Starting in Saigon on February 6, 2020 - 13 nights/13 days

This 2020 Return to Vietnam tour is designed for those who served in country and their families. Ladies rated the hotels excellent and the shopping great. There is time in Saigon for shopping at the markets. Included is an exciting boat trip in the Delta from My Tho with stops at a Coconut Plantation Workshop and lunch at a local restaurant. We start in Saigon on 6 February but most arrive on the 5th.

On Sunday afternoon we fly to Pleiku then drive to Kontum. We will spend four days visiting the Central Highlands with stops at what is left of the US military bases from Camp Enari (see group photo) south of Pleiku to Ben Het at the tri-boarder area in our 40 passenger, air conditioned bus. Our overnight in Kontum will include visits to the famous Kontum Wooden Church, the Orphanage, and a Bahnar village for a folk musical performance and “can” wine.

Leaving Pleiku, we will drive to Quy Nhon on Hwy 19 via the Mang Yang and An Khe Passes stopping in An Khe to view Camp Radcliff and have lunch. We will stay at the Qui Nhon Saigon Beach Resort Hotel for two nights. We will tour old military sites including LZ English. Nha Trang is next for two nights. For all those who spent time at this sea side city during the war, this is a special treat. The food is wonderful and deals on real pearls, all colors at the local market, are my wife’s favorite. Remember to bargain. Never pay the opening price. And don’t forget some beach time.

I’ve been leading the Return to Vietnam Tours since 2006 and this will be the third time I’ve said this is my last tour but I’m doing it again.

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Day 0: Feb 05, 2020 -- Arrive Saigon airport. Those arriving with most of the group will get a ride to the hotel. Those on different flights will take taxis on their own to the hotel. A business card from the hotel will be mailed to each client that can be shown to taxi drivers. Overnight at Paragon Saigon Hotel, Deluxe Rooms.

Day 1: Feb 06 (B, D) -- Today is free day on your own. Welcome cocktails at hotel and welcome dinner at local restaurant. O/n at the same hotel.

Day 2: Feb 07 (B) -- Saigon city tour: Morning explore Chinatown including Thien Hau pagoda, Old quarter, Chinese herbs street, Binh Tay market, and Giac Lam pagoda. Afternoon visit President Palace, Emperor of Jade pagoda, Ben Thanh market, Notre Dame church, and the old French Post Office. O/n at the same hotel.

Day 3: Feb 08 (B, L) -- Mekong Delta tours with full day trip Ben Tre – Saigon: 8:00 am departure from hotel. Traveling 1½ hours south of Saigon, you will cross the Mekong River to begin your discovery of the Deep South. Visit Vinh Trang Buddhist temple. Meet up with a local family at their home in My Tho to see how rice noodles are made. Continue to Ben Tre, arriving at the Hung Vuang Pier. Take a boat on the Ben Tre river, one of the tributaries of Mekong River. See lively activities along the river. Stop at an old brickworks to see how to make bricks in the traditional way by extruding and baking. Turn onto smaller and smaller streams to arrive at a local village. Take a walk to family workshop making products from coconuts and enjoying some fruits and tea. Then take a motor cart (xe loi) under tree shades, pass by green rice fields and vegetable gardens to lunch. Lunch at local house. In the afternoon, take pol boats along a water coconut palm-lined creek back to our tour boat and cruise back to Hung Vuang Pier. Pick up and transfer back to Saigon & arriving around 5:00 pm. O/n at the same hotel.

Day 4: Feb 09 (B) -- Saigon - Pleiku - Kontum
After breakfast, transfer to airport for your flight from Saigon to Pleiku on VN1426 @10:55 – 12:05. On arrival, board our 40 passenger bus and meet our Montagnard guide. On the drive to Kontum, we visit a Jarai village in Plei Phun. There you can have a stroll around the village to learn about their daily activities, especially the wooden statues surrounding the graveyard and the village artesian spring. Overnight at Indochine Hotel, Deluxe Rooms.

Day 5: Feb 10 (B) -- In the morning visit some of the famous sites and battlefields of the Vietnam War including Dakto 2 with its abandoned air strip, Tan Canh, and Ben Het. Drive back to Kontum for lunch and shop for donations for the orphanages. Visit the well-known Kontum wooden church with its adjoining orphanage. Explore the neighborhood of Daktu village, of the Bahnar people. Drive to Pleiku and arrive in the afternoon. Overnight at Hoang Anh Gia Lai hotel, Deluxe rooms.

Day 6: Feb 11 (B, L, D) -- After breakfast, drive southward on National Route 14 to visit Camp Enari, the former headquarter of the 4th Infantry Division. Pass former Camp Holloway by bus on National Route 19, Engineer Hill and stop off at the Bien Ho crater lake for sightseeing. Back to Pleiku for a free afternoon to relax & explore on your own. O/n at the same hotel.
Day 7: Feb 12 (B, L, D) -- Visit the orphanage in Pleiku and explore the downtown marketplace. After lunch, return to the hotel for the afternoon off. Those interested may take taxis on their own to see the former Holloway Airstrip. 5:00 pm pick-up for the folk musical performance with a girls’ dancing troupe and sample “ruou can,” homemade rice wine. O/n at the same hotel.

Day 8: Feb 13 (B) -- Pleiku to Quy Nhon: After breakfast, depart Pleiku and drive to Quy Nhon via Highway 9. Stop at Mang Yang Pass summit and at the Memorial site of the Dak Po ambush, the last battle of the French War in 1954. Drive by the gate of former base Camp Radcliff (1st Cavalry Division) and see Hong Kong Mountain. Have lunch at a local restaurant in An Khe. Proceed to Quy Nhon via the An Khe Pass. Check in to hotel and free time to relax or explore your former base. Overnight at Saigon – Quy Nhon Hotel, Deluxe room.

Day 9: Feb 14 (B) -- Quy Nhon: After breakfast, make a short visit to a Cham temple then proceed to Bong Son to visit what is left of LZ English. Lunch at a local restaurant then return to Quy Nhon. We will drive by the area of the old runway and stop at the Coop Mart Supermarket. Then free time to relax on the beach. O/n at the same hotel.

Day 10: Feb 15 (B) -- Quy Nhon – Nha Trang: After breakfast, drive to Nha Trang (5 hours) with stop at the Leper Hospital near the city. After lunch at a local restaurant on the beach, we arrive in Nha Trang early afternoon and check in to the Sheraton Nha Trang, then relax on the beach. Dinner on the beach front at the nearby Sailing Club. Overnight at Sheraton Nha Trang, Deluxe Ocean View Rooms.

Day 11: Feb 16 (B, D) -- Nha Trang Tours: visit Ponagar Cham tower, Long Son Pagoda & Hon Chong promontory then free to relax on the beach. This evening, have our farewell dinner at Nha Trang View Restaurant at the north end of the beach. O/n at the same hotel.

Day 12: Feb 17 (B) -- Nha Trang – Saigon. Morning free to relax on the beach until afternoon transfer to airport for your flight back to Saigon on VN1347 @17:15 – 18:15. On arrival, pick up and transfer to hotel. Then free to relax and/or shop on your own. Overnight at Paragon Saigon Hotel, Deluxe Rooms.

Day 13: Feb 18, 2020 (B) -- End of services. Today is free to relax on your own until transfer to airport for your flight back home. Taxis are available at the hotel 24/7.

16 to 25 persons based on twin share room: $2,660
Single supplement surcharge: $700

Includes:
- Transportation with private 40 passenger air conditioned bus with driver.
- Meals provided as part of the package for group (B -- breakfast, L -- lunch & D -- dinner)
- Boat trips in the Mekong Delta
- English speaking guides
- Entrance fees
- Hotel accommodations with breakfast included
- Air tickets: Saigon – Pleiku and Nha Trang – Saigon, economy class
- Permits to visit indigenous minority villages
- Traditional music with gong performances in Pleiku

Excludes:
- Airfare to and from Saigon
- Vietnam visa & travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned & beverages
- Personal expenses
- Tips for guides & drivers ($200 per person minimum)

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