

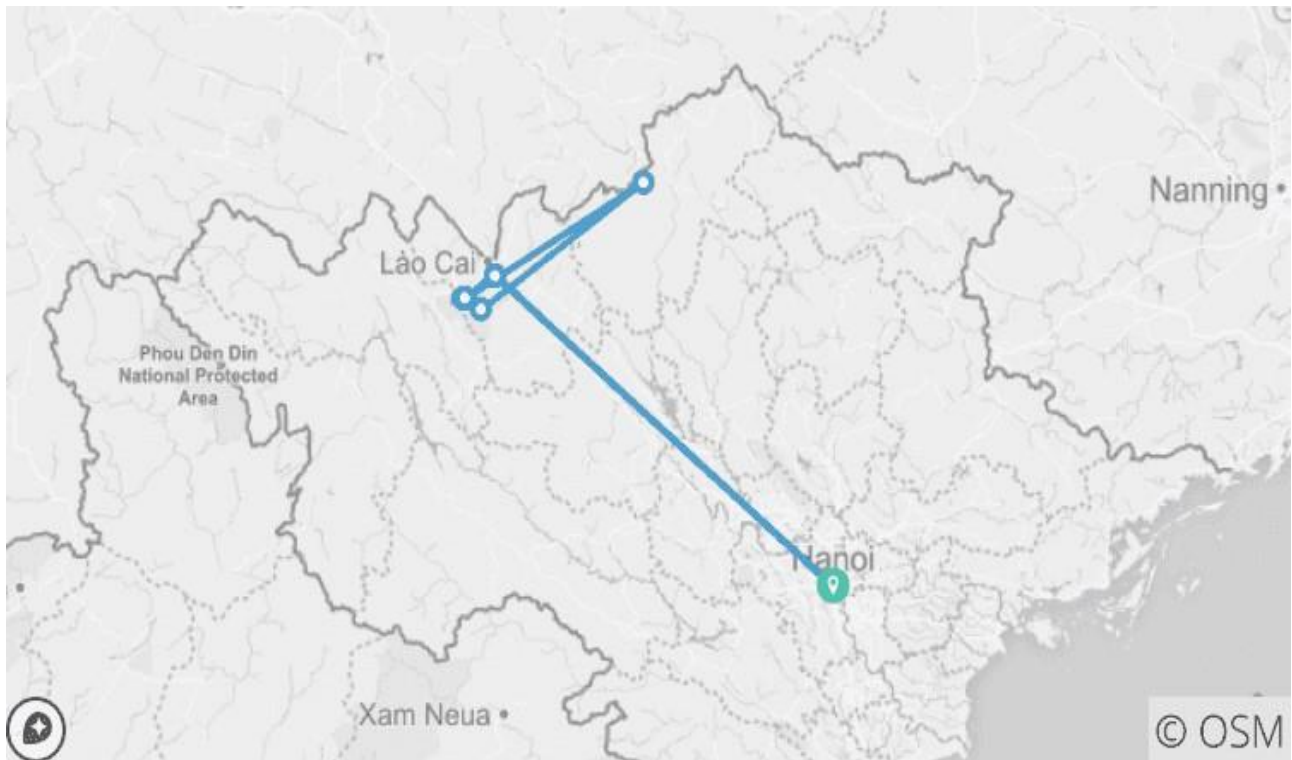


Full Itinerary & Trip Details

# Sapa Adventure

**BEST TRAVEL AGENTS****BEST PRICES  
SERURE****SAFE AND****TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

# Trip Overview



**PRICE STARTING FROM**

\$350

**DURATION**

5 days

**IDEAL AGE**

12 to 99 year olds

**STARTS IN → ENDS IN**

Hanoi → Hanoi

**STYLE**

Hiking & Trekking

# Itinerary

## Introduction

Northwest Vietnam is a captivating mix of dramatic mountainscapes, crisp fresh air and colourfully-clothed hilltribes. Set on the slopes of a beautiful emerald green valley, Sapa is the heart of this unique piece of Vietnam. Travel to this peaceful land and meet resplendently dressed ethnic minorities at the local market, visit neighbouring villages and hike through iridescent rice terraces, witnessing how the current of life has bubbled along here for centuries. This five-day trekking adventure is full of opportunities to be immersed in traditional hilltribe culture and cuisine, while relishing the striking landscapes of Sapa and its surrounds.

## Day 1: Hanoi

Xin chao! Welcome to Vietnam. A welcome pack containing a welcome letter, your trip itinerary, a Sapa information sheet and feedback card will be waiting for you at your hotel. Please ask your hotel's reception for the Intrepid welcome pack upon arrival. In any free time, dive into the barrage of bikes, boulevards and bustling life that characterise Hanoi. Take time to explore the French colonial architecture that decorates the tangled laneways, indulge in a decadent Vietnamese coffee while people-watching from street-side cafes, or step back in time on an exploration of the Old Quarter. This evening you will be picked up by your local guide from your Joining Point Hotel (see below), or from an alternate hotel located in Hanoi's Old Quarter (advised prior to departure), between 6.30pm-7pm. Your guide will first take you for an included dinner and to explain more about the Sapa region. After dinner, you'll be transferred to the train station, where your guide will give you your tickets for the return train journey. Say farewell to your local guide before you board the overnight sleeper train bound for Lao Cai (departing approximately 9.30pm, approximately 8 hours

journey time). The train journey is unaccompanied, and you may be sharing with locals or other travellers.

## Day 2: Sapa Trek

You'll be met on arrival into Lao Cai in the early morning (approximately 6.00 am) by a local driver. Your driver will be picking up several other passengers travelling on to Sapa. Transfer to Sapa by minibus (approximately 1 hour), passing through dramatic scenery along the way. You have a free morning to relax and explore this fascinating hillside town. If the weather is feeling generous, enjoy unhindered views out towards the giant staircase of rice terraces that cascade down the side of the mountains. Otherwise, delight in the enigmatic mists that often shroud the Sapa hillsides. In the afternoon, begin a guided 2-3 hour moderate trek down to the hilltribe villages of Cat Cat, often taking a paved path and passing a waterfall. The villages are home to the H'mong people who originated from China about 300 years ago. The H'mong people are easily recognisable by their dark-blue or black clothing. The dye is

made from the indigo plant, which is native to the area. H'mong women wear long aprons with embroidered waist-coats and have their hair rolled up into a turban-like hat, while the men wear a black skullcap. You are likely to encounter local H'mong traders, who are often described as persistent and aggressive in their sales techniques. Please respect that this approach is usually the result of the competitive nature of business, and only purchase items if you wish too. In the late afternoon, return to Sapa to spend the night in a hotel.

### Day 3: Sapa Trek

This morning after storing your main luggage at your Sapa hotel, set off on a six hour guided trek (approximately 12 - 15 kilometres). Pass along buffalo paths and trails, as well as through several hilltribe villages and resident minority groups such as Red Zao and Tay people. This is a spectacular walk, winding through stunning scenery and elegant rice paddy terraces. Be sure to watch your footing here as there can be uneven slopes, muddy patches, and rocky



inclines. The idyllic countryside scenes are like something out of a storybook, and you will encounter some of the friendliest people you could ever hope to meet. Stop for lunch along the way, and finally spend the night in the home of a Zay family in Ta Van Village. Perhaps take some time to explore the village after you arrive, wandering down to see the locals paddling in the Mua Huon River and the Hmong guys cruising around on their motorbikes. You'll enjoy an included meal of delicious Vietnamese dishes for dinner tonight, prepared by your hosts.

## Day 4: Sapa/Overnight Train

After a hearty, energy-giving early breakfast, set off on a 2-3 hour walk to Su Pan Village. Today's trek is shorter, but the scenery is still beautiful. Take the road to Giang Ta Chai village of the Red Dzao minority via the paths between terraces and through bamboo forests. Walk past waterfalls where buffalo might cool themselves from the heat and cross a suspension bridge. Be sure to take it all in and make the most of the last of your time in these incredible

surroundings. Cross Muong Hoa River, then head up to the mountain to visit the last village of the trek – Su Pan. Maybe grab a quick bowl of pho before meeting up with your vehicle for the 30 minute drive back to Sapa. Arriving in Sapa, you have a free afternoon to explore the town. Maybe get a massage to sooth trek-tired muscles, check out the local market selling produce, herbal remedies, and (very fresh) meats, pick up any Hilltribe crafts you might have had your eye on, or sit back with a drink while you look over the misty mountains. You will be picked up from your Sapa hotel between 5-5.30 pm today by a local driver. You'll then be transferred back to the Lao Cai train station this afternoon (approximately 1 hour). You will have some free time for an optional dinner before you board the overnight train to Hanoi. Boarding commences approximately 7.30pm for an 8.30 pm departure (journey time approximately 8 hours).

## Day 5: Hanoi

Your adventure ends upon arrival at Hanoi train station in the early morning (around 5am). The rest of the day is free for you to soak up the grace of this dynamic city that's the epitome of modern Vietnam.

# What's Included

## Accommodation

### OCCASIONAL ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION:

The style of accommodation indicated in the day-to-day itinerary is a guideline. On rare occasions, alternative arrangements may need to be made due to the lack of availability of rooms in our usual accommodation. A similar standard of accommodation will be used in these instances.

**TWIN SHARE / MULTI SHARE BASIS:**

Accommodation on this trip is on a twin/multishare basis. Please note there may be times where facilities will be shared rather than ensuite and rare occasions when you share a room with passengers travelling on a different Intrepid trip than your own.

**CHECK-IN TIME:**

Throughout the trip we request that our hotels prepare rooms in time for our arrival, especially if we're arriving prior to normal check-in time. However this isn't always possible which means we won't be able to check-in immediately on arrival at some hotels. Instead, we can store our luggage and explore our new destination.

**PRE/POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION:**

If you've purchased pre-trip or post-trip accommodation (subject to availability), you may be required to change rooms from your trip

accommodation for these extra nights. Homestay (1 nt), Hotel (1 nt), Overnight sleeper train (1 nt)

## Guide

The aim of our local guides is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. On this Short Break Adventure you will get to enjoy the variety of having someone different for each day and/or activity. They will be able to provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and, where possible, introduce you to our local friends. You can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects.

## Meals

2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners

## Transport

Minibus, Overnight sleeper train, Private vehicle

## Others

Guided trek

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