

Ba Be National Park

Ba Bể district · Vietnam

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Ba Bể National Park is in Bắc Kạn province, in north-east Vietnam, about 240 km north of Hanoi. Its centre is Ba Bể Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake in the country. Limestone hills and forest surround the lake, and Tày communities live in stilt-house villages on its shore.

Most visitors spend one or two nights in a homestay and tour the lake by boat.

When to visit

April to October is warm and green, though July and August are wet. September to November has clear weather. Winter from December to February is cold and misty. Rain can close trails and caves.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for hiking	20° / 26°	9° / 3°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for hiking	23° / 30°	12° / 5°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for watersports	27° / 32°	15° / 9°	Humid air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for watersports	30° / 36°	19° / 14°	13 rainy days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
May	Fair Fair for watersports	32° / 36° Feels like 35°	22° / 18°	19 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds
June	Poor Poor for watersports	32° / 35° Feels like 36°	24° / 21°	24 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
July	Poor Poor for watersports	32° / 35° Feels like 37°	24° / 23°	25 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Poor Poor for watersports	32° / 35° Feels like 36°	24° / 22°	24 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
September	Fair Fair for watersports	30° / 33° Feels like 34°	22° / 18°	17 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds
October	Good Good for watersports	28° / 31°	18° / 14°	12 rainy days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
November	Great Great for cycling	24° / 29°	14° / 9°	Calm winds
December	Great Great for hiking	20° / 26°	10° / 4°	Dry air · Calm winds

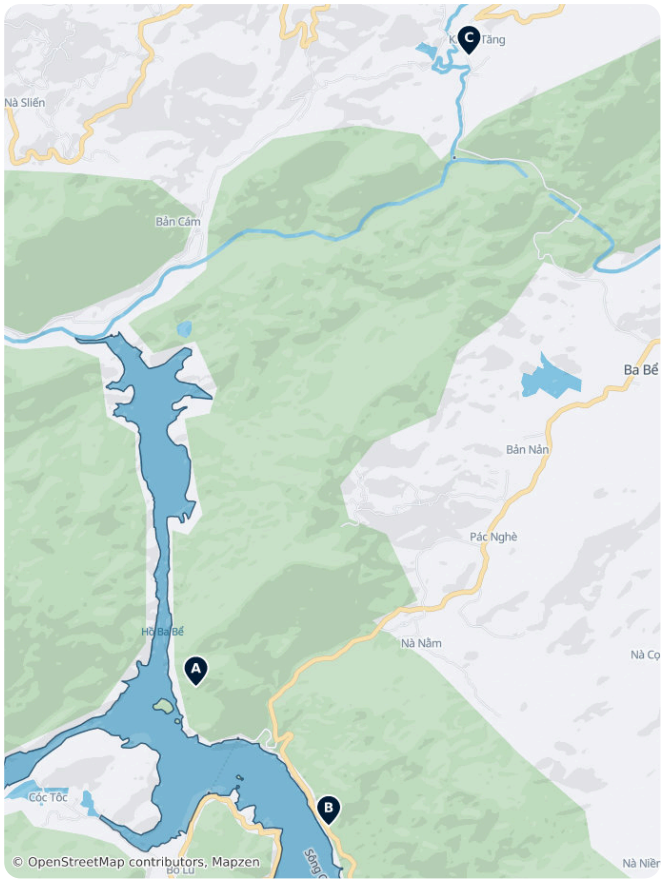
Best months: January, February, March, November, December

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Ba Be Lake is a freshwater lake about 8 km long, ringed by forested limestone hills. Boats cross it and stop at caves and villages.
- B Tham Kit is a cave near the lake with stalactites.
- C Thursday market is a market where Tày and Dao people trade.

Other stops on the boat trip are Pồng Waterfall, Puông Cave and Ao Tiên (Fairy Pond).



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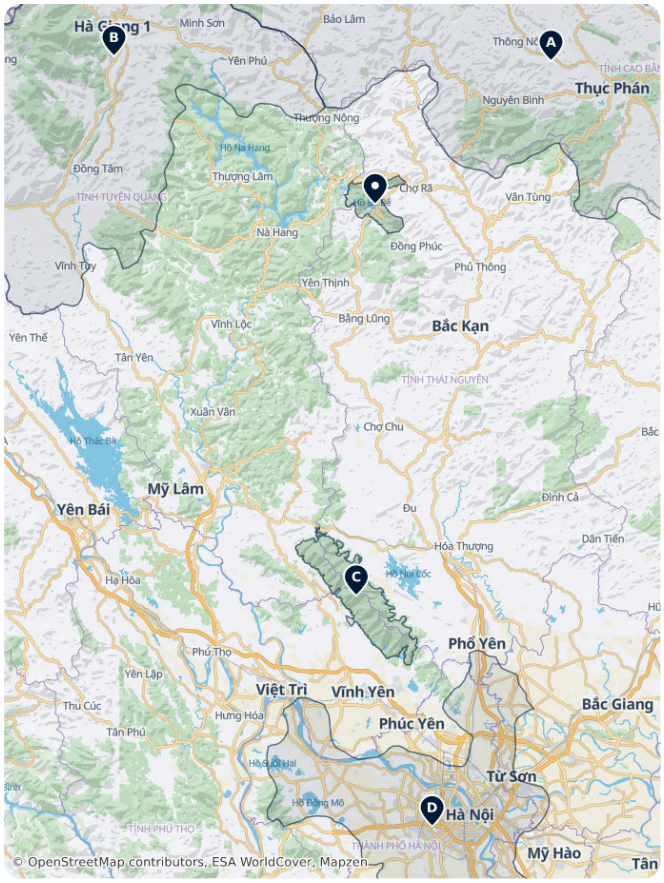
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What to experience

- **Take a boat trip**: Cross the lake and visit caves and waterfalls.
- **Stay in a stilt-house homestay**: Eat a home-cooked Tày meal.
- **Cycle between villages**: Easy lakeside roads.
- **Kayak or paddle**: Some homestays rent kayaks.
- **Visit the Thursday market**: A local trading day.

Day trips

- A Cao Bang: Cao Bằng is about 3 to 4 hours north-east.
- B Ha Giang: Hà Giang is further north.
- C Tam Dao: Tam Đảo is on the road toward Hanoi.
- D Hanoi: Hanoi is about 5 hours south.



Where to explore

- **North-east**: Cao Bang has Ban Gioc Waterfall.
- **North**: Ha Giang has the rocky plateau loop.
- **South**: Hanoi is the main gateway.

Getting there

- **By car or minibus**: Hanoi to Ba Bể takes about 5 to 6 hours. Many tour operators and homestays arrange transfers.
- **By bus**: Buses run from Hanoi's Mỹ Đình station to Chợ Rã, then a taxi or motorbike goes to the lake.
- **By train**: There is no railway near the park. Vietnam Railways serves Thái Nguyên, further south.
- **Roads**: The last stretch is winding and slow.

Getting around

- **Boat**: The main way to see the lake. Hire a boat at the Pác Ngòi dock.
- **Bicycle**: Homestays rent bikes for lakeside roads.
- **Walking**: Short trails link the villages.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The lake villages are walkable, but sights are spread around the water.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Lakeside roads are mostly flat, with some hills.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Hire a car with a driver from Hanoi. The road is long and winding.
- **Roads**: National roads are fine, but the last stretch is narrow.
- **Fog**: Possible on winter mornings.

Food & drink

Tày food around Ba Bể is simple. Try lake fish, grilled or steamed, sticky rice, smoked pork and forest vegetables. Bamboo-tube rice and local rice wine are common. Meals are booked with the homestay.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Pho · Phở
Beef or chicken noodle soup with a fragrant broth, fresh herbs, and rice noodles; commonly eaten for breakfast.

LUNCH

Bun Cha · Bún chả
Grilled pork patties and slices served with rice vermicelli, herbs, and a sweet-sour dipping sauce; a Hanoi specialty.

Bun Bo Hue · Bún bò Huế
A spicy, lemongrass-scented beef noodle soup from the city of Hue.

Cao Lau · Cao lầu
A noodle dish unique to Hoi An, with thick chewy noodles, pork, and greens, traditionally made with local well water.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Banh Mi · Bánh mì
A French-influenced baguette sandwich filled with pork, pate, pickled vegetables, and herbs.

Banh Xeo · Bánh xèo
A crispy turmeric rice-flour crepe filled with pork, shrimp, and bean sprouts, wrapped in lettuce and herbs.

Goi Cuon · Gỏi cuốn
Fresh (uncooked) spring rolls filled with shrimp, pork, herbs, and vermicelli, wrapped in rice paper.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Che · Chè
A category of sweet dessert soups or puddings made with beans, fruit, jelly, and coconut milk, served hot or over ice.

DRINKS

Ca Phe Sua Da · Cà phê sữa đá
Strong drip coffee served over ice with sweetened condensed milk; Vietnam's signature drink.

Bia Hoi · Bia hơi
Cheap, light draft beer brewed fresh daily and sold at street-side stalls, especially in Hanoi.

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Safety & health

Ba Bể is safe for visitors.

- Wear a life jacket on boats.
- Trails and cave steps are slippery after rain.
- Nights are cold in winter. Bring warm clothes.
- Medical care is basic. The nearest hospital is in Chợ Rã.
- Mobile signal is weak in some places.

History

The Ba Bể area has long been home to the Tày, Dao and Hmong peoples. Ba Bể Lake forms part of local legends.

The area was protected as a national park in 1992. In 2011 it was listed as a Ramsar wetland site.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Vietnam at a glance:

CURRENCY

VND ₫

ELECTRICITY



Type A / Type C / Type F
220 V · 50 Hz

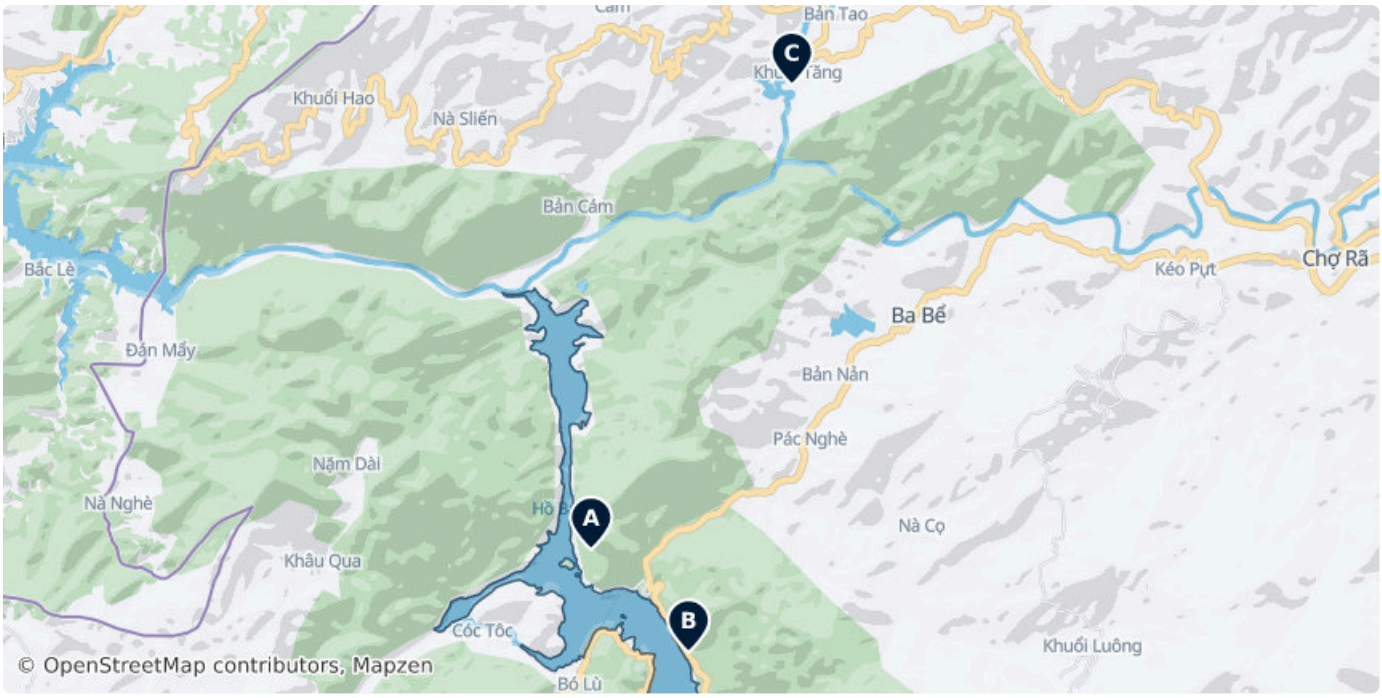
LANGUAGES

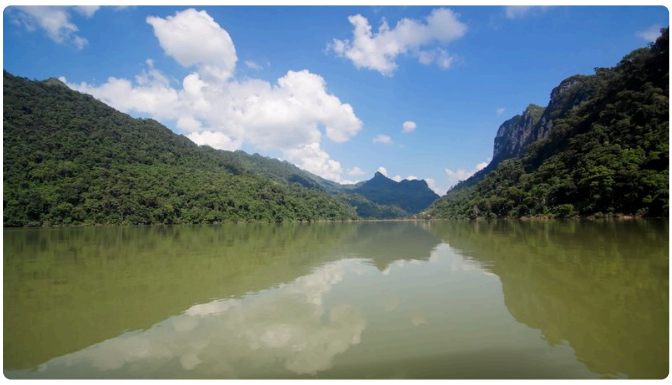
Vietnamese

TAP WATER

Not safe to drink

Top sights





A Ba Be Lake

Ba Bể Lake is the largest natural lake in Vietnam. It is located in Nam Mẫu commune, Ba Bể district, Bắc Kạn Province in the Northeast...

Vietnam (22.41373, 105.61868)

B Ace-tham kit cave

(22.40045, 105.63236)

C Market (Thursdays 6:00-8:00)

(22.47389, 105.64682)

DATA SOURCES

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