

# **The study about the perception and the level of satisfaction of Japanese tourists for Vietnam as a tourist destination**

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## **Abstract**

The Vietnamese tourism industry is still very young having only really taken shape in the early 1990's. As such, for many, Vietnam is a yet undiscovered final frontier that beckons tourists that are always in search of new experiences, to come and experience the country I its history I culture and people for themselves.

The Vietnamese government is committed to developing Vietnam as a tourist destination and has undertaken considerable investments (despite limited resources) in infrastructure, people and destination marketing/promotion to underline this intent. Already there have been significant changes to the benefit of the Vietnamese macro and micro-economies. In many areas of the country tourism is contributing to solving the labor problem, protecting and reinvigorating the traditions and culture of the many ethnic groups in the country and providing a welcome/channel for access to foreign currencies.

However, to undertake an optimal strategy in terms of the augmentation of the tourism industry and to avoid redundant measures it is vitally important that the Vietnamese government and Vietnamese National Tourism Organization (NTO) have a clear understanding of the destination attributes of Vietnam and, importantly, as to how these are perceived by key market segments. Marketers and tourism planners simply need to know who their customers are and what they expect if they are to provide tailored tourism products/services.

This study focuses on the perception of Japanese tourist in Vietnam as regards to Vietnam as a tourist destination. It is based on a multi-section questionnaire in which participants were asked to evaluate 18 attributes on a scale of 1 to 5 (poor to excellent) and provide some basic demographic data to allow a further target group segmentation. The sample for this study was composed of tourists who visited Vietnam between December 16, 2003 and January 16, 2004. The survey was conducted at the main departure area of Tan Son Nhat Airport, Ho Chi Minh City. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed 300 were ultimately used in the study. In terms of the analysis of the data the expectancy-disconfirmation theory provided a conceptual framework for this study. The expectancy-disconfirmation theory holds that consumers first form expectations of products or service performance prior to purchase or use. Subsequently, purchasing and use convey to the consumer beliefs about the actual or perceived performance of the product(s). The consumer then compares the perceived performance to prior expectation. Consumer satisfaction is seen as the outcome of this comparison. The actual data analysis was conducted using various techniques such as descriptive frequency, data transformation, the independent T-test, one way ANOVA and the Pearson correlation. The results shows that there is no difference in the perception of Japanese tourists regarding destination attributes of Vietnam among various demographic groups, but there is a difference in the level of satisfaction among different age and income groups. Moreover, a correlation analysis revealed that there is a relationship between perception and satisfaction. Vietnamese food, culture, friendly local people and quality of accommodation are given the highest mean scores by respondents. Vietnamese food is rated highest. The availability of local transportation, information, the accessibility of beaches and mountains, safety/security and the quality of the environment are given the lowest mean scores. Safety/security is apparently of great concern to Japanese tourists and is an issue that the Vietnamese authorities must address if they are to further promote Vietnam as a viable tourist destination in Japan.

From this study it does appear that the Japanese tourist market in Vietnam is a relatively homogenous one although obviously more detailed surveys and analyses are required to verify this impression. Also, it would appear that Vietnam does have the potential to be a very significant market for Japanese tourists given the high average score of all destination attributes and despite the obvious security concerns. Furthermore, it would seem that there is considerable scope to improve the marketing and promotion conducted by Vietnamese authorities. For example there should be a consolidated effort to promote Vietnamese foods through food fairs and advertising in Japan. This is not being done presently. In general there is scope for Vietnam to improve the provision of information to tourists both abroad and in Vietnam.

