

Bicycle rickshaws parked in busy Chinatown street of Ho Chi Minh City

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Bicycle rickshaws, or cyclos, are parked and empty in a busy Chinatown street of Ho Chi Minh City. The cyclos are painted various colors, but all have a numbered license plate visible in front of the passenger footrest. The large commercial street in the background is filled with pedestrians. At the back of the bicycle rickshaw parking stand, some drivers sit and wait for passengers with whom they will negotiate fares to particular destinations. Bicycle rickshaw fees, like many products and services in Southeast Asia, are open to negotiation or bargaining. When both seller and buyer agree to a common price, the transaction will take place. Both are able to refuse the other's asking price during negotiation, but once agreement is shown for another's stated price, the transaction must move forward at that price. To prevent being cheated in some areas, a firm grasp on local prices is indispensable in Southeast Asia. A good sense of humor and communications skills are also useful because market negotiations are part of the vendors' daily entertainment, and everyone generally tries to remain cheerful, harmonious, and amused during the process of public interactions and otherwise tedious work.



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