

WELCOME TO *YOUR* JOURNEY

VINAPIX PHOTOGRAPHY TOURS

"Our sole mission is to get you to the best place, at the best time of the year, at the best time of the day, so that you can create the best photograph."

From the endless plains of the Mekong Delta to the remote and rugged peaks of the North-west Highlands, Vietnam is a vast and diverse place. From the ancient streets of the North where life continues much as it has for thousands of years to the bustling skyscrapers of the South where almost everything is new and changing, Vietnam is a place of startling contrasts, and from the well dressed and fashionable youngsters of the big cities to the colourful costumes and traditional lifestyles of over fifty ethnic minority groups Vietnam is one of the most culturally exciting places on the planet.

There is something for everyone here, and for the photographer every day is a parade of sights and opportunities that can be found nowhere else. VinaPix Photography Tours are run by photographers and only for pho-

tographers. Indeed, we have been photographing Vietnam for twenty years, and no one knows the country better than we do. Our tours are unique. We don't try to fit everything into one rushed trip. Rather we follow the seasons and only run tours when the weather is optimal for photography. We make sure you arrive at the best locations at the right time of day... and have enough time to create photographs you can be proud of.

For this reason we run only one tour to each of the four distinct regions in Vietnam each year. Each of these four tours has been crafted so that you will visit the iconic locations required for any respectable Vietnam portfolio. We also, however, take you further off the beaten track to places of beauty and interest that are less well known... adding an element of originality and uniqueness to your work. Every tour also includes

opportunities for photographers to explore their personal interests, be that street photography, food photography, portraiture and so on. Indeed, each tour can be customized to meet participant's desired photographic outcomes.

Our rates include all accommodation, transport, meals and sundry costs* starting from the day before the tour officially begins until we return you to the airport for your flight home. While you are here the only thing you need to focus on is taking great photographs. We have put a lot of work into making our tours the very best Vietnam photographic experience possible and we take great pride in what we offer, so please take a look through this brochure and if you would like any additional information, do not hesitate to contact us.

** See page 11 for details*

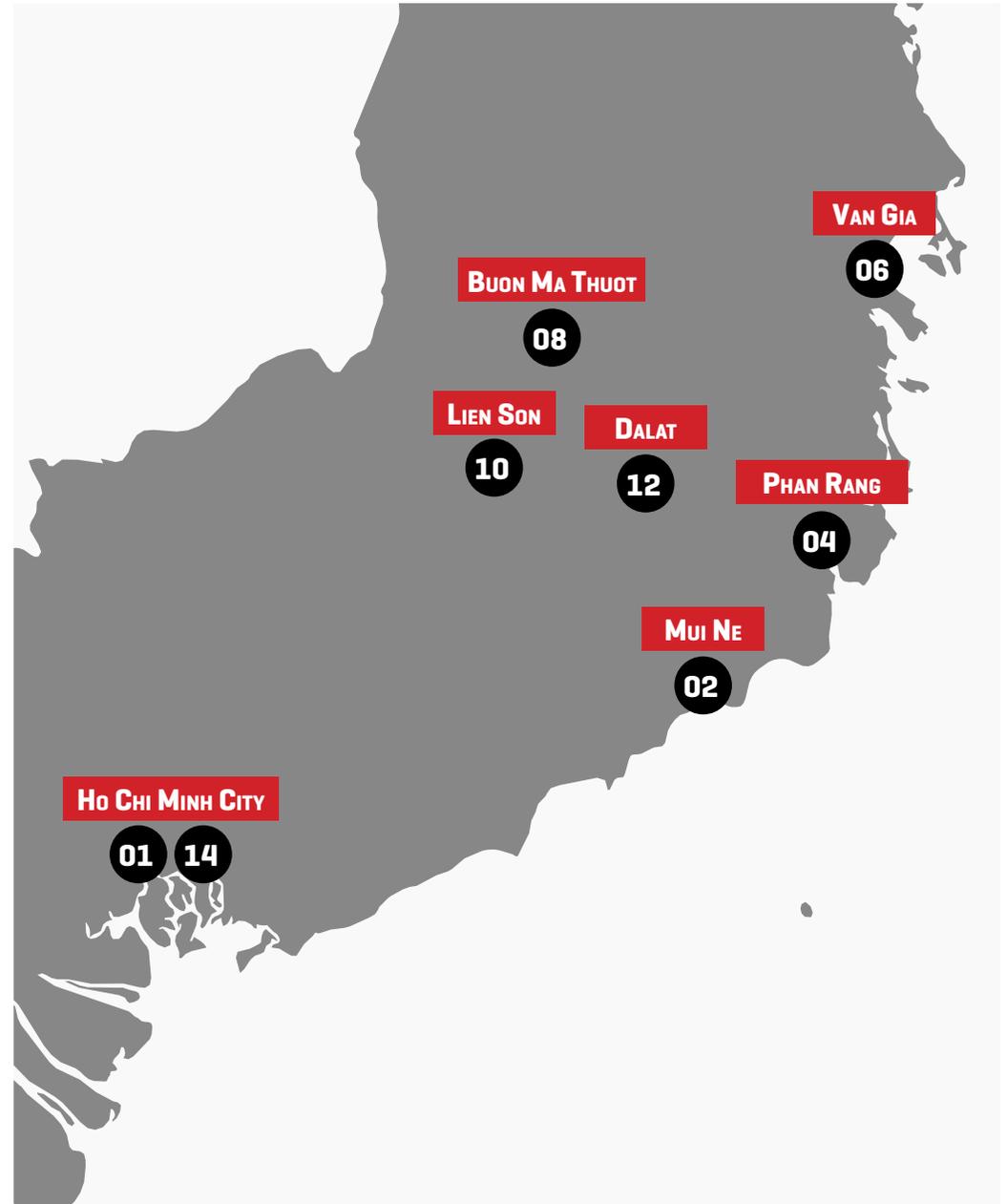
SAIGON AND SOUTHERN VIETNAM

Enjoy the sight of ancient and hallowed Buddhist pagodas standing next to gleaming glass skyscrapers. Explore the narrow back-street lanes of Saigon, where every front door is a pavement shop and people haggle endlessly over the smallest sale. Wander through green rubber plantations and cool alpine forests. Join whole families on the beach as they off load and sort the nights catch from colourful fishing boats. Sit

in silence and watch the sun rise over a remote mountain lake as elephants walk silently by. Share a drink with an Ede ethnic minority family in their wooden longhouse or party with the K'ho around raging bonfires at night. Southern Vietnam offers you an unequalled variety of photographic experiences. This is far and away our most popular tour... why not come and find out why?

ARRIVE

We meet you at the airport and whisk you off to your hotel to relax and freshen up after your flight. Later we all get together to enjoy a good meal before an early night to help you get over any jet-lag.



01**SAIGON – MUI NE**

After breakfast we head up highway one towards the seaside village of Mui Ne, stopping on our way to explore the Saigon river and cool, green rubber plantations. After lunch and a dip in the pool we travel a short way inland to explore the small farms of a lush and fertile valley hidden behind massive sand dunes before returning the bay to watch the day end over the assembled fishing fleet.

02**MUI NE**

Early birds can rise early today and enjoy the sight of the sunrise over the ocean before we all spend a few hours amidst the seeming chaos of the beach front fish market. Later we visit the local market and then a Cham tower overlooking the coast. The evening once again finds us at a lovely spot on a white beach lined with coconut trees as we watch the sun go down.

03**MUI NE – PHAN RANG**

Heading a little way north we stop to explore a sea of pure white sand dunes and sky blue lakes before travelling up the coast along a road cut into the cliffs above the rocks and ocean below. Our first stop is at a salt farm set at the foot of rocky hills after which we explore the local countryside and villages.

04**PHAN RANG**

We begin today exploring a vast area of sand dunes before visiting the finest example of Cham architecture in the country. The rest of the day is spent out in the countryside visiting local farms, walking in the fields as the rice is cut and baled and evening finds us alongside a slow flowing river as the sun sets over the distant mountains.



"One morning in Tra Vinh filled a 64Gb card... incredible opportunities!"

– Linda Meyer. South Africa





05

PHAN RANG – VAN GIA

Heading further up the coast we follow a spectacular road through the hills to a tiny village secreted in a forgotten cove. Passing through the tourist city of Nha Trang we pause to admire a giant statue of the Buddha seated on a lotus flower before arriving at one of the loveliest places on the coast. Later we slowly make our way through the beautiful countryside towards the mountains for another dramatic end to the day.

06

VAN GIA

We begin the day on the beach as the sun rises over the distant headlands before taking a slow drive up the coast, pausing at numerous places to take in the beauty of a vast bay littered with fish farms, a lonely lighthouse and sandy beaches clinging to towering cliffs. By evening we are once again facing the towering mountains and waiting for the sun to turn the flooded rice paddies to red and gold.

07

VAN GIA – BUON MA THUOT

Starting early we travel inland through lush green valleys and forested mountains towards the central highlands, stopping here and there to take in the stunning scenery. The afternoon is free to relax, catch up on emails or whatever. For those who like, however, a visit to the local market and other sights is always possible.

08

BUON MA THUOT

After breakfast we take a short drive and find ourselves walking through dense forests to two of the largest waterfalls in the highlands. We spend the morning exploring the falls from above and below before heading off to visit the forests and villages that line the mighty Serapok River.

“Vietnam: the country, the people and the food – it’s everything you could ask for and more.”

– Philip Baker. United Kingdom



09**BUON MA THUOT – LIEN SON**

Winding our way through the fertile highlands we arrive on the shores of a large freshwater lake set around with rolling hills. We take time to meet the local Ede ethnic minority people and visit their long houses and later we go in search of the local elephant which work in the surrounding forests.

10**LIEN SON**

Before dawn we find ourselves the perfect vantage point from which to view the sunrise over the lake and hills after which we set about exploring the countryside, including more Ede villages, beautiful lakes and forested hills. Tonight there is also the option of joining a local family for dinner and sleeping in a longhouse on the lakeshore.

11**LIEN SON – DA LAT**

We set out early today making our way through range after range of jungle clad mountains and lush valleys, stopping here and there to take in the amazing vistas, visit remote villages and explore a cool, dark and silent forest. Before reaching Da Lat, we also have the option of visiting a working coffee farm and a small silk factory.

12**DA LAT**

Today begins with a walk around a beautiful lake in the heart of the town followed by visits to a few local sights as well as a stop at the market where we join the crowds as they shop in the countless stalls. Later we find ourselves on top of the areas highest hill as we join the K'ho ethnic group for a campfire and party.



“The most fun I’ve had doing street photography in twenty years.”

— Hennie Van Der Merwe. South Africa



13**DA LAT – SAIGON**

There is the option for some sunrise photography for those interested, then after a late breakfast we take the short flight back to Saigon. After lunch you have the option to do a little shopping for mementoes or gifts before we travel over the Saigon River for panoramic views of the city at sunset.

14**SAIGON**

On our final day we take to the streets and explore a busy street market before visiting some of the city’s most interesting pagodas and temples. Sunset finds us atop Saigons tallest building looking out over the entire city before we retreat to a private room in a local restaurant for a final, farewell dinner.



DEPART

Today we say goodbye after two weeks of wonderful photography. We will escort you

to the airport for your flight home, or if you want to travel further, assist you on your way.

NOTE. This is a suggested itinerary. It may change a little due to local conditions or group preferences.



SAIGON AND SOUTHERN VIETNAM

DATES

Please refer to our online schedule on the website:

<http://vinapixphototours.com/tours/>

COST

The cost per person is \$2800

This is \$200 a day – **Inclusive of:**

- All accommodation - on a room share basis.* *(including your first night, before the tour officially begins)*
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner every day and general refreshments
- All transport
- All entrance fees, ferry fees etc. *(where applicable)*
- All tips and charitable contributions

This excludes:

- Your flights to and from Vietnam
- Your Vietnam tourist visa *(if applicable)*

- Your travel insurance
- Any strong alcoholic drinks, souvenirs or additional tips

A deposit of \$500 per person is required to confirm a booking. The remainder is payable upon arrival.

(No deposit is required until the minimum of six group members has been achieved and the tour is confirmed)

** Single rooms are available – the additional cost will be calculated upon demand.*

CUSTOMIZATION

The daily schedule of this tour can be adapted to some degree to meet your specific photographic interests. Should the group as a whole agree an extra day can be spent at any location. In addition many personal interests can be accommodated, such as extra time for street photography, food photography etc. Once you have confirmed your booking you will receive a customization form.



"The sunrise at Lak Lake alone was worth the whole trip. Thank you."
— David Goodman.
United States

GENERAL INFORMATION

YOUR GUIDE

Every tour will be accompanied by Ian Morton, a professional photographer who has lived and worked in Vietnam for the last twenty years.

GROUP SIZE

To enable us to meet every group member's photographic desires, and facilitate access to sensitive locations such as some pagodas and homes, the group is limited to between six to eight people.

HOTELS

We have sought out the best accommodation possible while keeping costs as reasonable as possible. Hotels are generally in the two and three star range, although we have arranged favorable discounts for top end hotels and resorts at some locations. On some tours, in more remote locations, accommodation may be a little more rustic, but all hotels have air-conditioning and

on-suite bathrooms with hot and cold water.

TRANSPORT

All transport is provided by new air-conditioned minibuses, with drivers who have been vetted for their care and attention to safety. Internal flights, where applicable, are with Vietnam Airline, a carrier with an exceptional safety record. On some tours we travel by small boats with local guides, but are never far from land and have never had any problems.

FOOD

Vietnamese cuisine is exceptional, and throughout every tour we have gone out of our way to ensure you experience the finest traditional and regional dishes available. At all locations there are a wide variety of vegetarian options, and in all but a few places Western food is available. Any dietary related issues can be detailed and resolved when you make your booking.

CLOTHING

You should bring comfortable light tropical clothing and a good pair of worn in walking shoes. Shorts are acceptable at most locations, but long trousers (including jeans) are recommended for visiting pagodas and temples. A good sun hat is a must for those arriving from cooler climes. A more detailed list will be provided when you make your booking.

HEALTH

Any person of average fitness will have no problem accessing the locations on any tour, indeed the most strenuous activity is a countryside walk along shady lanes. Heat may be an issue in some places, but mineral water is always available. If you have any specific concerns we can address these when you book your tour.



IAN MORTON



*"A great photographer,
a wonderful guy and a
terrific guide."*

*— Tim 'Slim' Selby.
United States*

Ian Morton grew up in Southern Africa. Upon leaving school he worked as a game ranger in some of the wildest and most remote areas of the sub-continent. Later he trained as a forensic photographer and was responsible for documenting war crimes and genocide throughout Central and East Africa. He arrived in Vietnam twenty years ago, and has remained there ever since.

Ian started VinaPix, a photographic business dedicated to supporting what was then, the country's fledgling tourism and hospitality business. In this capacity he has traveled to every province in Vietnam many times, visiting their most iconic locations, but also straying far off the beaten track in his endless quest for the beautiful, unique and interesting.

In 2010 Ian closed down the VinaPix website and withdrew

from commercial photographic work. As he says "I was tired of taking the photographs that everyone else wanted... I wanted to make the photographs that I wanted!" And so he set out to revisit all his favorite locations, once again traveling the length and breadth of Vietnam, taking with him his cameras and a vision of the art he wanted to create.

These days Ian's methodology is simple. He waits for the right season, searches out the best location, sets up his tripod and camera and waits, and waits, and waits. He waits until the dawn or evening light is perfect, he waits until even the clouds form part of the composition he desires, he waits until everything is just the way he wants it to be. And then he presses the shutter release.

A friend who's traveled with Ian on more than one pho-

tography trip comments that although he uses the latest digital equipment, it's more like working with someone who's shooting with an old 8x10" field camera! Sometimes things work out and Ian only spends a few hours at a specific location. More often or not, however, he will return to the same spot day after day until he makes the photograph he already has in his mind's eye.

What's he going to do with his latest work? Ian confesses that he doesn't know. Maybe an exhibition with giant one and a half meter prints, maybe a large format coffee table book, maybe something else. "I'm more than content now, just taking photographs that show the beauty of this wonderful land – I'm sure that something will evolve out of the work I'm doing one day, but for now I have another photograph to make."

YOUR OWN TOUR

In addition to our four open tours every year, we offer you the opportunity to book and customize your own tour. Why not get together with your photographer friends and come as group? These tours can be planned to run from seven to fourteen days and can follow one of our recommended schedules or be designed specifically for your group's interests. While you are welcome to arrange a tour to any of the four regions within Vietnam, we can only provide tours around the optimal time

of year for the region you wish to visit. As with all our tours, we unfortunately have to limit the number of participants to eight photographers. On the other hand, we do require a minimum of six participants on each tour.

While we can only run a few customized tours to each region every year, we do enjoy them and always try to arrange them to fulfill any given groups photographic desires. We have had a group spending a fortnight photographing waterfalls, another

documenting food production from the farm to the restaurant and one group spent a week in an Ede ethnic minority village photographing the daily life of the people. Generally, however, we recommend that you follow one of our standard schedules as these provide the widest variety of photographic opportunities and keeps down costs.

If you are interested in a customized tour, please email us and we will reply with all the information you'll need to get started.

*"Already saving for the next trip."
— Sue and Ken. United Kingdom*

