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TRAVEL TO
Hanoi

Viet Nam



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You're probably holding this guidebook while packing your clothes, already on the long haul flight or having landed in the captivating and stunning country, Vietnam. This may, or may not, be your first time in Vietnam but there is always something new to find out about this charming country.

We hope this guidebook will help you do just that. NashTech has been in Vietnam since 2000 and we have thousands of IT staff born and raised in Vietnam. So, most of the tips you read here are straight from the locals!



HANOI

Hanoi, the capital city for over 1,000 years, is nestled in a bend of the Red River. Hanoi has a compelling charm different from its southern sister, Saigon. You can find a mix of well-preserved colonial buildings, ancient pagodas, unique museums alongside rolling countryside and the ever developing cityscape.

The Old Quarter, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is Hanoi's beating heart and is made up of 36 streets with eateries and shops selling all kinds of wares, but if a particular street name seems repetitive, it's with good reason. The Old Quarter's streets are divided up by the type of merchandise sold. So you will quite literally walk down Sugar Street, Hat Street or Silk Street, depending on the items traditionally sold there.



FUN FACT

- Hanoi celebrated its millennial birthday on 10/10/2010. Talk about a birthday celebration!
- Hanoi got its name, "Inner River City", because it is located between the Red River and Nhue River. In Vietnamese, Ha means 'river' and Noi means 'inner'.



PEOPLE AND CULTURE

You might be thinking, this is my first time in Vietnam, what are the people like?

Hanoi is a charming, historical city with a unique culture. Hanoians consider themselves to be traditional, subtle, sophisticated, but sometimes ceremonious. Even across Vietnam, the impression of people from Hanoi being gallant, courtly and elegant is acknowledged widely in literature and music.

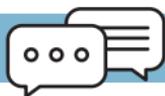
There is another side to Hanoi people. “As easy-going and open as a Hanoian” is a well-known saying used to describe the locals here. Most of the time, you will find yourself wandering the Old Quarter smiling back at street vendors with their bamboo frames holding two big baskets carrying all types of local fruits and snacks.



FUN FACT

Hanoian always proud of their elegant lifestyle worthy of the role and its position. The lifestyle of Hanoian or also called Trang An was referred in one famous saying:

*“Not aromatic also is jasmine
Though not as elegant also is Trang An people”*



LANGUAGE

Xin chào!



Hello!



Vietnamese is the official language of the country. The Vietnamese language belongs to a language group which was established a long time ago in East Asia. Changes in material conditions over many centuries, and the increasing demands of cultural life, have influenced the Vietnamese language.

English is the country's second language and is widely taught throughout schools and universities. The majority of Vietnamese people can speak conversational English. You can order food and drinks, or even do your shopping, conversing in English but buying street food at a stall can be a bit tricky. Body language will do!

Here are some useful Vietnamese phrases to help you blend in, just like a local:

English	Vietnamese	Pronunciation
Hello	Xin Chào	Sin chow
How are you?	Bạn Khoẻ Không	Ban Kwe Khom
Thank you	Cảm ơn	Kahm uhn
Sorry	Xin Lỗi	Sin Loy
No problem	Không Có Gì	Khom koh zi
Goodbye	Tạm Biệt	Tam Byeet
No, Thank You!	Không! Cảm Ơn	Khom, kahm uhn
My name is ___	Tên Tôi Là ___	Ten toy la ___
I am vegetarian	Tôi Ăn Chay	Toi an chayh
How much?	Bao Nhiêu?	Bao new
Too expensive	Đắt Quá!	Dat kwa!
No	Không	Khom



CURRENCY

The currency in Vietnam is Vietnamese Dong.

Taking Vietnamese Dong, in cash, is not essential but, if you do want to have cash on arrival, the best thing to do is take your local currency. Make sure there isn't any writing, marks or rips on the notes and you can change it at your hotel or at one of the exchange kiosks at the airport when you have cleared passport control.

ATMs are widely available and most major cards are accepted at hotels, restaurants and in large shops. If you're out shopping at a local market, or just popping for a coffee, then using cash is advisable. Daily expenses, such as travelling around, food and drink, shouldn't cost you more than VND1,500,000.

Here's a quick conversion table to help you spend wisely in Vietnam:

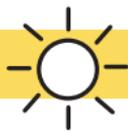
Currency	VND equivalent
GBP £1	30,000
USD \$1	22,000
SGD \$1	17,000
JPY ¥100	21,000
EUR €1	27,000

FUN FACT

The average salary in Vietnam starts at one million VND (yes, there are a lot of VND millionaires in the country!). This is because the base unit starts at thousands.

TIP

As always, tipping is at personal discretion. Bills normally include a service charge but it is customary to tip approximately 10% in restaurants and other places that cater to tourists.



CLIMATE AND CLOTHING

To help with your packing, this is a representation of the weather in city during the year:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
 Very cold	 Cool but very humid	 Warm	 Warm	 Hot	 Scorching
JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
 Scorching	 Cool and rainy	 Cool	 Cool	 Cold	 Very cold

FUN FACT

- Although the temperature gets below 5 degrees Celsius in Hanoi during winter, most households don't have built-in heating systems. Portable heaters have recently been used by households with elderly people or small children.
- If you are travelling in September and October you might notice the signature aroma of Hanoi's autumn in the evening. This comes from the blackboard tree flowers on all streets and corners of Hanoi.



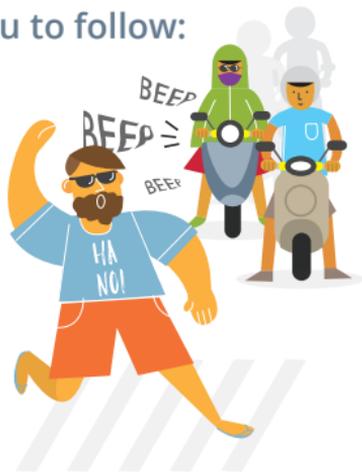
GETTING AROUND

Taxis with meters, found in most major cities, are very cheap by international standards and a safe way to travel around. The average tariffs are about VND12,000 to VND15,000 per kilometre. Two nationwide companies with excellent reputations are Taxi Group (www.taxigroup.com.vn) and Mai Linh (www.mailinh.vn).

Crossing the road in Hanoi, with hundreds of mopeds passing by that do not seem to follow any rules, could be considered an extreme sport! But, be afraid not! Here's our four step rules for you to follow:

Here are our four step rules for you to follow:

- 1 Look both ways! This is so you know which way the traffic flows
- 2 Just go for it. This may sound crazy but it works. Walk confidently, slowly and in a straight line. Be predictable, the traffic will flow around you
- 3 Don't stop suddenly, change direction or speed up when crossing
- 4 Congratulations! You have conquered the busy roads of Vietnam



- Avoid taxis with go-fast meters roaming around the streets; they often hang around bus terminals. Only travel with reputable or recommended companies.
- Don't feel like walking in the scorching heat exploring the Old Quarter? Or afraid you will miss out a lot of scenery when sitting in a taxi? A cyclo tour around the main streets of Hanoi might be your perfect solution. A cyclo is a simple bicycle taxi which is pedalled by a cyclo driver behind you so you can take in the views.



CUISINE

SIGNATURE DISHES



Phở: arguably the most popular dish of Vietnam, is said to originate from the north. Each region of Vietnam has their own way of cooking Phở. Try it all if you can and see if you notice the difference!

Bún chả: another noodle based dish which originated from Hanoi. Bún chả is served with grilled fatty pork (chả) over a plate of white rice noodle (bún) and herbs with a side dish of dipping sauce. A famous Vietnamese poet once described Hanoi as a town "transfixed by bún chả."



Egg coffee: How do you take your coffee? With a little egg? That's how we do it in Hanoi! This specialty is a creamy, soft, meringue-like, egg white foam perched on dense Vietnamese coffee. Some even think this drink is better than eggnog. Have a try and judge it for yourself!

FUN FACT

Former US president, Barak Obama along with the late chef Anthony Bourdain, on a trip to Vietnam had 2 bowls of Bún Chả while sitting on a plastic stool! Now that's a true Hanoi cuisine experience!

TIP

It is best to avoid drinking water from an unknown source. When in doubt, ask for bottled water.

RESTAURANTS

Whether you want Hanoi style cooking in a traditional Vietnamese ambience or just want some comfort food because you're feeling a bit homesick, Hanoi has got you covered:



Cầu Gỗ Restaurant, 73 Cau Go street,
Hang Trong, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
www.caugorestaurant.com

Đồng Phú 1932 Restaurant,
12 Hang Dieu street,
Cua Dong, Hanoi



Press Club, 12 Ly Dao Thanh street,
French Quarter, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi.
www.hanoi-pressclub.com

CAFÉ



Cộg Caphe
116 Cau Go, Hang Dao,
Hoan Kiem, Hanoi



Vintage 1976 Café
15 Dinh Le, Trang Tien,
Hoan Kiem, Hanoi

BARS



The Rooftop Bar
83 Ly Thuong Kiet,
Cua Nam, Hoan Kiem,
Hanoi



QBar
62M floor, Landmark72,
InterContinental Hanoi,
Keangnam Hanoi Tower, Hanoi



Polite Pub
5b Hang Hanh, Hang Trong,
Hoan Kiem, Hanoi



LOCATION

In the Vietnamese capital, you can immerse yourself in the French-colonial feel of the past, or a very modern metropolis. Whether you spend 2 or 20 days in the city, there will always be some hidden spots that you have never heard of, or some exciting activities that you can try. So don't be afraid to explore.

ATTRACTIONS

Here are some typical tourist attractions that will tell you all you need to know about this incredible city, its history and why we're proud to be Hanoian:



Old Quarter



St. Joseph's
Cathedral



Hoan Kiem Lake



Ho Chi Minh
Mausoleum



Temple of
Literature



Imperial Citadel of
Thang Long



West Lake



Vietnam Museum
of Ethnology

SHOPPING CENTRES



Trang Tien Plaza



Lotte Centre

ACTIVITIES

We hope the city keeps you busy during your trip but, if you find yourself lost in an online search wading through the many things to do and don't know where to start, here are some suggestions:



Weekend night market: Held every weekend in the Old Quarter. This is a bustling gathering that brings huge crowds of locals and tourists to keep you entertained for the night.

Bat Trang ceramic village: Half an hour ride from the centre, experience traditional ceramic pottery making and why not spend a whole day in the market and really soak up the experience?



The Quintessence of Tonkin show:
An outdoor spectacle showcasing traditional elements of Vietnamese culture in a contemporary and innovative way
www.thequintessenceoftonkin.com

Trang An: A perfect day trip outside of Hanoi. Just a two hour drive to Ninh Binh, hop on a boat and be rowed through natural limestone mastiff, romantic rivers, cave systems of the spectacular Trang An landscape.



Halong bay: One of the seven new wonders of the world. Take a weekend boat cruise or simply enjoy the full 360° view of the amazing limestone cliffs - www.halongbay.info



摩天雙柱上層層高對馬山高

特地百門開望望前臨龍水淵



This guidebook is just a little taste of what Hanoi has to offer. There are a million other things that we could tell you about, but we'll let you do the exploring!

We hope you enjoy the trip, remember to take lots of photos and share all of the interesting things you find while discovering your own Vietnam.

We'd love to hear from you!

Hanoi

6th Floor, HITC Building
239 Xuan Thuy Road,
Cau Giay District, Hanoi
Tel: +84 24 3834 2050
Fax: +84 24 3833 3834

Ho Chi Minh City

3rd Floor, E-town 1 Building
364 Cong Hoa Street,
Tan Binh District, Ho Chi Minh City
Tel: +84 28 3810 6200
Fax: +84 28 3810 6201

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