

Vietnam

Visas

Tourist visas are required for American citizens visiting Vietnam, as well as a passport valid for at least one month after the visa expiration date. Fees for visas vary depending on the type and length of stay, and are regularly adjusted. Contact the nearest embassy for up-to-date fee information. Tourist visas are valid for 30 or 90 days from the proposed date of entry depending on the type.

Apply for a visa through the Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Washington D.C. Visit their website for instructions on the application process: <http://vietnamembassy-usa.org/consular/visa-application-process>.

There are also a number of agencies offering a visa on arrival. You may also apply and pay for a letter of approval online through a commercial company and collect your visa on arrival at the airport (they are not issued at overland border crossings). These agencies charge an additional service fee.

You can extend tourist visas for up to a month. The best way to do this is through a travel agent in Vietnam. Rates vary depending on the agent. Do not overstay your visa.

Foreigners can take up temporary residence in Vietnam if they are invited to work there by an organization within the country. You must give details of the type of work and duration before a visa and temporary resident permit can be issued.

Climate

Because of its geography, the climate in Vietnam varies greatly from north to south with three distinct climatic zones (north, center, and south). Tropical monsoons occur from October to April in the center, and from May to September in the north and south. It is almost totally dry throughout the rest of the year. It can get exceptionally hot, however, all year round, but the north has a cooler time between October and April. Temperatures around the country can reach up to 40C in the height of the hot and rainy season (May to September), but the northern highlands and Hanoi can often seem chilly and damp in the winter.

Clothing

Loose, natural fabrics are appropriate all year, but warmer clothing will be necessary in the highlands, and in the winter in northern Vietnam. Bring rainwear during the wet season.

Budgeting

Accommodations and Food

Traveling in Vietnam can be very inexpensive. A bed in a dorm-style hostel can be as cheap as about \$6USD. Private double rooms are about \$17.50. Most towns frequented by tourists have a selection of budget hotels where, for less than \$20 per night, you can expect a TV, possibly air conditioning, and a very clean room. Two- to four-star hotels in Hanoi range from \$15 to \$60 per night. More expensive options are certainly also available, with rooms in luxury hotels running for over \$200 per night.

Food is also very affordable. Eating at street stalls and markets, you can get a bowl of pho or a rice dish for less than \$1. Most sit-down restaurants are also inexpensive, around \$2-\$4. The fancier (and more touristy) the restaurant, the more expensive. A liter of water at a convenience store is about 70¢, while a beer or soda at a restaurant is about 90¢-\$1.50.

Transportation

Bus travel is very inexpensive in Vietnam. The public bus around Ho Chi Minh City will cost a maximum of 16¢. Metered taxis are also affordable, and they are a safe option when moving through town at night. A 30-minute ride will run about \$5.80. The best taxi companies are Mai Linh and Vinasun. Cyclos (bicycle rickshaws) are a cheap and environmentally friendly option in cities. Drivers always hang out near major hotels and markets and speak at least broken English. Make sure the driver understands where you want to go—it's useful to bring a city map. Be sure to bargain, and settle on a fare before going anywhere. Fair prices are between 45¢ and 90¢ for a short ride, between 90¢ and \$1.80 for a longer or night ride, or around \$1.80 per hour. *Xe om* (pronounced *zay-ohm*) are motorbike taxis, whose fares are comparable with those for cyclo, but be sure to negotiate beforehand.

The train is an inexpensive way to travel between cities. When considering class in train travel, be aware that those at the bottom of the scale will have obstructed views from the windows, and will be much less comfortable and clean than those higher up. Fares vary according to class and the train you take; the faster the train, the more expensive it will be. Prices change regularly, but on the most expensive services from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, you'll pay around \$70 for a soft-sleeper berth, and around \$55 for a hard sleeper in the slowest trains; the equivalent fares for Hanoi to Hué are \$34 and \$30, respectively. Booking train tickets ahead is wise. Overnight buses are only about \$4.50-\$22, depending on the distance of the route and the type of seat chosen. If you buy a ticket from the point of departure (i.e. the bus station), the price will be fixed and reasonable. If you board somewhere along the way, there is a good chance the driver will overcharge.

There are also extremely low-cost airlines that can take you around the country for as little as \$18. Take note that the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has not assessed the government of Vietnam's Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization aviation safety standards.

As in any crowded area anywhere in the world, there is the potential for pick pocketing and bag snatching when taking public transportation. Be aware of your belongings at all times, especially if you want to sleep on overnight transport.

Tipping

Tipping is not expected, but it is generally very much appreciated. It is especially common in major cities. Most workers in Vietnam earn very low wages, and tips are one way they can make extra money. Do exercise some sensitivity when it comes to tipping because Vietnamese people have great pride and there may be rare cases where tipping can cause offense.

Currency

The basic unit of Vietnamese currency is the đồng (₫). Notes are in denominations of ₫500,000, 200,000, 100,000, 50,000, 20,000, 10,000, 5,000, 2,000, 1,000, and 500. Coins are in denominations of ₫5,000, 2,000, 1,000, and 500. The exchange rate is around ₫22,000 to \$1USD.

The U.S. dollar, preferably crisp clean bills, is widely accepted among major shops and restaurants. The downside of this is that the prices will be converted from đồng at the vendor's chosen exchange rate, which may or may not be close to the official one, and will be rounded up to the nearest USD.

If you intend to exchange USD to đồng, be sure your notes are clean and undamaged, as banks and other exchange services will not accept notes that are torn, excessively crumpled, or have writing on them. Be sure the Vietnamese notes you receive are not torn as many shops and restaurants will not accept them. It is also wise not to change too much money at one time as you will end up with a large wad of notes; the largest denomination is ₫500,000 (approximately \$24). Take care to note that ₫20,000 notes look only slightly different from the ₫500,000 one. You can avoid mix-ups by keeping ₫500,000 notes separate from the others. Be sure to count your đồng carefully before leaving the exchange counter and when receiving change from merchants; keeping track of such high denominations can be confusing when you are not used to it, and scams are not unheard of. Your best bet for fair exchange rates is at the bank, although there are also money changers in the airports with competitive rates. There is free wifi at major airports so you can check the official rate online.

There are a number of international banks in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City with 24-hour cash withdrawal facilities. Most ATMs enables you to get cash from Visa,

MasterCard, Cirrus, Maestro, Plus, and JCB network. The maximum withdrawal at ATMs is usually only ₫2,000,000 (approx. \$90) with an additional fee of ₫30,000 and up. You may make several withdrawals back to back, but you will still be subject to your own bank's daily cash withdrawal limits, and pay your bank fee every time too. As always, before traveling, tell your bank and credit card companies that you will be using your card(s) in Vietnam.

Telecommunications

Smartphones

If you want to use a smartphone while in Vietnam, you can choose between bringing a locked phone with you, bringing an unlocked phone, or buying a relatively cheap one after you arrive. If you bring a locked phone, make sure you understand your mobile company's terms for international roaming. With an unlocked phone or one you buy in Vietnam, you can simply purchase a SIM card and have a local number. Keep in mind that the unlocked phone that you bring must be a GSM phone, but most new phones are these days.

There are stalls, stores, booths, carts, etc. selling SIM cards in and around airports. You can also ask the staff at your hotel or hostel to point you to the nearest telecommunications store. For the best phone and 3G coverage, be sure that the SIM card you get is from Viettel or Vinafone. Mobifone is also fine if you are not planning to go far outside of large cities. There are very few differences between these companies in terms of the costs of local calls, international calls, and text messages; all are quite low. (On Mobifone, a call to a cell phone on another network is ₫1,800/minute and an international text message is ₫2,500.) **Note:** as with many other things in Vietnam, you'll need to show your passport when purchasing SIM cards and phones.

The initial SIM card you purchase will have pre-paid minutes in a denomination you choose. It will also come with an expiration date, so choose carefully. Topping up your minutes is also quite easy: you purchase a minutes card in any denomination you want, and the vendor is highly likely to activate it for you. If not, just type *100*<code on the top-up card># to add credit, then send an SMS to 888 to activate the call/data package.

Costs

A recent data-only Vinaphone SIM card for 5GB/30 days sold for ₫100,000 (approx. \$4.50). For those who need calls and texts as well, there are many different packages available. Expect to pay ₫150,000-₫250,000, depending on data, call, and SMS credit. For topping up, cards for 1.2GB/30 days have recently sold for ₫100,000.

Once you have your phone, you will need to know how to dial phone numbers in Vietnam:

Country code: +84

Trunk prefix: 0

International prefix: 00

Land line format: area code (1-3 digits) + phone number (5-8 digits)

Cell phone format: 09y xxx-xxxx or 01yy xxx-xxxx

From land line to local land line: area code + phone number

From land line to cell phone: 09y xxx-xxxx or 01yy xxx-xxxx

From cell phone to cell phone: 09y xxx-xxxx or 01yy xxx-xxxx

From anything to international phone number: 00 + country code + (phone number)

Internet

Internet access around the country is sporadic, but in constant development. In tourist areas and developed cities, it is easy to find cyber cafes or public places providing wifi. Almost every hotel provides Internet access, but may require extra fees.

The prices in Internet cafes are cheap, generally ranging from $\text{đ}5,000$ - $\text{đ}10,000$ per hour (20¢-40¢). However, be careful to log out of all your accounts after using public computers. Also avoid checking personal and important details, like online banking, in insecure areas. Depending on the area, the network quality may be damaged.

Electricity

Electrical outlets in Vietnam are 220 Volts (the United States' are 120 Volts), and the frequency is 50 Hz (the United States' is 60 Hz). Vietnamese electrical sockets are Types A / C / G (the US uses A and B; 2- and 3-pronged, respectively). Check the voltage limitations of your appliances and electronics for whether you will need a voltage converter. If the frequency of electricity in Vietnamese (50 Hz) is different from the one in your home country, use your own appliances at your own risk.

Vaccinations and Medical Care

Always consult a doctor or travel clinic before traveling to Vietnam – do so about eight weeks before your trip. UM affiliates can visit the University Health Service's travel website (<https://www.uhs.umich.edu/travelhealth>) for more information, travel precautions, and contact information to make an appointment. They will advise you about appropriate vaccinations and disease prevention precautions you should take. Different vaccinations are recommended depending on your travel plans.

If you take regular medication, you should make sure to have enough for your entire stay. Some prescription drugs may be illegal in Vietnam. Call their embassy (see below)

to verify that all of your prescriptions are legal to bring with you. Ask your doctor to help you get prescriptions filled early if you need to.

Malaria is a risk in some parts of Vietnam. If you are going to a risk area, fill your malaria prescription before you leave, and take enough with you for the entire length of your trip. Follow your doctor's instructions for taking the medication; some need to be started before you leave.

Before you leave, ask your doctor about prescription-strength medication to treat traveler's diarrhea, and how you should plan to rehydrate if/when you experience symptoms. Be sure to carry prescription medications in their original marked bottles with a copy of the prescription in case of questioning at customs.

Bugs (like mosquitos, ticks, and fleas) can spread a number of diseases in Vietnam. You can reduce your risk by taking steps to prevent bug bites. You should use DEET insect repellent, especially outside of major cities. Stay and sleep in air-conditioned or screened rooms, and use a bed net if the area where you are sleeping is exposed to the outdoors.

Tap water is not potable, and it is highly recommended for visitors to consume only boiled or bottled water for drinking and when brushing their teeth. It is also advisable to avoid eating food served at room temperature, raw or soft-cooked (runny) eggs, raw or undercooked (rare) meat or fish, unwashed or unpeeled raw fruits and vegetables, and unpasteurized dairy products.

Safety and Security

Safety regulations and standards in Vietnam are not at the same level as those in the United States, and they vary greatly from company to company and province to province. It is advised to research any touring company or cruise line that you select and ask questions about safety records prior to booking. While many companies may advertise endorsements from local and regional authorities, it is currently unclear if there is a reliable inspection mechanism in place. In addition, travelers should compare pricing among companies and be wary of prices for tour packages that appear either much higher or lower than those of competitors.

Pick-pocketing and other petty crimes occur regularly in Vietnam. Although violent crimes such as armed robbery are still relatively rare, perpetrators have grown increasingly bold. Thieves congregate around hotels frequented by foreign tourists and business people and areas such as Hanoi's Old Quarter and Ho Chi Minh City's Ben Thanh Market. Do not resist theft attempts, and report them immediately to local police and to the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi or the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City.

Motorcyclists are known to snatch bags, cameras, cell phones, and other valuables from pedestrians or passengers riding in "cyclos" (pedicabs) or on the back of motorcycles. Serious injuries have resulted when thieves snatched purses or bags that were strapped across the victim's body, resulting in the victim being dragged along the ground by the thief's motorcycle. Passengers riding in cyclos may be especially prone to theft by snatch-and-grab thieves, because they ride in a semi-reclining position that readily exposes their belongings and does not allow good visibility or movement. The use of motorcycle taxis (*xe om*) is strongly discouraged by the U.S. State Department. They are unregulated and unsafe, and the helmets provided to riders offer little to no protection against injury in the case of an accident.

Keep your passport and other important valuables in your hotel in a safe or another secured location at all times. Avoid wearing a lot of jewelry and showing off electronics. You should carry at least two photocopies of your U.S. passport on your person. Hotels are required to obtain a copy of your passport. You should immediately report the loss or theft of your passport to the local police and the embassy or consulate general. You must obtain a police report from the local police office in order to apply for a replacement passport and a Vietnamese exit visa.

Be careful in choosing ground transportation upon arrival at the airport in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City. If you are expecting to be picked up, ask the company for the driver's name, phone number, and license plate number before you travel. Use only established airport taxi companies or vehicles provided by hotels. You should be familiar with the basics of the hotel you have chosen, such as address and neighboring landmarks, to ensure you are dropped off at the correct location. This information can be found on the Internet.

Although unlikely, scams can happen taking motorcycle taxis. Have a decent knowledge of where you are going and points along the way. If you think you're going the wrong way, simply tell your driver to pull over and flag down a new bike.

Some other kinds of scams target tourists. Specifically, tourists have been victims of gambling scams in the Pham Ngu Lao neighborhood of Ho Chi Minh City. This scam usually starts with a friendly invitation to someone's home to meet a relative interested in visiting or studying in the U.S. While waiting for this individual, a casual game of cards will start. Victims have reported starting the game with only a small wager but losing thousands of dollars over the course of an evening. Be aware that gambling outside of licensed casinos is illegal in Vietnam.

The U.S. Embassy has also received occasional reports of incidents in which an unknown substance was used to taint drinks, leaving the victim unconscious or at least unable to make appropriate decisions. To date, most incidents resulted in theft, but the threat of sexual assaults is also real. Do not leave drinks or food unattended, and

do not go to unfamiliar venues alone. You should also avoid purchasing liquor from street vendors, as the authenticity of the contents cannot be assured.

Recreational drugs available in Vietnam can be extremely dangerous. Drug suppliers will often misrepresent the substances they are selling, such as heroin for cocaine and vice versa. Penalties for possession or use of drugs of any kind are severe.

If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in Vietnam is 113. Local police will issue a report of a crime, but generally will only initiate investigations for serious crimes, and investigations can take several months to complete.

While you are traveling in Vietnam, you are subject to its laws. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different those in the U.S. Persons violating Vietnamese laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. Penalties for possessing, using, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Vietnam are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines, or even death. In Vietnam, you may be taken in for questioning if you do not have proper ID, such as a passport, with you or if you take photographs of sensitive buildings. In Vietnam, driving under the influence of alcohol could land you immediately in jail. If you break local laws in Vietnam, your U.S. passport won't help you avoid arrest or prosecution.

If detained or arrested, U.S. citizens should insist upon contact with the U.S. Embassy or the U.S. Consulate General. The U.S. State Department encourages you to carry photocopies of your U.S. passport data and photo pages at all times so that, if questioned by Vietnamese officials, you have evidence of your U.S. citizenship readily available.

Some Other Issues to be Aware Of

- Hotels in Vietnam require you to present your passport (and visas, if issued separately) upon check-in so that your stay can be registered with local police. Therefore, carry these documents with you if you change hotels. Every guest in a hotel room must be registered, and it is illegal for a foreigner to share accommodations with a Vietnamese national. If you stay at a private residence, (i.e. at the residence of family or friends) you must comply with registration requirements by visiting the local police station and registering your stay within 24 hours.
- Vietnamese law prohibits the export of antiques. However, these laws are vague and unevenly enforced. Customs authorities may inspect and seize your antiques without compensating you. The determination of what is an "antique" can be arbitrary. If you purchase non-antique items of value, you should retain receipts

and confirmation from shop owners and/or the Ministry of Culture and the Customs Department to prevent seizure when you leave the country.

- Vietnamese government authorities have seized documents, audio and video tapes, compact discs, literature, personal letters they deem to be pornographic or political in nature, or intended for religious or political proselytizing. Individuals arriving at airports with videotapes or materials considered to be pornographic have been detained and heavily fined (up to U.S. \$2,000 for one videotape). It is illegal to import weapons, ammunition, explosives, military equipment and tools (including uniforms), narcotics, drugs, toxic chemicals, pornographic and subversive materials, firecrackers, or children's toys that have "negative effects on personality development, social order, and security."
- The government of Vietnam maintains strict control over all forms of political speech, particularly dissent. Persons -- both Vietnamese and foreign citizens -- engaging in public actions that the government of Vietnam determines to be political in nature are subject to arrest and detention. Even your private conversations can lead to legal actions.
- Blogging about the Vietnamese government and discussions in on-line chat rooms have also incurred scrutiny from authorities. The distribution of anti-Vietnamese propaganda and/or advocacy for a multiparty system is considered by Vietnamese authorities to be "a terrorist offense" and/or "propaganda against the state." In most cases individuals are detained, questioned, and then released. In the past few years, many U.S. citizens were arrested, prevented from leaving Vietnam, and/or deported.
- Taking photographs of anything that could be perceived as being of military or security interest may result in problems such as being questioned by authorities, being assessed a fine, and/or your travel being delayed for several days. You should be cautious when traveling near military bases and avoid photography in these areas.

Women Traveling Alone

Vietnam is a relatively safe country for women travelers as the incidence rate of violent crime is quite low. Although there is an inherent conservatism in Vietnamese culture, women are well respected in society. Still, the standard rules apply: don't take unlicensed taxis, don't go home with strangers, and avoid back streets late at night. Drug muggings are known to sometimes happen in Vietnam, but these can be easily avoided: don't eat or drink anything a stranger gives you.

Vietnamese people are, generally, quite modest dressers. Women may attract unwanted attention if they wear revealing clothing, especially if they already attract attention as ethnically foreign in Vietnam. It is advisable to avoid wearing sleeveless tops or short shorts when in public areas. Showing cleavage is considered impolite

anytime and anywhere. When visiting temples and pagodas, wear longer sleeves and a long skirt, pants, or a sarong around your waist.

In Vietnam, it is quite common to ask about the marital status of a woman. There is also a fair chance that some lifestyle choices may not be fully understood or supported. Many women travelers have reported that they wore a wedding band or said they were married simply to avoid these questions.

LGBTQ+ Travelers

There are no laws criminalizing sexual orientation, consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults, or the organization of LGBTQ events in Vietnam. VietPride marches have been held in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City since 2012. In January 2015, a Law on Marriage and Family was passed which officially allows same-sex weddings (though their legal status has not yet been recognized). This has been welcomed as a positive step by activists, and Vietnam now has more progressive governmental policies than many of its Asian neighbors.

Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City both have gay scenes, but LGBTQ venues still keep a low profile. Most LGBTQ Vietnamese have to hide their sexuality from their families and friends and a lot of stigma remains. Police have been known to raid men's clubs, massage parlors, and saunas, imposing fines and "re-education courses" on Vietnamese offenders. Police often target foreign LGBTQ visitors in the big cities and sometimes work with dangerous touts and escorts to set up LGBTQ travelers (and sex tourists) for blackmail and scams.

Outside of interacting with such solicitors, which is obviously discouraged for various health and safety reasons, LGBTQ travelers shouldn't expect significant problems in Vietnam. Checking into hotels as a same-sex couple, for instance, is perfectly acceptable, though it is prudent not to flaunt your sexuality. As with heterosexual couples, passionate public displays of affection are considered a basic no-no.

Accessibility

While in Vietnam, individuals with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation very different from in the United States. Currently, except for buildings and hotels that have been built under international standards, most public places and public transportation are not accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities will face difficulties in Vietnam because foot paths, rest rooms, road crossings, and tourist areas are not equipped to assist them. A 2010 law requires construction and major renovations of new government and large public buildings to include access for persons with disabilities, but enforcement is sporadic. New, modern buildings and facilities in larger urban cities are regularly being built with ramps and accessible entries.

Language

Traveling in major tourist areas, you will have little trouble finding locals who speak a little English, but using even a little bit of Vietnamese can go a long way to getting a friendly reception wherever you go in the country. The Vietnamese language has unique rhythmic and tonal features that make it distinctive. Without knowing the tones or inflections, almost anything you say may make no sense to the Vietnamese ear. You can learn to pronounce words correctly by listening carefully and mimicking. You can access audio guides for the most common useful Vietnamese phrases at:

<http://www.101languages.net/vietnamese/useful-vietnamese-phrases/>

Cultural Differences and Adapting to Vietnam

Vietnamese people are, in general, very gracious, polite, and generous, with the conservative nature of Confucianism. They are very appreciative of visitors trying to abide by their customs. Here are some of the most important items to be aware of in order to avoid some social taboos:

- Often all it takes to follow proper etiquette in Vietnam is a smile and a humble demeanor. Using a few words of Vietnamese will be much appreciated.
- Vietnamese do not like conflict. Friendly, outgoing, and peaceful are the norms for interactions. Avoid raising your voice or making accusations, as these will bring embarrassment. Problems are treated as issues to be solved along with others, and ego-based or emotional outbursts are inappropriate.
- Certain gestures should be avoided. Never touch the head of an older Vietnamese. Kissing and embracing in public, as well as other displays of affection, should be avoided. Do not point with your finger. Shaking hands is the normal manner of greeting people.
- Generally speaking, Vietnamese people are careful in their dress, especially in public areas. In order to avoid this culturally sensitive matter, foreign travelers are strongly advised to put on proper dress when they are out. For example, when visiting a local temple or pagoda, you should never wear a short-sleeved shirt or shorts. Instead, a long-sleeved and shoulder-covered shirt and long pants will be much more appreciated. It is rarely necessary to remove shoes at temples, but if you're unsure, just do what the locals do.
- When you want to take a picture of someone, ask for his/her permission first. In case of disapproval, do not insist on taking the picture or offer any money. This should also be kept in mind when you visit military sites.
- Do not take video cameras into small villages as it is considered very intrusive.
- If you're invited into a local's home, be sure to take off your shoes at the entrance. While there, do not sleep or sit with your feet pointing towards the

home's altar or shrine. Bring fruit, sweets, flowers, or incense as a gift. Do not sit until shown where to sit. The oldest person customarily sits first.

- Learn to use chopsticks. Try to finish everything on your plate, and rest your chopsticks on top of your rice bowl when you are finished eating. Hold the spoon in your left hand when eating soup.
- Carry toilet paper at all times—public restrooms usually do not provide it.

Etiquette When Visiting Vietnamese Temples

- Don't get in the way of local people who are actually there to worship.
- Back away from the Buddha statue rather than turning your back.
- Don't touch sacred objects in the worship area.
- Do not raise yourself higher than the image of Buddha (e.g. sitting on the raised platform for a photo).
- Don't point at a monk or Buddha statue, either with your fingers or feet.
- Don't smoke, spit, chew gum, or eat snacks.
- Don't photograph or disturb monks or others who are worshipping.
- Remove hats and sunglasses when entering a worship area.
- Turn off your mobile phone, remove headphones, and lower your voice.
- Always use your right hand when giving or receiving something from a monk.
- The proper way to sit in a temple is to tuck your legs underneath you as worshipers do. You are not a monk's equal, so you should not sit as they do. While sitting, avoid pointing your feet at the image of the Buddha or other people. If monks or nuns come into the *bot* to worship, stand up until they finish their prostrations.
- Dress modestly. Both men and women should not wear sleeveless tops; shorts, pants, or skirts should cover your knees.

Other Useful Information

Embassies/Consulates

U.S. citizens can be served at:

U.S. Embassy Hanoi

170 Ngoc Khanh

Ba Dinh District

Hanoi, Vietnam

Telephone: +(84) (4) 3850-5000

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(84) (4) 3850-5000 or

(04) 3850-5000/3850-5105

acshanoi@state.gov

U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

4 Le Duan, District 1

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Telephone: +(84) (8) 3520-4200

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(84) (8) 3520-4200

Inquiries: http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/contact_acs.html

Public holidays (2016)

January 1st – (International) New Year’s Day

February 7th-8th – Lunar New Year

February 9th-13th – Tet holiday (continuation of Lunar New Year celebration)

April 16th – Vietnamese Kings’ Commemoration Day

April 30th – Liberation Day/Reunification Day (observed Monday, May 2nd)

May 1st – Labor Day (observed Monday, May 2nd)

September 2nd – Independence Day

Vietnam Time Zone

The time zone for all of Vietnam is UTC/GMT +7 hours. Vietnam has no daylight saving – the time zone remains the same throughout the year.