INSIGHT TO A VETERAN’S VIETNAM EXPERIENCE
24 September – 05 October 2018
ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Destinations: Vietnam
Number of guest: 10 – 14 persons
Room type: Double/ Twin/ Single
Room reference: non-smoking, nice view, king size bed (where possible)
Travel style: Culture & History
Remarks:

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<th>Dates</th>
<th>Destinations</th>
<th>Accommodation</th>
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<td>Hanoi</td>
<td>Hilton Hanoi Opera</td>
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<td>26 – 27 Sep 2018</td>
<td>Hue</td>
<td>Saigon Morin hotel</td>
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<td>27 – 28 Sep 2018</td>
<td>A Luoi</td>
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<td>28 – 29 Sep 2018</td>
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<td>30 Sep – 01 Oct 2018</td>
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<td>05 Oct 2018</td>
<td>Saigon</td>
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DISCLAIMER:

- Tour quotation is based on the suggested hotel/room categories. Price is subject to change due to availability and fluctuation in airfares.
The capital Hanoi, located in Vietnam’s north, is the second most populous city in the country with approximately 11 million people. Compared to Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi is more traditional and refined. Today it is best known for its thriving contemporary arts scene and French architecture, reflected in many colonial villas and some notable public buildings scattered throughout the city. While it is rapidly developing, the city has retained many of its architectural features and cultural traditions.

As soon as you deplane, our Immigration Officer will meet you at the end of the jet bridge (or at the entrance of the terminal if there is no jet bridge), holding a signboard with your name(s) on it. The officer will assist you with immigration procedures. For those who already have their Vietnam visa, the estimated time to clear immigration is approximately 15-20 minutes per person.

For those applying for a visa on arrival, the estimated wait time for the visa is usually 30 minutes, depending on the number of guests in the queue. (FYI, there is only one visa-on-arrival counter at Noi Bai Airport.)

After clearing immigration, our Immigration Officer will escort you to the baggage claim to collect your luggage and introduce you to your guide who will be waiting outside the terminal.

If you cannot locate your guide, please go to the Airport information counter situated in the middle of Domestic and International arrival lobby (inside the terminal) and call the emergency numbers (+84) 9 1323 7040 for assistance. Your guide will come to meet you up and transfer you to hotel.

Meet with your host, Mr. Chuck Searcy, for a short briefing about your tour schedule over the following days. The rest of the day enjoy your leisure at the hotel’s facilities or wander the neighborhood and soak up the local sights and sounds.

Mr. Chuck Searcy is a US Army veteran of the Vietnam War who has knowledge of the history of the wars in Vietnam and two decades’ experience living here. After first returning to Vietnam in 1992 as a tourist, then working here for American veterans’ organizations since 1995, Searcy is now International Advisor to Project RENEW in Quang Tri Province. RENEW in the past three years has cleaned up and destroyed more than 50,000 bombs along the DMZ, provided artificial limbs to more than 1,000 amputees, and created income-generation for hundreds of families suffering from the consequences of the war, UXO, Agent Orange, poverty and related issues. Searcy is currently vice president of the Viet Nam chapter of Veterans For Peace, and a lifetime member of Vietnam Veterans of America. He is co-chair of the NGO Agent Orange Working Group. In 2003 he was awarded Viet Nam’s highest honor for a foreigner, the nation’s Friendship Medal. Searcy will
share your journey to famous former bases during the Viet Nam-American War and other historic sites with names that are seared into the consciousness of the American generation that lived through the decade of war that ended in April, 1975. We focus on the journey taking you back to the battlefields of that time, the momentous days of your youth, and the contrasts of Viet Nam today.

Meals: None  
Accommodation: Hilton Hanoi Opera/ Deluxe room

Day 2 – Tuesday 25 Sep 2018: Insight to Veteran's Experience

Hanoi has experienced more than 1,000 years of colorful history and survived many ups and downs which have contributed to the capital city’s charms and unique attractions. Today, you will explore and discover remnants and memories of the wars, and meet a Vietnamese veteran who was a soldier during the American war from 1970-1975, to get a glimpse of this history and his authentic experience.

0930: Start with the Hanoi Hilton where American POWs were imprisoned. Then head to Truc Bach and Huu Tiep Lakes in Ngoc Ha village where the wreckage of a B-52 which was shot down lies partially immersed in a lotus pond. Afterwards drive to Thang Long Royal Citadel (closed on Mondays). In that compound visit the deep underground war bunker which played an important role in the American war, especially in the 12 days and nights of the Ha Noi - Dien Bien Phu air battle during Christmas 1972.

Lunch is at a local restaurant at your own expense.

In the afternoon, continue your visit to the extensive Army Museum. (Closed on Mondays and Fridays). This repository of Vietnam's military history includes rooms full of war propaganda, photographs, and historical documents from Viet Nam’s wars defending the nation against China, France, and the US. End afternoon with a short stroll around Kham Thien Street, which was a main target of American carpet bombing and was seriously damaged during the 12 days and nights of the “Dien Bien Phu of the Air” battle in 1972.

This evening, enjoy a dinner hosted by a local veteran who will share with you his experiences and his life during and after the war.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner  
Accommodation: Hilton Hanoi Opera/ Deluxe room

Day 3 - Wednesday 26 Sep 2018: Hanoi-Hue by Vietnam Airlines #1543 @ 08.40/09.55 Economy class) - Hue - Study of 1968 Tet Offensive

Transfer from your hotel to the airport for the flight to Hue.
The imperial capital of the Nguyen Lords from the 17th to the 19th centuries, Hue’s splendid emperors’ tombs, ancient pagodas, and the remains of the Citadel contribute to its undeniable royal charm.

Follow the traces of the 1968 Tet Offensive battle for control of this southern city, including the old Shell Gas Station, the former MACV Compound, Tran Cao Van Street, Girl's High School, Hue University, Treasury, Public Health Building, Provincial Capital Building area, and the Church of the Redemptress.

We then enter the Citadel, with its ramparts and towers, and visit sites specific to the northern battle, including the Chuck Meadows and Dong Ba Gates where you will meet Mr. Nguyen Dac Xuan, a culture researcher, one of a survivor from this Battle. Transfer to Mr. Xuan’s house to participate in a 45-minute interaction with him to understand deeply this battle. He is willing to share with you the history of the battle and what saw with his own eyes in the past.

**Meals:** Breakfast  
**Accommodation:** Saigon Morin Hotel

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**Day 4 - Thursday 27 Sep 2018: Hue - A Luoi - Hamburger Hill (~ 65 km driving ~ 1.5 hour)**

Drive to rural A Luoi District with stops at the strategic Binh Dien and Bastogne Military Bases, used by the Americans to protect Hue against North Vietnamese attacks during the War. Enjoy the fantastic scenery along the way with rolling green hills, crystal-clear streams, and a bridge perching on the rugged banks of a small brook that winds its way through scattered big rocks.

Visit A Shau Valley and 937m (3,074ft) high Ap Bia Mountain, dubbed “Hamburger Hill” by the GIs. The name came from the heavy bombardment and shelling there which resulted in severe casualties on all sides in the battle – North Vietnamese Army (NVA), US GIs, and the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN).

This evening, enjoy a gong show performed by local hill tribe people, together with an outdoor dinner with the local people.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner  
**Accommodation:** Do Thanh hotel/ ROH

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**Day 5 – Friday 28 Sep 2018: A Luoi – DMZ (~ 150 km driving per way ~ 3 hours)**

Depart for the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a 5km (3mi) strip of land on either side of the Ben Hai River. Established after the first Indochina War, the zone functioned as the dividing line between North and South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Stop at places of military significance just south of the DMZ including the former American military base at Khe Sanh, the Rockpile, Camp Carroll, Dakrong suspension bridge, Lang Vay Special Forces Camp and more. Explore the Vinh Moc Tunnels where a village was constructed underground to avoid bombing.

In the afternoon, stop at the Quang Tri Provincial Mine Action Center for a briefing at Project RENEW. You will learn about the cleanup operations conducted by explosive ordnance disposal teams that have destroyed more than 50,000 bombs throughout Quang Tri Province in the last three years, reducing accidents nearly to zero, keeping today’s children and adults safe. Visit the Old Citadel of Quang Tri, the site of a bloody battle during the Easter Offensive in 1972.

**Meals:** Breakfast and Lunch
Accommodation: Muong Thanh Quang Tri/ Deluxe room

Day 6 – Saturday 29 Sep 2018: Quang Tri - Hoi An (~ 220 km driving per way ~ 4.5 hours)

After breakfast, head to Hoi An. En route stop at a number of different battle sites to see Hai River, Hien Luong Bridge, and Seventeenth Parallel.

Check into your hotel on arrival.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation: Anantara Hoi An/ Deluxe balcony room

Day 7 – Sunday 30 Sep 2018: Hoi An - My Lai with workshop - Qui Nhon (~ 295 km driving per way ~ 5 hours)

Drive 2.5 hours through beautiful countryside featuring rice paddies, vegetable gardens and cassava patches to My Lai, the site of one of the most horrific crimes of the Vietnam War. Pay tribute at the somber Son My Memorial centered on a stone sculpture of an elderly woman, arms carrying a dead child, fist raised in defiance.

Explore the small museum on site and view the photographic displays of the massacre and its aftermath, including images of soldiers who protected a group of villagers and those who exposed the atrocities. Tour the village where burnt-out shells of homes remain. On a more hopeful note, see how the local people have rebuilt their lives since that fateful morning of March 16, 1968. Drive south to Quy Nhon, stopping at the Bong Son area to explore the former area of operations of the 1st Cavalry and 173rd Brigade and the former US Army Base of LZ English.

Possible workshop at My Lai Museum with local Veterans. Suggested topic: “My Lai before and after war.”

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch
Accommodation: Avani Qui Nhon/ Avani Deluxe studio

Day 8 – Monday 01 Oct 2018: Qui Nhon - An Khe - Pleiku (~ 150 km driving per way ~ 4 hours)

Drive 3 hours along HW19 through An Nhon town with a stop where the French Groupment Mobile 100 (BR 252 483) at Mang Yang Pass were caught in a devastating ambush. Stop at An Khe, site of the former US Army base of Camp Radcliff. Continue to Hon Kon Mountain, the former base camp of the 1st Calvary. Hear to Dak To for a visit to the Dak To Airfields 1 and 2, followed by viewing of Hill 875.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch  
Accommodation: Darkruco Hotel/ Deluxe room  

**Day 9 – Tuesday 02 Oct 2018: Pleiku - Saigon by Vietnam Airlines #1427 @ 13.05/14.10 Economy class) - Saigon retracing the past**

You will be transferred to the Pleiku airport for the flight to Saigon.

Upon arrival in Saigon at lunch time, meet and transfer to Pho Binh for a late lunch of pho (noodle soup), the wartime headquarters where Viet Cong commanders gathered to plan the 1968 Tet Offensive.

After lunch, head to a **secret weapons chamber** used by the Viet Cong and then visit a shrine to US Embassy guards killed in the 1968 Tet Offensive, outside today’s US Consulate. Continue to the former CIA building (outside visit only), where helicopters evacuated the last remaining US citizens in April 1975. Visit the **Reunification Palace** for a guided tour of the former headquarters of the South Vietnamese Government and presidential residence.

Then head to the rooftop café of the iconic Rex Hotel, for a drink and a spectacular view of downtown Saigon as your guide explains the hotel’s place in history.

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch  
Accommodation: Majestic hotel/ Deluxe city view**

**Day 10 – Wednesday 03 Oct 2018: Saigon - Cu Chi & Tay Ninh**

This morning, board the private speed boat for cruising to Cu Chi tunnel. The ingenious Cu Chi tunnel complex is an **immense network of connecting underground tunnels** used by the Viet Cong as hiding spots during combat. Originally dug in 1948 as refuge from French air and ground sweeps, the tunnels also served as living quarters, communication and supply routes, and housed hospitals, food and weapons caches throughout the American War. **Visit the underground villages with a VC veteran** who once lived there, for a better understanding of the tunnels’ history, the hardships of life in the tunnels, and Vietnamese resilience during combat. With the help of your translator-guide, listen as the veteran recalls how he survived the living conditions of the subterranean hamlets where lack of air, food and water made conditions almost unbearable.

After lunch, head to **Tay Ninh province**. Visit **Phuoc Vinh (XT 967 490)**, **Quan Loi Airfield (XT 816 907)**, and **An Loc (XT 760 893) and (XT 780 990)**. Drive back to Saigon at the end of the day.

**Meals: Breakfast and Lunch  
Accommodation: Majestic hotel/ Deluxe city view**
Day 11 – Thursday 04 Oct 2018: Inside the Heart of Mekong Delta & Workshop; farewell dinner at Ambassador's Former Residence

Early morning departures leave from Saigon for a 1.5hr drive to Ben Tre, the gateway to the Mekong Delta. Escape the high-energy city for a day of exploring sprawling rice paddies and colorful fruit farms.

Arrive at the quaint An Khanh hamlet, where travelers will visit a small home factory that makes the traditional dish of sticky rice covered by coconut leaves. Meet with the owner and her hard-working team who will teach you about how they use century-old traditional methods to make this special and tasty cake.

Continue this rural journey of discovery with a short drive to meet a local family in Quoi Son village. After wandering though the lush gardens of this village, a motorboat awaits your arrival to begin a thirty-minute excursion passing peaceful scenes of countryside living. Disembark at a local ship building workshop and meet the owner who has perfected his craft, learning it from three generations of river boat-makers before him. With passion, he is devoted to preserving the traditional craft and supporting the local community.

Trade boat for bicycle and enjoy a relaxing 3 km ride over easy, level terrain as you travel through narrow village lanes lined with fruit orchards and customary cottages. When you arrive at your destination, sample exotic fresh fruits on the orchard of a local fruit farmer. Here you can also choose to ride on either a horse-drawn cart or tri-motorcycle through the lush surroundings of the fruit farms before boarding a sampan for a ride along the narrow canals of the Mekong.

End your excursion at a 100 year-old ancient house or local farmer's house where a lunch of Mekong Delta specialties will be served before driving back to Saigon.

Follow a lane dotted with colonial-era mansions until you reach a gate, behind which lies a truly enchanting villa. Home to Henry Cabot Lodge, the US Ambassador to South Vietnam in the 1960s, the villa is now a private residence and has been fully restored to its former glory, a beautiful mix of Vietnamese, French and American architecture.

*Take part in a 1.5 hour workshop with the local veterans. Topic suggested “Vietnam before and after the war. The American-Vietnam war through veterans’ eyes.”*

After the workshop, a fusion of traditional Vietnamese and western cuisine will be served in the magnificent dining room accompanied by live music, creating a uniquely memorable atmosphere.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner  
**Accommodation:** Majestic hotel/ Deluxe city view

Day 12 – Friday, 05 Oct 2018: Saigon Departure (Flight to be advised / own ticket)

Free at leisure until transfer to the airport for flight back home or connect to the next destinations.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**END OF SERVICE!**
**PRICING**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tour Price</th>
<th>Based on group size 10 – 14 persons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price per person on twin share</td>
<td>US$ 2,891.00</td>
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<td>Price per person in single room</td>
<td>US$ 3,549.00</td>
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TOUR INCLUSIONS:

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<th>Non-inclusions:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Overnight accommodation is inclusive of hotel</td>
<td>• Separate luggage truck</td>
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<tr>
<td>tax, hotel service charges and includes daily</td>
<td>• Vietnam Visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breakfast</td>
<td>• Other meals where not mentioned in</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Private transfers and transportation on tour</td>
<td>the program</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sightseeing with Local English speaking guides</td>
<td>• Drinks/water at included lunches</td>
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<tr>
<td>(one guide in each city)</td>
<td>and dinners</td>
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<td>• Entrance fees and boat rides</td>
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<td>• Meals as specified (meals only, no drinks/</td>
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<td>water)</td>
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<td>• Airfares: Hanoi – Hue/ Pleiku – Saigon</td>
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<td>(Economy class with airport tax)</td>
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<td>• Cold towels and water on sightseeing days</td>
<td>• Travel insurance</td>
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<td>• Welcome pack</td>
<td>• Tips &amp; gratuities</td>
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<td>• Airport assistance services upon arrival in</td>
<td>• Other services not listed in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanoi</td>
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NOTES:

- All flight times are local.
- Flight times and the daily order of sightseeing are subject to change.
- Vietnam Airlines allow for advance seat assignment on some domestic and regional flights (those departing Hanoi/Danang/Saigon airports only) with advance seat assignment within 24 hours before departure by check-in online.
- Transfer times are approximate and subject to local conditions at the time of travel.

**GENERAL BOOKING CONDITIONS**

**PAYMENT**
- 20% of the total tour cost to be deposited upon commitment of the tour. **This deposit is non-refundable.**
- 80% of the total tour cost to be paid 46 days prior to arrival date.
- 100% of the total tour is required 45 days prior departure or within 24 hours of confirmation if travelling within 45 days from departure.

**CANCELLATION:** Any cancellations must be made in writing.
- 22 days or more prior to arrival date: 20% deposit
- 21 - 15 days prior to arrival date: 50% of the total tour cost
- 14 - 8 days prior to arrival date: 75% of the total tour cost
- 7 days or less prior to arrival date: 100% of the total tour cost

**Special conditions:** Depending on airlines, hotels, cruises’ cancellation policies, the above conditions may be modified.
VISAS
Please ensure your passport is valid more than 6 months from the date of return for every country you are visiting. Please also ensure there is sufficient space in your passport to allow for all immigration procedures, taking note that some South East Asian countries take up a full page for the visa sticker and need yet more space on a separate page for entry & exist stamps.

Kindly note that visa service is not included in our proposal. Please contact Trails of Indochina for any visa service or guidance. Please note the following general information is subject to change concerning visas from our part of the world.

Vietnam: A one-month single entry visa is available on arrival with a pre-arranged visa invitation authorization letter. The visa invitation letter processing time is two weeks, rush service may be available at additional cost. The costs per person for the visa invitation authorization letter processing fee are $50 and an additional $25 per person must be paid in cash on arrival along with two passport photos at the Visa On Arrival Counter located in the International Airport. Selected nationalities can travel visa-free for 15 days if arriving by air or can apply e-visa (subject to change). Please refer for more details from Vietnam Predeparture Information.

TRIP & TRAVEL INSURANCE
The tour price does not include personal insurance. Travelers are highly recommended to purchase Trip Insurance & Travel Insurance upon commitment of the booking in case of force majeure. Trip Insurance covers the cost of your trip should you be forced to cancel your trip before you start the trip. Travel Insurance covers such costs as emergency and medical evacuation, hospital fees, property loss, etc which could possibly happen during the trip. If you would like Trails of Indochina to have a copy of your Trip Insurance & Travel Insurance information in case of emergency, please forward these details to your agent who will in turn forward to our office.