

Halong Bay on the Red Dragon Junk



Highlights

Take a two-day cruise onboard the Red Dragon Junk in the World Heritage site of Halong Bay. Stay in a deluxe cabin, enjoy delicious Vietnamese food and have time to explore beaches, lagoons and caves. You will be looked after by a friendly, knowledgeable English-speaking guide, and transfers from Hanoi are included.

If you're looking for a scene-stealer of a setting, you'd be hard pushed to find a better one than Halong Bay. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994, this implausibly beautiful place is home to 3000-or-so limestone islands that pierce the waters of the Gulf of Tonkin. Tiny crescent-shaped sandy beaches grace the shores, caves pock-mark the rocks, and on slopes high above, little coves crown the slate-coloured stone. From February to April the whole place becomes shrouded in a foggy mist giving the bay an even more magical feel.

As you sail around Halong Bay and up to Bai Tu Long Bay you'll be granted views so breathtaking a Lonely Planet writer would find them hard to sum up. There's no denying Mother Nature was feeling more than generous when she graced this place with such beauty. You can set out alone and spend time exploring in kayaks, laze on Ba Cua beach, and discover the streets of Vong Vieng fishing village. Or just sit back on your boat and enjoy the view.

Is it for me?

The team who sort out this cruise make sure they do their bit for the planet, so not only will you enjoy a great mini-cruise with plenty of time to relax, you'll also be supporting sustainable tourism and local communities. There's not really anything about this mini-cruise that could possibly put you off – the only minor drag is the three-and-a-half-hour drive from your hotel to the boat in Halong City...but the views are well worth it once you get there. Overall this cruise is a real stress-buster. You'll have plenty of time to yourself but because it's only an overnight stay you won't have time to get lonely if you're travelling alone.

Accommodation

You'll be staying onboard a traditional Vietnamese boat – known as 'a junk'. The Red Dragon Junk is a brand-new ship and is small enough that you're able to sail closer to Halong Bay's natural wonders and into small lagoons. Your cabin is of a deluxe standard so you'll be spending the night in luxury.

As for food, meals are prepared using fresh, locally-sourced ingredients so that local communities benefit. Expect lunches of fresh seafood and typically Vietnamese menus.

Itinerary

Day 1: Hanoi to Halong

You'll be picked up from your hotel at 8am and taken by bus to Halong city. After three and a half hours you'll arrive at the port. At 12 noon, you'll be welcomed onboard at Hon Gai wharf. Enjoy welcome drinks and check in to your deluxe cabin. Lunch of fresh local seafood will be served while cruising into Halong bay. After two hours

Prices from

116 GBP (2 days) per person

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you'll arrive in Vong Vieng where you'll explore the fishing village and the hidden lagoons in Bai Tu Long bay by kayaks and small rowing boats. Later on you'll head back to the boat to enjoy dinner and a stay onboard. You'll moor near Vong Vieng village or Trinh Nu Cave.

Day 2: Bai Tu Long Bay

Start the day early and watch the sun rise, or have a little lie-in and enjoy breakfast from 7.30am to 10.30am. After breakfast you can spend time on Ba Cua beach, swim, sunbathe and relax. You'll also visit a cave on the way back to Halong city. After this, you'll be back onboard the boat and by 12 noon you'll be in ashore and making your way back to Hanoi. Your tour finishes at your hotel around 4pm.

Details

Getting there

To reach Hanoi, you'll probably need to change in Bangkok or Hong Kong as there are few direct flights here. Flights with Vietnam Airlines and Pacific Airlines are likely to be your best bet.

Price includes

Price quoted is per person in a shared cabin. Single supplement of \$103 applies.

Transfer from hotel to boat, entrance fees, kayak, cabin onboard boat, breakfast, lunch, services of a tour guide.

Comfort level

Refined (boutique or luxury accommodation and food)

Experience required

Not relevant

Travellers should bring

Passport, change of clothes, sun-glasses & hat, toiletries, sun-block, insect repellent, flashlights, personal first aid kit & medicines, small VND notes for buying drinks. If you feel the need then cable lock for your bags is recommended.

Reviews (1)

Reviews of this experience

“ The Indochina boat Red Dragon III, we stayed on in Halong bay was really lovely, food was delicious and plentiful, and the dinner party in the cave a real treat. ”

Karen reviewing Halong Bay on the Red Dragon Junk