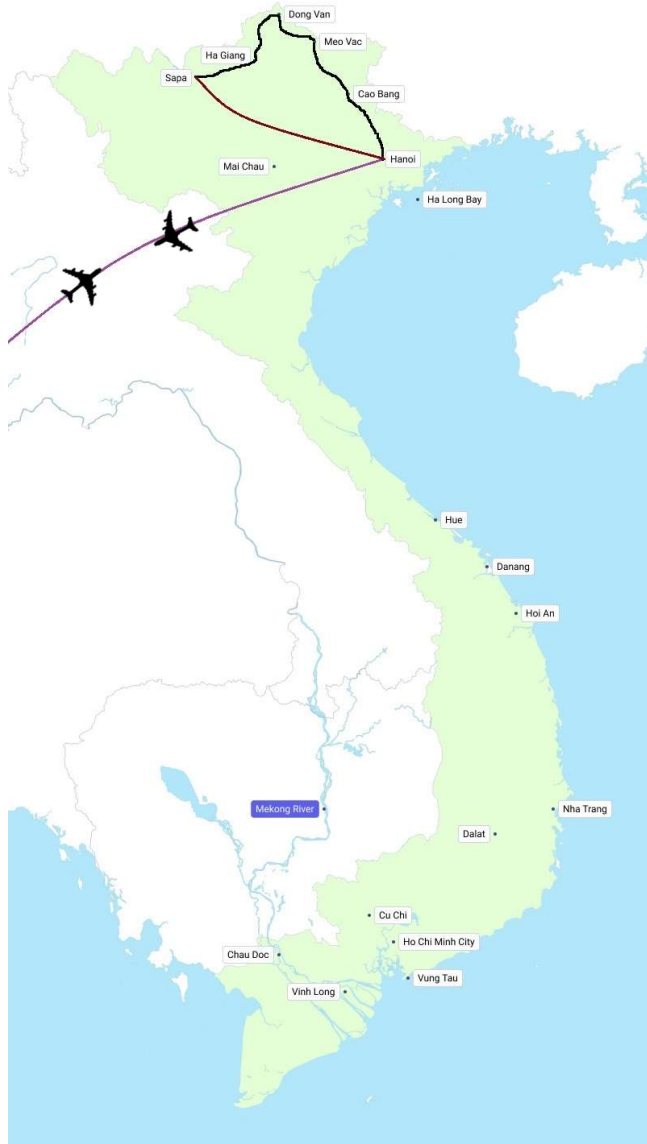


Epic Motorbike Adventure (12 days)

Vietnam

Departs October - November or February-April



Please note: This itinerary is designed for true adventure enthusiasts eager to explore Vietnam's stunning landscapes and remote regions by motorbike. If you love expansive vistas and discovering quaint villages untouched by modernity, this journey is perfect for you.

Unimaginable This motorbike adventure through Vietnam's far north offers an unforgettable blend of breathtaking natural beauty, rugged terrain, and vibrant hill tribe cultures.

Highlights include visits to tribal villages, where you'll witness the construction of thick mud houses, the cultivation of terraced crops, and the weaving of colourful traditional costumes. The journey also takes you across several dramatic mountain passes and to the former palace of a local king, built with wealth from the opium trade. A visit to one of the region's remote weekly markets, where unusual and sometimes shocking food items are sold, adds to the unique experience.

In addition to exploring the remote north, the itinerary includes time in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital. Here, you'll learn about Ho Chi Minh, the country's revolutionary leader, and visit a museum that once housed American pilots captured during the Vietnam War, alongside other fascinating historical sites.

Day 1: Wednesday

Vietnam (Hanoi)



Upon arriving in Vietnam, our tour leader greets us at Hanoi International Airport. We then board our bus and head to our hotel in the bustling downtown district. As we settle in, the sights, sounds, and aromas of this vibrant city, with its 1,000-year history, begin to immerse us in the quintessential Asian experience.

This afternoon, we visit the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university, established in 1070, followed by a tour of the Hoa Lo Prison Museum, which once held American pilots captured during the Vietnam War. In the evening, we delve into the lively Old Quarter, where we enjoy our first taste of authentic Vietnamese cuisine amidst the city's dynamic

and bustling atmosphere. (meals: dinner)

Day 2: Thursday

Hanoi - Cao Bang



Our day begins with a visit to Hanoi's historic Old Quarter, where we navigate winding lanes lined with vendors selling everything from headstones and tin wares to traditional medicines. Amidst the bustling streets, we join the locals for a breakfast of phở (pronounced "fur"), Vietnam's iconic beef noodle soup.

Afterwards, we board our private bus and set off on a 300-kilometre journey to the far northeast border regions. We arrive in Cao Bang, a provincial capital that sees few foreign visitors. This town, once a key hideout for the Vietnamese Communist movement in the 1940s due to its

strategic proximity to China, offers a glimpse into a lesser-known chapter of Vietnam's history. (meals: breakfast, dinner)

Days 3 & 4: Friday & Saturday

Cao Bang - Bao Lac – Meo Vac



Leaving behind the comfort of our bus, we begin our motorbike adventure, embarking on a 120-kilometre journey through the scenic countryside. The ride takes us through expansive fields and rolling hills. Along the way, we quickly adapt to local driving conditions—navigating around wandering buffalo, narrow roads, and crops drying along the roadside. As we pass through the remote countryside, curious locals often stop and stare, intrigued by our presence, as we make our way towards Bao Lac.

The next day, we set off on a 90-kilometre ride. Though the distance may seem short, the challenging road conditions and breathtaking scenery ensure a full day of travel. Along the way, our local guide explains the cultivation of rice and other unfamiliar crops. We also sample unique roadside delicacies.

Towards the end of the day, dramatic rocky outcrops rise in the distance, creating a surreal, almost lunar landscape. Passing through forested limestone areas, we soon encounter stark granite mountains.

Descending into a flat valley surrounded by steep, craggy hills, we arrive in the remote town of Meo Vac. (meals: 2 breakfasts)

Day 5: Sunday

Meo Vac – Ma Pi Leng Pass - Dong Van



A short walk brings us to the lively Sunday market, a vibrant weekly gathering where a wide array of goods is traded. This market attracts various ethnic minority groups who travel by motorbike or on foot, making it as much a social event as a commercial one. The market is organised into sections for rice wine, farming tools, clothing, local food stalls, and even livestock, including horses, pigs, and cows. Food specialties range from rice patty cakes to pig intestine soup, with freshly fermented rice wine sold by the jug.

We leave Meo Vac on our bikes and head to the next Sunday market in Dong Van, 28 kilometres away. En route, we traverse Vietnam's most breathtaking mountain pass, Ma Pi Leng. This winding road climbs to an altitude of 1,500 metres, skirting the edge of a dramatic 20-kilometre-long canyon. The views stretch across the rugged landscape and into China, providing endless photo opportunities.

Descending into Dong Van, we visit the historic Ancient Street, home to 100-year-old mud houses. There's time to explore the market, where brightly dressed Mong women mingle with Mong men clad in black, often seen sipping rice wine and playing mahjong. After checking into our hotel, we take a break to recharge. After lunch, those eager for more adventure can opt for a 60-kilometre round trip to Lung Cu, Vietnam's northernmost point. This route passes through remote Lo Lo hill tribe villages near the Chinese border, offering more stunning landscapes. We are welcomed into a local mud house to observe traditional rice wine production. Nearby, a lookout tower perched atop a hill provides sweeping views across multiple mountain ranges. (meals: breakfast)

Day 6: Monday

Dong Van – Sa Phin - Pho Cao – Sung La - Yen Minh



We explore four lesser-known villages spread across a 50-kilometre route, each offering unique insights into Vietnam's rich cultural heritage. Our first stop is the village of Sa Phin, home to Nha Vuong, the former royal palace of hill tribe king Vuong Chi Sinh. This multi-roomed wooden and mud palace, designed like a fortress, features an armoury and lookout towers. Once a centre for opium production, the palace now displays historical photos and artefacts from this influential family.

Continuing 16 kilometres further, we arrive at Pho Cao, a charming cobblestoned village with mud houses that have stood for over 200 years.

Here, we observe locals drying corn and sweet potatoes and take the opportunity to meet some of the residents.

Our journey then takes us to Sung La village, located just off the main road. This village is home to a subgroup of the Lo Lo ethnic minority. The young Lo Lo women proudly display their intricately embroidered patchwork costumes, typically worn during weddings and special occasions.

The final stretch of today's ride descends into the valley of Yen Minh. In the evening, we stroll through the quiet streets before dining at one of the local restaurants. Here, menus are non-existent—diners simply choose from the dishes available that day. Arriving early ensures the best selection! (meals: breakfast)

Day 7: Tuesday

Yen Minh – Quan Ba - Ha Giang



Today's ride takes us along a winding 95-kilometre route through rolling hills and scenic landscapes. One of the highlights is an ancient stone wall, historically used to divide the territories of various hill tribe clans. Along the way, we pass crystal-clear rivers and towering bamboo groves lining the riverbanks.

We stop at a small weaving village, where hemp is grown and crafted into traditional clothing. Continuing our journey, we ascend the Quan Ba Mountain Pass and pause at the plateau village at its peak, offering a glimpse into daily life in this elevated region. From there, we tackle what feels like a never-ending series of sharp turns—nicknamed the "1000

corners"—as we descend towards Ha Giang.

Ha Giang, the provincial capital is nestled among steep hills and bisected by a wide river, the town offers a striking contrast to the remote villages we've visited. (meals: breakfast)

Days 8 & 9: Wednesday & Thursday

Ha Giang – Pan Hou – Bac Ha



This morning, we visit the Ha Giang Museum, a must-see attraction rich with fascinating exhibits. The museum offers insights into the region's geological formations, prehistoric settlements, and the impacts of both the Vietnam War and the 1979 conflict with China. A series of photographs highlights the Vietnamese army and hill tribe labourers constructing the iconic cliff-edge roads that wind through Ha Giang. After our visit, we saddle up for an 80-kilometre ride to Pan Hou. The first 20 kilometres take us along a quiet highway before we ascend into the hills, passing lush fruit plantations and small waterfalls. By mid-

afternoon, we arrive in a tranquil valley, where we can unwind while watching water buffalo roam among the terraced fields.

The following morning, we embark on one of the most remote roads of our journey, crossing several mountain passes. A standout highlight is the terraced fields of Hoang Su Phi, a stunning testament to human ingenuity, carved meticulously into the mountainsides over decades. In this isolated region, most stops offer complete silence, with no signs of human activity in sight.

In the afternoon, we descend into the township of Bac Ha, covering approximately 115 kilometres for the day. (meals: 2 breakfasts)

Day 10: Friday

Bac Ha – Sapa



Today's 105-kilometre ride takes us along a scenic route of ascents and descents, weaving along the Vietnam-China border. Our first stop is in Lao Cai, the gateway to China. Here, we walk up to the border crossing and catch a glimpse of the bustling Chinese city across the river.

After lunch, we head into the hills, riding past the towering peaks of Hoang Lien National Park. This mountain range is home to some of Vietnam's highest summits, including Fansipan Mountain, the tallest at 3,143 metres.

By early afternoon, we arrive in the town of Sapa, situated at an elevation of 1,650 metres. Once a French colonial retreat, Sapa serves as our base for exploring the remote northern border regions. This area is home to some of Vietnam's most vibrant hill tribes, including the Red Dao, Black Hmong, and Giay. (meals: breakfast)

Day 11: Saturday

Sapa - Hanoi



Saturdays in Sapa are bustling, as it's market day. Hill tribe communities from the surrounding valleys gather to stock up on supplies, while visitors from Hanoi escape the city's heat for a relaxing weekend in the cool mountain air. Sapa is renowned for its beautiful ethnic art, showcased in boutique galleries featuring oil paintings, woven baskets, textile hangings, and traditional jewellery.

After lunch, we bid farewell to Sapa and the majestic mountains of the north, embarking on a half-day bus journey back to Hanoi. Arriving in the capital at dusk, we have time to explore the vibrant streets or stroll around the city's picturesque lakes. Options for the evening are plentiful—browse an art boutique, enjoy drinks at a local beer hall, or wander through laneways filled with hawker-style food stalls. (meals: breakfast, dinner)

Day 12: Sunday

Depart Hanoi



We explore some of Hanoi's most significant landmarks, starting with the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum. This imposing Soviet-style structure serves as the final resting place of President Ho Chi Minh, the leader of North Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

Next, we visit the Army Museum, which provides a comprehensive overview of Vietnam's 20th-century conflicts, including those against the French, Japanese, Americans, Cambodians, and Chinese. The museum features an extensive collection of military equipment, including a captured MIG fighter jet, tanks, rockets, and other Soviet-era hardware.

We then wander through the narrow laneways of Ngoc Ha commune, a densely populated residential area that was once rice fields. Our destination is B52 Lake, the resting place of an American B-52 bomber shot down in December 1972 during one of the final bombing campaigns of the war.

We transfer to the airport for our homebound flight, bringing our journey to a close. (meals: breakfast)

Summary

Grading

Moderate; To get the most out of this trip, you need to be in good health. However, anyone with a good level of fitness will be able to take part. Some outdoor activities include physical exertion, and there may be long periods of exposure to the elements. You will be expected to walk every day and carry your luggage for short distances. The itinerary will include bike riding. Suitable packing lists will be provided to match the content of the itinerary.

Accommodation

Private tours/family tours: Accommodation is based on a double/twin share arrangement. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same gender. If you choose not to share or are the odd numbered person on tour, a single supplement is payable.

Transport (Motorbike information)

This tour includes a modern air-conditioned private coach, and a support vehicle for luggage to follow on the bike riding days of the trip (days 3-11).

You will be expected to ride a local motorbike (125cc-150cc Yamaha or Honda or a 150cc trail bike).

Alternatively, you may choose to sit as a pillion passenger with a rider provided. An experienced mechanic will also accompany the group on riding days.

It is advised to bring your own helmet as sizes are limited in Vietnam.

Your Tour Leader

A tour leader accompanies all group tours. Your tour leader is the person who most influences the success of your trip. They have been meticulously trained and are very experienced in running tours. Every tour leader is locally employed, therefore they are the best person to showcase their country and culture. Their expertise and knowledge creates an insightful and authentic experience of the region. They are with you throughout your trip from breakfast time until the group returns to the hotel in the evening. They are contactable 24/7.

For more information on the role of the tour leader and the local guides, please refer to our website.

Group Size

Private tours/family tours: Minimum group size is 12. There are no maximum participant numbers on any tour.

Land Trip Cost and Details

Cost per traveller from A\$ 1,950*

Based on a minimum of 12 travellers

*Smaller or larger group sizes priced on application

Inclusions

- All accommodation, transport, activities, entrance costs and other programs as described in the itinerary
- Motorbikes (days 3-11) and support vehicle
- Professional Edventure Travel tour leader throughout the trip & additional specialist guides
- Extensive destination-specific risk management and assessment
- Meals (and drinking water) as listed in the itinerary
- 24-hour **IN COUNTRY** support
- Pre-departure support, briefings and planning meetings
- Tips for tour leaders, local guides & drivers

Exclusions

- International flights to/from Vietnam
- Travel Visa costs (if required)
- Petrol and repairs for motorbikes
- Spending money
- Travel Insurance

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