

A Tourist's Guide to Love

A Tourist's Guide to Love is a 2023 romantic comedy film directed by Steven K. Tsuchida and written by Eirene Tran Donohue. It stars Rachael Leigh Cook, Scott Ly, Missi Pyle, Ben Feldman, Nondumiso Tembe and Andrew Barth Feldman.

Filming took place on location in Vietnam in April 2022. The film was released by Netflix to mixed reviews on April 21, 2023.

Plot

Amanda Riley, a travel industry professional for Tourista, undertakes a covert mission to study Vietnam's tourism sector after her five year relationship with John ends unexpectedly. Her boss Mona convinces her to get a manicure for an expected proposal, however he proposes a hiatus to take a position in Ohio.

Amanda is met at the Vietnamese airport by Sinh, the tour guide for Saigon Silver Star and his cousin Anh, the owner's daughter. In the evening she meets the rest of the group. To keep her cover, Amanda proposes they not reveal their professions as a game.

Mona has given Amanda proposed itineraries, which Sinh consistently rejects and insists she trust his choices. She starts to get out of her comfort zone through bartering, tasting exotic foods and learning to cross a busy street without a crosswalk. Sinh sees that Amanda sells herself short, and believes that, rather than trying to follow a rigorous itinerary to be flexible and see where the day takes them.

At a temple, Sinh pulls some strings so their group can watch preparation for the lion dance for the Vietnamese Lunar New Year celebration Tết. At a seamstress's the group gets clothes made, as it is customary on Tết to wear something new with bright colors to invite luck and prosperity.

As the others rest before dinner, Sinh takes Amanda to a tiny street decorated with bright paper lanterns, where he opens up. He'd moved to the US as a child, but returned after college. At first Sinh had worked in his father's restaurant, but became a tour guide with his uncle and discovered his calling.

A Tourist's Guide to Love



Official release poster

Directed by	<u>Steven K. Tsuchida</u>
Written by	Eirene Tran Donohue
Produced by	<u>Rachael Leigh Cook</u> <u>Joel S. Rice</u>
Starring	Rachael Leigh Cook Scott Ly <u>Missi Pyle</u> <u>Ben Feldman</u>
Cinematography	Jon Keng
Edited by	Lauren Connelly
Music by	Jina Hyojin An Shirley Song
Production companies	<u>Muse</u> <u>Entertainment</u> Head First

Enjoying the day by the water, Sinh and Amanda try out a round boat and end up falling in. Soon afterwards, when Anh discovers that getting tickets for the Golden Bridge would take hours, Sinh again improvises. They go to the My Son Sanctuary, Hindu ruins which had been built over a thousand years.

As Amanda feels inspired, Sinh takes them off the beaten path to his grandmother's village. There, they stay in locals' homes and his grandma, sensing chemistry between him and Amanda, invites her to stay at hers. The group helps with preparations for Tết by cleaning, decorating and preparing a feast.

	Ben's Sister Production
Distributed by	<u>Netflix</u>
Release date	April 21, 2023
Running time	96 minutes
Country	United States
Languages	English <u>Vietnamese</u>

Anh interprets for their grandmother so she can ask Amanda what her intentions are with Sinh. She obviously is interested in him, but insists she just wants to stay friends. The grandmother says she doesn't believe her and leaves. Anh stays, confiding in Amanda that her dad is selling the company, but Sinh doesn't know yet. She also tells her that whoever first knocks on your door on Tết greatly influences your coming year.

Sinh visits Amanda bright and early, and everyone helps with the feast. Wearing their specially-made outfits, both old and new bonds are made stronger. Amanda is about to tell Sinh about her purpose for the trip, but instead they kiss.

Arriving to Hanoi the next day, John surprises them. Announcing he's come to win Amanda back, both Sinh and she look crestfallen. Alone together, John tells her he's ready to advance their relationship. Amanda calls Mona to tell her of her unintentional love triangle, with the comfortable John and the adventurous and exciting Sinh.

At that evening's water puppetry show, Sinh sullenly sits on one side of Amanda while John sits on the other. As the group sit outside, chatting happily about the show and having street vendor food, Anh gets word that Tourista has bought the tour company. John congratulates Amanda, so she has to confess her involvement. Upset, Sinh storms off and Amanda follows him, but he believes it was all a lie.

The next day, John tells Amanda that he's back in LA at the end of the year, so they can house hunt then. She realises he's not really motivated to marry her, but just wants to please her. Amanda realises she doesn't want it any more and says goodbye.

Meanwhile, the cousins make up and Sinh decides to travel to clear his head at his dad's. When Amanda finds out, Anh helps her cross the city to stop him from leaving and confess her feelings.

Cast

- Rachael Leigh Cook as Amanda Riley
- Scott Ly as Sinh Thach
- Ben Feldman as John
- Missi Pyle as Mona
- Glynn Sweet as Brian Conway
- Alexa Povah as Maya Conway
- Jacqueline Correa as Sam Gonville

- [Nondumiso Tembe](#) as Dom Fisher
- [Morgan Lynnee Dudley](#) as Robin
- [Andrew Barth Feldman](#) as Alex
- [Quinn Trúc Trần](#) as Anh
- [Lê Thiện](#) as Ba Noi
- [Anh Đào](#) as Auntie Diem

Production

In April 2021, [Variety](#) reported that [Rachael Leigh Cook](#) would star in and produce a romantic comedy, *A Tourist's Guide to Love*, that is based on an original idea of hers, with Eirene Tran Donohue writing the screenplay.^[1] The film is a [Netflix Original](#) film produced by Head First Productions and [Muse Entertainment](#).^[1] In May 2022, the casting of [Scott Ly](#), [Ben Feldman](#), [Missi Pyle](#), [Jacqueline Correa](#), [Nondumiso Tembe](#), [Morgan Lynnee Dudley](#), [Andrew Barth Feldman](#), [Glynn Sweet](#), [Alexa Povah](#), [Thanh Truc](#) and [Le Thien](#) was announced.^[2]

[Principal photography](#) commenced in April 2022, and took place on location in various cities of [Vietnam](#), such as [Ho Chi Minh City](#), [Da Nang](#), [Hội An](#), [Hanoi](#) and [Hà Giang](#).^{[2][3]} Donohue explained why it was important to her not to have an American film set in the country that focused on war, saying "There are almost no American movies set in Vietnam that aren't about the trauma of war. It was really important to me to tell a story about life now. One that was full of joy and love and celebration. I wanted to change the conversation about Vietnam, to highlight it as a modern thriving country whose stories are worthy of being told".^[4]

Release and reception

A Tourist's Guide to Love was released by [Netflix](#) on April 21, 2023.^[5]

On the [review aggregator](#) website [Rotten Tomatoes](#), 68% of 19 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.7/10.^[6] [Metacritic](#), which uses a [weighted average](#), assigned the film a score of 49 out of 100, based on 8 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[7]

[Christy Lemire](#) of [RogerEbert.com](#) gave the film a score of two and a half out of five, commenting that the film simply satisfied all of the genre's clichés. Despite her praise of Cook's "likability" and Ly's charisma and "understated delivery", she concluded that the story was simply "as harmless as its blandly forgettable title would suggest".^[8] [Variety](#)'s [Courtney Howard](#) was more effusive about both Cook and Ly's "sparkling repartee" and complemented their chemistry together. She praised the "care to incorporate the sights and sounds of Vietnam into the narrative", but she conceded that the film hinges on "the safety of genre tropes" and criticized the filmmakers for not going "off-book" and taking "a less travelled path" to enhance the narrative.^[9]

The *Los Angeles Times*'s Noel Murray was likewise critical of the plot and deemed that though "the movie's leads are undeniably charming, director Steven K. Tsuchida and screenwriter Eirene Tran Donohue don't give them much to do that hasn't been done many times before."^[10] Elisabeth Vincentelli writing for *The New York Times*, also panned the film for its lack of originality and found that the "soundtrack's catchy Vietnamese songs provide the only fizz in this otherwise flat concoction."^[11]

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External links

- *A Tourist's Guide to Love* (<https://www.netflix.com/title/81424906>) on Netflix
 - *A Tourist's Guide to Love* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt20115096/>) at IMDb
 - *A Tourist's Guide to Love* (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/a_tourists_guide_to_love) at Rotten Tomatoes
 - *A Tourist's Guide to Love* (<https://www.metacritic.com/movie/a-tourists-guide-to-love>) at Metacritic
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