



VIETNAM TRAVEL TIPS

Dear Travelers,

Welcome to our beautiful, friendly and smiling Vietnam!

We hope you will enjoy your trip to Vietnam. Below you will find some necessary but brief information that will help you to learn some facts prior to your trip.

Thank you very much for your interest in Vietnam and we are looking forward to welcoming you to our country.

Mausoleums and Museums

Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum opens every morning and closed every afternoon and months of October and November for maintenance. All museums and mausoleums closed on Mondays except War Museum (now called Museum of Vietnamese Revolutionary History) and Ho Chi Minh Trails Museum which closed every Monday and Friday.

Climate & Weather

Vietnam stretches over 1,800 km from north to south, with an area of 332,000 square km, Vietnam's topography varies from coastal plains to mountain ranges, therefore weather patterns in the principle cities are very different.

North: Winter lasts from November to April, with temperatures averaging 10 - 16C, fog and drizzle in January - March. Summer begins in May and lasts until October, with an average temperature of 30C, heavy rainfall and the occasional violent typhoon.

Center: Central Vietnam experiences a transitional climate, with heavy rainfalls between November and December and dry, hot summer months. Typhoons are quite common in coastal areas between July and November.

South: Temperatures are fairly constant through the year; 25C - 30C. Seasons are determined by the rains - the dry season runs from November to April and the wet season from May to October. The hottest period is March and April.

Highland areas: In the hill resorts of Dalat (1,500 m), Buon Me Thuot and Sapa, nights are cool throughout the year, and in the winter months, October to March, it can be distinctly chilly with temperatures falling to 0C. Even in the hottest months of March and April the temperature rarely exceeds 26C.

More details on weather, please visit: <http://www.wunderground.com>

Customs and Formalities

All visitors to Vietnam must fill in declaration forms and show their luggage to customs officials on request.

Visitors can bring with them unlimited amounts of foreign currency, objects made of gold, silver, precious metals and gemstones or plated with silver or gold, all of which must be declared in detail on the customs forms. Commercial Video films and printed materials that are considered



offensive are normally confiscated and sent to Ministry of Culture for inspection.

Goods prohibited to import: weapons, ammunition, explosives, military technical equipment, drugs, toxic chemicals, debauched and reactionary products, firecrackers of all kinds, toys with negative impacts on the dignity education, social security and safety, cigarettes beyond the stipulated quantity, etc.

Goods prohibited to export: weapons, ammunition, explosives, military technical equipment, antiques, drugs, toxic chemicals, wild animals, rare and precious animals and plants, documents related to the national security, etc.

What NOT to do

Don't buy things at the stops on the way you are touring especially the one called Hong Ngoc shop on your way from Hanoi to Halong. This place is only suitable for an interval stop for a long drive not a place to buy.

What to bring

Bring as little as possible. Keep in mind that you can and will buy things in Vietnam, so don't burden yourself. If you do forget to bring any 'essential' items, it's quite likely that they can be bought in Vietnam, at least in the cities.

Currency, Exchange and ATM

The local currency is the Dong (abbreviated "d" or VND). Bank notes are 100d, 200d, 500d, 1000d, 2,000d, 5,000d, 10,000d, 20,000d, 50,000d, 100,000d & 500,000d. Coins are 200d, 500d, 1000d, 2000d and 5000d.

Further details on exchange rate, please visit:

<https://portal.vietcombank.com.vn/en-US/Personal/TG/Pages/exchange-rate.aspx?devicechannel=default>

Money and travelers cheques, particularly U.S. Dollars, can be exchanged at banks, hotels and authorized money-exchangers. It is advisable to carry U.S. Dollar bills in small denominations. Credit cards are generally only accepted in major hotels, and in some up-market shops and restaurants in major cities. ATM facilities are readily available now in major cities.

Health Requirements

No actual vaccinations are officially required. Visitors are advised to check with their doctor or travel immunization clinic regarding the advisability of inoculation against typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis A & B and Malaria.

Those visitors taking medicine for certain conditions such as diabetes or heart problems should make sure that they carry these medications in their hand luggage at all times in case the main luggage should be delayed.

It is recommended that all travelers take out comprehensive Personal Travel Insurance to cover personal belongings, in case of accident or illness etc.



Domestic Flights

If flights are required in your itinerary they are in coach class, unless specified otherwise. Flight timings quoted are local and are subject to change. Domestic flights require a check-in, 1-hour prior to the flight departure.

Carryon luggage is limited to one piece plus a camera. In economy class air travel baggage allowance is 20kg per person.

We cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage to passenger's belongings. Domestic flights are prone to last minute schedule changes and cancellation without ANY advance notice.

Airport Tax

Airport departure tax for international flights currently is: US\$ 14 from Hanoi & Ho Chi Minh City; US\$ 8 from Danang

The departure airport tax may be paid in local currency or in US Dollars. Children under 12 years are entitled to have half fare of adult.

Airport departure tax for domestic flights is included in the airfare.

Internet

Vietnam joined the global computer age and internet-service providers are currently operating in most of the Cities. You can access the internet through hotels, Cyber Cafés & Internet/Computer Service Centers. ADSL technology is widely used in major cities.

Language

Vietnamese is the official language of Vietnam. Learning foreign languages, particularly English, is currently popular among young people in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Hue, Danang and other cities. Tourist guides are available for English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Russian speakers.

Local Time and Working Hour

Local time is GMT + 7 hours.

Governmental agencies work Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 4.30pm (excluding one-hour lunch) and are closed Saturday and Sunday.

Banks are open Monday to Friday from 7.30am or 8am to 11.30am and from 1pm to 4pm and are closed Saturday and Sunday.

Private shops are open from 8 or 8.30am to 9 or 10pm.

Overland Travel

The road system in Vietnam is reasonable in the main urban cities. The drives through the countryside can be a wonderful sightseeing experience. However, it must be noted that the roads are narrow and some may be poorly paved when outside the main cities, and as a consequence the drives can be rough and difficult at times.

The journey timings described in your itinerary are based on the usual amount of time a particular



journey will take. However, please appreciate that not all roads can be checked for their condition throughout the year.

Most cars used are manufactured locally by Toyota, Honda and Ford and are for the most part comfortable and ideally suited to local roads. Smoking is not permitted in any vehicle, under any conditions. There is ample opportunity to smoke during photographic, luncheon and sightseeing stops.

If you decide to leave the hotel and go out on your own, there are various means of transport that you may like to take such as taxis or "cyclos". If taking a taxi or "cyclo", insist on the meter being switched on before you begin your journey. Due to an effort to stop pollution, most "cyclos" are

pedaled as opposed to motor. It is suggested that you carry the name of your destination or hotel written in local language in the event your driver does not understand English. The staff at your hotel can assist you in this regard.

Passport and Visa

Travelers to Vietnam are required to hold a passport valid for at least six (06) months beyond the completion of their visit and must contain a valid visa.

Visas are usually issued by the passengers' home country (against the visa's approval number), which require the original passport, and 2 photos in order to issue a visa stamp.

Visas can also be obtained upon arrival at Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Danang airports (Visa on Arrival), in which case the stamping fee will be quoted separately.

Visas on Arrival can be requested via InasiaTrips Travel & DMC in connection with the booking of travel arrangements to Vietnam.

Hotels might reserve the right to keep travel documents overnight at the reception for registration purpose.

Food

Vietnam has abundant food supplies and an elaborate cuisine. Cooking is seen as an art and some Vietnamese dishes have achieved international fame, including such traditional dishes as noodle soup (pho), pork sausage (Giò Lụa), spring rolls (Nem rán), and fish balls (cha ca). In addition to Vietnamese food, the larger hotels also serve a wide variety of Continental and Chinese cuisine. In the smaller cities, when the hotels only have one restaurant, ordering a-la-carte may involve a slight wait, consequently it is advised that you take advantage of the large and diverse buffets available at these hotels to minimize any delay.

Never drink water from the hotel tap, no matter what category of hotel you are staying in. Bottled mineral water is available at all hotels throughout Vietnam. Do not have any ice in your drinks as this is often made from water that has not been purified.

Post and Telecommunications

A regular international post service is available. In addition Express Mail Service (EMS) is available to more than 50 countries worldwide with a delivery time of 2 to 10 days.



Vietnam has high international telephone charges. It is important to check the exact amount with the hotel before making a call, as hotel surcharges are often imposed.

VOIP calls which help reduce call charges (for most of International calls from any destination within Vietnam and for domestic calls between the main cities of the country) are now available as well pre-paid internet & mobile card can be bought in the major cities.

Service providers for mobile phone network are GSM of Vinaphone, MobilePhone and Viettel while CDMA are EVN Telecom and S-Phone. Numbers begin with 091, 090, 098, 095, 096

Electricity

Electricity in Vietnam mostly runs at 220 V (50 Hz), but often you will find 110V (also at 50Hz). In the south, most outlets are US-style flat pins. In the north, most outlets are the Russian-inspired round pins, which usually carry 220V. Electrical sockets are two and three-prong.

Shopping

Foreign visitors to Vietnam have the opportunity to buy souvenirs made of rattan, gold, silver and stone. There is a diverse range of products, from woodenwares such as wooden buttons or sindora beds to lacquer paintings, bowls and chopsticks, bamboo screens and stone tea sets. Woven tapestries, "tho cam" handbags and other handicrafts are produced by the traditional skills of the women of ethnic minorities in such rural regions in the north as Sapa, Mai Chau and Dien Bien.

Alerts: You are alerted from buying souvenirs from streets vendors, and souvenir shops on the way to Halong Bay, to Mai Chau to Hoa Lu Tam Coc etc as you may be cheated or over charged.

Bargaining & Tipping

Bargaining is advised to do when visit Vietnam. You should ask the taxi driver or motor taxi (xe om) driver for the price of your travel distance made. The same when you go shopping. When you are surrounded by street sellers, it is better to say no and mind your way. Tipping is widely practiced and expected

Porters :	VND 30.000 – 50.000 per bag
Waiters in restaurants:	5-10% of total bill
Taxi drivers :	10% of total bill
Tour guides :	USD\$5-10 per person/per day
Drivers :	US\$3-5 per person/per day

All of the above information is accurate at the time of publication.




Useful Words and Expressions

Hello	Xin chào	1	Một
How are you?	Có khỏe không?	2	Hai
Fine, thank you	Khỏe, cảm ơn	3	Ba
Good night	Chúc ngủ ngon	4	Bốn



Excuse me	Xin lỗi	5	Năm
Thank you	Cảm ơn	6	Sáu
Thank you very much	Cảm ơn rất nhiều	7	Bảy
What's your name?	Tên ông là gì?	8	Tám
My name is	Tên tôi là	9	Chín
Yes	Vâng	10	Mười
No	Không	11	Mười một
Understand	Hiểu	19	Mười chín
I donot understand	Tôi không hiểu	20	Hai mươi
I need	Tôi cần	21	Hai mươi một
I like	Tôi thích	22	Hai mươi hai
I donot like	Tôi không thích	30	Ba mươi
I want	Tôi muốn	90	Chín mươi
I donot want	Tôi không muốn	100	Một trăm
Change money	Đổi tiền	200	Hai trăm
Come	Đến	900	Chín trăm
Give	Cho	1000	Một ngàn/ngàn
Fast	Nhanh/mau	10000	Mười ngàn/ngàn
Slow	Chậm	One million	Một triệu

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