



Vietnam

CAPITAL

Hanoi

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Vietnamese

CURRENCY

Vietnamese dong

Guide version: V2 draft**Disclaimer**

This Country Guide reflects information believed to be correct at the time of publication. Regulations, procedures and charges are subject to change. IAM does not accept liability for errors, omissions, inaccuracies or misinterpretations in this guide. The information provided should not be considered as having been provided or sanctioned by the customs authorities of the country or territory concerned.

Overview

Customs Clearance

- Air shipments: physical Customs inspection at the air terminal is standard; average time approximately 1 to 2 days - Sea FCL shipments: typically undergo physical Customs inspection; average time 2 to 3 days - Sea LCL shipments: average time 3 to 5 days - Diplomatic shipments: exempt from physical Customs inspection

Documents

For All Importers (Sea and Air Shipments)

- **Copy of passport (identification pages only) with entry stamp — certified true copies required in Ho Chi Minh City (certified at the People's Committee Office of Ho Chi Minh City)**
- **Packing list in English**
- **Bill of lading (telex release) or air waybill (AWB)**

- **Vietnam entry visa (valid for at least 3 months) or temporary residence card — certified true copies required in Ho Chi Minh City**
- **Original Vietnam arrival-departure card (3 copies per shipment) — in Ho Chi Minh City, must be signed and stamped (company seal) by the owner of the goods' registered local employer in Vietnam**
- **Letter of employment**
- **Copy of business license of the owner of the goods' Vietnam employer**
- **Application letter**
- **Owner of the goods' address in Vietnam**

Additional Documents — Hanoi Only

- **Copy of labor contract (required by Hanoi Customs in addition to all above)**

For Sea and Air Shipments Over 300 kg (Gross)

- **Copy of work permit**

For Diplomats

- **Diplomatic documentation as applicable; diplomatic shipments are exempt from physical Customs inspection**

Household Goods — Specific Information

3 Copies Required: 3 copies of each document are required per shipment. If there are multiple shipments, a separate full set of 3 copies is required for each.

Document Signing and Stamping: All documents must be signed and stamped (with the company seal) by the owner of the goods' registered local employer in Vietnam. In Ho Chi Minh City, certified true copies are required for the passport and entry visa/temporary residence card; these are obtained from the People's Committee Office of Ho Chi Minh City.

Cultural Inspection: All shipments are subject to a cultural inspection conducted by the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. This process takes approximately 3 to 4 days and may cover books, artwork, DVDs, CDs, antiques, and similar cultural items. Antiques must be clearly photographed and well documented; they are inspected and registered upon entry (an additional 2 to 3 days). Antique descriptions must be clearly noted on the packing list and on individual cartons.

Clearance Complexity: The Vietnamese customs environment involves multiple agencies (Customs, Culture, Agriculture/veterinary for shipments with food or plant products) and is known for inconsistency across ports. The destination agent must be deeply experienced with local clearance requirements.

ISPM 15: All wooden packing materials must comply with ISPM 15 phytosanitary treatment standards.

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Weapons of all kinds
- Ammunition
- Explosives
- Military equipment
- Radio transmitters and receivers
- Satellite dishes
- Poisonous chemicals
- Cultural products that contravene Vietnamese law or national sovereignty
- Articles of anti-government or anti-state nature
- Fireworks
- Toys and games that negatively affect public moral education or security
- Pornographic or subversive materials
- Motorbikes (for private import outside diplomatic status)

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Alcohol — Import Duty Rates:

- Spirits with alcohol content below 30% ABV (measured at 20°C): 125%–150% duty
- Spirits with alcohol content above 30% ABV (measured at 20°C): 125%–150% duty
- Wine: 10 to 20 bottles duty-free; excess subject to 125%–150% duty

Tobacco — Import Duty Rates:

- More than 100 cigars: 150%

- More than 400 cigarettes: 150%
- Prepared tobacco (more than 50 grams): 45%
- Other manufactured tobacco products: 45%

Electronics:

- Personal computers: 15% import duty
- Personal printers: 10% import duty

Food: Non-perishable food items and canned/durably packaged goods can be imported in small quantities for personal use.

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Original passport**
- **Residency card**
- **Proof of ownership**
- **Original purchase invoice**

Specific Information

Private individuals cannot import motor vehicles into Vietnam unless they are working for a United Nations organization or for an Embassy or Consulate under diplomatic status. This is an absolute restriction — no duty-free import pathway exists for private expatriates. Clients who wish to have personal use of a vehicle in Vietnam must purchase one locally.

Pets

Specific Information

Significant Updates vs. IAM Baseline: The IAM guide lists documents including an "import permit" as a standard requirement and names only one entry airport (Ho Chi Minh City). Current requirements clarify that import permits are not required for 2 or fewer pets per person (per passport); Hanoi (Noi Bai), Da Nang, and Cam Ranh airports are also approved entry points. Vietnam does not recognize multi-year (3-year) rabies vaccines — annual vaccination is required. The health certificate validity window has been confirmed at 7 days.

Import Permit Threshold: An import permit is not required for 2 or fewer dogs or cats per person (per passport). Each owner/passport holder may import up to 2 pets without a permit. Groups traveling together may each have up to 2 pets. Imports of more than 2 pets per person require an import permit from the relevant agricultural/veterinary authority.

Approved Entry Airports: Pets may enter Vietnam by air at the following airports:

- Tan Son Nhat International Airport, Ho Chi Minh City
- Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi
- Da Nang International Airport, Da Nang
- Cam Ranh International Airport, Khanh Hoa

Advance Notice: Importers must notify veterinary officials at the intended entry airport before arrival to ensure inspectors are available. This is critical for arrivals outside normal business hours.

Timing: Pets traveling as accompanied baggage or as cargo should arrive on a weekday (Monday through Friday) before 3:30 p.m. to ensure customs and veterinary inspectors are available.

Quarantine: Quarantine is not required for pets traveling as cargo if all regulations are met. Pets not meeting import requirements will be quarantined, returned to the country of origin, or euthanized at the importer's expense.

No rabies titer test is required for entry into Vietnam. No breeds are banned from import.

CITES: Import of wildlife species requires CITES permits. Vietnam is a CITES signatory with significant enforcement efforts around wildlife trafficking. **[CITES]**

Documents Required (Dogs and Cats Traveling With Owner — 2 or Fewer)

1. ISO 11784/11785-compliant microchip — strongly recommended; not currently listed as mandatory in Vietnamese regulations but significantly facilitates clearance
2. Rabies vaccination administered between 30 days and 12 months before entry; pet must be over 3 months of age at vaccination; **Vietnam does not recognize multi-year (3-year) rabies vaccines** — annual vaccination is required
3. Additional vaccinations (recommended):
 - Dogs: distemper, hepatitis, parainfluenza, parvovirus
 - Cats: viral rhinotracheitis, panleukopenia, leukemia

1. Internal and external parasite treatment (recommended; ideally administered 5 to 7 days before import); record on health certificate or in a separate treatment document
2. International health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian and endorsed by a government veterinarian in the country of origin, within 7 days of entry into Vietnam

For Pets Traveling as Cargo (Separate from Owner)

All of the above plus:

- Original Vietnam arrival-departure card (3 copies per shipment)
- Vietnam employer's company license copy
- Application letter and Power of Attorney
- Air waybill
- Flight arrival details

Consignment Instructions

Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences between air and sea shipments, and between Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi.

Three-Copy Rule: Three copies of every document are required for each shipment. Multiple shipments require separate full document sets of 3 copies each.

City-Specific Requirements: Hanoi requires a labor contract copy in addition to all other documents. Ho Chi Minh City requires certified true copies of the passport and entry visa/temporary residence card, obtainable from the People's Committee Office. Document signing and stamping requirements differ between the two cities. Always confirm with the destination agent which city will handle clearance.

Work Permit — Over 300 kg: Shipments over 300 kg gross weight (sea or air) require a copy of the owner's work permit. Advise clients to have their work permit finalized before the shipment arrives if the weight threshold will be exceeded.

Cultural Inspection — Plan for It. The cultural inspection by the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism adds 3 to 4 days to every clearance timeline. Antiques add a further 2 to 3 days. Advise clients that Vietnam clearance timelines are longer than most regional peers due to this mandatory step.

Antiques. Antiques must be clearly photographed before packing, well documented, individually described on the packing list, and marked on the carton. They will be inspected and registered on arrival — an additional 2 to 3 days. Undocumented antiques cause significant delays.

No Vehicles for Private Importers. Private expatriates cannot import motor vehicles. Advise clients before the move so they can plan for local vehicle acquisition.

Visa Duration. The entry visa must be valid for at least 3 months at the time the shipment arrives. Monitor visa renewal dates carefully — expired visas block clearance.

ISPM 15. All wooden packing materials (pallets, crates, lift vans) must comply with ISPM 15 phytosanitary treatment standards.

Cultural & Other Information

Vietnam (officially the Socialist Republic of Vietnam) is a Southeast Asian country located on the eastern coast of the Indochinese Peninsula, bordered by China to the north, Laos and Cambodia to the west, and the South China Sea to the east. The capital is Hanoi; the largest city is Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). Vietnam has a population of approximately 98 million, making it the 15th most populous country in the world. The official language is Vietnamese. The currency is the Vietnamese dong (VND).

Vietnam has one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia. It is a major manufacturing hub for electronics, textiles, and footwear, and has been the beneficiary of significant foreign direct investment following the normalization of US-Vietnam diplomatic relations in 1995 and WTO accession in 2007.

The main ports of entry for household goods are Ho Chi Minh City (Cat Lai Port for sea freight) and Hanoi (various air and road routes). Air freight enters through Tan Son Nhat (Ho Chi Minh City) or Noi Bai (Hanoi).

Time Zone: Indochina Time (ICT), UTC+7. Vietnam does not observe daylight saving time.

Useful Links:

- [OpenFactBook — Vietnam](#)
- [Wikipedia — Vietnam](#)
- [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam \(MOFA\)](#)
- [U.S. trade.gov — Vietnam Customs Regulations](#)
- [U.S. trade.gov — Vietnam Import Requirements and Documentation](#)
- [PetTravel.com — Vietnam Pet Import Requirements](#)

Quick Links & Resources

- [Find Movers](#)

<https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Vietnam&lat=14.06&lng=108.28&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Vietnam>

- [Foreign Embassies in Vietnam](#)

<https://www.embassypages.com/vietnam>

- [Vietnam's Embassies Abroad](#)

<https://www.mofa.gov.vn/en/ds/dsnuocngoai>

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