

VIETNAM: TOWARDS AN EXTENSION OF VISA WAIVER



In an effort to give the tourism industry a major push, the Vietnamese government has launched online visa system for visitors on short holidays or casual business trips. Moreover, the official decree has not yet been issued but according to Action-visas.com Vietnam is planning on extending its visa waiver program.

The visa waiver period, which was extended since 2015, should thus be extended from one year to three years.

French, British, German, Spanish and Italian tourists will therefore be able to benefit from this exemption from consular formalities before departure until 30 June 2021.

The length of stay authorized without a visa will also be extended from 15 days to 30 days starting on 1 July 2018.

To benefit from this visa exemption, travelers must hold a passport valid at least 6 months at the time of arrival to Vietnam and (officially) present proof of exit confirmed within 15 days (until 30/06/2018) or within 30 days (from 1 July 2018), indicates the site specialist in issuing visas.

A second entry without a visa can only be made within 30 days after the last exit, without a visa, from Vietnamese territory. The official decree should be published in the coming days.

Last year, **Vietnam welcomed 12.9 million foreign visitors, which represents an increase of 29.1 percent against the previous year.** This year the authorities has set a target of receiving 15-17 million foreign arrivals. The main source markets of foreign tourists is China.

The industry is expected to contribute 10 percent to the country's GDP by 2020 when the government plans to welcome up to 20 million foreign visitors and earn \$35 billion in tourism revenue.

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