

Your first *72 hours*.

BEFORE YOU FLY

- Since 15 April 2026, every arriving traveller on a non-Vietnamese passport must file a short online entry form at **prearrival.immigration.gov.vn**. It is free: “fill it in within the three days before you fly”.
- Check “whether your ticket reads SGN (Tân Sơn Nhất) or LTH (Long Thành)”. Long Thành “is roughly an hour from the centre, has no rail link yet”.
- Health cover: “confirm with your employer’s HR team exactly when your coverage begins relative to your arrival date.”

AT THE AIRPORT

- The immigration queue at Tân Sơn Nhất “can absorb 45 minutes to an hour and a half”.
- Keep “your visa paperwork, and the QR code from Vietnam’s pre-arrival declaration” to hand.

GETTING INTO TOWN

- “Best is a ride-hailing app — Grab dominates here, with the electric-taxi service Xanh SM close behind — booked from inside the terminal and collected at the marked app-pickup lanes; a ride to District 1 or Thảo Điền runs roughly VND 150,000–250,000 (USD 6–10)”.
- Taxis: “only the two reputable firms, Vinasun (white) and Mai Linh (green), from their official queues”.
- Never follow anyone who approaches you inside the hall.

MONEY

- Cash: “use an ATM attached to a recognisable bank”.
- Careful: “the 20,000 and 500,000 notes are both blue polymer”. “Sort your notes by colour and size”.
- Cards and Apple Pay / Google Pay work widely; carry “a few hundred thousand đồng in small notes”.

YOUR PHONE

- Viettel, Vinaphone and MobiFone have counters in arrivals; SIMs and eSIMs cost “VND 100,000–300,000 (USD 4–11)”.
- “Bring your passport — SIM registration is mandatory”.
- Install Grab and Zalo.

PAPERWORK

- Your temporary residence is registered “by whoever houses you”: the hotel does it automatically; your landlord does it once you lease.
- Copy your passport photo page, visa and entry stamp: one copy in the cloud, one on paper. The original stays in the hotel safe.

YOUR EMERGENCY FOLDER

- One page per family member: blood type, conditions, allergies, medications, surgical history.
- Choose your hospital: “FV Hospital in District 7 or Family Medical Practice’s clinics, with Vinmec Central Park the strong newer option in Bình Thạnh”.
- Then “save its emergency number in every phone, because the private hospitals run their own ambulances and most of the foreign community calls them directly rather than the public 115”.
- A card for each child with your home address and the hospital’s name, in English and Vietnamese.

YOUR BODY

- In the heat, “drink roughly double the water you think you need”, and plan nothing ambitious “between 11am and 3pm for the first week”.
- “Do not drink the tap water”. Ice in established cafés is “fine”.

CROSSING THE STREET

- To cross: “wait for a seam in the traffic, step off, and walk at a slow, perfectly steady pace, no stopping, no darting”. Let cars and buses pass.

YOUR ANCHORS

- Find your nearest 24-hour Circle K or Family Mart, your nearest pharmacy, and your café.
- Keep both the old and the new (post-2025) versions of your address.

None of it is hard, and all of it compounds.

From the Going Global Ho Chi Minh City guide (When You Arrive; Healthcare).
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