

VIETNAM

A Destination Guide

Destination Guides 2025

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

➤ Country Description

Vietnam is a marriage of stunning natural scenery, incredible cuisine, and rich cultural traditions. This S-shaped nation enjoys a mountainous northern region home to its vibrant capital city Hanoi, as well as the world-renowned UNESCO heritage site of Halong Bay. A laid-back central region with deep roots in the past and the exotic Mekong in the south where languid waters flow. There can be no doubt that Vietnam provides much for the traveller to explore and for those who do visit and catch a glimpse of Vietnam's irresistible charms, it is sure to leave a lasting impression.

➤ Quick facts

- Population: ~101 million (2025)
- Primary Religion: Buddhism
- Capital: Hanoi
- Language: Vietnamese
- Time Zone: GMT +7
- Currency: Vietnam Dong (VND) Notes are available in denominations of VND 500,000; 200,000; 100,000; 50,000; 20, 000; 10,000; 5,000; 2,000; 1,000; 500; and 200.

- Vietnamese Dong is the main currency of Vietnam, whilst dollars may be accepted
- in some instances, they will be few and far between. It is advisable to carry VND with you.
- VISA, MasterCard and American Express cards are accepted in major hotels, restaurants, and shops in urban areas. Outside of the city and with any street vendor it is advisable to bring cash.
- Negotiating at markets and small stores for souvenirs is accepted practice. However, in shops with fixed prices and any restaurant where you sit down the rates are generally set and it would be frowned upon to negotiate. Whilst bargaining is part of the fun and experience of visiting local markets, please endeavour to remain polite and not offend anyone by negotiating too hard.
- Tipping waiters/waitresses is not a common practice but for guides or porters, this typically is.

- Climate: Despite lying within the tropics Vietnam's climate varies greatly and can more easily be understood as split into North, Central and Southern regions.

- In the North: This part of Vietnam enjoys four seasons, although winter may not be as cold as in non-tropical countries, in the mountainous regions to the Northwest it can occasionally drop to close to a few degrees above 0 (Celsius). From mid-spring in April through summer and into Autumn temperatures will stay high at around 30 Degrees (Celsius) and there will be occasional rain and high humidity. Particularly In July & August. From October through to March temperatures will cool but rarely dip below 10 Degrees (Celsius). Daytime temperatures will sit in the low to mid-20s.
- In the Centre: In central Vietnam from January to April temperatures will stay in the high 20s with little rain. From April through summer and into September temperatures will remain hot with highs of 35 Degrees (Celsius) and occasional rain. From September to December is when the central region will experience heavy rains. During the rainy season, there is the occasional risk of typhoons and flooding.
- The South: This part of Vietnam is typically identified with two main seasons a rainy and a dry season with temperatures staying consistently high. The wet season typically starts in late April and lasts through to September. Downpours will typically appear quickly but won't last too long. The dry season spans the months of October to May with plenty of sunshine.
- Tourist Seasonality
 - The best time to visit Vietnam is typically seen as Oct-March.
 - However, shoulder seasons and low seasons will still typically offer a lot due to the varied climate.
- Festival Calendar

Date	Day	Holiday
01/01	Wed	International New Year's Day
25/01 - 02/02	Sat - Sun	Tet Holiday (Lunar New Year)
06/02 - 31/03	Thu - Mon	Bai Dinh Pagoda Festival
09 - 10/02	Sun - Mon	Lim Festival
07/04 (10/3 Lunar)	Mon	Hung Kings Commemoration Day
30/04	Wed	Reunification Day
01/05	Thu	International Labour Day
30/08 - 02/09	Sat - Tue	National Day Holiday (02/09)
06/09	Sat	Mid-Autumn Festival
Monthly (14th Lunar)	Monthly event	Hoi An Lantern Festival

➤ Visa & travel permissions:

- E-visa is now available for multiple entry with the validity up to 90 days (iso Single entry for 30 days).
- E-visa is now granted for all countries and territories.
- Exempted visa nationalities is now extended to 45 days (iso 15 days).
- The ASEAN countries citizens still have staying time up to 30 days exempted visa.

[Read more about e-visa application](#)



- Tourists visiting Vietnam who are not eligible for any Visa exemption will require a **TOURIST VISA** to enter the country. Please refer to our detailed Vietnam Visa Information document on our Travel Trade website for more information about the Vietnam Visa process. We **can assist and facilitate applications for Tourist visas**. For information about other types of visas, please consult the official representatives of Vietnam (Embassy or Consulate) abroad.

Please inform us in case a delegate extends his journey; we can assist you.

We will still require travelers' passport details prior to date of travel in order to meet the requirements of hotels, airlines and cruise companies.

The above information is provided to the best knowledge of us and will be updated regularly. We are in the process of seeking clarification on some points of this new resolution, and will update you further should there be any changes to the conditions for Visa Exemption or the interpretation and its effects for our travelers.

Should you have specific questions for special cases or require more information, please do not hesitate to ask your Our Travel Consultant.

- If you do not fulfil the above criteria then you must apply for a Tourist Visa from your home country to obtain a visa/visa upon arrival.
 - Valid for 1 month or a 3-month stay.
 - Must complete a form from the website of the embassy of the passport holder's country.
 - Supply identity photos (less than 6 months old)
 - Book an appointment and visit the embassy with the form, photos, the fee for the visa and your passport.

➤ Access & Transportation

Border information – As Vietnam has a lot of border crossings the below list is just the major crossing points.

By Air – There are multiple airports in Vietnam with direct or indirect options available. Here are some of the main ones for international carriers:

- Hanoi – Noi Bar Airport is around 40 minutes from the city centre
- Danang – only 5KM from the city centre
- Nha Trang – Cam Ranh Airport is 30-40 minutes from Nha Trang city centre.
- Ho Chi Minh City – Tan Son Nhat airport is around 20 minutes from the city centre.

The national carrier for Vietnam is Vietnam Airlines but some different carriers are available with Bamboo Airlines offering direct options to some major European hubs.

By Land - Vietnam shares a border with Laos, China and Cambodia and has multiple land crossings available:

China - you must have a visa before going through immigration and customs.

- Mong Cai (Vietnam) – Ding Hung (China) by land.
- Dong Dang (Vietnam) – Ping Xian (China)
- Lao Cai (Vietnam) Hekou – Land or railway: trains from Hanoi run via the Hekou bridge.

Laos

- Sop Hun (Laos) – Tay Trang (Vietnam)
- Na Maew (Laos) – Nam Xoi (Vietnam)
- Nam Can (Laos) – Nam Khan (Vietnam)
- Nam Phao (Laos) – Cau Treo (Vietnam)
- Dansavanh (Laos) – Lao Bao (Vietnam) – A popular option to get to and from Hue.
- Bo Y (Laos) – Ngoc Hoi (Vietnam)

Cambodia - Cambodia and Vietnam share a long frontier with multiple border crossings. The following are the main ones utilised

- Moc Bai (Vietnam) to Bavet (Cambodia) By land and the main option from Ho Chi
- Minh City (60KM from HCMC) & Phnom Penh.
- Vinh Xuong (Vietnam) to Kaam Sammor (Cambodia) – By Boat (waterway border)
- links Phnom Penh with Chau Doc in Vietnam.
- Tinh Bien (Vietnam) to Phnom Den (Cambodia) – By Land
- Xa Xia (Vietnam) to Prek Chak (Cambodia) - By Land

➤ Do's & Don'ts

- Please ask for permission before taking a photo of people. Particularly in rural areas and if you are entering a Vietnamese person's home.
- When you are in Vietnam you may be asked about your age more than you are used to, for many Vietnamese, it is important to know the age of a person to know how to address that person correctly. There is great respect for 'older' people and no offence is intended.
- When out in public please avoid affectionate physical contact between yourself
- When using chopsticks don't leave them in food (rice specifically) pointing directly up toward the sky, this is reminiscent of practice around funeral rites.
- Before entering a Vietnamese home or temple take off your shoes.
- In pagodas or religious sites wear a T-shirt and shorts hiding at least your shoulders and your knees. Please also avoid wearing any form of a hat in a temple.

➤ Health

- Vaccinations - Always consult with your doctor before travelling to Vietnam.
- Covid restrictions – For the most up-to-date advice please check government websites for up-to-date information. As of May 15th 2022, you may enter Vietnam without showing proof of a negative COVID test and the Vietnamese government has returned to pre-pandemic visa issuance. Please check again before you travel!
- Health Advice:
 - Do not drink tap water and be careful of any street food where salads may've been washed with tap water.
 - Ice usually comes in bags and is safe, but if in doubt check before purchasing an iced drink.

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➤ Emergency contacts:












- Police: 113
- Ambulance: 115
- Fire department: 114

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➤ What to bring -

-  Lightweight, light-coloured clothing to reflect the sun.
-  Comfortable sandals or shoes.
-  Refillable water bottle.
-  Sunglasses.
-  Powerful sunscreen and long-lasting deodorant.
-  Earplugs.
-  Universal travel adaptor.
-  A good quality lightweight Raincoat
-  Swim shorts or bathing suit.
-  Warm clothing is recommended if travelling to northern Vietnam in the Winter months (Sapa).
-  Antibacterial gel.