



## Ho Chi Minh City - The Pearl of Viet Nam

Ho Chi Minh city situates in the Southern part of Vietnam. It's well known by its former name of Saigon. It is industrious and dense metropolis, the largest city in Vietnam and the business capital of the country. Today, Ho Chi Minh City has a energetic atmosphere, as it has adopted the western capitalist principles - the business-minded and competitive spirit of the people is much of the evidence. If you're into big cities, then you'll love Saigon, which has plentiful of commercial centers, high-class restaurants, coffee, bars and [hotels in Ho Chi Minh City](#).

The charm of Ho Chi Minh city is a mix between remained French colonial architecture and Oriental architecture: wide boulevards, plenty of sidewalk cafes similar to the days of French occupation. Coming to Ho Chi Minh city, you can visit many religious sites, historical monuments, and famous landscapes, cultural centers, such as: Notre Dame Cathedral, a French built Catholic cathedral in the city center, Thien Hau Pagoda, Nha Rong Port... You'll also get to meet friendly, open-minded people of Saigon.

Unlike Hanoi capital, Ho Chi Minh city is the nation's economic heart, so the money is on minds of most people here. And because of being an industrial city, with people coming from various regions across the country, Ho Chi Minh city features multiform style of cuisine. Apart from tasty southern food much influenced by Chinese food, there are other delicious cuisines from different Vietnamese regions, especially from Central Vietnam.

### The unexpected

Being a industrial city with a population of 9 million people, the city is crowded, noisy and poluted. If you are going to Ho Chi Minh city for a few days, you might want to stay away from the industrial zone full of pollution and dirty streets. The living cost in Ho Chi Minh city is also very high compared to other cities in the country, and it might be even expensive for foreigners.

### The bottom line

Many consider Ho Chi Minh City as the most exciting city of Vietnam, as it attracts foreigners from all over the world with its magnificent beauty. While Hanoi is the center of government, Ho Chi Minh City is the nation's economic heart. It's not a surprise that Saigon was given the name "Orient Pearl". Some travelers also say that Ho Chi Minh city is "Paris of Asia" for its wide boulevards filled with magnificent French villas.

### The recommended tours:

Travellers visiting Ho Chi Minh city can get [Vietnam visa on arrival](#) at Tan Son Nhat airport and take their favourite tour in city or from city to aroud areas, such as: Cu Chi... If traveling in city guests can visit Predential Palace, War Remnant Museum, Old Post Office, Notre Dame Cathedral... and taste famous delicious foods here. A lot of people have positive reviews on these tours following:

"You can choose tour in one day to visit around Ho Chi Minh city and enjoy some delicious food, such as: "Pho 2000", cream in Ben Thanh market... I think one day tour is not expensive. And if you want to visit also some beautiful and cheap areas

around Ho Chi Minh city, I think that tour from Saigon to Cu Chi may be not good idea. I taked part in these tour when I visit to Ho Chi Minh city one month ago. It was quite good".

45 miles north west of Ho-Chi-Minh is the town of Cu Chi, one of the most famous battlegrounds of the Vietnam war. It is here between the early 1940s and mid 60s that the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong built the main sections of tunnels that became a vital catalyst in their victory over the Americans and South Vietnamese. It is also claimed to be the most bombed and devastated area in the history of warfare after the Americans used all their firepower to destroy them. Despite becoming a heavy and sometimes comical tourist destination, full of westerners looking for their own experience, these tunnels really are fascinating to visit. At their height during the war they stretched from Ho-Chi-Minh right to the border with Cambodia in the west. At Cu Chi alone there were 250 km of tunnels. These places as better described as underground towns rather than just tunnels. The network reached several stories deep and housed up to 10,000 people who rarely saw daylight for years, coming out only at night to tend to their crops. The tunnels included first aid posts, storage rooms for weapons and food, kitchens, dorms and even classrooms and small theatres. Countless couples were married and had children underground. What makes the tunnels even more amazing is that they were dug with hand tools and yet had primitive technologies like underwater trap doors and vents to disperse cooking smoke. After building a base camp unwittingly right on top of these tunnels, the Americans became aware of them and tried to figure out how they could be destroyed. Special volunteer soldiers selected for their bravery were used as tunnel rats, armed with only a knife and a pistol for hand to hand combat. Because of the tunnels' formidable defences the American casualties were too high and so the bombing started. The Vietnamese showed incredible resilience to survive in these cramped and humid conditions, especially as they continued to suffer horrific casualties. Less than half of the 16,000 people who fought in the tunnels survived and thousands of their relatives were killed in the area. Today two sections of the tunnels are open to the public. The Ben Binh tunnels remain unlit and unreconstructed, making it difficult for larger westerners to negotiate. The Ben Duoc tunnels, however, are renovated and it is here that you can see bunkers, hospitals, kitchens, and trap doors plus the actual command room where the Tet Offensive was planned.

Source: [www.dulichso.com](http://www.dulichso.com)