

The Gardens of South East Asia

November 5 - 19, 2008

Presented by



Minnesota Landscape
ARBORETUM

Our 15-day journey to the Far East is unlike any that we've taken in the past, visiting Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Bangkok, and Singapore. Tours to historical sites such as Angkor Wat in Cambodia, and vacation areas like Đà Lạt in the Vietnamese highlands and Chiang Mai in the north of Thailand are on tap for us as well as stops in the Asian capitals of Bangkok and Singapore.

We'll begin our journey in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), to see the heart and soul of Vietnam -- the largest city in the country, and its economic and cultural center. The streets, where much of the city's life takes place, are a jumble of street markets, shops, cafes, stands-on-wheels and vendors selling wares spread out on sidewalks. It's impossible not to be infected by its exhilarating vibe. And yet the city still retains its timeless French and Vietnamese traditions, and the beauty of an ancient culture.

In the Mekong Delta outside of Saigon, we'll visit My Tho, a bustling town on the Mekong River, and we'll take a boat trip on the Mekong, past numerous islands, stopping to enjoy fruit and tea along the way, listening to the local music, and observing island life on a sampan ride through the waterways that thread the islands.

In Đà Lạt, in the Vietnamese highlands, we find a popular tourist destination - highly appreciated for its temperate climate, beautiful sights, waterfalls and lakes and its abundance of flowers and vegetables. In the early mornings, the city arises to mystic fog over the lake. With such a temperate climate, Đà Lạt is renowned for its orchids, roses, vegetables and fruits. We'll have time here to enjoy the city and explore the French influence in the region as well. In Cambodia, we'll view the spectacular ruins of Angkor Wat at sunset., and the following day, we'll continue our tour of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom.

Angkor Wat is the crowning jewel of Khmer architecture, the national symbol and highlight of any visit to Cambodia. The largest, best preserved, and most religiously significant of the Angkor temples, Angkor is impressive by its sheer scale and beautifully proportioned layout. Before leaving Cambodia we'll take a cruise on Tonle Sap Lake, to see the floating villages that thrive at the edges of the lake.



Vietnam

We'll connect in Bangkok to reach Chiang Mai. There we'll visit the Queen Sirikit Gardens as well as the special gardens built for the celebration of the King of Thailand's 80th birthday. In our 2006 tour to Thailand on the occasion of this special botanical exhibition, many considered our tour to the Queen's gardens as a highlight as much as the actual exposition itself. The garden has a wide collection of plant species, 12 exhibition greenhouses, garden and nature trails, and educational and research activities. We'll also stop at a beautifully kept orchid garden in the foothills of the mountains surrounding Chiang Mai.

In Bangkok, we'll stay in the heart of the city, on the Chao Praya river in downtown Bangkok. We'll tour for a half day tour in Bangkok, visiting the Grand Palace, and spending the afternoon enjoying the sights of the city on our own before flying out the next morning to Singapore, our final stop in the journey.

The city-state of Singapore has a botanical garden and an Orchid Garden which contains over 3,000 species of orchids. The Singapore Botanic Gardens has numerous sections within its confines, including an orchidarium, a bromeliad house, a cool house (to recreate the climate of a highland garden), a rainforest and a ginger garden. We'll also spend time exploring the Spice Gardens in Singapore.

What an incredible journey this promises to be – two weeks exploring the best that southeast Asia has to offer – a journey like we said unlike any you've ever taken in the past, and one you'll remember forever.

MEMBER'S TOUR PRICE: \$4,995, land only

Prices are per person, based on double occupancy. Single supplement \$1,650 extra

**Note: Non-members of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum add \$100 to the tour cost*

TOUR ITINERARY

Wednesday, Nov. 5 *Positioning travel to Saigon*

Today is the day that you will need to travel to Vietnam. Our tour offers special airfare departing today from Minneapolis to Saigon.

Thursday, Nov. 6 *Saigon*

Upon arrival in Saigon, arrangements are made to transfer you to your hotel late this evening.

Friday, Nov. 7 *Saigon*

Half day sightseeing tour of Saigon, to include visits to the historic center, strolling along Dong Khoi Street, the main shopping thoroughfare of old colonial Saigon. We'll pass classic European-style landmarks such as the ornate city hall and the old Opera House, and stop in for a quick visit to the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Central Post Office. After lunch, we'll tour the Saigon Botanical Gardens and make a stop at one of the well-known markets in the city before returning to our hotel for overnight. **B L**

Saturday, Nov. 8 *Mekong Delta Tour*

Transfer by coach to My Tho, a bustling town in the rich agricultural region of the Mekong Delta, where we'll first visit the Vinh Trang Pagoda, a beautiful temple and a sanctuary for orphans. Afterwards we'll cruise on the Mekong River and its islands, stopping at an orchard to enjoy some fruit and tea while listening to local music. We'll take a sampan ride through the tiny waterways that thread the island. Lunch is included today. **BL**

Sunday, Nov. 9 *Đà Lat*

This morning we fly from Saigon to Đà Lat, in the highlands of Vietnam, and a center for agriculture in the area. The region was popularized by French occupation at the turn of the 20th century. With the cool European climate (the area sits at an altitude of 5,000 feet above sea level) and the rolling mountainous, pine treed terrain, Đà Lat became the summer hill-station retreat for royalty and high society. The balance of the day is at leisure. We'll be met and taken to our villas for overnight. **B**

Monday, Nov. 10 *Đà Lat Sightseeing*

Đà Lat is a charming former colonial hill station with an abundance of colorful parks, lakes, gardens and waterfalls. Đà Lat is located in the South Central highlands of Vietnam. Known unofficially (and somewhat romantically) as The City of Eternal Spring, Đà Lat also lays claim to the title of *le Petit Paris*. A scaled down version of the Eiffel Tower emerging from the city centre adds a certain Parisian feel to the city. However it is the natural beauty of Xuan Huong Lake and the numerous examples of European inspired architecture and wide city streets that are really the centerpiece of this gorgeously romantic and seductive city of 185,000 inhabitants.

Beginning at the lake in the heart of the city, we'll stroll around the French District, whose atmosphere is reminiscent of a provincial town in France and visit the Cathedral. We'll continue to the Hang Nga Art Gallery, nicknamed the "Crazy House" by locals. Next we'll visit the Flower Garden, with its profusion of colorful blooms, and the old railway station. Afterwards we tour Bao Dai's Summer Palace, for insight into the daily life of the last Vietnamese emperor and his family. Lunch is included on our tour, and dinner is at our hotel. **B L D**

Tuesday, Nov. 11 *Siem Reap/Angkor Wat*

Today we fly to Cambodia, with our flight connecting in Saigon. We arrive in Siem Reap in the afternoon. After checking into our deluxe hotel, we'll have an evening visit to the temple at Angkor to watch the sun set over the Cambodian countryside from the upper terraces of this ancient temple. Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight. **B D**

Wednesday, Nov. 12 *Angkor Wat*

Visit to the fortified city of Angkor Thom, enclosed by a wall and wide moats. The city includes many of Angkor's most popular sights -- the Terrace of the Elephants and the Terrace of the Leper Kings, both adorned with beautiful bas relief. We'll visit Baphuon, the Royal Enclosure and the Bayon Temple, one of the most popular and compelling temples in the country. After lunch we visit the crown jewel of Khmer architecture, Angkor Wat, the national symbol and the highlight of any visit to Cambodia. The largest, best preserved, and most religiously significant of the Angkor temples, you'll be impressed by its sheer scale, beautifully proportioned layout, and the delicate artistry of its carvings. Sunrise and sunset are especially beautiful times at Angkor Wat to watch the play of light on the stones.

We'll visit Ta Prohm, where much of the jungle has not been cleared, looking very much as most of the Angkor monuments would have appeared when European explorers first stumbled across them. And at Ta Keo, built at the end of the 10th century, we'll see the first Angkorian monument built entirely of sandstone. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight. **B D**

Thursday, Nov. 13 *Tonle Sap/Chiang Mai*

After a morning of visiting the local markets, where the friendly locals make the experience an interesting excursion, we take a boat trip on Tonle Sap Lake. Located in the heart of Cambodia, this lake swells up to seven times its original size during the monsoon season. Its ecosystem is one of the richest and most diverse in the region. Our boat trip will explore the floating fishing villages that live at the edges of the lake, passing submerged forests and fishing farms. Afterwards, we'll transfer to the airport for our flight to Chiang Mai, connecting in Bangkok. On arrival in Chiang Mai, we are taken to our hotel in the city, where the balance of the day is at leisure. **B L**

Friday, Nov. 14 *Chiang Mai*

Today's full day will include our visit to the Queen Sirikit Gardens, Orchid Farm and the King's exhibit inside the Royal Flora with Lunch included.

The Queen's Garden, the first true botanical garden in the country, was created to serve as a center for botanical studies and research, render services concerning botanic and environmental knowledge as well as to provide recreation for public to enjoy the beauty of the Thai Flora. Visitors can enjoy the display of plants from tropical rainforests in the conservatory, where the humidity is maintained at about 50-70 percent all year round. En route to the Garden, we visit a nearby orchid garden. **B L**

Saturday, Nov. 15 *Bangkok*

Our morning is at leisure, and mid-day we are taken to the airport for our short flight to Bangkok. Upon arrival in Bangkok, we check in at our hotel where the balance of the day is at leisure. **B**

Sunday, Nov. 16 *Bangkok*

This morning, we have a half-day sightseeing tour of Bangkok, highlighted by a tour of the Grand Palace, a must-see for anyone visiting Bangkok. In the afternoon, there is time to visit one of the local markets or perhaps take in a Thai massage. Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

B D

Monday, Nov. 17 *Singapore*

Transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Singapore. Upon arrival in Singapore, we are taken to our hotel for check-in. In the afternoon, we go to the top of Mt. Faber for a panoramic view of the city. Afterwards we'll visit Chinatown, Little India and the Asian Civilizations Museum. Return to our hotel for overnight.

B

Tuesday, Nov. 18 *Singapore Botanical Gardens*

Today we have a full day tour of the Botanical Gardens in Singapore. We'll spend the day here and at the Spice Gardens, with lunch included. After our day at the gardens, we return to our hotel for overnight.

B L

Wednesday, Nov. 19 *Flights home*

An early morning transfer is arranged those needing to get to the airport for their return flights home.

B

Note: B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner

This outstanding value includes the following:

- 13 nights' first-class hotel accommodation on tour
- Breakfast buffet daily
- 6 lunches and four dinners
- Sightseeing as indicated in the itinerary
- Taxes and service charges
- Inter-Asian flights as described in itinerary
- Deluxe ground transportation in A/C vehicle, with complimentary cold towels and bottled water
- A tax-deductible contribution to the Arboretum
- Led by experienced Arboretum tour leader

Not included in the tour

- *Airfare into Saigon or out of Singapore*
- *Gratuities to drivers and guides*
- *Items of a personal nature-- laundry, telephone, etc.*
- *Visas (req'd for Vietnam and Cambodia)*

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Deposit due with booking: \$500 per person

Final payment due: August 1, 2008

Member's Tour Cost:

\$4,995 per person, double occupancy

\$1,650 per person, single supplement

Note: Non-members of the Arboretum add \$100

Special group airfare available from \$1,195 per person from Minneapolis (plus air taxes estimated at \$160). Airfare includes round trip transfers to and from the airport. Call for details.

NOTE: Visas are required for entry into Vietnam and Cambodia. Contact Macy's Group Travel for details on acquiring these visas.

Cancellation fees are as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 95+ days prior to departure | \$250.00 per person |
| 94 – 60 days prior | \$500.00 per person |
| 59 – 30 days prior | \$1,000.00 per person |
| Within 30 days of departure | NO REFUND |

Cancellation Notice - All cancellations must be in writing and are effective upon receipt in our office.

Trip cancellation insurance is recommended. Contact Macy's Group Travel for details

To register for this tour, please contact:

Macy's Group Travel
700 On the Mall, MS-750
Minneapolis, MN 55402
(612) 375-2881 or (800) 533-0324
Email: jlglad@macystravel.com

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Macy's Group Travel reserves the right to change the itinerary, class of service, and the method of transportation, all without prior notice, to the extent that such services and accommodations offered cannot be supplied due to delay or other causes beyond the control of Macy's Group Travel and further reserves the right to withdraw the trip prior to the date of departure. Further, Macy's Group Travel reserves the right to decline to accept or retain any participant (and the other members of his or her party) should such person's health or deportment impede the operation of the trip or enjoyment of any other participant. In such case, no refund will be made for unused land tour services should such person (and party) be required to depart the trip. Macy's Group Travel reserves the right to make changes that might become necessary or that are in the best interests of the tour members. No refunds will be made for any unused portion of the tour.

TOUR PRICE: Tour price is based on exchange rates in effect as of the printing date of this brochure, and is subject to change. Airfare and air tax is subject to change until ticketed. Should numbers fall below a minimum of 15 participants, Macy's Group Travel reserves the right to reprice or cancel the tour.

In order to qualify for the member's price, each traveler must be a member of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. For information on becoming a member of either the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, please contact the Arboretum membership at 952-443-1440

OUR HOTELS

EQUATORIAL HOTEL (revised) – Ho Chi Minh City

The 5-star hotel is centrally located between the waterfront and Cholon (Chinatown) and is only 20 minutes to the airport. A 10-minute's drive from the hotel is the city's major commercial, financial centers, shopping strips, recreational parks and night spots. The hotel features 333 air-conditioned guestrooms; with direct dial telephones, satellite TV, in-room electronic safe, hair dryer, mini-bar, and tea and coffee making facilities.

The hotel has 7 dining and bar/lounge facilities, a business centre, fitness centre and spa. In addition, the hotel has an outdoor swimming pool with sunken bar, steam room, sauna and jacuzzi, and a hair and beauty salon.

EVASON ANA MANDARA VILLAS & SPA – Da Lat

Evason Ana Mandara Villas & Spa is an exclusive enclave of fully restored French colonial villas built during the 1920s and 1930s. The 57 room resort consists of 17 villas. 15 of the villas have ensuite rooms retaining the unique personalities of their original owners while being lovingly restored to their former glory, and the remaining two villas being converted into a Restaurant and Six Senses Spa, respectively.

In your room you have king/twin-sized beds with mosquito netting, traditional claw foot bath and shower set, (or single shower in villa rooms only), windows open to mountain air, flat screen TV with satellite channels, CD / DVD players, wireless broadband, personal safe, detachable hairdryers, turn down service, access to an expansive at-your-fingertips selection of drinks, snacks and alcoholic beverages, and access to the Villa's private library & board games.

Each villa boasts a shared library, dining room, outdoor terrace and kitchen with wine cellar that serves as the ultimate mini-bar.

FAIRMONT HOTEL – Singapore

The Fairmont Singapore Hotel, formerly known as *Raffles the Plaza Hotel*, is a 26-story hotel ideally situated in the heart of Singapore. The hotel is a part of the world-famous Raffles Hotel complex in Singapore, where guests have access to the Willow Stream Spa, one of the largest spa facilities in Asia, offering the best in spa and fitness services.

The 769 Asian-inspired guestrooms have minibar, in-room safes, coffeemakers, and private step-out balconies with potted plants and city views. Other amenities include high-speed Internet access, down comforters, and complimentary daily newspapers. Marble bathrooms have scales, bathrobes, and slippers.

On-site dining options include traditional Szechuan and Japanese restaurants, an Italian-American pizzeria, a café specializing in local fare, and 24-hour room service. The hotel also has a jazz lounge, a poolside bar and restaurant, and a trendy nightclub.

The 50,000-sq-ft spa has two freeform outdoor pools, six tennis courts, a fitness center with complimentary classes, hot and cold plunge pools, and 35 spa rooms offering massage therapy, body treatments, facials, nail care, hydrotherapy, and other treatments.

SOKHA ANGKOR HOTEL & SPA – Siem Reap

Sokha Angkor Resort is strategically located in the heart of Siem Reap, within walking distance of the Old Market Place popular for local handicrafts, and a 10 minute drive to the airport and 15 minutes to the world-famous Angkor Wat Temples.

Each of our 276 spacious rooms and suites are tastefully decorated with traditional ancient and modern Khmer design for comfort. with view of the city or the swimming pool. Rooms feature broadband internet access, cable TV Channels & in-house movies, color TV with remote control, coffee and tea making facilities, hair dryer, air-conditioning, mini-bar, in-room electronic safe, separate bathtub and shower stall, direct-dial telephones, with extension in bathroom.

The resort features 4 restaurants, from traditional Khmer cuisine to Japanese dining, and an Irish pub on the premises. The Jasmine Spa features a sauna, steam bath and Jacuzzi, and massage rooms. There is a beauty salon and a fitness facility as well.

CHIANG MAI PLAZA HOTEL – Chiang Mai

The Chiang Mai Plaza hotel is a four-star hotel, located within walking distance of the Night Bazaar in Chiang Mai. Each of the 450 spacious guest rooms has a remarkable view of Doi Suthep Mountain and the quiet residential area nearby. The hotel has all the facilities of a world-class hotel, plus that extra something special; the warmth of a traditional Northern Thai welcome.

Spacious guestrooms are decorated in a classic *Lanna* era theme that gives the hotel an air of quiet luxury. All rooms are air conditioned, and have cable/satellite television, mini-bar and direct dial telephones. The hotel features a health and fitness center, with sauna and spa and outdoor swimming pool. There is a snooker room in the hotel also. The Phai Khum Restaurant and Lobby Bar are located in the hotel as well.

SHERATON ROYAL ORCHID HOTEL – Bangkok

The Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Towers offers superior facilities and quality service, enjoying an enviable location on the magnificent Chao Phraya River. The hotel is within easy access of the best that Bangkok has to offer. The Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel has been named to Condé Nast Traveler's Gold List almost yearly since 2000, and is also on Travel & Leisure's list of "Best Hotels in Thailand."

Some of the room amenities available include air conditioning with individual climate control, direct dial telephone, TV/Cable channels, in-room safe, iron/ironing board, hairdryer, in room coffee maker, 24-hour room service and in room electronic safes, to name a few.

The hotel features several bar/lounges on premises, as well as several restaurants, with excellent views of the river and skyline of Bangkok.

The hotel features a health club with workout facilities, an outdoor pool, hair salon and jewelry store on premises, conveniently located with easy access to shopping and nearby restaurants.