



Harmony Outreach

PRE-TRAVEL TIPS

1. **Airline Seating:** Call the airline in advance to request the type of seat you prefer. Most people prefer an isle or window seat over a middle seat.
2. **Jetlag:** Carry Ibuprofen PM with you on the flight. It helps to relax muscles, relieve pain, and put you to sleep. You can also bring a sleep aid like Simply Sleep to help you overcome jetlag and transition to the new time zone as quickly as possible. You will likely arrive at the hotel around midnight. After checking in, pop a Simply Sleep and go to bed. The Simply Sleep will help you to sleep through the night and avoid waking up at 3 am, which is typical of jetlag. On subsequent days, avoid taking naps. Go to bed at the normal time you would if you were in the U.S. For example, if you normally go to sleep at 10 pm in the U.S., then push through and don't go to sleep in Vietnam until 10 pm.
3. **Hotel:**
 - a. If you are teaching in Hanoi, then most likely you will be staying at the **Authentic Hanoi Boutique Hotel**.
 - b. If you are teaching in Saigon, you will most likely be staying at the **Elios Hotel**.
 - c. Check-in time for both hotels is 4:00pm.
 1. The hotels offer free internet and one or two free water bottles per day.
 2. You can have your laundry done for a fee.
 3. The hotels offer a free buffet breakfast every day.
 4. When you get to your room, you must insert the room key into a slot on the wall. That turns on the electricity in the room.
 5. It is not required, nor is it recommended, that you keep your passport on your person after you clear the airport. My recommendation is that you keep it in your in-room safe. Sometimes the hotel will request to keep your passport until you check out, which is also ok.
4. **Money:** Call your bank before you leave and tell them to put a note on your account that you are traveling to Vietnam. Otherwise the first time you use your credit or ATM card, your bank will interpret it as fraud and put a freeze on your account. You can change money in the hotel and there are ATM's nearby. Vietnamese currency is called Dong, and you get approximately 20,000 Dong per dollar. Although some tourist shops will accept American currency, many locations will not.
5. **Food:** Breakfast is free at the hotel. A Vietnamese lunch is provided at the teaching site during days that you teach. Dinner is on your own. The hotel has decent room service. There are numerous restaurants serving all kinds of food all around the hotel. Many small stands sell smoothies, fresh fruit and coffee-based drinks. They are quite good and very affordable. The staple food of Vietnam is Pho (a hearty soup, which is pronounced "fuh"). It is tasty and the pastors know the best places to get it.

6. **Weather:** Weather is tropical and generally pleasant. Dress for a warm-to-hot climate with a possibility of rain.
7. **Travel Insurance:** Linda-Mac will be emailing each of you a page with your Proof of Insurance prior to departure from the U.S. The policy covers medical expenses greater than \$250 (by reimbursement) and emergency airfare home if needed.
8. **Electricity:** Vietnam, like most of the rest of the world, uses 220-volt electricity. Most electronics are dual voltage. Check your power cord. If it says something like 110-240, you are good to go. If your electronics are not dual voltage (such as a blow dryer), you will need a power converter. In any event, you may need a plug adapter to have your plug prongs fit into the wall socket.
9. **Fun Stuff:** There are a lot of fun things to do near where you are staying. Both cities have many small tour companies that offer half- or full-day tours to a variety of locations for very affordable prices. I would recommend you take advantage of these. Also, there are a lot of fun shops and restaurants near your hotel where you can buy DVDs, traditional handicrafts, get a body or foot massage, and dine. Massages are fine so long as you pick a place where the purpose is actually a massage and not a cover for prostitution. You can tell the difference just by looking at the place and who is offering it. There is nothing better than a one-hour, \$5 foot massage! At night, beware of the 7 Deadly Sins—that is people offering you alcohol, girls or marijuana. That element comes out mostly at night. But don't let that detract or distract you from enjoying your evenings out. Just say, "No, thank you," and keep walking.