

Vietnam

Vietnam is a long narrow country in the shape of an “S” with the South China Sea all along the east coast. The Red River in the north and the Mekong River in the south make up extensive areas for rice farms with other items grown at the foot of the western Annamite Mountains. The country is beautiful and the people friendly and eager to show you their country.

For those that remember the Vietnam War, names of towns will be familiar, but the country is now one again - it is not North Vietnam and South Vietnam. They have a museum dedicated to the war that they call the “American War.” Traveling the Mekong Delta is a delightful boat trip and when walking the paths through the forests, there is no fear of being attacked. It is a lovely place and fascinating to see. You will notice that even the most rudimentary homes have refrigerators and televisions.

Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam and it is loaded with history as well as fine restaurants and hotels. If you go in by boat you will be amazed at how gorgeous the ride is through the mist and pointed plant covered rocky outcroppings. Hanoi itself is very interesting as it is also the former communist hub. You can visit Ho Chi Minh’s house and see his small outdoor meeting area where all major decisions were made during the war.

As the background of the rulers of the country was mostly Chinese and more recently, French, you will find French and English is spoken by many people. Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, is more capitalistic than Hanoi and you will find more commerce but it doesn’t have as much ambience as Hanoi. They are cities in contrast. In both cities you must be careful of the crazy traffic when crossing the street.

Hue is the old capital and is an historic complex of attractive buildings and temples. Nearby is the lovely coast with the pretty beaches at Da Nang. One of the charming villages is Hoi An. The attractive homes and shops are on narrow lanes that zig-zag their way in between so be careful as you can get lost.

Vietnam has beautiful beaches, their own Cao Dai religious mix of Islam,

Christianity, Buddhism and Taoism so there are a lot of beautiful temples and churches to see. Whether you are looking for the history or enjoying the way it is today, your trip will really be wonderful in this very pretty country.

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