



#### Thich Ca Phat Dai, Ba Ria - Vung Tau

Thich Ca Phat Dai, Ba Ria - Vung Tau The site of the pagoda occupies an area of 6ha on the side of Big Mountain. The beauty of the 19m high pagoda lies in the harmonious combination between the natural surroundings and the architectural structure. This pagoda exists exclusively for religious worship. The pagoda is unique in its white cement construction of the giant statue of Thich Ca Buddha sitting on a large lotus blossom.

#### Niet Ban Tinh Xa, Ba Ria - Vung Tau

This monastery was built on a hill from 1969 to 1974. The monastery has a flag pillar, a symbol of an ancient lotus stupa. Among the many items to observe are the 42 stairs paved with bricks, a 3.5-ton bell, intricate mosaic work, and a 12-m Buddha statue.

Binh Chau Thermal Springs are located 70km east of Vung Tau City. Covering an area of 1km<sup>2</sup>, Binh Chau Thermal Springs consist of many lakes and ponds joining through an underground pool of mineral water coming from a network of 70 main sources. The water temperature reaches up to 80°C, a temperature at which an egg can be boiled in 10 minutes. Binh Chau Thermal Springs belong to a protected area that also features numerous forests, coasts, and lakes. More restaurants and [hotels in Vung Tau](#) have been built to accommodate visitors who come here for health as well as for recreational purposes.

#### An Son Temple, Ba Ria - Vung Tau

In 1783, Nguyen Anh was defeated by Tay Son and ran away to Con Dao Island. Together with fishermen, Lord Nguyen Anh founded three villages: An Hai, An Hoi, and Co Ong. Nguyen Anh sent Prince Canh followed by Ba Da Loc to France to ask for reinforcements to fight against the Tay Son troops. Lady Phi Yen, the second wife of Nguyen Anh, advised him not to do so. Nguyen Anh got angry with her and thought that his wife might have been dealing with Tay Son troops. He intended to kill her. Just before Tay Son troops attacked the island, Nguyen Anh put his wife in prison and went to sea. Prince Cai, who was then four years old, wanted his mother to come with them. Nguyen Anh got angry and threw his son into the sea. The body of Prince Cai drifted onto Co Ong Beach where it was buried by villagers. According to the legend, Lady Phi Yen was rescued from the stone prison by a tiger and an ape. She lived with the villagers, taking care of Prince Cai's grave. After an unfortunate encounter with a man, she killed herself to keep her pride. The villagers mourned her and built a temple in her honor. In 1861, the French colonialists occupied the island and destroyed the temple. In 1958, the temple was rebuilt on its present location.

#### Con Dao Island, Ba Ria - Vung Tau

Looking at a map, Con Dao Island looks like a bear rising from the sea to south east of Vietnam. Originally a prison for patriots and revolutionists during the French and American resistance, Con Dao Island sheltered brave revolutionary spirits of the Vietnamese people. More than 22,000 prisoners who dedicated their lives to national independence were incarcerated on the isolated island of Con Dao.

Con Dao was recognized as a nature reserve in 1984 and a national park in 1993. The total protected area of the park is 20,000 ha, including 14,000 ha of sea and 6,000 ha of forest on 14 islands. There is also a buffer zone that is 20,500 ha wide. Con Dao National Park encompasses oceanic and coastal ecosystems such as mangrove forests, coral reefs and sea grasslands. Over 1,300 species of sea animals have been identified here. The park is the most important egg-laying area in Vietnam for sea turtles. The island also has many precious animals, the most important being dugong (called “sea cows” by locals). Between late 1996 and early 1997, officials at the park counted 10 dugongs in the sea surrounding the island. With high oceanic biodiversity, Con Dao is classified as one of the areas given optimum priority in the world's system of oceanic reserves.

The best time to [apply Vietnam visa](#) to visit Con Dao Island is from March to June, when the sea is calm. Some of those beaches include Dam Trau, Hang Duong and Phi Yen where visitors can relax and enjoy the warm temperature. The ocean around Con Dao Island is a heaven for sea life and the splendid forest cloaks the land. This is ecotourism at its best. Clean, smooth sand banks, blue sea, dolphins jumping and racing after boats, tropical almond trees swinging in a cool sea breeze, peaceful narrow roads, and forest covering most of the island, make Con Dao seem like heaven to visitors from far and wide.

Con Dao is one of the few places in Vietnam that is home to rare dugong, sea turtles, and dolphins, and to varieties of orchids found nowhere else in the country. In addition, the island has large and diverse coral reefs comparable to the most famous ecotourism spots in the region. This peaceful island district has 5,000 people whom nature seems to have created with kind hearted and generous characters and adventurous enough to choose the remote island as their home. Visitors will arrive there to enjoy themselves in an intact natural environment and have a good time with dugong, sea turtles and dolphins playing freely around the island paradise.

Source: [www.dulichso.com](http://www.dulichso.com)