



Vietnam to grant e-visas; Trade Facilitation Agreement to go into effect

FEATURES



Vietnam to grant e-visas to citizens of 40 countries

beginning Feb 1, 2017. According to Decree 07/2017-NĐ-CP, 25 Jan 2017, procedures for applying and payment will be done online. It will take 3 days to process applications for an e-visa valid for 30 days. The visa does not require letters of guarantee or invitation. This could substantially boost international visitors and FDI. The regular one-year validity, multiple-entry visas will continue to be available to U.S. Citizens.



Trade Facilitation Agreement will go into effect when two more countries

ratify the agreement. 108 have ratified already, and it will go into effect when 110 countries have. When Vietnam implements all the provisions, TFA will lower trade costs in Vietnam by 20%, making a sharp improvement in Vietnam's global competitiveness.



Traceability programs improve food safety in HCM City

HCMC vice chairman Le Thanh Liem asserts that the traceability program for pork and vegetables is of paramount importance to ensure that local consumers can have clean foods, especially during the upcoming Lunar New Year when the food demand surges. Liem added that the program is not just about pork and vegetables, but other products in modern shopping



Air Quality Index provides daily updates

amid growing concerns that air pollution in Hanoi has been worsening and reached dangerous levels. Hanoi's air has been repeatedly ranked as "unhealthy" and at times "hazardous," which means everyone should avoid being outdoors



CHÚC MỪNG - NĂM MŌI - THE YEAR OF THE ROOSTER

AmCham would like to wish you good health, happiness, and prosperity throughout the year of the Rooster.

We take this opportunity to extend our deepest thanks for all your support and participation in our events and activities.

TET Lunar New Year, 2017 . Jan 26 - Feb 1 - Seven Days

16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
THÁNG 2/2017						
Thứ Hai	Thứ Ba	Thứ Tư	Thứ Năm	Thứ Sáu	Thứ Bảy	Chủ Nhật
	1	2	3	4	5	

Traditionally, there are several main days of celebration: Tết Lunar New Year's Eve (Jan 27), and The First (Jan 28), Second (Jan 29), and Third (Jan 30), Fourth (Jan 31), and Fifth (Feb 1) of Tết Nguyen Đán. Vietnamese traditionally celebrate Tết from the fifteenth day of the twelfth lunar month to the fifteenth day of the first lunar month. And, even today, business slows two weeks before and two weeks after TET. The official 2017 TET Holidays in Vietnam are from Thu, Jan 26 to Wed, Feb 1 inclusive.

Events, Meetings, Special Offers



**AMCHAM
PALOOZA**

Feb 22 AmCham Palooza Party at Windsor Plaza Hotel

AmCham will continue its series of monthly informal networking events at the coolest and latest nightspots in Ho Chi Minh City. The monthly Palooza Party is a platform to develop new friendships, networking opportunities and information exchange. Come and join us for a night of casual networking, meet other professionals, bring your business cards!



Mar 9 Walmart Women Owned Business Supplier Selection

The event will contribute to your understanding of the requirements for companies to join Walmart's global supply chains, and help to increase the number of Vietnam companies that integrate into the global economy, and join global value chains. After a Walmart briefing, there will be face-to-face business appointments with Walmart's representatives.

We're looking to source all type of products from any qualified suppliers whether you're women owned business or not.



Mar 27-28 Asia Pacific Business Outlook

Now in its 30th year, Asia/Pacific Business Outlook (APBO) is North America's premier event for business leaders who want to expand their trade and investment in the Asia/Pacific region. The USC Marshall School of Business and the U.S. Department of Commerce have been working together on APBO since 1988 to help exporters and investors take advantage of tremendous opportunities and overcome challenges in the constant changing economies of Asia. ...



2017 AmCham Discount Program

The AmCham Discount Program is a mutually beneficial opportunity for both Discount Partners and AmCham Members who are representatives of companies doing business and living in Vietnam.

By offering AmCham Members special discounts on services or products, Discount Partners can enjoy marketing opportunities through listing freely and/or placing an advertisement on the [Discount Handbook](#) & [Online](#).

JOIN US: Become a Member of AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

***NEW OFFER:** Application fee will be waived for companies having a D-U-N-S® number.

Expand your business by joining us! We currently have almost 500 organizations represented by 1,000 representatives. They are multinational firms, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs. **Benefits include:** Networking, Information-Sharing, Advocacy and Problem Solving, visibility and Corporate Exposure.

Contact [Ms. Sam Hoang](#) for joining or additional information on membership.





Marketing Opportunities with AmCham HCMC

AmCham HCMC offers many opportunities to market your company's products and services to AmCham members, the business community and the general public. Our services include:

- Event Sponsorship
- Event Management Support
- Network (Advertise) on www.amchamvietnam.com: 720K views/yr; 360K visitors/yr (avg. 60K / 30K views/visitors per month) and **11.2K twitter followers**, 9.5K facebook fans (and 60K+ views/month) 5.7k LinkedIn followers.
- Announcement in Weekly Email: 4.8k AmCham company representatives and subscribers.

AmCham Companies are offered 3 complimentary announcements a year.

- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Directory
- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Discount Handbook
- Advertising on AmCham Discount Online



AmCham Premium Membership Packages

The AmCham Premium Membership comes with a range of membership dues, which include events, advertising, and other exclusive benefits. One all-inclusive Premium Membership annual, semi-annual, or quarterly billing simplifies your company's administration efforts. Premium Membership Benefits include:

- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner on AmCham website homepage
- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner in Weekly Update Email
- Company profile on the "Premium Membership" page on AmCham website
- Corporate profile on screen during cocktail reception at Members' Nights
- Special recognition/Thank You Page in Membership Directory
- Special recognition at all business events' backdrop/banner
- Special recognition in all email signatures

For full information on benefits of each package, please click [HERE](#) or contact [Cindy Tran](#).

News and Issues



U.S. to withdraw from TPP; negotiate bilateral free trade agreements

On Jan 23, a Presidential Memorandum directed U.S. Trade Representative (Robert Lighthizer, nominated but not yet confirmed) to "withdraw the United States as a signatory to TPP." The Memo also directed USTR to "begin pursuing ... bilateral trade negotiations to promote American industry, protect American workers, and raise American wages."



Public-private cooperation to develop Vietnam's tourism sector

Vietnam has not always done a good job of marketing itself as an international travel destination, but a recently launched tourism website is aiming to inspire tourists to visit the country. It may also point the way forward for a new model of the public sector leveraging off private sector expertise.



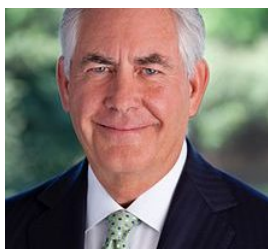
Sustainable Seafood

Nationally prominent chefs, fishermen, academics, and activists call on consumers to choose local species of fish when possible to protect the long-term vitality of harvested seafood and the well-being of the oceans. Some key numbers: 70 to 80% of global fish populations are not sustainably fished. 90% of seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported. 2% of that is inspected by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration..



U.S., Vietnam team up for food safety

The High Quality Việt Nam Products Business Association, the American Chamber of Commerce in Việt Nam and the Washington-based Global Food Safety Forum signed a memorandum of understanding on co-operation in food safety. The US imports 15% of its food, 20% of vegetables, 50% of fruit and 80% of seafood, according to the U.S. FDA, which has established an International Food Safety Capacity Building Plan to train foreign governments and food producers on U.S. requirements for food safety.



"I do not oppose TPP" - Secretary-designate Rex Tillerson

"I share some of (Trump's) views regarding whether the agreement that was negotiated serves all of America's interests best," he added during his lengthy confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. But he did not mention TPP in his opening statement.



ExxonMobile-PetroVietnam sign Ca Voi Xanh natural gas deal

ExxonMobil signed two agreements January 13 relating to the Ca Voi Xanh (Blue Whale) gas project offshore Vietnam. The project could fuel at least four power plants shortly after scheduled first gas in 2023. "The Ca Voi Xanh field is located about 80 km offshore central Vietnam and is an important natural gas discovery in Vietnam that has the potential to fuel the country's economic growth." PVEP said the project could supply enough gas for power plants with total capacity of 3 GW and also allow expansion for the petrochemical or power sectors. It said total investment in the project chain could be \$10bn, contributing \$20bn to state coffers.



SCS [Bien Dong] Reserves and Resources - U.S. EIA

Energy Information Administration estimates the South China Sea contains approximately 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in proved and probable reserves. Conventional hydrocarbons mostly reside in undisputed territory. Undiscovered resources could be greater. In November 2012, the Chinese National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) estimated the area holds around 125 billion barrels of oil and 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in undiscovered resources, although independent studies have not confirmed this figure.



Jan 14 Ambassador Osius: Vietnam-U.S. Relations in 2017

Ambassador Osius will share highlights of the past year and the outlook for Vietnam-U.S. relations in 2017. Following the momentous events of 2016, including the Presidential Visit in May and the U.S. General Election in November, and looking forward to APEC 2017 in Vietnam, as well as the 50th anniversary of ASEAN, what can we expect about Vietnam-U.S. relations, especially trade and investment relations?



Seafood Import Monitoring Program Final Rule

to combat fish fraud and illegal fishing was issued on Dec 8, 2016. The rule requires that fish species most often passed off fraudulently or at risk of illegal fishing be tracked from their source of origin before they can be imported to the United States. It requires retention of supply chain data by the importer of record and extends an existing NMFS requirement to obtain an annually renewable International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP) to import the seafood and seafood products regulated under this rule.



New Congress will focus on domestic issues, Cabinet confirmations

Congressional Republicans plan quick action on several of their top priorities - most notably a measure to clear a path for the Affordable Care Act's repeal. Perhaps the first thing that will happen in the new Congress is the push for deregulation. Also up early: filling a long-vacant Supreme Court seat, which is sure to set off a pitched showdown, and starting confirmation hearings for Mr. Trump's cabinet nominees.

Vietnam to apply extensive area code changes in 2017



Area code changes in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, and a number of other provinces will take place on June 17, 2017. The new area codes will be applied for 59 cities and provinces in three phases, from February 11 to June 17, with steps taken to ensure the change will not confuse the public, the Ministry of Information and Communications announced. But there are other concerns, such as the need to reprint packaging or business cards once numbers are changed, costing quite a sum.



Weekly Updates Archive 2006 - 2016

Launched in August 2006 to answer many questions about Vietnam's accession to the WTO, the Weekly Update Emails provide news updates, upcoming events, explanations of details of trade and investment agreements, developments in laws and regulations affecting the business environment in Vietnam. Click the link for to visit the archives and look back over the years. Links to more than 10,000 documents providing background on a wide variety of topics, from Vietnam's WTO Accession in 2006-2007, revision of the Labour Code in 2008-2012, to the TransPacific Partnership and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement from 2013 and ongoing.



Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit awarded to AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

At AmCham's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner on September 18, 2014, Vice Chairman of HCMC People's Committee Le Thanh Liem handed the Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit to AmCham Vietnam - HCM City and to Mr. Herb Cochran, Executive Director for their excellent performance in supporting and promoting trade and investment in Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam.



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