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# AVIATION TURKEY



**Vietnam, the  
Phoenix**  
A Country Born from  
Its Ashes



# Vietnam, the Phoenix: A Country Born from Its Ashes



by Ayşe Akalin

I don't know how to describe Vietnam, how to put it into words. As a journalist, I think this has been the most difficult piece I've ever written. Vietnam is a country where words fall short, where photographs feel insufficient, and where emotions are almost impossible to describe without actually feeling the energy there.

Despite all the pain it has endured, Vietnam has never lost its resilience, never abandoned its faith, and has risen from the ashes time and again. Perhaps Vietnam is a spirit that refuses to give up, reborn after every collapse.

There is a cultural proverb: "Nuoc chay da mon" – "The flow of water wears away stone." Perhaps nothing could describe Vietnam better than this saying. Patient, determined, faithful and forgiving like its leader Ho Chi Minh... On its ancient lands, within its unique nature, and despite its painful history, it has never forgotten its silence and the strength that comes from within.

Today, living in peace, Vietnam reveals: its endless determination and diligence in Hanoi;

its tranquility in Ninh Binh – Trang An; its quiet strength beneath the calm waters in Ha Long Bay; its ancient past in Hue; its face turned toward the future in Da Nang; its traditions in Hoi An and its passion for life and joy of living despite everything in Saigon.

As a guest of Vietnam Airlines on this 10-day journey, together with fellow journalists from different countries, we shared in the spirit of Vietnam. We returned to the essence of our existence, found inspiration, healed, reflected, shared, laughed, were moved, and were enchanted. On the way back, I believe we were no longer the same people.

As I share this experience with you, I can say with complete certainty: After seeing Vietnam, life is divided into two—before Vietnam and after Vietnam.

I hope that while reading these lines, you too can hear the melody of Vietnam within you, feel its scent in your soul, and sense that deep resonance that touches the heart.









# Flying with Vietnam Airlines:

## A Ten-Day Journey Across Vietnam

Flying with Vietnam Airlines set the tone for what would become a ten-day journey across Vietnam, a country as rich in hospitality as it is in heritage. Our adventure began in Paris, boarding an Airbus A350-900 bound for Ho Chi Minh City. The nearly twelve-hour flight in Business Class was more than just a transfer between continents; it was an immersion in Vietnamese warmth and refinement. From spacious seating and thoughtful amenities to the gentle attentiveness of the crew, every detail reflected the airline's dedication to comfort and care. The signature Vietnamese hospitality—graceful, genuine, and effortless—turned the long-haul journey into a serene prologue to our travels.

Our itinerary traced Vietnam from south to north, with stops in Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Hoi An, Hue, Ninh Binh, Ha Long Bay and Hanoi,

offering a sweeping view of the country's vibrant regions. After exploring the bustling energy of the south, we flew on a seamless domestic connection from Saigon to Da Nang, later continuing to Hanoi. Vietnam Airlines' domestic services matched the excellence of its international flights—efficient, comfortable, and remarkably well-catered. The in-flight meals, distinctly flavorful and generous, echoed the culinary pride of Vietnam, reminding passengers that travel is as much about the journey as the destination.

### Elevating Vietnam's Spirit in the Skies

Vietnam Airlines, the national flag carrier of Vietnam and a proud member of the SkyTeam Alliance, connects the world through a network of 106 routes, serving 22 domestic and 36 international destinations



across 20 countries, with an average of 400 flights per day.

Since becoming the first Southeast Asian airline to join SkyTeam in 2010, the carrier has positioned itself as a global player while retaining the essence of Vietnamese hospitality.

Vietnam Airlines also leads the way in fleet modernization. In 2015, it became the first airline in the world to simultaneously operate both the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner and the Airbus A350-900 XWB. Today, it boasts one of Asia's youngest and most advanced fleets, with more than 100 aircraft, including Boeing 787-9 and 787-10 Dreamliners, Airbus A350-900s, and A320/A321neos—delivering exceptional comfort, efficiency, and service across all routes.

The airline's pursuit of service excellence has been consistently recognized worldwide. It has been ranked among the Top 25 World's Safest Airlines (2025) and the Top

20 World's Best Airlines (2025), while also earning titles such as World's Best Value Premium Economy, APEX Global 5 Star Airline, and multiple honors from the World Travel Awards and Skytrax, including a 4-Star Airline rating for four consecutive years. These accolades reflect its ongoing commitment to reaching a 5-Star global standard.

Beyond service excellence, Vietnam Airlines is also at the forefront of sustainability initiatives, pledging to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 while fostering innovation across the global aviation sector.

For more than 30 years, Vietnam Airlines has led one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets, sustaining double-digit growth while showcasing Vietnam's unique cultural identity to the world. Today, the airline continues its journey toward becoming a leading 5-star Asian carrier, combining modern standards with timeless Vietnamese charm.

