

Preparing for Son Doong Expedition Tour

It's about time to get all prepared for your tour! Please make a thorough check of your equipment and physical fitness. We do not run this expedition as a test of your physical ability; we ask that you are in top physical condition so that you are better able to safely enjoy this wonder of the world.

Preparing physically:

- Start/continue training at least 6 months out
- You should be able to walk comfortably 10 kilometres/6 miles with at least one hill of 300-400m/900-1200ft by the time you join us
- You should be able to walk confidently over rough ground, and be able to scramble up and down rocks and boulders
- Aim to do at least 6 training hikes (10km/6 miles with at least one large hill) within the 3 months leading up to your tour departure. *All training hikes should be done in the shoes and backpack you plan on wearing on tour.*

Note: The best training you can do is workouts that are reflective of what you will experience during the expedition. This mainly includes hiking (not on constructed paths), trekking, and light scrambling.

Consider adding in some supplemental physical activities:

- Outdoor rock climbing (indoor/gym rock climbing is not reflective of cave terrain)
- Proper scrambling and bouldering
- Yoga (those with more flexibility tend to be less sore each evening at camp; hot yoga is an even better idea if you'll be joining us for a summer tour)
- Obstacle races and adventure races (such as Spartan Race, Tough Mudder, etc.)
- Squats, stairs, burpees (these are exercises that are easy to squeeze in even on a day when you are short on time)

Checking your fitness:

- Can you easily climb over a wall about the height of your waist?
- Can you walk up 6 flights of stairs without stopping and without getting out of breath?
- Can you walk 3 kilometres/1.5miles over rough ground in less than 1 hour?
- Can you walk confidently on uneven ground/rough trails/over rocks?

Final check:

- Have you completed your minimum of 6 training hikes?
- Have you fully broken in your shoes and do you feel comfortable with all of your equipment?

Your training should be timely and consistent. At the end of your training, you should feel extremely steady on your feet regardless of conditions underfoot. You should feel confident, strong, and ready to conquer the world's largest cave.

Let's get ready for a great adventure!

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FOR VIETNAMESE RESIDENTS JOINING US

Not sure where to train? Don't know where to purchase outdoor equipment? We are happy to help advise you so that you are best prepared for this adventure.

Any person who wishes to book the Son Doong Expedition journey must have done at least one trek that involves a hiking trail.

Physical preparation for those living in the North:

You could visit Viet Rock Climb in the Westlake area, or do some natural outdoor rock climbing with Outdoor Asia in Cat Ba island. There are also many trekking opportunities in the Northern Provinces such as Fansipan (not the cable car, of course) Apachai or Bach Moc Luong Tu. Ba Vi and Yen Tu are good places for the ones who live in Hanoi to practice in weekend but could not be counted as a trekking trail.

Where to purchase outdoor equipment in Hanoi:

- Umove Travel and Outdoor gear: Please check their website <http://umove.com.vn/> for the address of stores in Hanoi.
- Super Sports: <http://supersportsvietnam.com>

Physical preparation for those living in the South:

If you are in Ho Chi Minh city, you can do regular rock climbing at PhanDinhPhung stadium at District 3, and go trekking to Ba Den Mountain which is 100km from Saigon. Ta Nang – Phan Dung and Doi Cape (the Eastern most point of Vietnam) could be good options, too.

Where to purchase outdoor equipment in Ho Chi Minh City:

- Thu Sports: <http://thusports.com.vn> 42 Pham Hong Thai, Ben Thanh Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh city.
- Super Sports: <http://supersportsvietnam.com>
- Fanfan's Travel Shop, 61/4 CoGiang street, CauOngLanh Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh city. Phone: +84 28 6681 7130

Also, if you are unsure about how ready you are for Son Doong, we HIGHLY recommend that you join us for an *Oxalis tour* to the **Tu Lan Cave System** to help you prepare. Joining us to **Tu Lan** will help you to gauge your readiness levels and to see how physically fit you are. It will also help us to better advise you on how to continue preparing for this tour. If you are able to participate in a **Tu Lan** tour in the months prior to your **Son Doong Expedition** tour, please do so!

You can sign up for a tour to **Tu Lan** online at <http://oxalis.com.vn/adventure-tours/>.