

Vinh Long Tours and Boat Trips including going out to Cai Be Floating Market on the Mekong River.

Boat trips at Vinh Long have been booked from the government run Cuu Long Tourist or possibly from Mekong Travel. Note you may be approached whilst wandering near the river by locals offering boat trips but we understand that these are almost certainly unlicensed and therefore illegal.

If you have already a [Vietnam visa](#), the usual trip costs around USD25 to 30USD which apart from the boat includes a guide (but not tips) and you should book your trip at least the day before especially if you want to have an English-speaking guide. The boat trips leave at around 07:30 each morning because of the tide. The mass of water and huge rivers which make up the Mekong Delta are tidal despite being some 100kms from the South China Sea - at Vinh Long this means there is often a 3-meter difference in water level. The small adjoining waterways and canals are part of the boat trip's route and some of these canals empty at low tide and therefore obviously become un-navigable - so the trips have to be timed correctly to avoid getting marooned. This sticky mud problem also means what is on offer and which route is taken will vary but your trip will visit a factory, the flower or bonsai gardens and always of course a float around Cai Be floating market.

The following is fairly typical of what you may expect to see and visit on a boat trip from Vinh Long - on the basis that you tell them where you want to go as opposed to where they may want to take you. They are generally quite happy to discuss the route and places you wish to visit by use of a large map in their office (although you may have to wait for someone who speaks English).

Sampan along the canal and river to see the Bonsai Gardens near Vinh Long in Vietnam.

The boat you start off in crosses the river and then goes between An Binh and Binh Hoa Phuoc Islands. However, the boat is far too large to traverse some of these islands' waterways even at high tide and to reach the Bonsai Gardens you are transferred onto a sampan for the short canal trip. The gardens are not very large but nicely laid out so fine to wander around.

The tour continues with some Fruit Tasting and a Traditional Vietnamese Music and Dance display - they give you a large platter of different fruits to try plus Vietnamese tea - accompanied by dancing and singing. Next you go across the Tien Gang River to the Popcorn Sugar Candy Factory which is very near to Cai Be. This was quite an interesting visit, especially watching the popcorn being made. You can buy various types of local candies as well as popcorn etc. at the factory shop if you wish.

Visiting Cai Be Floating Market in The Mekong Delta, Southern Vietnam.

The boat then takes you a little further on to Cai Be which is one of the most popular day trips (usually from Saigon) in the Mekong Delta. Cai Be Floating Market is set in a very picturesque setting with many boats of all different shapes and sizes which are selling all manner of products and produce. This is all back dropped by Cai Be Town with its beautiful church and spire and the whole thing is extremely interesting and picturesque. Cai Be Floating Market is a wholesale market i.e. bulk goods are brought in on larger river boats and local traders often in sampans then buy from them - it is not a market for tourists to buy individual goods. The journey back to Vinh Long returns between the two islands again - hopefully without getting stuck in the mud. What happens is that having got a bit of a glimpse of these Mekong River Islands which are obviously really beautiful, you then need to re-visit them on your

own for a closer look. See below about cycling on An Binh Island.

Cycling on An Binh Island which is near Vinh Long, Mekong Delta - Vietnam. Apart from taking the above-mentioned day tour another good way of seeing An Binh Island is by hiring a bicycle - these can be hired for around 2USD however there are not many places in Vinh Long to get them. Try a small boarding house called Van Tram which is at the corner of 1 Thang 5 (Market Street). Bikes can be taken over to An Binh Island on the local ferry from Vinh Long for just a few Dong. As well as the island's narrow roads there are even smaller lanes, tracks and paths going between houses or just heading seemingly nowhere in particular into the undergrowth or through fruit tree orchards.

These lanes meander all over the island crossing narrow waterways and often over bridges where you get excellent reflections. As you can imagine it is not that difficult get yourself lost but you can always ask any of the local people "how to get back to the ferry". The island is incredibly picturesque and it is easy to spend hours just cycling around enjoying the lush countryside, small canals and streams often with sampans and boats moored etc. etc. Remember to take food and drink with you if going to the island for the day as there are not any cafes or restaurants around that were particularly obvious.

Tien Chau Pagoda - An Binh Island, Vietnam.

Before leaving the island to return to Vinh Long have a look on the corner of the road just a short distance from the ferry where there is a really colorful Pagoda to take a look round. The iron gates are often closed to keep the local wildlife out but unless they are actually padlocked it is fine to go in.

Source: [Vietnam visa on arrival](#)