



Central Highlands

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Best Places to Eat

- » V Cafe (p279)
- » Nam Phan (p280)
- » Black & White Restaurant (p286)
- » Dakbla Restaurant (p295)

Best Places to Stay

- » Dalat Hotel du Parc (p278)
- » Dreams Hotel (p278)
- » Forest Floor Lodge (p284)
- » Ana Mandara Villas Dalat (p278)

Why Go?

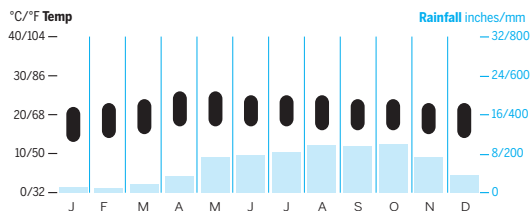
The undulating landscape that once sheltered Viet Cong (VC) soldiers down the Ho Chi Minh Trail offers an off-the-beaten-track destination for travellers. There's a rugged charm to its villages, valleys, waterfalls and winding roads. Most people come here to visit the hill-tribe villages, as the roads less travelled offer a more unspoiled existence than the touristed areas of the northwest.

Two notable national parks are found here. One of the region's big hitters is Cat Tien National Park, a Unesco-rated biosphere boasting an impressive variety of flora and fauna. Yok Don is Vietnam's largest protected area and is home to monkeys and deer. Both parks give visitors the opportunity to explore Vietnam's all-too-rare wild side.

Despite its fraught history, the central highlands are safe and easy to travel around. Dalat is perfect for a weekend's respite from the heat, the rest of the highlands for a week-long immersion in a life far from the madding crowd.

When to Go

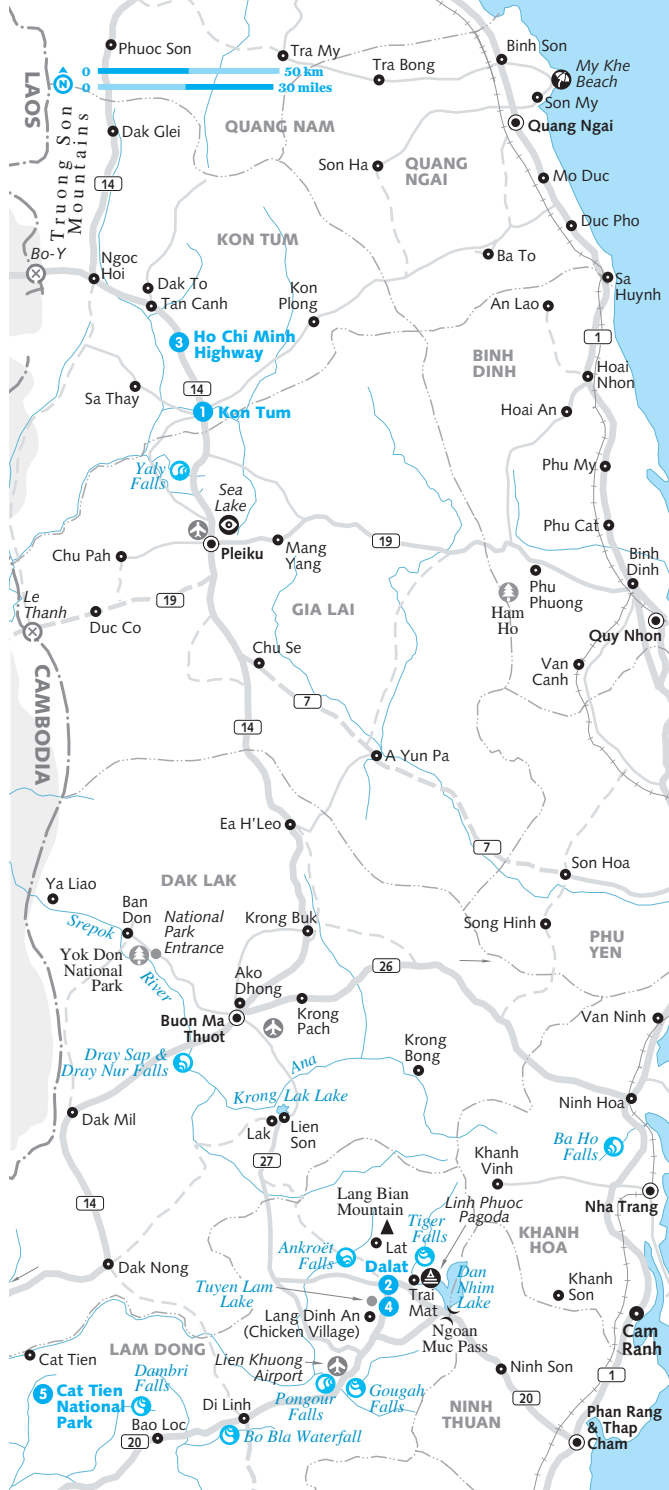
Dalat



Mar Great for the annual Coffee Festival in Buon Ma Thuot or elephant races in nearby Don.

Oct Autumn climes come to Dalat, the perfect time for exploring or adrenaline activities.

Dec Trek or cycle through Cat Tien National Park in cooler times, visiting the wild gibbons.



Central Highlands Highlights

- 1 Discover the hill-tribe way of life in remote village homestays around **Kon Tum** (p293)
- 2 Experience the fresh air and French flair of **Dalat** (p272), Vietnam's mountain resort
- 3 Jump on a motorbike and wind along the twists and turns of the **Ho Chi Minh Highway** (p291)
- 4 Crank up the adrenaline rate with an adventure in the hills **around Dalat** (p277)
- 5 Hike, bike or track down wild gibbons in the lush forests of **Cat Tien National Park** (p283)