



What About Vietnam - S4 - E15 – What makes female solo travellers love Vietnam?

Kerry Newsome (3:57)

Hello, Camellia Dinh, welcome to the about Vietnam podcast. How are you?

Camellia Dinh (4:03)

Hi, Kerry, thank you so much for having me here today. I am very well.

Kerry Newsome (4:07)

When we got together in Saigon. And we kind of talked through some ideas about what to talk about. I really liked the fact that we could talk about solo women and the empowerment of traveling Vietnam because it's something you and I both do. Yes. Like, I do it for some business and some leisure and I think you do it the same.

Camellia Dinh (4:36)

Okay. I think, yeah, I'm not sure about what it is for you in your own culture, right. As a Vietnam solo traveler. I mean, it is not something uncommon, from what I say, what I see that for the majority of time, even with my friends or the community that I know more than 10 people would prefer to travel with their partner, or with a group of friends as it is way more fun to have somebody to share things and experience with, that I don't know.

Maybe I am just one of those who would like also to explore my own way of enjoying things, I would actually say that I'm not a solo travel professional or in any way. But I started to be a solo traveler since I was a teenager. Because for me, I'd be growing up far away from my parents. So I have a lot of opportunity to figure things by myself and try to find ways by myself as I was growing up.

And as we keep getting busier as well, I find it extremely difficult, trying to arrange a trip with someone else. Whether even with my best friend, you know, they have different study schedule, go schedule, and we're just trying to find a date, we can go together and it is getting hard. And that was the moment that I think you know, forget it. Why don't we just go and travel and explore the world by ourselves. Because it will keep waiting, I don't know how long I will have to wait. And sometimes we'd prefer and I just want to

travel during the quiet time when people's go to work, I will travel so I have all the scenery by myself, even the hotel I stay will a bit quiet as I can actually enjoy the other services and the views in front of me, etc. And I do prefer it that way. So I thought okay, maybe I just give it a try. And then I do it and see how it goes. But the more I start traveling, on my own, I seem to enjoy it even more. Well, but don't get me wrong, okay, if I have chance to travel with friends, family partner, I'm still happy to do so.

Kerry Newsome (6:51)

And you know, I concur. I'm exactly the same, I found myself finding it limiting. Because my friends were busy with their families or their jobs, etc. I had a little bit more flexibility in time. So yeah, I just, you know, kind of started doing some travel on my own. But I found it quite liberating. I know that's a strange word. But because I found it easy to do in Vietnam, and I'm speaking to all women who are listening to this travel podcast, and are thinking, oh, gosh, I don't know whether I could go to Vietnam on my own. Well, I mostly go on my own.

So it forced me to, to look at Vietnam for what I wanted to experience, just like you were saying, it actually pushes you to discover things for yourself. And you can do it any way you like, because you don't have to ask your friends or your families that aren't OK, do they want to do it as well or whatever.

So, I'm like you I love traveling with my family and my husband and all the rest of it. But that's a very different experience to traveling as a female and traveling solo. But I never feel odd or people I don't think look at me strange. Because I'm on my own. Like you've seen me traveling Vietnam. Do you think I stand out in the crowd? Or? Maybe I do because I'm blonde. But like, do you think people look at you like you're strange because you're traveling on your own?

Camellia Dinh (8:27)

Actually, some towns, sometimes Kerry I have maybe in the past, I still remember one of my very first trips and pick some of those destinations that seems to be more suitable to travel when you have a partner for example, you know Dalat. Our Highland area, right? So the weather there is beautiful. Also, very chill. You have flowers everywhere, beautiful scenery. And people often picture themselves traveling with a partner. And they say yeah, you don't want to go to Dalat alone, what you want to do there?

I actually, I actually book my hotel for five nights, on my own. I mean, I was a solo traveler there. It was interesting. And at that time, it was eight years ago, and people asked me that question, are you seriously going to Dalat on your own? I say yes, I don't see anything wrong with that, especially all of my friends was lazy and cannot ask somebody to go with me. So I'm just going to find things on my own. And when I travel to the destination, the thing that fascinated me the most, of course, just like what you say, liberating rate, the word that you use, I feel free, because nobody stopped me from doing what I want. I eat whatever whenever I want. I go to different places. If I feel tired, I just go to sleep. I don't have to follow anybody's agenda.

But the interesting thing that I had along the way was once I was sitting in a cafe on my own, and I saw one American couple, they come approach me and ask me a few questions because they say, well, it's their first time in Vietnam. And they have the feeling like they need to come and talk to me for the reason that they saw me, a female solo traveler in Dalat, sitting on my own. I was like, well, that's interesting. And I asked

them, how their travel experience so far, and they say, I think Vietnam is a very safe country. However, my family didn't think so. The problem was, yeah, they travel from the US to Vietnam. And she has a very old grandmother, before she traveled to Vietnam, she told her grandmother that grand mom going to Vietnam and her grandmother got freaked out. Because all they was thinking of was the history the past and everything else.

And they will say, yeah, I don't recommend you to go there. It's very dangerous, people probably going to have that sort of mindset, however when she came, she felt my god, like nobody actually asking question whether she's American or any issue when it comes to history and culture, and you feel very welcoming. And the fact that I shall go to Dalat, and she saw me there just to prove that Vietnam is very safe for even a solo young female traveler on her own. And they have that confidence to come and speak to meet because they were so curious as well. And they asked me a lot of question, and we became really good friends afterwards.

So I thought, if I was traveling with a partner, I might not get a chance to talk to those interesting people. And, and that is one of the perks that we could only get when we also travel, we have chance to explore new things and paying attention to other people and things surrounding us.

Kerry Newsome (11:54)

Yes, I totally agree. I mean, I find myself in situations where I think people see me on my own. And they then feel like they can approach me because obviously, I'm kind of, I'm there on my own. So you know, I'm not talking to anyone, they're not going to disrupt me or anything like that. So, I often find I meet a lot more people. And in particular, with the Vietnamese, they also, as you talked about being curious, they're curious to find out about me, so they'll come and ask me questions, or they'll maybe want to practice their English, or they want to know what country I'm from, and things like that.

So I don't think I would have got to have had as much interaction with people if I hadn't have traveled on my own. And I think if the Vietnamese nature, if like, your nature wasn't as friendly, and as open, I likewise, wouldn't have got the opportunities that I got. But because those two match up really nicely. It is I always feel lighter and brighter. And you know, someone quoted me recently and I kind of said, you know, I feel like I get an injection of color into my life because you know, there's beautiful coffee houses and tea houses and places to go. So, you know, you can be with amongst people, but still be on your own and feel very comfortable. Can we talk a little bit about community, you, you are a young professional woman? And obviously, you have a good knowledge of Vietnam. So when you're traveling? Do you like pick, like you talked about the Dalat and that's a place I have got yet to feature on my podcast. But I loved Dalat also. Is there particular places that you would say are better for the female traveler as far as enjoyment, safety things to do, one over the other do you think?

Camellia Dinh (14:09)

Well Kerry, this question is a little bit complex answer right? When it comes down to experiences, it's all depend on what we are seeking for right? And what sets us the other way around. I think it really depends on what we're looking at here. It's very difficult for me to say which place is better than the others, because sometime it depends of how we like to enjoy life in different ways. Some people would prefer to stay in big cities, for example, so obviously to our mega city, Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, or even some other city later

now I'm going to be perfect for those who want to see a bit of a vibe seeing a lot of people on the street, a lot of things happening, events as such, right?

Then we have much of our country is we have a lot of mountains, right? So the mountainous area also beautiful, is gorgeous landscape, and you get to be very close to the nature and our coastal area. Okay, the beaches are also amazing. And I don't know, it just depends on which part of Vietnam that we want to explore. And from what we say earlier, a Vietnam is pretty safe. And we know that the level of crime is extremely low in this country, I will say is very safe.

But it also depends on how brave we are as a traveler and a female traveler in particular, when we travel to those areas, because other consideration that we need to take in would be on our language ability. If you were able to communicate with a local, because I will say, of course, if you are in big cities is very likely for you to be able to meet somebody who can speak English. But that might not be the same case when you travel to a province or village. Yeah, even though I say yeah, it's safe. But then you might not feel safe if you travel somewhere that people don't understand you at all.

So with that, we probably need to come with a little bit of preparation. But other than that, I think Vietnam is just so big when it comes into seeking different experiences. And I just cannot tell which experience will be better than the others.

Kerry Newsome (16:22)

Okay, then I'll share one of mine. And I'll share it from the experience of like, I'm a mature woman. So I'm traveling around, and I, I don't want to be worried about my safety, I don't want that to be part of my holiday. So, when I started doing this back in 2016, really on my own, I did one more. I did earlier trip in 2007. But I spent a month in 2016. And I decided to pick Hoi An as my base. And there was a couple of reasons that I chose Hoi An, and a couple of reasons I continue to choose Hoi an as a base, as it's got a very country style, feel to it, you can walk to most places, or you can get very short taxi rides to the beach or things like that.

There's a lot to do, there's a lot of things to experience, you can make lanterns or masks, do cooking classes, you know, go by the river, you can go to Marble Mountain, and you know, there's all sorts of things to do from there. But generally, it's quite chilled, it's quite easy. It's an easy place to maneuver.

When I first came to Vietnam, I was struck with Ho Chi Minh City as my open door to Vietnam. It was like "whoa," you know, like, I've really got to get my head around this, you know, I mean, over time, I've certainly conditioned myself. And I've found Saigon this time, much more manageable to get around. I think there's more street signs, there's more traffic lights, more one way streets. There is some better management of the flow of people around I think. it still gets, you know, like traffic jams, we all have that, etc. But it is easier to get around. But it's the city, you've got to keep your wits about you. You know, because it's so busy. Because there's a lot of people, there are more people that speak English there. But you, you know, like, I've heard some stories about people who get their cameras pinched, or their phones or, you know, they leave their handbag down or something and you know, then then it's gone. I mean, that's like that in any city in the world, to be honest.

But I just think for people that are coming to Vietnam for the first time, they are female, they are a solo traveler, I would be recommending that you, you know, do a little tip toe into Saigon for a few nights because you have to there's just too much great stuff to do there. But then you might want to go and spend a bit more time in some quieter areas like Hoi An or Nha Trang or Danang even would be a little bit quieter, etc. And then you can come back and stay in Saigon again on your way home.

So that's just from my experience. And that's you know, basically that's all I can share because that's what I know, that's what I live.

You know your experiences you work in a hotel, which has got a tagline called "the home of the daring." So I thought I'm talking to you, their sales and marketing director. She's working at a hotel that claims to be the home of the daring in the middle of Saigon Central. You know, she's a female traveler. She's definitely going to be able to talk about the empowerment of travelers because you meet them.

Also I would understand at the hotel solo travelers, I met a couple when I was there. So, you know, when a woman is coming to Saigon, Saigon is your main city? Do you have any places that you would see them to enjoy the best of Saigon? I mean, I think the shopping is amazing. But that's because I know some secret spots. And I'm putting up a tour together.... about that 'secret squirrel', but I don't know. What do you think? Are there some things that a female in Saigon should definitely do?

Camellia Dinh (20:44)

Well, Kerry, I think using bravery in a very interesting topic. And thank you for mentioning our hotel. So our hotel Fusion Original Saigon Centre; we do have a tagline called the home of the daring. And I think that is it's fascinating to think about it, and us the way we see here Vietnam as well, that is a country depends on the way we look at it. It's the way people actually look at our history in the past, and say that we are very conservative in certain things.

But the way we see here as a local, I was like anything and everything's happening in my country and we don't really have to put any limitation into the way we can export the things and learnings of a new culture. And I don't see Vietnam with a lot of subculture as such, for example, when it comes into even a sensitive topic, for example, like religions, or the LGBT community, or any things that some people might probably think that is part of the extreme in Vietnam. I think, we actually make it very easy for every single group of people to come and explore that includes solo female travelers that include the LGBT community that they don't feel discriminated for example, and different people from different religions example you're Christian, Catholic, Buddhist or any other religion as well, we have something for everyone.

So most people do not have a problem when they come in travel to Vietnam I will say for example, if you even come in from Islamic country, you're Muslim and you cannot eat pork in Vietnam, we actually eat pork every day you know, most of the time, we do that. But it doesn't mean that when they come to Vietnam they cannot find the right type of food because we can pick it up really fast when we know that. The travelers that come we listen to, and we diversify our offering to international tourists.

How about food especially in the five star environment, we know what our international guests want. And we start to introduce that concept into many of our restaurants here in the city. So, this is one of those

examples to tell you that yes, you can find anything and any trends that you can find for example, for female, when we start to care a lot more about wellness care, more about our dietary requirements.

How to make sure that our daily consumption will never be in check you know, because we don't want to gain weight, but the foods we eat will have to be delicious. So, I think Vietnam's cuisine is a great choice when it comes to that matter right. We love our food just for the reason how the resources is. But also how simple it is when it comes to the preparation and the clean factor as well extremely low compared to the rest of the cuisine in the world. So when it comes to that, obviously if the female travelers coming to my city or any other city in Vietnam, I would highly recommend to try. First thing is you probably want to try our cuisine okay? And I wouldn't hesitate to give you a list of some of our recommended restaurants for you to come and explore.

Kerry Newsome (24:02)

So okay, we'll have that list.

Camellia Dinh (24:06)

Yes, okay. So we do that and then you say shopping is an interesting experience as well right? When it comes to shopping. I will say different style either we can do, and no way you go to all the shopping malls, all those big ones, actually our hotel located inside a shopping mall, as you already know. But we also have the chance to experience shopping local in the local markets, by walking distance, or to go to some markets when you can actually see people prepare different things, especially women, like seem to be drawn to although tailor made clothing. Go there and get a beautiful Ao Dai for yourself that is custom made for your figure and all that sort of thing. So, they'll experience that kind of thing.

One thing I want to introduce. Last week is a very interesting day that I went to in Vietnam is we call "[Quê một cục](#)". And to translate in English, it means something like a countryside – Hair Salon?

Kerry Newsome (25:16)

Okay, so basically a hair salon.

Camellia Dinh (25:19)

Yeah, it's something like, that basically the ideas for them is to offer something belongs to the culture, okay, something happened years ago, it's not anything modern about that. But the way we put it because sometimes the Vietnamese language is interesting, and we just cannot translate into English. I hope you know what I mean. Or that when we came to that place, we heard the name in Vietnamese we start laughing, because that is something reminds us of the past when for example, when you find something a little bit old fashioned, but it still gives you a little bit feeling of the past and the history and culture and you kind of enjoying. We went to that shop, the hair salon, and they just have two very simple packages. One is to, to wash your hair with a facial treatment, okay, and although facial treatment, everything is made from

natural herb and to be sure that you are safe in this environment. It is to be sure that all products provided by the shop are safe for your body and the environment. And as with traditional ways of doing things, in the second package that we have is washing hair with a massage package for your shoulder, because we are office people, and we always need that. The session last for about half an hour, we were recommended to put away our phones, they told us to please take it away so that we can actually enjoy the moment in peace.

So in that place, when you come to that, you know, I was very tempted to take some pictures of the place because I was impressed. It was so impressed. I couldn't imagine that I can find such place in a city like Saigon. But then I was blown away by how beautiful it is. And people said to me: Just relax, close your eyes, and enjoy because life is very short not to enjoy the moment. So, I put my phone away completely and enjoyed the whole process. After getting my hair wash done. I was invited to a living room area when they did decorate the area in a way that reminds us of a Vietnamese traditional family that we have in the French colonial time. There are things that occur in a very indulgent style with all the tiles, furniture, the soft radio music. And they also have some groceries that you could find in that place, I remember many years ago when I was a kid, maybe six years old, I used to come to the local grocery stores to buy all those things. I loved the interesting language that they use to communicate at the place. And I feel like, okay, I'd love to share this experience to any traveler to Vietnam or especially those solo travelers who also have the need to for relaxation, but also learning also about culture. And this is what the Vietnamese was so proud to have.

Kerry Newsome (28:27)

That sounds wonderful, I'll definitely have to get the name of the place. And I'll put it in the show notes for everybody. And the translation and all that because I'll never be able to say it like, yeah, like you say it. So definitely, I'll put that in.

It's little things like that. I think as a solo traveler, you don't feel guilty about doing because you're not taking your time away from someone else or whatever. You can kind of be a little bit self-indulgent. And you can go, Oh, I think I'm going to have that half an hour or one hour treatment or you know and spoil yourself and I think those little gifts to yourself of kindness and, and just you know a little bit of compassionate time. We've been through some hard years. And I think that one of the things that I got from Vietnam in my last visit was just a feeling of invigoration. I was allowed to spend some time with some friends get invigorated by the kind of the upbeat vibe. Always think that Vietnam's got an upbeat vibe I don't know, I can't explain it any other way but it's 'up' and wherever you go. There's kind of that maybe it's just me, maybe I just you know, attract all the upbeat people.

Camellia Dinh (29:45)

I don't know. Okay, even I'm Vietnamese living here in Vietnam. It's the vibe, and you get to challenge yourself every day and things happening so fast and you see new things coming up your way, one after another. Today you see one event, then tomorrow you see something else coming up. It's very dynamic.

Kerry Newsome (30:10)

Very dynamic. And as I said, like as a female travel solo example, I probably wouldn't travel by myself in Australia. That's a funny thing to say, isn't it? I've gone to visit friends on my own? So, I've got friends in

Cairns and Melbourne and whatever, and I'll go on my own, but I go straight to them. But just to go and take off like I take off around Vietnam. I would never do that in Australia. I don't know why, but I just wouldn't. And I think people would look at me as if I had two heads if I did.

You know, in Vietnam, they don't look at me strangely. And I do meet some great people. And, you know, the other thing I want to take up with you is about the empowerment of women. In Vietnam, Vietnamese women, I often hear people saying, oh, "so and so" has got a business. But the real power behind that business is the wife, or the mother, or the daughter, or the female is the one that is obviously the enterprising one or the, you know, the energetic one or whatever. But I hear it a lot. Is that something you hear as well that women have the power behind the things happening?

Camellia Dinh (31:40) - International Womens Day's

Kind of thing? Yes, that is a very interesting topic. And this has brought it in, I think, and the very right moment. There's a few days. I'm not sure. Actually, tomorrow already, is the **20th of October** is our Vietnamese Women's Day. Okay, in Vietnam, we actually have two Women's Day, I don't think any other country would have that you might have a Mother's Day. Some of the Father's Day. But in here, we have two Women's Day.

The first one is actually on the **8th March**, called the International Women's Day, I think it was for Vietnam, being part of the Soviet Union in the past that we celebrate those days together. So that was one of our big day, celebrating International, international, and women's. And the Vietnamese Women's Day, which is tomorrow is also founded by the Vietnamese union here for women to celebrate our work and what we contribute to the country. That just to one of those proof, to have the proof is to see how much Vietnam as a country being moving ourselves to empower women, and we celebrate our women as well. But I think sometimes when we, when I tried to explain things in certain way, I tried to look deeper into the history and culture and try to explain, because I do believe that everything happened for a reason. And it's happened for decades. I think it probably was something that days long ago and for the longest time that we wouldn't know.

So I tried to file down and try to understand why the woman in Vietnam, like you said, have so much power. And you're right, the mother in the family, she actually is called for everything. Yeah. I think if we go back into 50 years, even during the Vietnam War, we often think about the women as when the family would be a loving mother because to their children, lovely wife, to the husband, but she also a fighter during the war.

And when it comes into the economy, she's also a social worker. So, the women you get an Amahs, you're wearing so many different hats. And the row is very important. And just imagine one day, I come home and my mom stopped cooking. Like, we all ended up having nothing to eat. That is very traditional. The role of the woman in the family is already important. But what happened in the work environment. I believe in hospitality industry, but I think it happens to most our country as well. That the majority of workers in the hospitality industry and tourism industry are female. I think there are some unique attributes to that because women in general, we have the tendency to care for people. We take care of people better. We know how to talk better than men. I hope there's no men listening to us right now. Not saying we are better.

Kerry Newsome (34:51)

Forgive us.

Camellia Dinh (34:52)

I think so, and when it comes to communication, we know how to express our feelings better.

So that also helps when it comes to understanding other people feeling. And for us here is about how to deliver customer service better as well that we need to put ourselves into the shoes of the customer to understand that. But also, once you understand that you will be able to know how to communicate with them in clear language, I think that is a gift that only women would have.

So that is really in general. But when it comes into empowerment in Vietnam, and the only way we can create, we all know when we start looking to compare to other countries, sometime I would say okay, if we just have a quick look when it comes into the bigger situation in Asia, even coming to China, or Korea or Japan, I actually think in Vietnam, we are quite fortunate, in a way, because I do feel like the women in Vietnam are much more dynamic, of course, this is my personal opinion that I look into our history.

And I was very impressed myself knowing that in many other countries, you used to have a king to rule in in the country, right? Throughout the history, you had either a king or an emperor, they were mostly men. But for Vietnam, we had our first female King since year 40. Four-Zero. So, when you travel to Vietnam, you see the road named "Hai Ba Trung", right? It was named after the Trung sisters who were our first female kings. Until today, we still read about them as well as other Vietnamese heroines, like the Lady Trieu. And throughout the wars and history time, we had so many female fighters, they stood up for the country, and we've been looking up to them, and we learn from them. And that actually, I think they become the role model. When we have a closer look at that, yes, as Vietnamese women, we have our soft features, we have our traditional values that we want to keep to being feminine, to being lovable people. But when it comes to work, and when it come into protecting the thing that we love, we also real fighters. And when it comes to that, it just can help being so proud of who we are as Vietnamese women and the opportunity that we have today also to tie in different aspects of life.

Kerry Newsome (37:31) Vietnam Women's Museum

And I think that's the aspect of females that I see in Vietnam as well, I see that strength. And I see when hardship comes, that the female sometimes is quicker to come up with a way to earn some money to feed their family. Because as you say, they have that care factor, they have that family that that is their primary.

So I've seen women come up with these business ideas, or all of a sudden very quickly be able to earn some money to be able to sell some things at the markets or do something very quickly, that will be able to feed their family and give their family support, where the men are trying to obviously get bigger jobs and things like that. There female partner or their mother or the women in the family seem to rally together and are able to, I don't know, pull magic out of the air almost, you know, you'll find them in the markets. And I'll talk to someone they'll say yes, you know, she said she's her family's had a very hard time, she now comes in, she sells fruit and vegetables that she picks up in the farms, like just that very quick, that they will jump into a position of being enterprising and use that strength.

The other thing I don't know whether you've been to in Hanoi, have you been to the [Vietnam women's Museum](#)? Yes. Isn't that a stunning place, and that is just floors and floors of, I guess the history. I think each floor is almost like a chapter of history in Vietnam, of women, and how they have progressed through history, including, as you say, fighting in the various wars for the French and the American etc. And seeing them you know, one minute a mother, the next week, you know, a gun the next week, you know, wearing an Ao Dai, you know, like they can wear many hats, as you say. And the minority groups a sectioned out, as well so that you can see how their lives were so totally and utterly dependent on the land and what the land could provide for their family. So really a great place to visit for everyone in Hanoi. Would be to spend some time to go to that museum.

Definitely recommend it.

Is there anything you want to finish off with any kind of “do's and don'ts” for our women who are listening who are saying, gee, I think I could do this, I can I could come to Vietnam on my own and do my own thing. Do we? Do you want to leave with any passing comments?

Camellia Dinh (40:19)

Well Kerry, anything with you being a professional travel up to Vietnam many times. So, I think we trust that you know so much that Vietnam is a safe country, and also now you have me here. So, all right, I'm so glad to be part of the podcast today. So, you know, you have one more contact.

If I could recommend something for all female traveler, I would recommend as well we do research in advance, on anywhere we traveled to in the world, right, we need to do our research, not only about safety is number one, of course your safeties are important to us. I reassure that Vietnam is very safe,

I still am just going to keep repeating say that Vietnam is very safe, but even more on to finding the experiences that are going to be more suitable for you based on the amount of time that you have in the country; which places that you would like to travel; maybe you want to go to mountainous area, or beach or city area as well. And I think one of the greatest tip'a that I could get would be if you could find a friend in the country, in the in the host country for a example now Kerry knows me, she would contact me in advance, share with me the agenda, see if we can meet along the way. And from time to time. I keep telling Kerry, if you have any questions at all, if you need any help, even when you are in Hanoi, I mean, Saigon, because I can still help. My friends are everywhere. So, there's some certain benefits when you know, a local version. So that's something that you can rely on.

Kerry Newsome (41:56)

And it's kind of one of the reasons why I'm going to be putting some special tours together for 2023 that will have people that you're right, that can kind of give people a little bit more confidence that they can reach out to someone. I've also got a girlfriend in Danang, who, you know, I'll let her know that I'm coming. And she'll say, well watch out, you know, this week, is Typhoon maybe you know, whatever is coming, so or make sure you bring a jacket or things just little things like that.

Or if I want to ask you about something in Saigon there's a show that it's coming up or, you know, we know the restaurant, would you recommend it for, you know, a family celebration or something like that. I really

value that. I think that the local insight that someone like yourself or some people that I'm going to have really helps. I think it does give you just another level of confidence in your travel experience.

Camellia Dinh (42:55)

Kerry, you just mentioned also sorry, in the interview. You just mentioned that your friend remind you to bring a jacket. That's something I want to bring up as well because the weather in Vietnam is very interesting. And we say it's not just like another Bangkok or Singapore where it's all year-round weather. We have very cold winter in northern Vietnam. So, before we travel, probably a bit more research or especially having a friend who tell you if you need to bring a jacket that would be great. Right now, what I'm staying in Saigon we still have warm weather in central Vietnam is a little warm my right now, with all the rainy season we just had, in Hanoi it is starting to get really cold.

Kerry Newsome (43:41)

Freezing in Hanoi in January. I couldn't believe it. I was literally walking shops to find big puffer jackets, you know those ones with a big puffer line. I was just so cold. Believe it I thought you know what you what was I thinking? No? Jacket. So, it was one of the first podcasts. And one of the in the trip planning ones in my show. I made sure I'd clearly identified that. You know, it's not all hot all year round, everywhere. It's certainly the case. Thank you very much for being on the show. I've loved having you. I knew you'd be brilliant to talk about this subject. And just want to say thanks again for your time.

Camellia Dinh (44:23)

Yeah, thank you so much, Kerry, and I look forward to catching up with you again soon.

Time stamps

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- 11.54 - Distinct advantages of solo travel
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- 20.44 - Camellia explains Vietnam's openness to all cultures, religions and communities
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- 40.10 - Making a friend in Vietnam before you arrive can enrich your stay