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Visit Hanoi, Halong Bay, Yen Tu Mountain, Hue, Phong Nha Cave, Dalat, and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). Our tour itinerary includes Tu Hieu Pagoda, the root temple of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, Bat Nha Monastery, and Phap Van Pagoda, all of which follow the practices of Plum Village. \_\_\_\_\_

Chau and Jim Yoder have traveled widely in Vietnam for many years. Jim has been doing community service there for many years. Chau was born in Hanoi, and she is a Dharma teacher and Mindful Chi Gung teacher. Chau coordinates La Boi Press, publishing Thich Nhat Hanh's books in the Vietnamese language; Jim volunteers with La Boi press, and a variety of Rotary Club projects.

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This itinerary will change slightly as we refine the tour; participants determine the details of the tour. We offer opportunities to learn about the history and culture, which includes travel, cultural and historical information, Chi Gung practice, meditation, Buddhist practices, and shopping, among other things.

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This tour is limited to a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 participants. \$1800 land cost includes all lodging, transportation within Vietnam, including three domestic flights, all entry fees to museums, events, all breakfasts and lunches, and two celebration dinners.

We will aid you in obtaining your air ticket and Vietnam visa. Airfare is about \$1000 and includes your Vietnam Visa, arranged through the travel agent we recommend.

It is easy to stay on in Asia after the tour, to return to a favorite place or travel further.

Note: We are not a travel company; we have lots of travel experience in Vietnam, and we promise we will do our best to help you have an enjoyable and memorable travel experience. We consider this traveling with friends.

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## Registration

**To register** for the tour please mail your information and a deposit of \$500 (checks payable to Chau Yoder) to:

Chau Yoder, A Mindful Visit to Vietnam,  
256 Dantley Way,  
Walnut Creek, CA. 94598 USA

**Full payment** is \$1800, due July 15, 2009.

**Cancellation:** Deposit minus \$50 will be refunded until June 15, 2009. After July 15 2009, refund minus \$500. If due to medical/immediate family emergency, travel insurance will cover this. If due to tour cancellation for any reason, you will receive a full refund.

Name.....

Address.....

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Phone/work/daytime.....

Phone/evening.....

Email.....

Citizenship.....

Passport Number:.....

Expiration Date:.....  
(must be at valid least 6 months beyond date of return to USA)

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**Inquiries:** Chau Yoder: Phone 925-708-8662 and email [chauyoder@high-spirits.com](mailto:chauyoder@high-spirits.com)

Online visit "A Mindful Visit to Vietnam" websites:

Photos of the October 2008 tour:

<http://www.high-spirits.com/VNTour2008>

Photos of the October 2007 tour:

<http://www.high-spirits.com/VNTour2007>

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# A Mindful Visit to Vietnam

Oct. 30–Nov. 15, 2009



with

Chau & Jim Yoder

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## ITINERARY

### **Day 1 - Friday-Sunday October 30-November 1 - Fly to Hanoi. (National History Museum and Museum of Ethnology)**

Arrive Sunday morning (November 1). We'll meet you at the Hanoi airport, transfer to hotel, nice lunch, then spend the afternoon at the National History Museum and Museum of Ethnology. Jet lag sets in, early to bed!

### **Day 2 - Monday Nov. 2 - Hanoi area (Quan Su Pagoda, sight-seeing & Water puppet show)**

The Quan Su Pagoda is in downtown Hanoi and is a large and old temple complex. We can circumambulate the grounds and get a pleasant experience of the practice of Buddhism today in the city. The monks, nuns and lay staff there are very kind, and if they have time they will be happy to greet us, show us the library and tell us about this temple.

In the afternoon, we will get to do sight seeing and shopping at the beautiful old quarter of Hanoi. The streets are named, in tradition, for the things sold there: Paper street, Shoe street, Tin street and many more. We'll walk around the old part of town surrounding Hoan Kiem Lake (learn the story of the sword and giant turtle). Shopping in Hanoi is generally a walking experience. There are modern places to shop, as well as the small shops. Both are an experience you will not want to miss.

We plan to see the water puppet show at night.

### **Day 3 - Tuesday Nov 3 - Hanoi to Halong Bay**

Halong Bay is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a must see for visitors. It's a 4 hour drive to where we'll get a boat and cruise the calm waters to view up close the limestone islands and caves. We'll have lunch on the boat and visit the island of the Amazing Caves, and a walking tour. We will spend a night in the city of Halong.

### **Day 4 - Wednesday Nov. 4 – Halong Bay to Hanoi**

On the way back from Halong bay to Hanoi, we will visit Yen Tu Mountain where King Tran Nhan Tong lived. He lived as a monk in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century after giving his kingdom to his son. We will hike up Yen Tu Mountain and visit Truc Lam Tu Pagoda, a newly built - grand pagoda at the bottom of this mountain, we will drive back to enjoy the evening in Hanoi.

### **Day 5 - Thursday Nov. 5—Hanoi sight-seeing & Temple of Literature, then fly to Hue**

One Pillar Pagoda, a completely different sort of pagoda; a Viet-

namese icon. We'll also visit the Temple of Literature (Van Mieu). Van Mieu is a cultural experience, a demonstration of the dedication to rigorous education in Vietnam. Here the winners of the historical mandarin scholar examinations were recorded in stone.

We will fly to Hue this afternoon, arrive about dinner time, and check in to our hotel.

### **Day 6 - Friday Nov. 6 - Hue area**

We'll travel out of town to Chua Tu Hieu, where Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh became a monk. We will stay there for as long as we wish and enjoy the peaceful surroundings. We may have lunch here with the monks. We will be guided through the large grounds and multiple temples. We are usually able to spend some time with the abbot and some of the senior monks to learn about their way of life. We can also tour other temples in the Hue area, especially Bao Quoc Pagoda, if there is time.

We plan a boat ride on the "romantic" Huong River at sunset time, with dinner and a live performance of classic Vietnamese folk songs on the boat.

### **Day 7 - Saturday Nov. 7 – Hue to Phong Nha caves & back to Hue**

We will take a bus to go north to Dong Hoi, and then Phong Nha caves. We will return to Hue that night. Phong Nha is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. These caves are explored mainly by boat, though there are a couple of raised areas where we will walk. The tour consists of a boat trip to the cave entrance, about 45 minutes, then another hour drifting through the caves.

### **Day 8 - Sunday Nov. 8 - Hue sight-seeing and fly to Ho Chi Minh City**

Tour the Old Citadel, the past residence of Vietnamese Kings, now partly restored from 1968 war damage. Visit local market. In the afternoon we will fly to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), with time after our arrival to enjoy an evening downtown walking tour and dinner in the central district.

### **Day 9 - Monday Nov. 9 - Ho Chi Minh City**

We will visit the central market. Our hotel will be near by, so walking the downtown will be easy, taxis are frequent, safe and cheap. We plan later to have ice cream at the top of the Saigon Towers office building on the 33rd floor, as we can see nearly the entire city from there - very spectacular. We will visit Phap Van Pagoda that the Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh founded in mid 1960's, and experience a different part of urban Saigon in route.

### **Day 10 - Tuesday Nov. 10 - Ho Chi Minh City – My Tho**

We will take a day tour by fast boat to visit My Tho. My Tho is

situated on the Mekong river south west of Ho Chi Minh city. We will take a short boat trip to an island in the wide river delta, watch coconut candies made, have lunch, ride a small boat along a tiny, hidden canal near the town of Ben Tre.

### **Day 11 - Wednesday Nov. 11 - Ho Chi Minh City to Dalat**

We'll go by bus to the mountains and city of Dalat. Even in October Saigon is very warm and the mountain air will be cooler. We will stop in the town of Bao Loc for lunch and a break at Tam Chau Coffee and Tea Company. We will visit Bat Nha Pagoda also. Homes belonging to hill tribe people can be seen in this area. We can visit the open market. Dalat city is small enough that we will be able to walk wherever we decide to have dinner. There is a very pretty lake that we can also walk around, and there is strong influence of French architecture here.

### **Day 12 - Thursday Nov. 12 – Dalat – Elephant ride**

We plan to go to a lake at Truc Lam Monastery nearby and take a boat to an island where we will be able to ride elephants, get to feed them, and meet the people who care for them. We will have some snacks along the bank of the lake. We may visit one of the biggest and most beautiful pagodas in Vietnam, right next to this lake if we have time. In the evening we have a final chance to see Dalat; we can easily walk the streets of this mountain city and try a variety of local snacks after dinner. Strolling the streets is a "thing to do" in Dalat and a lot of fun. There are several markets, cafes, boulangeries, and patisseries we can visit.

### **Day 13 - Friday Nov. 13 - Dalat to Ho Chi Minh City**

We'll fly back to Ho Chi Minh City. In Saigon again we will visit various markets, shop and do some last minute shopping. Our hotel will be close in to the central area of Saigon.

### **Day 14 - Saturday Nov. 14 - Ho Chi Minh City**

We'll visit Vinh Nghiem Pagoda which is an older temple, and on the grounds is a tower that houses the ashes of thousands of people.

There is a monument to the Venerable Thich Quang Duc which we can visit and discuss briefly. Finally, Chau and I have a special connection with Xa Loi Pagoda, we will share.... alternatively more last minute shopping and sightseeing if you wish.

### **Day 15 - Sunday Nov. 15 – Departing Ho Chi Minh City**

Drive to airport. Arrive in SF about the same time and day you departed Vietnam.

Note: we will see many tour agent offices in Vietnam any of which will be happy to assist with travel plans to Cambodia (Angkor Watt) and Thailand.