

About Chau Doc in The Mekong Delta - Vietnam and what to see and do.

The town has lots to offer for a few days stay - Chau Doc's Mekong River front is nicely paved with plenty of seats and it's great to hang around the area watching the large variety of boats with their bright eyes meandering along the Bassac River. A walk along the river front eventually takes you through the covered market where you can buy just about anything you can think of. Chau Doc market is very colorful and extremely busy especially in the mornings and early evening. Further along you reach a bridge which crosses the river and from this bridge there are excellent views not only of more boats but also some of the stilt houses which line the town's waterways in this area.

In the centre of the town is the Bo De Dao Trang Plaza the main feature of which is a statue of Quan Am in a gazebo and a Buddha sitting under a tree facing a small pagoda. The square has several travel agents, quite a few shops, a few hotels and is a focal point for day trippers thus is often very busy with tourists.

Hotels in Chau Doc

The town has a variety of accommodation but there seemed to be quite a gap between very high-priced hotels and cheap hotels with nothing much in between. Since it was our last destination in Vietnam before heading north into Cambodia we treated ourselves to a stay in the Victoria Hotel Chau Doc - the hotel is very expensive at USD150 per night but we were fortunate that we were given a free upgrade and ended up in a very large room which had a huge balcony offering fantastic views of the Bassac River and River Mekong.

Ways of travelling to Chau Doc from Can Tho in Vietnam.

If travelling to Chau Doc from Can Tho then the best option and certainly the cheapest is by using the Vietnamese mini-bus service. This bus service is really good - firstly they collect you from your hotel and take you to the bus station - make sure you get the correct ticket and get on the correct bus (it is a little hectic at the bus station). On arrival at Chau Doc bus station the ticket office staff there are only too happy to phone up for a taxi to take you on to your hotel.

Note:

- do ignore the drivers and motor bikers around who will try and claim no taxis will come to the bus station and you will have to use them at silly prices. Back about using the mini-buses.
- if there are two of you travelling and you have to say two largish suitcases then you can buy tickets for 4 seats on the bus so the suitcases can have their own view. The cost for the trip including the suitcases' seats is only around USD16. Obviously, this way of travelling can be done in either direction.

Travelling from Chau Doc into Cambodia (Phnom Penh).

From Chau Doc the way into Cambodia's Phnom Penh is by small boats which typically take a dozen or so passengers. There are several companies offering this trip which usually leave between 07 and 08:30 daily - a typical fare is in the region of USD25. The trip is also available for guests at the Victoria Hotel using their own hotel boat but this costs a staggering USD100 and ultimately does nothing other than take you along the river along with the cheaper boats for the usually 4-to 5-hour trip. The boats all have to stop at the border where you sort out your exit papers for leaving Vietnam (no fee) and then do a short boat-ride to the Cambodian side where

you can purchase a [visa for Vietnam](#). The Cambodian authorities require one passport photograph and you have to fill out an immigration form (previously given out by the boat-crew) and you need USD23 (must be US Dollars) - the visa is valid for only 30 days. (Remember that when leaving Cambodia there is a USD25 exit fee).

On arrival do watch out at Phnom Penh for taxi and tuk-tuk rip-offs - these guys wait for the inbound boats and offer to take you the apparently long distance to your hotel for stupid amounts of money. You can easily get a tuk-tuk or taxi from the road if these drivers won't negotiate down to a reasonable price which should really be around USD4 or 5 for a 4-kilometer taxi ride so try and have an idea how far away from the ferry point that your hotel is before arrival.

Chau Doc Restaurants and where to eat.

As for Chau Doc restaurants - these were not that easy to find but there is a floating restaurant quite near to the Chau Giang Ferry Pier (just along from the Victoria Hotel). This restaurant was always very busy with locals as well as tourists so its fortunate that they do have many tables available. The restaurant offered a wide choice of food and equally huge portions at very good prices - we soon discovered not to order too much and just re-order as needed. Another restaurant is located on the far side of Chau Doc covered market and is part of the Thuan Loi Hotel - get to it by going through the hotel reception and the restaurant is sat on stilts on the river with great close up views of river life.