

CTUMP: A Guidebook

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About the Country

- ▶ 93 Million inhabitants
- ▶ 1 of 5 Communist states in the world
- ▶ Most people are employed in the agricultural field
- ▶ Declared its independence from France after World War II
- ▶ United by communist forces in 1975 after withdrawal of United States and allied nations in 1973



Mekong Delta

- ▶ Region harbors the Mekong River and its tributaries
- ▶ Rainy season extends from April to October
- ▶ Can Tho is the largest province with a population of 1.2 Million
- ▶ Largest industries include agriculture and aquaculture
- ▶ Known for its floating markets



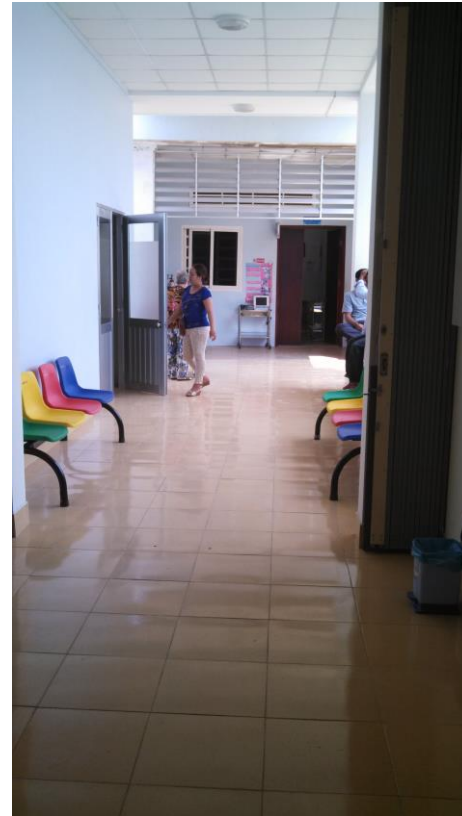
Opportunity as a Student

- ▶ Many public hospitals exist in the country with very few privately funded hospitals
- ▶ There are 10 medical schools in Vietnam
- ▶ Can Tho University of Medicine and Pharmacy is the only medical school in the Mekong Delta and is the southernmost school



Can Tho University of Medicine and Pharmacy

- ▶ Located north of Can Tho city center
- ▶ Established in 2011
- ▶ Includes departments for nursing, medicine and pharmacy
- ▶ Brand new clinic facilities which include a CT Scan and MRI
- ▶ New children's hospital being built for 2016



Before your departure

- ▶ Obtain \$300 in cash
 - ▶ Make sure they are crisp hundreds for the currency exchange
- ▶ Obtain a visa from the Houston embassy
 - ▶ Cost of \$100
 - ▶ Use a cashier's check
 - ▶ Needs to be obtained at one month prior to departure
 - ▶ The Office of Global Health can help make these arrangements.
 - ▶ A tourist visa should suffice
 - ▶ Even if they suggest a work visa
 - ▶ If you obtain a tourist visa, do not tell passport immigration you have been working
- ▶ Immunizations
 - ▶ Schedule an appointment with travel medicine for required immunizations
 - ▶ Malaria is in the region
 - ▶ Use of DEET and nets during dry months will prevent mosquitoes
 - ▶ Students in 2014 opted to not take anti-malarials
 - ▶ Japanese Encephalitis Vaccination
 - ▶ Carried by mosquitoes (use mosquito prevention)
 - ▶ \$300/shot, requires two shots
 - ▶ Does NOT provide life long immunity

What to pack

▶ Equipment

- ▶ TB mask, isolation masks
- ▶ Gloves
- ▶ Stethoscope
- ▶ Notepads and pens
- ▶ PEP kit from Office of Global Health
- ▶ Basic first aid kit with oral rehydration salts
- ▶ Sunscreen
- ▶ Bug spray with DEET

▶ Medications

- ▶ Full prescription of a broad spectrum antibiotic
 - ▶ Ciprofloxacin
- ▶ Imodium

▶ Food

- ▶ Having granola bars was useful on the move
- ▶ Water bottle with filter capabilities is a good way to stay hydrated
 - ▶ Lifestraw water bottles

What to pack

▶ Clothing

- ▶ White coat
- ▶ Clinic attire is usually long pants and long sleeve shirts
 - ▶ Custom is to be very conservative in your dressing
 - ▶ There's a social stigma about exposing yourself to the sun
 - ▶ Make sure your clothes are very light weight and breathable (it is extremely hot and humid with little indoor air conditioning)
- ▶ Avoid skirts higher than knee length

➤ Miscellaneous

- Shampoo, conditioner, soap, etc.
 - Quality may vary in Vietnam
- Games
 - Cards, bananagrams
- Thank you gifts
 - Always a good idea to thank the doctors you work with
- Small Texas Tech gifts
 - Keychains, coasters, cards, etc. (the Office of Global Health may have some items)
 - A nice token of appreciation

Communicating from there

- ▶ Phones
 - ▶ Cheap in country phones can be purchased, you may need to consult your concierge or Vietnam advisor
- ▶ WiFi
 - ▶ Readily available for free, making email and web chatting viable options
- ▶ Social Media
 - ▶ Heavily regulated by the government
 - ▶ Avoid any anti-communist, religious expression and political criticisms when using social media in country
 - ▶ Very spotty service



Communicating while there

- ▶ Learn a few basic phrases
 - ▶ Most people respond positively
 - ▶ Most Vietnamese don't know English or understand it, be prepared for a language barrier
- ▶ Always have a map ready
 - ▶ Great for taxis and directions in the city
- ▶ Ask someone to write your directions or translations down
 - ▶ Residents and concierges are usually more than happy to ensure you get to where you need to be safely



Flying There

- ▶ Budget between \$1000-\$1500 for flights
- ▶ Avoid the Tet holiday (early February) as this increases flight prices and is the busiest time to fly to Vietnam. In addition, CTUMP may be closed for the holiday.
- ▶ Begin looking for good rates 3-4 months in advance. Do NOT book too late
- ▶ Use of websites like priceline.com and kayak.com tend to give you the best deals



Tips from 2014

- ▶ Group obtained flights through priceline.com for \$1201.
 - ▶ From ABQ->LAX->Seoul->Ho Chi Minh
 - ▶ Reservations through American Airlines and Korean Air
- ▶ Use a large city to fly from (Dallas or Albuquerque) to reduce flight costs
- ▶ Fly to Ho Chi Minh, flying directly to Can Tho is very expensive



When You Land

- ▶ Exchange a few hundreds into Vietnamese Dong
- ▶ Obtain some drinks for the bus ride
- ▶ When you exit the airport find the taxi line
 - ▶ It helps to have directions to your destination written out in Vietnamese or a marked map
 - ▶ Try to have exact fare (they don't believe in change)



Getting to and from Can Tho

- ▶ 3 options:
 - ▶ Flying ~ approximately \$300
 - ▶ Private car ~ approximately \$100
 - ▶ Obtain reservations through CTUMP contact, local taxi company, or hotel concierge
 - ▶ Bus ~ approximately \$10 + \$20 taxi
 - ▶ FUTA buses run to Can Tho every 30 minutes, take a taxi from the airport to the ticket station and obtain a ticket
 - ▶ 3.5 hours with stop in the middle
 - ▶ Free shuttle to your hotel in Can Tho



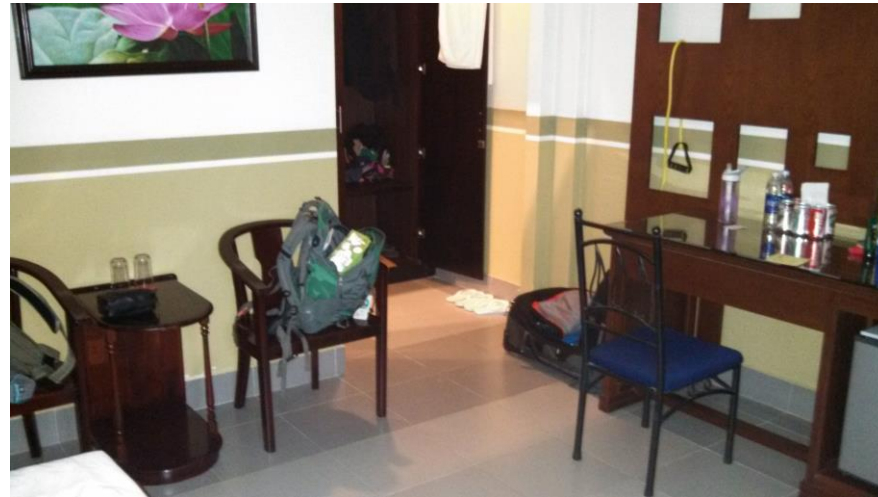
Tips from 2014

- ▶ Took a taxi from the airport to FUTA bus station
- ▶ Obtained ticket for Can Tho and boarded shuttle to buses
- ▶ Boarded bus to Can Tho, it stops at the halfway point for bathrooms and food (15 minute stop)
- ▶ Took the free shuttle from bus station to hotel
 - ▶ Show taxi driver hotel address
 - ▶ Only use FUTA shuttle
 - ▶ Do not tip
- ▶ On the return trip, able to obtain tickets through hotel



Staying There

- ▶ Hotels can be booked ahead of time
 - ▶ Use booking sites like agoda.com or booking.com
- ▶ Look for places within walking distance to your hospital location
 - ▶ Taxis are cheap (\$10/one way across town) but walking helps to reduce costs
- ▶ Try to find places with air conditioning, private bathrooms, and netting



Tips from 2014

- ▶ Booked hotel through agoda.com.
Stayed at Thanh Dat Resort
 - ▶ \$21/day for two bed room
 - ▶ Breakfast included
 - ▶ 30 minute walk from children's hospital and medical school clinic
 - ▶ 45 minute walk to downtown (\$10 taxi/way)
 - ▶ Downside: located down dirt road



Getting around the city

- ▶ **Motorbike**
 - ▶ Most popular with locals, but traffic is usually dense and chaotic
 - ▶ Can be rented if so desired
- ▶ **Taxis**
 - ▶ Relatively inexpensive for riding, especially if larger groups split the fare. Always have the address on hand.
- ▶ **Walking**
 - ▶ Not favored by locals
 - ▶ Cheap!
 - ▶ Never felt in danger, but always be careful crossing the street
 - ▶ Walk slowly, they will move around you



Opportunities there

- ▶ Children's hospital
 - ▶ Has inpatient floors
 - ▶ NICU
 - ▶ Located between medical school and downtown
- ▶ Adult Inpatient
 - ▶ Located at new medical clinic by school
 - ▶ Inpatient, clinic and imaging (CT & US) opportunities
- ▶ Surgery
 - ▶ CTUMP expressed interest in having students in OR at medical school



Rotating at the Children's Hospital

- ▶ Work day is 7a-11a, 1p-5p
- ▶ Each room is set up by diagnosis or symptom
 - ▶ i.e. diarrhea, measles and respiratory rooms
- ▶ One doctor is assigned to each room
- ▶ Each room has 10-15 beds per room
 - ▶ Two to four patients per bed with one family member per patient
- ▶ Patient care is done by family members
 - ▶ Including bathing, changing, and medicine administration



Tips from 2014

- ▶ Try to follow a “young” doctor (essentially a resident physician) in the morning
 - ▶ They have more time to help explain the patients to you
- ▶ Carry stickers for the children
- ▶ Review the drugs in the chart (typically on the right side) to help monitor the course of treatment the doctor choose
- ▶ Ask permission to obtain pictures
- ▶ Immunization day is every Saturday in varying providences
 - ▶ Try to attend one to see how they administer shots on a national level



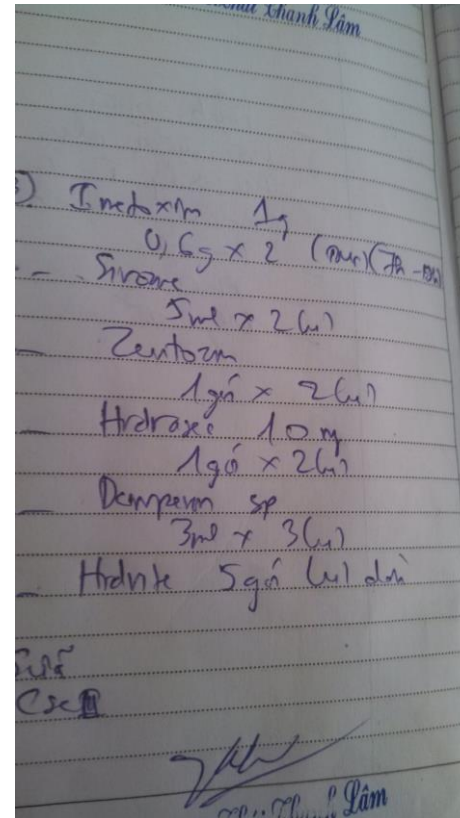
Rotating at the Adult Inpatient

- ▶ Work day is 7a-11a, 1p-5p
- ▶ Rooms are not categorized, except for Tuberculosis patients
 - ▶ Each room contains about 15 beds
 - ▶ One patient per bed, attended by one family member
- ▶ Each doctor is assigned a room and rounds in the morning
 - ▶ Physical exams are usually performed in front of other patients
- ▶ Doctors use staff room for charting and new admits
- ▶ CT Scan, MRI, and Ultrasound are available for diagnostic tools



Tales from 2014

- ▶ Be prepared to examine patients with the team and give differentials
 - ▶ Always try to be friendly and respectful
- ▶ Spend at least one afternoon seeing the various imaging clinics
 - ▶ Very interesting pathologies
- ▶ While in the doctor's area, review the charts with them
 - ▶ You will learn a lot about the patients and treatments
- ▶ The doctors and residents love to practice their medical English



Where to eat

- ▶ Ca Phes (cafés)
 - ▶ Located everywhere, usually includes free WiFi if you ask for the code
 - ▶ Drinks are cheap and unlimited free Jasmine tea is usually served
 - ▶ Traditionally there is no menu but you can bring food in
- ▶ Street vendors
 - ▶ Cheapest but also pose the most health risks
 - ▶ Usually serves banh mi which is a Vietnamese traditional sandwich
 - ▶ Pork, chicken, and fish are the safest choices



Where to eat continued

▶ Riverside restaurants

- ▶ Usually have tables that extend over the water or boats that take you out onto the river for dining
- ▶ Everything is ordered a la carte
- ▶ Very traditional restaurants can be found over by the Victoria Hotel

▶ Hot Pots

- ▶ A type of local cuisine where a hot pot of water is boiled with a meat and you add vegetables, noodles, and seasoning a la carte
- ▶ Can Tho has a wonderful hot pot alley



Local delicacies

- ▶ River Fish
 - ▶ Usually served whole and flame cooked or in a hot pot
- ▶ Turtles, Frogs, Snails
- ▶ Cats, Dogs, Snakes
- ▶ Field Mice and River Birds
- ▶ Beer
 - ▶ They have many local beers and tend to drink at unconventional American hours
- ▶ Fruits!!
 - ▶ If you buy at the floating markets they are the freshest



Tips from 2014

- ▶ Try it!
- ▶ Use your own judgment on food and always make sure its been cooked thoroughly
- ▶ Avoid dishes with beef (bo) as it usually isn't beef (expense import)
 - ▶ Or milk products like cheese
 - ▶ Usually very expensive



Points of interest

- ▶ Floating Markets
- ▶ Can Tho city center
 - ▶ Walking distance from most places
 - ▶ The day city and night city are very different and plan to see both
 - ▶ Many historical buildings and markets
- ▶ Ho Chi Minh City
 - ▶ A good weekend trip if you allot time in your travels



Tips from 2014

- ▶ City Center
 - ▶ Has a supermarket/mall for anything you might need
 - ▶ Has many tourist and goods markets
 - ▶ At night many streets close for nighttime markets
- ▶ Floating Markets
 - ▶ Take a boat tour
 - ▶ Can be booked through the hotel or at waterfront (remember to barter, \$10-20 per person)
 - ▶ Make sure guide is English speaking
 - ▶ Make sure you have shade cover
 - ▶ Usually includes floating markets, rice paper villages, and countryside tour

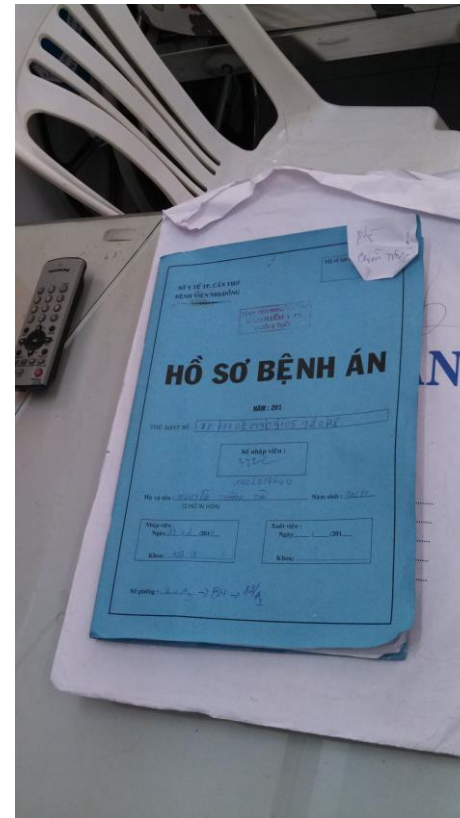


Interesting cultural taboos

- ▶ Light skin is greatly favored
 - ▶ The local population covers up almost every aspect of their body while in the sun
 - ▶ Including face masks
 - ▶ If you are of a lighter complexion be prepared to be stared at, touched, and photographed
- ▶ Hugging, hand holding, and other forms of touching is seen as culturally inappropriate (handshaking seemed to be allowed)
- ▶ Walking is a social stigma
 - ▶ Walking is the mode of transportation for the poor and many people avoid it even if they only travel a few blocks
 - ▶ Biking is primarily used by schoolchildren
 - ▶ Motorbike is the main stay of transportation
 - ▶ Cars are rare and only used by the wealthy
- ▶ Western toilets are generally used but the hospital used “squat pots”
 - ▶ Water buckets may be used if plumbing is not in the building
- ▶ Tipping is not an accepted practice in Can Tho and you will usually receive exact change, but not in Ho Chi Minh City
- ▶ Crime is very low due to the strict Communist government
- ▶ Bartering is expected, but you must have the intent to buy once a price is reached
- ▶ Can Tho was part of the allied forces during the Vietnam war. Many of the locals from that generation are friendly towards Americans
 - ▶ Otherwise the average population is considerably younger and has little or no memory of the war

Suggestions for the future

- ▶ Rotate at multiple locations
- ▶ Try to work with the resident physicians
- ▶ Ask ahead of time if there is any subject that they would like you to present
- ▶ Take medical equipment you don't mind leaving
- ▶ Take multiple copies of the review of systems already translated to help with patient communication



References

- ▶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html>
- ▶ <http://www.iime.org/database/asia/vietnam.htm>
- ▶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mekong_River_Delta
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