

# Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam



## TRIP OVERVIEW

Southeast Asia promises intrepid travellers high-octane cities, idyllic rural villages, exquisite culinary delights and fascinating historical insight, all linked by the mighty Mekong River which courses through its interior. Follow this winding waterway through three countries as you journey from Thailand's tropical north to the temple ruins of Cambodia, ending with a scenic river cruise in Vietnam.

## ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Southeast Asia. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as visa requirements and travel insurance.

### Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

### DAY 1: UK to Bangkok

Depart London on your scheduled, overnight flight to Bangkok.

### DAY 2: Bangkok D

Arrive in Bangkok this evening and transfer to your hotel.

### DAY 3: Bangkok B/L/D

After breakfast, journey through Bangkok's rural surrounds, passing villages and rice paddies before stopping at a salt and coconut farm. Learn about how these agricultural staples are grown then continue on to Damnoen Saduak Floating Market. Join haggling locals as you explore this busy maze of colourful stalls where vendors peddle tropical produce, trinkets and snacks from traditional long-tail boats. Travel to the River Kwai for lunch at a floating restaurant then visit the infamous Bridge over the River Kwai and the WW2 cemetery where the prisoners of war used to build this bridge are buried. Return to Bangkok with tonight's dinner at a barbecue restaurant.

### DAY 4: Bangkok to Chiang Mai B/D

After breakfast, depart for your flight to Chang Mai. On arrival in Chiang Mai, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. After settling in, join your group for an intimate dining experience at local restaurant with classic Thai dances before returning to your hotel for the night.

### DAY 5: Chiang Mai B/L/D

Chiang Mai, set in Thailand's tropical north, encapsulates the best of Thailand, with modern highrises circling a centuries-old walled city and miles of rolling greenery just outside the city limits. This morning, journey to the hilltop temple of Wat Phra That Doi Suthep and its shimmering golden stupas. The mythical 'Naga' (dragon-headed serpent) staircase leads you upwards to the temple grounds where you can take in sweeping views of the city before a cable car ride back to your vehicle. Browse the delicate sculptures at a local jade factory before lunch and an afternoon at leisure. In the evening, an entertaining Khantoke dinner allows you to experience this regional style of multi-plate dining and a colourful dance show.

### DAY 6: Chiang Mai to Sukhothai B/L/D

Depart Chiang Mai this morning, travelling first to nearby Lampang to explore Wat Pongsanuk, an elegant Burmese-style temple brimming with depictions of ancient gods and Buddha statues. Drive onward to Sukhothai, birthplace of the Thai nation, where you will have the rest of the day at leisure.

### DAY 7: Sukhothai to Bangkok B/L/D

Sukhothai is home to over 100 historical sites dating back to its glorious past as the ancient capital of Siam. Wander around the city's UNESCO-listed Historical Park, taking in crumbling palaces and temples, reclining Buddha figures and tranquil lotus ponds. Delve further into the region's history as you continue on to Si Satchanalai Historical Park where age-old statues and stupas lie nestled in the park's greenery. Travel to Phitsanulok for dinner then board your overnight sleeper train bound for Bangkok.

### DAY 8: Bangkok to Siem Reap B/D

After an early breakfast, set out to explore Thailand's charming capital as you visit the impressive golden Buddha at Wat Traimit Temple then stroll past stalls laden with delicacies and handicrafts in Chinatown. This afternoon transfer to the airport for your flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia. On arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel, with the remainder of the evening at leisure.

### DAY 9: Siem Reap B/L/D

Begin your first exploration of Cambodia and historic Siem Reap on today's full-day tour of the magnificent Angkor Wat temple complex. Start at the southern gate, flanked by rows of stone figures, followed by the Bayon and its beautifully crafted towers. From here, visit the Elephant Terrace, once used as a viewing stand for public ceremonies, then explore the sprawling temple of Angkor Wat. After lunch, visit the temple of Ta Prohm and wander amongst the towering trees that have overrun these ancient structures.

### DAY 10: Siem Reap to Battambang B/L/D

Following breakfast, journey to the peaceful city of Battambang where your first stop is the 11th century temple ruins of Wat Ek Phnom Temple. Encounter Cambodia's rich culinary traditions as you continue on to a local market where 'prahoc', a pungent local fish paste is made and sticky rice is steamed in bamboo. Return to the town centre for a short walk to a local market then return to your hotel.

### DAY 11: Battambang to Phnom Penh B/L/D

A morning of sightseeing starts at Battambang's main market before you sample the region's full-bodied coffee. Next, take in red lanterns and colourful murals at a Chinese temple then tour the city's old, abandoned

train station. Travel to nearby Phnom Sampeau where spectacular views and a golden stupa lie next to the area's Killing Caves. Tour this Khmer Rouge execution site, a grim reminder of Cambodia's past, before journeying to Phnom Penh for your overnight stay.

### DAY 12: Phnom Penh B/L/D

Cambodia's capital city provides a sensory experience, with tuk-tuk drivers rattling past colourful markets and regal monuments. Today's city tour begins with a visit to the Royal Palace. Marvel at the ornately gilded roofs and the solid gold-encrusted then visit the National Museum that houses a collection of Khmer art from throughout the ages. Round off your day with a tour of the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek, where victims of the Khmer Rouge regime are buried.

### DAY 13: Phnom Penh to Long Xuyen, Vietnam B/L/D

A last excursion into Phnom Penh takes you to the Tuol Sleng Prison Museum which chronicles the Cambodian genocide and provides sobering historical insight. After lunch, take a speed boat down the Mekong River, crossing into Vietnam and disembarking at Long Xuyen where you will be transferred to your hotel.

### DAY 14: Long Xuyen to Mekong Cruise B/L/D

This morning, transfer to Can Tho where you will board your vessel for your Mekong River Cruise. Enjoy lunch on the boat while you sail past fields, valleys and jungle undergrowth, observing life on the river banks. In the afternoon, take a shore excursion to a village where you'll meet the locals

and sample tropical produce and fruit. Back on board, enjoy a drink at the bar or relax on deck as the sun sets over the river. The boat will anchor for the night with dinner served on board.

### DAY 15: Mekong Cruise to Saigon B/L/D

Set sail at sunrise and see the passing landscapes bathed in a wash of colour while you enjoy an early breakfast. Next, explore the winding canals of the Mekong Delta on a traditional sampan boat or by foot before disembarking and travelling to Saigon for your overnight stay.

### DAY 16: Saigon B/L/D

Take in the fusion of old-world, post-war and colonial-era Vietnam on today's city tour. Visit the district of Cu Chi, famous for its extensive 75-mile tunnel system which served as the base of operations for the Viet Cong and once housed supply routes, hospitals, weapon factories and living quarters. In the afternoon, visit the War Remnants Museum and Reunification Palace then take a walking tour of the city's main sights, including the elegant Notre Dame Cathedral, the colonial-era Post Office, the Opera House and City Hall.

### DAY 17/18: Saigon to the UK or extension B

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK or continue on to your chosen extension.

## ACCOMMODATION DETAILS & MAP



### Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience, location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotels to Guesthouses. Hotel accommodation is generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note there is no international classification system for hotels, and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Thailand, Cambodia & Vietnam. All group tours hotels have private bathroom facilities and air-conditioning, where needed.

Rest assured that all accommodation used by Mercury Holidays is regularly inspected by our staff and partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

**Please note: final confirmation of your accommodation will be sent in a document, along with your final flight information, approximately 10 days before you travel.**

### Meals

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Dinner (when included) will be taken in local restaurants and 1 dinner will be arranged at your hotel. A variety of restaurants are visited giving you the chance to experience a range of dishes and flavours.

## ON YOUR ARRIVAL

On your arrival in Chiang Mai you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **LV Travel**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/LV Travel Representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your guide will be able to answer any queries. However, if you need to contact LV Travel during your stay the details are:

### LV Travel

Hanoi head office address: Villa 09, 310 Minh Khai Street, Minh Khai Ward, Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi, Vietnam  
Telephone : 0084 2439 413 748  
E-mail: operation@lvtravel.vn

### Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for **LV Travel**  
Telephone: 0084 888713289  
24 hour e-mail: operation@lvtravel.vn or len@lvtravel.vn  
Anna Hanh Office: 0084(0) 983 096032  
Mr Len Mobile: 0084 989 200 116

## WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

### Visas

**Thailand:** A visa is not required before you travel to Thailand; you will be issued with a tourist visa valid for 30 days on arrival into the country. Further advice should be sought from the applicable tourist authority for other nationalities and for general queries. We strongly advise you check your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy for the most up-to-date guidelines regarding visas and passport validity.

**Cambodia:** A visa is required when travelling to Cambodia and can be purchased on arrival. The cost of this is approximately USD \$30 per person and you will be required to bring a passport photo with you as well. Please note that it is important that is plenty of space left in the passport, as a Cambodian visa alone takes up one page. Visa is only available for purchase upon arrival at the border. E-Visas are only valid for airport arrivals, so not valid on our tours.

**Vietnam:** For UK citizens a visa for Vietnam is only required for stays longer than 15 days or for multi entry visits.. For stays longer than 15 days, a visa is required for entry into Vietnam. You can apply for an e-visa online at <https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn>. The cost of the visa is approximately USD\$25 and will take roughly 3 working days. Alternatively, we work closely with The Travel Visa Company who will be able to arrange your visa for you on your behalf. Please call them on 01270 250 590 and quote "Mercury Holidays". The cost of the visa is given on application. The visas take around 10 working days to issue and are only valid for 3 months from the date of entry. We therefore recommend that you apply for your visa 8 weeks before travel, however please be aware that your passport will be required for the application so make sure that you will not need it during this time. You can also visit the Embassy of Vietnam in London: 12-14 Victoria Road, London, W8 5RD. This visa information is a guide line only and is subject to change; up-to-date information regarding the process and fees will be advised at the time of calling the Travel Visa Company.

Please note: the entry point in Vietnam is Song Tien Landport.

**For all destinations your passport must be valid for at least 6 months before you enter either Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.** Visa requirements are subject to change and obtaining a visa is the responsibility of the traveller and not Mercury Holidays. We recommend you check with your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy prior to departure for the most up to date guidelines regarding visas and passport validity.

### Insurance

We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call **0800 781 4237** and quote 'WK830' for preferential rates. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

### Health and Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to check any health & vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk), [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk), [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk), your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

### Tour Guides

This is a fully escorted tour meaning that you will be met by a local guide in each of the cities that you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

### Private Tour

If you have booked a private tour then you will be accompanied by a Driver Guide or a Driver and Local Guides. These will be available to you during all scheduled sightseeing. Private Tours can depart on any day of the week depending on flight and train schedules and the opening days of the attractions. They will follow the itinerary as described in the brochure unless you have been advised otherwise and you will still have all of the same meals, sightseeing and local excursions included.

### Tipping

It is at your customary to tip both your driver and guide. We would recommend to tip approximately USD\$ 6/7 per person per day. This is a total of 116 USD per person to budget for tips on your trip. Tips will be

collected at the end of your tour. Tips are accepted in the local currency.

### Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties. All our tours feature a "Tour Pace" to help find the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights, climb stairs and get on and off coaches and boats. The tour pace for Thailand, Cambodia & Vietnam is rated as Advanced. A higher level of fitness as required as you may be on your feet for most of the day though this will be interspersed with regular breaks and vary from day to day. You will be walking around the sights, getting on and off coaches, trains, boats and climbing steps which may be irregular. There may be some time spend at high altitude. You will stay in variety of hotels, possibly including overnight trains, and accommodation standards may not match those you are used to at home. Our guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

### Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 10, and the maximum will be 40. If in the unlikely event there are less than 10 people booked on your tour date, we will endeavour to reduce any disruption to your holiday and try to operate your tour with lower passenger numbers. If we are not able to operate your departure date, then you may be asked to change to a different date and a full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

### Currency Exchange

**Thailand:** The currency in Thailand is the Thai Baht (THB). We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK, however cash machines are available in all the major cities to withdraw money in the local currency.

**Cambodia:** The currency in Cambodia is the Cambodian Riel (KHM). We recommend that you take some US Dollars (USD) with you and exchange this currency whilst you are travelling.

**Vietnam:** The currency in Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong, known as VND. You can exchange your currency in Vietnam, however US Dollars are widely accepted in Vietnam should you wish to keep an alternative currency on you. We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK. It is important that you budget carefully and ensure you have the right form of currency before you arrive in the country. Cash machines will also be available throughout the tour in order to withdraw money in your local currency.

### Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry, any meals not included in the itinerary as well as drinks and any additional snacks. Approximately £400- £500 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour. It is a good idea to try and maintain a supply of small notes and change in the local currency for tipping or small purchases.

### Credit Card Information

As normal practice you will be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card, you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels.

### Itinerary Changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

### Passport Information

Your Passport Information is required for this tour. This information is required at least 90 days prior to your departure. Failure to provide this information on time may result in your booking being cancelled with loss of deposit.

### Public Holidays – Vietnam

If you are travelling within the below Vietnamese Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded. Tet Holiday is between 10th-12th Feb 2024, International Labour Day is on 1st May every year, Reunification Day is on 30th April every year and National Independence Day is on 2nd September every year.



## WHAT TO PACK

- Sunscreen, insect repellent and hat
- Waterproof lightweight jacket
- Sunglasses
- Ruck sack or light bag per person and a small overnight bag to take on your Mekong River Cruise
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Lightweight clothing (jeans are not recommended)
- Sweater
- Swimwear
- Camera and charger
- Lightweight/travel towel
- Travel plug adapter – the electricity supply is 220V. You will need a 2-pin round plug adapter.
- Binoculars
- Personal toiletries
- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

**IMPORTANT: Please note that final flight details, including terminal, airline and baggage allowance, will be confirmed on your final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure. A printed E-ticket is no longer required at check-in, all you need to do is present your passport to the staff at the desk and your boarding pass will be given to you.**

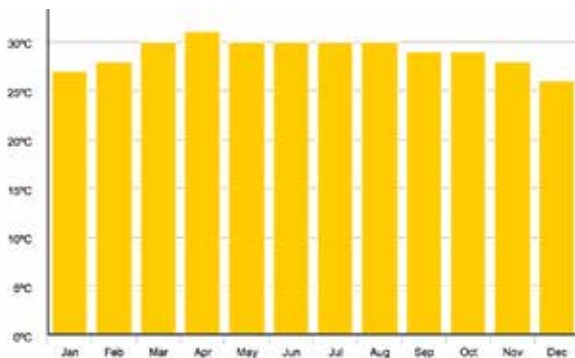
### Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras on 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

## WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

Average temperature: **Bangkok**



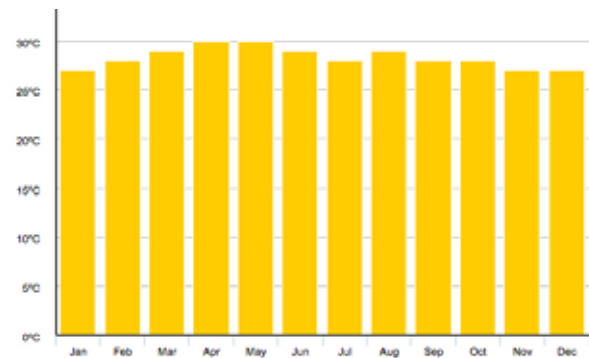
Average temperature: **Siem Reap**



Average temperature: **Phnom Penh**



Average temperature: **Saigon**



# Hanoi and Halong Bay Extension

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0333 003 0522



## TRIP OVERVIEW

Combine the famous sites of Hanoi such as the Ho Chi Minh Complex and One Pillar Pagoda with an overnight luxury cruise on the awe-inspiring Halong Bay, passing local towns, fascinating intricate limestone formations and visiting the impressive Thien Cahn Son Cave.

## ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for your extension to Hanoi and Halong Bay.

### Your included meal guide:

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

### DAY 17: Saigon to Hanoi D

On arrival in Hanoi, you will be met by your local guide and transferred to your hotel. Relax in the afternoon before enjoying dinner at a local Vietnamese restaurant.

### DAY 18: Hanoi B/L/D

Following breakfast your full day tour will commence at the Ho Chi Minh Complex, where the father of modern day Vietnam, affectionately referred to as 'Uncle Ho' declared the nations independence in 1945. Visit such sites as the ancient Temple of Literature, the Presidential Palace and the famous One Pillar Pagoda. Following lunch continue with a visit to the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology which offers an insight into the 54 different ethnic groups of Vietnam. In the evening sit back and enjoy a thousand-year-old Water Puppet Show and enjoy a local dinner.

### DAY 19: Hanoi to Halong Bay B/L/D

This memorable day takes you to the awe-inspiring Halong Bay where you will explore these tranquil islands on a luxury cruise boat, passing local towns and intricate limestone formations on the way. Take a tour of Thien Canh Son Cave, an ethereal wonderland of ancient carvings and suspended stalactites that hang beneath a canopy of glistening gems. Anchoring in the Cong Do area, a Vietnamese cooking demonstration will take place on the sundeck, followed by a sumptuous seafood dinner on board before you retire to your cabin for the evening.

### DAY 20: Halong Bay to Hanoi B/L/D

Start your day with a calming Tai Chi session before a rowing boat takes you to Vung Vieng fishing village, a settlement completely floating on water and dating back hundreds of years. In the afternoon, pass sprawling rice paddies and rolling hillside landscapes, as you travel back to Hanoi. Check in to your hotel and enjoy a farewell dinner.

### DAY 21: Hanoi to the UK B

Enjoy a morning at leisure before transferring to the airport for your return flight to the UK, via Bangkok.

### Hotel information

#### Hanoi (3 nights): 4★ Sunway Hotel Hanoi

Address: 19 Phạm Đình Hổ, Quận Hai Bà Trưng, Hà Nội 100000.

Contact number: 0084 24 3971 3888

#### Halong Bay (1 night): Victory Cruise Boat

Any alternative hotels or boats will have been confirmed at booking. Please speak to our reservations department if you are unsure.

**Please note: the hotels and boats listed are provided for guidance only and final confirmation of your accommodation will be sent in a document, along with your final flight information, approximately 10 days before you travel.**

### Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover personal purchases such as laundry service and souvenirs plus money for any drinks and meals that are not included during your stay.

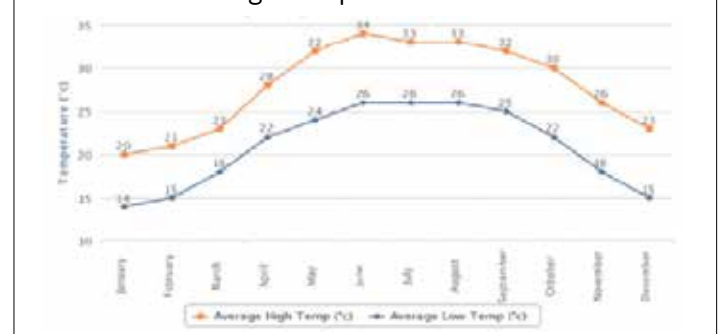
### Tour Guides

This is a fully escorted tour extension, meaning that you will be met on arrival by your guide who will remain with you for the duration of your trip ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

### Please note

This extension takes place after your main tour.

### Average temperature: Hanoi



## FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on **0333 003 0522**

## Mui Ne Beach Stay Extension

*If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0333 003 0522*



Bamboo Village

### TRIP OVERVIEW

Your trip will be complete with a 3 night stay to the laidback Vietnamese coastal town of Mui Ne whose golden shores are enjoyed by both locals and those seeking a tropical retreat. Stroll into the harbour and along the seafront to sample the town's many restaurants.

### ITINERARY & DETAILS

*This document aims to give you all the information that you require during your add-on to Mui Ne.*

#### Mui Ne (4 days/3 nights)

Having journeyed through three countries during your comprehensive 17 day itinerary, this extension is ideal for those looking to unwind while absorbing the warm Vietnamese climate. We have selected two popular hotels, the 4★ Pandanus Resort and the luxurious 4★ Bamboo Village Resort, to ensure you have luxurious surroundings to relax in.

#### Hotel Information

Your stay will take place at either of these hotels:

##### 4★ Bamboo Village

Providing guests with a serene getaway, the Bamboo Village Resort is located on the beach front and is surrounded by lush gardens. This charming hotel boasts two swimming pools, a Straw restaurant that serves delicious Asian cuisine and a luxurious pampering spa. Each spacious room is beautifully designed and equipped with a flat-screened TV, a minibar and balcony.

Hotel Information:

38 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien, Binh Thuan Province, Phan Thiet, Vietnam  
Contact number: 0084 252 3847 111

##### 4★ Pandanus Resort

Located within a ten hectare lush tropical garden on a three hundred metre long beach, the Pandanus Resort in Mui Ne has a large range of facilities and a variety of different accommodations, all designed to make

your stay relaxing and enjoyable. Adjacent to the long, sandy beach is a huge free-form pool, surrounding an island covered with coconut palm trees. Standard rooms have cable TV, tea/coffee making facilities, mini bar, air-conditioning and hairdryer.

Hotel Information:

3 Nguyen Huu Tho, Mui Ne, Phan Thiet, Binh Thuan, 77118, Vietnam  
Contact number: 0084 252 3849 849

Any alternative hotels or board basis will have been confirmed at booking. Please speak to our reservations department if you are unsure.

**Final confirmation of your hotel will be sent in a document approximately two weeks before you travel.**

#### Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any meals that are not included in your board depending on whether you have booked B&B, Half Board or Full Board, as well as personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry and drinks.

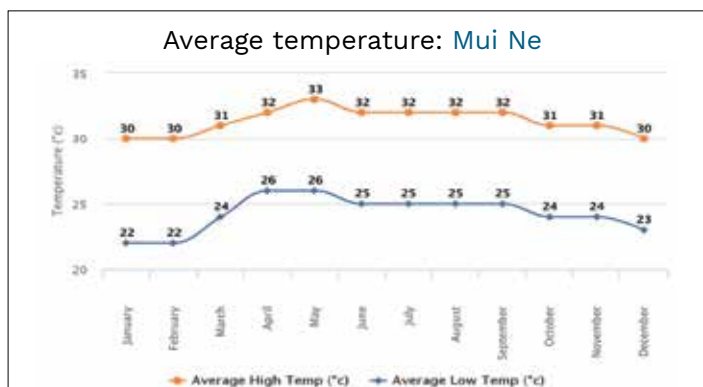
#### Tour Guides

This extension to Mui Ne is not escorted by a tour guide. Your time will be free to explore the area at your own pace. Transfers are included. Please note the average transfer time for this extension is around five and a half hours. For international flights travellers must arrive at the airport three hours before departure. Your return transfer will be eight and a half hours before your flight is due to depart.

#### Please note

This extension takes place after your main tour.

### WEATHER AND CLIMATE



Pandanus Resort

### FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on **0333 003 0522**