



ASIAN TIGERS
MOBILITY

Settling-in Vietnam



What's Inside?

The Basics



Let's Talk About Culture



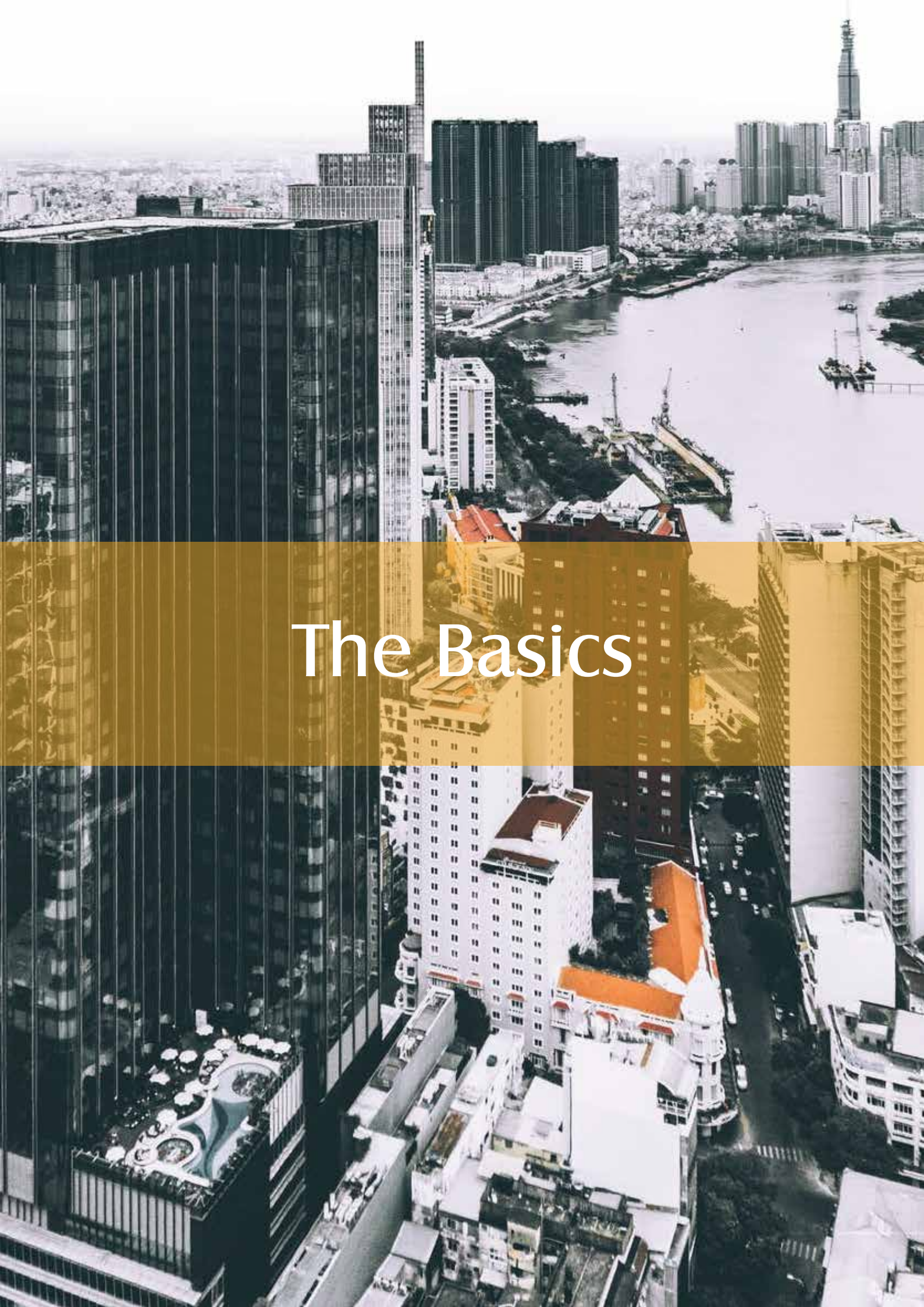
Settling in Tips



Let's Have Fun



Need Help?



The Basics

About Ho Chi Minh City

Ho Chi Minh City covers an area of 2,095 square kilometers, and as of 2010, had a registered population of roughly eight million, making it the most densely populated area in Vietnam and South East Asia with 3,818 people per square kilometer.

Being the financial and economic center of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City attracts citizens from all over the nation looking for opportunities that are not available in other regions of Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh City is the undisputed commercial, financial, and entertainment center of Vietnam.

Ho Chi Minh City is located in the Southeastern region of Vietnam and has a tropical wet and dry climate which is characterized by heat, humidity, rain and plenty of sunshine, which assuring year- round swimming & golfing weather and endless potentials for other leisure activities while access is made convenient by an international airport.

English is increasingly favored as a second language. There is more and more Vietnamese in Ho Chi Minh City learn to speak English. One can easily find English speaking channels and publications in English.

Ho Chi Minh City offers visitors and residents alike a fascinating mix between its unique Vietnam- ese charm and modern metropolis. Whether you are interested in cultural heritage, nightlife, dining out, or sports & fitness, you will find Ho Chi Minh City has a lot to offer!



Ho Chi Minh City's Facts & Figures

Land Area	: 2,095 sq. kilometer
Population	: 8 million
Density	: 3,818 people per square kilometer
Government	: Socialist Republic
Time Zone	: GMT + 7 hours (Vietnam does not observe daylight saving time)
Currency	: VND
Religion	: Mahayana Buddhists approximately 85% Christianity and Roman Catholicism, roughly 8% And Taoism and Confucianism
Language	: Vietnamese (national dialect); English is increasingly favored as a second language; French, Chinese, Khmer, and languages of other minority groups are also spoken.
Weather	: Tropical monsoon climate, with high temperatures, high humidity, and long hours of sunshine most of the year. Two distinctive dry and rainy seasons. Generally fair temperature between 16-40 degrees Celsius
Important Laws & Regulations	: Do not bring - Weapons, firearms, ammunition, explosives, military technical equipments, any form of firecracker - Debauched and reactionary products Toys with negative impacts on the dignity education, social security and safety



Let's Talk About Culture

Local Culture

- Hospitality and Friendliness are the most universal traits of the Vietnamese. One of the most important things to consider is always to be prepared to be tolerant, open-minded and to learn to accept and embrace cultural differences. Vietnamese culture differs greatly from Western culture on many fundamental levels. It is worth wide for foreigners to remember the prominent cultural attitude of the Vietnamese:
- The Vietnamese tend to save face at all time. They take shame and embarrassment very seriously. Confrontation is considered offensive especially in public.
- Nervous smiling and giggling are commonly used to release tension in embarrassing situations, but it does not mean that the matter is being treated lightly.
- The Vietnamese have a relaxed view of punctuality when it comes to social outings.
- The Vietnamese tend to be very curious. Staring and questioning by the Vietnamese are not meant to be offensive but mere expressions of curiosity.
- The Vietnamese drive on the right side. And traffic discipline is usually at a minimum.



Cultural Dos & Don'ts

More information on Vietnam Cultural Dos & Don'ts is available in your AT Mobility Welcome Kit. Your AT Mobility Consultant will be happy to provide any details in the materials.

Dos

Learn at least some basic Vietnamese words, greetings and introductions in Vietnamese will be useful for you and locals will appreciate the effort.

Do keep asking leading questions in order to verify and extend your knowledge of the situation.

Do arrive fifteen or thirty minutes after the appointed time for parties. This will be considered punctual.

Do realize that the Vietnamese have a very different perspective on social, political and business organizations, most of which are modeled on the extended family concept.

Do learn to address people with the right titles to avoid embarrassment and possibly to offend if you attempt to use Vietnamese.

Don'ts

Don't lose your temper. This is usually seen as a lack of respect for others.

Don't be offended by personal questions and remarks.

Don't parade or display another country's flag, make negative comments about the government or its leaders, you could be jailed for committing crimes against the party.

Don't attempt the good luck sign in Vietnam by crossing the index and middle finger. To the Vietnamese this is a very offensive gesture.

Don't signal someone to come by wiggling an upward-pointing index finger.

Don't display affection in public.

Don't lose your temper if a driver is not using the horn correctly behind you. The Vietnamese have very high tolerance with it comes to noises.



Settling in Tips

Getting Around

Air Travel

Flights to and from Ho Chi Minh directly are increasingly accessible. Otherwise, passengers can transit through Hong Kong, Bangkok (Thailand), Singapore or Doha. Flights within Vietnam from Ho Chi Minh City are highly accessible, from one to five flights a day depends on the destination.

The airport is conveniently located within 30 minutes from District 1. Passports are required for out of country traveling and in-country traveling.

Links to some airlines websites:

Vietnam Airlines:	www.vietnamairlines.com
Cathay Pacific Airlines:	www.cathaypacific.com/vn
Singapore Airlines:	www.singaporeair.com
Thai Airways:	www.thaiairways.com.vn
Qatar Airways:	www.qatarairways.com/vn/en/homepage.html

Train Services

Train rides are available from and to Ho Chi Minh City and some provinces: Phan Thiet, Nha Trang, Da Nang, Hue and Ha Noi. Air conditioned sleepers are available with prior booking.

However, trains do not operate as public transportation within the city. Vietnam Railway: www.vr.com.vn/english/index.html

Bus Services

Buses are the cheapest way to get around Ho Chi Minh City; however they are designed mainly for locals without personal transportation. Bus routes are only printed in Vietnamese and bus station staff as well as bus drivers will most likely not speak English. Buses can sometimes get over-crowded as drivers will try to collect as many fares as possible. While the bus system in Ho Chi Minh City may not be the most comfortable, it can be fairly convenient and inexpensive.

Taxi Services

Taxis in Ho Chi Minh City are plentiful and affordable, any time of the day or night. Unfortunately, not all taxis in Ho Chi Minh City use properly functioning meters. It is strongly suggested that passengers only hail taxis from one of these established, legitimate companies: Mai Linh, Vinasun, Future, and Vina. These companies have fully functioning, tamper-proof meters that display the exact, proper fare. Also, taxis operated by these companies have a 3 or 4 digit registration number on the side which should be recorded in case of any problems.

Most meters start at about 10,000 to 12,000VND and cost roughly 10,000VND from the second kilometer onwards. Tipping is not required, but extra service and courtesy may warrant a small gratuity. Most people will round the fare up to the nearest 10,000VND increment.

Mai Linh Taxi: (08) 3838 3838

Vina Sun Taxi: (08) 38 27 2727

Vina Taxi: (08) 38 11 1111

Future Taxi: (08) 38 18 18 18

Personal Cars

Foreigners with a valid passport and work permit can legally buy and own a car in Vietnam.

Driving License Requirements:

Foreigners can successfully apply for a Vietnamese driver license in case they have an international driver license for the equivalent vehicle in their home country. Foreigners without a driver

Food

While Ho Chi Minh City may be a smaller city compared to other cities, there is an ever increasing number of options for dining out. New restaurants are seemingly opening daily which feature cuisines from all over the world. There are restaurants that will suit every budget and taste, anything from champagne brunch buffets at 5 star hotels, gourmet dining, and rooftop riverside restaurants to western fast food and mouth watering street side fare that cannot be replicated in restaurants.

Tipping

Tipping in Ho Chi Minh City is not mandatory but has become customary in restaurants and is generally greatly appreciated by the wait staff. Tipping is more of a personal gesture for the appreciation of the service you have received rather than an expected payment. There is no set percentage for tipping. However some restaurants include a service charge of around 5% which is a good guideline for tipping amounts. Make sure to inquire as to whether or not a restaurant consists of a service charge. The amount to tip and whether or not to leave a tip at all is entirely up to personal choice.

Local Food

Rice is a dietary staple, consumed by the Vietnamese in some form or another consistently. Different types of rice incorporate fresh white noodles, pho, and congee. The typical dinner comprises of steamed rice with side dishes, for example, steamed or stir-fried vegetable or soup and a main course with meat or fish. The cooking method for the main course is typically roasted, stir fry, steam or fry.

Yellow noodles produced using wheat flour presented with chicken or pork in its broth and green vegetable, bean sprout and herbs; and baguette bread presented with cold cuts and vegetable are very popular options to a meal with rice in Vietnam. Breakfast can be similar to the same as lunch and dinner.

The common Vietnamese diet is high in carbohydrate, salt, sugar, and fiber. However, comparatively low fat and usually lack calcium as milk, and dairy items are not part of the diet.

International Food

There is an abundance of up market eateries featuring Italian, French, Spanish, Mediterranean, Mexican, Korean, Thai, Japanese, Chinese especially in District 1. Most restaurants can deliver at least to within the district of their location, usually at no charge.

There are an abundance of international cuisine and family friendly establishments, as well as chic and elegant eateries along the river in District 2 – a large expat residential area in Ho Chi Minh City. There are also some companies beginning to introduce international freezer friendly home cooked meals for families that prefer to stock up their refrigerator and eat at home without the hassle of cooking and clean up.

All of the 5 star hotels in District 1 offer sumptuous brunch and dinner buffets with free flowing wine and on occasion, award winning chefs. Some Western fast food franchises such as KFC, Domino's Pizza, and Carl's Jr. are also available at many areas in Ho Chi Minh City.



Medical Care

Private and Int'l Clinics & Hospitals

American Chiropractic Clinic

8 Truong Dinh Street, Ward 6, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City Tel: +84 8 3930 6667
www.vietnamchiropractic.com

Columbia Asia Saigon Clinic

8 Alexandre de Rhodes, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City Tel: + 84 8 3823 8888
Fax: +84 8 3823 8454
www.columbiaasia.com/vietnam.html

Columbia Gia Dinh International Hospital

1 No Trang Long, Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City Tel: + 84 8 3803 0678
Fax: + 84 8 3803 0677
www.columbiaasia.com/vietnam.html

Saigon International OIB-GYN Hospital

63 Bui Thi Xuan, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City Tel: +84 8 3925 3619
www.sihospital.com.vn

FV Hospital

6 Nguyen Luong Bang Street, Saigon South (Phu My Hung), District 7, Ho Chi Minh City
Tel: +84 8 5411 3333
www.fvhospital.com

International SOS

65 Nguyen Du, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City Tel: +84 8 3823 6520
Fax: +84 8 3829 8551
www.internationalsos.com

International Medical Centre (CMI)

1 Han Thuyen, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City Tel: +84 8 3827 2366
Fax: +64 8 3827 2365
www.cmi-vietnam.com

Government Hospitals

Hospital of Traditional Medicine

187 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City

Tel: + 84 8 3932 6579

Tu Du OIB-GYN Hospital

284 Cong Quynh, District 1

Tel: + 84 8 3839 5117

Orthopedic Hospital

929 Tran Hung Dao, District 5

Tel: +84 8 3923 5791

Hematology Hospital

201 Pham Viet Chanh, District 1

Tel: + 84 8 3839 7535

Email: hemato@vnn.vn

Mental Hospital

192 Ben Ham Tu, District 5

Tel: + 84 8 3923 4675

Tropical Diseases Hospital

190 Ben Ham Tu, District 5

Tel: + 84 8 3923 8704

Dermatology Hospital

2 Nguyen Thong, District 3

Tel: + 84 8 3930 5995

Ophthalmology Hospital

280 Dien Bien Phu, District 3

Tel: + 84 8 3932 6732

Otorhinolaryngology Hospital

155B Tran Quoc Thao, District 3

Tel: + 84 8 3931 7381

Email: entcenter@hcm.fpt.vn

Expatriate Housing in Ho Chi Minh City

From condominiums to homes in gated communities, Ho Chi Minh City has plenty to offer when it comes to expatriate housing.

If you are keen to live a Western-like suburban life, Ho Chi Minh City has two large residential areas in District 2 and District 7. These areas feature detached and semi detached houses in or out of a gated compound. Specialty stores/supermarkets selling international goods, fitness centers, entertainment centers etc are easily accessible in these two areas.

Permanent Housing

Apartments yield the widest selection of housing with most offering security and some with a swimming pool, children's play area and fitness facilities.

The majority of apartments are rented furnished. They include living room, dining room, bed room furniture, soft furnishings such as curtains or blinds, as well as telephones and air conditioners. Kitchens normally include an electric range, washer and refrigerator. Some special units might include a built in oven and dryer. Apartments are owned by individual owners, therefore interior décor and quality of furnishings can differ greatly. Apartments are typically one level, several units to a floor, in a building anywhere from 4 to 30 floors high. They are usually 1 to 4 bedrooms and range from 35 sq.m. to 200 sq.m. A few units are exceptionally spacious with ranges from 220 sq.m – 450 sq.m, spread out over two to three stories

A larger selection of more modern villas is available on the outskirts of the city, in District 2 and District 7. Some are located in planned communities or secured housing estates called compounds. They range from 200 sq.m. to 1,500 sq.m., offering from 3 to 5 bedrooms. Most detached properties are fenced or walled, offering both security and privacy. Most have a garden or at least a yard, and sometimes a swimming pool. Some compounds also feature communal swimming pools and fitness facilities.

Most villas come equipped with a refrigerator, washing machine, stove, air conditioners telephones lines, cable TV, and internet. Sometimes a villa may also be outfitted with a built-in oven, dryer, dishwasher, curtains, and generator; otherwise these amenities can be negotiated.

International Schools

The education system in Vietnam is through the Vietnamese language medium, but Ho Chi Minh City has an increasing number of international schools offer excellent academic. There are also Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese, French schools for parents who prefer their children to be schooled in their native language. English medium pre-schools and kindergartens can be found in practically every expatriate residential neighborhood.

Below is a brief overview of Ho Chi Minh City's most popular international schools.

ABC International School

28 Truong Dinh, District 3

Tel: +84 8 3930 3533

www.theabcis.com

ACG International School

East-West Highway (road 25B), District 2

Tel: +84 8 3747 1234

<http://vietnam.acgedu.com>

Australian International School (AIS)

21 Pham Ngoc Thach, District 3

Tel: +84 8 3822 4992

www.aisvietnam.com

British International School (BIS)

43-45 Tu Xuong Street, District 3 and 225 Nguyen Van Huong, District 2

Tel: +84 8 3932 0210

www.bisvietnam.com

International School Ho Chi Minh City (ISHCMC)

649A Vo Truong Toan, District 2 Tel: +84 8 3898-9100

www.ishcmc.com

Montessori International School

42/1 Ngo Quang Huy, District 2

Tel: +84 8 3744 2639

www.montessori.edu.vn

Renaissance International School Saigon (RISS)
74 Nguyen Thi Thap, District 7
Tel: +84 8 3773 3171
www.rissaigon.edu.vn

Saigon South International School (SSIS)
Nguyen Van Linh Parkway, Tan Phong Ward, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City
Tel: +84 8 5413 0901
www.ssischool.org

As in every search, it is very useful to narrow your preferences. Think for example on what makes a school appealing to you and your children and what is acceptable and what is not when coming to your children's education. Curriculum details, the medium of instruction, extracurricular activities, school's facilities, the percentage of English native speakers in the classroom, whether the school is new or has some tradition, and school's fees are all crucial points you want to consider. Additionally, it is also important to consider the prospective school's location in conjunction with your new home's location.



Daily Needs

Banking

International banks for personal banking services are available in Ho Chi Minh City, such as: ANZ, HSBC, Deutsch Bank, Citi Bank, Standard Chartered, Commonwealth Bank etc. Expatriates will need to have their passport, a visa/work permit to open a bank account. Local debit card can also be the ATM card.

It is difficult to deposit any cash into the account without proof of income and the bank's approval. The banks allow expatriates to withdraw or transfer the amount out of the country when they leave the country (as regulated at the time this guide is conducted).

ANZ Bank:	www.anz.com/vietnam
Deutsch Bank:	www.db.com/vietnam
Citi Bank:	www.citibank.com.vn
HSBC Bank:	www.hsbc.com.vn
Standard Chartered Bank:	www.standardchartered.com/vn
Hong Leong Bank:	www.hlb.com.my/vn
Commonwealth Bank:	www.commbank.com.vn/index.html

Groceries

Fresh groceries can be found at local wet markets or any of the following local supermarkets in Ho Chi Minh City: Coop Mart, Fivi Mart, Citi Mart or Maxi Mart.

More imported groceries and others can be found at Lotte Mart and Metro supermarket system. Imported food products are also available in Ho Chi Minh City at specialty shops located in the business district or residential districts. Some carry a wide range of imported groceries items as well as organic and gluten free products: An Nam Gourmet, Veggy's and Phuong Ha.

Groceries shops listing:	www.wordhcmc.com/listings/groceries/groceries
Supermarket listing:	www.wordhcmc.com/listings/groceries/supermarkets

Home Repairs

Handy man in Ho Chi Minh City are available on call and very affordable. Their services include: carpentry, electricity and water repair, painting, hanging blinds & paintings, installation, appliances repairs and maintenance among others. The only drawbacks are that they speak little English and usually do not have a company to represent them.

Utilities

High speed cable fiber option for internet has recently been introduced in Ho Chi Minh city, though the standard ADSL can accommodate most households' needs.

Cable TV provides standard international channels. Yet exclusive channels such as: BBC, CNN and other sports channels are not available without High Definition, parabol or satellite services.

Most accommodations have water and electricity ready. Some residential areas might experience periodically electricity outages during dry season. It is recommended that landlords can accommo- date a generator with enough capacity for emergency usage.

Ho Chi Minh City Electricity provider:

<http://english.hcmpec.com.vn/customer/tintuc.aspx>

Viettel Internet & Cable TV, landline telephone service provider:

www.vietteltelecom.vn

FPT Internet service provider:

www.fpt.com.vn

VNPT Internet, Cable TV, landline telephone service provider:

www.vnpthochiminh.com/

SCTV Cable TV, Internet service provider:

www.sctv.com.vn

Telephone and Mobile

Landline telephone connections are usually provided in any temporary or permanent residence. The contract is generally under the landlord's name. Landlines charge is cheaper than of mobile. Mobile phones shops are widely accessible in Ho Chi Minh City. There are currently 5 mobile service providers to choose from. Mobile phone and Vinaphone are probably the oldest and most established providers. One can opt for a prepaid option or sign a contract with the provider.

Foreigners will need a passport, valid visa/work permit and proof of residence to sign the contract and a security deposit to register for roaming services.

Security deposit is not needed in case the contract is under a company's name.

Mobile phone shop listing:

www.wordhcmc.com/listings/home/mobile-phones

Vina Mobile Phone service provider:

www.vinaphone.com.vn

Mobifone service provider:

www.mobifone.com.vn

Viettel Mobile Phone service provider:

www.vietteltelecom.vn

Domestic Help

Household helpers are readily available and can do anything from cleaning the house, washing clothes, to looking after the children and pets. Depending on the preference, one can either live in or come on a set schedule. If employing a live-in household helper, employers are required to provide either food or a separate food allowance.

It is recommended to only hire a household helper with good references and always take precautionary measures. Employers can ask politely to take a photograph of the new helper and make a photocopy of her National Identification card and keep both on file.

Vietnamese have the tradition of giving one month salary bonus to their employees before Lunar New Year for those that have been working for them from at least one year. House helpers usually demand this condition when signing a labor contract.

A large crowd of people is gathered at night, many holding up red flags. In the background, there is a large plume of white smoke or steam rising into the dark sky. A tall street lamp stands in the center. The scene is illuminated by warm, orange light, possibly from a fire or stage lights. The text "Let's Have Fun" is overlaid in white on a semi-transparent yellow band across the middle of the image.

Let's Have Fun

Business Entertainment

The epicenter of Ho Chi Minh City nightlife is District 1. Here you will find an ever-growing selection of nightlife entertainment options. From casual pub style bars to ultra-chic nightclubs and discos, there is a venue for every taste and mood.

Central District 1 is the most well-known area in Ho Chi Minh City that has bars and restaurants that cater primarily to expats. Within about a 5km radius, there is an extensive selection of bars, nightclubs, and restaurants ranging from 5-star hotel lounges with live music and the world famous Hard Rock Café, down to casual pub style hangouts that offer attractive drink and happy hour specials.

Expat residential areas in District 2 and District 7 play host to quieter, more relaxed bars and restaurants, many of which offer live music, drink specials, sports on TV, catering to expats. Families can enjoy the nearby entertainment center for children as well as numerous swimming pools and other activities aimed at youth that are available within Ho Chi Minh City.

Restaurant and bar listing: www.wordhcmc.com/listings/eatdrink

Nightlife listing: www.wordhcmc.com/listings/nightlife

Networking

Ho Chi Minh City has a variety of associations and clubs catered to expatriates. There are clubs for business, sports, reading, new mothers, young children, international ladies, card playing, etc.

Online Google groups for different residential areas run by expatriates themselves are good information sources, especially to newly arrived expatriates.

Useful Links and Contacts:

Networking events listing: www.citynetevents.com

Business groups listing: www.wordhcmc.com/listings/business/business-groups

A vintage rotary telephone is the central focus, resting on a dark wooden desk. The phone has a black handset and a light-colored base with a rotary dial. In the background, a wooden mallet with a turned handle stands upright. To the left, a glass jar with a decorative stopper is partially visible. The scene is lit with warm, low-key lighting, creating a nostalgic atmosphere. A semi-transparent yellow banner is overlaid across the middle of the image.

Need Help?

Emergency Contacts

Emergency

City Ambulance	: 115
City Fire Brigade	: 114
City Police	: 113
International SOS, District 1	: (08) 3 823 6520
Family Medical Practice, District 1	: (08) 3 822 7848
FV Hospital's emergency number, District 7	: (08) 5 411 3333
Columbia Saigon, District 1	: (08) 3 823 8888
Cho Ray Hospital, District 5	: (08) 3 855 4137 – Press 0

Directory

International Operator	: 110
Directory Assistance	: 116
Time Information	: 117
Telephone Information	: (08) 1080/1088

Copyright: Asian Tigers Ltd. 15/1/2019

We make every effort to ensure the information contained in these destination guide is accurate and up-to-date. However, do keep in mind that the rules, regulations and other material in these guides change from time to time, so we cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. We suggest that you contact the appropriate Asian Tigers office if you have any questions. They will be glad to help you.