



MAT McLACHLAN
BATTLEFIELD
TOURS

OTU SCHEYVILLE COMMEMORATION TOUR OF VIETNAM 2020

Walk in the footsteps of more than 50,000 Australians who served during the Vietnam War on this emotional journey to the former battlefields. Our 14-night tour takes in all the key Australian sites from the war, plus also many of Vietnam's cultural treasures, allowing us to experience all aspects of this vibrant country. Our guide on this compelling journey is Gary McKay, who served as a platoon leader in Vietnam and was decorated for gallantry.

DAY 1 MONDAY, 04 MAY 2020

HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON)

(D)

Welcome to this moving tour to the Australian battlefields of Vietnam. On arrival in Ho Chi Minh City we will be met at the airport and transferred to our hotel as a group. After checking in we will enjoy a group welcome dinner.

OVERNIGHT: Northern Saigon Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 2 TUESDAY, 05 MAY 2020

HO CHI MINH CITY TOUR

(B, L, D)



Today after breakfast we will meet our Historian and a local guide for a short orientation tour of the city including visits to the Post Office, War Remnants Museum and viewing other city landmarks including the Ben Thanh Markets and the Opera House. We will visit the former Presidential Palace (now Reunification Palace) where we will receive a briefing on the Australian headquarters system and liaison with Vietnamese and American headquarters during the war.

OVERNIGHT: Northern Saigon Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 3 WEDNESDAY, 06 MAY 2020

CU CHI TUNNELS

(B, L)

Today we will travel to Cu Chi to visit the famous Cu Chi tunnels, where Australians first operated in the Iron Triangle in 1965. A battlefield brief will be given on the bus enroute to Cu Chi and cover 1966's Operation Crimp that Australians were involved in. After visiting the tunnels we will visit the Bien Duoc memorial and then enjoy lunch at a nearby floating restaurant. After returning to Ho Chi Minh City the remainder of the day is at leisure.

OVERNIGHT: Northern Saigon Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City



DAY 4 THURSDAY, 07 MAY 2020

CORAL – BALMORAL

(B, L, D)

This is a full day tour where we will visit the sites of this important and largest battle Australia was involved in during the Viet Nam War. The battle site is now a working rubber plantation. We will receive a detailed brief on the battle and visit the mass grave site and Viet Cong memorial.

OVERNIGHT: Northern Saigon Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 5 FRIDAY, 08 MAY 2020

HO CHI MINH CITY – VUNG TAU (LONG TAN)

(B, L, D)

This morning after checking out of our hotel we will travel by fast ferry to the seaside resort town of Vung Tau and the former site of the 1st Australian Logistic Support Group (1 ALSG). We will enjoy an orientation tour of the town including the former 1 ALSG base area, and former Peter Badcoe Club site and the 'Flags' area. Tonight, we will dine at a famous seafood restaurant overlooking the South China (now Eastern Sea).

OVERNIGHT: Grand Hotel or similar, Vung Tau

DAY 6 SATURDAY, 09 MAY 2020**VUNG TAI – NIUI DAT – LONG TAN – VUNG TAU (B, L, D)**

Today we will travel to the former 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) base at Nui Dat where our Historian, Gary McKay will give a brief on the role of the 1ATF, how operations were conducted and how the base was developed and protected. The area is still a military reserve in parts and some areas may be restricted to visitors. We will then proceed to the iconic Long Tan battle site for a battle brief and a memorial service for the Battle of Long Tan.

OVERNIGHT: Grand Hotel or similar, Vung Tau

DAY 7 SUNDAY, 10 MAY 2020**VUNG TAU – LONG HAI – VUNG TAU (B, L)**

This morning we travel around the South China Sea coastline to visit the former Minh Dam Secret Zone. We climb to the apex of the Long Hai Hills and take in spectacular views of the area and visit the local museum in the former Viet Cong sanctuary. Returning to Vung Tau we travel through the former area of operations, visit the site of the battle of Ap My An near Lang Phuoc Hai that occurred during Operation *Bribie* in February 1967. Tonight, we are free to explore this delightful seaside country town and dine at a local restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Grand Hotel or similar, Vung Tau

DAY 8 MONDAY 11 MAY 2020**VUNG TAU - BINH BA - NUI LE - HO CHI MINH CITY (B, L)**

After checking out of our hotel, we will travel north through the former area of operations and visit the scene of the Battle of Binh Ba. Our Historian will deliver a detailed brief on this battle where the Armoured Corps won a battle honour. We will pay our respects at the 33rd Regiment North Vietnamese Army memorial that has been erected at the battle site. We will continue traveling north to the area of the Courtenay Rubber Plantation and the scene of the Battle of Nui Le, Australia's last major action of the war, where our leading Historian Gary McKay, was wounded and was awarded the Military Cross. After stopping for lunch we will travel through the Hat Dich area to Ho Chi Minh City. This evening is free at leisure to rest after this long day.

OVERNIGHT: Northern Saigon Hotel or similar, Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 9 TUESDAY, 12 MAY 2020**HO CHI MINH CITY – HOI AN (B, L)**

After breakfast we will be transferred to Tan Son Nhut Airport for our internal flight to Da Nang. On arrival we will travel south to Hoi An; enjoy an orientation tour of this beautiful provincial and historic town. 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 recognised for its well-preserved architecture, pedestrian-only streets and distinctive local cuisine, allowing visitors a glimpse of its illustrious past. After enjoying lunch at a local restaurant we will have the afternoon free at our leisure.



OVERNIGHT: Le Pavillon Boutique Hotel & Spa or similar, Hoi An

DAY 10 WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2020**HOI AN – DA NANG – HOI AN (B, L)**

After breakfast we travel north to Da Nang, which was the headquarters of the Australian Army Training Team. We will also visit Marble Mountain, famous for its marble factories. Lunch we will be in a local restaurant by the beach. Tonight we are free to dine at any of the terrific restaurants in this beautiful riverside town.

OVERNIGHT: Le Pavillon Boutique Hotel & Spa or similar, Hoi An

DAY 11 THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2020**HOI AN – HUE (B, L, D)**

After checking out of our hotel we will drive north via the famous Hai Van Pass to the former Imperial Capital of Hue. En-route we will stop briefly at Red Beach where the US Marines first landed in 1965, and China Beach, the Rest and Convalescence Centre for US troops. We will enjoy lunch and dinner at local restaurants. Later this afternoon we will visit the Citadel and undertake a battlefield tour of this historic and ancient city.

OVERNIGHT: Moonlight Hotel or similar, Hue

DAY 12 FRIDAY, 15 MAY 2020**HUE – DMZ – HUE****(B, L)**

After an early breakfast we drive north to the Hien Luong Bridge, the museum and visit the Vinh Moc tunnels. We drive south to the village of Dong Ha and have lunch in a local café with fascinating memorabilia before driving west to visit the former American bases at Camp Carroll and the Rockpile. We return to Hue after a long day on the road.

OVERNIGHT: Moonlight Hotel or similar, Hue

DAY 13 MONDAY, 16 MAY 2020**HUE – HANOI****(B, L, D)**

After checking out of our hotel we will travel to nearby Phu Bai Airport to fly to the Vietnamese capital Hanoi. After checking in to our hotel we will take an afternoon cyclo ride around the Old Quarter of Hanoi. This evening we will attend the world famous Water Puppet Show. We will enjoy lunch and dinner at local restaurants.

OVERNIGHT: Rex Hotel or similar, Hanoi

DAY 14 TUESDAY 17 MAY 2020**HANOI CITY TOUR****(B, L)**

After breakfast we will enjoy a highlights tour of Hanoi, which includes the One Pillar Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum (outside) and Ho Chi Minh's home. We will enjoy lunch at Brothers Café before continuing visiting the Lake of the Restored Sword. We will also visit the notorious 'Hanoi Hilton' prison, Hoa Lo, and the Army Museum.

OVERNIGHT: Rex Hotel or similar, Hanoi

DAY 15 WEDNESDAY, 18 MAY 2020**DEPART HANOI *OR* CONTINUE TO HA LONG BAY (B * B, L, D)**

Anyone departing the tour will be transferred to Hanoi airport as a group to meet any onward flight arrangements.

OR

Those staying on will drive east to tour the magnificent Ha Long Bay. We will depart Hanoi for a three-hour journey through the scenic landscape of the rural northeast, stopping at a crafts cooperative en-route to Ha Long Bay. At Ha Long Bay the romance of old Vietnam still lingers, with bizarre karst islets randomly scattered and

the odd red-sailed junk clipping across the waters. With 1969 limestone and dolomite islets sprinkled over an area of 1500 square kilometres, Ha Long Bay offers a wonderland of karst topography. After arriving at Ha Long Port we will board our traditional wooden luxury cruiser for a majestic cruise of Ha Long Bay. We will enjoy a delicious seafood lunch on board as we take in the magnificent scenery. In the evening we will enjoy dinner, before retiring for the night to our well-equipped cabins.

OVERNIGHT: Pelican Cruise or similar, Ha Long Bay

DAY 16 THURSDAY, 19 MAY 2020**HA LONG BAY – HANOI****(B, L, D)**

This morning we will enjoy a small breakfast on board while watching the magnificent sunrise on Ha Long Bay. We will then continue exploring the islands, beach coves, caves and floating villages. A brunch will be served before returning to the port. On our way back to Hanoi we will visit Dong Trieu ceramic village. We will arrive in Hanoi in time to check in to our hotel before our farewell dinner, a chance for a final celebration with the friends we have made during this special tour.

OVERNIGHT: Rex Hotel or similar, Hanoi

DAY 17 FRIDAY, 20 MAY 2020**DEPART HANOI**

Unfortunately, today our tour comes to an end. We will be transferred to Hanoi airport as a group to meet any onward flight arrangements.

The journey may be over, but the memories will last a lifetime.

Please note: This itinerary is an indication of the sites visited on the tour. The order of each day may be adjusted to allow for local events, weather conditions, etc.