Savvy Travels â?? Hanoi Itinerary on a Budget

Description



My husband and I recently travelled to Hanoi for a budget getaway, and our total expenses added up to about $700 per person for the entire week.

Hereâ??s a quick breakdown:

Flights (return)	S$250
Accommodation	S$128 (6 nights)
Halong Bay cruise	S$66
Hoa Lu â?? Tam Coc tour	S$75
Transport	S$21
Food & drinks	S$95 (approx. $15 per day)

Shopping / massage	$70
Total per person	**$705**



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Against the backdrop of Hoa Lu

Flight tickets

For a short flight, Vietjet was our budget carrier of choice. Personally, we felt seats were comfortable enough and service was decent.

We paid $200 per person inclusive of taxes.

Accommodation

I would strongly encourage you to book a hotel or hostel within the Old Quarters, even though the ones outside the area offer more affordable rates.

Trust me, youâ??ll want to pay for that convenience because none of the tours will pick you up at your hotel if youâ??re located outside the Old Quarters. Most of the tour groups average about 8 to 15 pick-ups at the different hotels within the city every morning, and have only 30 â?? 45 minutes to gather everyone.

So save yourself the headache from the horrendous morning traffic of trying to get into the Old Quarters on time, and just pick an accommodation in the area. You canâ??t put a price tag on convenience for this.

Local hotels are aplenty, and youâ??ll find many backpacker hostels going for as little as USD 4 per bed a night. Pay for the level of comfort you desire.



Us at Hoa Lu, the old capital of Vietnam

Transport & Wi-Fi

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Get local wifi (we opted for a portable wi-fi egg from Klook which was conveniently delivered straight to our hotel) so that youâ??ll be able to navigate Google Maps easily, and download the Grab app for cheap transport options before you go. In our case, we had no trouble with the wifi even while in the rural areas with our wifi egg (while other tourists were struggling to get a stable connection), which latches onto the areaâ??s strongest wifi signal and supports up to 5 devices.

The Uber equivalent in Vietnam is called Grab, and you can book taxis, private cars and even motorbikes on the app for cheap.

Do not take the non-authorised taxis from the airport. Their taxi meters are rigged to run at a faster speed, so youâ??ll still end up being overcharged! So please learn from our mistake and either get your hotel to book for you, or just book via Grab.

Another example: we got quoted 100,000 VND by our hotel and a tour agency for a taxi trip to Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, when it turned out to be only 25,000 VND on our Grab app -.-

Food and other expenses

In general, food in Hanoi is perfect for the budget traveller. Youâ??ll be able to get a satisfying sandwich for as little as USD 1 on the street, and coffee that is better than Starbucks for just USD 2+. A bowl of pho (rice noodles with beef / chicken soup) will set you back by USD 3. You can also get the local beer for just USD 0.30 (5,000 VND â?? you didnâ??t read that wrong!) along Beer Street.

If youâ??re up for some learning while on vacation, you can also try out the Vietnamese home cooking class we did here â?? it was a real treat!

Getting around the city via Grab bookings was extremely easy and cheap.

Manicure services start from as little as USD 4, whereas you can get fantastic massages for USD 7 and up.

DIY walking food tour

There are plenty of tour agencies offering guided food walks within the Old Quarters, but if youâ??re up for an adventure like we were and prefer to customize your own walking tour, hereâ??s what we DIY-ed :

â?? Local appetisers at **BÃ¡nh Cuá»?n BÃ Hanh** (26B Au Trieu Street). Try the lemongrass pork!
â?? 4-cheese pizza at **4Pizzas**
â?? Grilled pork with vermicelli soup + crab spring rolls **BÃºn Cháº£ HÃ ng MÃ nh 1** (donâ??t go to the imitation one across the street!)
â?? Coconut coffee at **Cong Caphe**
â?? Egg coffee at **Cafe Giang** (the original) or **Lakeview Cafe** (we preferred this)
â?? A mug of Bia Hoi (local beer) along **Ta Hien Street**
â?? Eel porridge and dry vermicelli at **Miáº¿n LÆ°Æ¡n Ä•Ã´ng Thá»?nh**
â?? Custard apple & â??breastmilkâ?• apple at any fruit stall
â?? Bonus: get the best (and cheapest) foot massage at **Váº¡n XuÃ¢n Foot Massage** at the end of the day!

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(Just download Google Maps and search using the stall names â?? itâ??ll show up!)



The fried eel porridge we had in Hanoi was the best Iâ??ve ever tasted in my life.
Thinking about it now is making me drool again.

In addition, we did a cooking class with the local Vietnamese and it was one of the best experiences ever.



Cycling in Tam Coc to see the limestone sights.



Click here to check out what we whipped up!

Day trips out of Hanoi

If youâ??re the spontaneous sort, I would recommend that you head there directly to any of the numerous tour agencies to book your day trips out of Hanoi. There are at least 2 â?? 3 on every street.

However, if youâ??re the anxious type who prefers to have all your bookings confirmed before you fly, then I highly recommend using an online booking agency instead. NEVER book directly through your hotel, as most of them will mark up the prices and sell you for a higher rate than what youâ??ll find on the streets.

I personally have been using Klook for all my travels in Asia, and never had an issue. Their mobile

voucher redemption (no printing, hooray!), instant confirmation and impeccable customer service have won me over numerous times. Whatâ??s more, their prices are extremely competitive as compared to the local ones we did.

Our hotel manager told us to shop around but not book outside, boasting that he could match any price or even get it for cheaper. Unfortunately, that all turned out to be a lie as they sold us a day tour to Hoa Lu and Tam Coc for USD 50 per person, when Klook offered the same tour for USD 40 (less after using promo codes).

I highly encourage the following day trips:
â?? Hoa Lu and Tam Coc
â?? Halong Bay (do the 3D2N version if you can, otherwise youâ??ll be spending 8 hours travelling to and fro on a single day trip)
â?? Sapa

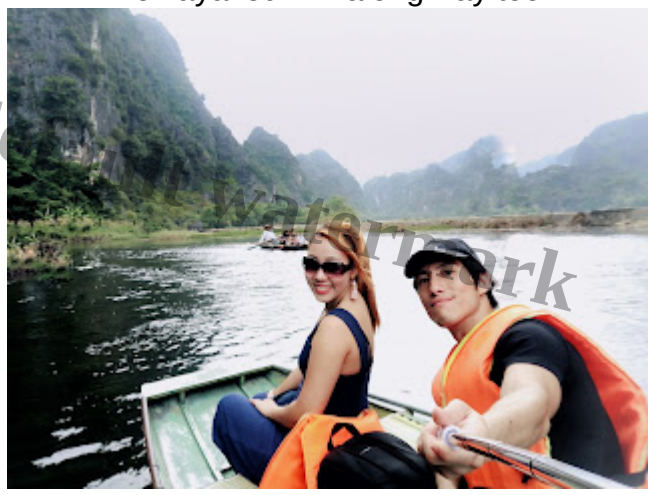


Us at Halong Bay


At a beautiful cave we explored while on our Halong Bay tour with Klook



We kayaked in Halong Bay too!



Being rowed along the scenic river of Tam Coc

For first-time users, you can key in the promo code **BB5** to add a $5 off voucher into your wallet (you can add the code into your wallet first for future use, valid until 30 November 2018). Donâ??t forget to also get $50 off in their year-end sale if youâ??re doing any bookings soon!

Click here to check out our adventures to Hoa Lu, Tam Coc and Halong Bay!

With love,
Budget Babe



Category

1. Family