



10 DAY

Yoga, Culture, & Adventure Retreat in Vietnam





A Shanti Yoga Retreat

**Join us for a 10-day
Yoga and Culture Tour
in Vietnam**

February 24 - March 4, 2024

Vietnam is stunning. From the colourful dragon boats that glide across the Perfume River to the sparkling skyscrapers that tower over Saigon, Vietnam is home to a breathtaking assortment of architectural and natural wonders. But what you see is only half the story—there's a world of history, culture, tradition and cuisine to be explored. Our retreat will take us to the most diverse part of Vietnam—the Central Region filled with record-holding landscapes, the best beaches in the Country, fascinating war history, and some of the most famous UNESCO World Heritage Sites the Country has to offer.

Accommodations

Alamity Hoi An Resort and Wellness Spa (Hoi An)

This 5-star resort will be our home for the first 5 days. Located only a short walk from the renowned ancient town of Hoi An, Alamity reflects the essence of cultural heritage in its architecture and eco-friendly philosophy while adding a modern twist. In your downtime, you can choose from daily spa treatments, herbal tea meditation and our daily Yoga practice. The organic food provides a farm-to-table experience and a historical narrative of cuisine. Also on site is an International Art Gallery with international art exhibitions of celebrated artworks.



Alba Wellness Valley (30 Km from Hue)

Alba Wellness was the home to the world-renowned Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh on his visits to his hometown of Hue. Located at the source of the Alba Hot Spring and natural mineral drinking water the Alba Wellness Valley offers a luxurious health and well-being experience. The deluxe rooms are spacious offering views of the Zen Garden and Lotus Lake. The rooms are filled with the natural scent of pine and feature a beautiful balcony to enjoy tea or coffee at sunrise or a glass of wine at sunset.

The hot spring mineral bath is waiting for you after our busy days of exploring. The legendary hot springs were discovered in 1928 by a French doctor and botanist, Albert Sallet. He found the springs contained high levels of healing properties from the natural elements including magnesium and calcium. Bathing in this thermal mineral water is sure to leave you feeling rejuvenated and healthy.

Located in the heart of the resort is the Madame Chau Restaurant. The exquisite fine dining restaurant offers 360-degree breathtaking views over Lotus Lake and the surrounding forests. Here you'll enjoy the best of Hue cuisine with food that reflects the local cultures and traditions.





■ Itinerary Overview

Key: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Day 1 (24/02): Da Nang airport arrival - Transfer to Almanity Resort (D)

Day 2 (25/02): My Son Holly Land “ World Heritage Site” - Hoi An ancient town (B,L,D)

Day 3(26/02): Cam Thanh Coconut Jungle Eco Tour (B,L,D)

Day 4 (27/02): Tra Que village, local crafts (B,L,D)

Day 5 (28/02): Charm Island Sightseeing and Snorkelling Tour (B,L,D)

Day 6 (29/02): Hoi An–Marble Moutain - Da Nang - Hue Alba Wellness Resort (B,L,D)

Day 7 (01/03): Hue Citadel & Royal Tombs (B,L,D)

Day 8 (02/03): Hue Traditional Handicraft Villages & Dong Ba market (B,L,D)

Day 9 (03/03): Hue - Cooking Class on Organic Farm (B,L,D)

Day 10 (04/03): Hue - Da Nang Airport - Departure (B)

Detailed Daily Itinerary

Day 1 (24/02)

Da Nang airport arrival - Transfer to Almanity (D)

Upon arrival at the airport, you will go directly to Almanity Resort to check-in. Two pick-up times will be provided by our tour company at Da Nang Airport on February 24th. Participants will be provided with the pickup times when registration for the retreat is complete.

Our group will gather for a short meeting at approximately **5:30 PM** at the resort, followed by dinner.

Day 2 (25/02):

My Son Holly Land " World Heritage Site" - Ancient Town of Hoi An

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, walking, sightseeing

After breakfast and Yoga, we will start our 40 km journey to My Son Sanctuary – a remnant of a long-lost civilization that disappeared in Vietnam. My Son – “the spirit and art valley” is a symbol of the ancient Indochinese culture of the Champa Kingdom. Since 1999, My Son has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The ruins of the grand ancient temples are in excellent condition and can't be found anywhere else in the Country.

Upon arrival in My Son, a special electric car will pick us up at the main gate and take us deep into the jungle where the mysterious ruins of the grand temple tower of the Champa Royal can be found. The most exquisite focus of ancient Champa culture – is considered to be the Holy Land. There, you will hear stories about the gods of worship in the Champa culture, and the mystical secrets that shroud the land to this day.



In the afternoon, we will continue our tour of the ancient town, of Hoi An. Between the 15th and 19th centuries, Hoi An known then as 'Faifo', was a prosperous trading port, attracting Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish ships amongst others.

Today, this World Heritage ancient town is recognized for its well-preserved architecture, pedestrian-only streets and distinctive local cuisine, allowing visitors a glimpse of its illustrious past. Hoi An's narrow lanes are ideal for a guided walking tour of its many atmospheric sights including the old merchant houses with influences from Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese architecture; the 400-year-old Japanese Covered Bridge, first built in the 1590s by the Japanese community to link them with the Chinese quarters across the stream; the Assembly Hall of the Chaozhou Chinese Congregation with its intricate woodcarvings; and the colourful market with stalls brimming with local specialties including silk, which can be turned into fashionable garments within a day or two.

After a full day, we will return to Alamity Resort, around 5 PM.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in local restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 3 (26/02):

Cam Thanh Coconut Jungle Eco Tour

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, paddling, walking

Following Yoga and breakfast our guide will pick us up at **10 AM** to visit the Cam Thanh fishing village. There we will meet the local fishermen and get an experience of typical daily life. Later we will take a bamboo basket boat on the Cam Thanh water coconut waterways, and get a brief introduction to the history there. Local fisherman will join us on the river and give us a hands-on experience of round net and cast net fishing. We will also learn to paddle the unique Vietnamese bamboo basket boat and join in a basket boat race. After lunch at a local restaurant, we will return to the resort for some rest and relaxation.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 4 (27/02):

Tra Que Village, Bicycle Ride, Local Crafts

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, biking (bike ride is light endurance), local farming, crafts

At **10 AM** our tour guide will meet us at the resort and provide your bicycle for your peaceful ride through the paddy fields and shrimp farms en route to Tra Que Village. Tra Que Village is an experience of a true organic farm. The farmers use only seaweed to fertilize the vegetables. The vegetables are so medicinal you can smell the sweet flavour in the air. You'll get to join the friendly farmers in their daily farming experience and see the rudimentary tools they still use. Later we will continue our bike tour to a local lantern craftsman where skillful hands will show us how to create brightly coloured lanterns. Expertly guided you could make yourself a lantern as a gift to your family. After lunch, in a local restaurant, our tour guide will take us back to the resort.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 5 (28/02):

Cham Island Tour

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, walking, boating, snorkelling

Our guide will meet us at **9 AM** and transport us to Cua Dai Harbour where we will take a speed boat to Cham Harbour. Upon arrival, we will take in the breathtaking view of Au Thuyen Typhoon Shelter, and walk through rice fields to visit Hai Tang Pagoda. Hai Tang Pagoda is an ancient Buddhist temple on Cu Lao Cham Island, first built in 1758 and restored after severe marine storms damaged the architecture. Following our temple visit a boat will take us to the snorkelling areas to experience the beautiful coral and colourful fish. After snorkeling we will ferry back to Cham Island for a delicious lunch at a local restaurant. Following lunch, we will return by boat to the resort.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 6 (29/02):

Hoi An-Marble Mountain - Da Nang - Hue Alba Wellness Resort

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, walking, site seeing, travel to Hue

After breakfast today we will check out of the resort and start our trek to Hue City via the picturesque Hai Van Pass and Lang Co beach. On the way, we will visit Marble Mountain to discover the stunning natural caves, enjoy the beautiful view from the top of the mountain, and visit the mysterious pagodas and the sculpturing village here. Next, we will visit Am Phu cave where we will walk through a devilish underworld full of demons. Our van will then take us to Monkey Mountain to see the biggest statue of Lady Buddha and enjoy the mountain scenery from the top of Son Tra Peninsula.

After a very full and exciting day, we will arrive at the beautiful Alba Wellness Resort, outside Hue City.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 7 (01/03):

Hue Citadel & Royal Tombs

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, walking, cycling, boating, sightseeing

After yoga, around **9 AM**, we will head out on a cycling tour to discover Hue's ancient capital. Once the imperial capital of the Nguyen Lords from the 17th to the 19th centuries, Hue's splendid emperors' tombs, ancient pagodas and the remains of the Citadel contribute to its undeniable royal charm. The Imperial Citadel at the centre of the Complex of Hue Monuments is inscribed by UNESCO As a World Heritage site.

Our guide will explain the history of the magnificent architecture along with the intrigue surrounding the former royal court. Despite being heavily bombed during the Vietnam War, there are some incredibly well-preserved sections intact and others which are being carefully restored. We will take a boat on the Huong River, then we will visit Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's best-preserved religious monument. Built in 1601, the seven-storied tower pagoda, perched on top of a hill overlooking the Perfume River, is one of Vietnam's most recognizable icons. In the afternoon, we'll visit the elaborate Khai Dinh Royal Tomb. Its architecture showcases elements of Eastern art and Western design. After a very full day we will head to Alba Wellness Resort to get pampered and enjoy exquisite food.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 8 (02/03):

Hue Traditional Handicraft Villages & Dong Ba Market

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, walking, arts and crafts

After yoga and breakfast, we will begin our exploration of some of the best traditional handicraft villages. Sinh Village is also known as Lai An Village with its famous folk painting industry. It's a cultural village of the ancient capital, where ancient painting crafts are kept. Perhaps due to the ancient traditions still in existence, the woodblock printing industry in Sinh, from its inception, was not purely artwork that served the elite, but it was used for worship, and in ritual ceremony healing and peace.

Specializing in researching, creating and designing works/artworks made from bamboo paper, only in Hue and by Hue people, Truc Chi Garden is a workplace for 15 of the most famous artists, and graphic designers in Hue. Next, we will visit Tay Ho Village, where the famous Bai Tho palm-leaf conical hat is crafted. The leaf hat of the Vietnamese people forms a perfect circular cone which tapers smoothly from the base to the apex. The hat is a Vietnamese symbol recognized worldwide.

We will continue on to Incense Village where we will enter a world of colour and witness firsthand the various stages of making an incense tree. After lunch in a local restaurant, we will visit Dong Ba Market and head back to the resort, around **5 PM**.

Meals: breakfast, lunch in restaurant, dinner in resort



Day 9 (01/03):

Hue - Cooking Class in Organic Farm

(B,L,D)

Main Activities: yoga, relaxation, cooking

Our last day will give us some time to relax and enjoy our beautiful wellness resort before embarking on our personal travel the following day. After a relaxing morning, we will have the opportunity to learn the art of Vietnamese cooking. This will be a great experience for us to explore the organic herbs and vegetables used in Hue food and Vietnamese cuisine.

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner in resort



Day 10 (02/03):

Hue - Da Nang Airport - Departure

(B)

After yoga and breakfast, we will say our goodbyes before travelling to Da Nang airport for departure flights. The departure time will be communicated at a later date.

Meals: breakfast,



IMPORTANT TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR VIETNAM RETREAT

PASSPORT/VISA REQUIREMENTS

Upon entering Vietnam, border authorities will require that you show documentation to justify the reasons for and the duration of your stay.

- A valid passport is required to enter Vietnam. Your passport must not expire within a minimum of six months of entry into the Country
- A visa is required to enter and travel within Vietnam. If you have a valid passport you can apply online for an e-visa. This is a single-entry electronic tourist visa, valid for a maximum of 30 days. It allows entry into Vietnam via the port of entry indicated in the visa approval notice only.
- There is a \$25 USD fee for processing the Vietnam e-Visa which is non refundable under any circumstance.
- You can apply for Vietnams e-Visa online. You still need to print the e-Visa and present the physical copy on your arrival in Vietnam.
- E-Visa link: www.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn

E- VISA GENERAL INFORMATION

A Vietnamese visa is a kind of travel document granted by Vietnamese competent authorities, providing permission to travel to and enter Vietnam.

An electronic visa (E-visa) is one of the visa types issued to foreigners by the Vietnamese Immigration Department via an electronic system. A Vietnam E-visa is valid for a maximum of 30 days, single entry.

The e-Visa fee is paid via an electronic payment gateway as prescribed by the Immigration Department. The fee will not be refunded if the application is refused.

RECOMMENDED VACCINES

Routine vaccinations should be up to date. The CDC recommends the following vaccinations for Vietnam: Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid and Rabies. Covid 19 restrictions have been lifted entirely. For more information on travel health notices visit

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/vietnam#vaccines-and-medicines>

The areas we are travelling to for our retreat does not pose a threat for Malaria, however, the CDC recommends that travelers going to certain areas of Vietnam take prescription medicine to prevent malaria. Depending on the medicine you take, you will need to start taking this medicine multiple days before your trip, as well as during and after your trip. Talk to your doctor about which malaria medication you should take. Find country-specific information about malaria.

CURRENCY

The official currency in Vietnam is the Vietnam đồng, symbolised by đ or VND. Vietnamese notes are a mix of small paper bills (no coins are used), and larger polymer bills, in values from 10,000 VND to 500,000 VND. If you're confused by all the zeros, mentally remove three zeros to get a simpler number. To quickly convert from VND to USD, just remove three zeros and divide by 23.

In tourist establishments such as airports and hotels you may be able to use the US dollar. Credit cards are also widely accepted in larger establishments, however, not in small villages or markets.

TRANSPORTATION

Participants are responsible for the cost of their own flight arrangements to and from Vietnam. There will be transportation provided from the Da Nang airport twice on February 24th. The times for pick -up will be provided after registration for the retreat is complete.

INCLUSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Price Includes:

- Group tours as described in the above itinerary.
- Services of a driver and private air-conditioned vehicle during all tours and transfers.
- Accommodations based on double/single room
- Meals as mentioned (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D = Dinner)
- English speaking guide
- Tour entrance fees & drinking water during the tour

The following additional services are included at Alba Wellness Resort:

- One reflexology treatment (50 minutes)
- 30 minute Onsen bath per night
- Hot mineral tub daily
- Tea ceremony and qigong party at Binh An Temple every afternoon
- One Zipline
- Free wifi (both resorts)
- Wellness turndown service

Price Does Not Include:

- Airfare to Vietnam
- Cost of E-visa
- Tips to driver and tour guides
- Early check in or late check out at resorts
- Alcoholic beverages in mini bar, resort, local restaurants
- Personal expenses which are not showing in the itinerary
- Optional tours
- Travel Insurance is not included in your retreat price. It is the participants responsibility to verify whether his/her local health insurance carrier provides coverage while traveling. Please contact your insurance carrier for details.

PRICING,REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT DETAILS

Single occupancy - \$3,199 USD (one bed | one person)

Double occupancy - \$2,699 USD (one bed | two people)

Twin occupancy - \$2,699 USD (two beds | two people)

PAYMENT DETAILS

- \$500 USD deposit is required to reserve your spot
- Payment # 2 after the deposit is due November 1, 2023
- A payment link for payment # 2 will be forwarded to your email after you make your USD \$500 deposit

To reserve your spot, please pay your USD \$500 non-refundable deposit as soon as possible. Deposit link can be found by clicking on the following link:

www.shantihotyoga.ca/retreats

CANCELLATION POLICY

- USD \$500 deposit is non-refundable
- In the event that a participant has to cancel, 100% of payment 2, after the USD \$500 deposit, is refundable up to December 15, 2023
- In the event a participant has to cancel between December 15 and January 15, 2024, 50% of payment 2 is refundable, after the USD \$500 deposit
- No refunds granted after January 15, 2024
- Airline fees and service charges related to the cancellation of flights are the responsibility of the individual traveller

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is the responsibility of each individual traveller. Shanti Yoga does not provide insurance for individuals or groups.

For any further inquiries please contact Uriel MacGillivary at:

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We can't wait
to share this
adventure
with you!

