



Vietnam Travel Tips – Before Departure

Make some business cards.

You will meet many people as you travel, and make many new friends. You will wish to exchange contact details.

Inevitably you end up with a whole set of scraps of paper, and various email addresses scrawled on the back of beer mats. You will also give other people your details in a similarly disorganised fashion. Make some business cards. You can print these yourself if you have a printer. Alternatively, a print shop will print 500 pretty cheaply for you.

Check online for deals, or visit your local print shop. Put as much or as little detail as you wish – email address, mobile phone number, Skype address, rough outline of travel plans – it's up to you. I learned this bit the hard way! Don't get glossy cards, as they can be hard to write on. If you print on both sides, leave some blank space to write other people's details to keep for yourself.

Ensure that your mobile phone is "unlocked".

Many phone companies lock phones they provide to their own network, meaning that a SIM card from another network won't work in the phone. Phone your service provider and explain that you plan to travel abroad, and ask if they can unlock your phone. If they won't there are people who can provide this service – check online. Alternatively, buy a cheap phone from somewhere like eBay, ensuring of course, that it isn't network-locked. As you travel to Vietnam, it is often very cheap to buy a pre-pay SIM card from one of the networks in that country, and use that for local calls and contacts. I ended up with five different SIM cards from my travels!

Prepare your hand luggage bag, and have a system.

I used a small backpack as my hand luggage bag. It is the type that has a padded pocket for a laptop computer, and lots of other pockets and compartments. I had a great system, and knew pretty-much exactly what was in each pocket, and could access anything I needed in seconds. I always knew where my important stuff was – flight tickets, passport, my approval letter for [Vietnam visa](#), coins, and many other useful items.

I always had a couple of those little foldaway toothbrushes, with the tiny tube of toothpaste inside, tucked in one easy-access outside pocket – great for long flights – as well as my contact lens kit and glasses.

I also carried a tiny fold-away tin opener, and a plastic knife, fork and spoon set. A couple of tins of food bought at the local supermarket before heading to the airport can save a fortune in expensive airport food purchases. A pen and small notebook is always useful, along with a handful of your business cards. The pen is particularly useful when flying from one country to another, as you almost always have to fill in an arrival card.

Pack some repair items.

In another pocket of my hand luggage bag I had various handy repair items. Needle and thread, safety pins, superglue, and absolutely invaluable, some plastic cable

ties. When the sole of my boot started to come off on the trek to Everest Base Camp, a major drama was averted by the simple use of superglue and cable ties.

Buy a good set of headphones for travel.

Not the type that sit over your ear, but the little ear bud type. Most airline headphones are very poor, and often noise can ruin your in-flight entertainment. On several flights I found it almost impossible to make out quieter dialogue in movies with the headphones provided. Also buy yourself a headphone flight adaptor which fits the audio output used on many earoplanes, which often use a two prong system to plug the headphones in to the headphone jack.

Source: getvietnamvisa.com