THE GRAND SOUTHEAST ASIA ADVENTURE

DETAILED ITINERARY | CAMBODIA, VIETNAM, LAOS, THAILAND | Nov 04/26



The land of a thousand smiles, ancient temples, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, exotic and welcoming cultures, Hilltribe villages, colorful markets and stunning scenery. ElderTreks' Grand Southeast Asia Adventure offers the best of Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos.

Our journey begins in Bangkok. Marvel at the amazing Grand Palace complex and the Temple of Dawn before taking a long-tail boat ride on the back canals of the Chao Phrya River.

Fly to Siem Reap, gateway to the fantastic ancient temples of Angkor. Visit the most impressive ruins: Bayon Temple, Banteay Srei, the "Citadel of Women", Terrace of the Elephants, Angkor Thom and much more. Enjoy a performance of classical Cambodian dance. We fly to Phnom Penh to begin our river journey along the Mekong into Vietnam.

In Vietnam, spend a relaxing day meandering through the rivers and canals of the Mekong Delta. Visit the infamous Cu Chi Tunnels before seeing the highlights and energy of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City).

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 25 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Start and finish in Bangkok, Thailand • All meals included • Includes 6 flights • UNESCO World Heritage Sites • Bangkok - Grand Palace, Temple of Dawn, Thailand • Cooking classes in Vietnam and Thailand • 2-day Mekong River journey, Laos • Spectacular Halong Bay, Vietnam • Remote Hilltribe villages

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Jan 11 - Feb 04, 2027	-	**$9995 USD**
Feb 12 - Mar 08, 2027	-	**$9995 USD**
Jan 06 - Jan 29, 2028	-	**$10695 USD**

Activity Level: 2

Comfort Level: Some rough/dusty roads and long drives. Flexibility is key due to changing internal airline schedules.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable hotels with private bathrooms.

ElderTreks

SMALL GROUP
EXOTIC ADVENTURES
FOR TRAVELERS 50 PLUS

Walk the streets of Hoi An - a "living museum" (UNESCO). Meander through tree-lined streets, past French colonial architecture and the old-quarter of Hanoi by cyclo and explore the thousands of limestone islands in the warm turquoise water of Halong Bay.

Fly to Luang Prabang (UNESCO) and discover some of Southeast Asia's most beautiful temples. Embark on a 2-day Mekong River journey into the remote regions of northern Laos.

We return to Thailand via the Golden Triangle and on to the northern city of Chiang Mai for Thai cooking lessons and a visit to Doi Suthep, overlooking the city and finish our tour back in Bangkok.

We hope you can join ElderTreks' adventure which visits Southeast Asia's greatest treasures - truly a journey of a lifetime.



DAY 1 ARRIVE IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Welcome to Thailand and the start of your Grand Southeast Asia Adventure!
Upon arrival in Bangkok, you are met and transferred to your hotel. Tonight we will enjoy our welcome dinner and group orientation.
Overnight in Bangkok.

DAY 2 BANGKOK - GRAND PALACE, RECLINING BUDDHA, CANAL JOURNEY

Visit the Grand Palace and the ancient temple Wat Pho, "Temple of the Reclining Buddha". After lunch, we visit the King's Royal Barges and Wat Arun, before boarding our long-tail boats.
We travel along the Chao Phraya River and observe Thai life on the water. In this river community, restaurants, fruit sellers, laundry facilities and even temples are all accessible by boat! We will enjoy dinner tonight at a riverside restaurant.
Overnight in Bangkok.


Wat Phra Kaew/ Grand Palace complex in Bangkok.


Reclining Buddha in Bangkok.

DAY 3 FLY TO SIEM REAP, ANCIENT TEMPLES OF ANGKOR

Early this morning, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Siem Reap. Angkor Wat is the largest religious monument ever built, covering an area of 200 acres with its towers, terraces and causeways. The Khmer Empire reached its zenith of artistic expression and architecture with the building of Angkor Wat. Built in the 12th century and abandoned in 1431, Angkor Wat was swallowed up by the encroaching jungle until the great temple complex was rediscovered in 1860 by French botanist Henri Mouhot. Today, we visit Prasat Kravan, Srah Srang, Banteay Kdei, Eastern Mebon and Pre Rup temples. Later this afternoon, we explore Ta Prohm, Takeo and Preah Khan temples.

Overnight in Siem Reap.

DAY 4 ANGKOR WAT (UNESCO)

Today, we continue our exploration of the magnificent temple complex of Angkor. Following breakfast, we will visit the South Gate of Angkor Thom, Bayon Temple, Terrace of the Elephants, Terrace of the Leper King, Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, and of course, Angkor Wat.

Tonight, we have dinner with a performance of classical Cambodian dances.

Overnight in Siem Reap.

DAY 5 ANGKOR - BANTEAY SREI, FLY TO PHNOM PENH

This morning, we visit Banteay Srei, "The Citadel of Women". Tucked away in the countryside, the sandstone carvings are better preserved here than at most temples of Angkor. Banteay Srei may be one of the smaller temples, but also one of the more impressive ones. In the afternoon, we will transfer to the airport for our flight to Phnom Penh, where we will be met upon arrival and transferred to our hotel.

Overnight in Phnom Penh.



Angkor Wat









DAY 6 PHNOM PENH

Phnom Penh is situated at the confluence of the Mekong, Bassac and the Tonle Sap Rivers. Once considered the most beautiful of the French-built cities of Indochina, its charm and character is still evident despite its turbulent past. Today's highlights include visits to the stunning Royal Palace and the Silver Pagoda. After seeing the most beautiful sites, we also reflect and touch on a sad and dark side of Cambodia's recent past under the Khmer Rouge as we visit the Killing Fields and Toul Sleng. After lunch we visit the National Museum.

Overnight in Phnom Penh.

DAY 7 BOAT JOURNEY TO CAN THO, VIETNAM

This morning, we embark on a scenic boat journey along the majestic Mekong River, departing from vibrant Phnom Penh as we cruise toward the charming riverside town of Chau Doc, Vietnam. Along the way, we'll soak in the lush landscapes and river life that define this enchanting region.

Upon arrival, we continue by road to the bustling heart of the Mekong Delta to Can Tho, where we'll unwind and savor a delicious, authentic Vietnamese dinner at a welcoming local restaurant.

Overnight in Can Tho.

DAY 8 MEKONG DELTA BOAT JOURNEY, FLOATING MARKET, HO CHI MINH CITY

After breakfast we will take a leisurely boat trip to explore the Lower Mekong Delta (Bassac River). Deposits of sediment from the Mekong River formed this rich verdant region. We journey to Cai Rang floating markets, which are the liveliest in the region. We have lunch in Can Tho at a local restaurant before departing for Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).

Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

DAY 9 CU CHI TUNNELS, HO CHI MINH CITY, FLY TO DA NANG

Following breakfast, we set out to explore the famous Cu Chi Tunnels - the Vietnamese soldier's underground tunnel system, that at one time stretched as far as the Cambodian border. The network consists of over 130 miles of tunnels in the Cu Chi district alone, parts of which are several stories deep.
There are trapdoors, specially constructed living areas, storage facilities, weapons factories, field hospitals, command centers and kitchens - all underground! Parts of this remarkable tunnel network have been enlarged and upgraded and are now open to the public.
After lunch we drive back to Ho Chi Minh City where we visit the Reunification Palace, which was the residence of the presidents of South Vietnam before 1975. We then visit the Notre Dame Cathedral and the historic Central Post Office before being transferred to the airport for our flight to Da Nang. A short drive will take us to Hoi An.
Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 10 HOI AN (UNESCO)

This morning, we meet the chef of the Triem Tay Cooking Class and embark on a delightful boat ride along the tranquil Thu Bon River. Set in a beautifully crafted bamboo space, this hands-on culinary experience offers stunning riverside views and warm village hospitality. We enjoy a delicious lunch while soaking in the peaceful surroundings.
In the afternoon, we stroll through Hoi An's enchanting streets—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—visiting the Museum of Trade Ceramics and the iconic Japanese Covered Bridge.
Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 11 HOI AN - LIFE ON THE RIVER

Today, we tap into Hoi An's rich traditions by crafting our own colorful lanterns, a symbol of the town's charm. Then we journey to Tra Que, a peaceful herb and vegetable village. After a stroll through lush gardens, we roll up our sleeves and join in local farming practices which include preparing soil, sowing seeds, and harvesting fresh produce. A soothing foot massage awaits before we return to town for a delicious local lunch.

The afternoon is ours to relax before we enjoy the spectacular A O Show and dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Overnight Hoi An.

DAY 12 TO HUE (UNESCO) VIA CHINA BEACH, IMPERIAL FORBIDDEN CITY

Today, we drive to Hue. Serving as Vietnam's capital from 1802 - 1945, Hue has traditionally been one of the country's cultural, religious and educational centers. We stop enroute and have a chance to dip our toes in the South China Sea at China Beach before proceeding to Da Nang to visit the Cham Museum. In the afternoon, we arrive in Hue and visit the Imperial City, also known as the Forbidden Purple City, which was based on Chinese designs in Beijing. Locally known as Dai Noi citadel, this impressive structure or enclosure was reserved for the Nguyen imperial family. The entire city is surrounded by a 10km moat and 10 gates. Afterwards we will enjoy a cyclo ride through the city streets of Hue. Dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Hue.

DAY 13 PERFUME RIVER BOAT TRIP, ROYAL TOMBS, FLY TO HANOI

Today's adventure begins with a serene boat cruise along the Perfume River, where we take in the tranquil beauty of Hue. We visit the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda, then explore the majestic tombs of emperors Tu Duc and Khai Dinh—each a masterpiece of imperial architecture. A heartfelt highlight awaits with a special lunch lovingly prepared by the nuns of Dong Thuyen Pagoda. Later, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Hanoi, Vietnam's vibrant capital.

Dinner and overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 14 HANOI TO HALONG BAY (UNESCO)

After breakfast we drive to Halong Bay, one of the most spectacular UNESCO World Heritage Areas and the world's largest marine limestone karst landscape. Halong Bay has thousands of weathered limestone islands that rise from the warm turquoise waters of the bay. Visually, Halong Bay is just spectacular! On arrival you will board your boat, a wooden junk, built modelling the old Vietnamese court vessels. This typical boat, with sails, wide stern and a rectangular superstructure will take you to the World Heritage Area, where you can enjoy some activities if weather permits. All meals will be provided on board.

Overnight on the boat in Halong Bay.

DAY 15 TO HANOI, WATER PUPPET PERFORMANCE

Today we continue to explore Halong Bay by boat. For early risers, the sunrise from the upper deck is a lovely way to greet the day from the water. We will enjoy brunch on board. We disembark at noon and journey back to Hanoi. This afternoon, we will enjoy a performance of the famous Vietnamese traditional water puppet show, followed by dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 16 SITES OF HANOI, OLD QUARTER

Today we explore Hanoi with its tree-lined streets and wide boulevards. We visit Ho Chi Complex, One Pillar Pagoda, the Temple of Literature, and Tran Quoc Pagoda.



Halong Bay.

We then travel by streetcar through the Old Quarter. This area has been the manufacturing and trading center for silk, rice, paper, fish and jewelry since the 15th century. Today, the area houses a number of small shops.
Afterwards, you will have some free to time to relax, go shopping or explore on your own.
Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 17 FLY TO LUANG PRABANG

This morning, we enjoy a relaxed breakfast before our early afternoon flight to Luang Prabang, a charming town nestled in the mountains of Northern Laos. Home to 58 villages—33 of which make up the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Old Town—Luang Prabang exudes timeless beauty and spiritual grace. Upon arrival, we're welcomed by our guide and transferred to our hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. In the evening, we may take part in a traditional Baci ceremony before dinner at a local restaurant.
Overnight in Luang Prabang.

DAY 18 LUANG PRABANG WALKING TOUR (UNESCO)

Luang Prabang is known as a mecca for Theravada Buddhism and has about 80 monasteries with approximately 1200 monks. For those who would like to experience the monks going on a 6am alms-round, your tour leader will be more than happy to organize this with offerings of rice for you to give to the monks as they walk by in a straight line. Time permitting we visit a vibrant local market this morning before our flight to Luang Prabang.
Located at the confluence of the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers, and surrounded by mountains, Luang Prabang is one of the most romantic cities in Southeast Asia. We have a walking tour of this beautiful old capital city which includes a visit to the National Museum, formerly a Royal Palace. We see a number of historic temples including Wat Sen, Wat Xieng Thang and Wat Mak Mo. The city has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the beautiful French mansions that grace the city are a historical reminder of its colonial past. We will also visit the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Center to learn about the many ethnic groups that make up the people of Laos. We return by tuk tuk to our hotel where we will have time to rest.
Overnight in Luang Prabang.

DAY 19 LUANG PRABANG - KUANG SY WATERFALL, K'HMU VILLAGES

We have the possibility this morning to wake up very early to go witness the Tak Bat ceremony, when the monks process along the streets of the town to receive the daily alms from locals. Afterwards we visit the morning market – a wonderful place to find interesting and authentic dishes, locally grown vegetables, and an abundance of snacks. We return to the hotel for breakfast.
After breakfast, we travel south of town to the famous of Kuangsi waterfall. Upon arrival, we take a short walking through the beautiful forest to the waterfalls where we can enjoy swimming in the clear pools. We will also have opportunity to visit the Asian Black Bear Rescue Center -a conservation centre that rescues animals from the wildlife trade. Meet the cute furry residents and learn about the efforts to protect Sun Bears in the wild.
Upon our return, we stop to visit local ethnic villages of Kamu and Hmong people to learn more about their daily life. En-route, we visit the Ock Pop Tock weaving centre, run by an organization that offers local weavers the chance to earn a decent income with their weaving skills. We visit Ban Xang Khong, a riverside village known for its traditional silk weaving and handmade Saa paper crafts.
Dinner is served at local restaurant
Overnight in Luang Prabang.





DAY 20 MEKONG RIVER JOURNEY, 'CAVES OF A THOUSAND BUDDHAS'

Early this morning we embark for our two-day voyage on the Mekong River to Pak Beng and Houay Xai. We will make a short stop at riverside villages to see the local people who work on the Lao-Lao whiskey produce, followed by a visit to Pak Ou Caves. Enjoy splendid natural scenery along the way, observing local fishermen and daily activities along the river. Pak Ou Caves, locally called Tam Ting, are filled with thousands of gold lacquered Buddha statues. The caves are noted for their miniature Buddha sculptures. Hundreds of wooden Buddhist figures take many different positions, including meditation, teaching, peace, rain and reclining.

Continue our cruise upstream on the Mekong river to Pakbeng, lunch is served on boat as local Lao cuisine. We will explore another local hill tribe village on the riverbank if time permits.

Upon arrival in Pakbeng, we will check in to our hotel and enjoy some leisure time before dinner at our hotel.

Overnight in Pak Beng.

DAY 21 MEKONG RIVER JOURNEY TO THAILAND

Embrace the sunrise over the Mekong River as we start our day towards Chiang Khong. Our journey continues through remote regions of northern Laos. We will make one stop enroute in a rural village to observe local daily life. After completing the immigration formalities, we cross the Laos/Thailand border and make our way for a relaxing evening in Thailand.
Overnight in Chiang Saen.

DAY 22 GOLDEN TRIANGLE TO CHIANG MAI

Today, we explore Chiang Saen before driving to Chiang Mai in the afternoon. Chiang Saen is the official center of the "Golden Triangle", where the borders of Burma, Thailand and Laos meet, at the confluence of the Ruak and Mekong Rivers. Historically, the "Golden Triangle" refers to a large geographic area, stretching thousands of square kilometers, within which opium trade is prevalent and vast fortunes were made. Enroute to Chiang Mai, we visit the "White Temple", a new take on traditional Buddhist temples.
With over 300 temples, set against a backdrop of rolling green hills, Chiang Mai is a visually striking city. The old city of Chiang Mai is a neat square bounded by moats and partial walls.
Overnight in Chiang Mai.

DAY 23 WAT DOI SUTHEP & THAI COOKING LESSONS

Visit Doi Suthep sitting at an elevation of 1,073m. Built in 1383 during the Lanna Thai period, legend has it that the temple's site was selected by an elephant sent to roam the mountainside, where upon reaching a suitable spot, it trumpeted, circled three times, knelt down and promptly died. In the afternoon, visit a lovely orchid and butterfly garden, followed by a local market with your Thai cooking instructor to purchase fresh ingredients, before preparing your evening meal at a cooking school.
Overnight in Chiang Mai.

DAY 24 CHIANG MAI TO BANGKOK

Today we fly from Chiang Mai to Bangkok. Depending on our flight time, we will either have the morning at leisure or afternoon at leisure.
On arrival we check in to our hotel in Bangkok. In the evening, we gather for a sumptuous farewell dinner.
Overnight in Bangkok

DAY 25 DEPART BANGKOK

We say a fond farewell to Southeast Asia with a transfer to the airport for our departure flights.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. Small groups allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), national guide, bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE "EDUCATIONAL" TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". We visit museums and local villages. We also have talks and discussions on history and culture, but this is only one aspect of what we do. We believe that it is equally educational to meet new people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent having a cold drink with locals in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All land transportation is included in the land price of the trip. We have our own airconditioned vehicles for road travel; we take 6 flights. Additional modes of transportation include boat, bicycle, cyclo and foot.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We always stay in good accommodations — both hotels and guesthouses, where each room has a private shower or bath. The accommodations have been chosen on the basis of location and atmosphere. The trip features 1 overnight on a boat in Halong Bay. Please note: single supplement cannot be guaranteed on the boat.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

Most of our tours to South-East Asia take place between November and February, or the "winter" season in South-East Asia. Daytime temperatures are around 70°F – 90°F, (21°C – 32°C) while night time temperatures can be cooler. Rain is not as prevalent during these months.

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $500 USD (plus insurance if you desire it) is due as soon as you decide to go and will reserve your place on the tour. The balance of the land payment is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and these are outlined in the "Terms & Conditions" section of our brochure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.
Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit

10. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. In many cases, we simply order a number of shared dishes, so that we can try everything.

11. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Take" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after you have booked the trip.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over en route, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the adventure, please call our office for more details. A Trip Specialist will be happy to answer your questions. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked the trip.















Bayon temple