

VIETNAM

Location

South-East Asia.

Area

331,689 sq km (128,066 sq miles).

Population

86.9 million (2009).

Population Density

261.9 per sq km.

Capital

Hanoi.

Population: 6.2 million (2007).

Government

Socialist republic since 1980. Gained independence from France in 1954.

Language

Vietnamese is the official language. English, French, Chinese and occasionally Russian and German are spoken.

Religion

Buddhist majority. There are also Taoist, Confucian, Hoa Hao, Cao daist and Christian (predominantly Roman Catholic) minorities.

Time

GMT + 7.

Electricity

220/110 volts AC, 50Hz; flat two-pin plugs are in use. Occasionally round two-pin plug sockets can be found, so it is worth having adaptors for both.

Head of Government

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung since 2006.

Head of State

President Nguyen Minh Triet since 2006.

Telephone

Country code: 84.

Mobile Telephone

Roaming agreements exist with some international mobile phone companies. Coverage is available throughout large parts of the country.

Internet

Internet cafes are widely available throughout the country.

Media

The media is controlled by the Communist Party. Newspapers straying beyond restrictive government reporting guidelines are shut down. Internet access is tightly controlled. Web content is subject to government approval and sites deemed unacceptable are blocked.

Post

Postal services can be slow. Airmail to Europe can take up to three weeks.

Post office hours: Daily 0700-2100.

Press

- Daily and weekly newspapers in Vietnam include *Lao Dong*, *Nhan Dan (The People)* and *Quan Doi Nhan Dan*.
- The *Vietnam Economic Times*, *Vietnam Investment Review*, *Saigon Times* and *Vietnam News* are published in English.
- *Le Courrier du Vietnam* is published in French.

Radio

- *Voice of Vietnam (VoV)* is state operated.
- *VoV 5* broadcasts programs in English, French and Russian.

Note

*Check with the embassy for the exact date. Visitors may experience difficulties during this period as shops, restaurants and public services close and prices tend to go up in the few shops that remain open.

Below are listed Public Holidays for the January 2010-December 2011 period.

1 Jan *New Year's Day.*

14 Feb

18 Feb **Tết, Lunar New Year.*

23 Apr *Gio to Hung Vuong Day.*

30 Apr *Liberation of Saigon.*

1 May *May Day.*

2 Sep *National Day.*

1 Jan *New Year's Day.*

5 Apr *Gio to Hung Vuong Day.*

30 Apr *Liberation of Saigon.*

1 May *May Day.*

2 Sep *National Day.*