

BUDGET GUIDE FOR LIVING IN HANOI 2003

Currency in Vietnam is Dong (pronounced 'dom') but USD is also commonly used. This budget has been prepared in USD and will vary depending on your ability and or desire to be frugal as well as ability to achieve Vietnamese rates (significantly less).

HOUSEHOLD BUDGET – FOREIGNER TYPICAL RATES

Item	Details	Cost/Range Per Month USD	
Rent	2 bedroom, 1 bathroom, 2 wc, fully furnished, all amenities, comfortable	250	400
	3-6 bedroom, usually bathroom/wc on each level, fully furnished, all amenities, comfortable	350	800
	Single, self-contained unit	150	250
	Share accommodation	150	250
Food/Household items	Single to Family	100	200
Utilities (Electricity, telephone, water, gas)	Single to Family (Depends on use of aircon, international calls etc, local calls are cheap, aircon is expensive)	50	200
Miscellaneous (petrol, emergencies, local travel, savings money, some money to support others not so fortunate, etc.)	(note – travel is inexpensive e.g. a 3 day all inclusive trip to Ha Long Bay = 100 USD; a 4 day all inclusive trip to Thailand = 350 USD etc.; hire a motor bike monthly rate = 50 USD)	50	100
Cook/helper/cleaner	Six days per week, 3 meals	60	100

SET UP AND ONE-OFF COSTS

Item	Details	Cost/Range Per Event USD	
Return Airfares	East coast Australia return		600
	Hanoi to Bangkok return		270
	Hanoi to Singapore/Malaysia return		250
Visa	One month		50
	Three months		100
	Six months – 12 months	150	250
Bicycle	New (Made in China)		50
	Quality Second-Hand (Made in Japan)	100	200
Motor Bike	New 110 cc	850	2,200
	Second Hand 110cc (good condition, little depreciation)	800	1,500
Travel Insurance	Single – Family (12 month policy)	250	1000
Computer	New, powerful with all accessories		500
	Second hand, powerful with all accessories	300	400
Printer	New, inkjet to laser (eg Hewlett Packard Laserjet 1100)	150	350
Other one-off set up costs	See notes below	100	500
Car/van (very expensive)	New 7-seater Suzuki mini van		5,000
	Second hand 9-12 seater van (2-10 years)	6,000	14,000
	Second hand 4 cylinder sedan (2-10 years)	5,000	14,000

BUDGET GUIDE FOR LIVING IN HANOI NOTES

1. Housing in Hanoi is in a French provincial style and although costs and standards can vary considerably, it is easy to find a reasonable and suitable place which meets any standards.
2. Visas
 - Part of these costs may be payable from your own country but in total should not exceed the above.
 - A work visa is required for working in Vietnam – it must be sponsored by the company you work for to be legal.
 - Work visas are usually only given when a sponsor, such as a language school, invites you to teach.
 - Visa status may be changed upon renewal for example, from a tourist to a work visa.
 - It is not uncommon for schools to employ teachers and help them change their visa status.
 - If you are invited by a school to come and teach in Vietnam they will usually organize your visa or at least give you a letter of invitation.
 - If invited by New Star ELT Center to work, we will organize your visa either from your home country or when you arrive if you are on a short tourist visa.
3. Depending on the comprehensiveness required, travel insurance for the first year is usually very adequate. Expatriate policies are usually more expensive but will give long term coverage including hospital and medical insurance.
4. Families usually prefer to hire a cook because of the difficulty to communicate and barter at the market for food to prepare at home. It ends up the cheapest and cleanest means of getting food on the table. Vietnamese cook great, it gives someone poor a job, helps you with language, it is very cheap and frees you up - alternatively, you can eat on the streets and being a little choosy, there is generally no problem.
5. Other one-off set-up costs. It depends on what you want - maybe you want some extra things e.g. small furniture items, shelving, cutlery, crockery, stereo, popcorn maker, juicer, helmet, teddy bear slippers etc. - in general, many costs here work out to be about 5 or more times cheaper than say in Australia or America. The exception to this is in some areas such as phone bill, electricity bill, most electrical appliances, quality books, western foods, banking charges, and a few other items which are about the same cost as in Australia or America.
6. Language learning information. For 3.5 USD per hour New Star ELT Center offers qualified Vietnamese teachers who are familiar with a communicative and modern approach. As a school environment, it is the cheapest by far in VN and also far more effective in method than Vietnamese-run centers - 2 - 4 max hours per day is plenty. 3 -5 sessions per week for the first year is necessary if you desire to really communicate well, but a few lessons per week will open many doors to Vietnamese lives and enhance your Vietnam experience. Alternatively, private tutors are easy to find and cost around 1.50 - 2.00 USD per hour. We would argue from experience this to be inefficient and only suitable for a particular learning style. The Vietnamese teachers are used to classes of 50 - 100 students, lecturing 'about language' rather than facilitating the 'acquisition of language'. They are wonderful people but for various reasons are not yet acquainted with effective methodology in areas of teaching and consequently, the Vietnamese language learning experience their way can be very discouraging. New Star may provide free 4 hours per week of language training for you if it has been negotiated.
7. Savings/Holidays will depend on your needs and budget. – money goes a long way in VN generally.
8. Immunizations – please see your local doctor or visit the web pages we suggested on the attached information sheet to satisfy yourself with what you will do in these areas.

9. Temperatures range from a very hot, humid 33 - 38 degrees in summer (hottest is from June – Sept) down to a very cold and damp 3 -15 degrees in winter (coldest is from Dec - Mar).