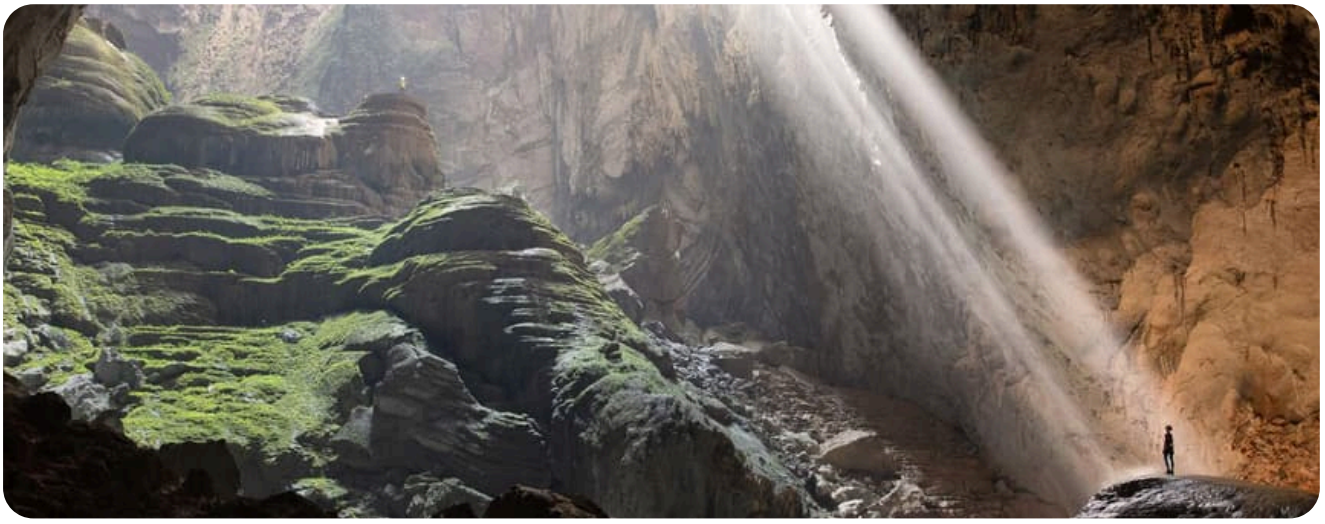
Son Doong Expedition Tour

Experience the largest cave in the world with a team of safety experts, professional guides and porters on this world-class tour of Hang Son Doong. Imagine yourself trekking through the World Largest Cave!



Tour details

DURATION
6 days 5 nights

DIFFICULTY LEVEL
Challenging

AGE
18-70 years old

GROUP SIZE
10 customers (Join-in)

OPERATION
January to August

PRICE
USD 3,000 • VND 80,000,000/pax

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> Please read this pack carefully before your departure and bring it with you.

Overview

This exclusive 6-day, 5-night expedition takes you far beyond the rhythms of modern life, deep into the heart of Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park in Quang Tri Province, on a once-in-a-lifetime journey into Son Doong Cave - the world's largest natural cave.

Discovered in 1990 and officially opened to visitors by Oxalis Adventure in 2013, Son Doong has quickly become a dream destination for adventurers from around the world. The expedition takes you through ancient forests and underground rivers, past million-year-old stalactites, and into awe-inspiring giant dolines, where sunlight reaches deep underground to sustain a remarkable hidden ecosystem.

More than a journey, this is an opportunity to step beyond your limits. Immerse yourself in nature, disconnect from the outside world, and experience one of the most extraordinary masterpieces created by nature.

The highlights include:

- **The world's largest natural cave**: Son Doong Cave is the world's largest natural cave, so vast that some of the world's largest caves could fit entirely inside it. Its immense passages and chambers are large enough to accommodate a skyscraper from New York City.
- **The cave has an entire jungle inside and its own weather system**: The colossal Hang Son Doong Cave, with its two giant dolines (sinkholes), creates a unique and separate weather system. Visitors can observe a dense jungle located 252 meters deep inside. The temperature inside the cave typically ranges from 18 to 24°C (64 to 75°F), a complete contrast to the outside temperature of 38°C (100°F) in the summer.
- **Explore the high-level passage of Son Doong**: For the first time, travelers can access a high-level passage of Son Doong formed millions of years ago. Spanning 700m in length and reaching up to 100m in width, this vast dry cavern features a stunning collection of rare and remarkable speleothems.
- **Unique species found only in Son Doong Cave**: Visitors may have the chance to see the world's most unique species found only in Son Doong Cave such as blind fish and transparent shrimp. There are also white scorpions and other species that are among the 7 new species found in Son Doong Cave.
- **Explore Hang En Cave**: Along the trek, travelers have the opportunity to explore Hang En Cave - the world's third-largest cave after Son Doong and Malaysia's Deer Cave. Though it features a modest entrance, the cavern opens into a massive internal chamber housing an underground lake, as well as a colossal exit arch that served as a filming location for the 2015 movie Peter Pan.
- **Discover the culture of the Bru-Van Kieu people**: Visit Ban Doong, tucked deep within the core zone of Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, and learn about the traditional culture and way of life of the Bru-Van Kieu people, closely connected to the surrounding forest.
- **An exceptional camping experience along the journey**: The expedition includes one night camping in the pristine forest near the entrance to Son Doong Cave, where you can wake to birdsong and the majestic mountain landscape. For the following two nights, you will camp deep inside the world's largest cave, experiencing its unique underground climate and watching ethereal beams of sunlight stream through the dolines.

- **World-class adventure tour**: Designed to deliver a once-in-a-lifetime experience, the Son Doong expedition is operated to the highest standards of safety and service, with a dedicated team of 30 professionals accompanying every expedition. The team includes guides, safety experts, forest rangers, chefs, and porters, who take care of everything from navigation and meal preparation to equipment transport and visitor support throughout the journey.

Itinerary

The Son Doong Expedition is Oxalis Adventure's ultimate challenge. Prepare for strenuous jungle treks (150m–800m gain), knee-deep river crossings, and technical cave navigation using ladders and ropes. This is a strictly off-grid experience; however, guides carry satellite phones for emergencies.

The itinerary of the Son Doong Expedition tour may be changed due to weather conditions.

DAY 1

Phong Nha – Safety Briefing

Once your Son Doong Expedition booking is confirmed, our adventure consultants will assist you in planning your journey and arranging the most convenient transfers and schedule.

You must arrive in Dong Hoi no later than 3:00 PM. Oxalis staff will pick you up from around Dong Hoi and transfer you to Commander Lodge in Phong Nha for check-in.

At 5:00 PM, your guide will take the group to the Phong Nha Caves Exploration Museum. Here, you will discover more than 35 years of underground exploration through detailed hand-drawn maps and specialist equipment used by the British-Vietnamese Caving Expedition Team. This is the perfect introduction to help you appreciate the extraordinary scale of the world's largest cave before setting off.

The group will then come to the Oxalis Phong Nha office to collect expedition equipment and attend the mandatory safety briefing. All guests are required to sign a release form. Attendance at the safety briefing is compulsory; failure to attend may result in being refused participation in the expedition without a refund. Oxalis's guide and safe experts will also inspect your footwear and backpack to ensure they are suitable for the demanding terrain. (Note: Visitors are recommended using good gripping trekking/approach closed shoes. Heavyweight trekking boots are not necessary).

After the briefing, the group will enjoy a relaxed dinner at Oxalis Home with the safety experts and guides. This is a great opportunity to meet your fellow expedition members and get to know one another before embarking on the journey ahead.

After dinner, the group returns to the hotel to rest. Oxalis will provide helmets and dry bags for you to pack the personal belongings that will be carried by porters to the campsite, so you can be fully prepared for the first day of trekking the following morning.

DAY 2

Phong Nha - Hang En Cave - Son Doong Cave Entrance

In the morning, the group will have breakfast at the hotel. Before 7:00 AM, you will need to pack the belongings required for the trek into the Oxalis dry bag provided the previous evening. The maximum weight is 7 kg per person. Leave the bag at the hotel reception, where the porters will collect it and carry it directly to the campsite.

Please note that you will not have access to these belongings during the trek. Any items you may need along the way should be packed in your personal backpack, ideally 20 - 30 litres in capacity. Any remaining luggage and valuables will be stored securely at the Oxalis office. For a detailed list of recommended items, please see "What to bring".

At 8:00 AM, the group will depart from Commander Lodge, traveling along Victory Road 20 and the western branch of the Ho Chi Minh Highway to reach the trailhead at KM35. Day one features a 14 km trek, navigating several steep descents and one major uphill section before arriving at camp. The route also requires approximately 30 knee-deep river crossings.

From here, the expedition officially begins with a descent into the ancient forests of Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park. The trek takes you across the three steep “Ba Gian” rocky slopes, with elevation changes of 150 to 350 metres, over rugged terrain. You will then continue through the forest and cross several small streams before reaching Doong Village, the secluded home of the Bru-Van Kieu people. Here, you will take a break and learn about the local community and its traditional way of life.

Continuing the journey, the group will trek through the forest and cross streams on the way to Hang En Cave. Passing through the cave entrance, where an underground river flows between massive boulders, you’ll be greeted by the breathtaking sight of a vast cave mouth illuminated by natural sunlight. In this spectacular setting, the group will take a break and enjoy lunch.

The group will then continue exploring Hang En Cave, one of the largest caves in the world and home to thousands of swiftlets that nest inside the cave. You will see impressive stalactite formations and make your way to the wide sandy area beneath the cave’s vast rear entrance. From there, the group will continue to the campsite near the entrance to Son Doong Cave. Along the way, you will stop at the stream near Khe Ry Cave for a swim and some time to relax before tackling the steep climb to the campsite at the Son Doong Cave entrance.

At the end of the first day, settle into your tent and enjoy a carefully prepared dinner surrounded by nature. It is a chance to rest, recharge, and prepare for the Son Doong Cave expedition the following morning.

Important note: To ensure the safety of both you and the group, the safety experts and tour guide reserve the right to ask you to end the journey and return to Oxalis Phong Nha if you are unable to complete the first day’s trek, become too exhausted and require continuous assistance from the safety team, or violate safety and conservation regulations. In such cases, no refund will be provided.

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DAY 3

Explore the High Level Passage of Son Doong - Doline 1 Campsite

After breakfast, the group will begin exploring the high level passage of Son Doong, a dry cave passage located directly above the main entrance. The entrance is narrow at first and requires careful movement. As you go deeper, the passage gradually opens into a vast space. Over its 700-

metre length, the passage features ceilings more than 50 metres high and sections reaching 100 metres wide, along with remarkable stalactites and stalagmites formed over millions of years.

After exploring the upper passage, the group will return to the campsite for lunch and a short rest before the next challenge: entering the main chamber of Son Doong. You will be equipped with a harness and safety equipment before beginning the descent. Under the close supervision of the safety team, you will descend 80 metres from the cave entrance to the cave floor. As you reach the entrance, cool air and mist rising from deep inside the cave create an immediate sense of entering a completely different world.

With the help of specialized lighting carried by the porters, the immense scale of Son Doong gradually comes into view. Just below the entrance lies a calm natural pool, surrounded by towering rock walls and massive cave formations. The group will then continue across underground rivers, along rocky slopes and rolling sandbanks towards the Hand of Dog. stalagmite.

At around 4:00 PM, the group will reach Doline 1 Campsite, set deep inside Son Doong. The campsite offers a direct view of Doline 1, often partly veiled in mist. If weather conditions allow, you can take a short walk to explore the nearby Fossil Passage. After a long day of exploration, there will be time to shower and relax in the changing tent area. As night falls, a warm dinner will be prepared for the group to enjoy together and recharge for the next day's expedition.

DAY 4

Doline 1 - Garden of Edam - Doline 2 Campsite

This is one of the most memorable days of the Son Doong Expedition. Today's pace is more relaxed, giving you plenty of time to take in the extraordinary beauty of the world's largest cave.

You will then follow the cave walls and climb steep rocky sections using fixed safety ropes, under the guidance of the safety team. The route continues through the James Bond hole towards Doline 1 - Watch Out for Dinosaur.

Here, one of Son Doong's most iconic views unfolds before you. Towering limestone walls surround the giant Wedding Cake stalagmite, creating a landscape that many cave experts have compared to a prehistoric world or the scenery from Avatar. The group will stop for lunch at the "Watch out for dinosaurs". If the weather is favorable, you may catch sunbeams streaming through the doline, creating one of Son Doong's most spectacular sights.

After a short break, the journey continues to Doline 2 - the Garden of Edam. Few would expect to find a pristine forest thriving deep within the cave, sustained by natural light and moisture. At first, the forest is almost completely hidden behind a giant stalagmite. As you climb to the top, the view gradually opens up, revealing tall trees, lush greenery, and thin clouds drifting through the cave.

As the clouds move, the view of the Garden of Edam changes throughout the day. Sometimes the forest is covered in a light mist, while at other times it is lit by natural sunlight. Take a few moments to sit quietly, listen to the birds, the flowing water, and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere deep inside the cave.

As you trek through the forest, your guide will share stories about Son Doong's fauna and flora, its unique cave environment, and how the cave was formed over millions of years. By late afternoon, the group will arrive at the Doline 2 campsite. You can relax and enjoy dinner after another incredible day of exploration.

DAY 5

Doline 2 Campsite - The Great Wall Of Vietnam - Son Doong Exit - Chay Lap Farmstay

The day begins with a warm cup of coffee and views of the Garden of Edam from a distance. You can watch thin clouds drift above the forest deep inside the cave. After breakfast, you will be equipped with a safety harness. The cave experts will explain how to use the safety equipment before you take on the Great Wall of Vietnam, one of the most challenging and memorable sections of the Son Doong expedition. The safety team will guide you through rope-climbing techniques and manage the safety lines throughout the ascent.

Along the way, you will pass through the cave pearl area, where you can see pearls in a variety of shapes and sizes. They form when calcite builds up around grains of sand or other small objects in shallow pools inside the cave.

To reach the base of the wall, you will cross an underground lake by boat. If the water level is low, the group will instead walk through a muddy and slippery section. At the foot of the wall, an approximately 18-metre vertical section must be climbed using a ladder and safety rope. After completing the steel ladder climb, you will continue up more than 70 metres of steep rock using safety equipment and ropes to reach the top of the Great Wall of Vietnam.

This is a challenging section, but with good physical fitness and the support of the safety team, you can safely complete the climb. After reaching the top of the wall, the group will have lunch there. In the afternoon, the group will exit the cave and trek through the forest to the road, marking the end of the Son Doong expedition. Here, the Son Doong Cave Expedition comes to an end with cold beer and soft drinks to celebrate the journey. Your guide and driver will then take you back to Chay Lap Farmstay, arriving around 3:00 - 4:00 PM.

DAY 6

Chay Lap Farmstay - Dong Hoi

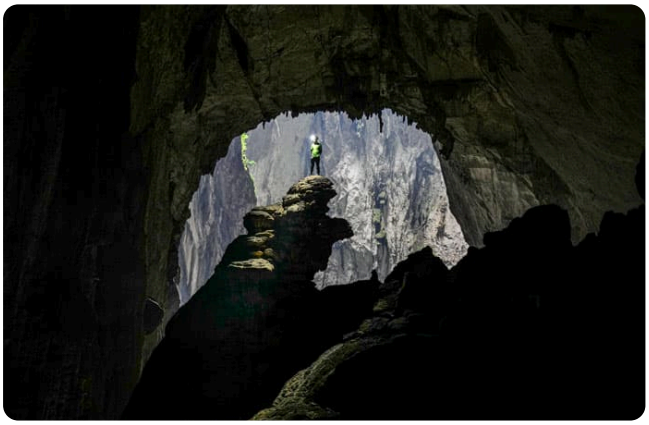
After breakfast, you are free to relax at Chay Lap Farmstay until your driver picks you up for your onward journey to the airport, train station, or hotel in Dong Hoi. If you have extra time, take the opportunity to explore the peaceful landscapes of Phong Nha and make the most of your Son Doong adventure.

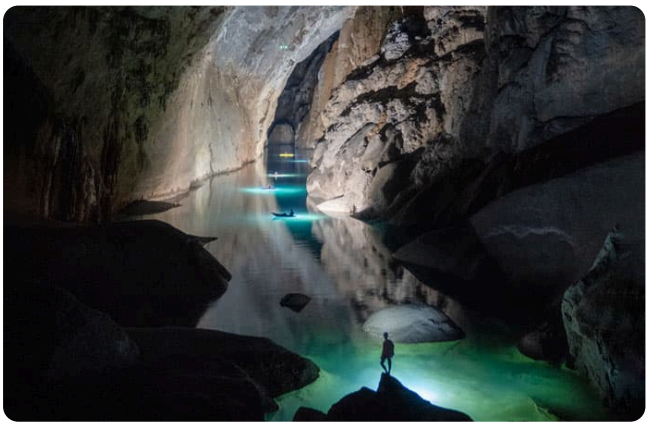
Hotel check-out is at 12:00 PM. Please let our adventure consultant know your departure time after the expedition so we can arrange your transfer. You can also refer to our Getting to and from Phong Nha information to choose the most suitable transportation option. If you would like to stay

in Phong Nha for a few more nights, we can also assist with arranging accommodation at Chay Lap Farmstay.

For guests who wish to extend their stay or join another Oxalis tour, please contact your adventure consultant for assistance.

Gallery





Difficulty Level and Physical Fitness Requirements

Difficulty Level: Challenging

These are the most challenging expeditions within Oxalis's adventure portfolio.

Requirements: Within the past 12 months, participants must have completed at least one overnight camping trek in a forest or mountain setting (covering a minimum of 8 km per day over rocky and steep terrain, with a total elevation gain of at least 1,000 m across the entire journey). Participants must possess a baseline physical fitness level, demonstrated by completing both of the following activities (performed independently, not necessarily consecutively): an outdoor 5 km run within 45 minutes and climbing 5 flights of stairs continuously, without experiencing symptoms of dizziness, lightheadedness, headaches, nausea, abnormal shortness of breath, or chest pain/tightness. Participants must not suffer from any medical conditions included in the restricted list for trekking and caving activities as recommended by Oxalis.

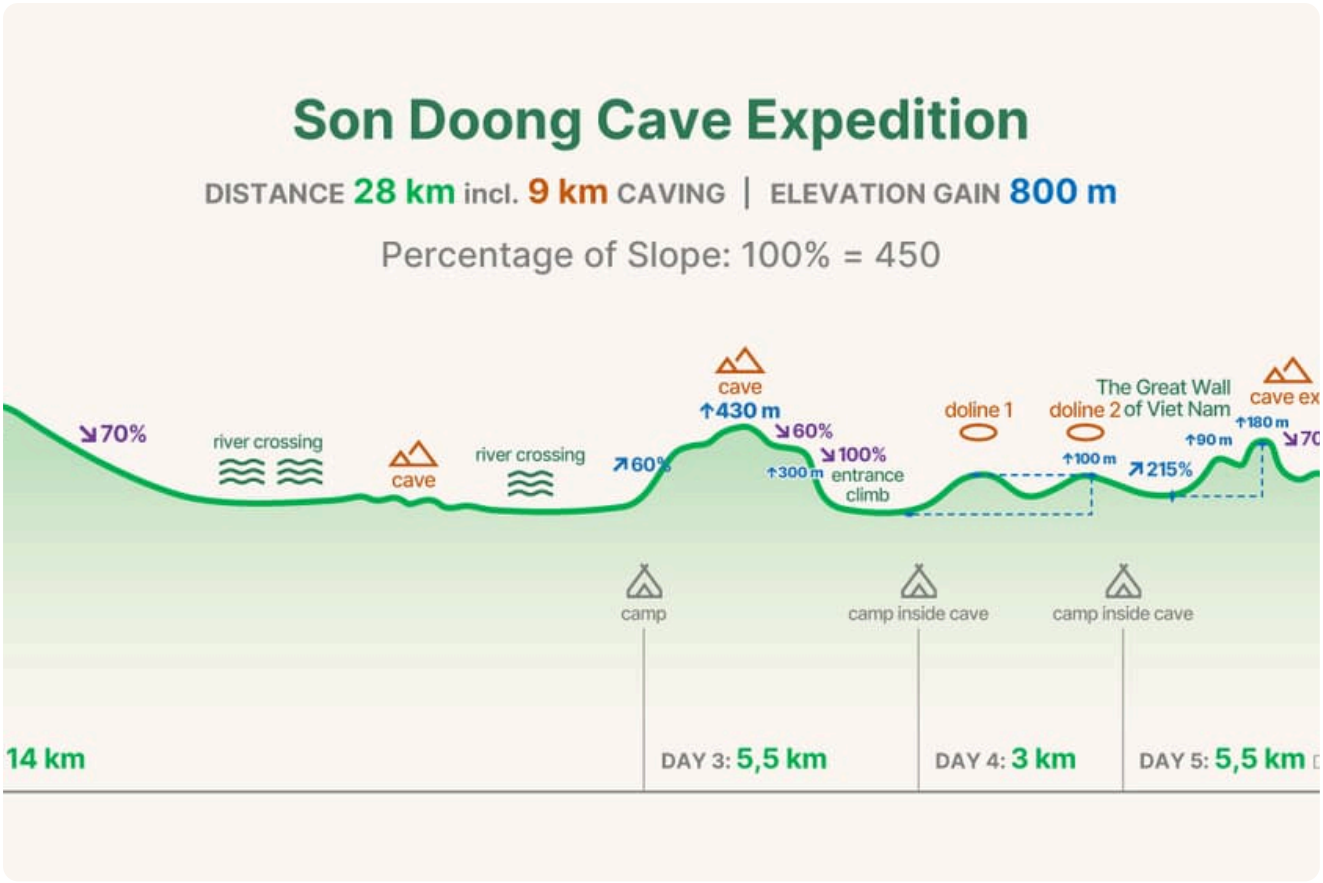
Suitable for: Regular trekkers and mountaineering with excellent physical fitness.

Tours with the same Difficulty Level: Son Doong Cave Expedition 6D5N; Hang Ba Deep Jungle Expedition 3D2N; Tu Lan Cave Expedition 5D4N.

Terrains

The tour takes place in remote areas with complex terrains. Customers must be physically fit. Please carefully read the tour itinerary and honestly fill out the booking information yourself, especially your experience and health condition.

- 28km trekking on jungle and mountain trails, elevation changes up to 800m.
- Cross rivers and streams around 50 times, with water levels varying from knee-deep to deeper depending on weather conditions, as well as underground rivers inside the cave.
- 3 nights of camping: 1 night in the pristine forest and 2 nights inside the cave.
- 9 km of cave exploration, including climbing with safety equipment, scrambling, and traversing large boulders on challenging, uneven terrain.
- 90m descending to the cave entrance with a steep slope of 45 degrees with support from safety equipment, safety assistants and the cave expert.
- 90 m climb up the Great Wall of Vietnam, including an 18 m ladder climb and a 72 m ascent on a 45-degree slope at the Great Wall near the Son Doong Cave exit. All challenging sections are carefully instructed and equipped with appropriate safety gear, with the entire climb managed and supervised by cave experts and safety assistants.



For more information on the necessary physical activities for a successful trip, please refer to: https://oxalisadventure.com/getting-ready-oxalis-tour/.

Who Should Not Join the Expedition

The Son Doong Expedition is physically demanding and takes place far from modern medical facilities. For this reason, it may not be suitable for people with little or no experience in trekking or camping in the forest, those with limited physical fitness, or those with certain chronic health conditions, such as cardiovascular conditions (blood pressure above 140/80), diabetes, or musculoskeletal conditions.

For the safest and most enjoyable experience, please discuss your physical fitness and health with an adventure consultant. They can recommend another expedition that is better suited to your individual needs.

Safety on tour

This is always Oxalis' top priority in order to ensure the safety of both guests and staff during any trip. Oxalis only uses international standard equipment, mainly imported from France, UK and Switzerland, selected, inspected and maintained by cave experts from the British-Vietnam Caving Expedition Team.

The operations team, including guides and safety assistants, must undergo professional training and regular skills assessments. Anyone lacking sufficient experience or failing to meet the required standards is not permitted to lead tours.

Only qualified, highly experienced guides are assigned to lead tours with Oxalis Adventure. For more information, explore Oxalis Adventure's safety management procedures and the safety equipment used throughout its tours here.

By signing the Release Form, visitors agree to follow all tour safety regulations and the instructions of the cave experts and guides throughout the expedition. To ensure the safety of the entire group, the safety experts and guides have the authority to require any guest to end the expedition if they fail to comply with the safety regulations explained during the briefing.

Items to bring on Son Doong Expedition Tour

The Son Doong Expedition is a multi-day trekking adventure that takes you across a wide range of terrain. Depending on the season of your expedition, you will need to prepare carefully to ensure you are comfortable and well-equipped throughout the journey.

You need to prepare

Essential clothing

- [ ] Trekking clothes:
  - 3-4 quick-dry, bright, long-sleeved shirts
  - Arm cover if wearing short-sleeved T-shirts
  - 2-3 pairs of long trekking pants (quick-dry)
  - 1 waterproof jacket (winter months January to March)
- [ ] 1-2 sets of clothes for wearing at the campsites:
  - Warm clothes for winter from January to March
  - Shorts and T-shirts for summer from April to August
- [ ] 1 medium size backpack (20L) to carry stuff that you need while trekking
- [ ] 1 pair of good gripping trekking/approach closed shoes
- [ ] 4 pairs of calf-length, thick socks
- [ ] 1 pair of sandals for use at the campsites
- [ ] Personal dry bag/box for electronic devices

Personal items

- [ ] Mosquito repellent
- [ ] Sunglasses, sun hat, sunscreen
- [ ] Hand fan for summer (April to August)
- [ ] 1-2 medium towels
- [ ] Underwear
- [ ] Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, nature-friendly shampoo & soap, ...)
- [ ] Power banks
- [ ] Personal medication
- [ ] Antifungal foot powder

Oxalis provides

- [ ] Camping equipment: tent, mattresses, pillow, sleeping bags
- [ ] Caving and safety gears: helmet, headlight, gloves,...
- [ ] Basic trekking shoes are available to borrow from Oxalis (sizes 36-44). If you use Oxalis shoes, please bring thick socks and two pairs of insoles to help prevent blisters. A VND 50,000 cleaning fee applies.
- [ ] Water bottle (1L)
- [ ] Water purifier
- [ ] Compost toilet, toilet paper, hand cleaner
- [ ] 1 dry bag (15L) for personal items to use at the campsites
- [ ] First-aid kit and medical rescue equipment
- [ ] Satellite phone
- [ ] Storage room and lockers for luggage and valuables

Optional items

- [ ] Camera & Tripod
- [ ] Ear plugs
- [ ] Bandana or headband
- [ ] Rehydration tablets
- [ ] Blister prevention tape

- [ ] Passport

Food and drinks in the tour

Although the expedition takes place deep in the primary forest and inside Son Doong Cave, you will be provided with three meals a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Oxalis has a dedicated team of cooks who prepare fresh ingredients brought directly to the expedition route, ensuring you receive the nutrition you need throughout the long days of trekking.

For your health and safety, all drinking water served during the expedition is treated through a specialized water filtration system and thoroughly boiled at the campsites to meet strict safe drinking-water standards. Hot drinks such as tea and coffee are also available.

The menu offers a variety of options, including standard, vegetarian, and special-diet meals. If you have specific dietary requirements or food allergies, please note them on your booking form so the Oxalis team can make the necessary preparations in advance.

Camping, Showers and Hygiene During the Expedition

The Son Doong Expedition includes two nights at a local hotel before and after the expedition, along with three nights of camping. On the first night, you will camp near the entrance to Son Doong Cave. The following two nights will be spent deep inside the cave: the second night at Doline 1, approximately 4.5 km from the cave entrance, and the third night at Doline 2, on the edge of the underground primary forest known as the Garden of Edam.

Tents: At each campsite, you will stay in tents specially designed by Oxalis. Double tents measured 1.5m x 2m, while single tents measured 1m x 2m, and is set on a sturdy raised platform 30 cm above the ground, helping minimise moisture and insects. The tent walls are made of breathable mesh, with a fan provided inside to keep the space cool while allowing you to stay connected with the surrounding natural environment. Each tent is also equipped with a mattress, pillow, and sleeping bag, all thoroughly cleaned before every expedition to ensure a comfortable night's sleep.

Toilets and water facilities : Each campsite is equipped with modern toilets and convenient shower facilities. All water used for washing and other daily needs is carefully treated through a filtration system to ensure safe use throughout the expedition.

Waste management and environmental protection: To help preserve the cave ecosystem, 100% of solid waste generated during the expedition is carried out of the cave. For wastewater and toilet waste, Oxalis uses portable septic tanks combined with an advanced filtration system to ensure that discharged water meets Vietnam's strict environmental standards.

Tour booking process

This is a tour that requires careful logistical preparation from both guests and Oxalis. Reading the tour information thoroughly will help you make an informed decision before booking. If you have any

questions or are unsure about anything, please chat with an Oxalis adventure consultant using the chat icon in the bottom-right corner of the screen, or contact us via hotline at +84 919 900 357 for assistance. The booking process is as follows:

Step 1: Learn about the tour

Visit oxalisadventure.com to learn more about the itinerary, highlights, adventure level, tour price, and most importantly, the health and fitness requirements.

Step 2: Choose your departure date

Click "Book Now" on the tour page to view the available departure dates. Available dates will be shown on the calendar. Select your preferred date and enter the number of participants.

Step 3: Provide your information

Complete your contact details accurately, especially your email address and phone number. You must provide truthful information about:

- Your health condition and any medications you are currently taking;
- Allergies or special dietary requirements, such as vegetarian meals or food allergies;
- Trekking experience;
- Exercise frequency and level of physical activity.

Important: Oxalis reserves the right to cancel your booking without a refund if any information provided is found to be false or incomplete, particularly information related to your health and physical fitness.

Step 4: Complete your booking request

Select any additional services you may require, such as transfers or accommodation at Chay Lap Farmstay and Oxalis Home.

Read and agree to the booking terms and conditions, then click "Submit Booking Request." The system will send a booking code to your email address.

Step 5: Consultation and information confirmation

Within 48 working hours, an Oxalis travel consultant will contact you by email or phone to:

- Provide detailed information about the expedition;
- Confirm your booking details;
- Assist with arranging any additional services you have requested.

Step 6: Payment

Once your information has been confirmed, Oxalis will send you an invoice and payment instructions. You must complete the payment within 24 hours of receiving the payment instructions. After this period, your booking request may be automatically cancelled.

Step 7: Booking confirmation

Once Oxalis receives your payment, you will receive an official booking confirmation by email. From this point, you can begin preparing your clothing, equipment, and fitness for the expedition.

Terms of tour cancellation

To confirm your booking, you will be required to pay the tour deposit after completing the booking process. Your booking will be officially confirmed once the deposit has been received. The Son Doong

Expedition tour requires good physical preparation and well prepared trekking items. Last minute cancellations will greatly impact the operation of the tour.

To ensure that Oxalis can find a replacement if there is a cancellation, the terms are:

- The cancellation must be done at least 90 days before the tour departure date. You will be charged a VND 7,000,000 booking processing fee per person for cancellation and the balance will be refunded. Departure date change can only be done if there are spots available.
- Guests will be charged 50% of the tour fee if the cancellation occurs 45 days before the departure.
- Guests will be charged 100% of the tour fee if the cancellation occurs less than 45 days before the departure.

See more details in “Terms of tour cancellation”.

Useful Information

What the World's Media Says About Son Doong Cave

Son Doong Cave was discovered in 1990 by Ho Khanh, a local jungle man in Phong Nha. It was surveyed by the British-Vietnamese Cave Expedition Team in 2009-2010. In 2009, the expedition team and National Geographic announced Son Doong as the world's largest natural limestone cave. In 2010, National Geographic TV further confirmed Son Doong as the world's largest cave by volume, measuring approximately 38.5 million cubic metres.

In 2014, National Geographic UK named the Son Doong Expedition the world's most prestigious adventure tour. In 2017, the UK's Daily Mail named Son Doong the cave with the world's most spectacular campsite. In 2019, British television channel Dave TV ranked the Son Doong Cave Tour fifth among the 20 greatest adventures on Earth.

On 26 November 2023, Son Doong Cave, Hang En Cave, and Hang Va Cave appeared in Episode 6, "Extremes," of the acclaimed BBC documentary series Planet Earth III. On 30 March 2026, the American CBS programme 60 Minutes aired a 12-minute feature on the expedition into Son Doong Cave.

Weather and Climate in Son Doong Cave

Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park, like many northern provinces of Vietnam, has 4 seasons in a year (spring, summer, autumn and winter). Due to the weather condition and for the safety of guests, Hang Son Doong Cave tour is only operated from January to the end of August every year.

- From January to March, the weather may be quite cold. If there are sunny days, you may see sunbeams illuminating Hang En Cave campsite.
- From April to May may be one of the best times of year when the weather becomes nice and warm, landscapes and scenery turn green, and flowers bloom. This is also the time to see clouds and mist forming in the cave.
- From June to August are the warmest summer months. However, most of the time the trek is under the tree cover and inside the cave with temperature from 22 to 25 degrees, so it is not too bad at all. Swimming in the underground lakes is the best experience of this season.
- From September: This Son Doong Expedition tour will be closed due to weather conditions. You can also check the weather forecast for Phong Nha and Son Doong to help you prepare for your expedition.
- Each season contains its own unique features, unlike any other caves in Vietnam's national park. Son Doong Cave has its own weather system. Please read more about weather in Son Doong at "Weather of the seasons in Hang Son Doong Tour".

Communication on tour

The Son Doong Cave Expedition is rated at the highest adventure level of Oxalis Adventure. The itinerary leads deep into the core zone of the national park, far removed from medical facilities, doctors, and hospitals. Participants will navigate rugged jungle trails with steep, repeated inclines that are entirely inaccessible to bicycles, motorbikes, or cars.

The journey is off-grid with no standard cellular signal or Wi-Fi, though Starlink satellite internet is provided in some areas for emergency communications. Guests can still use the internet and phone at the hotel before departure and after leaving the forest. During the tour, the safety staff will communicate by walkie-talkie (radio).

In order for the guest to safely explore the caves, Oxalis Adventure has developed an "emergency response procedure", ready for: cave rescue, cave evacuation and first aid in case of emergency. Every year, we organize many training courses for first aid, rescue, evacuation etc. We have established rescue teams for each tour operating area. The equipment for rescue is chosen and imported from Britain and France, and designed for cave rescue and evacuation. Due to the remote location, the rescue team and medical assistance may take several hours to reach the casualty. Therefore, the safety of guests is Oxalis' top priority. During the booking process, Guests are required to fill in details about health, physical fitness honestly on their own so that the cave experts and tour consultants can give useful advice. Guests are requested to update their health condition to our Adventure Consultant 45 days prior departure of the tour.

** Please note that tour communication is conducted in English and Vietnamese.*

Emergency Responses Procedure

In order for the guest to safely explore the caves, Oxalis Adventure has developed an "emergency response procedure", ready for: cave rescue, cave evacuation and first aid in case of emergency. Every year, we organize many training courses for first aid, rescue, evacuation etc. We have established rescue teams for each tour operating area. The equipment for rescue is chosen and imported from Britain and France, and designed for cave rescue and evacuation. Due to the remote location, the rescue team and medical assistance may take several hours to reach the casualty. Therefore, the safety of guests is Oxalis' top priority. During the booking process, Guests are required to fill in details about health, physical fitness honestly on their own so that the cave experts and tour consultants can give useful advice. Guests are requested to update their health condition to our Adventure Consultant 45 days prior departure of the tour.

** Please note that tour communication is conducted in English and Vietnamese.*

Risks and how to avoid

Any activity carries risks, but with adventure tours, these dangers and risks are even higher in comparison with other types of tourism. There could be: floods, insect bites, snake bites, accidents, illness or many others. You can learn more about: "dangers, risks and how to avoid them"

What to expect about Son Doong Expedition Tour

This tour is designed for travelers who love adventure and new challenges. Son Doong Expedition is a “must” to do in a lifetime.

There are people who rarely exercise, but once they decide to go to Son Doong, they exercise more often and participate in more outdoor activities to improve their health and physical fitness.

The itinerary of the Son Doong Expedition is designed so that each day has a similar duration and number of challenges so that all guests who are well prepared should complete the trek comfortably. With the temporary disconnection from computers, internet, smart phones or daily business, visitors will have more time to enjoy nature and harmony.

During the tour, guests will be expected to complete the trekking activities by themselves.

This tour requires a huge amount of logistics to ensure that guests will have a comfortable trip.

You can find more about “Son Doong Expedition tour: What to expect”.

How do you get into Son Doong cave?

Phong Nha is located 45 km from Dong Hoi, Quang Tri Province (the former capital of Quang Binh Province). You just need to get to Dong Hoi, and Oxalis staff will pick you up from any location there. There are many ways to get to Dong Hoi such as a plane, train or sleeper bus.

By air

- Hanoi - Dong Hoi: Vietnam Airlines and Sun PhuQuoc Airways currently operate daily direct flights between Hanoi and Dong Hoi. The flight takes approximately 1 hour 5 minutes.
- Ho Chi Minh City - Dong Hoi: Vietnam Airlines and Vietjet Air operate direct flights from Tan Son Nhat International Airport to Dong Hoi, with a flight time of approximately 1 hour 40 minutes.
- Nha Trang - Dong Hoi: Sun PhuQuoc Airways operates direct flights between Cam Ranh International Airport and Dong Hoi, with 3 round trips per week.

By train

Dong Hoi Railway Station is located on the North-South railway line, approximately 45 km from Phong Nha. Trains to Dong Hoi are available from Hanoi, Ninh Binh, Hue, Da Nang, Nha Trang, Ho Chi Minh City, and many other cities and provinces. From the station, an Oxalis vehicle will pick you up and transfer you to Phong Nha. There is also a Hue-Phong Nha tourist train, offering a direct connection between the two destinations as part of a journey through Central Vietnam. This is a convenient option for guests who wish to combine a visit to Hue with their Son Doong Expedition.

By bus

Sleeper buses are a convenient option if you prefer to travel directly to Phong Nha without transferring to Dong Hoi. Direct bus services are currently available from Hanoi, Hue, Da Nang, Hoi An, and several other destinations.

International airports: There are 3 main international airports for international flights: Tan Son Nhat International Airport (SGN), Noi Bai International Airport (HAN) and Da Nang International Airport (DAD). From Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) or Ha Noi, travellers can book domestic flights to Dong Hoi Airport (VDH). From Da Nang, travelers can catch a train or bus to Dong Hoi/Phong Nha.

You can check out the means of transportation to Phong Nha here. “How to get to Phong Nha?". All participants of Oxalis Adventure tours will be picked up at their designated hotel around Phong Nha town on the morning of the departure day.

Vietnam visa: Vietnam currently grants visa exemptions to citizens of 29 countries and has expanded its E-visa program to apply to nationals of all countries and territories.

Upon arrival and during their stay, travelers are required to present a valid passport together with a valid visa or other legal residence documents in Vietnam so that accommodation providers and tour operators can complete temporary residence registration as required by Vietnamese regulations.

For the latest details on travel policies, please verify the information here: Vietnam Travel Policy Updates

Son Doong Cave tour price includes

The Son Doong Cave tour costs VND 80,000,000 (US$3,000) per person, including: VAT, entrance fee and environmental service fee (US$600), management and supervision fee from the National Park (US$20), and the following tour services:

- Pick up and drop off at any location in Dong Hoi.
- Expedition support team: Each group of 10 guests is accompanied by 1 cave expert, 1 tour guide, 6 safety assistants, 2 chefs, and 18 porters carrying belongings. The number of team members may vary depending on the group's physical condition.
- Food and drink: Oxalis will provide food (vegetarian, vegan...), tea and coffee during the trip (not including extra requests). Oxalis' dishes follow a fixed menu. Please let us know your food option when booking the tour to visit Son Doong Cave.
- Accommodation: You will stay at Commander Lodge on the first night, followed by 3 nights of camping - 1 night in the primary forest and 2 nights inside the cave. After exiting the cave, you will stay at Chay Lap Farmstay.
- Safety equipment: Oxalis will provide safety equipment such as: helmets, harnesses, headlights, gloves and others.
- Travel Insurance: Oxalis Adventure will purchase travel insurance for travel as required by Vietnam Tourism Law. The maximum compensation per case is VND 50,000,000. We recommend that guests purchase their own comprehensive travel insurance.

Carbon Footprint Index

At Oxalis Adventure, we are dedicated to minimizing our environmental impact and promoting sustainable tourism. Since 2023, conducting annual greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories has been an essential part of our journey toward Net Zero.

We are pleased to report a 15% reduction in our carbon footprint compared to 2023. According to our 2024 inventory, the average carbon footprint for a participant on the Son Doong Expedition Tour is 542.6 kgCO_2e. This figure is comprehensive, accounting for all emission sources, including transportation, accommodation, and tour-related activities.

FAQs

How do I get to Hang Son Doong?

To enter Son Doong Cave, you must join the Son Doong Expedition Tour. Oxalis Adventure is currently the only operator licensed to organize and run expeditions to Son Doong Cave.

Why does a Son Doong Expedition cost US$3,000?

The Son Doong Cave tour cost is US $3,000 per person, including: VAT, entrance fee and environment service (US$600), management fee and supervision from National Park (US$20) and the tour services as follows:

- Pick up and drop off at Dong Hoi airport / train station.
- Expedition support team: Each group of 10 guests is accompanied by 1 cave expert, 1 tour guide, 6 safety assistants, 2 chefs, and 18 porters carrying belongings.
- Food and drink: Oxalis will provide food (vegetarian, vegan...), tea and coffee during the trip (not including extra requests). Meals follow a fixed menu. Please let us know your food option when booking the tour to visit Son Doong Cave.
- Accommodation: You will stay at Commander Lodge on the first night, followed by three nights of camping - one night in the primary forest and two nights inside the cave. After exiting the cave, you will stay at Chay Lap Farmstay.
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Are there any additional costs besides the Son Doong Expedition price?

The tour price includes all services provided during the expedition, as well as transfers between the airport, train station, or hotel in Dong Hoi, Quang Tri, and your accommodation in Phong Nha. It also covers two nights of accommodation at Commander Lodge and Chay Lap Farmstay, the expedition itself, and other related costs.

You will only need to cover your own personal expenses, such as shopping, transportation, or visits to places outside the Son Doong Expedition. Any additional services requested beyond those included in the tour price will also be charged separately.

How far in advance do I need to book the Son Doong Expedition?

The Son Doong Expedition Tour 6D5N operates on a strict first-come, first-served basis, and spots sell out exceptionally fast. We strongly recommend reserving your spot as early as possible to secure your preferred dates.

How can I contact an adventure consultant?

You can easily contact a consultant via chat box (on the right corner) on Oxalis website or email to: contact@oxalisadventure.com; Hotline: +84919900357.