North Vietnam
PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR

From the terraced mountains of gold coloured rice to the colourful ethnic minority people and dynamic markets, North Vietnam is truly a smorgasbord of colour. It however does not end there. You will see and photograph scenic mountains extending as far as the eye can see and spectacular karst formations rising from turquoise waters. This tour truly is a feast for the lens that should not be missed.
Program

Main Tour
Day 1 : Arrive Ha Noi
Day 2 : Quan Ba
Day 3 : Dong Van
Day 4 : Meo Vac
Day 5 : Ha Giang
Day 6/7 : Sa Pa
Day 8 : Mu Cang Chai
Day 9 : Nghia Lo

Day 10 : Ha Noi
Day 11 : Depart Ha Noi

Optional Extension Tour
Day 12 : Ha Long Bay
Day 13 : Ha Noi
Day 14 : Depart Ha Noi
“I want to thank you for a wonderful experience in North Vietnam. You went out of your way to make it a memorable adventure – impromptu stops at random villages, connecting with people along the way, stopping on hairpin bends to get some spectacular views of the stunning countryside, something a run-of-the-mill guided tour would never come close to doing. Plus all that fabulous, fabulous food..... (which will take a while to work off).”

SANDRA SMITH | AUSTRALIA
Highlights

- Meet numerous colourful ethnic minority groups
- Ethnic minority markets and scenic northern highland hill tribe villages
- Experience the life of minority people through a home stay
- Magnificent terraced mountains of rice

Optional Extension Tour

- Jagged isles, hidden lagoons, and sea caves of Ha Long Bay
- Overnight stay on junk boat
“I didn’t want to be part of a group being herded from place to place and what I experienced was better than I could imagine, particularly the great photographic opportunities. Travelling in the North region of Vietnam was a fantastic experience, encountering dramatic landscapes and sweeping panoramas; enjoying the hill tribe groups, waterfalls, high passes and terraced valleys. There were many highlights on the trip but I loved the many markets we visited. I certainly felt that I received value for my money. Malcolm’s attention to detail, passion for photography and travel made my holiday adventure memorable. I am now looking forward to a trip to Cambodia in 2010.”

JANENE CLEVERLEY | AUSTRALIA
Spotlight on Asia PHOTOGRAPHIC TOURS | NORTH VIETNAM
Malcolm Fackender is an Australian award winning travel photographer who specialises in small group photographic tours. Malcolm has been involved with and successful at photography since a young teenager, winning Gold Medal in 1985 at the age of seventeen. Initially Malcolm had a strong interest in macro and bird photography, but more recently developed a strong interest in travel photography, where he has broadened his photographic interests to cover any other genres.

Through his business Spotlight on Asia, and with the assistance of local and international travel agencies, Malcolm has successfully planned, arranged and led 46 small group photographic tours to Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), China, Thailand, India, Namibia, East Africa (Kenya & Tanzania), Iceland, Italy and Cuba. Being passionate about photography, travel and just being around and inspiring fellow photographers, Malcolm intends to build his business to include many more countries in the years to come.

Having been involved with Photographic clubs in Sydney and New South Wales for over 30 years, Malcolm is always eager to share his knowledge with the members of clubs as well as any other photographers and clients. Malcolm regularly conducts educational and inspirational photographic talks at various photographic clubs and has recently incorporated workshops into his business. Malcolm actually gets much more joy out of inspiring and teaching people than receiving any competition awards. For him, there is no greater joy than seeing or hearing about the successes that past clients have with images taken on one of his tours. This is one of the main reasons clients are happy to travel again with Spotlight on Asia whenever a new destination is released. In addition to introducing new exciting destinations, Malcolm always freely gives advice on photographic equipment and technique.

Personally, Malcolm enjoys taking photographs and extending himself wherever possible. He believes that photography is a cycle of continuous improvement from a technical, hardware and creative perspective and as such looks forward to growing and extending his portfolio for many years to come.
Spotlight on Asia PHOTOGRAPHIC TOURS | NORTH VIETNAM
SPOTLIGHT ON ASIA is an Australian business specialising in travel photography and small group photographic tours to Asia. With over 30 years of photographic experience as well as extensive experience in customer service, operations and project management, Spotlight on Asia strives to provide photographic tours that are uniquely specialised yet very affordable.

Unlike many other photographic tour companies, Spotlight on Asia designs the photographic tours from the ground up with photography in mind. This however does not mean you need to be a photographer to enjoy the tour. The tours appeal to photographers and non-photographers alike. Working with carefully selected local and international tour companies, the tour programs are designed to ensure that the very best photographic opportunities are on offer, but without neglecting all the other joys of travel, such as culture and cuisine.

VIETNAM was Spotlight on Asia’s first love and will remain so for many years to come. With extensive experience from travelling numerous times to Vietnam as well as a good understanding of the culture and business, Spotlight on Asia is able to provide outstanding tours with inclusions not offered by other tour companies.

THE MEKONG RIVER is one of the greatest in the world, so it was only natural that a tour would be introduced to explore the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam, then travelling into CAMBODIA to visit Phnom Penh, the Pearl of Indochina before concluding with the extensive UNESCO World Heritage listed temples of Angkor.

MYANMAR (formerly known as BURMA) is a mystical country centred amongst South-East Asia’s more common destinations, yet still remaining relatively unknown. Myanmar is one of the least developed and least Western-influenced countries in the world, providing many attractive and unique photographic opportunities. From ancient civilisations to the friendly and happy people, Myanmar promises to be a feast for the lens and is highly regarded as one of the best destinations in the world for travel photography.

SPOTLIGHT ON ASIA has also recently led tours to India and China, both offering their own unique photographic opportunities. India is the most colourful and dynamic country in Spotlight on Asia’s travel schedule. The women wear an array of colourful sari’s whilst the men proudly show off every possible style of facial hair one could imagine, both of which are extremely photogenic. Whilst close, China may seem a world apart, however the landscapes in Yunnan and Guilin in Guangxi Province are certainly spectacular.

SPOTLIGHT ON ASIA looks forward to travelling with you.
“There were no highlights to this trip............. because every day was an outstanding highlight in its own right. Malcolm, your attention to detail and ability to seek out photo opportunities others would miss is outstanding; scheduling the itinerary to be in the right place on the right day for local events, obvious rapport with the hill tribe people and, of course engaging Pham, the local minorities guide, lead to the delivery of an excellent, value for money, product. The biggest problem we had was selecting just what are the best shots from over 8,000 between us. “Better to have travelled well than arrived” (Buddah) or “Stop and smell the roses along the way” (Mac Davis) sums up the theme of this entire trip in our view. From the impromptu stops that developed into magnificent photo opportunities to the arranged photo shoots the whole recipe for this trip produced a delightfully tasty experience.”

JOHN & SANDY O’FARRELL | AUSTRALIA
When considering your next photographic adventure, please ensure you compare Apples with Apples. Many people book standard tours only to return disappointed because they had no flexibility, were at the wrong place at the wrong time and had little opportunity to do any serious photography. It is also important to note that not every photographic tour is made equal. Ensure you choose a reputable tour, not just a standard tour that has been re-badged as a photographic tour. Your photographic tours should be designed from the ground up with photography in mind, led by an experienced photographer offering guidance and photographic instruction, and most importantly, offer exceptional value for money.

When designing the photographic tours, Spotlight on Asia conducts extensive research to identify suitable shoot locations, and then goes about planning the logistics to suit. Tour routes will make the most of the opportunities and hotels will be conveniently located so that early morning shoots are nearby. The entire program is very much about the photography, so if you are seeking a 5 star luxury rest and relaxation tour, this is not the tour to be on.

Spotlight on Asia tours are not only designed to deliver the very best photographic opportunities on offer, but also offer the opportunity to learn as you travel. Experienced photographers are more than welcome to go about their own photography as they see fit, but those requiring advice can be comforted in knowing that their photographic leader will be there with them every step of the way, inspiring and guiding them through the creative and technical aspects of photography. Being on a photographic tour with like-minded people also provides an opportunity for everyone to discuss and share their passion for photography.

Spotlight on Asia’s tours however are not only about photography. Travel is very much about people and culture, and as such, we always endeavour to introduce people to different cultures, traditional shows and local cuisine. You are guaranteed to not only return with many amazing images, but also great memories.

Finally, Spotlight on Asia knows all too well that photographers are often charged premium prices for photographic tours. By definition a photographic tour is a specialised tour, but that does not necessarily mean services are double in price. In some instances you are paying for one or more high profile photographers to lead the tour, but in most cases, you are blatantly being over charged for something that offers little more than a standard tour at half the price. It is Spotlight on Asia’s business philosophy to continually offer affordable photographic tours with inclusions that are second to none.

You can read feedback from past tours on SPOTLIGHT ON ASIA’s website.
Who travel with us?

There is no greater joy than travelling with people sharing a common interest, and once you understand the value of travelling on a dedicated photographic tour, you will most likely return for more photographic adventures. Approximately 50% of Spotlight on Asia's travellers are repeat clients, with many intending to travel on further tours well into the future.

Two of the most common questions received by Spotlight on Asia are “do I need to be a good photographer to join the tour” or “is my camera good enough?” The tours accommodate photographers of all standards, from beginners with small compact cameras, to professional photographers with Digital SLR's and a variety of lenses. As long as you enjoy taking photographs, and wish to be presented the very best photographic opportunities, you will feel at home travelling on any of the tours. The only prerequisite is that you have a basic understanding of operating your camera.

In actual fact, Spotlight on Asia tours appeal to photographers and non-photographers alike, with many enthusiast photographers bringing their non-photographic partners. If they have an appreciation for seeing a country, experiencing a culture and trying things not offered on standard tours, they will still have a great time. The only requirement of travelling is that they will need to exercise some patience. Whilst photographers enjoy their photography, non-photographers are more than welcome to venture off and explore on their own, or even better, be swept up in the photographic passion and learn the art of photography. Some non-photographic clients on past tours have thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and soon after invested in photographic equipment in preparation for the next Spotlight on Asia’s photographic tour.

The tours will appeal to people of all ages and experience. Most tours consist of travellers between 50 and 70 years of age, but have also accommodated as young as 20 and as old as 90 years of age. As long as those choosing to travel on a Spotlight on Asia tour are physically fit, they are more than welcome to join.

The important thing to remember is that your photographic expertise should never be the deciding factor in joining a Spotlight on Asia tour. We are happy to accommodate any standard of photographer, and look forward to not only presenting the very best photographic opportunities but also assisting you in taking amazing images.
Our team

Spotlight on Asia may design the tour programs, co-ordinate all arrangements and personally lead the tours, but it could not be done without the valuable assistance of partners and a great team.

Partners have been carefully selected to ensure they share the same values and are willing to go to all lengths to ensure we work towards a common goal. Our tour guides have extensive local experience, providing us opportunities not experienced on other tours. Our drivers have been carefully selected to ensure they have the patience and understanding when it comes to transporting photographers, and more importantly, they drive in a safe manner.

THE SPOTLIGHT ON ASIA TEAM is committed to delivering an amazing travel experience with the very best photographic opportunities.
Details

DATE
Main tour: 6 - 16 September 2018 (11 days)
Optional extension: 17 - 19 September 2018 (3 days)

PRICE(*)
US $4395 per person twin share for land only content. Optional extension tour price is US $1395 per person twin share.

We will make every effort to match up single travellers who wish to travel at twin share rates. For anyone requiring a single room, there will be an additional charge of US $399 on the main tour and US $179 on the optional extension tour.

International airfare departing Sydney estimated at AUD $1300(**) per person.

GROUP SIZE
Group size will be a minimum of 3 people and maximum of 8 people.

HOTELS
The accommodation offered on the tour will be 2-3 star standard and is based on twin share. All hotels will be clean with private bathrooms, hot water, air-conditioning or fans, laundry service and other facilities. Coffee and tea making facilities are generally not available and many hotels will have free internet service. A preference is always given to hotels near prime photographic locations wherever possible. In some cases, a homestay may be included in the program, in which you can expect very basic facilities.

TRANSPORT
Depending on the final group size, you will be comfortably transported in either a 16 seat van or a 29 seat mini-bus.

MEALS
During your travels, you will have the opportunity to try a variety of local cuisine. Meals will often provide a selection of dishes to choose from, and may on occasion be al-a-carte. If you have special dietary requirements, don’t be too concerned as we are still able to accommodate you.

INCLUDING
The complete tour as per itinerary, clean twin share accommodation (3 star or best available in isolated areas), arrival/departure transfers, in country ground transport by private air-conditioned vehicle with driver, boat cruise as indicated in itinerary, professional Australian photographic tour leader, local Vietnamese tour guide/s, meals as specified in itinerary (B/L/D), drinking water, plus taxes and admission fees.

NOT-INCLUDING
International airfare, visa, personal travel insurance, meals not indicated in program, additional beverages such as soft drinks and alcohol, activities during free time, items of personal nature, tips and gratuities, excess baggage fee.

NOTE
(*) Price is based on a twin share basic unless you choose to pay a single supplement.
(**) Subject to change prior to ticket issuance (due to weekly variations in Taxes and Surcharges)
If you are interested in joining us on a Spotlight on Asia Tour or require additional information please contact:

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