# Table of contents

Mui Ne .......................................................................................................................... 1
About this guide ............................................................................................................... 6
Map of Mui Ne .................................................................................................................. 7
Accommodation ............................................................................................................... 8

**Accommodation: Ham Tien** ....................................................................................... 8
  Cat Sen Auberge ........................................................................................................ 8
  Coco Beach ................................................................................................................ 10
  Mia Resort Mui Ne ...................................................................................................... 12
  Thuy Thuy Cottages .................................................................................................. 13
  Villa Aria .................................................................................................................... 14
  Cocosand Hotel ........................................................................................................ 16
  Hai Yen Family Resort .............................................................................................. 16
  Minh Kha Guesthouse .............................................................................................. 17
  Mui Ne Backpacker Village ...................................................................................... 18
  Sunrise Resort ......................................................................................................... 19
  Delight Hotel ............................................................................................................. 21
  Hong Di Bungalows .................................................................................................. 21
  Mui Ne Backpackers Resort .................................................................................... 22
  Rang Garden Beach Side ......................................................................................... 23
  Xin Chao .................................................................................................................... 24
  Song Huong Hotel .................................................................................................... 25

**Accommodation: Suoi Nuoc Beach** ......................................................................... 26
  Full Moon Village ...................................................................................................... 26
  Longson Mui Ne Campgrounds .................................................................................. 28

**Accommodation: Phu Hai** ....................................................................................... 31
  Victoria Phan Thiet .................................................................................................... 31

Eat and meet .................................................................................................................. 33
Sights and activities ......................................................................................................... 37
  Mui Ne's beaches ...................................................................................................... 37
  Kite surfing ............................................................................................................... 40
  Po Shanu Cham Towers ............................................................................................ 41
  Sand dunes ................................................................................................................ 42

Getting there and around .............................................................................................. 45
  Air .............................................................................................................................. 45
  Train ......................................................................................................................... 45
  Bus ............................................................................................................................. 45
  Getting around ......................................................................................................... 45
Mui Ne

One of southern Vietnam’s popular beach destinations, Mui Ne is a 12-kilometre long sweeping bay that boasts beachfront resorts. Twenty years of development have transformed the once sleepy fishing town into a water sports mecca, most notably for kitesurfing. With Ho Chi Minh City a mere four hours away, it’s an attractive option for travellers looking to jump into a beach holiday from the city.

What tourists know as “Mui Ne” is actually the village of Ham Tien. Sandwiched between Mui Ne (a fishing town to the east) and Phan Thiet, the capital of Binh Thuan province, Ham Tien is where the action happens. To add to the confusion, the beach district is part of Phan Thiet city. Sometimes online hotels are categorised under “Phan Thiet”, but you probably don’t want to book accommodation in downtown Phan Thiet.

Most of the accommodation and restaurants are spread out over a 10-kilometre stretch of coastal road called Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, which turns into Huynh Thuc Khang Street as it gets close to Mui Ne town. Accommodation is either ocean side or across the road from it.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder and Mui Ne has characteristics that tend to draw a strong reaction — you will either love it or hate it. Kitesurfers love it.

Mui Ne is a kitesurfer’s paradise, competing with Boracay in the Philippines as the kitesurfing capital of Southeast Asia. It draws wind sport worshippers from around the world due to its consistent cross onshore winds. On average it has over 200 days a year with

See you next week.
winds of more than 12 knots. The best time is October to the end of March. Peak time is December and January, when you’ll see a flurry of activity along the entire shoreline. A stack of schools offer lessons to beginners.

Kitesurfing is an extreme sport and the key is to get professional instruction at a reputable school. Of 20 or so shops in Mui Ne, we were told only five have officially certified teachers. Do choose your school carefully.

The water adventures aren’t limited to just kitesurfing. Rentals and lessons are on offer for surfing, windsurfing, SUP, sailing, kayaking and jet ski.

Not into strenuous activity? If your ideal holiday involves beachfront accommodation (and if you can afford it), then Mui Ne might be for you. Unlike Nha Trang which has almost no beachfront properties, Mui Ne is covered with them, from places with a few rooms to mega-resorts. The down side is the fact that the sand and water are not easily accessible to the public and budget travellers have to manoeuvre to find a spot. Most resorts (regardless of if they have a legal permit or not) consider their plot of sand their own. Park your bum and you could be quickly shooed away by security.

Your options are to go to the crowded public beach at the western end, find an empty non-resort which will likely be strewn with rubbish, pay a resort for a day pass or find a beach bar. To make matters worse, Mui Ne has a dirty little secret: It is suffering from coastal erosion.
High tide erases a lot of the sand and in recent years some hotels have lost their beach completely. It just makes it that more difficult for budget travellers to find a decent spot. Mui Ne has developed a reputation and detractors. With development unbridled, the tourist strip is gaudy and soulless. It is an extremely popular destination for Russian tourists, package tour groups arriving by the plane full. Dubbed “Russia Town” by local expats, shops and restaurants cater to the market.

Suoi Nuoc is a bit of ok.

Other beach destinations in Vietnam are also doing a far better job of making the beaches clean and accessible to all, so many travellers are eschewing Mui Ne in favour of Phu Quoc, Da Nang and Nha Trang. But the Russian financial crisis and ruble crash in 2015 and 2016 has hit the destination hard, leaving the town scrambling and offering good deals on accommodation. Low season yields fantastic value.

The not-so-fab reputation isn't all deserved. Talk to small business owners who have grown up with the town and they are passionate about Mui Ne. They are joining forces to run their own initiatives such as beach clean ups and destination promotions. There are also wonderful low-key chill out bars, quiet spots beneath palms to dig your feet into the white sand watching the water glow orange in the setting sun — a bar atmosphere you won’t find in Nha Trang or Da Nang.

If you can peel yourself off the sand (or away from the bar), a few places are worth checking out in the surrounds. The key attraction is the red and white sand dunes, which can be visited by motorbike or with a cheap Jeep tour. Get fantastic photos at Mui Ne fishing village harbour, especially at sunset.

Get away from the crowds at Nuoc Suoi Beach, 16 kilometres up the coast from town, just past Hon Rom. Choose anywhere along this virtually empty stretch of white sand, or hangout at Jibe’s Beach Club or Longson Mui Ne Campground. In the other direction, get out of the tourist bubble by exploring Phan Thiet city which is full of cheap, tastier local eats and seafood. Along the way stop at Po Shanu Cham towers.
The masses like to head to the **Fairy Stream (Suoi Tien)**, which we’ve chosen not to cover in depth because when we visited in March 2016, it was full of trash, cow dung and not well managed. It’s a 20- to 30-minute walk up a stream with a wall of red rock to one side. People will demand payment everywhere. Give it a miss.

**Orientation**

The tourist strip is in the village of Ham Tien, which is sandwiched between Mui Ne (a fishing village to the east) and Phan Thiet city. Most of the accommodation and restaurants are spread out over a 10-kilometre stretch of road along the coast called Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, which turns into Huynh Thuc Khang Street as the road gets close to Mui Ne town. You will likely find yourself needing a **bicycle, motorbike or taxi** to get around.

Accommodation is either ocean side or across the road from it. As for addresses, even numbers are on the ocean side; odd numbers, the other. The western end of the beach, dubbed Russia Town by local expats, is where you will find higher-end accommodation, some in the form of monster tour-series resorts. Staying further from the main drag gives visitors more affordable options.

High season in Mui Ne has traditionally been from **November to April**, low season from May to October. But with tourist numbers in decline, some accommodation are applying low season rates as early as February/March.

**Renting motorbikes** is a popular way for tourists to get around. The roads look deceptively easy. Mui Ne’s single road is frequented by big buses, trucks and tourists often trying motorbike driving for the first time. Beware of sand patches. The road runs straight east-west which means one side usually has blazing sun directly in the eyes. We were in Mui Ne for only an hour before we witnessed a motorbike accident between a local and a tourist.

By the letter of the law, **tourists must have an international drivers license** in order to drive a motorbike. Of course, not having one will not prevent you from renting a motorbike, but police happily capitalise by holding **regular stings** targeting foreigners. It will cost you a fine, more if they confiscate the bike.

Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street is packed with everything a beach bum needs at a huge mark up. If you are staying for a long time or are self-catering, it’s worth it to do your shopping in Phan Thiet city, which has a local markets, large Lotte Mart and Coop Mart.

The tourist strip also has a surprising number of **pharmacies and medical clinics**. The
closest hospital is in Phan Thiet but anything serious, head to Ho Chi Minh City.

**VITA Clinic** at 139 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St is open 24 hours. T: (094) 363 1418; medhelp24@gmail.com; vitahealthvn.com/home/. The medical clinic at the Swiss Village has an English and Russian speaking doctor. It’s at 44 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St; T: (062) 847 497, (0918) 210 504. Open daily 09:00 -21:00.
About this guide

This Travelfish.org guide was researched in person, on the ground, by a Travelfish writer. Travelfish.org always pays its way. No freebies. No discounts. No exceptions.

Links are to other pages within the document, or to external websites, so you will need to have internet access enabled for the latter to work. If you’re accessing this on a tablet or iPhone, please note that the links do not work in Kindle Reader for Android and iPhone. They do work in other PDF readers though, such as iBooks.

We’ve made the text large to make the guide easier to read on portable devices, so if you’re planning on printing this off, please consider printing two pages per page (most printers allow this).

This guide may include links to Agoda, Booking and other affiliate programmes. If you click on one of these links and make a reservation, we may earn a commission.

Got an idea on how to improve this guide? See something that is incorrect or out of date? Please let us know by emailing stuartmcdonald@travelfish.org or sambrown@travelfish.org.

Like the guide? Please spread the word!

All Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Mapbox.

Good travels,

Sam and Stuart
The above map is intended to give you the general lay of the land. Many individual listings in this guide each have their own map showing you where they are. [Open this map in Apple or Google maps](https://www.travelfish.org/).
Accommodation

Ham Tien

What tourists refer to as “Mui Ne” is actually the village of Ham Tien. Sandwiched between Mui Ne (a fishing village to the east) and the provincial capital Phan Thiet, Ham Tien is where the action happens. There’s a single tourist strip Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street – which turns into Huynh Thuc Khang Street as the road gets close to Mui Ne town – accommodation is either ocean side or across the road from it. As for addresses, even numbers are on the ocean side; odd numbers, the other.

High season in Mui Ne has traditionally been from November to April, low season from May to October. But in recent years tourist numbers have been in decline and some accommodation are applying low season rates as early as February/March.

Mui Ne accommodation is good value but if you dream of beachfront, you will have to have a bigger budget. You’ll also have to be careful in choosing as some places have lost their beachfront completely due to coastal erosion.

Cat Sen Auberge

Peaceful and charming
195 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien
T: (0163) 503 2550
catsen.booking@gmail.com
http://catsen.simdif.com/
USD 20 to 50 (Midrange )
Check online rates: [ Agoda ] [ Booking ]

From the moment guests move up the driveway, they will be enraptured by Cat Sen Auberge’s utterly gorgeous property dotted with lofty coconut trees. This hotel is a peaceful respite in a gaudy tourist town and it offers budget travellers a welcoming feeling of home.

It’s one of our top picks for Mui Ne.

This family-run accommodation has rooms and cottages, both of which exude French charm in the simple details: stone foundation, exterior siding, French windows and a front porch shaded by frangipani trees and vibrant bushy pink bougainvillea. Lovely curb appeal aside, the interiors are simple but elegant, comfortable and well maintained. Mattresses are amazing (rock hard Southeast Asia beds these are not), there’s air-con or ceiling fan, a minifridge, safety box, kettle and WiFi. There are four rooms in a single building at the front, perfectly good for one or two people. Bathrooms are spacious and have a separate shower and sink with countertop.
The bungalows are bigger, and the front porch is the big selling point. It has a countertop with a sink and you can ask for cooking equipment to be set up your own little outdoor kitchen and whip up your own meals. We could see how the bungalow’s semi-outdoor shower may be controversial: some will love it, others may not. The water is also warm rather than hot but a minor detail that can be overlooked in Mui Ne’s tropical climate.

More details we love: big drinking water dispensers available for a small cost — bring it to your room (yay to no small plastic bottles!). There’s also a laundry machine guests can use for free, clothes lines, hammocks, garden swings and the prettiest chickens roaming the lawn that we have ever seen. Seriously, we know our chickens. It all adds up to a sweet, peaceful feeling, an affordable respite to rest after all that sand dune climbing and windsurfing.

Cat Sen Auberge is located at the eastern edge of the main drag, just past the strip of bo ke seafood joints. You will need to rent a bicycle or motorbike to get to tourist drag or the areas of beach good for swimming.

Not surprising, Cat Sen is popular, especially with long-term stays. In high season book in advance to avoid disappointment. The owners speak perfect French, English and Chinese and they are keen to help and make guests comfortable. It’s a great deal.
**Room rates**

*Standard - Double: US$18 (low season) US$22 (high season)*

*Bungalow air-con private b'room: US$29 (low season) US$35 (high season)*

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.

---

**Coco Beach**

*The first resort in Vietnam*

58 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien

T: (062) 384 7111 F: (062) 3847 115

paradise@cocobeach.net

http://www.cocobeach.net

USD 100+ (Luxury)

Check online rates: [Agoda] [Booking]

**Coco Beach Resort** is not only the longest-running resort in Mui Ne, it was the very first resort in Vietnam. It occupies prime real estate in the heart of Mui Ne. As the destination has grown, so has Coco Beach from simple bungalows on an empty beach in post-war Vietnam to a family-friendly oasis in a bustling holiday town.

Twenty-eight individual bungalows and three villas dot a well-manicured garden and lawn full of its signature coconut trees, all stretched out along a beachfront that is very wide by Mui Ne standards. Closed every year for a month of renovations and maintenance, the love and attention is apparent as the wooden bungalows appear in top notch condition.
The interiors balance class and casual comfort, the natural wood softened with bright nautical hues, dreamy mosquito netting and white birch coloured furniture. It’s so comfortable and well laid out, you get a taste of what seaside tropical living would be like – and that means no TV! Bungalows come with big windows, a desk, kettle, full length mirror and private balcony with canvas beach chairs. WiFi, safety box and air-con are also standard amenities. Bathrooms are painted a cheerful yellow and come with a neatly tiled shower with rain showerhead.

What really sets Coco Beach apart is the fact that it’s loaded with things to do. There’s something almost retro about a small resort that has so many activities, the bygone days when resorts weren’t so formal, organised or fussy. The fun distractions are abundant.

There’s a billiard table, ping pong table, darts, on the beach massages (252,000 dong for a one-hour full body), playground, pub with big screens to watch the game, a French restaurant as well as a beachfront bar/restaurant Paradise Beach Club and a water sports centre - kayaking, stand up paddleboard and sailing. Don’t forget the large swimming pool and plenty of hammocks strung between palms for R&R.

If you haven’t already surmised, this place is fantastic for families and children – lots of space to run around – but bungalows are spread far enough apart that adults can enjoy quiet privacy. The courteous and helpful staff round this off as an outstanding choice.
If it’s out of your budget (even after you’ve contacted them about any monthly specials), drop into the beach club for a sundowner or get a day pass. Outside guests (up to a daily maximum of 25 people a day) can pay 130,000 dong which gets you a sun lounger, towel and access to the resort’s beautiful section of white sand.

**Room rates**


[Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.](#)

**Mia Resort Mui Ne**

Beach chic

24 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien

T: (064) 3847 440

info@miamuine.com

http://www.miamuine.com/

USD 100+ (Luxury)

Check online rates: [Agoda] [Booking]
If money is no object, then Mia Resort Mui Ne is a tropical living fantasy come to life. In addition to beautiful bungalows, the resort has prime beachfront, a pretty pool, a water sports centre, spa and beachside restaurant.

Mia Mui Ne wins the best tropical garden award in town. Nestled amongst the abundant greenery are the stylish beach-chic rooms and bungalows. Interiors are fresh and light due to the soft white walls complimented by fabrics in faded blue, sage green and lilac, as well as sandy beige furniture. Soaring ceilings draw the eye up to a thatch roof and overhead fan. Expect the usual luxury hotel amenities such as minibar, robes, hair dryer, full-length mirror, kettle, desk, WiFi, air-con and fancy toiletries. The bathrooms have design pizzazz: copper sinks, blue tile backsplash, green towels and a shower of patterned tiles.

At this price, Mia has what you would expect of a resort: pool with loungers, sophisticated beachfront restaurant, umbrellas in the sand. They also have their own kitesurfing and water sports outfitter and lessons are available.

Competition is tough amongst luxury resorts in Mui Ne and we noticed good discounts online for many of them, Mia included. Prices listed are rack rates so if this seems just out of reach, it’s worth checking a few online booking sites.

**Room rates**

- **Standard - Double:** 3,190,000 dong (low season) 3,880,000 dong (high season) - Garden view.
- **Superior - Double:** 4,650,000 dong (low season) 5,350,000 dong (high season) - Garden view.
- **Deluxe - Double:** 5,580,000 dong (low season) 6,270,000 dong (high season) - Garden view.
- **Beachfront bungalow:** 6,910,000 dong (low season) 7,600,000 dong (high season)

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.

**Thuy Thuy Cottages**

*Boutique bungalows with resort facilities*

123 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien

*T:* (062) 384 7357

*Email:* infothuythuycottages@gmail.com
If you dream of having your own comfortable cottage in a palm dotted garden with a big pool, it exists in Mui Ne: look no further than Thuy Thuy Cottages. Situated on the non-ocean side of the road, the 10 cottages are charming, tidy and well maintained. Each one has a private terrace with a patio set, which adds to the difficulty of deciding where to hang out. The garden has huts with cushy sofas and frilly white hammocks strung between palms, plus don’t forget the many sun loungers around the good sized pool. Decisions, decisions.

Inside each freestanding bungalow is an inviting, playful space with terracotta tile floor underfoot, bamboo furniture with cushions, white linens and white walls jazzed up with bright curtains and colourful art. Windows also let in plenty of natural light. Attention has been paid to the little details such as bedside table, lamp and plugs, and you get a fridge, air-con, TV and WiFi. The bathrooms are spacious and come with a separate shower stall with two types of showerheads.

Thuy Thuy has a central location on the strip, across the road from Mui Ne Backpackers Resort and a short walk to some beach area. It boasts better service and more amenities than some of the so-called “resorts” in Mui Ne: a restaurant pavilion, gym, steam room and foosball table – and friendly service to boot. It’s an absolute winner for travellers on a mid-range budget, or families as there’s green space for kids to run around.

**Room rates**

*Bungalow air-con private b’room: US$40 (low season) US$60 (high season)*
Chic, tropical and fresh, Villa Aria brings contemporary elegance to Mui Ne’s beachfront. It ticks all the boxes for a resort-type experience – beach, pool, terrace, restaurant, garden, creature comforts – packed into a narrow slice of property. Though not the biggest or flashiest, it’s all you need really and the boutique size is a stark contrast to some of the mega resorts that Mui Ne has become infamous for.

A leafy tropical garden abundant with flowers and fronds provides the 23 rooms and their terrace/balcony some privacy and shade. Inside the cool white walls and clean, contemporary lines are enlivened with welcome splashes of sea blue, lime green and sandy beige. The decor is unapologetically soft and on the feminine side, though who cares as it’s stacked with amenities: desk/vanity, bedside tables, lamps and plugs, flatscreen TV, minibar, WiFi, air-con and fancy hotel extras such as hair-dryer, slippers, wet clothes drying rack, comfortable patio chairs, kettle and safety box. The bathrooms are spacious, simple and zen, with an enormous glass shower stall.

The good-sized infinity swimming pool stretches out to a great view of the ocean. There are plenty of sun loungers and umbrellas to enjoy both around the pool and on their section of white sand beach. If you can splurge and don’t want a tour series resort with over a hundred rooms, Villa Aria is a newer four-star property that will offer an intimate experience. And with so much competition between luxury hotels in Mui Ne, we noticed some fantastic low season rates on online booking sites. It’s worth doing a quick search for deals.

**Room rates**

**Superior - Double:** 2,640,000 dong (low season) 3,300,000 dong (high season)

**Deluxe- Double:** 3,080,000 dong (low season) 3,740,000 dong (high season) - Garden. Seaview: 3,520,000/4,180,000 dong.

**Suite:** 6,600,000 dong (low season) 7,920,000 dong (high season)
Cocosand Hotel

Clean, comfortable and friendly
119 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien
T: (0127) 364 3446
cocosandcatdua@yahoo.com.vn
USD 10 to 20 (Flashpacker )
Check online rates: [Booking ]

Follow a small alley leading from the main strip and you’ll find a quiet, quaint enclave of clean, comfortable rooms and a friendly English speaking owner. Cocosand Hotel (not to be confused with Coco Beach Resort) offers budget travellers excellent value. Rooms face a central sandy garden that has a few hammocks and picnic tables for guests to enjoy. Inside is spotless – clean tile floors, linens and walls. WiFi, air-con, small TV, wardrobe, minifridge and desk come part of the package. The bathroom is spacious, and the shelf for shower toiletries is a small, handy detail. The rooms only have two windows so they don’t get much sunlight. This is a minor negative aside, this is a fantastic budget pick and a bargain in low season.

Room rates
Standard - Single: US$13 (low season) US$17 (high season)
Standard - Double: US$16 (low season) US$20 (high season)
Triple air-con private b’room: US$18 (low season) US$22 (high season)
Quad air-con private b’room: US$20 (low season) US$24 (high season)
132 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien
T: (062) 384 7243
haiyenguesthouse@yahoo.com
http://www.haiyenguesthouse.com
USD 20 to 50 (Midrange )
Check online rates: [ Agoda ] [ Booking ]
A swimming pool does not make a place a “resort” but name games aside, Hai Yen “Family Resort” is decent value. The modern building is reminiscent of a seaside apartment building, with balconies and floor to ceiling sliding glass doors taking full advantage of their vantage. Hai Yen will satisfy travellers who are suckers for a great ocean view.

Hai Yen is at the eastern end of the strip, with the beach areas here deserted compared to the kite-surfing clutter west down the coast. Once a haven for backpackers, the hotel has gone through some serious renovations and now firmly sits in the midrange category with the entry level rooms within reach of flashpackers.

All of the air-con, hot water rooms come with hair dryer, flat screen TV, kettle with coffee and tea, minifridge, fan, vanity/desk and WiFi. The bathrooms are no nonsense, have a proper enclosed shower and sink with countertop. The ocean view rooms are undeniably special, their commanding view of the sea explains the premium rate. Most of the deluxe rooms on the first floor still have ocean views too. There’s a splash pool with parasols and deckchairs.

Like many of the “beachfront” accommodation in Mui Ne, erosion has eaten up the beach and the steps simply lead down to the water.

Room rates
Standard - Double: US$21 (low season) US$25 (high season)
Deluxe- Double: US$35 (low season) US$55 (high season) - Ocean view: $45/$60.
**Minh Kha Guesthouse**

A steal  
109A Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien  
T: (062) 374 1255  
USD 10 to 20 (Flashpacker)

Tucked behind their restaurant, Minh Kha has fantastic budget rooms that make a good case for spending a few dollars more than a dorm for a private room. The best are in a new three-storey building way at the back, removed from the road traffic and the noise. And the best of the best are the rooms on the top floor – a sliding wooden door makes the front terrace private and while there’s no view of anything particular, it is a relaxing quiet spot away from it all.

Tall folk will appreciate the room’s soaring ceilings. Rooms are well appointed with solid wood furniture including bedside table, wardrobe and desk, and also come with a medium-sized fridge, flatscreen TV, air-con and WiFi. The large bathrooms are great, with the shower at the far end so you don’t get wet feet using the sink or toilet. Countertop, hooks and a ventilation window complete the deal.

The six rooms in the older motel style building are not as flashy but are still decent for the price, clean and tidy. It’s just a little dated and gets less natural light. A friendly family own this hotel and it has a good central location close to Coco Beach Resort.

**Room rates**

*Standard - Double: US$10 (low season) US$15 (high season)*

*Superior - Double: US$13 (low season) US$17 (high season) - New.*

---

**Mui Ne Backpacker Village**

*Melrose Place for backpackers*  
137 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien  
T: (062) 3741 047  
info@muinebackpackervillage.com
Mui Ne Backpacker Village is a flashpacker hostel at a backpacker price, and it lives up to its name as they have created an entire village for all a backpacker needs. It instantly reminded us of Melrose Place (a 1990s TV soap opera reference which, yes, dates us) but it does look more like an LA apartment courtyard complex (complete with the central pool) than a hostel.

The place is a constant hive of activity, with backpackers coming, going, lounging around the pool or crowding the bar though when we visited, it was eerily quiet as almost everyone was glued to their phones.

The air-con four-bed or six-bed dorms are no-nonsense and well thought out. The beds are a concrete and tile frame (not bunks), each bed nook has its own shelf, electric outlet and locker. The shared bathroom for the four-bed dorm is ensuite. They also have private rooms, perhaps worth it if you're a travelling pair. A few dollars more per person and you have a spartan but functional room with air-con, hot water shower and the added frills of a TV and mini patio.

The joint is a well-oiled backpacker machine: bus and train tickets, sand dune tour for 70,000 dong, breakfast for 35,000 dong, day storage room for backpacks and even a drying area for clothes. It’s all very tidy and organised. There’s no direct beach or ocean access, and we’re still scratching our head at the sight of 30 people Church-silent intensely playing with their phones, but the hostel is good value and an overall more welcoming atmosphere than Mui Ne Hills Budget Hotel.

**Room rates**
- Dorm air-con: US$7 (low season) US$8 (high season) - Six-bed dorm. Four-bed dorm: $8/$9.
- Dbl air-con private b'room: US$20 (low season) US$25 (high season)
- Triple air-con private b'room: US$27 (low season) US$35 (high season)

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.
Sunrise Resort

Flashpacker hideaway
72 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Mui Ne Beach
T: (062) 384 7015 F: (062) 374 1409
pq@sunriseresort.com.vn
USD 20 to 50 (Midrange)
Check online rates: [Agoda][Booking]

Next door to Hong Di Bungalows, Sunrise Resort is an affordable haven that is a big step up from its neighbour. If flashpackers splurge a little, they get a clean well-appointed room with ocean access and a pool long enough to do laps.

Rooms are simply laid out and have everything an easy going traveller needs: bedside table and plug, coffee table, vanity/desk, clothes drying rack, wall mounted flatscreen TV, wardrobe with a full length mirror and a clean hot water bathroom with a high window that provides light and ventilation. Beds appear comfortable and white linens look crisp and clean. WiFi and air-con complete the package. Rooms have big glass doors – get a pool view and sunlight, draw the thick curtains for privacy.

The hotel has done a good job for a narrow plot of land. Palms provide pool side loungers shade, while you’ll need plenty of sunblock for the loungers at the edge of the property overlooking the ocean (there’s no umbrellas). Unfortunately erosion has completely taken away the beach – steps lead down directly into the sea. For a patch of sand guests will have to walk a few hundred metres.

You won’t get bells and whistles and five-star service at this price. If you want a place that ticks the boxes -- ocean, pool, check, check -- then this is great value. Want to shop around? Check out Rang Garden Beach Side, Hai Yen Family Resort and Hong Di Bungalows.

Room rates
Dbld air-con private b’room: US$30 (low season) US$35 (high season)
Bungalow air-con private b’room: US$35 (low season) US$40 (high season)

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.
**Delight Hotel**

Local hotel, decent rooms  
109B Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien  
T: (090) 888 8980  
info@delightotelmuine.com  
http://delightotelmuine.com/  
Under USD 10 (Backpacker)  
Check online rates: [Agoda]  

Delight Hotel, also known as An Can Hotel, is your typical guesthouse-esque local hotel offering solidly built, generic rooms at a reasonable price. It’s nothing to write a postcard home about but it’s a safe bet for a private room with a few extras.

Those extras include a solid wood desk, mirror, flatscreen TV, bedside table, WiFi, air-con, minifridge and a large wetroom bathroom with hot water shower. Linens look clean and you get a top sheet, a local hotel rarity. The room we saw had a big bay window that let in lots of natural light but oddly, the window was your access to the private balcony – that’s right, there was no door to it. The window was low enough to climb out.

English is limited and they couldn’t tell us what the upcoming high season rates would be. These head scratchers aside, this hotel would suit most flashpackers just fine. Delight Hotel is centrally located, closer to the Russian tourist strip.

**Room rates**  
Standard - Single: US$12  
Standard - Double: US$15  

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.
**Hong Di Bungalows**

*Budget beachfront*

70 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien

T: (062) 384 7014

hdhongdi@yahoo.com

USD 10 to 20 (Flashpacker)

The price is right for budget travellers and while Hong Di’s rooms are not the newest or flashiest and the service isn’t the friendliest, it offers beachfront accommodation.

Hong Di has a bunch of rooms in a longhouse at the back. The mint ice cream coloured walls make the rooms feel slightly dated yet it does come with flash amenities such as flatscreen TV, aircon, mini fridge and WiFi, as well as shiny solid wood furniture and clean linens. The wetroom bathroom has an electric heated shower. Steps lead down to the beach which fortunately has not eroded away like so many other joints in Mui Ne. The sand is probably a more pleasant place to hang out than on the cushionless wooden sun lounger in front of every room.

Hong Di has stiff competition these days, with flashier bungalows at a midrange price. Still, for beachfront their rate can’t be beat. Mui Ne Backpackers Resort’s private rooms are cheaper but there’s no beach.

**Room rates**

*Bungalow air-con private b’room: US$15 (low season) US$25 (high season)*

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.

**Mui Ne Backpackers Resort**

*Oceanfront hostel*

88 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien

T: (062) 3847 047

info@muinebackpackers.com
http://www.muinebackpackers.com/
Under USD 10 (Backpacker)
Check online rates: [Agoda] [Booking]

It's certainly not a resort, however it does offer budget travellers a small resort-type perk as guests have direct access to the ocean. Mui Ne Backpacker Resort has dorms, private rooms and a small flagstone terrace with a few wooden loungers, umbrellas and stone steps leading straight down to the ocean; there's no beachfront. If you want a patch of sand, you'll have to walk along the road (or swim) a few hundred metres.

Dorms have six tightly packed wooden bunks. They have tile walls and flooring, air-con, WiFi, a small ensuite bathroom and wood lockers. The dorms face a courtyard with a tiny central pool. Private rooms are small but functional and have extras such as bedside table, solid wood furniture, window, flatscreen TV, mini fridge, security box and bathroom with a separate shower stall. It's good value if you want to be steps to the sea.

The overall layout of the property is a bit odd and tightly packed into a small space. The dorms are in the front close to the entrance and when we visited, there was no security – anyone could walk in and out of the property. Ocean view private rooms are in a separate building closer to the water. In contrast to Mui Ne Backpacker Village, here there's no communal area to hangout or a meet-your-fellow-traveller vibe. They do offer the usual tours, a breakfast for 35,000 dong and ocean front rooms at a budget price.

**Room rates**

*Dorm air-con: US$7 (low season) US$8 (high season)*

*Dbl air-con private b'room: US$15 (low season) US$18 (high season)*

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.
ranggarden@gmail.com
http://www.rang-muine.com
USD 20 to 50 (Midrange)
Check online rates: [Agoda] [Booking]
We endeavoured to find a few decent oceanfront properties with a swimming pool for under US$50 and this is one of them. Rang Garden is located on the quieter end of Mui Ne’s tourist drag and this family-run accommodation has comfy rooms, some of them with a balcony overlooking the sea or pool.

The exterior cob (mud) walls are rather ugly but if you can look past that, the rooms inside are respectable with blank white walls and modern generic Vietnamese hotel furnishings. Rooms are equipped with a flatscreen TV, minifridge, end of bed bench, vanity, air-con, WiFi and functional bathroom – the one we saw had a bathtub/shower combo and sink with countertop. Every one has a terrace with a patio set and the view from the beachfront and oceanfront rooms are the best for obvious reasons.

The hotel is on the eastern end of Ham Tien, away from the main drag. Therefore you’ll need to cycle or motorbike if you want more bar and restaurant options. This isn’t the best value property – Sunrise Resort has the same selling points, a little more charm and is cheaper. You are paying for the easy ocean access – it will satisfy those who want both beach or pool.

**Room rates**
*Standard - Double: 964,000 dong - Street view. Pool view: 1,000,000 dong.*
*Superior - Double: 1,300,000 dong - Pool room. With partial ocean view: 1,400,000 dong.*
*Deluxe- Double: 1,615,680 dong - Oceanfront.*

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.

**Xin Chao**
*Small hotel with character*
129 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien
*T: (062) 374 3086*
info@xinchaohotel.com
Run by amiable English-Vietnamese couple Paul and Tien, Xin Chao is for those looking to escape the big, bland resorts. It’s a modestly sized hotel built around a central courtyard with a rectangular pool.

Whether you choose the rooms around the pool or upstairs in the main building, they are clean, comfortable and have some tasteful character with funky abstract art, an accent wall painted a cheery colour and dark wood furnishings including a dresser and bedside table. These aren’t backpacker prices but there are added amenities such as minifridge, air-con, flat screen TV, modern bathrooms, safety box and WiFi.

The pool has a few sun loungers and pool view rooms have their own porch seating. The room rate includes breakfast based on double occupancy. While not on the ocean side of the road, it does have a central location in the middle of the strip and the building is set back enough from the road that traffic noise is not an issue.

**Room rates**

*Standard - Double:* US$28 (low season) US$35 (high season) - Upstairs

*Superior - Double:* US$30 (low season) US$40 (high season) - Pool view downstairs.

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.

**Song Huong Hotel**

*Cheap private rooms*

241 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien

*T:* (062) 384 7450

hotelsonghuong@yahoo.com

http://songhuonghotel.com/

USD 10 to 20 (Flashpacker )

Check online rates: [ Booking ]
It's a little out of the way, across from The Sinh Tourist bus office near the eastern end of Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, but Song Huong Hotel would appeal to budget travellers looking for a cheap private room in a modern building. It’s a typical Vietnamese guesthouse affair: white walls, tile floor and hard bed. Guests also get air-con, WiFi, flatscreen TV, bedside table, minifridge and kettle. The corner rooms have many windows so everything feels bright. The bathroom is your basic, no nonsense wet-room. A communal front balcony with coat rack for drying clothes completes this deal.

There are certainly more charming and better located budget places in Mui Ne – Minh Kha and Delight Hotel are in the same price range and are in the main tourist drag. For a few dollars more, you can get a room at oceanfront Hong Di Bungalows. Song Huong Hotel would be suitable for someone who wants to be away from the bustle, or a road weary backpacker stepping off a long The Sinh Tourist bus ride.

**Room rates**

*Standard - Single: US$10 (low season) US$15 (high season)*
*Standard - Double: US$12 (low season) US$18 (high season)*

[Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.](https://www.mymap.com/)

**Suoi Nuoc Beach**

Located 16 kilometres up the coast from Ham Tien village (Mui Ne’s tourist strip), Suoi Nuoc Beach is a breezy, virtually empty stretch of white sand. Interspersed between many abandoned, crumbling resorts are two interesting beachfront properties: a booming backpacker Shangri-La and high-end villas.

**Full Moon Village**

Private villa getaway
*Nguyen Co Tach, Suoi Nuoc Beach, 1.8 km up coast from Longson Mui Ne Campground*
*T: (062) 3836 099 F: (062) 3836 227*
*reservation@fullmoon-village.com*
USD 50 to 100 (Toprange)

Check online rates: [Agoda][Booking]

Have a big budget and want to get away from Mui Ne’s tourist bustle? Full Moon Village at Suoi Nuoc Beach is a private getaway. Though the hotel is not on the beach, the property is directly across the quiet road from it and guests have full access to their beach club.

Full Moon Village has two-bedroom villas done in a traditional style or three-bedroom modern villas. There’s pricing for a one-bedroom which simply means they lock the second bedroom. The traditional style villa is exceptionally pretty and private, with clean and chic design details. The main room is one big, breezy open-concept space. Sleek oriental lacquered pillars support a lofty ceiling. The terracotta tile floors, intricate wood detailing, dark wood furniture and red cushions add a sumptuous richness while the big windows all round keep it all airy and light. There’s a living and dining area, as well as a kitchen including full-sized fridge and gas stovetop – if you plan on self-catering, come with all you need as there is no grocery store for miles.

Bedrooms are equipped with mosquito net, bedside tables, desk, air-con, fan, WiFi and ensuite bathroom that has a bathtub-shower combo. To top it off, there’s a lux perk of an outdoor Jacuzzi. If you tire of the tub or the beach, head to the elegant pool which has a separate shallow kids area. The self-catering, multiple bedrooms and the kid’s pool make this a family friendly accommodation.

Full Moon Village is an especially good idea if you’re serious about your watersports. A variety are on offer through their beach club Jibe’s Suoi Nuoc. Windsurfing, kitesurfing, SUP, kayak and surfboards – lessons and gear rental are available. The beach here is breezier than Mui Ne and during windy season from around September to February, it isn’t good for swimming, ideal for boogieing on a boogie board.

Full Moon Village and Jibe’s Suoi Nuoc Beach Club are located on Suoi Nuoc Beach, 16 kilometres northeast up the coast from Ham Tien village (Mui Ne’s tourist strip) just past Hon Rom. By motorbike from Mui Ne, travel east on the highway DT716. Eventually there is a fork, with hotel signs pointing you to exit right to follow the narrow coastal road. Or take the white and blue local bus #1 (“Tien Loi – Mui Ne – Suoi Nuoc” in the window) which departs every 20-30 minutes, costs 16,000 dong. The final stop is a few metres from the property. Buses start early, the last bus around 19:00. Any buses coming from the north headed to Mui Ne will pass and the property also has a second entrance on the highway. Of course, taxi from Mui Ne or private transfer from Ho Chi Minh is possible.

**Room rates**

*Private pool villa: US$70 (low season) US$90 (high season) - No pool.*

*House: US$185 (low season) US$260 (high season) - 2-bedroom villa. 3-bedroom villa: $260/$360*
**LONGSON MUI NE CAMPGROUNDS**

*Beachfront backpacker haven*

706 St, Hon Rom, Long Son, Suoi Nuoc Beach

T: (090) 268 6489

booking@longsonmuine.com

http://www.longsonmuine.com/

Under USD 10 (Backpacker)

Cheap. Beachfront. Backpacker. Music to your ears? Set on a virtually empty stretch of white sand beach, **Longson Mui Ne Campgrounds** is the Club Med for backpackers travelling on a shoestring. Whether you prefer a bricks and mortar air-con dorm, an open air dorm or a tent on the sand, it will cost you chump change.

Imagine driving along a quiet, narrow coastal road full of the skeletal remains of abandoned resorts and stumbling upon a bustling village of travellers – and we do mean a village. There are people coming and going, dining, playing pool, sleeping off their hangover, swimming or just hanging out, chewing the fat with others. **Longson Mui Ne is a social hive**, with 90 plus people a night, 120 in high season – that is a lot of humans. They are often drawn here by word of mouth alone. In its current iteration, the campground/beach club has only been around for a year and isn’t found in any of the traditional guidebooks.
Suoi Nuoc Beach is definitely not Mui Ne.

First, the accommodation. The open-air dorms are set in a large pavilion with bamboo blinds that offer some privacy while still allowing a breeze in. The beds are built out of stacked pallets topped with a mattress and each comes with its own mosquito net. There are also dorms with double beds for couples who will hopefully not engage in coupling while others are trying to sleep. Air-con dorms are basic but cold, with bunks (eight-beds) and the shared bathroom ensuite.

Tents are lined up on the sandy lawn and there are a few available right on the beach. They come with a mattress, pillow and blanket. The shared bathrooms are large, have unheated showers and are a decent level of cleanliness.

There's a surprising mix to the guests. When we visited there was a Vietnamese school group doing a team building camp. The property's Vietnamese restaurant caters to tour groups and there were a few buses doing a lunch stop. But undeniably, the main market is the foreign budget backpacker crowd and the population swells on Friday, when dorms drop to US$4, tents to US$1 per person. Expect a party.

Big wooden lockers are large enough for a backpack (locks are available), plus there are charging stations for electronics, spotty WiFi, a pool table, foosball, several bars and hangout spots everywhere – loungers, bean bags, tables, sofas. Every day there are activities and food and drink specials: movie and trivia nights, beach bonfires, poker tournaments and menu items for just a dollar. We're sceptical of quality, but hey, for some it's just fuel. The only alternative dining is to head to Jibe's Beach Club down the road (where you can also arrange for good kitesurfing or windsurfing lessons) or travel four kilometres to Hon Rom, a coastal area built up for Vietnamese tourists.
The downside? This place is what it is: unheated shower, party, people, no local eats or local anything for miles — if any of this review makes your toes curl, then this is not for you. You will not get five-star or even one-star service for one dollar accommodation. The only reasonable disappointment is that swimming in the ocean is seasonal. Suoi Nuoc is even breezier than Mui Ne and during the windy months from around **September to February** it’s too wavy to swim. Also, we imagine that sleeping in a tent during rainy season downpour isn’t so fun.

If you arrived in Mui Ne and imagined budget beachfront accommodation, you would have been disappointed. Most of Mui Ne’s beach is either taken by pricey resorts or erosion, with limited areas the public can use. So Longson Mui Ne will fulfil the dreams of some backpackers.

**Longson Mui Ne Campgrounds, Restaurant and Beach Club** is located on Suoi Nuoc Beach, 16 kilometres northeast up the coast from Ham Tien village (Mui Ne’s tourist strip), just past Hon Rom. By motorbike from Mui Ne, travel east on the highway DT716. Eventually there is a fork, with hotel signs pointing you to exit right to follow the narrow coastal road. Or take the white and blue local bus #1 (“Tien Loi – Mui Ne – Suoi Nuoc” in the window) which departs every 20-30 minutes, costs 16,000 dong and goes right past the property. Buses start early until the last bus around 19:00. Any buses coming from the north headed to Mui Ne will pass – the driver can drop you off and it’s a short walk from the highway. Of course,
taxi from Mui Ne is always an option.

**Room rates**

*Tent*: US$4 - *Friday*: $1.


*Dorm air-con*: US$5 - *Friday*: $4.

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

**Back to the table of contents.**

**Phu Hai**

Sandwiched between Phan Thiet city and Ham Tien (the tourist strip referred to as Mui Ne) is Phu Hai, home to a string of upscale resorts offering a more private experience than Mui Ne while still being reasonably close to the tourist strip.

**VICTORIA PHAN THIET**

*Classic charm*

*KM 9, Phu Hai Ward, Phan Thiet City*

*T*: (062) 381 3000  *F*: (062) 381 3007

resa.phanthiet@victoriahotels.asia

https://www.victoriahotels.asia

USD 50 to 100   *(Toprange )*

Check online rates:  [Agoda ]

Sandwiched between Mui Ne’s tourist strip and Phan Thiet City is Victoria Resort, offering something neither destinations can deliver: private beach. Guests can also look forward to down to earth luxury with the simple, charming bungalows and plenty of entertainment for kids, including a large swimming pool, kids club and playground.

Adults get entertainment as well in the form of a spa (with seaside massage pavilions), volleyball net, kayaks, bar, al fresco restaurant terrace, with barbecues and buffets offered at least once a week. The bungalows are not flashy and somewhat dated. They are quaint and comfortable with simple decor. Bungalows come with WiFi, air-con, bedside tables and lamps, private terrace with lounger, minibar, flatscreen TV, safety box and kettle. Bathrooms feature a bathtub, stone countertops and an outdoor shower.
It is a unique getaway that stands out from the crowd. It's bridges two worlds -- it's close to Mui Ne’s tourist strip and the local scene in Phan Thiet. Or you don’t have to leave the resort at all. Like all Mui Ne accommodation, rates are great in low season.

**Room rates**

_Bungalow air-con private b'room: US$89 (low season) US$245 (high season) - Beachfront: $116/$265_  
_Family room: US$138 (low season) US$309 (high season)_  
_Deluxe- Double: US$139 (low season) US$335 (high season)_

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

[Back to the table of contents](#).
Mui Ne

Sadly but not surprisingly, Mui Ne suffers all the usual trappings of a tourist beach town. Food is pricey and overwhelmingly mediocre, with few true local joints. This fact makes a strong case for popping into nearby Phan Thiet city for delicious, inexpensive seafood and cheap, cheerful local food. But if you want to stick around in Mui Ne, here are our suggestions.

**Seafood** is coveted by tourists and it seems you can’t turn anywhere without seeing signs for it. **Cay Bang** is the longest running seafood restaurant in Mui Ne. It’s located on the western end of Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, just before it curves to the public beach. A big terrace over the rocks and ocean, coupled with a fresh sea breeze in the evening makes for a great setting. Service is a well-oiled machine and this place is popular with both locals and tourists. The menu is bilingual and seafood is priced by weight: shrimp, lobster, clams, scallops, squid, fish and crab, running anywhere from 500,000 dong to a precious million dong per kilo. The specialty is seafood, so skip the stir-fried noodles or meat dishes. They also have a location in Phan Thiet.

![While the beach shines at Mui Ne, the food isn’t a real highlight.](image)

Several long-time Mui Ne residents recommended **Bi Bo** to us. Though we ran out of time to try it, we were told their food is fresh and comes served in big portions ideal for sharing family style.

You’ll no doubt see signs for **bo ke**, informal pop-up barbecue seafood restaurants that appear every evening. There’s a concentrated strip of them in the middle of Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, just west of **Cat Sen Auberge**. Most of these joints don’t have running water or sanitary methods. As much as we are big street food eaters, we personally wouldn’t eat at the **bo ke** and locals also told us to avoid them. Eat at your own risk.
Indulging in a meal or just a drink at a **boutique resort** can buy you a beautiful beach setting and view. There are two worthy splurgey hotel restaurants. **Victoria Phan Thiet** is set to the west on a private beach away from the tourist drag. It’s a respite from the crowds and the restaurant has a peaceful view over the water, as well as a bar/lounge with a range of excellent cocktails. The Vietnamese dishes are prepared by the chef who has been there for 17 years. There’s a small barbecue most nights (500,000 – 650,000 dong per person), as well as a big all-you-can-eat buffet once a week for 500,000 dong. Otherwise, a la carte will set diners back a reasonable 300,000 dong for two courses and a drink. Call ahead to make a reservation or to find out the day of the buffet.

**Mia Resort**’s **Sandals** restaurant is suitable if you’re in the mood for a posh sundowner. It’s a beach-chic spot with very comfortable chairs next to the sand but expect to pay 140,000 dong for a cocktail. Local beer starts at 45,000 dong.

Dig your feet into the sand at **Pogo Beach Bar and Grill**, another good chilled out beachfront haunt. It’s a good place to use for beach access, with sun beds, beanbags, friendly staff and a rinse-off shower. Things get livelier after sun down – yes, there are bucket drinks, as well as tunes. Some nights there’s live music. Though we didn’t try the food, the menu did catch our eye for being different – Mui Ne seems to suffer an epidemic of standard boring menus. Here you can get a beetroot couscous salad, all day breakfast, lemongrass clams, coconut prawn and passionfruit chicken. Mouth watering yet? Dishes start at 70,000
Jibe's Beach Club is a popular hang out for kite and windsurfers who get to refuel on Western fare – burgers, sandwiches, pastas – starting at 100,000 dong. There's seating under the shade or al fresco, with tables, chairs and sofas. Its neighbour Lam Tong Restaurant also caught our eye. It's right on the water and it would be another decent spot for a oceanside cold one.

Got for the putts, stay for the food. Tropical Mini Golf, down a small lane across from Coco Beach Resort, has 18 holes, a fun distraction if lying in the sun gets too boring. The restaurant terrace is surrounded by tropical greenery that's great for hanging out and the daily special menu of French fare is delicious. The regular menu includes both Vietnamese and Western, including steak frites and pasta. Mains start at 200,000 dong. A round of mini golf is 100,000 dong per person, or 120,000 dong including a beer.

The Mexican food at El Latino is fresh and simply prepared, and while it lacks that authentic zing, it does the trick if you're craving it. Prices are a bit dear. Scarf down tacos, burritos, quesadillas for 120,000 dong, a salad costs 150,000 dong. Nachos and salsa grace the menu and you can munch away to latin tunes. There are two locations, El Latino and La Casa del Latino, the latter has a “husband waiting area” (in other words, bean bags and books). Herbivores can get tasty flavourful meat-free eats at El Cafe. International vegetarian food include burritos, falafel, hummus, pasta and Indian dishes such as samosas. It’s fresh and the price is right, only 40,000 – 60,000 dong per item. Find it at the eastern end of Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, in the back left corner of Dong Vui Square outdoor food court, ironically next to a meat barbecue joint.

El Cafe: 246/2B Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien, at Dong Vui Square; T: (168) 811 4838; www.facebook.com/elcafevietnam/; open daily 14:00-23:00.

Travelfish guide to Mui Ne
35/47
Copyright https://www.travelfish.org/
Map of eating options for Mui Ne

Legend
(1) Bi Bo (2) Cay Bang (3) El Cafe (4) Jibe’s Beach Club (5) La Casa del Latino (6) Mia Resort (7) Tropical Mini Golf (8) Pogo Bar (9) Victoria Phan Thiet

Back to the table of contents.
Sights and activities

**Mui Ne's beaches**

*Plenty to choose from*

Twenty years have transformed Mui Ne from a small fishing village to a hot-on-the-radar sun holiday destination. Five hours from Ho Chi Minh City and a regular stop on Open Bus tours, Mui Ne has 10-kilometres of white sand beach – more if you venture north along the coast. Here’s a roundup of where travellers can get their fill of beach time.

...but before we can get into the best spots, there is a long list of caveats. Mui Ne offers a different beach experience than other popular destinations in Vietnam such as Nha Trang, Da Nang and Phu Quoc. In many aspects, Mui Ne performs poorly in comparison. Accommodation and restaurants now line the 10-kilometres of coast but unless you have the means to stay at a beachfront resort, you’ll have to manoeuvre to find a spot to enjoy.

Most resorts (regardless of whether they have a legal permit or not) consider their beachfront to be private. Park your bum and you could be shooed away by security. We suggest you still give it a try – they may not care or notice if you’re discreet. It’s the only way you’re guaranteed to find clean white sand.

You can search for a non-resort patch but expect rubbish – or for it to be gone. Mui Ne is suffering from coastal erosion and in parts, high tide erases terra firma completely. In recent years some hotels have actually lost their beach. If you don’t care about sand, only swimming, then anywhere is possible but steer clear of the strip of bo ke, informal pop-up seafood restaurants that appear every evening. They don’t have proper facilities and all the cooking waste and grey water gets chucked into the sea. It just adds to the challenge for budget travellers to find a decent spot. In Nha Trang, Da Nang and Phu Quoc, tourist beaches are cleaned regularly, easily accessible and have free facilities such as rinse off showers and toilets.
Once you do find your ideal go-to sweet spot, it’s great. Mui Ne has some redeeming qualities such as chilled out beach bars ’neath picturesque coconut trees. They are informal affairs and away from the main drag. Enjoy some food and drink and relax in a sun bed, use their toilet and rinse-off shower. Check out Pogo Beach Bar and Grill at 138 Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street — it is open early until late.

Coco Beach Resort offers a day pass to outside guests, up to a limit of around 25 people per day. For 130,000 dong you get a lounger, towel and access to their generously sized section of beach. Drinks are reasonably priced (32,000 dong for a draft beer), and massage and equipment rentals are available. 58 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien; T: (062) 3847 111.

The small public beach area is located at the western end of the tourist strip Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, across the road from monstrous Sealink Ocean Vista Resort. The water is shallow, calm and clear and the piles of colourful basket boats provide ample photo ops. But the beach is packed on the weekend, drawing huge crowds from as far as Ho Chi Minh City. Kids and adults scream with delight as they frolic in the water, jet skis whizzing around. There are kayaks, SUP and such for rent but no chairs or umbrellas. With no bins or no toilets, the bushes at the back of the beach become both. It’s a lively scene. Relaxing? Probably not. Parking the motorbike should be 5,000 dong but unsuspecting foreigners are charged more.

We wish we could say the beach in nearby Phan Thiet is better. There’s a lot more room but it has heaps and heaps of rubbish (or at the least, it did when we visited).
Not a bad vibe at Jibe’s.

The crowded public beach makes a good case for getting out of town and exploring north of Mui Ne. Head east on the desert highway and just past the red sand dunes is a long section of wild beach, then the road sweeps north to Hon Rom and Suoi Nuoc Beach. Hon Rom is popular with Vietnamese tourists, and there are restaurants and hotels catering for that market; Suoi Nuoc, on the other hand, will be more appealing to Western travellers. It’s miles of empty and accessible wind swept, white sand beach.

Interspersed between the eerie ruins of abandoned resorts is Longson Mui Ne Campground and Jibe’s Beach Club’s second location. The campground is a real backpacker haven and daytrippers are free to come hangout, use the beach, facilities, bars and restaurant without pretension. Jibe’s Beach Club is a more elegant affair, with indoor and outdoor dining/lounge, better food, beach chairs and equipment rental.

We highly recommend a daytrip north of Mui Ne; just keep in mind that it is breezier here than Mui Ne and during windy season from around September to February, it isn’t good for swimming – but ideal for wind sports.

It’s an easy drive up. By motorbike from Mui Ne, travel east on the highway DT716. Eventually there is a fork, with hotel signs pointing you to exit right to follow the narrow coastal road. Or take the white and blue local bus #1 (“Tien Loi – Mui Ne – Suoi Nuoc” in the window) which departs every 20-30 minutes, costs 16,000 dong. The final stop is a few metres from Jibe’s. Buses start early, the last bus around 19:00.

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.
Kite surfing

Windy fun
Mui Ne is a kitesurfer’s paradise, and competes with Boracay in The Philippines as the kite surfing capital of Southeast Asia, drawing wind- and kite-surfers from around the world due to its consistent cross onshore winds.

During peak season, you’ll see a flurry of activity along Mui Ne’s entire shoreline; on average it has 227 days a year with winds of more than 12 knots. Not surprising, there’s a stack of schools that offer lessons to beginners. The best time to head to Mui Ne for wind- and kite-surfing is October to the end of March. Peak time is December and January. Winds are not as strong outside these months and while schools endeavour to find an area of coast and time of day with ideal conditions, the monsoon does make for inconsistent wind and waves.

If you think kitesurfing requires a lot of strength, think again. The most important skills are coordination and the proper technique (as well as some level of being comfortable on the water). One school we spoke to has had students as young as six and as old as 76. That said, it still is an extreme sport and the key is to get professional instruction at a reputable school. The IKO is to kitesurfing what PADI is to scuba diving. Of 20 or so shops in Mui Ne, we were told only five had officially certified teachers.

Beginners courses take eight to 12 hours. It can be physically and mentally fatiguing – there is a lot to learn, practise and absorb, but once you cover the fundamentals the learning curve skyrockets at the end. A good school would recommend you do it over two to three days.
The first two hours are spent on the beach: introduction to equipment, oceanology and lots of theory. Then you’re put on a two-line trainer kite to do exercises, practice kite control and self-rescue.

The next step is getting on the water with the instructor, practicing two hands, one hand and body dragging. The final achievement is being on the water independently, manoeuvring with one hand. If a school makes promises of you sailing alone through the air within a day, it’s a big red flag. Ensure they communicate a clear course plan for you and price.

Learning is not cheap. Expect to pay US$50-60 per hour of instruction. Enthusiasts say that once you are able to get up and travel a bit, you will be hooked for life.

Mui Ne Kitesurf School (MKS) is a professional, reputable school. We spoke to a student who had overwhelmingly positive feedback about the instruction. All teachers are IKO certified, with instruction available in English, German, French, Spanish, Russian or Vietnamese. A full beginner course will cost around US$400-500. Advanced and kids lessons are available as well. They rent surfboards and SUP, with lessons should you need them. Find the school on the beach at 42 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien; T: 128 601 3101; muinekitesurfschool@gmail.com; www.muinekitesurfschool.com; open daily 09:00-17:00.

Another popular school is Jibe’s Beach Club. Kitesurfing lessons are US$60 an hour. They also offer windsurfing, which, for beginners, can usually be done all year as only a little wind is needed. It is US$55/hour and a two-hour lesson should get you on the water independently, though instructors are usually happy to give you some extra teaching and practice time should you need it. Jibe’s Beach Club (which has a gear shop and rentals) is located at 90 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St, Ham Tien, with a second location at Suoi Nuoc Beach 16 kilometres up the coast. T: (062) 3847 405; info@jibesbeachclub.com; www.jibesbeachclub.com.

Back to the table of contents.

Po Shanu Cham Towers

A small diversion
While not as impressive as the My Son temple complex in Da Nang or Po Nagar in Nha Trang, the Po Shanu Cham Towers (Thap Po Shanu) provide a quick opportunity to see some remnants of the Champa Empire. The temple dates back to the ninth century.

It is believed that the Cham people descended from the Sa Huynh, who inhabited the same area from 1000 BC to the second century AD, when Cham culture began to develop. The empire’s golden age between the 6th and 15th centuries saw the kingdom span Vietnam, eastern Cambodia and Laos, and their highly desired precious metals, gemstones, spices and wood were traded across Asia and as far as India, the Middle East and North Africa. The empire eventually declined and was conquered in the struggle with the Khmer Empire and the Dai Viet kingdom. There are still ethnic Cham living in Vietnam today.

Perched on a hill between Mui Ne and Phan Thiet, Po Shanu was built in the Hoa Lai style in the ninth century. The ruins today consist of two tall towers and a smaller third building, built to worship Hindu God Shiva. It can take you as little as 10 minutes to see the site. There is little information available here, but a brochure we found confusingly explains that according to Cham legend, Po Sah Inu Princess was the daughter of Parachanh King (La Khai in Vietnamese history). When she died, the Cham worshiped her here. Archaeologists uncovered the site between 1990-1995, with repairs following until 1998. Ethnic Cham continue to make pilgrimage and perform ceremonies, most notably the annual Kate Festival (Mbang Kate), landing on the first three days of the seventh month in the Cham calendar.

Hiking a bit further up the hill takes you to a memorial to a group of revolutionaries who stormed the former French hill station in 1947.

Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.

Back to the table of contents.

**Sand Dunes**

*A touch of desert in Vietnam*

Mui Ne’s sand dunes – one red, the other white – are a fascinating regional phenomenon created by the high winds rushing to and from the ocean. Since Mui Ne is thin on tourist
sights, the dunes have become the top attraction, their natural beauty somewhat diminished by the crowds scampering all over it.

The dunes can be visited either under your own steam or a tour – the Jeep tours being especially popular and actually cheaper than renting your own motorbike. The red dunes are closest to town, 11 kilometres from the tourist centre. Simply head east on desert highway TL706B, virtually empty until you hit the predictable row of tourist shops – you can’t miss it.

Yes, there is plenty of sand.

The most popular time to see it is at sunset, when the amber sand radiates an intense fiery red; the effect is dramatic. However, you won’t be alone. This is the last stop on most tours and arriving vehicles are swarmed by women and children renting sheets of plastic to use as sleds; it’s 10,000 dong for a few rides down.

The second most popular time is at sunrise, and early birds are rewarded with cooler temperatures. You may have the dunes to yourself in the middle of the day, but it would be an absolute inferno.

Dramatic.

The same all applies to the white sand dunes, a further 23 kilometres up the coast from the red dunes. The white dunes are taller and vaster, with much of them marred by tire tracks and the sound of ATVs racing all over. Alas, Vietnam loves nature for its profitable beauty so if you want to rent one, it is 400,000 dong for 20 minutes. It certainly does save you from a
tedious slog up and down.

To get to the white dunes, from the red dunes continue along Highway DT716 for 20 kilometres, at the junction turn right. For the tourist parking, look for the second sign/entrance on your left (the first leads to the lake). You’ll be charged for parking/entrance.

If you want to avoid the tourist parking, there’s no reason why you can’t continue along the highway and find a spot– it’s sand and dunes for kilometres more. A local would tell you it’s not a good idea because there is no parking protection or shade but it should be fine.

**Tours** (which is actually just transport to the different sights) are an economical way to see both. They usually take half a day, departing early morning for sunrise or early afternoon so that it ends at sunset. Some pad it with a stop for a photo at a lookout to Mui Ne fishing village or the Fairy Stream. We saw hostels advertise “Jeep” tours for as little as 70,000 dong. Just double check if there are any extra fees. We did the trip with The Sinh Tourist for US$7. The bus was new, clean and air-conditioned, and it included drinking water. Their office is at 144 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St. T: (062) 384 7542; muine@thesinhtourist.vn; [www.thesinhtourist.vn](http://www.thesinhtourist.vn); open daily 07:00-22:00.

[Click here or on the map above to see the location in Apple or Google maps.](https://www.google.com/maps)

**Back to the table of contents.**
Transport

Air

There is no airport in Mui Ne or Phan Thiet. The closest airport is Lien Khuong Airport, which services Da Lat (130 kilometres away). Alternatively, Cam Ranh International Airport is 191 kilometres away; Tan Son Nhat International (aka Ho Chi Minh City’s airport) is 200 kilometres away.

It’s possible to charter a seaplane. In town we found a flyer for Hai Au Aviation. T: (096) 2960 689; rsvn@haiauaviation.com; www.seaplanes.vn.

Train

Mui Ne doesn’t have a train station — the closest is in nearby Phan Thiet, in the northwest corner of the city. There is only one train a day, SPT1 running between Ho Chi Minh City and Phan Thiet. From HCMC, it departs at 06:40, scheduled to arrive at 11:22. From Phan Thiet to HCMC, the train departs at 13:10, arrives at 18:27. Tickets for soft seat air-con are 190,000 dong; hard-berth air-con are 220,000 dong; soft berth air-con are 255,000 dong.

The red local bus goes from Phan Thiet train station to Ham Tien (the tourist strip) and Mui Ne. It should cost around 20,000 dong. Otherwise, meter taxis and xe om are available.

Bus

Mui Ne is well serviced by open-tour bus companies, including The Sinh Tourist.

The Sinh Tourist office is at 144 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St. T: (062) 384 7542; F: (062) 384 7656; muine@thesinhtourist.vn; www.thesinhtourist.vn; open daily 07:00-22:00.


Nha Trang: Sleeping bus departs at 01:00, 13:00. Costs 89,000 dong.

Da Lat: Sitting bus departs at 07:30, 13:00. Costs 79,000 dong.

Tam Hanh open bus office is at 135 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St. T: (062) 384 7560; www.tamhanhtravel.com/

HCMC: Departs at 00:00, 01:00, 06:30, 08:00, 11:00, 13:30, 16:00. Costs 120,000 dong.

Nha Trang: Departs at 1:00, 13:00. Costs 120,000 dong and takes 4 hrs.

Da Lat: Departs at 07:00, 12:30. Costs 100,000 dong and takes 4 hrs.

Hoi An (via Nha Trang): Departs at 13:00. Costs 320,000 dong and takes 17 hrs.

Phuong Trang (Futa Bus) is one of the more reliable national bus companies. The ticket includes pick-up/drop-off to your hotel in Mui Ne. Office is located at 20 Huynh Thuc Khang St. T: (062) 3743 113; futabus.vn/

HCMC: Departs every 30-60 minutes from 06:00 to 22:30. Costs 120,000 dong.

Mui Ne: Departs HCMC at 00:30, 01:00, 01:30, then frequently from 07:30-23:30.

Other destinations

Vung Tau: departs at 07:00. Costs 90,000 and takes 4 hrs.

For buses to Ca Na or Phan Rang-Thap Cham, take a bus headed to Nha Trang.

Getting around

The easiest way to get around is by motorbike. Shops and hotels rent them for 80,000-150,000 dong a day. Quality of machines varies greatly and if you’re headed out for some exploration, you’ll want to hunt around for something that looks reliable and not on its last legs.
The tourist strip is comprised of a single long and flat road that looks deceptively easy. Though not too dangerous compared to driving in the big cities, the narrow road is frequented by big buses, trucks and tourists - often renting Jeeps and trying motorbike driving for the first time. Also, the road runs straight east-west which means one side usually has the blazing sun directly in their eyes.

By the letter of the law, tourists must have an international drivers' license in order to drive a motorbike. Of course, not having one will not prevent you from renting a motorbike, but police happily capitalise by holding regular stings targeting foreigners, especially near popular attractions such as the sand dunes. Expect to pay a fine if you don’t have one and you’re caught. We suggest you carry whatever drivers license you have and don’t carry huge amounts of cash in your wallet. Or keep a separate decoy wallet with a few 100,000 dong notes to mitigate losses.

Some hotels provide bicycles free or for rent. Taxis are available for further away locations -- a collection usually hangs around outside the bigger resorts or have your hotel call you one, they’ll come to you at no extra charge.

Xe om drivers hang out in the shade along the strip, especially in front of hostels.

To see the sights, tour companies offer cheap Jeep or bus tours (shared transport really) that are usually cheaper than the cost of hiring a motorbike and petrol.

Mui Ne and Phan Thiet have several cheap local buses and savvy travellers can save money by grabbing the right bus.

The 20,000 dong red bus goes to Phan Thiet train station. The white and blue bus #1 starts in Phan Thiet and travels north along the coast through the tourist strip along Nguyen Dinh Chieu and Huynh Thuc Khang Street, then to Hon Rom, Long Son and Suoi Nuoc Beach, home to Long Son Mui Ne Campground and Jibe’s Suoi Nuoc Beach Club. The local buses depart every 20-30 minutes, starting early, the last bus around 19:00, costs 16,000 to 20,000 dong. The full route (listed by streets): Tien Loi – Tran Quy Cap – Tran Hung Dao – Nguyen Tat Thanh – Ton Duc Thang – Thu Khoa Huan – Nguyen Dinh Chieu – Huynh Thuc Khang – Ho Xuan Huong – Hon Rom.