

Background Information On Vietnam

Continent: Asia

Official Name: Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Form of Government: Socialist Republic

Capital: Hanoi

Population: 93, 421, 835

Official language: Vietnamese

Money: Dong

Area: 127, 123 Square Miles

Location:

- Vietnam shares its board with three different countries; China (North), Cambodia (West), and Laos (West)
- Located in Southeast Asia on the edge of the peninsula known as Indochina.
- The country is only 30 miles wide

People and Culture:

- Most of the population inhabit the countryside, predominantly in the river delta region of North and South Vietnam although there has been a recent trend of the population moving to the main cities of Ho Chi Ming and Hanoi
- There is no official religion considering it is a communist country however the people are not restricted on who/what they choose to worship. A popular choice of religion is “three teachings” of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism
- Some 5,000 years ago civilization first rose in Vietnam in the Red River Valley. A Chinese lord conquered the region in 207 B.C who established a kingdom called Nam Viet. Prior to this a northern tribe flourished throughout the country.
- Nam Viet became part of the Chinese empire in 111 B.C.
- In A.D. 939 Ngo Quyen, a Vietnamese commander, organised a revolt that drove the Chinese out. The country was later renamed DAi Viet by dynasties and then gradually extended their territory south.
- The land was divided into two in the mid-1500s; the Trinh in the North and the Nguyen in the South.
- With the help of the French in 1802, a Nguyen Lord defeated the Tring, after which they renamed the country Vietnam. However Vietnam was taken over by the French in 1890
- WW2 brought new control to the country as Japan briefly took over until their defeat in 1945 after which Ho Chi Minh was declared an independent nation by the leader of the Vietnamese communist party.

- A war erupted between the French and the communist Vietnamese as France attempted to retake over the country. This ended in 1954 with the partition of the country into communist North and Non-communist South Vietnam.
- 1957 to 1975 North and South Vietnam were in war against each other. The United States, Russia and China got involved. Subsequently they reunited under a communist regime.

Trade:

- The country traded with predominantly other communist countries between 1975 and 1980s however the collapse of the union in 1990 initiated a free market system and trade with the west began again which brought with it economic progress
- The exportation of Cashew nuts and black pepper from Vietnam is the largest in the world producing one third of the world's resources for these products. Second to Thailand it is also one of the largest exporters of rice.
- Main exports: crude oil, seafood, rices, shoes, wooden products, machinery, electronics, coffee, and clothing.

Government and Economy:

- Vietnam is governed by the communist party of Vietnam and is a socialist state.
- A Prime Minister runs the government while a president, appointed by the National Assembly is in control of the state and command of the armed forces.