

Si Ma Cai District sits in the northeastern Lao Cai Province. It is about 95km from Lao Cai City, at the elevation of 1,600 meters above sea level. From Lao Cai City, one can take the bus to Si Ma Cai Town. The curving road stretching from the city center to Si Ma Cai is 95km. At some points it is quite steep. Arriving at Si Ma Cai, visitors with [Vietnam visa on arrival](#) can indulge in the pure nature, the mountains and thick forest as well as the fresh atmosphere. They can enjoy the beauty of the pink tam giac mach (buckwheat) flowers, mingle in the local market space and enjoy the local specialties. Along with spectacular nature, Si Ma Cai also attracts visitors for its diverse culture formed by different ethnic minorities: Thu Lao, Mong, Tay, Nung. Each has their own costumes, cuisine and architecture. There are a number of options for one to explore the local life and ethnic culture, including the spring festivals and the markets of the Mong, Thu Lao and Nung ethnic groups.

The area is surrounded by grand limestone mountain ranges. It is no longer a remote locality as there is a concrete road connecting the district with the neighbouring ones. From the Bac Ha plateau, one drives about 10km to get to Lu Than Commune, where the pink buckwheat flower blooms on the hillsides in September. The blend of the green forest and pink violet flowers makes the area look like a painting. Si Ma Cai is also decorated with golden terraced rice fields in Sin Cheng Commune, the grey rock garden in San Chai Commune or the sea of clouds floating in mountains in Thao Chu Phin. The commune is also home to seemingly endless sa moc (evergreen coniferous trees) forest. A boat tour around the Chay river in Ban Me Commune lets you contemplate the tranquil riverscape and valleys.

The Sin Cheng Market takes place every Wednesday with the colourful booths displaying traditional costumes of the Mong ethnic people. There are several local markets worth visiting in Lao Cai: including Bac Ly, Ban Phiet and Coc Ly. The best one is said to be Can Cau Market, about ten kilometres from Bac Ha. The market opens every Saturday and on special occasions in the year. When the foggy dew still lingers in the trees, local ethnic people with baskets on their backs head to the market, some leading their buffalo or horse, some carrying a few chickens. Locals in the neighbouring districts also gather for trading as this is known as one of the biggest horses and buffalo markets. Men buy horses and buffalo; kids snack in the eateries and women mostly gather in the clothes-selling areas. The market is separated into different areas: cattle, garments and food. Some Mong ethnic people wearing bright colourful clothes make the area look like a flower market. Specialty dishes of the region include maize wine, thang co (a dish made from horse meat and its organs), mountain pork, black chicken and Sin Cheng duck. The Quan Than San Mountain range at the height of 2,800 metres also impresses visitors along with the friendly smiles of locals.

Nguyen Van Bach, first-time visitor to Si Ma Cai, said, "I am very impressed with the serenity of the landscape as well as the communal ambiance of the local market.

The local people are also very friendly and helpful. Yet a negative here is the poor infrastructure. There are not many accommodations and the eateries are not diverse. There is no hostel or hotel available, so I don't stay here at night but come to Bac Ha and return Si Ma Cai the day after." Giang Sin Cho, deputy chairman of Si Ma Cai District People's Committee, said, "Tapping the tourism potential is a priority of the locality as well as local people. The district has implemented solutions to push tourism development but they haven't yet yielded big revenue." Currently, Si Ma Cai District welcomes about 15,000 visitors a month.

Source: [Đặt phòng khách sạn](#)