

Tu Lan Cave Encounter Tour

- *Tour code: TL2*
 - *Adventure level: Easy*
 - *Age 16-70 years old*
 - *Group size: 10 customers*
 - *Tour type: Join-in*
 - *Operation: mid-Nov to mid-Sep*
 - *Price: USD 292/pax*
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On joining the 3 days 2 nights Tu Lan tour, visitors may experience firsthand the ecosystem of a tropical forest and admire the beauty of the [Tu Lan Cave system](#), Quang Binh. You will swim in the underground river of a cave carved out millions of years ago, trek along forest trails, spend the night camping in the wild by the side of a waterfall, enjoy a local dinner, and spend the night at a Rural Homestay, the very first weather-adaptive homestay in Vietnam. These experiences will help you temporarily forget the hectic city life and immerse yourself in nature.

The highlights include:

- Explore stunning caves:** Journey through the remarkable Tu Lan cave system, exploring both dry and water caves like Ken, Tu Lan, Kim, and Hung Ton. Each cave offers a distinct world, revealing magical landscapes and a rare, pristine beauty hidden beneath the mountains.
- Immersive underground river swimming:** Experience the most iconic and memorable part of the Tu Lan challenge: [swimming through dark, underground caves](#). The valley is crisscrossed by hidden rivers, and as you swim through these subterranean passages, natural light disappears. All you'll hear is the sound of flowing water and see the sparkling reflections of your headlamp on the cliffs. This feeling of excitement and awe turns every stroke into an adventure into a mysterious, underground world. (Note: If you prefer not to swim, you can choose to hike over the mountains to enjoy the wild, majestic scenery.)
- Camp in a primeval forest oasis:** Spend a night fully immersed in the wilderness at the Tu Lan camping site. Carefully selected for its beauty, the site is situated next to a waterfall and natural swimming pool. Surrounded by vast primeval forests, it offers a clear view of the sparkling Milky Way once night falls.
- Taste local culture and cuisine:** Enjoy a cozy dinner featuring authentic local cuisine at a resident's home on the final night. This is an opportunity to savor the rustic, sincere flavor of Tan Hoa and hear the [compelling story](#) of how the village is harmoniously connecting people and nature. You can also cycle through the peaceful village to admire the countryside and soak up the rare, fresh atmosphere.
- Stay in a unique floating homestay:** Experience a night in one of Vietnam's most unique, weather-adaptive floating house homestays. These unique homes offer all the

facilities of a small hotel, complemented by the openness, enthusiasm, and warmth of your hosts. Share a cup of tea or listen to stories about [local culture](#) for an unforgettable, personal experience.

☑️ **Support a unique sharing economy model:** By joining the Tu Lan Challenge tour, you are directly contributing to a unique sharing economy model. This initiative supports local livelihoods by partnering with 10 households to provide authentic dinner services and 10 households to offer overnight stays in their family's innovative, flood-adaptive floating houses. Your visit helps create jobs and income, ensuring that tourism benefits the Tan Hoa community.

☑️ **A journey that transforms lives:** Beyond the natural splendor, your presence contributes to a powerful story of community resilience and growth. Sustainable tourism has played a key role in [transforming Tan Hoa](#), driving the poverty rate down from 85.7% in 2010 to just 2% in 2024. This expedition supports vital initiatives, including the construction of floating houses and septic toilets to improve local living standards. Furthermore, Oxalis is committed to future generations, sponsoring free open [swimming and safety training](#) to over 300 children in Tan Hoa and along the Rao Nan River every year.

Itinerary

The Tu Lan Cave Encounter tour schedule may be adjusted according to the weather conditions. The trek can be quite muddy and slippery when it rains.

[Download the itinerary](#)

Day 1: Phong Nha - Tan Hoa - Ken Cave - Tu Lan campsite

Your adventure begins between 07:30 – 08:00 AM with a pick-up in Phong Nha for the scenic 70km drive to Tan Hoa Village. Upon arrival at the adventure headquarters, you'll receive a safety briefing, gear up, and prepare for the expedition ahead.

The trek starts gently, winding 2.5km through peanut and corn fields to the banks of the Rao Nan River. From here, the landscape shifts. You'll cross the river and conquer a rocky 50m hill before descending into the flat, grassy expanse of Hung Ton Valley. Lunch is served at the impressive entrance of Hung Ton Cave, fueling you for the afternoon leg—a challenging climb over steep hills that leads to your home for the night: the Tu Lan Valley campsite, situated right next to a cascading waterfall.

Drop your gear and cool off with a swim before exploring Ken Cave, located just steps from camp.

The day concludes with a chef-prepared dinner by the waterfall, where the sounds of the jungle and the rushing water promise a deep, peaceful sleep.

Our tour departs promptly in the morning! Please plan your travel to reach Phong Nha before 07:00 AM. If you are traveling by train to Dong Hoi, the SE3 (from the North) and SE8 (from the South) are the best options. Don't worry if you arrive very early – we offer free use of our dorm beds so you can rest and freshen up before the adventure starts.

Day 2: Tu Lan cave - Kim Cave - Hung Ton Cave - Tan Hoa

The second day is dedicated to exploring the water caves of the system. You will trek and swim through Hang Tu Lan and Hang Kim, navigating underground rivers to reach the To Mo Valley. After a lunch break at the campsite, the journey continues into Hung Ton Cave.

This section includes a technical highlight: swimming into the cave entrance by the waterfall and ascending a 10m ladder with safety equipment. Emerging from the cave, you are rewarded with a stunning view of the Hung Ton Valley below. The trek concludes with a walk back to the Tan Hoa office, crossing the Rao Nan River and passing through local corn and peanut fields.

Upon return, check in to the Rural Homestay for a shower and rest. At 6:00 PM, the group will visit a local family for dinner. This cultural exchange allows you to taste traditional dishes and learn about the village's history and way of life, followed by a peaceful night at the homestay.

Day 3: Visit local farms by bike - Tour ends

Morning in Tan Hoa is peaceful and rustic, with wide green valleys and limestone mountains fading in and out of the early mist. You can enjoy the sunrise from your homestay window or take a short walk around the village to feel the fresh, quiet atmosphere. After that, you can cycle to the Tu Lan Lodge restaurant for breakfast, served from 6:30 AM.

At 08:30 AM, our guide will lead you on a bicycle tour through the heart of Tan Hoa. You will cycle along quiet paths lined with cornfields and peanut gardens, observing the daily rhythm of rural life. Stops include visits to local farms to learn about the sustainable VAC farming model. Along the way you'll taste local specialties like boiled corn, roasted peanuts, and ginger honey tea.

The tour finishes around 11:00 AM, giving you time to pack and prepare for check-out at 12:00 noon. The shuttle from Tan Hoa to Phong Nha or Dong Hoi departs at 12:30 PM.

Please inform Oxalis Adventure travel consultant of your flight/train/bus schedule at least one day in advance. If you are leaving Quang Tri on the same day, ensure your departure is after 4:00 PM.

If you wish to stay longer or join additional activities in the Phong Nha–Ke Bang area, contact your Oxalis Adventure consultant or ask the hotel reception for assistance.

Suggested itinerary before and after the tour:

To ensure the best preparation before your journey or to unwind after the expedition, Oxalis suggests staying at Chay Lap Farmstay, featuring premium rooms, a swimming pool, spa, kayaking, cycling, and more. A special discounted rate for Oxalis customers is 1,000,000 VND/room for 2 people. Check availability here: chaylapfarmstay.com

During your time in Phong Nha, the [Phong Nha Caves Exploration Museum](#) (open daily from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM, free admission) is a must-visit destination. Here, you can experience the Son Doon 5D VR technology for 500,000 VND per ticket. All proceeds from this activity are contributed to the Oxalis Foundation to support local community projects, making your journey even more meaningful.

Adventure level on tour

After many years of adventure tourism activities, Oxalis Adventure has created a Level of Adventure scale to help guests participating in Oxalis tours to visualize and choose the adventure tour most suitable for their fitness and health. This scale is not to be applied to other companies or tours with different conditions and terrains. The easiest level (level 1) anyone can join, and the most difficult level - 6 requires regular exercise and some trekking experience. Those who play sports or do some exercise can complete this tour.

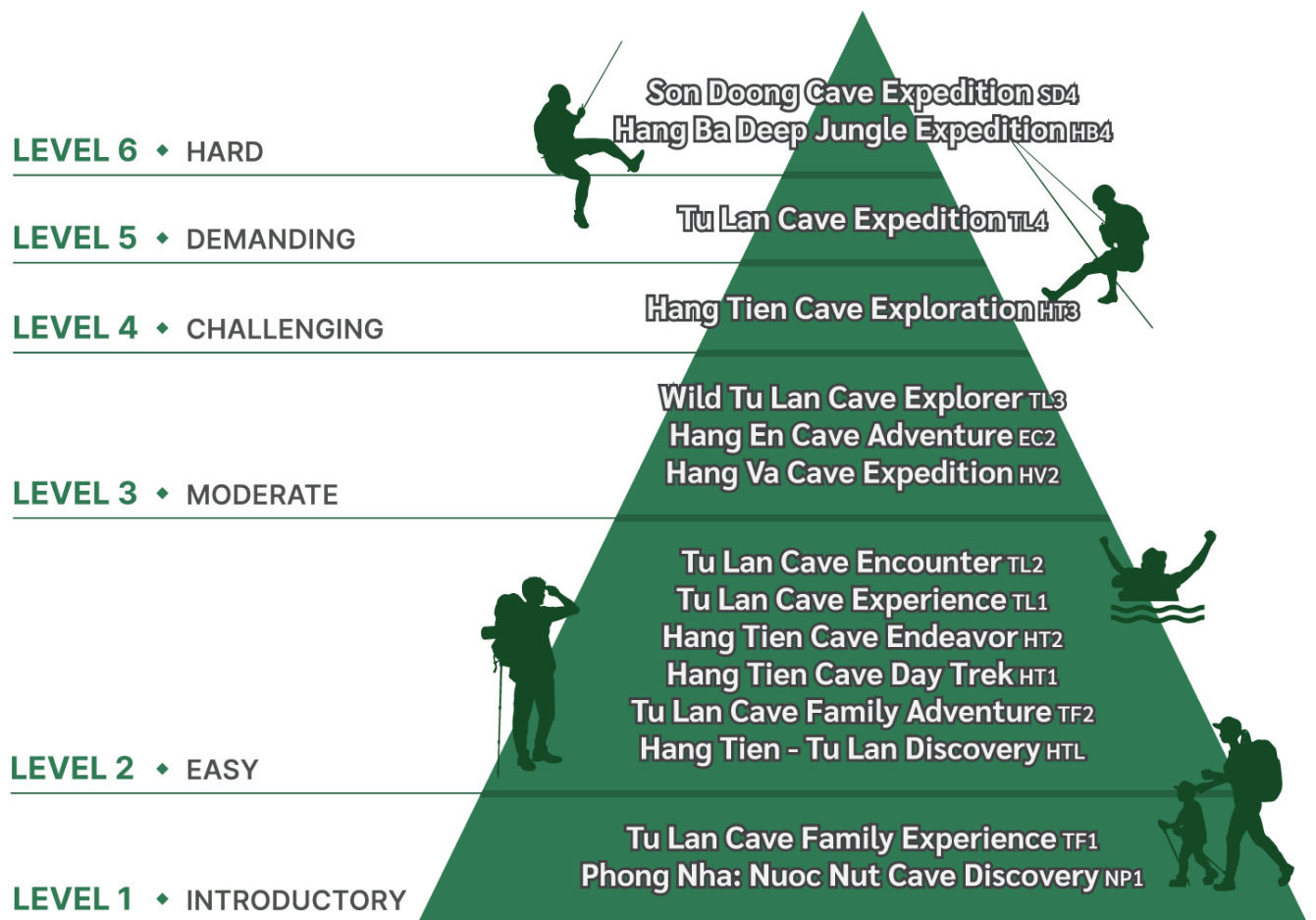
Adventure Level 2 · Easy

The Tu Lan Cave Encounter Tour is rated as Easy (Level 2) on the Oxalis adventure level system. The difficulty of the tour is based on the physical fitness and health of average active people, not runners, athletes, or intensely active individuals.

Number of guests per tour:Maximum of 10; Age 16-70 years old.

Expect: Easy trails, some rocky sections, short ladder climb and optional swim

- ★ Easy to moderate trekking
- ★ 14,5km of trekking including up to 2km of caving
- ★ 300m elevation gain
- ★ 1km swimming in the caves with a life vest provided by Oxalis
- ★ Descend 15m ladder in cave with a safety rope and harnesses, operated by the safety team.



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.

Tu Lan Cave Encounter (TL2)

DISTANCE **14.5km** incl. **2km** CAVING | ELEVATION GAIN **300m**

Percentage of Slope: 100% = 45°



Items to bring on tour

All adventure tours in Vietnam will cross a variety of terrains and customers will be asked to prepare suitable clothing for safety and comfort. Clothing should be good for trekking in the jungle, river crossings, or exploring the cave as well as avoiding dangers and risks from sharp rocks, snakes, insects, or poison ivy. Visitors need to choose a good and well-fitting pair of shoes for steep rocky terrain.

Oxalis provides

Camping equipment: tent, mattresses, pillow, sleeping bags

Caving and safety gears: helmet, headlight, gloves, ...

1 PVC backpack (25L) to carry helmet, dry box, water and things you need during the trek.

Basic jungle boots (EU size 36–44); if using Oxalis shoes, bring thick, long socks and 2 insoles to ensure comfort.

Water bottle (1L)
Water filter
Compost toilet, toilet paper, hand cleaner
Shared dry box and semi-dry bag (15L)
First aid and medical rescue equipment
Portable fan (in summer)

You need to prepare

Essential clothing

Trekking clothes:

- 2 quick-dry, bright, long-sleeved shirts
- 1-2 pairs of long trekking pants (quick-dry)
- 1 waterproof jacket (winter months November to March)

Campsite clothing sets:

- Warm clothes for winter from November to March
- Shorts and T-shirts for summer from April to September

1 pair of good gripping trekking/approach closed shoes. Heavyweight trekking boots are not necessary

2 pairs of calf-length, thick socks

1 pair of sandals/slides for campsite

Swimwear using at the Campsites

Personal items

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

Passport



Optional items

Arm cover if wearing short-sleeved T-shirts

Camera & Tripod

Ear plugs

Bandana or headband

Rehydration tablets

Blister prevention tape

Personal dry bag/box for electronic devices

Photos



