



Asia Concierge

THE ART OF TRAVEL DESIGN



COUNTRY INFORMATION, FACTS & ADVICE

Vietnam



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● ARRIVING INTO VIETNAM

Passport and Visa

Vietnam has is open to foreigners and overseas Vietnamese who hold valid passports and permanent residence cards, temporary residence cards, visas, and visa exemption certificates in compliance with the Law on foreigners' entry into, exit from, transit through, and residence in Vietnam.

The following nationals may enter Vietnam without a visa:

- Cambodia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand (up to 30 days)
- The Philippines (up to 21 days)
- Belarus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden & UK (up to 15 days)
- Brunei and Myanmar (up to 14 days)

The visa waiver policy applies for this category of passengers is valid from March 15, 2022 to March 14, 2025.

All other passport holders must apply for a visa either at a Vietnamese embassy prior to departure from your point of origin or on arrival in Vietnam.

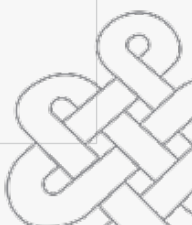
Nationals of 80 countries can now obtain a pilot e-visa online. To check your eligibility or to apply for an e-visa online, visit [Vietnam visa online](#). E-visas are valid for stays of up to 30 days, single entry only. Visas for longer stays or multiple-entry must be obtained from your nearest embassy, prior to departure from your point of origin or on arrival in Vietnam.

Useful tips:

- Check your passport expiry date and ensure it is valid for more than six months beyond the date of your expected return to your country.
- Ensure you have at least two blank pages in your passport prior to arrival in each country of your journey.
- Print all important documents and keep them handy, such as airline tickets and visa approval letters.
- If your passport is lost or stolen overseas, please contact your local Asia Concierge representative or hotel staff. They will assist you in contacting the relevant embassy or consulate.

Whilst we do our best to provide the most up-to-date information, visa requirements may change at short notice. Obtaining the correct visa is the responsibility of each guest. Therefore, we recommend that you check with your consulate or embassy for current visa information before leaving home.

We highly recommend the fast-track arrival service provided by Asia Concierge at Ho Chi Minh City, Danang and Hanoi airports, which avoids lengthy queues and airport navigation. All we need is a passport copy sent prior to travel and we take care of everything. We do not need passport photos. Due to heavy congestion at Tan San Nhat Airport in Ho Chi Minh City we are also recommending this service when exiting the country also.





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THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● KEEPING HEALTHY IN VIETNAM

Vaccinations

Staying up-to-date with your vaccinations is a crucial part of your pre-holiday planning and it is important to seek professional medical advice for your specific requirements. If you are traveling to remote areas, you may also consider preparing a medical kit.

Drinking Water

Do not drink tap water in Vietnam and avoid ice in your drinks unless it is made from mineral water. Exercise caution when eating and drinking outside reputable hotels and restaurants and please only dine at places recommended by your Asia Concierge guide or representative as many local restaurants do not follow typical food hygiene practices.

Special Requirements

If you are on prescribed medication, ensure that you take a copy of your prescriptions in case of loss of supply. Be sure to pack enough medication in your hand luggage for the duration of your trip as it may not be available locally. It is important to keep it in its original packaging. Check with the relevant embassy or consulate that your medication is legal in the countries you plan to visit and find out whether you need to take a doctor's letter with you.

Please advise an Asia Concierge Travel Designer of any special dietary requirements or allergies at least four weeks prior to departure. Every effort will be made to comply with your request. Travelers with physical disabilities and those who require frequent or on-going medical attention should advise Asia Concierge of their situation at the time of booking or at the earliest possible opportunity.

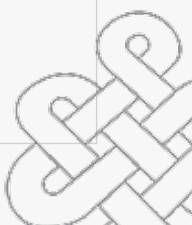
● TIPPING

Tipping is not compulsory in Vietnam. Some restaurants add a 5 - 6% service charge to your bill. However, you are welcome to offer additional gratuities as a sign of appreciation for the services provided.

Tipping is a very personal matter and should only be considered when the staff have gone above and beyond for you. Should you feel you would like to acknowledge their service, please consider the following as a rough guide, per person per day.

Type of Service (USD)	1	2	3	4	5-9	10 >
Guide (or Trip Leader)	15.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	6.00	5.00
Driver (or Tour Assistant)	8.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	2.50
Hotel Porters			1.00 per service			
Local Service Providers			1.00 per service			

The above tipping guidelines are recommendations only and are not compulsory. Please use your own discretion in tipping based on quality of service provided.





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THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● WEATHER

In general, Vietnam has a tropical climate with average annual temperatures ranging from 22°C (72°F) to 34°C (86°F). Although temperatures are consistent year round, various parts of the country, at certain times of the year, can be affected by unpredictable storms which may cause flooding.

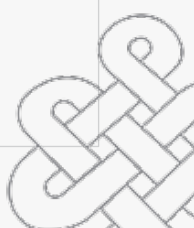
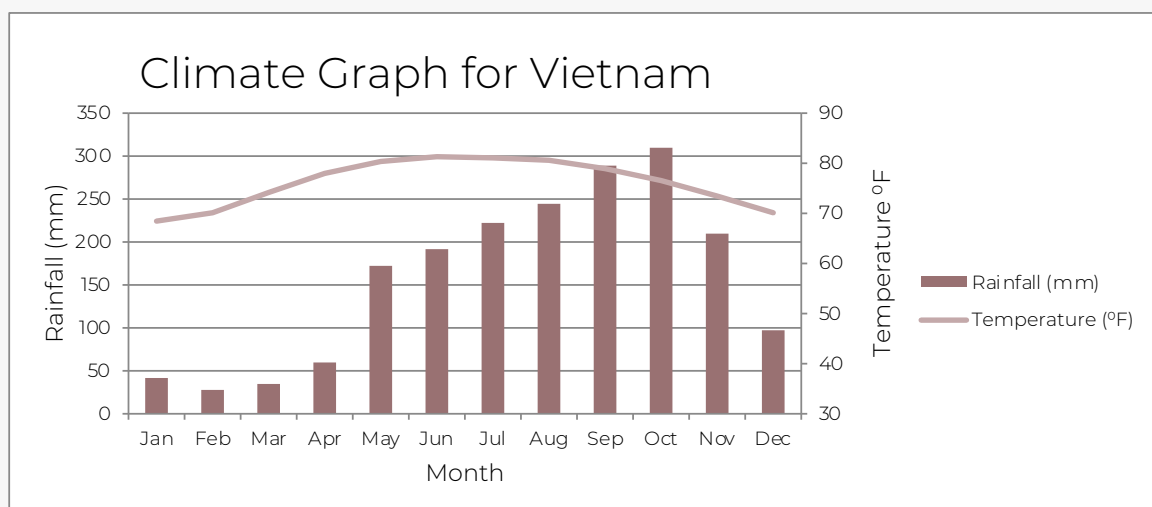
From May to November, most of the country is affected by south-western monsoons. The rains, which tend to be concentrated in the late afternoons, provide welcome relief to the heat. The heaviest rainfall tends to occur between July and August in the north; June to October in the south; and November to January in Central Vietnam.

December to March and into April is a pleasant time to visit the southern city of Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta, although temperatures in Hanoi and northern regions tend to be cooler during those months.

In the mountainous regions in the far north such as Sapa, the temperature can, at times, drop below zero (32°F) during the winter months.

The best time to visit the north is between September and December when there's a good chance of clear skies and low humidity, while March to October is an ideal time to enjoy the beaches and sightseeing spots of Central Vietnam. Beach destinations in the south such as Nha Trang, Phan Thiet, Phu Quoc, and Con Dao Island are warm and sunny most of the year. However, the rainy season varies for each destination: Nha Trang (October to December); Phan Thiet (July to October); Phu Quoc (June to September), and Con Dao (June – November).

Humidity is also a consideration when travelling to Vietnam and this generally peaks from May through until end August, although in a tropical climate, humidity is a factor throughout the year.





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THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● WHAT TO PACK

Light and comfortable cotton or linen clothing is recommended for the summer months, while warmer clothes for the winter months are recommended. Good walking shoes or sandals for touring are also beneficial.

For women, shorts are acceptable, however keep in mind that the Vietnamese tend to dress conservatively, and very revealing clothing may be frowned upon outside of the cities. Smart/casual dress is adequate for dinner restaurants.

A hat, sunscreen, sunglasses and regular sun protection are recommended to protect against the sun and heat, particularly if you are planning to spend a lot of time visiting the many interesting sites which are outdoors.

When visiting temples and shrines, it is best to dress conservatively as visitors may be refused entry if not dressed appropriately. It is often a requirement to wear a long skirt or trousers that cover the knees as well as long sleeves to cover the arms and shoulders. Avoid any see-through clothing. You may also be required to remove any footwear, so sandals may be more convenient.

It is recommended to bring along a universal travel adaptor. The voltage supply in Vietnam is 220v 50Hz. Sockets are sometimes fit for two or three round prongs and sometimes two parallel blades.

● MONEY

Currency & Exchange

The national currency in Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). Although US dollars are accepted in some shops and restaurants, it is recommended to have some local currency at hand.

Notes are issued in denominations of 1000, 2000, 5000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000, 100,000, 200,000 and 500,000.

Credit Cards

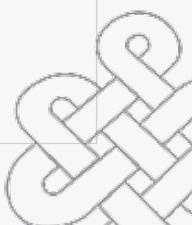
Visa and MasterCard are accepted in most major shopping centers, restaurants and hotels, although relatively few establishments accept American Express.

Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks can be exchanged in most banks, authorized exchange bureaus and hotels although they are not generally accepted as payment for items in shops.

Banks & ATMs

Normal banking hours 08:00 to 11:30 and 13:00 to 16:00. ATMs can be found in most major cities.





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THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● TIME ZONE

Vietnam operates on GMT + 7 hours. At 12:00 in Vietnam, it is:

- 05:00 in London
- 00:00 in New York
- 23:00 in Chicago (the previous day)
- 21:00 in Los Angeles (the previous day)

● SHOPPING

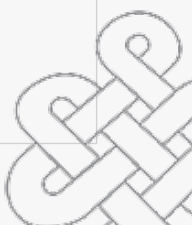
Shopping in Vietnam can be great fun and rewarding. Bargaining is widely accepted and most of the time expected. It is recommended that you start your bid at half the asking price and work towards settling somewhere in the middle.

Traditionally crafted lacquerware items, mother-of-pearl inlays, ceramics, exquisite embroidered tablecloths and shirts, intricate basketwork and beautiful ethnic clothes of high standards, wood-block prints and Vietnamese oil paintings are among the best buys. The port town of Hoi An is an epicenter of tailors and seamstresses, who can produce any design that you desire including traditional ao dai, the Vietnamese national dress, fashioned from high-quality silk.

Useful tips :

- Take your purchases home with you wherever possible to avoid complications with additional shipping fees, customs duties and regulations. Also, airfreight and shipments can sometimes take months to arrive.
- Avoid purchasing expensive items unless you are certain of its quality and value. Some vendors may overstate the value of their goods, even in shops recommended by Asia Concierge. While our guides will try to assist wherever possible, they are not authorities on antiques or rare items.
- Take the time to read credit card slips and calculate the exchange rate before signing.
- Retain receipts of your purchases as you may be asked to provide proof of purchase to local officials when exiting the country. You may also need to present it to customs on your return home.

If you are looking for a specific item, your guide may, as a courtesy, refer you to a vendor that carries the merchandise. However, this should not be taken as Asia Concierge's endorsement of the vendor. All purchase decisions are entirely your own responsibility. Asia Concierge shall not assume any liability for products that may be faulty or not as advertised. Similarly, Asia Concierge does not take responsibility for any loss or damage during shipment.





Asia Concierge

THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● LOCAL FOOD & DRINK

The cuisine of Vietnam varies from region to region; stir-fried dishes are more commonly found in the north due to Chinese influences, central Vietnamese dishes tend to be hot and spicy, while southern Vietnamese cuisine can be characterized by a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, and spices. French influence can also be seen throughout Vietnam, particularly in 'banh mi', which is a Vietnamese version of baguette.

Vietnamese cuisine is typically known for its use of fish sauce and hoisin sauce as well as generous servings of fresh vegetables, herbs and spices including garlic, shallots, lemongrass and lime. Rice is the traditional staple dish, although noodles are also popular.

Traditional dishes include 'pho', noodle soup often served with fresh slices of beef, and 'gio lua' which is a type of pork sausage. Deep-fried spring rolls, known as 'nem ran' or 'cha gio' can be found in almost every eatery in the country and 'cha ca', or fish balls, are also commonly eaten.

Places to eat in Vietnam include local markets, where the greatest selection is available in the morning before the day gets hot. In addition to Vietnamese food, the larger hotels also serve a wide variety of continental and Chinese cuisine as well as large and varied buffets.

Please advise your Asia Concierge Travel Designer of any special dietary requirements or allergies at least two weeks prior to departure. Every effort will be made to comply with your request.

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