



Southwest Highlands

Includes ➔

Dalat & Around.....	272
Bao Loc.....	282
Ngoan Muc Pass.....	282
Cat Tien National Park.....	282
Lak Lake.....	284
Buon Ma Thuot.....	285
Around Buon Ma Thuot.....	289
Pleiku.....	289
Kon Tum.....	291

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ V Cafe (p279)
- ➔ Thanh Tram (p287)
- ➔ Le Rabelais (p280)
- ➔ Trong Dong (p279)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Forest Floor Lodge (p284)
- ➔ Ana Mandara Villas Dalat (p278)
- ➔ Dreams 3 (p278)
- ➔ Family Hotel (p292)

Why Go?

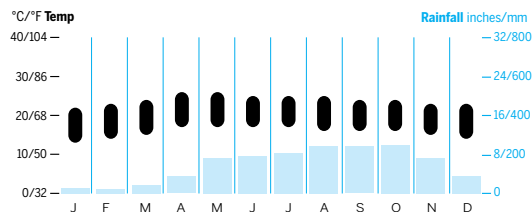
There's a rugged charm to this distinctly rural region, with pine-studded hilltops soaring over intensively farmed fields and remote, bumpy roads meandering through coffee plantations. The scenery lacks the immediate appeal of Vietnam's far north, but the hill-tribe villages here are less-visited than the heavily toured areas around Sapa.

Two national parks are of key interest. Cat Tien is a Unesco-listed biosphere with an impressive variety of flora and fauna. Yok Don is Vietnam's largest protected area and is home to elephants and prolific birdlife (including the giant ibis). Both parks give visitors the opportunity to explore Vietnam's all-too-rare wild side.

Dalat, a former French hill station that still boasts plenty of colonial charm, makes a great base. Fast establishing itself as Vietnam's highland adventure sports mecca, it offers myriad biking and hiking trips for daytime thrills and an array of atmospheric restaurants and bars for after-dark chills.

When to Go

Dalat



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

Oct Autumn in Dalat, the perfect time for exploring or adrenaline-pumping activities.

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



Southwest Highlands Highlights

- 1 Crank up the adrenalin with a hike, biking trip, horse ride or even a canyoning or climbing adventure in the hills around **Dalat** (p276).
- 2 Track down wild gibbons in the early morning, then seek out crocodiles by torchlight in the lush forests and lakes of **Cat Tien National Park** (p282).
- 3 Revel in the fresh air and French flair of **Dalat** (p272), Vietnam's mountain resort par excellence.
- 4 Fire up a motorbike and explore the twists and turns of the **Ho Chi Minh Highway** (p285).
- 5 Discover the hill-tribe customs and culture in remote village homestays around **Kon Tum** (p291).