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Travel agencies in Vietnam market demand and offer landscape

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This report evaluates market demand drivers for travel agencies and tour operators in Vietnam, maps the competitive landscape, and benchmarks how agencies package and price offers (with a close read of **wideeyedtours.com** and comparable operators). Findings are based on official/semiofficial statistics and policy sources, plus public offer pages from major agencies and DMCs. [1]

Market demand essentials

International (inbound) demand has become the dominant growth lever for inbound agencies since the country fully reopened. Vietnam recorded **~17.6 million** international visitor arrivals in **2024**, then **~21.2 million** in **2025** (a new all-time high), exceeding the pre-pandemic peak of **18 million in 2019**. For agencies, this expands the pipeline for (a) multi-day circuit tours, (b) day tours and transfers sold as add-ons, and (c) higher-value specialist themes such as premium cruises, private guides, and curated culinary itineraries. [2]

Inbound demand is also structurally shaped by source-market composition and entry-mode flexibility. In the first five months of 2025 alone, Vietnam received **9.2+ million** international visitors, with **China** and **South Korea** leading by volume; **~85%** arrived by air. This tends to concentrate demand into airport-linked hub itineraries (North–Central–South circuits) and increases the value of strong ground-handling capacity and supplier contracting in the major entry hubs. [3]

Domestic travel remains a separate, high-volume demand engine that produces predictable peaks—especially around Tet. During the 2025 Lunar New Year holiday window (Jan 25–Feb 2, 2025), Vietnam recorded an estimated **12.5 million domestic tourists**, up **19%** year-on-year; several provinces and cities reported tourism revenues exceeding VND 1 trillion during that period. For agencies, domestic peaks reward “fast bundlers” who can assemble transport + hotel + attraction tickets + guide services at promotional prices and distribute them through high-frequency digital channels. [4]

Outbound demand (Vietnamese citizens traveling abroad) matters because it underpins the business models of large retail agencies and MICE-oriented agencies. Reported official-data summaries indicate **~6.7 million Vietnamese** traveled abroad in **2025** (up **26.4%** year-on-year). This supports flight-inclusive packages, visa support services, and group-departure offerings—often sold through mixed online/offline networks. [5]

A final demand signal comes from the digital channel itself: the Vietnam country brief of the **e-Conomy SEA 2025** program (by entity["company","Google","technology company"], entity["company","Temasek","investment firm singapore"], and entity["company","Bain & Company","management consulting firm"]) shows **online travel GMV** at about **US$4B in 2025**, with a projection of **~US$8B by 2030**. For travel agencies, this is a strong indicator that itinerary discovery, quotation, and booking will keep migrating online—raising the importance of conversion design, chat-based customer support, and trust signals. [6]

Policy and operating environment

Visa and border-access policy has been an unusually material demand driver for Vietnam. In 2023, Vietnam expanded e-visa validity to **up to 90 days**, with **single or multiple entry** options, and extended unilateral visa-exempt temporary stay for certain nationalities to **45 days**. These changes make longer itineraries easier to sell (and reduce itinerary engineering constraints for agencies), especially for travelers combining multiple regions or adding cross-border add-ons. [7]

In December 2025, the **entity["organization","Viet Nam Government Portal","official government news portal"]** reported that the Government supplemented **41** additional border gates for e-visa use, raising the **total to 83** eligible ports under Resolution 389/NQ-CP. This supports demand for cruise-linked itineraries, overland loops, and regional multi-entry travel plans—products that agencies often monetize with higher-value logistical coordination and risk management. [8]

On the demand-stimulation side, the **entity["organization","Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism","vietnam government ministry"]** launched a Tourism Development Stimulus Program for 2025 ("Vietnam – Timeless Journey, Endless Love"), explicitly encouraging integrated promotional packages and noting discounts of **up to 50%** across services (transport, accommodation, F&B, entertainment, etc.) depending on provider conditions. This is a strong policy push toward bundled offers—reinforcing a market where agencies compete not only on itinerary design but also on contracted rates and the ability to coordinate multi-supplier promotions quickly. [9]

For agencies, the regulatory environment is also defined by licensing and deposit rules. During pandemic relief, deposits were reduced; official legal summaries indicate the reductions ran until **31 Dec 2023**, after which deposit levels revert to baseline under Decree 168/2017 (e.g., inbound international travel services VND 250m; outbound VND 500m; domestic VND 100m). This creates a structural barrier to entry and encourages a long-tail market of micro-operators that either (a) operate under proper licenses or (b) survive informally by acting as resellers/affiliates. [10]

A related operational point is that certain state fees can change over time. For example, one practitioner summary cites Circular 64/2025/TT-BTC as temporarily reducing international tour operation licensing fees for a defined period (July 2025–Dec 2026). Even if fee levels are modest relative to operating capital, these details affect low-margin agencies and can influence new market entry timing. [11]

Market structure and competitive landscape

Vietnam's travel agency market is structurally fragmented. In 2019, Vietnam's official tourism annual report reported **2,667** inbound/outbound tour operators and highlighted rapid growth in the number of travel enterprises, with licensing activity (issuance, change, re-issuance, withdrawal) exceeding **1,000** dossiers in that year. This baseline matters because it shows that fragmentation and licensing churn are not new; they are a stable feature of the market. [12]

By late 2025, a foreign-investor briefing that compiles VNAT data reported **4,437 international tour operators** and **44,171 active tour guide cards** (with language distribution heavily weighted to English and Chinese). While this is a secondary compilation rather than a primary VNAT statistical bulletin, it is consistent with the direction indicated in earlier official reporting: a growing, competitive supplier base that makes differentiation increasingly important. [13]

The VNAT stimulus portal underscores the same point in a different way: it publishes a long list of tour operators registered to welcome tourists under the 2025 stimulus resolution, including addresses, contact details, and license numbers. The scale of this list illustrates both (a) the depth of licensed supply and (b) how official programs can steer demand toward registered operators (a trust signal) rather than informal sellers. [14]

In practical competitive terms, the market clusters into a handful of archetypes:

Large integrated retail groups (domestic + outbound heavy) are built around scale advantages (call centers, offline branches, flight-ticket distribution, charter relationships, and MICE delivery). One example is entity["company","Vietravel","vietnam tour operator"], which describes itself as spanning the “full tourism spectrum” and claims to serve **800,000+ customers every year**, with an affiliated airline (entity["company","Vietravel Airlines","vietnam airline"]) and an airport counter at entity["point_of_interest","Tan Son Nhat International Airport","ho chi minh city airport"] (marketed as “Green Leaf Center”). [15]

Premium inbound specialists and DMCs tend to sell either (a) directly to foreign travelers (B2C), emphasizing custom itineraries and on-the-ground assistance, or (b) to overseas travel sellers (B2B), emphasizing service consistency, guide standards, risk management, and responsible travel. For example, entity["company","Discova","destination management company"] positions itself as an on-the-ground DMC operating across multiple Asian countries, with service lines including tailor-made travel, group series travel, and educational travel. [16]

Local legacy brands and budget-focused operators often dominate day tours, open-bus style transport, and attraction-heavy itineraries; they compete on price, volume, and distribution presence in tourist districts and online marketplaces. The segment also features brand-name confusion and copycats—raising the value of verification and reputation management (covered further below). [17]

Market demand and offers in practice

The offer landscape is best understood as modular packaging. Across agency types, Vietnam products are commonly built from repeatable modules: transfers, accommodation, guides, entrance fees, and “signature experiences” (cooking, cycling, street food, cruises, motorbike loops). This modularity is what enables agencies to promise customization while reusing proven supplier blocks behind the scenes. [18]

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A clear example of this modular, customization-driven positioning is entity["company","Wide Eyed Tours & Travel","tour operator vietnam tours"], which markets “customisable itineraries” and categorizes tours by interests (adventure, beach, culture, cycling, eco, food, golf, wellness) and by holiday types (day tours, family, group, luxury, honeymoon, cruise). Its public Vietnam tour catalogue provides transparent, consumer-grade pricing and “top seller” tags, spanning short city breaks and multi-week itineraries—evidence of an offer stack designed for both inspiration browsing and conversion. [19]

At the large integrated end, agencies tend to offer “travel services menus” beyond tours. Vietravel’s DMC-facing site, for instance, lists categories such as day trips, package tours/combos, visa services, transport, tour guides, and ticket/show products, reflecting a strategy of capturing more of the in-destination wallet beyond the base itinerary. [20]

For corporate and MICE demand, large operators emphasize planning and execution capabilities. entity["company","Saigontourist Travel","vietnam tour operator"] describes its core business as designing and operating leisure tours and delivering “meeting & incentive travel & business travel services,” and it cites a cooperation network of **400+** travel companies and agents internationally as well as membership in entity["organization","Vietnam Tourism Association","tourism industry group vietnam"] and entity["organization","Ho Chi Minh City Travel Association","tourism association ho chi minh"]. This type of network claim matters because network breadth is a proxy for B2B reach and contracting depth. [21]

In inbound leisure and B2B ground handling, “premium DMC” positioning is common. entity["company","Threeland Travel","dmc vietnam tours"] describes itself as a premium DMC with local multilingual teams serving “1,800+ global partners,” providing private tours, group tours, and MICE, and it markets theme-tour categories ranging from classics and day trips to cycling, luxury, cruise, sustainable tours, and MICE. [22]

Pricing and value propositions

Pricing in Vietnam’s agency market is best read as a function of (a) private vs group delivery, (b) hotel grade, (c) internal transport mode (train/flight/road), and (d) activity density (cruise grade, specialized guides, premium attractions). Consumer-facing sites that publish prices show a wide ladder from short break packages to multi-week private tours.

On wideeyedtours.com, publicly listed examples include a **10-day private “Best of Vietnam”** itinerary at **US$1,514 per person sharing**, a **14-day private tour** at **US$1,744 per person sharing**, an **18-day private tour** at **US$2,319 per person sharing**, and a **2-day Ha Long Bay cruise** from **US$217 per person sharing**—illustrating both “circuit tour” price anchoring and the use of high-demand icons (cruise) as entry products. [23]

A closer look at a typical family-oriented private package page shows how value is communicated through inclusions. Wide Eyed’s “Vietnam Family Holiday” example explicitly lists hotel classes and nights, meal count, named activities (jeep tour, cruise, cave tour, cycling and cooking), guides and tickets, and “all transport,” while excluding insurance and visas (offered as an extra). This inclusion/exclusion transparency is a key conversion tactic in a market where buyers are wary of hidden costs. [24]

Local-volume operators often publish in VND and compete on low headline prices for half-day/day tours. For example, the site thesinhtourist.vn lists half-day city tours and Cu Chi tunnel tours at **~299,000 VND**, and multi-day domestic packages at several million VND. This illustrates a different value proposition: low unit price, high frequency, and standardized routing. [25]

Digital distribution data also helps contextualize pricing pressure. entity["company","Mordor Intelligence","market research firm"] estimates the Vietnam online travel market at **US$2.87B in 2025**, projecting growth to **US$4.69B by 2031**, and notes that **mobile** accounts for a large share of bookings (reported at **72.77%** share in 2025). Whether or not one accepts every modeling assumption, the direction is clear: price transparency and rapid comparison on mobile raises competitive pressure and rewards agencies that can (a) bundle uniquely and (b) defend margins with differentiated experiences. [26]

Distribution channels and how offers reach buyers

Vietnam's agency distribution is now structurally mixed: traditional retail and partnerships remain important, but the center of gravity keeps shifting to digital discovery and mobile conversion. The e-Conomy SEA Vietnam brief shows online travel GMV growth and a large 2030 projection, indicating that the "addressable online checkout" pool is expanding—pushing agencies to invest in online catalogs, itinerary UX, chat-based sales, and payment rails. [6]

Inbound-focused agencies frequently rely on B2B distribution through overseas travel sellers, wholesalers, and other DMC networks. The formation of Discova as a global(izing) DMC brand illustrates the B2B logic: Buffalo Tours and Olympus Tours were merged to create a DMC positioned to support global business partners with in-destination solutions and stronger service standards. For Vietnam-based suppliers, this matters because B2B DMCs can channel significant volume—often with tight SLA expectations and sustainability requirements. [27]

Domestic and outbound retail agencies often use omnichannel distribution: websites/apps for discovery and payment plus phone hotlines and offline touchpoints for complex bookings. Vietravel's emphasis on a 24/7 support center and its airport counter is consistent with this hybrid "digital + physical trust" model, especially for higher-ticket outbound products where customers seek reassurance. [15]

Official programs also act as distribution shapers. The VNAT 2025 stimulus portal not only promotes discounted packages but also publishes lists of registered tour operators—effectively steering certain tour-dependent visa exemptions (and related demand) toward participating/registered businesses. [28]

Risks, trust, and due diligence in a fragmented market

High fragmentation increases both competition and consumer risk. Two tangible issues appear repeatedly in public traveler discussions: (1) inconsistent service quality across a long tail of operators and (2) brand confusion/copycats—where historic names are reused by unrelated sellers. Historic commentary on "Sinh Cafe"/Sinh Tourist rebranding notes it was, in part, an attempt to move away from copycats; more recent traveler discussions similarly flag the potential for scams and emphasize verifying the correct website or company identity. [29]

As a result, trust signals have become more economically valuable. Everyday trust elements for Vietnam agencies increasingly include: publishing tour-operator license numbers, maintaining consistent contact/office information, clear inclusion/exclusion lists, insurance expectations, and a credible external review footprint. The VNAT stimulus operator list provides a reference-style model (licensed operator name + address + license number) that illustrates the direction of institutional trust mechanics in the market. [14]

Operational risk also influences offers. Vietnam's storm season and localized flooding risk can disrupt itineraries (especially in certain central coastal heritage areas). This pushes agencies toward itinerary flexibility, alternative routing, and real-time communication—features that are now part of the "hidden value proposition" distinguishing premium operators from commodity sellers. [30]

Offer outlook and strategic implications

The demand outlook is structurally positive for the next planning cycle, but not uniformly profitable. International arrivals have already exceeded pre-pandemic levels, domestic demand remains strong, and outbound travel is expanding—meaning total "agency-addressable trips" continue to rise. However, growing supply (thousands of licensed operators plus OTAs and experience platforms) increases price competition, especially in standardized routes and day tours. [31]

The agencies best positioned to defend margins are likely to be those that do at least one of the following:

They differentiate with clearly packaged experiences (not just transport + hotels), with transparent inclusions and consistent operations. Wide Eyed's published inclusions and modular "interest-first" tour design exemplify a consumer-facing version of this approach. [32]

They lean into B2B DMC capability (service standards, guide systems, sustainability integration, and multi-destination reliability), as in the Discova model and the broader consolidation logic in DMC markets. [33]

They build omnichannel trust infrastructure (24/7 support, strong pre-trip information, and physical touchpoints), which is especially important in outbound and complex multi-component itineraries, as shown in Vietravel's positioning. [15]

They exploit policy windows and official programs (tourism stimulus discounts, visa-exemption linked programs) to create time-bound, high-conversion bundles—while ensuring compliance and traceability (license publication, inclusion clarity). [28]

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