

Orient Odyssey – *Journeys beyond the ordinary™*

14 Day

Vietnam & Cambodia Panorama

This journey presents a fascinating scenic look at Vietnam and the great traveler's plum of Angkor

From the dramatic limestone monoliths of Halong Bay, to the tranquility of Perfume River

From the white sandy beaches in Da Nang, to the cultural treasure-house of Hoi An

From forever busy, engaging Saigon we fly over the endless green expanse to Siem Reap

Where **"the epic poem"** of Angkor, called by **Arnold Toynbee**,

"Like the Odyssey and like Paradise Lost"!

Special Highlights – We cut no corners!

Visits to multiple UNESCO World Heritage and Culture Sites, and Southeast Asia's best museums

Upgraded luxurious 4 and 5 star hotels and boutique properties exclusively for 2015

Fascinating culture, gorgeous temples, spectacular ruins, lush tropical scenery, and vibrant cities

Unique **"People to People Contacts®"** feature throughout the journey

Interact with locals to obtain true insights of daily life, random stops at villages, farmer's home and markets

Inclusive culture experiences – the Water Puppet Show, a stroll in the bustling Old Quarters, cruise on the Halong Bay, the Perfume River and the Mekong, visits to the floating community in Cambodia.....



- **Hanoi** – Temple of Literature, One Pillar Pagoda, Hoan Kiem Lake, a stroll in the bustling Old Quarters & more
- **Halong Bay** – Magnificent voyage onboard traditional wooden junks, enjoy the beautiful landscape and caves
- **Hue** – Vietnam's ancient capital with imperial citadel, Thien Mu Pagoda, and fleets of serene royal burial grounds
- **Hai Van Pass** – The spectacular sea to sky scenic drive with stops at fishing villages, mountains and the beaches
- **Da Nang** – Explore the exquisite carvings at Cham Museum. Visit the interesting temples at the Marble Mountain
- **Hoi An** – A well preserved 16th century bustling port with traditional buildings, serene beaches, and cobble stone paths
- **Saigon** – The metropolis of Vietnam with full energy, the grand mixture of East and West, old and new
- **Siem Reap** – The magnificent Angkor Wat & its surrounding ruins, cruise to floating villages at Tonle Sap lake

Enjoy our signature True All Inclusive® value

There are no last minute surprises, or hidden costs.....

This tour is all inclusive - all listed sightseeing, shows, and daily meals are included

Tour Cost Includes:

1. Guided comprehensive sightseeing, admission and culture shows as per specified
2. Luxury accommodations - luxurious 5 star, or local best 4 star hotel room and surcharges
3. Handpicked experienced certified English speaking guide in each city
4. Daily meals, special local flavor dishes, and banquets as per specified
5. Domestic transportation via flight, train, bus, water craft and cruise ships as per specified
6. Round trip transfers and luggage handling

Tour Cost Does Not Include:

1. International airfare between USA & Asia
2. Tipping, Travel Insurance, Vietnam and Cambodia visa fee and handling
3. Any misc. charge with personal natures that are not mentioned in the itinerary

Call **Orient Odyssey** **1-800-637-5778**

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Orient Odyssey – Journeys beyond the ordinary™

Tour Name: Vietnam and Cambodia Panorama
Tour Code: VCP – 2017 / 2018

Unsurpassed Flexibility.....

- Join the following suggested departures or pick your own departure date – prices are the same!

Personalize Your Journey.....

- Add an excursion to Sapa or extend the journey to explore more sites of Asia, cut the trip short to match your traveling schedules, or enhance the sightseeing programs, or delete some meals to fit your personalized budget.....we are flexible and can work with you to customize each and every departures!

Premium Quality and Optimum Personal Attentions.....

- All **Orient Odyssey** journeys feature optimum personalized service with certified professional English speaking local guides, a chauffeur and a vehicle serving your party exclusively throughout the trip.

Travel with Friends and Family Together and Save More.....

- Inquire about generous discounts when you plan the trip together with families and friends together.....

SUGGESTED GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Or choose your own departure date – any date throughout the year!

Tour Code	Arrival Date Day 2 - Arrive Hanoi	Exit Date Day 14 – Bangkok	Land Cost (not include int'l air) Day 2-14 Hanoi-Bangkok	Single Supplement
0212VCP	Feb 13, 2017	Feb 25, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0312VCP	Mar 13, 2017	Mar 25, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0409VCP	Apr 10, 2017	Apr 22, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0507VCP	May 8, 2017	May 20, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0604VCP	Jun 5, 2017	Jun 17, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0702VCP	Jul 3, 2017	Jul 15, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0903VCP	Sep 4, 2017	Sep 16, 2017	\$3660	\$889
1008VCP	Oct 9, 2017	Oct 21, 2017	\$3660	\$889
1029VCP	Oct 30, 2017	Nov 11, 2017	\$3660	\$889
1105VCP	Nov 6, 2017	Nov 18, 2017	\$3660	\$889
1112VCP	Nov 13, 2017	Nov 25, 2017	\$3660	\$889
1119VCP	Nov 20, 2017	Dec 2, 2017	\$3660	\$889
0114VCP ²⁰¹⁸	Jan 15, 2018	Jan 27, 2018	\$3660	\$889
0311VCP ²⁰¹⁸	Mar 12, 2018	Mar 24, 2018	\$3660	\$889

Important Remarks:

- Vietnam and Cambodia air ticket tax of \$174 per person is extra.
- Sample special low season fares for your round trip international flight **USA – Hanoi**, open jaw, **Bangkok – USA** are as follows:
 From Los Angeles: Economy class fm. \$870 p.p. Business class fm. \$3460 p.p., incl. tax / fuel / fees
 From San Francisco: Economy class fm. \$800 p.p. Business class fm. \$4600 p.p., incl. tax / fuel / fees
 From New York: Economy class fm. \$840 p.p. Business class fm. \$3900 p.p., incl. tax / fuel / fees
 Fares are subject to availability and seasonality. Prices may change without notice. Lower rates might be available due to local sales.
- Prices quoted are in US currency, based on per person double occupancy. Payment can be made by check, money order, or credit cards – we accept Visa, Master, and Discover card.

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14 Day

Vietnam & Cambodia Panorama

Tour Code: VCP – 2017 / 2018

Operated by Orient Odyssey



B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner, F-In flight snacks & meals,
SL / SD-Special local flavor meal or banquet

Day 01 USA – Hanoi

Depart from Los Angeles, New York, or any other major US gateways. Enjoy in-flight meals and services. Move watch one day ahead as you fly cross the international dateline. F

Day 02 Arrive in Hanoi

Your flight will land in Hanoi Noi Bai International Airport. After immigration and customs, our guide will greet and escort you to the 5 star, luxurious, **Hilton Hanoi Opera**. Enjoy a restful sleep to recover from the jetlags. Welcome to Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, a city of lakes, tree-lined boulevards and public parks, complimented by the mystery and charm of past centuries in narrow lanes of the old city. F

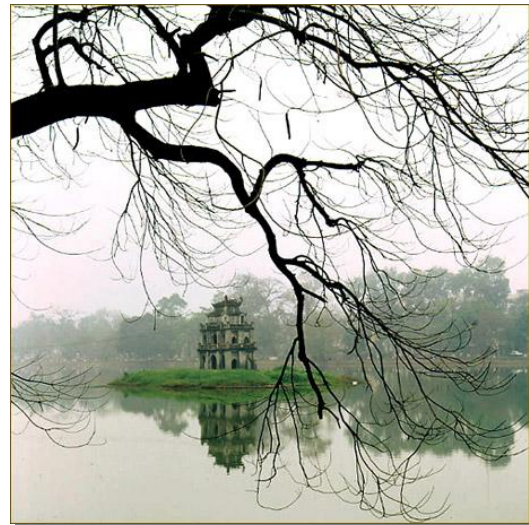
Day 03 Hanoi

After breakfast, we head to the One Pillar Pagoda built by **Emperor Ly Thai Tong** in the 11th century. The unique wooden structure stands on a single stone pillar, resembling a lotus blossom. Next we study the excellent example of traditional Vietnamese architecture and stroll through peaceful series of walled courtyards and graceful gaeways at the Temple of Literature, founded in 1070, initially dedicated to Confucius. In 1076 it was adjoined by the Quoc Tu Giam, “School of the Elite of the Nation”, and became

Vietnam’s first university. After passing exams at the local levels, scholars aspiring to become senior mandarins came



here to study for rigorous triennial examinations. There is a pavilion housing 82 stone steles, survivors of the original 117, all resting on the backs of stone tortoises. The steles are inscribed with the names of those who succeeded in the 82 examination sessions held between 1492 and 1779. Also on today’s agenda is a visit to the massive marble and granite Ho Chi Minh’s Mausoleum in Ba Dinh Square where **Ho Chi Minh** delivered Vietnam’s declaration of independence in 1945. We jog past the Presidential palace, a sumptuous colonial mansion built in 1906 as the residence of the French Governor-general of Indochina, to the modest two-room Stilt House, where **Ho Chi Minh** spent the last decade of his life in spartan conditions. After lunch we set out to the Hoan Kiem Lake, the “*Lake of the Restored Sword*”,



with a tortoise pagoda standing on an islet. During the scenic drive around the city, picture stops are planned at the magnificent 1911 Opera House and the St Joseph Cathedral, a neo-Gothic

piece finished in 1886 with square towers, elaborate altar and stained glass windows. At [Museum of Ethnology](#) we learn the astonishing ethnic diversity with art and artifacts from 54 different ethnic groups that inhabit the country. [Orient Odyssey's](#) unique "People to People Contact©" feature leads us to the experience of [discovering the old quarter of Hanoi on foot](#),



strolling through busy streets and markets, taking the close-up views of bustling local's daily about. The district is often referred to as "[the 36 streets](#)", where through over 600 years of history, each



narrow lane or street being named after the merchandises traditionally sold there. [Dinner is followed by a traditional Water](#)

[Puppet Show](#) – a fascinating and delightful spectacle accompanied by the traditional music. [B/L/D](#)

Day 04 Halong Bay Excursion

[The scenic drive leads us through the lush paddy fields and bustling village towns of the Red River Delta to the beautiful Halong Bay](#), dotted with well over 3,000 limestone islands and islets. It is an enchanted, timeless world created by bizarre rock sculptures jutting dramatically from the sea, and the numerous grottoes. The sails of the junks and sampans gliding on the bay add mystic to the beauty of the scene. United Nation had declared here as the "[World Heritage Site of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#)". Halong, can be literally translated as "[where the dragon descends into the sea](#)". Legends said that a celestial dragon and her offspring were ordered by **the Jade Emperor** to halt an invasion from the sea. The creative dragons spewed out bits of jade that turned into wondrous islands and karst formations, thereby scuppering the enemy ships.

According to one other version, the jewels were pearls and the bay was created when the dragon flung herself into the sea; on the way her swishing tail dug deep valleys and crevices in the



mainland, which were subsequently filled by the water from the ocean. Regardless, the dragon was so pleased with her creations that she settled amongst them. She is said to live under the bay to this day. We reach the harbor after the scenic two hour coach journey, and [board a traditional wooden fishing junk for a 4 hours' scenic cruise](#) that sails pass countless limestone islets and beautiful grottos. [Enjoy a sumptuous seafood lunch onboard](#) as we glide through the emerald clear water amidst , craggy limestone cliffs. [The vessel will stop at an island where we go on shore to explore the massive underground cave](#), then continue the serene journey, cruising by the picture-perfect floating villages, fisherman casting their nets and interesting pearl fisheries, taking in the rhythms of the peaceful life on the bay. In the history, Halong has also been the setting of many famous battles against invasions from the north - it is believed that the countless sharp bamboo stakes that **General Tran Hung Dao** planted in Song Bach Dang in an effort to destroy **Kublai Khan's** invasion fleet were still stored in many of the caves here..... Disembark at around 4:30 p.m., we enjoy the scenic drive back to Hanoi for dinner and a restful night. [B/L/D](#)



Day 05 Hanoi - Hue

Early risers can stroll the awakening street of the capital and explore the markets, observing the

daily life at own pace.....We will head to the airport and depart on [Vietnam Airlines](#) flight VN1543, leaving at 8:50 a.m., reaching Hue at 10:00 a.m.. Check-in at the 5 star, luxurious, [Imperial Hotel Hue](#). The charm of this timeless old capital lies not only in its historical and architectural value, but also in the natural beauty of its location along the banks of the seductively named Perfume River. In the spring of 1601, the Nguyen lords established a kingdom here. An uninterrupted succession of 10 feudal lords ruled



over this area until 1802, when the 10th Nguyen lord proclaimed himself **Emperor Gia Long** and founded the Nguyen Dynasty, which would last for another 143 years. A quick succession of 13 emperors graced the throne until the

abdication of **Bao Dai**, the last of the Nguyen emperors in 1945. Today the remaining French colonial garden houses and villas, the quiet streets, the riverbanks, the outlying tombs and pagodas that escaped war damage, gives this city a lovely, unique atmosphere of tranquility. We begin our program in the afternoon with [a visit to the impressive Imperial Citadel](#). Modeled on Beijing's Forbidden City, Hoang Thanh (Yellow



Enclosure) and Tu Cam Thanh (Forbidden Purple City) are enclosed within the all-encompassing Kinh Thanh (the external enclosure). Stone, bricks and earth were used for the 26 ft high and 65 ft thick wall, with 10 large fortified gates, each topped with a formidable watch-tower. The citadel was initially built during the reign of **Emperor Gia Long** in 1804. Most of the buildings, palaces and halls were destroyed during the Tet Offensive of 1968 in the Vietnam - American War, but the ruins that

remain can still provide visitors a fascinating glimpse into the court life of the Nguyen dynasty. [Our first sight is the striking Flag Tower](#) at the entrance where a giant Vietnamese flag waves proudly. [We then enter the imposing Ngo Mon Gate](#), the main entrance of the Imperial Enclosure, walking through the central passageway and its yellow doors, and the bridge that across the lotus pond, once reserved for the Emperor's exclusive use. [Here we stand in the courtyard of Thai Hoa Palace](#), the magnificently decorated reception hall with an ornate roof of huge timbers supported by 80 carved and lacquered columns. [We also explore the myriad Hall of the Mandarins, the Nine Dynastic Urns and the ruins of the Purple Forbidden City](#). Before day's end, **Orient Odyssey's** "People to People Contact@" experience calls for a [stroll through the bustling](#)



[Don Ba Market](#) – most famous for the prettiest conical hats in the country. The opportunity to mingle with the busy local daily life in close range, is

always priceless. **B/D**

Day 06 Hue

[A scenic boat trip on the Perfume River takes us to the Thien Mu Pagoda](#), the "[Celestial Lady Pagoda](#)" as it is called by the locals. Situated on the hill overlooking the river, the pagoda was built in 1601. Each of the seven tiers of its octagonal tower, guided by six statues of deities, represents a different reincarnation of Buddha. Many generations have heard the tolling of the pagoda's enormous 4,600 lb, 6 ft high bell since



it was cast in 1701 – its sound can be heard nearly 10 miles away. From here the famous 66 year-old monk **Thich Quang Duc** drove to Saigon on Jun 11, 1963 where he died by self-immolation on a street corner to protest **President Diem's** repressive policies. Today in the small garage of the pagoda, visitors can still see the little Austin car he used to drive himself there. We board our dragon boat again, and continue the voyage on the river, to the Imperial Tomb of Emperor Minh Mang, a majestic complex of courtyards, pavilions and temples in a beautiful natural setting, where we marvel at its beautiful architecture, imposing military statues



and elaborate decorations. After lunch, we drive to explore the tombs of Emperors Tu Duc and Khai Dinh. The imperial tomb of **Tu Duc**, who reigned from 1847 to 1883, the longest of any Nguyen emperors, is indeed a royal palace in miniature that harmonizes beautifully with the natural surroundings of groves of frangipani and pine trees. The elegant tomb was designed by the emperor himself, and was an ongoing construction project throughout his life time. We will enjoy a slow stroll through park like settings, soaking up the tranquil atmosphere, wandering among the gracefully proportioned pavilions set among the forested hills, courtyards and lotus ponds. Emperor **Tu Duc** actually spent many of his leisure hours here, using the site as a retreat for meditation, reading and theatre performances! Here he wrote poetry, no doubt inspired by the beauty of his surroundings, fished, and enjoyed the fragrance of the lotus. While “different” is hardly enough the word to describe our next stop - the 20th century tomb of Emperor Khai Dinh, incorporating distinct European elements into the traditional Vietnamese architecture. Completed in 1931, it sits magnificently on the verdant slopes of Chau E mountain in Chau Chau village. A grandiose dragon staircase leads up to the first courtyard, from where further stairs lead to a square, lined with stone statues of elephants, horses, civil and military mandarins. Once



inside, the contrast is more striking. Colored tiles pave the floor, a huge “*dragon in the clouds*” mural, painted by artists using their feet, adorns the ceiling of the middle chamber. Jade green antechambers lead off to the left and right. Bright frescoes composed of many thousands of inlaid ceramic and glass fragments depict themes of animals, tress, and flowers, providing an unforgettable visual feast. **B/L/D**

Day 07 Hue – Da Nang – Hoi An

After breakfast, we set out on a scenic car ride climbing the dramatic Hai Van Pass, also called “*the Pass of Ocean Clouds*”. The journey crosses over a spur of the Truong Son (Annamite) Mountain Range that juts into the South China Sea, with the breathtaking sceneries along the route. **Jeremy Clarkson**, host of the BBC motor program *Top Gear*, called the passage “*a deserted ribbon of perfection, one of the best coast roads in the world*”. On route, our first



stop is the lovely Lang Co Fishing Village where the stretch of white sandy beach curves outwards between a clear blue lagoon and the South China Sea. Before long, we will reach Da Nang,



Vietnam's fourth largest city, which also marks the northern limit of the country's tropical zone that boasts a pleasant year-round climate. Here we explore the famous Cham Museum, first established in 1915 by the Ecole Francaise

d'Extreme Orient, it is now home to some 300 priceless Cham sculptures dating to the 4th century. We will also visit and enjoy a stroll on the famous China Beach. Stretching for 18 miles,



with “pink” sands and roaring waves, it was the famous landing spot of American soldiers during the Vietnam War. An exploration of the famed cave temples of the Marble Mountain is also on the agenda - a cluster of five marble and limestone hills rising sharply from the surrounding rice fields, riddled with caves and shrines, each represents one of the five elements of the universe: Kim (metal), Thuy (water), Moc (wood), Hoa (fire), and Tho (earth). After flyers of stairs, we will investigate the largest and the most famous hill - Thuy Son, with many of its natural caves in which Buddhist sanctuaries were established centuries ago. Early evening we end our road journey in Hoi An. Overnight at the 5 star, luxurious, *Sunrise Premium Resort and Spa Hoi An.* B/L/D

Day 08 Hoi An

The charming old town of Hoi An, now a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site, was once an important and flourishing ancient trading port and the meeting place of East and West, a world class center of cultural exchange. Hoi An

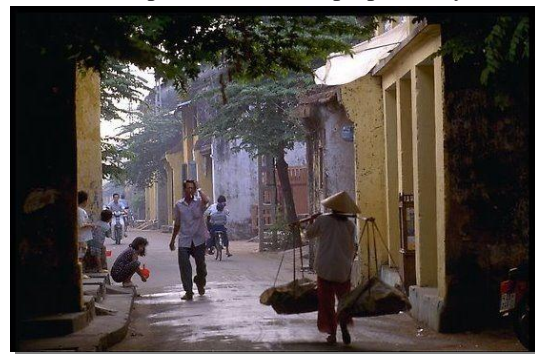


appeared in western travelogues in the 17th and 18th centuries as Faifo. Chinese, Japanese, French, English, Spanish, Portuguese and other

traders all established their communities here. The old wooden houses, bridges and temples that remain are the reminiscent of the century old Vietnam. Today, it is a graceful, picturesque, back water town with hump-backed bridges and shops bursting with silks, paintings, embroidered goods and lacquer ware. We will enjoy an interesting walking tour of this fascinating village town seemingly frozen in the river of time, marvel at the distinctive low tiled roof houses and the busy central market selling everything from vegetables, live stocks to daily household items. Stroll along the Tran Phu Street we reach the uniquely shaped Japanese Covered Bridge, constructed in 1593 by Japanese community to provide a link to the Chinese quarters



across the stream, with a useful roof to shelter from rain and sun. We explore one of the many family chapels - built by prominent merchants as centers for ancestor worship. We visit the private houses, some of which are occupied by the same family for up to eight generations! Take the opportunity to interact with family members, inspect the centuries old engraved panels of exquisite figures. We will also stop randomly at Chinese style pagoda, Assembly Hall, and the famed Sa Huynh Museum, displaying interesting artifacts from the early period of Hoi An's history. **Orient Odyssey's exclusive “People to People Contact®”** experience will wrap up the day as we



board a traditional wooden fishing boat, cruising down the Thu Bon River to a pottery and woodcarving village, where we observe the life of peasants, boat builders and craftsman before returning to the small Hoi An Harbor with hundreds of colorfully painted fishing boats are moored. Enjoy the remaining of the day at own leisure..... Hoi An is a shopper's paradise.

Endless small stores and art galleries team both sides of the cobble stone path. Travelers hunt for bargains for paintings, silk fabric, clothing, ceramics, lanterns, chopsticks, lacquer ware, teapots, embroidered tablecloths, and napkins..... **B/L/D**

Day 09 Hoi An – Saigon (Ho Chih Minh City)

Rising early, the morning drive takes us to the airport in Da Nang. Check-in for **Vietnam Airlines** flight VN117, departing at 10:15 a.m., reaching our destination at 11:40 a.m.. Welcome to Saigon - also called as “Ho Chi Minh City”. This is Vietnam’s most vibrant metropolis teeming with energy and activity. The meeting of traditional and modern life is visible everywhere. The emerging modern skyline stands next to colonial buildings and traditional temples. Young professionals zip by



on motorcycles, chatting on cell phones, while inside quiet temple courtyards worshippers still pray amidst clouds of incense. Within this teeming metropolis are 300 years of timeless traditions and the beauty of an ancient culture. Our exploration starts with an overview drive round the city; passing the Opera House, and Dong Khoi Street, formerly known as the Rue



Catinat during the French Years, now the main shopping avenue in the heart of the old colonial Saigon. Enjoy picture stops along the way - first at the red-brick Catholic Cathedral of Notre-Dame, then at the 19th century Empire-style Post Office, and the next door “Hotel de Ville” now the City Hall, with its distinctive gingerbread façade, and of course the Grand Opera House - built around the turn of the century to house the lower division of the

National Assembly at the time, it is now the municipal theatre and Saigon Concert Hall. We visit the important historical landmark: the Reunification Palace, formerly the Presidential Palace for the South Vietnamese government. On April 30, 1975, a Vietcong tank stormed its modern compound, signifying the fall of South Vietnam. From the balcony of the palace we can see where this historical moment occurred. We will also examine through the halls, meeting rooms, offices, presidential living quarters, and even underground communication bunkers. Our next stop is at the harrowing War Remnants Museum, revealing the bloody fights by the Vietnamese against the French and Americans.

In the afternoon we head to the west of the city to District 5, a sprawling, densely packed Chinese neighborhood (Chinatown) called “Cholon”, meaning “big market”, where we will visit the Jade Emperor Pagoda, one of the oldest and the most interesting pagodas in the city; the Thien Hau



Pagoda, built by the Cantonese congregations and dedicated to the heavenly goddess, stroll in the colorful Binh Tay Market, the vast wholesale market selling every kind of good from dried



foods to T shirts to electronics. Our day ends at the bustling Ben Thanh Market, where vendors display a vast array of goods and handicrafts, appealing to every taste. We will overnight at the 5 star, luxurious, Renaissance riverside hotel Saigon. **B/D**

Day 10 Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City)

Nowhere is better than Saigon to enjoy a free day to rest, shop or explore at own pace, or to soak up the ambience of this great metropolis in the

Orient. If preferred, you can also consult with our guide to pre-arrange any of the following recommended excursions at extra cost. Some of them might involve couple of hour's scenic drive from Saigon. **B**

❖ **Cuchi Tunnels**

The 150 miles of tunnels which make up an impressive underground network are evidence of the tremendous ingenuity and



resourcefulness that are characteristic of the Vietnamese. It was from here that the North Vietnamese waged their guerrilla warfare. We will see secret trapdoors, underground kitchens, living areas and meeting rooms. The more adventurous may explore the deeper second, and even third level tunnels.

❖ **Tay Ninh**

The birth place of Vietnam's own unique Cao Dai religion, a fusion of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Christianity, Islam and native Vietnamese spiritual beliefs. We



will observe the daily noon time ceremony at the Great Temple from the upper balconies, see worshippers garbed in colorful robes flocking to participate in the prayer sessions.

❖ **Mekong Delta and Mytho Village**

My Tho is a bustling town in the rich



agricultural region of Mekong Delta. Enjoy cruise voyage on a river boat and a wooden sampan to Mekong River islands. We will moor at the lush palm fringed shore lined with fishing boats. Take a rest at a local village and enjoy fruit, tea, and folk music performances.



Day 11 Saigon – Siem Reap, Cambodia

Bid farewell to Vietnam, we embark on our flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia for the optimum highlight of our journey - the Khmer temples of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom. **Cambodian Angkor Air** flight K6*825 will depart at 12:00 p.m. reaching Siem Reap, Cambodia at 1:00 p.m.. After immigration and customs, the local representative will greet and accompany us to the 4.5 star, deluxe, **Tara Angkor Hotel Siem Reap**. The ancient capital of the Khmer kingdom is the cultural and spiritual heartland of Cambodia. The ruins existing today, although monumental in scale, still offers intimate glimpses into lives



lived in a distant past. During 9th and 13th century, Khmer Empire reached its golden age. Elaborate monuments were built, along with a massive sophisticated system of irrigation canals, solidifying the strength of the Empire. The city was abandoned in 1431 after the defeat by the Thai armies. Siem Reap was then taken over by Theravada Buddhists and became an important pilgrimage site. In 1858, a French naturalist and

explorer **Henri Mouhot** stumbled upon Angkor in the jungle. His message popularizes the Angkor in the west like no others before: *“One of these temples – a rival to that of Solomon, and erected by some ancient Michaelangelo – might take an honourable place beside our most beautiful buildings. It is grander than anything left to us by Greece or Rome...”* He also wrote, *“At Ongcor (Angkor), there are...ruins of such grandeur...that, at the first view, one is filled with profound admiration, and cannot but ask what has become of this powerful race, so civilized, so enlightened, the authors of these gigantic works?”*..... Today the “lost city” of Asia can indeed once again be seen in all its glory. On this journey we will spend several of our days exploring in a leisurely fashion the fantastic temples, gates, ruins, and stone carvings.

Our exploration begins at the fortified royal city of Angkor Thom, built in 1,100, covering an area little less than 4 square miles. It is encircled by a 320 ft wide moat, enclosed by a wall and five monumental gates. Inside lie many of Angkor’s most popular sights. Entering the imposing South Gate after a causeway lined on both side



by multiple statues of demons and gods, all carrying a giant naga (snake), we first reach the the Elephant

Terrace, a base for the Kings’ grand audience hall, the site of public ceremonies, where on both end of the retaining wall we can see the famous lines of elephants. Not far is the Terrace of the Leper King, a platform with a nude statue - one of Angkor’s many unanswered mysteries. We further investigate the ruined Baphuon, the Royal Enclosure and Phimeanakas - the “Celestial Palace”. The most striking experience of the day will no doubt be a visit to the stunning Bayon Temple, one of the most popular and compelling sites in Angkor. Its exterior gallery walls contain some of the most extensive and best bas-reliefs, depicting everyday scenes with historical details of battles won and lost by the Khmers. The domestic scenes, many of which are in smaller bas reliefs below the main war scenes, show details of fishermen, markets, festivals, cockfights, removing lice, hunting, women giving birth..... One can also find intriguing everyday scenes from the royal palace – princes and princesses, wrestlers and sword fighters. The East Gallery,

which is in an excellent state of preservation, features a military procession of Khmer troops, elephants, ox carts, horsemen, musicians, and parasol shielding the commanders of the troops..... The South Gallery is equally impressive. The early panels depict the great naval battle that took place on the Tonle Sap Lake in 1177. The fighting is intense, with



bodies falling from the boats and sometimes being taken by crocodiles. We now ascend the narrow stairs to the central sanctuary. Suddenly appearing before us is an amazing collection of 54 towers, decorated by 200 faces of **Avalokitesvara** – *“the Bodhisattva of Compassion”*, all smiling enigmatically down at us from every angle! **PJ de Beerski** once wrote about them in his 1920’s book: *“godliness in the majesty and the size, mystery in the expression”*. French Architect and Archeologist **Maurice Glaize** also wrote that *“Wherever one wonders”* the faces of **Avalokitesvara** follow and dominate with their multiple presences. Angkor’s ruins are stunning at any time of the day, but the sunrise and sunset are especially beautiful times to watch the play of light on the stones. Today at dusk, we will do just that - watch the sunset over the Cambodian countryside from the upper terraces of an ancient Angkorian Temple. B/D

Day 12 Siem Reap

Today we devote the entire morning to Angkor Wat, the crowning jewel of Khmer architecture,



the national symbol of Cambodia, and the optimum highlight of any visits to Southeast Asia. The largest, best preserved and most religiously significant of the Angkor temples, Angkor Wat impresses visitors with her sheer scale, beautifully proportioned layout, and the delicate artistry of its carvings. “*An epic poem,*” wrote by British Historian **Arnold Joseph Toynbee**, “*Like the Odyssey and like Paradise Lost, it makes its effect by the grandeur of its structure as well as the beauty of its details.*” To approach to the site we have to cross the vast moat and walk on the broad causeway lined with naga balustrades. After entering the main building, we ascend through a series of galleries and courtyards, reaching the central sanctuary. Looking back from here, one would be awed at the unexpected amazing views of the causeway and the surrounding countryside. We then spend some time to study the intricate stone carvings that adorn nearly every surface, with some 1,700 Apsaras, or “*celestial dancers*” sculpted into the walls. The outer gallery runs the beautiful, longest continuous bas-relief in the world, narrating stories from Hindu mythology which



include scenes of battles, depictions of the Ramayana, and the Churning of the Ocean of Milk. Angkor Wat, the 12th century masterpiece that covers 81 hectares, took more than 30 years to complete. It is one of UNESCO’s most famous World Culture Heritage Site, and is considered by art historians the definitive example of classical Khmer art and architecture! This afternoon we explore Ta Prohm, “*Ancestor of Brahma*”, also nicknamed “*Kingdom of Trees*”. Following an unusual archaeological decision - the jungle has been only partly cut back, so that the buildings are covered with the roots of huge banyan and kapok trees which rise high above the temple. Spectacular roots bind lintels and crack vaulted passageways, while parrots fly in the upper canopy and break the stillness with



their sharp cries. Even today, it still looks very much the same as most of the Angkor monuments did when European explorers first stumbled upon them! Our exploration continues on as we head to the beautiful Banteay Srei; the “*Citadel of Women*” – a tiny enchanting temple built of red sandstone in the 10th century dedicated to the Hindu God **Shiva**. We will take time to study the exquisitely carved male and female figures in the niches with beautiful style and proportion, representing the extraordinary carving skills and superior artistic appealing of the Khmer sculpture. A true jewel in this remarkable city - in the words of **H. W. Ponder** in his *Cambodian Glory*: “*a fairy palace in the heart of an immense and mysterious forest.*” Before dusk we will enjoy the opportunity to stroll in the bustling market of Psah Chah, mingle with the shopkeepers and hunt for bargains..... **B/L/D**



Day 13 Siem Reap - Bangkok

After breakfast, we continue our in-depth exploration of the magnificent Angkorian archeological ruins. Our first stop is Prasat Kravan, the Hindu temple built in 921 with five brick towers and spectacular bas-reliefs on the interior walls. Next we visit Banteay Kdei – a



massive Buddhist temple dating back to 12th century, surrounded by four concentric walls, featuring towered enclosures and shoulder hugging corridors in a jungle setting. Also explore Sras Srang – “*The Pool of Ablutions*”, a centuries-old basin with a tiny island in the middle, where now only the stone base remains of what was once a wooden temple. We tour Preah Khan, “*the sacred sword*”, a 12th century temple built under **King Jayavarman VII**. The World Monument Fund is currently working on preserving this temple with its myriad halls, pavilions, causeways, moats, as well as sculpted garudas and serpents on the exterior walls. Next we head to Ta Keo, the first Angkorian monument built entirely of sandstone and



dedicated to Lord Shiva. The summit of the central tower is 170 feet high and is surrounded by four lower towers. Our exploration of the ruins end at Thommanon and Chau Say Tevoda, a temple built during the 2nd quarter of 12th

century dedicated to Lord Shiva and Vishnu. Shortly after lunch we begin our excursion on a drive to the Tonle Sap Lake, “*the Great Lake*”. Located in the heart of Cambodia, the huge body of water swells up to seven times of its original size during the monsoon season every year. Its ecosystem is one of the richest and the most diversified in the region. Through **Orient Odyssey’s** unique “**People to People Contact®**” experience, we explore Chong Kneas, one of the floating communities on the lake by boat. Enjoy a cruise on the wooden sampan, we sail across



the vast lake to the floating villages, passing submerged forests and fish farms. If the timing is right we might even be able to visit a floating

school so we can interact with teachers and students. Observe the authentic village life while we stroll by the simple huts. Our night flight on **Bangkok Airways** PG910, will leave at 8:55 p.m., reaching Bangkok at 10:10 p.m.. After immigration and customs, VIP private transfer will greet and take us to the 5 star, luxurious **Chatrium Hotel Riverside Bangkok** with prime downtown riverside location. The remaining of the day is free to rest, explore, shop, or checking out the culinary delight in the city at one’s own pace. Our luxury hotel offers complimentary shuttle boat services throughout the day to the nearest sky train station, which is the most efficient and economical way to get around in Bangkok. **B/L**

Day 14 Bangkok – USA

After a grand delicious buffet breakfast, there might still be some free time for last minute packing, shopping or exploring. Savor the memory of the thrilling Vietnam and Cambodia Panorama while our VIP private transfer service takes you to the airport. Check-in for the homebound transpacific flight, and arrive back to USA on the same day (or the next day) depends on your international flight schedule. **B/F**

Kindly refer to General Terms & Conditions

Featured luxury hotels and cruisers:

1. **Hilton Hanoi Opera** *****
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Sample int’l flight schedule from Los Angeles:

KE18	LOS ANGELES – SEOUL	1200 / 1740+1
KE679	SEOUL – HANOI	1840 / 2140
KE660	BANGKOK – SEOUL	0950 / 1710
KE11	SEOUL – LOS ANGELES	2000 / 1500

Sample int’l flight schedule from San Francisco:

BR17	SAN FRANCISCO – TAIPEI	0020 / 0610+1
BR397	TAIPEI – HANOI	0930 / 1135
BR202	BANGKOK – TAIPEI	1430 / 1910
BR18	TAIPEI – SAN FRANCISCO	1950 / 1550

Sample int’l flight itinerary from New York:

BR31	NEW YORK JFK – TAIPEI	0020 / 0530+1
BR397	TAIPEI – HANOI	0930 / 1135
BR62	BANGKOK – TAIPEI	1240 / 1710
BR32	TAIPEI – NEW YORK JFK	1930 / 2210

- Special contract fares from other major US cities are available upon request.
- International and domestic flight schedules are subject to change without notice.

Important Notice

- ❖ Itinerary is subject to change due to local condition and weather. Kindly refer to attached General Terms and Conditions. Living conditions and culture in Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand are different from those in North America and passengers should be aware and prepared.
- ❖ Never pack your passport, international air tickets, insurance documents, and medication into the check-in luggage. Please always keep those important documents with you.
- ❖ Domestic flight schedule might involve minor changes. Guides in each city will advise the most updated schedule and assist the group to check-in for each segment.

Any questions for logistics and sightseeing details, please feel free to call **Orient Odyssey** at

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