

### I. Travel planning and preparations

1. I'm going to Vietnam for the first time. Where should I go?

Vietnam is favored by Nature with a number of beautiful beaches, mountainous regions, and other beauty spots scattered along the country. Ha Long Bay, Hue, Hoi An, Mui Ne, Nha Trang, etc. are top places to visit in Vietnam. For detailed information, please click [here](#) (Before You go> Further for Foreign tourists> First time to Vietnam ).

2. Should I go on my own or with a tour?

If this is your first time to Vietnam, it'd be better to go with a tour. To book a tour, please click [here](#) .

3. Which flights to Vietnam are available?

Click [here](#) (Before You go> Flights)

4. What guidebooks are available?

Here are the guidebooks for your reference:

□□ - *APA Publications, 1991, 351 pages, \$19.95.*

□□ - *Prentice Hall, 1993, 306 pages, \$18.00.*

□□ - *Eurasia Travel Guides, 1993, 464 pages, \$19.95.*

And click [here](#) for more information (Before You go> Recommended Readings)

5. Do I need a visa to visit?

Only citizens of certain countries can visit Vietnam without Vietnam entry visa. Those

countries include: most citizens of ASEAN countries are no need Vietnam visa for visit Vietnam within 30 days; citizens of Korea, Japan & Scandinavians (Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland passport holders) do not need Vietnam visa for visiting Vietnam within 15 days. Click <http://vietnam-visa.com> for details.

### 6. What's the Indochina?

The Indochina is a region in Southeast Asia. It lies roughly east of India, south of China. Indochina comprises the territory of the following countries:

- in strict sense, only the former colonial French Indochina:

- Cambodia
- Laos
- Vietnam

- in the wider sense, better described as Mainland Southeast Asia, it also includes:

- Peninsular Malaysia (comprising the southern end of the Malay peninsula but none of the Malay islands)
- Myanmar (formerly Burma and part of British India until 1937)
- Singapore (also considered part of Maritime Southeast Asia if the man-made Johor-Singapore Causeway is not taken into account)
- Thailand (formerly Siam)

### 7. What should I pack?

Click [here](#) for information (Before You go> More for Foreign Tourists> [Luggage Packing Tips](#) )

### 8. I am going to travel with my old grandparents, so what more should I bring?

Buy insurance for them before going, particularly when they are more than 70, not only for healthcare reasons, but for a number of others like safety and equality. For instance, some old persons, well into their late 60s and beyond, leave their luggage in all kinds of places.

Remember to bring all the required medicines and have them on time right up to your grand parents' prescription if they have any diseases of the old.

Always remind them to bring along a note of your family's or guardian's contacts (Name, Address, Tel, etc.) for immediate contact in emergency case if any.

Ask them to keep in hand the list of local foreign hospitals or clinics, or International SOS Vietnam to contact when in need.

9. I am going to travel with my small kids, what should I bring?

Mostly, remember to bring those following stuff for your babies/kids:

- Bring a blankie and cuddly toy
- Start — and end — your day early
- Establish a routine and stick to it
- Eat familiar foods
- Stay close to home base
- Schedule running-around time for toddlers
- Expect the adjustment to take several days

For details, please click [here](#) (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Travelling with kids](#) )

10. I am a woman and going alone to Vietnam. What notes should I take?

As you are woman, there're more things to notice than men: dressing notice, safety notice, jewelries keeping, etc. For detailed tips, please click [here](#) (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Travellers' tips](#))

11. What should I see during my trip?

Click [here](#) for information (While You are in Vietnam> [Things to do](#)) or <http://www.vietnam-beauty.com> for detailed information about Vietnam's cities, destinations, cultures, and world heritages...

12. What should I bring back as gifts for my friends?

Click [here](#) for information (Leave Vietnam> [Suggested Gifts](#))

## II. Money and financial matters

13. What currency should I use?

Mostly Vietnamese Dong (VND) as this is Vietnam's currency. Besides, US Dollars are also accepted in big cities and provinces (Hanoi, Hochiminh City, Hue, Da Nang, Nha Trang, Da Lat, etc.). Click [here](#) for more info (Before You go> Further for Foreign Tourists> [Money/Currency](#))

14. What's the "Interbank" exchange rate?

"Interbank" Exchange Rate is the Exchange Rate given by the Interbank to be applied among banks in Vietnam, while the market Exchange Rate is applied between commercial banks and customers. Normally, Interbank exchange rate can be understood as "Wholesale" rate and the other is "Retail" rate, thus, the former is often a bit lower than the latter.

15. Will my bank machine card or credit card work in Vietnam?

All kinds of credit and debit cards work in Vietnam, particularly VisaCard and MasterCard. ATM machines are also available at your use (yet, all provide VND). For details, please click [here](#)

(While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things>

[Payment in Vietnam](#)

)

16. Should I use traveller's cheques?

Yes. However, though traveler's cheques are an easy method of carrying money around, they can only be cashed at major banks (not small banks in small towns) in Vietnam.

17. Should I change money before I go or when I get there?

You should change money into USD as all big cities in Vietnam accept USD (if you don't have USD yet).

And you don't have to change your USD or other currencies into Vietnam Dong (VND) before you go because you can easily do it in Vietnam (airports, big hotels, and big cities with banks). In this case, all you should do is to bring sufficient US dollars.

However, if you are going to small towns with few banks, it's best to change some into VND at home before you go to spend during your time there. Remember NOT to change too much as VND is not quite widely used outside of Vietnam. Click [here](#) for more information (Before You go> Further for Foreign Tourists>

[Money/Currency](#)  
)

18. How do I change money at a bank or bureau de change?

Please click [here](#) for details (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Payment in Vietnam](#) )

19. Are ATMs available everywhere in Vietnam?

ATMs are available in all big cities and provinces of Vietnam, like Hanoi, Hochiminh City, Hue, Hoi An, Nha Trang); remember that they all provide VND. For details, please click here (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Payment in Vietnam](#))

20. What does "VAT" mean?

VAT means Value Added Tax, which is the tax levied upon the goods or services you buy for its added value. Normally, it is 10% of the goods/service value. So, customers have to pay 110% of the goods/service value.

21. Can I get a VAT refund?

No, because this VAT is to be submitted to the Central State Treasury of Vietnam (the Government) later by those who sold you the goods/services.

22. Can I buy "duty-free" items?

Yes, you can buy good-quality duty-free items at any international airports (Noi Bai, Tan Son Nhat, or Danang) in Vietnam, or reach the following addresses:

- Hanoi: Ex-Import & ODA Duty-free Shop (C4 – Giang Vo St., Ba Dinh Dist., Hanoi)
- Hochiminh City: Saigon Tourist Duty-free Shop (102 Nguyen Hue St., Dist.1, Hochiminh City)

### **III. Transportation**

23. Where can I get the best airfare?

For Flights to Vietnam and Vietnam's domestic Flights, please click [here](#) (Before You go> Further for Foreign Tourists>

[Flights](#)

)

To book a flight to Vietnam at the best fare, please refer to <http://www.tripadvisor.com> . Or more simply, refer to your country's national airlines to get the best airfare.

24. What is the best means of transport in Vietnam for foreign tourists?

There are several means of transport in Vietnam for your choice, but the most convenient one for foreign tourists would be taxi if you are in big cities or provinces. This is much more comfortable and quicker than public means of transport for getting around inside a city or province. However, if you are going to small towns or mountainous regions where taxi and public means of transport are rare, “xe om” or motorcycle taxi is your best choice. For more information, please click [here](#) (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Transportation](#) )

25. Is my driver's license valid in Vietnam?

Please click [here](#) for information (While You are in Vietnam> DOs and DON'Ts> Transportation)

26. Can I drive as fast as I want in Vietnam?

In any country where there exists a law adjusting transportation, you cannot drive as fast as you want. In Vietnam, also, you can drive at around 50 km/h as maximum inside crowded city center, and around 80 km/h out of this. For more information, please click [here](#) (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Transportation](#) )

27. Where can I get information on trains?

Click [here](#) for information (While You are in Vietnam> Tips for common things> [Transportation](#) )

28. Should I buy a rail pass?

If you go a long way (say, from cities/provinces to cities/provinces at long distances), you

should buy one. If not, travelling by bus or taxis is probably the best choice in Vietnam these days.

29. Where should I buy train tickets?

You can buy train tickets at railway stations, for details, please click [here](#)

#### IV. Miscellaneous

30. I speak language <X> and I'm going to Vietnam. How widely is my language spoken in this country?

English is a widely used foreign language in Vietnam. Normally, people speak the mother tongue, Vietnamese. For information about language, please click [here](#) (Before You go> [Vietnam Overview](#))

31. Can I drink the tap water in Vietnam?

It'd be better not to drink tap water in Vietnam today as it is still of unsure purity. You should drink bottled water (and remember to make sure that the seal on the bottle is intact). For detailed advice/tips about alerts when travel to Vietnam, please click [here](#) (Before You go> Further for Foreign Tourists> [Travel Alerts](#))

32. Should I worry about crime in Vietnam?

Almost no, as Vietnam is one of the safest destinations in the world today. For detailed reasons why Vietnam attracts tourists, please click [here](#) ([Why travel to Vietnam](#))

### 33. What's the time difference?

Vietnam is GMT + 7hours. For more information about Vietnam time and other information, please click [here](#) (Before You go> [Vietnam Overview](#))

### 34. What's the weather like over there?

As lying in a tropical region, Vietnam features a tropical climate. Yet, the weather/climate changes from region to region. The North has 4 seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, whereas the South features 2 seasons: Dry Season and Rainy Season. For details about Vietnam weather/climate, please click [here](#) (Before You go> [Vietnam Overview](#)> [Weather/Climate](#))

### 35. How can I make a phone call to Vietnam?

Vietnam's Tel Code is +84. To make a phone call to Vietnam, you just dial 0084 + <regional code> + <number>. For details, please click [here](#) (While You are in Vietnam> [Tips for common things](#)> [Connectivity](#))

## V. Selected Links

\* Airlines: <http://www.vietnamair.com.vn/>

\* Trains: <http://www.vr.com.vn/>

\* Buses (coaches)

\* Other Useful Links

## **VI. Your Own Questions**