets are always buzzing and full of life.

No visit to Bangkok is complete without a visit to Khao San Road, the famous strip filled with markets, stalls and neon lights. From people watching to shopping, and nightlife to food and drink, this is the place to be on a night out in Bangkok. If you're feeling adventurous you might wish to try a fried insect or two! As an alternative, the Patpong area is Bangkok's most notorious nightlife area. Exotic bars, clubs, neon lights, and night markets abound and you may be able to see some interesting stage shows if you so desire.

On a more cultural note, Bangkok also boasts hundreds of Wats (temples), with Wat Arun being the main one visited by most travellers. The Grand Palace is also a popular attraction, and for something different you can cruise along the Chao Phraya River and through the canals. Bangkok once had an elaborate network of canals and was given the nickname, 'Venice of the East', and although some of them have been filled in and converted to streets, many still exist today. Travelling through these canals you will see how the locals live along the riverside - you almost forget you are in a large, bustling city.

**Included Excursions:** Grand Palace

### Day 16 to 18 - Siem Reap

Siem Reap is our base for exploring the famous temples of the Angkor area. The name Siem Reap means 'Defeat of Siam' - today's Thailand - and refers to a century-old bloodbath which you can see commemorated in stone in the celebrated bas relief carvings of the monuments around the area.

Our first day we head out on our included excursion to the most famous temple, Angkor Wat, with a guide to give us an overview of the history and layout of the temple. Our remaining time in Siem Reap can be spent at our own leisure exploring this expansive site armed with our cameras and the knowledge from our guide.

There are over one thousand temples here which attract over one million visitors annually. The temples range from small ruins to the famous Angkor Wat, and the site is said to be the world's largest single religious monument.

Angkor Wat, a UNESCO World Heritage site, pays homage to the Hindu god Vishnu and has a dazzling array of beautiful ornate carvings. The many ceremonial structures and temples here were built between the 9th and 13th centuries by the Khmer Empire that spanned a period of approximately 600 years. These temples are some of the most famous in the world and take up an area of approximately 160 square kilometres.

There are superb photographic opportunities here at most times of the day so make sure your camera batteries are fully charged and your memory card is ready to go! Tuk-tuks provide a convenient form of transport around the area here, and you can hire a tuk-tuk and driver for the day if you wish. The

Angkor area (in and around the Ta Prohm temple) was the site where the film Tomb Raider starring Angelina Jolie was filmed.

**Included Excursions:** Guided Tour of Angkor Wat

### Day 19 to 20 - Phnom Penh

Phnom Penh is Cambodia's bustling capital city with a turbulent past. Located on the banks of the Mekong River, Phnom Penh has been the national capital since the French colonised Cambodia during the 19th century. The city has grown from a small fishing village to what is now the industrial, commercial, cultural and historical centre of Cambodia.

Take a visit to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (a former torture centre) and the Choueng Ek Memorial at the site of the Killing Fields, to learn about one aspect of this country's turbulent past.

Phnom Penh has many other attractions including the Russian Market and National Museum. You could also take a stroll along the river's famous Sisowath Quay and enjoy a coffee or cocktail at one of the many cafes while observing the bustling river traffic. You may wish to take a tuk-tuk ride around Phnom Penh (a tuk-tuk is a motorbike-taxi with an enclosed passenger cabin that can fit around 4 people).

**Included Excursions:** Transport & Entrance to Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and Killing Fields

### Day 21 to 22 - Ho Chi Minh City

Ho Chi Minh City was known as Saigon until the end of the Vietnam War (around 1975), originally a small fishing village, Ho Chi Minh City is now the most important economic centre in Vietnam and is the largest city in the country.

Traffic in the city is fairly hectic at the best of times but getting around is surprisingly easy by taxi or motorbike taxi, although drivers may not always speak English. Bus is the only form of public transport and motorbikes rule the road; there are around 3 million motorbikes cruising around the streets of Ho Chi Minh City.

If you're interested in the history of the Vietnam War make sure you visit the War Remnants Museum and the Reunification Hall. If you're less of a history buff and more in the mood to haggle for a bargain, don't miss Ho Chi Minh's largest market, the Ben Thanh Market. You can buy everything from cosmetics to live ducks here. There are also numerous food stalls at this market, and at the popular night market nearby. The food in Ho Chi Minh is some of the best and most diverse in all of Vietnam so make sure you eat well during your stay. There are also many bars and clubs to spend your evening in.

We head out to the Cu Chi Tunnels. A network of tunnels which was home to around 10,000 people who lived underground for several years during the war. It took about 25 years to build this underground city. It has living rooms, kitchens, hospitals, weapon factories, storage facilities and command centres. At its largest the tunnel system stretched over 250 kilometres from Saigon to the Cambodian border and was three levels deep. Today the remaining tunnels have become a major tourist attraction giving the visitor a unique experience and a feel of what underground life during the American war must have been like.

**Included Excursions:** Cu Chi Tunnels

### Day 23 to 23 - Mekong Delta

This morning we travel to the heart of the Mekong Delta, a region in southwestern Vietnam where the Mekong River approaches and empties into the sea through a network of distributaries. Life in the Mekong Delta revolves much around the river, and many of the villages are often accessible by rivers and canals rather than by road. The region produces half of the country's rice output which is more than Japan and Korea together.

On our way out, if timing allows, we will visit Cao Dai temple. Cao Dai is a syncretistic Vietnamese religious movement that incorporates aspect of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and even Catholicism. The Temple was begun in 1933 in a unique architectural style that reflects its blended traditions.

We will take a boat trip around the tributaries of the mighty Mekong River which provides an insight into a real perspective of Delta life. We will also visit some local businesses from a floating market, rice paper and sweet making place, ceramics factory and tile making shop, rice processing plant, bonsai garden where you can hold a giant snake, taste local fruits, drink tea or snake wine. It is a great opportunity to purchase some unique souvenirs to support the local community. We will be staying in home stays along with other members of your group. The accommodation on the Mekong Delta takes us back to basics and has no showers and no hot water.

**Included Excursions:** Mekong Delta Overnight Excursion

### Day 24 to 24 - Ho Chi Minh City

The next morning we take an early cruise on a traditional sampan to visit the famous floating markets before we return to Ho Chi Minh City in the afternoon.

### Day 25 to 27 - Nha Trang

Nha Trang is a popular beachside destination for many travellers and is brimming with restaurants, bars and nightlife. You can choose to relax and swim in the surrounding crystal clear waters - try your hand at kite surfing, scuba diving or maybe hit the seas on a catamaran. To really chill out on the seas you could maybe take a cruise around the islands with a seafood lunch.

### Day 28 to 29 - Hoi An

We have free time in Hoi An to explore the handicrafts, ceramics and fabrics that are sold at an abundance of markets. Hoi An is renowned for tailoring; pack your favourite item of clothing and get it copied here! If you're all shopped-out, you might enjoy relaxing on the serene coastal beaches with some local cuisine.

### Day 30 to 31 - Hue

We depart Hoi An and travel north to Hue. The drive takes us across the Marble Mountains and via the scenic Hai van Pass where you will enjoy stunning views of the surrounding coastline and rice paddies.

Once the capital of Vietnam (during the Nguen Dynasty in 1802-1945), Hue is situated on the banks of the Huong Giang or Perfume River. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a bustling, lively place with many things to see and do. Hue is renowned for its monuments temples, pagodas and architecture. The Imperial City, often likened to the Forbidden City in Beijing (and sometimes referred to as the Forbidden City as well), is well worth a visit. Hue also offers many Buddhist pagodas and markets to explore if you just feel like soaking up the lively atmosphere.

**Included Excursions:** Marble Mountain • Hai Van Pass

### Day 32 to 32 - Halong Bay

We depart Hanoi and drive to Halong Bay. The area is surrounded by spectacular beaches and is, naturally, renowned for its delicious seafood! We will arrive around midday and we will board a junk boat for our overnight cruise. The cruise will visit the famous caves and then find a secluded spot for swimming, kayaking and sunbaking.

Halong Bay (Bay of Descending Dragons) is renowned for its limestone karsts. The bay consists of a dense cluster of just under 2000 limestone monolithic islands, each topped with thick jungle vegetation, which rise dramatically from the ocean. Several of these islands are hollow and contain large caves, and on our cruise we will be able to explore these caves filled with stalactites and stalagmites. Dinner will be followed by the option of a spot of night fishing if you're still awake!

Local legend describing the origin of the bay claims that the gods sent a family of dragons to defend the land when locals were fighting neighbouring invaders (thus the name 'Bay of Descending Dragons'). When the dragons came down on Halong Bay they began spitting out jewels, which turned into the various islands that are scattered around the bay, linking together and forming a barrier against invaders. Halong Bay was kept safe and free from invading warriors from then on.

On our final morning we will continue to cruise around the bay to find more secluded areas to swim in or you may like to hire a kayak for some energetic exploring. In the early afternoon we will depart the majestic Halong Bay and travel back to Hanoi for some more free time. If you haven't seen a water puppet show yet, make it your business to do so at our stop this time as it is our last visit to Hanoi.

**Included Excursions:** Halong Bay Overnight Excursion on a traditional Junk boat • Guided tour of caves

### Day 33 to 34 - Hanoi

Hanoi is the capital of the Socialist Republic and is dominated by colonial buildings and tree-lined boulevards. The city boasts a convoluted yet elegant history which is characterised by its 'chameleon of names' - the city has changed names many times throughout history. In terms of recent history, the French withdrew their forces in 1954 and ever since foreign investment and property has developed substantially.

In Hanoi, exploring on your own is relatively easy on foot or by bike. Many travellers believe the true appeal and essence of Hanoi is discovered wandering the streets, tasting local market food, observing the local way of life, and taking in the architecture and surroundings.

### Day 35 to 35 - Depart Hanoi

Your adventure of a lifetime comes to an end today. If you have a late flight or have lengthened your stay by adding post tour accommodation you will have more time to explore the sights.

This itinerary is a guide. Changes may be made before or during your tour to improve the running or due to unforeseen circumstances.

## Travel Style

This is an **Adventure Tour**. We see a destination from the locals' perspective using a variety of transport and staying in small locally owned accommodation. There is a maximum of 16 travellers with an average group size of 8-12.

## Packing List

We have a detailed packing list for all of our Adventure Tours [here](#).

## Baggage

On all of our Adventure Tours, you will be required to carry your luggage long distances down unpaved and uneven roads or up flights of stairs when elevators are not available. It is important that you choose a durable and lightweight soft bag that you can carry comfortably on your back.

You will also need a small daypack, large enough to carry everything you might need on overnight excursions.

## Add-ons & Extras

On many of our Group Tours, we spend one night in our arrival and departure cities. If you want to explore these cities more we can book pre and post tour accommodation, city tours and airport transfers for you. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour. We also have **Add-ons** - short packages that can be booked alongside a tour or on their own and have been carefully designed to ensure you don't miss out on popular highlights.

## Rooming

All our **Adventure Tours** are priced per person on a shared room basis meaning there is no compulsory extra payment for those travelling on their own.

I'd like my own room

If you are a solo traveller, a single room is available on most occasions at an extra cost. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour.

## Day by Day Itinerary

Day	Activity	Country	Meals	Single Room
Day 1	Singapore	Singapore		
Day 2	Melaka	Malaysia		
Day 3	Melaka			
Day 4	Kuala Lumpur			
Day 5	Kuala Lumpur			
Day 6	Cameron Highlands			
Day 7	Cameron Highlands			
Day 8	Penang			
Day 9	Penang		B	
Day 10	Langkawi		B	
Day 11	Ao Nang	Thailand		
Day 12	Ao Nang			
Day 13	Overnight bus/train from Ao Nang to Bangkok			
Day 14	Bangkok			

Day 15	Bangkok			
Day 16	Siem Reap	Cambodia		
Day 17	Siem Reap			
Day 18	Siem Reap			
Day 19	Phnom Penh			
Day 20	Phnom Penh			
Day 21	Ho Chi Minh City	Vietnam		
Day 22	Ho Chi Minh City		B	
Day 23	Mekong Delta		BD	
Day 24	Overnight train to Nha Trang		B	
Day 25	Nha Trang			
Day 26	Nha Trang		B	
Day 27	Overnight bus to Hoi An		B	
Day 28	Hoi An			
Day 29	Hoi An		B	
Day 30	Hue		B	
Day 31	Overnight train to Hanoi			
Day 32	Halong Bay		LD	
Day 33	Hanoi		B	
Day 34	Hanoi		B	
Day 35	Hanoi		B	

(B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner included)

Please note the day to day itinerary above is given as a GUIDELINE ONLY.

For tours that include the option of a single supplement, a ? will indicate in which destinations single rooms are available.