



FLY and BIKE
internationaal gezelschap

Vietnam's Mekong Delta

The mighty Mekong flows 4,350 kilometers from the Tibetan plateau through China, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam before flowing out into the South China Sea. In South Vietnam it spreads into tentacles and tributaries, forming nine mouths that are absorbed by the sea. These tributaries are what make the delta so fertile and the region one of Vietnam's highest producers of rice, vegetables and fruits.

**4 Days/3 Nights
Departure Dates:**

Tours depart every Tuesday with a minimum group of 4 adults. We can go any day of the week if you wish to have a private tour, just **contact us** about arranging a tour for your group.

Prices

USD 565 Tour

€ 95 Single Supplement

De prijzen in Euro vindt u op de website www.flyandbike.be

Bike Hire is included

Cycling through rice paddies, orchards, along and over a myriad of small irrigation canals will let you see a part of Vietnam that is quite unique. The flat and lush scenery is unlike anything else you will see in Vietnam. This adventure starts with a ride from Cai Lay to Cai Be on the quiet back roads, lunching on an island before staying with a local family. As water is everywhere it is unavoidable that we will board a few boats on this trip, but it will give you an up close perspective of Vietnamese life on the river. Day three takes us through the Khmer area and we see much



evidence of this in the architecture of temples and the many Khmer people who populate this area. The last day we take in the Phong Dien floating market and many of the cottage industries before we head back to Saigon in the afternoon.

Our route is designed to take us off the main roads as much as possible. We explore scenic back roads on the way to all our destinations and once away from the main roads, cycling in Vietnam is a wonderful experience as the bicycle is still the most common form of transport.

Trip Profile

The cycling is on a mixture of well-surfaced roads and the option to go off road onto single track. An air-conditioned bus will travel behind the group to support us. On the occasions when it is impossible for the bus to follow, our guide follows behind on a motorcycle.

Participants can cycle as much or as little as they like and still enjoy the same views as the rest of the group.

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Suitability: The daily distances are not too long and the terrain is gentle so this trip is suitable for most people, but it's advisable to have a modicum of fitness to enjoy the riding! Fast cyclists can ride at their own pace, as detailed directions are available from the leader.

Day to Day

B= Breakfast L= Lunch D=Dinner

Day 1: Ho Chi Minh City – Cai Be

Transfer with bikes to Cai Lay. Ride to Cai Be on back roads approx 1.5 hours. Have lunch on an island before continuing onto our local home stay run by a lovely retired couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ba. They live in a typical Mekong Delta Vietnamese house, with airy rooms and outdoor kitchen. The rest of the afternoon is free to bike the dirt paths surrounding the home stay. Dinner will be prepared by the home stay hosts.

Mr. and Mrs. Ba's Home stay. Ride 18-30 km. L D

Biking Difficulty



(out of five)

We ride on asphalt and off road tracks, which vary from hard packed jeep roads to single-track.

Day 2: Cai Be – Vinh Long – Tra Vinh

From Vinh Long enjoy a boat journey out to one of the Mekong islands. Bike along narrow country lanes, easy dirt tracks and trails. This is biking at its most glorious -- through tiny orchards, witness colorful life along the riverside, pedal past picturesque delta homes, pause to chat with welcoming villagers, clack across innumerable wooden bridges. Cross a narrow canal on a local sampan, before finishing at the main ferry for a refreshing boat trip across the expansive Co Chien River. Ride a final few kilometers to the very pretty Khmer town of Tra Vinh. There will be plenty of time to explore side tracks and trails as the cycling distance today is not far. This gives a great first impression of the 'heart of the Mekong'.

Local hotel in Tra Vinh. Ride 40 km. B L D

Day 3: Tra Vinh – Can Tho

A special ride today as much of the area is populated by Khmer people. The regional architecture is interesting and there are many Khmer temples to stop and admire en route. Cycle as much or as little as is preferred; the road is peaceful, narrow and very pretty all the way to Can Tho! Pedal to Ba Om Pond with its magnificent lotus flowers, and observe local women having their future predicted in the small temple nearby. En route, stop to visit a local Buddhist Temple School if possible. Arrive finally at Can Tho, the Mekong's largest town located at the confluence of the Can Tho and Hau Giang rivers.

Local hotel in Can Tho. Ride 40 km. B L D



Cycling Distance

150 kilometers

Cycling Days

2 full, 2 half

Day 4: Can Tho bike loop - Saigon

Spend the morning riding to Phong Dien floating market. Weave through teeming early morning market bustle along the banks of an active riverfront. Ride on a narrow paved road to Phong Dien floating market. Absorb the sights of endless cottage industries, timber merchants, coconut shredders, small docks loading/unloading rice, tiny vibrant markets. Continue by bike on the narrow lane and loop round to the main road. Ride to O Mon or Binh Thuy. Lunch in local restaurant in town. Return to the hotel, check out and drive four hours back to your hotel in Saigon.

Ride 40 km. B L

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Nuts & Bolts

Bikes: The bikes you will be riding are well-known makes of Hybrid or Mountain bikes (depending on the tour) with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, v-brakes and Shimano components and front suspension.

Bike Repairs: Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety: Wearing a helmet is compulsory on all our biking adventures. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding.

Support: We will be supported by an air-conditioned vehicle for transfers and back up as per itinerary.

Guides: You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 8 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

- **We have carefully chosen accommodation that is the best available for the location and offer a good mix, from home stays to luxurious lodges, on our tours.**

- **We love Asian cuisine, well-known for being hot and spicy and for its use of fresh ingredients, and will make sure you get to sample lots of it.**

The Nitty Gritty

Arriving and Departing: This tour begins and ends in Ho Chi Minh City. International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. If you need help or advice arranging flights please contact us.

Passports and Visas: All nationalities require a visa for Vietnam. Visas can be obtained from any Vietnamese embassy worldwide, but please allow up to three weeks for visa processing.

Health: Recommended vaccinations are typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A. A certificate for Yellow Fever is required when arriving from an infected area within six days. Please speak to your doctor for the most up to date information.

Weather: Weather in Vietnam can vary quite considerably according to distinct climate zones. Due to regional climate differences there are no good or bad seasons to visit Vietnam. The North of Vietnam experiences cool, damp winters between November and April with temperatures in Hanoi falling to around 15°C. The summer months from May to October are hot and dry. A pleasant time to visit is spring (March-April) or autumn (October-December). The best time to visit the north of Vietnam is from September to December when it isn't so humid. The weather turns quite cold and wet in January and this continues until March. The humidity can prove oppressive from May to the start of September and there's a danger of flooding.

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Subject to Change

In remote destinations abnormal conditions can prevail at any time, and all adventurous holidays can therefore be subject to unexpected change and we will do our best to adhere to the original itinerary and cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible when necessary.

Food: Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Most meals are Vietnamese food and features noodles, rice curries and soups. Vietnamese cuisine is world famous and we make sure you sample as much variety as possible. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink: Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price. Beer is freely available everywhere in Vietnam, but is NOT included in the price.

Extra Expenses: We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US\$10, for incidentals. It is customary to tip local tour guides and drivers, however, the amount you give should be dependent on the level of service you receive. As a general guide we suggest US\$ 3-4 per person per day is appropriate.

Money: The official national currency is the Vietnam dong (d), but the US dollar is widely accepted in tourist centers. However, in smaller towns and villages the dong is preferred. ATMs are available in all major tourist destinations and big cities. Vietcombank has the best network with a limit a single withdrawal limit of 2,000,000d (about US\$125). Most major currencies can be exchanged at leading banks in Vietnam, but the US dollar is preferred away from the tourist centers. Changing US\$100 will make you an instant millionaire! You cannot legally take the dong out of Vietnam but you can reconvert reasonable amounts of it into US dollars on departure.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Where differences exist in the information between this and previous information, this document is the correct version and supersedes the brochure or website.

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