

# contiki

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TRAVEL WITH NO REGRETS

ASIA 2017 / 18



# YOU ONLY GET TO LIVE IT ONCE

Way back in '62 one guy had a dream: to show young travellers the world and change their lives in doing so. 55 years later and we've perfected the secret formula. One of the most important things we've learnt along the way is to do things with passion or not at all.

Most companies provide good service. But at Contiki, we go further than that, making sure that every second is one to remember, every trip is one that will change your life and alter your perception of the world. That's what we live for and what keeps us up at night. Are you ready to become part of the story?

BUT IF YOU DO IT  
RIGHT, ONCE IS  
ENOUGH  
**#NOREGRET**

# CONTIKI CARES

Powered by **TREADRIGHT**

Contiki Cares is our mission to protecting and preserving the places we go to and the people we meet, so that the generations who follow us can see the world with the same wide-eyed wonder as we do. It's our dedication to treading lightly, acting with respect, and recognising when to speak for the planet when it can't speak for itself.

Advising us on our journey is the TreadRight Foundation, our older, wiser sister on all things sustainable and our guiding force in seeking to make the world a better, more interconnected place. Together with TreadRight, we're on a journey – to seek out the causes that need support, and the traditions and communities that need protection in our ever changing world.



**TREADRIGHT**  
FOUNDATION

[TreadRight.org](https://TreadRight.org)

## CONTIKI LOVES THE PLANET

Contiki is proud to be using 100% recycled LEIPA paper for the body of our brochures. By doing so, we proudly save 41,000 trees per year. It is just part of The Travel Corporation way.

# WELCOME TO CONTIKI

You're about to head out on the adventure of a lifetime & experience the way we travel. We can't wait to show you Asia, the Contiki way!

Like you, we're a bunch of passionate travellers, so we know all the top tips that you need to know before & during your trip.

We've put together this handy (& exclusive!) Traveller's Guide to set you out right.

## **Before you go...**

From the big stuff, like where does my trip start & what should I pack, to the smaller stuff, like where's the best place to find free WiFi on your trip – it's all here in our handy guide.

## **When you're on the road...**

We've packed in a heap of awesome things to do in almost all the cities we visit. It's the stuff the locals love – from the best places to shop to where to try some authentic local food, or just chill.

## **Getting Social...**

We all know there's nothing better than posting pics from where you'd rather be to your friends & family back home. So make sure you're using your trip hashtags, #contiki & #NOREGRETTS so they can follow your epic story!

Keep this in your pocket or take the sharing is caring approach & pass it onto a friend when you're done.

## **Let the adventure begin...**

Love,

Team Contiki

**LIVE WITH NO EXCUSES  
TRAVEL WITH  
#NOREGRETTS**

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# BEFORE YOU GO

## CHECK IN ONLINE

Save time on Day 1 & check in online before you leave home. It's easy. Just give us your details & tell us what you're interested in before you start your trip & you're done! It'll save you time, so you can get on with having fun as soon as you arrive. Visit [contiki.com/checkin](http://contiki.com/checkin) for details.

## PACK YOUR BAGS...

Packing for your trip can be niggly, so we make it easy with some handy tips.

On our trips, you can bring one bag or suitcase of 73cm x 50cm x 25cm (29" x 20" x 10"), with a max weight of 20kg (44lbs) – 15kg in India – plus one piece of hand luggage suitable as a carry-on for flights.

For the Bali Island Hopper trip, a large suitcase is not recommended due to transiting between islands on ferries. You will need to carry your own bags everywhere as portage does not exist yet in Indonesia. Due to the large number of included flights on most of our trips, luggage also needs to meet the weight & security restrictions imposed by airlines.

**Note:** Contiki is not responsible for any costs incurred by overweight luggage.

Here's an idea of what you could pack before you go. As well as all the standard stuff like jeans, jumpers, T-shirts, plus your iPod etc here are a couple of ideas about what else you might need on tour...

- Rainproof jacket
- Comfy walking shoes
- A watch
- Towel
- Swimwear
- A diary (for writing down all your travel stories)
- Medical stuff & insect repellent
- Travel adaptor/s
- Spare camera memory cards
- Going out gear & shoes
- A couple of fold away travel bags (for all that shopping, girls!)
- Some portable speakers

Slip-on shoes or sandals are useful for visits to pagodas or guest houses, as you'll save time taking your shoes on & off. When visiting pagodas or temples, shorts & tank-tops are unacceptable. Your knees & shoulders must also be covered.

## AND DON'T FORGET...

- Your passport!
- Your Contiki trip documents & hotel vouchers
- Travel insurance details
- Visas (if applicable, see p9)
- Credit cards & cash
- A spare print out of all your important details, just in case...

For more, head to [contiki.com/m/travel-resources](http://contiki.com/m/travel-resources) for all our suggestions.

## **OVERNIGHT BAG**

On some of our trips, it is necessary to use an overnight bag on the occasional nights when it's not possible to access your luggage (like overnight trains etc). It's a good idea to bring an overnight bag, or hand luggage that's big enough to double up as an overnighter when needed.

## **KICK-START MEETINGS**

On all our trips, a Kick-Start meeting with your Trip Manager will be held at the beginning of your trip – check your trip docs and the hotel notice board for details.

## **TEMPLE WEAR**

In many Buddhist temples & some palaces that are visited as inclusions on a Contiki trip, there is a requirement to dress respectfully. It is essential that knees & shoulders be covered for both sexes. This dress code is strictly enforced, with entrance refused to those who do not comply.

The following list is an example of the prohibited outfits for temples & some palaces:

- Sleeveless shirts
- Singlets/vest tops
- Shirts that have the mid-riff exposed
- See-through shirts
- Short trousers that expose the knees or ankles
- Trousers that have rips in them
- Leggings or trousers that are too tight (and thus revealing)
- Culottes
- Mini ski

The above list should also be looked at as a guideline for other places of religious significance.

Open-toed shoes/sandals/thongs/flip-flops/slip-slops/jandals/Havianas are permitted.

It is suggested that the following items be packed as “temple wear” for Asian trips. They can also be purchased on arrival, if needed:

- Lightweight trousers such as Fisherman pants: light, loose-fitting trousers that cover down to the ankle, jeans are also acceptable
- Sarongs can also be worn (by females only)
- Cotton t-shirt with sleeves (standard t-shirt is okay)

Look for options that are both respectful & cool (for the heat/humidity). After the visit to the location is completed, the clothing can be changed to something else better suited to the climate.

## **WARM & FORMAL CLOTHING**

If your trip includes stops at beaches & mountainous areas, you will need clothes for all temperatures. Ideas of what to pack include a swimsuit, sunglasses, a hat, t-shirts, shorts that are not too revealing, long trousers, some lightweight/long-sleeved tops & a light jacket that is wind & rain-resistant.

During winter (Nov to Jan), it can get cool to cold in Asia. Destinations at higher altitudes can get chilly; so you're advised to choose clothes that you can layer.

The larger cities like Phnom Penh, Ho Chi Minh City, Tokyo & Bangkok offer some upscale bars & restaurants, so be sure to pack some clothes & shoes for an evening out. However, it is recommended that you leave any expensive personal items at home to avoid attracting too much attention.

### **TOILETRIES & MEDICATION**

Although imported beauty products are readily available in larger cities, it's advisable to pack staples like sunscreen, contact lens solution & mosquito repellent, as well as prescription medication. Many medicines are available in Asia without prescriptions, but they may be of poor quality or out of date. Larger cities have department stores which are good places to stock up on Western toiletries & medicines.

In each of these countries, penalties for drug offences are severe & include the death penalty. The possession of even small quantities of "soft drugs" for recreational purposes can result in lengthy jail sentences, deportation or death.

### **ELECTRICITY & VOLTAGE**

**Cambodia:** Electricity in Phnom Penh & most of Cambodia is 220V, 50Hz. Electric power sockets generally fit two round pins. 3-pin plug adaptors are sold in markets in Phnom Penh.

**China:** China has 220V, 50 Hz electricity. Electric power sockets generally fit 2 & 3 round pins.

**India:** India has 230V, 50 Hz electricity. Power sockets fit 2-pin European-style appliances

**Indonesia:** Indonesia has 220V, 50 Hz electricity. Power sockets fit 2-pin European- style appliances

**Hong Kong:** Hong Kong has 220V, 50 Hz electricity. Power sockets fit 3-pin UK style appliances.

**Japan:** Japan has 100V 50Hz electricity. Electric power sockets take 2-pin USA-style plugs.

**Laos:** Laos has 220V, 50Hz electricity. As both 2-prong & flat pins are in use you would be wise to bring adaptors for both.

**Malaysia:** Malaysia's voltage is 240 volts, 50 Hz. Power sockets fit 3-pin UK-style appliances.

**Singapore:** Singapore's voltage is 220 - 240 volts, 50 Hz. Power sockets fit 3-pin UK-style appliances.

**Thailand:** Thailand has 220V, 50Hz electricity. Wall outlets are usually the round, 2-pin type, although some fit two flat blades.

**Vietnam:** Most of the electrical current in Vietnam is 220V, 50 Hz. Round 2-pin plugs are more common although some places use flat pins or 3-prong pins. Cheap adaptors are sold in local markets.

**Note:** Protect sensitive electronic equipment like laptops from power fluctuations by using a surge-protector.

### **FLYING HINTS**

- Ensure you carry all your travel documentation, your camera & any items to keep you occupied on your flight in your hand luggage.
- Most airports have restrictions on the amount of liquids that can be in your hand luggage. Check this before you pack.
- Take advantage of duty free shopping but check the current limits that apply in the country of your destination.



- Don't carry articles packed by others & never accept articles to carry from people not known to you.
- Adjust immediately into local time on arrival by staying awake until the evening before sleeping. This will help you recover from jet-lag.

## **TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

You should bring a money-belt (or similar) to safely carry your travel documents & cash & ensure that your luggage has a lock. Bring photocopies of your passport & visa, plus some extra passport photos if you're applying for on-arrival visas.

When flying into or within Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia & Laos you will be given baggage claim tags (they will be stuck to the back of your ticket). Keep these, as you may need to show them when leaving the airport.

## **INSURANCE**

It is strongly recommended that you take out comprehensive insurance cover for cancellation, medical expenses, personal accident, personal baggage, money & public liability before you travel.

For insurance details, please speak to your Travel Agent or Contiki reservations agent at the time of making your booking.

## **PASSPORTS & VISAS (PLEASE READ CAREFULLY)**

Depending on your nationality, you may require visas to enter certain countries on your trip. In Asia, some visas –but not all – can be purchased at the border with US\$ or local currency. You are fully responsible for obtaining all necessary visas that are required prior to the departure of your trip. Contiki is not legally permitted to knowingly allow anybody who does not have a valid visa to join a trip. Visa & other entry & exit conditions (such as currency, arrival/ departure taxes, customs & quarantine regulations) do change regularly.

At [www.contiki.com/contikipedia](http://www.contiki.com/contikipedia) we have put together some information for all of the countries that we visit on our Asia trips. Review contikipedia & consult your travel agent to determine which visas you require & how to obtain them.

Your passport must have at least six months' validity remaining when you arrive. Local immigration authorities may deny entry & deport people who do not meet this requirement, even if they intend on staying only for a short period. Important to consider:

1. Visas can take up to six weeks & a fee is normally charged.
2. Failure to obtain all necessary visas could cause you to miss part of your trip & will result in you incurring considerable expense & inconvenience.
3. It is better to apply for all visas through your travel agent before you leave home. Be aware that some visas can be purchased & arranged on arrival.
4. It is very important that the entry & exit dates are correct on the visa. Your travel agent will contact Contiki for full details. In these cases passport photos and US\$ will be required and your Trip Manager will explain the process.

## CURRENCY

In Asia, you'll be using several local currencies such as Yuan (China), Riel (Cambodia), Rupee (India) and Rupiah (Indonesia), Yen (Japan), Kip (Laos), Baht (Thailand) and Dong (Vietnam). US\$ is commonly used in Cambodia as the standard currency and can be used in several other countries as a backup currency.

Many of the countries that are visited on Contiki Asia trips accept cash more than credit cards. Local currency is readily available through cash machines which are prevalent throughout all travelling regions that Contiki Asia trips visit. These cash machines accept all major cards for withdrawals.

## ACCESS TO MONEY

We highly recommend that you carry your currency in a number of different ways (cash, credit cards and prepaid cash cards) so that you have access to money at all times while on your trip. Please do not rely solely on a credit/debit card for cash as they are not accepted in all areas.

**Please note:** Travellers Cheques are accepted in larger cities but can only be changed at money exchanges or banks (particularly in Vietnam). The process of changing travellers cheques in Asia can be quite time consuming. An alternative to Travellers Cheques are Prepaid Cash Cards that are preloaded with an amount prior to travel. Funds can be withdrawn through local cash machines.

It is wise to bring adequate funds in cash if travelling in remote areas. Your Trip Manager will advise when this is the case.

## BUDGETING

There are loads of great things to spend your money on while you're in Asia – from a trip to an offshore island, to a special dinner or an outfit that you just can't resist... So how much money should you bring?

Remember your trip already includes plenty of things such as breakfast every day, many meals, lots of sightseeing, guided tours & activities & much more. So what else will you spend your money on? As a guide, the table on the following page shows you the main items you'll probably spend your money on while you're on tour.

US\$ cash or local currency will be required for ME Time optional activities.

Item	Approx cost per day US\$	Frequency
Lunch	US\$3 - \$7 US\$10 - \$20 in Japan	Every day
Dinner	US\$10 - 15 US\$20 - \$30 in Japan	On nights when there is no included or optional dinner
Public transport / taxis (during free time)	\$5 - \$10	On free days in cities
Sightseeing / museum entrances	\$5 - \$10 per museum/sight	On free days in cities
ME Time optionals	US\$10	Average amount per day if you do all activities
Entertainment / drinks	US\$10 - \$40	As often as you want
Internet access	US\$2 - \$5 per hour	On free days in cities
Souvenirs	US\$10 - \$20	On free days in cities

## VACCINATIONS

At the time of production, the following immunizations were recommended for travellers in Asia by the CDC (US Centre for Diseases Control & Prevention):

- Diphtheria & tetanus
- Typhoid
- Japanese B Encephalitis
- Hepatitis A
- Rabies
- Polio
- Hepatitis B

Malaria & dengue fever are also an issue within this region. You should consult a travel doctor who specialises in travel medicines or your local doctor to advise on what vaccinations and/or preventative medicines would be required. Further information on vaccinations can be obtained at [www.contiki.com/contikipedia](http://www.contiki.com/contikipedia).

Don't forget to bring with you any medication that you may require en route such as antihistamines, antibiotics etc.

## INTERNATIONAL COUNTRY CODES

When calling home you will need to ensure you use the correct country code – below are a few for your reference.

Australia	61	Canada	1
Great Britain	44	USA	1
New Zealand	64	South Africa	27
Japan	81	Indonesia	6
Singapore	65	Malaysia	60
Israel	972	Brazil	55
Mexico	52		

Your Trip Manager can recommend the most convenient places to call home.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Taking photos is a great way of remembering your trip to Asia. Your Trip Manager will endeavour to allow as much time as possible for you to take photographs. However there may be occasions when it is not possible or practical to stop the transport the group is using.

If travelling with a digital camera, you should try to carry memory cards with enough storage for at least five days at a time. You may have access to internet cafes in some larger places visited to download photographs. Doing this every couple of days will reduce the free time you have in cities.



# DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Although DVT is rare, we love our travellers & keeping healthy before, during & after your trip is important. If you are flying to &/or from your trip, please read the DVT info below for our hints on what to look for & how to minimise any risks.

## WHAT IS DVT?

DVT is when blood clots develop in the veins of the legs, the groin & sometimes the arms. For some people, the risk of DVT can significantly increase after a flight of 4 hours plus, & it's important to note that it can take a few days before the side effects of DVT become known. If you're on tour & you feel any symptoms below then let your Trip Manager know.

## FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DVT INCLUDE

- Immobility or cramped seating positions
- Flying
- Recent major surgery
- Personal or family history of DVT, heart disease or Pulmonary Embolism
- Cancer, pregnancy, obesity, or if you're taking contraceptive pills

## THE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Redness or skin discolouration, warmth, hardening & swelling in the ankles, calves or thighs
- Tenderness &/or pain on walking, raising or flexing the foot

## HOW CAN YOU LOWER THE RISK?

- Make more leg room (pop your hand luggage in the overhead lockers)
- Try not to sit with your legs crossed
- Try some of the exercises listed on the right
- Elevate your legs whenever you can
- Wear your favourite comfy threads when travelling
- Take a short walk every 2-3 hours
- Drink plenty of fluids & keep hydrated
- Avoid too much alcohol & taking sleeping tablets
- If you think you're at risk – throw on some compression stockings for your flight

## OUR TOP EXERCISES TO KEEP YOU MOVING...

- Bend & straighten your legs, feet & toes regularly
- Press the balls of your feet down hard on the floor
- Take a short walk

## DVT TOP EXERCISES



Take advantage of any breaks by getting off the coach & stretch your legs.

You can also exercise whilst seated. Use the following movements to keep your circulation moving & to avoid getting stiff:



Bend & straighten your legs, feet & toes.



Press the balls of your feet down hard against the floor.



Perform regular upper body movements & breathing to relax the back & shoulders.



Make sure you drink water regularly to avoid becoming dehydrated.

# OTHER INFO

## YOUR CONTIKI TEAM

### TRIP MANAGER

Contiki Trip Managers have been chosen for the qualities that enable them to make your trip to Asia a richer experience. Many of our Trip Managers have worked with us in other places around the globe & they're all English-speaking expats who call Asia home. You'll appreciate their knowledge of all the local hotspots like where you're going, the best things to see & ideas for your free time. They also complete all the 'behind the scenes' work of pre-booking, border & customs procedures to make your trip hassle-free. In some circumstances, it may be necessary for your Trip Manager to make decisions on behalf of the group as a whole. In such cases, we ask for your co-operation. His or her decisions & discretion should be observed because they are in your best interest & that of the Team, trip group & Contiki.

### LOCAL GUIDES

Contiki works closely with our 'on-the-ground' partners, to buddy up with local English-speaking guides. These professional, Local Guides help you learn & discover even more with their in-depth knowledge of the places you're visiting.

### DRIVERS

With their experience, you are in good hands. The Driver is responsible for the coach & we ask you to remember that they have to keep it clean for everyone. Please adhere to the suggestions made to you at the beginning of your trip regarding waste paper, eating & drinking while on board the coach.

The Driver, Trip Manager & Local Guide work as a team, so you may often see them together planning your days, to give you lots of variety & choice & show you the best of what Asia has to offer.

### ACCOMMODATION

We have chosen a wide range of accommodation in order for you to get a taste of what Asia has to offer. Our accommodation has been chosen for their particular character, charm, location & style.

Contiki Asia is almost entirely all hotel accommodation. You'll stay in centrally located 3-star hotels & resorts on a twin-share basis. They're all very comfortable & have some great amenities, like WiFi (if you're carrying a laptop or smart phone), ensuite bathrooms & a TV. We have also included some real Asian experiences too. Like a family-run Guest house in the Mekong, a traditional junk boat in Halong Bay & an authentic local guesthouse in Laos.

**Note:** All contracts for your accommodation are negotiated by Contiki many months in advance. There may be times when hotels will provide alternative accommodation to that advertised. Such situations are beyond Contiki's control & we will do our utmost to minimise any inconvenience.

### MEALS

All breakfasts are included, plus some lunches & dinners too. We don't include every meal for a reason: to enable you to explore & try new foods from the places you visit in your free time. Your Trip Manager & Local Guides can also recommend some great places to eat & we offer some excellent optional activities where you can cook traditional meals.

## **MAKING A DIFFERENCE & RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL**

Contiki Asia allows you to give something back to the places you visit. Wherever possible Contiki is involved with organisations that support the community – so when you travel Contiki, you also begin helping some of the less fortunate in the countries we visit.

For example, some of our included dinners are at restaurants where youth have been taken off the streets & into a job, training them not only in hospitality but equipping them with life skills too. You can eat their local cuisine, made with local ingredients & not only do you support these local disadvantaged youths & their families, you get a delicious local meal too!

In China, we visit a local hutong & also eat lunch with a local family – so you can get an in-depth experience & a look at the way the locals live.

## **TRANSPORT**

In Asia, half the fun is not where you go, but how you get there. We have mixed in planes, overnight trains, air conditioned coaches & mini vans with tuk-tuks, cyclos, bicycles, boats & more, so that you have some funky & fun ways to get around. Travelling with Contiki in Asia is varied & we make the most of what's on offer so you get a true taste of how the locals live.

Between Beijing and Xi'an we travel just like the locals do – by train. We take an overnight train with sleeper beds in 4-berth cabins. The beds have thick mattresses with pillows, clean linen & blankets.

## **YOUR COACH**

We always use private, air-con coaches instead of local buses, meaning we can get you to more remote places, quickly & easily in style and comfort.

Your comfort is our top concern whilst you travel. We do make frequent stops every few hours where you will have the opportunity to buy a drink or snack, smoke (if you do) & use the toilets.

Smoking is not permitted on the coach.

## **INTERNAL FLIGHTS**

To reduce travelling time between destinations we use internal & international flights with reputable airlines, giving you more time in the places that count.

## **MORE FUN WAYS TO GET AROUND**

On land, you'll take rides in tuk-tuks, on bicycles & rik shaws; plus when you hit the water there are long tail boats, dragon boats, & traditional junk boats.

## **HEALTH & HYGIENE**

It's important to look after your health whenever you are travelling, as you may have more late nights & early mornings than you do at home. Your Trip Manager will give you some hints on how to stay healthy while on your trip & will also be able to provide you with obtaining medical assistance if you need it. Please remember the quality of medical services varies considerably from country to country in Asia & that medications available on prescription at home may be obtainable over the counter in Asia.

Tap water in some areas is undrinkable, so please take care – your Trip Manager will advise you on areas where it's safe to drink. However most bottled water is cheap & easily found throughout the countries visited.

If you are on a regular course for medicine/contraceptives you must bring a supply sufficient for the whole time you are away. We also suggest you bring a small supply of antiseptic cream, Band Aids, aspirin, insect repellent (containing a minimum 30% DEET), cough mixture, motion sickness medication & a supply of antibiotics. These items are your responsibility to bring when you travel.

## **LOCAL CUSTOMS**

In some countries visited, revealing clothing is culturally insensitive off the beach. Shorts are generally fine as long as they aren't too short.

In terms of behaviour, public displays of affection between men & women are considered shocking in some places. On the other hand, it's perfectly normal for a pair of men or a pair of women to link arms or hold hands. Upon meeting someone new, people may simply nod to each other or may shake hands. Using both hands to shake someone's hand is considered a gesture of respect.

The majority of men in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand & Vietnam smoke. While flights are non-smoking, few restaurants or bars offer non-smoking seating. However, when sitting with the group for meals, it is suggested that smoking is done away from the group so that they may enjoy their meal in a smoke free environment.

Meeting the people of the countries you visit will enhance your enjoyment & give you some great memories to take home. Generally, if the local people see you respecting their customs they are complimented & you are likely to be well received by them. Remember, as an adult you will be held liable for your actions according to the individual laws of each country.

Things that you may consider rude in your country aren't always rude in Asia. For example, burping loudly, spitting, shoving and shouting are considered pretty customary in China.

Try to learn some of the local language – but remember there are often many different dialects to choose from! Your Trip Manager or Local Guide can give you some tips on words you can try. On the other end of the spectrum, countries like Japan consider things like having a loud conversation or using your phone on public transport rude.

## **TIPPING**

In all areas of the service industry, from restaurants, bars, hotels & taxis, it is common practice to tip if you feel that the service received has been excellent. The same goes for your Contiki Team. If you feel that their service has been exceptional, then feel free to tip them. Our travellers often ask what to tip, we suggest US\$3 per person per day. Remember that tipping (& how much you tip) is optional - it's entirely up to you.

In Indonesia, a service charge of 10% and government tax of 11% are often added to the price for any service related transaction.

## **SHOPPING**

Some of the countries visited are still developing & some locals can be very persistent when trying to make money, especially around tourists. People may try to overcharge you, but rather than becoming irritated, join the game & bargain! They are not all ruthless hagglers, so smiles & jokes are the best way to agree on a good price. Just know that some cultures are more adept at haggling and willing to negotiate than others. It is also recommended to check prices of the same items in the neighbourhood before purchasing.



If you are being followed by street vendors & do not wish to make a purchase, often the best course of action is to say “no” firmly & politely & continue on your way. Do not hesitate, linger, use the terms “maybe” or “later” as this will encourage the seller to try & engage you further.

Some shops may provide a mail service, but please be aware that it can take up to six months & sometimes longer for the goods to arrive home and on arrival, perhaps be liable to customs & excise duty.

If you choose to ship items home, we highly recommend that you buy shipping insurance & check the policy details. As shops are not responsible for damages incurred en route, it’s better to be safe than sorry. In large department stores the prices are fixed.

When it comes to getting a bargain while shopping there are some simple guidelines to follow:

- Start bargaining at a fraction of the asking price. For inexpensive items you can drop as low as 50% of the price. Try not to start too high!
- Get some practice on smaller items first. Try your skills at bargaining on less expensive items, before moving up to the big stuff!
- Don’t rush! Take your time to bargain – if the seller doesn’t move on the price, you can walk away and look at other items
- Decide what you are prepared to pay. Ask yourself “how much would I pay for this?” and this will help to focus your bargaining skills.
- Walk away! If you reach a sticking price that is still too high for you, give your final offer and walk away slowly (but make sure you look at other vendors and items). Sometimes you might be called back – and sometimes you might go back without achieving anything.
- Don’t feel sorry for the sellers. There will be many sad stories that vendors will tell you about how you are taking “food from the mouths of my children”, but this is all part of the game. Rest assured, they will make a profit on any items they sell.

Watch your belongings and pockets – many pickpockets and thieves work in the markets that are popular with tourists. Contiki Holidays cannot accept responsibility for any misrepresented or faulty goods. We cannot take responsibility for following up on merchandise that you choose to ship home.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY**

For the most part, Asia is a safe place to travel. However pickpockets and thieves work in common tourist areas throughout Asia, targeting locals as well as foreign tourists. Here are some tips on avoiding trouble:

- Don’t keep all your money in the same place.
- Don’t carry too much cash around with you.
- Don’t carry your passport with you.
- Keep your bag zipped and hold on tight on a crowded subway or in other crowded places.
- Don’t carry your wallet in an open back pocket.
- Don’t carry valuables in a backpack.

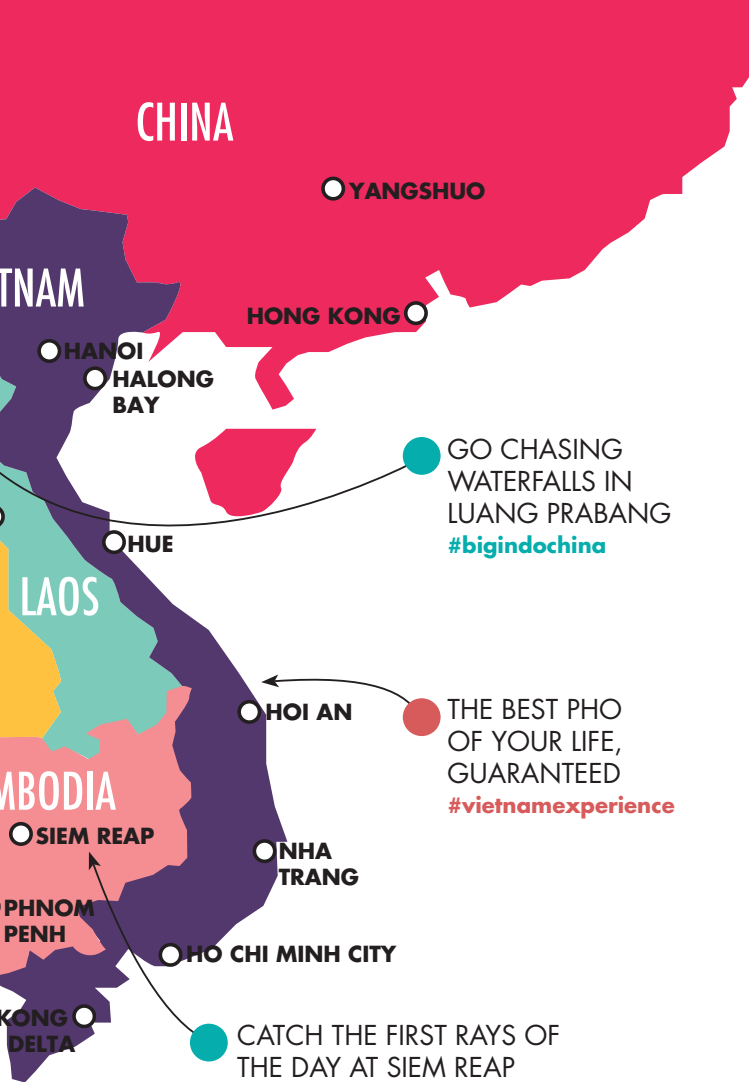
## **LAUNDRY FACILITIES**

It’s a good idea to start the trip with a week’s worth of clean clothes so if it does take you a while to get the opportunity to do washing, you won’t get caught out. Laundry services are available at a cost in most cities. Your Trip Manager will advise on the best places to go.

# WHERE WE TAKE YOU



TREEHOUSE SLEEPS  
IN ENCHANTING  
KHAO SOK  
**#northernthaihighlights**



CHINA

YANGSHUO

Vietnam

HONG KONG

HANOI  
HALONG BAY

GO CHASING WATERFALLS IN LUANG PRABANG  
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HUE

LAOS

HOI AN

THE BEST PHO OF YOUR LIFE, GUARANTEED  
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Cambodia

NHA TRANG

SIEM REAP

PHNOM PENH

HO CHI MINH CITY

Mekong Delta

CATCH THE FIRST RAYS OF THE DAY AT SIEM REAP  
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SINGAPORE



INDONESIA

# WHERE YOUR TRIP STARTS

**CHECK YOUR CONTIKI TRIP DOCUMENTS FOR HOTEL LOCATIONS FOR EACH TRIP.**

## **KICK-START MEETINGS**

Your Kick-Start meeting provides a chance to meet your fellow passengers & Trip Manager & receive any new information about your trip. Trip briefings are held at 6:00pm on Day 1 for all trips.

Check for information regarding timings & location on the noticeboard in the departure hotel reception area.

## **IF YOU MISS THE TRIP**

Please contact the reception staff or representative at the start hotel as soon as possible. They will give you specific details on how to join your trip.

# VIETNAM

**Currency:** Dong (VND)

**Language:** Vietnamese

**Country Code:** +84

**Climate:** From April to October, most of the country is affected by south-western monsoons. The rains, which tend to be concentrated in the late afternoons, provide welcome relief to the heat. Travel to very remote areas may be affected by the rains, but overall they should not interfere with your trip. The summer months are the perfect time to visit Ha Long Bay, as the water is warm enough for swimming.

Northern Vietnam is at its loveliest from September to December, when there's a good chance of clear skies & low humidity. The hottest months in Hanoi are April & May. However nights from October to January can get quite cold so warm clothing will be needed.

For beach destinations, such as Nha Trang, Phan Thiet & Phu Quoc Island, the weather is warm & sunny almost all year-round. The best time to visit is from mid-December until September, when there may be little or no rain.

## **HOW TO GET THERE - HO CHI MINH CITY**

Drive time from Tan Son Nhat International Airport to the city is approximately 45 minutes. Metered taxis cost VND150,000 to 170,000 (usually under US\$10.00). Ensure the taxi meter is turned on & working! Avoid taxis that offer to set the price. Mailinh & Vinasun Taxis are recommended.

## **GETTING AWAY - HANOI**

Noi Bai International Airport is approximately 35 km or 45 minutes drive north of the city. While it can be a little more expensive you can prepay a taxi/transfer in the airport for around VND200,000. Metered taxis cost approx VND450,000 (US\$20). Ensure the taxi meter is turned on & working! Airport, Noi Bai & Mai Linh Taxis are recommended. Hotel reception can organise a transfer for US\$20 per car (for two people with luggage).

## MOBILE PHONES

You can buy a SIM card &/or handset at any mobile phone shop. 'Top up' credit vouchers are available at most phone shops (particularly ones displaying the network logo), local post offices (buu dien) or at the airport for around US\$10-15. Most areas have 3G coverage.

## PUBLIC PHONES

These require phone cards, which are sold at post offices. For the best long distance rate, dial 171 before the country code & number. This line has a flat fee of US\$1.30 per minute to 50 countries. You can place international phone calls at post offices or at most hotels, although hotels often charge extra fees.

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR FREE TIME....

**Hanoi:** In 1010 Emperor Ly Thai To founded his capital, which he christened 'Rising Dragon', on the banks of the Red River. Almost a millennium later, Hanoi remains Vietnam's political centre, its crowded streets lined with reminders of its long & turbulent history. You'll find the Temple of Literature, an Old Quarter of winding alleys, crowded markets & traditional shop-houses; tree-lined avenues flanked by imposing French colonial villas; & the Soviet-style mausoleum built in honour of the man who led the country to independence, Ho Chi Minh.

**Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum:** Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum is the historic place where respected Uncle Ho read the Vietnam Manifesto on 2 September, 1945. There are always two guardsmen dressed in white uniforms standing at the main entrance.

**Thang Long water puppet theatre:** Traditional legends & historical tales are among the enchanting puppet plays performed at this popular theatre.

**West Lake:** West Lake is a freshwater lake in the centre of Hanoi. With a shore length of 17 km (about 10.6 miles), this is the largest lake in the capital & a popular place for recreation with many surrounding gardens, hotels & villas. The lake was created from a curved part of the Red River & appeared in several Vietnamese legends. One legend suggests that West Lake was shaped after the battle between Lac Long Quan & a night-tail fox spirit, which is why the lake was once called "Fox Corpse Swamp". A small part of West Lake is divided by Thanh Nien Road to form Truc Bach Lake.

**Sapa:** Set high in Vietnam's northeast mountains, Sapa offers spectacular views of jagged mountain ridges, terraced rice paddies & green valleys inhabited by people of various hill tribes, all of whom congregate in Sapa's colourful market. Each group has its own distinctive style of dress. Sapa is becoming a bit of a Mecca for tourists.



## OTHER IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN HO CHI MINH CITY INCLUDE

**Vietnam History Museum:** This collection of historical treasures & artefacts is one of the few Vietnamese museums with helpful English explanations to make sure you get your way around the museum easily.

**Ho Chi Minh City Museum:** Once known as the Revolutionary Museum, it was renamed Ho Chi Minh City Museum that displays the history of Ho Chi Minh City. It is an attractive building where many couples choose to take their wedding photos.

**Cao Dai Temple - United Colors of Religion:** Just outside Tay Ninh & 60 miles northwest of Ho Chi Minh City is the Great Temple or Holy See, the centre of the intriguing Cao Dai sect. Cao Dai is a syncretistic Vietnamese religious movement that incorporates aspects of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism & even Catholicism. The Cao Dai Temple (as it is more commonly known) was begun in 1933 in a unique architectural style that reflects its blended traditions. Most people choose to visit on a day trip from Ho Chi Minh City.

# THAILAND

**Currency:** Thai Baht (THB)

**Language:** Thai

**Country Code:** +66

**Climate:** Due to its long north-south span, Thailand's climate is very diverse. While temperature differences in Bangkok are slight (highs around 38°C or 95°F in April & lows of 32°C or 88°F in January), it can drop down to 13°C in Chiang Mai in the winter. Northern, north-eastern & central Thailand have three seasons: the rainy season lasts from July - November; the cool season runs from November - mid-February; & the hot season from March - June. Southern Thailand has only two seasons: wet in the summer & dry in the winter. As a general rule, the farther south you go, the shorter the dry season.

## HOW TO GET THERE - BANGKOK

Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi International Airport is 30km from the city, or approximately 50 minutes' drive. A taxi should cost approx. 600 Baht

## USEFUL INFORMATION

**Mobile phones:** Thailand has two mobile phone networks: GSM & NMT 900MHz. Most areas have 3G coverage while built-up areas have 4G. You can buy a SIM card for around 200 THB. 'Top up' credit vouchers are available at most phone shops and convenient stores.

## GETTING AROUND

**Bangkok:** With towering skyscrapers pressed up against Chinese shop-houses & brand-new Mercedes squeezing past vendors with pushcarts, this is a city of sharp contrasts. See the dazzling Royal Palace & the city's countless pagodas, while shoppers could spend weeks sifting through Bangkok's many malls & open-air markets.

Dining options are varied; whether you're eating French cuisine in a plush hotel restaurant or sampling fried crickets on the side of the road, prepare to have all of your senses engaged. This is the place to eat, drink & be merry.

## OTHER IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN BANGKOK INCLUDE

**Floating market & rose garden:** The Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, situated 110 km west of Bangkok, is a very attractive place for tourists to see the old style, local & traditional way of selling & buying fruits, vegetables etc from small boats. You will also see traditional Thai houses plus the way residents in the area live & travel by boats. The trip includes a visit to Nakorn Pathom, site of the highest Chedi in Thailand called “Phra Patom Chedi” which is the largest pagoda in Southeast Asia.

**River Kwai:** Travel to Kanchanaburi, site of the infamous bridge over the River Kwai. Known as the “Death Railway” & built during World War II by prisoners of war, take a visit to the war cemetery before crossing the bridge in the train. After lunch visit the poignant war museum for another look at the local history.

**Phuket:** Located off Thailand’s west coast in the Andaman Sea, Phuket is the largest island in Thailand with an area of 810km<sup>2</sup>. The coastal scenery is magnificent, with tropical rainforests, steep limestone cliffs, rocky beaches & picture-postcard beaches of soft golden sand. Inland lay coconut, pineapple, cashew nut & rubber plantations. Clear water & colourful coral reefs make this area the most popular dive spot in Thailand.

**Koh Samui:** Lying off Thailand’s east coast in the Gulf of Thailand, Koh Samui offers everything you could want in a beach retreat: white sand beaches, coconut palms, fresh seafood & clear water. With an area of 247km<sup>2</sup>, Koh Samui is the largest island in an archipelago of around 80 islands. The nearby Koh Phangan & Koh Tao also offer many beach resorts & great diving. Like Phuket, Koh Samui attracts many visitors yet has plenty out-of-the-way spots for those wishing to get away from it all.



# CAMBODIA

**Currency:** Riel (KHR)

**Language:** Khmer

**Country Code:** +855

**Climate:** Two monsoons dictate Cambodia's climate. From November to April, a north-eastern monsoon brings cool air but little rain, while a south-western monsoon, which occurs from May to October, causes heavy winds & rain. During the summer rainy season rains tend to take place in the late afternoons.

## GETTING AWAY - SIEM REAP

Siem Reap's small airport is 6km from town & therefore only a short drive. Best option is to book a transfer to the airport through the hotel. Prices start at US\$13.

## MOBILE PHONES

Cambodia uses a GSM mobile phone network. Most areas have 3G coverage and 4G can be found in some areas of Phnom Penh. You can buy a SIM card for around US\$5-10. 'Top up' credit vouchers are available at most phone shops and convenience stores.

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR FREE TIME

**Phnom Penh:** Cambodia's capital for the most of the last 6 centuries, Phnom Penh retains a rather dusty, small town feel, with crumbling French colonial buildings, sprawling Wats (as the pagodas are known here) & the imposing Royal Palace. Phnom Penh is also where the well-known memorials & museums of the Khmer Rouge atrocities are located, including Tuol Sleng.

**Siem Reap:** Built between seven & eleven centuries ago, the temples – about 100 of which are still standing – were devoted to Buddha & Hindu deities. Within the fortified city of Angkor Thom lies The Bayon, the third tier of which is lined by more than 200 huge, carved faces that stare down from 54 towers. Other highlights include the Buddhist temple of Ta Prohm, which looks just as it did when French explorers stumbled upon it in the 1860s & Angkor Wat, a vast temple complex dedicated to Vishnu in the early 12th century.

# LAOS

**Currency:** Kip (LAK)

**Language:** Lao

**Country Code:** +856

**Climate:** Laos has two seasons. The rainy season runs from May to October & the dry season from November to April. Most rain falls in the south. For the most part, Laos is hot, although there is a good deal of fluctuation between summer & winter temperatures at higher elevations. The capital, Vientiane, ranges from the mid-30°C (mid-80°F) in April to the upper- 20°C (mid-70°F) in January. In the mountains temperatures can plummet to near freezing in December and January. During February & March local people burn the fields & forests to prepare for the annual crops, so during this time Laos is typically hot & smoky.

## MOBILE PHONES

Laos uses a GSM mobile phone network. It is easy to purchase a pre-paid SIM card in Laos – just make sure your phone is unlocked to accept SIMs from other networks, or buy another handset. Handsets are cheaper in Thailand & Vietnam. Cost of a SIM card is around 200,000 KIP.



## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR FREE TIME

**Vientiane:** Set along a bend in the Mekong River, Laos' capital is a perfect spot to chill out & relax. You'll find some beautiful old Wats to explore, a large market that holds the best selection of hand woven textiles in the country, a variety of good restaurants serving an international mix of cuisine & pleasant riverside bars at which to sip a beer & enjoy the sunset. This is a lovely spot to recover from the rigours of travel.

**Vang Vieng:** Formerly a pit stop between Vientiane & Luang Prabang, now Vang Vieng has become a destination for those keen to enjoy eco tours, trekking, caving & rock climbing activities. The main attraction is the countryside & intricate rock formations riddled with caves, although the laid-back town is popular with backpackers for its social cafés & bars.

**Luang Prabang:** The site of Laos' former royal capital is the little town of Luang Prabang. Nestled in an elbow of the Mekong River & surrounded by tree clad mountains, this remote northern town has long been Laos' religious centre. You'll find dozens of historic temples, lovely French-built villas & streets lined with charming old shop-houses. With its main hall inlaid with a dazzling mosaic of cut glass the Royal Palace is well worth a visit, as are the Pak Ou caves, a Buddhist cave shrine some distance up river.

**Xiengkhoang ('Plain of Jars'):** While there are many theories, nobody really knows why hundreds of huge stone jars are scattered across several sites on a barren Laotian plain. Carved from solid rock, most of the containers weigh from 600kg to one tonne apiece; the largest weighs six tonnes. The jars are said to be 2,000 years old but again, nobody knows for sure. Were they sarcophagi, water jars, rice stores? Scientists continue to debate this intriguing find; other visitors just marvel at these mysterious relics.

**Pakse:** Set on the Mekong River, the southern town of Pakse features French colonial architecture & a colourful market stocked with fresh produce grown in the nearby Bolaven Plateau, a highland region inhabited by a number of ethnic minority groups. Pakse is also the jumping off point for a visit to Wat Phu, an exquisite, Angkor-era temple complex built between the 6th & 13th centuries. Even the most temple-weary visitor can't help but be captivated by the mesmerising beauty of these lonely ruins.



# MALAYSIA

**Currency:** Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)

**Language:** Malay

**Country Code:** +60

**Climate:** The climate for majority for the year is very warm where during the winter (November, December and January) the lowest temperature rarely falls below 20°C (68°F). During its hottest months (July and August) the temperature ranges from 30-40°C (86-104°F). Warm, dry season is from February through to June with Monsoon occurring in October.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

**Mobile phones:** Most areas have 3G coverage while built-up areas have 4G. You can buy a SIM card for around 15 MYR. 'Top up' credit vouchers are available at most phone shops and convenient stores with Tune Talk and Hot Link.

## GETTING AROUND

**Kuala Lumpur:** The capital has plenty to do and so much to see. The best way to get around the city is by the Monorail or LRT system however taxis are by meter and getting around the metropolis will often only send you back 8 MYR. GrabCar and Uber are also legal here and will save you \$\$.

Dining throughout Malaysia changes from state to state, where its history and occupants are identified through its cuisine. The fusion of Malay, Indian and Chinese is found everywhere and is best tasted at a night hawker where you can eat for as little as 4 MYR. For those that love to treat themselves, there are plenty of 5-star restaurants and bars with world class views of the city in Kuala Lumpur.



# SINGAPORE

**Currency:** Singapore Dollar (SGD)

**Language:** Malay, Tamil, Mandarin, English

**Country Code:** +65

**Climate:** Singapore has a tropical rainforest climate as it is situated near the Equator. The weather is predominantly warm, wet and humid all year round with the average temperature between 25-31°C (77-88°F). The hottest months are April and May when it can reach temperatures of up to 37°C (98°F) and the driest months are considered to be February and March.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

**Mobile phones:** xxxxxx

## GETTING AROUND

Singapore's MRT (mass rapid transit) system is probably the best way to explore the city. This extensive rail network is easy to use and has stops near every major attraction. Uber operates in the city and metered taxis are available.

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR FREE TIME

**Marina Bay Sands:** Home to the highest infinity pool in Singapore. Check out panoramic views of Singapore from above the hotel at a public bar called CÉ LA VI. At night after 7pm there is a night time light show that occurs daily.

**Gardens by the Bay:** The world class Gardens by the Bay is renowned for its sky trees and night time light show where the garden comes to life. You can stroll around that park for free or enter the Flower Dome to explore the vibrant colours of the seasonal flora.

**Universal Studios:** located on the island of Sentosa, Universal Studios Singapore is the 2nd Universal studios in Asia and is said to be best theme park in South East Asia for the next 30 years to come..

**Raffles Hotel:** The home of the Singapore Sling cocktail. This luxury hotel is named after the founder of Singapore, Sir Thomas Raffles. The history behind this historic building has granted this hotel a national monument status in 1987.



## **SOUTHEAST ASIA EMBASSY & CONSULATE INFO**

### **AUSTRALIAN EMBASSIES IN ASIA**

#### **Cambodia Embassy**

No. 16B, National Assembly Street, Sangkat Tonle Bassac, Khan Chamkamon, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Tel: +855 23 213470 Fax: +855 23 213 413

#### **Laos Embassy**

KM4, Thadeua Road, Watnak Village, Sisattanak District, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

Tel: +856 21 353800 Fax: +856 21 353801

#### **Malaysia Embassy**

6, Jalan Yap Kwan Seng, Kampung Baru, 50450 Kuala Lumpur

Tel: +603 2146 5555, Fax: +603 2141 5773

#### **Singapore Embassy**

25 Napier Rd, Singapore 258507

Tel: +65 6836 4100, Fax: +65 67375481

#### **Thailand Embassy**

37 South Sathorn Road, Bangkok.

Tel: +66 2 3446300 Fax: +66 2 3446593

#### **Vietnam Embassy**

8 Dao Tan Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi.

Tel: +84-4 3774 0100 Fax: +84-4 3774 0111

#### **Vietnam Consulate-General**

5th Floor, The Landmark Building, 5B Ton Duc Thang, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City.

Tel: +84 83521 8100 Fax: +84 83521 8101

### **UK EMBASSIES IN ASIA**

#### **Cambodia Embassy**

27-29 Street 75 Sangkat Srah Chak, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh.

Tel: +855 23 427124 / 428153 Fax: +855 23 427125

#### **Laos**

See UK Embassy in Thailand, Bangkok. Assistance can also be gained from the Australian Embassy.

#### **Malaysia Embassy**

Level 27, Menara Binjai, 2 Jalan Binjai, 50450 Kuala Lumpur.

Tel: +603 2170 2200, Fax: +603 2170 2370

#### **Singapore Embassy**

100 Tanglin Road, Singapore 247919.

Tel: +65 6424 4200

#### **Thailand Embassy**

14 Wireless Road, Lumpini, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330.

Tel: +66 2 305 8333 Fax: +66 2 255 9278

#### **Thailand Honorary Consulate**

198 Bumrungraj Road, Muang, Chiang Mai 50000.

Tel: +66 53 263 015 Fax: +66 53 263 016.

#### **Vietnam Embassy**

Central Building 4th floor, 31 Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi.

Tel: +84 4 3936 0500 Fax: +84 4 3936 0561

#### **Vietnam Consulate-General:**

25 Le Duan Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City.

Tel: +84 8 3825 1380 Fax: +84 8 3829 5257 - Visa/Consular

## **NEW ZEALAND EMBASSIES IN ASIA**

### **Cambodia**

The New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand represents interests in Cambodia.

### **Laos**

The New Zealand Embassy Bangkok, Thailand represents interests in Laos. The Australian Embassy may be able to offer assistance.

### **Malaysia Embassy**

Level 21, Menara IMC, 8 Jalan Sultan Ismail, 50250 Kuala Lumpur.  
Tel: +603 2078 2533 Fax: +603 2078 0387

### **Singapore Embassy**

Level 21-04, 1 George St, Singapore 049145.  
Tel: +65 6235 9966, Fax: +65 6536 8180

### **Thailand Embassy**

M Thai Tower, 14th Floor, All Seasons Place 87 Wireless Road, Lumpini, Bangkok 10330.  
Tel: +66 2 254 2530 Fax: +66 2 253 9045 or +66 2 253 0249

### **Vietnam Embassy**

Level 5 63 Ly Thai To Street, Hanoi.  
Tel: +84 4 3824 1481 Fax: +84 4 3824 1480

### **Vietnam Consulate-General**

Suite 909, Level 9, The Metropolitan Building, 235 Dong Khoi Street District 1, Ho Chi Minh City.  
Tel: +84 8 3827 2745 Fax: +84 8 3824 6940

## **USA EMBASSIES IN ASIA**

### **Cambodia Embassy**

#1, Street 96, Sangkat Wat Phnom, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh.  
Tel: +855 23 728 000 Fax: +855 23 728 600

### **Laos Embassy**

19 Rue Bartholonie, That Dam.  
Tel: +856 21 267 000 Fax: +856 21 267 190

### **Malaysia Embassy**

376 Jalan Tun Razak, Kuala Lumpur, 50450 Kuala Lumpur.  
Tel: +603 2168 5000 Fax: +603 2142 2207

### **Singapore Embassy**

27 Napier Road, Singapore 258508.  
Tel: +65 6476 9100 Fax: +65 6476 9340

### **Thailand Embassy**

95 Wireless Road, Bangkok.  
Tel: +66-2-205-4000 or +66 2 205 4049 Fax: +66 2 205 4103

### **Thailand Consular-General**

387 Wichayanond Road, Chiang Mai 50300.  
Tel: +66 53 107 777 (Emergencies) Fax: +66 53 252 633

### **Vietnam Embassy**

Lang Ha Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi.  
Tel: +84 4 3850 5000 Fax: +84 4 3850 5010

### **Vietnam Consulate General**

4 Le Duan Blvd., District 1, Ho Chi Minh City.  
Tel: +84 8 3520 4200 Fax +84 8 3520 4235

## **CANADIAN EMBASSIES IN ASIA**

### **Cambodia**

The Canadian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand represents interests in Cambodia. The Australian Embassy in Laos may be able to offer assistance.

### **Laos**

The Canadian Embassy Bangkok, Thailand represents interests in Laos. The Australian Embassy in Laos may be able to offer assistance.

### **Malaysia Embassy**

17th Floor, Menara Tan & Tan, 207 Jalan Tun Razak, 50400 Kuala Lumpur. Tel: +603 2718 3333 Fax: +603 2718 3399

### **Singapore Embassy**

One George Street, #11-01, Singapore 049145.  
Tel: +65 6854 5900 Fax: +65 6854-5930

### **Thailand Embassy:**

15th Floor, Abdulrahim Place 990 Rama IV Road, Bangrak, Bangkok 10500.

Tel: +66 2 636 0540 Fax: +66 2 636 0566

### **Thailand Consulate**

151 Super Highway, Tambon Tahsala Amphur Muang, Chiang Mai 50000.

Tel: +66 53 85 0147 or +66 53 24 2292, Fax: +66 53 85 0332

### **Vietnam Embassy**

31 Hung Vuong, Hanoi.

Tel: +84 4 3734 5000 Fax: +84 4 3734 5049

### **Vietnam Consulate-General**

10th Floor, The Metropolitan 235 Dong Khoi, District 1,

Ho Chi Minh City. Tel: +84 8 3827 9899 Fax: +84 8 3827 9935

## **SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSIES IN ASIA**

### **Cambodia**

The South African Embassy Bangkok, Thailand represents interests in Cambodia.

### **Laos**

The Canadian Embassy Bangkok, Thailand represents interests in Laos. The Australian Embassy in Laos may be able to offer assistance.

### **Malaysia Embassy**

Level 21, Menara IMC, 8 Jalan Sultan Ismail 50250 Kuala Lumpur.

Tel: +603 2078 2533, Fax: +603 2078 0387

### **Singapore Embassy**

Level 21-04, 1 George St, Singapore 049145.

Tel: +65 6235 9966, Fax: +65 6536 8180

### **Thailand Embassy**

12th A Floor, M Thai Tower, All Seasons Place, 87 Wireless Road, Lumpini, Pathumwan. Tel: +66 2659 2900 Fax: +66 2685 3500

### **Vietnam Embassy**

3rd Floor, Central Building, 31 Hai Ba Trung Street, Hanoi.

Tel: +844 3936 2000 Fax: +844 3936 1991

### **Vietnam Consulate-General**

80 Vo Van Tan Street, 6th Ward, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City.

Tel: +848 3823 8556 Fax: +848 3823 8557

# CHINA

**Currency:** Yuan (aka Renminbi) (CYN)

Hong Kong Dollar (HKD)

**Language:** Mandarin (China); Cantonese (HK)

**Country Code:** +86 (China); +852 (HK)

**Climate:** From April to May, south of the country is affected by monsoons. In June they move further north. The rains, which tend to be concentrated in the late afternoons, provide welcome relief to the heat. Travel to very remote areas may be affected by the rains, but overall they should not interfere with your trip.

## HOW TO GET THERE – BEIJING

Drive time from Beijing Capital International Airport to the city is approximately 20 minutes. Metered taxis cost CYN100. Do not go with people soliciting fares out the of the taxi line and have the hotel name printed in Chinese for the driver. Ensure the taxi meter is turned on & working! Taxis are recommended.

## GETTING AWAY – HONG KONG

Hong Kong International Airport is easily accessible via the Airport Express train that departs from Hong Kong and Kowloon station and takes about 30 mins. One way tickets cost 90HKD.

## MOBILE PHONES

It is not recommend to obtain a SIM card in China as most carriers are not compatible with phones outside of China. Getting out & exploring on your own is half the fun of experiencing new places. We've put together a list of some cool places to visit if you feel like doing something different.

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR FREE TIME

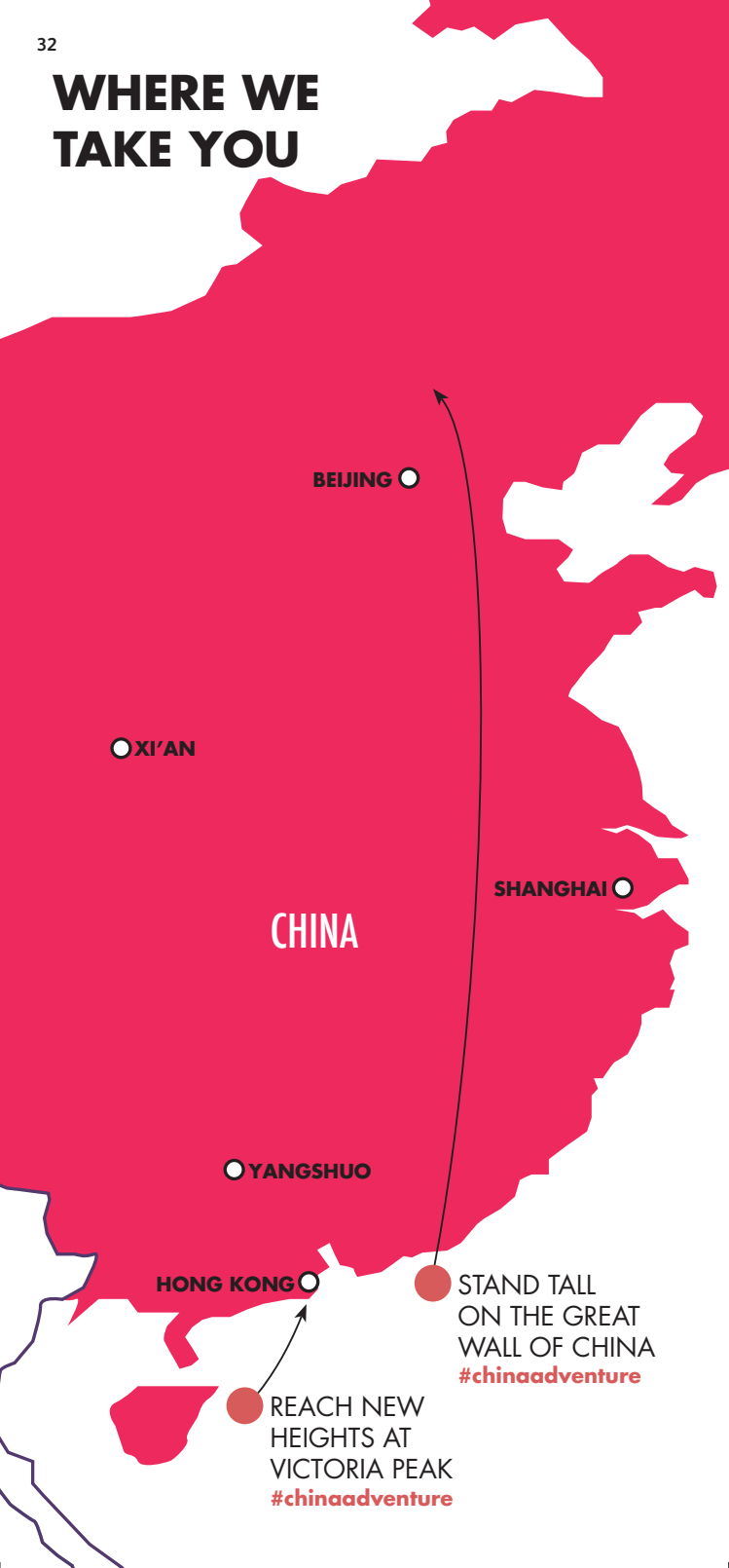
**Temple of Heaven:** This colourful complex of temples was built between 1406 & 1420, during the reign of the Yongle Emperor, the same emperor who instructed the building of the Forbidden city. The complex was extended & renamed the Temple of Heaven in the 16th century & is located in southeastern Beijing. Historically, the complex was visited by the Emperors of Ming and Qing dynasties, who would head to the site to bring offerings & pray to the heavens for good harvests. Today, this UNESCO World Heritage site was re-furbished in 2005 & is open to the public most days. It also features gorgeous gardens, full of locals going about their day, like practicing tai chi, playing board games & relaxing.

**Hohai Lake:** Located in the historic Shichahai in central Beijing, this lake has recently become known for it's pumping nightlife. Ask your Tour Manager for some tips, there's lots of restaurants, bars, and cafes for you to relax & people watch, or take it up a level & head to a local spot for a fun night out.

**Liulichang Street (for shopping):** This is a not-to-miss shopping experience. Refurbished in its original style of the Qing era, it is the perfect place to pick up virtually any kind of Chinese gift to take home. The cute shops are packed with crafts, gorgeous Chinese art, antiques, books & if you're looking for that perfect gift to take home, like a personalised Chinese calligraphy scroll – you'll find it here.

**Xiushui (Silk Street Market):** Born to shop? Head to Silk Street market for some bargains – it's guaranteed to keep you busy for hours. With over 1,700 retail outlets, you'll find a mix of fashion, accessories, silks to Chinese antiques, handcrafts & art.

# WHERE WE TAKE YOU



BEIJING ○

○ XI'AN

CHINA

SHANGHAI ○

○ YANGSHUO

HONG KONG ○

REACH NEW HEIGHTS AT VICTORIA PEAK  
#chinaadventure

STAND TALL ON THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA  
#chinaadventure



**Nan Luo Gu Xiang (Nightlife and shopping):** With its international vibes, Nan Luo Gu Xiang is a great place to head for a fun night out. There are lots of cool bars, coffee shops, shops & restaurants on offer, so ask your Tour Manager for some tips, or head out & you'll stumble across somewhere along the way.

**Sanlitun Village (nightlife and shopping):** At Sanlitun Village you'll find a real mix of designer shopping, more high street stores & restaurants that you might find back home. The 17 buildings that make up the complex are pretty cool too, so it's a good place to check out some modern Chinese architecture & splash some cash at the same time.

## HONG KONG

**Temple Street Night Market:** Go local & head out to the busy Temple Street night market for some tasty street food & shopping. Jordan and Yau Ma Tei in Kowloon are perfect for some great food, shopping & people watching.

**Ride on the Star Ferry:** Experience seriously awesome views of Hong Kong island as you cruise on the Star ferry, carrying passengers across Victoria harbour between Hong Kong island & Kowloon.

**Hong Kong Disneyland:** Feel like discovering your inner child again? Head to Hong Kong Disneyland for a fun day out at legendary Fantasyland, Tomorrowland & Main Street USA & more.

**Lantau Island:** Get in touch with your inner culture vulture & head to Lantau Island. Jump on a cable car Tung Chung to Ngong Ping Village, where you can see the worlds tallest seated bronze Buddha. Sitting on Ngong Ping plateau amongst the cool mountain scenery of Lantau Island, this massive Buddha is 34m high & took 10 years to make, weighing an impressive 220 tonnes. You could also visit the Po Lin Monastery for a delicious vegetarian lunch served by the local monks before heading back to mainland Hong Kong island.

**Roof of the IFC Mall:** Head to the landscaped roof of the downtown IFC Mall for incredible views over the city, for free! Although the restaurants around here can be pricey, the cool chilled out resort style outdoor areas are open to the public, so grab a bottle of wine & some nibbles with some friends & chill out whilst soaking up the incredible city views.

## SHANGHAI

**Propaganda Poster Art museum:** Head to the Shanghai Propaganda Poster Art Museum for a fascinating look into the history of propaganda after the rise of communism in China.

**Ride the Maglev Train:** Feeling the need for speed? You could take a ride on Shanghai's Maglev train for some seriously high speeds, travelling from central Shanghai to the airport in just over 7 minutes, with top speeds of 431km/ph.

**Shanghai Museum:** Get a taste of history at the Shanghai Museum. The building itself is amazing, with it's striking architecture & modern technology being sure to impress. Inside, it houses 10 permanent exhibitions, from ancient Chinese bronzes to calligraphy, Ming & Qing dynasty furniture to coins, sculptures & ceramics. Plus there are smaller non-permanent exhibitions from around the world.

**ShangART - 50 Moganshan Road:** Made up by a complex of warehouses, this area has recently flourished as the main art district of Shanghai. With humble beginnings of a few galleries and artists' studios, it is now considered to be similar to the early days of SOHO, New York.

**XI'AN**

**The Great Mosque of Xi'an:** As one of the oldest & best preserved mosques in China, it was originally constructed in the 700's, then re-built in the 1300's during the reign of the Ming Dynasty. It's made up of courtyards & pavilions & is still a place of worship for many Muslim monks & is a popular spot for travellers to visit in Xi'an.

**Xi'an Drum and Bell Towers:** Built in 1384 by Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang, this tower dominated the landscape, marking the geographical centre of ancient Xi'an. The Tower is the largest and best-preserved of its kind in China & is an impressive 36 meters high & during the reign of the Ming Dynasty, Xian was an important military town in Northwest China. The dark green glazed tiles on the eaves, gold-plating on the roof and gilded color painting make the tower a colorful & stunning piece of Ming Dynasty architecture.

**Forest of Stone Steles Museum:** You could head to China's largest stele museum for a look at these impressive rectangular stone tablets, inscribed with traditional Chinese scripts featuring funeral, commemorative, or territorial messages. With over 3,000 on display, there's lots to keep you entertained. You can also pick up some souvenir ink rubbings of the steles for friends, family or yourself.

**YANGSHUO**

**Silver Cave:** For something different you could take a trip about 30 min out of Yangshuo to see the impressing limestone Silver Cave. Made up of 3 different sections of the lower & upper caves & the grand hall, it's a pretty impressive sight, where lights glisten on the silvery cave walls.

**CHINA****EMBASSY & CONSULATE INFO****AUSTRALIA****BEIJING**

21 Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Sanlitun, Beijing 100600.

Tel: +86 5140 4111 Fax: +86 5140 4204

**SHANGHAI**

Level 22, Citic Square, 1168 Nanjing West Road, Shanghai 200041.

Tel: +86 21 2215 5200, Fax: +86 21 2215 5252

**HONG KONG**

23/F Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Tel: +852 2827 8881 Fax: +852 2585 4457

**NEW ZEALAND****BEIJING**

1 Ritan Dongerjie, Chaoyang District Beijing 100600.

Tel: +86 10 8532 7000 Fax: +86 10 6532 4317

**SHANGHAI**

Consulate-General, Room 1605-1607A, The Centre 989 Chang Le Road (c), Shanghai 200031.

Tel: +86 21 5407 5858 Fax: +86 21 5407 5068

**HONG KONG**

Consulate-General, 6501 Central Plaza, 18 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong. Tel: +852 2525 5044 Fax: +852 2845 2915

**UK/BRITISH****BEIJING**

British Embassy, 11 Guang Hua Lu, Jian Guo Men Wai, Beijing 100600.  
 Beijing Embassy (Consular Section), 11 Guang Hua Lu, Beijing 100200.  
 Tel: +86 10 8529 6083 Fax: +86 10 8529 6081

**SHANGHAI**

Consulate-General, Suite 301, Shanghai Centre, 1376 Nan Jing Xi Lu,  
 Shanghai 200040.  
 Tel: +86 21 3279 2000 Fax: +86 21 6279 7651

**HONG KONG**

Consulate General, 1 Supreme Court Road, Hong Kong.  
 Tel: +86 21 3217-4650 Fax: +86-21 6217 2071  
 Emergencies: (86-21) 6433 3936

**SOUTH AFRICA****BEIJING**

No. 5 Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District, 100600 Beijing.  
 Tel: +8610 8532 0000 Fax: + 8610 6532 9926

**SHANGHAI**

Consulate General, 222 Yan An Road East, 27th Floor, Room 2705/6,  
 Shanghai 200002 China.  
 Tel: +86 21 5359 4977 Fax +86 21 6335 2980

**HONG KONG**

Consulate General, 1906-08, 19/f., Central Plaza, 18 Harbour Road,  
 Wanchai, Hong Kong.  
 Tel: +852 3926 4300 Fax: +852 2890 1975

**USA****BEIJING**

No. 55 An Jia Lou Lu, Beijing 100600.  
 Tel: +86 10 8531-3000 Fax: +86 10 8531-3300

**SHANGHAI**

Consulate General, 8th Floor, 1038 West Nanjing Road, Shanghai.  
 Tel: +86 21 3217 4650 Fax: +86-21 6217-2071  
 Emergencies: +86 21 6433 3936

**HONG KONG**

Consulate General, 26 Garden Road, Hong Kong.  
 Tel: +852 2523 9011, Fax: +852 2845 1598

**CANADA****BEIJING**

19 Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100600.  
 Tel: +86 10 5139 4441 Fax: +8610 5139 4448

**SHANGHAI**

Consulate General, ECO City Building, 8th floor, 1788 Nanjing Xi Lu,  
 Jing An District, Shanghai, 200040.  
 Tel: +8621 3279 2800 Fax: +8621 3279 2801

**HONG KONG**

Consulate General, 9th floor, Berkshire House, 25 Westlands Road,  
 Quarry Bay, Hong Kong.  
 Tel: +852 3719 4700, Fax: +852 2847 7561

# JAPAN

**Currency:** Japanese Yen (¥)

**Language:** Japanese

**Country Code:** +81

**Climate:** The Japanese are proud of their four seasons. In March-April the temperatures are warm but not hot and there's not too much rain. It is one of the best times of year to be in Japan for the famous cherry blossoms. Summer starts with a dreary rainy season in June and becomes very hot in July-August, with extreme humidity and the temperature heading as high as 35°C. Temperatures and fall colours can be just as impressive as cherry blossoms. It is very cold over winter in Japan with snow sports being very popular in the north.

## HOW TO GET THERE – TOKYO

Japan is serviced by two major international airports, Narita and Haneda. Taxis are available from both airports but should be avoided due to high cost, around US\$200. For both airports, the best and most economical way to reach the hotel is by the airport limousine bus. Tickets can be purchased from the counters at the airport. The journey takes approximately 2 hours from Narita Airport or 1 hour from Haneda Airport.

## GETTING AWAY

Kansai (for Osaka) International Airport is approximately 45 minutes away by bus. The Airport Bus is located directly next door to our hotel. Tickets can be purchased at the station for ¥1,550. Taxis are not recommended as they are very expensive.

## MOBILE PHONES

Japan has unique rules surrounding the use of pre-paid SIM cards for tourists. It is not possible to purchase a pre-paid SIM card unless you are a Japanese citizen. You can rent handsets from the airport and major department stores with pre-paid minutes and data on them. Alternatively, most tourists find using their own handset with a Wifi friendly messaging service the best option as Wifi is readily available.

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR ME TIME

**Shibuya Crossing, Tokyo:** Rumoured to be the world's busiest, this intersection in front of Shibuya Station is famously known as 'The Scramble'. It's an awesome spectacle of giant video screens and neon, guaranteed to give you a 'Wow - I'm in Tokoya!' feeling. People come from all directions at once - sometimes over a thousand with every light change - yet still manage to dodge each other with a practiced, nonchalant agility.

**Hiroshima:** Hiroshima has a surprisingly large art scene. The Museum of Art houses a modest collection of big-hitters (Monet, Picasso and the like), but the constantly changing exhibitions at Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art are best for experiencing the thudding heart of the region's art scene. Want something a little more leftfield? If you reserve ahead, you can enjoy the spectacle of Japan's largest assembly line at the decidedly odd Mazda Museum.

**Kyoto:** Gion is the famous entertainment and geisha quarter on the eastern bank of the Kamo-gawa. While Gion's true origins were in teahouses catering to weary visitors to Yasaka-jinja, by the mid 18th century the area was Kyoto's largest pleasure district. Why not take a walk through town and see if you can spot one of the world famous Geisha girls?

**Osaka:** The Japanese are mad for baseball, so why not see if you can score tickets to a game in Osaka? With two of the national teams based in Osaka, games are held regularly in the Osaka Dome just outside the city. The best part about the baseball in Japan is that the cheapest seats in the outfield generally have the best atmosphere so you don't need to spend a fortune to enjoy yourself.

## WHERE WE TAKE YOU



### JAPAN EMBASSY & CONSULATE INFO

#### AUSTRALIA

2-1-14 Mita, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan. Tel: +81 (03) 52 32 4111

#### UK

3-5-1 Bakuro-machi, Chuo-ku, Osaka. Tel: +81 (6) 6120 5600

#### USA EMBASSY

1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo Tel: +81 03 3224 5000

#### NEW ZEALAND

20 - 40 Kamiyama-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo Tel: +81 (03) 3467 2271

#### CANADA

7-3-38 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo. Tel: +81 3 54 12 6200

#### SOUTH AFRICA

Hanzomon First building, 4th floor 1-4 Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo  
Tel: +81 3 3265 3366

# WHERE WE TAKE YOU

CHINA

DELHI

JAIPUR

AGRA

RANTHAMBHORE NATIONAL PARK

UDAIPUR

INDIA

MUMBAI

GOA

JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE TAJ MAHAL  
**#eternalindia**



# INDIA

**Currency:** Indian Rupee (INR)

**Language:** Many different languages and regional dialects, but mainly Hindi and English

**Country Code:** +91

**Climate:** Our trips run from October to April, meaning we are predominately travelling through the dry season! Luckily this means we skip the monsoon, and rain isn't very common. In terms of temperature, it largely depends on the part of the country. In the North, like Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and Udaipur, it can get rather cold, especially in the mornings and evenings, and during the months of December and January. Most of the time the temperature is very pleasant during the day. In the South, like Mumbai and Goa, it is hot all year round, as well as being humid.

## HOW TO GET THERE - DELHI

Once you exit the airport, look for a stall directly outside with a yellow sign saying "pre-paid taxi". These taxis are run by the Delhi police and are very reliable. Upon approaching the counter, you will be asked where you're going, reply with "Green Park" (The name of the suburb the hotel is in). This will cost you 350 Rupees, or roughly US\$5. The closest landmark to the hotel (most taxi drivers may not know specific hotels) is the metro station, so ask your driver to take you to "Green Park metro", they will know where this is.

## GETTING AWAY - GOA

Out the front of the hotel is a 24 hour taxi stand, that is always manned with numerous taxis. A trip to the airport can take up to 1.5 hours with traffic, and shouldn't cost you a single rupee more than 1500R, roughly US\$20, but keep in mind you can bargain with these drivers.

## MOBILE PHONES

You can get a SIM card at the airport, or at mobile phone store outlets, with the two most popular brands being Vodafone and Airtel. Both of these companies have outlets at the airport before you exit. When purchasing a SIM, you will need your passport, a passport photo, an address in India (the first hotel address will do) and patience, as they usually take 4 or 5 hours after purchasing to activate. You can "top up" data and minutes at any phone outlet, but remember to write down exactly what you buy, for if you try and top up in a different city it will make the top up you already have void!

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN DELHI (BEFORE YOUR TRIP)

**Lotus Temple:** This unique temple structure is the most well known Baha'i temple throughout the world, and holds the distinction of being the most visited building on the planet! In accordance with Baha'i faith, people from all religions and ways of life are welcome, and any religious prayers can be said in the main hall. With no entry cost and only a short tuk tuk ride away from the starting hotel, this is a great place to check out before the trip starts! Some other places of interest include Humayun's tomb and the Red fort, however during the trip we will be going to places that share the same architectural style, but are much grander and are more intact, such as the Taj Mahal itself and the Agra Fort.

**Qutub Minar:** Take a 10min tuk tuk ride, or take the subway a couple of stops to “Qutub Minar station”, and you’ll find yourself at a UNESCO World Heritage site that dates back to 1200 AD! Qutub Minar is the world’s tallest rubble masonry minaret, standing at 73m (or 240ft) high and is one of the most prominent attractions in India! Entry costs 500INR, and if you want to take a camera inside the complex you’ll need to pay another 300INR (Standard at many attractions throughout India).

## **IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN GOA (AFTER YOUR TRIP)**

**Old Goa:** If you want to see some architecture like no where else in India, then old Goa is definitely worth checking out, with its numerous Catholic Cathedrals, monasteries, nunneries and open streets, it immediately summons feelings of the Mediterranean! Arguably the most notable is the Basilica de Bom Jesus, which houses the remains of St. Francis Xavier, the patron saint of Goa, and a founding member of the Jesuit society! His body inexplicably mummified while being transported from China to Goa after his death, and this was taken as a sign from God! You can still see his casket today, and there are pictures and panels detailing more information on the events! It takes about 40 min in a taxi from the Contiki hotel, and all cathedrals are free to enter, but a respectful dress code is enforced.

**Margao:** Margao is the cultural capital of Goa and retains a huge amount of Portuguese influence! If you like wine, coffee, pastries and Mediterranean architecture, then this is definitely a place worth making a day trip to! It takes around 1.5 hours in a taxi to get there from the Contiki hotel.

**Aguada Fort:** This abandoned Portuguese fort used to serve as protection on one of the most important trading routes in European history, and is still in amazing condition, as well as having plenty of panels around it describing things in more vivid detail. It is free to enter and is only 15min by taxi from the hotel.

**Panjim:** The capital of Goa, Panjim is only around 20min from the hotel in a taxi and offers a plethora of restaurants, shops and entertainment, with people easily being able to spend half a day or a full day exploring the town!

## **INDIA**

### **EMBASSY & CONSULATE INFO**

#### **AUSTRALIA**

High Commission: No. 1/50 G Shantipath (Gate 1), Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110021.

Tel: +91 11 4139 9900 Fax: +91 11 2687 2228

#### **UK**

High Commission: Shantipath, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110021.

Tel: +91 11 2419 2100

#### **USA**

US Embassy: Shantipath, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 11002.

Tel: 011 91 11 2419 8000 Fax: 011 91 11 2419 0017

#### **NEW ZEALAND**

NZ High Commission: Sir Edmund Hillary Marg, Chanakyapuri 110021  
New Delhi. Tel: +91 11 4688 3170 Fax: +91 11 4688 3165



## CANADA

India High Commission: 7/8 Shantipath, Chanakyapuri,  
New Delhi 110021.

Tel: +91 11 4178 2000 Fax: +91 11 4178 2020

## SOUTH AFRICA

India High Commission: B-18 Vasant Marg, Vasant Vihar,  
New Delhi 110057.

Tel: +91 11 2614 9411 up to 9420 Fax: +91 11 2614-8605

# INDONESIA

**Currency:** Rupiah (IDR)

**Language:** Indonesian

**Country Code:** + 62

**Climate:** Indonesia has two seasons – wet and dry, with warm tropical temperatures throughout the day. In most regions, the dry seasons spans from May to September, with the wet season from October to April.

## GETTING AROUND

Horse carts (Cidomo) are abundant in Lombok and the Gili Islands. On the Gili Islands there is a Cidomo Task Force who are in charge with monitoring treatment of the animals. They are rested throughout the day and work in shifts, much like a taxi driver. Mistreatment of animals can be reported with the number of the Cidomo driver to the Port Office. Lombok is different. Horse carts are privately owned and you may see animals that are in less than perfect condition.

## IDEAS OF SITES TO VISIT IN YOUR FREE TIME

**Kuta, Bali:** Why not make the most of the tropical weather and spend your day at Bali's biggest and most popular waterpark, Waterbom. With a mix of waterslides, adventure rides, swim up bars and chilled out spots to swim and sunbake, the park offers something for everyone

**Discovery Mall, Kuta:** This mall is conveniently located in central Kuta and offers a great mix of upscale boutiques, chain stores, sports shops and everything you will ever need for the beach. With lots of restaurants and cafes to choose from, it's also a great place to escape the heat and enjoy a meal

**Sea Swing, Gili Trawangan:** Why not take a short stroll down from your hotel on Gili T to find the iconic sea swing. Spend some time playing in the sea and be sure to snap a picture of yourself and your new travel mates on the swing. To make it even more memorable, make your trip down at sunset for an even more incredible backdrop!

**Sendang Gile and Tiu Kelep Waterfalls:** take a day trip north on the island of Lombok to these magnificent waterfalls. With their layered falls, cool green air and spectacular scenery, the waterfalls are a photographer's dream and also a great place to cool off. The falls are located at the foot of Mount Rinjani, the island's only active volcano which can be seen on a clear day.

# WHERE WE TAKE YOU



SNORKELLING  
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ISLANDS FOR  
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## INDONESIA EMBASSY & CONSULATE INFO

### AUSTRALIA

Jalan H.R. Rasuna Said Kav C 15-16, Jakarta Selatan 12940.  
Tel: +62 21 2550 5555 Fax: +62 21 2550 5467

### UK

Jl. Patra Kuningan Raya Blok L5-6, Jakarta 12950.  
Tel: +62 21 2356 5200 Fax: +62 21 2356 5351

### USA

Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan No. 3-5, Jakarta 10110.  
Tel: +62 21 3435-9000 Fax: +62 21 386 2259

### NEW ZEALAND

Sentral Senayan 2, Floor 10, Jl Asia Afrika No 8, Gelora Bung Karno,  
Jakarta Pusat 10270.  
Tel: +62 21 2995 5800 Fax: +62 21 5797 4578

### CANADA

World Trade Centre I, 6th Floor, Jalan Jend. Sudirman Kav. 29-31,  
Jakarta 12920.  
Tel: +62 21 2550 7800 Fax: +62 21 2550 7811

### SOUTH AFRICA

Suite 705, 7th Floor, Wisma GKBI, Jl. Jend. Sudirman No. 28,  
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# CONTIKI WORLDWIDE

## AUSTRALIA

Travel House, Level 3,  
35 Grafton Street,  
Bondi Junction, NSW 2022  
Telephone: +61 (0)2 9511 2200  
contiki@contiki.com.au

## UNITED KINGDOM

Wells House, 15 Elmfield Road  
Bromley, Kent, BR1 1LS  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 8225 4200  
travel@contiki.co.uk

## EUROPE

Travcorp SA Contiki Holidays  
58 Avenue Louis-Casai, CP12  
1216 Cointrin  
Geneva, Switzerland  
contiki.geneva@bookttcuk.com

## NEW ZEALAND

131 New North Road, Eden Terrace  
Auckland 1021  
Telephone: +64 (0)9 300 1601  
contiki@contiki.co.nz

## AMERICA

801 East Katella Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Anaheim, CA 92805  
Telephone: +1 714 935 0808  
contiki@contiki.com

## CANADA

33 Kern Road,  
Toronto, ON M3B 1S9,  
Telephone: +1 416 932 9377  
contactus@contiki.ca

## SOUTH AFRICA

6 Hood Avenue  
Rosebank 2196  
Johannesburg  
Telephone: +27 11 280 8400  
reservations.sa@contiki.com

## ASIA

600 North Bridge Road,  
#06-06 Parkview Square,  
Singapore 188778.  
Telephone: +65 6337 8166  
asia.res@contiki.com

## contiki.com

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