



vietnam mekong delta



trip highlights

- Cycle alongside rice drying on the roadside, amongst coconut palms and pagodas
- Take a boat trip and visit the largest floating market in the Mekong at Cai Rang
- Visit the bustling border crossing into Cambodia
- Cycle through a region populated by the Khmer people and their distinctly decorated stilt houses
- Stay in a luxurious hotel in Can Tho, built in French architectural style of the 1930's
- Visit a house in a floating village, where they farm the famous Bassa catfish



Trip Duration	9 days
Grade	Introductory level
Activities	9 day cycle & cultural experience
Accommodation	8 nights in quality 3.5 > 4.5 star hotels

Kia Ora from Adventure South

Experience Vietnam off the beaten track – easy cycling at its best! We are excited to introduce a revised itinerary for our very popular cycle tour in the exotic Mekong Delta. We now spend two nights each, in the very beautiful Victoria Resort Hotels in Chau Doc & Can Tho and have added in some more quiet road cycling into the little visited western Mekong Delta region.

Tours are timed for the dry season when, although still hot, it is not humid. This tour caters for all levels of cyclists, - distances are great enough to challenge strong riders but as the route is nearly all flat it is also suitable for recreational cyclists, combined with our full sag wagon support system.

The cycling is superb, at any moment there are a multitude of unique sights to see & we have included many off-the-bike experiences for you to enjoy.

Enjoy delicious meals, Vietnamese cuisine is world renowned with its combination of Western and Asian influences and we have carefully chosen restaurants with a high standard of hygiene.

Above all you will experience the essence of the Mekong Delta, with its friendly people and unique water based lifestyles, you will leave with this unique corner of Vietnam occupying a special place in your heart.

why travel with Adventure South?

“Small groups, Great Guides, Superb Holidays.”

This comment encapsulates an Adventure South active holiday in Vietnam. The phrase was not born from a long and tortuous strategic planning process, it came from a client review! We could not have said it any better. Our client feedback also confirms that what helps make our holidays different are the quality of our professional local guides. They share their humour, compassion and wilderness experience to ensure that you have a great vacation and the right degree of personal challenge.

On an Adventure South tour you can also expect the right, proven equipment is provided for your tour; the food is delicious, plentiful and can be catered to your dietary requests; your guides are all First Aid trained; and that the itinerary you have chosen has been carefully crafted from years of personal experience in Vietnam, not from a guide book recommendation.

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Spend the days meeting the locals as you cycle through rural villages and enjoy the nights in the comfort of our quality hotels.



trip dates

2011 12 Nov - 20 Nov
26 Nov - 04 Dec
10 Dec - 18 Dec
21 Dec - 29 Dec
31 Dec - 08 Jan

2012 14 Jan - 22 Jan
28 Jan - 05 Feb
11 Feb - 19 Feb
25 Feb - 04 Mar

trip cost

Joining Ho Chi Minh City Base Cost: NZD\$1995 /

options & supplements

fast facts

Countries Visited:
Vietnam

Visas:
Yes*

Vaccinations:
Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Private Groups:
Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:
A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local leader

Brochure Reference:
Adventure South

*Ask our staff for more information

the trip

A 9 day tour taking in the highlights of the Mekong Delta with its unique culture & water based life-style. Enjoy flat cycling on rural roads alongside the extensive canal network and through small villages. A highlight of the tour is in meeting the locals, with the help of your local guides you will enjoy some wonderful cultural experiences as you learn about life in the Mekong Delta.

about your leader

Enjoy the trip in the company of your fully trained and experienced Vietnamese guides who will provide the local interpretation as well as looking after your every need. You will learn so much from our local English speaking guides who take great pleasure and pride in introducing you to their region. We pride ourselves on the standard and quality of these great people who you will be spending your holiday with. They come from all walks of life but they all have a common desire to give you the best possible experience, heaps of fun and lots of fond memories to take home with you. We provide you with the services of two guides for many of our trips, (this may depend on the size of the group). All are certified in first aid and CPR and many are trained bike mechanics. To check out more about our guides see our 'About us' page on our website (www.advsouth.co.nz).

at a glance

DAY 1	HO CHI MINH CITY
DAY 2	HO CHI MINH TO LONG XUYEN
DAY 3	LONG XUYEN TO CHAU DOC
DAY 4	CHAU DOC
DAY 5	CAN THO TO HON TREM
DAY 6	HON TREM TO CAN THO
DAY 7	CAN THO
DAY 8	CAN THO TO HO CHI MINH
DAY 9	TOUR ENDS AFTER BREAKFAST

what's included

- 8 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 6 dinners
- Bilingual group leader and bike mechanic
- Air-Conditioned Support vehicle
- Medical Kit

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Ho Chi Minh City

We will collect you from the May Hotel at 3.00pm and drive to the quiet suburb of Phu My Hugn, 20 minutes away from the busy roads of the city centre. Here we will fit you with your bicycle and you can have a test ride on the local roads ending at a local coffee shop. Over a pre tour briefing you can

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try Vietnamese coffee, local yoghurt & juices before we return to May Hotel with time to relax at the roof top pool. At 7pm we go out for a welcome dinner at a local BBQ garden restaurant and enjoy the nightlife of Saigon

Please bring with you to Phu My Hun :

* swimming costume & towel (there is a lovely pool at your disposal)

* your personal bicycle gear e.g. pedals, shoes, saddles, mirrors, bike bags. If you do not have bike bags these will be supplied on your bikes.

* you will not need full cycling clothes as you will only be riding a very short distance

* pen & paper

meals: D

DAY 2 Ho Chi Minh to Long Xuyen

The trip starts by driving out of the city to the village of Tan Phuoc where we start our cycling on a quiet rural road. Immediately you will see the essence of the Mekong Delta with a network of canals and rivers crisscrossing the pancake flat countryside. The Mekong is known as the rice basket of Vietnam and the watery landscape is transformed into a brilliant green as the crops near harvest. In the late afternoon you have the option to visit the Mekong Delta's only Crocodile farm, or you can explore the local markets with your guide. And for those that want to relax there is always the welcome waters of the hotel swimming pool.

Cycling Distance – 55 kms/35 miles

Best riding – Tan Phuoc to Phu My 39 kms/24 miles

meals: B,L,D

DAY 3 Long Xuyen to Chau Doc

The morning ride follows local canal systems to Tri Ton, as we marvel at the river lifestyles of the local people. The canals host a constant procession of boats transporting all manner of goods and along the banks many of the houses have fish farming cages. Our ride ends at Chi Lang where we visit a Khmer Pagoda before the drive to check in to our riverside hotel. This afternoon we take a short boat tour to visit a floating village. Each house is built above fish cages, in which they grow the famous local Bassa catfish. Tonight's accommodation is in the luxurious Victoria Chau Doc hotel on the riverbank.

Cycling Distance – 55kms/34 miles

meals: B,L,D

DAY 4 Chau Doc

You have the option for a morning ride to Tinh Bien where you can see the busy border crossing into Cambodia. This area is little visited by westerners & you will find the local people will be keen to meet you as you cycle through their villages. We return by vehicle (or you can cycle back if you want to) to Chau Doc & the lovely Victoria Hotel, with the opportunity to relax by the pool, or explore the township. Later this afternoon your guides will take you to visit the famous Tay An Pagoda and temples, and will drive you to the top of the sacred Sam Mountain. From the summit on a clear day, we can enjoy fabulous views towards Cambodia.

Cycling Distance – 18km/12 miles each way

meals: B

DAY 5 Can Tho to Hon Trem

Today we cycle through a region populated by the Khmer people, typified by their distinctly decorated stilt houses, Buddhist Stupas and the unique sugar palm trees. This is an isolated area with its quiet roads and small villages alongside the Cambodian border, which is on the other side of the Vinh Te canal on our right hand side. We stop for lunch at a Huong Bien restaurant in Ha Tien

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town. The afternoon sees us cycling alongside the coast as we pass by shrimp farms & fishing villages. We also ride over some small hills as we pass from bay to bay, but as always the support vehicle is never far away if you need a ride. Tonight's lodging is at resort hotel overlooking the ocean & the nearby Phu Tu islands.

Cycling distance – up to 99kms/62 miles

Best Riding – Tinh Bien to Ha Tien 60 kms/37 miles

meals: B,L,D

DAY 6 Hon Trem to Can Tho

This morning we retrace our steps before turning east away from the border region. There is an option to cycle to Hon Dat, where we load up & drive to Rach Gia to avoid a busy section of road. After our lunch overlooking the waterfront our cycle ride follows the canal network, along which you will see the famous monkey bridges used by the villagers to get across the canals. The road is edged with water coconut trees whose leaves are used for thatched roofs and will we cycle alongside “Xe Loi”, the unique pedal powered towing rickshaws. Tonight we stay in luxury at the famous Victoria Resort, on the banks of the Hau Branch of the Mekong. The hotel has a lovely swimming pool & working artisans on site who will explain to you about the local crafts.

Cycling Distance – up to 95kms/59 miles

Best Riding – Long Thanh to Vi Thanh 39 kms/24 miles .

meals: B,L,D

DAY 7 Can Tho

An early morning start sees us taking a boat trip to visit the largest floating market in the Mekong at Cai Rang. The market is situated at a busy river junction and you will see a large variety of local produce being sold from a multitude of boats. For those that want to cycle we have a delightful quiet road ride in the surrounding countryside. This afternoon provides a chance to rest up, enjoying the beautiful Victoria Hotel - situated on the banks of the Hau river, the passing river traffic & scenery can keep you well entertained.

Optional Cycling Distance – 23kms/14 miles

meals: B

DAY 8 Can Tho to Ho Chi Minh

Today's ride is on very quiet roads, and typical of the Mekong, you will cycle through small villages with enthusiastic children to greet you, alongside rice drying on the roadsides, amongst coconut palms and pagodas. We end our ride in Vinh Long with lunch alongside the mighty Mekong River before driving to Ho Chi Minh City. Our farewell dinner is a highlight as we enjoy a shipboard meal and cruise on the Mekong River as it passes through Saigon.

Cycling Distance – 38kms/24 miles

meals: B,L,D

DAY 9 Tour ends after breakfast

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

country information

All nationalities require a visa. It is your responsibility to arrange visas before you travel. Your travel agent can assist. You will need to send off your passport & should allow 3 weeks for processing. The cost is different in each country.



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Passports are required by all visitors to Vietnam except children under the age of sixteen accompanied by a parent, provided the child is included in a valid family passport. Passports must be valid for a period of not less than two months beyond the date the visitor intends leaving Vietnam.

All the roads we cycle on are sealed, although there will be some rougher sections with potholes etc. The Vietnamese are rapidly improving their road infrastructure so you will encounter some construction. There are over 80 million people in Vietnam, a country the size of New Zealand, so although we have chosen quieter roads for this tour it is hard to get away from people & you will still be with some traffic. Such traffic will include bicycles, motor bikes, rickshaws, buffalo carts & motorized vehicles and buses/trucks. Traffic is heavier in the towns & cities, and on certain sections on days one & two but the tour is designed that if you are uncomfortable about biking in the urban areas or on busier sections of road you can use the support vehicle.

Our guides all speak English & will be close at hand to interpret for you. Apart from isolated rural areas, basic English is widely spoken, especially among the younger people & most service staff will speak some English. It is however very important that you speak slowly to be understood.

We recommend that you do not drink any tap water in Vietnam. Bottled water is everywhere & cheap. Ice made from purified water is becoming readily available & your guides will advise you as to its safety.

We choose our restaurants for their local character, great cuisine and hygiene standards. Meals are eaten Asian style with the sharing of dishes among the group, being able to use chopsticks is an advantage but not essential. Meals are based around rice with several courses, including lots of fresh vegetables & seafood. Our meals are slightly Westernized in that they are not too spicy & we do not put local Mekong delicacies like Rat or Snake on the menu (unless you are brave & want to try them?) On many days breakfasts are a highlight, showing the French influence with baguettes, cheeses & yoghurt readily available - you will enjoy the local coffee. Note - on some cycling days we are in very isolated areas so we have little choice for lunch venues.

Vietnam is very safe to travel in, tourism is a very important part of the economy & the authorities crack down heavily on people who transgress against foreigners. However there are a lot of poor people in the country & it pays to take the usual precautions with your valuables when traveling in a foreign country.

climate

Vietnam has a remarkably diverse climate because of its wide range of latitudes and altitudes. In Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) the average annual temperature is 29°C (84°F). June to August are the wettest months in the south, from November to March is the dry season in the Mekong Delta, there is little rain & humidity is low. Daytime temperatures will be around 30 degrees but getting hotter towards late March.

a typical day

A typical day sees us cycling an easy 40 > 50 kms, with options for more distance for strong riders. By mid-afternoon we are enjoying the comfort of our luxurious lodgings or out exploring the local attractions in the company of your local guides. The local food is a highlight and you guides will introduce you to an array of great local dishes.

accommodation on the trip

During the tour we stay at a high standard of accommodation, most with swimming pools. The rooms are based on a twin/double share with en-suite facilities. A guaranteed room to yourself is available for an extra payment of NZD \$652



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pre and post tour accommodation

If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation speak to our staff as they can help with different suggestions.

joining instructions

Meet at May hotel at 3pm, located downtown near the City Theatre. Tan Sot Nhat Airport is 15 minutes drive.

Address : 28-30 Thi Sach Street, District1, Ho Chi Minh City

Telephone: (848) 38234501 Email: sales@mayhotel.com.vn

what you carry

The tour is fully supported so you wont have to carry anything! If hiring one of our bikes it will have a small front handlebar bag. Enough space to put your camera, wallet, phone etc. We recommend you pack your luggage in a soft sports bag for easy stowing in the trailer/vehicle. We urge you to keep your luggage to a minimum. If you have extra luggage you do not require for your holiday we can easily arrange to have it stored until the end of the trip.

equipment required

A bicycle helmet is compulsory on this trip. A comprehensive gear list will be provided on booking.

what's not included

- **Bicycle Helmet**
- **Airport Transfers**
- **Optional activities listed in the itinerary**
- **Items of a personal nature such as laundry**
- **Beverages and meals not listed in the itinerary**
- **International airfares and departure taxes**
- **Visa costs**
- **Travel insurance**

trip grading

To determine the grade of a particular adventure we consider a number of factors. These include the condition of the terrain, the altitude, the roads and the length of the trip. The Mekong Delta is graded introductory. You will need a reasonable level of fitness and we suggest 30 minutes of aerobic type exercise, (either cycling or jogging) three times a week for the three months leading up to your trip.

adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. In remote areas and other countries do not expect the standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may need to be altered as a result. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are mentally flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The

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itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

private groups

The adventures featured in our brochures, and on our website, are just a starting point. Planning and providing special group departures is something we do exceptionally well. Over the past 18 years we have developed some exceptional itineraries, from cycling to hiking or combination multi-adventure trips. School groups, charities, work colleagues and cycling buddies have all been part of our experience. Our team can assist you with all aspects of your private group to ensure the trip is tailored just right for your group. Contact our team today.

subscribe to our e-newsletter

To keep up to date with the new and exciting trip releases, special offers plus more please subscribe to our free e-newsletter at www.adventuresouthnz.com.au. Or why not view past travellers images and join in on the conversation at [facebook.com/AdventureSouthNZ](https://www.facebook.com/AdventureSouthNZ)

trip availability

If this trip seems right for you then we encourage you to call us now to check availability. A popular reason to travel with Adventure South is because of our small group sizes. These can fill quickly so it is important to check your availability well in advance. We always need to ensure other services, like train tickets or accommodations, are also available before we can confirm your place on our tours. To ensure we can assist you onto your New Zealand adventure of a lifetime we ask that you check your trip availability with our team at your earliest convenience.

how to book

To book an Adventure South holiday, you can book directly online (<http://www.advsouth.com/booking.aspx>) or you will need to complete a booking form (found at the back of our brochure). You can also download a copy from www.advsouth.com . On completion, please fax or post the form to Adventure South or your nearest World Expeditions office, along with your non-refundable deposit. If you're coming from outside New Zealand call your nearest World Expeditions office or travel agent for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance and additional accommodation. If you're unsure what would be the best option for you call us NZ free phone 0800 00 11 66, AUS free phone 1800 10 70 60, USA free phone 1866 479 9827 anywhere else +64 3 942 1222 or email us on guide@advsouth.co.nz