

TRAVEL TIP

VIETNAM



○ LANGUAGE

Vietnamese is the official language of Vietnam. English is widely used in business. Other popular languages include French, German, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Russian.



○ PASSPORT AND VISA

A passport with more than 6 months of validity remaining is compulsory.



○ CURRENCY

Đ/VND. Foreign currency can be exchanged at banks, hotels, and authorized money exchangers.



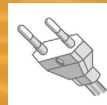
○ TIME ZONE & WORKING HOUR

Local time is GMT + 7 hours.



○ ELECTRICITY

Electricity in Vietnam is 220V, with a frequency of 50hz, the following plugs are used:



○ TRANSPORTATION

Metered taxis are widely available at reasonable price. Bicycle rickshaw (Cyclo) and motorbike taxis (Xe om) are also common and easy to get but you need to bargain before the ride. Or you can use UBER as it is now popular in Vietnam. Tip: Keep the hotel card with you to show the drivers.

ETIQUETTE



DOS

Greet people you meet by shaking their hand and say "Xin chao" (Hello)

Show your respect to the old and religious beliefs

Pass things to others using both hands

Dress respectfully at all times (shorts below the knees, shoulders covered)

Remove shoes when entering homes or temples

Ask for permission before taking photograph at the sights or the local people

DON'TS

Don't touch an adult's head or shoulders

Don't point with fingers (use your whole hand)

Don't refuse an offer of tea at the reception or meeting

Don't point the soles of your feet towards a person or a sacred object, such as an image of Buddha

Don't make another person to "lose face" (i.e. to be embarrassed)

Don't commit public displays of affection



BEFORE TRAVELING

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

No actual vaccinations are officially required. Travelers are advised to check with their doctor or travel immunization clinic regarding the advisability of inoculation against typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis A & B and malaria. It is highly recommended that all travelers purchase comprehensive Personal Travel Insurance issued by companies located in their countries to cover personal belongings, or in case of accident or illness, etc. and avoid complicated paperwork.

WHAT TO BRING

Be a smart traveler. Before heading overseas, make a list of things to bring. You are recommended to "travel light" as much as possible. Please refer to the weather section of the website to identify what you should pack (sunblock, appropriate clothes, hat, mosquito repellent etc.)

CLIMATE AND 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 the climate from North to South can be very different.

Check this page below for detailed information on the climate in Vietnam:

<https://www.vietnamstay.com/best-time-to-visit-vietnam>

WHILE TRAVELING

CURRENCY, MONEY EXCHANGE & ATM

The local currency is the Dong (abbreviated "d" or VND). Bank notes are 1000d, 2,000d, 5,000d, 10,000d, 20,000d, 50,000d, 100,000d & 500,000d. Exchange rate can be checked at: <http://www.vietcombank.com.vn/en/Exchange%20Rate.asp>.

Most retailers do not accept cheques. But Visa, Master & JCB cards are widely accepted. A 3% bank fee charge on transaction (4% for AMEX) is quite common, due to bank's policy. ATMs are very popular in most tourist destinations.

SAFETY

Ostentatious displays of money, jewelry, luggage, and dress can encourage the wrong type of attention. When travelling, be aware of where your luggage is at all times - particularly your hand bag, camera, etc. Do not leave them unattended or hanging on the back of chairs in restaurants. Petty theft is also common on crowded trains, buses, and at supermarkets.

Importance: *You should take good care of all your belongings first, and do not always rely on your escorted guides or drivers as their duty is not to take of your belongings during the trip; but to help you to go and well understand the destinations. Lost items are not always found by local policemen as the report procedures are quite complicated and take time. In case of any loss, do not claim your local agent or tour operator as they are not involve in this matter. They may try to help you as much as possible so that you can claim to Insurance Company if it is the case. Local operators are not responsible these losses.*

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS & AIRPORT TAXES

Airport departure tax for domestic and international flights is included in the airfare issued. Schedules are subject to change without prior notice. You should be at the airport at least 1 hour prior to your domestic flight departure for the check-in process. Baggage allowance is 20kg per person in economy class. Hand luggage should not weigh more than 7kg.

COMMUNICATIONS

Phone/ SIM Card

Vietnam has high international telephone charges. It is important to check the exact amount with the hotel before making a call. VOIP calls help reduce call charges. Pre-paid internet & mobile SIM cards can be bought in the major cities so if your phone is unlocked, this solution is cheap (around USD5) and it is easy to buy the top-ups.



Internet

You can access the internet at hotels, cyber cafés & Internet/Computer Service Centers. WIFI internet is available at some cyber cafés, restaurants, and most hotels in major tourist destinations. Free WIFI is also available in some international airports.

Post Services

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

FOOD AND DRINKS

Foreign visitors consider Vietnamese food quite healthy. It is neither spicy nor oily. It has a very distinctive style, although it is also clearly influenced by Chinese and to a lesser extent, French cuisine. Coffee and draft beers are good but often strong. Drinking tap water is not advisable. Bottled drinking water is widely available for a reasonable price.

SHOPPING & BARGAINING

Vietnam is most famous for its handicrafts, war souvenirs, art, antiques and gems. Markets vary from high class shopping malls and supermarkets to bustling open markets, galleries, boutiques, and street stalls. Before going to Vietnam you should do some research for a general idea about prices in Vietnam. To make your trip even more enjoyable, you should know something about the art of bargaining. If you are being followed by street vendors and do not wish to make a purchase, often the best course of action is to say “no” politely and firmly and continue on your way. Do not hesitate or linger, as this will encourage the seller to try and engage you further.



TIPPING

Gratuities are a prime motivator for tour guides, as well as a major source of their income and therefore are commonly expected in the travel industry of Southeast Asia in general.

If you are pleased with the services provided by your tour guides and drivers, then a tip for their hard work and being away from home will be very much appreciated. Tips are expected by hotel, boat and restaurant staffs also.

All suggested tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars (do not use coins, personal or traveler's check for tips). Of course, whether you tip, how much you tip, and how you tip is always at your own discretion.

Tour guides and drivers

The following gratuity guideline is introduced solely for the convenience of our travelers.

US\$04-06/guest/day for local (city) guide

Normally, drivers expect to receive half of the guides'

For biking/trekking trip: as guide and driver work harder than on regular cultural tours, you may consider tipping more in addition to the above tipping guidelines.

Hotel & Restaurant staffs

Most hotels and restaurants levy a 5% service charge, but this may not go directly to the staff. A tipping of 5-10% of the total bill is appreciated. If you stay a couple of days in the same hotel, try to tip the hotel cleaner, possibly US\$2-3/day/room. For hotel porters, US\$1-2/time/room is appreciated by those who have escorted you to your room and/or delivered your baggage. \

Boat Cruise staffs

If you travel on a local basic boat such as in the Mekong Delta, Nha Trang, Hue, Hoi An, Ninh Binh etc., a suggested tip from US\$1-2 per guest.

For an overnight boat trip such as in Halong Bay or Mekong River, the suggestion is US\$20-50 for the entire boat cruise team depending on group size, or US\$3-5 per passenger.