

# EXPLORE!

## TRIP NOTES



### Family Saigon to Bangkok Explorer (FQBK 2017)



TRIPDURATION  
**14**  
DAYS



**Tour Style:** Classic  
**Tour Pace:** Moderate

**Tour Type:** Small Groups  
**Accommodation**  
**Grade:** Standard

**Trip Code:** FQBK

#### Trip Highlights - Family Saigon to Bangkok Explorer

- ✓ Ho Chi Minh City - Learn about the resourcefulness of the Viet Cong at the Cu Chi Tunnels
- ✓ Mekong Delta - Riverside stilt houses and fascinating floating markets
- ✓ Siem Reap - Gateway to the iconic and awe-inspiring Khmer temple complex of Angkor
- ✓ Pranburi - Golden sand beaches and warm waters of the Gulf of Thailand
- ✓ Bangkok - Explore the glittering Grand Palace complex and the beautiful temple of the Reclining Buddha (Wat Po) (Optional)

#### Trip Essentials

**Accommodation:** 9 nights Standard Hotel  
1 night Premium Hotel  
3 nights Standard Bungalow

**Included Meals:** 13 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 dinner

**Start Point:** Join trip: Ho Chi Minh City

**End Point:** Trip ends: Bangkok Airport

**Transport:** Boat, Public Bus, Taxi, Minibus, Bicycle

**Countries:** Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand

**Minimum Age:** From 7 years

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## Family Saigon to Bangkok Explorer

This action-packed journey across Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand takes us to many of South East Asia's great sights: from vibrant cities to dense jungles and tropical beaches. We explore the Cu Chi tunnels from the Vietnam War, discover the impressive temples of ancient Angkor where Tomb Raider and many other films have been filmed and visit the floating markets of the Mekong Delta.

### TRIPLE ROOMS

This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on a selected number of night stops within the holiday. If you would like this option, a discount may be applicable on the cost of the trip - please ask our Sales team for further information.

### Why Book this trip

This trip is for families that want the maximum coverage from their holidays. With visits to Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand, you will be able to see the highlights of each country including Angkor Wat, Cu Chi Tunnels, the Killing Fields and the Mekong Delta as well as visiting famous cities such as Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City, all within 14 days and at a great price as well.



### Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

### Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

### Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

### Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

## Your trip itinerary

### Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.



## Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

### DAY 1 Join tour Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Arrive Ho Chi Minh City and check-in at the hotel. Also referred to as Saigon we start our adventure in Vietnam's largest, and arguably most exciting, city in Vietnam. Saigon is an eclectic mix of the traditional and the new, where pagodas and markets compete alongside the trappings of Vietnam's newly discovered entrepreneurial spirit. Your time is free to settle in.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** None

### DAY 2 Morning visit to Cu Chi Tunnels; Afternoon cyclo tour of Saigon

After breakfast this morning we head out to visit the infamous Cu Chi tunnels. First constructed by the Vietnamese during their colonial war with the French, the tunnels were later greatly expanded and went on to achieve notoriety during the Vietnam War, when they served as an underground command base for 10,000 Viet Cong troops. Exploring Cu Chi gives some idea as to the conditions that the Vietnamese and their American adversaries had to endure but, be warned, the tunnels are narrow and can be quite claustrophobic. Please note that we will share the transport to and from Cu Chi with other tourists. This afternoon we take a cyclo tour of Saigon, visiting Chinatown and the bustling Binh Tay market.


Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

### DAY 3 Drive to the Mekong Delta and cycle ride. Drive to Can Tho via Cai Be floating market

Leaving the city, we drive to the Mekong Delta and catch a boat to the start point of our cycle ride. We cycle for around 10-12 km along the flat Cai Thai village path with constant views of the delta as we wind our way around its many tributaries. The route is often shaded which is a helpful to combat the humidity (the boat can pick up cyclists at various stopping points if required). Along the way, we visit Mrs Nani's home who will show us how to make rice paper in the traditional way and Mr and Mrs Chin's home who will provide refreshments that include her famous 'Banh Tieu' (traditional doughnut). We return to the boat where we have lunch on-board and sail close along the delta to the famous Cai Be Floating Market. Spend some time cruising through the market and soaking up the atmosphere of this unique trading point before travelling on to Can Tho.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

### DAY 4 Morning boat cruise to Cai Rang floating market and Ba Lang canal then drive to Chau Doc

One of the most colourful attractions of the Mekong is its floating markets and this morning we visit the biggest in the Delta, at Cai Rang. We spend some time paddling through the market, soaking up the atmosphere and enjoying the friendly attentions of the locals, including the opportunity to board a local boat and meet the traders and perhaps buy a pineapple on board. We then visit the Binh Thuy Ancient House, a beautiful old property which dates back to the end of the 19th century - the house is filled with a wonderful collection of antiques and memorabilia. After our visit we drive to Chau Doc.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

### DAY 5 Morning speed boat to Phnom Penh

Driving to the jetty in Chau Doc this morning, we board an early morning speed boat to Phnom Penh, a four and a half hour river journey that takes us up the Hau Giang River into neighbouring Cambodia.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

**Swimming Pool Available** 


 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 6 Market bartering and cooking lesson with local school visit in Phnom Penh

Our first morning in Cambodia includes a visit to the local market to barter and buy fresh ingredients which will be used for the group to prepare a traditional Khmer meal at the La Rose restaurant, one of the finest Khmer cuisine restaurant's in the region. We then meet local children at a school giving the opportunity to learn some Khmer language as well as teach English to these children. We may also be able to arrange some activity between both sets of kids such as a game of football or taking on the locals at a traditional Cambodian board game. Our base tonight is Cambodia's historic capital, Phnom Penh, which sits at the confluence of the Sap, Mekong and Bassac Rivers. A rich testament to the country's ancient and colonial past, the city is filled with reminders of its diverse cultural heritage such as the grandeur of the Royal Palace and the National Museum to the Killing Fields of Choeng Ek, gruesome reminders of life under the brutal Khmer Rouge.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 7 Travel to Siem Reap. Afternoon orientation tour

Travelling by private bus, we head next for the jungle temples of Siem Reap, one of the most expansive and famous archaeological sites anywhere in South East Asia. After our day's journey, we check in to our hotel and take an orientation tour of the town on foot. Later this afternoon we have the option to visit the Khmer traditional Apsara Dance Shows for a buffet dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## DAY 8 Full day visits to Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat

Following in the footsteps of Lara Croft, we visit the Angkor Wat temples at Siem Reap today which span a period of some 600 years, from the 9th to the 15th centuries. Travelling by local tuk tuk, we visit two of the most famous temple sites today, those of Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat. The fortified city of Angkor Thom was originally built at the end of the 12th Century and was a formidable sight in its day; surrounded by eight metres walls, towering gates and a crocodile filled moat. Our second visit is to the beautiful setting of Angkor Wat, without doubt the most renowned and impressive of Siem Reap's jungle temples.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 9 Free in Siem Reap with opportunity to visit the Ta Phrom, made famous in the Tomb Raider film

Today has been left free for you to enjoy Siem Reap at your own pace. A great way to explore is by bicycle or rickshaw, travelling around the sites with the freedom to come and go as you please. You can visit the atmospheric ruins at Ta Phrom, made famous in the Tomb Raider film, or take a boat trip along the Roulous River to the floating villages and forests on Tonle Sap (the largest freshwater lake in South East Asia). Another possibility is a visit to the fascinating Landmine Museum, just to the south of Banteay Srei Temple.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 10 Morning bus to border. Afternoon bus to Bangkok

We take another bus this morning to Poipet on the Thai border. Meeting our Thai guide on the other side of the border control around lunchtime, we then continue in a private minivan to Bangkok (taking around 3 1/2 hours) with time to explore this amazing city when we arrive.

Overnight: **Premium Hotel**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 11 Free in Bangkok to visit the Grand Palace or cruise along the city's Klongs. Afternoon transfer to our beach resort

We have a morning to enjoy the Thai capital with free time to pay a visit to two of Bangkok's most impressive monuments; the 18th century Grand Palace and the rambling complex of Wat Po, which is older than the city itself and home to the fabulous 46 metre reclining Buddha. Another option is to take a cruise along the city's Klongs in a traditional long-tail boat. This is the ideal way to explore something of Bangkok's network of meandering waterways, taking in the Royal Barge Museum and the iconic Wat Arun (the Temple of the Dawn) along the way. In the late afternoon, we travel west along the coast to our beach resort in the Pranburi area. The journey takes around 3 hours and is well worth it to enjoy the beaches, national parks, ocean and relaxation that this area provides.

Overnight: **Standard Bungalow**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **12** Free day on the coast for snorkelling or to relax on the beach

The beach resort is off the country's southwest coast in Pranburi and is surrounded by shady trees, gardens and the beach as well as the Samroi-yot National Park. Pranburi offers pristine beaches, clear waters of the Gulf of Thailand and provides the feel of a sleepy coastal village that has developed into a resort but still retains its privacy and exclusivity. The hotel offers a wide range of facilities including a large outdoor swimming pool, restaurant with buffet menu including traditional Thai and western style cuisine, wireless internet access and bicycle rental. The spacious en-suite rooms are close to the pool and are well-decorated and furnished with satellite TV, air-conditioning and free Wi-Fi.

Overnight: **Standard Bungalow**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **13** Free day to relax on the beach or explore the area

Another day to enjoy the land and water based fun with a charming local village close by, several natural attractions such as the Khao Sam Roi Yot's dramatic backdrop of endless limestone peaks which covers an area of nearly 100 sqkm along the coast or just simply relax and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

Overnight: **Standard Bungalow**

**Swimming Pool Available** 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **14** Travel back to Bangkok where the tour ends

We travel back to Bangkok where the trip ends. Note, the transfer arrives at the airport early evening. A second transfer from our beach resort in the Pranburi area can be arranged for flights that depart around midday.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Ability to swim required

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

## Accommodation and Meals

### Accommodation Notes

We start our adventure in Ho Chi Minh City where we stay in a centrally located hotel with the Ben Thanh market close by. Rooms have air conditioning, hairdryer, Wi Fi, safe and TV along with a facilities that include four restaurants, fitness and health centre with massage and spa treatment. The hotel in Can Tho is a four star hotel located next to the Hau River. There are four restaurants offering Asian, European and local specialities plus a swimming pool and fitness centre with massage treatments. All rooms are equipped with TVs, minibar, safe and Wi-Fi. The accommodation in Phnom Penh is located in the downtown area of the city, close to the tourist attractions such as the National Museum, the Royal Palace, Wat Phnom and the Independence Monument. Rooms are well deigned and have air-conditioning, TV, mini bar, private bath/shower and Wi-Fi access. Moving onto Siem Reap, the small and friendly hotel embodies Cambodia's tranquil pace of life with a casual lounge and restaurant terrace. The location is close to the main tourist spots and is a 10 minute drive to the Angkor Wat complexes. Free Wi Fi, air-conditioning, mini-bar, TV, hair dryer, safe and bathroom are all provided in the rooms along with a poolside bar, restaurant and pool.

### Food & Drink

Included meals: 13 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 dinner included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

## Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

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## Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

### Vietnam

**Lunch £:** 5.00 - 7.00

**Dinner £:** 9.00

### Cambodia

**Lunch £:** 6.00

**Dinner £:** 10.00 - 12.00

### Thailand

**Lunch £:** 3.00 - 5.00

**Dinner £:** 4.00 - 8.00

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## Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

### Vietnam

**Bottle of Beer £:** 2.00 - 4.00

**Water £:** 0.50

### Cambodia

**Bottle of Beer £:** 1.30

**Water £:** 0.60

### Thailand

**Bottle of Beer £:** 1.50

**Water £:** 0.50

## Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

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## Optional Excursions

Bangkok - Long tailed klong boat trip including Royal Barge museum and Wat Arun US\$18.00; Grand Palace (entrance fee only) US\$17.00; Wat Po (entrance fee only) US\$3.00, Floating Market with a private tour by paddle boat; \$46 (based upon 3-5 people)

Siem Reap - One-day Angkor Temples pass US\$20; Bicycle/rickshaw hire approximately US\$15-20 per day; Land Mines Museum US\$5; Tonle Sap boat optional US\$14

Phnom Penh - Royal palace US\$7; National Museum US\$3; Visit to Tuol Sleng & the Killing Fields US\$15; Mekong River cruise US\$12

Ho Chi Minh City - War Remnants Museum US\$2; Reunification Palace US\$2

Optional excursions offered in Vietnam are generally run via our agent in the country. Other companies to be found locally may offer similar optionals at a cheaper price. Should you want to use these companies please be aware that a lower price may mean that not all costs are included (entrance fees etc) or services will not operate at the same safety and quality standards.

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## Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

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## Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 30.

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## Foreign Exchange

### Vietnam

**ATM Availability:** There are ATMs virtually everywhere in Vietnam and in Cambodia, though we also recommend bringing cash.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Some shops in Hanoi, and Hoi An. The occasional restaurant.

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**Travellers Cheques:** Travellers cheques can usually be changed in the towns, but only during bank opening hours.

**Local Currency:** Dong.

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** Carry your money in US\$ Dollars cash. You can also take GBP but US\$ are easier to exchange. (Dollar bills can be used in some hotels and shops; change is often given in local currency).

**Where to Exchange:** Most towns.

## Cambodia

**ATM Availability:** There are ATMs in most towns and cities.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Credit cards are accepted in some large shops and restaurants in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

**Travellers Cheques:** They can be hard to change outside of Siem Reap and Phnom Penh; we recommend them for emergencies only.

**Local Currency:** Riel.

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** In Cambodia, US\$ is the most commonly used currency (small denomination notes are easier to use).

**Where to Exchange:** Large towns.

## Thailand

**ATM Availability:** ATMs are available in Bangkok but are limited on the islands.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Major stores and restaurants.

**Travellers Cheques:** Can be exchanged at banks and exchange offices throughout the tour although rates may not be as favourable.

**Local Currency:** Thai Baht

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** We recommend that you bring your money in GBP or US\$.

**Where to Exchange:** Most major towns and on the islands - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

## Joining your Trip

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at [www.explore.co.uk](http://www.explore.co.uk), in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Important Information

### Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must

fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers [www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore](http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore) who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducing Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

### **Travel Aware**

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at [www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety](http://www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety)

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting [cr@explore.co.uk](mailto:cr@explore.co.uk) or 01252 379438.

### **Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### **Visa Information**

Vietnam: Until 30th June 2018 'British Citizen' passport holders can visit Vietnam for up to 15 days without a visa. A visa will be required if you enter after this date or if you wish to re-enter within 30 days of your departure.

For visits of up to 30 days, you can get an e-visa before you travel from <https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/>

For visits of longer than 30 days you must get a visa from the nearest Vietnamese embassy before travelling to Vietnam. If you want to make a second visit within 30 days of leaving Vietnam, you'll need to get a multiple entry visa to re-enter.

Please note that it is a pre-requisite for entry into Vietnam that your passport is valid for a minimum of 6 months from your date of entry

All visa related issues including information for other nationalities should be confirmed with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Cambodia: A single visa is required by UK, New Zealand, Australian, USA & Canadian citizens and can be obtained on arrival. The current cost is 30USD, a passport sized photograph for immigration will also be required.

Thailand: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens for a stay of less than 30 days. All passports must have at least 6 months validity remaining on entry to Thailand. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa related issues including information for other nationalities should be confirmed with the relevant Embassy prior to departure..

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

### **Lone Parents**

#### **Vietnam**

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Vietnam embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.



## Cambodia

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Cambodia embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

## Thailand

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Thailand embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

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## Vaccinations & Protection

### Vietnam

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on Malaria and Zika Virus. Although not compulsory travellers may also wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

### Cambodia

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, infectious hepatitis, tetanus, typhoid, diphtheria and polio. Consult your GP regarding tablets advised for malaria. Though not compulsory, travellers may wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

### Thailand

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and infectious hepatitis. Although not compulsory, travellers may also wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on Malaria and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

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## Preparing for your Trip

## Climate

### Vietnam

As Vietnam is a long, narrow country from north to south climate conditions vary considerably. The climate can be divided into three distinct patterns between the north, central and south regions. The climate in the north is generally humid and subtropical, although the winter months from November to March can be colder with temperatures from 10 - 15 degrees. Summer months, May to September can be quite hot with temperatures from 30 - 35 degrees. Meanwhile south Vietnam enjoys a tropical climate all year round, with little variation throughout the year (around 27 - 32 degrees), however May to November is the rainy season when short, heavy downpours are quite frequent. Central Vietnam lies somewhere in between. The coastal strip is usually dry and hotter from April to October while November to March is wetter and cooler. A light rain jacket and small umbrella are recommended year round.

### Cambodia

Cambodia is a hot and tropical country, being hottest in April and coolest in January (still high 20s). Although rainfall is at its maximum in October, Phnom Penh and Siem Reap receive very little rain compared to the coastal areas, and when it does rain it tends to be in the form of sporadic mid afternoon downpours. There is normally very little rain between December and March.

### Thailand

Generally hot with high humidity. There is some rainfall from April to September with most days being hot (around 33 Degrees) and a light breeze on the islands. If it does rain, it will be more of a heavy tropical downpour that lasts a few hours. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>.

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## Clothing

Pack essentially for hot weather. Bear in mind that the region is tropical (humid) and that days can be very hot. Lightweight rainwear or an umbrella is advisable at any time of the year, but especially between May and October. Casual clothes are the most practical (something with long sleeves, and long trousers for evenings) bear in mind that very short shorts are generally unacceptable and a sunhat

is essential. Shorts, vests, revealing or casual clothes and open backed sandals are not permitted in the Grand Palace in Bangkok.

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## Equipment

A torch, water bottle, insect repellent and high factor suncream are all essential, as are good quality sunglasses and a lip salve with sun protection. Don't forget your swim wear.

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## Footwear

Comfortable shoes and sandals/trainers for relaxing.

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## Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

## General Information

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### Country details

#### Vietnam

**Population:** 90,549,390

**Size of Country:** 331,698 sq km

**Major Language:** Vietnamese

**Religion:** Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism

**Time Difference to GMT:** +7

#### Cambodia

**Population:** 14,805,358

**Size of Country:** 181,035 sq km

**Major Language:** Khmer

**Religion:** Buddhism

**Time Difference to GMT:** +7

#### Thailand

**Population:** 67,000,000

**Size of Country:** 514,000 sq km

**Major Language:** Thai

**Religion:** Buddhism

**Time Difference to GMT:** +7

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### Electric Supply & Plugs

#### Vietnam

2 Pin Round

#### Cambodia

2 Pin Round

#### Thailand

2 Pin Round

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## Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

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## Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

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## Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group ([www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

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## Booking Your Holiday

### Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

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### Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

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### 100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

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### Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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