

Our First Day in Ha Giang

As soon as our four-day tour of the Ha Giang province began, we knew that the trip was going to be special. From far-flung villages and colorful local markets, to rice workers and buffalo boys, we saw so many amazing sights just on the first day, that it was almost overwhelming.



The bus from Hanoi to Ha Giang took eight hours, and we arrived in the evening. Our tour would be starting in the morning, and we were immediately sorry to have not scheduled more time in the town of Ha Giang itself. It's small and picturesque, surrounded by large hills and with almost no traffic. It would have been nice to have a full day here, to see the sights, recover from the bus ride and to acclimate to the northern environment.

But we were excited to get going. It was drizzling when [Chu Chu](#) picked us up. We set off to the north, and within minutes encountered a foreigner on a motorbike, stuck in a ditch. We pulled over to help him, not yet realizing that "tourists in distress" would become a recurring theme of our tour. People underestimate the challenges of driving in Vietnam, especially during the rainy season, and every time we met another westerner with a crash-related injury, we were happier about our decision to hire a guide.