



A Travel Guide to  
**VIETNAM**

**THE**

**ESSENTIAL**

**THINGS**

PLACES **CUISINES** CULTURE **HACKS** and MORE!



It's a blessing for us to take people to places and make them smile everyday.

- CEO David Dao

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**EXPLORE  
ENJOY  
REPEAT**



**UNBEATABLE  
PRICES**



**7-DAY  
MONEY BACK**



**DEPARTURE  
GUARANTEE**

*Greetings from*

## Asia Vacation Group

Inspired by the passion of travelling and exploring the extraordinary, Asia Vacation Group travel agency was born in 2015 with the vision of delivering the ultimate travel experience to group and individuals around the world.

### **Guests Lover**

Our dedicated services are with you all the way. Just sit back and relax.

### **Local Leaders**

With more than 60 itineraries to 7 countries in Asia, we will take you the most beautiful corners of the land.

### **Responsible Travel**

We implement only good ethic practices to protect the environment and historical wonders for mankind.

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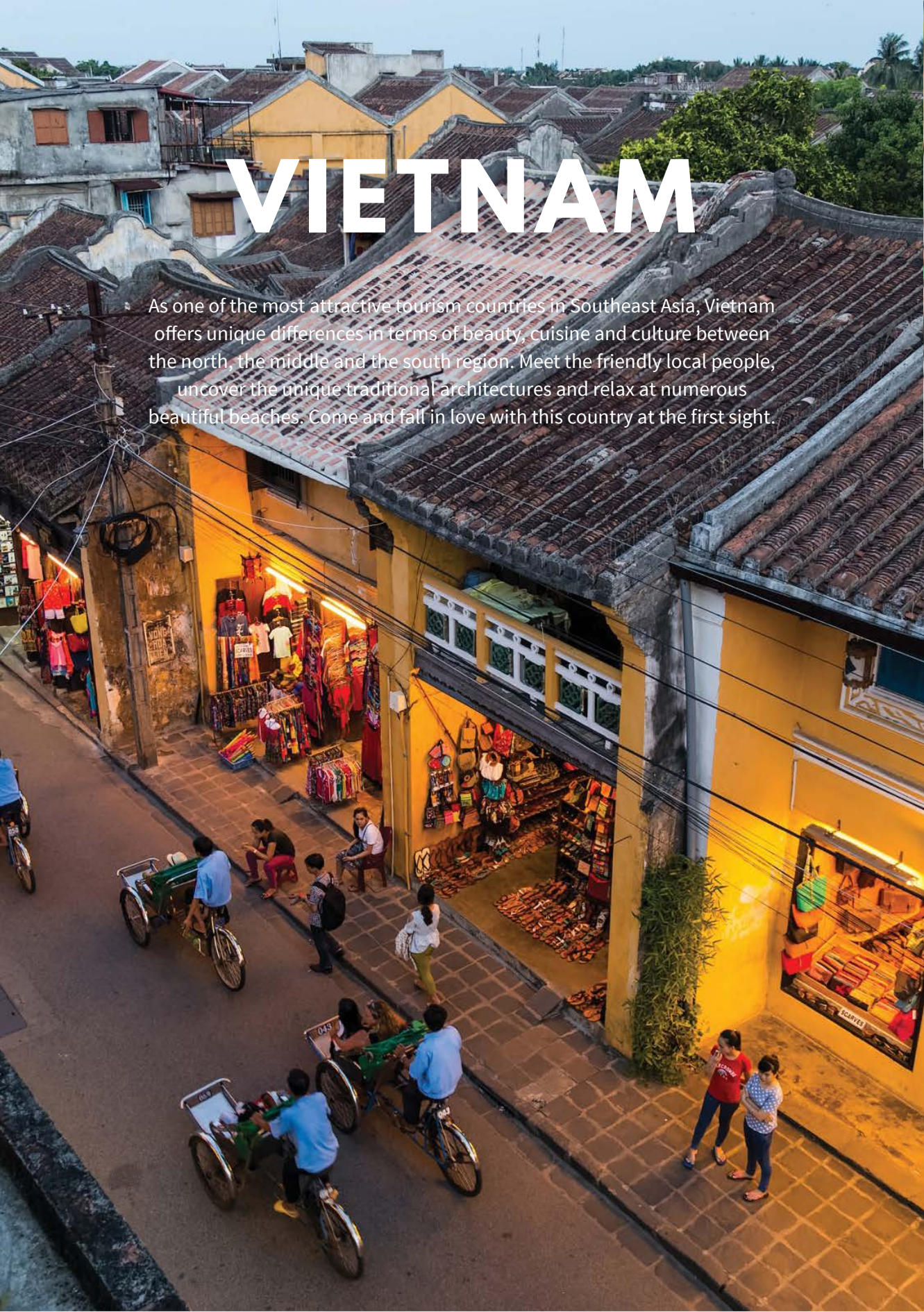
The accommodation was exemplary in the four hotels we stayed in and every tour was terrific with the highlight for me being the Saigon River dinner cruise. The food everywhere was fantastic. Thank you for arranging such a great holiday.

- Norm Avent  
Asia Vacation Group Customer



# VIETNAM

As one of the most attractive tourism countries in Southeast Asia, Vietnam offers unique differences in terms of beauty, cuisine and culture between the north, the middle and the south region. Meet the friendly local people, uncover the unique traditional architectures and relax at numerous beautiful beaches. Come and fall in love with this country at the first sight.





# OVERVIEW

## Quick Facts



POPULATION  
96,147,000 (as of Feb, 2018)



LANGUAGE  
Vietnamese



CURRENCY  
VND (Vietnamese Dong)



TIME ZONE  
UTC + 7 hours



EXCHANGE RATE

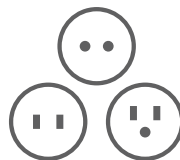
	1 USD	1 AUD	1 Euro
to VND	23,000	17,000	26,700



ELECTRICITY  
220V-50Hz.  
Plug type A, C & F are widely used.

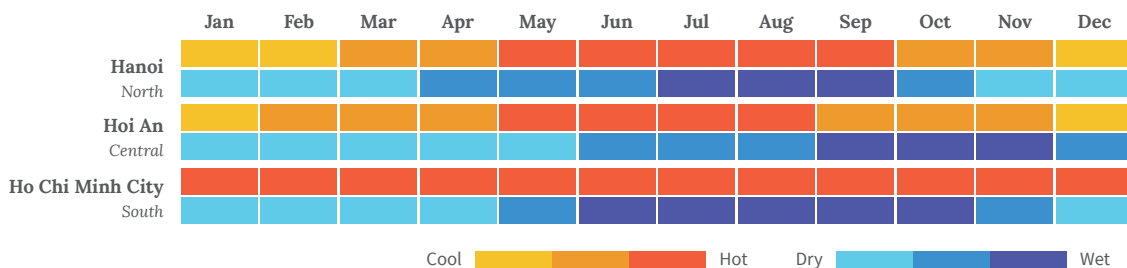


POPULAR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS  
Noi Bai Airport (HAN), Hanoi  
Cam Ranh Airport (CXR), Nha Trang  
Tan Son Nhat (SGN), Ho Chi Minh City



## Weather

Vietnam can be visited year-round. However, the best time to visit Vietnam is usually from October to April. We highly recommend you to start planning six months in advance.



# WHERE TO GO

Listed below is the must-go 7 destinations while your trip in Vietnam, from the north to the south of the land. Many people think Vietnam is small. Just be careful as you may be caught off-guard.



## Sapa

This mountainous town is inhabited by colourful hill tribes and situated within Hoang Lien Son Mountain range, which includes Fansipan - the highest peak of Indochina peninsula.



## Hanoi

The capital of Vietnam, well-known for its delectable food and well-preserved colonial buildings.



## Halong

Halong Bay is described as “a spectacular seascape sculpted by nature” by UNESCO due to its breathtaking caves and limestone pillars sitting on the water.



## Hue

Used to be the ancient capital of the Nguyen dynasty from 1802 to 1945, Hue now is home to the UNESCO World Heritage Imperial City which is the ruin of the last emperor dynasty.



## Hoi An

Hoi An ancient town is a striking UNESCO World Heritage Site with many historic buildings and sparkling decorative elements.



## Nha Trang

Nha Trang - A beautiful beach city on the South Central Coast of Vietnam, offering wonderful beaches, water sports, vibrant nightlife.



## Ho Chi Minh City

Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), “the Pearl of Indochina”, is never asleep, perhaps. Just such as Mekong Delta and Cu Chi Tunnels.



CHINA



## AN ENDLESS BEAUTY

There are much more beautiful destinations not being mentioned here. Visit our website to explore the bigger Vietnam.



# WHAT

## TO DO

01

### Trek through tribal villages in Sapa

Laying in the far north of Vietnam, Sapa set itself apart from other cities in the countries with colourful minorities, cool weather year-around and endless terraced fields. Imagine walking uphill and the tremendous valley covered in yellow and green “waves” starts to fill in your eyes. Further down the way into tribals, they dress in the ways you won’t find anywhere else on earth.

Welcome to Sapa!



02

### Get lost in the Old Quarter of Hanoi

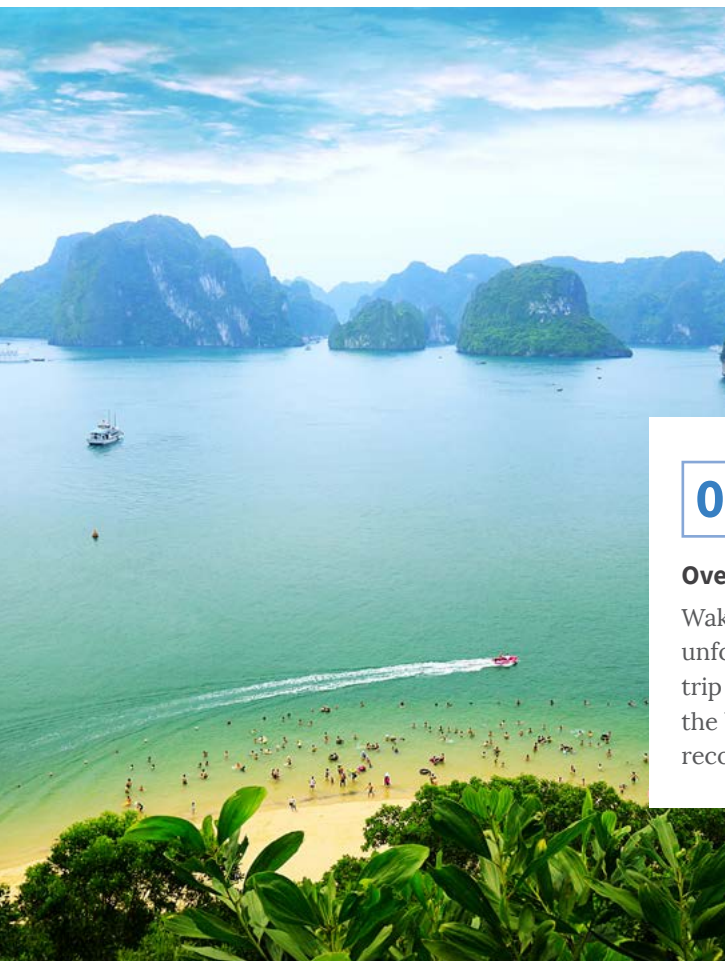
The streets are small, the alleys are tiny, houses look old, and there are people just want to be friends. This area is made out of 36 streets and each one of them is likely specialized in selling one kind of products. Walking from one street to another is like going from one country to another. Also, people here love giving directions, so it is okay to get lost.



03

### Overnight in Cruise in Halong Bay

Waking up in the middle of the bay is indeed an unforgettable experience. While getting a cruise trip may be bit pricy, you are guaranteed to get the best moments out of Halong Bay, a UNESCO recognized site.





04

#### Try **street food** everywhere you go

How about rolling off track and taste the best food on earth? In Vietnam, every place has their distinctive kinds of food that will amaze your six senses. Crab Vermicelli Noodle, Egg Coffee and Beef Jerky Salad in Hanoi or Rice Paper Salad, Snails and hundreds of sweet desserts in Saigon. And don't worry, they are not going anywhere so take your time.



05

#### Drop a lantern in **Thu Bon river at Hoi An**

Hoi An is famous not only for having Thu Bon river running across the city, but also for monthly Lantern Festival. If you happen to be in this city on the 15th day of the lunar month, then you are in luck. The city, especially the river, will be lightened up with hundreds of lanterns at night. You may want to buy a couple, make your own wish and let it flow to the gods with the river. In fact, people do it every night lately. It is just more beautiful during the mid-month event.



06

#### Crawl through the eminent **Cu Chi Tunnels**

Cu Chi Tunnels had become legendary during the 1960s as a strategic military base and community life centre. Try to squeeze in the tight tunnels and discover innumerable trap doors, living areas, storage facilities, classrooms and weapon factories. You can even try to fire an AK-47 for real.

07

#### Enjoy bustling **Saigon nightlife**

Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) is a bustling city in the southern Vietnam. When the sun goes away, the city center turns into a big stage filled with music, lightings, irresistible food smell and fires. Why not start making friends with the buddy next to you?




# INSIGHTS

## Getting a Visa

In order to enter Vietnam, a visitor usually needs a Vietnam visa, unless he or she holds a passport of a country in ASEAN and is eligible for a Visa Exemption. Below is 3 types of Vietnam Visas.

Type	Visa Before Arrival	Visa On Arrival	E-visa
<b>What</b>	Get the Visa stamped to your passport prior to leaving.	Get the a Visa Approval Letter prior to leaving. Then, present the letter at the Custom Border along with other documents for visa approval.	Get an electronic visa sent to your email's inbox.
<b>Pros</b>	Pay only once. No waiting at the Custom Border in Vietnam. Enter the country any way.	Cheaper. Can apply online.	100% online application.
<b>Cons</b>	A bit pricy. Must apply at the Embassy via mail or in person.	Pay several times during the process. Lengthy process. Enter the country via <u>air</u> only.	Single entry only. Non-extendable. Non-refundable when being refused. Only 46 eligible countries. Maximum 30 day validity.

## Living Costs

	Low Range USD <b>40</b> /day	Mid Range USD <b>40-100</b> /day	High Range USD <b>100</b> /day
	USD <b>10-15</b> /night Hostel, homestay or dorm	USD <b>10-15</b> /night Hostel, homestay or dorm	From USD <b>10-15</b> /night luxury hotels or resorts
	USD <b>0.30</b> /ride Bus	USD <b>0.30</b> /ride Bus	USD <b>0.50-0.75</b> /km Taxi
	USD <b>1.50-2.50</b> /meal Economical vendors	From USD <b>10</b> /meal Decent restaurants	From USD <b>20</b> /meal Premium restaurants

## Local Money

Local currency can be exchanged at the banks or authorized agencies.

Popular banks are Vietcombank, Vietinbank, BIDV and Techcombank.

*Do not make any transaction at unauthorized shops. There's a fine and the difference is not worth it.*



10,000 VND



20,000 VND



50,000 VND



100,000 VND



200,000 VND



500,000 VND

## MOVING AROUND

### AIRLINES

Domestically, there are only 3 airlines in Vietnam including Vietnam Airlines, Jetstar Pacific and Vietjet Air. Vietnam Airlines is the premium 4-star airline and the other 2 are budgeted airlines.

*\*Delays are normal when taking flights in Vietnam, no matter which airline you are with. Don't freak out.*

### FERRY

Beside cruise and boat tours, ferries are still in charge to help people cross rivers or move between cities that have harbours or piers. Tickets can be purchased at the station.

  
Vietnam Airlines

  
BAMBOO  
AIRWAYS

  
Jetstar

  
vietjetAIR.com



### TAXI

Car Taxis charge from <sup>USD</sup>1/km. Popular Brands are Mai Linh, Vinasun, Taxi Group and ABC.

*\*Make sure the meter is active when getting on the cab.*

Motorbike Taxis charge typically from <sup>USD</sup>0.75/km.

*\*There is no meter so make sure to agree on a price before leaving.*



### BUS

For intra-city, a bus ride costs ~<sup>USD</sup>0.3 and the waiting time is typically 5-10 mins.

For inter-city, it costs <sup>USD</sup>4/100km for Eco buses and <sup>USD</sup>7/100km Premium buses, on average.

Popular Bus Providers: Hoang Long, Phuong Trang, Van Minh, Thuan Thao and Kumho Samco.



### TRAIN

Available for limited routes. There are 4 kinds of accommodation on a train, including Hard Seat, Soft Seat, Hard Bed and Soft Bed. For a route from Hanoi to Saigon, the price for Hard Seat, Soft Seat, Hard Bed and Soft Bed are about <sup>USD</sup>40, <sup>USD</sup>50, <sup>USD</sup>70, and <sup>USD</sup>90 respectively. To buy train tickets in advance, refer to Vietnam Railways booking site [www.dsvn.vn/#/](http://www.dsvn.vn/#/)



### RENT A BIKE

More economical, exciting and challenging. However, just beware of the chaotic traffic in Vietnam.

Bike renting typically cost <sup>USD</sup>9-15 per day.

Car renting typically cost <sup>USD</sup>40-50/day, plus ~<sup>US</sup>\$3/km.

*\*Further discounts may apply for longer period of renting.*



# HUNGRY?

## 01 Noodle Soup (Pho)

*Best place to get: Hanoi*

Irresistible aroma of herbs and spices, and a sweet and bold taste of the soup after being simmered for hours with meat, bones and secret recipes. Just don't leave the country without having a hot bowl of Pho.



## 02 Hue Beef Noodle Soup (Bun Bo Hue)

*Best place to get: Hanoi*

A harmony of spicy, sour, salty and umami flavor. You will find beef brisket, steamed pork blood, fatty pork leg, pork cake, and a pinch of basil, onions and shrimp paste. The spicier, the better.



## 03 Vietnamese Sandwich (Banh Mi)

*Best place to get: Hanoi, Hoi An, Saigon*

A crunchy sandwich filled with meat, Vietnamese paté, butter, mayo, chilly and cilantro. Quick, tasty and efficient. This is a legendary Vietnamese food of all time.



## 04 Spring Rolls (Goi Cuon)

*Best place to get: Saigon*

Boiled pork, shrimp, vermicelli and a rice paper wrapping around. Simple yet memorable. Dip the rolls in special fish sauce or soy sauce and bon appetit!

## 05 Vietnamese Coffee (Café)

*Best place to get: Everywhere*

The bold, bitter, and sweet taste is distinctive to the coffee in Vietnam. A cup of coffee and a piece of sandwich is a national breakfast combo.



## STAY HEALTHY

Fully equipped hospitals are available in all big cities like Hanoi, Da Nang and Saigon. In rural and remote areas, there may be local clinics that can perform basic medical operations.

The most common issue for travellers is diseases related to digestive system, ranging from stomach ache to diarrhea. In any case, the best solution will be to seek for immediate medical attention.

*\*Street food is nice, but not everyday.  
\*Tap water is not for drinking.*



## EMERGENCY DIAL

**113**  
POLICE

**114**  
FIRE

**115**  
MEDIC



## STAY CONNECTED

Mobile network in Vietnam is quite strong with 4G data network available.

A 4G data SIM card will cost less than <sup>USD</sup>5, giving about 3GB of data.

Popular Network Providers: Viettel, Vinaphone and Mobiphone.

## STAY SAFE

Thief is a threat just about anywhere in the world and for some reasons, they prefer tourists.

*\*Don't bring valuable stuff with you on the street. If you must, just don't make them too visible.*

*\*Put all your bags or backpack in front of your body for full-time surveillance.*

Night time is ideal for robbery to come visit you on the street. Therefore, avoid walking alone on empty and dark roads. If you have to, make it quick or find an accompany.

CULTURE

# FESTIVAL



## > Lunar New Year

*February*

As the biggest and most wanted festival of the year, Lunar New Year or Tet is celebrated on the first day of the Lunar year and usually lasts 5 days. This is a special occasion for families to reunite, for kids to get lucky money and for young ones to find their true love. During this holiday, businesses are closed and people are on party mode.

## > Mid-Autumn Festival

*September*

Also called “Tet for kids”, this occasion is most wanted by children across the nation. The festival is held on the 15th of August, according to lunar calendar. Kids will have their special treats, play fun games and especially, light up lanterns. At night, streets will be overwhelmed with lanterns, lion dances and children.



## > Hoi An Lantern Festival

*Monthly*

The festival is usually celebrated on the 14th day of every lunar month in Hoi An. Streets will be lit with thousands of lanterns and Thu Bon River is flooded with sparkling candles. You can take a sampan boat ride (costs about 100,000VND) to the middle of the river and drop the lanterns on the river while making a wish.





# ETIQUETTES



## Stay local. Stay right

### #1

Dress conservatively where possible, especially in sacred places.

### #2

The oldest is king, respect them by all means!

### #3

Avoid political talks or it will be awkward.

### #4

Do not touch any one's head.

### #5

Practice the art of saving face, as self-esteem matters in public.

### #6

Bring gifts when coming to someone's house as guests.

### #7

Do not make aggressive physical contacts, especially with the opposite sex.

### #8

Punctuation is 5 minutes late. Hang on.

### #9

Do not do finger-crossing. It means bad things, really bad.

### #10

Do not gift handkerchiefs, black stuff, yellow flowers or chrysanthemums.





# TRAVEL AGENCY

Employed by Asia travel experts, Asia Vacation Group understands deeply WHERE to go, WHAT to do, and HOW to take your holiday to the fullest



Best Prices



7-day Money Back



100% Departure Guarantee

## Our tours typically include



Flights



Accommodation



Selective Meals



Transportation



Sightseeing



Tour Guides

*\*Prices are on per person twin share basis and subject to change without notice.*



FLIGHTS



CRUISE



SIGHTSEEING

FROM  
AU\$2,950

### 10 Day Highlights Of Vietnam

Tour Code WHV

Hanoi, Halong Bay, Hoi An, and Saigon



FLIGHTS



CRUISE



BEACH

FROM  
AU\$3,954

### 14 Day Best of Vietnam with Nha Trang Beach Break

Tour Code JP16

Hanoi, Halong Bay, Hoi An, Saigon, and Nha Trang



FLIGHTS



CRUISE



SIGHTSEEING

FROM  
AU\$4,920

### 14 Day Vietnam & Cambodia Discovery

Tour Code WCV14

Hanoi, Halong Bay, Hoi An, Saigon, Siem Reap, and Phnom Penh



FLIGHTS



CRUISE



LUXURY

FROM  
AU\$6,099

### 13 Day Vietnam & Cambodia with Luxury Mekong River Cruise

Tour Code WMK13

Saigon, Mekong River Cruise, Phnom Penh, Tonle Sap Lake, and Siem Reap

## TRAVEL HACKS

# the CHECKLIST for PACKING

You don't need to pack your whole apartment into your luggage...

### Documents

- Passport with at least 6 months expiry date.
- Visa documents.
- E-tickets or printed ticket.
- Hotel list.
- Tour itinerary.

### Clothes

- Tshirts, shorts.
- Swimsuit.
- Jackets.
- Hat or cap.

### Electronics

- Chargers.
- Electrical adapter and converter.
- Camera kit, including batteries and memory cards.
- Phone, earphones.

### Medicines

- Cold/Flu, Diarrhea, Pain Relief,
- Allergy.
- Prescription drug with label and doses description.
- Sunscreen and insect spray.



### Money

- Foreign currency in cash.
- Credit card (Mastercard or Visa are more widely accepted).

### Packing Gears

- 1 check-in luggage (up to 20/30kg).
- 1 carry-on luggage (up to 7kg).
- 1 small travel bag/backpack.

### Shoes

- Comfortable walking shoes.
- Sandals.

### Accessories

- Sunglasses.
- Umbrella.
- Hat or cap.

### Toiletries

- Toothbrush and toothpaste.
- Soap/shower gel.
- Feminine product.
- Hand sanitizer or wet wipe.

## TRAVEL HACKS

# ON THE GO

## SURVIVAL TIPS



### CROSSING THE STREETS

Vietnam is quite famous for its chaotic yet predictable traffic.

Rule 1: Cross with a local (if possible).

Rule 2: Do NOT wait for the street to be empty. It just doesn't happen.

Rule 3: Do NOT go backward.

Rule 4: Traffic will not stop for you. Don't rush.

### TALK LOCAL

Some common Vietnamese phrases that may come in handy.

English	Vietnamese	Pronounce
Hello	Xin chào	sin chow
Thank you	Cảm ơn	kahm uhn
Sorry	Xin lỗi	sin loy
To the airport	Đi sân bay	dee sun bay
To the hospital	Đi bệnh viện	dee bain vian



### BARGAIN

Prices are made to be haggled and bargaining is an art.

Rule#1: Only perform this technique at street vendors or similar.

Rule#2: Do not use this move if the price is too low already.

Rule#3: Start bidding at 50% of the offer received and work your way up.

Rule#4: If 50% works, walk away immediately. It can be much lower.

Rule#5: Just walk away...

Have fun shopping! 😊



# BOOKING FORM

Please fill in the form below and kindly send them to our office. Our address is on the last page of this guide.

## SECTION 1: TRIP DETAILS

1. Which tour do you want to book?  
.....

2. Preferred room type

Twin     Double     Triple

3. Where will you depart from?

Sydney     Melbourne     Brisbane  
 Adelaide     Canberra     Perth  
 Auckland     Other (Please specify below)  
.....

4. Would you like to purchase travel insurance

Yes     No

5. Preferred Flight Class

Economy     Premium Economy  
 Business     First Class

6. When do you want to travel  
.....

(dd/mm/yyyy)

7. Number of passengers  
.....

8. Add-on Tours (Please name all of them)  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. Special Request (transport, accommodation, etc)  
.....  
.....  
.....

\* Final price will vary based on your selections. But don't worry, you are still having the best rates possible

## SECTION 2: LEAD PASSENGER

10. First Name

11. Middle Name

12. Last Name

13. Street Address 1

14. City

15. State

16. Postal Code

17. Street Address 2

18. Country

19. Nationality

20. Email Address

21. Phone Number

## SECTION 3: OTHER INFORMATION

22. Would you like to hear about our latest offers and promotions?  Yes  No

Terms & Agreement (Please read carefully)

If submitted by one party only, I confirm that I am authorized to sign on behalf of all passengers listed on this booking form. All parties have read, understood and agree to abide by the terms, booking conditions and responsibilities.

Your signature

Today's Date:...../...../.....

## BOOKING CONDITIONS

### Reservation & Deposit

Tour prices are subject to availability of tour, airlines, special economy class fare and specific airfare class availability. All services are subject to availability.

Typically, a deposit (from \$199 per passenger) is required within three (3) days of receiving confirmation that the company is holding space for you. Actual amount of deposit may vary depending on tours. *Note that Private Tours and Tailor-Made Tours require a 30% deposit.* Passenger names must be provided exactly as per passport, including middle names, at the time of deposit/booking. Any spelling corrections made after a deposit is paid must be sent in writing and will incur additional fees, including any ticket reissue fees. Asia Vacation Group reserves the right to correct any errors in rates quoted or calculated, or any commissions made at any time during your booking. Any verbal quote given is an indication only of the final price and is subject to confirmation in writing.

### Amenments & Extra Fees

The following fees will apply:

- Amendments to confirmed and deposited itineraries outside of 30 days prior to departure where the value of the booking is decreased: \$50 per change for admin fee.
- Transferring between tours (within 75 days): See "Cancellation by Customer" for applicable fees and details.
- Reissue of airline tickets: From \$100 per person.
- Once a booking is confirmed, name transfers may incur additional charges.

### Cancellation by Customers

All cancellations must be made in writing to Asia Vacation Group and will be subject to the following cancellation charges from the date the written cancellation is received:

- If airline and rail tickets are issued, up to 100% of the airfare and rail fare surcharged.
- If your booking is made with the Budget airlines, up to 100% of package tour.
- If customer wants to change the travel dates and visa issued,

up to 100% of visa fee.

- More than 75 days prior to departure: loss of deposit plus any administration fees
- Between 74 and 59 days prior to departure: 25% of total cost
- Between 58 and 46 days prior to departure: 50% of total cost
- 45 days or less prior to departure: 100% of total cost
- Any "No Show": 100% of total cost

In the event of a cancellation any refunds will be less administration fees and any applicable amendment fees. Asia Vacation Group will endeavour to recover as much as possible from suppliers to pass on to the customer. Regrettably cancellation charges and fees cannot be waived. There can be no exceptions. No refund will be made for any unused portions of the holiday after the departure date. Please note that employees of any overseas company or staff of Asia Vacation Group outside Australia are not authorised to give any guarantees or agreements to customers in respect of refunds or any other matters.

### Cancellation by the Company

Asia Vacation Group reserves the right to cancel or vary a tour prior to departure due to insufficient numbers. In such an event, alternative guaranteed travel dates will be offered. Should these options not be acceptable Asia Vacation Group will refund the full price paid, less visa cost. If a tour is cancelled or varied prior to departure due to unforeseeable circumstances such as, but not restricted to, severe weather conditions or force majeure, Asia Vacation Group will refund all monies prior to departure less visa cost, fuel surcharge and any other cancellation fees levied by airlines and other third parties. Unforeseeable circumstances such as force majeure, adverse weather, flight rescheduling, hotel overbooking and faults with transportation or road conditions may also have an effect on the tour itinerary after the commencement date. Any decision made in respect of tour services by independent operators to re-route or amend the itinerary due to any of the above or similar circumstances

is at the discretion of the tour service provider and Asia Vacation Group will not be liable for any claim whatsoever arising from such events.

### Responsibilities

Asia Vacation Group acts as a coordinator for all persons taking these tours in the making of all arrangements for transportation, sightseeing and hotel accommodation. The Company does not own, manage, control or operate any transportation vehicle, any hotel or restaurant or any other supplier of services. All receipts and tickets are issued subject to the terms and conditions specified by the supplier and all services are subject to the laws of the country where the services are provided. The Company acts only as an agent for the owners, contractors and suppliers of transportation and/or other related travel services provided and assumes no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage to baggage or property or for any injury, illness or death or for any damages or claims whatsoever caused arising directly or indirectly from accidents, loss, theft or damage to person or property, delays, transport failure, strikes, wars and uprisings or acts of God etc. over which the Company has no control. We strongly urge all customers to undertake a high level of personal responsibility in order to ensure that possessions, equipment and personal documents are closely monitored and protected at all times.

### Privacy

We are collecting your personal information so that we can process your booking. We will also keep you up to date with other Asia Vacation Group's offers and product information that may be of interest to you if you have consented to this. You can opt out of receiving information at any time if you choose to do so. Any personal information you provide will be managed in accordance with Asia Vacation Group's privacy policy.



We are living in a connected world.



### **AUSTRALIA HEADQUARTERS**

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Toll free: 1800 22 93 39

Outside Australia: +61 3 9988 3029

support@asiavacationgroup.com.au

www.asiavacationgroup.com.au

### **NEW ZEALAND OFFICE**

NZBN 9429046951151

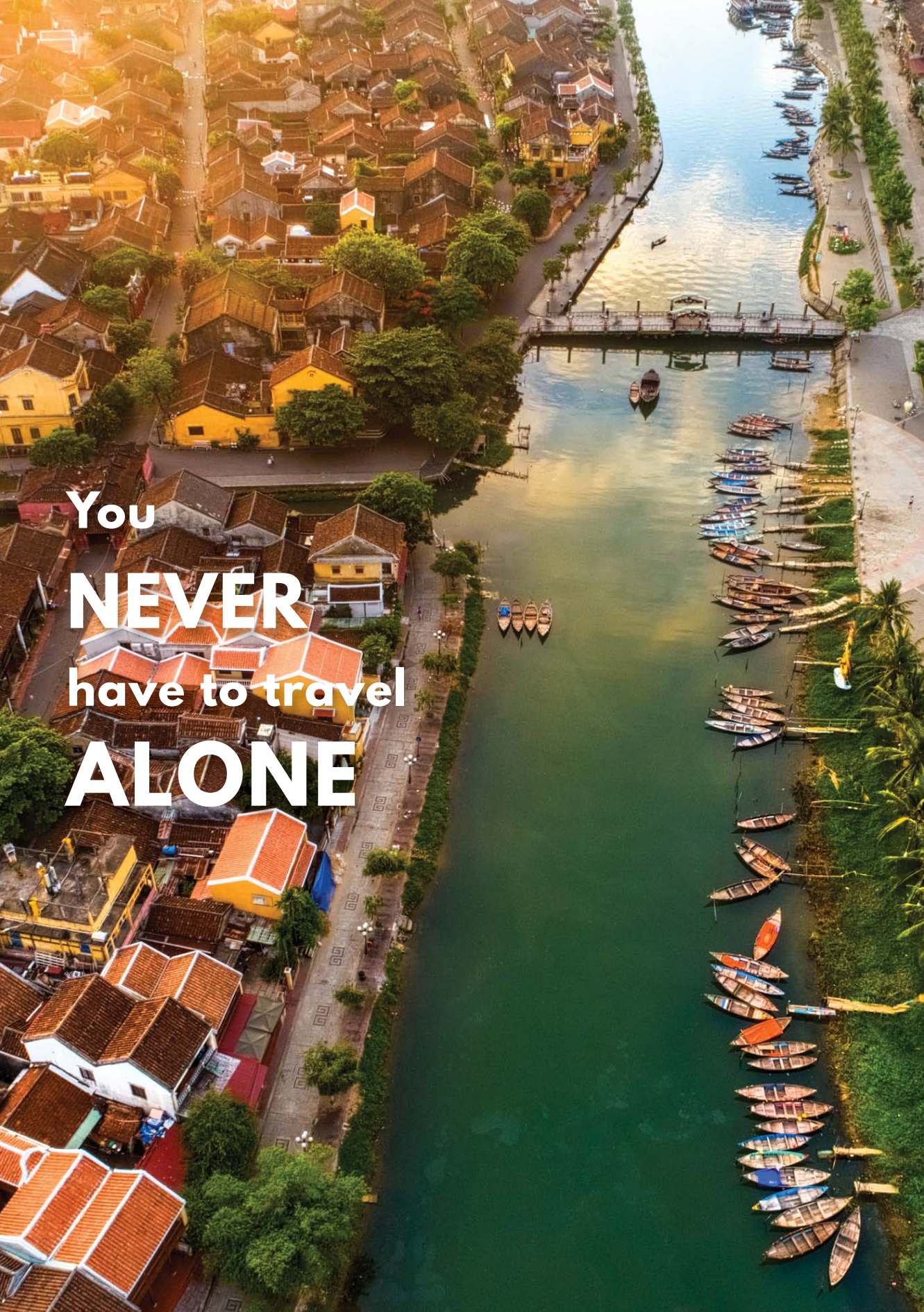
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www.asiavacationgroup.co.nz



You  
**NEVER**  
have to travel  
**ALONE**