



Ho Chi Minh City

in collaboration with Blue Dragon Tours Ho Chi Minh

Photo: Aleksandr Zykov



Located near the Mekong River, Ho Chi Minh City is the largest and most exciting city in Vietnam. With a population now almost 8 million people, it's one of the densest urban areas in the world and it's common to see houses where several families share the same living space. For a foreigner, visiting Ho Chi Minh is a real experience! It's a vibrant and an in transition' city. Unlike other cities in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh is also very active at night, with many bars and restaurants to entertain you!



Photo: Aleksandr Zykov



Photo: Andrea Schaffer



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Top 5

Notre Dame Cathedral

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Reunification/Independence...

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THE CITY



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Saigon or Ho Chi Minh City? The first used to be the capital of the French colony and the latter - the former state of South Vietnam until the end of the war in 1975. Yet the locals still lovingly call it Saigon. Upon arrival, you'll immediately be plunged into a lively street atmosphere, cadenced by over 3 million motorcycles, racing along sidewalks dotted with colourful fruit stalls.

Ho Chi Minh did not escape the war but it's now a rapidly growing city. The nation's economic heart has embarked onto important urban and education developments. Some 50 universities and colleges attract over 300,000 students! You will also find dozens of supermarket chains, luxury shopping malls and modern fashion centres. But Ho Chi Minh is also a city with a rich past! Heavily influenced by the French in terms of culture and style in the past, there are still elegant boulevards and historic colonial buildings.

TOP 10

Notre Dame Cathedral

The Cathedral was built by the French in the 19th century with bricks shipped from Marseille. This place gives you a taste of France in the heart of Ho Chi Minh Ville!

For a bit of history, Saigon Notre Dame Basilica was not the first church in town, the very first church was built on

today's Ngo Duc Ke Street. However, in order to fully meet the religious and community need of French colonists, commander-in-chief Bonard decided to build a wooden church in 1863 which was shortly attacked by termites. In 1876, South Vietnam Admiral Duperré organized a design competition for the new church which is today's Saigon Notre Dame Basilica and architect J. Bourad won the competition and then was responsible for the construction of the church as well. In 11th April 1880, the official inaugural ceremony took place. 15 years after, the very most unique features of the Church – the two 60-meter high bronze bell towers were then added in to magnify the Church's beauty. As one may not know, the Notre Dame was the harmonious combination of Roman architecture and the late medieval Gothic features. Until now, the Church still remains its untouched state due to special bricks which were designed and created originally in France and directly transported to Vietnam. Notre Dame Cathedral Saigon is now becoming a popular gathering spot for young generations in Ho Chi Minh and it is considered the idiosyncratic symbol when people first think of Saigon.

Address: Bến Nghé, Quận 1, Hồ Chí Minh

Tickets: N/A

More Info: District 1

Reunification/Independence Palace (Dinh Doc Lap)



Located just 6-minute walking from Saigon Notre Dame Basilica, Independence Palace, also known as Reunification Palace, is another must-not-be-missed

destination in Vietnam's second largest city. The today's Independence Palace was actually first designed by French architecture, then officially constructed on 23 February 1868 with a name of Norodom Palace, and finished after 3 years.

This is where a lot of French and Japanese

colonist-generations used to work and live during the colonial period before 1954. The Palace was designed with a concept of modern western architecture mixed with symbolic traditional eastern art. The Independence Palace also has a tremendous historical and cultural value reminding people of a striking event shocking the whole world at that time.

Tourists nowadays are attracted not only by the Palace's historic value but also by its aesthetic surroundings. Walking through the giant cages, ones can see a huge neat lawn full of freshly-mown green grass with an ornamental fountain in the center. The best thing to do is then taking a memorable picture which can capture the whole palace with green grass and the water fountain.

Address: 106 Nguyen Du, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 085 094
Internet: www.dinhdoclap.gov.vn
More Info: District 1

Cho Lon (Chinatown)

Cho Lon, also well-known as China Town, is a must-see destination in Ho Chi Minh. The place is where Chinese immigrant people (yet they can speak Vietnamese really fluently) are staying and earning their living. In Cho Lon, the biggest and most crowded hub of trading is Tan Binh Market, where sells a lot of clothing, arts and handicrafts with an incredibly cheap price.

The best time to visit Cho Lon is when local people celebrating Chinese New Year Festival. During Tet Holiday, all the restaurants, cloth shops are lavishly decorated with multi-colored lanterns, red Eastern parallel sentences. The whole streets seem to be overwhelmed with one single red color. One another activity in Tet Holiday that need to be noticed is Lion Dance performed by local people. Lion Dance is a traditional ritual performed to bring good luck for a new year, in which two men dance costumed in a large ornamental artificial lion head and body. Cho Lon is also an interesting place which can offer tourists a newfangled experience of huddling through a crowd in Tan

Binh Market, and trying to haggle with local shopkeepers over some beautiful handicrafts.

Address: Cho Lon, Ho Chi Minh
More Info: West, District 5

War Remnants Museum (Nha Trung Bay Toi Ac Chien Tranh)



It is not easy to understand the difficulties and cruelty Vietnam has been through but after a visit to this museum you are a little bit closer. The War Remnants Museum was

first opened to public on 4 September 1975 with the purpose of restoring the heroic evidence of the war against cruel colonialism. The very first name of Museum was "Exhibition House for US and Puppet Crimes" and then on 10th November 1990, the name was changed to "Exhibition House for Crimes of War and Colonialism" before having present official name "War Remnants Museum" on 4th July 1995. War Remnants Museum is one of the worthy-of-visiting destinations in Ho Chi Minh City. The Museum contains a lot of cultural, traditional and national significance reflecting strong determination, restless effort and deep devotion toward Revolution of Vietnamese people during the hardship time. More than 20,000 valuable war documentations, artifacts and films are being exhibited in the Museum, attracting 500,000 both domestic and international visitors annually.

Address: 28 Vo Van Tan St, Ho Chi Minh City
Opening hours: 8:00AM to 5:00PM
Phone: +84 8 3930 5587
More Info: District 3

Cu Chi Tunnel (Ben Dinh)



Approximately 2 hours from Ho Chi Minh city, a very important but almost invisible landmark is located. The tunnels of Cu Chi hide a whole world including classrooms,

kitchens and medical facilities underground. Today a park is built around a part of the system and you can see the tunnels from above and even try to go down in one if you're not too claustrophobic.

You will get a truly unique experience of crawling inside the dark tunnels to understand the hardships that Vietnamese soldiers had been through during the wartime. One may utterly be amazed by the determination and endurance of those people who dug up tons of solid soils, gravels and sands to construct this 200-kilometer (125 miles) long underground network. But the utmost incredible thing about the Tunnels is the life of people living under earth surface. They put their own life in danger because of lacking of fresh air, water shortage and malaria, which was the second cruelest cause of death while the first one is battle wounds.

Address: Cu Chi

Tickets: 180,000 VND (~8\$)

Giac Lam Pagoda

Giac Lam Pagoda built in 1744 is one of the oldest and most popular Buddhist pagoda people usually visit during the Tet Holiday. It was officially accredited as national cultural and historic site by Vietnamese Department of Culture and Information in 1988. Once entering the pagoda through the main gate, one may encounter the garden with a large statue of Bodhisattva under the tall Bodhi Tree – the symbol of Buddhism. Come a little further, the seven-storey stupa with the traditional Southern architecture style will magnificently appear at one's naked eyes. This is the place where relics of Buddha are being stored and preserved. In addition, there are a lot

of precious statues of Buddha and Bodhisattvas made from both wood and bronze in the Pagoda. The Pagoda is located not too far from the city center, one just need 15-minute drive to get there. It is strongly suggested that one should pay a visit to Giac Lam Pagoda while staying in Ho Chi Minh City.

Central Post Office

Saigon Central Post Office is a famous tourist attraction in Ho Chi Minh City located really near to Notre Dame Cathedral. One interesting fact about the Post Office is that it was designed and constructed by famous French Eiffel Tower's architect Alexandre Gustave Eiffel. Mr. Eiffel had derived his artistic inspiration from Western neoclassical architecture style and Asian style of decoration before harmoniously mixing them up and starting to construct the Central Post Office. Just like its neighbor Saigon Notre Dame Cathedral, Saigon Central Post Office has long been becoming the symbol of busy Saigon and also an ideal place to have "bet" coffee and enjoy the surrounding scenery. Walking through a little bit inside, you will notice that there are two big maps: the first one is Saigon ses environs and the second one is Lignes télégraphiques du Sud Vietnamet du Cambodge. Postal services such as mailing, money exchange, postcards are also offered in The Central Post Office.

Pham Ngu Lao Backpacker Quarter

While Hanoi has Ta Hien in the Old Quarter as a "tây" (foreigner) street, Ho Chi Minh is also famous for its bustle of Pham Ngu Lao Street when the light of city is on. Located in the center District 1, Pham Ngu Lao Street is a renowned gathering spot for foreign visitors coming to Ho Chi Minh as well as younger generation in the city. Foreigners visiting the city usually come here to sense the sophisticated lifestyle of the local people while youngsters in Ho Chi Minh treat the street as a place where they can meet each other, have a cosy chat or even dance and sing together, liberating themselves after a day full of stressful works.

Pham Ngu Lao Street is also regarded as the "never-sleep" street because there are a lot of bars and pubs nearby and they are operated the whole night long, ensuring a night full of fun for tourists. Not only that, the other reason that constitutes the attractiveness of Pham Ngu Lao Street is the food which are being sold on the wide pavement with an affordable and even cheap price. This street is a highly recommended spot for those who want something distinctive, something idiosyncratic that nowhere else Saigon can offer.

Address: Pham Ngu Lao, District 1, HCMC
Opening hours: All day

DO & SEE



Photo: Andrea Schaffer

The best way to see Saigon and its districts is on foot. Most major tourist attractions are in District 1. There you'll find the History Museum or the famous Ben Thanh Market. You will also find many beautiful temples and gorgeous architectural buildings in the city. To truly understand the meaning of the temples and buildings around, visit the Museum of History which houses 2,000 years of Vietnam's history.

Stroll around the city and discover the smaller lovely districts to find your own favourite.

Museum Of History (bao Tang Lich Su)

Bao Tang Lich Su first opened its doors in 1929. The Museum houses a unique collection of artefacts from Vietnam's two thousand years of recorded history. A

statue of the Buddha with 1,000 eyes and 1,000 arms is also part of this superb collection.

Address: 2 Nguyễn Bình Khiêm, Bến Nghé, Hồ Chí Minh
Phone: +84 8 3829 0268
More Info: District 1

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Phone: +84 8 085 094
Internet: www.dinhdoclap.gov.vn
More Info: District 1

Emperor Jade Pagoda (den Ngoc Hoang)



There are many beautiful pagodas (temples) in Ho Chi Minh and Emperor Jade is considered by many to be the finest and most lavishly decorated. The architectural style is heavily influenced by southern China.

Address: 73 Mai Thị Lựu, Đa Kao, Hồ Chí Minh
Phone: +84 8 3820 3102
More Info: District 1

Cho Lon (Chinatown)

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Address: Cho Lon, Ho Chi Minh
More Info: West, District 5

Vinh Nghiem Temple

This is a seven layer temple and southern Vietnam's most

majestic one. It was the first pagoda in Vietnam that was built in Vietnamese traditional architecture style but with concrete.

Address: 339 Nam Kỳ Khởi Nghĩa street, Ward 7, Ho Chi Minh
More Info: District 3

Notre Dame Cathedral

The Cathedral was built by the French in the 19th century with bricks shipped from Marseille. This place gives you a taste of France in the heart of Ho Chi Minh Ville!

For a bit of history, Saigon Notre Dame Basilica was not the first church in town, the very first church was built on today's Ngo Duc Ke Street. However, in order to fully meet the religious and community need of French colonists, commander-in-chief Bonard decided to build a wooden church in 1863 which was shortly attacked by termites. In 1876, South Vietnam Admiral Duperré organized a design competition for the new church which is today's Saigon Notre Dame Basilica and architecture J. Bourad won the competition and then was responsible for the construction of the church as well. In 11th April 1880, the official inaugural ceremony took place. 15 years after, the very most unique features of the Church – the two 60-meter high bronze bell towers were then added in to magnify the Church's beauty. As one may not know, the Notre Dame was the harmonious combination of Roman architecture and the late medieval Gothic features. Until now, the Church still remains its untouched state due to special bricks which were designed and created originally in French and directly transported to Vietnam. Notre Dame Cathedral Saigon is now becoming a popular gathering spot for young generations in Ho Chi Minh and it is considered the idiosyncratic symbol when people first think of Saigon.

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Tickets: N/A
More Info: District 1

Cao Dai Temple

If you have time, a day trip to Tay Ninh, the centre of the Cao Dai religion is fascinating. The breathtaking temple is the main attraction.

Address: Tay Ninh, Hô Chi Minh

Fine Arts Museum

This museum is housed in a restored building that is a former home. In sixteen different rooms you can watch a beautiful selection of both Vietnamese and foreign artists, pottery, sculpture and even weapons.

Address: 97A D Pho Duc Chinh, Hô Chi Minh

Phone: +84 8 294 441

Internet: www.baotangmythuattphcm.vn

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Phone: +84 8 3930 5587

More Info: District 3

Hon Viet - The Soul Of Vietnam

This magic show is held at the opera house on the 15th and 23rd of every month. Professional actors and dancers perform different theatre and musical acts that tell the story of the Vietnamese culture. After the show started in 2011, it has grown popular among both locals and tourists.

Address: Lam Son Square, Hô Chi Minh

Phone: +84 8 222 99 414

More Info: District 1

Cu Chi Tunnel (Ben Dinh)



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Mekong Delta



The Mekong River flows from the Tibetan Plateau and ends in the area close to Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. The delta, that is assigned as a 'biological treasure trove', is

also home to over 17 million people that live their daily life on the river. There are several different tour operators that offer day- and overnight trips to the Mekong delta. On these tours you will get to see both the magic nature and the floating market.

Address: Mekong Delta

Bitexco Financial Tower Skydeck

From the 49th level in Bitexco Financial Tower you have the best view over the city and its surroundings. The building is the highest in the Ho Chi Minh and with its modern architecture, inspired by a Lotus bud, it stands out in the city skyline.

Address: Hai Trieu, Ho Tung Mau, Ngo Duc Ke Street, Ho Chi Minh

Phone: +84 8 3915 6868

Internet: www.bitexcofinancialtower.com

Dam Sen Water Park

The city is bustling and hot, so to cool you off, make a visit at Dam Sen Water Park. Several swimming pools, water slides and rides will keep you occupied and excited for a whole day.

Address: 03 Hoa Binh, Ward 3, Ho Chi Minh

Phone: +84 8 58 8418

Internet: www.damsenwaterpark.com.vn

More Info: District 11

Museum of Traditional Vietnamese Medicine (FITO)

This museum is one of a kind. Though it is quite small, the modern exhibition rooms show almost 3,000 objects with a connection to traditional Vietnamese medicine. The

staff speaks perfect English and the guided tour is highly recommended.

Address: 41 Hoang Du Khuong Trs, Ho Chi Minh

Opening hours: Daily from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm

Phone: +84 8 3864 2430

Internet: www.fitomuseum.com.vn

More Info: District 12

Giac Lam Pagoda

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Pham Ngu Lao Backpacker Quarter

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Foreigners visiting the city usually come here to sense the sophisticated lifestyle of the local people while youngsters in Ho Chi Minh treat the street as a place where they can meet each other, have a cosy chat or even dance and sing together, liberating themselves after a day full of stressful works.

Pham Ngu Lao Street is also regarded as the "never-sleep" street because there are a lot of bars and pubs nearby and they are operated the whole night long, ensuring a night full of fun for tourists. Not only that, the other reason that constitutes the attractiveness of Pham Ngu Lao Street is the food which are being sold on the wide pavement with an affordable and even cheap price. This street is a highly recommended spot for those who want something distinctive, something idiosyncratic that nowhere else Saigon can offer.

Address: Pham Ngu Lao, District 1, HCMC
Opening hours: All day

DINING



Photo: felixtriller.

The colonial influence of the French is still very much apparent. On the local side, the Vietnamese dishes are made with fresh vegetables and meat. The seafood is also abundant and excellent. For a fast and efficient lunch break, try the Pho, the typical beef noodle soup! One of the best places to taste the authentic and cheap local food is Thi Sach street (two blocks behind the National Theatre) lined with many small restaurants which are packed nightly.

Le Bordeaux

This is one of the restaurants with the best contemporary French cuisine and wines in town. The goose liver is imported directly from France.

Address: 72-D2 Street Van Thanh Bac, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3899 9831
Internet: www.restaurant-lebordeaux.com
More Info: Binh Thanh District

Nam Phan

Not far from Nam Giao, Nam Phan is on the top of Vietnamese cuisine in town. The restaurant is beautifully situated in a former colonial villa. Even if there are over 200 seats it is highly recommended to make a reservation in advance.

Address: 34 Vo Van Tan St., District 3, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 829 2757
Internet: www.khaisilkcorp.com
More Info: District 3

Restaurant 13

Restaurant 13 serves traditional and flavourful Vietnamese food at reasonable prices and has become popular with travellers. Ask for the Clay Pot dish and you can even cook the cuisine yourself!

Address: 13 Ngo Duc Ke, District 1, Hồ Chí Minh
More Info: District 1

Nam Giao

This is another recommended venue offering excellent Hue-styled central Vietnamese cuisine in the city centre. Here you can find a mixed crowd of both locals and tourists.

Address: 136/15 Le Thanh Ton, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 825 0261
Internet: www.namgiao.com
More Info: Behind Ben Thanh Market

Song Ngu Seafood Restaurant

Song Ngu is one of the best venues for seafood adepts. When you are here, try the fresh seafood hot pot.

Address: 70 Suong Nguyet Anh, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 325 017
Internet: www.songngu.com
More Info: District 1

Good Morning Vietnam

Are you tired of local food? This popular restaurant serves great Italian dishes cooked to perfection but to reasonable prices. The menu is also filled with a good selection of wines.

Address: 197 De Tham, District 1, Pham Ngu Lau, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 837 7894
More Info: District 1

La Nicoise

La Nicoise serves decent French and Mediterranean cuisine in the heart of Saigon. This restaurant is highly recommended!

Address: 42 Ngo Duc Ke, Hồ Chí Minh

Phone: +84 8 822 8613

Asian Kitchen

Asian Kitchen is one of the favourites among the backpackers community. They serve great food to a good price!

Address: 185/22 Pham Ngu Lao, Ho Chi Minh City
Phone: +84 8 836 7397

Cyclo Resto

At this place you can't blame the chef if you're not satisfied with your meal. At Cyclo Resto, You are the chef. After being picked up and taken to the small restaurant with a cyclo, you and your company will get instructions how to cook popular Vietnamese dishes. When you're done with the cooking you can sit down and enjoy the result.

Address: 3A Dang Tran Con, Ben Thanh ward, Distric 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 66804235
Internet: www.cycloresto.com.vn
More Info: District 1

La Villa French Restaurant

As you can guess from its name this restaurant serves French food. To accompany the delicious cuisine, the wine selection offers a wide array. Enjoy your dinner in the beautiful dining room or in the lush and lovely garden by the swimming pool.

Address: 14 Ngo Quang Huy, Thao Dien Ward, District 2, Ho Chi Minh
Opening hours: Sunday is closed
Phone: +84 90 8128 860
Internet: www.lavilla-restaurant.com.vn
More Info: Dress code: Smart Casual

Scott and Binh's

With a good reputation among both locals and tourists this relaxed restaurant offers a pause from the national Vietnamese cuisine. The mixed menu is filled with different international dishes such as European salads, Mexican quesedillas, American burgers and Thai spring rolls.

Address: 15 - 17 Cao Triều Phát, Phú Mỹ Hưng, Dist. 7, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 94 8901 465

Internet: www.bizuhotel.com
More Info: District 7

Ciao Bella

At Ciao Bella the waiters and the staff take well care of their guests in the welcoming dining room. Home-made bread and dip are complimentary upon arrival and high quality Italian dishes come out from the kitchen. The cosy setting makes this restaurant perfect for a romantic evening.

Address: 11 Dong Du Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3822 3329
Internet: www.saigonrestaurantgroup.com
More Info: District 1

Baba's Kitchen

This restaurant provides Indian flavours in a bustling and well-visited ambience. It is located in the backpacker district of the city and in the evenings, the area attracts young and old travellers searching for a good place for a drink and someone to chat with.

Address: 164 Bui Vien Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Opening hours: Open Everyday 11.00am - 11.00pm
Phone: +84 83 838 6661
Internet: www.babaskitchen.in

Pizza 4P's

Pizza 4P's is a contemporary restaurant with a not so common theme; Italian Japanese fusion. The Japanese chef makes delicious pizzas with their home-made cheese in a wood-fired oven. After the restaurant opened in 2010, it has been mentioned in several magazines and shown in different TV-shows.

Address: 8/15 Le Thanh Ton Str., Ho Chi Minh
Opening hours: Open everyday 7.00am - 11.00pm
Phone: +84 120 789 4444
Internet: www.pizza4ps.com
More Info: District 1

Hum Vegetarian Cafe & Restaurant

For the vegetarian visitors of the city and everyone else that feel for some meat-free cuisine, Hum Vegetarian

Cafe & Restaurant is a restaurant to visit. With its small garden with lotus-flowers, this is a peaceful and quiet venue in the bustling city.

Address: 32 Vo Van Tan st., W.6, D.3, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8393 03819
Internet: www.hum-vegetarian.vn
More Info: District 3

CAFES



Photo: Yuichi Kosio

This is not the city of cafés, but with its French influence, the ones you find, will not make you disappointed. American coffee chains are also starting to take their way into the city so the selection of relaxing venues steadily increase.

Illy Café

In the city centre, Illy Café lets you choose between its local coffees or international food. You can relax in the inviting courtyard.

Address: Bong Sen Centre, 11-13 Lam Son Square, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 827 5946
More Info: District 1

Café 343

This café brings western European coffee culture to Vietnam. In an elegant setting you can relax here with just a simple coffee or a light lunch. The menu is presented in Vietnamese and English.

Address: 343 Nguyễn Trãi, Quận 1, Tp Hồ Chí Minh
Phone: +84 920 0998

Internet: www.cafe343.com

More Info: District 1

Bread & Butter

This place is close to the backpacker's district and a nice stop when you are looking for lunch. This is a small place with great food and service and a good place to meet other travellers.

Address: 40/24 Bui Vien Street, Hô Chi Minh

More Info: District 1

ABC Bakery

ABC Bakery offers a unique range of pastries and is the perfect place if you are in the mood for nice bread and lovely croissants. The menu, also offer a wide array of drinks and light snacks.

Address: 223 - 225 Pham Ngu Lao, Hô Chi Minh

Phone: +84 903 635 595

Internet: www.abcbnc.com

More Info: District 1

Shalom Coffee

This place is not only a splendid coffee shop but also a roasting-house so the coffee that is brewed here is outstandingly fresh. In addition to the popular coffee, the café also has a wide selection of salads, sandwiches, chocolates and smoothies.

Address: 53 Vo Truong Toan Street, Thao Dien Ward, District 2, Ho Chi Minh

Phone: +84 8 37 444 111

Internet: www.coffeeshalom.com

More Info: District 2

BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Photo: alex.ch

Ho Chi Minh City is very intense at night. You will find dozens of featured bars and pubs, wine and cocktail bars or backpackers' bars. District 1 is the best place to stay when the sun goes down, especially around Hai Ba Trung and Dong Khoi. In Saigon, you can have fun and dance to the latest sounds all night long! Like the bars, the best nightclubs are in District 1. They usually have a cover charge and not any particular dressing code to get in. Go as you are.

Hoa Vien

In this popular micro-brewery you'll find some of the best Saigon beers. This venue can host over 600 guests and is a paradise for beer lovers.

Address: 28 Bis Mac Dinh Chi, District 1, Ho Chi Minh

Phone: + 84 8 829 0585

Internet: www.hoavien.vn

More Info: District 1

Vasco's Club

Vascos is very popular with the expats. This funky and sophisticated venue offers great fun every day and features live music on weekends.

Address: 74/7D Hai Ba Trung, Ho Chi Minh

Phone: +84 8 3824 28 88

Internet: www.vascosgroup.com

More Info: District 1

The Wild Horse Saloon

The Wild Horse Saloon features live music most nights

with no specific genre. It is located just next to La Casa Latina,

Address: 8A1/D1 Thai Van Lung, District 1
Phone: +84 8 825 1901

Rex Hotel Rooftop Bar



This is one of the best bars in Vietnam! It has a gorgeous view over the city, lovely drinks and a great atmosphere. Basically, they offer all you need for a good night out.

Address: 141 Nguyen Hue Blvd, District 1
Phone: +84 8 829 2185
Internet: www.rexhotelvietnam.com

Cloud 9

At Cloud 9 you can enjoy a lovely rooftop! This place gives you a great combination of top design, amazing view and a great place to chill out and don't forget to check out the gorgeous people around you.

Address: 2bis Cong Truong Quoc Te, District 3, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 909 44 55 44
More Info: Level 6 & 7, Hai Nam Building

SHOPPING



Photo: Yuichi Kosio

Welcome to paradise for shoppers! And those who like haggling will get endless pleasure here! Most of the time items without a price sticker can be bought for about two thirds the price initially quoted. You will find plenty of shops with beautiful handicrafts but there is also a lot of tourist junk. Lacquer items are found around District 1. Boxes, vases or rosewood bowls make wonderful gifts!

Celadon Green (51 Ton That Thiep, District 1) is one of the best shops for such items. Jewellery, amber, ceramics, antiques, silk and clothes are found in Dong Khai Le Thanh Ton areas. Le Loi Street is home to specialised shops for all kinds of war surplus and hardware items. At the corner with Nguyen Hue is the Tax Department Store with a good supermarket on level 2. Silk and fashion are major draws for shoppers. Khaisilk (107 Dong Khoi, District 1) has superb creations in silk from Vietnam's most respected manufacturers. There are also affordable tailors for custom made shirts in just three days for less than ten US dollars! You'll find most of them in District 1.

Nha May Cuong (59 Ly Tu Truong or 247 Le Thanh Ton), or Albert Thanh at 22 Vo Van Tan Street (District 3) have also been recommended as very good by travellers. Those who look for a more westernized style of shopping may head to Diamond Plaza (34 Le Duan St), Saigon's premier department store. Saigontourist is another huge department store to satisfy all the shopping and entertainment demands of domestic and foreign

customers (35 bis Le Thanh Ton St).

ACCOMMODATIONS



Photo: yeowatzup

In Ho Chi Minh you can choose from both the most luxurious hotels or backpacker hostels. In the area around Ben Thanh Market there is a wide array of different kind of accommodations. Where ever you stay, you will be met by a friendly staff.

Caravelle Hotel



At Caravelle Hotel you can expect the top luxury with all amenities in the heart of Saigon! It is located only 8 km from the airport and has six dining venues.

Address: 19 Lam Son Square, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3823 4999
Internet: www.caravellehotel.com

New World Saigon Hotel

New World Saigon Hotel offers excellent value in this category! This five star hotel is located only 7 km from the airport and has two restaurants offering Chinese or International cuisine.

Address: 76 Le Lai, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3822 8888
Internet: www.saigon.newworldhotels.com

Continental Hotel

This hotel offers everything you need for reasonable rates in this category. Here you can enjoy excellent level of facilities, service and beautiful furnitures.

Address: 132-134 Dong Khoi, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 829 9201
Internet: www.continentalvietnam.com

Duna Hotel

Duna hotel is a new modern building with beautiful architecture. It is situated conveniently in the heart of Saigon and with a very friendly staff!

Address: 167 Pham Ngu Lao, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3837 3699

Grand Hotel

In a beautiful colonial building, this is one of the oldest hotels in Saigon. It is tastefully renovated and it has a nice pool. Together with its great location it is perfect for families.

Address: 8 Dong Khoi, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3915 5555
Internet: www.grandhotel.vn
More Info: District 1

Sen Viet Hotel

Sen Viet Hotel is a friendly and familiar hotel, located with the city centre on walking distance. The 64 guest rooms are all equipped with air condition and free WiFi and offer beautiful views of the city.

Address: 33 Cao Thang Str, Ward 2, District 3, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3929 2233
Internet: www.senviethotel.com.vn
More Info: District 3

Saigon Mini Hotel 5

The Saigon Mini Hotel 5 is a centrally located hotel to affordable prices. It is situated right in the backpacker's district with lots of restaurants and bars. The famous Ben Thanh Market is just 15 minutes walk from the hotel.

Address: 196 Bui Vien Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3836 8691
Internet: www.saigonminihotel.com
More Info: District 1

Norfolk Mansion

This complex provides two- to four bed luxury apartments, all of them including free WiFi and some of them with their own private balconies. Guests can enjoy the outdoor pool or work out in the fitness centre.

Address: 17-19-21 Ly Tu Trong Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3822 6111
Internet: www.norfolkmanison.com.vn
More Info: District 1

Alagon Hotel Saigon

This elegant hotel offers 56 modern equipped rooms at a perfect location right in the city centre. The Ben Thanh Market is just 5 minutes away. It features a 24-hour restaurant and free WiFi.

Address: 289 – 291 Ly Tu Trong Street, Ben Thanh Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3828 2888
Internet: www.alagonhotelsaigon.com

Hotel Majestic

This luxurious Hotel Majestic provides all necessary amenities for its guests. A full spa, a fitness centre, an outdoor pool a casino, two restaurants and two bars are just a few of all the facilities of the hotel. The 175 rooms are comfortable and beautifully decorated. Hotel Majestic is located with beautiful views of the Saigon River and several bars and restaurants are just around the corner.

Address: 1 Dong Khoi, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3829 5517
Internet: www.majesticsaigon.com.vn

Novotel Saigon Centre

Novotel Saigon Centre is a contemporary hotel with 247 stylish decorated rooms some of them including an espresso machine and iPod dock. WiFi is free throughout the building. The hotel also features an indoor swimming

pool and a fitness centre.

Address: 167 Hai Ba Trung, District 3, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 38224866
Internet: www.novotel-saigon-centre.com

My My Arthouse

This guesthouse, centrally located, offers different kind of twin and triple rooms and dorms. Free WiFi is provided and the rooms are cleaned and served with new towels on a daily basis.

Address: 219/8 Pham Ngu Lao, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3836 7937
Internet: www.mymyarthouse.hostel.com

Aquari Hotel

This three star-hotel is situated just a short way from many of the city's major attractions. The rooms have a classic décor and the hotel features a spa and a restaurant serving international and Asian cuisine.

Address: 9 Thi Sach Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 38 29 28 28
Internet: www.aquarihotel.vn
More Info: District 1

Grand Silverland Hotel & Spa

At Grand Silverland Hotel & Spa, guests can relax by the rooftop swimming pool after a hectic day in the city. The 89 rooms are modern and some of them offer views of the city. The Ben Thanh Market is just 1 minute walk away.

Address: 125-133 Ly Tu Trong Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 382 93 888
Internet: www.tanhailonghotel.com.vn
More Info: District 1

Rex Hotel



This luxury hotel is a landmark of the city. It dates back to the early 20th century and during the war, this was the hotel where most of the international correspondents stayed. Today, it still has kept its old-time charm, but there is also now a renovated and more modern wing.

Address: 141 Nguyen Hue Blvd, District 1, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 3829 2185
Internet: www.rexhotelvietnam.com
More Info: District 1

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



Photo: Vyacheslav Argenberg

Airport

Tan Son Nhat International Airport is Vietnam's largest international airport, located 7 km north of the city centre (District 1).

The air-conditioned airport bus is the cheapest way into the city. A one way ticket costs VND5000 plus an additional VND5000 for the luggage. The bus stops going after 6pm so if you arrive after that time you have to take a taxi. Make sure the driver uses the meter and wears an official badge. A taxi from the airport to the city takes app. 15-30 minutes and should cost about VND150,000 - 200,000 including the mandatory toll fee.

Address: Ho Chi Minh City Airport

Public Transport

Since 2004, Saigon has had an efficient public transit bus network. It's cheaper and safer than many of the alternatives. The buses are green and there are 150 routes throughout the city. The ticket is bought on the bus from the fare collector.

Address: 1 Phạm Hồng Thái Street, 2 Ward, Ho Chi Minh
Phone: +84 8 385 461 10
Internet: www.saigonbus.com.vn
More Info: District Tân Bình

Bicycles and Motorbikes

Bicycles and motorbikes for hire are available along the sidewalks near hotels and around the backpackers' area. Many places will ask you to leave your passport as a deposit other places just ask you for your name and the hotel where you are staying. Prices are negotiable.

Cyclos

This three wheel pedalled vehicle is being phased out, as more and more streets are banning the cyclos from entering. Cyclos' prices are bargains, which is about one-third of taxi fares. Be sure to decide on the price and your destination before you start the ride, since some of these cyclo riders tend to change the price when you have reached the final destination.

Taxi

Taxis are the most comfortable way of getting around and are cheap. It's easy and safe to catch one anywhere and any time. It's recommended to use the newest taxis, they have air-conditioning and they drive more safely. Always make sure the meters work properly.

Post

The main post office is located on Dong Khoi in district 1. Even if you don't need to visit it in the purpose of sending mail it can be worth a visit since the building is designed and constructed by the famous architect Gustave Eiffel.

Address: 2, Paris Commune Street, Ho Chi Minh
More Info: Opposite Notre Dame Cathedral

Electricity

220 Volts, 50 Mhz

Telephone

Country Code: +84

Area code: 08

Population

7,750,900

Currency

Vietnamese Dong (VND)

Opening hours

Government: 7.30 am-4.30 pm (excluding one-hour lunch).

Closed on Saturday and Sunday.

Banks: 7.30 am or 8 am-11.30 am and 1 pm-4 pm. Closed
Saturday and Sunday.

Private shops: 8 am or 8.30 am-9 pm or 10 pm.

Internet

www.vietnamonline.com

Newspapers

Sai Gon Giai Phong (Liberated Saigon)

Tuoi Tre (Youth)

Nguoi Lao Dong (Labourer)

The Thao (Sports)

Saigon Times Daily

Emergency numbers

Police 113

Fire Brigade 114

Ambulance 115

Tourist information

Head office

45 Le Thanh Ton street, District 1

+ 84 8 38 27 9279

