

## 1. General Driving Rules

- Size Matters

Be aware that, in accidents, the biggest vehicle wins by default. Be cautious when driving a motorbike, because only bicycles and pedestrians are smaller than you. Cars, trucks, and especially buses are larger, so crashing with them could be deadly. Smaller vehicles have to be careful and pay attention, because the bigger vehicles have the right-of-way in Vietnam.

- Road Rules

Basically, there aren't many. Or, arguably, any. Legally, a motorbike can carry only two people. But we are in Vietnam so we have seen bikes with six people... plus luggage! This law is enforced in major cities, but wildly ignored in rural areas.

- Helmet Law

It is defined by law that you need to wear a helmet when riding a motorbike in Vietnam, even when travelling as a passenger. We would recommend investing in a really good helmet if you are planning long trips. The local helmets are about as effective as broken eggshells and don't really offer that much protection; you should not use them. Safer, higher quality helmets are available in major cities for around 500.000 VND.

- Night-time Driving

Driving at night can be really dangerous and is vastly different compared to driving during the day. It is okay to drive at night in the big cities, but you should avoid stopping, especially in the poorer areas. The night-time situation on the highways is different. You should avoid driving at night on highways because it is difficult to see the road and any dangerous potholes you could hit. But the most dangerous thing at night are large vehicles, like buses and trucks, which tend to drive extremely aggressively at night.

## 2. Police

- Where are there plenty of police?

Most policemen are inside the city, typically in the main part of big city's like Hanoi and Saigon. Try to not violate the law in these areas, because they will go to great lengths to try to stop you. They will even hunt you down. There can also be plenty of police on some highway roads. In the countryside, away from the main roads, policemen are really rare.

- How should you behave when they stop you?

There is a trick. Avoid speaking any English. In fact, pretend like you cannot speak English at all, only some other language like Spanish or German. They will let you go more easily if they need to struggle to communicate with you, because if they can't speak with you, you are just an annoying problem they won't want to deal with.

If they stop you for no reason, just pay them a fee of 200,000 VND. The fee for violating traffic regulations is higher. Furthermore, you have to show them the Blue Card for your bike so that they know it was not stolen. Make sure that you carry a copy of the Blue Card (or a picture) whenever you go driving.

- What are the consequences for violating the law?

If they catch don't catch you breaking the law, you're fine. If they do, try to pay the police so that you won't have to face consequences. If that doesn't work, there are two possible consequences: they could take your license or take your bike. After that you'll have to go to the police to get it back. And of course, you will have to pay a fee for violation of the rules. Our recommendation is to just pay the police officer in the first place and to avoid the trouble.

### **3. Dangerous Situations**

- Where should I be especially careful?

You should be especially careful when driving at night. Drive carefully on bad roads and in crowded areas like cities. Anything could happen, since other drivers in Vietnam just don't seem to care about danger. Road conditions can really vary day-to-day. When it is raining, some roads can become extremely slippery. Be sure to use your common sense and drive carefully.

### **4. Environmental Hazards**

- Heavy Rain

When you are driving in Vietnam, particularly in the rainy season, you will experience heavy tropical rain. You should avoid driving in such situations, but when you do, be careful and drive slowly. Be aware that you will not see potholes and so on.

- Flooded Streets

If it has been raining for a longer period of time, the streets can become flooded. It could happen that the engine of your bike will be under the water level. If that happens, try to give it as much gas as you can to keep the water from getting into the engine. If the engine dies while under water, you have a big problem. Do not turn it on again, because in that case the engine will be flooded completely and broken. Instead you should let it dry or bring it to a mechanic to have it checked.

## 5. Safe Parking and Crime

- Where is a safe place to park the bike?

There are many parking spots for bikes in the city. If they charge you money and give you a card with a number for your bike, you know the place is safe.

- Where should you avoid parking?

Do not park your bike at a random spot on the street in the city, and especially not at night. If you park your bike outside of a parking spot, make sure you can see the bike at any time so nobody can easily steal it without you knowing.

- How can you protect the bike against theft?

We provide an anti-theft device for the bikes. The bike locks are mounted on the break disc of the bike, and when locked you cannot move the bike.