



Hoi An old town from the river

Optometry in Vietnam

14 – 26 March 2022

With extension to Angkor Wat, Cambodia

14 – 28 March 2022





Cruise through Halong Bay

Optometry and eye care in Vietnam are still developing at a national level. Optometrists are now being trained in both the north and south of the country, with Sydney based Brien Holden Vision Institute being closely involved with some more recent advances in optometry training. A broad range of professional visits provides excellent insight into this developing field in Vietnam, balanced by a wide range of cultural visits with ample opportunity to experience the beauty and warmth of Vietnam and its

ancient culture and history. You will also enjoy wonderful food from one of the great cuisines of the world and stay in some very lovely hotels.

“I have learnt a lot about eye care and history of both Vietnam and Cambodia. I have enjoyed the trip very much.”

Raina Damani, Optometry in Vietnam, 2016

Tour Leader

David Shannon graduated in 1986 from Southern College of Optometry, Memphis, Tennessee, as a Doctor of Optometry. Between 2010 and 2013 he was Chairman of the AOP (Association of Optometrists). Previously he was AOP Board member responsible for OT (Optometry Today). He has consulted for Johnson & Johnson Vision Care and has trained practitioners across the UK. Until 2014 he worked in the family practice, Shannon and Carton Ltd, in London. David has supervised undergraduate optometry students at City University's contact lens clinic. David has led many successful optometry study tours, including to China, Cuba, India, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Nepal and Peru, for Jon Baines Tours.



“David was an amazing tour leader.”

Felicity McCormack, Optometry Tour to China, April 2019

Hue Citadel



3 nights Hanoi – 1 night Halong Bay – 2 nights Hue – 3 nights Hoi An – 2 nights Ho Chi Minh City



Day 1: Hanoi (Mon, 14 Mar) **D**

- Am:** Arrive in Hanoi, which celebrated its 1000th birthday in 2010, and check into the Silk Path Boutique Hotel, a lovely boutique hotel in the heart of old Hanoi.
- Pm:** Take a walking tour through the vibrant old quarter in the afternoon. Walk through Hanoi's '36 Streets' including Medicine, Silk, Silver and Optical Streets, and visit the traditional medicine shops. Visit peaceful Hoan Kiem Lake.
- Eve:** Dinner at Aubergine.

Day 2: Hanoi (Tue, 15 Mar) **B D**

- Am:** Early start to visit Hanoi Flower Market before returning for breakfast. Visit the Temple of Literature, the site of Vietnam's old university, as well as One Pillar Pagoda and Hanoi Opera House.
- Pm:** Visit the National Acupuncture Hospital and examine the use of traditional therapies in eye care.
- Eve:** Welcome dinner at Green Tangerine.

Day 3: Hanoi (Wed, 16 Mar) **B L**

- Am:** Optional early morning coffee by the lake. Visit the Vietnam National Institute of Ophthalmology (VNIO). Learn about the background to health, eye care and the status of optometry in Vietnam. There will also be a discussion on VNIO's refraction and spectacle technical training for optometrists, supported by the Brien Holden Vision Institute.
- Pm:** Have lunch at KOTO, an Australian-Vietnamese based charity, and learn about their inspiring initiatives with street children. Time at leisure.

Day 4: Hanoi / Halong Bay (Thur, 17 Mar) **B L D**

- Am:** Rise early the next day to set off for Halong Bay, where thousands of steep-sided islands tower above the emerald waters as junk boats cruise languidly among them. Board the private Victory Star Junk in time for lunch.
- Pm:** Cruise through beautiful Halong Bay, stopping at limestone caves, with options to swim, kayak or relax on deck. Spend the night in a cabin on the junk.

Day 5: Halong Bay / Hue (Fri, 18 Mar) **B L**

- Am:** Cruise back to port.
- Pm:** See traditional water puppet theatre at Dao Thuc village.
- Eve:** Transfer to the airport for an evening flight to Hue. Check into the historic and elegant Saigon Morin Hotel.

Day 6: Hue (Sat, 19 Mar) **B D**

- Am:** Take a tour of Truc Chi Garden, a museum devoted to the burgeoning art form of truc chi, which builds on and refines the exquisite Vietnamese art of paper crafting.
- Pm:** Visit Minh Mang Tomb, one of the royal tombs of Hue, and the dramatic Khai Dinh Mausoleum.
- Eve:** Dinner at Y Thao.

Day 7: Hue (Sun, 20 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Take a guided tour of Hue Citadel, which was home to the nation's last royal family. The vast citadel defended the Imperial City itself, its huge outer walls still bearing the scars of battle dating from the Tet Offensive during the Vietnam-American conflict.
- Pm:** Cruise back to the hotel along Hue's Perfume River, with a stop at the elegant Thien Mu Pagoda to see a daily prayer recital.
- Eve:** Dinner at Moc Vien.

Day 8: Hue / Hoi An (Mon, 21 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Visit the Hue School for the Blind, which provides vocational training to students, and see their low vision unit.
- Pm:** Take the scenic train from Hue to Danang and continue to charming Hoi An by road. Check into the stylish, luxurious Allegro Hotel and at leisure before dinner.

Day 9: Hoi An (Tue, 22 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Walking tour of the old quarter of Hoi An, once a thriving port popular with European, Chinese and Japanese merchants - a cultural mix still in evidence today.
- Pm:** At leisure. Hoi An is an excellent place to have one of the local tailors run up a bespoke outfit, shop in the silk market, visit nearby China Beach or simply relax and soak up the atmosphere.

Day 10: Hoi An (Wed, 23 Mar)

B L

- Am:** Take boat across Thu Bon River and visit the village of Kim Bong. Explore some of the surrounding villages and countryside, littered with ancestral tombs and family temples, and discover how the majority of Vietnam's population lives.
- Pm:** Visit a family-run vegetable and herb farm and sample some of their fresh homegrown ingredients for lunch. Spend the afternoon at leisure or take an optional Vietnamese cookery class.

Day 11: Hoi An / Ho Chi Minh City (Thur, 24 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Transfer to Danang and fly to cosmopolitan Ho Chi Minh City and check into the central, contemporary Liberty Central City Point Hotel.
- Pm:** Visit the colourful bustle of Ben Thanh market. Continue onto the French era Notre Dame Cathedral, the palatial Central Post Office, Reunification Palace and a local optician, Ngoc Toan Opticians.
- Eve:** Dinner at Noir, a dining in the dark experience.

Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City (Fri, 25 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Visit Ho Chi Minh City Eye Hospital, home of the first optometry school in Vietnam. Their optometry course is a joint effort between Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine, HCMC Eye Hospital and the Brien Holden Vision Institute. Learn of optometry education and the Optometry Development Program. Meet with local optometrists.
- Pm:** At leisure or options to visit the interesting FITO museum of traditional medicine or the poignant War Museum.
- Eve:** Farewell dinner at Indochine.

Day 13: Ho Chi Minh City (Sat, 26 Mar)

B

- Am:** At leisure (or take extension to Siem Reap – see below).
- Pm:** Depart Ho Chin Minh City or take the extension.



One Pillar Pagoda



The temples of Angkor Wat

Extension to Angkor Wat, Cambodia

26 – 28 March 2022

Cambodia is a nation with a proud ancestry in the form of the Khmer Empire, which at its zenith covered much of modern South East Asia, leaving as its legacy the magnificent structures at Angkor. At its peak Angkor is thought to have contained upwards of a million people, making it the largest city in the world at that time.

Day 13: Ho Chi Minh City / Siem Reap (Sat, 26 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Fly to Siem Reap and transfer to the beautiful boutique Hotel Lotus Blanc.
- Pm:** At leisure.
- Eve:** Dinner at the Foreign Correspondents Club.

Day 14: Siem Reap (Sun, 27 Mar)

B D

- Am:** Early morning visit to Bayon and the romantic ruins of Ta Prohm, still intertwined with enormous tree roots hundreds of years old. Return to the hotel for breakfast before visiting the

Angkor Wat complex, which represents one of humankind's most astonishing architectural achievements.

- Pm:** At leisure to explore the market, the old French Quarter or relax around the pool.
- Eve:** Dinner at Vrioth to enjoy delicious Cambodian food, still less known to Westerners than that of its Thai or Vietnamese neighbours.

Day 15: Siem Reap (Mon, 28 Mar)

B

- Am:** At leisure.
- Pm:** Depart to airport for onward flight or spend more time in Cambodia.



Ta Prohm, Cambodia



Silk lanterns in Hoi An (by Kevin and Laurianne Langlais) (top);
A market trader in Hanoi (above)

The ground only cost of the tour is USD \$3,402 per person (excluding international flights and transfers)

Please contact us regarding international flights.

The cost includes:

- The services of an experienced tour leader (David Shannon)
- 11 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium grade and first-class hotels

Single supplement is USD \$623

- Overnight in first-class junk with private facilities
- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily (all meals on 11 November)
- All professional and cultural visits as per the itinerary, including entrance fees
- Services of an English-speaking national guide
- All transport services and taxes in Vietnam
- All tips and mineral water daily

The cost of the extension is USD \$635 per person sharing and includes:

- Two nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities at the Lotus Blanc Hotel.

Single supplement is USD \$112

- Two breakfasts and two dinners
- All admission fees and water and tips during sightseeing
- Services of an English-speaking national guide
- All transport services in Cambodia
- One-way flight from Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap

The cost excludes:

- Meals not mentioned and drinks with meals
- All optional excursions, tours and visits
- Travel insurance, visa
- Airport transfers (unless taking flight package)

NB: All itineraries in Vietnam and Cambodia are subject to change according to local conditions. Places on this tour are strictly limited.

CPD / CME

It may be possible to gain CPD/CME points on this tour through the professional visits and talks. If you wish to apply please contact us.

About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.



The tomb of Emperor Khai Dinh in Hue (top); Hoi An Ancient Town (photo by Rene Deanda); HCMC Central Post Office; The Bayon (extension) (above)

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