

# Trip Details

## Incredible Vietnam

Experience the highlights of Vietnam from North to South with a taste of limestone island beauty, fascinating history and colourful culture! Sail the serene waters of UNESCO World Heritage-listed Halong Bay on a traditional Junk Boat. Uncover the best of hustling Hanoi from street food to unique architecture with local guides. Take a domestic flight to Danang, the gateway to exploring the Imperial City of Hue and the colourfully french-inspired town of Hoi An. Plus, fly to the vibrant metropolitan of Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, and learn of Vietnam's rich war history from your local guide. This 9-day adventure is bursting with fast-pace Vietnamese flavour!

<b>Duration</b>	9 Days	<b>Group Size</b>	13-35 People
<b>Destination</b>	Vietnam	<b>Age Req.</b>	18+
<b>Start/Ends in</b>	Hanoi / Ho Chi Minh City	<b>Trip Theme</b>	Classic, Discovery
<b>Hotels</b>	4 Star	<b>Departs</b>	All Year Round

## Why You Will Love This Tour

- \* This 9-day trek through Vietnam hits the highlights of Vietnam from exotic island landscapes to breath-taking Imperial cities and metropolitan heartlands for new cultures and cuisines!
- \* Enjoy two included domestic flights to save on travel time. Plus, all breakfasts, 3 lunches and 1 dinner is included in the tour package.
- \* Stay in carefully-selected 4-star hotels and travel with a local expert guide in the comfort of private, air-conditioned vehicles.
- \* Sail amongst the UNESCO World Heritage-listed limestone islands of North-West Vietnam and spend an evening onboard a traditional Junk Boat, sleeping in Halong Bay – one of South-East Asia's most scenic backdrops!
- \* Learn of the incredible war history, historic dynasties, and captivating cultures on included city tours with local guides in Hanoi, Hoi An, and Ho Chi Minh.
- \* Shape your Vietnam adventure with unforgettable optional extras including Kayaking in Halong Bay, guided Hoi An tours on vintage Vespas, Vietnamese cooking classes, Cu Chi Tunnel tour, or visit the Gold Hand Bridge for epic panoramic views and photo opportunities!
- \* Want to spend a few more days in Vietnam? Take a look at our 12-day tour with trekking through the lush hillsides of Sapa.

## Arrival Details

The group welcome meeting with you guide and other travellers is held around 18:30 at the hotel lobby on Day 1 of your tour, unless otherwise notified.

### Meeting Point

#### Bonne Nuit Hotel– Hanoi

**Address :** 30A Cua Dong Street, Hoan Kiem Dist., Hanoi, Vietnam

**Phone :** +84-2437476420/22 **Emergency Number:** +44 (0) 208 099 75 36

## Making Your Own Way to the Starting Point

The quickest way to get from Noi Bai International Airport (HAN) to Bonne Nuit Hotel is to taxi which costs 19\$ - 23 \$ and takes 25 min.

## Finishing Point

The finishing point for this tour is:

**Alagon Saigon Hotel – Ho Chi Minh**

**Address :** 46 Thu Khoa Huan, District 1, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

**Phone :** (84-28) 3822 7927      **Emergency Number:** +44 (0) 208 099 75 36

## Highlights

- \* **Cham Museum:** Dedicated to this period and the Champa existence which began predominantly in the coastal area. Housing the largest exhibition of Cham sculpture in the world.
- \* **Cu Chi Tunnel:** The Chu Chi Tunnels are part of a massive war museum in Ho Chi Minh. They offer a sneak-peek at the underground life of Vietnamese soldiers back in 1948.
- \* **Dog Island:** Dog Island is close to the west of Dau Go Grotto and is one of 1969 islands in island complex, it is the symbol of peaceful sea and safety for sailing junks in the bay.
- \* **Dong Ba Bustling Market:** The Dong Ba Market traces its provenance way back in Hue history. Historically, the market stood outside the Hue Citadel and was the largest commercial center.
- \* **Flag Tower:** Flag tower is one of Hue monument complex. After being constructed under Emperor Gia Long's reign. The flag tower consists of two parts including tower and the flag pole.
- \* **Ga Choi Island:** Ga Choi Island (Fighting Cock Island), which is no doubt one of the most unique and popular features that has appeared as symbol of Halong Bay.
- \* **Golden Hand:** Known as the Golden Bridge, it stands 1,400 m above sea level above the Ba Na hills, offering majestic panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.
- \* **Hanoi:** Known for its centuries-old architecture and a rich culture. At its heart is the chaotic Old Quarter, where the narrow streets are roughly arranged by trade.
- \* **Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum:** Discover the life and legacy of Ho Chi Minh in a vast complex that constitutes the famous One Pillar Pagoda, the Vietnam leader's gardens and residence.
- \* **Hoi An:** Ho An Ancient Town is an exceptionally well-preserved example of a South- East Asian trading port dating from the 15th to 19th century.
- \* **Imperial City of Hue:** The ancient Hue was recognized by UNESCO as one of the World Heritage Sites. This city is the cradle of Vietnamese culture and used to be the national capital.
- \* **Marble mountain:** The Marble Mountains are a cluster of five hills made from limestone and marble in Da Nang. It's also a well-known pilgrimage site with peaks, caves, tunnels and temples.
- \* **Ngoc Son Temple:** The temple is dedicated to General Tran Hung Dao (who defeated the Mongols in the 13th century), La To (patron saint of physicians) and the scholar Van Xuong.
- \* **One Pillar Pagoda:** Built of wood on a single stone pillar, the pagoda is designed to resemble a lotus blossom, the symbol of purity, rising out of a sea of sorrow.
- \* **Royal Tombs of Khai Dinh:** The monument is a synthesis of Vietnamese and European elements. Most of the tomb's grandiose exterior is covered in darkened weathered concrete.

- \* **Temple of Literature (Van Mieu):** Having gone through several destruction and restorations, the Temple of Literature still retains its original features. Signifying a hallmark of education in ancient Vietnam and its great value to the Vietnamese people.
- \* **Thien Mu Pagoda:** Thien Mu Pagoda (namely Heaven Fairy Lady Pagoda), also known as Linh Mu Pagoda, is one of the most fascinating and ancient pagoda in Hue city.
- \* **War Remnants Museum:** This interesting and well-curated museum is a must-do for any visitor to Saigon given the impact of the American War, as it is known in Vietnam.

## Itinerary

Please note that the itinerary may be subject to small changes depending on the conditions during the tour. Alternative accommodation of similar standards may be used depending on the group size and hotel availability.

### Day 1: Hanoi

Welcome to Vietnam! Meet your guide and new tour mates in the hotel lobby at 6.00pm for an informal welcome meeting. Afterwards, get amongst the hustle of Hanoi for an optional tour group dinner or explore the night markets and busy streets as they come to life after dark!

- **Accommodation**

Bonne Nuit Hotel – 4 Star

- **Included Activities**

Welcome Meeting

- **Optional Activities**

Group Dinner

### Day 2: Hanoi City Tour

Enjoy a full day in Hanoi to explore the streets swarmed with buzzing motorbikes, delicate scents, and delicious street food. Be sure to try a traditional Vietnamese coffee and wander the Old Quarter for an epic fusion of French, Chinese, and Vietnamese architecture. Then, meet up with the tour group at 1.00pm for a half-day guided city tour! You'll visit President Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum, residence, and One Pillar Pagoda. Then, visit the breath-taking Temple of Literature and surrounding gardens, built as a university in 1080, and dedicated to Confucius. Finish the guided city tour with a walk around the famous Hoan Kiem Lake to take in the peace and quiet of Ngoc Son Temple, a pagoda sitting on a small island in the center of the lake! Wrap up your last night in Hanoi exploring the streets or join an optional Hanoi street food by night walking tour.

- **Accommodation**

Bonne Nuit Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Hanoi City Tour

- **Optional Activities**

Hanoi street food by night (walking tour) – 25 USD

- **Entrance Fees**

President Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum and residence – 4 USD

Temple of Literature – 1.50 USD - Ngoc Son Temple – 1.50 USD

### Day 3: Hanoi, Halong Bay Cruise

Today you'll farewell the capital and head towards the dreamy, UNESCO World Heritage-listed region of Halong Bay! On the way, you'll pass lush paddy fields by the Red River Delta before arriving at Tuan Chau wharf by midday. Then it's all aboard a traditional Junk Boat for the true Halong Bay experience. Kick back and soak in the serenity on board as you drift past the abundance of limestone islands with lunch served at 1.00pm. In the afternoon, stop to visit some of the islands, explore the intricate cave systems on foot, or join the optional Kayaking activity. Then it's back on board to savor sunset moments over the picturesque backdrop before dinner is served at 7.00 pm. Spend the evening relaxing on board, chatting at the bar, or trying your luck at squid fishing off the Junk Boat.

- **Accommodation**

Traditional Junk Boat

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

- **Included Activities**

Halong Bay Cruise

- **Optional Activities**

Kayaking – 10 USD

### Day 4: Halong Bay, Flight to Danang, Hoi An

Morning views don't get much better than this! Coffee and tea will be served from 7.00am, but take it slow as you enjoy the leisurely vibes from the Junk Boat deck. Snap some final pics of the dreamy islands of Halong Bay, including Dinh Huong Island, Ga Choi Island and Sail Island. Check out is at 9.00am and Brunch will be served by 9.30am as you cruise back to the pier and say farewell to Halong Bay and your incredible Junk Boat Crew! This afternoon we'll make our way to Danang via domestic flight, then transfer to our hotel in Hoi An – one of Vietnam's most beautiful cities!

- **Accommodation**

Vinh Hung Riverside Resort – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast, Lunch

- **Included Activities**

Halong Bay Cruise

### Day 5: Hoi An

Good morning from Hoi An! In centuries gone by, Hoi An was once a bustling port for a myriad of various traders. Today, it is a delightful riverside town with tranquillity and charm that attracts visitors far and wide. Get your bearings with a guided tour through the Old Quarter and fall in love with the Japanese Covered Bridge, visit a historic trader's home, check out the French Colonial architecture and Chinese Assembly Hall. In the afternoon enjoy free time to visit one of Vietnam's famous tailors for custom-made clothing or hire a bicycle and head to An Bang beach for seaside vibes and fresh seafood. If you're feeling a bit more adventurous, join an optional city and street food tour on Vespa, take a guided countryside bike tour or put your cooking skills to the test with a Vietnamese cooking class!

- **Accommodation**

Vinh Hung Riverside Resort – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Hoi An Walking Tour

### Day 6: Hoi An, Marble Mountain, Golden Hand Bridge, Hue

Free time in the morning to catch some final sights in Hoi An, pick up your tailor-made clothing or wander the boutique stores. In the afternoon, travel from Hoi An to visit the Marble Mountains and Cham Museum. Don't miss out on the optional visit to the Golden Hand Bridge. Standing 1,400m above sea level the gold-coloured footbridge held aloft by two giant stone hands offers majestic panoramic views over the surrounding countryside. Then, hit the road and take in the scenic views of Hai Van Pass en route to Hue. There'll be free time in the afternoon to explore the beautifully decorated pavilions and lotus flower ponds at your own pace. We recommend hopping on a Cyclo ride to see the city from a new and exciting angle in

- **Accommodation**

Muong Thanh Luxury Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Golden Hand Bridge tour – 60 USD

Roundtrip cable car & private transfer – 35 USD

- **Entrance Fees**

Marble Mountain – 2 USD

Cham Museum – 2 USD

### Day 7: Hue City Tour, Flight to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Although many of the finest buildings of Hue (pronounced 'hway') were devastatingly destroyed during the American War, the historic UNESCO World Heritage-listed city still resonates with the glories of imperial Vietnam. Today we'll spend a full day exploring Hue on a guided city tour from 8.00am. You'll visit the Old Imperial City, Flag Tower, Thien Mu Pagoda, Dong Ba market and Royal Tombs of Khai Dinh. Have your camera ready for some of the most beautiful architecture you'll see in all of Vietnam! In the afternoon, take a domestic flight to Ho Chi Min and rest up for a big day to come.

- **Accommodation**

Alagon Saigon Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast, Lunch

- **Included Activities**

Hue City Tour

- **Entrance Fees**

Imperial Citadel – 9 USD

Royal Tombs of Khai Dinh – 7 USD

### Day 8: Ho Chi Minh City Tour

Kick-start your time in Ho Chi Minh city with a guided city pickup at the hotel for half day city tour through the highlights of the exhilarating city. Visit the historic Reunification Palace and War Remnants Museum, followed by the architectural treats of French colonial Notre Dame Cathedral and the iconic Post Office. Take an optional tour to the world-famous Cu Chi Tunnels and learn stories of the Vietnamese who dug these tunnels and started a new life underground, to escape the war. Then, end your day at the Ben Thanh Market and try some traditional Bánh mì, Pho and Bia hơi.

- **Accommodation**

Alagon Saigon Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Ho Chi Minh City Tour

- **Optional Activities**

Cu Chi Tunnel tour – 25 USD

Saigon Vespa and street food tour at night – 60 USD

- **Entrance Fees**

Reunification palace entry – 2 USD

War Remnants Museum – 2 USD

### Day 9: Ho Chi Minh City

After breakfast at the hotel, our trip will end in Ho Chi Minh City as we say goodbye to our new travel mates and check-out of the hotel by 11.00 am.

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

## Inclusions & Exclusions

**Accommodation:** 4 Star hotels, Traditional Junk

**Airport Transfer:** Airport transfers for the included domestic flights on the tour.

**Meals:** 8 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 1 Dinner

**Transportation:** A/C coach or mini-bus, domestic flights

**Guide:** Services of experienced Travel Talk local guides licenced by the Ministry of Tourism

**Sightseeing:** Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, Temple of Literature, Ngoc Son Temple, Halong Bay  
Hoia An ancient town, Marble Mountain, Cham Museum, Imperial Citadel, Flag Tower,  
Royal Tombs of Khai Dinh, Reunification Palace, War Remnants Museum

### What is NOT included in the tour price?

- Any flights not mentioned above
- Travel insurance
- Meals not stated above
- Items of a personal nature
- Tips & gestures
- Entrance fees to the sights and museums
- Optional activities
- Other services not stated in the itinerary

## Hotels & Accommodation

Solo travellers will be roomed with another solo traveller of the same gender in a twin or triple room, or can upgrade to a solo room by paying the single supplement. You may choose the solo room option when booking online or contact us to arrange a private room. Your tour leader will allocate rooms upon arrival at the starting hotel in accordance with the rooming lists, last minute changes may not be guaranteed.

#### **BONNE NUIT HOTEL-HANOI-4 STAR**

Bonne Nuit Hotel offers luxurious and modern accommodation in Hanoi's Old Town and a short 15- minute walk from Hanoi Old City Gate and Hoan Kiem Lake.

#### **TRADITIONAL JUNK-HALONG BAY-SUPERIOR JUNK**

Sleep on board a traditional-style boat and set sail through hundreds of limestone islands that rise dramatically from the emerald waters of the bay.

#### **VINH HUNG RIVERSIDE-HOIAN-4 STAR**

Located on the bank of the romantic Thu Bon River, Vinh Hung Riverside Resort is a short walk from Hoi An's ancient town and offers elegant rooms with river view.

#### **MUONG THANH HOTEL- HUE- 4 STAR**

Muong Thanh Hotels features a panoramic picture of Hue City, Perfume River, Trang Tien bridge and Hue citadel. This hotel has a Spa center.

#### **ALAGON HOTEL- SAIGON- 4 STAR**

Enjoying a prime location in the heart of the vibrant Ho Chi Minh City's District 1, Alagon Hotel&Spa features modern rooms and rooftop pool.

## **Budgeting**

Please note that entrance fees to sights and optional activities are not included in the tour price. Optional activities are not operated by Travel Talk and may require a certain number of attendees to run.

### **Optional Activities**

Please note that Optional Activities are not operated by Travel Talk.

Hanoi street food by night (walking tour)	25 USD
Kayaking	10 USD
City tour and street food by Vintage Vespa	60 USD
Countryside tour by bike	20 USD
Cooking class	30 USD
Golden Hand Bridge tour	60 USD
Roundtrip cable car & private transfer	35 USD
Cu Chi Tunnel tour	25 USD
Saigon Vespa and street food tour at night	60 USD

### **Entrance Fees**

President Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum	4 USD
Temple of Literature	1,5 USD
Ngoc Son Temple	1,5 USD
Hoi An ancient town	8 USD
Marble Mountain	2 USD
Cham Museum	2 USD
Imperial Citadel	9 USD
Royal Tombs of Khai Dinh	7 USD
Reunification Palace	2 USD
War Remnants Museum	2 USD

# Essential Information: Vietnam

## Passport & Visas

Visas to enter Vietnam are compulsory for most tourists including travellers from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. An eVisa is available to many nationalities. Processing times and fees vary per application location, nationality and travelling dates. eVisas are typically issued for a maximum of 30 days, single entry, and cost 25 USD.

Further to this, 24 nationalities are not required a visa for touristic visits up to 15 days, which include United Kingdom and EU passport holders.

Travel Talk strongly recommends travellers obtain a tourist visa, where applicable, before arriving in Vietnam. For more information on Vietnam eVisas, please visit <https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/>.

Passport validity entry requirements: Travellers entering Vietnam must also carry a passport or travel document with a minimum of 6 months validity remaining.

This information is provided as a guidance, we strongly advise that you check with the consulate or embassy as this information can change at any time and with little notice. It is your responsibility to make sure that all the required travel documents are ready when travelling.

## Travel Advice

We are closely monitoring the latest travel updates to Vietnam and follow the advice of the UK Foreign Office (FCDO). For the latest travel advice from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/vietnam>

We recommend all travellers to check their Government National Travel Advisory prior to their departure:

- Australia - <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>
- Canada - <https://travel.gc.ca/>
- New Zealand - <https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>
- USA - <https://travel.state.gov/>

## Travel Insurance

All passengers travelling with Travel Talk are required to have personal travel insurance before participating in any of our tours. Your guide will collect your travel insurance details on the first day of your trip. It is your responsibility to make sure you have an adequate and suitable travel insurance for you in place, you may read more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/travel-insurance>

## Health & Safety

The health and safety of our passengers, staff and communities visited is of utmost priority. As we monitor and comply with the official advice from the UK Foreign Office, as well as World Health Organization and government authorities regularly, we have implemented several policies and precautions on our tours for your wellbeing. You may find our Safe Travels Protocols at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels>



Travel Talk Adventures has received the Safe Travels stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), which allows travellers to recognise companies around the world that have adopted health and hygiene global standardised protocols – so consumers can experience ‘Safe Travels’.

Please make sure to regularly check your Government’s travel advice before travelling and be well-informed of any requirements. Your tour guide will also notify you of the regulations and protocols to follow throughout your trip with us.

Please note that if any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary or possess a potential risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, we reserve the right to remove them from all or part of a trip.

Please consult with your doctor for the latest medical travel information and any vaccinations you may need. We recommend that you bring any personal medical requirements and medications with you as these may be difficult to obtain while on tour.

## Weather

The weather across Vietnam varies significantly from North to South, making it a year-round destination for avid travellers. In Northern Vietnam, the typically hot and humid summer months fall between May and August. Meanwhile, central Vietnam experiences extended summers from January until August and South Vietnam is known for its year-round pleasant temperatures. March to May (Spring) and September to November (Autumn) are considered the best months to visit Vietnam in its entirety due to minimal rainfall and moderate temperatures. If visiting Halong Bay and Sapa in Vietnam's north - consider travelling between Spring and Autumn to ensure the most picturesque weather conditions with minimal rainfall and

Months	Hanoi		Sapa		Ho Chi Minh	
	C°	F	C°	F	C°	F
January	17	63	10	50	27	81
February	17	63	11	52	28	82
March	21	69	15	59	29	84
April	24	74	17	63	30	86
May	28	82	20	68	30	86
June	29	83	21	70	29	83
July	29	84	21	70	28	82
August	29	84	21	70	29	83
September	28	82	20	68	28	82
October	25	77	17	63	28	82
November	22	71	14	57	27	81
December	18	64	12	54	27	80

## Distances

### Driving

Hanoi to Sapa: 315km, 5 hr  
 Hanoi to Halong Bay: 170km, 2 hr 5 min  
 Danang to Hoi An: 42km, 1 hr 5 min  
 Hoi An to Hue: 125km, 2 hr 45 min  
 Hue to Danang: 93 km, 2 hr

### Flights

Hanoi to Danang: 1 hr 20 min  
 Danang to Ho Chi Minh: 1 hr 25 min

## Money Matters

The official currency of Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). The numerous denominations of VND can be confusing for foreigners, so it is worth noting that 25,000 VND converts to approximately 1 USD. Credit and debit cards are accepted at major hotels and tourist attractions across Vietnam but are not accepted for small payments such as snacks. Travel Talk recommends carrying VND cash to cover daily expenses. ATMs are quite common across Vietnam and US dollars can also be used to pay for hotels, restaurants, and some other services in major cities. We recommend you do not exchange bulk sums of money at the airport, as the exchange rates are usually more favourable in the major cities.

Please remember that everyone has different spending habits, some prefer to spend more on souvenirs, some on experiences and others on a night out! Make sure to budget your trip to your spending habits for shopping, drinking, and tipping.

Tipping is not customary in Vietnam but is very much appreciated, a small tip can equate to a large portion of daily wage for service staff. Rounding your bill to the nearest 1 USD or VND equivalent is a small gesture that is greatly appreciated across the nation for good service. You may also consider tipping your leader and driver for outstanding service at the end of your trip. The amount is entirely a personal preference.

## Eating & Drinking

Vietnamese cuisine is distinct and unforgettable, made famous for its use of tangy herbs and zesty flavours. Traditionally, Vietnamese cuisine is boiled and steamed, rather than stir-fried like Thai and Chinese. Inexpensive food markets, street vendors and casual restaurants line almost every corner of Vietnam's major cities and small towns - making it extremely easy to find these popular meals and more.

**Goi Cuon:** Translucent spring rolls packed with greens, coriander and minced pork or shrimp. These traditional spring rolls are served as a starter in most Vietnamese restaurants.

**Banh Mi:** Known as Vietnam's most popular street food, Banh Mi is a unique French-Vietnamese sandwich that consists of a toasted baguette with pickled vegetables, pate, butter, soy sauce, cilantro and chillies.

**Pho:** Considered Vietnam's signature dish, Pho is comprised of rice noodles in a flavourful soup with meat and various greens, plus a side of nuoc cham, or chilli sauce. A basic bowl is often topped with bean sprouts, lime wedges, fresh herbs, mint, cilantro and onions. The dish is commonly eaten at breakfast by the locals.

**Banh Xeo:** Like a crepe or pancake, Banh Xeo is made of rice flour, coconut milk and turmeric. The pancake batter is then filled with vermicelli noodles, chicken, pork or beef slices, shrimps, sliced onions, beansprouts, and mushrooms. The sizzling pancake is sold at local food markets and is dipped in peanut sauce.

**Bun Cha:** Traditional to Hanoi, Bun Cha consists of grilled pork belly, vermicelli noodles, salad and herbs with a side of chilli fish sauce.

**Egg Coffee:** Unique to Hanoi, Egg coffee is a sweet and delicious beverage made from a coffee base with frothy egg yolk and condensed milk.

**Com Tam:** Commonly referred to as Broken Rice, Com Tam is a simple but tasty dish of grilled meat, fried egg, salad and pickles. The broken rice element is actually broken grains of rice left over from traditional drying and milling processes. It's eaten by locals at any time of the day and is a very inexpensive meal costing approximately 1USD.

Vietnam's national drink of choice is green tea, which is the accompaniment to every social gathering. Vietnamese coffee is also extremely popular amongst travellers, made from condensed milk and drip coffee. At the harder end of the spectrum, you will find rice wine! In Northern Vietnam amongst the farming regions, most rice wines are made in small home distilleries using sticky rice.

## Internet Access

Most cafes, hotels and restaurants in cities of Vietnam provide free Wi-Fi, but the connection may be spotty or slow. If you wish to use your own 3G/4G Data, be sure to enable data roaming on your mobile. Purchasing a Vietnamese SIM card for the duration of your tour may be a cost-effective alternative. Make sure that your phone is unlocked before you leave home so a local SIM will be compatible. Your local guide will be able to provide advice on where to purchase SIMs in Vietnam.

## Essentials to Bring

- \* Face mask/cover and hand sanitiser enough for your personal use throughout the trip – See more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels>
- \* Travel Documents: Passport, Visa (if required), flight or transport ticket (and photocopies)
- \* Travel Talk Tour Voucher (printed or digital)
- \* Travel Insurance Policy (and photocopy)
- \* Personal medical kit and medicine
- \* Money (cash, credit card, travellers' cheques)
- \* Power Adapter
- \* Reusable water bottle
- \* Ear plugs and eye mask
- \* Sun protection – hat, sunglasses, sunscreen
- \* Comfortable, closed walking shoes
- \* Wind/water proof jacket
- \* Warm clothes, hat, and gloves for cold weather
- \* Sandals, swimwear, shorts for warm weather

## Culture, Religion, Traditions

Vietnamese culture has been profoundly influenced by the Chinese, who occupied the country for 1,000 years and left a heavy influence in modern day. Vietnam is home to 53 ethnic minority groups (around 14 million people) with most living in the North and carving their existence from the lush mountainside landscapes along the Chinese and Lao borders. The nation hosts a large variety of beliefs and religions as reflected in its abundance of temples, pagodas, Buddhas and other religiously sacred sites. However, over the centuries, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism have fused with popular Chinese beliefs and ancient Vietnamese animism to form the Tam Giao (Triple Religion) that many Vietnamese identify with today. In many Vietnamese homes it is common to find a shrine dedicated to past ancestors, complete with offerings of flowers and incense. It's also common to worship rulers of yesteryear, such as the likes of Ho Chi Minh.

## Etiquette and How to Dress

Going to hot and humid places often call for light, natural fabrics like cotton and silk. However, it is important to remember that Vietnamese people dress conservatively. Both women and men wear long pants and tops that cover their shoulders. For the most part, visitors are expected to do the same, while it is common to roam in swimwear on the islands and around the beaches. When visiting a religious complex, it is essential to wear clothing that covers your chest, shoulders and knees or you will not be permitted entry. If invited to visit a local's home, it is important to remember to take your shoes off at the entrance. It is also worth noting that small villages can find it intrusive to film or take photographs of them and their homes. Before capturing photos or video it is polite to ask if the individuals mind, through translation via your Tour Leader.

## Solo Travellers

We have many solo travellers joining our tours. Solo travellers will be roomed with another traveller of the same gender. If you would like a private solo room, please contact us.

## Rules to Follow

We are committed to ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. We do not tolerate any form of violence (physical or verbal), bullying or harassment involving customers, partners, Travel Talk staff or locals. Sexual relationships between a tour leader and a passenger are forbidden.

We will not tolerate any illegal activity, including but not limited to: use and possession of illegal drugs, trespassing, and disrupting public order. If you consume alcohol, please ensure that you drink responsibly and follow the local laws and regulations.

You must follow the advice of your tour leader and local officials regarding health and safety measures. We operate all tours under Safe Travels protocols for the wellbeing of our passengers, staff and communities visited. Please ensure that you have read the <https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels/> and are fully prepared for your trip.

If someone is acting inappropriately regarding these matters, please notify your tour leader immediately or contact us on the emergency contact number provided below.

Your tour leader has the right to remove from the group anyone not abiding by these rules, with no right of compensation or refund. See more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/booking-terms/>

Please remember that our travellers come from different parts of the world and will have various needs and preferences. Be understanding and patient with your fellow travellers, and always strive to be on time.

## Responsible Travel

We believe that travel is a force for good and show our support through various initiatives and charity organizations, as well as keeping the principals of responsible and sustainable travel at the core of our ethos. These values are engrained in our business culture and the design of our trips just the same. Together with you, we strive to make a positive impact on local people and economies, respecting the local culture, environment, social fabric and customs; encouraging respectful and meaningful cross-cultural exchange.

Read more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/responsible-travel/>