

Ha Long Bay – a magnificent magical destination

Written by Tuyet Nhung

Monday, 11 August 2008 08:16 - Last Updated Wednesday, 20 April 2016 09:07

[Ha Long Bay](#) is said to be a magic land of natural sea bay beauty, attracting more and more tourists ever since UNESCO's recognition of its nature!



Location & Climate

[Halong Bay](#) is located in the Northeast of [Vietnam](#) , belonging to Ha Long city, Quang Ninh Province, in the Gulf of Tonkin. On the world map, it has borders to China in the North and adjacent to the East Sea in the East .

The Bay has a medium size of 1,553 square kilometers. It is accomodation of many fishing communities, including the 4 communes of Cua Van, Cong Tau, Vong Vieng and Ba Hang with a population of more than 1,600 people. The residents live on floating houses and boats, making their own lives by fishing and aquaculture.

The bay is a sea islands in tropical wet with 2 seasons: hot and moist summer, dry and cold winter. Average temperature is from 15°C- 25°C. Annual rainfall is between 2,000mm and 2,200mm. **[Halong Bay](#)** has the typical diurnal tide system (tide amplitude ranges from 3.5-4m). The salinity is from 31 to 34.5MT in dry season and lower in rainy season.

Historical name

Literally, "Ha Long" means "Bay of Descending Dragons." Before the 19th century, this name was not recorded in any document or archive. In this term, there is a mysteriously legendary tale as follows

"Long ago, in the first founding days, the Viet people were attacked by foreign aggressors. The Jade Emperor sent the Mother Dragon and her band of Child Dragons to help the Viet people fight the invaders. While the enemy vessels were launching massive attacks against the mainland, the dragons descended in flocks from the sky. They spat out innumerable pearls which changed into jade stone islands the moment they touched the water. These islands linked together to form firm citadels that checked the enemy's advance and smashed their vessels to pieces. After the invaders were driven out, Mother Dragon and her Child Dragons did

Ha Long Bay – a magnificent magical destination

Written by Tuyet Nhung

Monday, 11 August 2008 08:16 - Last Updated Wednesday, 20 April 2016 09:07

not return to Heaven but stayed on earth, right at the place where the battle occurred. The spot where the Mother Dragon landed was Ha Long, and where the Child Dragons came down was [Bai Tu Long](#)

. The place where their tails violently wagged was called Long Vi, the today's Tra Co Peninsula with its soft sandy beach stretching a series of kilometers."

Gifted Beauty & top sightseeings

In 1962, the Ministry of Culture and Information classified Halong Bay as a National Landscape Site, covering an area of 1,553 km² with 1,969 islands. [Halong Bay has been recognized twice by UNESCO](#) as a World Heritage Area for its universal values of landscape, geology and geomorphology, respectively in 1994 and 2000, an area of 434 sq. km. including 775 islands.

The dense cluster of 1,969 limestone monolithic islands within the bay is topped with thick jungle vegetation, which rise spectacularly from the ocean.

Most of the islands were formed over 500 million years ago, and massed in the Southeast and Southwest. Those in the Southeast have an average height of 50-200m, covering lots of flora. Several of the islands are hollow, with enormous caves. Hang Đuối Gỗ (Wooden stakes Cave) is the largest grotto in the Ha Long area. French tourists visited in the late 19th century, and named the cave

Grotte des Merveilles

. Its three large chambers contain large numerous stalactites and stalagmites (as well as 19th

century French graffiti). There are two bigger islands, Tuan Chau and

[Cat Ba](#)

, that have permanent inhabitants. Both of them have tourist facilities, including hotels and beaches. There are a number of wonderful beaches on the smaller islands. The others are Bai Chay, Ti Top, Minh Chau, Quan Lan and so forth.

Viewed from above, Ha Long Bay looks like an extremely vivid huge drawing, and sailing beneath the bay is like leisuring in between a huge valey on water. Ha Long bay is exactly a wonderfully skillful masterpiece of Nature that turns thousands of dumb soulless stone islands into fantastic sculptural and artistic works of various graceful shapes, both familiar and strange to human beings. Thousands of islands emerging in the fanciful waves look strong and magnificent but also mild and vivid. Amidst these islands tourists may feel as if they were astrayed in a petrified legendary world. The names given to the islands were based on their shapes and forms, such as, Human head Island, Sail island, Fighting cocks islands... Inside the

Ha Long Bay – a magnificent magical destination

Written by Tuyet Nhung

Monday, 11 August 2008 08:16 - Last Updated Wednesday, 20 April 2016 09:07

stone islands are various breath-taking caves like Thien Cung, Dau Go, Sung Sot, and others. These are really magnificent palace of many huge stalactites hanging poised in mid air and stalagmites growing majestically upwards. Ha Long's sea is always the same, blue, smooth and still.

What is more, the bay has its own seasoned beauty. In Spring, buds of trees burst on limestone islands. In Summer, it is cool and clean with many sparkling sun rays reflecting from the sea's surface. In Autumn, especially at night, moonlight illuminates the mountains, making them like gold, inlaid into the earth. In Winter, with pervasive frost, Ha Long is glamorous as "a floating flower basket on smooth wave" (by writer Nguyen Tuan). All of them, stone, water and sky, make the Aesthetic value of [Ha Long Bay](#).

The Bay's Geological value is evaluated in two ways: by the history of its formation and its karst geomorphology. It is also home to the ancient Viet people beginning from 7,000 to 18,000 years ago, Ha Long's Cultural – Historical value. Besides, Bio-diversity is an important natural resource, to be well-conserved so as to maintain the ecological balance of the whole region.

[Ha Long Bay](#) is undoubtedly not only a national but also a world nature, a magnificent work of Natural Creator. People who are admirers of natural beauty should stand up, pack their luggages, and right away pick up a flight to Ha Long, or else they will soon feel regretful!

Halong bay tour Information

Halong Bay is definitely a must-see destination in Northern Vietnam. The best way to enjoy its natural and magnificent beauty is to join a cruise for one day or more if time allows. Most travel agencies in Vietnam provides Halong bay tours that depart from Hanoi city for tourists.

For those who only have one day in their itinerary to visit Halong, the best option would be joining a day tour from Hanoi to Halong Bay. As the time for one day (including transportation time) is limited, this is a recommended itinerary for a [Halong bay tour from Hanoi](#) from City Insight that cover the most visited attractions in Halong. Furthermore, if you are seeking for overnight tours in Halong Bay, a [Hal](#)

Ha Long Bay – a magnificent magical destination

Written by Tuyet Nhung

Monday, 11 August 2008 08:16 - Last Updated Wednesday, 20 April 2016 09:07

[ong bay tour](#)

for 2 days and 3 days will be a good choice. Apart from Halong Bay, you can visit Bai Tu Long Bay, Cat Ba Island and Lan Ha Bay as well as experience home-stay and cruise overnight.

More Vietnam Destinations:

- [Ha Long Bay – a magnificent magical destination](#)
- [Ninh Binh province – a huge tourism potential](#)
- [Perfume Pagoda \(Chùa Hương\) – “the first ranking Southern grotto”](#)
- [Tam Coc-Bich Dong, “South second nicest grotto”](#)
- [Lai Chau – a beautiful mountainous land](#)
- [Sapa, the fanciful town in fog](#)
- [Hoi An Old Town – an ancient Beauty of Vietnam](#)
- [Mỹ Sơn Holy land – a masterpiece of Chă m Architecture](#)
- [Vinh Moc Tunnel – a famous Vietnam’s historical relic](#)
- [Da Lat – a flowerful town of romance](#)
- [Ben Tre – huge potential of ecological tourism in Vietnam](#)