

# VIETNAM BATTLEFIELD TOURS

Presents:

**220<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company**

**“CATKILLERS”**

**RETURN to VIETNAM**

**15 days: May 4 – 18, 2014**

**Day 1 & 2** (Sunday – Monday, 4-5 May 2014) – **ENROUTE**

**Bill recommends you arrive in LA on Saturday (May 3) and stay at the Sheraton 4-Points near the airport**

Report to Los Angeles International Terminal by 8:30 p.m. [**this is on 4 May 2014**] and proceed to ticketing counter. Depart for Taipei and lose one day crossing the **International Dateline**.

**Day 3:** (Tuesday, 6 May) – **HANOI**

After a short layover in **Taipei**, we depart for **Vietnam**. At Hanoi's **Noi Bai Airfield**, we proceed through immigration, retrieve our bags, clear customs, and board our motorcoach and cross the **Red River** and its **dikes** to explore the **Ha Noi** environs. Mission-permitting, our first stop is **JPAC (Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command)** for a command briefing on their efforts to find missing Americans. We then visit the **Hoa Lo Prison (Hanoi Hilton)** after which our last stop will be the **John McCain Monument**. Tonight we enjoy our Welcome Dinner.

Meals: **B (in flight) /L/D**

**Day 4:** (Wednesday, 7 May) – **HANOI to HUE**

This morning we visit the **Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum**, the **Ho Chi Minh House**, the **One Pillar Pagoda**, and the fascinating **War Museum**. After lunch, we continue to **Noi Bai**

**Airfield** and catch our flight to **Phu Bai Airfield**. After touchdown, we motor north on **Highway One** and transfer to our hotel on the southern bank of the **Perfume River** in **Hue** (the old Imperial Capital of Vietnam) for a relaxing evening. Be sure to enjoy the hotel pool. After dinner, you can roam the fascinating shops on **Le Loi Street** until late at night.

Meals: **B/L/D**

#### **Day 5: (Thursday, 8 May) – HUE**

Today is devoted to the study of the 1968 Tet Offensive battles for Hue. We will first walk the southern battle. We follow the actions of 1/1 and 2/5, covering, among others, the **Shell Gas Station**, the former **MACV Compound**, **Tran Cao Van Street**, **Girl's High School**, **Hue University**, **Treasury**, **Public Health Building**, **Provincial Capital Building** area, the **Church of the Redemptress**, the **ARVN BOQ**, and the crash site of **Benchmark 15**. After lunch we visit the **Citadel**, with its ramparts and towers, and visit sites specific to the northern battle, including **Phase Line Green**, the **Chuck Meadows Gate** and the **Dong Ba Gate**. We finish at the **Imperial Palace** gate blown by 1/5, which allowed the ARVN to enter and lower the NVA flag that had flown from the main flagpole for 24 days. We then visit the **Forbidden City**, home to the ancient emperors.

Meals: **B/L/D**

#### **Day 6: (Friday, 9 May) – HUE to DONG HA**

This morning we take a relaxing **Dragon Boat** cruise up the beautiful Perfume River to the **Thien Mu Pagoda** and the **Tu Duc Tombs**. After lunch we head north on **Highway One** toward **Dong Ha**, stopping at sites along the way, such as **Quang Tri City** and the **Ai Tu Airfield**. Before checking into our hotel, we explore the city which has now overgrown the Dong Ha airbase.

Meals: **B/L/D**

#### **Day 7: (Saturday, 10 May) – DONG HA**

Departing early this morning, we first stop at the **Dong Ha Bridge** (destroyed by John Ripley which stopped the initial NVA advance during the 1972 Easter Offensive). Next, we pass through the villages of **Mai Xa Chanh** and **My Loc**. Taking the beach road we cross into **North Vietnam** over the **Song Ben Hai**, the river that was the only true physical demarcation between the North and South. We then explore the tunnel complex in the NVA artillery village of **Vinh Moc**. On our return from the North, we merge onto Highway One and cross the **Peace Bridge** making a stop at **Gio Linh FSB Forward** (Alpha 2) located on the forward edge of the **DMZ** on the south. Next we visit the **Marketplace** and **Con Thien** (the Hill of Angels). Following the route of the **Rough Riders**, we cross the **Washout**, pass **C-2**, **C-3**, and stop at the **Cam Lo Bridge**. We return to Dong Ha for the evening. Today we traversed the four quadrants of **Leatherneck Square**: Gio Linh, Con Thien, Cam Lo, and Dong Ha.

Meals: **B/L/D**

**Day 8:** (Sunday, 11 May) – **DONG HA to LAO BAO**

This very early this morning, we head west on **Route 9**. Our first stop will be **Camp Carroll**, the joint services artillery plateau. We continue on to the **Rockpile** and the **Razorback**. Along the way we will come upon other sites that were of military importance during the war, including the **Khe Gia Bridge**, **Vandergrift Combat Base** (LZ Stud), and **Ca Lu**. Next is a stop at the **Da Krong Bridge** for photos and visit a **Bru Montagnard** village. After lunch in Khe Sanh village, we visit **Khe Sanh Combat Base** where we will spend ample time exploring. Our final stop is the **Lang Vei Special Forces Camp**, overrun in the first ever NVA tank assault. **Co Roc Mountain** soars to the heavens just across the border. Tonight we stay in the Laotian border town of **Lao Bao** in Spartan accommodations.

Meals: **B/L/D**

**Day 9:** (Monday, 12 May) – **LAO BAO to HUE**

After breakfast, we return east on Route 9 for a short while and then head south deep into the **Da Krong** and **A Shau Valleys**. We stop at the town of **A Loui** before turning east on **Highway 547** back to Hue City. Points of interest include stops at **FSB Bastogne** and **FSB Birmingham**.

Meals: **B/L/D**

**Day 10:** (Tuesday, 13 May) – **HUE**

Today is a free day in Hue for shopping, relaxing by the pool, or for personal exploration. Lunch and Dinner are on our own.

Meals: **B**

**Day 11:** (Wednesday, 14 May) – **HUE to HOI AN**

Departing early this morning we drive south on Highway One. Our first stop is the Airbase at Phu Bai and the home of the *Catkillers*. Continuing south, we stop at interesting sites along the way before heading up the **Hai Van** with a stop at the **Pass** to explore old French bunkers and take in a view of **Da Nang** and the bay. Heading down the Hai Van, we visit **Nam O Bridge**, and **Red Beach II**. We pass through **Dog Patch** as we enter **Da Nang City** and stop for lunch. After a quick photo stop at **China Beach** on the **South China Sea**, we pass through the **MMAF (Marble Mountain Air Facility)** area. We then visit a marble carving shop and climb **Marble Mountain** to explore the **VC hospital** area located within. Tonight we stay in **Hoi An**. You can roam by yourselves the streets and shops of this ancient port city (formerly known as **Faifo**) where Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese, and Japanese traders once walked. Shopping is excellent here and one of the best places for tailor-made clothing.

Meals: **B/L/D**

**Day 12:** (Thursday, 15 May)

**GROUP 1: – HOI AN**

We travel south to visit **MACV Quang Ngai, Quang Ngai Special Forces Camp, Quang Ngai Airfield, Chu Lai Airbase, Crescent Beach, Ky Ha, and Hill 43.**

Meals: **B/L/D**

**GROUP 2: DA NANG to SAIGON (Bailey)**

Early this morning you transfer to Da Nang for your flight south. Arriving at **Tan Son Nhut Airfield**, retrieve your bags, board your waiting car, and enter **Ho Chi Minh City** (still called **Saigon** by most Vietnamese). Today you visit **Cha Cham Church** (where President Diem fled during the 1963 coup and was captured, removed, and murdered). Next is the **War Remnants Museum**. After lunch you tour the old **Presidential Palace** (now called Reunification Hall), **Notre Dame Cathedral**, and drive by the new **US Consulate** located in the former U.S.

Embassy compound.

Meals: **B/L/D**

**GROUP 3: – HOI AN**

Enjoy a free day to relax, explore on your own, or shop till you drop. Today, lunch is on your own.

Meals: **B/D**

**Day 13:** (Friday, 16 May)

**GROUP 1: – HOI AN to DA NANG**

Today we travel west and parallel to the southern edge of **Go Noi Island**. Our next stops are **Liberty Bridge** (south) and **An Hoa Regimental Combat Base**. We will make a special visit to the **My Son Holyland** located deep in the foothills of the **Que Son Mountains**. My Son is the site of **Trakieu**, the ancient capital of the **Cham Kingdom** and contains ruins dating back to the 5th Century. We then climb **Hill 65** and finally **Hill 55**. Tonight all hands gather for a very special Farewell Dinner at the most famous restaurant in Da Nang, the **Kim Do**.

Meals: **B/L/D**

**GROUP 2: – SAIGON**

Today you visit **Long Binh** and **Binh Hoa** areas. Returning to Saigon for lunch you have the afternoon free and dinner is on your own.

Meals: **B/L**

**Day 14:** (Saturday, 17 May)

**GROUP 1: – DA NANG to HANOI**

After a leisurely breakfast, we head to **Da Nang Airfield** for our flight to Hanoi. After lunch, we prepare for the journey home and more last-minute shopping. Having had a late breakfast, we skip lunch and prepare for the journey home and more last-minute shopping. This evening we enjoy a visit (mission permitting) to the **Marine House**, home of the U.S. Marine Corps Security Guard responsible for the protection of the U.S. Ambassador and the American Embassy.

Meals: **B/D**

**GROUP 2: – SAIGON**

Today is a free day to relax, to meet old friends, or to explore on your own. You can also take a walk along old **Tu Do Street** (now **Dong Khoi Street**) to explore fascinating little shops where you can discover special gifts to bring home. Lunch is not included, but your last dinner is this evening.

Meals: **B/D**

**Day 15:** (Sunday, 18 May) – **RETURN to CONUS**

**GROUP 1 & 2 – HANOI or SAIGON to CONUS**

After breakfast, transfer to our flights which will rejoin both groups in Taipei. Departing from Taipei, we gain a day enroute to the continental United States by re-crossing the International Dateline, arriving in Los Angeles at approximately 3:55 p.m. this same day.

Meals: **B/L/D** (in flight)

William W. Stilwagen, Bush Guide

My home phone is: 757-787-4070