THE TIMES

11 of the most beautiful places in Vietnam (and how to see them)

Our expert guides you to the places that show this southeast Asian country at its most gorgeous — from under-the-radar beaches to hidden urban corners and unsung islands

Extract · Joshua Zukas, Vietnam expert · Sunday August 30 2026 · The Times, Travel

Extract from the article published in The Times on 30 August 2026, in which Huê's walled city is placed first of eleven. Quoted for reference; the full article is available to Times readers at the link below. Thiên Ý stands inside the walled city, a few minutes' walk from the Imperial City.

1. The walled city, Hue



The Forbidden Imperial City ALAMY

Relentlessly photographed, Hoi An hums with camera shutters and tour groups, which is why I'm championing Hue, its larger, heritage-rich neighbour to the north. There is an urban grace to this former imperial capital that feels vanishingly rare in Vietnam, from its broad, tree-lined boulevards and park-fringed river to the lotus-filled lakes that bloom each summer. The walled neighbourhood, best explored by bicycle with a local company such as Oriental Sky Travel, is like a self-contained garden. It's embellished with the glistening palaces of the Forbidden Imperial City.

[...] Ten further places follow, from Hanoi's Old Quarter to the Ban Gioc Waterfall.

Source: The Times, "11 of the most beautiful places in Vietnam (and how to see them)", Joshua Zukas, 30 August 2026. https://www.thetimes.com/travel/destinations/asia-travel/vietnam/most-beautiful-places-in-vietnam-and-how-to-see-them-wlwn5nd5f