

**Full Itinerary & Trip Details**

# Son Doong Cave Expedition 5 days



- ✓ Discovering Son Doong cave, the world's largest cave on an expedition
- ✓ Experiencing the highest cave adventure level with running, trekking, caving or rock climbing
- ✓ Sightseeing enormous stalagmites and statuesque stalactites, hanging from the ceiling and rising from the ground like an alien species

## Trip Overview

Our Son Doong Cave Expedition will take you deep into the heart of Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park in Quang Binh Province, Vietnam, on one of the most thrilling adventure tours in the world. A jungle within a cave, that's almost so unreal that you have to see it to believe it. Misty clouds enveloping the whole scene, evidence of the cave's own weather system.

## What you'll get

**DURATION**

**PRICE STARTING FROM**

US\$3,300



**STARTS IN / ENDS IN**

Phong Nha / Phong Nha

**SUITABLE**

Friends, Active Traveller, People have good health, over 18 years old

**Transportation**

Shuttle bus

**PRODUCT CODE**

T88OXA07

**MEALS**

4 Breakfast, 4 Lunches, 5 Dinners

**ACCOMMODATION**

Camping Tent, Hotel

**TYPE**

Land tour

## Price Includes

- 1 night at hotel in Dong Hoi on day 1
- Meals as indicated in itinerary (B= Breakfast, L= Lunch, D= Dinner)
- Camping gear: tent, sleeping mat and sleeping bag
- Caving & safety gear: caving helmet, caving headlight, harness and gloves
- 1.5 L bottled water at the top of the trailhead/trekking point





- Base Camp water filter and purifier (application by guide and porters)
- Basic camping facilities with eco-friendly compost toilet using western toilet seat
- First Aid Kit, Medical Rescue Equipment & Satellite Phone (application by technical advisor and tour guides only)
- 1 Technical Advisor (member of the British Cave Research Association)
- 1 professional English-speaking tour guide, 5 safety assistants and 2 chefs
- Porter team to carry all gear and prepare all meals

## Price Excludes

- 2 – 3 long quick dry, full length pants and 4 – 5 (easy to dry) shirts (at least one long-sleeved shirt) to wear during the trek; thick athletic leggings/running tights/yoga pants are acceptable if they are full-length and not see-through. Jeans are not acceptable. You may feel more comfortable packing a set of clothes for each day, but most people re-wear trekking clothes for multiple days.
- 1 – 2 pair of shorts and t-shirt to wear at campsite (plus your swimsuit for Hang En); warmer camp clothes suggested for colder months
- 1 Fleece and 1 lightweight windproof/jacket (February – April only)
- Trekking boots/shoes – difficult terrain, good footwear necessary. Recommended: Salomon XA Enduro, Salomon Speed Cross 4 (Keen/Merrell has good quality trekking boots/shoes as well). Gore-Tex/waterproof boots are NOT recommended as they do not drain well. If you are comfortable with your own shoes and used to trek with low-gore tex shoes, it will be fine. Also consider bringing a backup pair of shoes. Refer to Son Doong FAQ: Packing section for more information
- Underwear
- 1 pair of flip flop (sandals) for campsite
- 1 medium size towel
- 4 – 5 pairs of calf-length close weave socks (not ankle socks or waterproof socks – no neoprene; SmartWool is a good brand; if you go with cotton, make sure it's composed of 50% or less cotton)
- Anti-fungal foot powder/talcum powder (your feet are often wet)
- Dry shampoo & wet wipes (very limited bathing inside the cave!)
- Medium sized rucksack/backpack for daily belongings, most people find 25 L adequate; backpack must fit the helmet we will provide for you and cannot be strapped to the outside; you will also be responsible for carrying your own tripod in your backpack. (Camel pack will not be considered as a day-pack)
- Water bottle at least 1.5 L



- Personal items – toiletries, medication, camera, tripod, spare batteries (toiletries should also include feminine hygiene products for ladies, even if it's "just in case")
- Sunscreen and hat
- Mosquito repellent
- Small head-torch for use around camp
- Rehydration tablets
- 'Compeed'/blister dressings
- Medication – bring any essential medication and anything you take regularly (e.g anti-inflammatories). We supply drugs for emergency/unexpected conditions only.
- AA/AAA batteries if needed (low quality only available locally)
- The following items are not required but highly recommended:
- Dry bag in the event of rain (for camera, clothing, and personal items within your daypack); alternatively, a backpack cover would be a good idea especially for the rainier months of February – April
- Gloves, as ours are one-size-fits-all (if you bring your own, please choose gloves with fingertips)
- Cotton or silk sleeping bag liner
- Swimwear (for Hang En)
- If you are serious about photography, please bring your tripod along with your camera (this must be able to fit in your daypack)

## Cancellation by Customer

For almost of our tours, once tour is confirmed and fully paid but for one reason they cancel the tour, the following charges will apply in the event of cancellation prior to tour commencement:

- More than 30 days before arrival: No charge
- 15-30 days before arrival: 10% of total tour price.
- 7-15 days before arrival: 50% of total tour price.
- 4-7 days before arrival: 75% of total tour price.
- Within 3 days before arrival: 100% tour price.

Notes:

- There will be no refund given for any unused or missed ground arrangements, sightseeing, meals or hotel accommodations.

- For no show cases, there will be no refund.
- All cancellations must be in person or in writing and received by us

## Cancellation by Weather

In case of an unexpected situation/ bad weather causes an effect on your trip after commencement, we serve the right to change the itinerary of your booked tour for the safety of all clients in the group. If there are more than one solution, we will ask for your permission and agreement to do the next step. In such kind of cancellation, the refund of any payment on the un-used portion of transportation service, hotel service, car rental or tours will be given.

## Itineraries

### Day 1: Dong Hoi ? Safety Briefing ? Phong Nha

Morning: Arrive in Dong Hoi, transfer (by your account) to hotel in Dong Hoi. Free time and checkin from 2:00pm

Afternoon (after 02:00pm) you will be met by our driver and transferred to Phong Nha for safety briefing meeting. Upon arrival, hospitality services will be happy to help you plan your extra time there. You'll then have the rest of the day to rest, relax and wander around the village of Phong Nha. You will be required to purchase your own breakfast and lunch on this day.

Around 5:30-6:00pm you will congregate in the hotel restaurant before transfer to our Headquarters, where you'll meet your cave expert and guide team for your safety briefing and equipment check. The briefing is mandatory. Anyone who chooses not to join the briefing may be eliminated from the tour without refund.

You are suggested to have all belongings that you will be taking on the trek



prepared before the safety briefing. The operation team will collect everyone's belongings right after the briefing in individual large plastic bags and send them to our porters to prepare for the following day.

You will receive your belongings each evening once you get to your campsite. Therefore, anything you want to take with you during the day you should keep in a separate backpack (e.g. cameras, tripods etc.). Before dinner, you will be given your helmet for the trip; the helmet will then be your responsibility for the duration of the tour. Please note that the Release Form needs to be signed at the safety briefing. After that, enjoy dinner with your team at around 7:30 pm at our headquarters, after which you will be transferred back to your hotel for a good night's sleep.

Meals: D

Accommodation: Hotel

## Day 2: Phong Nha ? Ban Doong Village ? Hang En Cave

Early morning transfer to the headquarters. Enjoy breakfast at 8:00 am with your guide before departing at 9:00 am for the first leg of the expedition. You'll leave extra luggage and any valuables at the the headquarters before heading to pick up the porter team and setting off for adventure.

After a 45 minute drive along Road 20 of the Ho Chi Minh Highway you'll reach the trailhead, where you'll start trekking for approximately 1 hour downhill through the forest, which is quite steep at times.

Walk for half an hour along a small stream to the minority village of Ban Doong, which is a real highlight for many on this expedition. Learn more about this unique ethnic group of people and enjoy lunch beside a small river.

After this point, you will be in the sun all afternoon with about 2 hours along a river, with very little shade. You'll cross the river many times and so please expect to have wet feet for the whole day. In the summer, the water is only usually knee deep, but Gore-Tex boots will fill and hold the water so therefore they are not recommended.

You'll then reach the entrance to Hang En Cave, home to thousands of swifts. Here you'll be given your headlight and you will trek/boulder approximately 20-30 minutes





to your campsite inside the cave.

The group should arrive at camp by 3:00 pm where you can enjoy swimming and washing within the underground river. Dinner will be served at the spectacular campsite with numerous photographic opportunities.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Tent

### **Day 3: Hang En Cave - Son Doong Entrance - Hand of Dog - SD Camp 1 - Fossil Passage**

You'll again begin your day with a delicious breakfast at around 8:00 am. You'll be in for a very tough day today so it's best to enjoy a big breakfast, as you'll need your energy!

Start your trek at 9:00 am through Hang En Cave for about 30 minutes to reach the magnificent exit, made famous by many photographers over the past few years. You'll scramble down to the river valley and then it's an hour walk through the river, so your boots are going to be wet for most of the day; it is unavoidable, yet part of the fun.

You'll then start climbing a steep hill for about 45 minutes with some rocky sections to start. At the top of the hill you'll enjoy lunch, a safety briefing and fit your safety harness and prepare for your big journey underground. A steep descent with a couple of short rope climbs brings you at last to Son Doong entrance.

With your safety harnesses, you'll then start the 80 m descent into the cave by making a number of short climbs, using ropes and safety lines with your guides' assistance. There is no rappelling or abseiling at any point during the expedition. You'll then enjoy a few more climbs and bouldering to reach the first and second river crossings inside the cave, which are no more than knee-to-thigh deep depending on the water levels. You should have a wash here, as it will be the last washing place for the day.

On your way to the first campsite in the first large passage of the cave, you'll have to be extra careful as there are a number of big drops and scrambling over boulders







along a rocky path before reaching one of the most spectacular views: Hand of Dog and daylight streaming through the cave, thanks to the first doline! You will then scramble down to the first campsite of Son Doong around 3 – 4 pm. After a tea and coffee break we will head down to view the ancient fossils. Here there is a chance for a short and cool swim, but no washing. You're in for another big meal with your team before turning in for the night.

Please note that there are no washing facilities at camp on this day.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Tent

## **Day 4: SD Camp 1 ? Watch out for Dinosaurs - Great Wall of Vietnam ? SD Camp**

Your day begins with a hearty breakfast with your team before a 9:00 am departure towards your second campsite in Son Doong Cave.

You'll start with some rocky climbs, which are quite steep in some places, as you reach the first jungle within the cave at Watch Out for Dinosaurs. It will take about 1.5 hrs to travel within the cave from Camp 1 to Watch Out for Dinosaurs. After a short break you'll be trotting down the rocky path to reach the enormous Green Gours, one of the most magnificent and famous photography spots on the tour!

A light lunch is provided with an incredible backdrop of the first doline. If you are lucky you may even catch some sunbeams, which make for truly spectacular photos! It is then an easy walk through the cave past gigantic formations and plenty of cave pearls towards the light of the second doline and main jungle within the cave. Follow the path past the beautiful foliage reaching towards the light, to reach the underground jungle, unlike anything you could experience on the planet! Cross the jungle for around 45 minutes to reach the steep and sometimes slippery path down to your second campsite within Son Doong Cave. You will reach camp around 2 – 3 pm.

After a short rest at your campsite, you are back on your feet and heading deeper within the cave towards the Great Wall of Vietnam. You'll pass through a very large





dry passage with huge stalagmites and great views back to the second doline. Many new creepy crawlies have been discovered within this passage including white spiders, fish, woodlouse and shrimp species, so be sure to keep your eyes open. You will reach at this point either a very large beautiful underground lake (where you'll then paddle to reach the Great Wall of Vietnam) or you will find a fantastically adventurous muddy pit (at which you will need to trudge your way through for a few hundred meters to reach the wall). It is entirely optional if you wish to go further and reach the actual wall, as you will get very dirty in the mud and there are no bathing facilities on this day at camp (pack plenty of wet wipes if you decide on the plunge!). You'll be back at camp again around 6 pm to enjoy a sensational dinner with your team and delight yourself with an evening of games and entertainment, or simply relax and soak up the views at what is quite possibly the very best campsite in the world.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Tent

## **Day 5: SD Camp 2 - Wall of Vietnam - Son Doong Exit - Chay Lap Farmstay**

After refueling with another hot breakfast you'll pack up camp and start heading towards the Wall of Vietnam. Scaling this wall will use a combination of ladders and ropes, but you will always have a safety line and people to look after you. After this strenuous ascent, you will see the light from the exit. Pass more flowstones and cave pearls, and see the calcited animal skeleton. Enjoy a picnic lunch before emerging into the jungle again.

A short but fairly rocky path will lead you down to the bottom of the hill, and a short hike to the road. Cold drinks await you at the top of the hill before a 45 minute drive back to Chay Lap Farmstay where cool towels and a refreshing swimming pool are waiting for you. You will have time to relax after your long trek before enjoying a group farewell dinner with your fellow expedition team members.

Please advise our sales team in advance of your departure time for the following day so that they so they can arrange the logistics of your transfer back to the airport

or train station. If you would like to extend your holiday in Phong Nha, let our team know so that we can assist you in booking extra nights at the hotel.

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Chay Lap Farmstay

## 5 Reviews



**Awe-Inspiring experience**

20 Feb 2019



**Wonderful cave**

25 Oct 2018



**You will love it**

13 Oct 2018



**Truly amazing place**

09 Sep 2018



**Son Doong Cave Expedition 4D3N**

04 Sep 2017

## 24/7 Customer Support

**Hotline:+84 868790788**

<http://redgeckotravel.com/page/contact-us.html>

Red Gecko Travel



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