



CAPITAL CITY

The capital city of Vietnam is **Hanoi**.

SIZE

The total land area of Vietnam is approximately 331,212 Km².

GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

Vietnam is a Southeast Asian country sharing borders with China to the north, Laos to the northwest, and Cambodia to the southwest. To the east, it has a long coastline along the South China Sea, providing stunning beaches and maritime resources.

Shaped like the letter "S," Vietnam stretches 1,650 kilometers from north to south, featuring diverse landscapes that include mountains, forests, and extensive coastlines.

The country is divided into **3 main regions**:

Northern Vietnam, with mountainous terrain and fertile Red River Delta;

Central Vietnam, is known for its narrow plains, highlands, and coastal areas;

and **Southern Vietnam**, home to the lush Mekong Delta with its network of rivers and canals.

Each region boasts unique natural beauty and cultural charm.

POPULATION

As of 2025, Vietnam's population is estimated to be approximately **101.6 million people**.

Vietnam is home to 54 officially recognized ethnic groups. 85% of the population is Viet, 0.8% Chinese and 1.3% Khmer. Numerous ethnic minorities make up the rest of the population of Vietnam: Tay, Thai, Muong, Hmong, Dao, Nung, Cham, and various mountain-dwellers.

Religion: Most of the population practices **folk religions**, including ancestor worship, accounting for approximately 73.2%.

Around 15% of the population follows **Buddhism**. **Christianity** represents about 8.5%, with 7.4% being Catholics and 1.1% Protestants.

Other religions, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Hoa Hao, Islam, and Caodaism, are also practiced within the population.

LANGUAGE

Vietnamese is the official language.

English is the most widely learned foreign language, especially among younger generations, due to its importance in education and business.

French has historical significance and remains spoken to some extent, particularly by older generations. However, a guide is duly recommended as language can be a problem outside of main cities for people who have no knowledge of Vietnamese.

CURRENCY

The currency of Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND) (₫).

Exchange Rate (as of March 2025): 1 USD = 24,600 VND --- 1 EUR = 26,800 VND.

Banknotes: Common denominations ranging from 1,000 VND, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000 VND, 20,000 VND, 50,000 VND, 100,000 VND, 200,000 VND, and 500,000 VND.

ATM & Credit Card Usage

- **ATMs** are widely available in cities and towns, dispensing Vietnamese Dong (₫).
- Most ATMs accept Visa, MasterCard.
- **Credit cards** like Visa and MasterCard are commonly accepted at hotels, restaurants, and large stores, fees may apply. American Express is accepted at select locations.

Travel Tip: Cash Recommendations

- Carry some Vietnamese Dong in cash for convenience, especially for small purchases.
- Exchange currency at banks or authorized exchange offices for better rates.
- Ensure banknotes are clean and undamaged, as they are more likely to be accepted.
- If you bring cash in USD or Euros, please note that exchange rates may vary between small and large notes. We recommend carrying some smaller USD or EUR for initial expenses, along with \$100 or €100 banknotes for larger transactions.

Banks generally operate from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday to Friday, with limited service on Saturdays.

CLIMATE

With its long shape along the South East Sea, Vietnam experiences diverse weather and climate, allowing visitors to explore the country year-round with minimal climatic challenges.

Vietnam has a **tropical monsoon climate** with **3 main seasons**:

Sunny Season (May–August): Temperatures can rise significantly, especially in the southern regions, often exceeding 35°C (95°F). This season is ideal for beach lovers and those seeking sunny weather.

Green Season (September–November): Frequent rain showers and high humidity dominate, particularly in the central and southern regions. Temperatures remain warm, typically ranging from 25°C to 32°C (77°F to 90°F), with lush and vibrant landscapes.

Cool Season (December–April): The most pleasant time of the year, with cooler temperatures and dry weather. In the northern regions, temperatures can drop to around 10°C (50°F), while the south remains warm and comfortable, making it perfect for sightseeing and outdoor activities.

LOCAL TIME

Vietnam is 7 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. It is the same time zone as Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.

ELECTRICITY

In Vietnam the electricity operates at 220 volts with a frequency of 50 Hz.

Sockets are both round and flat types.

As for plug types, Vietnam primarily uses: Type A, C, F.



TAP WATER

It is advisable not to drink water from the tap unless it is boiled properly.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Vietnam's country code is **+84**.

The country has modern and reliable mobile networks, with widespread 4G coverage and ongoing expansion of 5G services.

Internet-based communication is widely available due to affordable mobile data and broadband connections.

Internet cafés are common in every city. Wi-fi is very widespread and free in most bars and restaurants.

HEALTH & MEDICAL FACILITIES

No vaccinations are required, but visitors are advised to get shots for hepatitis A and B, typhoid, and tetanus. Vaccination for yellow fever and malaria tablets are generally unnecessary, though some doctors may still suggest them.

Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City have well-equipped hospitals with foreign medical staff or providing English-speaking support services.

Dial **115** for medical emergencies.

TRANSPORTATION

Vietnam's transportation network is well-connected both domestically and internationally. Vietnam is connected to destinations in Asia, Europe, and beyond through its 11 international airports and growing maritime links.

Airports: Vietnam has **11 international airports**, including major hubs like **Noi Bai International Airport (HAN)** in Hanoi, **Tan Son Nhat International Airport (SGN)** in Ho Chi Minh City, and **Da Nang International Airport (DAD)**. These serve as key gateways for travelers from around the world.

Trains: Vietnam's train system offers a scenic way to explore the country, connecting major cities like Hanoi, Hue, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City. Travel times are lengthy, making it ideal for those who want to enjoy the views, as the journey from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City takes at least 32 hours.

Road conditions: Roads in cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City are generally well-paved but can be congested with heavy traffic, especially during rush hours.

DRIVING

In Vietnam, we drive on the right side.

An International Driving Permit is required to legally drive in the country.

Car rental is discouraged in cities due to heavy traffic and complex road conditions but may be more suitable for countryside travel.

CUISINE

Vietnamese food is renowned for its fresh ingredients, delicate flavors, and harmonious balance of sweet, salty, sour, and spicy elements.

For vegetarians, Vietnam offers creative Buddhist-inspired dishes, blending an endless selection of vegetables and tofu. In addition to the vibrant street food and traditional culinary wonders, major cities now boast a growing variety of international restaurants.

Signature Dishes: Iconic dishes to savor include Phở (Beef noodle soup), Gỏi Cuốn (fresh spring rolls), Cao Lầu (Hoi An-style noodles with pork and herbs), and Bánh Xèo (crispy savory pancakes). Each region offers its own specialties, reflecting the diversity of Vietnamese cuisine.

Street Food: Must-try dishes include Bánh Mì (Vietnamese baguette sandwich), and Bún Chả (grilled pork with rice noodles).

Be Cautious: Vietnamese food is generally mild, but some dishes may include fish sauce or fermented ingredients, which can have strong flavors. If you have dietary restrictions, it's helpful to confirm ingredients when ordering.

CUSTOMS AND HABITS

Culture and Traditions: Vietnam's customs are deeply influenced by Confucianism, emphasizing respect for elders, family values, and social harmony. Ancestor worship is a central practice, with family altars dedicated to honoring the deceased.

Greeting: A polite greeting involves a slight bow of the head or a respectful handshake. Excessive physical contact in public is generally avoided. It can be friendly say "Xin Chào" (Hello) to Vietnamese people.

Dress Code: Modesty is important in Vietnam. When visiting temples and pagodas, shoulders and legs must be covered.

SHOPPING

Vietnam offers a wide variety of goods, from high-tech products to local handicrafts like lacquerware, paintings, silk, and wood or stone artworks. Major cities are packed with small shops and large shopping centers, making it easy to find souvenirs. Travelers planning to shop are advised to pack light to make room for their purchases.

While some prices are fixed, bargaining is a common practice in Vietnam, especially at markets and smaller shops. It's a fun and cultural experience for visitors!

TIPPING

Tipping is not mandatory although it is appreciated. Note that prices in hotels and restaurants usually include 10% for VAT and 5% for service charges.

ACCESS

Vietnam is **globally connected with direct flights to major cities**. Noi Bai International Airport (HAN) in Hanoi and Tan Son Nhat International Airport (SGN) in Ho Chi Minh City are the main hubs, along with Da Nang International Airport (DAD).

From Europe: Direct flights from London, Paris, and Frankfurt are offered by Vietnam Airlines and other international carriers.

From the USA: Direct flights from San Francisco (SFO) to Ho Chi Minh City (SGN) are operated by Vietnam Airlines, with increasing connectivity options.

VISA AND PASSPORT

Visa Exemption: As of 2025, travelers from **26 countries** can visit Vietnam without a visa for varying durations, ranging from 14 to 90 days, depending on their nationality. No application is needed—just check your eligibility and **ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months**. For nationals of Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Poland, there are specific procedures for obtaining visa exemption, please contact us.

E-Visa: Starting from 2025, Vietnam offers an **online E-Visa system** for citizens of eligible countries, allowing visitors to apply directly through the Vietnam Immigration Portal without visiting an embassy.

(<https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/trang-chu-ttdt>)

Visa on Arrival: Travelers arriving by air can apply for a Visa on Arrival with a pre-approval letter, which can be arranged online through travel agents or visa services.

Before traveling, ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your return date and has a minimum of one blank page for the entry stamp.

BEFORE GOING

Clothing: Pack warm clothes if traveling to the north or central regions between October and March, as well as for highland areas like Sapa, Buon Ma Thuot, and Dalat year-round. In the south, light clothing is suitable all year long.

Essentials: Bring mosquito repellent, sun protection (cap, hat, sunglasses), a raincoat, and a small bag for day trips, especially if leaving larger luggage at the hotel.

Safety: Vietnam is generally safe, but avoid bringing gold jewelry and leaving valuables in vehicles during journeys.