

SPICE ROADS

CYCLING



NORTH VIETNAM FAMILY EXPLORER

Tour Code
VNM-VNF

5 DAYS
4 NIGHTS

	Destinations	Vietnam
	Tour Meets Tour Ends	At your hotel in Hanoi. At your hotel in Hanoi.
	Fly in to Fly out of	Noi Bai International Airport (HAN) Noi Bai International Airport (HAN)
	Group Size Minimum Age	2-16 riders 0 (on scheduled departures)

ACTIVITY PROFILE



3 Cycling days	162 km Total cycling distance
32 km Avg distance / day	m Avg climbing / day

PRICING



Price	US\$ 980
Bike Hire (Hybrid)	Included
Bike Hire (E-Bike)	US\$ 85
Single Supplement	US\$ 60
Child Pricing	Under 5: free; Age 5-11: 20% discount

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Hotel pick up
- ✓ Hotel drop off
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Bike and helmet
- ✓ Snacks and drinks
- ✓ Accident insurance

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

DEPARTURES



04 March - 08 March 2019
11 March - 15 March 2019
18 March - 22 March 2019
25 March - 29 March 2019
01 April - 05 April 2019
08 April - 12 April 2019
15 April - 19 April 2019
22 April - 26 April 2019
29 April - 03 May 2019
06 May - 10 May 2019

See website for later departures

TRIP PROFILE

We ride a total of 162 kilometres through spectacular limestone mountain scenery, bright green rice fields, and charming villages. The roads are a mixture of good asphalt, small rural trails, and dirt roads– all perfect for a family of cyclists. Each day there will be additional activities to learn about Vietnam, immersing yourself hands on in the culture. A highlight will be an afternoon with monkeys, gibbons, civets, and pangolins! The first two nights we stay in a village at a homestay. We sleep in a stilt bamboo house in an open dormitory-style room with shared facilities. There is the option to upgrade to a hotel with a pool. Please contact us for the cost.

Suitability: This trip is designed and suitable for families with children of any age. We have included many activities for an action-packed holiday. The tour is suitable for anyone with minimal biking experience and wants to discover Vietnam's rich history and culture by bicycle.

Biking Conditions: You can expect a gentle ride each day. The cycling is leisurely with plenty of stops to rest or take photos. We cycle on a variety of terrain, from tarmac to concrete paths to dirt roads. There are a few small hills, but there will always be the option to jump in the support vehicle. Cycle as much or as little as you like.

Day 1 Hanoi - Mai Chau

Our guide will pick you up at your Hanoi hotel to start our 4 hour drive to Mai Chau, a rural town in Hoa Binh province, southeast of Hanoi. The scenery is dotted with limestone karsts and ethnic highlanders of White Thai, Hmong, and Zao living in the small villages that we pass along the way. We stop at the top of a pass for a panoramic view of stunning Mai Chau Valley so you can get an overview of where we will be cycling. We check into our lodging, have lunch, and then it's time to get on the bicycles and explore the valley. We start pedaling on small paths, past green rice paddies and local stilt houses, and of course meeting friendly local villagers. Taking a break at Hoa Ban Plus, a weaving centre and living complex for disabled women, gives us a chance to see the traditional handicraft of weaving in action, and we can even give it a try. You'll leave with a new appreciation for fabric after seeing how complex and time-consuming it is to produce. We continue cycling on to our homestay overnight at Pom Coong village. We sleep in stilt bamboo house in an open dormitory-style room with shared facilities.



Homestay



Lunch, Dinner



Ride 22km

Day 2 Mai Chau - Buoc Village

After breakfast, we ride up to the hills along a dirt road frequently used by local villagers. As we climb, the valley views open up to boundless, spectacular scenery. A steep 2 km climb is rewarded with a 10 km downhill through rustic villages and lush terrain. A quiet paved road and a small trail leads us to the White Thai village of Buoc. We can take a short walk around and learn about local village life, visit a few households, and see where families cook and sleep. We help with preparing lunch by making "Com Lam", traditional sticky rice in bamboo. With a belly full of local delights, we cycle back to Mai Chau and have the rest of the afternoon free.



Homestay



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 35km

Day 3 Mai Chau - Cuc Phuong National Park

We drive one hour drive to Cho Lo where we then get on the bikes. A flat ride on country roads follows where we'll have to watch out for chickens crossing the road and give right of way to water buffaloes. A bowl of Pho, noodle soup, will hydrate and fill us. Be sure to add in the greens, herbs, spicy pastes, and a squeeze of lime to make the soup taste to your liking. A short transfer takes us uphill to Cuc Phuong National Park in Ninh Binh Province, the oldest national park in Vietnam and its most significant biodiversity site. Time to get wild! A guided tour of a rescue centre where monkeys and gibbons are being rehabilitated to return to the jungle will show you how many species there are in the jungle. After seeing the antics of the monkeys it's a short walk to the Carnivore and Pangolin Education Centre, where we'll learn about and see civets and the unusual pangolin with their protective armour of scales and long tongues for capturing ants and termites. The rescued animals are in well-designed, spacious enclosures, and the centre offers interactive displays to understand the threats to wildlife and learn about conservation. A fun and educational afternoon with wildlife!



Cuc Phuong National Park Guest House



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 35km

Day 4 Cuc Phuong National Park - Tam Coc

A feast for the senses today, from the sight of the towering karsts to the sound of the river to the taste of our self-cooked dinner. Cycling from our guesthouse, we go downhill before riding along a dyke that provides a flat and safe ride, to the town of Hoa Lu. An ancient capital of the Dinh and Le Dynasties, we step back in time and visit a 17th century temple built in the shape of a Chinese character. After lunch, we change from bikes to boats and relax and enjoy the amazing mountains that dominate most of the region. We are rowed through a cave by local sampan rowers who use their feet to oar and enter a green and fertile land. Back on land, we head to our resort amidst rice fields. Another hand on meal as we assist in the preparation, learning the best technique to roll fresh spring rolls, and then feast on our creations.



Tam Coc Rice Field Resort



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 30km

Day 5 Tam Coc - Bat Trang - Hanoi

A change of pace as we get our hands dirty. Cycling away from the karsts, we follow numerous rivers as they reach toward the coast. The scenery changes to flat plains as we cycle into the delta, a guaranteed flat ride. We take a break at Phat Diem Stone Cathedral, which has a unique blend of eastern and western architecture illustrated by its pagoda-styled roofs. We transfer to Bat Trang, a ceramic producing village that makes giant vases. Make your own souvenir tea cup or bowl using local techniques. Then it's time to head back to Hanoi for your onward travel.



Breakfast, Lunch



Ride 40km

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Bike hire is included in the tour. Child bikes and tag-along bikes (for ages 5-11, max. weight: 38 kg/85 lb) are available. Adults must be experienced riders to pull a tag-along and preferably have experience with tag-alongs. The bikes are well-known makes of hybrid or mountain bikes (depending on the tour) with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, v-brakes, and Shimano components and front suspension.

You can also hire an electric bike (or an E-Bike) for the price listed in the tour pricing section. We have 2 sizes available: S = 155 cm - 170 cm and M = 171 cm - 180 cm. The E-Bikes are GIANT brand with SHIMANO Alivio 1,9 speed, disc brakes, and adjustable suspension fork.

Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

THE NITTY GRITTY

Passports and Visas

Please make sure your passport is valid for a minimum of 6 months beyond the duration of stay in Vietnam. Most nationalities require a visa for Vietnam, however 22 nationalities including citizens of UK, France, Germany, Spain and Italy are exempted from visa when entering Vietnam not exceed 15 days, regardless of type of passport and immigration purpose. However they must acquire a tourist visa if staying longer. For a list of countries exempt go to this [page](#).

For [46 nationalities](#) – including Australians, Canadians and Americans – an [e-visa](#) can be obtained. This must be applied for and received before departure to Vietnam. To check for the E-visa and tourist fee for single entry and multiple entries please check the [Visa fee](#). You must scan a copy of your photo and passport when applying and get your approval letter of your visa on arrival at international airport of Vietnam. To learn more click [Visa process](#). The processing time is 1-3 working days (not include Saturday, Sunday and Vietnamese holiday).

Alternatively you can obtain a visa to Vietnam from the embassy worldwide. Here is the list of [locations](#). You must specify your arrival date when applying for a visa and it is from this date that the 30 days will be calculated. When picking up your visa check to be sure the dates match your travel plans and that it is stamped directly into your passport as it will not be accepted if it is stapled in.

Health

Recommended vaccinations are typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A. A certificate for Yellow Fever is required when arriving from an infected area within six days. Vietnam is a malarial area and you will need to take anti-malarial tablets. Please speak to your doctor for the most up to date information.

Weather

Weather in Vietnam is divided into 4 main regions - the far north, north, central and south.

The far north can get very cold in December and January while the dry season runs from October to late March and the wet season between April to September.

In Hanoi & the north, it is hot, wet and humid from May to October while November to April is cooler and dry.

Central Vietnam experiences hot, dry weather between January & August with temperatures ranging in the mid 30°C. High levels of rainfall are during September - November.

Southern Vietnam is dry and hot from November to April, and warm and wet between May & October, with the highest rainfall in June, July & August.

Food

Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Most meals are Vietnamese food and features noodles, rice curries and soups. Vietnamese cuisine is world famous and we make sure you sample as much variety as possible. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit, and soft drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. Beer is freely available everywhere in Vietnam but is NOT included in the price.

Solo Travelers

SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for traveling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveler of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

Extra Expenses

We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US\$10, for incidentals. It is customary to tip local tour guides and drivers, however, the amount you give should be dependent on the level of service you receive. As a general guide, we suggest US\$ 3-4 per person per day is appropriate.

Money

The official national currency is the Vietnam dong (d), but the US dollar is widely accepted in tourist centers. However, in smaller towns and villages the dong is preferred. ATMs are available in all major tourist destinations and big cities. Vietcombank has the best network with a single withdrawal limit of 2,000,000d (about US\$125). Most major currencies can be exchanged at leading banks in Vietnam, but the US dollar is preferred away from the tourist centers. Changing US\$100 will make you an instant millionaire! You cannot legally take the dong out of Vietnam but you can reconvert reasonable amounts of it into US dollars on departure.

GENERAL BOOKING INFO

Booking

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place: Read our [Booking Conditions](#)

From the tour page click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2)

required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If you are unsure about the trip status, please [email us](#) or call our office. For the next steps you'll need to know the names of the people traveling and have either a Visa or a MasterCard. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height, or you can add that later by logging into [Manage My Trip](#) (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). However, if you wish to get a children's discount, please do fill out the date of birth of the riders. If you are having any problems, [please send us an email](#), or give us a call (+66 2 381 7490) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

Deposit

For Long Tours (7 days or more) to guarantee your place we require a 30% or 500 USD deposit, whichever is the greater. For Short Tours (6 days or less) we require full payment to guarantee your place. We also require that you take out [travel insurance](#) when you book your holiday. Besides covering you during your holiday it will also enable you to claim for any money that you have paid to us, including your deposit, should you have to cancel your trip.

Balance

Full payment must be paid 45 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights. Our confirmation will include personal details you provided us (including your flight information), visa application advice, a packing suggestion list and a detailed tour itinerary. It will also include a checklist to ensure you get everything ready for your holiday.

Cancellation Policy

On the rare occasions when we, SpiceRoads, must cancel a trip, all payments received to date will be 100% refunded, which constitutes full settlement. There will be absolutely no deductions. If you, the client, must cancel your reservation, your cancellation fee will be determined according to when you cancel. For full details, please read our [cancellation policy](#).

Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts can not be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for loyalty discount.

International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your [travel insurance](#) that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel [e-newsletter](#) is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Please note that the itinerary is subject to

change due to unforeseen circumstances, however, we will always do our best to adhere to this original itinerary

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