

Australian Institute of International Affairs, New South Wales

Study Tour to Vietnam - mid to end October 2016

Expressions of Interest

I have this year decided to organise a study tour to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Of 14 to 16 days, it will take place between mid and end of October. I am hoping for around 20 to 25 participants. Members of the New South Wales Chapter will have first preference, but the tour is open to members of other State Chapters.

I propose to begin in Hanoi around Friday 14 October (participants will be expected to make their own arrangements to get to and from Vietnam). As a former Australian Ambassador to the country, I look forward to leading the tour. We already have the support and backing of DFAT and the Vietnamese Ambassador in Canberra. With their help, I hope to engage senior Vietnam officials in briefing sessions and round table discussions about Vietnam's domestic situation and its foreign policy. We will have briefings by the Australian Ambassador and his staff in Hanoi, and in Ho Chi Minh City, by the Australian Consul General and her staff. We will also visit the RMIT campus and engage resident Australian business people and others of interest to our members.

The tour will not be all work and no play. Apart from briefings and touring the main sights in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh, I hope to arrange visits to Dien Bien Phu, the military redoubt near the Thai border region of the Red River Delta where the French were decisively beaten by General Vo Nguyen Giap and his Vietminh forces in 1954; to Ha Long Bay; to Hue and Loi Anh in the centre of the country; and to the hill station of Dalat north of Ho Chi Minh City.

I think the proposed itinerary will well and truly fill our time, but I am open to other suggestions of places to visit. I will be aiming for comfortable four star accommodation in all cities, and four star travel - whether by air or rail or bus. We will engage the services of local guides as and when required. I do not yet have accurate costings, but I envisage the whole trip (excluding flights to and from Vietnam) to be around \$3,600 per person.

I would be grateful if interested members throughout Australia would contact me either by email or phone.

With best regards,

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