



Hidden Vietnam



HANOI



HOÀNG SU PHÌ DISTRICT



DONG VAN



MEO VAC

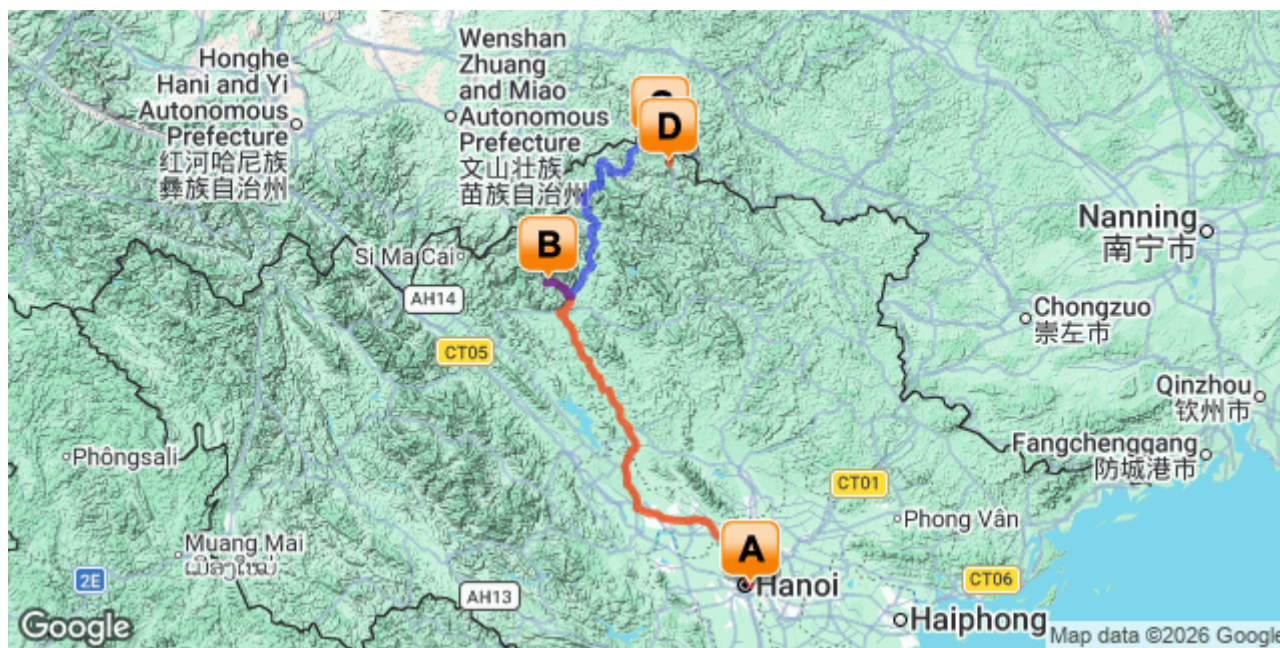
Hidden Vietnam

Hanoi - Hoàng Su Phì District - Dong Van - Meo Vac

11 Days / 10 Nights

0 Persons

Date of Issue: 05 April 2026



Introduction

Venture beyond the familiar and uncover the untouched beauty of Northern Vietnam on this deeply immersive journey through its remote highlands. From the bustling charm of Hanoi to the terraced landscapes of Hoang Su Phi and the dramatic limestone ranges of Ha Giang, this itinerary is designed for travellers seeking authenticity, connection, and discovery.

Along the way, engage with diverse ethnic communities, hike through breathtaking valleys, and experience life in regions rarely touched by mainstream tourism. Balanced with moments of comfort—from tranquil eco-retreats to intimate homestays—this journey offers a rare glimpse into Vietnam’s cultural soul, where every path leads to a story and every encounter leaves a lasting impression.

Accommodation	Destination	Basis	Duration
Capella Hanoi	Hanoi	B&B	1 Night
Panhou Retreat	Hoàng Su Phi District	B&B	2 Nights
Hoa Cuong Dong Van Hotel	Dong Van	B&B	1 Night
Auberge de Meo Vac	Meo Vac	B&B	2 Nights
Overnight Travel			2 Nights
Capella Hanoi	Hanoi	B&B	2 Nights

Key

B&B: Bed and Breakfast

Day 1 Capella Hanoi, Hanoi

Hanoi

With its wide boulevards, ancient pagodas and tree-lined lakes, Vietnam's capital is also the country's most atmospheric and beguiling city. There is an energy and charm here arising from the genteel mix of French colonialism and Asian grace and tradition. Enjoy a showcase of synchronised t'ai chi at Hoan Kiem Lake; stroll around the lively Old Quarter with its narrow streets with traders and hoards of scooters weaving in and out, and don't miss the chance to see a water puppetry show at the Thang Long Puppet Theatre. Other places to visit include the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, the Perfume Pagoda temple complex and the Hanoi Opera House in the heart of the French Quarter.

Day Itinerary

Upon arrival at Hanoi Airport, you will be warmly welcomed by our representative and transferred by private vehicle to your hotel in the city. Early check-in can be arranged subject to availability and at an additional cost. The remainder of the day is at leisure—take this time to unwind and recover from your journey. Overnight stay in Hanoi.

Overnight: Capella Hanoi

Capella Hanoi offers luxurious accommodation moments away from the Hanoi Opera House and Hanoi's Old Quarter. Each of the property's 47 guest rooms and suites are individually styled with operatic memorabilia that pay tribute to Opera's legendary artists, composers, designers and performances. Guests can enjoy delicious authentic flavours at the on-site Backstage restaurant as well as bohemian cocktails and ambrosial sweets at Diva's Lounge.



Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 2 Panhou Retreat, Hoàng Su Phì District

Hoàng Su Phì District

A remote highland district in Vietnam's Hà Giang Province, Hoàng Su Phì is shaped by rugged mountains, winding rivers, and breathtaking rice terraces. Carved along steep slopes, these terraces form a striking landscape that changes with the seasons, from emerald green in summer to golden hues during harvest. Ethnic groups such as the Nùng, Dao, Tày, H'Mông, and La Chí have cultivated these lands for centuries, preserving unique agricultural traditions. The Sunday market bursts with colour, as locals trade goods, socialise, and showcase traditional attire. Ban Phùng and Bản Luốc feature some of the most dramatic terraced fields, while Hồ Thầu and Nam Ty highlight Red Dao culture. Tây Côn Lĩnh, the highest peak in northeast Vietnam at 2,419 metres, attracts trekkers seeking panoramic views. Chiu Lầu Thi, known as the "nine-storey mountain," is another towering peak with a dense forest ecosystem. Local cuisine includes bamboo-cooked rice, smoked buffalo, and La Chí-style grilled rat.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, embark on a scenic drive from Hanoi to the remote highlands of **Hoang Su Phi**, a region celebrated for its dramatic terraced landscapes and untouched beauty. En route, pause for lunch at a local restaurant (payable directly).

Arrive by late afternoon at **Pan Hou Village**, where you will check into the tranquil Pan Hou Retreat, nestled amidst lush forests and rice terraces. The rest of the evening is at leisure—unwind in the peaceful surroundings and soak in the serene atmosphere of this hidden gem. Overnight stay at Pan Hou Retreat.

Overnight: Panhou Retreat

Panhou Retreat is located in Ha Giang, Vietnam, surrounded by breathtaking mountains and forests. The guest rooms and suites are bright, spacious, and beautifully decorated, each equipped with air conditioning, Wi-Fi, electric kettles, and private bathrooms. Guests can indulge in a selection of expertly prepared dishes on-site. Additional amenities include complimentary parking. Guests can also take part in activities such as mountain trekking tours.



Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 3 Panhou Retreat, Hoàng Su Phì District

Day Itinerary

Begin your day amidst the tranquil surroundings of **Pan Hou Village**, where the gentle sound of birdsong echoes through the lush gardens, set against the backdrop of the Song Chay Mountains. After breakfast, set out on a guided walk into the surrounding hills, gradually ascending along scenic trails that reveal sweeping views of layered rice terraces and distant mountain ranges.

As you continue, arrive at a village of the **Red Dao community**, known for their vibrant red attire and intricate brocade. Here, gain insight into their unique traditions, including the use of medicinal plants for healing and wellness. After a simple local lunch, continue your walk through terraced fields, rolling landscapes, and tea plantations, passing through smaller villages that offer a glimpse into the region's rich cultural diversity.

By late afternoon, return to Pan Hou Village, where you can unwind and soak in the serenity of your surroundings. Dinner and overnight at the retreat.

Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 4 Hoa Cuong Dong Van Hotel, Dong Van

Dong Van

Located in the northernmost reaches of Vietnam's Ha Giang Province, Dong Van is a naturally scenic district known for its majestic towering karst mountains. This unspoiled mountainous wilderness is the perfect backdrop for exhilarating outdoor activities such as trekking and mountain climbing. The town of Dong Van makes an excellent base for exploring the nearby minority villages and the surrounding visitor attractions. These include, among others: the Hmong King Palace, a fascinating architectural landmark built in the early twentieth century; Lung Cu Flag Tower perched on the top of a mountain and showcasing tools, costumes and cultural products of the area's many ethnic groups; and the bustling local Sunday market selling local products made by the Mong, Han, Dao, Giay and Tay people.

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, set out on a scenic drive from **Hoang Su Phi to Quan Ba**, journeying deeper into Vietnam's dramatic northern highlands. Continue onward to **Yen Minh**, with enriching stops along the way at traditional villages such as **Nam Dam**, home to the Dao community, and **Lung Tam**, known for its H'mong heritage and local craftsmanship.

From Yen Minh, ascend into the Dong Van Karst Plateau, where the landscape transforms into a striking panorama of rugged peaks and winding mountain roads. Pause at the charming border village of **Pho Bang**, near the China-Vietnam frontier, admired for its centuries-old houses and quiet atmosphere.

Continue to the breathtaking **Sung La Valley**, often regarded as one of the region's most beautiful, and enjoy a short walk through a picturesque village set amidst rolling hills. The journey then takes you to **Sa Phin**, once the capital of Ha Giang, where you will visit the historic **King's Palace**, a fascinating relic of the region's past.

By evening, arrive in **Dong Van** and check in to your hotel. The rest of the evening is at leisure. Overnight stay in Dong Van.

Overnight: Hoa Cuong Dong Van Hotel

The Hoa Cuong Hotel is located in the historic town of Dong Van, which is home to the UNESCO Dong Van Stone Plateau, in the mountainous Ha Giang region. The hotel is close to local restaurants and bars and is also a perfect base to explore the stunningly scenic surrounding landscape. All 82 hotel rooms offer free Wi-Fi, ensuite bathrooms and a flat screen tv. Room types range from single rooms to VIP rooms, which boast a separate living room. The hotel consists of 9 floors and received its first guests in 2015. Another highlight when visiting Hoa Cuong Hotel is a scenic walk through the Dong Van old quarters to experience the traditional local culture.



Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 5 Auberge de Meo Vac, Meo Vac

Meo Vac

Meo Vac, a small rural town embraced by the majestic and awe-inspiring steep karst mountains, is an enchanting gateway to the highlands of Vietnam. Its rugged and untamed beauty sets the stage for breathtaking adventures and unforgettable experiences. The winding and adrenaline-inducing Mai Pi Leng Pass unveils panoramic vistas of breathtaking peaks and serene valleys. The Nho Que River, meandering through the dramatic landscape, adds a touch of tranquility to the wild scenery. Meo Vac is also a gateway to Heaven's Gate, a natural wonder that offers breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. The town is surrounded by remarkable natural treasures, including the UNESCO World Heritage Protected GeoPark and the verdant landscapes of Ba Be National Park. Meo Vac beckons adventurers and nature enthusiasts to explore its untamed wonders and immerse themselves in the unspoiled beauty of Vietnam's highlands.

Day Itinerary

Today, embark on one of the most spectacular drives in northern Vietnam as you journey from **Dong Van to Meo Vac** along the famed *Happiness Road*. The highlight of the day is crossing the dramatic **Ma Pi Leng Pass**, often considered one of the most breathtaking mountain passes in the country.

Pause along the way to take in sweeping views of towering limestone peaks, deep valleys, and sheer rock faces that create a truly awe-inspiring landscape. This stretch offers some of the finest photo opportunities, with every turn revealing a new perspective of the rugged highlands.

Upon arrival in **Meo Vac**, check in to your mountain lodge, set amidst serene natural surroundings. If time permits, explore nearby ethnic villages to gain a glimpse into the daily life and traditions of the local communities. Return to your lodge for a peaceful evening. Overnight stay in Meo Vac.

Overnight: Auberge de Meo Vac

Set in the old house of a former Hmong notable, the Auberge de Meo Vac is just a 5-minute walk from the town centre of Meo Vac. The lodge offers five guest rooms, a small dormitory, and separate showers. Guests can dine and have drinks at the on-site restaurant and bar that opens up onto an old paved courtyard. Guests can take advantage of the trekking tours available at the lodge.

Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 6 Auberge de Meo Vac, Meo Vac

Day Itinerary

Today is dedicated to exploring the remote beauty and cultural richness of the **Meo Vac region**, home to a remarkable diversity of ethnic communities and framed by dramatic mountains and deep, rocky valleys.

After breakfast, set out on a guided day hike with a packed picnic lunch, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in this untouched landscape. As you traverse scenic trails, you'll encounter local villagers going about their daily routines—tending to corn fields, gathering forest produce, and offering a genuine glimpse into life in the highlands. The pace of the walk is flexible and tailored to your comfort, ensuring a relaxed and personal experience.

Pause along the way to enjoy your picnic amidst stunning natural surroundings before continuing your exploration. By evening, return to your lodge to unwind and savour a warm dinner, reflecting on a day of meaningful connections and breathtaking scenery. Overnight stay in Meo Vac.

Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 7 Overnight Travel

Day Itinerary

After breakfast, bid farewell to **Meo Vac** and set out on a scenic yet extensive drive through the northern highlands. Today's journey takes you across three provinces—**Ha Giang, Cao Bang, and Bac Kan**—offering ever-changing landscapes of rugged mountains, winding roads, and remote valleys along the Sino-Vietnamese frontier.

Though the drive is long, it is richly rewarding, with opportunities to pause and experience local life along the way. Time and weather permitting, you may visit villages belonging to the **Nung, San Chay, or Dzaotien** communities, each offering unique cultural insights and traditions.

By mid-afternoon, arrive at **Pac Ngoi Village** in **Ba Be National Park**, a serene lakeside setting surrounded by lush greenery. Here, you will be welcomed into a traditional stilt house for an authentic homestay experience with a local Tay family. Enjoy a home-cooked dinner and soak in the peaceful atmosphere of rural Vietnam. Overnight at the homestay in Ba Be.

Day 8 Overnight Travel

Day Itinerary

After a leisurely breakfast, set out on a relaxed cycling experience through the scenic landscapes of **Ba Be National Park**. The route is gentle and flexible, with a few uphill stretches—should the incline feel steep, you are free to walk alongside your bicycle and enjoy the surroundings at your own pace. Along the way, catch your first glimpse of **Ba Be Lake**, Vietnam's largest natural freshwater lake, beautifully framed by forested limestone mountains.

Continue cycling down to the lakeside wharf, where you can pause for a refreshing drink while taking in the calm, unspoiled setting. From here, board a small boat and glide across the lake, entering the **Gam River** as you journey toward the secluded village of **Dau Dang**.

Arrive around lunchtime to a warm welcome at a local home, where you'll enjoy a delicious meal prepared with regional flavours—often considered among the finest in the area. After lunch, return to your boat and drift along the river toward the impressive **Puong Cave**, a natural wonder carved through limestone cliffs.

Later, rejoin your bicycles and continue along a scenic route back toward **Pac Ngoi Village**, passing through the national park's main gate and enjoying sweeping views of the lake along the way. Upon return, unwind with a refreshing shower before settling in for another comforting dinner and overnight stay at your homestay.

Day 9 Capella Hanoi, Hanoi

Hanoi

As previously described

Day Itinerary

Enjoy a relaxed morning in **Ba Be**, with time to take a final stroll through the village or simply soak in the peaceful surroundings of the lake and its lush landscapes. A leisurely lunch will be served at your homestay before you prepare for departure.

In the afternoon, set out on a scenic drive back to **Hanoi**, bidding farewell to the tranquil beauty of the national park as you journey along quiet countryside roads. Arrive in the capital by late afternoon and check in to your hotel.

The remainder of the day is at leisure—perhaps explore the bustling streets, enjoy a café, or simply unwind after your journey. Overnight stay in Hanoi.

Overnight: Capella Hanoi

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 10 Capella Hanoi, Hanoi

Day Itinerary

Enjoy a full day at leisure in **Hanoi**, allowing you to explore the city at your own pace. You may choose to wander through the charming lanes of the Old Quarter, discover local cafés, or visit cultural landmarks and museums. Alternatively, simply relax at your hotel and soak in the rhythm of the city. Overnight stay in Hanoi.

Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 11 End of Itinerary

Day Itinerary

Depending on your flight schedule, you will be transferred to **Hanoi Airport** for your onward journey. Your private vehicle will ensure a smooth and timely transfer, marking the end of your memorable journey through Vietnam.

Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Transport

Transfers

Date	Company	Pick Up	Drop Off	Time	Vehicle
		Noi Bai International Airport [HAN]	Capella Hanoi		Transfer
		Capella Hanoi	Panhou Retreat		Transfer
		Hoa Cuong Dong Van Hotel	Auberge de Meo Vac		Transfer
		Capella Hanoi	Noi Bai International Airport [HAN]		Transfer

Travel Information



From the remarkable beauty of Sam Mountain and Halong Bay to the numerous sacred temples and pagodas, Vietnam has a lot to offer. It is a country that features everything from exotic culinary delights to breathtaking scenery. Seemingly endless, tranquil rice paddies stand in stark contrast to bustling cities such as Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi which embrace all the technology and conveniences that the modern world has to offer. The well-preserved colonial buildings of Hoi An play host to a slew of charming boutiques and tempting cafes while, further north, the local hill-tribe people of Sapa sell a wide variety of exquisite crafts and handmade trinkets. Beyond the urban areas, this diverse country is characterised by vast, verdant jungles and lush mountainous regions as well as an enticing coastline peppered with golden sand, palm-lined beaches.

Banking and Currency

Currency

Local currency: Vietnamese Dong

Symbol: ₫

ISO code: VND

Subunit: Hào

Banknotes: ₫1000, ₫2000, ₫5000, ₫10000, ₫20000, ₫50000, ₫100000, ₫200000, ₫500000

Coins: None

Banking

Card Transactions: Yes

ATMs: Yes

Mastercard: Yes

Visa: Yes

American Express: No

Diner's club: No

Banking Hours:

Weekdays: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Weekends: Closed

Public Holidays: No

Foreign exchange services: Yes

Travel, Transport and Getting Around

Air:

Main airlines: Vietnam Airlines, VietJet Air

International Airports: Tan Son Nhat International Airport (Ho Chi Minh City), Noi Bai International Airport (Hanoi)

Domestic Airports: Da Nang International Airport, Cam Ranh International Airport

Road:

Driving on the: Right
 Tar roads: Yes
 Gravel roads: No
 Valid International Driver's License needed: Yes
 Car hire available: Yes
 Taxis: Yes
 E-hailing services: Yes

Bus:

Inter-city bus services: Yes
 Local city bus networks: Yes

Rail:

Railway system: Yes
 Subway System: No

Water:

Ferries: Yes
 Water taxis: Yes
 Leisure cruises: Yes

Food, Drink and Cuisine Advice**Food and water safety:**

Can you drink the tap water: No
 Fresh fruit and veg: Yes
 Ice: Yes
 Meat: Yes
 Street food: Yes

Local cuisine:

Vietnamese cuisine is renowned for its fresh ingredients, balanced flavors, and diverse dishes. Pho (noodle soup), banh mi (sandwich), and spring rolls are popular street foods. Vietnamese cuisine is characterized by the use of herbs like mint and cilantro, fish sauce, and a variety of meats and seafood. Notable local drinks include Vietnamese coffee, iced tea, and sugarcane juice.

Tipping: 5-10%

Climate and Weather

Annual rainfall: 1500 - 2500 mm

Average temperature: 25°C

Summer:

Average highs: 35°C
 Average lows: 25°C

Winter:

Average highs: 20°C

Average lows: 15°C

Best time to visit:

The best time to visit Vietnam is from November to April when the weather is cooler and drier, making it ideal for exploring the country.

Clothing and Dress Recommendations

Spring and Summer

Cool, light, breathable and comfortable: Yes

Lightweight warm clothes: No

Winter and Autumn

Jerseys, cardigans, sweaters, jackets: Recommended

Heavyweight clothing and boots: No

General

Umbrella and raincoat: Yes

Warm gloves, hat and scarf: No

Swimming costume (bathing suit): Yes

Hat, sunglasses and sunblock: Yes

Walking shoes: Yes

Casual: Yes

Smart-casual attire: No

Internet Availability

Internet cafes: Yes

Accommodation options: Yes

Restaurants: Yes

Cafes: Yes

Shopping malls: Yes

Public parks: Yes

Libraries: Yes

Electricity and Plug Standards

Plug Type: Type A, Type C

Voltage (V): 220V

Frequency Hertz (Hz): 50Hz

*Travel plug adapter and voltage converter might be necessary depending on your appliances.
