

TOUR INFORMATION

Your Spiritual and Culinary Vietnam tour of South Vietnam hosted by Drol Kar Buddhist Centre doesn't merely focus on immersing ourselves in the history and culture of South Vietnam. This journey brings commitment, relaxation, spiritual cultivation and engagement with the community, and on every inch of our journey, tantalises our taste buds with the cuisine from various regions of Vietnam and more. March is a vibrant busy holiday month in the Vietnamese calendar.

In a journey of three phases, the adventure begins in **Ho Chi Minh City - Saigon**.

First find yourself easing into a more relaxed state as you enjoy activities close to the waters of the **Mekong River**. Start the days with guided meditation and end with evening spiritual discussions with Venerable Jampa; cruise out to explore the narrow waterways of the Mekong Delta; visit the floating markets and local villages; learn to make rice noodles and rice paper rolls.



Travel to the mountain resort town of **Dalat** for three nights of peace and tranquillity visiting the monasteries and temples and other local attractions and venturing out into the surrounding farming communities.

As the journey continues, take a step into the Vietnamese village environment. Enter into the daily lives of the villagers in Venerable Jampa's home town of **Nha Trang**. Volunteer in the fields alongside the farmers; help the local school children and join them in play; visit and cook a meal at the school for disabled children; or just observe the village lifestyle and enjoy the hospitality of the local people. Follow the escape route taken by Venerable Jampa's family in their bid for freedom. Leave the village lifestyle with a flight to **Hoi An**, a city that escaped the destruction of the wars, and is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Conclude the journey back in the bustling cities of **Danang** and **Saigon** with free time for shopping and exploring the traditional markets and modern shopping precincts.

PRICING DETAILS

Total cost: \$4250 (early bird price **\$4150** if deposit paid by **September 30, 2011**)

Deposit: \$500 required by **October 31, 2011** (non-refundable)

Balance payment: \$3750 will be required by **December 15, 2011**

Failure to pay the balance by this date may result in forfeiture of your place, loss of deposit and the next person on the waiting list will then be offered your place on the tour. If for some reason the tour doesn't go ahead, all monies will be refunded as long as it is prior to deposits paid for flights and accommodation etc.

Additional costs: Optional single supplement \$503

Walking tour on day 13 - \$40

Meals on some days

Personal insurances (travel insurance required)

Personal spending

Photo fees (some sightseeing venues)

BOOKING PROCEDURE:

Print out and complete the booking form. Forward the completed form, together with your cheque or money order for the full deposit of \$500 (non-refundable) to the address shown on the booking form as soon as possible to secure your place on the tour. A receipt for the deposit, detailed trip information and confirmation of your inclusion on the tour will be sent to you immediately.

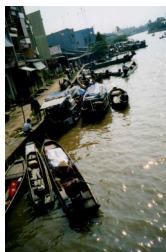
Payment by Credit Card or direct funds transfer can also be arranged by calling your tour organizer – Karen Mayer 03 5254 3123 A/H or karens@barwonhealth.org.au

South Vietnam March 3 – 19, 2011 ~ ITINERARY

Day 1: Australia/Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) (D)

Upon arrival to one of the maddest cities for constant streaming of traffic, we transfer to Saigon City for one night. At a formal dinner we meet our drivers and English-speaking tour guide, and enjoy a cultural folksong performance.

Day 2 & 3: Saigon/Can Tho (all B/L/D)



The first part of the journey is geared to help you unwind with daily morning meditations. Enjoy relaxing on the waters of the Mekong Delta, be part of the bustling floating markets of Cai Rang, walk mindfully through the markets and observe the local people haggling and trading. This will be our first opportunity to explore the lifestyle of Vietnamese farmers. If in luck, we may have

hands on experience with husking rice, one of the staple foods for the Vietnamese. After spending the day observing the life of the Vietnamese people the evening will be devoted to spiritual discussions given by Ven Jampa. Overnight stay at My Khanh ecological tourist village.

Day 4: Can Tho/Dalat (B/L/D)

From the soothing waters, we drive 7 hrs through the scenic rubber, tea and coffee plantation towards the cool mountain town of Dalat making several stops along the way. This city was developed by the French as a hillside resort. Two days homestay at a YK home villa.

Day 5 & 6: Dalat (all B/L/D)

We continue with our early morning meditation sitting, unwind even further with the scenic farmland to appreciate our physical health. Here we will spend time at the Vietnamese monasteries Bat Nha and Truc Lam. Overnight at a monastery.



Day 7: Dalat/Nha Trang (B/D)

Morning is unstructured free time to explore the area or relax. After lunch we journey via spectacular scenery to the tropical resort of Jampa's hometown Nha Trang where you will be spending 4 nights at the Light Hotel in town. There will be no professional tour guide, but Jampa will show us around.

Day 8-10: Nha Trang (B/L/D-except for one D)

Daily early meditation/yoga followed by breakfast and full days ahead of us. You will have choice to volunteer in the fields alongside the farmers, visit temples, go into school to read English books to the children, visit and cook (under supervision) a meal for the **Nha Tho Hoa Yen** Home for disabled children, or just observe the village lifestyle and enjoy the hospitality of the local people and Jampa's relatives.



We will visit Jampa's parents' humble home and also trace the escape-route that Jampa and her family took back in 1978. For those who are daring, you can travel by motorbike for a small donation.

Day 11 Nha Trang/Hoi An (B/L/D)

We take a one hour flight to Danang, then a bus trip to Hoi An via Marble Mountain, site of ancient Buddhist caves, rock sculptures and statues.

Day 12 Hoi An (B)

Leaving behind the village lifestyle we begin a four day stay in Hoi An at the Hoi An Trails Hotel.

Hoi An is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Having escaped the destruction of successive wars, it is now oozing with charm and history.

There are many attractions and activities in and around the city.

Enjoy exploring all that Hoi An has to offer either on foot or by bicycle - in a group of friends or on your own.

Or relax by the beach or the pool.

Formal meditations and discussions will not be provided during the remainder of the stay, however, self directed practice in the comfort of our rooms, is encouraged.



Day 13 Hoi An (B/L)

Today there is an optional walking tour, with an English-speaking guide, along the streets and back alleys of local markets. Here we connect with the stall holders and their delicacies. This tour is designed to provide you with a unique opportunity to learn about and experience Vietnamese culture through its unique cuisine (\$40pp).

Otherwise a free day.

Day 14 and 15 Hoi An (B)

Both free days for exploring Hoi An Ancient town, sightseeing, shopping or just relaxing.



Day 16 Hoi An/Danang/Saigon (B/L/D)

Travel from Hoi An for a tour of Danang before heading to the domestic airport for the return flight to Saigon with an overnight stay at Blue Diamond Hotel.

Day 17 Saigon (B)

The day is free for last minute shopping/sightseeing before your journey comes to an end at 18.00. Transfer to airport for departure flight to Melbourne at 21.05.

Day 18 Australia

Arrive Melbourne airport at 9.35am.