

LEGENDS OF THE LOTUS

Phnom Penh - Siem Reap - Angkor Wat - Ho Chi Minh City

US departure date: **September 4, 2027** | Phnom Penh land tour start date: **September 6, 2027** | Ho Chi Minh City return date: **September 13, 2027**

Hanoi and Ha Long Bay extension return date: **September 17, 2027**

9 Days from: **\$2295**



START YOUR ADVENTURE

Dear Young Alumni and Friends!

Can you think of a better way to travel than with fellow VCU Young Alumni?

The VCU Alumni Alumni Travel Program, designed for recent grads in their 20s and 30s, offers you this opportunity by bringing you together with individuals in the same age range, with similar backgrounds and experiences, while enriching you on well-designed, hassle-free tours of the world.

These programs provide social, cultural, and recreational activities and many opportunities for learning, enrichment and enjoying a connection back to VCU. Our journeys are of great quality and value, operated by a travel company with over 50 years of experience in the young travel market.

In this brochure you will find a detailed itinerary, travel dates and pricing.

If you have any questions about this tour, please contact our tour operator, AESU Alumni World Travel, by calling 800-638-7640 or email alumni@aesu.com.

To make an online booking, please visit our young alumni tour landing page www.aesu.com/vcu and select this tour to be directed to the tour web site.

We are looking forward to traveling with you this coming season.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Bass
Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations
Virginia Commonwealth University

Travel insurance is compulsory. Some schools or alumni associations may offer travel insurance to you at a reduced rate. If not, AESU also offers group travel insurance. Ask our reservations agent for details or visit this link: <https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/get-a-quote.html?partner=AESU3922>

WHAT'S INCLUDED

VIETNAM + CAMBODIA

Get ready for a wild adventure through Cambodia and Vietnam. Zip through the lively streets of Phnom Penh by tuk-tuk, wander the jungle-covered ruins of Angkor Wat, and uncover hidden corners of Cambodia off the beaten path. In Vietnam, dive into history at the Cu Chi Tunnels, soak up the energy of Hanoi's bustling streets, and feast on the flavors that make the cuisine here unforgettable. And for those craving epic scenery, hop on a boat to explore the jaw-dropping limestone karsts of Halong Bay—a bucket-list experience you won't forget.

10-DAY PACKAGE

Transportation and Lodging

- 7 nights in 4-star hotels, 2-share rooms with private bath/shower
- One-way flight from Phnom Penh to Ho Chi Minh City in economy class
- All ground transportation by air-conditioned motor coach, as per itinerary
- Domestic airport transfers included with land package price
- Arrival and departure airport transfers included with purchased AESU group airfare

Meals

- 7 continental breakfasts, 3 dinners, 3 lunches

Activities & Admissions

- Guided tours, led by a local English-speaking expert in Siem Reap, Angkor Wat, Phnom Penh & Ho Chi Minh City
- Welcome orientation in Phnom Penh
- Choeng Ek Memorial & Toul Sleng Museum
- Wat Phnom Buddhist Temple
- Siem Reap tuk-tuk tour
- UNESCO World Heritage Site Angkor Wat
- Banteay Srei Temples | Ta Prohm & Bayon Temple
- Saigon River Cruise
- Vietcong Cu Chi Tunnels
- Cholon Market
- Water puppet show

Sights & Highlights

- Phnom Penh Royal Palace
- Silver Pagoda
- National Museum
- Choeng Ek Killing Field Memorial
- Angkor Thom
- Terrance of the Leper Kings
- Ho Chi Minh's Notre Dame Cathedral & Presidential Palace
- War Museum

PLUS

- Private tour director for the entire duration of the land tour
- All service charges & local taxes

Optional Excursions (not included in land package price):

- Optional Santorini catamaran sailing cruise
- Optional excursion from Mykonos to Delos

4-DAY OPTIONAL HA LONG BAY EXTENSION

Transportation and Lodging

- 2 nights on a 5-star cruise ship with private bath/shower, 2-share cabins
- 1 night in 4-star hotel in Hanoi, 2-share rooms with private bath/shower
- Transfer from hotel in Hanoi to airport
- One-way economy class airfare from Ho Chi Minh City to Hanoi
- Transfer from Ha Long Bay to Hanoi airport by motor coach as per itinerary

Meals

- 3 breakfasts, 2 lunches on board the 5-star cruise, 1 brunch on board the 5-star cruise, 3 specialty dinners

Activities & Admissions

- Guided tour of Hanoi, led by a local English-speaking expert
- Cyclo tour of Hanoi
- Vietnam Museum of Ethnology
- Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university
- Hoa Lo Prison Museum 'Hanoi Hilton'

Sights & Highlights

- See Hanoi sights, such as One Pillar Pagoda
- St. Joseph's Cathedral
- Ngoc Son Temple on Hoan Kiem Lake
- UNESCO World Heritage Site Ha Long Bay
- Tran Quoc Pagoda on West Lake

Also Included

A private tour director for the entire duration of the land tour. All service charges and local taxes are covered. Airfare is an additional cost.

EXPERIENCES

This trip has been carefully designed for young travelers and features fantastic inclusions and highlights. For a glossary of these key aspects, visit: www.aesu.com/experiences



ACTIVITY LEVEL: MODERATE/ACTIVE

This trip features a full and active itinerary sometimes at a fast pace and offers activities with higher intensity.



HOTELS

Hotels are centrally located and many offer great extra amenities such as pools, gyms or rooftop bars. All land package rates are based on two people sharing a room. If a single room is desired, a supplement of \$425 applies. If traveling solo and not wanting to pay the single supplement, AESU will attempt to arrange a share with a same-gender traveler. If a share cannot be arranged the single supplement will apply.

TOUR DIRECTORS

Our qualified tour directors and staff of local experts mean a trouble-free journey with the added security of group travel. Show your tour director and driver your appreciation with a tip. We suggest \$8-10 per person/per day for your tour director and \$4-5 per person/per day for your driver. To learn more visit www.aesu.com/tour-directors

By booking your trip with AESU, you are agreeing to all the terms and conditions as outlined on our website: www.aesu.com/terms-conditions/

ITINERARY

DAY 1 – FLIGHT TO CAMBODIA (crossing the international date line and arriving on DAY 3)

Crossing time zones and the International Date Line as we head toward the heart of Cambodia.

Meals: In-flight

DAY 2 – Crossing the international date line

DAY 3 – LAND TOUR START DAY: PHNOM PENH

Step off the plane and into the vibrant heart of Cambodia. Phnom Penh, the bustling capital, hums with energy, and today is ours to unwind and soak it all in. In the evening, we gather with fellow travelers for a welcome dinner featuring authentic Khmer flavors — a delicious first taste of the adventure ahead.

Inclusion: Transfer from airport to hotel included with purchased AESU group airfare | Welcome orientation | Welcome dinner of Khmer specialties

Meals: In-flight | Dinner

DAY 4 – PHNOM PENH

Dive into Phnom Penh's rich history and culture as we wander the glittering halls of the Royal Palace and marvel at the treasure-filled Silver Pagoda. The National Museum of Khmer Arts offers a stunning showcase of over 5,000 artifacts, from bronze sculptures to intricate carvings. Midday, we pause for lunch at a local restaurant, sampling classic Cambodian flavors before continuing our discoveries. Climb the sacred hill of Wat Phnom, then feel the pulse of the city at Central Market, a 1930s architectural gem teeming with color, scents, and local life. The day also takes a reflective turn with a visit to Choeng Ek, where history leaves a profound imprint.

Inclusions: Guide tour of Phnom Penh, led by an English-speaking local expert | Royal Palace | Silver Pagoda | National Museum of Khmer Arts | Buddhist Temple, Wat Phnom | Choeng Ek Killing Field Memorial

Meals: Breakfast | Lunch

DAY 5 – PHNOM PENH – SIEM REAP

We begin with a poignant exploration of Tuol Sleng, the former S-21 prison turned museum, offering insight into Cambodia's recent past. Along the journey to Siem Reap, make a stop at the lively Spider Market, a local hotspot where the unexpected awaits. Wander among stalls bursting with colorful textiles, handicrafts, and quirky curios, feeling the energy of locals negotiating and sharing stories. Just a short distance away, pause at Naga Bridge, an iconic landmark spanning the river, where we can stretch our legs, snap photos, and take in the scenic views of Cambodia's countryside before continuing toward the ancient wonders of Siem Reap. In the evening, gather for dinner at a local restaurant, sampling regional specialties and unwinding after the day's journey.

Inclusion: Tuol Sleng prison / Genocide Museum | Spider Market | Naga Bridge

Meals: Breakfast | Dinner

DAY 6 – SIEM REAP – ANGKOR WAT

Wake early to discover Banteay Srei, a small temple famous for its intricate pink sandstone carvings. Next, experience the awe-inspiring Angkor Wat, the architectural jewel of Cambodia, where sprawling galleries, courtyards, and bas-reliefs tell stories from centuries past. We pause at a nearby restaurant, enjoying a break to taste local Cambodian dishes before continuing our adventure. In the afternoon, explore Ta Prohm, the jungle-covered temple made famous by Tomb Raider, where massive tree roots wrap around ancient stone. We end the day at Angkor Thom, home to the enigmatic Bayon Temple, the Royal Enclosure, and terraces adorned with monumental carvings — an unforgettable journey through history.

Inclusions: UNESCO World Heritage Site Angkor Wat | Guide tour of Angkor Wat, led by an English-speaking local expert | Banteay Srei Temple | Ta Prohm Temple | Terrace of the Leper Kings | Traditional Angkor Wat lunch | Ankor Thom

Meals: Breakfast | Lunch



DAY 7 – SIEM REAP – HO CHI MINH CITY

See Siem Reap from a fresh perspective as we hop on a tuk-tuk and glide through the leafy pathways of the Royal Independence Gardens, feeling the city come alive around us. The adventure continues at the bustling “Old Market,” where vibrant stalls overflow with spices, textiles, and local crafts, and the mingling aromas, colors, and chatter create a sensory tapestry we won’t forget. Later, we board our flight and trade the streets of Cambodia for the dynamic energy of Ho Chi Minh City, where a dinner cruise along the shimmering Saigon River invites us to unwind and watch the city’s skyline light up, setting the perfect tone for our first night in Vietnam.

Inclusions: Tuk-Tuk tour | Royal Independence Gardens | Shrine of Ya Tep | Preah Ang Check Preah Chom shrine | Psar Chars ‘Old Market’ | Flight from Siem Reap to Ho Chi Minh City | Airport transfers | Saigon dinner cruise

Meals: Breakfast | Dinner



DAY 8 – HO CHI MINH CITY

We step back in time at the Cu Chi Tunnels, an astonishing network of underground passages that tell the story of Vietnamese resilience, then return to the city to explore the Reunification Palace, the Notre Dame Cathedral, the Central Post Office, and the War Remnants Museum, gaining perspective on the country’s complex history. Cap the evening with a magical water puppet show, a centuries-old art form performed on a shimmering stage of water.

Inclusions: Guide tour of Ho Chi Minh City, led by an English-speaking local expert | Cu Chi Tunnels excursion | Reunification Palace | Ben Thanh market | Water puppet show

Meals: Breakfast | Lunch



DAY 9 – HO CHI MINH CITY – OPTIONAL MEKONG DELTA EXCURSION

The day is ours to explore Ho Chi Minh City at our own pace, whether that means lingering in hidden cafés, browsing bustling markets, or finding quiet corners off the beaten path. For those of us who choose the optional excursion to the Mekong Delta, we trade the city streets for lush waterways. Glide through winding canals in a traditional boat, stop at a brick kiln, and visit coconut workshops where we sample handmade sweets. In a peaceful village, try our hand at age-old crafts like sleeping mat weaving, then drift along in a rowing boat beneath swaying palms. A local lunch rounds out the experience before returning to Ho Chi Minh City.

Inclusions: Free day to explore Ho Chi Minh City

Meals: Breakfast | Lunch

Optional excursion: Mekong Delta excursion



DAY 10 – FLY HOME OR CONTINUE ON THE OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO HANOI AND HA LONG BAY

If this is where your adventure ends, enjoy a leisurely breakfast before heading to the airport. Take home memories of bustling markets, breathtaking temples, and unforgettable experiences along the Mekong and beyond. The rest of us continue with a flight to Hanoi, the bustling capital of Vietnam. Upon arrival, our local guide leads us straight into the heart of the city. Start at Ba Dinh Square, where the most solemn ceremonies unfold, and glimpse the iconic Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum from the outside — a place of deep respect and history. Nearby, the unique One-Pillar Pagoda rises delicately from its single stone pillar, a symbol of harmony and ingenuity dating back to 1049. Then, hop on a traditional “cyclo” to weave through Hanoi’s famous 36 Streets, a labyrinth of narrow alleys and shop houses, each street historically named for the goods sold there — from fabrics to crafts to herbal medicines. We pause at the serene Ngoc Son Temple on Hoan Kiem Lake before dinner at KOTO Van Mieu, where a meal supports disadvantaged youth learning life and hospitality skills.

Inclusions: Transfer from hotel to airport included with purchase of AESU group airfare | Flight from Ho Chi Minh City to Hanoi | Transfer and city tour of Hanoi, led by a local English-speaking expert | See Ba Dinh Square | Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum | One-Pillar Pagoda | Cyclo tour of Hanoi | Ngoc Son Temple on Hoan Kiem Lake | 36 Street shops

Meals: Breakfast | Dinner (for travelers continuing on the extension)

DAY 11 – HANOI

Fueled by strong Vietnamese coffee, we kick off the day diving into Vietnam’s past at the Museum of Ethnology — a vibrant crash course in the country’s 54 ethnic groups, complete with stilt houses you can walk through and traditional outfits that look straight out of a festival. From there, we make our way to Tran Quoc Pagoda, floating peacefully on West Lake like something from a postcard, before stepping into the Temple of Literature — Vietnam’s first university. After lunch, things take a darker turn at Hoa Lo Prison, aka the “Hanoi Hilton,” a gritty window into Vietnam’s wartime past. We wrap it up at St. Joseph’s Cathedral, a French-built Gothic church that looks like Notre Dame’s stylish younger cousin — the perfect spot to snap a few golden-hour shots before hunting down happy hour.

Inclusions: Full day tour of Hanoi, guided by a local English-speaking expert | Vietnam Museum of Ethnology | Tran Quoc Pagoda on West Lake | Temple of Literature, Vietnam’s first university | Hoa Lo Prison Museum ‘Hanoi Hilton’ | St. Joseph’s Cathedral

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 – HANOI – HA LONG BAY

After breakfast, leave the city behind as we transfer to the legendary Ha Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage wonder. We board our cruise and toast our arrival with a welcome drink as the karst limestone islands rise dramatically from emerald waters. The day is ours to embrace the bay: swim in hidden coves, paddle through quiet channels by kayak, explore mysterious caves, and join a hands-on cooking demonstration with the cruise team. Fresh, local flavors fill every meal, with lunch and dinner served on board as we drift through one of the world’s most breathtaking seascapes.

Inclusions: Transfer to Ha Long Bay | 5-star overnight cruise | Lunch on board the cruise ship | Specialty dinner on board the cruise ship

Meals: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

DAY 13 – HA LONG BAY

We wake to a morning framed by soaring limestone peaks and calm waters. Spend a full day on the water — swim, kayak, or simply soak up the sun on the sundeck while taking in the surreal scenery. Explore hidden corners of the bay, capture the perfect photos, or sip coffee as mist rolls across the islands. Meals continue to delight with local cuisine prepared on board. Another night on the cruise ensures we are fully immersed in Ha Long Bay’s tranquil magic.

Inclusions: Visit UNESCO World Heritage Site - Ha Long Bay | 5-star overnight cruise | Lunch on board the cruise ship | Specialty dinner on board the cruise ship

Meals: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

DAY 14 – FLIGHT HOME

Our final morning on the water begins with breakfast as the cruise slowly winds back toward shore. We take in the last panoramic views of the bay before checking out. A farewell brunch on board rounds out our floating retreat. Then, we transfer to Hanoi’s Noi Bai Airport for our flight home, carrying memories of emerald waters, towering limestone cliffs, and a truly unforgettable escape.

Inclusions: Morning Swim | Cruise ship brunch | Coach transfer to Hanoi Airport

Meals: Brunch | In-flight



TOUR MAP

