

SPICE ROADS

CYCLING



HILL TRIBES OF VIETNAM

Tour Code
VNM-VNE

10 DAYS
9 NIGHTS

	Destinations	Vietnam
	Tour Meets Tour Ends	Hanoi Hanoi
	Fly in to Fly out of	Noi Bai International Airport (HAN) Noi Bai International Airport (HAN)
	Group Size Minimum Age	2-16 riders 18 (on scheduled departures)

ACTIVITY PROFILE



7 Cycling days	502 _{km} Total cycling distance
72 _{km} Avg distance / day	1375 _m Avg climbing / day

PRICING



Price	US\$ 2,100
Bike Hire (Mountain Bike)	US\$ 140
Bike Hire (E-Bike)	US\$ 300
Single Supplement	US\$ 160

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Airport drop off
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

DEPARTURES



11 April - 20 April 2020
05 September - 14 September 2020
31 October - 09 November 2020
01 November - 10 November 2020
04 September - 13 September 2021
06 November - 15 November 2021

TRIP PROFILE

The cycling is challenging and follows quiet mountain roads through stunning scenery punctuated by local farming communities and sculpted landscapes. This relatively untouched region incorporates rain forests, bamboo forests, lush cultivated valleys, meandering rivers, lakes, national parks.

We ride up to 500 km through spectacular mountain scenery. The roads are a mixture of good asphalt, broken or potholed roads. Although there are a few challenging climbs, it is very enjoyable and anyone who enjoys hill riding will love this tour. The scenery really is fantastic, and the people are extraordinarily colourful and friendly.

Suitability: This trip will have some challenging hill sections as it is a very mountainous region, and we have to cross many valleys and mountains. Fitness, of course, will be a huge asset on those hills.

Biking Conditions: This tour is mainly on good quality tarmac road. The tour is fully supported, and the bus is always close at hand for those that find the riding too difficult.



Day 1 Hanoi

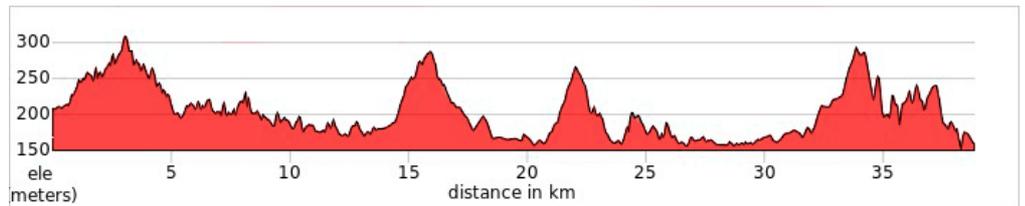
Meet in Hanoi and in the evening, we gather for dinner and trip briefing.

 Church Boutique 95 Hang Gai  Dinner

Day 2 Hanoi - Ba Be National Park

In the morning, we transfer 4 hours outside Hanoi and have a lunch break in Bac Kan. It is finally time to get on the bicycles and we start cycling on quiet roads, through small villages of Tay and Thai ethnic minorities. The riding will be along rivers and undulating most of the day. Passing Cho Ra's small market, we turn left and then are only 17 km from Ba Be National Park. Home to 65 mammal species, 27 bat species, 233 bird species, and 43 reptile and amphibian species Ba Be National Park is also known for its diversity of butterflies -- 354 species have been recorded. If time permits, we will take a boat trip to explore the beauty of poetic Ba Be Lake. Considered as the green pearl of northeast Vietnam, Ba Be Lake is Vietnam's largest natural lake and is surrounded by rugged limestone mountains. We spend the night in a Tay stilted house on the banks of the lake. Hot showers and western toilets are available.

 Homestay  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

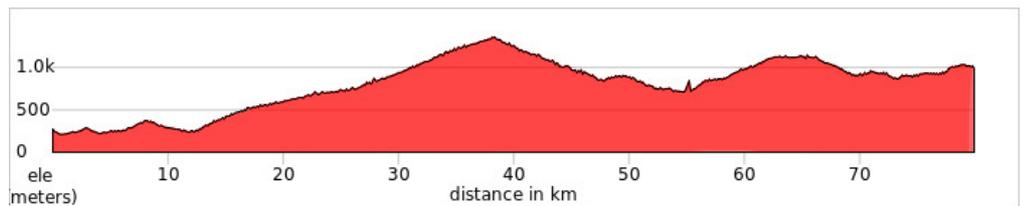


📍 Ride 38km 📈 +746m 📉 -793m

Day 3 Ba Be National Park – Bao Lac

In the morning a short transfer takes us to our start point at Ha Hieu. From here we will cycle on dirt and paved roads to Tinh Tuc where we pause for lunch. If we're lucky we will be able to seek out some delicious sticky rice in banana to give us power through the afternoon of riding. There are two hills to conquer today, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, but both are gradual with no steep gradients. We cycle until reaching near Bao Lac then get in the van to transfer to our hotel. The Black Lolo hill tribe are the primary residents of Bao Lac and are recognizable by their heavily adorned black clothing and dyed black teeth. Descendants from Yunnan province, the Black Lolo migrated to Vietnam some 400 years ago and reside in wooden stilt houses along the mountain edges and grow rice, corn, vegetables and breed small livestock for their villages.

🏠 Viet Hoang Guest House 🍴 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

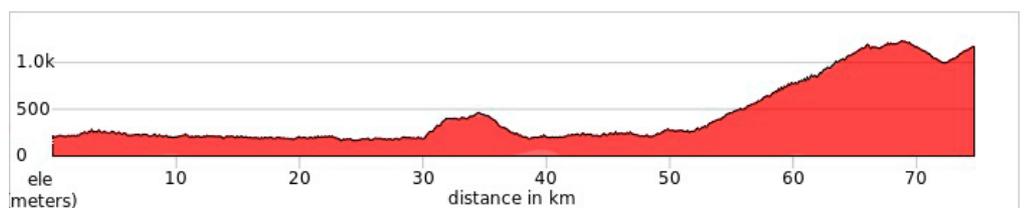


📍 Ride 80km 📈 +1520m 📉 -786m

Day 4 Bac Lac – Dong Van

We get on the bikes first thing and cycle directly from the hotel following the Gam River. It is a leisurely, flat pedal for the first 50 km. Thereafter we have a long ascent to Meo Vac, cycling alternately through forests and terraced rice fields. On each switchback we are the recipients of stunning views and limestone panoramas. There are still some challenging hills ahead so we will transfer the remainder of the route to Dong Van. But stay awake as the scenery remains spectacular, including the amazing Ma Pi Leng Pass, also known as Heaven Gate. To construct this pass in 1962, thousands of workers tied themselves to the cliffs to complete the project in just 330 days – a legendary achievement. At almost 2,000 metres you feel like you can touch the sky but at the same time are grounded by the meandering flow of the Nho Que River. In this region you are likely to see ethnic families of the Black Dao, Red Dao and Hmong.

🏠 Hoa Cuong 🍴 Breakfast, Dinner



📍 Ride 75km 📈 +1245m 📉 -788m

Day 5 Dong Van - Ban Me

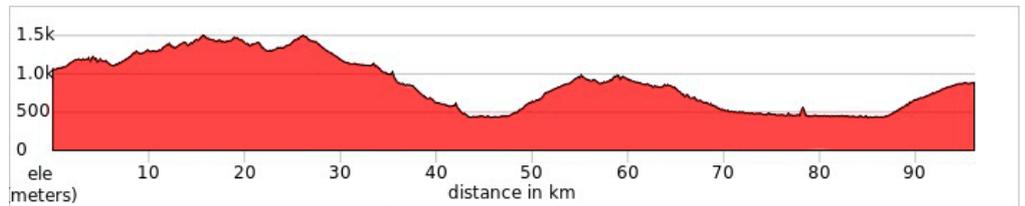
We commence another marvelous cycling day with two long climbs ahead. On the way, we stop to see Vuong's Palace, which once belonged to a Hmong king during the French domination. The palace is a unique architecture mix of European and Chinese styles. The road today is rolling with a lot of stiff climbs and long descents, including one 17 km downhill where you will lose close to 1,000 m in elevation. There will be many opportunities for photos of the perpendicular walls of rock of this limestone mountain range. We stop riding at Quan Bai and transfer from there to the provincial capital. We take a stop in Ha Giang town and have a quick look around town before we head to our home for the night, Me Village, on the outskirts of the town. This beautiful Nung village is a maze of small paths leading through tended rice fields and well kept traditional homes on stilts.



Homestay



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 96km



+1614m



-1794m

Day 6 Ban Me - Hoang Su Phi

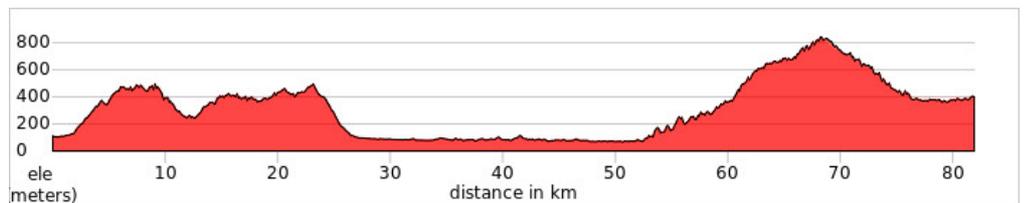
This morning we leave behind our homestay and new Nung friends as we head south along the Lo River. The first 45 kms are flat and easy and we will finish them off quickly. The next 17 km will be tough though, as we slowly climb up to the top of Con Troi Pass at 800 m. Along the way you'll see many ethnic groups -- Tay, Nung, Hmong and Dao – working in the steep rice terraces or in their hamlets. Once we have the climb behind us it is mostly downhill to the Pan Hou Resort. Located in a beautiful valley, our resort is nestled amid terraced gardens along the banks of a small river.



Pan Hou Resort



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 82km



+2174m



-1883m

Day 7 Hoang Su Phi Rest Day

Today is at your leisure to enjoy the surroundings of our eco lodge. Go for a stroll through local villages and end your day at the resort's small spa, offering traditional medicinal hot tubs and massage (optional).



Pan Hou Resort



Breakfast

Day 8 Hoang Su Phi - Xin Man - Bac Ha

Today is hard day with mixed surfaces to the market town of Bac Ha. We start from the hotel and have an undulating day through through townships and dense pine forests with the smell of these trees lingering all morning. There are many small roadside waterfalls that make for a refreshing cool down for those in need. We'll stop for a picnic lunch at a beautiful vista before continuing on roads carved out of the mountains. Some sections of the road today are under constant repair so dependent on the previous weather and the work being done there may be the need to jump on the bus for a small section. We stop riding in the town of Xin Man, at the base of a major

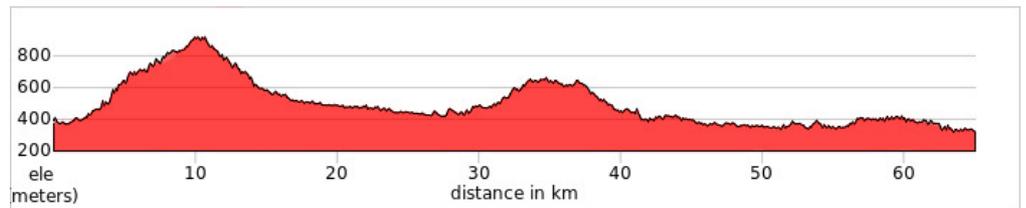
climb. From here we will transfer to the town of Bac Ha, famous for herbal steam baths, the perfect way to unwind at the end of the day.



Sao Mai Bac Ha Hotel



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 65km



+1529m



-1609m

Day 9 Bac Ha - Bao Yen - Hanoi

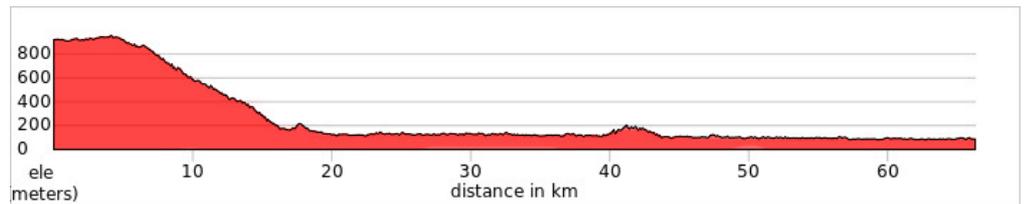
Wake up early and be ready to be infiltrated by a flurry of colour and commerce that is the Sunday market. Villagers flock in from the hills and valleys for their weekly shopping and socializing. The cattle and clothing sections are interesting but don't bypass the food stalls where peoples meet, talk, eat and drink a kind of locally made corn-wine. Back to the hotel then departing Bac Ha town which is a largely downhill affair for the first 20 kms as we leave the hills and mountains behind and head into the lowlands for a leisurely pedal. At the main highway our bus will be waiting for us and we have a 4 hour transfer back to Hanoi. We will arrive in the early evening and we quickly freshen up at the hotel before a farewell dinner at a restaurant to share memories about the trip.



Church Boutique 95 Hang Gai



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 66km



+797m



-1630m

Day 10 Hanoi Departure

Our tour ends today after breakfast. At leisure until transfer to the airport for onward international flights.



Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we do not provide them as part of this tour. However, you can hire bikes locally for the price listed in the tour pricing section.

The bikes are well-known makes of mountain bikes with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, v-brakes, and Shimano components and front suspension. If you bring your own bike, please make sure it is a mountain bike, preferably with front suspension, in good mechanical order.

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.

* For travellers on our [Saigon to Bangkok](#) or [Saigon to Siem Reap](#) trips, an eVisa is not applicable at the Vietnam exit point at Chau Doc. However, Visa On Arrival is available with an approval letter, which SpiceRoads can arrange at cost.

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

When booking your tour, you'll be required to pay a deposit to guarantee your place. For tours priced US\$ 2,000 and lower, the deposit amount is US\$ 200 per tour, per rider. For tours priced US\$ 2,001 and above, the deposit amount is US\$ 500 per tour, per rider. For tours priced US\$ 500 and below, full payment is required upon booking.

Read more about booking and paying for your trip [here](#).

All SpiceRoads trips require proof of travel insurance when booking your holiday. Besides covering you during your trip, travel insurance will also enable you to claim any fees that you have paid to us, including your deposit, if you have to cancel your trip

Balance

Tours priced below US\$ 500 require full payment at the time of booking. For tours priced US\$ 500 and above, 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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