

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: VIETNAM & CAMBODIA



TRIP CODE:
TVCHS3



TOPDECKER, meet Asia (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. 17 days. Two of the most slap-you-in-the-face-unbelievable countries you'll ever experience. Who's ready to go exploring? You know it, we know it – even the carved faces at the Bayon temple know it. Vietnam and Cambodia are famous the world over for their mind-blowing natural beauty, ancient architecture and unique cultures. And this trip? It's here to help you see the very best that both have to offer. We're talking amazing cities. Fascinating history. Tropical scenery. Food that could actually change your life. Need we go on?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Hanoi street food tour
- Walking tour of Hanoi with Trip Leader
- Overnight junk boat cruise in Halong Bay
- Overnight train to Hoi An
- Domestic flight to Nha Trang
- Visit Hang Rai cave
- Overnight train to Ho Chi Minh City
- Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels
- Boat trip through the Mekong Delta
- Visit Cai Be Floating Market
- Local cookery demonstration
- Overnight stay in a local homestay
- Visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum
- Sunset cruise on the Mekong River
- Visit the Angkor complex with a local guide

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Hanoi
Vietnam

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Siem Reap
Cambodia

TRIP CURRENCIES

- Vietnam - VND
- Cambodia - KHR

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | HANOI (VIETNAM)

Blaring horns. French Colonial buildings. Picturesque lakes. And the smell of incense in the air. Welcome to historic Hanoi! Meet your fellow explorers and kick things off with a DE-licious street food tour through the Old Quarter. Our in-the-know Trip Leader will take us to all the local spots for goodies like bánh mì, pho, spring rolls and egg coffee – trust us, it's tasty. Then: head to Bai Hoi (aka Beer Corner). No guesses how this place got its name. Pull up a roadside stool with a cold Bia Hà Noi and get to know the gang – we might be a mixed bunch, but we're all in it together. Cheers to that!



MEALS:

- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Hanoi street food tour

DAY 2 | HANOI

Ready to delve deeper into this incredible city? We thought so. Slip on the Birks and explore with your Trip Leader – ticking off the likes of One Pillar Pagoda, Lenin Park, Northern Gate, Cua Bac Church, B52 Lake and Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum (you can visit later, if you like). Then, we're heading to a local bún cha eatery for lunch. How many spring rolls is too many? Stupid question. What you do this afternoon is 100% up to you, but if you're chasing that off-the-beaten-path experience – jump aboard a locally guided Vespa tour. History buffs should check out Hoa Lo Prison. Catch a water puppet show at Thang Long theatre. Or stroll around Hoan Kiem Lake before hunting down a local hole-in-the-wall for a bowl of pho.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Hanoi with Trip Leader



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Locally guided Vespa tour of Hanoi: from 1,790,000 VND

DAY 3 | HANOI – HALONG BAY

Halong Bay: World Heritage Site. The jewel in Vietnam's crown. One of the 'New 7 Wonders of Nature'. Whichever way you look at it, Halong Bay is pretty damn special. So, today we're gonna do it properly with an overnight junk boat cruise. Spend the day swimming in glittering turquoise water, exploring limestone islands, digging into freshly made meals, and dancing into the sunset with your travel buds. This? This is what makes the memories. *Heads up! If you selected twin-share accommodation for this trip, you might be bunking with an extra trip mate for the duration of the cruise. All part of the experience, right?



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Overnight junk boat cruise in Halong Bay

DAY 4 | HALONG BAY – HANOI – HOI AN

Rise and shine, sailors! Kick off the day with a refreshing dip and hearty brunch. Then: we're dropping anchor back in Hanoi, where there's free time to get your explore on. Afterwards, we're moving on to ancient Hoi An the traditional way – by overnight train! This is your chance to catch up on some zzzs and swap tales with your trip mates. It doesn't get more authentic than this.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Overnight train to Hoi An

DAY 5 | HOI AN

Hop off the train and wave chào to the locals – after a short drive from Da Nang prepare to be SERIOUSLY charmed by the ancient city of Hoi An. This stunner is a patchwork of all the civilisations to leave their imprint here. Expect: rustic Chinese shophouses, multicoloured French Colonial villas, and one helluva spectacular Japanese bridge. Want help discovering this gem of a place? We got you. Soak up views of the forest and surrounding villages on a sunset paddleboarding adventure along the river. Dreams = made.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Sunset paddleboarding in Hoi An: from 1,114,667 VND

DAY 6 | HOI AN

You wanted more free time to explore. So, here it is. Need some suggestions? Opt for a cooking class and local market visit – your mad new gastro skills are sure to impress the Tinder matches back home. Rather do your own thing? Explore the buzzing Central Market. Get a custom piece made by the city's famous tailors. Or cycle to An Bang Beach for chilled boho vibes. Tonight, we'll have free time to explore the lantern-filled magic of Hoi An Old Town and tuck into a bowl of cao lau (a local specialty) along the river. This is what you came for.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Traditional cooking class: from 800,000 VND

DAY 7 | HOI AN – PHAN RANG

Set those alarms (yep, plural) cos today's an early start. Why? We're taking to the skies. Touch down in Nha Trang and prepare to get your Indiana Jones on as we make a beeline for Hang Rai cave. Setting foot in this spellbinding complex of rock formations and fossilised coral reef is like being dropped into a screensaver. Just: wow. Lunch is included today, so prepare for more lip-smacking Vietnamese goodness. Once we've rolled into Phan Rang, the evening is yours. Hunt down some banh canh noodle soup and show off those expert chopstick skills (or not). Or just head to the local beach, sink your toes in the powdery white sand and relax. It's pretty dreamy.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Domestic flight to Nha Trang
- Visit Hang Rai cave

DAY 8 | PHAN RANG

Great news guys: today is 100% yours to delve deeper. AND we've got some epic optionals to help you do just that. Strap on those hiking boots and discover the wild beauty of Nui Chua National Park and underwater world of Vinh Hy Bay. Or simply turn off Google Maps and see where the day takes you. That's what exploring's all about. And this evening? Gather your trip mates and find a local haunt for some DELish banh xeo – pancakes filled with your fave veggies or meat. Plus dipping sauces of dreams. Mmm...



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Full-day hike in Nui Chua National Park (including snorkelling in Vinh Hy Bay): from 1,800,000 VND

DAY 9 | PHAN RANG – HO CHI MINH CITY

You wanted more time to explore, and we LOVE making you happy. So here it is! What will it be today? Opt for a half-day tour of the city hotspots, or nearby sand dunes and a traditional Cham village. Channel your inner Lara Croft and discover the incred ruins of ancient Po Klong Garai Temple. Or just chill with the coconut trees along Phan Rang Beach – these guys are living their best lives. Later: we'll choo-choose the overnight train once more as we make tracks for Ho Chi Minh City. Shotgun top bunk!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Overnight train to Ho Chi Minh City



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Half-day tour of Phan Rang: from 800,000 VND
- Half-day tour of sand dunes and a Cham village: from 1,053,333 VND

DAY 10 | HO CHI MINH CITY, INCLUDING CU CHI TUNNELS

Jump off the train like the local pro you now are. Welcome to Ho Chi Minh! A capital with nearly 9 million people, HCMC is a bubbling pot of energy, excitement and hidden gems. Aka your perfect match. Next: pull out your history hat – we're off to visit the Cu Chi Tunnels. Surrounded by jungle that was once a stronghold of the Viet Cong, take a guided tour of the area and learn all about how this underground network was used by guerilla fighters during the Vietnam War. Then: we'll drop into an organic farm for a lesson in local produce and a traditional homemade lunch. Tasty times. Back in the city, the evening is up to you. Get lost in the streets and find yourself along the way.



MEALS:

- Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels

DAY 11 | HO CHI MINH CITY – MEKONG DELTA

This is not over Ho Chi Minh – we're coming back for you later. Today's all about the wet stuff as we set our sights on the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam: the Mekong Delta region. This tropical maze of rivers and swamps looks like it's dropped straight outta The Jungle Book. For real. Wanna know how to make markets more fun? Put them on boats, obvs. We'll check out the world-class pineapple tossing skills of the traders at the traditional floating market in Cai Be. Then: time to take to the waterways with a pit stop at a local bonsai gardener's home for an included lunch. Hope you like leafy greens. And tonight? We're hunkering down in a traditional homestay with a local family, where our host will give us a masterclass in Vietnamese cooking. Heads up: rooms are shared here, so settle in and swap notes on the adventure so far.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Boat trip through the Mekong Delta
- Visit Cai Be Floating Market
- Local cookery demonstration
- Overnight stay in a local homestay

DAY 12 | MEKONG DELTA – HO CHI MINH CITY

Wake to the sound of the village stirring to life, and catch sight of the locals preparing for a new day. After a group brekkie at our homestay, we'll jump back on a boat towards the waterfront city of Vinh Long for an included lunch – stopping along the way to see how some of the locals make their living. Afterwards: it's time to return to HCMC for shellfish, rice paper pizza, and the city's specialty – com tam *wipes drool from chin*.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch

DAY 13 | HO CHI MINH CITY – PHNOM PENH (CAMBODIA)

No lies, it's an early wake-up call this morning. But you'll have plenty of time to catch up on some zzzs as we roll into Cambodia! Ancient wonders. Serene landscapes. And a fascinatingly diverse history – Cambodia delivers on all fronts. We'll kick off in Phnom Penh, where the evening's yours to sample some sizzling street food along Sihanouk Boulevard. OR go full-out with an optional cocktail tour of the city. Be rude not to, right?



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Evening cocktail tour: from 69 USD

DAY 14 | PHNOM PENH

We'll begin the day with a sobering visit to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum – documenting the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge during their 'revolution'. There's a lot to take in, but learning about this devastating period of the country's history is important to fully understand modern Cambodia. Later on, quiz your expert Trip Leader on the best bargains to sniff out at the iconic art deco Central Market. And this evening? We'll take to the water for a sunset cruise on the mighty Mekong. This is what you came for.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum
- Sunset cruise on the Mekong River

DAY 15 | PHNOM PENH – SIEM REAP

We'll swap Phnom Penh for Siem Reap this afternoon, with plenty of time to spare for some pretty immense optional activities. Get a taste of local life on a sunset quad biking tour through the countryside. Or discover the treats on the streets with a finger-lickingly good food tour. There's even an evening under the big top with the Cambodian Circus on offer. Can't say we don't spoil you! Tonight, immerse yourself in the neon-jungle of Angkor Night Market or experience the crazy that is Pub Street. Go steady – tomorrow is packed with memory-makers that you're not gonna want to miss.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Siem Reap street food tour: from 71 USD
- Phare Circus show and workshop: from 40 USD

DAY 16 | SIEM REAP

Ready for a real-life temple run? This is it. First up: we'll explore the Angkor Thom complex with our local guide. Venture through statue-lined South Gate, the intricately decorated Bayon Temple and check out the Elephant Terrace. Then it's onto Ta Prohm – a ruin filled with crumbling towers and overgrown tree roots. Think: Tomb Raider. Refuel and rehydrate – next we're headed for Angkor Wat temple. The biggest temple complex in the world, 'otherworldly' doesn't even come close to describing this place. Once you're all temple-d out, we'll settle in for our final group dinner at a local eatery. WHAT an adventure it's been.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit the Angkor complex with a local guide

DAY 17 | SIEM REAP

17 days of incredible adventures with a pack of strangers who are now like family. Get down to breakfast and swap those socials – you'll need them for next year's reunion trip. Not ready for The End? There's a final chance to flex your chef skills with an optional cooking class at a local farm. Niiiiiice.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Local cooking class and farm tour (including lunch): from 53 USD

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!