



## Cruise Details

Name:	Essence of Vietnam
Reference:	SCENICVIET141124-2
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Spirit
Regions:	Mekong
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Departs On:	14 Nov 24
Departs From:	Hanoi
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Arrives On:	23 Nov 24
Arrives At:	Hoi An
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Cruise Nights:	9
Total Vacation Days:	10

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Welcome to vibrant Vietnam, a world of colour, culture and food. Enjoy the day at leisure and settle into a two night Special Stay at your iconic hotel. This colonial 'grand old lady' of Hanoi boasts luxury rooms and amenities with an exceptional staff to cater your needs and comforts.

Arrives On: 14 Nov 24

### Day 2: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Rise and shine to a day of exploration in this nostalgic city with your first Scenic Freechoice.

**Freechoice:** Choose to visit the History Museum and Hoa Lo Prison. The National Museum of Vietnamese History displays monumental components stretching across every period. Housed in a colonial French building completed in 1932, the design incorporated French colonial and traditional Vietnamese architecture. Continue to

Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, which was used by the French for political prisoners, and later by North Vietnam for prisoners during the Vietnam War. Alternatively, visit Ho Chi Minh Quarter and his Mausoleum, the resting place of Ho Chi Minh himself before visiting the Temple of Literature, originally built in 1070 as a university dedicated to Confucius, scholars and sages. Thirdly, visit the ancient village of Bat Trang, a traditional porcelain and pottery community. Interactively learn the intricate steps involved in making these ceramic works of art. Afterwards at a house where locals worship their ancestors, a local elder explains the unique aspects of Vietnamese culture and its spiritual beliefs. Conclude the trip by learning all about Bánh Cuốn or rice pancakes, a dish of northern Vietnam that you'll enjoy as part of a tasty self-made lunch of local specialties.

Enjoy a "green" electric car tour through Hanoi's old quarter to tonight's Enrich activity.

**Enrich**

For your Enrich Activity, attend a customary performance of Hanoi's famous water puppets. As a VIP ticket holder, you will have premium seating as well as the opportunity to learn the secrets behind this illusionary show thanks to your special backstage pass.

Arrives On: 15 Nov 24

### Day 3: Hanoi (Vietnam)

After breakfast, checkout of your luxury accommodation and begin your four-hour journey to Halong Bay. Along the way you will drive through the prosperous farmlands of the Red River Delta before joining a two-night cruise onboard the Au Co for an awe-inspiring trip through the picturesque waters of this spectacular World Heritage-listed icon.

This stunning vessel provides a first-class experience from beginning to end. The luxurious features and suites allow a comfortable and exquisite way to explore Halong Bay reaching areas of the bay far beyond the day trippers and overnight cruises.

Arrives On: 16 Nov 24

### Day 3: Cát Bà Island (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 16 Nov 24

### Day 4: Cát Bà Island (Vietnam)

After breakfast, enjoy a Tai Chi lesson on the Sun Deck as the ship sails deeper into the National Park. Take control and jump into a kayak to paddle your way through a limestone cave system, and later take a bike ride on Cat Ba Island. Cat Ba Island has to be one of the hidden beauties of the region. Twined with jungle and wildlife, the island remains mainly untouched from large development.

**Sunset Drinks**

After your adventure ashore head back to the ship to enjoy an exclusive to Scenic guests Sunset Drinks activity whilst at anchor. Soak up the aromas in a wine tasting set against the backdrop of the karst

Islands at sunset. Later, after enjoying the fine local cuisine in the onboard restaurant, try your hand at some squid fishing from the boat.

Arrives On: 17 Nov 24

#### Day 5: Cát Bà Island (Vietnam)

Relax during your morning cruise back to the harbour. After stopping for lunch and shopping en-route back to Hanoi, arrive back for another night at your hotel. Later join a historical bunker tour at the hotel to learn about its place in the history of this capital city, a history that spans over 1000 years.

**Freechoice Dining:** Tonight, you have a choice of venues for your dinner through Scenic's Freechoice. Dine in house at the La Terrace at your hotel, or situated in the splendid surroundings of Hanoi's French quarter, near Hoan Kiem Lake and the Opera House, dine at the historic La Table Hanoia Restaurant located in the old Press Club, giving you the chance to experience traditional French dishes in a stylish and upbeat setting. For the more adventurous, ride tandem on the back on a Vespa with a guide for a foodie tour of Hanoi's Old Quarter, stopping at local food haunts for authentic Hanoi Street food with free flow drinks enabling you get a feel of the nightlife and vibe of the local Hanoi culture.

Arrives On: 18 Nov 24

#### Day 5: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 18 Nov 24

#### Day 6: Hanoi (Vietnam)

Enjoy your morning at leisure in Hanoi before flying to Hue, the former imperial capital in the afternoon. Check into your hotel, your home for the night.

**Enrich**  
Traditional Vietnamese cuisine is served family style at the private Garden House accompanied by Royal Hue court music and a glass of wine.

Arrives On: 19 Nov 24

#### Day 6: Hue (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 19 Nov 24

#### Day 7: Hue (Vietnam)

Your days starts with breakfast before checking out and setting off on a morning excursion to the Mausoleum of Emperor Tu Duc, the last independent emperor of Imperial Vietnam before French colonisation. Enjoy a cyclo ride to Hue's Imperial Citadel before wandering though

the grandeur of its ruins. After lunch, travel along the breath-taking Hai Van Pass to the ancient town of Hoi An where you will enjoy a three night stay at your resort, which includes a daily spa journey as part of your stay.

**Enrich**

During an inspiring visit to Duc Son Pagoda, talk with the nuns and learn how they are supporting their orphanage through different initiatives.

Arrives On: 20 Nov 24

#### Day 7: Hoi An (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 20 Nov 24

#### Day 8: Hoi An (Vietnam)

Step back in time as you take a walking tour of Hoi An's World Heritage-listed Old Quarter, visiting the Japanese Bridge and central market where you can experience its incredible sights and aromas. Afterwards stop at the home of a former merchant to learn all about what life is like in the old town of Hoi An, before trying some local street food specialists of Hoi An such as Com Gà, Cao Lu and Bánh Mì at a local restaurant.

Enjoy the afternoon at your leisure, perhaps to get a massage using your included spa treatment, swim in the hotel's large resort style pool or continuing shopping in the old town, visiting the many tailors the town is known for.

**Sunset Drinks**

Before dinner attend your Scenic Sundowners, a time to relax at a reception in the Blue Bar with included beer and wine.

**Freechoice Dining:** After you have settled into your little slice of heaven, take the opportunity to enjoy a range of carefully selected dining venues for your Scenic Freechoice dining. Dine in the old town at either the Morning Glory Signature Restaurant or Quang's Kitchen Restaurant, styled on a nostalgic ancient Hoi An House. Alternatively at Lim Dining Restaurant try modern Italian cuisine nestled in the heart of Hoi An's Ancient Town.

Arrives On: 21 Nov 24

#### Day 9: Hoi An (Vietnam)

Start the day refreshed and ready to join your Scenic Freechoice activity.

**Freechoice:** The option of a half day drip to My Son provides a glimpse into the area's ancient history and a truly cultural highlight of Central Vietnam. The remaining structures of the Tower Temples provide an atmospheric image of the majesty of the Champa Kingdom. Stroll through the ruins and visit the small museum at the entrance to My Son before a local lunch.

The second option is to ride a bicycle to a local village to learn about the local lives of Hoi An's fishermen. Climb into a small, round bamboo fishing basket and learn to cast a fishing net in the traditional way. Then continue to an area filled

with water palms and coconut trees and learn about the history of this part of Hoi An. Round off the adventure with a scenic boat trip back to Hoi An, savouring lunch on board.

Thirdly meet with the representative of Reaching Out, an NGO established in 2000 and gain an insight into their efforts in providing opportunities for people with disability to learn skills and gain meaningful employment. Undertake a Lantern Making Class at their workshop located at an old merchant house and get a glimpse into how this NGO helps the disabled to integrate fully with their communities and lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Alternatively, you have the choice of participating in a bicycle ride to a local farm in Tra Que Village. Soak in the beauties of the vegetable gardens and participate in the preparation of the land and fertilizing it with seaweed with the local farmers. You will learn how to prepare 'Tam Hu'u', a local delicacy before sitting down for a home cooked meal including 'Banh Xeo' a specialty savory pancake wrapped in rice paper.

After your morning of adventures, arrive back at the Almanity Resort where you are then free to head back into town to explore on your own.

Arrives On: 22 Nov 24

#### Day 10: Hoi An (Vietnam)

Your final day in the centre of Vietnam starts with breakfast before checking out and setting off to the airport in Danang for your homebound or onward flight. Leave with a full camera and stunning memories to treasure.

Arrives On: 23 Nov 24

#### Day 10: Da Nang (Vietnam)

Arrives On: 23 Nov 24

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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