

## Hanoi

Indochina's old dame, Hanoi is striving to modernize, yet unwilling to let go of the beauty of its glorious past. Slightly vain, the city won't bow down and give any tourists an easy time. Only those who are truly willing to understand and listen will recognize the logic of Hanoi's beauty, the complexity of its chaos and peace, its urban speed and rural tranquility.

### History and name

Hanoi used to be called Thang Long (flying dragon). The myth was that in 1010, the new king Ly Cong Uan while visiting this valley saw a dragon flying into the sky, and took this as an omen that this place was a suitable capital to rule. Thang Long had rich soil and good defense because it was surrounded by the Red River and backed by mountains.

The city was later renamed Hanoi (which means inside the river) in 1831 when the Nguyen dynasty moved capital to Hue. Hanoi was returned its status as capital during the French rule from 1887 to 1954, and continued to be the capital, first of Communist North Vietnam (from 1954) and later, of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. As of 2008, Hanoi will be expanded to include the surrounding province of Hatay and parts of Ha Dong, to a size of 3.200km<sup>2</sup> and population of over 6 million people.

### Getting there and around

Most visitors will land at Noi Bai international airports with [Vietnam visa](#) through one of the following airlines:

- Vietnam Airlines - the primary national carrier
- VietjetAir - discount Vietnamese carrier
- Bamboo Airline - discount Vietnamese carrier
- Malaysia Airlines Malaysia Airlines fly daily to Hanoi from Kuala Lumpur
- Cathay Pacific - upscale airline with flights to Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Airlines - new carrier with daily flights to/from Hong Kong
- Thai Airways International - two flights daily to/from Bangkok
- Lao Airlines – operating flights from Phnom penh to Hanoi
- Nok Air - budget airline flies to/from Bangkok
- Tiger Airways

It takes around 40-60 minutes to get to the city downtown or any [hotels in Hanoi Old Quarter](#) from the airport by taxi and costs 20 US\$.

### By train

Vietnam's major north-south train, the Reunification Express, runs from Hanoi south to central Vietnam (Hue and Danang) and then further to Ho Chi Minh City (more than 30 hours from Hanoi).

### By bus

Hanoi is the main gateway for buses run from north to south on the coast of Vietnam. There are daily bus routes from Hanoi to all cities around Vietnam at Kim Ma, Giap Bat, Luong Yen and Gia Lam bus station.

Hanoi weather and climate: the information on current Hanoi weather and tips on best time to go.

Hanoi has typical North Vietnam climate, with a cold and dry winter (when temperatures can drop to as low as 6°C – 7°C) and a hot and extremely humid summer (temperatures can climb up to a maximum of 35°C). Spring is characterized with light drizzles while the summers bring heavy rain.