

Vietnam

Climate:

There are no good or bad seasons to visit Vietnam. When one region is wet, cold or steamy hot, there is always somewhere else that is sunny and pleasant. Basically, the south has two seasons: the wet (May to November, wettest from June to August) and the dry (December to April). The central coast is dry from May to October and wet from December to February. Generally speaking, November is an excellent month to visit the north but it will be typhoon season in the south and central coasts. The north has two seasons: cool, damp winters (November to April) and hot summers (May to October). The average annual temperature in Hanoi is 74° F (23° C), in Hue is 77° F (25° C) and in Ho Chi Minh City is 81° F (27° C); in the highland city of Da Lat, it drops to 70° F (21° C).

Currency: The local currency is the Dong. Credit cards and Travelers checks are getting more and more popular. They are accepted in many good hotels, restaurants and most of the banks in the bigger cities. If you travel outside these areas, you should carry enough US\$ in cash (Please use only new notes in perfect condition). The US\$ is the second "official" currency in Vietnam nowadays. You will also want enough local currency for shops. Go to finance.yahoo.com/currency?u for current exchange rates.

Immunizations: Although no vaccinations are required for travel in SE Asia, we recommend you consult your physician about tetanus, polio, typhoid, gamma globulin, Hepatitis A & B and malaria. For current information, check directly with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a traveler's clinic or other medical authority. Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/Travel/destinationList.aspx#P>

Tipping Guideline: Drivers - \$5-\$8 pp per day
Mainland guides - \$10-\$20 pp per day
For trekking trips: Cooks - \$5 pp per day
Porters and other trekking staff - \$3-4 pp per day

Budget: You will need to analyze your spending habits and decide how much extra money to bring for alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, gratuities, souvenirs, and laundry. For a ten day trip, budget at least \$200 - \$300pp above and beyond tips for additional expenses. A rule of thumb: take half the clothing and twice the money you thought you would need!



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Dialing Code: 84

Time Zone: GMT/UTC + 7

Electricity: 220V ,50Hz

Visas: You can either get your visa upon arrival or in advance. We recommend getting it on arrival since it only \$25 then compared with \$125 if you get it in advance. For a visa upon arrival, the details of passport and date and place of entry in Vietnam need to be faxed to Myths and Mountains for us to forward to our Vietnam operator. The operator will send us an invitation letter which we will forward to you. This invitation letter, valid passport, two visa application forms, two passport sized photos and the visa fee (US\$25) must be shown to the immigration authorities upon arrival in Vietnam. Do **NOT** forget the invitation letter- people have been denied access into Vietnam without it.

Additional Country Information: More country specific information can be found on our website. Go to the Travel Center page (<http://www.mythsandmountains.com/2000/travel/center.cfm>) and then scroll down to the bottom of the page. There you will find links to various websites from the CIA Factbook to travel films.

"A mind that is stretched by a new
experience can never go back to its
old dimensions."

-Oliver Wendell Holmes

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See the Longitude Books website: <http://www.longitudebooks.com/> for more book ideas.

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