

VIETNAM UNPLUGGED – TRIP NOTES

TRIP CODE: TAGVS114

Valid until 31 Dec 2025

Overview

From the lively streets of Hanoi to the tranquil waters of the Mekong Delta, this 14-day journey showcases both prominent highlights and hidden gems, offering the perfect blend of culture, history, and natural beauty. Start in Hanoi, exploring the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and the vibrant Old Quarter. Then, trek through Binh Lieu's mountains, meet hilltribes, and immerse yourself in local traditions. Cruise Halong Bay's emerald waters, passing towering limestone islands before heading to Hoi An's charming streets. After a train ride to Thap Cham, unwind at Ninh Chu Beach, where you can relax by the sea and enjoy water activities. Next, head south to Ho Chi Minh City for a dynamic mix of history and modern energy, visiting the War Remnants Museum and Cu Chi Tunnels. Conclude your journey with a serene Mekong Delta cruise, where you'll encounter evergreen orchards, undulating rice paddies, charming rural villages, and captivating waterways. This tour perfectly blends adventure, culture, and relaxation, offering the best of Vietnam's diverse landscapes and vibrant cities.

Detailed itinerary

Day 1: Hanoi - Arrival

Xin chao! Welcome to Vietnam!

Upon your arrival at the airport, you will be greeted by our friendly representative who will assist with your transfer to your hotel in the heart of the city.

Hanoi, Vietnam's vibrant capital, is a blend of history, culture, and modern life. The city's lively atmosphere, filled with sounds and sights, makes it one of the most dynamic destinations in Asia. During your free time today, we suggest a stroll through the Old Quarter, where you'll find narrow streets full of life, local shops, and historical buildings. You can also visit the Ngoc Son Temple on Hoan Kiem Lake or catch a Water Puppet Show, a unique cultural performance highlighting Vietnam's rural tradition.

Food lovers will find Hanoi a delight. Sample some of Vietnam's best-known dishes like "Pho", the beloved "Banh mi" sandwich, and the famous egg coffee. The city's street food scene is buzzing with options, offering a variety of authentic and mouthwatering flavors.

At 6:00 PM, you will have a group meeting with your tour guide to complete some procedures and receive briefing about the upcoming days of your tour. Following the meeting, you can join your fellow travelers for dinner and enjoy some fun activities together.

Meals included

- No meal included on this day

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hanoi

Special notes

Hotel check-in time is from 14:00. If you arrive earlier and wish to access your room before that time, you can book pre-trip accommodation when making your reservation, or let us know in advance so we can arrange it for you.

The group meeting scheduled for today is of great importance. During this meeting, you will complete essential local travel procedures, have the opportunity to meet your fellow travelers, and receive detailed guidance for the upcoming days of your tour. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend the meeting, please inform your travel agent or the hotel reception. You can also check with the hotel reception or look for a notice in the lobby for the meeting location.

Day 2: Hanoi city sightseeing

For early risers, Hanoi's parks and lakes offer a great opportunity to join locals for morning exercises. Experience the city's vibrant energy by participating in Tai Chi, aerobics, traditional dance, or even a friendly game of badminton. You might also receive a complimentary back-flapping massage from welcoming locals - a fun and unique experience!

After breakfast, embark on a guided half-day tour of Hanoi's cultural and historical highlights. The itinerary includes a visit to the Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, which houses the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, the Presidential Palace, Uncle Ho's humble stilt house, and the Ho Chi Minh Museum. Within the complex, the One Pillar Pagoda, a nearly 1,000-year-old symbol of Hanoi, stands gracefully on a single stone pillar amid a peaceful garden.

Next, explore the Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first national university, established in 1076. Admire its elegant traditional architecture and stroll through serene courtyards lined with ancient stone stelae inscribed with the names of past scholars.

The afternoon is yours to explore at your own pace. Wander through the lively Old Quarter, shop for souvenirs, or relax at a local café. For those seeking a deeper cultural experience, optional activities include a Hanoi cooking class or a motorbike food tour, perfect for discovering the city's vibrant street food scene.

Included activities

- Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex
- Temple of Literature
- Old Quarter orientation tour

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hanoi

Optional activities

- Hoa Lo Prison: US\$ 2
- Water puppet show: US \$4
- Hanoi cooking class: US \$55

Day 3: Binh Lieu hill tribe trek

After breakfast, leave Hanoi and journey along the highway to Binh Lieu, a hidden gem in Northern Vietnam. This remote mountain district boasts untouched natural beauty, rich cultural diversity, and a peaceful escape from the usual tourist trails. Home to ethnic groups such as the Tay, Dao, and San Chi, Binh Lieu preserves deep-rooted traditions and a strong cultural identity.

Upon arrival, enjoy a traditional lunch before visiting Song Mooc village, home to the high-hat Dao minority. The welcoming locals are eager to share their customs and way of life, offering a deeper insight into their unique heritage.

Then, embark on a scenic trek through Song Mooc's terraced fields, stopping to take in the breathtaking views, interact with local farmers, and gain insight into traditional agricultural

practices. Continue along a small trail winding through cinnamon and anise forests, leading to the tranquil village of Khe Tien, where you will spend the night.

Settle into a traditional rammed-earth farmhouse and take some time to unwind. In the evening, savor a delicious home-cooked dinner featuring fresh, locally sourced ingredients, complemented by homemade rice whiskey. Afterward, enjoy a warm conversation with your hosts, gaining a deeper appreciation for their daily lives before settling in for a restful night in your cozy farm stay.

Included activities

- Binh Lieu hill tribe trek
- Farm stay with local meals

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Accommodation

- Farm stay in Binh Lieu

Day 4: Binh Lieu hill tribe trek

Wake up to the peaceful sounds of nature as the sun rises over Khe Tiễn. set off on a trek along untouched trails, winding through bamboo forests and dense jungle toward the breathtaking Khe Tien Waterfall, a secluded gem nestled in lush greenery. Along the way, learn about the diverse plants and wildlife of the tropical forest and how local communities have lived in harmony with nature for generations.

After approximately three hours of trekking, arrive at Khe Tiễn Waterfall, a stunning natural wonder where crystal-clear waters cascade through lush surroundings into serene pools below.

Take a refreshing dip in the cool waters, unwind, and then enjoy a picnic lunch by the falls.

In the afternoon, take on a more challenging trek, hiking uphill through bamboo forests to a scenic mountaintop. From the top, soak in breathtaking views of rolling hills and terraced fields stretching into the distance. Then, follow winding paths back to Khe Tiễn, where a well-earned rest and a delightful dinner by the fire await.

Overnight in traditional rammed-earth house farm stay.

Included activities

- Binh Lieu hill tribe trek
- Farm stay with local meals

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Accommodation

- Farm stay traditional rammed earth house

Day 5: Halong Bay cruise

Wake up to the stunning view of mist-covered mountains, inhale the fresh air, and take a moment to soak in the tranquil atmosphere.

After breakfast, you'll be transferred to the bus for your journey to the breathtaking Halong Bay. Upon arrival at the pier, board your cruise and set sail through this mesmerizing seascape.

Halong Bay is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of Vietnam's most iconic natural wonders. It's known for its thousands of limestone islands that rise out of the emerald-green water.

Shaped by nature over millions of years, the bay is home to pristine beaches, floating fishing villages, hidden caves, and unforgettable vistas, making it a must-see destination. Indulge in a delicious lunch on board as you cruise through the bay, admiring the towering karst formations and the serene beauty of the surroundings. In the afternoon, relax on the deck or take a swim at a quiet beach. As the sun sets, join happy hour on the top deck and watch the sky turn beautiful shades of orange and pink. The cruise will then anchor for the night, giving you a peaceful rest surrounded by the islands. End the day with a lovely dinner on board and fall asleep under the stars, surrounded by the beauty of Halong Bay.

Included activities

- Halong Bay cruise & cave explore
- Halong bay kayaking/swimming
- Overnight aboard

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Accommodation

- Overnight on board

Day 6: Halong Bay cruise

Start your day early to witness the beautiful sunrise as it lights up the stunning landscape of Halong Bay. After breakfast, take a peaceful rowing boat ride through a natural tunnel and exploring a charming floating village.

Return to the main boat and continue your relaxing cruise to uncover another scenic part of the bay while enjoying a delicious lunch on board.

Arrive at the harbor in the early afternoon (around 11:00 - 11:30, depending on the boat and tides). Disembark and make your way back to Hanoi. Take some time to explore the city for shopping and dinner before being transferred to the station for your overnight train journey to Da Nang, gateway to ancient town of Hoi An.

Overnight in an air-conditioned soft sleeper cabin.

Included activities

- Boat rowing & natural tunnel explore
- Halong Bay boat cruise and sightseeing

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Accommodation

- Overnight train

Special notes

The overnight train will take approximately 15 hours to get to Da Nang. You'll stay in a shared cabin with four comfortable bunk beds, equipped with soft sleepers and air conditioning. The cabin can be locked from the inside, and toilets are available at both ends of the carriage. There is also a dining car usually at the end of the train that serves simple meals and drinks. Please note that the train travels at around 60 kilometers per hour and may be a bit noisy for those not used to train rides. So, earplugs and one or two bottles of rice wine might come in handy :))

Day 7: Hoi An ancient town

Wake up to breathtaking views as the train glides along the coastline, winding its way through stunning landscapes of picturesque rural villages, lush greenery, vibrant countryside, and the dramatic Hai Van Pass, offering panoramic vistas of the sea and cliffs.

Arrive at Da Nang station in the late morning. You'll be picked up and transferred to your hotel in Hoi An for check-in.

Once a thriving trading port from the 15th to the 19th century, Hoi An is now a charming town with narrow streets lined with yellow-painted houses, blending Japanese, Chinese, and European architecture. Its well-preserved heritage, vibrant traditions, and unique charm make it one of Vietnam's most beloved destinations.

This afternoon, enjoy an orientation walking tour of the ancient town, visiting highlights such as the bustling Hoi An Market, the historic Tan Ky Ancient House, ornate communal halls, the Hoi An Museum, and the iconic Japanese Covered Bridge.

The rest of the day is yours to explore at your own pace. Hoi An is a shopper's paradise, offering a wide range of products from leather and ceramics to wood and silver. It's also famous for its skilled tailors, who provide custom-made clothing with a quick turnaround and a variety of fabrics, perfect for getting a perfectly fitted outfit.

As evening falls, Hoi An is illuminated by a beautiful display of colorful lanterns, filling the streets with a magical glow. Take a leisurely stroll along the river and join the local tradition of releasing a lantern into the water, symbolizing good luck and future wishes.

Included activities

- Hoi An ancient town walking tour

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hoi An

Day 8: Hoi An ancient town

Spend the day discovering Hoi An at your own pace. Wander through its charming streets, where moss-covered rooftops and lantern-lit balconies create a magical atmosphere. Take a break at a local café for a refreshing drink, explore the shops, or taste local specialties like Cao Lau noodles and White Rose dumplings.

You can also opt to bike through the countryside for scenic views, or take a boat ride along the Thu Bon River. If you're interested, you can also join a cooking class to learn how to make traditional Vietnamese dishes.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Hoi An

Optional Activities

- Cooking class: US\$ 35

Day 9: Hoi An easy

Breakfast is at the hotel.

Enjoy another free day to explore Hoi An.

In the evening, you will get transferred to Da Nang station to catch overnight train to Ninh Thuan.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Overnight train

Day 10: Ninh Chu beach relax

Arrive in Thap Cham in the late morning. Get picked up and transferred to hotel in Ninh Chu. Ninh Chu Beach is one of Vietnam's most tranquil and unspoiled coastal destinations. Stretching over 10 kilometers, this stunning beach is known for its golden sand, crystal-clear waters, and gentle waves, making it an ideal getaway for relaxation and outdoor activities. Unlike other beach destinations, Ninh Chu offers a peaceful atmosphere with fewer crowds, allowing visitors to enjoy nature at its finest. The area boasts year-round sunshine, making it perfect for swimming, sunbathing, and water sports such as windsurfing, kite surfing, and sailing. Spend the remainder of the day unwinding on the beach. Relax under the tropical sun, take a refreshing swim in the crystal-clear waters, or sway gently in a hammock under a coconut tree, enjoying the soothing sea breeze.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ninh Chu

Day 11: Ninh Chu beach

Spend another relaxing day on Ninh Chu's beautiful shores. For those looking to explore, rent a motorbike taxi or car and venture into Ninh Thuan's unique landscapes and cultural sites. North of Ninh Chu Beach, you'll find the Panduranga Cham Towers, an important remnant of the Cham civilization, showcasing intricate architecture and cultural significance. Further north, the Thai An vineyards offer a chance to taste locally produced grapes and wine while enjoying picturesque vineyard landscapes.

To the south lie the golden Nam Cuong sand dunes, a stunning desert-like landscape. Further along the coast, the Mui Dinh Lighthouse stands atop rugged cliffs, offering panoramic views of the sea and surrounding scenery.

In the evening, transfer to the train station for your overnight journey to Ho Chi Minh City.

Meals included

- Breakfast

Accommodation

- Overnight train

Day 12: Ho Chi Minh City sightseeing

Arrive at Saigon Station early in the morning.

Ho Chi Minh City, the largest city in Vietnam, blends rich history with modern development. Colonial architecture coexists with towering skyscrapers, and the streets are constantly buzzing with activity.

After freshening up at the hotel, enjoy a city tour to discover some key landmarks including the War Remnants Museum, the Reunification Palace (the former Presidential Palace of South Vietnam), Saigon Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Saigon Post Office, and the Opera House. The morning wraps up with a stop at Ben Thanh Market, a vibrant hub offering local crafts, fresh produce, and souvenirs.

The afternoon is free for you to explore at your own pace.

For those interested in deeper historical insights, an optional trip to the Cu Chi Tunnels is available. Alternatively, food enthusiasts can embark on a motorbike tour to sample the best of Saigon's street food and experience the city's lively atmosphere at night.

Included activities

- War Remnant Museum
- Reunification Palace
- Notre Dame Cathedral
- Saigon Post Office
- Ben Thanh Market

Meals included

- No meal included on this day

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Optional activities

- Cu Chi Tunnels tour: US\$ 25
- Saigon nightlife & food adventure on motorbike: US\$ 55

Day 13: Mekong Delta explore

After breakfast, leave Saigon for an exciting tour of the Mekong Delta, often referred to as the rice basket of Vietnam.

Upon arrival, embark on a relaxing boat cruise along a small river, taking in the sights of local life along the banks. Visit a vibrant orchard, taste fresh tropical fruits, and explore workshops where you can learn about traditional coconut candy-making, pop rice production, and mat weaving. Next, take a motor cart ride through shady paths, passing coconut groves, rice fields, and vegetable farms, offering a glimpse into the local way of life.

Enjoy a delightful local lunch featuring specialties like elephant ear fish, prawns, and crispy banana flower cake. Finish your tour with a peaceful sampan ride through winding creeks lined with water coconut mangroves, before returning to the pier and driving back to Ho Chi Minh City.

As tonight marks your last evening in Ho Chi Minh City, why not join your fellow travelers for a memorable farewell dinner and have fun together. Saigon's nightlife offers something for every taste. For those who seek a vibrant atmosphere with neon lights, the Bui Vien Street and Pham Ngu Lao area are hotspots for night owls. If you're looking for a more refined experience, visit Eon Heli Bar atop Landmark 81, Vietnam's tallest building, where you can enjoy breathtaking panoramic views and expertly crafted cocktails.

Included activities

- Mekong River cruise
- Motor cart ride through villages
- Sampan boat rowing

Meals included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Accommodation

- Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City

Day 14: Departure

Today is the departure day of your trip, and no activities are organized. Make the most of your free time to unwind, relax, do some last-minute shopping or simply taking a leisurely stroll. After checking out, you will be transferred to the airport for your departure flight. Safe travel and looking forward to seeing you again soon!

Meals included

- Breakfast

Special notes

The hotel's check-out time is 11:00 AM. If your departure flight is later and you would like to extend your stay in the room, please inform us in advance so that we can book the room for you.

Alternatively, you can store your luggage in the hotel's storage and use the public restroom. If you plan to stay longer in Ho Chi Minh City, we can assist you in arranging post-trip accommodations and activities. Additionally, if you are interested in exploring other countries in the region, we encourage you to explore our tour list for suitable set departure dates that can be combined with your current trip.

Trip Style: Standard

This style is designed with great flexibility to ensure that you can enjoy your experience most with a reasonable budget. Whilst it is built for adventure-minded people, this tour style focuses on active exploration, uncommon landscapes, and local cultures. Accommodations in these trips are normally tourist standard 2 or 3 stars. Guest houses and homestay with a local family are also used in these trips to enhance your local experience. Apart from included activities, you also have some free time to explore the place on your own way. Transports used on these trips are normally by buses and trains with public buses also sometimes used.

Joining & group size

Group tours allow you to meet and connect with others, adding fun and enriching your local experiences. During the trip, and at certain locations, you may join other travelers for specific activities. To ensure quality, group sizes are limited to no more than 16 people, except on larger cruisers or public transportation.

Most day tours and excursions are directly organized and operated by Travel Authentic Asia. Occasionally, some activities may be conducted by our trusted local partners, following agreed-upon standards. In such cases, Travel Authentic Asia guarantees the quality of your trip and takes full responsibility for addressing any issues or complaints with our local service providers on behalf of our customers.

Physical Grading: 2.5/5

This tour is suitable for most fitness levels. Nothing is too challenging.

Price inclusions

Meals: 11 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 3 dinner

Transport: Bus, train, boat

Accommodation: Hotels (7 nights), Farm stay (2 nights) Overnight boat (1 night), Overnight train (3 nights)

Included activities: Hanoi: Ho Chi Minh Memorial Complex, Temple of Literature, Old Quarter orientation tour; Binh Lieu: hill tribe trekking, farm stay with local meals; Halong Bay: boat cruise & sightseeing, cave exploring, Halong kayaking/swimming, boat rowing, staying overnight aboard; Hoi An: ancient town walking tour; Ninh Chu beach relax; Ho Chi Minh City: War Remnant Museum, Reunification Palace; Mekong delta: Mekong River boat ride, motor cart ride through villages, sampan boat rowing

Price exclusions

Visa, International flights in and out the country, Laundry, Personal expenditures, Travel Insurance, Tips, Other than mentioned in the trip notes & itinerary.

Optional activities

In addition to the activities included in the day-to-day itinerary, you may also pursue your own interests and adventures during your free time by participating in optional activities, where available.

Please note that optional activities are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Travel Authentic Asia, nor are they included in the price of the trip. Participation in any optional activities is at your own risk. It is important to understand that your decision to participate is entirely yours and does not form part of your contract with Travel Authentic Asia. For some optional activities, you may be required to sign a waiver or receipt.

Dossier & Itinerary Disclaimer

These trip notes have been compiled with the itinerary and are updated regularly with the most reliable info on local travel facts. For the itinerary, though trying very much to adhere to the route, we cannot say that the local travel conditions stay unchanged so, a certain level of flexibility is requested in case of any alteration need to be made to fit with local circumstances.

Please ensure that you read well and have a copy of these trip notes before your departure in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Tour guide

During your trip, you will be guided by tour guides specific to each region. This ensures you receive the benefit of their deep knowledge of the area's history, culture, and hidden gems, making your experience richer and more authentic. Their familiarity with local customs and practices will enhance your understanding and connection to the destination.

Tour guides will manage all organized activities, including pickups and drop-offs when necessary. However, they may not accompany you at all times, giving you the freedom to explore independently when desired.

For your peace of mind, our operations team and 24/7 customer care service are always available. You can reach us easily via phone, WhatsApp, or Messenger to ensure any concerns are promptly addressed.

Meals on tour

When traveling with Travel Authentic Asia, you'll have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of delicious cuisine unique to each country you visit. While some meals are included in the trip price, you will also have the freedom to choose where, what, and with whom to dine, based on your own budget and preferences. This flexibility allows you to explore local food at your own pace.

Your tour guide will offer restaurant suggestions throughout the trip, and group members are welcome to dine together or explore their own culinary choices for privacy and personal enjoyment.

Transportation

Most of the vehicles used during the trip are air-conditioned and designed for tourist comfort. For short distances or specific activities, we occasionally incorporate local transportation options, such as taxis, tuk-tuks, or cyclo, to offer a more authentic travel experience.

In certain cases, domestic or regional flights may also be arranged to save time or accommodate long-distance travel efficiently.

For overnight train journeys, we use local trains with air-conditioned, 4-berth compartments featuring lockable doors. These cabins are shared with fellow travelers or, occasionally, with other passengers not part of the group. During peak travel seasons, when availability is limited, 6-berth compartments may be provided as an alternative.

Accommodations

Our accommodations on this trip are typically 2- or 3-star hotels, offering comfortable stays throughout the trip. The standard check-in time is 14:00 PM. If the group arrive early in the morning, we will arrange a day room for showering and luggage storage. While we always strive to have rooms ready upon our arrival, if we arrive close to the standard check-in time, this isn't always possible, meaning that check-in may not be immediate at some hotels.

In larger, more populated cities, hotel rooms tend to be smaller compared to those in smaller towns, and some rooms may not have windows due to high population density. Although hotels are of the same standard, facilities may vary slightly depending on the location.

Single Travelers

On our joined group trips, you will typically share a room with another group member of the same gender. However, if you are traveling alone and there is no one else available to share the room with, you may be required to pay a single supplement. Alternatively, you have the option to pay for a single supplement in advance to ensure that you have your own room throughout the trip. Please note that single supplements are not available for overnight trains or local homestays.

Start-Ending-points

Starting point:

Starting point:

Hotel

Hanoi – Vietnam

Phone:

The hotel is located in the Old Quarter of Hanoi, very close to the Hoan Kiem Lake and within walking distance of Hanoi's interesting sights. Rooms are air-conditioned and have an en suite bathroom.

Notes: If local conditions require a change to the starting hotel, we will select an alternative of the same standard and notify you via email at least one month before your arrival to ensure you arrive at the correct location.

Arrival complication

If you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact your starting-point hotel and leave a message for your tour guide.

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be greeted by our representative holding a sign with your name and our company logo in the arrival hall. Please note that neither the driver nor the representative will request additional payment. If you cannot locate our representative or have concerns about your transfer, contact our hotline at +84 903432999 or +84 912221442 for immediate assistance.

To ensure a smooth airport transfer, please provide your flight details at least 14 days before your departure. If the transfer (included in the tour price or booked as an extra service) or any portion of your trip is missed due to a flight schedule change without prior notice, no refund will be issued. Any additional costs incurred to rejoin your group will be your responsibility.

If you need to arrange your own taxi from the airport to the starting-point hotel, metered taxis are available at the airport's ground-floor exit gates. Alternatively, you can approach airport taxi service counters managed by uniformed staff. To ensure a safe and reliable service, seek assistance from airport security or staff. Avoid unsolicited offers from taxi touts claiming to have metered taxis parked outside the airport.

Ending point

Hotel

Tel:

Centrally located in the tourist hub of Saigon – Ho Chi Minh City, from the Prague hotel it is convenient to find restaurants, bars, and other tourist venues. It is within walking distance of many of the area's main attractions such as Ben Thanh Market, Reunification Palace, Post office, and so on.

Money

The official currency of Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). According to government regulations, all prices for goods and services must be quoted in VND. Foreign currencies can only be exchanged through authorized exchange bureaus or used with special permission.

In practice, USD is widely accepted in tourist areas and is often considered a secondary currency. Other foreign currencies, such as EUR, AUD, and GBP, are also accepted in some locations, though less commonly. In tourist hotspots, establishments like restaurants, bars, travel agencies, and souvenir shops may accept both USD and VND, with prices sometimes displayed in both currencies. However, outside tourist areas or in remote regions, only Vietnamese Dong is accepted. During your trip, it's best to carry a mix of VND and USD for convenience. Ensuring that any bills, particularly USD, are in good condition without tears or excessive wear, as damaged bills may be rejected. Vietnamese Dong (VND) can be easily withdrawn from ATMs, which are widely available on street corners throughout the country. Having both currencies on hand ensures you are well-prepared for transactions in both tourist hubs and more remote areas.

Tipping

Tipping is not compulsory, but it is greatly appreciated. If you are satisfied with the service provided, offering a tip is a meaningful way to show your appreciation. It is especially significant to those who take care of you during your travels and helps inspire excellent service. Tipping should be given directly to the recipient.

Here are some suggested tipping amounts based on local practices and feedback from previous travelers:

Local Restaurants: If dining alone, a tip of around US\$2 is appropriate. In more upscale restaurants, tipping ranges from 10% to 15% of your bill. For group dining, a collective tip of US\$5 to US\$8 is suggested, depending on the group size.

Drivers: For a single traveler, a tip of US\$5 is recommended. For a group, a total tip of US\$10-15 per day is appropriate.

Tour Guides: Tipping for guides depends on the level of service, and US\$2-4 per person per day is typical for group tours. Free to tip more as you see fit. The amount is entirely up to your discretion based on service quality.

Visas

Visas are the responsibility of the individual traveler. Visa requirements vary depending on your nationality and destination. Generally, most countries require that your passport be valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay. Upon arrival, you may be asked to show return tickets and proof of sufficient funds to cover your stay.

Travel Authentic Asia offers e-visa and visa-on-arrival services, which can be arranged by booking the additional service when you make your tour reservation or by contacting us via email.

For more details, please visit our website at: <https://travelauthenticasia.com/travel-guides/vietnam/how-to-get-a-visa-for-vietnam.aspx>

What to bring

What you need to bring will depend on the trip style, the countries you are visiting, and the time of year. Generally, we recommend packing as lightly as possible. You'll be expected to carry your own luggage on excursions, though you won't be walking long distances with it. We suggest keeping the weight under 20kg/44lbs.

You can choose to carry your luggage in a backpack or suitcase, but with wheels is most convenient. An overnight bag or a small backpack with a shoulder strap is useful for carrying essentials like water and a camera on day trips.

Depending on the season and the activities included in your trip, be sure to bring appropriate clothing. In winter (November to February), North Vietnam can be cold, so warm clothing is necessary. During other times of the year, light and comfortable clothing will be sufficient. If your trip involves trekking, make sure to bring trekking shoes or sandals. You'll find that most items can be purchased locally at reasonable prices, so there's no need to pack everything; only bring the essentials.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for this trip. However, we recommend consulting your doctor for up-to-date medical travel advice before departure. It's a good idea to bring along a basic First Aid kit, hand sanitizers, antibacterial wipes, and any personal medications or medical items you may need during your journey.

Safety and Security

Before departure, we encourage you to seek advice on international travel safety and familiarize yourself with potential situations you may encounter during your trip. Traffic can be more chaotic than what you're accustomed to at home, so take your time to adjust to the new environment. Your tour guide and locals are great resources to learn how to navigate local traffic safely.

For added security, we recommend using a neck wallet or money belt to store your passport, air tickets, travelers' cheques, cash, and other valuables. Only carry the amount of money you'll need for the day, and leave the rest in the hotel's safe. We also suggest using a lock to secure your luggage.

While the cities visited are generally safe during the day, we advise caution when wandering at night. It's best to stay in small groups and take taxis to and from restaurants or on evening excursions.

In certain situations, your tour guide has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the itinerary for safety reasons.

If engaging in water activities in oceans, rivers, or open water, be aware that waves and currents can be unpredictable. All participants should be able to swim and have experience in open water, and we recommend seeking local advice before entering the water.

For more information, please visit our website's travel guides.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is mandatory for all Travel Authentic Asia travelers and must be obtained independently. It is your responsibility to carefully review your insurance policy before traveling to ensure it provides adequate coverage for personal accidents, medical expenses, evacuation and repatriation, baggage loss, and cancellation or curtailment of your trip. Please note that any local travel insurance included in sightseeing tickets at certain sites is limited and does not replace comprehensive travel insurance. Travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must confirm that their chosen insurance policy covers these conditions. If such conditions are not covered, it is understood that the traveler assumes full financial responsibility for any issues or costs arising from treatment or complications related to their pre-existing medical condition. Travel Authentic Asia is not liable for any problems, delays, or expenses resulting from such conditions.

Responsible travel

At Travel Authentic Asia (TAA), we operate with a strong commitment to Responsible Travel. We believe that both tour operators and travelers play a vital role in making the world a better place. By traveling responsibly, we not only contribute to the advancement of tourism but also enhance the overall travel experience.

Responsible travel is not an abstract concept; it is reflected in the actions, behavior, and appearance we exhibit every day during our travels. With small efforts, each of us can make a significant difference in the places we visit.

Issues on your trip

While we always strive to provide the best possible holiday experience, we understand that travel can sometimes present challenges due to local conditions or unforeseen circumstances. If something goes wrong, the best way to address the issue is by discussing it with your tour guide or one of our travel consultants or customer care personnel. This allows us to resolve the problem and minimize any negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We acknowledge that there may be situations where a tour guide or our local partners may not be able to resolve an issue to your satisfaction. If that occurs, please feel free to reach out directly to our travel consultant or management team via chat or email, and we will do our best to assist you.

Trip review & feedback

After traveling with us, your feedback is invaluable in helping us improve our services and ensure a better experience for you and future travelers. You are the best person to tell us what we need to do to meet your expectations. Therefore, your comments and suggestions are highly appreciated.