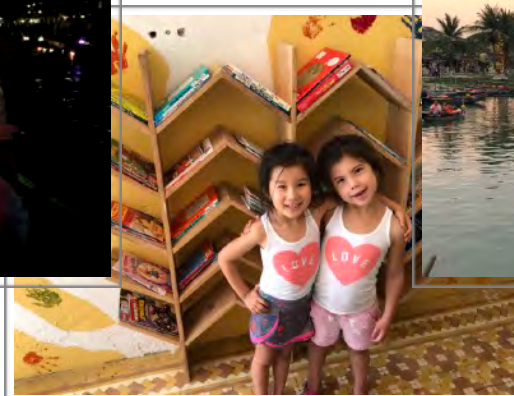
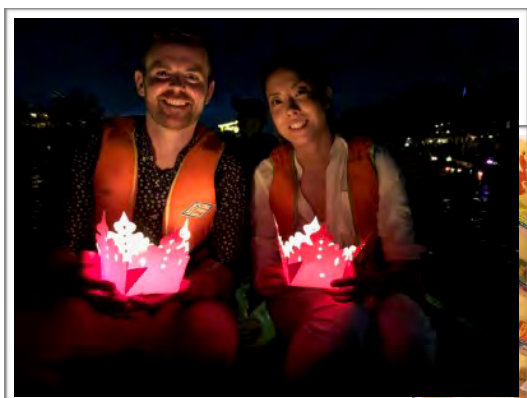


# Expedition Vietnam



HAVE FUN.

HELP PEOPLE.



## Introduction to Vietnam

Vietnam's rapidly growing economy makes for stark disparities between rural and urban areas, and even between generations. Young people may answer tech-support questions at call centers while their parents harvest rice. All of this growth has made it increasingly easier for travelers to access even the most remote corners of the country. There are a host of things to see and do in one of the friendliest countries on earth. Scores of war monuments all across the country praise the Vietnamese victories in the last century. Still, visitors from all over the world are welcomed here with open arms.

## Community

Globe Aware's program is based in the picturesque town of Hoi An. Declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, Hoi An draws visitors to its lovingly preserved mix of Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and French architecture - evidence of the town's fascinating past as a major trading port. Traders from as far away as Holland, China, Japan, and India frequented this riverside port from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Vietnamese silk, porcelain, pepper, cinnamon, and medicinal plants were important commodities at this time. While trade dried up



when the river filled with silt, the town's distinctive architecture remains intact, having miraculously survived the wars of the 20th century. Hoi An's historic quarter features traditional architecture with facades made of carved ironwood. The front rooms of many of these structures served as shops, while the families lived on the second floors. Central and back courtyards allowed sunlight and fresh air into the living spaces. To this day, many houses have a pair of carved wooden yin yang symbols to protect the house's inhabitants from ghosts and bad luck.

In order to ensure our efforts are both wanted and that the projects are organized in a local manner, we work with locally organized groups, usually grassroots NGOs, or non-government organizations (in the United States the term is “nonprofit.”) The NGO helps to identify which projects are most needed by the community at the time and what materials will be needed to address it.



Often we employ members of the NGO to help us carry out our work. In Vietnam, Our program was originally organized in cooperation with Lely Hayslip, who was the subject of the Oliver Stone movie “Heaven and Earth,” LeLy is a survivor of horrific torture during the Vietnam War. She tells the story of her wartime experiences as a 12-year-old spy for the Viet Cong and her remarkable transformation into an international leader of peace and reconciliation in her bestselling autobiography, *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*, which was translated into 17 languages before being made into the Im. Her dream has been to help heal the wounds of war between the United States and Vietnam.



The mission of the foundation with which we work is to partner with the people of Vietnam to improve their health, education, and economic conditions in an effort to eradicate poverty and to help them achieve self-sufficiency. Lely has since then retired, but her efforts continue to inspire our project.



## Sample Itinerary

This is an example to give a rough idea of what your week will be like. Please note that all of these activities are subject to change and will depend on how many volunteers there are during the week, project availability, weather, previous progress, etc. Local holidays and celebrations may hinder projects from being conducted in a normal manner if you happen to be visiting during these times. Tet Nguyen Dan, or Tet for short, is considered the biggest and most popular festival of the year in Vietnam. Celebrated on the first day of the first month in Lunar Calendar, Tet's celebration is the longest holiday which may last up to 2 weeks, usually during the end of January or early February. Volunteers should expect to work between 5 and 6 hours a day. You will have two to three hours of unstructured free time, and several cultural activities planned within your week.

### Saturday

Mid-Day	Meet up with GlobeAware coordinator, Check into program hotel, get settled in. Lunch at the Villa.
Afternoon	Orientation Meeting by local coordinator, Discuss goals, go through itinerary and answer questions.
Evening	Dinner at villa, free time to walk around or bike around neighborhood, become familiar with surrounding and other volunteers.

### Sunday

Morning	Breakfast in Villa, review activities for the day Vietnamese class taught by local coordinator, culture and customs insight.
Mid-Morning	Ancient Town tour conducted by local Student Tour .
Mid-day	lunch at Villa.
Afternoon	Free time, bike to the beach, go to the market, shop for custom tailored clothes.
Evening	Dinner at villa, walk with coordinator, see lantern shops, converse with locals at coffee shop.

### Monday

Morning	Breakfast, review activities for the day.
Mid-Morning	Travel to work site by bike or electric car, start program project work.
Mid-day	lunch at Villa or on project site with local family.
Afternoon	Continue work of project on site.
Late Afternoon	Free time, Sunset boat tour.
Evening	Cooking class/Dinner at Villa followed by free time to bike to night market.

### Tuesday

Morning	Breakfast, review activities for the day
Mid-Morning	Travel to work site by bike or electric car, start program project work.
Mid-day	lunch at Villa or on project site with local family
Afternoon	Continue work of project on site.
Late Afternoon	Free time, bike ride through the lanterns of the city
Evening	Cooking class/Dinner at Villa followed by free time

### Wednesday

Morning	Breakfast, review activities for the day.
Mid-Morning	Travel to work site #2 by bike or electric car, start program project work.
Mid-day	Lunch at Villa or out.
Afternoon	Free library project/Playground repair & upgrades.
Late Afternoon	Cultural excursion, Carpentry village.
Evening	Dinner with Mr Quan/Hoi An English club at his villa followed by free time.

**Thursday**

Morning	Breakfast, review activities for the day.
Mid-Morning	Serve lunch at elderly center.
Mid-day	Lunch at Villa or out.
Afternoon	Complete work projects, install free libraries.
Late Afternoon	Cultural excursion, Coconut Forest.
Evening	Dinner at Villa.

**Friday**

Morning	Breakfast;
Mid-Morning	Cultural excursion-My Son Temple.
Mid-day	Lunch out/to Go.
Afternoon	Free time, bike to the beach.
Evening	Good-bye Dinner at restaurant hosted by GlobeAware, followed by free time.

**Saturday**

Morning	Breakfast, say goodbyes, check out, head to the airport .
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**Projects and Expectations**

Volunteers may be engaged in a variety of projects such as installing water pumps, building playgrounds, refurbishing buildings to use as schools, working on primary schools, cultural/ vocational training centers, as well as village markets and other infrastructure projects to help raise the standards of living throughout rural Vietnam.



Volunteers might teach Basic English and play games with children, build chicken coops and donate chickens as a sustainable protein source, revitalize poverty stricken homes, or assist with our free libraries project. Volunteers have also participated in decorating trashcans that are donated to the market area of the city to help encourage keeping the environment clean. You will notice that trash is a major problem in Hoi An. You might also have the chance to participate

in riverside clean up with a farming collective where we also learn about traditional farming techniques and the importance of keeping the local ecology healthy.

The community chooses your work projects before your arrival based on the progress of prior groups and the immediate needs of the community. Please remember that concepts of scheduling and organization are not universal. It is best to keep an open

mind and not be judgmental when visiting a foreign country. Remember that your way of doing things may not be the best way here – the locals usually also have a very good reason for completing a task in a certain way, and their priorities may be different than ours. Here is an example:



*“But Mario, why are we building the fence so close to the river? Surely erosion will cause the fence to fall o the edge!” “Don’t worry, the foundation is very thick – it won’t fall. Besides, we can’t move it over any more because the boundary of the soccer eld is too close!” Ah ha!*

We understand your desire to know as much as possible about the project you will be working on. It is important to understand that projects are often not set in place until about two weeks prior, as they are based on factors such as which

projects were finished by the last group, what supplies are available, how many volunteers are in your group, weather conditions, the changing priorities of the community, etc, and can even change upon arrival, for example based on the fitness level of the specific volunteer group and changing weather. Therefore its best to approach the experience with an open attitude, knowing you’ll be working approximately 6.5 hours a day during the week days, usually concentrated earlier in the day, and you’ll have a couple of hours of unstructured free time every day. There are usually three to four planned but optional leisure and cultural activities throughout the week. Communicate with your coordinator. If you find the work level is too much, or not enough, he or she will do as much as possible to work with you.



## Leisure Activities

You will have the opportunity to explore Hoi An during your free time, as well as take excursions to the beach, Coconut Forest, a Vietnamese cooking class, boat ride, or the Champa ruins of My Son. Access to bikes and helmets will allow you to roam and venture to parts of Hoi An to discover on your own time with the daily scheduled free time . Leisure activities can be as varied as relaxing on the back porch of the Villa or taking a bike ride to one of the many local beaches to shopping for custom made clothing and shoes.





Volunteers will have the opportunity to replace the My Son ruin excursion that is included as part of our program with a half day excursion to the Cham Islands. This will be at an additional expense to the volunteer. The cost of the excursion at the time of writing is \$35 per person and can be arranged through your coordinator. If you decide to partake on this tour you will be picked up from the villa at 8:00 AM and taken to the harbor.

You then board a large speed boat for a 30 minute journey to the main island and take a tour of the fishing village. You will learn about the way of life there on the island. The islands are a protected UNESCO site and items such as plastic bags are not permitted. It is quite a pleasant change from busy Hoi An; being surrounded with lush green mountains and pristine beaches. After the 45 minute walking tour of the village, volunteers change and head back to the boat for a snorkeling excursion. Participants snorkel from the boat, not land, so if you would prefer to skip this portion, please ask the boat captain to make a stop at the beach first. After snorkeling, the group heads to one of the beautiful beaches to relax, swim, and take in the local wildlife. A delicious and fresh lunch is included with this excursion and is taken at the pavilion just off of the beach. At around 2:00 PM you will head back to Hoi An with drop-off back at the villa.



### **Additional Packing Information**

Please refer to the general orientation handbook for a general suggested packing list. Make sure to pack enough clothes to be comfortable, considering that you may get dirty doing volunteer work. You should not need to do laundry on a week-long trip. It is OK to wear clothes more than once. Remember that modesty is essential in all of our program sites. Short shorts or skirts and skimpy tank tops are never appropriate.

#### **Essential Items**

- **Water bottle**
- **Sunscreen**
- **Bug Repellent**
- **Umbrella/rain proof coat**

You may enjoy bringing games or books for free time.

Please note that the packing list is meant as a guideline. There is no single item that you can't live without for one week. Pack what you think you will need to be comfortable, but do not get preoccupied about items that you didn't bring, weren't on the list, etc. Everyone has different opinions about essential items!

## Accommodations

Our program Villa is in the Cam Nam neighborhood, south across the Thu Bon River from the hub of Hoi An in a less hectic, less developed section of Hoi An. Close to everything, the Cam Nam neighborhood is a short 10 minute walk or brief bike ride across the bridge from all that Hoi An has to offer. The location is ideal. You will be offered helmets and bicycles to allow you to freely roam Hoi An at your leisure. An urban location with a scenic rural view o the back patio provides plenty of relaxation after a day of volunteering and exploring, with most rooms offering balconies as well. Meals will be provided at the Villa and prepared by the staff specifically for our volunteers. Breakfast on the back patio each morning is a sincere treat. Modern flushing toilets, running hot water, and access to electricity is provided. Complimentary Wi-Fi is also provided. Hair dryer are also provided in the rooms. You will find these accommodations to be among the highlights of this program.



## Electricity

You might see all 3 of these plugs, so it is wise to bring a 3 prong adapter with you. There is limited electricity: enough to recharge digital batteries, but not enough to do heavy-duty hair drying. Voltage is 220, and most chargers, etc. Are equipped to deal with this. Read the label near the plug on your device to make sure it can handle this voltage.





## Food

Volunteers will be served home cooked local Vietnamese specialties – simply incomparable cuisine of fresh herbs, noodles, rice, meats and vegetables. Our program Villa staff will prepare home cooked meals. Some, meals may be catered to the site or taken at a nearby restaurant. This will allow you the opportunity to taste a variety of local dishes. The French influence has left behind a proud tradition of fine crusty breads, strong coffee, and a love of inventive cooking processes. Vietnamese cuisine is a balance of all the different influences. One street vendor might be selling noodle soup while the next door vendor might sell a baguette smeared with a local pate. Both may be complemented by either the sh sauce or the dipping sauce (nuoc cham) – made up of sh sauce, water, sugar, and lime juice seasoned with chilies and garlic. Meals are rarely divided into courses rather the food is served at once and shared from common dishes. The meal will most likely be served with noodles in the North and rice in the central and southern regions. The Vietnamese prefer long-grain rice to the glutinous short grain variety preferred in Northern Thailand and Japan. Most meals will include a soup and stir fried dish and another main dish. Vegetables are often left raw, especially in the south, to act as a contrast to the spicy cooked meat. The distinctive flavors of Vietnamese food come from the primary ingredients of mint leaves, coriander, lemon grass, shrimp, sh sauce, star anise, ginger, black pepper, garlic, basil, rice vinegar, sugar and spring onions. Sometimes the food is served rolled in rice paper or lettuce leaf, or both and dipped in a pungent sauce.



## Money

Unless you plan on buying a lot of souvenirs or extending your trip, you should not need an enormous amount of extra cash. Phone calls, souvenirs, fare to get to the meet up point, alcohol, and departure tax are the main things not covered in your program fee. Currency when departing. Many people will take American dollars at the going exchange rate and give you change in their local currency, if requested (though this can not be 100% relied on in every case). Do not bring travelers checks. They are extremely difficult to cash and ATM's are abundant.

**\*\*Also, a note for all program locations—it is a good idea that you call your bank and credit card companies before you depart and notify them of the country you will be traveling to and the dates of your travel so that they will allow charges and/or withdrawals internationally.\*\***

## Phone and Internet

The international dialing code for Vietnam is + 84. When making international telephone calls from Vietnam first dial 00 + country code (USA) 1 + area code

## Health

There are no required vaccinations for travel to Vietnam. Please refer to the CDC's Vietnam Travel website for official recommendations. <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationVietnam.aspx#vaccines> Health Insurance is provided as a part of your program. It is a reimbursement setup so please bring back any documentation and we will help you file a claim when you return home.

## Arrival and Meet-Up

Your coordinator will meet you in Danang at the airport exit, unless otherwise expressly arranged, to take you to the program site, and accompany you throughout the program. The airport is small with only one small parking lot, but there are often crowds of families waiting for arrivals, so don't be worried if you do not see your coordinator at first. Look for your Globe Aware coordinator, they will have Globe Aware attire and a Globe Aware banner for you to find them more distinctly.

## If you Miss the Pick-Up

If we do not see you at the meet up point, the coordinator's first step is to check with the airline to see if your flight was delayed. If it was not, our next call is to your emergency contact. Therefore, if you have any sort of change in your arrival, please make sure to inform your emergency contact, as this is the first person we will be contacting. We will do our best to contact you, however if we cannot contact you in about an hour's time the group will continue on without you. Once you have made contact with either your emergency contact or our headquarters, we will try and work out arrangements to get you to the program location, but it may be at your extra expense, as this cost is not estimated into the program budget. If you feel there is a problem with these arrangements, or you cannot meet the time schedule, please contact us prior to your departure if possible, and we will try to resolve this the best we can. Because of certain limitations, and strains on other volunteers, such requests should be made within a fair amount of time (at least one and a half weeks before the program date) and will be remedied at our discretion. The phone number you have provided as your emergency contact will be used in case of an emergency. This may be if something happens to you while participating in the program, or if you are not at the meet up location on time. Please let your emergency contact know this. If you are lost prior to meeting with the group, or your plane has arrived late, please attempt to contact us at the numbers below or your emergency contact. In addition to the 24-hour emergency US office # 214-824-4562, here is a list of local contacts, which you may use in case of an emergency. Feel free to call the US office collect.

## Our Coordinator in Hoi An

Bella Nguyen is from a high village in Central Vietnam, she moved to Hoi An 2 years ago to pursue higher education at Phan Chau Trinh University. She enjoys studying languages, especially English. Bella has held various jobs like assistant teacher, waitress, and tour guide so she could gain more real world experience. Bella has worked before with GlobeAware as a student guide for us in Hoi An, now she is the Coordinator of our Hoi An, Vietnam program. In her free time Bella enjoys yoga, outdoor activities, charity work, traveling and reading.

(Bella Nguyen) +84 0962131147



## Entering and Leaving Vietnam

Be sure to apply for your visa NOW. List your reason for entry as TOURISM, not work (otherwise they may feel you are trying to steal the job or work of a local). The specific page for the application is here:

<http://vietnamembassy-usa.org/consular/visa-application-process>

A valid passport, with 6 months of validity still remaining from your arrival date into the country, and a Vietnamese visa are required. The visa application can now be done Online with several options, The E-Visa ( 1 month stay, single entry - arrive and leave from same airport, around \$25), tourists to Vietnam can have their visas emailed, E-visas will be issued by the immigration authority via digital transactions for foreigners wanting to enter Vietnam. This option is done on line and is accepted at any of the eight international airports in Vietnam.

The other option is Visa on Arrival (VOA), to receive the Vietnam visa upon arrival (VOA) you need to obtain/buy an “Approval letter”, This approval letter can be purchased from any of the visa services and then you take this filled out letter to Vietnam. You obtain the official visa at the airport in Vietnam. This procedure applies if you y to Vietnam by plane to Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang. If you come from a neighboring country, by other mode of transportation... bus or motorbike, this visa does not apply. Very important to check ...When entering Vietnam you must have at least 6 months beyond the date of your arrival of validity remaining on your passport ! It is recommended that you apply no sooner than 6 months before and NO LATER than 2 weeks before. The standard visa is good for 30 days from entry. Americans arriving without an appropriate Vietnamese Visa will not be permitted to enter, and will be subject to immediate deportation. Vietnamese visas are usually for only one entry. Persons planning to leave Vietnam and re-enter from another country should be sure to obtain a visa allowing multiple entries. An international departure tax is payable by all travelers leaving Vietnam. Most airlines include this in the price of the ticket, but be sure to check with your airline.



## Safety and Security

The area where the Globe Aware program is located is not near any areas of suspected risk. Please review the United States Department of State travel website for more information about safety and security while traveling in Vietnam. For more information:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1060.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1060.html)

## United States Embassy

7 Lang Ha Road

Ba Dinh District, Hanoi

Telephone Number (84) 4 843 1500 Fax (84) 4 835 1510

## Further Readings

Dispatches by Michael Herr takes a cold hard look at the Vietnam War through the eyes of an American correspondent.

The war from the point of view of a North Vietnamese (who by no means is anti-American) is described by Bao Ninh in *The Sorrow of War*.

*A Bright Shining Lie* by Neil Sheehan is a highly acclaimed biographical account of the war.

*Vietnamerica* by Thomas Bass brings the Vietnam War home to America in a more poignant and personal form, following the fortunes of the children fathered by American soldiers in Vietnam.

*The Quiet American* by Graham Greene (1954) is set during the last days of French rule and is probably the most famous Western work of fiction on Vietnam.

*The Lover* by Marguerite Duras provides a French perspective on colonial life in Vietnam.

