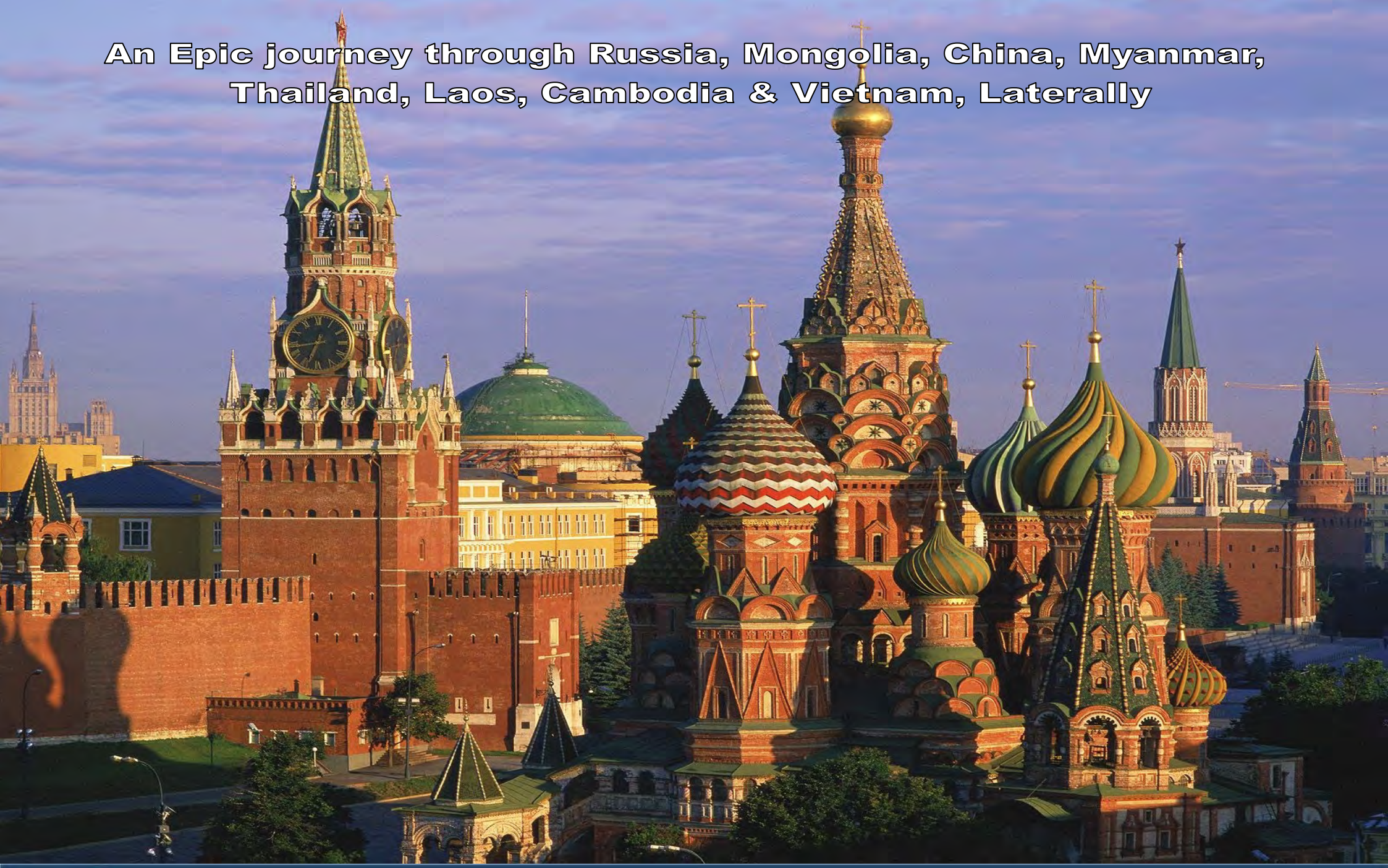
An Epic journey through Russia, Mongolia, China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia & Vietnam, Laterally



laterallife

Because I've always wanted to...

ARCTIC OCEAN
Arctic Circle (66°33')
RUSSIA
FRANZ JOSEF LAND
SEVERNAYA ZEMLYA
NOVAYA ZEMLYA
NEW SIBERIAN ISLANDS
Barents Sea
Kara Sea
Laptev Sea
East Siberian Sea
Wrangel Island
Chukchi Sea
Bering Sea
Sea of Okhotsk
Sea of Japan
Yellow Sea
East China Sea
South China Sea
Philippine Sea
Celebes Sea
Banda Sea
Arafura Sea
Timor Sea
Java Sea
Arabian Sea
Bay of Bengal
Andaman Sea
Laccadive Sea
Gulf of Aden
Gulf of Thailand
Gulf of Tonkin
Luzon Strait
Black Sea
Caspian Sea
Sea of Azov
Aral Sea
Lake Baikal
Lake Balkhash
Lake Victoria
Lake Tanganyika
Lake Nyasa
Persian Gulf
Red Sea
Gulf of Carpentaria
Murmansk
Arkhangel'sk
Noril'sk
Tiksi
Cherskiy
Anadyr'
Yakutsk
Magadan
Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy
Khabarovsk
Sakhalin
KURIL ISLANDS
Occupied by the SOVIET U administered by RUSSIA
St. Petersburg
Yaroslavl'
Nizhniy Novgorod
Perm'
Moscow
Kazan'
Ufa
Yekaterinburg
Chelyabinsk
Omsk
Novosibirsk
Krasnoyarsk
Irkutsk
Barnaul
Samara
Voronezh
Saratov
Volgograd
Rostov
Donets'k
Kharkiv
Kiev
UKRAINE
Minsk
BELARUS
MOLDOVA
Chisinau
Odesa
Atyraū (Atyrau)
KAZAKHSTAN
Astana
Qaraghandy (Karaganda)
Almaty
Bishkek
KYRGYZSTAN
Tashkent
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
Ashgabat
Dushanbe
TAJIKISTAN
Kashi
Ürümqi
Ulaanbaatar
MONGOLIA
Harbin
Changchun
Shenyang
Vladivostok
Sapporo
Baotou
Beijing
Tianjin
Taiyuan
Jinan
Qingdao
Lanzhou
Zhengzhou
Xi'an
CHINA
NORTH KOREA
Pyongyang
Seoul
SOUTH KOREA
Busan
JAPAN
Tokyo
Yokohama
Nagoya
Osaka
Fukuoka
Nanjing
Shanghai
Wuhan
Hangzhou
Chengdu
Chongqing
Changsha
Nanchang
Guiyang
Kunming
Taipei
Taiwan
Okinawa
RYUKYU ISLANDS (JAPAN)
NAMPŌ-SHOTŌ (JAPAN)
Guangzhou
Hong Kong S.A.R.
Macau S.A.R.
Nanning
Hanoi
LAOS
Vientiane
Chiang Mai
Rangoon
Mandalay
Pyinmana
BURMA
THAILAND
Bangkok
VIETNAM
CAMBODIA
Phnom Penh
Ho Chi Minh City
Hue
PARACEL ISLANDS
Hainan Dao
SPRATLY ISLANDS
ANDAMAN ISLANDS (INDIA)
NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
Manila
PHILIPPINES
Cebu
Davao
Koror
PALAU
Northern Mariana Islands (U.S.)
Saipan
Guam (U.S.)
Hagåtña
FEDERATED ST
Bandar Seri Begawan
BRUNEI
Kuala Lumpur
MALAYSIA
Singapore
SINGAPORE
Medan
Pontianak
Palembang
Makassar
Jakarta
Semarang
Surabaya
Bandung
INDONESIA
Dili
EAST TIMOR
PAPUA NEW GUIN
Port Moresby
Darwin
Christmas Island (AUSTL.)
Cocos (Keeling) Islands (AUSTL.)
Ashmore and Cartier Islands (AUSTL.)
NEPAL
Kathmandu
BHUTAN
Thimphu
Lhasa
BANGLADESH
Dhaka
Kolkata (Calcutta)
PAKISTAN
Islamabad
Lahore
Quetta
Karāchi
New Delhi
Jaipur
Lucknow
Kānpur
Ahmadābād
Nāgpur
Mumbai (Bombay)
Pune
Hyderābād
Bangalore
Chennai (Madras)
INDIA
Colombo
SRI LANKA
Male
MALDIVES
LAKSHADWEEP (INDIA)
British Indian Ocean Territory (U.K.)
Diego Garcia
SEYCHELLES
Moroni
COMOROS
Mayotte (administered by FRANCE, claimed by COMOROS)
Glorioso Islands (FRANCE)
Tromelin Island
Victoria
Mahé
Afghanistan
Kabul
Kandahār
Islamabad
Lahore
Quetta
1972 Line of Control
Indian claim
Line of Actual Control
IRAN
Tehran
Mashhad
Eşfahān
Tabrīz
Shirāz
Al Basrah
Baghdad
IRAQ
Kirkuk
Mosul
SYRIA
Aleppo
Damascus
Beirut
LEB.
CYPRUS
Nicosia
Crete (GR.)
TURKEY
Ankara
İstanbul
İzmir
Bursa
Konya
Adana
Yerevan
ARMENIA
AZERBAIJAN
Baku
GEORGIA
Tbilisi
Alexandria
Cairo
Al Iţrah
Tel Aviv-Yafo
ISRAEL
Jerusalem
Amman
JORDAN
EGYPT
Aswān
SAUDI ARABIA
Riyadh
KUWAIT
Kuwait
BAHRAIN
Manama
QATAR
Doha
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Abu Dhabi
OMAN
Muscat
Jiddah
Mecca
Port Sudan
Omdurman
Khartoum
SUDAN
ERITREA
Asmara
YEMEN
Sanaa
Aden
Socotra (YEMEN)
DJIBOUTI
Djibouti
Berbera
Addis Ababa
ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA
Mogadishu
Juba
Kisangani
UGANDA
Kampala
KENYA
Nairobi
Mombasa
RWANDA
Kigali
BURUNDI
Bujumbura
Dodoma
TANZANIA
Dar es Salaam
Lubumbashi
ZAMBIA
Lilongwe
MALAWI

In a Nutshell...

Day 1 - Arrival in Moscow. Maxima Panorama Hotel.
Day 2-3 - Exploring Moscow. Maxima Panorama Hotel.
Day 4 - Train to Ekaterinburg. Overnight on train.
Day 5 - Evening arrival by train in Ekaterinburg. Chekhov Hotel.
Day 6 - Explore Ekaterinburg. Chekhov Hotel.
Day 7 - Wilderness Adventure (weather permitting). Overnight on train.
Day 8-9 - Train to Irkutsk. Overnights on train.
Day 10 - Arrival in Irkutsk. U Ozera Hotel in Listvyanka.
Day 11 - Siberian Trek. U Ozera Hotel.
Day 12 - At leisure. U Ozera Hotel.
Day 13 - Evening train to Mongolia. Overnight on train.
Day 14 - Continue train journey to Ulaanbaatar. Overnight on train.
Day 15 - Early arrival in Ulaanbaatar. Elstei Ger Lodge.
Day 16 - At leisure. Elstei Ger Lodge.
Day 17 - At leisure in Ulaanbaatar. Bayangol Hotel.
Day 18 - Board overnight train to China. Overnight on train.
Day 19 - Afternoon arrival in Beijing. Hotel Cote Cour.
Day 20 - Beijing and the Great Wall. Hotel Cote Cour.
Day 21 - Tiananmen Square and city landmarks. Hotel Cote Cour.
Day 22 - Summer Palace in Beijing. Hotel Cote Cour.
Day 23 - Overnight train journey to Xian.
Day 24 - Visit Terracotta Warriors. Mercure Hotel.
Day 25 - Fly to Taiyuan and transfer to Pingyao. The Financial Club Hotel.
Day 26 - Explore Pingyao. The Financial Club Hotel.
Day 27 - Fly from Taiyuan to Shanghai. URBN Hotel.
Day 28-29 - Shanghai at leisure for Halloween. URBN Hotel.
Day 30 - Fly to Lijiang. Zen Garden Mountain Inn.
Day 31-33 - Explore Lijiang and surroundings. Zen Garden Mountain Inn.
Day 34 - Lijiang to Tiger Leaping Gorge Hike. Tea & Horse Guesthouse.
Day 35 - Halfway House to Shangri-La. Songtsam Retreat Hotel.
Day 36 - Exploring Shangri-La. Songtsam Retreat Hotel.
Day 37 - Fly to Kunming. Grand Park Hotel.
Day 38 - Fly from Kunming to Mandalay. Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel.
Day 39 - Amarapura and Mandalay sightseeing. Mandalay Hill Resort.
Day 40 - Maymyo visit. Kandawgyi Hill Resort.
Day 41 - Fly from Mandalay to Bagan. Amazing Bagan Hotel.
Day 42-43 - Exploring Bagan. Amazing Bagan Hotel.
Day 44 - Travel from Bagan to Popa and Kalaw. Hilltop Villa Resort.
Day 45 - Trek from Kalaw to Monastery. Overnight in Monastery.
Day 46 - Trek to Inle Lake. Inle Resort.
Day 47 - Indain and Mine Tauk. Inle Resort.
Day 48 - Fly from Inle to Ngapali Beach. Amazing Ngapali Resort.
Day 49-51 - Beach at leisure. Amazing Ngapali Resort.
Day 52 - Fly to Yangon. Overnight at Kandawgyi Palace Hotel.
Day 53 - Fly to Bangkok. Aetas Hotel.
Day 54 - Exploring Bangkok. Aetas Hotel.
Day 55 - Fly to Luang Prabang. Le Bel Air Resort.
Day 56-57 - Exploring Luang Prabang. Le Bel Air Resort.
Day 58 - Fly to Siem Reap. Royal Bay Inn Angkor.
Day 59-60 - Exploring Angkor Temples. Royal Bay Inn Angkor.
Day 61 - Coach journey to Phnom Penh. Villa Langka Hotel.
Day 62-63 - Exploring Phnom Penh and surroundings. Villa Langka.
Day 64 - Fly to Saigon/Ho Chi Minh City. Northern Hotel.
Day 65 - Visit Saigon & Cu Chi Tunnels. Northern Hotel.
Day 66 - Journey to Cantho & The Mekong Delta. Vinagolf Hotel.
Day 67 - Floating Markets & fly to Danang/Hoi An. Vinh Hung Hotel.
Day 68 - At leisure in Hoi An. Vinh Hung Hotel.
Day 69 - Journey by train to Hanoi. Overnight on train.
Day 70 - Arrival and touring in Hanoi. Maison D'Hanoi Hanova Hotel.
Day 71 - Journey to Halong Bay. Jasmine Junk Boat.
Day 72 - Cruising Halong Bay. Jasmine Junk Boat.
Day 73 - Return to Hanoi for overnight stay. Maison D'Hanoi Hanova.
Day 74 - Transfer to airport for onwards flight.

Your Suggested Itinerary...

Day 1 - Arrival in Moscow
Arrival in Moscow at 1455. You will be welcomed by a lateral**life** representative and transferred to your hotel. Spend three nights at the Maxima Panorama Hotel. At check-in, (after 2pm) the hotel reception will advise you they will need your passport for visa registration. This process takes 1–2 hours. Your InfoPack will provide ideas for getting the most out of your time in Moscow. Please note your Trans-Siberian train tickets will be delivered to the hotel during your stay.
Accommodation: Maxima Panorama Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: None

Day 2 - Explore Moscow
Today you'll be met in the lobby at 10am to embark on a three hour walking tour, to introduce the city (by public transport) and to get your sightseeing off to a flying start. Your walk ends in the city centre around lunchtime. The rest of the day's your own to consider visiting the Moscow Kremlin, the Tretyakov Gallery, the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum, or a boat trip along the Mosvka River.
Accommodation: Maxima Panorama Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 3 - Explore Moscow
After breakfast the day is free to explore Moscow independently.
Accommodation: Maxima Panorama Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 4 - Departing Moscow
A morning free to pack in any last minute sightseeing and check-out at 12pm (left luggage is possible at the hotel for a small fee). Consider visiting the Lenin Mausoleum which is only open in the mornings - arriving there early (it's in Red Square) helps beat the queues! At 2pm meet your driver in the hotel lobby from where you'll be transferred to Yaroslavsky Station to board the Ekaterinburg bound train. Although there's a restaurant car service on board your train, you may want to supplement this with some snacks, treats, and fresh fruit.
NB TIMES ON RUSSIAN TRAINS ARE ALWAYS MOSCOW TIME, NOT LOCAL TIME
Accommodation: Train # 15/16 at 16:08, Two Berth Sleeper.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 5 - Arrival in Ekaterinburg
Your first full day on board The Trans-Sib travelling through the Ural Mountains. There will be plenty of time to meet fellow travellers and hang out in the dining car which serves a variety of reasonably priced meals and snacks. 19:45 arrival in Ekaterinburg where your driver will meet you at the end of the platform, and will be holding a meeting-board with your name on. Transfer to the Hotel Chekhov which is centrally located.
Accommodation: Hotel Chekhov, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: None

Day 6 – Around Ekaterinburg
After breakfast enjoy a guided walking tour around the well known and less obvious attractions of Ekaterinburg. Visit the historical centre of the city, including the scene of the assassination of the Romanov Royal Family, on which a Cathedral now stands to mark the event. You'll also see something of Ekaterinburg's involvement in Russia's military history. The last half-hour will be spent at The Museum of Gems. The tour ends in the downtown area (we make sure you know the way back!), where you have multiple lunch choices and a free afternoon to explore independently.
Accommodation: Hotel Chekhov, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 7 – Siberian Wilderness Adventure
Today you'll venture out on a Siberian wilderness adventure (weather permitting) where as you head to the west of Ekaterinburg you find the official border between Europe and Asia and to the East is where Siberia officially begins. Later, you'll check-out of the hotel around 21:00 with a transfer provided to the station where you will board the Irkutsk bound train (departure scheduled for 22:25).
Accommodation: Train # 340 at 22:50, Two Berth Sleeper.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 8-9 – On board The Trans-Sib
Journey eastwards via Novosibirsk and across the River Ob and onwards to the immense River Enisei, at Krasnoyarsk. Along the way you'll see astonishing Siberian scenery as the deciduous forests or the Ural Mountains give way to the Siberian Pine forests. You have time to sample a vodka and perhaps some smoked salmon and caviar in the dining car!
Accommodation: Train # 340, Two Berth Sleeper.
Meals: None

Day 10 – Arrival in Irkutsk
10:11 arrival in Irkutsk. Your driver will meet you at the end of the platform, holding a board marked with your name. Transfer to "U Ozera Hotel" (the name translates as "At the Lake Hotel", although it is not directly at the lake shore) situated in Listvyanka Village (70km) travelling by road through the forest. The official check-in time is 12 noon and the hotel reception will advise you they will need your passport for visa registration formalities. However if your room is available, this will be allocated to you on arrival. (If your room is not available you will be able to leave your luggage with the hotel reception). You will have a chance to have breakfast before setting off on your walking tour around Listvyanka Village. This will include a visit to the Limnological Museum and also a small wooden Russian Orthodox Church. Return to your hotel at the end of the walk, with time to relax and enjoy your lakeside surroundings; maybe experience a real Siberian "banya" (sauna).
Accommodation: U Ozera Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 11 - Siberian Trek - Lake Baikal
Enjoy a guided morning Siberian Trek to familiarise yourself with the surroundings. The afternoon is at your leisure.
Accommodation: U Ozera Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 12 – Listvyanka Village
Day at leisure. We suggest you head down to the harbour and enjoy freshly caught Omlu, the indigenous fish of Lake Baikal.
Accommodation: U Ozera Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 13 – Departing Irkutsk
After breakfast transfer back to Irkutsk city. You will have the option to leave your bags at a local office. You will be given a map and some recommendations of interesting places to visit. We suggest you take this opportunity to purchase provisions for the next leg of your journey, as often this service has no dining car. Evening transfer to the station where you will board the Ulaanbaatar bound train.
Accommodation: Train #362 IR at 20:35, Two Berth Sleeper.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 14 – On board The Trans-Sib
Day on the train heading south towards Mongolia. At midnight you will make the border crossing into Mongolia with the usual halt for formalities.
Accommodation: Train #362 IR, Two Berth Sleeper.
Meals: None

Day 15 – Arrival in Ulaanbaatar
06:10 arrival in Ulaanbaatar. Your driver will meet you at the end of the platform and will be holding a board with your name. Transfer from the station to a hotel with a chance to shower and have breakfast. At 10.30am approx you'll be taken on a tour of the city which includes the Gandan Monastery ceremony. In the afternoon, transfer to Elstei Ger Lodge (70km).
Accommodation: Elstei Ger Lodge, Twin Bedded Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 16 – Free time at Elstei Ger Lodge
No specific activities are planned so you can choose to chill out or (for a small payment made directly to the nomads), you can go horse riding with local nomads. Spend a relaxed evening in the bar and after dinner there are occasional impromptu performances of live Mongolian music, where you might hear the Morin Khuur (horse-head lyre), the cimbalom, or native Mongolian throat-singing.
Accommodation: Elstei Ger Lodge, Twin Bedded Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 17 – Return to Ulaanbaatar
Around 10am you make the return trip to Ulaanbaatar. Check into the central...

...Bayangol hotel. The balance of today is at leisure. Consider a visit to the Choijin Monastery Museum or the Bazaar and enjoy an evening in Mongolia's capital.
Accommodation: Bayangol Hotel, Twin Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 18 - Departing Ulaanbaatar
Transfer to the station where you will board the 08:05 Beijing bound train and pass through the sun parched scenery of the Southern Gobi Desert. Later this evening are the Chinese border formalities after which you may sleep.
Accommodation: Train # 1CTR24 Shuren at 08:05, Two Berth Sleeper.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 19 – Arrival in Beijing
Wake early to enjoy the change from desert scenery to mountains and rice paddy fields. Arrive at 14:55 into Beijing Central Station and the end of your Trans-Siberian journey. You'll be welcomed by lateral**life**'s China representatives and transferred to the Cote Cour Hotel for a 4 night stay. Look out for our rep on the platform - he will be holding a sign with your name! Remainder of the day at leisure.
Accommodation: Hotel Cote Cour, Standard Room.
Meals: None

Day 20 – The Great Wall
Enjoy a full day visit to the Great Wall of China. You'll head to the Great Wall at Jinshanling and although further, it offers a much more natural Wall experience as it is much less visited with ample opportunity to explore and take in the stunning views of the surrounding countryside. A picnic lunch box is included to enjoy at the Wall.
Accommodation: Hotel Cote Cour, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Box Lunch

Day 21 – Tiananmen Square & The Forbidden City
A full day of sightseeing including visits to some of Beijing's main imperial-era attractions. Start at the vast Tiananmen Square, home to China's Parliament – The Great Hall of the People. Walk through The Gate of Heavenly Peace from where Mao declared China as the People's Republic in 1949. Head to The Forbidden City, the former home to many of China's Emperors. After lunch continue to the Hutongs, the small lanes and former courtyard houses of an Old Beijing.
Accommodation: Hotel Cote Cour, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 22 – The Summer Palace
This morning visit the magnificent Temple of Heaven, where the Emperors came to pray for good harvests and today it's where local residents come for morning exercises such as Tai Chi and Ballroom dancing! It's a fascinating visit. From here, enjoy a visit to the Imperial Summer Palace which you can explore at your leisure (includes transport). Afternoon is at leisure.
Accommodation: Hotel Cote Cour, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 23 – Beijing - XI'an
Day at leisure. Late this afternoon, transfer to the train station for your overnight soft-class rail journey to Xi'an.
NB: CHINA TRAIN TIMES & TICKETS WILL BE PROVIDED IN CHINA.
Accommodation: Train, Soft-Berth.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 24 – The Army of Terracotta Warriors
On arrival in Xian, you are met at the train station and transferred to the Mercure Hotel for one night - breakfast on arrival is included. Without a doubt the highlight of any visit to Xian and possibly even China is to explore the legacy of The Army of Terracotta Warriors and visit the incredible burial site, where they were discovered only recently. Pass by the Mausoleum of Emperor Qin Shihuang and visit the Warriors themselves who stand guard over Emperor Qin's tomb. A simple lunch is offered whilst this afternoon a visit is arranged to the Old City of Xian where your guide will bring alive Xian's association with the mighty Silk Road. Visit the old City Walls (where a short bike or buggy ride is enjoyed), The Islamic Quarter and also the Great Mosque, which is a beautiful spot in the midst of peaceful gardens.
Accommodation: Mercure Hotel on Renmin Square, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 25 – Xi'an – Pingyao
After a leisurely breakfast, transfer to the airport for a flight to Taiyuan. As part of the departure transfer, we include a visit to the fascinating Terracotta Warriors of the Han Dynasty which date from about 80 years later than the more famous ones which were visited yesterday. Fly to Taiyuan, welcome on arrival and drive onwards to Pingyao. On arrival, check-in to the The International Financier Club where a Guest Room is offered for a 2 night stay.
Accommodation: The International Financier Club, Guest Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 26 – Pingyao
This morning you are introduced to this fascinating and well preserved Ming Dynasty walled town and you will get the opportunity to explore the Ancient City Wall, the Rishengchang Draft bank, the first bank in China, and imagine yourself in the noisy business atmosphere on Ming-Qing Street when Pingyao was the financial capital of China. The afternoon is at leisure.
Accommodation: The International Financier Club, Guest Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 27 - Pingyao - Shanghai
Departing Pingyao, drive to Qiaojiabao Village where the Qiao Family Compound is visited and for fans of Chinese cinema, this is where acclaimed Director Yang Zimou filmed 'Raise the Red Lantern'. Late this afternoon fly onwards via Taiyuan to Shanghai where on arrival your local guide meets you and the private transfer is offered to the URBN Hotel for a 3 night stay.
Accommodation: URBN Hotel, Garden View Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 28-29 – Shanghai
These two days are at leisure for independent exploration. Highlights include a walk along the riverfront area known as the Bund where many of the historical buildings are located. Opposite the Bund, on the other side of the river, is Shanghai's financial powerhouse district known as Pudong. A drink is recommended in the 85th floor bar of the Park Hyatt hotel. The French Concession is also a pleasant upmarket residential area to explore (where your hotel is located) with numerous options for dining, drinking and shopping.
Accommodation: URBN Hotel, Garden View Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 30 – Shanghai - Lijiang
Transfer to the airport for a flight to Lijiang and where on arrival you are met by your local guide and transferred to the charming but simple Zen Garden Mountain Inn for a 4 night stay. This is a much more natural part of China and the scenery and village life are fascinating.
Accommodation: Zen Garden Mountain Inn, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 31 – Lijiang
This morning we offer a visit to Lijiang's fascinating Old Town, Dayan, where your Guide brings alive the area's history and its indigenous Dongba culture. Visit Black Dragon Pool. The afternoon is at leisure.
Accommodation: Zen Garden Mountain Inn, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 32 – Lijiang Surroundings
Today we offer a full day in the countryside outside of Lijiang and make a visit to Yu Hu Village the former home of renowned naturalist, Dr Joseph Rock where the more traditional Naxi way of life continues. From here a journey is offered by road, on foot or on horse-back (the horses walk and are led by a local) over the mountains to Wenhai Lake, which is rarely visited. The small villages in this area are reminiscent of a China from many years ago and this is a perfect way of seeing a more rural China. A simple lunch is offered in Baisha Village before returning to the hotel.
Accommodation: Zen Garden Mountain Inn, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 33 – Lijiang at Leisure
The day is offered at leisure for independent exploration.
Accommodation: Zen Garden Mountain Inn, Standard Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 34 – Lijiang - Tiger Leaping Gorge
This morning transfer to Qiaotou Town which is located at the entrance of the Tiger Leaping Gorge and from here start trekking along a path up to a Naxi Family Guesthouse where lunch is offered. During the trek you have a chance to overlook three of the famed snow mountains including Jade Dragon, Haba and Meli. This afternoon continue onwards to Tea & Horse Guest-House where your accommodation is offered for the night (simple with private bathroom) and which is about 2400m above the sea level.
Accommodation: Tea & Horse Guesthouse, Guest Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 35 – Half-Way House to Tina's Guesthouse to Shangri-La
This morning trek onwards to Half Way House for lunch and then down to Mid Tiger Leaping Gorge which is about another 8km. Late in the day transfer onwards to Zhongdian (Shangri-La) and on arrival transfer to the Songstam Retreat Hotel for a 2 night stay.
Accommodation: Songtsam Retreat Hotel, Superior Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 36 – Shangri-La
Visit the imposing Sumtsenling Monastery and be introduced to the Tibetan way of life here, and in Shangri-La's Old Town. Lunch is at the Gyalthang Dzong Hotel, a sister property of the Banyan Tree. This afternoon visit Napa Lake to visit local Tibetan Families, observing various migratory birds and enjoying the beautiful grasslands at the foot of Shika Snow Mountains.
Accommodation: Songtsam Retreat Hotel, Superior Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 37 – Shangri-La - Kunming
Today we offer a short day trek in the area around the hotel which offers stunning countryside views. The day starts with a visit to Ringha Monastery and then continues along the Shuoduogang River to experience the peace and tranquillity of Shangri-la. It's a short day but one which offers experiences of the local countryside with lunch of local cuisine being offered with a Tibetan family. This afternoon, fly onwards to Kunming where you have an overnight stay at the Park Hotel.
Accommodation: Grand Park Hotel, Superior Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 38 – Kunming - Mandalay (Myanmar)
This morning you are transferred to the airport for your onward flight to Mandalay. On arrival in Myanmar, you are welcomed and transferred to the Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel for a two night stay.
Accommodation: Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel, Guest Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 39 – Amarapura and Mandalay
After breakfast, tour the ancient royal capital of Amarapura. Here you'll visit the Mahagandayon monastery, which is a school for young monks, and the nearby U Bein bridge. More than two centuries old and at 1.2 km, it is the longest teakwood span in the world. Continue to the highly Mahamuni Pagoda; a gold leaf hammering craftshop, Shwenandaw Monastery, noted for its exquisite wood carvings; Kuthodaw Pagoda, renowned as the World's largest book for its 729 stone slabs containing the entire Buddhist scriptures. If time permits, enjoy the sunset from Mandalay Hill.
Accommodation: Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel, Guest Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 40 – Maymyo (Pwin Oo Lwin)
After breakfast, drive to Pyin Oo Lwin which is 42 miles away from Mandalay (about a one and a half hours) and was a former British Hill Station. The town was originally renamed Maymyo after British Colonel May who established the towns beautiful botanical gardens built by Turkish prisoners of war during WWI. It is on the way to Lashio and to the Chinese border town of Muse. The sightseeing highlights of Pyin U Lwin includes Purcell Tower, which was a present from Queen Victoria; the morning vegetable market; the Church of the Immaculate Conception, the Botanical Garden; Naung Kan Gyi Paya where you can see a panoramic view of the town; B.E waterfall, Peik Chin Myaung Cave. Overnight in Maymyo.
Accommodation: Kandawgyi Hill Resort, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 41 – Maymyo – Mandalay - Bagan
After breakfast, free time at leisure. 12.00PM check-out of the hotel and transfer to Mandalay airport for your late afternoon flight to Bagan. Upon arrival, you'll be welcomed and transferred to your hotel. The remainder of the day is free at leisure. Stay 3 nights at the Amazing Bagan Hotel.
Accommodation: Amazing Bagan Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 42 – Bagan
Enjoy sightseeing of one of Asia's most incredible highlights: busy Nyaung Oo Market and Bagan's distinctive pagodas such as Shwezigon, a prototype of later Myanmar stupas; Wetkyi-in- Gubyaukgyi, a 13th century 'cave temple with interesting fine frescoes; Ananda Pagoda, one of the finest, largest and best persevered in Old Bagan; and next to it Ananda Ok Kyaung, one of the few surviving brick monastery buildings. Return to the hotel for a rest, in the afternoon visit Dhammayangyi Temple, a massive later period temple with the finest brickwork in Bagan and Thatbyinnyu Temple which towers above the other monuments of Bagan. As the sun goes down you will be at one of the ideal viewing sites for a panoramic sunset over the temples.
Accommodation: Amazing Bagan Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 43 – Bagan Ballooning
Start your morning with a hot-air balloon flight over the plains of Bagan. Enjoy the fabulous views as the sun rises over the stupas and Irrawaddy River. This is truly an unforgettable and unique experience!

After breakfast, visit Phya Saw Village - enjoy a walkabout in a village where you can see the traditional ways of life still carried on such as weaving cotton by hand, grinding peanut oil with oxen, the care of various farm animals etc.

Afternoon, continue sightseeing to visit Bagan's impressive pagodas and temples. Sightseeing highlights includes Manuha Temple built by King Manuha to represent his displeasure of captivity, Nanpaya close behind the Manuha and which is also Bagan's first "gu-style" (cave) shrine and next to visit Gubaukgyi Temple, in the old Bagan village of Myinkaba, is an early period temple with well-preserved paintings inside. Visit a lacquer-ware craft shop to see the process of hand-making these beautiful pieces. Late afternoon, enjoy horse drawn carriage ride to one of the sunset temple chosen by our guide.
Accommodation: Amazing Bagan Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 44 – Bagan – Popa – Kalaw
After breakfast, drive to Mt. Popa, which supposedly rose from the ground in a massive earthquake in 442 BC. Mt. Popa is famous as the abode of the Nats (Spirit Gods) and for its panoramic view of the local tropical region. There is a volcanic plug with a temple on top that you can climb. On the way to Mt. Popa visit a local toddy palm farmer and see how toddy palm juice and sugar are produced.

Afterwards continue driving to Kalaw with several photo stops en route. Arrive in Kalaw in the late afternoon and check-in to the hotel for an overnight at Amara Resort
Accommodation: Amara Resort (waitlist);
Hilltop Villa Resort/Superior Room is confirmed as backup
Meals: Breakfast

Day 45 – Kalaw—Monastery Trek
Today's trekking takes you to visit a village of the Palaung people (about 2-5 hour). The trail takes you through mountains with the view of tea plantations along sides of the hills and vegetables gardens with villager's houses located all along the ravines. This is a fascinating trek through mountains and villages to an ancient Buddhist Monastery where you will spend the night. NB very basic accommodation on sleeping mats with sleeping bags and outdoor shower facilities.
Accommodation: Local Monastery
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 46 – Trek to Inle Lake
After breakfast, continue your trek through the countryside to magical Inle Lake, located about 900 meters above sea level and 20 km long by 6 km wide. Arrive at Nyaung Shwe jetty and start our sightseeing by long tailed boat to Innpawkhone Village where you can see lotus and silk weaving industries. Next to is Nanpan to see the traditional boat making, cheroot (Burmese cigar) making factory.

Late afternoon, continue the visit to Phaungdaw U Pagoda and if we have time, take a short visit to Leshae Village where you can see the making of a Buddha image from dried flower powder. Later visit to 'jumping cats' monastery and floating gardens. Stay 2 nights at the Inle Resort.
Accommodation: Inle Resort - www.inleresort.com ; Duplex Cottage.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 47 – Indain and Mine Tauk
Continue sightseeing on Inle Lake with a visit to Indain and its enchanting 17th century pagodas. To reach Indain and the nearby village, take a boat ride up a small scenic creek that runs into Inle Lake.

This afternoon, head to the small town of Mine Tauk and then make a small trek to a local orphanage to visit Mr. Thet Tun, the elderly headmaster who runs the orphanage, who will speak about its history. He speaks English well and the children may greet you too.
Accommodation: Inle Resort, Duplex Cottage.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 48 – Inle Lake—Ngapali Beach
After breakfast, transfer to the airport to take a flight to Thandwe. Upon arrival, meet and transfer to Ngapali Beach. Spend 4 nights at the Amazing Hotel. The remainder of the day is free at leisure.
Accommodation: Amazing Ngapali Resort, Deluxe Seaview Villa.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 49-51 – Ngapali Beach
Enjoy your days at leisure on beautiful and untouched Ngapali Beach.
Accommodation: Amazing Ngapali Resort, Deluxe Seaview Villa.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 52 – Ngapali—Yangon
After breakfast, check-out of the resort transfer to the airport to fly back to Yangon. Upon arrival, meet and transfer to hotel for an overnight stay.
Begin sightseeing in Yangon to visit Yangon downtown area and from there walk along the Pansodan Street which has many large colonial buildings which are still in use. It is also interesting to see the sidewalk markets including those selling old books and magazines dated from the 1960's to the present. In the afternoon, visit the famous Scott Market (Scott Market closes every Monday and public holidays), a sprawling complex built in 1926 and noted for its variety of handicrafts and other items which provides an excellent opportunity for a shopping spree. Afterward, visit the colossal reclining Buddha Chaukhtatkyi and finish with a visit to the awe-inspiring Shwedagon Pagoda which towers over all of Yangon. It is perhaps the most beautiful pagoda complex in all of Asia and is one sight that no visitor to Myanmar should miss.
Accommodation: Kandawgyi Palace Hotel, Superior Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 53 - Yangon—Bangkok
Check-out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for your flight to Bangkok, Thailand's vibrant capital city. Upon arrival, welcome and transfer to your hotel. Stay two nights at the Aetas hotel located near Lumpini Park.
Accommodation: Aetas Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 54 – Bangkok
Board a "James Bond Boat" – Long tail boat cruising along The River of Kings while enjoying beautiful scenery and Thai lifestyle along the canal which has been given the name of "Venice of the East'. Jump in a Tuk Tuk for a short ride to the Royal Grand Palace. At the Royal Palace, observe the most important shrine in the Kingdom, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha (Wat Phra Kaew), with its solid green jade Buddha image. Walking to Wat Po, which has the enormous reclining Buddha and the Chedis of Thailand's previous Kings. Wat Po is also the spiritual home of authentic therapeutic Thai massage.

Dress code: Casual summer wear
For religious reason, women should have their knees and shoulders covered and gentlemen should wear long trousers and short-sleeved shirts. Shoes must be removed before entering the Emerald Buddha Temple.

Accommodation: Aetas Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 55 – Bangkok—Luang Prabang (Laos)
After breakfast, transfer to the airport for a flight to Luang Prabang in Laos. An arrival transfer will be provided to Le Bel Air Hotel for a 3 night stay.
Accommodation: Le Bel Air Resort, Riverview Bungalow.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 56-57 – Luang Prabang
Enjoy two days at leisure to explore at your will. We recommend an early rise one morning to see the taking of alms by the Buddhist monks.

Walks along the Mekong are ideal during sunset and stop by one of the numerous lowkey bars for sundowners. A short journey by longtail boat brings you to Pak Ou Caves, which have formed along the river edge. Similarly the Kuang Xi waterfalls are worth a visit for a refreshing dip.
Accommodation: Le Bel Air Resort, Riverview Bungalow.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 58 —Luang Prabang - Siem Reap (Cambodia)
Board a flight to Siem Reap in Cambodia for a 3 night stay at the Royal Bay Inn Angkor. Private transfers are included to your hotel.
Accommodation: Royal Bay Inn Angkor, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 59 – Temples of Angkor
In the early morning around 05.30AM, enjoy the sunrise at Angkor Wat and visit the intricately carved Khmer ruins at Angkor Wat - one of the world's most impressive ruins. Continue exploring the mysterious Royal city Angkor Thom. Its 50-tower temple is an awesome sight. At first glance it seems a shapeless mass of stone, but further scrutiny reveals face after stone face gazing silently through half-closed eyes. Furthermore, visit the Baphou, Elephant complex.
Accommodation: Royal Bay Inn Angkor, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 60 – Temples of Angkor
After breakfast, enjoy a drive to the rural outskirts 35km from Angkor area to visit the smaller, but magnificent, Banteay Srei built in the 10th Century and dedicated to Shiva. The temple was the birthplace of Khmer classical style architecture and the bas-relief work is the best example of Khmer classical art remaining. The pink sandstone structure bears a series of striking and beautiful sculptures, lintels, pediments and friezes. Khmers say the temple must have been carved by women for the details are too fine for the hands of a man. Return to town with a stop with shopping opportunities at Artisans D'Angkor studios carving and silk.

In the afternoon, continue to visit the picturesque Ta Prohm that had nearly disappeared into the jungle and remains overgrown, an oddly haunting and exotic scene. The magnificent roots of a tree, pushing between the huge stone blocks of the temple in a sort of embrace for a truly memorable sight.
Accommodation: Royal Bay Inn Angkor, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 61 – Siem Reap—Phnom Penh
After breakfast, transfer to the local bus station for a comfortable coach ride to Phnom Penh. Upon arrival, welcome and transfer to the Villa Langka Hotel for a 3 night stay.
Accommodation: Villa Langka, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 62 – Phnom Penh
After breakfast, enjoy a day at leisure to tour the city independently. We recommend you visit the National Museum which houses Khmer art, especially sculptures from different periods of Cambodian history; the Royal Place built in 1866 by King Norodom; the Silver Pagoda is so named because of its floor, which is made up of 5,000 silver tiles and located within the Royal Palace compound and Wat Phnom.
Accommodation: Villa Langka, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 63 – Phnom Penh
After breakfast, experience a guided tour of Toul Sleng Museum, a reminder of the Khmer Rouge regime and the Choeung Ek – Killing Fields. Be warned that what you see and learn here is not for the faint hearted! End the day with a stroll around the Russian Market. The remainder of the day is free at leisure.
Accommodation: Villa Langka, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 64 – Phnom Penh—Saigon (Vietnam)
Checkout and transfer to the airport for a flight to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). Arrival in Vietnam and welcome by a Lateral Life representative with transfer to your hotel. Stay 2 nights at the Northern Hotel.
Accommodation: Northern Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 65 —Saigon & Cu Chi Tunnels
Enjoy a 2-hour-drive northwest of Saigon to Cu Chi tunnels, through typically lush southern Vietnamese countryside. The tunnel complex was dug in 1948 for the guerrillas to hide from French air and ground sweeps. It also served as a communication route and food and weapon caches as well as hospital and living quarters for guerrilla fighters throughout the American war. Visit the underground villages to better understand the tunnels' history, life in the tunnels and the Vietnamese's resilience during the combat.

Spend the afternoon at leisure during which you can embark on an independent walking tour of Saigon's historic landmarks including Rue Catinat, the Opera House and the Presidential Palace, among others.
Accommodation: Northern Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 66 – Saigon - Can Tho & The Mekong Delta
A 2 hour drive will take you to a lush green area in the middle of the Mekong Delta known as Ben Tre. En route you will stop to visit Vinh Trang pagoda, an ancient southern architectural gem built in 1849. Vinh Trang pogoda is a mixture of Asian and European architecture that incorporates elements from the Renaissance period, Romanesque style, French decorative flowers and Japanese enameled tiles. From here you will continue on your journey to My Tho jetty where you will board a local motorized boat for the remainder of the trip to Ben Tre. Visit a small coconut-candy workshop to get a glimpse of a typical family run business in this area. Another 30 minute cruise bobbing on the waves will provide you a deeper insight into agricultural life in the Mekong Delta.

Disembark and walk around sleepy villages and picturesque orchards until you reach Vuon Dau to sample freshly picked fruit at the invitation of friendly local farmers. Savour a tasty lunch of delicious Mekong Delta specialties at Ngoc Gia Trang. Enjoy another boat ride through the canals in the shadows of water-coconut palms and bid farewell to the boatmen before another 2-hour drive to Can Tho. Overnight at the VinaGolf 4 Hotel.
Accommodation: Vinagolf 4 Can Tho Hotel, Deluxe Room.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 67 – Can Tho - Saigon - Hoi An
Rise early in order to catch the bustling atmosphere of the unique floating market of the Mekong Delta before returning to the hotel for a leisurely breakfast. You will board a local boat to explore the colorful Cai Rang floating market, where many boats laden with fruit, vegetables and fish jostle for trade. You have the option to leave your boat and meander around the local Le Binh market to enjoy another part of the local life. Relax and enjoy the cruise back to your hotel to freshen up and check-out before returning to Saigon, with a lunch stop at the Mekong Rest Stop restaurant along the way.

After lunch, transfer directly to the airport for a flight to Danang. Upon arrival, welcome and transfer to quaint Hoi An for a 2 night stay at the Vinh Hung One.
Accommodation: Vinh Hung One Hotel, Suite.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 68 – Hoi An
Enjoy a day at leisure meandering the cobbled streets of Hoi An. Tailors everywhere are after your business offering bespoke suits and every item of clothing imaginable. There are delightful cafes and restaurants to watch the world go by and stroll around the ancient quarter of historic pagodas, bridges and character homes. Note that a cooking lesson in Vietnamese cuisine (or just dinner) is recommended at Morning Glory.
Accommodation: Vinh Hung One Hotel, Suite.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 69 – Hoi An - Train to Hanoi
After a leisurely morning, you'll be transferred to the train station in Danang to board the overnight train to Hanoi. Onboard you will have a private soft-berth cabin with a/c. Note you are advised to stock up on some food supplies for the journey.
Accommodation: Train, Private Soft-berth Sleeper.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 70 – Hanoi
Arrive early in Hanoi. You'll be welcomed at the station and transferred to the Maison D'Hanoi for breakfast and an overnight stay.

In the afternoon, visit One Pillar Pagoda - situated in the middle of a pond of lotus leaves and was built in 1049 by King Ly Thai Tong in the style of ancient temples of ancestors. Continue to the Temple of Literature - the 1st University of Vietnam, dedicated to Confucius which broke the Buddhist monopoly in education.

Later enjoy a cyclo tour in the Old Quarter of "36 streets and 36 wares" dating back to the 11th century to witness the bustle of Hanoi. Each street had merchants specialising in a particular trade, such as silk and jewellery. Nowadays, the street names still reflect those industries, although few of them remain exclusively in their original commerce. End at Lake of Restored Sword with a visit to the Ngoc Son temple.

This evening, enjoy a water puppet show - a tradition that dates back as far as the 11th century CE when it originated in the villages of the Red River Delta area of Northern Vietnam. Today's Vietnamese water puppetry is a unique variation on the ancient Asian puppet tradition.
Accommodation: Maison D'Hanoi Hanova Hotel, Classic Room.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 71 – Hanoi - Halong Bay
After breakfast, check-out of the hotel and depart Hanoi for Halong – a World Heritage site (3.5 hours drive) with a stop en route at a crafts cooperative. Arrive by noon at the pier, welcome aboard and set sail through the bay while lunch is served. Passage into the magical bay, where thousands of sculpted limestone islands rise from the waves like dragons' teeth.

After lunch, take a short trek to a nearby summit for a panoramic view of the bay dotted with golden sails, go swimming on a quiet beach or sunbathe on deck. Late afternoon, visit an interesting fishing village with the opportunity to interact with fishermen who have been living in the bay for almost three generations. Back on board, enjoy cocktails while watching sunset and later unwind over a delicious dinner.
Accommodation: Halong Jasmine Junk, Deluxe Cabin.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 72 - Halong Bay
After breakfast, transfer to your day-boat with private crew and cruise to the bay's most untouched areas. Enjoy swimming on quiet beaches, visiting water tunnels, fishing villages or kayaking. Lunch is served on board by a private chef. Return to the mother boat for the night and dinner.
Accommodation: Halong Jasmine Junk, Deluxe Cabin.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 73 – Halong Bay - Hanoi
Greet the day with a morning Tai Chi exercise and view the sunrise over the bay. Visit a beautiful limestone grotto then back to the boat for a final glimpse of Halong Bay while cruising back to the pier. Arrive at the boat docking station around 11:00AM. Return to Hanoi with a stop en route for lunch and visit Dong Trieu village, one of the last survivors of an old pottery village amidst the modern pressure to industrialize. The remainder of the day is free at leisure. Overnight at Maison D'Hanoi.
Accommodation: Maison D'Hanoi Hanova Hotel, Classic Room.
Meals: Brunch

Day 74 - Hanoi - Departure
Final day in South East Asia. You'll have time at leisure until your transfer to the airport for a flight to your next destination.