



Wendy Wu Tours

SOUTHEAST ASIA

YOUR TRAVEL GUIDE & PHRASE BOOK





Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue

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YOUR SOUTHEAST ASIA HOLIDAY WITH WENDY WU TOURS

Cruising between towering limestone cliffs on Halong Bay, standing in awe before Angkor Wat, reveling in the bustle of Bangkok or wandering between crumbling temples in Burma are just some of the incredible sights and experiences that make Southeast Asia one of the world's most captivating destinations. Expect lands of contrast, unique and compelling landscapes, incredible history, heritage and culture – all quite unlike anything you might have imagined.

Your Wendy Wu Tours experience begins before you travel and we stay with you every step of the way until you get home again. Our customers are our priority, and we will do all we can to ensure your holiday is one to remember.

This **Travel Guide** provides you with practical advice and cultural information to help you prepare for your holiday. We are aware that this can seem like a lot of reading material, but we ask that you take some time to familiarise yourself with this information prior to departure and refer to the contents within throughout your travels.

Your **Tour Dossier** provides a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in each day's sightseeing for your itinerary. If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the duration of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation in our more off the beaten track destinations; they will be explained in your Tour Dossier.

MORE ABOUT YOUR HOLIDAY

One of the joys of travelling in Asia is discovering a way of life that is, at times, completely different to your own. In that respect, we ask our travellers to embark on their holiday with a sense of humour and adventure and to accept that things do not always go to plan – you will be rewarded with the most incredible experience. Southeast Asia may be developing quickly, but it is worth noting that health and safety standards here are not always at the levels that we enjoy at home. However, all of our suppliers meet local and national safety standards as a minimum.

At Wendy Wu Tours we are continually working with our suppliers to maintain and improve safety standards by seeking good practice in health and safety and we will do our best to ensure that your holiday is safe and trouble free. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense as well as refer to notices and follow the advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

Our tours are operated at a moderate pace with appropriate rest stops and are designed to be comfortable for people of all ages. A normal level of fitness and mobility is all that is required to enjoy our tours – unless stated in your [Tour Dossier](#).

JOINING YOUR TOUR

Check-in Information: Most, but not all, airlines allow online check in 24-48 hours prior to departure. To check-in online you will need your passport and airline reference number – this can be found on your e-ticket receipt. As part of the check-in process you will be able to select your seats and print your boarding pass. At the airport, go to the Bag Drop Area of your airline to check your luggage in.

Some airlines will allow you to pre-book seats further in advance but may charge you a fee which needs to be paid to the airline directly by phone or via their website. Please refer to your airlines website for further information.

If you would prefer to check-in at the airport, simply proceed to the check-in desks or self-service kiosks of your airline. We recommend you arrive at the airport 3 hours prior to departure however you choose to check in; this is due to the increased security measures now in place at all airports.

Baggage Information: We recommend that you do not exceed 20kgs of checked in baggage on your international flights as many of the domestic airlines within Southeast Asia have a luggage allowance of only 20kgs. As a guide, your main baggage should not exceed the following dimensions: 90cm x 75cm x 43cm (35.5ins x 29.5ins x 16ins), including the handle, pockets and wheels, and your cabin baggage should not exceed 55cm x 40cm x 20cm (22ins x 16in x 8ins), maximum weight 5kgs. For further information please refer to your airlines website.

Terminal Information: This is shown on your e-ticket.

On arrival in Southeast Asia, you will be met by your National Escort or Local Guide.

WHILST ON TOUR

Every location on the itinerary will be visited with entrance fees to the main areas included, although the order may change depending on weather, traffic, last minute alterations or other conditions. If you wish to visit places that are not included in the itinerary, you may do so at your own cost. Please check in advance with your National Escort. Whilst out sightseeing, western toilets may be difficult to find in more remote areas.



Wat Xieng Thong, Luang Prabang

NATIONAL ESCORTS

Should there be less than 10 people in total in your tour group, you will NOT have a National Escort; however, you will be met by a Local Guide on arrival and you will have a Local Guide in each city you visit on the tour. If you do have a National Escort they will meet you upon arrival and stay with you throughout your tour.

In Cambodia, you will have two National Escorts, one for the Siem Reap portion and one for the Phnom Penh portion.

On multi-country tours, you will have a different National Escort for each country you visit.

Our National Escort/Local Guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for passengers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

FESTIVALS

Tet Nguyen-Dan or 'Tet' is the Vietnamese New Year celebration, which lasts for three days in late January or early February. However, in reality, the celebrations go for up to ten days. During the Tet holiday, all businesses are closed and work in Vietnam slows down. Tet will be celebrated on 29th January 2017 and 17th February 2018. Please expect tourist sites to be busier than usual. New Year celebrations for Cambodia, Laos and Thailand are in mid-April every year. Businesses will also be closed during this period and tourist sites will be busier than usual.

TIPPING

Tipping is a firm and expected element in the tourism industry today and Southeast Asia is no exception. We strive to establish trust with our guides who rely on and expect tips from passengers. If the guides are keen to work with our passengers regularly, they become familiar

with our itineraries as well as the Wendy Wu Tours' philosophy and expectations we have of their work.

Many passengers are often uncertain of how much to tip, so we have established a tipping system whereby every passenger gives a set amount (in US Dollars) to the National Escort who will distribute the amount appropriately throughout your trip. On multi-country trips, this amount will be paid in stages on arrival in each country. All group tour passengers are expected to contribute to the tipping kitty. (If there is no National Escort, please give the money directly to your Local Guides – the tipping amounts for each city will be shown in your final itinerary).

The amount for the kitty is calculated for each tour depending on the length, group size and services used during the trip. Your final documents and invoice will specify the exact tipping amount for your group. The tipping kitty will cover local guides and drivers in each city/province, local and/or site guides and your National Escort. Porterage to your room is not included.

For independent passengers, or group passengers with pre/post tour arrangements, you should allow USD7-10 per person per day.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

A number of optional extra programmes/activities may be offered by your National Escort/Local Guide whilst on tour, time permitting. These can range from US\$20-US\$50 per person.

Please feel free to ask your National Escort/Local Guide about any optional touring they may be planning over the next few days and the approximate cost so you can ensure you have the appropriate funds. All the optional extras must be paid for in local currency. Our philosophy is that these optional extras are only offered when there is sufficient time available, and they should never compromise the standard sightseeing. It is for this reason that it is difficult to preplan the optional extras because they depend on the time available and local conditions.

If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, please make arrangements with your guides to enjoy some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

In addition, you will also need to consider additional discretionary tipping for any Local Guide/vendor/driver who is involved in such activities. Please be aware also, that it is likely that the expected tipping in these situations is a fee to undertake the optional activity plus a tip for the driver/vendor.

EATING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The cost of all meals excluding beverages is included in most group tour costs. If you are travelling on a Discovery Tour or an

Exclusive Collection tour, included meals will be stated on your final itinerary. Breakfast is a combination of local and western food, usually served buffet style at the hotel you are staying in. Lunches and dinners consist of traditional cuisine and are served at reputable local restaurants. As is traditional in this region, lunch and dinner consists of small dishes of local cuisine which are placed on the table for everyone to share – this way you can experience a variety of dishes at every meal. We aim to cater to the tastes of the majority of people and so the food is not too spicy or unusual in taste.

Drinks will be at each tour members' own expense and paid for at the end of each meal. Beer is widely available and cheap. Wine is often very expensive as it is imported and so is not widely available except at upmarket restaurants. Bottled drinking water, soft drinks and fruit juices are also widely available – remember that you should only have ice or fruit juices from a trusted restaurant, where they will use boiled or bottled water.

Due to the French colonial influence in some Southeast Asian countries, black tea (commonly referred to as 'lip-ton' by the locals), coffee and baguettes are available in most places. The local way is to have sweet condensed milk with tea and coffee. Fresh dairy milk is not usually served but many restaurants will provide this if requested. 'Cafe Sua-da' (or iced coffee with milk) is also a favourite choice amongst the locals. It is possible to buy snacks in supermarkets within major towns or cities. Alternatively, you may also like to bring comforts like cereal, biscuits, muesli bars and tea/coffee from home.

Any food/diet requests MUST be specified at the time of booking and you should mention it again to the National Escort/Local Guides when you meet them – they will do their utmost to cater for any special requests, such as vegetarian meals or food to be avoided in case of allergies.

People on restricted diets should expect complications in Southeast Asia. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Lao and Thai cuisine relies heavily on fish sauce or shrimp paste and your National Escort/Local Guides will need to instruct each restaurant to omit such ingredients if required. Vegetarians should remember that although vegetarian dishes are available, they may be offered meat by restaurant staff who do not understand the concept. In these cases, patience and understanding will go a long way.

Please be aware that on some days where a lot of sights are covered, dinner times may be early (around 5.30pm) and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing. Whilst travelling away from major cities, it is highly recommended that passengers with food intolerances take additional food items, as not all dietary requests will be met due to the limited foods available.

If you have booked a tour that does not include all meals, your local guides will be able to recommend a variety of restaurants to meet your taste and budget.

TRANSPORT

We use a variety of transportation to operate your itinerary at the best pace and to give you an authentic travel experience so you are not always 'removed' from the locals. Travel through Southeast Asia requires patience as schedule changes are common and the road conditions are poor in some rural areas.

Domestic Flights

The flight schedule of domestic airlines in this region changes frequently, hence all domestic flights that appear in your itinerary are subject to change. Please ensure that all valuables and any medications you may need for the rest of the day are taken on board with you. The luggage limit is 20kg per passenger with 5kg hand baggage, and all seats are economy class. Airlines currently do not allow liquids (alcohol, spirits, wine, water, perfume etc) or sharp objects to be carried on-board the aircraft and these will be confiscated. Wendy Wu Tours issues all internal domestic flight tickets in Southeast Asia and they will be handled by your National Escort / Local Guide and given to each passenger just prior to their flight.

Coaches

Our coaches are comfortable, air-conditioned vehicles, although they may be less spacious than coaches in the UK. Please note – in many parts of the world, seatbelts are not compulsory by law and local people largely choose not to wear them. Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee that vehicles will be fitted with operable seatbelts. Where available we recommend seat belts should be worn at all times while travelling.



Overnight Trains

Overnight train travel in Vietnam will be in first class 'soft sleeper' trains, which are the best available in Southeast Asia. Each compartment is shared by four people and is air-conditioned, with lockable doors and four beds which are fixed in place. There is room for passengers to sit on the lower berths. A pillow, clean sheets and a quilt are provided. In Thailand, second class sleeper carriages are used, where the whole car is shared. There are privacy curtains for each berth.

Your National Escort/Local Guides will try to organise that the whole group sleep in the same carriage but in busy periods of travel, this may not be possible. Each group will receive tickets with sequential berth numbers; these may be sharing with people from another tour group/company, or with some of the locals. We regret that it is not possible to arrange private train cabins. There is usually a western style toilet at one end and a squat toilet at the other end of the carriage. Hot drinking water is available from a boiler which is located at the end of the carriage.

Pack for the train: We recommend you bring a small overnight bag to carry whatever you need until the following morning as you will not have access to your main luggage which will be stored on a separate carriage of the train. Consider including a face towel, all toiletries, medication you require until midday next day, a tracksuit or similar outfit to sleep in and toilet paper, as the train supply tends to run out. There is no dining car, so please carry snacks with you.

Please note: The rail system abides by the same regulations as the airlines with regards to liquids in your 'carry on' luggage. They do not allow cigarette lighters, bottles of liquid, alcohol, spirits/wine, juice, water, perfume etc (regardless if they have been opened), or sharp objects to be carried with you on the train. Items of this nature will be confiscated if you attempt to carry them on board, so please leave them in your main luggage.

Keeping valuables safe on the train: Carry all valuables with you at all times. A passenger should remain in the compartment at all times to watch all belongings. Consider locking your main luggage.

Boats

Your tour could include taking a ride in a wooden boat on the Mekong, in modern speedboats between Phnom Penh and Chau Doc or on a traditionally-designed junk boat on Halong Bay. To access the boat, you may need to cross between moving pontoons or other boats that have be moored together (particularly at Halong Bay and Nha Trang), climb steps and disembark onto makeshift docks – sometimes without assistance or handrails; or onto muddy riverbanks.

Bicycles / Motorbikes / Jeeps

If at any time you choose to ride on a bicycle, motorbike, jeep or tuk-tuk, the responsibility is your own. We strongly advise against using them as health and safety standards will not be the same as in the UK and it is very unlikely that your travel insurance will cover this form of activity. Please also be aware that safety helmets may not be available for hire.

ROAD CONDITIONS & TRAFFIC

Although road conditions are improving, there are still some rough, unsealed roads covering vast areas of rural and mountainous regions across Southeast Asia which can result in existing road surfaces being affected by heavy or monsoonal rains.

The number of vehicles in Southeast Asia is rapidly increasing. Please keep in mind that major events or holidays and new construction projects create traffic that can interfere with your tour and meal times. Your National Escort/Local Guides will do their utmost to avoid possible delays, changes or in rare cases, cancellations to sections of your itinerary

ACCOMMODATION

Hotels

Group tour hotels are mainly 3½ – 4 star, located conveniently in the city, near markets or shops. Double beds are not common; please note that we cannot guarantee their availability.

Hotel rooms will usually have private western bathroom facilities, television, air-conditioning and a telephone (unless stated otherwise). Some hotels may have hot water restrictions, operating for only a few hours at a time, usually in the mornings/evenings. It is not customary for hotels in Southeast Asia to have in-room fridges, tea/coffee making facilities and a safe deposit box. Most hotel rooms do not have irons or boards, but most will offer a laundry service that can wash your clothes (typically in 24hrs).

Most hotels throughout Southeast Asia are still required to register all guests with the local police. Reception staff will collect your passports each time you check-in and the hotel will keep them safely for a few hours or overnight. Please keep this in mind if you need to exchange money or get a credit advance at the bank.

In Southeast Asia, check-out time is usually 12 midday and check-in time is usually 2pm. Please keep this in mind on the days when you are travelling between cities as it may result in a delay of access to your room or a change of itinerary. Hotels in this region cannot guarantee late check-out. At many hotels, some reception staff may speak very little English. If you require help, please contact your tour guide.

Hotel Ratings

Worldwide star ratings identify the standard of quality for hotels but no international classification system currently exists. Typically, a three-star Southeast Asian rated hotel cannot be compared to a three-star UK rated hotel. Differences do exist in the quality of accommodation which plays an integral part in defining which hotel category the specific accommodation fits into. Please be advised that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our operators so that high standards of quality and safety are maintained.

Please be aware that hotels in Laos and in regional areas of Vietnam and Cambodia may not always have the same quality standards and infrastructure that you will find in the bigger, more developed areas. In these regions, Wendy Wu Tours endeavors to provide the best quality available within the 3½ – 4 star range.

Halong Bay Junk Boats

Accommodation is in a twin berth cabin with private western facilities. Single cabins are available at a supplement on request.

Mekong Delta Homestay – Vietnam

Accommodation is at the home of a local farmer, which has a river view. Your bedding is an individual soft camp bed with a mosquito net in a dormitory of up to ten people. There are showers and western toilets in an outside block; similar to caravan parks. Usually there is only cold water for showers but most people do not mind this due to the hot weather all year-round in the Mekong.

Mae Kampong Homestay – Thailand

On the Thailand Highlights tour there will be an overnight stay in Mae Kampong with a local family, in their simple house located in the hills. The group will be split into groups of 4-8 people per house. The houses are all located within walking distance of each other, however as the area is quite hilly, a van is available for transfer in between. Generally there will be separate rooms; however single passengers may need to share a room for the night, depending on the size of the house. Your bedding is an individual, thin mattress on the floor, with a blanket or sheet and pillow. However, it is recommended you bring an additional sheet from home, as in this area it can get quite cold at night. Mosquito nets will be provided. There is a bathroom with a hot shower and western toilet in each house.

ELECTRICITY

There is an electricity supply of 220 volts throughout Southeast Asia, in the cities and most towns. 240-volt appliances will work safely with this supply. However, there is no universal power point; they vary not just from one country to the next but from one hotel to another. You can buy adaptors (conversion plugs) from hardware, department and duty free stores.

In Vietnam – vertical two-pin (US) plug or round two-pin (Europe) plug.

Cambodia – round two-pin (Europe) plug or flat three-pin (UK) plug.

In Laos – vertical two-pin (US) plug.

In Burma – round two-pin (Europe) plug or flat three-pin (UK) plug.

In Thailand – vertical two-pin (US) plug or round two-pin (Europe) plug or round three-pin Old British plug.

US Plug



Europe Plug



Old British Plug



In some areas there is a lesser electricity supply of 110 volts, which is available only a few hours each day from the town's supply or from a diesel generator. Whenever there is limited electricity supply this will also mean limited hot water supply. Remote and village areas also experience power surges or outages, both of which can make re-charging electrical appliances very difficult. We advise you to bring a supply of batteries (bought in the UK) with you to allow for days when you cannot recharge.

Burma

Although Burma uses 220V, this can occasionally increase to 300V and then drop to 100V. Short power cuts are not uncommon even in the capital Rangoon. From March through to May, the electric power is supplied in a rotating system from quarter to quarter in and around Rangoon. Most of the popular tourist destinations still have rationing. However, most major hotels have their own generator.

LUGGAGE

All passengers are limited to two (2) items of luggage each:

- ✓ One (1) suitcase or backpack, with a maximum weight of 20kg. Consider a lock on this main luggage.
- ✓ One (1) piece of hand luggage, with a maximum weight of 5kg.

It is advisable that your hand luggage consist of a ‘daypack’ – a small bag which you can access during the day and carry items like your camera, bottled water, toilet paper, hat etc. We have included suggested packing lists and climate charts at the back of this travel guide.

MONEY

Due to global currency fluctuations, please check up to date exchange rates before you travel. Don't forget to check with your bank before leaving the UK about fees that can be incurred using your credit and debit cards abroad.

Vietnam

The local currency is the đồng and is written as “đ” or “VNĐ” (Viet Nam Đồng). It is available in notes of 200đ up to 500,000đ although the lesser notes are rarely seen and larger value notes are being converted to plastic. Shop keepers will sometimes quote a price in USD, but it may be better to ask for price in VNĐ. We recommend that you take mainly USD cash which can be exchanged at hotels and banks, but you will need to check with your Local Guide before travelling to smaller towns. US Dollars should be from the new series from the year 2003 onwards. Old series notes can be more difficult to exchange. ANZ and Vietcom Bank have ATMs in major towns including Hanoi, Saigon, Hue, Hoi An, Danang, Nha Trang,

Can Tho and Vung Tau. These accept Visa and MasterCard. All ATMs in Vietnam dispense VNĐ notes only.

Cambodia

The local currency is the riel, and is written as “r” – however the economy runs on USD. Usually you will be given riel as change for amounts under US\$1. It is worth noting that locals often do not accept notes over \$20. We recommend you take cash in US dollars with you as there are only a few locations in Cambodia (i.e. hotels) where you can exchange Sterling. There are ATMs in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and at each of their international airports (next to the visa issuing stations). ATMs in Cambodia dispense USD notes.

Laos

The local currency is the kip, however the economy runs on USD and Thai baht. It is available in notes of 1,000kip up to 20,000kip. Usually you will be given kip as change for amounts under US\$1. It is worth noting that locals often do not accept notes over \$20. We recommend you bring US dollars cash which can be exchanged at major (Thai) banks in Vientiane, or at upmarket hotels in Vientiane and Luang Prabang into kip if you wish.

There are only a small handful of ATMs in Laos, mainly in Luang Prabang. Only a few upmarket hotels and tourist shops in Vientiane

and Luang Prabang accept American Express, Visa and MasterCard (but will charge high commission).

Thailand

The Thai unit of currency is the baht, where 1 baht is divided into 100 satang. Notes are in denominations of 1,000 (brown), 500 (purple), 100 (red), 50 (blue), 20 (green) and 10 (brown) baht. Most major currencies can be changed easily at hotels, tourist shops, all provincial banks, shopping centres and money changers. Rates of exchange at banks or authorised money changers are better than those at hotels and department stores. Travellers leaving Thailand may take out no more than 50,000 baht per person in Thai currency. Most outlets take all major credit cards and ATM machines are readily available. Not all ATM machines take all kinds of cards; many will not take Visa or MasterCard, or will take one but not the other.

Burma

The official Burma currency is Kyat (pronounced ‘Chat’) and comes in the following denominations: Kyat 1000, Kyat 500, Kyat 200, Kyat 100, Kyat 50, Kyat 20, Kyat 15, Kyat 10, Kyat 5, Kyat 1. We recommend bringing US dollars with you to exchange into kyat, but please be aware, even the tiniest tear will mean the note is rejected – make sure all your dollars are crisp and new. Also, the higher denomination your dollar notes are, the better exchange rate you'll get.

The money exchange at the airport upon arrival does not have the best exchange rate – there are several authorised money changers in Burma who will give you better rates. Your National Escort can advise the best place to exchange your money. Please be sure to keep your receipts as these may be requested by Burmese Customs upon your departure. Most hotels in Burma accept credit cards. Change your kyat back to dollars before leaving Burma, as you can't change it outside its borders.

MORE ABOUT MONEY & TRAVELLING

Spending Money: Southeast Asia is not an expensive region to travel in, so on an average two-week tour, we would recommend approx. £300-400 per person spending money. This will need to cover your drinks, snacks and souvenirs and any additional services you might like to use, e.g. laundry. Outside of major cities, local banks do not have ATMs and are not licensed to exchange foreign currency. **Please ensure that you organise your spending money before you leave a major town and have enough cash to cover you during this time.**

Keep some of your exchange receipts: You can convert any unused notes into USD at the international airport exchange desks when you depart. You will need to present your passport and potentially

some receipts of the money exchanged/withdrawn in Southeast Asia. Some banks in the UK may be able to convert your money back into Sterling, however please check before departing the UK.

Counterfeit Cash: This is a problem in Southeast Asia so shop owners and clerks at banks or exchange desks are very cautious and can refuse to accept notes in bad condition. When purchasing cash in the UK or when exchanging them during your holiday – it is a good idea to stand at the desk to count and check the condition of each note. Do not accept any notes which are torn, very faded, a different shade, have ink stamps or any writing on them. If you accept the notes and sign the exchange receipt, then notice a problem, you will not be able to exchange them.

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend taking any travellers cheques to Southeast Asia.

Credit/Debit Card

Taking one credit/debit card is recommended in case of emergency and may be used for large purchases in most hotels, department stores and souvenir stores. The most widely accepted credit cards include Visa, MasterCard and American Express. However, please do not rely on a credit/debit card as your only source of spending money and keep a photocopy of your card(s).

We always recommend that you have access to more than one source of money – bringing a combination of cash and a credit/ debit card will give the most security and flexibility while travelling.

SHOPPING

Shopping can be a fun and entertaining component to any travel adventure, and Southeast Asia has a vast array of shopping opportunities for those who love to seek out a bargain. From hand carved elephants to local silk products or bamboo woven conical hats – the variety and choice can seem endless. We have included visits to establishments that not only provide an opportunity to purchase a locally produced, great-value souvenir; but you'll witness first-hand how these local products are made, their history and how they support the local economy. We are aware that people like to take home souvenirs, so we endeavour to ensure the shops you visit have a reputation for quality, honesty and authenticity. Most establishments will also feature a place where you can buy refreshments and take a break. Wendy Wu Tours, our staff, National Escorts and Local Guides are not qualified nor permitted to guarantee the quality or value of any goods purchased during your holiday. All passengers who make purchases during their holiday must accept responsibility for their decision regarding the

item's value, authenticity, as well as the risk and process of credit card purchase and/or shipping.

It is recommended that you double check any items purchased before leaving the store (the item and any credit card receipts) and if you are having a large item shipped, make sure you take a photo of your purchase and the contact details of the store.

We cannot assist in returning or refunding goods in any circumstances, including purchases made at shops or factories which you may visit as part of your tour with us.

Tailors in Hoi An

There are hundreds of tailors in Hoi An, all competing for your business, but not all of the same quality. Check their work and the quality of their material, hemlines, sewing, etc and always compare their work and price with other tailors. Be specific about everything you want (e.g. buttons, pocket designs) and that your tailor understands these requests.

HAGGLING OR BARGAINING

In local shops, markets and street stalls all over Southeast Asia, haggling is the accepted way to agree on a selling price. It can be a great way to save money, as well as a wonderful way to interact with some local people you may not otherwise meet. Generally, if a shop has marked prices, there is no option to haggle.

CUSTOMS & DUTY FREE

Vietnam

You can bring in up to 2L of alcohol, 200 cigarettes/ tobacco and unlimited amounts of foreign currency (declare this on customs form). Vietnam's officials remain sensitive to what they call 'culturally damaging material' that portrays the nation or government negatively; they forbid things like films or books which are officially banned (including some guide books!) and pornography.

Cambodia

Tourists can enter with 'a reasonable amount' of duty free items. Please note that cigarettes/tobacco and alcohol are cheaper for sale within Cambodia than at duty free. Exporting any Angkor period sculpture is illegal and these items will be confiscated. If you buy a souvenir that could be mistaken for a genuine antique, get an official receipt from the shop.

Laos

You can bring in up to 1L of alcohol, 500 cigarettes, 1 bottle perfume/cologne and unlimited amounts of Lao and foreign currency (declare this on the customs form). Exporting antiques such as old Buddha images or bronze drums are illegal and these items will be confiscated. If you buy a souvenir that could

be mistaken for a genuine antique, get an official receipt from the shop.

Thailand

Up to 200 cigarettes and 1L of wine/spirits can be brought into the country. If you purchase any antiques or objects of art, you must obtain an export licence through the Department of Fine Arts. Visitors entering Thailand are entitled to refunds of the 7% value-added tax (VAT) paid on goods purchased at shops and department stores displaying “VAT Refund for Tourists” signs.

Burma

You can bring in up to 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250g tobacco; 1 litre of alcohol; 0.5 litres of perfume or eau de cologne. Prohibited and restricted items include gambling equipment, antiques, archaeological items and pornography. Jewellery, electrical goods and cameras must be declared; failure to do so may result in visitors being refused permission to export it on departure.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Phone Calls

To call Wendy Wu Tours it is 00 44 800 630 0888. The emergency number (out of office hours) is given below.

From	International Access Code Prefix	Wendy Wu Tours Emergency Number
Vietnam, Laos, Burma	00 44	00 44 7984 041 625
Cambodia, Thailand	001 44	001 44 7984 041 625

(remember to omit '0' from the UK local area code)

International and national phone calls can be made from hotel rooms, or from central post offices for a charge. Phone cards bought in the UK or in Southeast Asia can be used in most public pay phones, but if you plan to use these to call from your room – always check the costs and procedure with hotel reception beforehand. If the hotel does enforce a call charge, you will be unable to refute it after making your call.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phone coverage is available throughout Southeast Asia, though you may find the signal unreliable in more rural and mountainous areas. We recommend that you contact your mobile supplier if you intend to use international roaming during your holiday and ensure you investigate all associated costs before you leave the UK.

Postage

We recommend that you use the Post Offices, rather than your hotel to post items. All packages need to be inspected (also forms completed and fees paid) before sending – posting DVD's, CD ROMs, etc is not allowed. From capital cities or major towns, airmail letters and postcards take 10-20 working days to arrive and from smaller towns, they will take over a month. We advise you to use a courier service (e.g. E.M.S from Post Offices) to send anything valuable or important. In Burma, the postal service is considered unreliable and letters sometimes take months to arrive at their destination.

Internet & Email

All of your hotels will have Wi-Fi available, though do bear in mind that some may charge for its use, or that it might only be available in certain areas of the hotel, eg the lobby. For those who do not have or wish to take a Wi-Fi-enabled device on holiday, most hotels have a business centre or internet-enabled computer that you will be able to use for email.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos are 7 hours ahead of the UK during the winter and 6 hours ahead of the UK during the summer.

Thailand is 7 hours ahead of UK time year-round.

Burma is 6.5 hours ahead of UK time year-round.

INSURANCE

It is a condition of booking a holiday with us that all travellers take out comprehensive travel insurance. Please ensure you have the appropriate cover for your holiday as overseas medical costs are expensive. Please inform our office of your relevant policy number and keep details of the policy in your travel documents including policy number, 24 hour emergency number and next of kin details.

If you are taking out travel insurance with your credit card company, you need to investigate the policy's inclusions and conditions fully. You should receive a policy number, an international access phone number to contact them in an emergency and a copy of full conditions.

All travel insurance providers require you to contact them ASAP in the unlikely event that you need medical treatment, hospitalisation or change travel plans, to inform them of your situation. They will then decide the best course of action in regards to further treatment and/or repatriation and make appropriate booking arrangements. Our staff in Southeast Asia will be able to assist you in contacting your travel insurance company.

It is essential you inform your insurance company of all pre-existing medical conditions.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Although Southeast Asia is considered safe for travellers, please keep in mind that cash or wallets in pockets, obvious jewellery, swinging handbags etc may attract unwanted attention. Keep your belongings with you at all times and beware of pickpockets in market areas and at train stations. Do not leave any valuables unattended in your hotel room or on the coach. Lock away cash you do not need during the day/evening, credit cards, airline tickets, passports, jewellery etc either in your room's safe or at reception; as not all hotels will have an in-room safe deposit box. Likewise whilst travelling each day, do not leave any valuables unattended on the bus.

It is your own responsibility to ensure that your money and valuables are safe at all times.

Wearing a money belt under your clothing is strongly recommended. We advise you not to bring valuable jewellery etc with you to Southeast Asia and keep a photocopy of your passport and debit/credit card(s).

LANDMINES

Some remote areas of Cambodia and Northern Laos have not been cleared of Unexploded Ordinance (U.X.O.). All areas within our group itineraries are cleared and considered very safe. If you are travelling independently through remote areas, keep to marked paths and roads regularly used by the locals. Do not pick up metal objects.



TRAVEL HEALTH

A health certificate is not required for entry into Southeast Asia.

Visit a doctor before travelling.

We strongly recommend that you see a doctor for the latest health advice at least six weeks before your holiday to allow time for any necessary vaccinations etc. Remember to take your itinerary with you to the appointment.

	Recommended
Vietnam	Hepatitis A, Typhoid & Tetanus. It may be advisable to take malaria tablets
Cambodia	Hepatitis A, Typhoid & Tetanus. It is advisable to take malaria tablets
Laos	Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Diphtheria & Tetanus. It is advisable to take malaria tablets
Thailand	Hepatitis A, Tetanus. It may be advisable to take malaria tablets
Burma	Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Diphtheria & Tetanus. It is advisable to take malaria tablets

This information is given as a guide only and no responsibility can be taken for any errors or omissions. Always seek your doctor's advice.

Source: www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Drinking Water

We strongly recommend you do not drink the tap water, and avoid ice in your drinks. There will usually be a kettle or flasks of boiled water in your hotel room and on board trains. Boiled water is suitable for drinking and cleaning teeth. Safe, bottled drinking water is readily available for sale everywhere – from small shops, supermarkets, restaurants and hotels. It is not customary for hotels to provide complimentary bottled drinking water. Always ensure that the seal is unbroken.

Toilets

Toilet facilities can be basic throughout Asia. Whilst western-style toilets are available in hotels and at tourist sites, 'squat' toilets are common in public places and toilet paper is rarely supplied. We suggest that you carry toilet paper in your day backpack as well as not turn down the opportunity to use a 'nice' toilet when you see one!

TRAVEL ADVICE

We strongly recommend that you check www.fco.gov.uk for up to date travel information and advice from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office for Southeast Asia before departure.

PERSONAL MEDICAL KIT

Take all pharmaceutical products that you may require on your tour; do not rely on being able to purchase these during your holiday. You will see pharmacies all over Southeast Asia, but they stock local traditional medicine and many unregulated brands of western medicine. Consider taking a 'personal medical kit' containing any medication or medical equipment you may need during your time in Southeast Asia:

- ✓ All prescribed medication
(with a cover note from your doctor)
- ✓ Headache tablets
- ✓ Anti-diarrhoea tablets
- ✓ Cold and flu tablets
- ✓ Travel sickness tablets
- ✓ Lozenges
- ✓ Insect repellent and sunscreen
- ✓ Antibacterial hand wipes and/or hand wash
- ✓ Spare pair of glasses/contact lenses

If you need to purchase any pharmaceuticals or medical equipment while in Southeast Asia – you may ask your National Escort, Local Guide or hotel staff to help you locate a pharmacy, identify medication or to translate from the local language to English. If you need medical attention they will be able to arrange a call from a doctor, usually one who speaks English. However, the decision to purchase or take any non-prescribed (either western or traditional local medicine) is entirely your own.

The staff at Wendy Wu Tours (in the UK and in Southeast Asia) are not medically qualified. Therefore they are neither able, nor allowed to give any medical advice, recommendations or administer medications.

TRAVEL WITH CONSIDERATION

Wendy Wu Tours takes Responsible Tourism seriously. We are aware that tourism can impact the natural, economic and social environment and are committed to addressing these wherever possible without compromising our customers' experience.

Gifts & Begging

Wendy Wu Tours does not condone the practice of giving gifts such as sweets, coins and souvenirs to local people while in Southeast

Asia. Instead, we encourage our customers to donate to one of the charities listed in the Responsible Tourism section at the back of our brochures.

Taking Photos

"Tourists stick their cameras in our faces and promise they'll send photos back, but they never do." We encourage you to think about how you would like to be treated by camera-wielding tourists – always check that it is ok before taking a photograph of a local person. Simply indicate to your camera to ask and never take the photograph if someone gestures or says that they do not want you to.

Observe Local Rules

The laws, regulations and behaviour in Southeast Asia are affected by their different culture. For example:

- ✓ Avoid touching anyone on the head (or their hair)
- ✓ Try to avoid pointing the soles of your feet towards people/religious objects
- ✓ Always leave your shoes outside a temple, pagoda or anyone's home
- ✓ Cameras are not allowed in some sightseeing spots, particularly temples and pagodas
- ✓ Do not raise your voice as this can cause offense
- ✓ It is considered very rude to indicate for someone's attention by gesturing with your palm upwards. Instead, extend hand with palm downwards and wave by moving your wrist
- ✓ Locals don't normally shake hands when they greet one another, but instead press the palms together in a prayer-like gesture called a Wai

In Buddhist countries, local people retain a more traditional culture. Their daily routine, religious beliefs and acceptable behaviour are all determined by Buddhism. As a guide:

- ✓ Try to keep your head lower than monks and Buddha images
- ✓ Women should never touch a monk, or their robes

Dress Appropriately

The locals in this region dress conservatively. According to their culture only very poor labourers would wear clothes which reveal their shoulders and legs, or go without a shirt. Short shorts or skirts can be offensive – no matter how hot the weather. For men, full length cotton trousers or shorts that cover the knees are acceptable. For women, skirts or trousers that reach below the knee are ideal, worn with tops that cover the shoulders.

In temples and pagodas, at royal palaces and at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Hanoi, female travellers should wear modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders. A ‘modesty shawl’ – either a large shawl or sarong – can be useful to carry in your daypack while sightseeing. Covered shoes must be worn at the Angkor complex.

READING LIST

- First They Killed My Father, Loung Ung (Cambodia)
- Home is Where the Heart Is, Geraldine Cox (Cambodia)
- The Quiet American, Graeme Greene (Vietnam)
- Catfish and Mandala, Andrew X Pham (Vietnam)
- The Beach, Alex Garland (Thailand)
- Four Reigns, Kukrit Pramoj (Thailand)
- Burmese Days, George Orwell (Burma)
- The Glass Palace, Amitav Ghosh (Burma)
- One Foot in Laos, Dervla Murphy (Laos)
- Another Quiet American: Stories of Life in Laos, Brett Dakin (Laos)

CUSTOMER HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

Southeast Asia in general is a safe place to travel – this is especially true for you, travelling in a group with an experienced National Escort and/or local guides. As with all things in life, using your common sense is the key. Be aware of your belongings at all time, and do not display vast amounts of cash, passport, cameras and jewellery or leave them lying around. We strongly advise not to walk around on your own at night. This also applies to taking care of yourself – if you’re not sure that the ice in your drink isn’t tap water, remove it, if you don’t think that the food is cooked properly, don’t eat it – all very simple rules to follow. At Wendy Wu Tours, we want you to have the best holiday you possibly can, and whilst we here to help and assist you every step of the way, there are some things that only you can control.

CLIMATE

We recommend you check weather conditions before you depart. The region generally has a tropical climate with monsoon rains for part of the year. However, the word ‘monsoon’ should not deter you – travelling during the monsoon can be the most rewarding, with lower tourist numbers and lush growth of the landscape. Usually the monsoon involves a downpour late in the day, which is heavy but short lived. In Cambodia, you could almost set your watch by the weather as it tends to rain at the same time every afternoon! In other areas, it varies. Freak weather conditions could result in delays, changes or in rare cases, cancellations to sections of your itinerary.

Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos

The countries of Indochina have a subtropical climate; the months of December, January and February are equivalent to their winter with it being the coolest time of the year. In southern and central Vietnam, Cambodia and southern Laos, the days can still be warm but the evenings cooler and dryer. The mountain areas of northern Laos, and all of northern Vietnam can get quite cold and experience light rains at this time of year. You will need a pullover or jacket in the mountainous areas of Laos (such as Luang Prabang, Phonsavan, Saravane and Houeixay) and northern Vietnam.

The months of April, May, September, and October enjoy warm temperatures, with April and May being their equivalent to spring; September and October being autumn. These four months enjoy almost identical weather conditions, with usually mild and warm weather. However, it can get extremely hot and humid in Cambodia during April, just before the relief of the wet season rains come.

March and November also enjoy warm temperatures, with March being early spring and November being late autumn. These two months enjoy almost identical weather conditions – mild and less humid weather. However in November, Central Vietnam experiences occasional storms and Laos has cooler temperatures and you will need a pullover or jacket in mountainous areas. During June, July and August it is the wet season for most parts of this region; their equivalent to summer, experiencing warm temperatures and humidity which is relieved by the monsoonal rains that take place most afternoons.

Thailand

Thailand’s climate is tropical and humid for the majority of the country during most of the year. The southern region of Thailand really has only two seasons – the wet and the dry. These seasons do not run at the same time on both the east and west side of the peninsular. On the west coast the southwest monsoon brings rain and often heavy storms from April through to October, whilst on the east coast the most rain falls between September and December. In northern Thailand the seasons are clearly defined. Between November and May the weather is mostly dry. However November to February is cooler, whereas March to May has higher temperatures. May to November is dominated by the southwest monsoon, during which time rainfall in the north is at its heaviest. During the winter months, the temperatures in the far north can drop significantly during the evenings, making it very cold.

Burma

Since it is in the tropical region, Burma is generally hot and humid though cooler in more mountainous areas. The location and topography of the country generate the “dry and wet monsoon climate” pattern; with drier weather from February to May and

November to January, with wet weather between mid-May and October. Daily extremes of temperature are rare. The best months to travel are October through January when the days are not so hot.

SUGGESTED PACKING LISTS

A range of clothing, some suitable for sun exposure and mild temperatures, as well as water/ windproof clothing for the cooler, wetter weather is recommended. Loose fitting, lightweight cotton materials are the most comfortable for humid weather. The dress code throughout the tour is casual however, it is important that all passengers dress conservatively to fit with local customs.

Example packing list:

- ✓ Your travel documents and passport – including a photocopy of your passport in case it is lost or stolen while you are abroad. Keep one photocopy at home and take another photocopy on your trip with you.
- ✓ Main luggage & luggage padlocks.
- ✓ 'Day bag' – a smaller bag to carry with you during the day, both while driving and sightseeing. E.g. drinking water, hat, sunscreen, toilet paper, insect repellent, camera and spare batteries, jacket.
- ✓ Money belt to carry passport, cash, credit cards, airline tickets, etc.
- ✓ Lightweight trousers or shorts/skirts (for women) – please remember to respect local customs (knee length is recommended).
- ✓ Shirts or long-sleeved tops of light cotton material.
- ✓ Light jumpers – great for layering.
- ✓ Walking shoes and socks, or sandals – it is important to have sturdy and comfortable shoes for sightseeing every day.
- ✓ Swimming costume.
- ✓ Sun protection – hat, sunscreen and lip balm.
- ✓ Personal medical kit including insect repellent.
- ✓ Antibacterial wipes or gel to clean hands before eating.
- ✓ Tracksuit/similar outfit of soft material is recommended for the overnight train journeys.
- ✓ A water/windproof jacket.
- ✓ Umbrella/raincoat/poncho – particularly if you are travelling during the rainy season June – October.
- ✓ A 'modesty shawl' or sarong to wear in conservative areas or temples (for women).
- ✓ Torch, conversion plug and spare batteries – batteries available to buy in Southeast Asia tend to be unreliable.

- ✓ Spare glasses – it is difficult to get any prescription lenses repaired or replaced in Southeast Asia.
- ✓ Small bath towel is useful for overnight train journeys.
- ✓ Toilet paper – not all sightseeing public toilets will provide this.
- ✓ Snacks – tea bags/coffee, milk powder or sachets, instant soups or noodles, or anything else you can't live without!
- ✓ Camera and spare film/memory card – film available in Southeast Asia tends to be bad quality or sun damaged.
- ✓ Sleeping sheet & small bath towel – handy for home stays (although linen is provided).
- ✓ Toiletries (soap, shampoo, lotion) – for personal use during homestays.

In addition, if your tour visits the mountainous region of northern Laos, or northern Vietnam:

- ✓ Light jumpers or thermals
- ✓ A warm water/windproof jacket
- ✓ Thick and warm socks, gloves, scarf and a hat



CLIMATE CHARTS:

Indochina:

Average Temperatures	January		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	21/ 31	MED	13
HANOI	13/ 20	MED	18
SAPA	5/ 11	MED	40
HOI AN	18/ 24	HIGH	96
HUE	17/ 23	HIGH	180
PHNOM PENH	21/ 31	HIGH	7
SIEM REAP	19/ 31	MED	2
VIENTIANE	14/ 28	MED	5
LUANG PRABANG	13/ 28	MED	15

Average Temperatures	February		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	22/ 32	MED	4
HANOI	14/ 21	HIGH	28
SAPA	6/ 12	MED	71
HOI AN	19/ 26	HIGH	33
HUE	18/ 24	HIGH	93
PHNOM PENH	22/ 32	HIGH	10
SIEM REAP	21/ 32	MED	10
VIENTIANE	17/ 30	HIGH	15
LUANG PRABANG	14/ 32	HIGH	18

Average Temperatures	March		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	24/ 33	MED	10
HANOI	17/ 23	MED	38
SAPA	11/ 18	MED	119
HOI AN	21/ 28	MED	22
HUE	20/ 27	HIGH	66
PHNOM PENH	23/ 34	HIGH	40
SIEM REAP	23/ 33	MED	20
VIENTIANE	19/ 33	HIGH	38
LUANG PRABANG	17/ 34	HIGH	31

Average Temperatures	April		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	25/ 34	MED	50
HANOI	20/ 32	HIGH	81
SAPA	13/ 21	MED	178
HOI AN	23/ 31	MED	26
HUE	22/ 30	MED	60
PHNOM PENH	24/ 35	HIGH	77
SIEM REAP	24/ 34	MED	60
VIENTIANE	23/ 34	HIGH	99
LUANG PRABANG	21/ 36	HIGH	109

Average Temperatures	May		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	25/ 34	HIGH	218
HANOI	23/ 32	HIGH	196
SAPA	16/ 22	HIGH	370
HOI AN	24/ 33	HIGH	62
HUE	23/ 33	HIGH	83
PHNOM PENH	24/ 34	HIGH	134
SIEM REAP	24/ 33	HIGH	140
VIENTIANE	23/ 32	HIGH	267
LUANG PRABANG	23/ 35	HIGH	163

Average Temperatures	June		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	24/ 32	HIGH	311
HANOI	26/ 33	HIGH	239
SAPA	17/ 22	HIGH	355
HOI AN	25/ 33	HIGH	87
HUE	25/ 34	HIGH	96
PHNOM PENH	24/ 33	HIGH	155
SIEM REAP	23/ 32	HIGH	170
VIENTIANE	24/ 32	HIGH	302
LUANG PRABANG	23/ 34	HIGH	155

Average Temperatures	July		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	24/ 32	HIGH	293
HANOI	26/ 33	HIGH	323
SAPA	17/ 22	HIGH	480
HOI AN	25/ 34	HIGH	85
HUE	25/ 34	HIGH	50
PHNOM PENH	24/ 32	HIGH	171
SIEM REAP	23/ 31	HIGH	200
VIENTIANE	24/ 31	HIGH	267
LUANG PRABANG	23/ 32	HIGH	231

Average Temperatures	August		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	24/ 31	HIGH	270
HANOI	26/ 32	HIGH	343
SAPA	17/ 23	HIGH	480
HOI AN	25/ 33	HIGH	103
HUE	24/ 34	HIGH	137
PHNOM PENH	26/ 32	HIGH	160
SIEM REAP	23/ 31	HIGH	200
VIENTIANE	24/ 31	HIGH	292
LUANG PRABANG	23/ 32	HIGH	300

Average Temperatures	September		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	24/ 31	HIGH	327
HANOI	24/ 31	HIGH	254
SAPA	16/ 22	HIGH	320
HOI AN	24/ 31	HIGH	349
HUE	23/ 31	HIGH	502
PHNOM PENH	25/ 31	HIGH	224
SIEM REAP	23/ 30	HIGH	260
VIENTIANE	24/ 31	HIGH	302
LUANG PRABANG	23/ 33	HIGH	165

Average Temperatures	October		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	23/ 31	HIGH	266
HANOI	22/ 29	MED	99
SAPA	13/ 18	HIGH	190
HOI AN	23/ 29	HIGH	612
HUE	22/ 28	HIGH	688
PHNOM PENH	24/ 30	HIGH	257
SIEM REAP	22/ 30	HIGH	230
VIENTIANE	18/ 29	HIGH	109
LUANG PRABANG	21/ 32	MED	79

Average Temperatures	November		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	22/ 31	HIGH	116
HANOI	18/ 26	MED	43
SAPA	10/ 17	HIGH	119
HOI AN	21/ 27	HIGH	366
HUE	20/ 26	HIGH	647
PHNOM PENH	23/ 30	HIGH	127
SIEM REAP	21/ 30	HIGH	80
VIENTIANE	18/ 29	HIGH	15
LUANG PRABANG	18/ 29	MED	31

Average Temperatures	December		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
SAIGON	21/ 30	MED	48
HANOI	15/ 22	MED	20
SAPA	7/ 13	MED	40
HOI AN	19/ 24	HIGH	199
HUE	18/ 23	HIGH	375
PHNOM PENH	22/ 30	HIGH	45
SIEM REAP	19/ 30	MED	10
VIENTIANE	16/ 28	MED	3
LUANG PRABANG	15/ 27	MED	13

Thailand:

Average Temperatures	March – May (Summer)		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
BANGKOK	25/38	HIGH	70
CHIANG MAI	18/33	HIGH	60
PHUKET	23/31	HIGH	180

Average Temperatures	June – October (Rainy)		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
BANGKOK	23/31	HIGH	115
CHIANG MAI	21/32	MED	160
PHUKET	24/31	HIGH	260

Average Temperatures	November – February (Winter)		
	Temp °C min/max	Humidity	Rain mm
BANGKOK	20/30	HIGH	20
CHIANG MAI	13/30	MED	15
PHUKET	18/31	HIGH	40

Burma:

Average Temperatures	February
	Temp °C min/max
Rangoon (Yangon)	19 / 34
Mandalay	15 / 32
Bagan	14 / 33

Average Temperatures	November
	Temp °C min/max
Rangoon (Yangon)	22 / 32
Mandalay	19 / 32
Bagan	19 / 31

 Wendy Wu Tours

YOUR PHRASE BOOK SOUTHEAST ASIA



GUIDE TO PRACTICAL VIETNAMESE

Vietnamese has been spoken by the inhabitants within the current day borders of Vietnam for millennia and today it is the national and official language of the country. It is the mother tongue of 86% of the inhabitants of Vietnam and is a second language spoken by the many small ethnic minorities within the country.

The ancestor of the Vietnamese language was originally based in the area of the Red River, in what is now northern Vietnam, and during the subsequent expansion of the Vietnamese language and people into what is now central and southern Vietnam.

It appears that the language has been heavily influenced by its location in the Southeast Asian region and much of the vocabulary has been borrowed from Chinese, especially words that denote abstract ideas in the same way European languages borrow from Latin and Greek. Although it was formerly written using the Chinese writing system, the writing system in use today is an adapted version of the Latin alphabet.

Through extensive contact with western countries over many hundreds of years, other languages have been in common usage within Vietnam and today English is widely spoken throughout the country.

With the use of English being commonplace you should have no difficulty in finding your way or visiting restaurants and shops during your visit to Vietnam. However, there may be occasions, especially in small towns, rural areas and in the many local markets, when you may find the ability to communicate in Vietnamese to be helpful and also a great way to make friends with the warm and hospitable Vietnamese people.

To assist you in this we have prepared this brief phrase book, containing some phrases that you are most likely to need as well as a small dictionary of additional words that you may find useful from time to time. We have added space at the back of this book for you to write down any other words you may need; ask your National Escort or Local Guide for a word and then write it down and you are set to go.

For each word or phrase we have given the English followed by the Vietnamese and then a phonetic version that should make it easier for you to pronounce.

First though you need to know about the tones. Vietnamese is a tonal language with 6 tones. These tones are marked as follows:

1.	Level	ma	ghost
2.	High Rising	má	cheek
3.	Low/Falling	mà	but
4.	Drip-Rising	mả	tomb
5.	High Rising Glottalized	mã	horse
6.	Low Rising Glottalized	mạ	Rice /seeding

Something else to help you is the Vietnamese alphabet, try these pronunciation exercises:

Aa	a
Ăă	ah
Ââ	er
Bb	ber
Cc	ga
Dd	zar
Đđ	dar
Ee	air
Êê	e
Gg	gar
Hh	har
li	Ling-an
Kk	ga
Li	e-luh
Mm	m-mar

Nn	nar
Oo	or
Ôô	aw
Ơơ	er
Pp	pa
Qq	car
Rr	e-rer
Ss	s-ee
Tt	dar
Uu	oo
Ưư	er
Vv	va
Xx	s-ee
Yy	caw ret

GETTING STARTED

All phrases throughout this booklet are set out in the following order:

ENGLISH	hello or hi
VIETNAMESE	xin chào
PHONETIC	sin chòw

The first thing to know is the various forms of greeting:

Hello or Hi

xin chào
sin chòw

How are you?

bạn khoẻ không?
barn quair kong

If you are asked the same question then the answer is:

I am very good

tôi rất là khoẻ
doy zut là quair

If you ask the question first and ask 'How are you?' the response will probably be:

I am very good, and you?

tôi rất là khoẻ, còn bạn?
doy zut là quair, gon barn

To which the final response will be:

I am also good

tôi cũng rất là khoẻ
doy koong zut là quair

So the full conversation will be:

(You) barn quair kong?
(Them) doy zut là quair, con barn?
(You) doy koong zut là quair

Here are the words you have learnt:

You	Good; well; fine
bạn	khoẻ
barn	quair

Add to the end of a word or phrase to pose a question:

VIETNAMESE	không
PHONETIC	kong

I; me	Very
tôi	rất là
doy	zut là

Here are some more greeting words that you can easily use:

Pleased to meet you

rất hân hạnh gặp bạn
zut hun hang gup barn

Good morning

chào buổi sáng
chòw boỏ-ee saảng

Good afternoon

chào buổi chiều
chòw boỏ-ee chee-ò

Goodbye

chào tạm biệt
chòw dam biet

Good evening

chào buổi tối
chòw boỏ-ee dóy

You (formal)

bạn
barn

Practice this with your partner or a friend.

Now you have learnt how to greet someone you may like to learn something about them, their name or where they are from or what they do for a living.

The following words and phrases should help you with that.

May I ask your name?

cho tôi hỏi tên bạn là gì?

char doy hi den barn là zi

My family name is Brown, given name John

họ tên tôi là Brown, tôi tên là John

ho den doy là Brown, doy den là John

What's your name?

bạn tên là gì?

barn den là zi

Where are you from?

bạn đến từ đâu?

barn den du dow

If you are asked this question your answer would be:

I'm from

tôi đến từ

doy den du

Australia

uc

ook

I am

tôi là

doy là

America

mỹ

mey i

You are

bạn là

barn là

China

trung quốc

chung quor

He is

anh ấy là

ang ay là

England

anh quốc

an guor

She is

cô ấy là

gaw ay là

New Zealand

niu zi nan

new zee lan

They are

họ là

họ là

What do you do?

What is your work?

bạn làm nghề gì?

barn lam nay zi

We are

chúng tôi là

júm doy là

Let us review the new words you have learnt:

May I ask?

cho tôi hỏi

char doy hi

I/me

tôi

doy

You/your (formal)

bạn

barn

He

anh ấy

ang ay

What

cái gì

gái zi

She

cô ấy

gaw ay

Name (family)

họ tên

ho den

They

họ

ho

Name (given)

tên

den

We

chúng tôi,

júm doy

Here are some other words you may find useful

This

(cái) này

(guy) này

Theirs

của người kia

gor nooa gia

That

(cái) đó

(guy) đó

Both; all

cả hai

ga hi

Which

cái nào

cuy now

Friend

bạn

barn

Who

ai

ai

Male

người đàn ông

gooay dan ong

Mine

của tôi

guo doy

Boy friend

bạn trai

barn chai

Yours

của bạn

guo barn

Girl friend

bạn gái

barn guy

His/hers

của anh ấy / của cô ấy

guo ang a / guor gor a

No; not

không

kong

Want
muốn
morn

Today
hôm nay
hom nay

Hence
Don't want
không muốn
kong morn

Tomorrow
ngày mai
nay my

I Understand
tôi hiểu
doy heê-ow

Tonight
tối nay
dóy lay

Hence
I don't understand
tôi không hiểu
doy kong heê-ow

Hence
Do you understand?
bạn có hiểu không
barn heê-oo kong

Asking the whereabouts of something or someone

Where is the toilet?
nhà vệ sinh ở đâu?
nyà ve sing er doh

Where is John?
John ở đâu?
John er doh

Where is the dining room?
phòng ăn ở đâu?
fung an er doh

Where is the market?
chợ ở đâu?
cha er doh

I would like to buy water
tôi muốn mua nước
doy morn mooer luac

SHOPPING

Do you have water?
bạn có nước không?
barn gor luac kong

Just looking
tôi chỉ nhìn thôi
doy chỉ nin toy

How much does this cost?
cái này bao nhiêu tiền?
guy lay bow nio dien

It is too expensive
cái này mắc quá
guy lay ma qua

Excuse me
xin lỗi
sin loy

Miss
cô ơi
gaw oi

I want
tôi muốn
doy morn

Thank you
cám ơn
gam urn

Very good
tốt lắm
dort lam

Not good
không tốt
kong dort

No thank you
không cám ơn
kong gam urn

CAFES & RESTAURANTS

Do you have coffee?
bạn có cà phê không?
barn go ga fay kong

I want coffee
tôi muốn cà phê
doy morn ga fay

We all want coffee
tất cả chúng tôi muốn cà
phê dùt go chung doy morn
ga fay

No milk thank you
không sữa, cám ơn
kong su er gam urn

I would like to drink beer
tôi muốn uống bia
doy morn uong bia

Please bring a knife and fork
làm ơn cầm dao và rĩa
lam ern gam zow va zia

Waiter!
bồi bàn!
boy ban

Do you have an English
menu?
bạn có thực đơn bằng
tiếng Anh không?
barn go tuc dern bang dieng
an kong

Bill please
tính tiền làm ơn
ding dien lam ern

Let us review some more new words you have learnt:

Toilet nhà vệ sinh nhà vệ sinh	Where is Ở đâu ở đâu
--------------------------------------	----------------------------

Dining room phòng ăn phòng ăn	Market chợ chợ
-------------------------------------	----------------------

Water nước nước	Looking nhìn nhìn
-----------------------	-------------------------

Excuse me làm ơn làm ơn	Miss cô cô
-------------------------------	------------------

Want muốn muốn	Thank you cảm ơn cảm ơn
----------------------	-------------------------------

Good tốt tốt	Coffee cà phê cà phê
--------------------	----------------------------

Milk sữa sữa	Water bồn bồn
--------------------	---------------------

Waiter bồi bàn bồi bàn	Cold lạnh lạnh
------------------------------	----------------------

Beer bia bia	Menu thực đơn thực đơn
--------------------	------------------------------

NUMBERS

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE	PHONETIC
1	một	mort
2	hai	hi
3	ba	ba
4	bốn	born
5	năm	num
6	sáu	sow
7	bảy	bay
8	tám	dam
9	chín	chin
10	mười	moo ay
11	mười một	moo ay mort
12	mười hai	moo ay hi
13	mười ba	moy ay ba
14	mười bốn	moo ay born

And so on to 19 and then...

20	hai mươi	hi moo ay
21	hai mươi một	hi moo ay mort
22	hai mươi hai	hi moo ay hi

And so on to 29 and then...

30	ba mươi	ba moo ay
40	bốn mươi	born moo ay
50	năm mươi	num moo ay
60	sáu mươi	sow moo ay
70	bảy mươi	bay moo ay
80	tám mươi	dam moo ay
90	chín mươi	Chin moo ay

And so on to 99 and then...

100	một trăm	mort chum
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DICTIONARY

Following is a small dictionary of words that you may find useful either in practising your Vietnamese skills, or when you are out shopping. If there are any specific words you want to know that are not shown here or in the general phrasebook, simply ask your National Escort or Local Guide to write them down for you in the space provided at the end of this section.

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE	PHONETIC
A.		
Adaptor	cái nắn điện	guy lun dien
Address	địa chỉ	dia chi
Allergic	dị ứng	zi oong
Apple	quả táo	gwa dow
Asprin	dược học	zur how
ATM	nơi rút tiền	noi zut dien
B.		
Bakery	lò bánh mì	lor bang mi
Banana	quả chuối	gwa cheway
Band aid	băng răn tay	bung zan die
Bank	nhà ngân hàng	nia nun hang
Bar	quầy bán rượu	gway ban zio
Beer	bia	beer
Black	màu đen	mao den
Blue	màu xanh	mao sang
Boiled water	nước đun sôi	luac doon soy
Bookshop	hiệu sách	hio sa(t)
Bread	bánh mì	bang mi
Brown	màu nâu	mao no
Buy	mua	mooer
C.		
Cake	bánh ng t	bang nort
Camera	máy nh	my ang
Change (money)	đ i ti n	doy dien
Cheese	phó mát	for ma(t)
Chemist	bán d c ph m	ban zur phum
Chocolate	sôcôla	shocola
Chopsticks	đũa	do are
Coffee	cà phê	ga fay
Cold	l nh	lang
Cough drops	thu c ho	tuoc ha
Credit card	thẻ tín dụng	tear din zung
Cup	chén	chen

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE	PHONETIC
D.		
Dentist	thợ trồng răng	ta chowng zang
Diabetes	bệnh đái đường	ban dai duong
Dirty	dơ bẩn	zo ban
Doctor	bác sĩ	ba(t) see e
Dollar	đồng đô la	dong dollar
Double bed	giường đôi	zuong doi
E.		
Earache	đau tai	dow dye
Eat	ăn	un
Egg	trứng	choong
Electricity	điện	dien
Empty	trống không	chong kong
Enough	đủ dùng	do zung
Exchange (rate)	giá hối đoái	za hoi doan
Excuse me	làm ơn	lamb urn
Expensive	đắt tiền	dat dien
Eye drops	thuốc nhỏ mắt	tour nia mut
F.		
Fan	cái quạt	dye quar
Fire	lửa	luar
Fish	cá	gar
Flower	bông hoa	bong hua
Fork	cái đĩa	guy zia
Fresh	tươi	do ay
Fruit	trái cây	chai gay
Fruit juice	nước trái cây	luac chai gay
G.		
Glass	cái cốc	gay goc
Good	tốt	door
Green	màu xanh	mao sang
H.		
Hard	cứng	gung
Headache	nhức đầu	nioc dow
Heater	lò sưởi	la soo ay
Heavy	nặng	nun
Help	cứu giúp	giu zoo
Honey	mật ong	mu(t) ung
Hot	nóng	numb
Hot water	nước nóng	luac numb
I.		
Ice	nước đá	luac da
Ice-cream	kem	giem
Indigestion	không tiêu hoá	kong dio hoar
Insect repellent	thuốc trừ sâu	tour chew sew

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE	PHONETIC
J. Juice	nước ép	luac ep
K. Key Knife	chìa khoá con dao	cheer kwa gone zao
L. Leather Lemon Lipstick Lunch	đồ da quả chanh son bôi môi ăn trưa	doe za(n) gwa chang sun boy moy un chure
M. Magazine Mail Meat Melon Menu Milk Mineral water	tạp chí thư từ thịt dưa tây thực đơn sữa nước khoáng	da chi too dur dit zure day tuc dern su er luac kwung
N. Name Need Newspaper No None Noodles Notebook	tên cần tờ báo không không một ai mì sách viết	den gun dar bow kong kong mot eye me sack viet
O. Okay Old (thing) Orange (fruit) Orange (juice)	được già quả cam nước cam	doer zar gwa gam luac gam
P. Padlock Pain Paper (writing) Passport Pen Photo Pillow Plate Police Police Station Post Office	cái khoá móc đau đớn giấy viết hộ chiếu bút bức ảnh gối đĩa cảnh sát đồn cảnh sát bưu điện	guy kwa mao dow dern zay viet hoar chio bort booc ang goy dia gang sa(t) dorn gang sa(t) bill dien

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE	PHONETIC
Q. Quick Quiet	nhanh yên lặng	niang ien la
R. Raining Razor Razor blades Receipt Red Restaurant Room Room number	mưa dao cạo lưỡi dao giấy biên nhận màu đỏ quán ăn phòng số phòng	mu ar zow gow luay zow zay bien nian mao dor gwan un fung so fung
S. Safety pin Shampoo Shirt Shoe Sorry Spicy Spoon Sugar	kim băng thuốc gội đầu áo sơ mi giày xin lỗi cay cái thìa đường	gim bung tour goi dow ow sir me zay sin loy guy guy tia do ong
T. Tailor Tea Telephone Time Toast Today Toilet Tomorrow Too expensive Too much Toothpaste Towel	thợ may chè điện thoại mấy giờ bánh mì nướng hôm nay nhà vệ sinh ngày mai đắt quá nhiều quá thuốc đánh răng khăn lau	ta my chair dien twy may zar bang mi luong hom lay nya ve sing nay may dut gwar nio gwar tuo dang zung kahn lou(d)
U. Umbrella	ô	or
V. Vegetarian (I am) Vinegar	người ăn chay giấm	noo ay un chy zum

ENGLISH

VIETNAMESE

PHONETIC

W.		
Waiter	Bồi bàn	boy ban
Want	cần	gun
Warm	ấm	um
Wash	rửa	zoo ar
Water	nước	luac
Watermelon	quả dưa hấu	gwa zoo er ho
Wet	ướt	oo ot
White	màu trắng	mao chang
Yellow	màu vàng	mao van
Yes	vâng	vung
Yogurt	sữa chua	su er choo er

NOTES

We hope that these few words and phrases will help you when communicating with the locals. We have added space below for you to add additional words and phrases.

CAMBODIA VOCABULARY

Khmer or Cambodian is the language of the Khmer people and the official language of Cambodia.

Below is a list of the most common words and phrases you are most likely to need whilst in Cambodia in phonetic version to make it easier for you to pronounce.

ENGLISH	KHMER (Phonetic)
Hello	sues'day
Goodbye	sohm dtoh
Yes	baat (by male) or chaa (by female)
No	tei
Excuse me / Sorry	somtoh
My name is...	k'nyom tchmouh
How are you?	Tau neak sok sapbaiy jea te?
Thank you	awkun
I am British	k'nyohm mok pee pradeh Britain
Good	l'aw
Not good	akrawk
Beautiful	sraw (people) or saat (places / objects)
I would like...	k'nyohm jong....
Rice (plain)	buy
Rice (sticky)	bye domnap
Tea	tie
Postage stamp	t'i'em
Cold beer	bia
(without) ice	(k'mien) dteuk goa
(without) chilli	(k'mien) ma tay
Mineral water	tuck
Boiled drinking water	teuk dam
Chopsticks	chawng kus
Bowl	muey caan
Plate	chan
Knife	kambut
Fork	sohm
Toilet	kun

LAOS VOCABULARY

Lao or Laotian is the official and national language spoken in Laos as well as north-east Thailand.

Below is a list of the most common words and phrases you are most likely to need whilst in Laos in phonetic version to make it easier for you to pronounce.

ENGLISH	LAO (Phonetic)
Hello	sa-bai-dee
Goodbye	la kawn
Yes	doi
No	baw
Excuse me / Sorry	kor thoad
My name is...	kway sue wa
How are you?	chao phen nell dai?
Thank you	kok chai
I am British	koi man kol Britain
Good	dee
Not good	bor dee
Beautiful	gnum
I would like...	khoi yak dai.....
Rice (plain)	kao
Rice (sticky)	kao niaw
Tea	num sa
Postage stamp	ka jum
Cold beer	beer yen
(without) ice	(baw sai) nam kawn
(without) chilli	(baw sai) phet
Mineral water	nam dumb
Boiled drinking water	nam thome
Chopsticks	mai thou
Bowl	tuay
Plate	chane
Knife	meed
Fork	soum
Toilet	hong nam

BURMESE VOCABULARY

Burmese is the official and national language spoken in Burma (Myanmar).

Below is a list of the most common words and phrases you are most likely to need whilst in Burma in phonetic version to make it easier for you to pronounce.

ENGLISH	BURMESE
Hello	Mingalarbar
Goodbye	Nhote sat par tal
Yes	Hote tal
No	Ma hote buu
Excuse me	Khwin pyu par
My name is	Kya note a myi mhar
How are you?	Nay Kaung lar
Thank you	Kyay zuu tin par dal
I am British	Kya note ka British
Good	Kaung Tal
Not Good	Ma kaung buu
Beautiful	Hla tal
I would like	Kya note lote chin tal
Rice (Plan)	Hta minn phyu
Rice (Sticky)	Kout Nhyin hta minn
Te	La bat yay
Postage Stamp	Da sate gaung
Cold Beer	beer aye
(Without) ice	(ma par) yay khae
(Without) chilli	(ma par) a sat
Mineral Water	Yay Thant
Boiled Drinking Water	Yay Nway
Chopsticks	Tuu
Bowl	Bagan lone
Plate	Bagan Pyar
Knife	Dar
Fork	Kha yinn
Toilet	Eain Thar

LAST UPDATED: February 2017

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