

# HERITAGE Guide

ĐẶC SẢN CỦA TỔNG CÔNG TY HÀNG KHÔNG VIỆT NAM

*The  
Heritage  
land of*

**NINH BINH**









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**HERITAGE**  
**Guide**  
JAN/2026

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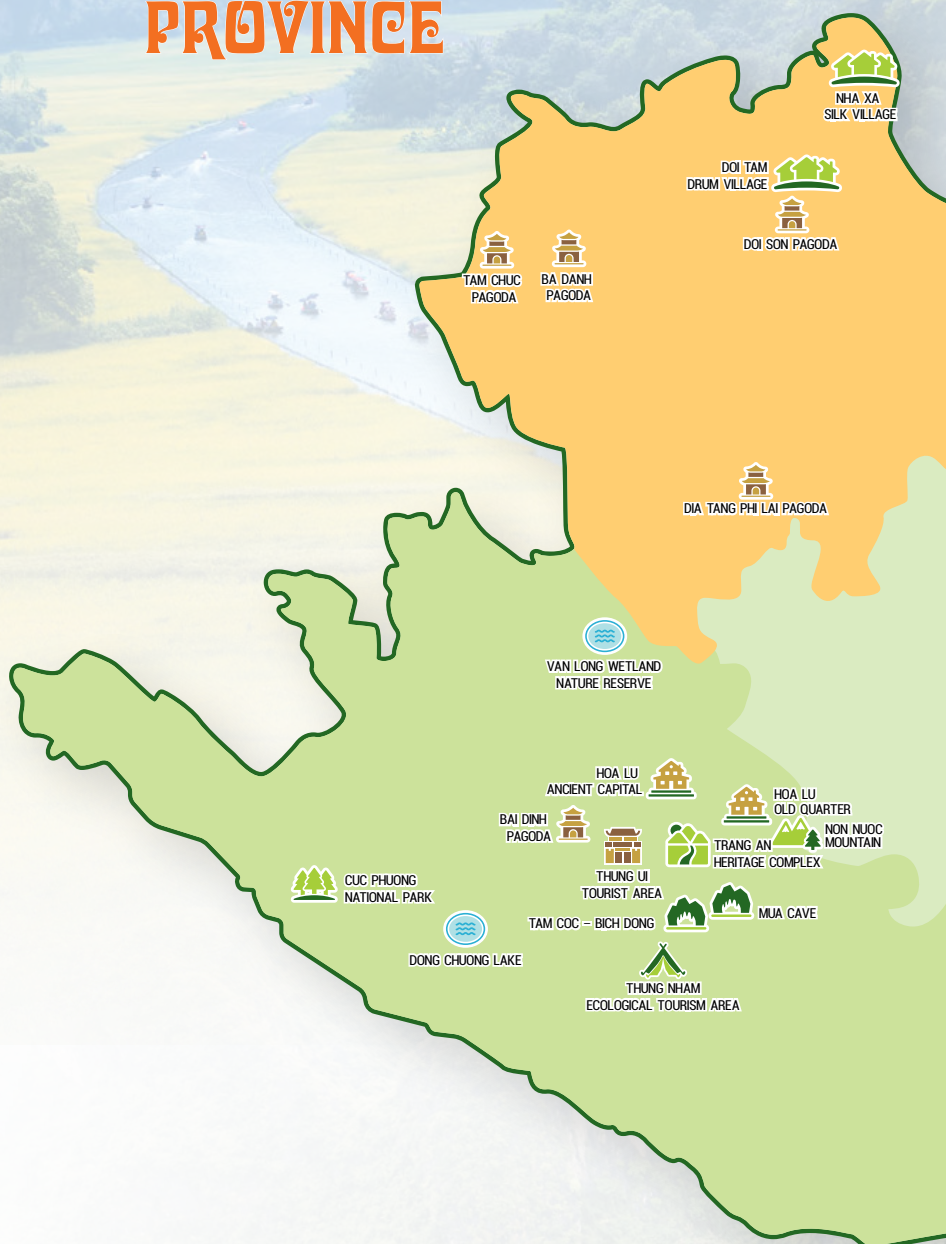


*Thai Vi Temple Festival*  
📅 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> Mar (Lunar Calendar)



# NINH BINH

## PROVINCE



The historic land of Ninh Binh, the former capital with a realm of millennial heritage, is the combination of culture and nature. Here, the ancient capital of Hoa Lu still resonates with the heroic spirit of the Dinh, Le, and Tran dynasties; Trang An and Tam Coc stand as masterpieces of majesty and poetry; while the Bai Dinh Pagoda rises in the wilderness.

For cuisine, Ninh Binh's allure is further defined by its distinctive flavors: the tender aroma of mountain goat, the satisfying crunch of crispy fried rice, and the sweet sinewy of mountain snails.



The historic Ha Nam was a realm of fertile lowlands, nurtured by the gentle Day River and lush green slopes. Against this pastoral backdrop, ancient pagodas and temples embellish the soul of the land: the secluded Ba Danh Pagoda resting by the river, the thousand-year-old majesty of Long Doi Son, and the grand Tam Chuc Pagoda, appearing like an "earthly paradise" amidst the mortal world.

This is the very land where the Ngoc Lu bronze drum - the pinnacle of the Dong Son civilization was found. The old land of Ha Nam carries the deep, rustic soul of the North in the resonance of Doi Tam drums and the softness of Nha Xa silk, alongside the cherished flavors of clay-pot braised fish, Phu Ly steamed rolls, and Dai Hoang bananas... leaving an impression of a serene and gentle Northern Delta.



The old Nam Dinh - where the Red River embraces the East Sea - has long been revered as the cultural cradle of the Northern Delta. Nature here is a convergence of plains and ocean: from the whispering waves of Hai Hau and Quat Lam beaches to the vast expanse of the Giao Thuy mangroves and the lush greenery of Xuan Thuy National Park.

The culture of ancient Nam Dinh is steeped in the melodies of *Chau Van* and *Cheo* folk singing, in the intricate crafts of embroidery and mat weaving, and in renowned specialties like beef *pho*, *xiu pao* cake, and Siu Chau candy.



# NINH BINH

*Located where the green plains meet majestic limestone mountains, between rivers and the sea, Ninh Binh has long been a symbol of Vietnam's natural beauty. This heritage land not only allures visitors with its breathtaking scenery but also preserves a priceless treasure of culture, history, nature, and local life. Its story stretches back millions of years, through the founding dynasties of Vietnam, and continues to flourish today.*

*A heritage land  
of thousands  
years*



## THE PRICELESS ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY OF THUNG UI

At the heart of the Trang An Landscape Complex, archaeologists have discovered ancient remains and successfully decoded the DNA of a 13,000-year-old prehistoric warrior, named "*Chien binh Binh Minh*" (The Dawn Warrior). This groundbreaking discovery has transformed Trang An - Bai Dinh from a famous tourism and spiritual destination into a global highlight in archaeology and anthropology.

In February 2026, *Chien binh Binh Minh* will be displayed at *Dai Kinh Dia* (Earth Worshipping Altar) in Thung Ui Tourist Area for visitors to watch and immerse themselves in a "gateway of time".

## TRANG AN ECOLOGICAL SITE - A FAIRY TALE LAND

Considered an "outdoor geological museum," Trang An's cave system dates back 32 million years and bears evident traces of natural changes. All of these processes created a mesmerizing tropical karst landscape with winding mountain ranges, flooded valleys, and water caves that take visitors into a fairy-tale world.



## HOA LU ANCIENT CAPITAL - THE GLORY OF THREE DYNASTIES

Hoa Lu Ancient Capital was the first capital of Vietnam's centralized feudal state, where the Dinh, Early Le, and Ly dynasties laid the foundation for long-lasting national independence. Surrounded by the limestone mountains, which formed a solid natural fortress, Hoa Lu served as a military stronghold and the political, economic, and cultural center of 10<sup>th</sup>-century Vietnam.

Today, architectural remains such as the Temples of Kings Dinh and Le, Nhat Tru Pagoda, palace foundations, and ancient steles showcase the exquisite stone and wood craftsmanship of the past.





## CENTER OF BELIEF, SPIRITUALITY & RELIGION IN VIETNAM

The heritage land of Ninh Binh is one of Vietnam's most important centers of religion, belief, and spirituality. As one of the earliest regions where Buddhism developed, it is home to many large temple complexes that hold national and international records, such as Bai Dinh and Tam Chuc Pagodas.

After expansion, this cultural landscape became even richer with traditional worship practices honoring Saints, the Mother Goddess, and the Four Palaces - recognized as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Festivals are held year-round, from temple and pagoda celebrations to folk rituals, creating a vibrant spiritual picture where culture, history, and nature deeply intertwine.

## EXPERIENCE A HEALING THERAPY

Ninh Binh offers pristine ecological spaces with typical destinations such as Trang An, Tam Coc - Bich Dong, Van Long Lagoon, Cuc Phuong and Xuan Thuy National Parks. Here, there are majestic mountains and peaceful rivers. Visitors can enjoy boat rides, cycling, and trekking to reconnect with nature and find inner peace.

Beyond its breathtaking landscapes, Ninh Binh is also an ideal destination for wellness and energy renewal. Amid limestone mountains, gentle waterways, and pure air, visitors can enjoy hot mineral springs, yoga and meditation retreats, herbal spas, traditional massages, and indigenous health treatments at various eco-resorts from budget to high-end.

Thanks to the great nature, Ninh Binh can provide many outdoor activities to help balance daily rhythm and recharge energy. Some notable programs are hiking through Hoa Lu forest, cycling through Tam Coc - Bich Dong valley, or kayaking in Trang An... You should not miss playing golf and relaxing at Dong Chuong lake, a perfect destination with fresh lakes, pine hills, and forests for sports and relaxation.

### Trang An Golf & Resort

📍 Phu Long Commune

☎ 02296 333 111

🕒 6am - 7pm

💰 **Golf Green Fees:**

**Weekdays:** From VND2,500,000/person

**Sat & Sun:** From VND3,500,000/person

## NINH BINH CUISINE - A GIFT FROM NATURE

Ninh Binh's landscape and history have shaped a rich and unique culinary identity.

There are abundant local ingredients, among which are mountain goat, field eel, fragrant sticky rice, for signature dishes such as crispy rice, Hoa Lu mountain goat, eel vermicelli, and Kim Son snakehead fish salad.

Cultural exchanges also bring delicious specialties from nearby regions: beef pho, Gao Thuy fermented pork rolls, Nam Dinh ramie leaf cakes and longan cakes, Phu Ly steamed rice rolls, Vu Dai braised fish, and Dai Hoang bananas.

The culinary delights of Ninh Binh become a signature slice of culture, giving visitors yet another reason to return.





# ANCIENT BAI DINH PAGODA

## The spiritual root of the heritage land

*According to legend, the ancient Bai Dinh Pagoda was built in 1136 and is located halfway up the Dinh Mountain range (Tay Hoa Lu Wd.). It's said that in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, King Dinh Tien Hoang once built an altar atop the mountain to pray for a peaceful country, thereby turning this land into a sacred destination. Till the reign of King Ly Nhan Tong, the Zen master Nguyen Minh Khong came here to practice Buddhism. Feeling the mountain's powerful spiritual energy, he founded Bai Dinh Pagoda, marking the beginning of its long Buddhist tradition. The ancient Bai Dinh Pagoda reflects the Ly dynasty's "cave-pagoda" architectural style: no grand curved roofs or lavish upper halls, but structures that harmonize with natural caves and forests, creating a serene and nature-embracing atmosphere. The 300-step stone path to the pagoda, surrounded by picturesque mountains, offers a peaceful route for visitors to enjoy the scenery and find inner calm.*

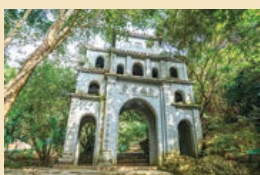


### VISITING THE ANCIENT BAI DINH PAGODA COMPLEX

Estimated duration: 1.5 - 2 hrs

#### Ngoc Well (Jade Well)

Located at the foot of the mountain, Ngoc Well is nearly 30m wide and 10m deep. Its water has a natural jade color and never runs dry. It is said that the Zen master Nguyen Minh Khong once used this well's water to prepare herbal medicine.



#### Pagoda Gate & Stairway

From the foot of the mountain, visitors climb about 300 stone steps to reach the ancient pagoda. The path is wide and surrounded by ancient hardwood trees - perfect for taking photos.

#### Sang Cave

##### (Buddha-Worshipping Cave)

About 2m high, 25m long, and 15m wide, this cave is a worship space dedicated to Buddha and the Mountain God.

#### Cao Son Shrine

Located right behind the exit of Sang Cave, this shrine honors Cao Son - the guardian deity of the ancient Vu Lam Mountain region.

#### Shrine of Saint

##### Nguyen Minh Khong

Built against the mountainside in the Ly dynasty's architectural style, this shrine honors the Zen master who founded Bai Dinh Pagoda and devoted his life to cure people.



#### Toi Cave (Mother Goddess- Worshipping Cave)

Larger than Sang Cave, Toi Cave consists of seven interconnected chambers. The cave is dedicated to Mother Goddesses and Saints following Vietnamese folk beliefs.



# NEW BAI DINH PAGODA

## Vietnam's great Buddhist wonder

Beside the ancient pagoda lies the new Bai Dinh Pagoda, located in Tay Hoa Lu Wd., Ninh Binh. Construction began in 2003 and the first phase was inaugurated in 2008, creating a majestic spiritual space amidst impressive limestone mountains.

The new 80-hectare pagoda complex, located in the west of the ancient capital Hoa Lu, possesses outstanding architecture with large, majestic blocks. Decorative details combine the craftsmanship of traditional artisan villages - Phuc Loc woodwork, Ninh Van stone carving, Y Yen bronze casting, Van Lam embroidery, Cat Dang lacquerware, Dong Xam silver carving... Local materials such as Ninh Binh greenstone and dark brown Bat Trang tiles give the pagoda a distinctly Vietnamese character. Today, the new Bai Dinh Pagoda is a famous pilgrimage site and has hosted major international events, including the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations 2014.

### A PAGODA OF RECORDS

Known as Vietnam's "Great Buddhist Wonder", the new Bai Dinh Pagoda holds several Southeast Asian and Asian records.



### ASIA'S LARGEST GOLD-GILDED BRONZE BUDDHA STATUE

The Shakyamuni Buddha statue in the Giao Chu Hall stands 10m tall, weighs approximately 100 tons, and sits on a 1.5m lotus pedestal.



### SOUTHEAST ASIA'S TALLEST STUPA

Bao Thien Tower (Relic Stupa) rises 100m high with 13 floors, built in the Mahayana Buddhist style combined with traditional Vietnamese architecture.



### ASIA'S LONGEST ARHAT CORRIDOR

The Arhat Corridor stretches 3,400m along both sides and is made entirely of wood. It features 500 exquisitely carved Arhat statues, each 2.5m tall and weighing approximately 4 tons, crafted by Ninh Van artisans.



In addition, the Bai Dinh Pagoda complex also includes: the Quan Am Hall with a gold-gilded thousand-armed Avalokiteshvara statue weighing about 90 tons; the Giao Chu Hall with three of the largest wooden horizontal lacquered boards and carved ceremonial gates in Vietnam; a beautifully sculpted garden of stone Buddhist statues - an inspiring place for both worship and exploration.





# EMBRACING SPRING in the sacred realm

Set amidst Ninh Binh's spectacular landscape, Bai Dinh Pagoda is a destination for all seasons. However, the most ideal time to fully appreciate its beauty and grandeur is during the early days of the year.

The Bai Dinh Pagoda Festival officially starts on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the Lunar New Year and continues through the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> lunar month. This is one of the premier spring festivals in the ancient capital, honoring Buddhist values while paying tribute to historical figures and celebrating national pride.



## A SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

The festival's ceremonial aspect involves solemn traditional rituals that reflect the Vietnamese philosophy of gratitude and respect. It begins with a procession carrying the spirit tablets of God Cao Son, Saint Nguyen Minh Khong, and Ba Chua Thuong Ngan (the Mother Goddess of the Forests) from the ancient pagoda to the new one, symbolizing a bridge between the past and present. This is followed by incense offerings at the Tam The Hall, Guan Yin Hall, and the Temple of Saint Nguyen Minh Khong, along with prayers for favorable weather, national prosperity, and peace.

## A VIBRANT SPRING CELEBRATION

Following the ceremonies, the festival atmosphere comes alive with the vibrant energy of spring. Visitors can enjoy traditional art performances like *Cheo* (traditional opera), *Ca Tru* (ceremonial singing), and *Xam* singing. Notable historical reenactments include the sacrifice ceremony to King Dinh Tien Hoang and the flag-raising ceremony of King Quang Trung. It is also a time for visitors to participate in releasing creatures for good karma and praying for a lucky and peaceful year.



## BAI DINH SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL TOURISM COMPLEX

📍 Tay Hoa Lu Wd. ☎ 1900 966 909 ⌚ 6am - 8:30pm (Ticket sales close at 6pm)



**Free entrance**

💰 **ELECTRIC CART (ROUND TRIP):**

**Adults:** VND100,000/pax

**Children (1-1.3m tall):** VND70,000/pax

**Children (under 1m tall):** Free



**STUPA ENTRY:**

**Adults:** VND60,000/person

**Children (1-1.3m tall):** VND40,000/person



**Combo (Electric car + Stupa visit + Herbal foot soak):**

**Adults:** VND300,000/person

**Children (1-1.3m tall):** VND210,000/person

**Children (under 1m tall):** Free

# The magical BAI DINH NIGHT

If the daytime impresses with sheer scale, the sunset transforms Bai Dinh into something entirely different: quiet, sacred, and mesmerizing. As the sun dips behind the hills, the Stupa is silhouetted against a fiery horizon. Golden lights wash over the hillsides and architectural lines, making every curved roof, corridor, and statue shimmer in the night. The evening stillness invites a slower pace, offering a sense of deep relaxation and mindfulness. The pagoda opens till 9pm daily for night tours, sightseeing, and tea ceremonies.



## BAI DINH NIGHT TOUR

📞 1900 966 909

💰 VND250,000/person (for groups of 4+)

### Highlights:

- Admire the illuminated Bao Thien Stupa in a spectacular sunset.
- Watch the Tam The Hall glowing in golden light.
- Enjoy a panoramic view of the glittering complex from the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of the Stupa.
- Release lanterns on Thuy Dinh Lake.
- Participate in the nightly prayer ceremony for peace.

## STAY AT BAI DINH GUESTHOUSE

📍 Inside the Bai Dinh Spiritual and Cultural Tourism Complex

📞 1900 966 909

💰 From VND1,250,000/night

Bai Dinh Guesthouse offers a peaceful retreat surrounded by nature. The architecture reflects a classic Asian style - warm, minimalist, and elegant - providing a sense of serenity after a day of exploration. Guests can enjoy quiet moments in the tea ceremony space, relax with music and herbal foot therapy at Café Chuong Gio, and experience authentic Vietnamese cuisine and vegetarian dishes at Cat Tuong restaurant.

### Cat Tuong Restaurant

📞 1900 966 909

💰 Traditional Vietnamese dishes: From VND69,000/dish

Family-style meal set: From VND350,000

Vegetarian menu: From VND59,000/dish

Tourist set meals: From VND129,000





# TAM CHUC

## An earthly paradise

*Backed by the majestic That Tinh (Seven Stars) mountain range and facing the vast Tam Chuc Lake - where six limestone islets float like lotus buds on the water - the Tam Chuc Spiritual Complex (Tam Chuc Wd.) appears as a serene realm of meditation between heaven and earth. More than a pilgrimage site, Tam Chuc is a symbol of the harmonious blend of native Buddhist architecture and international artistic excellence, connecting humanity with the cosmos.*



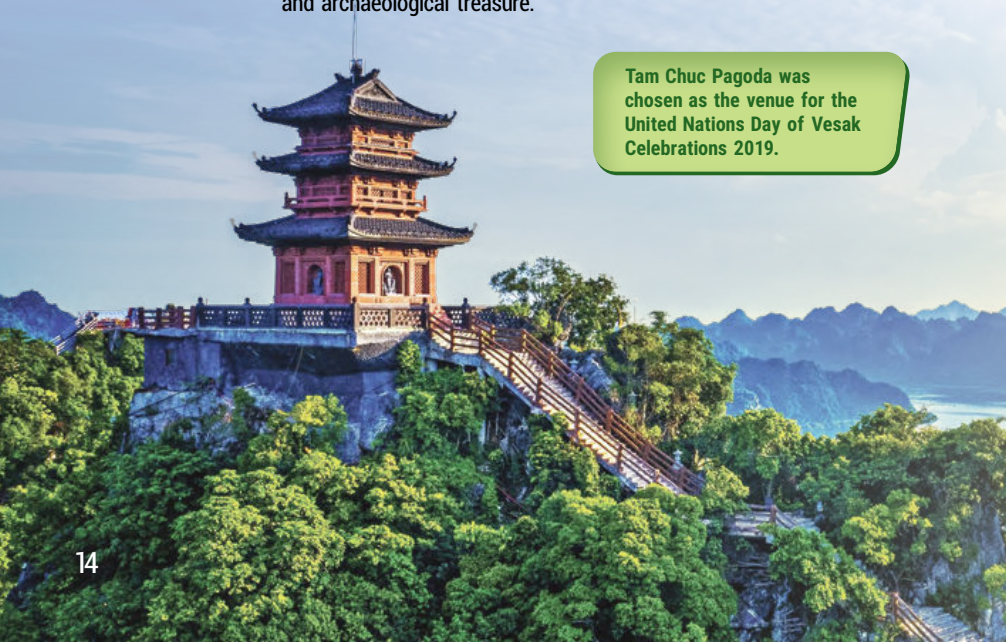
### A LEGENDARY LAND

Legend tells of seven fairies who descended to earth and, captivated by Tam Chuc's beauty, transformed into seven stars illuminating the mountain range. Today, on the foundations of a thousand-year-old temple, one of the world's largest spiritual complexes has risen. Spanning 144ha within a larger 5,100-ha national tourism area, Tam Chuc seamlessly combines traditional Vietnamese design with modern engineering. Though crafted by artisans from various countries and faiths, it retains the solemn, pristine beauty of an ancient Vietnamese pagoda - a fairyland on earth.

### AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TREASURE TROVE

Beyond its spiritual grandeur, Tam Chuc holds significant archaeological value. Excavations have revealed human remains and graves dating back approximately 10,000 years, alongside Dong Son pottery and Hoabinhian stone tools, proving early prehistoric settlement in this resource-rich area. In September 2025, the Tam Chuc Complex was designated a Special National Relic, affirming its status as a cultural and archaeological treasure.

Tam Chuc Pagoda was chosen as the venue for the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations 2019.






## WORLD-CLASS BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE

A journey through Tam Chuc is an emotional ascent, where every step reveals unique cultural and spiritual values.

### 1 THUY DINH GUESTHOUSE - WHERE THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Located on Tam Chuc lake, Thuy Dinh is built as a traditional Northern communal house with curved tile roofs and intricate wood carvings. This is the ticket counter for boat and electric car services.

 Return boat to Tam Quan Gate, then electric car to other spots: VND300,000/pax  
Return boat to Tam Quan Gate, then walk: VND250,000/pax



### 2 TAM CHUC COMMUNAL HOUSE

Situated in the middle of the lake, this temple sits on the foundation of the thousand-year-old Ba Sao Pagoda and worships King Dinh Tien Hoang and Queen Duong Thi Nguyet of the Dinh Dynasty.

### 3 TAM QUAN GATE

The imposing three-tiered main entrance, guarded by two majestic Dharma Protector statues.

### 4 GARDEN OF SUTRA PILLARS

A garden of 32 massive green stone pillars, each 13.5m high and weighing 200 tons, modeled after the national treasure at Nhat Tru Pagoda in Ninh Binh.



### 5 THE THREE MAIN HALLS (TAM DIEN)

Situated on the central axis of the complex are three magnificent shrines:

**Quan Am Hall:** Features a 100-ton monolithic bronze statue of Avalokite - vara Bodhisattva.

**Giao Chu Hall:** Houses the largest monolithic bronze Shakyamuni Buddha statue in Southeast Asia (200 tons).

**Tam The Hall:** The largest hall, capable of hosting 5,000 worshippers at once.

A unique feature found only in the Three Main Halls is the collection of 12,000 relief sculptures depicting Buddhist philosophy. These were crafted from volcanic rock by Indonesian artisans and assembled onto the wall surfaces of the three great halls.



### 6 JADE PAGODA - ALTAR OF HEAVEN

Located at the highest point in the Tam Chuc complex, accessible via 299 stone steps, is *Chua Ngoc* (the Jade Pagoda), also known as the Altar of Heaven. Perched on the peak of That Tinh Mountain, the pagoda is 15m high and constructed from 2,000 tons of red granite assembled in solid blocks without the use of cement or adhesives. All stone was processed in India and installed in the style of ancient Vietnamese architecture. The treasures of the pagoda include a ruby Amitabha Buddha statue weighing 4 tons from Myanmar.





# A SANCTUARY FOR THE SOUL

Tam Chuc Pagoda, with its back nestled against the mountains, facing the lake, and surrounded by lush, untouched forests, becomes an ideal stop for pilgrimage, sightseeing, seeking pure energy for the new year's journey, and healing both body and mind. In 2025, the World Travel Awards honored the Tam Chuc Heritage Complex as "Asia's Leading Cultural Tourism Attraction," affirming the special attraction of this spiritual land.

## TAM CHUC SPRING FESTIVAL

Spring - the season of pilgrimages - is the most lovely time to visit Tam Chuc, one of the largest spiritual complexes in Vietnam. When spring arrives, Tam Chuc Lake is covered in a thin layer of mist, while the layered limestone mountains act as a dark screen embracing the pagoda in the center. In that moment of season transition, the Tam Chuc Spring Festival begins.

The festival officially opens on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month annually, starting with the festival drums, bells, and chanting echoing amidst the waters and mountains. The most distinct highlight is the Water Procession Ritual, a symbol of wet rice civilization. Hundreds of boats follow one another on the lake, led by two dragon boats carrying 10 jars of water collected directly from the lake. The procession moves towards the area of the Neu tree near the ancient Tam Chuc Communal House, where the water offering ritual is performed solemnly. The water, after being blessed, is processed to the shrines, carrying wishes for favorable rain and wind, bountiful harvests, and the country's peace and prosperity.

The spring atmosphere at Tam Chuc is not limited to the opening day. From the first to the third lunar month, the site transforms into a "cultural market" with many attractions such as: Tet markets, traditional craft villages, folk games, and art performances...



Tam Chuc Pagoda hosts 3 major annual festivals: The Tam Chuc Festival Opening (12<sup>th</sup> of the 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month); Vesak Day (15<sup>th</sup> of the 4<sup>th</sup> lunar month); and the Vu Lan Filial Piety Festival (15<sup>th</sup> of the 7<sup>th</sup> lunar month).



## A BOAT TRIP ON TAM CHUC LAKE

The Tam Chuc tourism complex spans approximately 5,100ha, including over 1,000ha of water surface and 3,000ha of limestone mountains and natural valley forests. Taking a boat on the lake is a great way to feel that immense grandeur.

From the boat, visitors can admire the panoramic view of the temples and majestic mountains, immersing in the fresh air, cool breeze, and a sense of peace. It only takes about 15-20 minutes for travelling each way. At sunset, the lake reflects the rolling mountains, and the pink sunset light spreads out. It is also the perfect moment to enjoy tea, listen to the water, and let your heart follow the rhythm of nature.

### Sunset Afternoon Tea on VIP Cruise - Tam Chuc

🕒 4pm - 6pm

🕒 Approx. 60 minutes/trip

🏠 VND350,000/person (max 40 guests/trip)

*Note: Service should be booked in advance.*

## PREMIUM DINNER ON TAM CHUC LAKE

When the night falls, luxurious cruise ships will take you on an excursion across the lake to watch the Tam Chuc and the architectural works shimmering in the night. On board, you will enjoy dishes featuring local specialty flavors prepared by top chefs.

☎ 1900 999 962

💰 **Traditional Vietnamese dishes:** From VND69,000/dish

**Tourist set meals:**

From VND129,000

**Family-style meal set:**

From VND399,000

**Tam Chuc vegetarian menu:**

From VND59,000/dish

**Culinary experience on Luc Nhac Lake cruise:** From VND299,000/person



## A RETREAT IN PARADISE

If you are looking for a place to leave behind the noise, recharge your energy, and immerse in majestic nature, then Tam Chuc is the ideal destination. With magnificent scenery, imposing limestone mountains, and covering natural forests, Tam Chuc brings the feeling of being lost in a fairyland. The quiet, serene space here helps you relax your body, set your soul adrift, and find deep inner peace.

Tam Chuc Guesthouse, located within the Tam Chuc Tourism Complex, offers you experiences of rest and healing in a spiritual environment.

This is the place to plan a vacation for the soul - spend a day taking a boat to worship at the pagoda and view the scenery; in the afternoon, relax reading a book by the lake or meditating lightly; at night, lie down watching the starry sky, listening to the whispering nature, and sleep in a gentle space, enjoying a silence hard to find in the city.



### Tam Chuc Guesthouse

📍 Within the grounds of the Tam Chuc complex

💰 From VND1,150,000



The ancient land of Ninh Binh opens diverse spiritual journeys during the early-year pilgrimage season. The spiritual route linking Huong Pagoda (Hanoi), Tam Chuc, and Bai Dinh leads visitors through serene landscapes and remarkable cultural-religious sites. In addition, long-standing sacred destinations in former Ha Nam and Nam Dinh provinces further enrich these contemplative paths, offering tranquil spaces that embody the cultural spirit of Vietnam's Northern Delta.

Pilgrimage  
routes of  
**SPRING**

**JOURNEY 1** THE BUDDHIST  
HERITAGE ROUTE

Stretching along the majestic limestone mountain ranges running northwest to southeast is a spiritual tourism axis known as the "Buddhist Heritage Route." This route connects three major pagodas that reflect essential milestones in the development of Buddhism in Vietnam: Huong Pagoda (Hanoi), Tam Chuc Pagoda, and Bai Dinh Pagoda of Ninh Binh Province.



**HUONG PAGODA**

As one of the oldest and most sacred Buddhist pilgrimage centers in northern Vietnam, the Huong Pagoda complex stretches along the Huong Son Valley with dozens of temples, caves, and shrines such as Trinh Temple, Thanh Son Pagoda, Long Van Pagoda, Hinh Bong Cave, Tuyet Son Cave, Tran Son Temple, Giai Oan Pagoda, and Thien Tru Pagoda.

Its center is Huong Tich Cave, honored as the "Most Beautiful Cave Under the Southern Sky." According to Buddhist lore, Huong Tich Cave is where the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara practiced and attained enlightenment, making this a spiritually powerful and sacred destination.

*The spring festival at Huong Pagoda is one of the largest and longest in Vietnam, lasting from early 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month through the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> lunar month. Visiting during this season, you can immerse yourself in a peaceful Buddhist landscape, surrounded by misty spring mountains, quiet streams, and the poetic Yen River reflecting the hues of the sky and mountains.*

Huong Son Commune, Hanoi

Festival Dates: From the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> lunar month.

Sightseeing and round-trip boat tickets:

HUONG TICH ROUTE:  
**Adults:** VND230,000/person  
**Children (under 1.2m):** VND65,000/person

LONG VAN - TUYET SON ROUTE:  
**Adults:** VND85,000/person  
**Children (under 1.2m):** VND50,000/person

ROUND-TRIP CABLE CAR  
(Thien Tru Pagoda - Huong Tich Cave)  
**Adults:** VND260,000/person  
**Children & priority groups:** VND180,000/person



**TAM CHUC PAGODA**

The second destination on the Buddhist Heritage Route is Tam Chuc Pagoda, one of the world's largest Buddhist complexes. Beyond its stunning landscapes of mountains and lakes, Tam Chuc is internationally recognized for its immense Buddhist architecture, which embodies the values of compassion, kindness, and benevolence.

**BAI DINH PAGODA**

Bai Dinh is the spiritual complex where the thousand-year history of the former Hoa Lu capital harmonizes with the grand, modern Buddhist architecture on a regional scale. Together with Huong Pagoda and Tam Chuc Pagoda, Bai Dinh completes the pilgrimage axis-leading visitors on a meaningful spiritual journey toward peace and good fortune for the new year.



## JOURNEY 2 SPRINGTIME IN OLD HA NAM

The ancient land of Ha Nam (today part of Ninh Binh Province) lies at the southern gateway to the Red River Delta. Here, soft limestone mountains blend with rivers, lakes, and fertile rice fields to create picturesque villages. This land is where nature, culture, and spirituality intertwine, forming a distinctive and memorable identity. A spring journey through the region's famous temples and shrines is a wonderful way to immerse yourself in the festive spring colors while discovering cultural and spiritual values, and to wish for a peaceful, fortunate new year.

### BA DANH PAGODA

### LONG DOI SON PAGODA

### DIA TANG PHI LAI PAGODA

### TRAN THUONG TEMPLE

#### BA DANH PAGODA

📍 Danh Xa Hamlet, Kim Bang Wd.

🕒 6am - 6pm

🎫 Adults: VND10,000/person

Children: Free

Ba Danh Pagoda - also known as Bao Son Tu - is famously associated with the saying "as deserted as Ba Danh Pagoda," stemming from its once-isolated location, surrounded by forests, backed by mountains, and facing the Day River. In the past, visitors could only reach it by boat. Today, the pagoda attracts many visitors seeking a peaceful spiritual space amid charming scenery.



#### LONG DOI SON PAGODA

📍 Tien Son Wd.

🕒 Open all day; daytime recommended for climbing and sightseeing.

Located atop Long Doi Mountain, Long Doi Son Pagoda (Dien Linh Tu) dates back to the Ly Dynasty (circa 1054-1059). The pagoda features ancient architecture and preserves many valuable artifacts. The ascent includes 373 stone steps along the mountain slope, offering sweeping views of the winding Chau Giang River embracing the surrounding plains.



#### DIA TANG PHI LAI PAGODA

📍 Ninh Trung Hamlet, Thanh Binh Commune

🕒 5am - 6pm

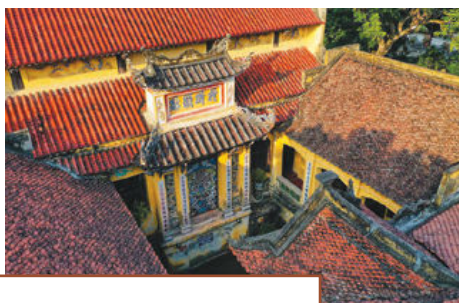
Nestled in the peaceful Thanh Liem Valley, Dia Tang Phi Lai Pagoda was built around the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries. It draws visitors with its peaceful atmosphere and traditional architectural style, offering many picturesque corners.

#### TRAN THUONG TEMPLE

📍 Tran Thuong Commune

🕒 7am - 8pm

Tran Thuong Temple is associated with the history of resisting invaders during the Tran Dynasty. The current temple stands on a site that once served as a military food-storage depot for Saint Tran Hung Dao and played a key role during the Mongol invasions.



*The Tran Hung Dao Food Distribution Festival takes place on the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> to dawn of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month. It honors the national hero's contributions and prays for peace and prosperity. The festival is recognized as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage.*



## JOURNEY 3 ACROSS A RICH TAPESTRY OF BELIEFS

A trip to Ninh Binh's heritage land is a journey into a vibrant spiritual world filled with Tran Dynasty temples, the colorful *Tu Phu* (Four Palaces) belief, sacred pagodas, and centuries-old religious sites. This region forms a rare spiritual landscape where temples, communal houses, and shrines weave together into a cultural map that preserves thousand-year legacies and offers a deeply meaningful spring pilgrimage experience.

PHU  
DAY

PHO MINH  
PAGODA

THIEN TRUONG  
TEMPLE

KEO HANH THIEN  
PAGODA



### PHU DAY - Temple complex of the Mother Goddess Lieu Hanh

📍 Vu Ban Commune

Phu Day is a typical traditional religious architectural complex of the Vietnamese people, associated with the legend of the Holy Mother Lieu Hanh - one of the Four Immortals of Vietnamese folk beliefs. The complex includes three major sacred sites: Tien Huong Palace, Van Cat Palace, and Lang Mau (Mother Goddess Shrine), forming the largest center of the worship of the Mother Goddess Worship (Tam Phu) faith, recognized by UNESCO as a Representative Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016.

Visitors to Phu Day can also experience unique cultural practices such as *Hau Dong* and *Chau Van* - rich expressions of Vietnamese spiritual art.



Visit Phu Day from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> lunar month to enjoy the vibrant festival atmosphere, including palanquin processions, torch parades, *Chau Van* singing, human chess, and more.



### PHO MINH PAGODA

📍 Tuc Mac Hamlet, Nam Dinh Wd.

🕒 6:30am - 6pm

Pho Minh Pagoda is a relic bearing the unique historical and architectural mark of the Tran Dynasty. The pagoda originated in the Ly dynasty and was expanded during the reign of King Tran Thanh Tong in 1262. It served as the center for meditation and teaching of the Truc Lam Zen Monastery, associated with King-Monk Tran Nhan Tong and the Zen masters Phap Loa and Huyen Quang.

Its highlight is the Pho Minh Tower, the tallest ancient brick tower still standing almost intact after more than 700 years (19.51m). The 14-story tower weighs about 700 tons, with a green-stone base and upper tiers made of carved fired bricks featuring Tran-style dragon motifs.



## THIEN TRUONG TEMPLE

📍 Tran Thua St., Nam Dinh Wd.

🕒 6:30am - 6pm

In 1262, King Tran Thai Tong built the Thien Truong Palace on the Tuc Mac - Thien Truong land (now a part of Ninh Binh Province).

It served as a strategic fortress for food storage, military training, and administrative functions alongside the capital Thang Long.

Today's Thien Truong Temple stands on the foundation of the former Trung Quang Palace, where the Tran kings lived, ruled, and worshiped their royal ancestors. The temple honors 14 kings of the Tran Dynasty, their queens, and officials.



*The night of the 14<sup>th</sup> and the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month mark a sacred time at Thien Truong Temple, when visitors can immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the Khai An Ceremony (Tran Temple Opening Ceremony) - a tradition believed to have been passed down from the Tran Dynasty. Visitors may also seek a "Tich Phuc Vo Cuong" seal, a traditional Vietnamese blessing symbolizing the accumulation of boundless merit and good fortune for lasting health, prosperity, and peace.*



## KEO HANH THIEN PAGODA

📍 Xuan Hong Commune

Keo Hanh Thien Pagoda Complex worships both Buddha and the revered Zen master Duong Khong Lo, an influential figure in Dai Viet Buddhism. The pagoda covers over 1 hectare and faces south, surrounded by rivers. Its architectural layout is grand and harmonious, reflecting the distinctive style of the Later Le Dynasty of the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Besides its architectural and artistic values, as well as decorative sculptures, the pagoda also preserves many valuable intangible cultural heritages expressed through a system of *Han Nom* manuscripts (steles, royal decrees, legends, parallel sentences, large characters, etc.). It was designated a Special National Relic in 2016.



*Visit the pagoda from the 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> lunar month to experience a lively local festival featuring processions, incense ceremonies, and folk games.*





*Trang An Heritage Complex stands out for its majestic karst limestone mountains, winding rivers, flooded valleys, mysterious caves, and pristine ancient forests.*



# TRANG AN

## WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

**L**ocated in Ninh Binh Province, Trang An is the only site in Vietnam and Southeast Asia recognized by UNESCO as a mixed World Heritage site, honored for its outstanding natural landscape, rare geological features, and unique cultural-historical heritage.

Covering over 6,000ha, the complex includes four main zones: Trang An Eco-Tourism Area, Hoa Lu Ancient Capital, Tam Coc - Bich Dong Tourism Site, and Hoa Lu Nature Reserve. Together, they form a unified whole of geological, scenic, historical, and spiritual significance. Its limestone ranges, ancient rivers, and enclosed valleys-shaped over millions of years-create the signature landscape of Ninh Binh. The area also preserves continuous traces of human habitation from prehistoric times through native cultural development, flourishing most notably when it became the capital Hoa Lu of Dai Co Viet in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Trang An, the heart of Ninh Binh, is a place where nature and history blend into a serene symphony. Here, you can immerse yourself in majestic landscapes and feel the tranquility preserved over thousands of years.

**Come and let Trang An tell you the story of a land  
rich in both cultural and natural heritage.**



## TRANG AN

A SHINING DESTINATION ON THE WORLD TRAVEL MAP

**KOTLER AWARD 2024:**

**Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex:**

*"Impactful Destination" category.*

**TRAVELLERS' CHOICE 2025 (TRIPADVISOR):**

**Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex**

*"Best of the Best", ranked among the top 1% of destinations worldwide.*

**Tam Coc - Bich Dong and Bai Dinh Pagoda**

*"Outstanding Destination 2025", ranked among the top 10% of the world's most popular destinations.*



# TRANG AN

## A symphony of four seasons

*Often hailed as an "Outdoor Geological Museum," Trang An is a masterpiece sculpted by nature, featuring limestone arcs rising from wetlands, pierced by mysterious water caves and valleys. Each season here narrates a distinct chapter of earth, water, and history, compelling travellers to visit, fall in love, and return.*



### SPRING

#### A tapestry of blooms

Spring drapes Trang An in a brocade woven by the elements. It is a sensory awakening: the air carries the pristine scent of wildflowers, the freshness of new grass, and the warm, drift of incense from ancient temples. Whether drifting down the Sao Khe or Ngo Dong rivers, navigating through silent caves or beneath towering cliffs, visitors fall into the gentle rhythm of nature, experiencing the romantic elegance of a Trang An spring.



### EXPLORING THE WATERWAYS

#### SAO KHE RIVER ROUTES (TRANG AN)

🕒 7am - 5pm

🕒 2-3hrs

💰 Adults: VND300,000/person

Children: VND150,000/person

- ROUTE 1** ● Boat Dock → Trinh Temple → Toi Cave → Sang Cave → Nau Ruou Cave → Tran Temple → Ba Giot Cave → Seo Cave → Son Duong Cave → Khong Cave → Khong Palace → Bao Hieu Pagoda → Tran Cave → Quy Hau Cave → Boat Dock
- ROUTE 2** ● Boat Dock → Lam Cave → Cao Son Temple → Vang Cave → Thanh Truot Cave → Suoi Tien Dock → Dai Cave → Vu Lam Palace → Pass by the Kong: Skull Island film set → Return to Boat Dock
- ROUTE 3** ● Boat Dock → Trinh Temple → Dot Cave → Van Cave → Suoi Tien Temple → Dai Cave → Vu Lam Palace → Pass by the Kong: Skull Island film set → Return to Boat Dock

#### NGO DONG RIVER ROUTE (TAM COC - BICH DONG)

This iconic journey involves a traditional sampan ride through three magic caves: Hang Ca, Hang Hai, and Hang Ba. For over an hour, you glide over crystal-clear waters revealing mossy depths, flanked by swaying reed fields.

🕒 7am - 5pm

🕒 1 - 2hrs

💰 Admission & Boat Transfer:

Adults (Over 1.3m): VND250,000/pax

Children (1m-1.3m): VND120,000/pax

Admission, Boat Transfer & Electric Cart:

Adults (Over 1.3m): VND350,000/pax

Children (1m-1.3m): VND190,000/pax



*Traveling to Tam Coc is not just about moving on small boats; you can also cycle or walk to admire the beauty of Tam Coc in the spring weather, visit the ancient Bich Dong Pagoda to pray for health, peace, and luck, or climb Mua Cave hill to fully capture the charming Tam Coc within your sight.*

## SUMMER - LOTUS BLOOMS & GOLDEN HARVESTS

**The golden season (May - June):** Tam Coc enters its "Golden Season" when the rice fields lining the Ngo Dong River turn a brilliant yellow, resembling a magnificent carpet under the early summer sun. You can take a boat ride to immerse yourself in this golden world or hike up to Mua Cave hill for a breathtaking aerial view.

**The lotus season (May - July):** Summer is also when lotuses bloom across Ninh Binh. Vast lotus ponds, glowing with vibrant pink hues and surrounded by majestic layered mountains, creates a poetic backdrop for photography.



## AUTUMN - POETIC TRANQUILITY

Autumn brings cool, pleasant weather and clear blue skies. Honey-colored sunlight pours over the Sao Khe and Ngo Dong rivers, while foliage turns color across the valleys. This is the quietest time of year, perfect for those seeking deep relaxation and a profound connection with nature.

## WINTER - WATER LILIES & REED FLOWERS

**Water Lilies (Sep - Dec):** Purple water lilies stretch along the Ngo Dong River. From high points like May Peak, the river looks like a ribbon dyed purple against the limestone backdrop.

### Take photos with water lilies

🕒 1900 9157

#### 🎫 Boat Tickets:

Adults (Over 1.3m): VND250,000/person

Children (1 - 1.3m): VND120,000/person

Water lilies: From VND50,000

*Note: Tickets can be purchased at Tam Coc Boat Dock (7am - 5pm). For the best blooms, it is recommended to take photos early in the morning.*



**Reed Season (Nov - Jan):** As the weather turns cold, white reed flowers bloom across the wetlands. Their swaying white plumes in the misty morning light create a dreamlike scene.



# HOA LU

## The glorious ancient capital

*Standing in Hoa Lu - where mountains rise like walls, the sky forms a natural roof, and the ancient earth lies beneath your feet-you realize history is not confined to books. It lives here in every breeze, every moss-covered stone, and every bell echoing from ancient temples.*

*Hoa Lu is where the heroic spirit of an independent nation shines. Key heritage sites - such as the Temples of Kings Dinh and Le, Nhat Tru Pagoda, and the Hoa Lu Four Guard Temples - take visitors back to the nation's roots amid spectacular natural surroundings.*



### HOA LU ANCIENT CAPITAL - HISTORICAL & CULTURAL SITE

📍 Tay Hoa Lu Wd.

📞 02293 620 099

🕒 Open from 7am (Ticket sales ends at 3:30pm)

🎫 **Adults:** VND20,000/person

**Children** (6-15 years old): VND10,000/person

If Trang An represents nature's grand symphony, then Hoa Lu - at the heart of the Trang An Heritage Complex - is its cultural and historical soul. As the first centralized feudal capital of Vietnam under the Dinh and Early Le dynasties, Hoa Lu played a pivotal role during the turbulent 10<sup>th</sup> century. It was here that essential decisions shaped the foundation of Dai Co Viet, and King Ly Cong Uan issued the Edict on the Transfer of the Capital from Hoa Lu to Thang Long (now Hanoi).

### TEMPLES OF KING DINH TIEN HOANG & KING LE DAI HANH

In 968, after quelling the anarchy of the 12 Warlords and unifying the country, King Dinh Tien Hoang ascended the throne as Emperor Dai Thang Minh, naming the nation Dai Co Viet and establishing the capital at Hoa Lu. After his passing, Le Dai Hanh became king in 980 and founded the Early Le Dynasty. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, temples honoring King Dinh Tien Hoang and King Le Dai Hanh were built on the foundations of the former royal palaces to commemorate these national heroes.

**King Dinh Temple:** Nestled at the foot of Ma Yen Mountain, the temple was rebuilt in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Its sanctuary houses a monolithic stone royal bed featuring exquisite dragon carvings. Visitors can also hike to the summit of Ma Yen Mountain to pay respects at King Dinh's tomb.

**King Le Temple:** Located just 500m away, this temple honors King Le Dai Hanh. Rebuilt in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it stands as a masterpiece of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Vietnamese carving art.



Both temples house a set of *phu viet* - lacquered and gilded wooden ceremonial weapons - recognized as national treasures.





## AM TIEN CAVE & PAGODA

☎ 0987 807 965

🕒 7am - 5:30pm

👤 **Adults:** VND50,000/person

👦 **Children (0.9-14m):** VND20,000/person

Located 400m from King Dinh Temple's East Gate, Am Tien Cave lies deep within a flooded valley, walled in by sheer cliffs that create a secluded, melancholic beauty detached from the outside world.

The entrance sits halfway up the mountain, reached by over 200 stone steps. Viewed from afar, it resembles a dragon's open mouth, earning it the folk name "Dragon Cave." Inside, the cave features rich stalactites and serves as a place to worship Buddha, Zen Master Nguyen Minh Khong, and Queen Mother Duong Van Nga.



## THE FOUR GUARDIANS OF HOA LU

"*Hoa Lu Tu Tran*" (The Four Guardians of Hoa Lu) refers to the four sacred deities and their respective temples, which protected the East, West, South, and North directions of the ancient Hoa Lu capital of the former Dai Co Viet.

### EAST: Thien Ton Pagoda and Cave

📍 Dung Duong Mountain, Hoa Lu Wd.

A recognized National Historical Site located to the east of the ancient capital of Hoa Lu, dedicated to the guardian deity Thien Ton of the Hoa Lu capital in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

### WEST: Cao Son Temple

📍 Tay Hoa Lu Wd.

Part of the Bai Dinh Spiritual and Cultural Tourism Complex, the temple is dedicated to Cao Son Dai Vuong, the 17<sup>th</sup> son of King Lac Long Quan.

### SOUTH: Quy Minh Temple

📍 Nam Hoa Lu Wd.

Located within the Trang An Ecotourism Complex, the temple is dedicated to Quy Minh Dai Vuong, the water deity who guarded the Son Nam region.

### NORTH: Khong Lo Zen Master Temple

📍 Dai Hoang Commune

Also known as the Duc Thanh Nguyen Temple, it is dedicated to Zen Master Khong Lo (Nguyen Minh Khong) - an eminent figure of the Ly Dynasty who was deified in folk belief.



*Other notable sites:*  
*Nhat Tru Pagoda,*  
*Yen Trach Communal*  
*House, Ngan Pagoda,*  
*Dong Vuong Palace,*  
*Kinh Thien Palace,*  
*Temple of Princess*  
*Thuc Tiet, Muoi Cave,*  
*Quan Cave.*



# THUNG UI

## A thousand years within reach

Located at the western gateway of the ancient capital, Thung Ui sits at the highest point of the Moc Hoan valley within the core of the Trang An World Heritage site. It transports visitors back to the golden era of Dai Co Viet and immerses them in the unique culture of the Muong people.

Just around 3km from Bai Dinh Pagoda, the Thung Ui Tourist Area retains a wild, peaceful beauty beside a blue lake hidden beneath cliffs. It preserves the historical value of the ancient Hoa Lu royal retreat and recreates the life of 10<sup>th</sup>-century Vietnamese people. Visitors can worship at sacred sites like *Dai Kinh Dia* (Earth Worshipping Altar), *Dai Kinh Nhan* (Human Worshipping Altar), *Dien Kinh Thien* (Heaven Worshipping Hall), and *Dan Kinh Thien* (Heaven Worshipping Altar).



A trip to Thung Ui is not just a return to national roots but also a chance to dive into Muong culture - the ethnicity of King Dinh Bo Linh himself. A stilt house area amidst nature allows guests to wear Muong attire, taste local dishes, and play folk games, helping to preserve indigenous heritage.

- 💰 **Entrance Fee:**
- Adults** (over 1.3m): VND100,000/person
- Children** (1m - 1.3m): VND70,000/person
- Children** (under 1m): Free
- Entrance Fee + Raft/Boat Ride:** VND200,000/person
- Accommodation:**
- Stilt House:** From VND6,000,000/night



After unifying the country, Dinh Bo Linh established the Altar of Heaven in the west of Hoa Lu (now Thung Ui) to proclaim his enthronement to heaven and earth. Since then, Thung Ui had been the site for royal prayers for national peace and bountiful harvests.



## FINDING ROOTS IN THUNG UI

Amid the tranquil mountain and forest landscape, Thung Ui Tourist Area preserves numerous relics associated with ancient legends. Each trace found here opens a journey into the past, allowing visitors to feel the cultural depth and enduring spirit of this ancient land.



### DAI KINH DIA (EARTH WORSHIPING ALTAR)

Inscribed with "*Van Co Anh Linh*" (Eternally Sacred), this altar expresses reverence for ancestors who built the Vietnamese way of life.

Archaeological remains - including prehistoric human skeletons such as the nearly 13,000-year-old "Binh Minh Warrior" and the remains found in Hanh Cave and Moi Cave (both around 10,000 years old), discovered within the Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex - will be enshrined at *Dai Kinh Dia* so that later generations have the opportunity to pay homage, remember, and learn about the nation's roots.



### DAI KINH NHAN (HUMAN WORSHIPING ALTAR)

This altar honors great figures in Vietnamese history, including Kings of the Dinh, Le, Ly, and Tran dynasties, Zen Master Nguyen Minh Khong, and President Ho Chi Minh.

### DAN KINH THIEN (HEAVEN WORSHIPING ALTAR)

Connecting humanity with the cosmos, this altar features round upper platforms (symbolizing the sky) and a square lower platform (symbolizing the earth). It is the site for solemn rituals, praying for favorable weather across the four seasons and family happiness.

### DEN KINH THIEN (HEAVEN WORSHIPING HALL)

Considered the soul of Thung Ui, *Den Kinh Thien* worships the Jade Emperor and celestial deities. The hall is adorned with paintings made from Indonesian volcanic rock, depicting human enlightenment and celestial rituals.





*As the sunlight gradually fades behind the tranquil limestone mountains, the Hoa Lu Old Quarter takes visitors back to the glorious days of Vietnam's ancient capital, where echoes of the past linger in wooden roofs and elegant curved door frames. By Ky Lan Lake, the reflection of Tu An Tower shimmers on the water surface, creating a scene that is both magical and magnificent. Take a leisurely walk in the Hoa Lu Old Quarter to feel the beauty of an ancient capital awakening at the heart of Ninh Binh whenever night falls.*

# THE LUMINOUS CHARM OF THE OLD QUARTER



## Moc Lan Restaurant

- 📍 Hoa Lu Old Quarter
- ☎ 091 613 8692
- 💰 "Green Day" vegetarian buffet:  
From VND149,000/person
- Family-style meal set: From VND299,000
- À la carte dishes & hot pot:  
From VND59,000/dish

## HOA LU OLD QUARTER

- 📍 Tran Hung Dao St., Hoa Lu Wd.
- 🕒 8am - 11pm
- 🕒 Traditional stalls: 2pm - 11pm
- 🎫 Free admission

Hoa Lu Old Quarter is a sightseeing spot that recreates the space of Dai Co Viet's capital in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The old quarter space is modeled after traditional Northern architecture with wooden houses, tiled roofs, carved pillars and beams, stone-paved courtyards, and a characteristic lantern system. Inside are stalls displaying handicrafts (ceramics, bamboo and rattan, weaving, brocade, lacquer...), a folk cuisine area with specialties from many regions, and ancient markets arranged in an old style.

## TOURISM ACTIVITIES AT HOA LU OLD QUARTER

### BOAT TRIP "EXCURSION ON KY LAN LAKE"

The experience of "Excursion on Ky Lan Lake" by boat will take you gliding smoothly across the water in the middle of the Hoa Lu Old Quarter, enjoying the ancient landscape and feeling the quiet beauty and gentle relaxation of the ancient capital. Do not forget to release auspicious flower lanterns to light up your own wishes!

Additionally, from 7pm to 11pm every Saturday and Sunday, on the unique stage in the middle of Ky Lan Lake, there will be performances of folk art forms such as *Cheo*, *Xam* singing... bringing audiences new experiences as they sit on boats while enjoying art performances.



#### Anh Trang Boat:

Adults (Over 1.3m): VND100,000/pax  
Children: (Under 1.3m): VND80,000/pax

#### Ang May Boat (VIP):

Adults (Over 1.3m): VND150,000/pax  
Children (Under 1.3m): VND100,000/pax  
\*\* Children (Under 1.0m): Free

\*\*\* On the boat, visitors can experience activities such as tasting tea, cakes, and releasing floating lanterns, etc.

### REAL-SCENE CIRCUS "HERO OF THE REED FLAG"

The program is a unique combination of many special art forms, such as martial arts, folk dance, traditional music, and real-scene techniques, with content telling the legend of the national hero Dinh Bo Linh.

- 📍 Thuy Dinh Stage, Hoa Lu Old Quarter
- 🕒 Every Fri, Sat, Sun evening
- 🎫 Adults: VND350,000/person
- Children (1m - 1.3m): VND175,000/person

# DONG CHUONG LAKE

## A green haven in the heritage land

*Dong Chuong Lake pine hills offer a vast natural retreat where a tranquil lake mirrors centuries-old pine forests. Free from the hustle and bustle of modern life, Dong Chuong feels like a natural "garden retreat," where visitors return to a slower pace of life and listen to the gentle rhythm of nature.*



### A LEISURE RETREAT AMONG WHISPERING PINES

Dong Chuong Lake invites you to slow down and unwind in close harmony with nature. At pine forest campsites by the lake, guests can welcome misty sunrises, watch sunsets over the water, and gather around campfires at night. The area also offers serene lakeside bungalows and homestays, featuring rustic architecture that blends seamlessly with the surrounding mountains and forests.

Notably, the Stay & Play program combines accommodation with a 36-hole Trang An Golf Course experience set amid centuries-old pine forests, creating a balanced holiday of relaxation, sport, and Ninh Binh's lush heritage landscape.

#### Green Pine Camp

📞 0915 299 368

💰 **Camping:** VND700,000 - VND1,560,000/person

**Resort:** VND1,100,000 - VND12,000,000/night

### AWAKENING GREEN ENERGY AT DONG CHUONG LAKE

Dong Chuong Lake Pine Hills is an all-in-one destination for sightseeing, exploration, and outdoor activities. Visitors can stroll and take photos at Ky Phu Pagoda, Tho Dan Island, Ba Tua Farm, and more. For adventure seekers, highlights include go-kart racing, cycling through pine forests, boating on the lake, grass sliding, and various outdoor challenge games.



#### Dong Chuong Lake Pine Hills Tourist Site

📞 0985 999 796

🕒 7am - 5pm

**Sightseeing:** From VND100,000 - VND250,000/person



#### EXPLORING HOA LU OLD QUARTER

Surrounded by verdant mountains and rich in history, Hoa Lu Old Quarter offers endless opportunities to explore, photograph, and soak in its nostalgic atmosphere. Must-visit cultural and spiritual landmarks include Ky Lan Pagoda, Bac Pagoda, Tu An Tower, Den Mau (Mother Goddess Temple), and Ky Lan Communal House.





*For generations, Ninh Binh - Nam Dinh - Ha Nam have been known as three culinary treasures of the Northern Delta, each with its own specialties, flavors, and traditions. When combined, these unique food cultures complement each other, forming a rare and vibrant "culinary ecosystem" - from limestone mountain dishes to delta cuisine, from coastal flavors to rural and urban specialties, blending rustic traditions with royal heritage.*

# THE RICH AND DIVERSE CULINARY WORLD

## NINH BINH FOOD JOURNEY

Ninh Binh, a semi-mountainous terrain area, is famous for dishes influenced connected with limestone mountains, such as goat meat, snakehead fish salad, and crispy rice.

### NINH BINH MOUNTAIN GOAT MEAT

Hoa Lu mountain goat is Ninh Binh's signature dish. The goats are naturally raised on rocky mountains, eating wild plants, which gives the meat a firm texture and natural sweetness. The local people prepare many dishes from goat meat, including rare goat meat with lime, which was honored by TasteAtlas as one of the world's most delicious goat dishes.

#### Thanh Long Restaurant

📍 9 Phuc Son, Hoa Lu Wd.  
☎ 0869 733 335  
🕒 7:30am - 9pm  
💰 From VND150,000

#### Duc De Restaurant

📍 29, Alley 458 Nguyen Hue St., Nam Hoa Lu Wd.  
☎ 02293 874 858  
🕒 7am - 10pm  
💰 From VND150,000



### KIM SON SNAKEHEAD FISH SALAD

Fresh snakehead fish is thinly sliced, mixed with roasted sticky rice powder and local spices, and served with a special dipping sauce made from ground fish bones.

#### Vu Bao Restaurant

📍 86 Luong Van Tuy St. (extended), Hoa Lu Wd.  
☎ 0985 800 535  
🕒 10am - 10pm  
💰 From VND400,000

#### Tinh Goi Restaurant

📍 248 Ngo Gia Tu, Gia Van Commune  
☎ 0918 301 268  
🕒 8am - 8pm  
💰 From VND200,000

### CRISPY FRIED RICE - The perfect Ninh Binh gift

Crispy fried rice is the must-buy specialty of Ninh Binh. This century-old dish is made from fragrant sticky rice, pressed into round pieces, and fried until crisp. With its affordable price, crispy fried rice is a convenient and delicious gift for travelers.

#### Com Chay Co Do

📍 Hoa Lu Wd.  
☎ 0912 426 600  
🕒 7am - 7pm  
💰 From VND20,000

#### Com Chay Dai Long

📍 Lien Minh Hamlet, Gia Lam Commune  
☎ 0972 086 234  
🕒 7am - 11am & 1:30pm - 5pm  
💰 From VND18,000

#### Com Chay Viet Hung

📍 Da Trang Area, Hoa Lu Wd.  
☎ 0912 740 577  
🕒 7am - 10pm  
💰 From VND30,000



You can also buy crispy rice and other famous local specialties: Gia Vien shrimp paste, Kim Son wine, Yen Mac fermented pork rolls at rest stops such as Duy Tien rest stop (Phap Van - Cau Gie - Ninh Binh Expressway, Ha Nam Wd.) and Xuan Khiem rest stop (Cao Bo - Mai Son Expressway, Yen Thang Wd.).



## THE RUSTIC FLAVORS OF OLD HA NAM

Former Ha Nam cuisine (now part of Ninh Binh province) was well-known for simple, natural and hearty flavors evoking the country life of the Red River Delta. Some signature foods are born from the fertile fields and home gardens such as Vu Dai braised fish, freshwater perch noodles, Dai Hoang bananas, and Phu Ly steamed rice rolls.

### VU DAI BRAISED FISH

The quintessence of the lowlands



Once a royal delicacy offered to the Nguyen Kings, Vu Dai Braised Fish (*Ca Kho Vu Dai*) is revered for its meticulously selected ingredients and elaborate cooking process. Mature black carp is slow-braised in clay pots over longan wood fires, enriched with field crab juice to create a robust, savory depth. The fire is kept alive for a full day and night until the bones soften completely, melting into the meat.

#### Ca kho Ba Kien

- 📍 Hamlet 13, Nhan Hau Village, Nam Ly Commune
- 📞 0962 083 232
- 💰 From VND600,000 (for 1.5kg)

#### Ca kho Hoang Tho

- 📍 Hamlet 11, Hoa Hau Village, Nam Ly Commune
- 📞 0984 583 485
- 💰 From VND500,000 (for 1.5kg)

#### Ca kho Tran Luan

- 📍 Hamlet 1, Village 2, Nam Ly Commune
- 📞 0988 999 525
- 💰 From VND550,000 (for 1.5kg)

### FRESHWATER PERCH NOODLE SOUP

A region of fertile lowlands Ha Nam is famed for its freshwater perch that has firm, sweet flesh and are caught from the ponds and fields surrounding the villages. The fish is simmered in spiced oil to retain nature sweetness, then bathed in a broth stewed from fish or chicken bones. A bowl of perch noodles then tastes harmonious and refreshing.

#### Canh banh da ca ro dong que Vu Nam

- 📍 Ly Thuong Kiet St., Phu Van Wd.
- 📞 0912 822 462
- 🕒 5am - 8pm
- 💰 From VND40,000

#### Bun ca ro Ngoc Binh

- 📍 243 Ly Thuong Kiet, Phu Ly Wd.
- 📞 0972 554 465
- 🕒 5am - 10am
- 💰 From VND40,000



### PHU LY STEAMED RICE ROLLS

Phu Ly's steamed rice rolls is a distinguished food thanks to the delicate, smooth texture of the rice sheets. Crafted from fragrant Tam Xoan rice, the sheets are soft yet resilient, and never mushy. They are served with charcoal-grilled meat made from thinly sliced pork belly. Marinated in savory spices and grilled just to perfection, the meat retains a natural tenderness and smokiness.



#### Banh cuon cha Phu Ly - Hung Nu

- 📍 217C Truong Chinh, Phu Ly Wd.
- 📞 0987 705 199
- 🕒 5:30am - 11am
- 💰 From VND30,000

#### Banh cuon cha Minh Ngoc Nhu Y

- 📍 216 Truong Chinh, Phu Ly Wd.
- 📞 0869 258 399
- 💰 From VND40,000

#### Banh cuon Phu Ly Leo Quan

Good choice for suppers when other spots have closed.

- 📍 142 Le Thanh Cong, Phu Ly Wd.
- 📞 0979 675 485
- 🕒 5am - 2pm & 5pm - 9pm
- 💰 From VND35,000

#### Banh cuon Nha San Phu Ly

- 📍 103 Ngo Quyen, Phu Ly Wd.
- 📞 0916 969 382
- 🕒 5:30am - 10am
- 💰 From VND40,000



## A CULINARY TOUR OF NAM DINH

The centennial city of Nam Dinh (now a part of Ninh Binh Province) has created simple and refined Vietnamese dishes to suit the palate of the North. Ancient Nam Dinh is celebrated as a cradle of Pho - a National Intangible Cultural Heritage - and serves as a vibrant street food paradise. Here, familiar staples like *banh mi*, noodles, sticky rice, and sweet soups are not only "delicious, nutritious, and affordable" but also represent a unique treasure trove of local specialties.

### NAM DINH PHO

*Pho Bo* (Beef Pho) is a must-try of Nam Dinh cuisine. Compared to the Hanoi-style Pho, the Nam Dinh-style Pho is defined by the bold, savory richness of fish sauce. The signature cooking method involves sautéing or stir-frying the beef (*tai lan*), which keeps the meat fragrant and firm yet tender and sweet. Traditional Pho shops like Pho Co or Pho of Elder Tang (Pho Cu Tang) are unforgettable destinations of the local and worthy stops for visitors seeking the authentic taste of old Nam Dinh.



#### Pho Co

📍 2 Ly Thuong Kiet, Nam Dinh Wd.  
☎ 0946 944 351  
🕒 6am - 1pm & 6pm - 8pm  
💰 From VND40,000

#### Pho Co Khac

📍 Giao Cu Hamlet,  
Nam Dong Commune  
☎ 0358 045 686  
🕒 5am - 1pm & 4:30pm - 10pm  
💰 From VND30,000

#### Pho Cu Tang

📍 23 Hang Tien, Nam Dinh Wd.  
☎ 0228 6252 178  
🕒 6am - 9m & 4pm - 8pm  
💰 From VND40,000



### FOOD TOUR

#### A day in Nam Dinh

Prepare a hearty appetite and an eager spirit, for this "Nam Dinh Food Tour" promises to leave you so enchanted.

#### MORNING WITH XOI XIU

##### (Char Siu Sticky Rice)

Plump, chewy Hai Hau sticky rice is blended with an array of tempting toppings: pâté, meat floss, char siu pork, sausages, and Chinese sausages. The dish is brought together by a thick, savory sauce made from stewed bones and special spices.

#### Xoi Xiu Thai Lien

##### (Xoi Xiu Bac Ninh)

📍 44 & 50 Bac Ninh,  
Nam Dinh Wd.  
☎ 0917 839 366  
🕒 6am - 12pm & 2pm - 11pm  
💰 From VND15,000

#### LUNCH WITH BUN CHA

##### (Grilled Pork Vermicelli)

Fresh pork that is half lean, half fat is clamped between bamboo sticks and grilled until fragrant. The dipping sauce is served hot in winter and cool in summer, together with a plate of nutty roasted peanuts.

#### Bun cha Nam Thanh

📍 32 Hang Cau, Nam Dinh Wd.  
☎ 0942 467 264  
🕒 11am - 6:30pm  
💰 From VND40,000

#### AFTERNOON WITH XIU PAO

*Xiu Pao* is a Chinese-influenced pastry adapted to fit the Vietnamese palate. The golden-brown cake features a thin, slightly crispy crust and a filling of tender, fatty meat that is so fragrant it beckons travelers to stop and taste.

#### Xiu Pao Hanh Phuc

📍 28 Nguyen Trai, Nam Dinh Wd.  
☎ 0947 152 022  
🕒 5am - 9pm  
💰 From VND5,000



If you can try more food, let's find Ms. Hien rice noodle (Dien Hong Market), Bay Cau Muoi rice noodle (511 Truong Chinh, Nam Dinh Wd.), or sticky rice with ice cream (132 Nguyen Du, Nam Dinh Wd.).

#### NIGHT WITH BANH MI

Do Quan *Banh Mi* is toasted to a crisp on a charcoal stove, then filled with liver pâté, a fried egg, fried shallots, sweet-and-sour pickled papaya, cilantro, and chili sauce. Finally, a layer of fragrant scallion oil is drizzled on top - enough to warm your stomach in the late night.

📍 5 Hang Thao, Nam Dinh Wd.  
☎ 0888 669 090  
🕒 6am - 8pm  
💰 From VND12,000

## HEARTY GIFTS FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE



Ancient Nam Dinh cuisine is not merely food; it is a mirror reflecting the life of the Red River Delta people-rustic yet creative. From the Giau Thuy pork skin rolls (*nem nam*) dipped in savory Sa Chau fish sauce, to *banh gai* (ramie leaf cake), *banh nhan* (golden longan cake), and Siu Chau candy, every gift tells a story of the warm hospitality of local people.

### NEM NAM GIAO THUY

(Pork skin rolls)

Tender pork rump is combined with crunchy pork skin and fragrant roasted rice powder (*thinh*), wrapped in Vietnamese fig or polyscias fruticosa leaves, and dipped in rich Sa Chau fish sauce. Each bite delivers a full spectrum of flavors: astringent, spicy, salty, and sweet - a dish that is at once rustic and sophisticated.

#### Tuan Nem Restaurant

- 📍 48 Tran Hung Dao, Giau Thuy Commune
- ☎ 0984 097 916
- 🕒 5am - 7pm
- 💰 From VND40,000

#### Nem nam Giau Thuy Chu Hy

- 📍 Giau Minh Commune
  - ☎ 0976 156 571
  - 🕒 7am - 10pm
  - 💰 From VND50,000
- Recommended to order before arrival.*

### SIU CHAU CANDY

Siu Chau Candy is a famous Nam Dinh delicacy made from peanuts, sesame seeds, sugar, and malt. Loved for its crisp texture and nutty, it is best enjoyed with hot tea, especially during the Tet holidays.

#### Keo Siu Chau Hung Tien

- 📍 186 Tran Hung Dao, Nam Dinh Wd.
- ☎ 0918 867 895
- 🕒 8am - 8pm
- 💰 From VND45,000

#### Keo Siu Chau Kim Thanh Hoa

- 📍 122 Minh Khai, Nam Dinh Wd.
- ☎ 0904 911 411
- 🕒 7am - 10pm
- 💰 From VND40,000

### GRILLED FISH UNDER A BASIN

This specialty is from the Ninh Giang Commune. The fish is grilled by the heat of burning glutinous rice straw placed over an inverted metal basin, then incubated in rice husks for hours. This technique creates a golden, crispy skin while keeping the meat inside sweet and firm.



#### Am Thuc Dong Que Restaurant

- 📍 Nam Hoa Hamlet, Vi Khe Wd.
- ☎ 0989 232 889
- 🕒 9am - 10pm

#### Phuong Nguyen Restaurant

- 📍 280 Dang Xuan Bang, Hong Quang Wd.
- ☎ 0903 415 4577
- 🕒 10am - 10pm

### BANH GAI NAM DINH

(Ramie leaf cake)

*Banh gai* captures the soul of the Northern countryside. Its black glutinous rice skin, mixed with *la gai* (fragrant ramie leaves), wraps around a rich filling of mung bean, coconut, and lotus seeds. Its soft texture and mild sweetness offer a simple yet refined experience.

#### Banh gai gia truyen Nga Sy

- 📍 205 Han Thuyen, Nam Dinh Wd.
- ☎ 0915 514 998
- 🕒 6:30am - 8:30pm
- 💰 From VND10,000

#### Co so Banh gai Huong Cuc

- 📍 365 Han Thuyen, Nam Dinh Wd.
- ☎ 0912 307 008
- 🕒 6am - 10pm
- 💰 From VND10,000







# NINH BINH

## Four seasons festivals

*Endowed with poetic landscapes and layers of culture accumulated over millennia, Ninh Binh unfolds as a symphony of festivals resonating through the four seasons. Be it the thunderous drums of Truong Yen Festival piercing the fresh spring air, the sacred fragrance of incense permeating the tranquility of Bai Dinh, or the autumn season of Vu Lan honoring the bonds of filial piety - each festival marks a sacred journey, immersing visitors in the spiritual rhythm and profound beauty of the Ancient Capital.*

**5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> Jan** (Lunar Calendar)

**"Tich Dien" Doi Son Ploughing Festival** (Tien Son Wd.)

A reenactment of the ritual where King Le Dai Hanh ploughed the fields at the beginning of the year to encourage agriculture, praying for favorable rain and wind, and bountiful harvests.



**6<sup>th</sup> Jan** (Lunar Calendar)

**Bai Dinh Spring Festival** (Tay Hoa Lu Wd.)

The largest festival in Ninh Binh, dedicated to praying for a new year filled with peace and happiness.



**Night of 7<sup>th</sup> Jan - Morning of 8<sup>th</sup> Jan**

(Lunar Calendar)

**Vieng Market Fair** (Vu Ban Commune)

A unique market that convenes only for one night each year. Locals gather to buy and sell agricultural tools, antiques, plants, and cattle, driven by the belief of "buying luck, selling bad luck".



**11<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> Jan** (Lunar Calendar)

**Tran Temple Seal Opening Ceremony** (Nam Dinh Wd.)

A ceremony honoring the merits of the Tran Dynasty and praying for national peace, prosperity, and favorable weather.



**12<sup>th</sup> Jan** (Lunar Calendar)

**Tam Chuc Spring Festival Opening** (Tam Chuc Wd.)

An occasion for early-year pilgrimage, praying for peace and blessings, and sightseeing at the pagoda.



**13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> Jan** (Lunar Calendar)

**La Temple Festival** (La Phu Village, Dong Thai Commune)

A festival commemorating Saint Nguyen Minh Khong - a Ly Dynasty Zen master, and praying for peace.



**15<sup>th</sup> Jan** (Lunar Calendar)

**Lantern Festival for National Peace**  
(Hoa Lu Old Quarter - Tay Hoa Lu Wd.)

At 7pm in Hoa Lu Old Quarter, Buddhists and visitors join the grand ceremony, lighting flower lanterns to send sincere prayers for national peace and prosperity.



**8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> Mar** (Lunar Calendar)

**Hoa Lu Festival** (Tay Hoa Lu Wd.)

Also known as the Truong Yen Festival, this event is held at the center of the Ancient Capital Hoa Lu to commemorate the nation-building merits of the two Kings, Dinh Tien Hoang and Le Dai Hanh.





**10<sup>th</sup> Mar** (Lunar Calendar)

**Dan Kinh Thien Trang An Ceremony**  
(Tay Hoa Lu Wd.)

A ritual worshipping Heaven and Earth and remembering King Dinh Tien Hoang, praying for national peace and abundant crops.



**18<sup>th</sup> Mar** (Lunar Calendar)

**Trang An Festival** (Tay Hoa Lu Wd.)

The festival is held annually to honor the merits of Saint Quy Minh Dai Vuong - a general who defended the Son Nam region and protected the country's borders.



**April** (Lunar Calendar)

**Vesak** (Buddha's Birthday)

A major religious festival of Vietnamese Buddhism, organized at grand pagodas in the region such as Bai Dinh and Tam Chuc.



**May & June**

**The Golden Season of Tam Coc**

During this time, Tam Coc enters its ripening rice season, creating a dazzling "golden landscape" set against the backdrop of verdant mountains and shimmering waterways.



**July** (Lunar Calendar)

**Vu Lan Festival**

Held at major pagodas such as Bai Dinh, Non Nuoc, and Tam Chuc, this festival is an occasion for everyone to express gratitude to their parents and ancestors and to cultivate compassion and goodness.



**September - December**

**Tam Coc Water Lily Season**

As autumn arrives, the water lily ponds of Tam Coc bloom in vibrant shades of pink, unveiling a scene of serene and poetic beauty.



**November & December**

**Ninh Binh Reed Season**

Across Trang An, Hang Mua, Van Long Lagoon, and beyond, vast fields of white reeds sway in the wind, creating a softly romantic landscape.



**31<sup>st</sup> Dec**

**Countdown at Hoa Lu Old Quarter** (Tay Hoa Lu Wd.)

A New Year's Eve countdown event is held in Hoa Lu Old Quarter.







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