

A woman with dark hair is shown from the chest up, looking upwards and to the right. She is holding blue chopsticks with her right hand, bringing a portion of white, shredded food (likely rice vermicelli) to her open mouth. The background is a deep red with a subtle, repeating floral or damask pattern. The overall mood is elegant and focused on the act of eating.

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VIETNAM

JUNE 2013

THE GREAT PRETENDER

The Dangers of
Fake Alcohol

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GO EAST, YOUNG MAN

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HANOI OR SAIGON?

Cultural Nuances
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Eating

VIETNAM

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9 Xuan Dieu, Tay Ho

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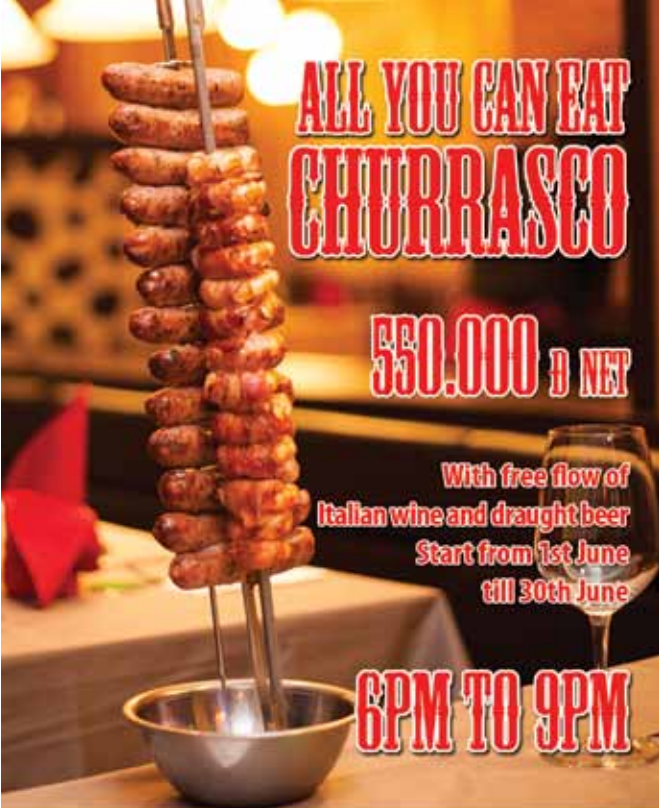
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Editor's Note

ISSUE NO. 4
JUNE 2013

Food for Thought

WITHOUT A DOUBT Vietnam's national dish is *pho* but there's so much more to the country's culinary landscape than this noodle dish that we all know and love. With three distinct regions and countless specialties of individual areas, cities and even tiny towns, it's no wonder that Vietnam is known all over the world for its variety of dishes, each with its own distinctive taste. For example, northerners like to balance spicy, sour and sweet while Hue cuisine is known for bringing diners to tears with some of the spiciest dishes found anywhere in the country. Coming from a Hue background, meals at our family table were never complete without a large side dish of fresh cut chilies. My mom claims it's the reason why Hue people (or maybe just specifically me!) are so hot-tempered. And in keeping with the smooth talking southerners, an extra spoonful of sugar is always welcome in any Saigon kitchen. This month, take a mouth-watering journey with us as we explore some of Vietnam's culinary highlights hinting at the many cultural influences - Chinese, Cambodian and Japanese - that make Vietnamese cuisine so deliciously complex.

As much as we love to eat, we love to travel too. Weigh in on whether modern Shangri-la lives up to its mythical name in Heather Halls' *In La La Land* and join Amberly Young as she sets out to see the world one organic farm at a time

in *Wwoof! Wwoof!* Our resident travel writer and guru James Pham gives us an insight into how luxury hotels are stepping up their game to win guests over with everything from handknit slippers to natural toothbrushes made out of twigs. We also sent him on assignment to check out the breezy beach town of Mui Ne to review the latest resort to break sand there. Before you go, though, fashionistas will want to check out our beachwear special where our fashion editor will have you looking as hot as the sun.

On a more sobering note, Jonathan Rebour investigates the dangers of consuming fake alcohol and how to protect yourself in *The Great Pretender*. Michael Arnold heads out to An Phu to speak to residents about the recent rash of break-ins in *Home Invasion* while our legal eagle gives us the lowdown on how things are likely to play out in cases of divorce between a foreigner and a local.

We've put together a visual feast for you this month, so without further ado, time to grab your chopsticks and let the eating begin! ■

CHRISTINE VAN

Managing Editor

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L I V E S P O R T S

Datebook

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NOW THRU
JUNE 16



What: Tarzan and Friends Circus Production

Where: HCMC Circus, Gia Dinh Park, Hoang Minh Giam, Go Vap

About: In honor of Children's Day, the Hanoi Animal Circus is collaborating with the HCMC Circus to put on its first ever limited production of Tarzan, including exciting aerial stunts, acrobatics, clowns and illusionists. The Hanoi Animal Circus contributes with performances by bears, monkeys, dogs, snakes and birds.

Contact: Visit www.xiechcm.com or phone 094 477 4445

JUNE
8



What: Dodgeball League

Where: 4pm - 10pm at Rach Mieu Stadium, 1 Hoa Phuong, Phu Nhuan

About: Come witness Saigon's third annual clash of the champions, as eight teams come together at this year's fierce dodgeball tournament. The venue will be held at an air conditioned, indoor stadium. Expect cheap cold drinks, food deliveries, prizes and a whole lot of shenanigans. Open for all international players and locals. Free entry.

Contact: Call 0125 777 3385 for more info

JUNE 8-16

What: Mua Vang (Golden Rain) Exhibition

Where: Fine Arts Museum, 97 Pho Duc Chinh, D3

About: An exhibition of 21 lacquer paintings by Panpimon Suwannapongse, the Thai Consul General in Ho Chi Minh City, along with 15 others by artist Hua Thanh Binh. The paintings depict Thai matters - reverence to the Buddha and the Thai King - in Vietnamese lacquer. They are created with materials like coins, gold, silver, stone, beads, mud, seashells and dust.

Contact: Visit www.baotangmythuattphcm.vn or phone 3829 4441



JUNE 8

What: Second Charity Darts Event

Where: 2pm - 6pm at Red Bar, 70-72 Ngo Duc Ke, D1

About: The entry fee is VND200,000 per person, of which VND150,000 will be donated to The Loreto Vietnam-Australia Program, the remaining VND50,000 will be used for a cash prize. Registration deadline is June 6.

Contact: For more info and registrations, email Kris.goetghebur@gmail.com or SMS 090 981 5784



JUNE 11

What: Gallery in the Sky

Where: 5pm - 8pm at Alto Heli Bar, Icon68 Shopping Centre, Bitexco Financial Tower, 2 Hai Trieu, D1

About: Free entrance to a Gallery in the Sky! VinGallery's paintings will be on display, set against the stunning backdrop of Saigon's sunset viewed from up high. This event is in support of Saigon Children's Charity.

Contact: email booking@altosaigon.com or phone 6291 8752



**JUNE
11**

What: Jazz-rock concert with Charles Pasi

Where: 8pm at IDECAF, 31 Thai Van Lung, D1

About: The French Institute in Vietnam and IDECAF present a jazz-rock concert with singer and harmonica player Charles Pasi. Pasi is the composer for the soundtrack for movies like *Actrices* by Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi and *Cineman* by Yann Moix. His first album *Mainly Blue* reached the finals at the Memphis International Blues Challenge in 2007. Tickets priced at VND100,000; students half price.

Contact: Email culturel@consulfrance-hcm.org or phone 3520 6863

JUNE 15

What: A Dose of Escape

Where: 2pm until late at Diamond Island, off Dong Van Cong Highway, D2

About: The first ever dance music festival in Vietnam with over 30 DJs, 5,000 people, and two stages. Appearing on the day will be well-known Vietnam-based mixmeisters and sound architects. Entrance to the dance festival is VND200,000 per person including one drink; VIP table reservation packages are also available.

Contact: Call 093 860 9689 or 0122 705 5122 for more info

JUNE 18

What: Saigon Comedy Nights

Where: Cargo Bar (7 Nguyen Tat Thanh, D4) at 8pm, Costs VND250,000 and includes a beer

About: Two international comedians, together with stand-ups from the local scene, will give people something to laugh about. From the UK will be Stephen Grant, who has been described by *Time Out* as "the consummate comedian." He will be followed by "Aussie humor at its best" Australian Steve Allison. Beer will be going for VND50,000 a glass while spirits and mixers will cost VND80,000.

Contact: Email rod@saigonsoundsystem.com for more info

JUNE 20

What: Art Talk

Where: 6.30pm at VinGallery, 4 Le Van Mien, D2

About: In this month's Art Talk, three very different artists will present their work – a leathersmith, a watercolor painter and an oil painter: Ha Hung Dung, Bridget March, and Nguyen Van Du. In lieu of an entrance fee, bring a bottle or nibbles.

Contact: Email info@vingallery.com or phone 090 772 9846

JUNE 21

What: Fete de la Musique

Where: 6pm – 12am at Rooftop Swimming Pool, Sofitel Saigon Plaza

About: In a throwback to vintage glamour and style, Sofitel will be hosting a 60s themed BBQ party in conjunction with this year's Fete de la Musique and the hotel's BB Forever photography exhibition, which celebrates the life of the iconic Brigitte Bardot. Entry is VND400,000 per person which includes one drink; other packages also available.

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JUNE 22

What: Canada Day Stampede

Where: Crescent Mall, Phu My Hung, 2pm – late

About: Organized by CanCham Vietnam, this celebration of Canada's national day features a day full of games and activities for the whole family including a bull riding competition for those who dare take the challenge. Live music, a full buffet including Canadian steak and free flow of beverages and Caesar drinks are also featured.

Contact: Email hcmc@canchamvietnam.org for more info

JUNE 23

What: Shabazz Palaces

Where: 6pm - late at Cargo Bar, 7A Nguyen Tat Thanh, Q4

About: New Saigon alternative music collective O DAU? welcomes Seattle-based hip-hop duo Shabazz Palaces (Sub Pop) to Cargo Bar. Tickets priced at VND250,000 (in advance) and VND300,000 (at the door).

Contact: Tickets are available from the Q4 box office or by emailing q4.info@saigonsoundsystem.com or odausaigon@gmail.com



JULY 17

What: Arsenal vs Vietnam National Football Team

Where: 7pm at My Dinh Stadium, Ha Noi

About: Arsenal will become the first-ever English Premier League team to play a match in the Southeast Asian nation, with its top players set to be enlisted for the visit as part of its pre-season Asia Tour 2013. Ticket details for the Vietnam match and further details will be confirmed soon.

Contact: Visit www.arsenal.com/asiatour2013 and keep up to date with all news and activities being planned for the tour

Troi Oi

The city by the numbers

15

the proposed minimum age to drive a motorbike under 50cc (currently 16) by Nguyen Hoang Hiep, the vice chairman of the National Committee for Traffic Safety.

"Many students [under 16] are [already] driving motorbikes to school. This

shows a real demand that can't be prevented or controlled," Hiep told local media.

Other sources say that many students under 16 are driving motorbikes to schools and parking them in out-of-the-way places to avoid the traffic police who wait at school parking lots to issue fines to underage drivers.



VND7 MILLION

the fine levied on Vietnam Airlines captain Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Y along with a one month suspension for taking photos with a former tourism envoy and model / actress in the cockpit while the plane was in flight. A deputy and chief flight attendant were also fined lesser amounts for their involvement when the photos surfaced online of the actress posing in the vice captain's chair and hugging two flight attendants in the cabin.



1,000

seat floating restaurant is set to re-open in late May, early June. The three-story Esila Ship, anchored at the Nha Rong Wharf in D1, has a terrace, an event hosting hall, BBQ area, music room and a bar.

**1.6
MILLION**

the number of homosexuals, bisexuals and transgenders in Vietnam who are facing difficulties in identification, cohabitation, birth-giving and adoption,

according to information released by the Institute for Social, Economic and Environmental Research.

The seminar on homosexual issues jointly held by the agency and the Institute for Legislation Research said that in countries where same-sex marriage is allowed by law, the proportion of people with sexually transmitted diseases is low, reiterating the Health Ministry's statement that same-sex marriage should be allowed, since it is a human right.

29

traffic police officers suspended in Tay Ninh for allegedly taking bribes from drivers who committed traffic violations.

These officers will be suspended for one month for taking bribes in lieu of fines from drivers caught overloading, speeding, and driving in the wrong lanes.

A similar case was reported in central Thanh Hoa Province last year, when the provincial People's Court sentenced two former traffic police officers for taking a bribe of US\$240 from a truck driver who had violated a traffic rule, with each receiving 30-36 months of jail time.

49%

decline in newborn mortality in Vietnam between 1990 and 2011, putting it among the top 10 countries worldwide to have made the biggest

strides in saving newborn lives over the past 20 years, according to international charity Save the Children.

In its 14th annual State of the World's Mothers report, Vietnam was ranked the 86th best country for mothers, based on factors such as their health, education and economic status, as well as critical child indicators such as health and nutrition. It finished ahead of the Philippines, Indonesia and Myanmar, but ranked below Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

Overall, Finland was ranked the best place to be a mother, while worst was the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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HOT

What's Hot & What's Not

NOT

HOT

Inspirational speaker Nick Vujicic delivered a message of hope for people with disabilities throughout Vietnam in late May. Vujicic, born without any limbs, has made a career in testifying to the power of determination to overcome setbacks.



NOT

The exorbitant ticket costs charged to local people to hear Vujicic speak, something most disabled Vietnamese people could never afford. If able-bodied wealthy locals want to be inspired by stories of overcoming the odds, do they really need to look outside of Vietnam?

HOT

IMF figures released May 27 showed pleasing results for Vietnam with solid growth in the national GDP coming in at over six percent.



NOT

Closer analysis of the data made available revealed that a stunning 95 percent of the total GDP was borrowed from the IMF itself, as well as from other offshore sources.

HOT

Trees. With a population of around 10 million people driving around on 5.6 million registered motorbikes, the city needs more of them!



NOT

Tree transportation. Just ask Vietnamese 'Driver of the Year' Ngo Tan Thao who cut power to almost the entire south of Vietnam on May 22 when the tree he was shifting struck the north-south 500kV power grid.

HOT

The super-cute Korean Gwiyomi craze has now officially landed in HCMC in a big way. Young Vietnamese women everywhere are posting videos of themselves dancing with their fingers only in an attempt to seem sweeter than a schoolgirl. Oddly disturbing, but innocent enough. Maybe.



NOT

Psy's pelvic thrust dance designed to follow up the *Gangnam Style* sensation. Somehow, pushing women over and forcing them to smell his farts seems far more like a celebration of Korean misogyny rather than satire.

The Bulletin

New in HCMC...



Summer School

The Australian International School will launch its summer program for July 2013. There will be many fun activities-based classes for children aged between three and ten taking place at the Thao Dien campus such as Master Chef and Animal Planet. Also at the campus, there will be a Life Skills English program which is an enquiry-based program for children aged 10 – 16. For children wishing to focus on developing their English language skills, there is a five week summer English program at the Thu Thiem Campus for ages 3 -18.

For more details, visit www.aisvietnam.com



MEKONG MOVE

Previously located on Ngo Duc Ke, Mekong Quilts and Mekong Creations have recently celebrated their move to a brand new space on Le Loi. The new space holds a large collection of handmade quilts and home ware products including a new range of bamboo furniture. The store features floor to ceiling glass views of the busy Le Loi thoroughfare below with a timber interior in keeping with the natural materials of the range on offer. Mekong Quilts and Mekong Creations is located at 1st floor, 68 Le Loi, D1.

Little Dalat in Saigon

Agnes Cafe - Dalat Coffee & Flower Shop (11A-B Thao Dien, D2) offers fresh Dalat coffee, along with refreshing smoothies and juices. A breakfast and lunch menu feature items such as the Breakfast Burrito, Trudy's Melted Meatloaf Sandwich, Baja Tacos and more. Free delivery or dine in.

STW Group Launches Edge Asia

The first regional digital advertising network in Southeast Asia, Edge Asia has a foothold across Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Edge Asia has more than 450 staff with a client roster including brands such as HSBC, Visa, MSN, AIA, and Samsung. This is part of STW Group, Australasia's leading marketing content and communications group.

For more info, visit www.edge-asia.com

Gourmet Burger Night

Every Wednesday, starting at 5pm at Snap Café (32 Tran Ngoc Dien, D2), there's going to be a weekly burger feast with a large variety of gourmet burgers such as Spicy Jalapeño Cheddar Burger with Sriracha Mayo (VND180,000), Chili Cheeseburger - Cheddar Burger topped with Chili Con Carne (VND185,000), and many more. A promo of 2 draft beer or 2 glasses of house wine for free will also be on offer.

Plan B – Champagne Bistro

Plan B is the city's newest high end eating and drinking spot specializing in an expert drinks menu to accompany the fantastic French bistro food, served until 1am. With DJs playing regularly and a live stage area it's sure to pull in an eclectic crowd.



Gourmet Meatballs

Nana Marie's Gourmet Meatballs unique food cart will launch this month serving homemade meatballs. They will initially offer two kinds of meatball subs - the Classic Meatball (a combination of minced beef and pork blended with secret Italian herbs and spices, bathed in a slow-cooked savory tomato sauce) and the Sweet & Sour Pork Meatball (an infusion of Asian-inspired ingredients with hints of ginger, green onions swimming in a tangy pineapple-based sweet and sour sauce). Both come on a toasted baguette. In addition, fresh cooked-in-front-of-you chicken breast sandwiches and pastas will also be on offer. Accompanying sides include fries, garlic bread, and Caribbean rice.

Located at 60 Bui Vien, Nana Marie's is open from 5pm till late.

Grand opening is June 7 with limited hours (Fridays to Sundays only). In July hours will extend to every day except Tuesdays. There will be a Canada Day 20 percent discount on July 1.

For the full menu and updates, visit nanamaries.weebly.com



A Wake Up Call

How Westerners and Vietnamese differ on the method of putting their children to bed

TEXT BY MICHAEL ARNOLD

IF THERE'S ANYTHING that's a universal heart-warmer, it's the sight of a sleeping kid snuggled up warmly beneath the blankets. No grumpy parent can resist that completely relaxed and totally intent expression of their own child absorbed in sleep - the only thing capable of making us forget the total chaos they're capable of when they're awake.

Of course, it's supposed to be the parent's task to get them into that state in the first place and to wake them up again at the appropriate time - something that takes far more skill than you might think. My daughter, quite infuriatingly, just doesn't enjoy sleep at all - far too interested in every ambient noise and the shifting lights on the ceiling from passing bikes outside, she requires a great deal of cajoling - bordering on pleading - just to get her to keep her head flat on the pillow. As soon as the gathering morning glow touches the curtains, she's up again, just in time to remind me to feel guilty for heading off to work.

Of course, not every kid's like mine, but it does lead me to wonder - do the Vietnamese deal with this problem any better than I do? Are Vietnamese methods traditionally tender or something more brutal?

Single mother Minh Anh has long since given up on proper bedtimes for her young son who, despite having a bedroom with most things a kid should want, insists on sharing a bed with his mom. "Minh Viet's a late sleeper," she says. "He'll watch TV until the broadcasting finishes at around 11 and there's nothing left to see. I usually have to work late on my laptop anyway, and inevitably I'll turn around to find he's simply switched off."

The late bedtimes are a problem for a kid whose international school classes start at 7.30am, but Minh Anh doesn't have to face this struggle alone. "His father calls him every morning at 6.30am. I hold my phone to his ear so that he can hear his Dad's voice. He likes that, but it doesn't get him out of bed - I usually turn on Cartoon Network and slowly raise the volume until his natural curiosity to watch what's happening takes over."

"The one thing that always gets him up is if I tell him he's going to make me late. He just loves me enough not to want to cause me any trouble. He gets to school on time."

A Stronger Attitude

If Vietnamese sleep training is essentially a gentle science, it's one that failed Amy Vu, whose daughter Sofia's troubled sleep habits only improved after leaving Ho Chi Minh City and going abroad.

"I was breastfeeding until she was 18 months old," she says. "At the time, she kept waking up

at night, and I thought I had to feed her so she could get back to sleep. The situation got worse and worse - we were both very tired, and neither of us slept well."

After two months in New Zealand, however, Amy encountered a nurse who advised her to stop feeding her daughter at night. "She cried for three nights consecutively, and I wasn't allowed to touch her or say anything to her. I just let her cry until she got too tired and went back to sleep. However, it worked perfectly after the third night; she cried less and stopped completely on the fourth."

"Now she sleeps very deeply through the night. I'm so grateful to that nurse - most of the Vietnamese advice I received was focused on her need to eat rather than sleep," Amy adds. "Vietnamese people seem to nurture their kids too much. We're not strong enough to teach babies to be independent. We're too scared to hear babies crying and compromise too easily. Westerners are much stronger in their training attitudes. They gave me clear, confident instructions - exactly what new mums need."

Local restaurateur and expat father Scott Marquis made similar moves in training his daughter to do without a night feed despite local attitudes, but then he's got it easy: "Zoey is a great sleeper, and has been since she was born." That being said, Zoey's situation is a little different from most kids, in that with both parents working nights, she tends to sleep their hours too.

Regular napping keeps Zoey fresh. "On a normal day she naps twice, from around 12pm-1pm till she wakes up, and then again in the early evening before she comes to visit us at the restaurant. We try to put her down between 10pm-11pm, but it doesn't always work," he laughs. Wake-up times are similarly effortless: "We just let her sleep until she wakes up. If we have to take her out before she's awake, it's no problem. She just gets a little cranky because we didn't lie around in bed and play with her for awhile."

What surprises Scott most is that Zoey's Vietnamese grandmother seems to take their Western approach in stride. Zoey doesn't co-sleep with her parents, unlike most Vietnamese children, and sleeps in fully air-conditioned rooms - habits that expats often report cause heated debates with their Vietnamese in-laws, who are concerned that Western child rearing techniques buck time-tested traditions.

"Duc's mom has been really good about doing things our way when we're around. She follows our 'no sweet milk or sugar' rule, and we let her put a hat on Zoey no matter how hot it is when she takes her outside," explains Scott. "It might be that Zoey is so smart, alert, happy, and active that Grandma just doesn't question us about everything." ■







IMAGE BY NAM QUAN

The Eternal Debate: Hanoi or Saigon?

Through simple yet poignant images, graphic artist Le Minh Nhat revisits the rivalry between Vietnam's two great cities

TEXT BY JAMES PHAM

STAR TREK OR STAR WARS? Creation or evolution? Spider Man or Batman? iOS or Android?

Thanks to budding graphic artist, Le Minh Nhat, 25, there's now buzz around the greatest local eternal debate: Hanoi or Saigon?

Born in Thanh Hoa, 136 km south of Hanoi, Nhat moved to Ho Chi Minh City at the age of 18 to attend university. Armed with a degree in IT, it didn't take long for him to discover that he didn't like working with hardware. "I love images. Even TV commercials and advertising posters speak to me." So it was back to graphics design school.

For his final project, Nhat created a whimsical book outlining the differences

between Hanoi and Saigon, highlighting

cuisine, dress, daily habits and work culture. "I love traveling and wanted to work with the theme of Vietnamese culture. The idea came from reading an online forum where people argued which region was better - the north or south. But it was very biased. So I wanted to make a pictorial comparison but with a narrower scope of just Hanoi and Saigon. As someone who's lived in the north and the south, I based the book on my own observations, asked family members and did a lot of research on YouTube and read articles."

The product was a 31 page book which Nhat uploaded onto Behance, an online platform to showcase and discover creative work. Picked

up by websites, blogs and media, the simple, poignant illustrations have gone viral. Within a week, more than 20,000 people had viewed his book. "My purpose in uploading my work was to find prospective employers. I wrote it in English because I wanted my foreign teacher to be able to read it. I didn't think about monetizing it or securing rights to it."

The images obviously resonate with viewers. "I think people yearn for traditional culture. People also like to compare things. 80 to 90 percent of the comments have been positive. People have given me lots of compliments and also some suggestions to fix the spelling and grammar. People also comment on their own observations. I think people who live in Saigon but go to Hanoi for business really get my work."

Nhat is currently interning as a graphic artist but has plans to make more books, with topics ranging from teenage slang to more on the differences between north and south. T-shirts are also in the works as is getting the book published.

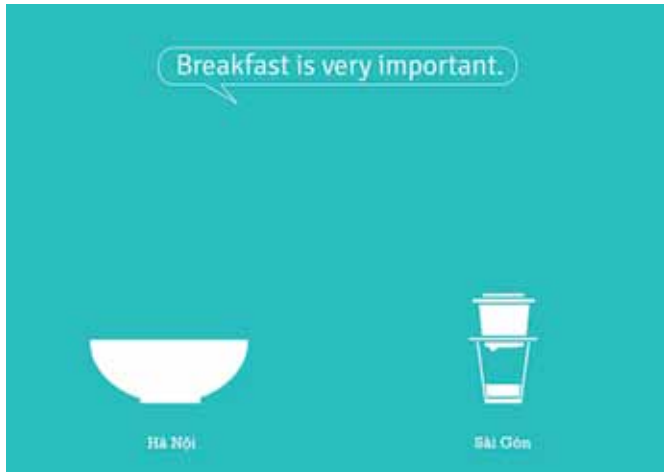
On future projects, he says: "I want to make something to help first-time visitors better understand Vietnamese culture. I feel Vietnamese culture is like a gold mine that hasn't been fully excavated. If foreigners can come to Vietnam and write books for other foreigners about Vietnamese culture, why can't we?"

When asked which city he prefers, Nhat answers coyly, "Every place has its own

characteristics. You can live anywhere as long as you're happy."

Scan to see more of Minh Nhat's work. ■





"Life is so rushed here in HCMC. Sometimes people only have time for a coffee and then head off to work."



"In Hanoi, the custom is to wish someone a good meal before eating. In Saigon, you just dig in."



"People in the north are more flowery in their speech, while Saigonese are straight talking."



"This image illustrates the difference in the northern accent and the southern one. People in the south tend to speak with a higher pitch."



"In the north, we go home early to be with our families, but here, people like to stay out to the early morning hours."

THE MYTH:

Do motorbike tire repair places put nails out on the road to get more customers?

THE SHORT AND simple answer is yes, they do. Tire repair shops along various streets have gained a reputation for their willingness to do just about anything to get more customers. Local Vietnamese have taken to calling them the “nail devils” because of the high number of traffic accidents they cause by littering nails on the roads.

This practice is punishable by Vietnamese law due to the high number of injuries - and even death - it has caused in recent years.



IMAGE BY NAM QUAN

THE MYTH:

Is it true that a Vietnamese woman and male foreigner can't stay in the same hotel room together unless they are married?

THIS DEPENDS ON who you ask. It used to be (and in some places, still is) that a couple going into a hotel for the night would be asked for proof of their marriage (usually the marriage certificate, but two ID cards with the same home address would also do). This practice has roots in a particularly unfortunate phrasing of clause 8.5 of the defunct regulation number 02/2001/TT-BCA, April 5th, 2001. Clause 8.5 states that “the accommodation provider must provide separate rooms for men and women unless they are family members or husband and wife, if they have adequate facility.”

While clause 8.5 did not expressly forbid different sex cohabitation, it has been used as a standard process for the majority of hotels in Vietnam. Coupled with Vietnamese traditional moral values, the practice has since been accepted as the status quo for the hospitality industry and interpreted as a legitimate ban.

In the Vietnamese legal community, clause 8.5 was and is a cause for debate. While many lawyers interpret it as a functional ban against cohabitation, just as many argue that the spirit of the law is to protect guests from being exploited by unscrupulous accommodation service providers, not to give legal weight to a moral standpoint that may or may not be appropriate. This same group of lawyers also pointed that no charge has ever been made against either the guests or the hotel in question on clause 8.5. Whenever

a charge is pressed, it is usually over prostitution or drug crimes.

In 2010, a new regulation number 33/2010 TT-BCA was introduced as replacement for the old one. The exact sentence that perpetuated the entire practice was conspicuously missing. However, instead of bringing closure to a much debated issue for the last decade, the new regulation only threw the whole thing into further confusion. Because the original ‘ban’ was

never a truly legitimate ban in the first place, owing its strength more to local custom than bulletproof legal clauses, so even with the new regulation, it can't be said to have been ‘lifted’ either. Either way, the debate is now entirely theoretical and kept strictly within the Vietnamese legal community. **By NPD Khanh**

Do you have a myth you want us to bust? Email us at saigonmythbusters@oivietnam.com. ■





CREATED FROM A need by British officers to shake off the excesses of the weekend, hashing began in 1938 in Malaysia. Keeping the public school traditions of songs and nicknames alive, while also keeping fit, they would play harriers by chasing a paper trail on a cross country run before finally enjoying a drink at the end. Hashing has become a global phenomenon, with an estimated 2,000 groups worldwide.

The Saigon Hash House Harriers was started in 1990 by workers at the British Petroleum Plant in Ho Chi Minh City and has been going strong more or less ever since. Each Sunday a hash meets at 1.30pm outside the Caravelle where a bus awaits to whisk away harriers (no prior sign-up necessary) to the running area for the day. Dong Nai Province has been the main location and the 'hares' will have papered out the trail the day before, laying colored strips to be followed as you find your way around the course.

Problems have previously occurred where on the day of the hash the road has been bulldozed up, or the run has accidentally wandered through private

Hashing it Out

Saigon's most bizarre and certainly most eclectic sport and social club

TEXT BY JONATHAN REBOURS

property, or even well run routes have inexplicably transformed into barren swampland. Experience is on their side though and the club has always managed to have a good time, despite such occasional obstacles.

Around 50 hashers a week join the event, combining regular expats, locals and visiting hashers from around the world. "It truly is the most diverse social club in the city. We have anyone from company CEOs to teachers, students and NGO workers, you name it, they've probably hashed at some time or another," says Julia Stanton, the Grand Mistress.

This mix is what makes hashing such a great thing to be part of, Julia is keen to stress. "There are no boundaries based on fitness level or occupation, but what

you absolutely must have is a good sense of humor."

After the final runner or walker has finished, the hash holds a 'circle'. This is an important component of hashing worldwide, where new members are welcomed, songs are sung and, most alarmingly, people are 'charged'. A charge can range from any offence, from using your mobile phone on the course, to

being involved, however tenuously, with something in the news that week.

"At last week's hash," recalls Julia, "a British coffee dealer joined the hash, and in the Thai news there were reports of the mistreatment of elephants on coffee plantations, so the Brit in question was subsequently 'iced'." The man had to sit on a block of ice as penance for the crimes of his trade. Like Julia says, "you cannot take yourself too seriously."

Every week also involves an 'on-on,' a post-hash dinner held somewhere in Saigon along with a well-deserved drink after a tiring day.

To join, visit www.saigonhash.com.

Would your club like to be featured in Oi? Email us at editorial@oivietnam.com ■



Eating VIETNAM

We are what we eat – literally. As we consume food, it becomes a part of us, sculpting away at the physical shape of our bodies. But food also binds us to others. Food takes us back in time, linking us to the recipes and rituals of previous generations. Food ties us to our family, and to our wider communities. And food also transports us to into other worlds, offering us tastes of unknown culture and traditions.

As our cover story takes you on a culinary journey through Vietnam, one bite at a time, discover the stories and history of the nation's unique dishes.

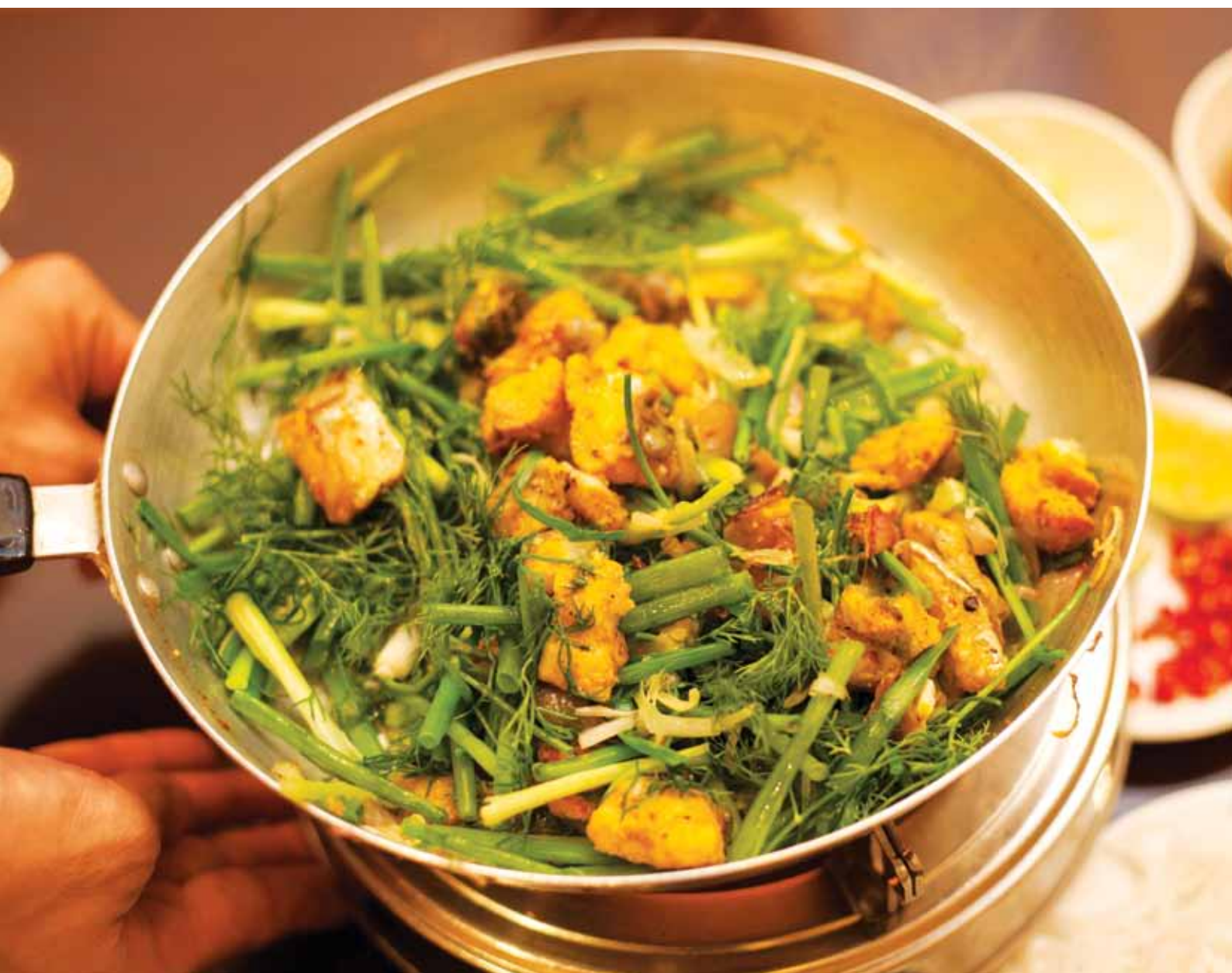
CHUC AN NGON!

TEXT BY JAMES PHAM & JULIAN AJELLO

IMAGES BY NAM QUAN

Hanoi:

CHA CA LA VONG



THIS ICONIC DISH from Hanoi is said to have originated over a hundred years ago in a restaurant in Hanoi's Old Quarter that shares, and still bears, the same name. "It was invented by the Doan family and they gave it the name La Vong," says Hong, the owner of Papaya restaurant. La Vong is the Vietnamese name for Lu Shang, the Chinese military strategist of the 11th century B.C. who helped overthrow the Shang Dynasty. "They gave it his name

because they had a small idol of La Vong in their restaurant. All the people who came to eat there saw the idol and began calling it La Vong's restaurant," she further explains.

Distinctive is the first word that leaps to mind when describing this culinary achievement. The incorporation of dill accounts for much of it. Dill is abundant in cha ca La Vong, which is unusual as it's seldom found in Southeast Asian cuisine. Many believe that it's the copious amount of dill

in this dish that may prevent it from being more popular in Vietnam.

Accompanying the dill is turmeric, shrimp paste, and, of course, fish sauce, which combine with chilies, noodles, and a host of fresh herbs that light up the fish with flavor.

WHERE TO TRY IT:

Cha ca La Vong
36 Ton That Thiep, D1

CAO LAU

Hoi An:



IN A REGION brimming with culinary triumphs, *cao lau* is the dish. Made with noodles, pork, and greens, it is held that the unique flavor of *cao lau* comes from a special elixir used to prepare the noodles. It is comprised of lye and water drawn from ancient Cham wells hidden around Hoi An and Quang Nam provinces.

Kieu, who hails from Hoi An and used to help her grandmother run a *cao lau* stand, claims: “It is because of this brew that some say only *cao lau* from Hoi An is authentic; all other incarnations use water that comes from

somewhere else.”

Other explanations that don’t carry such an urban legend tone propose that the town’s origins as a Japanese trading center in the 17th century prior to the Chinese establishment helped influence the dish. The similarity between *cao lau* and *soba* noodles lends some credence to this. There is no definitive explanation on the history of this storied dish, but luckily that doesn’t prevent anyone from enjoying it.

One feature that people who try the dish take note of is the texture. “*Cao lau* noodles are firm and chewy, like the Japanese *soba* noodles,

instead of the typically soft rice noodles found in other Vietnamese noodle dishes,” says Kieu.

Although *cao lau* is considered a jewel in Vietnam’s culinary crown, many advise against trying to create it at home. Because of the effort required to prepare all the ingredients, the undertaking is quite extravagant. It’s better to leave it to the pros.

WHERE TO TRY IT:

Quan Fai Fo

139 Le Thi Hong Gam, D1
3822 5236

COM HEN

Hue:



HUE HAS REVERENT status among the many cities and regions of Vietnam. Home to ancient kings and meals fit for them, it's ironic that one of Vietnam's most loved dishes is far from the imperial cuisine for which Hue is known. *Com hen*, which means 'rice and baby clams', is a peasant dish that was a staple for the multitudes of poor in the Hue region who rely on the abundance of clams found in the Huong River and the produce they grow in their own gardens to feed themselves.

"Poor people started going to the island of Con Hen a long time ago to catch clams," explains Tam, the proprietor of Tib Restaurant that specializes in Hue cuisine. "They would use the clams along with the things they grew in the garden."

One of the more complicated dishes offered in Vietnam, it includes a multitude of ingredients that produces a harmony of pleasing aromas—rice, onions, and grease—and tastes that include sweet, bitter, sour, salty,

buttery, and spicy.

The ingredients in *com hen* are the clams, a variety of greens, rice, and a slew of spices and sauces. "The clams are what make it special, of course, but it's the sate and the shrimp paste that turn it into what it is, a delicious dish that's been enjoyed for over 200 years," Tam says.

WHERE TO TRY IT:

Tib
187 Hai Ba Trung, D1



Trang Bang:

BANH TRANG TRANG BANG



FORTY KILOMETERS NORTHWEST of Ho Chi Minh City lies the tiny district of Trang Bang, population less than 200,000. Best known as a blip along the road to the wildly popular religious sites of the Cao Dai Temple or the Black Virgin Temple in Tay Ninh, Trang Bang is now known as the production center for all kinds of rice paper. The district of Trang Bang reportedly has up to a thousand *banh trang* 'factories' ranging from the mom and pop enterprises making the wraps out of their own houses, to village collectives where each family looks after one link in the process.

Out of these many production centers, a few hundred are dedicated to the making of the rice paper named after the region, *banh trang phoi suong Trang Bang* (dew wetted rice paper). This labor-intensive wrap starts off with two layers of rice and tapioca flour,

thinly steamed, one on top of the other, over a stretched piece of canvas. Once dry, the rice paper is grilled over an open flame, making it puffy and opaque. In the early morning dew, the paper is briefly left out to soak up the elements. Sealed in bags, the lightly salty rice paper remains pliable and chewy for about a week, without needing to be wet before use.

Hong Em and her family have been making rice paper for over 20 years in their small house. "With just three of us, we can make 500-700 every day. We only do the steaming and grilling, though. We then turn it over to another family to finish the process," she says. When asked why it's become a Trang Bang specialty, Hong Em's simple roots show through. "Because it's good. It's different," she posits succinctly.

Traditionally, this dew wetted rice paper is used to wrap slices of boiled pork, crunchy

pickled vegetables and vermicelli, all dipped in either fish sauce or fermented shrimp sauce. But the highlight for many is actually the raw herbs that accompany the dish. With odd names like water dropwort, perill and Spanish Flag, the dozen or so herbs grown predominantly in the area represent the full range of sour, sweet, astringent and even spicy. Textures are also varied with some leaves being hard and waxy while others are eaten stalk and all.

Because of the many of ingredients involved, *banh trang Trang Bang* is most often eaten out, commonly enjoyed with rice wine or an icy cold beer.

WHERE TO TRY IT:
Banh Trang Trang Bang Hoang Ty
 106 Cao Thang, D3
 3833 2077

COM TAM

Ho Chi Minh City:



WITH SAIGON BEING Vietnam's melting pot, where almost every regional dish from around the country can be had, it's ironic that locals would be hard pressed to name a dish that is uniquely Ho Chi Minh City. Perhaps a truer indicator, though, is to travel to other parts of the country and suddenly realize what is conspicuously missing - the familiar *com tam* stands that vie for space on nearly every Saigon street corner.

Hien, a recent Hanoi transplant explains why the simple rice and pork dish, so wildly popular in Saigon, simply hasn't caught on in the North. "In Hanoi, we're not used to eating rice for breakfast. It's mainly *pho* and other soups, or steamed foods. We also don't eat a lot of meat for breakfast. And the sauce is too sweet for our taste. When it's sold in Hanoi,

the recipe has to be reworked."

The story of the origins of *com tam* as a peasant dish is widely known. Born of necessity in the farmlands of the south, workers kept the broken grains of rice unsuitable for sale and served it up with pork skin, one of the cheapest cuts of the animal, tossed with powdered roasted grains of rice for a smoky flavor, all doused in a sweet concoction of fish sauce. With students, travelers and families looking for a better life in the city, the quintessential comfort food made its way to the big stage.

A fancy version of humble *com tam* even made headlines last year when American-born Vietnamese home cook, Christine Ha, used it to win Season 3 of the reality cooking show *US Masterchef*. Her dish was an elevated

rethink of braised pork belly with rice, with the addition of crispy kale and maitake mushrooms, and topped with the familiar fried egg.

The basic components of *com tam* are simple: rice and pork (ribs, chops or shredded). Typical add-ons include pork skin called *bi*, an egg-based quiche with ground pork and tree ear mushrooms known as *cha* and a fried egg, *trung chien*, all topped with a spoonful of scallion oil.

WHERE TO TRY IT:

Com Tam An La Ghien (97B Nguyen Trai, D1) restaurants serve up 20 variations on the dish, some traditional, some with a modern twist, like the addition of sate or salt-crusted pork.



Mekong Delta Region: HU TIEU NAM VANG



IF YOU EVER find yourself deep down south in towns like Soc Trang or Tra Vinh, you may be surprised to find some of the residents with slightly darker skin and features unlike your typical Vietnamese including wider noses, rounder eyes and the occasional curly hair. These are Khmer Krom - ethnically Cambodian but who in most cases, have lived in Vietnam for decades, even generations.

While Cambodian cuisine hasn't exactly made an entrance on the world's culinary stage, one dish in particular is enjoyed throughout the south in Vietnam - *hu tieu Nam Vang* or Phnom Penh style noodle soup. It has been good naturedly called an international dish - created by Cambodians, refined by the Chinese community there and served up Vietnamese style. In its essence, *hu tieu Nam Vang* is a pork broth with chewy tapioca

noodles, served up with ground pork and other meats such as offal, poached shrimp and sliced pork. The Vietnamese version also has a boiled quail egg and herbs like Chinese parsley, chives and bean sprouts, all topped with deep fried onions. The dish can also be ordered dry, with all the noodles and meat mixed with a dash of soy sauce and chili sauce and the broth served on the side, to be sipped while slurping the dry ingredients. The Chinese version is flavored with soy sauce, while the actual version served in Cambodia is sweeter.

Ly, and her husband Muoi, own Lien Hua, one of the city's most well-known *hu tieu Nam Vang* eateries, selling an average of 300 bowls a day. Ly is second generation Cambodian, with her parents emigrating to Vietnam in 1975. They brought along with them the family recipe, opening their

first restaurant when she was 10. "We had restaurants in every house we rented, near Le Thanh Ton and Nguyen Hue. Now we own five shops all over town." While Ly only speaks a few words of Khmer, she's made the Cambodian soup for decades. "I've eaten it in Phnom Penh and it's different from the kind served here. It's sweet, but the sweetness comes from sugar and MSG. In my shop, the sweetness of the broth comes from stewing the bones from 4am every morning. The beauty of great *hu tieu Nam Vang* is in the chewiness of the noodles, the clarity of the broth, the freshness of the shrimp poached to order and the different cuts of pork."

WHERE TO TRY IT:
Hu Tieu Nam Vang Lien Hua
321 An Duong Vuong, Q5

LAU MAM

Chau Doc:

LAU MAM



IF YOU FIND THE smell of *nuoc mam* noxious, you've obviously never tried *lau mam*. A specialty of the *Mien Tay Nam Bo* region of Vietnam, a vast area of southern Vietnam bordered by Cambodia to the west, the Gulf of Thailand to the south and the East Sea, *lau mam* is essentially a seafood hot pot with fermented fish as its base, eaten with vermicelli noodles, a heap of herbs and blossoms, and sides of sliced cucumbers, eggplant and green banana, all dipped in tamarind fish sauce. It's a visual, if not olfactory feast, with the bright green of the herbs, the yellow of the squash blossoms, the purple of the eggplant and the pink flesh of the fish waiting to be cooked in the reddish-orange broth. It typifies down home cooking because all the ingredients are locally plentiful, found in ponds, fields, rivers and home gardens.

Nestled just over the border from Cambodia and with easy access to the Hau River, the city of Chau Doc has emerged as the fermented fish capital of Vietnam. The broth for *lau mam* starts with sticky fermented fish paste made from freshwater carp or minnows, either from the river or the rice fields. After the fish is cleaned and the guts removed, it's salted and left in barrels to cure for about a month. The fish is then cleaned and dredged in rice grains, roasted and crushed into powder. Carefully laid out in rows, the fish is again put into barrels, this time soaked in fish sauce for another two to six months. Finished off with spices and palm sugar, the fermented fish paste is ready to be the base for a number of pungent dishes.

Khanh, the owner of Lau Mam Quan Vy, acknowledges the very much acquired taste and smell of her specialty. "After we buy two

different kinds of fish paste from Chau Doc, we bring it back to the shop and cook it down until there's nothing left but bones. We'll add in our own ingredients, like pineapple, lemongrass and *ngai bun* (a regionally grown root related to the galangal). I'll have to admit, though, that it's pretty smelly. So we cook it at night or early in the morning before customers come. We also have a pretty big exhaust fan!"

Both sides of Khanh's family come from the Nam Bo region, so she grew up eating it. "You can't make it for one. It's a dish meant to be shared. My mom would make it every time we had a family get together."

WHERE TO TRY IT:
Lau Mam Quan Vy
190/19 Su Van Hanh, D5
3835 4815

Phu Quoc:

GOI CA TRICH



TO FOODIES, TERMS like sashimi and carpaccio (raw protein sliced thinly) and ceviche (raw seafood marinated in citrus juices) are nothing new. But what may surprise some is that Phu Quoc, Vietnam's largest island located just eight miles off the Cambodian coastline, has its own version of carpaccio meets ceviche in *goi ca trich*. In Vietnamese, the word *goi* refers to food that is rolled up and *ca trich* is a small schooling fish and part of the sardine family.

The dish itself is simple. Start with the freshest sardinellas you can find, filleted, but with its silvery skin left on. It's then tossed with homemade vinegar, a concoction of bananas, sugar cane, guava, sugar and water, essentially using acid to cook the fish until the flesh begins to turn white on

the outside while still pink in the middle. Some who prefer it more well done will heat the vinegar first. Lime juice may also be used instead of vinegar. Then it's rolled in damp rice paper, along with moist shredded coconut, slivers of onion and shallots and wild herbs, served with a dipping sauce made of Phu Quoc fish sauce, chilies, garlic and crushed peanuts.

Dung, a native of Phu Quoc and now a cook at Liberty Central, remembers the dish of his youth. "I remember it being difficult to roll because of all the ingredients, so my parents would roll it for me even into my teens!" he recalls with an embarrassed smile. "It's great because it doesn't cost much to make, but the dish has everything. All the flavors are there, from the fattiness of the

coconut flesh, the sweetness of freshly caught fish and the sourness of the dipping sauce."

Best enjoyed as an appetizer along with a glass of Phu Quoc rose myrtle wine (*ruou sim*), the intoxicatingly delicious combination of Phu Quoc sardinellas and Phu Quoc fish sauce is even extolled in Vietnamese proverb as being good enough to make men forget their own wives because of it.

Phu Quoc sardinellas aren't widely available in Saigon's markets so the dish is best sampled at one of the few Phu Quoc specialty restaurants around town. ■

WHERE TO TRY IT:

Phu Quy

46/6B Tran Van Dang, D3
090 753 3056

Wine & Dine

■ IMAGE BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY





The Great Pretender

The practice of selling fake liquor is all too common

TEXT BY JONATHAN REBOURS

IN A BAR somewhere on Bui Vien, after drinking a few shots of Johnnie Walker Gold Label Reserve, Jeff (name has been changed to protect his identity) decided it was time to call it a night, feeling slightly worse for wear as is usual when a night out ends in the Pham Ngu Lao area.

The next day, even though his hangover was severe, he promised to meet his business partner in the afternoon. He never made it into work that day. Tragically, he fell into a coma shortly after the conversation on the phone and began to inhale his own vomit during a seizure.

He was flown to Taipei to receive treatment in an attempt to bring him out of his coma. Sadly he died two weeks later, while everyone in Vietnam was celebrating Tet. Poison from an infection in his lungs had moved to his brain, an infection caused by unknowingly ingesting methanol, the simplest form of alcohol commonly found in solvents, antifreeze and fuel.

Faking it

When disguised in a bucket with a lot of ice and sugary mixer and sold for VND40,000 it's not easy to detect a counterfeited spirit.

What is troubling, however, is the increasing tactic of making fake alcohol. Not just a watered down version of the original, this new brand of spirits is a deceptive and dangerous batch in itself. "They're killing people for bigger margins," says Jeff's friend, a fellow bar owner. "And they don't even care."

Another source believes "some establishments purposely purchase fake alcohol as a way of lowering cost".

Methanol, also called 'wood alcohol', and other industrial substances such as dried alcohol, are used to lower production costs. It has been reported on vietnamnet.vn that alcohol producers can make the same amount of alcohol in 30 minutes that previously would have taken a week using traditional methods. "Is it a terrible hangover from overindulgence, or is it this faked stuff? Are we slowly being poisoned?" questions a bar

manager who asked to remain anonymous.

Doctors warn that just 10ml of methanol ingested causes serious damage. Symptoms can include a severe hangover, blurred vision and sometimes loss of vision as it breaks down into formic acid. Falling into a coma is the next step and, as in the case above, death can follow.

Vietnam imposes a huge import tax on alcohol - up to 150 percent. The huge duty on these goods means it's not surprising that producers are seeking cheaper methods, no matter the human cost, to make bigger profits. "Bootlegging is nothing new," another industry insider tells us, "but what's different now is that they are lying to people by using well-known bottles."

How to Spot It

All the bar owners and managers we spoke to agreed that you must always be vigilant with your stock and what you drink, and never take anything for granted. "We check every bottle as they come in, checking the number on the cap to that of the bottle so we know it's not been recapped." Another added, "Every time a bottle is finished, we break it. Break the bottle and it cannot be resold and refilled."

There are also some tips to spotting a fake. Alcohol, especially higher end cognacs and whiskies, are fairly dense and so giving the bottle a good shake should produce a torrent of mini bubbles that will still be slowly rising even a minute later. "Chivas Regal used to be a popular brand here, regularly counterfeited or faked, but if you give it a good shake from the punt [bottom] you should see a satisfying froth which won't be there in a dodgy bottle."

The taste is obviously going to be the most telling so try a small amount and if it's overly chemical, overly alcoholic tasting, then it's probable that it's a fake.

Be vigilant when out drinking, and if a high end brand is at a price that's too good to be true, it probably is. It certainly isn't worth risking your life over. ■



Interpretive Eating

A Scot brings a unique combination of flavors to whet your appetite

TEXT BY ROBERT STOCKDILL PHOTOS BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY

IN A CITY WITH such a vast array of international cuisines aimed at expats and more adventurous local diners, hotel dining options are often overlooked. In the case of Reflections, on the third floor of the Caravelle Hotel, that's a shame because Executive Chef Darren Watson, three years at Reflections, has mixed local produce and flavors with international styles to create an extensive and unique fine dining offer to satisfy even the pickiest eaters.

Chef Darren previously worked at Sydney's Aria restaurant, a stone's throw from the Opera House, was the personal chef of billionaire Australian industrialist the late Richard Pratt, and was at Phoenix on Melbourne's Yarra River as well as at Auckland's Langham Hotel before heading to Vietnam. Australasians will know most of those venues; to those from the other hemisphere, rest assured that's an impressive CV.

He tries to use as many locally sourced ingredients as possible in his dishes, which range from Asian fare based on traditional



Vietnamese dishes, through to haute cuisine inspired from all corners of the world. The only seafood imported is salmon and almost all the vegetables come from Dalat. Most of the food is prepared in-house by the team of about 120 who staff the Caravelle's kitchens - down to home baked bread, ice cream and even black pudding.

Try these menu options for an example of the internationalism of the fare: Lobster and shellfish mousse tempura on mussel risotto with anis saffron reduction; pressed duck liver and duck *confit* with Szechuan glazed jelly, pineapple chutney and cashew nuts; and herb breaded crispy frog legs with broccoli and roast garlic puree, celeriac cream and shaved parmesan. And those are just appetizers.

Our Meal

Reflections has little profile when you arrive at the hotel. It's located on the third floor of the original building, accessed by the lift which most of us know as the way to the famous Saigon rooftop bar.

Oi had the misfortune of arriving in the same lift as three other diners the night we visited, an amazing coincidence given it was probably the restaurant's quietest night in weeks. We let the other group be seated first, but somehow were forgotten and left lingering in the lobby for what seemed like ages before venturing in and being greeted by the musicians and eventually by someone who seemed embarrassed by our abandonment.

But from a confusing start, the service and dining experience matured into a memorable night of gastronomic delight, attentive service and friendly engagement by the entire team.

Reflections is a large restaurant, but its split level design, the solid structural pillars throughout and dark polished wood make it feel much more intimate - even when just a few tables are occupied. Live music - a female singer with accompanying pianist - adds to the romantic feel of the room, but it's not too dark or subtle for a business dinner or a pre-theatre indulgence.

Once seated we chose to go straight to the wine list, but an endearing feature of the restaurant is a cocktail trolley for those who want to enjoy the theatre of seeing their favorite mix created in front of them. We felt the Scott Base New Zealand Pinot Noir for VND1.76 million would best complement the broad range of flavors we were ordering.

The menu, as previously detailed, is extensive. And mouthwatering. Choosing is not easy and as usual we sought the counsel of the staff - all of whom speak exceptionally good English - before deciding on a mix of the adventurous and the familiar.

My dining partner opted to try Chef Darren's interpretation of a Caesar salad (VND228,000) with lightly cured smoked salmon (there is an option of salmon or Italian ham) for an appetizer, followed by wok-fried Nha Trang lobster served with XO sauce and served on a bed of sautéed local *thien ly* flowers and steamed rice - from the Asian Flavours section of the menu (VND598,000).

I opted for the seared deep sea scallops on parsnip puree, broad beans, green peas, herb salad and barbeque duck *jus* (VND398,000) followed by the "Sous vide" butter poached lamb loin with smoked gnocchi, green peas, fava beans, olives, lardons, pea puree and roasted red capsicum lamb *jus* (VND558,000).

Neither of us was disappointed.

The scallops were large and meaty, yet juicy and tasty - none of those American style minnows on the Reflections' plate! But the accompaniment proved like a series of mini flavor crackers: fennel, crunchy beans, a lashing of creamy sauce and a piquant red *jus*.

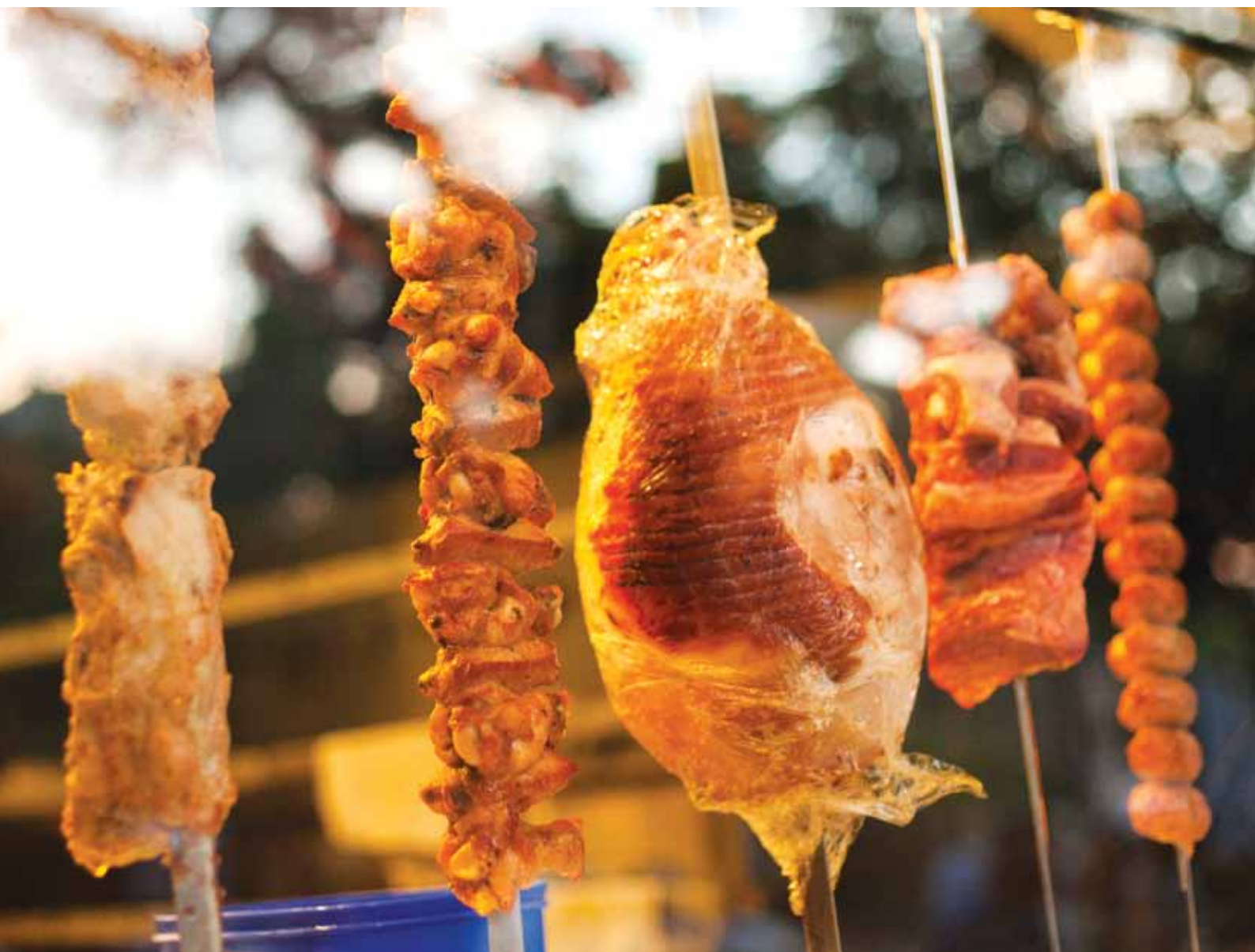
The salad delivered beyond expectation - it might not be the most adventurous dish to order from such a menu, but the salmon was smooth and smoky and the lettuce particularly crisp.

The mains were works of art, especially the Nha Trang lobster, spread out in perfect formation, the flesh exposed to eat with ease and surrounded by *thien ly* flowers (a personal favorite among foods unique to Vietnam). Chef Darren creates this dish with more than 50 ingredients including reduced pork fat, shrimp, XO sauce, garlic, chili and a whole range of seasonings. It's a house specialty and very unique.

The lamb, which is imported from Hawkes Bay, New Zealand, was slowly cooked to maintain moisture, flavor and texture before being pan fried for color and texture crispness on the exterior. It was tender, a generous size, full of flavor and lacked the dry, stringiness too often found in lamb dishes in this city.

Oi's reviewers were too full to sample the dessert on offer. Chef Darren's favorite is the vanilla poached pear with Earl Grey ice cream. Desserts are his specialty; another option is the dark chocolate hazelnut molten lava cake with its own dark chocolate sauce, honeycomb and granola ice cream, which the menu warns takes 20 minutes to prepare.

From a slightly disappointing arrival, clearly a glitch, Reflections over-delivered in its promise to be an enjoyable, fulfilling fine dining experience in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City. The food is fragrant, tasty, innovative and delicious, the table service engaging and unobtrusive, the setting warm and relaxing. The best verdict on a restaurant's performance is whether one would return. We would without hesitation. ■



Meat Lover's Delight

A carnivorous feast that will satiate any hungry stomach

TEXT BY **ROBERT STOCKDILL** PHOTOS BY **NAM QUAN**

"PREPARED WITH LOVE, served with passion" is the slogan printed on the menu of JJ's Brazilian BBQ Restaurant and Bar. It's a promise that creates a high level of expectation when you take a seat at one of its tables, yet a promise well delivered on in *Oi's* experience. The restaurant is located at 279 Pham Ngu Lao in the heart of the backpacker district, which at first seems surprising for a quality dining experience.

"This is a travel hub," says owner James Heng, explaining the location. "Everyone who visits Ho Chi Minh City comes here. I want to give them memories of great food and service."

James, a Singaporean who has lived in the city for a decade, ran a seafood exporting business before realizing his dream to open a restaurant. JJ's originally opened last September but he was unhappy with the execution so he closed it at Christmas and reconfigured the concept, reopening on May 12, Mother's Day.

The concept is Brazilian barbecue Churrasco, where meat is barbecued over charcoal on metal skewers and carved directly onto the plates of diners at their table by roaming staff. The meat is prepared in a spotless open kitchen visible from the street

and the downstairs dining room, creating a sense of theatre. It's common to see passing tourists stop and pose for photographs outside the window as chefs prepare meals through the glass behind them.

An open kitchen in itself is rare in Vietnam. "Most Vietnamese restaurant kitchens are closed," reflects Heng. "This is somewhere they don't want to expose to the public."

JJ's covers two floors. Downstairs is a full a la carte dining section with an al fresco seating area and bar deck facing the street and a warm, cozy seating area inside where a Filipino band plays Thursday to Saturday



nights. Upstairs is a lighter, brighter dining area for the Churrasco Buffet, with an open salad bar and plenty of room for large groups or quieter dining.

The menu is far more extensive than the Churrasco offer and the menu - and pricing - is very relevant to the restaurant's location: you can dine on a very modest budget or opt for a far more extravagant indulgence. Breakfast is offered from 8am to 11am, with set menus for VND69,000, including coffee. The lunch and dinner offer is extensive, including pastas and risottos (VND140,000 - VND230,000), pizzas (VND180,000 - VND220,000) and mains.

The main menu is a carnivore's heaven. The chef's signature dish is oven grilled New Zealand beef ribs served with red wine sauce and rocket salad for VND350,000. JJ's specialty is smoked US pork ribs for the same price. Slow oven baked beef cheek served with rocket salad and tuna cream sauce or beef rump wrapped in parma ham will set you back VND320,000. Also on the main course menu: rib eye and T-bone steaks, pork sausages, roast chicken breast and grilled salmon - and for VND400,000 a mixed grill platter for the really hungry, with sausage, beef, shrimp and chicken wings served with salad and a choice of potato dishes.

Or one can just stop by for a drink with a well-priced wine menu featuring drops from France, Italy, Australia and Chile, spirits and a happy hour from 8am to 8pm daily when

Tiger draught is served in an ice-cold mug for VND20,000.

Our Meal

Oi was keen to try the Churrasco barbecue, so we opted for the lighter upstairs dining room which we shared with the high spirited staff of a Korean company celebrating a company milestone.

On the table was a plastic disc for each of the pair of us, similar to a casino chip, which you turn over according to whether you want to be served more food or rest for a while.

We ordered a house special wine - a light, moorish Sangiovese from Italy for little more than VND300,000 which proved to be one of the best value wines we've ordered in town and well suited to the food which was to follow.

The salad bar is compact but unique. Buffets are not our usual preference, and we approached with a little trepidation expecting wilting greens and bowls of unimaginatively sliced tomatoes and onion swimming in vinegar. So it was a surprise to find an array of small plates bearing quaint and sometimes unusual styles of vegetables, such as marinated sliced beetroot, cool pastas, whole baby red tomatoes which were so fresh they burst in your mouth, grilled eggplant, mixed green and black olives, marinated mushrooms tossed in herbs and caesar salad with crisp romaine lettuce liberally doused in creamy, cheesy sauce with diced ham and cheese.

Once seated, the staff will start serving

the barbecued meats at your own pace. We never felt rushed (as in similar experiences overseas) or overwhelmed with food. The servings were modest in size so one could be sure not to be full before the whole range was served. Servings are unlimited so if you enjoy one meat more than others, you simply ask for more.

First up were grilled shrimps, succulent and juicy. From there the order became a blur as more and more meat flowed: beef brisket, chicken, lamb, asparagus wrapped in bacon, beef rump and sausages made to order for JJ's with pork and oregano. And our favorite of all: ham served with roasted pineapple, sliced from its own skewer, a classic combination of fruit and meat but unique for the fresh crisp state of the sweet pineapple contrasting the slight saltiness of the pork.

Heng later explained that most of the meats in the barbecue offer are prepared in a simple marinade prior to cooking and seasoned with salt and pepper before being grilled over charcoal to ensure an original taste. The ham is slow roasted for four hours to ensure tenderness. It works!

In June, JJ's offers an all-inclusive daily Churrasco buffet package, including free-flowing draught beer and wine for VND550,000. Based on Oi's experience, that's a great way to experience a unique style of cooking and distinctive South American flavor without too great an impact on the bank balance. ■

>>The List

Wine & Dine



Atexpats is Ho Chi Minh City's first truly comprehensive insider's guide for foreign residents - website launching 2013

bakeries

Bread Talk

With a mission to revitalize the once-stale business of bread, Singaporean BreadTalk now has outlets throughout Asia and has established itself in several HCMC locations. A brand partnership with Gloria Jeans has seen a wide range of bakery goods available in the cafés, with both brands sharing the premises at this location.

106 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
3930 3181

Brodard Bakery

Brodard Bakery has been operating in Saigon for over 30 years. It provides finely crafted cakes for all occasions in addition to ice cream, pastries, chocolate and tarts.

95 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 2416
6am - 10pm

Cakewalk Cupcakes

Small boutique cupcake shop offers cupcakes with panache. Traditional cupcakes as well as new, creative flavors are sure to satisfy everyone who is compelled to bend to the will of their sweet tooth.

84 Nguyen Cong Tru, D1
6295 9087
10am - 9pm

Givral

The cakes and tradition of this unique cake shop have captivated generations of Vietnamese customers. With many outlets throughout the city, this particular store was reopened in 2010 on its original site at Vincom A, built on the old Eden complex.

171 Dong Khoi, D1
3822 8659
www.saigongivral.com
6am - 10pm

Gourmand Shop

A traditional delicatessen shop featuring freshly baked baguettes, croissants, chocolate breads, charcuteries, pastries, finest macaroons and other French delicacies prepared daily. Special products imported from France are also available such as French oysters, Damman Freres luxury tea, and a range of authentic products.

Ground floor, Sofitel Saigon Plaza
17 Le Duan, D1
3824 1555

Harvest Baking

Harvest Baking offers a delivery-based bakery service with a charitable focus, teaching young Vietnamese hopefuls how to bake delicious breads and cakes through their food training program.

30 Lam Son, Tan Binh
3547 0577
harvestbaking.net
7am - 5pm Monday-Saturday

Kinh Do Bakery

Kinh Do Bakery makes reasonably priced baked goods to-go, such as cakes and cupcakes, tarts, sandwiches, Vietnamese "banh bao", Western-style hamburgers and mini-pizzas and gelatin-based desserts.

128A Hai Ba Trung, D1
3829 6552
kinhdobakery.vn
6am - 10.30pm

La Doree

Providing patrons with over 50 varieties of cakes, along with a rich sandwich menu from luxurious French-designed premises. La Doree is the best place in town for macaroons.

216 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3822 1718
www.ladoree.com
7am - 9.30pm

Nhu Lan Bakery

One of the most famous and prestigious local brands of bakeries in the city, Nhu Lan Bakery supplies bakery products, cakes, bread, ham, sausage, poultry, roasted pork, and dried foods.

50 Ham Nghi, D1
3829 2970
www.nhulan.vn
4am - 12am

Pacey Cupcakes

This cozy little bakery features elegant décor and offers 12 kinds of cupcakes daily, located near the cathedral in a hip, modern setting.

53G Nguyen Du, D1
3823 3223
nguyen.tran@paceycupcakes.com
www.paceycupcakes.com
9am - 10pm

Pat'a Chou

French-style bakery with charming décor. Specializing in baguettes, fresh croissants of various varieties, small quiches, and cakes for every occasion.

74B Hai Ba Trung, D1
3824 8179
5am - 10pm

Savoure Bakery

Shops have a wide selection of cookies, sweet and savory breads and cakes including cashew chocolate, taro and orange. Custom cakes can be ordered for weddings and holidays.

Unit E3, 1st Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Centre,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3914 3773
www.savourebakery.com

Schneider's Cafe & Tea Corner

The bakers at Schneider's offer fresh, healthy, delicious breads, cakes, and pastries, introducing Ho Chi Minh City to eight centuries of German baking tradition.

27 Han Thuyen, D1
2229 6910
www.schneiders-finest.com
9.30am - 9pm

Tous Les Jours

A Korean owned French-style bakery franchise serving fresh baked bread and popular pastries, all baked on-site.

180 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3823 8302
6am - 11pm

bars

187 Pham Ngu Lao, D1
6291 5424
allezboo@hcm.fpt.vn
24 hours

Alto Heli Bar

From the 52nd floor of the Bitexco, you can enjoy sweeping panoramic views of the city's skyline. Try the tapas tasting platters, sip on French Champagne, or choose from the selection of fine wines, local and international beers available.

Level 52 Bitexco Financial Tower, 2 Hai Trieu, D1
6291 8752
info@altosaigon.com
www.cirrusaigon.com

Bernie's Bar & Grill

An Irish bar and restaurant serving international cuisine like pizza, burgers, pasta and more. Celebrates happy hour from 5 to 7pm, and frequently provides live music.

19 Thai Van Lung, D1
3822 1720

Blue Gecko

Blue Gecko provides a classic bar experience complete with a pool table, darts board, cold beer and friendly staff. Guests can watch live sports and relax in the comfortable ambience of the bar.

31 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3824 3483
simon@hcm.vnn.vn
www.bluegecko.saigon.com
4.30pm - 12am

Bootleg DJ Café

Modern, moody, and minimalist cafe bar with reasonable prices by day, chic lounge with DJs playing by night. Has a limited menu of sandwiches and other health-conscious Italian fare.

9 Le Thanh Ton, D1
090 760 9202
dorutudose@gmail.com
9.30am - 1am

Boston Sports Bar

Located in the heart of the backpacker area, Boston Sports Bar is open 24 hours and provides guests with a modern bar-going experience. The bar boasts a pool table, live sports on LCD TVs, and western food.

28/4 Bui Vien, D1
6656 6338
bostonpizzavn@gmail.com
24 hours

Carmen Bar

Carmen Bar features a small cavern-like entrance with rough rock walls decorated with ambient lighting. With an exclusive range of drinks and cocktails, guests can relax while enjoying tunes from an excellent Flamenco band.

8 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3829 7699
5pm - 11.30pm

Charm Bar

Unassuming expat bar in the central city with table soccer and an upstairs floor for private functions. Charm holds an understated air of class within the expat bar district, and is the favorite of its series of regular patrons.

58 Huynh Thuc Khang, D1
3915 3826
thecharmsg@yahoo.com

Boudoir Lounge

Designed to look like a lived-in yet immaculately styled Parisien home with plush leather sofas, silk cushions and velvet armchairs, Boudoir Lounge serves up everything from afternoon tea to evening cocktails along with signature dishes for any occasion from informal meals and business lunches to gourmet canapés accompanying evening drinks.

Ground floor, Saigon Sofitel Plaza
17 Le Duan, D1
3824 1555

Brotzeit German Bier Bar & Restaurant

The HCMC venue is in the flashy Kumho complex on the edge of the central district, and features a wide 24-meter restaurant frontage on the mezzanine level and a contemporary and chic setting with German-inspired wooden benches and a long wooden bar counter. Serving authentic Bavarian cuisines and premium beers.

39 Le Duan, D1
9822 4206
brotzeit.co/kumholink

Chilli Pub Saigon 🍷 O's Pick

A fun place to unwind, with cold drinks, good music (customers can choose the music) friendly staff, light pub food, weekly quiz night (Mondays), darts and televised sport. Try a challenge shot from the big Chilli on the bartop.

104 Ho Tung Mau, D1
09 8376 3372
fin291182@yahoo.com
4pm-4am

Chu Bar

At this beautiful, laid back venue, tourists and locals alike can sit around Chu's large oval bar or on luxurious padded benches. It has a full cocktail menu as well as a short menu of snacks and sandwiches.

158 Dong Khoi, D1
3822 3907
7am - Midnight

Cloud 9 Rooftop Lounge

Located near Turtle Lake, this stunning bar offers panoramic views of Saigon. Guests can peruse an extensive international wine list or choose from an array of creative cocktails and international beers.

Level 667, Hai Nam Building, 2 Bis Cong Truong Quoc, D3
090 944 5544
12pm - Late

Ginger 60

A low-key expat bar with an extensive drink menu and live music in a friendly atmosphere.

60 Ton That Thiep, D1
093 772 1011
4pm - 12am

Go2

Go2 is a popular nightspot in the backpackers area. This two level bar offers dancing, shisha, and a streetside view with comfortable seating. The bar also has a pool table and extensive western food menu.

187 De Tham, D1
3836 9575
9am - 5am

Hard Rock Café

Memorabilia from Hard Rock's iconic collection adorns the walls of Hard Rock Café Ho Chi Minh City and there is live music most nights. Located in the Kumho Plaza complex.
39 Le Duan, D1
6291 7595
www.hardrockcafe.vn
11.30am - 2am

Heaven Bar Saigon

Standing out from other nightclubs, Heaven Bar impresses their guests with nice decor in tone of red and blue, a broad range of sparkling drinks, Ladies' night, awesome DJ at weekend, and many exciting events for expats.
8 Le Quy Don, D3
090 534 3316
www.barsaigonheaven.com
5pm - 2am

Ice Blue

A small, atmospheric, emphatically English-style pub, Ice Blue is a popular meeting place for Ho Chi Minh City's expats with reasonably priced drinks, friendly staff and a cozy atmosphere. Great place to play darts.
54 Dong Khoi, D1
3822 2664
3pm - 1am

Kim's Tavern

An expat bar on the edge of the downtown shopping district renowned for friendly, attractive staff, cold beer, and a relaxed 'local pub' environment.
20 Huynh Thuc Khang, D1
090 777 5141
4pm - 1am

Last Call 🍷 OI's Pick

A fine hole-in-the-wall cocktail bar in the centre of town opposite the Sheraton Hotel, Last Call is a 70's themed lounge with a permanent neon glow. Now one of the most popular expat/hip local late evening bars, with a small deck from which to overlook the nightlife set on Dung Du.
59 Dong Du, D1
3823 3122
lastcallsaigon@gmail.com
facebook.com/lastcallsaigon

Le Pub

In a brawny Australian snub to the effete vestiges of French Colonialism that pervade in Saigon, Le Pub is a hearty Oz-styled pub proudly located in a small alleyway between Pham Ngu Lao and Bui Vien st, Opposite the Chua Au lac arch, where it is a magnet for backpackers and blokey expats. The manager and staff are friendly enough too, I suppose.
175/22 Pham Ngu Lao, D1
3837 7679
www.lepub.org

Lindo

Cozy sports bar with big screen TVs and restaurant quality meals. The Sunday afternoon "Sausage Sizzle" and other weeknight events make this an appealing venue for expats any day of the week.
149 Ton That Dam, D1
3915 3149
4pm - 11pm

Long Phi 🍷 OI's Pick

One of the staples in the backpacker district, Long Phi is a no-frills bar that doubles as a cheap diner serving some fairly decent French and European cuisine.
207 Bui Vien, D1
3837 2704
6pm to very late, Tuesday - Sunday

Lush

Another of Saigon's more infamous night

venues, this have-to-go/love-to-hate club is still as popular as ever, attracting a pumping Vietnamese and foreign crowd on a nightly basis – if the reports from local events websites are to be believed. Lush has a highly distinctive, modern look, with different areas catering to different needs, including a VIP space with plush couches for chatting with hot new friends.
2 Ly Tu Trong, D1
www.lush.com.vn

M52 Bar

A bar catering primarily to foreigners. Offers a simple setting for a night of drinking in the company of friends.
34 Ton That Thiep, D1
3821 0151
5pm - 12am

MTV 🍷

A large Vietnamese cafe in D3 spread over two levels with space for quiet romantic chat or larger group meets. Serves a broad range of coffees and chilled drinks.
65 Vo Van Tan, D3
3930 2597
thuyhangmtv@yahoo.com
www.mtvcafe.com.vn
7am - 11pm

Number Five Bar

Number Five Bar has become notorious for its "all you can drink" draught tiger beer offer. Attractive waitresses are always enthusiastic contestants on the billiards table.
44 Pasteur, D1
3915 3150
heinzvn@gmail.com
3pm - 1am

O'Brien's 🍷 OI's Pick

Two-storey Irish-themed bar & restaurant furnished to high standard. O'Brien's promotes a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere. Known for its excellent food menu, this is a fun place to socialize while shooting pool, playing darts, or chatting with the friendly staff.
74/A3 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3829 3198
www.irish-barsaigon.com
11am - 1am; Sundays 4pm - 1am

Olive Bar

Spanish-influenced restobar specializing in cocktails, wine, tapas and finger food. Modern, stylish decor and fusion-influenced menu make this a trendy destination for young business executives and fashion-conscious tourists alike.
17A6 Le Thanh Ton, D1
090 973 3304

Phatty's

A sports bar offering a selection of ice-cold local and imported beers as well as a complete range of tasty pub food. Central features are the TVs, connected to an extensive sports channel network.
46-48 Ton That Thiep, D1
3821 0796
info@phattysbar.com
www.phattysbar.com
9am to midnight

Red Bar & Restaurant

Popular nightspot and networking event venue near Bitexco Tower. Serves Aussie pub food and hosts a live Filipino band.
3rd Floor, 70-72 Ngo Duc Ke, D1
2229 7017
8am - 2am

Saigon Saigon Bar

In wartime Saigon, the rooftop of the Caravelle hotel was one of the most popular drinking holes in the city for foreign journalists and expat embassy staff – and it remains one of the most sought-out casual tourist attractions in the city today. Panoramic views of Saigon

can still be obtained on the garden terrace despite all the construction, and efforts have been made to preserve the original character of the venue with its multiple ceiling fans, subdued decor, and quietly romantic atmosphere with oil candles on the table tops.
19 Lam Son Square, D1
3823 4999
www.caravellehotel.com/en/1/15/325/products.aspx

Saigon Retro

One of the newest expat bars on the block, offering friendly bar service. Live sport on screen, including English Premier League.
113 Ho Tung Mau, D1
6278 2349
4pm - 2am

Sheridan's Irish Pub 🍷 OI's Pick

Offering traditional Irish food like biscuits and sausage, along with British dishes like fish and chips or bangers and mash and even local menu items.
24 Ngo Van Nam, D1
3823 0793
8am to midnight

Slate

Slate takes its name from the dark grey slate tiling that covers the floor of the entire establishment. A modern, relaxing spot for an after-dinner drink with an extensive martini list and delicious BBQ menu. A tad difficult to find above a BMW dealership, but accessible from the hotel it is worth the effort.
3rd Floor, Moevenpick Hotel, 253 Nguyen Van Troi, Phu Nhuan
3844 9222
5pm - 11pm

Spotted Cow

Hearty breakfasts, great pub grub, cheap drinks and the latest sport on TV make this an appealing destination for tourists of all budgets. Located in the heart of the backpacker district.
111 Bui Vien, D1
3920 7670
spottedcow@alfrescosgroup.com
11am - 12pm

Storm P

Storm P restaurant and bar is named after the famous Danish cartoonist Robert Storm Petersen, and it's the only Danish restaurant in Vietnam.
5B Nguyen Sieu, D1
3827 4738
www.stormp.vn
10am - late

Vasco's

Stylish bar, restaurant and cocktail lounge in a converted colonial style house. European and Asian fare downstairs

with extensive wine list and cocktails. DJs perform upstairs at night.
74/7D Hai Ba Trung, D1
3824 2888
www.vascosgroup.com

cafés

Achaya Cafe

Achaya Cafe have two floors providing a nice atmosphere for meeting, relaxation or party. The menu is extensive with drinks and Western, Japanese, Vietnamese food from sandwiches, spaghetties, pizzas, steak and special Japanese sweet desserts.
90 Le Loi, D1
093 897 2050
11am - 10:30pm

Aisha Lounge

Secreted away in a small alleyway on Pasteur, Aisha lounge is a fascinating Turkish-style coffee shop designed with an Arabic architectural theme. The ground floor is washed in a Mediterranean blue tone, and seating is on plush cushions of the kind you'd expect to spend the evening lounging around on in a haze with an exotic pipe. Rather incongruously, however, Aisha offers a menu studded with various Vietnamese drinks and food – although the belly dance show does evoke the spirit of the interior design.
63/1 Pasteur, D1
6660 9040
aishalounge@aishalounge.com
www.aishalounge.com

AMI Café

A dimly-lit atmospheric venue hosting live music and with a fully-stocked bar.
133 Hai Ba Trung, D1

Angel-in-us Coffee

A sophisticated and classy coffee franchise with exemplary attention to detail, Angel-in-us has a pretty angel wing motif and a quality coffee menu.
145 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3827 8588
facebook.com/angelinuscoffeevn

AQ Coffee

Beautiful café situated in one of the city's oldest French mansions, serving coffee made with traditionally-roasted coffee beans.
32 Pham Ngoc Thach, D3
3829 8344
7.30am - 11.30pm

Blue Cafe 🍷

A sprawling, unique cafe in Go Vap, with indoor-outdoor seating and an attempt to recreate the appeal of rural Dalat. Enjoy the shade inside, or sit outside amidst the greenery and watch aircraft taking off from Ton Sat airport. Extensive menu and broad



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range of coffees and chilled drinks.

701-703 Phan Van Tri, Go Vap
3588 6824
thuyhangmtv@yahoo.com
www.mtvcafe.com.vn
7am - 11pm

Bobby Brewer's

A contemporary cafe in the backpacker area set over three floors, the cafe features a large free cinema, a great place for couples.

45 Bui Vien, D1
3920 4090
www.bobbybrewers.com
6.30am - 11pm

Boulevard Cafe

This Parisian-style cafe has a fine, white tone and a warm ambiance that attempts a look of luxury with its plush sofas and chandeliers. Effectively, this makes it one of the more international-looking Vietnamese cafes and a very pleasant venue in an area away from the city centre.

98 Phan Xich Long, Phu Nhuan
3995 9876
09 0909 0052

Bukafu d

A two-storey cafe in an arty, creative environment serving a variety of traditional rice dishes, amongst other local goodies and beverages. Upstairs, perch on the floor and feel like you're eating in the style of a local family.

43 Nguyen Huu Cau, D1
0902 652 635
9am - 10pm

Café Ban Sonate

Café Ban Sonate is a peaceful haven, tucked away from the boisterous noise of the city. This cafe offers elegant decor along with indoor and outdoor seating options.

53 Dang Dung, D1
3290 6004

Caffe Fresco

A new player on the scene currently battling for supremacy in the coffee chain market, Fresco offers a wide range of espresso and local coffees, juices and smoothies.

121 Le Loi, D1
3821 1009
info@fresco.com.vn
www.fresco.com.vn
6am - 12am Monday through Saturday

Café Terrace

Café Terrace is a popular modern cafe/restaurant in the chic Saigon Center. This cozy, dimly lit cafe offers customers a long outdoor terrace with views of the bustling pedestrian and traffic scene. A second cafe is located on the first floor amongst fashion stores.

Ground Floor & First Floor, Saigon Centre,
65 Le Loi, D1
3821 4958
8am - 10pm

Cafe Vuon Kieng

Cafe Vuon Kieng is a quiet, casual cafe near the banks of the Saigon River, boasting relaxing views and refreshing breezes. This riverside cafe offers jasmine tea, coffee, ice cream, beer, even cocktails.

10B Ton Duc Thang, D1

3823 3279

7.30am - 11pm

Centrofarms Coffee

This recently opened cafe, located near the airport, sells its own eponymous brand of Centrofarms organic roasted beans direct from Dalat with indoor and outdoor seating that's perfect for people watching and getting your daily dose of caffeine.

19 Ut Tich, Tan Binh

Chi's Cafe

Chi's Café is a restaurant serving both Western and Vietnamese food in the backpacker area. The menu is extensive, with everything from sandwiches and pizzas to their popular baked potatoes with filling.

40/31 Bui Vien, D1
3836 7622
9am - 10pm

Ciao Cafe

An icon in downtown HCMC, Ciao cafe features two floors serving simple food, coffee, smoothies and ice cream – and an opulent lounge bar on the top floor. Antique tiles mix with velvet curtains and stylish paintings to make this a memorable chill out environment.

74-76 Nguyen Hue, D1
40 Ngo Duc Ke, D1
7am - 11pm

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

Offering over 22 varieties of coffee and 20 kinds of tea, The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf has been serving the best coffees and teas from around the world for more than 40 years in its cozy, handcrafted oak paneled stores.

www.coffeebean.com.vn
7am - 11pm
39 Le Duan, D1
Ground Floor, Crescent Mall
Ton Dat Tien, D7
157-159 Nguyen Thai Hoc, D1
39 Le Duan, D1
12-14 Thai Van Lung, D1
94 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
235 Nguyen Van Cu, D1
235 Dong Khoi, D1
1-5 Le Duan, D1
60-62 Cach Mang Thang 8, D3
1-3 Phan Chu Trinh, D1

Cosmo Lounge

Cosmo Lounge is a popular location for stylish and trendy locals and expats alike. Chill out in a bold blue and white environment with local and European cafe food and a broad selection of coffees and drinks.

86 Bis Le Thanh Ton, D1
3823 5848
8am - 9pm

Cooku's Nest

Cooku's nest has a clean, artsy vibe offering drinks and snacks.

13 Tu Xuong, D3
2241 2043
cooku@yaho.com
8am - 10.30pm

Crêperie & Café

Inexpensive Western fare targeted mainly at locals, delivering some fairly decent low-cost sandwiches.

Galaxy Co, 5 Han Thuyen, D1
7am - 10.30pm

Deja Vu Cafe d

A stylish, modern cafe which feels more like a private home than a commercial cafe - and even has a piano for suitably talented customers to demonstrate their skills. Offers breakfasts in the weekends and frequent art exhibitions.

314/2 Dien Bien Phu, D10
6276 6966
info@dejavu.vn
www.dejavu.vn
8am - 10pm

Elle Cafe

Keeping in line with the sense of style that comes along with the Elle fashion label brand, the menu and décor of Elle Cafe sets it apart from the competition.

Ground Floor, Bitexco Financial Tower, 45
Ngo Duc Ke, D1
6291 8766
7am - 11pm

Geisha's Coffee and Tea House

Experience a funky, relaxed atmosphere with a refreshing drinks & delicious snack at Geisha Coffee and Tea House. A retreat away from the hustle and bustle of the streets of Saigon.

85 Pasteur, D1
3829 4004
www.geishacafe.com
8am - 10pm



Hatvala

This tea house, coffee shop and restaurant offers selected, quality Vietnamese tea and coffee to drink or to buy as leaves and beans. They also have a delightful all day casual dining area in their stylish bistro.

44 Nguyen Hue, D1

3824 1534

8am - 11pm

hatvalavietnam@gmail.com

www.hatvala.com

www.facebook.com/hatvala

Hi-End Coffee

Located near the leafy Tao Dan Park, Hi-End Coffee is one of a few venues serving up just as much music as caffeine.

126 Suong Nguyet Anh, D1
3824 1004
Open to 10pm

Gloria Jeans

Australia's most popular coffee franchise now has a solid presence in Ho Chi Minh City with multiple locations in the inner city. While the favourite Dong Khoi address has now been given over to a Sony store, new venues in Vincom A and at CMT8 prove this favourite brand with locals and expats alike is steadily growing in Vietnam.

2 bis Cong Truong Quoc Te, D3
3825 6045
www.gloriajeanscoffees.com/vn

Highlands Coffee

With over 50 cafes in Vietnam, Highlands Coffee serves up international and traditional Vietnamese blends. Coffee lovers can also find Highlands premium quality blends in selected hotels and supermarkets.

Saigon Center, 65 Le Loi, D1

I-Box Cafe

iBox cafe is a unique, cafe with aristocratic decor. This decorative cafe specializes in red wine, Asian dishes and spaghetti. They also offer an extensive selection of ice cream creations.

135 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3825 6718
8am - 10pm

ID Café

Separated from the bustle of nearby Ben Thanh Market by a tiny alleyway, ID is a retro cafe opening a door to an earlier Saigon.

34D Thu Khoa Huan, D1
7.30am - 11pm

Imagine Cafe Shop d

A great place for local creative types to hang out, Imagine features a wide range of teas, juices and other drinks, served amidst shelves of books, many of which are for sale. Regular author lectures are hosted here.

58 Ho Bieu Chanh, Phu Nhuan
09 0956 0105
nguyenmai@huan@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/ImagineCafeShop
8am - 10pm

Kebab Cafe

The healthiest kebab! Featuring an excellent homemade white sauce, fresh veggies and chicken or pork marinated without oil. The French owner also serves savory and sweet crepes and a home-made puree.

538/2/8 Doan Van Bo, D4
01648 805 915

contact@kebab-cafe.com
www.kebab-cafe.com

10am - 10pm

Kem MY (American Ice-cream) d

Kem My literally translates to American ice cream, and here is where you go to enjoy a cool respite from Saigon's heat. A brightly colored interior and lively music make this a popular destination during day time and into the evening.

11 Street 41, D4
0937 303 030
nnquang8800@yahoo.com
www.kemmy.vn
3.30pm - 11pm

Kesera

A cozy and friendly café/bar serving coffee, beer, wines, freshly-baked homemade cakes and delicious Western food.

26/1 Le Thanh Ton, D1
keserakesera.com

Kita Coffee

This three-storey establishment provides patrons with Lavazza coffee along with a unique Mediterranean menu.

39-41 Nguyen Hue, D1
3914 0683
kitacoffee@gmail.com
7.30am - 10pm

Kopi Beans

Kopi Beans Cafe is a favorite among high school kids. It's a small takeaway coffee shop with cheap espresso and iced coffees.

206 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
6684 4788
kopibeans@yahoo.com
www.kopibeans.com.vn
8am - 10pm

L'amour

A stylish bakery and cafe new to Hai Ba Trung, in the city centre, L'amour specialises in cakes and desserts and serves Illy Coffee. Eat in or take away.

24 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3520 8180
www.lamourbakery.com
6am - 10.30pm

L'Anmien Dining Cafe

Linked to the luxurious Mui Ne hotel of the same name, this internationally-styled sidewalk café is a place to relax and enjoy the cool air and watch the busy inner-city traffic from a more refined vantage.

76A Le Lai, D1
38212718
7am - 10pm

Lightbox Cafe d

Dine in a box - literally. Lightbox Cafe

doubles as an event venue and studio. It's easy to find in Phu Nhuan District - just look for the bright red framed 'box' amidst the impressive villas stretching along the roadside.

179 Hoa Lan, Phu Nhuan
3517 6668
thuongle1968@yahoo.com.vn
www.lightbox.vn
6.30am - 11pm

L'Usine

L'Usine is a retail, café and gallery space occupying two locations in the center of DI. Its retail space is dedicated to Vietnamese designers and more established brands from abroad as well as stocking a wide range of stationary and home ware items. The café in both locations serves international fare and a range of pastries and the ever popular Sweet & Sour Cakes.

151/1 Dong Khoi, DI
70B Le Loi, DI
9am - 9pm

The Living Room

The Living Room has two floors providing a laid-back atmosphere for meet-ups or after-work relaxation over drinks and Western and Vietnamese food.

40-42 Dong Du, DI
3822 0377
10am - 3am

Lo Tokyo Baum

Popular Japanese cake cafe with quiet seating area, specializing in orange cakes.
46 Nguyen Van Trang, DI
3926 0388
8am - 10pm

NYDC

NYDC offers a modest selection of wholesome western dishes and desserts - steaks, burgers, fish and chips - and

gourmet caffeine addicts will cue up for the enormous elephaccino.

Ground Floor, Metropolitan,
235 Dong Khoi, DI
3822 7955
marketing@nydc.com.vn
www.nydc.com.vn
7am - 11pm

May Coffee

A superb, friendly, and inexpensive little café most notable for its perfect view of the Cathedral tower bells and close proximity to the post office.

1 Cong Xa Paris, DI
3827 7099
www.maycoffee.com
7.30am - 11.30pm

Paris Deli

A French style cafe serving some of the best pastries in Saigon, this cheerful spot is a real slice of Parisian life. Many European drinks and dishes.

Ground Floor, Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, DI
3821 6127
9am - 10pm

Passio Coffee to Go

Passio Coffee offers its guests fine Italian style coffee made from the finest ingredients. Since Passio's inception in 2006, this enthusiastic team of coffee brewers has become recognized by international coffee drinkers.

112 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
3930 0100
093 346 8007
hdd310@gmail.com
www.passiocoffee.com
6.30am - 11pm

Princess and the Pea

A fairytale-themed venue for the dreamers of Ho Chi Minh City, hidden away in a tiny alleyway off Pasteur. Discover it if you can.

63/18 Pasteur, DI
093 635 3179
princess.and.the.pea.pasteur@gmail.com
8am - 10.30pm

Regina Coffee

A popular hangout for hip, young Vietnamese around Nguyen Du, serving western coffee in a vintage, artsy environment.

84 Nguyen Du, DI
3824 4204
7am - 11pm

Soho Coffee

Two level local cafe chain serving light meals, coffee and local chilled drinks.

185 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, DI
3839 5038
7am - 11pm

Starbucks Coffee

This Seattle-based coffee chain recently opened in Feb 2013 with a large, open ground floor space with ample seating in booths and tables, and a smaller space upstairs with views out on the busy Nga 6 Phu Dong roundabout. Also has outdoor seating. Expect to pay Western prices.

76 Le Lai, DI

Stella Restaurant & Cafe

Providing authentic Italian and Vietnamese food using fresh imported and local premium-quality ingredients. Where else can you find such good coffee/cuisine at such reasonable prices?

119-121 Bui Vien, DI
3836 9220
www.stellacaffe.com
7am - 11.30pm

Tram Coffee

A unique romantic cafe experience hidden well off the beaten track, but close to District 1 in neighbouring Phu Nhuan

District. Sip a coffee, juice or beer or indulge in good cafe food over candlelight in a dark, intimate environment hidden amongst trees and trickling streams. Relax in an air conditioned room or dine alfresco amongst the greenery. The perfect spot to impress a date with your local knowledge.

100 Tran Huy Lieu St, Phu Nhuan
2240 5306
7am - 11pm

The Myth

Indoor outdoor themed cafe destination with mystical atmosphere: ancient trees, streams, waterfalls and mist. Serves broad selection of coffees and chilled beverages and 40 menu items. Live music.

176 Dien Bien Phu, D3
3820 9735
thuyhangmtv@yahoo.com
www.mtvcafe.com.vn
7am - 11pm

Trung Nguyen Cafe

One of the most ubiquitous coffee brands in Vietnam. With a burgeoning presence throughout the city, it's hard to go anywhere without tripping over a Trung Nguyen café - serving gourmet Vietnamese street coffee.

26B-C Le Loi, DI
3825 1270

The Serenata Cafe

The Serenata Cafe is a peaceful, relaxing oasis in a French Colonial house. This cafe embraces nature with plants, fishponds, and small fountains, and offers music in the evenings.

6D Ngo Thoi Nhiem, D3
3930 7436
7am - 11pm

Windows

A highly fashionable cafe near the



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cathedral. For many years, this eye-catching venue has remained a place to see and be seen, often frequented by the famous, the well-to-do, and the ne'er do well.

12 Alexandre De Rhodes, DI
38238408
7am - 12am

Zoom Cafe

This distinctive Vespa-themed Café has been a popular fixture in DI for ten years. Today, the café serves as the place for Vespa enthusiasts and tour veterans to swap stories over ice-cold beers and what many claim is the best selection of mouth-watering burgers, paninis, and baguette sandwiches in town.

169A Bui Vien, DI
3920 3897
vscooterguy@yahoo.com

chinese

Dragon Court

Dragon Court is a large restaurant opposite the Opera House in Saigon's bustling District 1. Enjoy Chinese dishes from many regions with dishes like glass noodles, hot pot, and a large dim sum collection.

11-13 Lam Son Square, DI
3827 2566
10am - 2.30pm; 5pm - 2am; Sundays from 8am.

Dynasty

New World hotel's in-house Chinese restaurant is certainly a venue of fine contemporary Chinese dining. The chef offers a variety of authentic Cantonese dishes along with classic dim sum under a high lantern/chandelier-lit ceiling, in a broad dining room decorated in classic Chinese style. VIP guests can dine in one of four semi-private or three totally private rooms.

New World Hotel
76 Le Lai, DI
3822 8888
www.saiгон.newworldhotels.com

Hung Ky Mi Gia

Hung Ky Mi Gia is a famous and long-standing restaurant with more than 13 years of operation. It serves traditional Chinese cuisine with authentic dishes such as roasted chicken, duck, and pork.

20 Le Anh Xuan, DI

3822 2673

8am - 1am

Kabin

Kabin is a Cantonese restaurant specializing in exotic dishes such as baked duck tongue, grouper cutlet, and lobster soup. Located in the five star Renaissance Riverside Hotel, this restaurant offers a wide variety of dim sum.

Renaissance Riverside Hotel,
8-15 Ton Duc Thang, DI
3822 0033
www.marriott.com
12pm - 2.30pm, 6pm - 10pm

Li Bai Chinese Restaurant

Located in the Sheraton Hotel, Li Bai offers a selection of over 50 dim sum dishes as well as traditional Chinese and Cantonese specialties. Diners will enjoy the relaxed, upscale ambiance provided by the wood paneling and oriental art.

Level 2, 88 Dong Khoi, DI
3827 2828
www.libaisaigon.com
11am - 2.30pm; 6.30pm - 10pm

Ming Court

Since the Nikko Hotel graced the Saigon

skyline, the venue has managed to set the standard for classy, five-star dining with its bold grey modern decor and Japanese-style efficiency. Ming Court, on the hotel's third floor, is a large Chinese restaurant with all the expected graces of the Orient belonging to the exotic fantasy of the dynastic era.

3rd floor, Nikko Saigon Hotel
235 Nguyen Van Cu, DI
3925 7777

Seven Wonders (Bay Ky Quan)

It's worth traipsing out to D6 for this one. Not only are the Dim Sum, Peking Duck, and pan-China home-style cuisine exemplary, but the venue design, with its architectural flourishes from the seven wonders of the world (including the Great Wall, the Taj Mahal, and the pyramids) makes for a highly distinctive dining experience.

12 Duong D6, D6
3755 1577
www.7kyquan.com

Shang Palace Restaurant

The slightly off-centre, high-class Norfolk Mansion Hotel on Ly Tu Trong is home to one of Saigon's most well-respected Chinese restaurants outside of Cho Lon. Located on the 1st floor, Shang's dark intricate wooden tables and chairs with white linen and deep red carpeting make for an atmosphere of moody opulence; there is seating for over 300 guests, and private rooms are available.

1st Floor, Norfolk Mansion
17-19-21, Ly Tu Trong, DI
3823 2221

Shi-Fu Dim sum

Shifu Dim Sum House is a restaurant specializing in dim sum, with modern Chinese décor and over 68 dim sum dishes.

139A Nguyen Trai, DI
3925 1111
www.dimsumhouse.vn
7am - 12am

french

Alibi Restaurant and Bar

Centrally located a stone's-throw from the Opera House in downtown DI, this is a warm, appealing lounge environment with modest prices.

5 Nguyen Sieu, DI
3825 6257
www.alibi.vn
10am - late daily

Au Manoir de Khai

Au Manoir de Khai is an authentic, first class French restaurant. Guests can enjoy traditional French cuisine in this classic 100 year old villa. Their menu is extensive and features dishes like Kobe beef, foie gras, red grouper, and truffle mushrooms.

251 Dien Bien Phu, D3
3930 3394
aumanoir@khaisilkcorp.com
www.aumanoirdekhai.com
9am - 10pm

Bon Appetit

A small French-Vietnamese fusion bistro on Pham Ngoc Thach with a simplistic charm enhanced by a fine selection of old-style French music.

78 Pham Ngoc Thach, D3
090 789 8345
9am - 2.30pm; 5pm - 10pm

Bonjour Restaurant

Bonjour serves up international dishes with a French flair. The large menu of main courses feature roast duck, salmon, lamb and steak with specialties being ostrich

and venison.

150/26 Nguyen Trai, DI
3926 0699
bonjourresto.com
7am - 10pm

Cordon Blue

A unique French venue decorated with blue and green shades serving high-quality French cuisine on the outskirts of the inner city.

38 Mac Dinh Chi, DI
3822 5216
www.cordonblue.vn

La Brasserie de Saigon

Set in a trendy space featuring art nouveau décor and intricate iron spiral staircases, La brasserie de Saigon presents authentic French cuisine with Parisian brasserie service experience.

38 Dong Du, DI
0862913657
contact@labrasseriendesaiгон.com
www.labrasseriendesaiгон.com
11.30pm - 2.30pm; 6pm - 12am

La Camargue

Known for its high food quality, reasonable prices and a fine selection of wine, the long running La Camargue serves up home-style French cuisine in an open plan 1st-floor terrace.

74/17 Hai Ba Trung, DI
11am - 2pm; 6pm - 10.30pm



La Creperie

La Creperie is the first authentic Brittany French restaurant that serves savory galettes, sweet crepes with tasty seafood and the best apple cider in Saigon.

17/7 Le Thanh Ton, DI
3824 7070
infosgn@lacreperie.com.cn
Mon-Sun 11am-11pm



La Cuisine

This ultra-fine little bistro is an exercise in minimalism with its twenty seats and bare, chic-rustic interior of wooden furnishings and black & white photographs on whitewashed walls. Its warm lighting and clean atmosphere belies a certain sophistication, however, and the price of the fare is significantly damaging enough to make this a rare treat for those not in the restaurant's fabulously wealthy target market.

48 Le Thanh Ton, DI
2229 8882
www.lacuisine.com.vn

La Doree

La Doree provides its patrons with over 50 varieties of cakes, as well as a rich sandwich menu. They are located in the heart of District 1 in a building with a luxurious French design. In addition to sweets and snacks, this eatery also serves coffee, cocktails, and their specialty: green tea tiramisu.

216 Ly Tu Trong, DI
08 3822 1718
www.ladoree.com

La Fourchette

Small and cozy, La Fourchette is a favorite amongst the French expat community. The vintage posters and wood paneling add to the charm of this French eatery located downtown, a stone's throw from the Saigon River.

9 Ngo Duc Ke, DI
3829 8143
www.lafourchette.com.vn
12pm - 2.30pm, 6pm - 10pm

La Nicoise

A small, friendly French bistro with about a dozen tables, La Nicoise serves up typical French dishes under the watchful eye of its French-Vietnamese owners.

56 Ngo Duc Ke, DI
3821 3056
7am - 9pm, closed Sunday evenings

L'essentiel OI's Pick

A recent arrival to the growing ranks of authentic French dining experiences in HCMC, L'essentiel offers a quiet intimate dining experience downstairs with space for private functions and alfresco dining on an upper floor. The menu changes weekly, the food is fresh and the wine list carefully collated.

98 Ho Tung Mau, DI
0948 415 646
bruno.petret@free.fr

Le Bordeaux

Set in a French colonial-style mansion, Le Bordeaux serves southwestern French cuisine in a beautiful setting. Known for its foie gras and large selection of wines, Le Bordeaux is worth the trip to Binh Thanh district.

72 D2 Street, Binh Thanh
3899 9831
restaurant-lebordeaux.com.vn
11.30am - 1.30pm; 6.30am - 9.30pm

Le Bouchon De Saigon

Red and white checked tablecloths and closely set tables make Le bouchon de Saigon the place to go for a casual, classic French bistro experience under the eye of iron chef Vietnam winner David Thai.

40 Thai Van Lung, DI
3829 9263
www.lebouchondesaigon.com
11am - 2.30pm; 5.30pm - 10pm

Le Jardin

Le Jardin is a gorgeous enclosed garden space that allows eaters to follow the example of the French colonists a century ago and pretend they're actually in Paris. Whether dining outside under the shaded terrace or within the old, warmly-lit villa, the cuisine, decor, and general mood of the place is like a Stargate direct to France.

31D Thai Van Lung, DI
3825 8465

L'Olivier

L'Olivier is a restaurant serving authentic Mediterranean cuisines, located on the 2nd floor of the Hotel Sofitel.

Sofitel Saigon Plaza, 17 Le Duan, DI

3824 1555

www.sofitel.com

11.30am - 2pm; 6pm - 10pm

The Refinery OI's Pick

This Parisian bistro hidden away in its enclave on Hai Ba Trung is an exceptional venue, making for an elegant reparation of the sins of the past. It was here in French Colonial days that opium was manufactured, bringing ruin to the people of Asia; it is here that a far softer side of the French culture now exercises its influence over present-day Saigon,

serving modern European cuisine in its tastefully decorated dining area and airy outdoor patio.
74 Hai Ba Trung, DI
3825 7667
www.therefinerysaigon.com

Ty Coz

An unpretentious venue focused only on serving great cuisine. Ty Coz provides a fine balcony view of the cathedral, intimate atmosphere, and affordable prices.

178/4 Pasteur, DI
3822 2457
www.tycozsaigon.com
11am - 2pm; 6pm - 9.30pm Tuesday through Saturday

Vatel Saigon Restaurant

This is a fine, well-managed, and even luxurious dining venue serving authentic French cuisine in a Franco-Viet design space. There's red carpet along the entrance way, gallery-standard art on the walls, and an overall atmosphere of refinement and good service.
120 bis Suong Nguyet Anh, DI
08 5404 2220
vatelsaigon.com

indian

Baba's Kitchen

Baba's Kitchen, also known as the best Indian restaurant on Bui Vien, is familiar among expats and locals alike, rating 4.5 out of five stars on Trip Advisor. Their vindaloo is a must try.
164 Bui Vien, DI
3838 6661
www.babaskitchen.vn
11am - 11pm

Bombay Indian Restaurant

Located in DI near the Ben Thanh Market

area, serving Indian & Halal cuisine. The ambience is relaxed thanks to Bombay's easy-going, family kitchen vibe.
57-59 Ham Nghi, DI
9am - 10.30pm

Ganesh

Ganesh serves authentic northern Indian tandooris & rotis along with the hottest curries, dandas, and vada from the southern region.

1584 Le Thanh Ton, DI
8223 0173
www.ganeshindianrestaurant.com
11am - 2.15pm; 6pm - 10.15pm

Indus Indian

Indus Indian is a relatively new Indian restaurant in Saigon providing all the classic Indian favorites. Operated by a dedicated husband/wife duo, this restaurant specializes in Halal food.

2G Thi Sach, DI
3521 0324
9am - 2pm; 5pm - 10pm

Mumtaz

With bona-fide Indian owners and chefs, authenticity at Mumtaz is guaranteed. While the service and setting is relatively basic, the food is amongst the best of its type in the city in terms of taste alone. The brand has a second branch in Da Nang city if you're ever on holiday and missing your curries.

226 Bui Vien, DI
3837 1767
mumtazvn@gmail.com
11am - 11pm

The Punjabi

Authentic North Indian cuisine prepared in a home-made tandoori oven makes

Punjabi a popular spot for budget conscious eaters who crave Indian standbys like spinach naan and chicken tandoori.
40/3 Bui Vien, DI
3508 3777
11am - 11pm daily

italian

Basilico Restaurant

Trattoria-style Italian eatery Basilico specializes in homespun recipes. Contemporary décor, casual ambience, and casual yet attentive Bistro-style service makes it a relaxing dinner venue.
Ground floor, on the Corner of Nguyen Du & Le Van Huu, DI
3520 9099
6.30am - 10.30pm

Capricciosa

You'll find the standards here – pizza, pasta, soups, salads, with a few special dishes such as calamari and onion in squid ink sauce. They're all prepared according to strict Japanese standards, and the result is actually really good.

Booth B3-03A, Level B3
Vincom Tower, 70 Le Thanh Ton, DI
3993 9786
www.capricciosa.com.vn

Casa Italia

Italian owned & run, Casa Italia's menu ranges from home-style cooking that includes steaks, seafood, a large variety of homemade pastas, jumbo salads, appetizers and the best pizzas.

86 Le Loi, DI
3824 4286
www.casaitalia.com.vn
10am - 11pm



Ciao Bella

Hearty home-style Italian food served with flair and excellent service. An extensive menu is complemented with daily specials. Arriving guests are greeted with a free glass of Prosecco. Diners sit in a cozy setting upstairs or on the ground floor for people watching. Big groups should book in advance.
11 Dong Du, DI
3822 3329
Tonyfox5@hotmail.com
www.saigonrestaurantgroup.com/ciao



Good Morning Vietnam

Italian restaurant with a unique menu including traditional Italian dishes. The restaurant is conveniently located in a beautiful old house in the heart of Saigon, well integrated in the local architecture.

197 De Tham, DI
3837 1894
www.thegoodmorningvietnam.com
9am - 12am

La Hostaria

Designed with an intimate atmosphere involving something like an Italian town, this venue focuses on traditional ethnic Italian cuisine (rather than the ubiquitous pizza and pasta), creations of the skillful executive chef – straight out of Venice.

BOOM BOOM

BURGERS



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090 953 2378



boomboomburgers.vn



Scan for the full menu



Baba's Kitchen
164 Bui Vien, District 1
Phone: 083-838-6661 & 083-838-6662
Open 11am to 11pm
North & South Indian food
Halal & vegetarian dishes
Of course we can cater!
order online at vietnammm.com & eat.vn
"Baba brings India to Vietnam"

The place lights up on romantic Thursday evenings with candlelight and light music.
17B Le Thanh Ton, D1
3823 1080
www.lahostaria.com

Lucca 🍷🍷 Oi's Pick

A Brooklyn-style Italian eatery upstairs with an adjoining bar. Downstairs is a relaxing cafe offering generous breakfasts, simple cafe fare for lunch and some of the best espresso coffee you'll find in the city.
88 Ho Tung Mau, D1
3915 3692
8am - 11pm

Margherita 🍷🍷

Well-reviewed overseas, Margherita is a familiar place to tourists trawling the nooks of Ho Chi Minh City. This is partly a result of its agreeable price, sumptuous Western-style pizzas, English-speaking staff, and more than average customer service.
175/I Pham Ngu Lao, D1
3837 0760

Opera Restaurant 🍷🍷

A contemporary, casual trattoria-style Italian restaurant overlooking the Opera House, Opera is located within Park Hyatt Saigon specializing in authentic pizza baked in a wood-fired oven, pasta and homemade Italian dishes.
1st floor Park Hyatt Hotel,
2 Lam Son Square, D1
3824 1234
www.saiгон.park.hyatt.com
6am - 11pm

Pizza 4P's

A little treasure hidden away at the top of an out-of-the-way alley off Le Thanh Ton, this Japanese pizzeria is a major hit with those in the know. Highly attractive premises and some extraordinary toppings catering to all tastes make this an unmissable pizza experience.
8/15 Le Thanh Ton, D1
012 0789 4444
www.pizza4ps.com
11am - 11pm

Pomodoro 🍷🍷🍷

In this family-style, simply-decorated trattoria restaurant with an arched ceiling and an all-brick interior, a fine Italian menu pleases diners with 12 different pizzas along with pasta dishes, parma ham with a spicy tomato chutney, and a highly-recommended French onion soup. Ideal option for a simple, reliable, and thoroughly pleasant night out with no complications.
79 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3823 8998
www.pomodoro-vietnam.com

Sarpino's Pizzeria 🍷🍷🍷

Sarpino's Pizzeria provides authentic Italian pizzas made from gourmet ingredients.
125 Ho Tung Mau, D1
3821 6677
yvonne.trinh@sarpinos.vn
www.sarpinos.vn

japanese

Aka Taiyo 🍷🍷

Aka Taiyo serves traditional and exotic Japanese cuisine with an extensive menu featuring more than 200 dishes. Also stocks a surprisingly comprehensive range of Japanese alcoholic beverages.
74B Hai Ba Trung, D1
3824 4295
www.akataiyo.com

Ajisen Ramen 🍷🍷

One of the more authentic Japanese

venues in the area with ingredients imported from Japan, this restaurant is best-known for its tasty "white" soups. The restaurant serves at least 250 traditional dishes.

120 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D1
3822 0522
info@ajisen.com.vn
www.facebook.com/Ajisen.Vietnam
10am - 10pm

Aki Japanese Restaurant 🍷🍷

A small Japanese restaurant with a cozy and comfortable atmosphere, Aki serves over 100 authentic Japanese dishes.
15/9 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3827 9083
11.30am - 2pm; 4.30pm - 11pm

Blanchy Street 🍷🍷 Oi's Pick

Once hidden upstairs at the Blanchy's Tash bar, Blanchy Street now has its own location in the courtyard of eateries on Hai Ba Trung, offering authentic Japanese food mixed with fusion cuisine and the occasional additional Southeast Asian dish. Run by an ex Nobu (London) chef with his own signature dishes, it has wide appeal. Food is designed to be shared and is backed by an extensive list of sakes and wines.

74/3 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3823 8793
blanchystreet@gmail.com
www.blanchystreet.com

** Reviewed by Oi in April 2013*

Cam On Restaurant 🍷🍷

Cam On specializes in Japanese health food, with a dedication to helping men and women maintain their beauty and health by providing quality cuisine with natural ingredients.

30 Thai Van Lung, D1
3823 3955
www.cam-on.asia
11am - 2pm; 5pm - 10pm

Dragon Hotpot 🍷🍷

Dragon Hotpot blends fine taste with the healthy ingredients of Japanese cuisine. Drinks include Japanese favorites along with fine international wines.

122-124 Ho Tung Mau, D1
3825 8842
info@dragonhotpot.vn
dragonhotpot.vn
11am - Late

Dragon Noodle 🍷🍷

A rather small but pretty restaurant with warm tones and a nice series of murals depicting old Saigon, Dragon Noodle focuses on the Japanese staple – ramen noodle soups – although their version is a little less spicy than is traditionally served, increasing perhaps the international appeal of the dish. There are a total of four soup bases to accompany the noodles.

29 Dong Du, D1
3521 0008
info@rame.com
www.ramen.vn

Dragon Steak 🍷🍷🍷

A striking Japanese restaurant tucked away off Saigon's central street, Dragon steak specialises in thick wagyu cuts and tenderloin that could well have been cut off a beast the size of a dragon. They're so enormous that the restaurant once ran a cheeky competition – guests who finished one within half an hour dined free.
138 Ton That Dam, D1
3821 0288
www.steak.vn

Ebisu 🍷🍷

Ebisu serves neither sushi nor sashimi – instead, the menu focuses on a range of

wholesome charcoal-grilled meals and on thick, white Japanese udon noodles – made from imported udon powder from Australia – and presenting an overall rustic cuisine with a variety of good sakes.

35bis Mac Dinh Chi, D1
3822 6971
ductm@incubation-vn.com
ebisu-vn.asia

Fuji Restaurant 🍷🍷

The cuisine is exceptional – fresh seafood and vegetables flown in direct from Japan and Dalat. A preferred venue for those staying at the hotel, and worth trying if you're living local.

Ground Floor, Nikko Hotel Saigon
235 Nguyen Van Cu, D1
3830 8123

Hanayuki 🍷🍷

A Japanese-style restaurant on Ton Duc Thang with a sushi bar on the ground floor and a fine mezzanine level, Hanayuki serves more than 200 exquisite Japanese dishes with more than 30 kinds of sushi and sashimi. Private, traditional Japanese VIP rooms are available on the top level.

21C Ton Duc Thang, D1
3824 2754

Inaho Restaurant 🍷🍷

This unique venue specializes in traditional sushi & sashimi as well as hot pot dishes. Couples can retreat to the upstairs area; it's far more private than the downstairs bar.

4 Chu Manh Trinh, D1
3829 0326
11am - 2pm, 5.30pm - 10pm

Kabuto Tokyo 🍷

One of the more exuberant Japanese venues in this city, Kabuto Tokyo on Mac Thi Buoi specialises in both traditional and fusion fresh Japanese seafood cuisine. It's a vibrant venue with its manga murals, carp lanterns, giant samurai warrior, and large aquarium – and in the evening it becomes a respectable upmarket bar. For a quirky beverage there, try a sake served in a bamboo tube.
45 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3822 2351
kabuto.com.vn

K Cafe 🍷🍷🍷

K Cafe Sushi is a large Japanese restaurant, an ideal place to gather for a business lunch or for a social dinner.
74A4 Hai Ba Trung, D1
38245355
www.yakatabune-saigon.com
11am - 2pm, 5pm - 11pm

Kobe Kokko 🍷

Korean-style teriyaki, hot pot, rice and fried dishes. Part of the Golden Gate Group which also owns Ashima, Sumo BBQ and Kichi Kichi.
4th Floor Pandora, I/1 Truong Chinh, Tan Phu
3849 6840

La Fenetre Soleil 🍷🍷

Glass tables with mosaic tiles and wooden floors set off large comfy sofas and high ceilings, and diners can look out over the busy Ly Tu Trong though 11 large French windows. Its sense of personality attracts artistically-inclined expats to return often, and many of these profess it as their favourite hangout in Saigon. Cuisine is Japanese-Vietnamese fusion.

44 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3824 5994

Mus Mus 🍷

This is a particularly bright and simple Japanese health food bistro where the cuisine is based on straightforward hotpot recipes. Customers choose a total of

twelve ingredients from the selection on offer, which are then added to a bowl of boiling broth on the tabletop. Flavours are essentially Japanese seafood.

117 Vo Van Tan, D3
3930 9185
info@musmus.net
www.musmus.net

Osaka Ramen 🍷🍷

Traditional Japanese noodle restaurant offering traditional Ramen dishes as well as Japanese/Vietnamese fusion cuisine.
67 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1
10am - 10pm

Sakura Vietnamese-Japanese Restaurant 🍷🍷

Cozy, friendly and modern Japanese restaurant near all of the attractions in the city center.
99 Suong Nguyet Anh, D1
6291 1036
sakurasaku.vn
11am - 2pm; 5pm - 11pm

Sumo BBQ 🍷🍷

Sumo BBQ is a rising star amongst Japanese venues in Saigon, offering smokeless table BBQ and a unique buffet/a la carte concept: get whatever you want from the menu, as much as you like. Free birthday beer specials on arrangement.

300 Le Van Sy, Tan Binh
3991 4757
sumobbq.com.vn
10.30am - 10.30pm

Sushi Bar 🍷🍷

There are plenty of dining spaces – large and small rooms, floor-level Japanese dining on tatami mats, private areas, and the eponymous large sushi bar on the ground level.

2 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3823 8042
www.sushibar-vn.com

Sushi Dining Aoi 🍷🍷

Sushi Dining Aoi is one such restaurant, where the whole atmosphere of the place evokes the best of the culture. With its typical Japanese-style decor – the smooth earthen tones of the wooden furniture and surrounds, the warmth and privacy of the VIP rooms – it's possible to believe you're in a more elegant realm.
53-55 Ba Huyen Thanh Quan, D3
3930 0039
www.sushidiningaoi.com

Sushi World 🍷🍷🍷

The Japanese presence in HCMC has ensured a wealth of sushi for both themselves and the rest of us here, Sushi World being one specialty venue with a more casual atmosphere that's also a comfortable place to eat for local diners. A four-storey restaurant in a Japanese-style, the first and second floors feature an open sushi bar, while the upper levels contain 15 VIP rooms decorated in a traditional Japanese style with tatami matting.
28 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3911 0147
www.sushiworld.com.vn

Tokyo Deli 🍷🍷

Tokyo Deli's menu consists of a wide range of distinctive and delicious meals, prepared by specialists to create pure Japanese flavor. The menu is always being changed and improved.
240 Le Thanh Ton, D1
5404 2244
tokyodeli.com.vn
11am - 11pm

Uraetel BBQ Restaurant 🍷🍷

Uraetel serves yakiniku grill, a variant

of the popular Korean dish bulgogi. The restaurant itself is attractively done, with a nod to feng shui in its selective placement of ponds and rocky pathways outside.
6673 9373

Vicki's Teppanyaki & BBQ

It provides a fusion of Asian cuisines with dishes from Japan, Singapore, and Vietnam. Their menu is interesting and diverse, with many delectable seafood options.
42 Le Anh Xuan, D1
3823 3232
vickis.com.vn
10.30am - 3pm; 5pm - 10pm

Yoshino

The decor is straight out of the set of Shogun, with black wood, tatami mats, stencilled cherry blossoms and all the trappings of Japanese exoticism – tastefully done. While Ho Chi Minh City is certainly not short of fine Japanese eateries, this one is particularly impressive.
2A-4A Ton Duc Thang, D1
3823 3333

Yuki

Yukie is a popular Japanese restaurant located in the backpacker area of District 1. Offering authentic Japanese cuisine at affordable prices.
99 Nguyen Thai Hoc, D1
3824 2754
10am - 2pm; 4pm - 10pm

korean

Dae Jang Gum

All the theatrics of a traditional Korean experience are part of the service at Dae Jang Gum, named after an historic figure, but more pertinently after a wildly popular Korean drama focusing on her life – photos from the series appear throughout the venue. From waitresses in hanboks to vast plates of kimchi, this is the most authentic introduction to the cuisine available outside of District 7.
1st Floor, Kumho Asiana Plaza
39 Le Duan, D1
3825 7974
www.daejanggum.vn

Hana Restaurant

Japanese-Korean fusion in the heart of D1. Hana has contemporary decor with a private, open feel. Its broad menu includes both cooked and raw fish in addition to traditional hot pot with fish eggs, rice and vegetables.
8 Cao Ba Quat, D1
3829 5588
9am - 10pm

Kimsine

A place to enjoy Korean style dishes in the city center. Kimsine's menu is extensive, offering everything from instant noodles to chicken's feet.
8A/5D2 Thai Van Lung, D1
7306 4045
094 467 2281
jymimill@hanmail.net
10am - 3am

Mi Han Quoc

This franchise has gained popularity in Ho Chi Minh City for having successfully adapted the spiciness of Korean cuisine to the local Vietnamese palate, serving perfectly balanced noodle dishes.
92 Ham Nghi, D1
3914 1565
www.mihanquocvn.com
8am - 11pm

Mr. BBQ – Korean Chicken & Hof

This unusual Korean import famous for

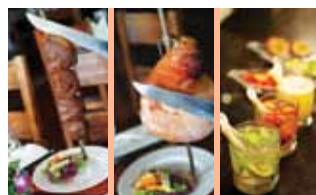
extraordinarily spicy chicken is an odd phenomenon on the HCMC culinary landscape, serving up a version of KFC that's actually painful. Lovers of spicy food rejoice. The restaurant itself is clean and modern in design, and there are another 50 Korean dishes on offer beyond the signature dish, including some tasty bibimbap mixed rice dishes.

20 Ho Huan Nghiep, D1
3823 9000
9am-11pm

Seoul House

Seoul House is a well-known two-story Korean restaurant with a simple, cozy atmosphere. Its menu contains Korean favorites like Banchan, hotpots, grilled meat, clay pot mixed rice, and kim chi tofu soup.
33 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3829 4297
7am - 10pm

steakhouses



Au Lac do Brazil

Serving Saigon for more than 10 years, Au Lac do Brazil is the very first authentic Brazilian Churrascaria in Vietnam, bringing a new dining concept - an "All you can eat" Brazilian style BBQ where meat is brought to your table on skewers by a passador and served to your heart's content. They have an extensive selection of fine wines as well.
HO CHI MINH CITY
Au Lac do Brazil I
238 Pasteur, D3
(08) 3820 7157
HA NOI
Au Lac do Brazil II
6A Cao Ba Quat, Ba Dinh
(04) 3845 5224
For Banquet & Catering
Call or email
pr@aulacdobrazil.com
090 947 8698

www.aulacdobrazil.com
www.facebook.com/aulacdobrazil

Corso Steakhouse and Bar

Corso Steakhouse and Bar operates under an open kitchen concept, bringing together an exciting menu of Asian and European dishes with a focus on grilling. Guests can choose from a wide variety of wines and spirits.
117 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3829 5368
www.norfolkhotel.com.vn
6pm - 11pm

Dragon Steak

Specializing in generous portions of Wagyu cuts; they're so enormous that the restaurant runs a cheeky competition - finish one within half an hour, and it's free.
138 Ton That Dam, D1
3821 0288
www.steak.vn
11am - late

El Gaucho 🍖 Oi's Pick

Serves great Argentinean steaks, hamburgers and more. A great place to entertain clients or friends from overseas. With outlets in Hanoi and Bangkok too.
5D Nguyen Sieu, D1

38251879
www.elgaucho.asia

New York Steakhouse

While situated in a fairly laid-back area, New York Steakhouse is definitely in the upmarket category and serves exclusive American imported beef dishes, with a whole range of steaks from rib eye, New York strip steak, and tenderloin being popular options.
25-27 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D1
3823 7373
contact@steakhouse.com.vn
www.steakhouse.com.vn

Pho 99

Not a traditional steakhouse per se, but Pho 99 is known for its excellent filet mignon steaks made out of Cu Chi beef. Also serves great pho.
139 Nguyen Trai, D1
3925 2791
6am - 2.30am

Samba Brazilian Steakhouse

This is certainly Saigon's most visible and colourful restaurant serving the popular Brazilian buffet style, where enormous skewers of meat are circulated around the tables for diners to enjoy as much of as they can.
10C Thai Van Lung, D1
3822 0079
www.samba.vnnhahang.com

Wild Horse Salon

Cowboy-themed western steakhouse with an impressive exterior on trendy Thai Van Lung, Wild Horse serves high-quality Tex Mex/American cuisine with enormous servings.
8A/1D1 Thai Van Lung, D1
3825 1901
10am - 2pm; 4pm - 11.30pm

thai

Coriander

A small Thai joint pleasingly decked out in natural materials with cork walls and sedge-lined floors. The resulting ambience is nicely authentic, and the same goes for the cuisine – try the green shrimp curry, the fried noodles in Thai style, or the squid vermicelli for a taste of the Gulf of Thailand. The restaurant is also known for its almost embarrassingly cheap beer.
185 Bui Vien, D1
3837 1311

Golden Elephant

A cozy and relaxing Thai style restaurant, serving an extensive collection of Thai specialties including noodles, curries, rice, stir-fries, soups, and a good range of seafood.
34 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3822 8554
11am - 10pm

Jasmine Thai

A quiet, candle-lit affair complete with the ethereal tones of traditional music, guests can enjoy variations on dishes prepared in the Thai culinary tradition.
85 Quoc Huong, D2
35190038
5pm - 9.30pm Tue-Sun

Koh Thai

Stunning Thai-chic decor and unique Siam cuisine make Koh Thai one of Saigon's most authentic and memorable Thai restaurants. Located in the Intercontinental complex, Koh Thai serves Asian inspired cocktails in a trendy lounge environment with

chill music.
1st floor, 39 Le Duan, D1
3823 4423
091 233 9138
www.hothai.com.vn
11am - 10pm Daily

Lac Thai

Lac Thai is a large, three-floor restaurant offering a wide range of Thai cuisine with signature dishes like Pad Thai, Tom Yum Koong, Chicken Satay and many others.
71/2 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3823 7506
9am - 9pm

Mai Thai

Mai Thai is a Thai restaurant offering an extensive menu with many Thai favorites. This two-storey restaurant features traditional decorations and friendly service.
13 Ton That Thiep, D1
3821 2920
11am - 2pm, 5pm - 10pm

Malee Thai

A cute, central Thai venue decked out in royal purple decor, Malee is an intimate restaurant serving a wide range of consistently tasty dishes, although without the full effect of Thai cuisine's signature burn.
37 Dong Du, D1
3829 3029
11am - 2pm; 5pm - 11pm

Spice

Spice Thai restaurant has been a favorite among the locals in Saigon since 2003. This multicultural eatery offers Thai food & seafood in a décor fusing Oriental & Mediterranean artifacts.
27C Le Quy Don, D3
3930 7873
www.spicevn.com
11am - 2pm; 5.30pm - 10pm

Thai Express

Thai Express is the world's largest Thai restaurant chain. Enjoy fantastically authentic Thai cuisine at reasonable prices in a relaxed, contemporary atmosphere.
8A Le Thanh Ton, D1
6299 1338
www.thaieexpress.com.vn
10.30am - 10pm

vietnamese

3T Quan Nuong

With hanging oil lamps and wooden statues lining the stairs, this venue above the Temple Bar has a touch more atmosphere than most of its kind, but the otherwise simple décor with bamboo tables and chairs are fitting enough. The broad barbecue grill menu features classics of its kind.
Top Floor, 29 Ton That Hiep, D1
3821 1631

An Khue Quan

This pleasant little establishment out by the New World hotel is simply decorated with plain wooden furnishings and minimal, albeit tasteful, decorations. This is appropriate for the restaurant's style, serving a well-selected series of dishes from both northern and southern regions of Vietnam in an area where international diners are likely to be in abundance – and therefore well attuned to the foreign palate.
92B Le Lai, D1
3925 9583

An Vietnamese Bistro

An Restaurant offers exquisite dishes

from the North, Central, and South of Vietnam, served by well-trained waiters and waitresses dressed in traditional Southern clothing.

71/5-6 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3825 8275
11am - 10pm

Banh Xeo 46A

Although known for a wide range of Vietnamese specialties, the local pancake stuffed with herbs and prawns is its tastiest dish.

46A Dinh Cong Trang, D1
3824 1110
10am - 9pm

Banh Xeo An La Ghien

This franchise emphasises ethnic Vietnamese traditions with the rustic decor of the countryside, featuring thatched roofing and red tiles, bamboo chairs, and an open, natural ambiance. The fare on offer is traditional Vietnamese, specialising in the Banh Xeo filled egg pancake, a favourite with foreigners with its light crispy shell and fragrant herbs and meats inside the pancake pocket.

74 Suong Nguyet Anh, D1
3833 0534
www.banhxeoanlaghien.com.vn/en

Barbecue Garden

The venue features all open-air dining and the atmosphere is distinctly festival-like, relaxing, and casual, becoming congenially boisterous in the evenings. The restaurant specializes in Western-Vietnamese fusion dishes such as beef with cheese, 5-spices beef, squid with satay sauce, and shrimp kebabs.

135A Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1
3823 3340
www.barbecuegarden.com

Beefsteak Nam Son

This local steak restaurant specialises in Vietnamese-style iron-plate meat dishes rather than the American steaks often popular with expats – but while these two varieties have their differences, the local version of the dish has a fresh, light character and is served with some good, delicate Vietnamese sauces.

188 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
3930 3917
www.namsonsteak.com

Bo Ne Le Hong

Bo Ne Le Hong is a popular Vietnamese restaurant specializing in beefsteak. It has a rich, diverse menu, and also offer fresh fruit juices.

489/27/39 Huynh Van Banh, Phu Nhuan
3990 5106
11.30am - 22.30pm

Bun Sai Gon

This franchise positions itself firmly in the local market with the slogan 'the bun noodles of the Vietnamese people' – indicating a concerted dedication to the authenticity of its noodle soup staples.

6276 2609
www.bunsaiigon.com.vn

Cha Ca La Vong

This venue only serves Cha Ca, a traditional Hanoian dish. Cha Ca is a salad made out of pieces of fish and spring onion stir-fried in a hotpot.

36 Ton That Thiep, D1
3915 3343
7.30am - 10pm

Cuc Gach Quan

Fine cuisine with a rustic touch hidden away in the extreme reaches of the inner city. Set inside a restored French colonial mansion with antique wooden furniture and a central staircase, this Vietnamese venue serves traditional, country-style

foods, a mixture of street food dishes made with fine ingredients together with a selection of more contemporary options.

10 Dang Tat, D1
3848 0144

Ganh

With green suspended lanterns, simple and elegant furnishings, all touched off with bamboo baskets of fruit, flowers, and reed grass, the atmosphere is just as smooth and well-defined as a more modern-styled venue.

58/4 Pham Ngoc Thach, D3
3829 5243
www.nemnuongganh.com

Gold Fish

Gold Fish offers a slice of authentic Vietnam with a genuinely rural cuisine.

73 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3822 5229
www.goldfish.vn

Highway 4

The menu reflects the ambiance of the north and wider Vietnam, although dishes are carefully selected to meet a more universal palate.

101 Vo Van Tan, D3
3602 2069
www.highway4.com

Hoa Tuc

Set in what used to be Saigon's opium refinery, Hoa Tuc serves up contemporary Vietnamese cuisine in a Parisian, art-deco atmosphere.

74 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3825 1676
www.hoatuc.com
10.30am - 10.30pm daily

Lemongrass

The vibe aims at a harmony between modern styling and the Vietnamese traditional arts, and the dining room with its tile floors and wooded wainscoting effects a comforting natural environment.

4 Nguyen Thiep, D1
3822 0496
info@lemongrasssaigon.com

Luong Son

Exotic beer garden style eatery famous for its barbecue beef. Luong Son also serves fear factor items such as scorpions, grubs, ostrich meat and crickets.

31 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3825 1330
www.facebook.com/LuongSonQuan
10am - 10pm

Nam Phat

A Vietnamese run restaurant popular for family events, desserts and cakes.

21 Nguyen Trung Ngan, D1
3910 6488
www.facebook.com/nhangnamphat
10.30am – 2pm, 5pm – 10pm

Marina Saigon

Marina Saigon is one of the leading seafood restaurants in Ho Chi Minh City. This restaurant provides a luxurious environment with French/Vietnamese fusion cuisine.

172 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D3
3930 2379
ngocsuong.com.vn
10am - 11pm

Maxim's Nam An

Large and lavishly decorated, Maxim's Nam An restaurant serves Vietnamese cuisine in style. The carved wooden booths, completed with silk curtains,

are a romantic hideaway for couples or small groups.

13-15-17 Dong Khoi, D1
10am- 10pm

Nghi Xuan

Lost down one of the less noticeable alleyways of the inner city, if you do happen to chance upon Nghi Xuan, the sheer grace of the venue will come as something of a surprise. Decorated as a high-class traditional Vietnamese mansion, Nghi Xuan is perfectly fitting for a venue serving the finest of Vietnam's classical cuisine – the imperial dishes of Hue. Service is courteous, fast, and quintessentially elegant.

5/9 Nguyen Sieu, D1
3823 0699
nghixuanrestaurant.com

Nha Hang Ngon

Famous restaurant serving easy Vietnamese cuisine to foreigners and tourists with more than 400 traditional dishes.

160 Pasteur, D1
3827 7131
www.quanhanggon.com.vn
8am - 10pm

Papaya Restaurant

A petite, clean, and brightly-coloured Vietnamese restaurant with simple décor serving a light, healthy, northern-style cuisine. There's no fuss in the layout here – green walls with black & white artworks, brown wooden furnishings, and lanterns above every table make for a very pleasant atmosphere – and it's casual without being messy, and refined without any trace of pretentiousness.

68 Pham Viet Chanh, Binh Thanh
6258 1508
papaya@chi-nghia.com
www.chi-nghia.com

Pho 2000

Pho 2000's Ben Thanh Market branch was famously visited by former US President Bill Clinton in 2000. The chain serves up variations on pho as well as noodle and rice dishes.

4 Phan Chu Trinh, D1
3822 2788
6am - 10pm

Pho 24

PHO24 is a popular Vietnamese noodle restaurant chain with 70 outlets across Vietnam and throughout Southeast Asia.

71-73 Dong Khoi, D1
3825 7505
info@pho24.com.vn
www.pho24.com.vn
7am - 11pm

Royal Revolving Restaurant

The Royal Revolving Restaurant is a unique restaurant experience. Experience stunning views of the city while you spin around in the sky. The restaurant offers more than 50 Hong Kong inspired dishes and a bar that serves coffee and cocktails.

3823 2232
nhanghanghoanggia@yahoo.com
6am - 10am; 11am - 2pm; 5pm - 11pm

Saigon Vegan

Saigon Vegan is located in a casual and inviting space with high ceilings, dark wood tables, and lots of natural light. Guests can choose from over 100 vegan dishes, all of which are either soy or vegetable based.

378/3 Vo Van Tan, D3
3834 4473
8.30am - 2pm; 4pm - 10pm

SH Garden restaurant

Established in the 1930s, the Terrace restaurant is located at the corner of two of the oldest boulevards of Saigon, Nguyen Hue and Le Loi, where romantic memories of Saigon float around. This restaurant offers a variety of delicious traditional Vietnamese dishes.

4th floor, 98 Nguyen Hue, D1
6680 0188
shgarden.com.vn
10am -11pm

Song Ngu

There are eight different rooms capable of seating a total of 350-400 guests, each warmly-lit with dark wooden furnishings. On a small stage, a traditional chamber orchestra with ladies wearing classical Ao dai costumes perform Vietnamese music on genuine old instruments.

70 Suong Nguyet Anh, D1
3832 5017

Temple Club

Usually regarded as one of central Saigon's most authentically Vietnamese venues, this historic and good-looking features classic Indochinese decor, broadly interpreted as a blend of the old French colonial style with pan-Asian graces that appeal more to Asian exoticism than reflect actual Vietnamese styles. With antique furnishings and ceiling fans, the atmosphere is certainly pretty.

29-31 Ton That Thiep, D1
3829 9244
templeclub.com.vn

Thanh Nien Restaurant

With its attractive home-style layout, pretty garden for outdoor dining, and warm, yellow-toned interior for the buffet, it's a charming venue for tourists and a familiar favourite for long-timers. It's intentionally decorated like a private home, walls decorated with floral artworks, and the garden surrounded by bamboo.

11 Nguyen Van Chiem, D1
3822 5909
www.vnnavi.com/restaurants/thanhvien

Tib Restaurant

This fine Vietnamese Hue-style restaurant looks almost like a temple, and it's considered one of the city's premier settings serving imperial cuisine.

187 Hai Ba Trung, D3
3829 7242
www.tibrestaurant.com.vn

Tin Nghia

A charming little venue serving vegetarian cuisine. Its quaint appearance hides the fact that it was the first international vegetarian restaurant in Ho Chi Minh City and an important center of the city's vegetarian culture.

9 Tran Hung Dao, D1
3821 2538
7.30am - 1.30pm, 4.30pm - 7.30pm

Vietnam House

Vietnam House is a high quality restaurant specializing in both local Vietnamese and international cuisine. This restaurant is set in a restored French colonial house offering stunning views of the street.

93-95 Dong Khoi, D1
3829 1623
www.vietnamhousesaigon.com
7am - 11pm

(other) asian

Lion City

This is a Singaporean franchise to

watch with interest – since its humble beginnings in 2006 with the rather more unpleasant name Singapore Frog Porridge, it has risen in strength to become the most prominent representative of the cuisine in the city, and its growth has continued to be remarkable.

45 Le Anh Xuan, D1
3823 8371
www.lioncityrestaurant.com

Long Monaco 🍷 Oi's Pick

Long Monaco operates throughout the city under various brand names – this outlet is a standalone restaurant in the busy Etown office complex in Tan Binh district. You'll probably only visit if you're working nearby or visiting on official business, but you'll find the restaurant serves some great Asian business lunches.

Ground Floor, Etown I
364 Cong Hoa, Tan Binh
3812 2242
www.longmonaco.com.vn

western/international

Al Fresco's

Offering a mix of Tex-Mex, Italian, and Australian food along with cold local & imported beers and a wine list featuring Australia's finest whites along with affordable South American reds.

16 Nguyen Thi Nghia, D1
3926 0036
www.alfrescosgroup.com
8.30am - 11pm

Annam Gourmet

An upscale deli and grocery chain offering gourmet groceries, cheese, organic products, gluten-free products, fruit and vegetables, gourmet deli, wine and other beverages. All locations, in District 1, 2 and 7, have a coffee lounge that serves breakfast, lunch, drinks and early dinner.

16-18 Hai Ba Trung, D1. 3822 9391
41A Thao Dien street. D2. 3744 2630
5B2-1 My Khanh 4, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7
5412 3263 / 5412 3264
www.annam-gourmet.com

Au Parc

It's only fitting that this Mediterranean-styled restored villa with its original tiles, old window frames, plush cushions, and opium-themed art collection sits in one of the most gorgeous streets of central Saigon. Au Parc is an unforgettable venue with a décor that manages to simultaneously capture the grace of the old Colonial architecture and the mood of west-Asian exoticism that transfixed Europe in the Romantic period.

23 Han Thuyen, D1
3829 2772
auparcsaigon.com



Bahdja
 Algerian restaurant serving north African delights such as couscous, tajines and desserts. Unique Mechoui set dinner is a popular choice and perfect for groups (available with prior notice).

87-89-91 Ho Tung Mau, D1
093 787 2010 (French, Arabic, English, Finnish)
0122 763 1261 (English, Russian, Vietnamese)
Mon - Fri 11:30 - 2pm
Mon - Sat 6pm - 11pm

Beirut Shisha Bar

The Beirut Shisha bar offers fine Middle

Eastern cuisine with imported meat to guarantee impeccable flavor. Shisha is the perfect way to relax after a long day in the city.

74/13D Hai Ba Trung, D1
38222188
beirutbar.com
4pm - late

Black Cat Restaurant

Originally envisioned as a fast food Vietnamese sandwich place, Black Cat Saigon now serves international food with a focus on burgers, most famously its "Big Cheese" featuring 500g of beef.

13 Phan Van Dat, D1
3829 2955
www.blackcatsaigon.com
7am - 11pm

Blu Bar and Grill

Blu Bar provides a wide range of Asian and Mediterranean specialties for breakfast, lunch, and dinner along with many unique beverage options.

53 Vo Truong Toan, D2
3744 4111
7am - 11pm

Bobby Chinn's 🍷 Oi's Pick

This is TV celebrity and experienced international chef Bobby Chinn's showcase restaurant adjacent to Intercontinental Asiana Hotel in the Kumho Link. Stylish lounge environment offers fine dining with a separate lounge bar area. Extensive cocktail menu and wine list backed by artfully created western dishes. Ideal venue for launch functions - and possibly features the most luxurious restaurant restrooms in HCMC.

39 Le Duan, D1
6291 7788
www.bobbychinn.com

The Burger Corner

Tasty, fresh homemade burgers with a range of ingredients aimed at satiating both foreign and local palates. Menu includes local 'rice burgers' and prices are well below those of international chains.

43 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 0094
www.theburgercorner.com.vn
8am - 9.45pm

The Elbow Room

The Elbow Room on Pasteur is an American-style bistro with a long bar, exposed brickwork, white walls, and whirling ceiling fans – making for a casual, contemporary space with an international vibe. More of a diner than a restaurant, Elbow shoots at a cool, relaxed atmosphere, pleasantly decorating its warmly-lit walls with evocative black & white photos and subtle lighting.

52 Pasteur, D1
3821 4327
www.elbowroom.com.vn

Hog's Breath Café

An Australian family diner and bar concept. Renowned for quality steaks, seafood and other western fare served in an informal environment. Smoke-free indoors.

Ground Floor, Bitexco Financial Tower,
2 Hai Trieu, D1
3915 6066
090 381 8700
www.hogsbreathcafe.com.vn
8am - 12am

Jaspas Wine & Grill 🍷 Oi's Pick

Jaspas Wine and Grill provides an extensive wine list along with many "reinvented" Jaspas dishes, new creations, and

mouthwatering steaks. Japas also offers a wide array of delectable dessert options.

74/7 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3827 0931
alfrescosgroup.com
8.30am - 11.30pm

Khoi Thom

Khoi Thom, which translates to "fragrant smoke" features bright, colorful, Latin-American decoration inspired by renowned Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta. This unique eatery offers a hybrid of Vietnamese and Mexican flavors.

29 Ngo Thai Nhiem, D3
3930 0233
khoithom.com
10am - 11pm

La Habana

Offering authentic Spanish cuisine and a wide choice of tapas, as well as Cuban cocktails, La Habana is a den of Cuban-Spanish inspired architecture located on inner-city Cao Ba Quat.

6 Cao Ba Quat, D1
3829 5180
www.lahabana-saigon.com

Ly Club

Often used as a venue for gatherings, networking meetings, and events where an air of wealth and sophistication is useful, Ly Club is a sure bet for making an impression on a date or business lunch. Built into a traditional French villa with wide elliptical arches, the atmosphere of naked opulence persists throughout the property.

143 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
3930 5588
www.lyclub.vn

Margherita

For some, Margherita doubles as an unofficial expat rendezvous, partly a result of its agreeable prices and sumptuous Western-style pizzas and foods.

175/1 Pham Ngu Lao, D1
3837 0760
8am - 11pm

Mogambo Bar & Grill

Mogambo is a dark, African-styled restaurant with some of the finest US & Tex-Mex and exceptional burgers.

50 Pasteur, D1
3825 1311
mogambo@saigonnet.vn
7am - 11pm

Pacharan - Tapas & Bodega

The city's best-known Spanish restaurant with a sports bar on the ground floor, two floors of dining space, and an open rooftop deck for cocktails and live music. Serving tapas, paella, and an extensive Iberian wine list.

97 Hai Ba Trung, D1
090 724 2757
andres@pacharan.com.vn
10am - late

Parkview Restaurant

This restaurant is best known locally for its seafood buffet, with a wide variety of international specialties freshly-prepared at the live cooking stations. Local and imported seafood includes oysters and prawns, molluscs and organic lobsters.

76 Le Lai, D1
3822 8888
www.saigon.newworldhotels.com

Pasha

Serving Turkish and Mediterranean

cuisine, the kitchen is headed by Chef Ismet with over 30 years of experience in similar restaurants.

25 Dong Du, D1
6291 3677
www.pasha.com.vn

Shri Restaurant and Lounge

Visitors to Shri are regularly astonished to discover such an international-standard venue secreted away on top of a plain-looking bank tower, serving a catalogue of exotic recipes, and while prices are as to be expected, the fare is an impressive collection of dishes guaranteed to suit the palate of Western diners as well as pleasing those with an Asian culinary background.

Rooftop, Level 23, 72-74 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
3827 9631
www.shri.vn

Skewers

An open-air kitchen at the front of the restaurant and a small cigar lounge upstairs set off the atmosphere and mark this venue as one with a unique presence in Saigon. The purely Mediterranean cuisine is appropriately authentic.

9A Thai Van Lung, D1
38224798
www.skewers-restaurant.com

Subway

Subway is now in Vietnam, offering its internationally-renowned range of subs sandwiches and cookies. World travelers can expect the same high quality of ingredients regardless of what nation they are visiting.

121 Ho Tung Mau, D1
3914 4118
7.30am - 12am

Strata

Located on the 50th floor of the Bitexco tower, Strata offers a stunning dining experience with views over the city and a dessert bar with coffee and tea. Popular with tourists and locals seeking a unique location for a special occasion.

Level 50, Bitexco Financial Tower,
2 Hai Trieu, D1
086 291 8750
www.cirussaigon.com
10am - 10pm

Warda

Warda is a Middle-Eastern style bar and restaurant headed by a renowned Syrian chef. Guests can enjoy authentic middle-eastern cuisine indoors and outdoors while enjoying an almond cigar or shisha.

71/7 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
8am - 12am

Xu Restaurant Lounge

The venue is well-known for its pork wantons, bun cha, seared beef crostinis, bo luc lac diced beef and 'Xu-style' chicken rice. Xu is an elegant venue that works as a restaurant or a high-class bar for the upper echelons.

71-75 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3824 8468
www.xusaigon.com

Zoom Cafe 🍷 Oi's Pick

Zoom cafe serves Tex-Mex and Vietnamese cuisine as well as running a Vespa tour service from within the café.

169A Bui Vien, D1
3920 3897
vscooterguy@yahoo.com
7am - 2am daily



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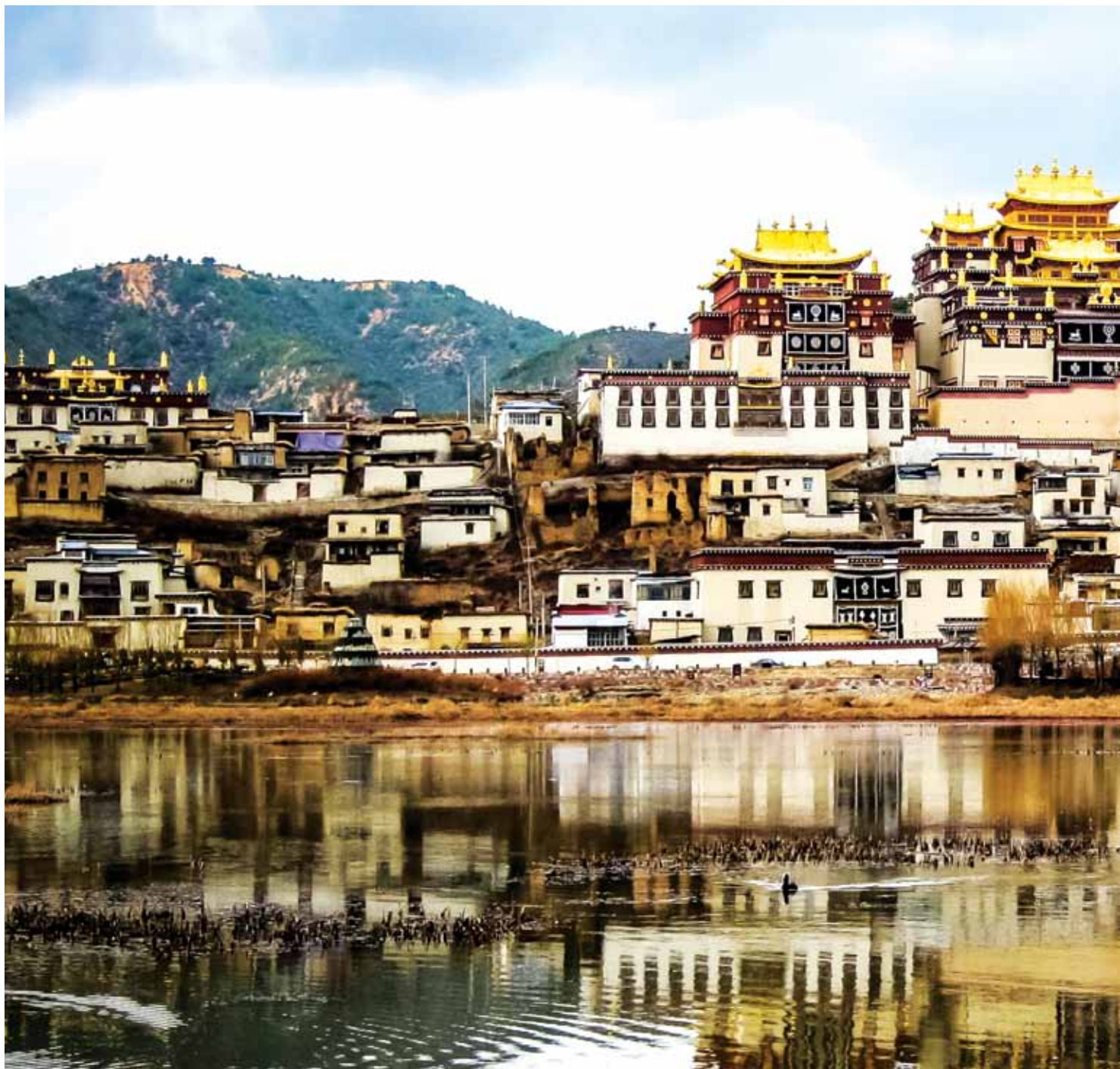
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Travel & Leisure

IMAGE PROVIDED BY WINDFLOWER BEACH BOUTIQUE HOTEL - MUI NE





In La La Land

Visit a remote Himalayan region the Chinese consider a Utopian paradise

TEXT BY **HEATHER HALL**

THE WORD 'SHANGRI-LA' conjures up visions of a magical realm tucked away on some distant, exotic mountain, an idyllic place equally difficult to find as it is to leave.

Shangri-la was first introduced to our imagination by James Hilton in his 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*, a story centered on a mythical monastery high in the Tibetan Himalayas whose residents lead astonishingly long lives. This fantasy of a lost paradise prompted some to search for the inspiration for Hilton's Utopia. Sensing opportunity, a handful of towns adopted the moniker over the years in an effort to boost tourism, but only one place succeeded in getting the name to stick - a small town formerly known as Zhongdian in China's southwestern Yunnan Province, nestled along the borders of Myanmar and Tibet. Local authorities, convinced of the legitimacy of their



claim, officially changed the name to Shangri-la (in Mandarin, *sheeang-guh-lee-lah*) in 2001, effectively fixing the tourist spotlight on their corner of the world.

Dubious marketing practices aside, the quaint little town may even deserve this name on its own merits. Situated in the Hengduan mountain range at an elevation of over 3,300 meters, Shangri-la's environs feature rolling hills, broad meadows, and imposing snow-capped peaks. The spring air is crisp and cool, and the sky looms large in the high altitude. Many people take a day or so to acclimatize, as I did, which forced me to slow down and appreciate things I might have missed otherwise, like the dogs and cats prowling across rooftops and the fact that the ever-present children never seem to cry.

While the population has grown and the new town more and more resembles a standard-issue

Chinese city, Shangri-la's Old Town remains a jumble of twisting, narrow alleys paved with stones of granite that can be quite slippery in the intermittent rain and morning mist. Once a stop on China's ancient Tea Horse Road, along which Chinese tea and Tibetan horses were traded centuries ago, the Old Town has retained its charm with wooden houses and inns still lining pedestrian-only streets. But this is no museum exhibition. The neighborhood feels lived in, with more locals than tourists going about their day.

Desperation for Preservation

Efforts to preserve the region's traditional architecture and food have been embraced by residents, both Chinese and expats. A few historic buildings have been painstakingly restored and given new life as restaurants, shops

and guesthouses. One such labor of love is Tara Gallery and Café, a restaurant-cum-art gallery serving authentic local dishes prepared by a Tibetan chef in a former courtesan's home.

Uttara, the expat owner, saved the old building from a planned demolition and restored the original wood beams and rammed-earth wall, then filled the eatery with classic regional décor and exquisite pieces of art. Asked why she worked so hard to preserve it, Uttara replied, "I just loved the structure and did not want to see it disappear."

Shangri-la authorities didn't understand Uttara's vision at first, telling her it would be cheaper to tear the old building down and put up a brand new one. They didn't see the value in saving what was to them just an "old dirt wall." She recalls her struggle to even find laborers familiar with techniques on how to preserve

"The local men are decked out in cowboy hats, boots and oversized leather coats, and wouldn't look out of place in Bolivia or Peru"

such an old building, and who had high-quality workmanship. Although she ultimately succeeded in her endeavor, the financial cost was high, taking her nearly eight years to acquire the funds for the job. Last year, Uttara purchased and restored another old inn, but said she is unable to afford any more projects of that kind. While she believes others are now more interested in preserving the town's physical history, she speculates they may not have the means. A group of town administrators has taken up the cause and she hopes the entire street will one day be restored.

A few doors down from Uttara's place, Arro Khampa: Damien and Ting's Tibetan Bistro serves sophisticated, modern Tibetan cuisine in arguably one of the best restaurants in the neighborhood. The meticulously-tended space is warm and welcoming thanks to a roaring fireplace and the owners' friendly service. Damien, a Frenchman, met "his gal" Ting in Paris where they lived the corporate life until a chance opportunity to take over a restaurant in southwestern China presented itself. That was two years ago and Damien said they are very happy with the decision, relishing the slower pace of the small town.

Other conservationists are focusing on the area's rich artistic heritage. The Shangri-la Tibetan Thangka Painting Center employs traditional painting techniques and materials to create beautiful silk scrolls depicting scenes from Buddha's life and other spiritual motifs. Master painters, including the father of the proprietor who showed us around the workshop, make the paint by hand using crushed minerals, pearls and even gold, which is reflected in the high retail price. We were told that private collectors and hotel decorators from around the globe have come to purchase these special works of art. For the more modest shopper, the Shangri-la Handicraft Development Center, run by the non-profit Yunnan Mountain Heritage Foundation, teaches locals to make handicrafts such as lacquerware, jewelry and woven yaks wool rugs. A large array of items is sold in the attached shop, with proceeds going back into the community.

The region surrounding Shangri-la is home to a large population of ethnic Tibetans and minority groups including Naxi, Yi, Bai, Hui and Lisu, and their colorful presence pervades the town. Women can be seen on the streets outfitted in bold colors, hand-woven patterns

and elaborate head pieces. Many seem to schlep around everything from firewood to fresh produce in large wicker baskets strapped to their backs. Babies also get slung onto backs with embroidered carriers and scarves. The local men are decked out in cowboy hats, boots and oversized leather coats, and wouldn't look out of place in Bolivia or Peru.

Solitary Confinement

The northern edge of the new town is crowned by the Sumtseling Monastery that bears a striking likeness to Tibet's Potala Palace in the capital Lhasa. Founded in the 17th century by the fifth Dali Lama, Sumtseling is the most important Tibetan monastery in southwestern China and home to around 700 monks. Though damaged during China's Cultural Revolution, one would almost never know it by the dazzling appearance of the main assembly hall. Buddha images as high as eight meters dwarf the cavernous space, which is hung with colorful prayer flags and seats up to 1,200 monks. Candles burning at the altar add warmth and fill the room with fragrant smoke. It was surreal

to walk into such a vast room and find myself completely alone. In a country of 1.6 billion people, it's a rare luxury. The entire monastery was strangely quiet, with just a few solitary travelers exploring the grounds alongside us and a smattering of locals walking here and there. A tour group showed up as we were leaving, but even this hardly left an impression in the wide expanses. On our way out past the deserted ticket counter, a Western couple asked if Sumtseling was worth the almost USD20 cost of admission; despite our raving review, they decided against it and wound up with us on the same bus back to town. A shame to have come so far...

At the southern end of Old Town, the 100 Chickens Temple (Baijisi) represents the more humble end of the temple spectrum, though it entrances in its own way. That is, assuming you can find the poorly marked path. We meandered down a few alleys until coming to a wide field with a dirt path through the center and a couple menacing-looking yaks on the ridge above. While contemplating our options a friendly old fellow happened by, pointing up the hill



IMAGES BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY



and telling us in Mandarin that the temple was hundreds of years old and “*feichang tebie*,” or very, very special. He also assured us that the horned beasts wouldn’t bother us and indeed we passed unmolested. The one-room shrine is tended by a lone man who presumably also cares for the dozens of chickens and pigs that roam freely all over the temple grounds. An absolute riot of colorful prayer flags covers nearly every surface and flows through the surrounding hills. The climb to the temple is steep, but the site affords sweeping views of the new city and soaring mountains, and the peaceful setting is a fair reward. Once again, we had this incredible place almost entirely to ourselves.

Despite its ethereal beauty, Shangri-la has a ways to go before reaching the utopia its name implies. Ongoing restoration and construction projects provide a sometimes less-than-tranquil soundtrack to the experience, and the occasional pile of dry cement or building supplies on an Old Town path can hinder the casual stroll. Higher traffic pedestrian streets have their share of tacky souvenir shops selling mass-produced trinkets, fake tiger pelts and the ubiquitous

dried yak meat. Local ladies gather in the large public square to dance in the evenings to blaring Sino-pop music, a scene that can feel a bit contrived. But despite these minor quibbles, many of Shangri-la’s charms have withstood the inevitable drift towards modernity that has resulted from the increased attention and it remains a tranquil retreat.

Winters in the mountainous region can be harsh, and many businesses close from November 30 to April 1. Uttara, a long-time resident, entreats visitors to come in the summer when Shangri-la’s hills and meadows are full of rare and beautiful flowers turning the region into a true Utopia.

Bio: Putting aside a career in marketing, Heather Hall moved with her husband to Shanghai in 2011 and has been exploring East Asia ever since. She has discovered a particular fondness for the climate, cuisines, and friendly people of Southeast Asia and looks forward to spending more time exploring this fascinating region. Read more about her adventures at www.ferretingoutthefun.com. ■

ADDITIONAL INFO

Arro Khampa: Damien & Ting’s Tibetan Bistro

27 Jinlong Street

Pricing: RMB18-58 (USD3-10); more for hotpot and Tibetan raclette

Tara Gallery Cafe & Bar

29 Jinlong Street, Old Town

Pricing: RMB 20-70 (USD3-12); more for hotpot

Shangri-la Handicraft Development Center

1 Jinlong Street, Old Town

www.ymhfshangrila.center.com

Shangri-la Tibetan Thangka Painting Center

Chi Lang Lane, Old Town

Wwoof! Wwoof!

Seeing the world by volunteering on one farm at a time

TEXT AND IMAGES BY **AMBERLY YOUNG**

THE LIGHT FILTERS through the branches of the plum tree, each leaf outlined in a brilliant yellow from the just risen sun. We are reaching up, stretching to pluck the abundant purple plums above us.

In about an hour, we'll all join together for our first meal of the day - muesli, homemade yogurt, and fresh fruit salad made with fruit we picked earlier in the week.

I'm on an organic stone fruit orchard in Australia, volunteering with five other travelers from around the world. After breakfast, we gather in a shed for our next job. We laugh and tell stories around a table as we carefully slice fruit for the solar drier. Once our four hours of volunteering are over, we convene with the farmers and share a big communal lunch.

The rest of the day we have free to explore. We can borrow bikes, go for a walk around the neighboring orchards, relax and read books, or talk and play games with our new friends. At dinnertime we reconvene for a group meal, which we take turns each night cooking. Tonight, the Japanese travelers are trying their hand at a quiche, and I

overhear them asking the older couple from Switzerland for advice about how to make the perfect crust.

Every day, I am learning new, practical skills for free. More importantly, though, I'm meeting like-minded travelers intent on learning from each other and giving back to the world. We are WWOOFers - World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms.

The minimum day requirement varies depending on the hosts. Most ask for at least one or two weeks, although it's possible to arrange a shorter or longer stay. Some hosts will allow language learners or people interested in starting their own farm to stay for a long time, from three months to a year to forever! As a WWOOFer, though, if I really disliked or felt uncomfortable at a farm for any reason, I would be free to leave the next day.

Off-the-Beaten Life Path

WWOOFing for the past two years in Australia, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia has changed my whole outlook on life. Before, I assumed that my life would be

linear: I would go to graduate school, get a job, buy a house, and raise a family, like most people I have known. After WWOOFing, I have experienced first-hand the many alternatives there are to that path.

WWOOF was the first organized program of this kind, created in 1971 by a London secretary named Sue Coppard. Her aim was to bring busy city folks back to nature with weekend trips to farms in the country. More than 40 years later, there are now thousands of places to WWOOF in 99 countries all over the world. In Australia alone, there were 2,287 host farmers looking for volunteers in 2010.

Since its creation, WWOOFing has evolved to keep up with the growing demand from both travelers and farmers. Other voluntourism programs have also sprung up to embrace this new form of travel, such as HelpX. This website (www.helpx.net) expands far beyond organic farms to hundreds of other volunteer opportunities. Through the HelpX program, I've painted the outside of a bed and breakfast in New Zealand and taught English to kids in Bali. Volunteer projects are rarely boring.



"Volunteering is the purest form of cultural exchange. There is no money changing hands, only the goodwill of travelers and hosts," says James Nolting, a Californian who has volunteered on 10 farms around Australia and New Zealand. "I WWOOF because it's a great way to get in touch with a new place. I get to meet the locals and dive into a different culture. It makes me feel more connected, less like a tourist and more like a member of the community."

Along those lines, one of my projects involved building teepees and adobe houses in Australia. Don and Sue live in a straw bale house they made with their own hands on their 10 acre property outside of a small town in South Australia. Even though they are Australian, the couple is fascinated with Native American spirituality and lifestyle. Inspired by the Lakota tribe, they lovingly create custom-built teepees of all sizes. One overwhelmed mother wanted a private retreat to escape from her boisterous children, while another man wanted a space where he could safely barbecue in the backyard of his high fire risk neighborhood. Sue and Don also have teepees with beds and fire pits set up on their property for "glamping," or glamorous camping.

When I first accompanied Don to the forest, he knelt on the ground and thanked the trees for their contribution to his art. Then we sawed down trees and stacked them on top of his old Honda, taking them back to his property to strip off the bark and sand smooth. A few days later, after he had measured and sewn the canvas cover, we

drove to a customer's house and set up the 25-foot-wide teepee in the moonlight. It was a magical experience.

On that same trip, I spent my mornings chopping down thistles, feeling like a warrior from *Lord of the Rings*. With other WWOOFers from Canada and Finland I built a spiral herb garden. We also spread sandy clay on the walls of a new straw bale structure they were building. Sue and Don don't count hours; they just told us what projects they needed help with on their expansive property nestled in a eucalyptus forest, where platypus swim in the stream and kangaroos gather in the pasture at sunset. I stayed in a straw bale cabin there for two weeks.

Transcendental Tourism

Not all voluntourism experiences have been as ideal, though. I remember working for a commercial organic vegetable farmer who needed three to eight WWOOFers to weed for five hours a day just to keep his business running. I only stayed there for a few days because I was unhappy with the way he treated us. He had been hosting WWOOFers for more than 10 years and was disillusioned by the whole scheme, not bothering to learn anyone's names.

Paul Kretchner's biodynamic stone fruit orchard has a completely different take. Thanks to a roster updated daily, I knew exactly what my duties were to be, hour for hour, every day I was there. I found this comforting, since I knew that I was giving exactly what they expected.

Over the past 13 years, Paul has happily hosted 315 volunteers on his orchard. "WWOOFers add a diversity and interest to our lives, which we would otherwise not have," he says.

After traveling for three years in the US, Canada, and South America, Paul also knows the importance of having a safe respite from travel for a week or more. "WWOOFing gives volunteers a place to stay for a while in a family setting, and to have some 'home life'. It's an opportunity to experience this part of Australia, and to learn new skills working on a fruit property. For non-English speakers, it's a great opportunity to improve their English."

There are no age limits or requirements to volunteering. Many farms, including Paul's, accept families with small children, and enjoy having older WWOOFers. "The oldest volunteer we had was 70 from Switzerland, and he did a fantastic job," says Paul. For me, WWOOFing has exposed me to new ways of life I never would have dreamed of. These ongoing discoveries challenge me to redefine my life plan. Now, there are so many more options to choose from. When I volunteer, my travel experience has a deeper meaning, transcending sightseeing and tourism.

Bio: Amberly Young graduated with a BA in Creative Writing from the University of California at Santa Cruz. A few months later, she embarked on an around-the-world trip, starting with a one-way ticket to New Zealand. Read more on her latest adventures at whereisamber.com ■





Swept Away in Mui Ne

Time to exchange the air and noise pollution of HCMC
for the sea breeze and serenity of the beach

TEXT BY **JAMES PHAM**

THE RIBBON OF azure blue on the horizon imperceptibly draws closer as the sun brightens up the water, illuminating shades of aquamarine. We're in Mui Ne, a small seaside retreat just four hours from Saigon. With better beaches than Vung Tau and closer and less expensive than Nha Trang, Mui Ne makes the ideal beach getaway.

Long in the shadows of more well-known beach towns, Mui Ne in recent years has come into its own. Literally meaning "Promontory of Escape" for the jut of land on the far side of town that provided safe harbor on both sides for ships in distress, Mui Ne is still blissfully a

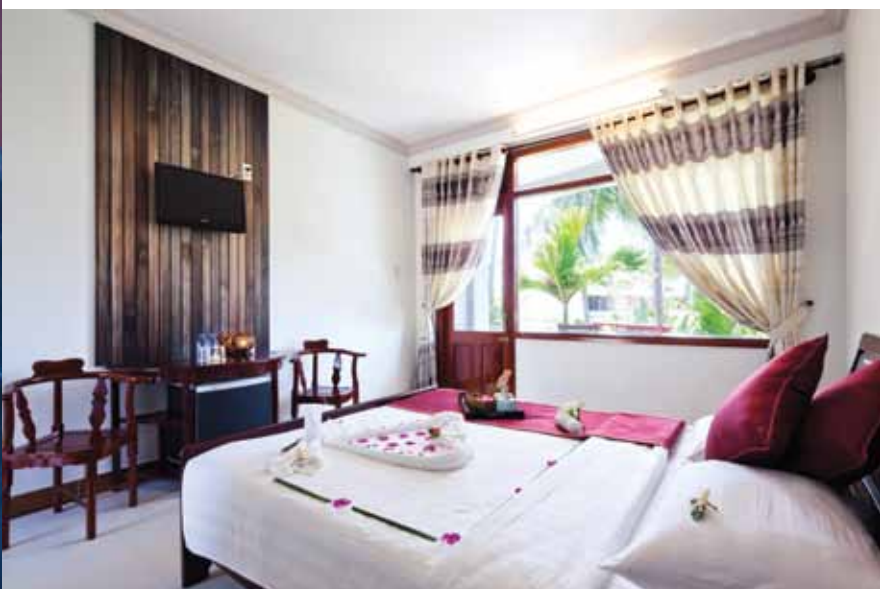
one road town with a decidedly laid back vibe. Low-lying hotels line the beach side of the road while families go about their business on the other.

Our base in is the newly opened WindFlower Beach Boutique Hotel - Mui Ne, 24 rooms in one three-story building set comfortably (and quietly) halfway between the town of Mui Ne and the busy strip of hotels, pubs and restaurants to the west of town. Built in 2012 and opened this April, the WindFlower makes the most of every inch of its long, narrow plot. Guests are greeted by the sight of a lush green manicured garden filled

with palm and banana trees and windflowers (aka pinwheels) to the cerulean blue of the pool to the darker ultramarine of the ocean beyond. Future guests can also look forward to a garden spa, electric cart shuttle service and BBQ nights. Danny, the General Manager, pads by on his bare feet to mingle with the guests. Not only does he exude the carefree vibe of the hotel, his bare feet tell him whether the floors are meticulously clean to his liking.

A Man with a Vision

Having lived 10 years abroad in New Zealand and Singapore, Danny's vision is to bring 5-star



IMAGES PROVIDED BY WINDFLOWER BEACH BOUTIQUE HOTEL - MUI NE

Western service to his mid-range boutique hotel. "As much as possible, we try to always say 'yes' to our guests, whether that means going out and buying fresh flowers for a special occasion or granting a complimentary late check-out whenever possible." That level of customer care is reflected in the details - in-room snacks and beverages priced the same as nearby convenience stores, slatted wooden shower platforms to make it easier for guests to wash off the inevitable sand and the branded bath products unusual for mid-range beach hotels. Danny also speaks of a recent power outage when staff asked him whether they should keep the generator running even though the hotel only had a handful of mid-week guests. "I told them to absolutely keep the generator on. We may not have had a lot of guests but we have a level of responsibility which we take very seriously."

Jo and her 15 friends are here from Saigon, supporting their friends doing a triathlon. "We found WindFlower through agoda.com and they were able to accommodate all of us. It was on the right side of town and the price was good. We were welcomed very nicely and

everyone tries hard," she says of the property as their group lounges around the pool and jacuzzi, recalling the refreshing dragonfruit welcome drink, one of the specialties of the region and creatively served in its own lipstick pink shell.

It's late Sunday afternoon and all the families have packed up to head back to Saigon for the beginning of the work week. The resort is blissfully quiet. "Our ideal market is young couples who want to get away from the everyday routine," explains Danny. "We're five minutes from the center of Mui Ne town and 10 minutes from the hotel strip with all its pubs and restaurants, but we encourage our guests to explore the immediate area on one of the hotel's 10 complimentary bicycles."

Indeed, the Fairy Stream is literally steps down the road, a relaxing place for a romantic afternoon picnic. Wading through ankle deep cool waters past a 2km gauntlet of striking red and white sand cliffs leads to a small waterfall which is especially scenic during the rainy season. Or guests can head in the opposite direction for the family fun of the red sand dunes, renting a plastic mat from

entrepreneurial local kids for a slide down the slopes. "The dunes used to be much higher," remembers Thao, 23, a Mui Ne native. "Or maybe it's just because I was a lot smaller then." Both attractions are free to visit.

For the more adventuresome, a jeep can be hired for a half-day trip out to the white sand dunes of Bau Trang, about 35km out of town, past the wide Hon Rom beach so popular with Vietnamese beachgoers, past fishermen waist deep in the surf casting their small weighted nets along deserted beaches, and past vibrant turquoise tombstones in scattered family plots, brilliant against Mui Ne's distinctive bright red earth. VND10,000 grants access to the dunes, picturesque not only for their blindingly white fine sand but also because they abut Bau Sen, a lotus-filled lake. A small shop rents out mats for sliding as well as ATVs for tootling around the dunes.

Doubles at WindFlower Beach Boutique Hotel - Mui Ne start at USD50 including breakfast, quads available from USD70. The hotel's full-service restaurant is open from 7am to 10pm. Contact www.windflowermuine.com or phone 062 374 3969 or 090 291 3969 (English). ■

Thank You for Staying with Us

They'll do almost anything to get you in bed



THE HOTEL BUSINESS is an extremely competitive one, often with little separating one luxe property from another. Last year finally saw global occupancy rates bounce back to where they were before the recession, when 2009 was the worst year for hotels since the Great Depression. Currently, Asia-Pacific hotels are doing well, leading all regions with 70 percent occupancy rates in the latest statistics, with Hanoi hotels adding to the encouraging performance with a 10.7 percent increase to 78.1 percent. Ho Chi Minh City has its own share of rooms to fill, reportedly with 40,900 units, including 4,587 rooms in 14 five-star hotels.

In this economy, brand loyalty can only get you so far. Standing out from the crowd is imperative. Ever since the first pillow menu appeared in a tiny 17 room boutique hotel on the equally tiny Caribbean island of Mustique in 1997, luxury hotels have been in a race to outdo each other with amenities and services they offer. Some are going for decadent. Others for comfort. But in almost every case, hotels are trying to meet the growing demand for value demanded by travel savvy guests. A recent survey conducted by the travel marketing company MMGY pointed to "value for the price" as being the number

one determining factor in selecting a hotel, regardless of the room rate, cited by 9 out of 10 respondents.

This is forcing properties to up the ante, as several trendy perks from years ago, like free newspapers, frequent stay programs, flat screen TVs and super premium bed linens, are now seen as the norm rather than providing added value. The traveling public is clamoring for more.

Over the Top

In this race for the best perks, some properties have put a twist on the old, like Saigon's own New World Hotel. Not content with the foam versus feather option, the property has added unique pillow choices like buckwheat, latex and charcoal. Phung Van My, Director of Rooms, says of the variety on offer: "Everyone has different needs. Some people have aches or muscle pain, so the latex or contour pillow is good for them. The buckwheat pillow molds to the guest's head. The charcoal pillow is stiff with a cushioned middle area."

In the same vein, instead of the usual toiletries, Francis Ford Coppola's ultra-luxe Palazzo Margherita (Bernalda, Italy) offers bath products that have been made by Dominican friars in Florence since 1221. If

you were to check into the Lakshman Sagar in Rajasthan, India, you might find a twig where the toothbrush ought to be. These all natural, antimicrobial neem twigs are a hit with eco-minded guests and are said to offer the same dental protection as toothbrushes without the need for toothpaste. And instead of the unflattering slippers found in most hotel closets, the Hotel Refugia (Chiloé, Chile) gives out sheep's wool slippers hand-woven by local artisans which can be taken home by guests.

Miranda Stolfo explains that the slippers are typical of the region where people of the older generations are constantly warning youngsters against the dangers of going barefoot indoors, and many Chilotes wear them around the house. Indeed, properties are learning that small things can really make a difference. Not long ago, I stayed at the Marriott Khao Lak (Thailand) where a made-to-order fresh fruit smoothie bar at breakfast was a great hit. Something so simple and relatively inexpensive turned out to be very memorable. No tired boxed juices need apply.

Not to be left out are amenities catering to the profitable kids and pets segments. The Coast lounge at The Ritz-Carlton, Palm Beach, has a recording studio where teens can create a live radio program, mix and scratch

"Some guests have booked and paid for one or two nights and ended up overstaying an additional seven, eight or even nine!"



IMAGE BY NAM QUAN

Having visited nearly 60 countries as a travel writer and award-winning photographer, **James Pham** blogs about his adventures at FlyIcarusFly.com



on DJ turntables or learn video production and editing. Christine DiRocco, Director of Public Relations, told *Oi*, "The teens section is no parents - just 'cool' younger, chaperone type staff members. Parents love that they have their own time, plus their kids are happy which equals win/win."

Not to be forgotten are the furrier members of the family. For an additional room charge and cleaning fee, man's best friend gets an exclusive W pet bed and a special surprise during nightly turn-down service at W Hotels. Couldn't bring Fido with you on the trip? Not to worry. Kimpton Hotels will deliver an in-room goldfish to help you through pet separation anxiety as part of their "Guppy Love" program. In case you're wondering, the staff feeds and cares for the goldfish so all the guest has to do is enjoy its company.

Some properties are obviously going for over-the-top decadence, like a helicopter airport transfer from the Hong Kong Peninsula (USD2,063 one way for up to four guests). Other properties are taking advantage of our penchant to travel brag. A recent study found that travel stories and photos make up 42 percent of content most often shared on Facebook. A new term,

"smoasting" (a reduction of "social media boasting"), has even been coined to describe the latest trend of posting don't-you-wish-you-were-here travel photos. For those too busy to do the dirty work themselves, the Madison Hotel (Washington, DC) is offering a package that includes a social media butler who will give your fans a play-by-play of your vacay on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest.

Pay by the Hour

The more pragmatic hotels are simply re-thinking the obvious and 'repurposing' their rooms. The Art Series Hotels with properties around Australia, trialed an Overstay Checkout earlier this year whereby guests didn't need to check out until someone else actually checked in. Guests simply called reception the morning of their departure, and the hotel let them know how late they could check out, whether it be late afternoon or the next day. Adam Ferrier of Naked Communications, the company that helped develop the concept, told *Oi*, "Some guests have booked and paid for one or two nights and ended up overstaying an additional seven, eight or even nine!"

During the one month promotion, the three properties gave away a total of 1,203 hours and 339 free nights.

To residents of Vietnam, seeing signs for hotel hourly rates is nothing new. What is new is that exclusive, upscale hotels in cities such as Paris, London and New York are joining the club. Ostensibly for business guests who might just need a place to get some work done and prepare for a meeting before taking an evening flight home, the concept of legitimate (or not) short-stays has caught on with hundreds of high-end properties whose rooms are otherwise unoccupied between 11am - 4pm.

Dayuse-hotels.com is one example of an online booking service catering to this trend. Launched in November 2010, the site now offers hundreds of properties in 10 countries for people who need a second office, a second bed, or a discreet place for some fancy afternoon delight. Savings can be substantial. The boutique Ten Manchester Street in London is regularly GBP145 per night. The day use rate with two glasses of champagne? GBP90.

What's your favorite hotel amenity or service? Email us at travel@oivietnam.com ■

airlines

Air China

7th Floor, Sun Wah Tower, 115 Nguyen Hue, DI
3823 3888
www.airchina.com

Air France

130 Dong Khoi, DI
3829 0981
mail.hcm@airfrance.fr
www.airfrance.com.vn

Asiana Airlines

39 Le Duan, DI
3822 2622
www.ea.flyasiana.com

Air Asia

No official office in Vietnam
www.airasia.com
Address of sales office: Noibai Airport, Terminal 1, International Departure Hall, 3rd Floor, Ha Noi
Website of agent: www.airasia.biz.vn
Phone: 04.37478953
95G - Ly Nam De - Phuong Cua Dong - Quan Hoan Kiem - Ha Noi
Tel: (04).37478953

Cathay Pacific Airlines

R502, 5th floor, 72-74 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, Ward 6, D3
3822 3203
sgn#rnt@cathaypacific.com
www.cathaypacific.com

China Southern

21-23 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, DI
3829 6800
passengerservice@cs-sgn.com
www.csair.com

Emirates

15 Nguyen Hue, 14th Floor, Dist.1, HCMC
Email: ehvietnam@emirates.com
Phone: 08 39113099
www.emirates.com/vn

Etihad

etihadairways.com

EVA Airlines

2A-4A Ton Duc Thang, DI
3822 4488
www.evaair.com

JAL Japan Airlines

4F Hotel Nikko Saigon, 235 Nguyen Van Cu, Nguyen Cu Trinh, DI
3830 6231

Jetstar

112 Hong Ha, Ward 2, Tan Binh Dist., HCMC
Tel. 08 38450092
servicecomments@jetstarpacific.com.vn
www.jetstar.com

Korean Air

Unit 909, Floor 9, Diamond Plaza, 34 Le Duan, DI
3824 2878
www.korean-air.vn

Lufthansa

14th Floor, Bitexco Building, 19-25 Nguyen Hue, DI
3829 8529
lufthansa.vn@dlh.de
www.lufthansa.com

Malaysia Airlines

37 Ton Duc Thang, DI
3829 2529
www.malaysiaairlines.com

Qantas Airways

186 - 188 Le Thanh Ton, DI
3910 5373

Qatar

Suite 8, GF, Petro Vietnam Tower
1-5 Le Duan St., room 4, Floor 8, AB tower, Dist.1, HCMC
84 8 38273888
reservations@vn.qatarairways.com
Working hours: Mon-Fri: 8-17, Sat: 8:30am - 12:30pm
Hanoi phone No: 04 39336767

Singapore Airlines

29 Le Duan, DI
3823 1588
www.singaporeair.com

Thai

29 Le Duan Blvd, DI
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Phone: (84-8) 3822 3365
E-mail: reservations@thaiairways.com.vn
Monday - Friday: 08:00 - 16:30 (excluding holidays)
Saturday - Sunday: Closed

Turkish

Sales office in Vietnam
76 Le Lai St., room 4, Floor 8, AB tower, Dist. 1, HCMC
84 8 39360360
marketing.sgn@thy.com
Working hours: Weekdays: 8am-12pm / 13-17; Sat: 8-12, Sun: closed

United Airlines

Unit 708, 7th Floor, Sun Wah Tower, 115 Nguyen Hue, DI
3823 4755
www.united.com

Vietnam Airlines

16F Sunwah Tower, 115 Nguyen Hue, DI
3832 0320
www.vietnamairlines.com.vn

Vietjet

CT Plaza Building 8th Floor, 60 Truong Son St., Tan Binh Dist., HCMC
84 8 35471866 / Hotline: 1900 1886
www.vietjetair.com
19001886@vietjetair.com

hotels

HO CHI MINH CITY

TWO STAR

Bali Hotel

★★
Ideally-located for attendees to any exhibitions held at the Saigon Exhibition and Convention Centre, Bali Boutique is flash and modern in style - with a little touch of the plush thrown in for good measure.
39 - 41 Hung Phuoc Villas, D 7
54104747

Calmette Hotel

★★
Charming hotel on one of the most attractively-named streets in the city, although slightly out-of-the-way. Quality, elegant furnishings and modern amenities.
151 Calmette, DI
39144951

Cat Huy Hotel

★★
Cat Huy is the best-kept secret of the backpacker district, located in a peaceful and very local-looking alley close to the downtown area of Ho Chi

Minh City, but culturally part of deep suburban Saigon.

353/28, Pham Ngu Lao, DI
39208717

Ken Hotel

★★
A surprisingly well-designed hotel, this budget establishment looks anything but from within, although the location in a side alley off CMT8 is quite deceiving.
285/7 Cach Mang Thang Tam, DI
0906699371

Little Saigon Boutique Hotel

★★
A small, value-for-money boutique hotel with 18 air-conditioned, non-smoking rooms, Little Saigon Boutique Hotel is an easy walk to Ben Thanh Market and other DI sights. Hidden away in a quiet back alley right in the central area.
36 Bis/2 Le Loi, DI
35218462

THREE STAR

A&E Hotel - 8A Thai Van Lung

★★★
Local accommodation chain that aims at the classy mid-level market; still budget, but with a touch of dignity about it.
8A/1D2 Thai Van Lung, DI
38224495

Blue Diamond Hotel

★★★
A cut above the multiple nearby 2-star properties, this hotel has been officially recognized for its quality décor and service, including high accolades in international publications.
48-50 Thu Khoa Huan, DI
38236167

Bong Sen Hotel

★★★
Located in the heart of DI, The Bong Sen Hotel offers luxurious accommodation for guests who wish to relax or get a little work done.
117-123 Dong Khoi, DI
38291516
reser@bongsenhotel.com
www.bongsenhotel.com

Catina Saigon

★★★
Hotel Catina Saigon provides 3 star accommodation in large, boutique rooms that include free, high-speed internet access and city views.
109 Dong Khoi, DI
38296296

Tan Hai Long Hotel & Spa- Nguyen An Ninh

★★★
The Tan Hai Long Hotel and Spa offers award winning 3 star service and stunning views of Ben Thanh Market and downtown Saigon. 3 star Hotel and spa located in the heart of Ho Chi Minh city with 160 rooms and suites, also providing professional spa services by skillful and experienced staff
15-17-19 Nguyen An Ninh, DI
38272738

FOUR STAR

Hotel Continental Saigon

★★★★
One of Saigon's oldest hotels, most graceful colonial properties, and historic places to stay, it is perhaps most

famous as the location where much of Graham Greene's The Quiet American was written in room 214.

132-134 Dong Khoi, DI
38299201
continentalhotel@vnn.vn
www.continentalhanoi.com

Kimdo Royal City Hotel

★★★★
Nestled in amongst the commercial buildings at the top of District One's central business strip, the posh-looking Kimdo is right in the heart of the administrative, business, shopping, and entertainment district.
133 Nguyen Hue, DI
38225914
royalcity@kimdohotel.com.vn
www.kimdohotel.com

Liberty Central Hotel

★★★★
Liberty Central has a very prominent brand and is a particularly stylish, eye-catching property right in the centre of the tourist district.
179 Le Thanh Ton, DI
38239269
libertycentral@libertycentralhotel.com
www.libertycentralhotel.com

Norfolk Hotel

★★★★
Chic, warm exterior with boutique charms within, this property is an ideal escape for business travellers from the plasticity of chain hotels.
117 Le Thanh Ton, DI
38293415
nifo@norfolkhotel.com.vn
www.norfolkhotel.com.vn

Novotel Saigon Centre

★★★★
One of HCMC's newest hotels, Novotel is located on busy Hai Ba Trung St, just within walking distance of downtown attractions. It's everything you'd expect from the international brand with 24-seven guest services and a broad dining offer.
167 Hai Ba Trung, DI
38224866
H7965@accor.com
www.novotel.com

Oscar Saigon Hotel

★★★★
French colonial hotel in District 1 offering stunning panoramic views and 4 star amenities.
68A Nguyen Hue, DI
38292959
oscarsaigonhotel@oscar-saigonhotel.com
www.oscar-saigonhotel.com

Palace Hotel Saigon

★★★★
One of the tidier properties of its class within the vicinity, with 144 deluxe guest rooms of contemporary design well-equipped with modern facilities.
56-66 Nguyen Hue, DI
38292860
reservation@palacesaigon.com
www.palacesaigon.com

Park Royal Saigon Hotel

★★★★
Park Royal Saigon Hotel is an ideally placed conference hotel which caters to all MICE needs. The hotel offers a wide array of banquet services and can accommodate 30 to 300 guests.
309B-311 Nguyen Van Troi, Tan Binh
38421111
enquiry.prsgn@parkroyalhotels.com

www.parkroyalhotels.com

Thao Dien Boutique Hotel

Set in a secluded, verdant garden occupying 1.2 hectares along the Saigon River, Thao Dien village is a tropical hideaway that's just 20 minutes from the city centre.

195 -197 Nguyen Van Huong, D 2
37442222

sales@thaodienvillage.com
www.thaodienvillage.com

FIVE STAR

Caravelle Hotel

Part of the city's modern history since 1959, few properties in Saigon are quite as iconic. A major center for foreign correspondents during the war, it has emerged as a plush and vibrant luxury hotel in the present era.

Caravelle Hotel is one of the city's classiest icons and represents a true slice of Saigon's history while remaining one of its most luxurious places to stay.

19 Lam Son Square, D 1
38234999

hotel@caravellehotel.com
www.caravellehotel.com

Equatorial Ho Chi Minh City

An international hotel located where the borders of the city's four main districts meet. The city's major commercial and entertainment area is only an 8-minute drive away.

242 Tran Binh Trong, D 5
38397777

info@hcm.equatorial.com
www.equatorial.com/hcm

InterContinental Asiana

Located in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City, the InterContinental Asiana Saigon is dedicated to providing

local, authentic, and enriching travel experiences. Decorated in tasteful oriental flair, the hotel is dedicated to representing the charms of Asia and evokes the mystique of this beautiful continent and its cultures. Right next to Saigon's key landmarks, this hotel is ideally placed for high-class travellers and groups seeking a high standard of accommodation. Full MICE areas and facilities are on-site.

Corner Hai Ba Trung & Le Duan, D1
3520 9999

saigon@ihg.com
www.intercontinental.com/saigon

Legend Hotel

Classic hotel offering 5 star amenities along with a scenic view of the Saigon River, and providing a unique culinary experience with many options for fine dining.

2A-4A Ton Duc Thang, D 1
38233333

www.legendssaigon.com

Majestic Saigon

One of HCMC's oldest and most characteristic hotels, the Majestic on the Saigon River with its grand French architecture is just a few steps away from Saigon's premiere attractions.

01 Dong Khoi, D 1

38295517

www.majesticsaigon.com.vn

Moevenpick Hotel Saigon

An international hotel chain with Swiss roots, this comfortable hotel caters to both businesspeople and families with fine dining options, a fitness centre, and multiple conference rooms.

253 Nguyen Van Troi Apartments, Phu Nhuan

38449222

hotel.saigon@moevenpick.com
www.moevenpick-hotels.com

New World Saigon Hotel

One of the most impressive business hotels in Ho Chi Minh City, with stunning views and 5 star amenities. 533 luxury rooms and suites offering the perfect ambience for concentrated work and undisturbed relaxation.

76 Le Lai, D 1
38228888

saigon@newworldhotels.com
www.saigon.newworldhotels.com

Nikko Saigon

One of the city's newest accommodation jewels, this lavish hotel is designed to make the maximum impression of austere Japanese-style class from the lobby upwards. This is one of the most luxurious hotels in HCMC, with classic, precise and elegant decor.

235 Nguyen Van Cu, D 1
39257777

www.hotelnikkosaigon.com.vn

Park Hyatt Saigon

Without a doubt the city's most luxurious hotel, Park Hyatt Saigon features French colonial inspired rooms, two award-winning restaurants, an outdoor pool and a stylish contemporary bar. The exterior is the result of meticulous research into the colonial architecture of the region.

2 Lam Son Square, D 1
38241234

saigon.park@hyatt.com
www.saigon.park.hyatt.com

Rex Hotel Saigon

Rex Hotel has consistently won awards for being one of the best hotels in Asia. Impeccable dining options, great location, and 5 star amenities make this

recently refurbished hotel a preferred destination for travellers with generous budgets.

141, Nguyen Hue, Ben Nghe, D 1
38292185

www.rexhotelvietnam.com

Saigon Domaine Luxury Residences

High-class getaway hotel located out of the city centre on exotic Thanh Da Island, allowing guests to escape from the chaos of the city life while remaining close to the action. More hotel than apartment complex, The Domaine's private residences are classic and luxurious, making the most of the natural surroundings.

1057 Binh Quoi, Binh Thanh
35561145

www.saigondomaine.com

Sheraton Saigon Hotel And Towers

Located in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City vibrant business and entertainment district, Sheraton Saigon Hotel & Towers is a 5 star haven of convenience, connecting guests with colleagues and friends.

88 Dong Khoi, D 1
38272828

sheratonsaigon@sheraton.com


Softel Saigon Plaza Hotel

The Softel Saigon Plaza is located in the city center, in the heart of the business district and close to Notre Dame Cathedral and Reunification Palace. 275 elegant rooms and 11 suites, a swimming pool, and a fitness center.

17 Le Duan, D 1
38241555

H2077@Softel.com
www.softel.com/gb/hotel-2077-softel-saigon-plaza/index.shtml



You can 

Save Vietnam's endangered wildlife with WAR

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-  Name a wildlife.
-  Support food for wildlife.
-  Volunteer.
-  Shop and save.

WAR
WILDLIFE AT RISK

Wildlife At Risk (WAR) is a non-profit organisation based in Ho Chi Minh City
Tel: +84 3899 7314 Fax: +84 3899 7316 Email: info@wildlifeatrisk.org
www.wildlifeatrisk.org

Windsor Plaza

Located in the heritage area of old Cholon, the Windsor offers authentic Vietnamese and Chinese hospitality with a mix of commercial, cultural, and retail experiences - and they put on a fine buffet.

18 An Duong Vuong, D 5
3833 6688
www.windsorplazahotel.com

CON DAO ISLAND

Six Senses Con Dao

True to the Six Senses philosophy of selecting remote (but accessible) destinations in areas of outstanding natural beauty, Con Dao is an untouched and breathtakingly beautiful area. Con Dao has been built with the very lightest ecological footprint, with villas set up along a mile of sandy beach, sheltered by the green forested hills behind and with stunning vistas of the deep blue sea and the curve of the bay.

Dat Doc Beach, Con Dao, Con Son
06 4383 1222
reservations-condao@sixsenses.com

DALAT

Ana Mandara Villas Dalat

Ana Mandara Villas Dalat comprises seventeen restored French-style villas from the 1920's and 1930's, preserving the original design, décor and charm, is and set in the cool climate of the rural highlands of Central Vietnam. Striking views of the surrounding town and countryside abound from all areas of the gently sloping hillside property.

Le Lai, Phuung 5, Dalat
06 3355 5888
reservation-dalat@anamandara-resort.com

Sofitel Dalat Palace

Hotel Sofitel Dalat Palace is one of the most beautiful and amongst the few remaining historical hotels in Southeast Asia. Built in 1922 and meticulously restored in 1995 to its original grandeur, the Sofitel Dalat Palace offers individualized service in the finest tradition of Vietnamese hospitality.

12 Tran Phu, Dalat
06 3382 5444
info@dalatresorts.com

DANANG

Furama Resort Danang

The Furama Resort enjoys a stunning beachfront location on one of Vietnam's finest beaches, fringed by natural pines and coconut palms. Two four-storey wings overlook the ocean on one side and a freshwater swimming lagoon and manicured tropical gardens on the others.

Truong Sa, Ngu Hanh Son, Danang
051 1384 7333
reservation@furamavietnam.com

Fusion Maia

Incorporating the spirit of our time, Fusion Maia Danang is a unique fusion of resort and spa where spa treatments are inclusive and a part of daily living in this beach resort. It is the first all-pool villa-style resort in the destination and offers 87 pool suites, spa villas, and beach villas each with modern, open-plan living and private courtyard with swimming pool. Customize-your-stay options and breakfast available at multiple locations are a few of the surprising offers in store.

Truong Sa, Ngu Hanh Son, Danang
051 1396 7999

reservation-dn@fusion-resorts.com

Life Resort Danang

Sitting on the Bac My An beachfront only 3km from downtown Danang, and 30km from Hoi An. A pair of four-storey hotel blocks house most of the resort's rooms, with villas flanking one side of a long pool corridor splicing the middle of the resort. Its proximity to three UNESCO World Heritage sites as well as the former colonial French hill stations at Bach Ma and Ba Na make this ideally placed for incentive excursions.

Truong Sa, Ngu Hanh Son, Danang
051 1395 8888
reservations@lifestyle-resort-danang.com

HALONG BAY

Novotel Halong Bay

A glimpse into contemporary Vietnam with echoes of the country's intricate past through its elegant interior décor. Sturdy polished stone, glass and marble stand against the delicate Asian textures of silk, wickerwork and carved wood. With sweeping windows and large mirrors, the hotel captures panoramic views of Halong Bay and its spectacular seascapes at every turn.

Ha Long Road, Bai Chay Ward, Ha Long City
03 3384 8108
info@novotelhalong.com.vn

TUAN CHAU RESORT

Tuan Chau Resort is constructed in the style of classical French and modern Vietnamese architecture. This is the ideal place to find white sands, blue ocean, and the rejuvenative energy of the Vietnamese tropical sun.

Tuan Chau Island, Ha Long City
03 3384 2999
info@tuanchauresort.com.vn

HANOI

Hilton Hanoi Opera

This landmark of Hanoi was inspired by the famous Opera House located nearby. A hotel of great beauty and luxury, the Hilton stands in the city's fashionable and elegant French Quarter, and is within close range of the charming Old Quarter and bustling Business District.

1 Le Thanh Tong, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
04 3933 0500
frontofficeadmin.hanoi@hilton.com

Intercontinental Westlake

Superbly situated on the serene waters of Hanoi's West Lake and adjacent to the famous 800-year-old Golden Lotus (Kim Lien) Pagoda. Conveniently located and yet able to offer a retreat from the hustle and bustle of downtown Hanoi, the combination of spacious luxurious accommodations, facilities, and attentive Vietnamese hospitality make this the perfect place to stay for both the corporate and leisure traveller.

1a Nghi Tam Tay Ho, Hanoi
04 6270 8888
Reservation.Hanoi@ihg.com

Sheraton Hanoi

Perfectly located by the shores of the largest lake in Hanoi and surrounded by a beautifully landscaped garden and courtyard, the hotel provides the perfect balance between tranquillity and convenience. Take in panoramic views of Hanoi's largest lake and enjoy great comforts in the 299 spacious guest rooms and suites, specially designed for relaxation.

K5 Nghi Tam, 11 Xuan Dieu, Tay Ho, Hanoi

04 3719 9000

Reservations.Hanoi@Sheraton.com

The Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi

*****  O's Pick

Located at the heart of Hanoi since 1901, Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi has a long history as a luxurious place for prestigious events and popular rendezvous. Features include 364 rooms and suites, excellent French cuisine at Le Beaulieu, Vietnamese specialties at Spices Garden, and Angelina - Hanoi's most "avant garde" Italian Restaurant & Lounge. Seven function rooms, a swimming pool, fitness centre and the Le Spa du Metropole are also available in the hotel.

15 Ngo Quyen, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
04 3826 6919
h1555@sofitel.com

HOI AN

Life Heritage Resort Hoi An

Rooms are designed along Japanese themes, each having a personal porch with couches for reading and relaxing. Spacious bathrooms feature stand-alone showers or recessed baths, and many bathrooms enjoy views of a private garden. Ideal for events where participants will be enjoying the colourful ancient town area.

1 Pham Hong Thai, Hoi An Town, Quang Nam
Nam
051 0391 4555
hoian@life-resorts.com

The Nam Hai

A stunning all-villa resort located on the pristine China Beach featuring 60 one-bedroom retreats as well as 40 privately-owned two-to-five bedroom residences each with a private infinity pool.

Hamlet 1 Dien Duong Village, Dien Ban, Quang Nam
051 0394 0000
reservations@thenamhai.com



Palm Garden Resort

Set on five hectares of landscaped tropical garden with over 400 species of palm trees and plants right along the beach and near the World Heritage Hoi An Ancient Town.

Lac Long Quan, Cua Dai beach, Hoi An
0510 3927 927
www.palmgardenresort.com.vn

HUE

Ana Mandara Hue

The quiet sounds and vistas of the sea welcome guests to the first unique luxury beach resort with private pool villas in the area. Located a scenic 15km drive from central Hue, this is a spacious resort with the largest villas and rooms in the area. The property includes private pool villas, beach villas, duplex and deluxe rooms in a wide range of styles and decor designed with complete and modern facilities.

An Hai Village, Thuan An Town, Hue Phu Vang

05 4398 3333

rsvn@anamandarahu-resort.com

La Residence Hotel & Spa

This former French Governor's residence dates to 1930 and is a masterpiece of art deco design. Its incredible location overlooking the Citadel and the Perfume River brings this 122-room hotel a total and serene tranquillity. The hotel features a 40m outdoor salt swimming pool at river height giving the illusion of merging into the Perfume River. Ideal for executive retreats and exotic incentives programmes.

5 Le Loi, Hue
05 4383 7475
resa@la-residence-hue.com

Pilgrimage Village

Pilgrimage Village offers the harmony of a soothing natural environment and fascinating local culture. Delicious meals, sound sleep, and the peaceful life of the quiet countryside refresh the spirit. Pilgrimage Village is also a place where skilful artisans carve, polish and weave to create authentic works that reflect the traditional culture of Hue.

130 Minh Mang, Truong An, Hue
05 4388 5461
info@pilgrimagevillage.com

NHA TRANG

Evason Ana Mandara

Reflecting the style of an old Vietnamese village, with warm hospitality, rich culture and unique tastes. The exclusive location affords city-centre access to Nha Trang's only beachfront resort. It is surrounded by private tropical gardens, offering simplicity, serenity and refinement together with spectacular views of Nha Trang Bay. Unforgettable incentive experience.

Beachside Tran Phu Boulevard, Nha Trang
05 8352 2222
reservations-nhatrang@evasonresorts.com

Six Senses Hideaway Ninh Van Bay

The resort is one of Asia's most exclusive and intimate beach escapes, sitting on dramatic Ninh Van Bay, with its impressive rock formations overlooking the South China Sea, white sand beach and towering mountains behind.

Ninh Van, Khanh Hoa
05 8372 8222
reservations-ninhvan@sixsenses.com

Sheraton Nha Trang

Sheraton Nha Trang Hotel & Spa offers ten categories of accommodation - from spacious, deluxe rooms to 70m2 executive suites and a huge presidential suite. With exemplary conference facilities, this is the number-one MICE resort in the region.

26-28 Tran Phu, Nha Trang
05 8388 0000
reservations.nhatrang@sheraton.com

PHAN THIET

Anantara Mui Ne Resort & Spa

The new face of the former l'Anmien, this resort offers an exclusive haven of luxury and relaxation in a spectacular beachfront location right in the heart of Mui Ne. The only property in the Mui Ne district with full conferencing facilities and a range of exclusive villas - and it has an impressive wine cellar.

Mui Ne
06 2374 1888
muine@anantara.com

Princess d'Annam

The look of the resort is classical, bright, and impeccably clean and private. The two Empress Suites are the pinnacle of luxury accommodation in Vietnam – they are mini millionaire's mansions in themselves, fully-equipped, bright and spacious, and possessing of the same ethereal design quality that pervades this whole resort. Set in the remote Ke Ga Bay, wordlessly beautiful.

Hon Lan, Binh Thuan
06 2368 2222
info@princessannam.com

PHU QUOC ISLAND

Chen Sea Resort & Spa

Located in a quiet bay, this resort allows guests to enjoy the peace and natural beauty of Phu Quoc while also enjoying the exclusive atmosphere that the location suggests and the resort offers. The resort was born from a long and passionate study in order to be integrated and to respect the uncontaminated nature of the bay and of the coastal zone.

Bai Xep, Phu Quoc
07 7399 5895
cpv@chr.co.th

Saigon Phu Quoc Resort

Located on a hill of coconut palm trees, Saigon Phu Quoc is a beautiful, quiet seaside resort with plenty of sunshine. Just 10 minutes from the airport, the resort is an ideal haven for relaxing, fishing, trekking, snorkeling, and scuba diving.

62 Tran Hung Dao, Phu Quoc
07 7384 6999
sgphuquocresort@hcm.vnn.vn

La Veranda

The most distinguished of Phu Quoc

Island's hotels and guesthouses, La Veranda sports paddle fans, butterfly exteriors, whitewashed louvers, and tropical gardens recalling a colonial plantation. Freestanding deluxe villas are notable for their sea-facing porches, spacious bathrooms, and cathedral ceilings.

Tran Hung Dao, Duong Dong Beach, Phu Quoc
07 7398 2988
contact@laverandaresorts.com

QUY NHON

Life Wellness Resort Quy Nhon

A hide-away style spa and beach destination set in 135 hectares of private mountainous land and beach. The tranquility, splendid views, Cham-inspired architecture and surroundings are so far unmatched in Vietnam. This resort was awarded Best Wellness Resort in Vietnam in 2005, 2006 and 2007 by the Vietnam Economic Times.

Ghenh Rang, Bai Dai Beach, Quy Nhon, Binh Dinh
05 6384 0132
quynhon@life-resorts.com

Bai Tram Resort and Spa

Bai Tram is based on holistic ideals and the search for environmental balance embodying the trend towards seeing ourselves, the natural world, and the man-made environment as one.

Hoa Loi, Xuan Canh, Song Cau, Phu Yen
05 7372 2563
rm@bai-tram.com

serviced apartments

Avila Serviced Apartment

These serviced apartments combine an excellent location with luxurious amenities.

20-20bis Thi Sach, D 1

35218365

Bella Serviced Apartments

Affordable, classy apartment living in a tidy alleyway residence styled with white classical flourishes, Bella offers good living and proximity to the city without succumbing to the lures of the expat bubble. Facilities include a small but well-equipped gym on the top floor and pleasant terraces on front-facing apartments.

56/4 Nguyen Thong, D3
3526 0020

Cantavil Daewon Apartment

High-luxury complex with libraries, research center, and cultural information center on site. Also features an outdoor swimming pool. One of the most luxurious towers in the central area.

600A Dien Bien Phu, Binh Thanh

Central Garden Apartment

These luxurious apartments offer stunning views of downtown Saigon along with western style accommodations and excellent location.

Clean, inner-city luxury compound close to the Ben Nghe River.

225 Ben Chuong Duong, D 1
091 654 2598 / 093 347 6556

City View

Located in the prime business and residential district, only minutes away by car from downtown area, City View is the perfect place for home and/or business in Ho Chi Minh City.

12 Mac Dinh Chi, D 1
38221111

Hung Vuong Plaza Apartment

Hung Vuong Plaza apartments above the D5 Parkson are comprised of two 29 floor buildings with many luxurious apartments in bustling Cho Lon.

126 Hong Bang, D 5

Jasmine Court Serviced Apartment

A boutique property with only 12 apartments, comprised of one and two-bedroom suites of various sizes. All apartments are designed in a fresh contemporary style and finished in a pleasing neutral colour scheme.

307/29 Nguyen Van Troi, Tan Binh
38446639

Lancaster Serviced Apartments

Lancaster Serviced Apartments Le Thanh Ton enjoys a commanding position over the nightlife, culture, and business hub of Ho Chi Minh City, offering a sweeping panoramic view of the city skyline from virtually every window.

22 Bis Le Thanh Ton, D 1
38246666

The Landmark

The Landmark is a prestigious development of residential accommodation and office space situated in the heart of HCMC. The 16-storey complex, located on a prime waterfront site, was one of the first of its kind in the city.

5B Ton Duc Thang, D 1
38222098

Mai Ha Lan II Serviced Apartments

Mai Ha Lan II offers a sweeping panoramic view of the city skyline from virtually every window. It offers 33 luxurious and graciously furnished apartments with studio and two bedroom options.

8A/1C Thai Van Lung, D 1
62990992 0909868052

Norfolk Mansion

A comfortable serviced luxury apartment in the city center, the Norfolk features an outdoor pool, gym & sauna, and high-class Cantonese restaurant.

17-19-21, Ly Tu Trong, D 1
38226111

DANCENTER SHOW

Inspiration

8/06 19:30
9/06 15:00

Nhà Văn Hóa Thanh Niên
4 Phạm Ngọc Thạch, Q.1

Featuring: Jazz, Hip Hop, Ballet, Tap, Contemporary and Belly Dance.

THIS YEAR, DISCOVER WHAT INSPIRED OUR CHOREOGRAPHERS AND BE INSPIRED BY THE PASSION OF OUR DANCERS...



TICKET SALES
THE REFINERY - 74 Hai Bà Trưng, Q.1
DANCENTER - 53 Nguyễn Đăng Giai, Thảo Điền, Q.2
Tickets: 200K - 150K - 100K
reservation@dancentervn.com
08 3519 4340



Design by: amarcapdesign.com Photo Credit: Fred Weare



dancentervn.com

f dancenter vietnam

Saigon Court

Since its opening in 1998, Saigon Court has become well-known amongst the expatriate community for exceptional standards of service. This 12 storey building is among the highest in the area, offering its tenants commanding views of other parts of the city.

149 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D 3
39306466

Saigon Pearl Apartment

Ho Chi Minh City's largest five star apartment complex, Saigon Pearl comprises six 37-story residential towers located on the banks of the Saigon River in Binh Thanh District, about five minutes by taxi from downtown. Pool, gym, supermarket and dining facilities all on site.

92 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh
38219999

Saigon Skygarden

A 15-storey building located in the Saigonese Little Tokyo on Le Thanh Ton, offering 172 international-standard Serviced Apartments for lease.

20 Le Thanh Ton, D 1
38220002

Saigon View Residences

Saigon View Residences offer a range of Deluxe, Superior, and Executive room types in distinctive one and two bedroom apartments.

117, Nguyen Cuu Van, Binh Thanh
38404966

Sedona Suites

With a fantastic location in District 1 and rooms offering all of the comforts of home, this award winning serviced apartment complex caters to businessmen and families alike.

65 Le Loi, D 1
38229666

Sherwood Residence

Serviced apartments available for short or long term bookings, located in Pasteur, within walking distance of downtown Ho Chi Minh City, international schools, shopping centres, etc. Pool, sauna, gym, mini-cinema onsite.

127 Pasteur, D 3
38232288

Somerset Ho Chi Minh City

Designed with families in mind, it provides relocating executives the space and security to build a warm and comfortable home. Friendly staff are always on hand to help with local knowledge. You can join in a wide range of social, cultural and lifestyle activities, especially designed to help you integrate into the local culture.

8A Nguyen Binh Khiem, D1
3822 8899
www.somerset.com/vietnam

Somerset Chancellor Court

Each of these 172 spacious serviced apartments in District 1 is fully-furnished with an open kitchen concept, contemporary western style décor, and a large balcony.

21-23 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D 1
38229197

V-Star Apartment

Good proximity to the Saigon River and FV International Hospital, as well as international schools and the Tan Thuan export zone.

Go O Moi, Phu Thuan, D 7
37733151

travel agencies

Asiana Travel Mate

Offering tours to magnificent scenic areas in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, and India - the firm has strong purchasing power in these

regions, allowing it to offer heavily discounted rates.

92-96 Nguyen Hue, D1
3825 1358
090 780 0432

Aquarius Booking Office

With access to a global network of leading travel specialists, Aquarius is a domestic & international air ticketing agency committed to offering low-cost flights, travel insurance, and accommodation.

4th Floor, Yoco Building, 41 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3823 1905

Amazing Thailand Tourism Office

Funded by the Thai tourism board, this office is loaded up with travel resources and advice for travellers to Thailand, an invaluable source of help for travelers on their way to the land of smiles. Travel resources and advice for travelers to Thailand.

5th Floor, Empire Tower, 26-28 Ham Nghi, D1
6291 3887

Ben Thanh Tourist

One of the better-known tour agencies in the city, Ben Thanh Tourist is 20 years old and specializes in domestic and foreign travel, MICE, tourist transportation, and air ticketing.

51 Dong Khoi, D1
3914 3921
090 611 1121

Clé Voyages - Xuan Viet Travel

Xuan Viet Travel has been providing travel services and advice for nearly two decades.

Unit 1105, Harbour View Tower, 35 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 4942

Fiditour

Fiditour offers a wide range of tours to the southeast Asian region, including unique cultural trips, adventure trips, beach holidays, cruises, and culinary trips.

129 Nguyen Hue, D1
3914 1414

Hoi An Express

Preferred by many five-star hotels in Ho Chi Minh city such as Windsor Plaza Hotel, Duxton Hotel, Legend Hotel Saigon, and Equatorial Hotel, this privately owned travel agency offers a wide range of services.

94 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3939 0135
090 803 9699

Refine Asia

Representing class, creativity, and absolute professionalism in Asian corporate and luxury travel services, Refine Asia is the first-class and luxury arm of the well-known regular travel services operator Focus Asia.

138 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ward 6, D3
3932 0732

Saigon River Tour

Established in 1998, Saigon River Tour provides speedboat services and speedboat tours (ecotourism, Cu Chi Tunnels, Mekong Delta) from Bach Dang Pier.

10b Ton Duc Thang, D1
6290 9410
098 936 8508

Sinh Cafe

Sinh Cafe started out as a coffee shop, but later expanded to cater to the needs of tourists and travelers. This unique travel agency offers tours within Vietnam, and also to Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand.

246-248 De Tham, D1
3836 7338

Viet Journey

Viet Journey was founded by dedicated travelers of the southeast Asian region,

and they strive to provide quality, time-efficient service for travelers from around the world.

18-19-20 Ton Duc Thang, D1
3823 7152
090 809 7008

bowling

The Bowling Center

The Bowling Centre is a smaller venue with 12 lanes located in the International Club.

285B Cach Mang Thang Tam, D10
3864 3784

Bowling Pacific Garden

Small bowling alley at the Pacific Garden apartments complex, ideal for a more private game away from the crowds of teenagers.

8 Bis Ba Thang Hai, D10
3863 7944

Diamond Superbowl

An electrifying bowling experience featuring a 32 lane centrally-located bowling alley with fluorescent bowling balls and high-tech scoring.

4th Floor, 34 Le Duan, Ben Nghe, D1
3825 7778

PowerBowl 388

This is a 10 lane, 10 pin bowling alley with a games section attached, located on the 4th floor of the Parkson Saigon Plaza building.

Level 4, 35 Le Thanh Ton, D1
38295388

Powerbowl Hung Vuong

12 lane 10 pin AMF bowling alley with a games section located on the 3rd floor of the Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza building - a Bud's ice-cream station awaits indoors.

126 Hong Bang, D5

Saigon Superbowl

Formerly the coolest venue in HCMC and opened to great aplomb in the early noughties, this tired old complex in the wrong part of town still retains its international-standard huge bowling alley.

43A Truong Son, Tan Binh
3848 8888

charities

Education For Development Vietnam

An international organization that works with Vietnamese partners to improve and expand their educational services for disadvantaged children and youth.

305/30 Le Van Sy, Tan Binh
3991 6033

International Organization For Migration

The organization is concerned with the welfare and quality of life of the Vietnamese people, particularly migrant and mobile populations.

1B Pham Ngoc Thach, D1
3822 2057

Loreto Vietnam Australia

Dedicated to the reduction of poverty through beneficial, qualitative and responsive educational opportunities for underprivileged and disabled students.

17c Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3910 6364

Mekong Quilts - Ngo Duc Ke

Founded in 2001, Mekong Quilts employs women in communities northeast of Ho Chi Minh City, to create high quality, hand-crafted bed covers, accessories and gift wares. All profits from the sale of the quilts are reinvested into the community through the NGO Mekong Plus.

1st Floor, 35-37 Ngo Duc Ke, D1
2210 3110
mekong.quilts.creations.hcmtdt@gmail.

com

S17- Sky Garden 1, Nguyen Van Linh, D7
6271 7758

Saigon Children's Charity

Saigon Children's Charity was founded in 1992 to help disadvantaged Vietnamese children to get an education and a fairer start in life.

Their programs aim to help the most disadvantaged children of Vietnam to escape from poverty through education and training.

59 Tran Quoc Thao, D3
3930 0503

The Little Rose Shelter

The Little Rose Shelter is a refuge for young girls who have been sexually abused or trafficked for the purpose of labor or sexual exploitation. It offers psychological rehabilitation, opportunities to go to school, free healthcare and a supportive, loving environment to grow.

Hem 30, 55/2 Bis Lam Van Ben, D7
3872 0308

Unicef Vietnam

UNICEF Vietnam provides support in policy development, legal reform, and improving social services. Following reunification in 1975, the charity launched a nationwide programme to meet the basic needs of Vietnam's girls and boys.

Unit 1406, Suh Wah Tower, 115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 9413

Waifs Of War Foundation

The Waifs of War Foundation was established in March 2004 by a group of individuals concerned with improving the lives of the children born to Vietnamese mothers and American War servicemen fathers.

24 Le Loi, D1
3913 0439

cinemas & theatres

The Ballet and Symphony Orchestra

Ho Chi Minh City's local classical music venue with regular programs & performances.

212 Nguyen Trai, D1
3925 2265

Ben Thanh Theatre

Once the cultural center of District 1 when it was built in 1995, this is a good air-conditioned theater for Vietnamese shows & cultural activities that can accommodate over 1000 people.

6 Mac Dinh Chi, D1
3823 1652

CT Plaza Megastar

This theater complex offers close proximity to shops for shoppers and many other attractions. Large cinema complex on the 7th floor with 3D theatres and VIP room.

Level 10, 60A Truong Son, Tan Binh
6297 1981

Galaxy

Vietnamese cinema showing international and domestic films.

116 Nguyen Du, D1
3822 8533

230 Nguyen Trai, D1
3920 6688

246 Nguyen Hong Dao, Tan Binh
3849 4567

Golden Dragon Water Puppet Theater

Vietnamese water puppet show with live Vietnamese traditional music, this is an original performing art preserved and handed down for nearly a thousand years. Daytime performances by special arrangement.

55B Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3840 4027
098 937 9873 (Mr. Lam)

Ho Chi Minh Conservatory Of Music

One of three conservatories in Vietnam, offering world class musical education and performances.

Concerts at the local Ho Chi Minh City Music School.

112 Nguyen Du, D1
3822 5841

Hung Vuong Megastar

This theater complex offers close proximity to shops for shoppers and many other attractions. Large cinema complex in the CT Plaza building with 3D theatres and VIP room.

126 Hong Bang, D5
3222 0388

IDECAF Drama Theatre

IDECAF is a theater holding French cultural exchanges as well as offering courses in French.

31 Thai Van Lung, D1
38295451

Le Thanh Theatre

Experimental art space for dance and exhibitions, with regular performances of leading-edge artistic theatre.

25 Phan Phu Tien, D5
2242 4622
090 580 4820

Lotte Cinema Diamond

Fine cinema complex in one of the most iconic department store buildings in town. Ride up the elevator to the top floor to catch a flick.

13th Floor, 34 Le Duan, D1
3822 7897

Lotte Cinema Nam Saigon

The district 7 branch of Lotte cinemas features the Charlotte VIP lounge with 6 modern cinema rooms and a luxury coffee shop.

Level 3, 469 Nguyen Huu Tho, Tan Hung, District 7
3775 2526

Saigon Opera House

No mere historical museum piece, the Municipal Theater is a thriving performance centre with regular musical and cultural shows - predominantly of the classical, high-brow, and top-dollar variety.

7 Lam Son Square, D1
3825 1563
098 987 4517

The Soul of Vietnam

The Soul of Vietnam showcases traditional Vietnamese music shows with voice and traditional instruments. Be sure to check out the three-part Legend of the Trung Sisters' with accompaniment of stone musical instruments, gongs and two lifelike elephants.

7 Lam Son Square, D1
2229 9414

gyms

California WOW

The first and largest international fitness company to open in Vietnam. Provides world class fitness services and products in a state-of-the-art 5-star fitness and entertainment facility.

126 Hong Bang, D5
3222 0299
28-30-32 Le Lai, D1
6291 5999
5 Nguyen Tat Thanh, D4
3826 0999

Crescent Wellness Group

Directly targeting foreign customers, especially Phu My Hung residents, CWG is equipped with the latest modern facilities and fitness equipment, selectorized strength training stations, plate-loaded machines and free weights.

3rd Floor, 103 Ton Dat Tien, D7
5412 1277

Get Fit Gym

Located on the 3rd floor in the H3 Building, this international-standard, gym offers a steam bath and sauna, yoga, kickboxing, rumba, salsa, merengue, cumbia and reggaeton classes.

384 Hoang Dieu, D4
6261 6169

K1 Fitness & Fight Factory

A well-known brand name founded by a group of professional kickboxers and now present in France and Southeast Asia, including Montpellier and Phnom Penh as well as here in Saigon.

14 Duong 38, Nguyen Thi Thap, D7
091 833 7111

Nutrifort Fitness

Aiming to be the voice of health and fitness in Vietnam, Nutrifort provides clientele with proper tools and teaching methods to keep the mind and body fit and healthy. Clients also learn about nutrition to nourish and maintain their health.

281 Chu Manh Trinh, D1
3825 8560

Rex Health Club

This spa was designed for both men & women, integrating traditional Vietnamese, Indian, and Chinese herbal remedies and techniques. Situated on the rooftop of the Rex Hotel, it features two outdoor swimming areas.

141 Nguyen Hue, D1
3825 1814

Saigon River Club

Located in Ruby Tower at the Saigon Pearl, Saigon River Club is equipped with the very latest in fitness technology. It has a fully-equipped sauna and steam room and a large outdoor pool with jacuzzi.

Ruby Tower, 92 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh
3514 9009

Star Fitness Bitexco

Located in The Manor Tower, this gym is not only a fitness center it includes other specialized classes such as yoga, belly dancing, kick boxing, zumba, body toning, and so on.

Level 1, 91 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh
3514 0255

museums

Fine Arts Museum Ho Chi Minh City

With a collection housing more than 21,000 pieces in various displays, the Fine Arts Museum Ho Chi Minh City highlights traditional and modern works of HCMC artists as well as other artists from the south of Vietnam.

97A Pho Duc Chinh, D1
3821 3508

Geological Museum

A fittingly dull-looking building at the corner of Nguyen Binh Khiem and Nguyen Huu Canh, the museum has over 20,000 samples of interesting rocks.

2 Nguyen Binh Khiem, D1
3829 8146

Ho Chi Minh Campaign Museum

Small military museum dedicated to the Ho Chi Minh Campaign that led to communist victory over southern Vietnam.

2 Le Duan, D1
3822 9387

Ho Chi Minh City Museum

An old French Colonial palace, the museum has a wide and varied collection and some interesting modern history of its own.

65 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3829 8250

Ho Chi Minh Museum

Three stories dedicated to Ho Chi Minh, the museum features an assortment of artifacts from his personal life, including a radio, sandals and clothes. After exploring the more than 3,000 Ho Chi Minh portraits, take a walk in the lovely gardens around the old building nicknamed the Dragon House' for its ornate roof and hybrid Franco-Chinese architecture.

1 Nguyen Tat Thanh, D4
3940 2060

Museum of Southern Vietnamese Women

The Museum of Southern Vietnamese Women has become a place of interest for both locals and tourists alike. The museum was set up in order to educate future generations of women about patriotism and the national traditions of Vietnamese women.

202 Vo Thi Sau, D3
3932 7130

Reunification Palace

Formerly known as the Independence Palace, the Reunification Palace marked the end of the Vietnam War, when a North Vietnamese Army tank crashed through its main gates. Roped-off showrooms, exactly as they were in 1975, include the presidential office, bedroom, and reception.

135 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1
0808 5008

Vietnam History Museum

This long-running historical museum offers a chronological display of many items and artefacts, and has been showered with multiple awards by the local administration.

2 Nguyen Binh Khiem, D1
3829 8146

Vietnamese Traditional Medicine Museum

The Museum of Traditional Vietnamese Medicine contains nearly 3,000 items informing guests about the subject dating all the way back to the Stone Age.

41 Hoang Du Khuong, D10
3862 7812

War Remnants Museum

Attracting more than 500,000 visitors a year, the War Remnants Museum shows the grim reality of war, focusing mainly on the American phase of the Vietnam War. The multi-building museum includes a courtyard with military equipment including a "Huey" helicopter, an M48 Patton tank and an F-5A fighter.

28 Vo Van Tan, D3
3930 6325

parks

Cong Vien Van Hoa Park

This former French recreational space has been converted into one of the city's favorite sports parks.

115 Nguyen Du, D1

Dam Son Park

This beautiful park was constructed on reclaimed marshland and is widely considered to be Vietnam's most exciting cultural theme park.

3 Hoa Binh, D11
3963 3073

Ky Hoa Park

Large tourist area in the inner suburbs with many lakeside entertainment activities.

12 Ba Thang Hai, D10

Le Thi Rieng Park

A large park in D10, Le Thi Rieng park is a well-known spot for casual exercise, a friendly game of badminton and early morning birdwatching.

875 Cach Mang Thang Tam, D10
3862 6655

Phu Lam Park

Gentle park on a small lake amidst busy back streets of outer Cholon, popular with locals for fishing and exercise.

121 Kinh Duong Vuong, D6
3751 3313

September 23 Park

One of the largest parks in the city center. It's a great place to exercise, see free music performances, attend public events, and enjoy food from street vendors.

Pham Ngu Lao, Pham Ngu Lao, District 1

Suoi Tien Theme Park

Enormous amusement park on the outskirts of the city with multiple themed attractions demonstrating Vietnamese culture.

Xa Lo Ha Noi, D9
3896 0260

Van Thanh Park

This expansive park located on the banks of the Thi Nghe River offers myriad culinary options in addition to stunning views and natural atmosphere.

48/10 Dien Bien Phu, Binh Thanh

Zoo and Botanical Gardens

One of the world's oldest zoos, with a modest collection of animals and a botanical garden, with many rare orchids, ornamental plants, and over a hundred species of mammals, reptiles and birds.

2B Nguyen Binh Khiem, D1
3822 8309

places of worship

Ba Chuong Church of St Dominic

Ba Chuong Church was redesigned in 2003, and now this visually stunning house of worship features a blend of traditional oriental and western architecture.

190 Le Van Sy, Phu Nhuan
3844 8206

Bac Ha Church

Built in 2008. The name Bac Ha is the combination between the two names of their original dioceses, Bac Ninh and Ha Noi. The church has two bell towers at 42m high, and there's a room dedicated to looking after kids to let their parents join the mass.

419 Ly Thai To, D10
3839 1032

Central Mosque

Built by South Indian Muslims in 1935 on the site of an earlier mosque, this was originally constructed for worshippers from southern India then-resident in Saigon. Now Muslims from all over the world come here to worship.

66 Dong Du, D1
3824 2903

Cha Tam Church

Cha Tam Church is an old catholic church built in 1900. The church was named for priest Cha Tam in honor of his great sermons and contributions to the community.

25 Hoc Lac, D5
3829 8914

Cho Quan Church

An old church built on the foundations of earlier churches that have stood here for centuries, Cho Quan Church was constructed in 1887 in the Gothic tradition, with large stone pillars and a red tiled roof. The massive bell tower consists of three floors and provides stunning views.

120 Tran Binh Trong, D5

Cholon Mosque

Built by Muslims from South India in 1932, the Cholon Mosque Serves Cholon's Muslim community, including Malaysian, Indonesian as well as South Asian worshippers.

641 Nguyen Trai, D5
3855 5350

Dieu Phap

Almost half a century after Dieu Phap pagoda was founded, it has continued to provide a home and food for the poor, helpless, and homeless elderly people.

188 No Trang Long, Binh Thanh
3553 3267

Giac Lam Pagoda

Probably Ho Chi Minh City's oldest pagoda, Giac Lam features a rare bodhi tree and seven-storied stupa containing Buddhist relics. The 32 metre-high stupa, facing East, is one of the most distinguished towers of the city.

11, Lac Long Quan, Tan Binh

Hoa Khanh Temple

A tall, colorful, and oddly out-of-place temple, sticking up prominently from the homes and businesses that surround it.

215 Phan Van Tri, Binh Thanh
3843 1699

www.chuahoa Khanh.com

Hung Phuoc Pagoda

Quiet and unassuming active Buddhist pagoda situated behind the Saigon Railway Station.

540/23 Cach Mang Thang Tam, D3
3993 4113
095 806 3311

Huyen Sy Church

One of Saigon's oldest churches convenient to the backpacker district, and built by the grandfather-in-law of the last king of Vietnam.

1 Ton That Tung, D1
3882 3858

Jade Emperor Pagoda

An ancient temple built by the city's Cantonese Chinese community, the interiors are filled with paintings portraying Taoist and Buddhist mythical stories and sculpture depicting the ten levels of hell and the apocalypse from Chinese mythology.

73 Mai Thi Luu, D1

Jamiul Islamiyah Mosque

Highly stylistic Mosque near the central police station, servicing a sizeable local Muslim community, it is also known as the Nancy Mosque.

459B Tran Hung Dao, D1
3920 3325

Loc Uyen Meditation Chamber

In stark contrast with the pagodas and temples that dot the city landscape, Loc Uyen Meditation Chamber is a place dedicated to seeking inner peace and the study of Buddhism. A colorful D6 pagoda with resident monks, daily devotional instruction, and a free traditional medical healer on Thursdays and Sundays from 8-11am.

121 Kinh Duong Vuong, D6
3875 1155
093 868 0935

Mariamman Temple

This small Hindu temple is frequented by both Saigon's tiny Hindu population along with residential Vietnamese. The temple was built in the late 19th century by traders from Tamil Nadu and is dedicated to the Hindu Goddess Mariamman.

45 Truong Dinh, D1

Nga Sau Church / Saint Jeanne d'Arc Church

Dedicated to St. Joan of Arc, this salmon-pink church is built on the site of a former Chinese cemetery.

116B Hung Vuong, D5
3855 7616
090 835 6266

Quan Am Pagoda

An impressive pagoda dedicated to the popular Goddess of Mercy, with a beautiful interior and large fish and turtle pond.

12 Lao Tu, D5

Quoc Tu Pagoda

Prominent seven storied pagoda with colorful statuary in D10, the main complex of the pagoda spans seven stories with the first two open to the public.

Ba Thang Hai, D10
3865 2700

Saigon Notre-Dame Basilica

Ho Chi Minh City's foremost tourist attraction, this beautiful cathedral dates from the 1860s and is built with bricks from Marseille. In front of the cathedral stands a Virgin Mary statue, which is said to have been shed tears in 2005, causing thousands of people to stop around the Basilica.

1 Cong Xa Paris, D1
3824 2903

St Joseph Seminary

This stunning complex of old colonial-period buildings a few blocks to the east of Notre Dame Cathedral is looking its age after significant tropical weathering, but it's slowly being restored and has been training new seminarians since 1986.

6bis Ton Duc Thang, D1

Subramaniam Swami Temple

One among the city's only two South Indian Hindu temples, it was the first Hindu temple ever built in Ho Chi Minh City and the largest. Located a mere five minutes' walk from Ben Thanh Market.

98 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1

Tan Dinh Church

Built by French colonists in the late 19th century, Tan Dinh Church is renowned for its distinctive pink facade and decorative designs. A popular photography subject for visitors to Ho Chi Minh City regardless of their religion.

289 Hai Ba Trung, D3
3829 0093

THE WELL International Church

The Well is a registered English speaking, evangelical Protestant church for Ho Chi Minh City's expatriate community meeting each Sunday at 11am.

Khanh Hoi Church, 98 Le Quoc Hung, D4
0976 285 610
tom@thewellvn.org
www.thewellvn.org
Sundays 10:30 - 12:30

Thien Hau Pagoda

One of Cholon's most popular pagodas, this temple was originally built as an expression of gratitude by 19th century Chinese immigrants for Thien Hau's protection during their initial trip to Saigon by sea. Its many hanging incense coils make for superb photographs.

710 Nguyen Trai, D5

Tran Hung Dao Temple

One among a series of temples and pagodas dedicated to the Vietnamese folk hero Tran Hung Dao, who freed ancient Vietnamese people from the Mongolians in the 13th century.

36 Vo Thi Sau, D1

Vinh Nghiem Pagoda

Sitting next to the canal at the end of Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, this structure draws its inspiration from traditional Vietnamese culture and a touch of the Japanese architectural style. The largest and most impressive Mahayana Buddhist pagoda in the city.

339 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
3843 9901

Xa Loi Pagoda

The largest pagoda in Ho Chi Minh City and known for a brutal 1963 raid, Xa Loi was built in 1956 following the drawings of the architects Nguyen Van Duong and Do Ba Vinh for worshipping Buddhist relics.

89 Ba Huyen Thanh Quan, D3
3930 0679

social clubs

Brogolf Bar Wars

Group of barflies who meet regularly for golf, open to new members. First Saturday of each month, breakfast, brunch, and 18 holes with a caddy.

46-48 Ton That Thiep, D1
090 927 3997

Dat Nam Friendly Club

While it may ring of a bingo association, this is a fairly well-respected venue for entertainment and cultural exchange amongst foreigners and entrepreneurs - a very casual networking opportunity.

Basement Level, 116 Nguyen Du, D1
5404 3618

International Ladies of Vietnam

A women's group that meets Thursday mornings for coffee from 10am- noon at Sherwood Residences- 1st floor (127 Pasteur, D3) Cost for coffee and snacks is VND130,000. Membership is VND700,000 per year. Open to all ladies

Latin Street Dance

Geisha's was funky enough without the addition of this new meet-up for Latin fans yearning for something a little grittier than salsa.

Geisha Tea House, 85 Pasteur, D1

Overland Club

Overland Club is a 100 percent foreign-owned Japanese company that organizes cultural classes including pottery (from basic to intermediate level, as well as painting unglazed pottery) and cooking classes (Japanese and Vietnamese). The Overland Club also hosts various events. Past events include noodle making, soap carving, and kids' cooking.

36bis Huynh Khuong Ninh, D1
3820 9734

Saigon Swing Cats

Saigon Swing Cats organizes dance classes, workshops and events at various venues around HCMC including restaurants, lounges and dance studios. Dance styles include the Lindy, Shim Sham and Tranky Doo.

Petrohouse Tower- caffe molinari,
5 Le Duan, D1

sports

Green Bamboo Club

Pleasant tennis club with several courts just a short hop over the bridge from District 1 into Binh Thanh.

50/3 Xo Viet Nghe Tinh, Binh Thanh
3898 6504

Lan Anh International Tennis Court

Popular international sports club facility with advanced sporting equipment, courts, gym, and restaurant. This sports club also hosts tennis tournaments and other events.

291 Cach Mang Thang Tam, D10
3862 7144

Kimdo Recreation Centre

Situated in downtown Saigon, Kim Do Recreational Centre provides a wide variety of services: restaurant, karaoke, live music cafe, bar, dancing, massage, steam bath and hairdressing.

129A Nguyen Hue, D1
3822 5914

swimming pools

Great World Pool

Popular public pool known for its high standard of cleanliness, this indoor pool is shallow at both ends and deep in the middle to ensure safety for non-swimmers.

600 Nguyen Pham Tuan, D6
3853 7867

Ky Dong Swimming Pool

Great D3 outdoor family pool, ideal for the kids.

40 Ky Dong, D3
2241 5322

Lam Son Swimming Club

Olympic-sized swimming pool with designated lanes (one exclusively for women) and a reputation for cleanliness.

242 Tran Binh Trong, D5
3835 8028

Lan Anh Swimming Club Pool

The popular Lan Anh club is a well-situated sports area with a clean, quiet pool and jacuzzi. A bar serves drinks and towels by the water. There are various areas with different depths from 1.4m to 2m, suitable for adults. Swimming lessons are available at the club.

291 Cach Mang Thang Tam, D3
3932 5508

Van Thanh Pool

A very casual swimming venue favored by younger people and recreational swimmers.

48/10 Dien Bien Phu, Binh Thanh
2219 5487

Yet Kieu Swimming Pool

A long-standing swimming club that's become the standard for competition, clean water, and inexpensive prices, Yet Kieu is a well-managed complex of pools for the family - and it also has its own gym.

1 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
0839101542

classes

Cetana PSB Intellis International College

PSB College is the first and only Singapore licensed college in Vietnam. Provides students easier accessibility in gaining knowledge and skills beyond the usual classroom study. PSB College offers a suite of internationally-recognized diploma programs from business, marketing, hospitality to finance.

144-146-148 Le Lai, D1
3926 2233
www.psbcollege.edu.vn

Saigon Cooking Class

Classes can include a market tour to buy the day's ingredients followed by a hands-on cooking class, organized twice a day from Tuesday till Sunday (US\$39.50 to 45.50). Team building programs also available.

74 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3825 8485

Vietnam Cookery Centre

A complete cookery center offering hands-on classes. This culinary compound introduces visitors to Vietnamese cuisine.

26 Ly Tu Trong, 4th floor, Ste 45, D1
3827 0349/ 3823 8085

VLS Vietnamese Language School

Imparting genuine fluency in Vietnamese since 1994, VLS is one of the city's best-organised and most professional training centers devoted to the Vietnamese language, with classes for all levels.

4th floor, CMARD2 Building, 45 Dinh Tien Hoang, D1
3910 0168

Fashion

IMAGES BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY



STYLIST: JAMES ALLEN
MODEL: AMANDA SCOTT
MAKEUP AND HAIR: KENNY LIEU
ASSISTANT STYLIST: DANNY ST. LOUIS

Jumpsuit | D.U.Y Boutique
VND2,490,000

Chain Necklace | Candy Rox
VND599,000

Pearl Necklace | D.U.Y Boutique
VND890,000

Bangle | Candy Rox
VND200,000

Jacket | Xuan Thi
Not for sale



The recently abandoned area of Thu Thiem is littered with debris, a bare landscape providing little shelter from the fierce Saigon heat.

In the near future this area will transform into a new development, expanding the tight confines of Ho Chi Minh City, and a stripped back place where it is impossible not to meet the sun head on.

It is often more popular to try and escape the heat, but there are many ways to dress for the sun and providing you have sun block and a bikini in the bottom of your bag, a lunchtime dip is never out of the question. The key is to adapt to the heat, strip back your wardrobe and reawaken the sun worshipper that is dying to get out of the office and into the sunlight.

Bodysuit | **Ha Nhat Tien**
VND1,600,000

Voile Jacket | **Le Thanh Hoa**
VND1,700,000

Earrings | **D.U.Y Boutique**
VND190,000

Necklace | **Candy Rox**
VND699,000





Swimsuit | **Candy Rox**
VND899,000

Necklace | **Gaya**
VND1,600,000

Necklace | **D.U.Y Boutique**
VND250,000

Bangle | **Candy Rox**
VND200,000



Crop Top | LAM Boutique
VND1,990,000

Swimsuit | Candy Rox
VND899,000

Strap | Le Thanh Hoa
VND1,500,000

Maxi Shirt | D.U.Y Boutique
VND1,390,000

Bangle | Candy Rox
VND200,000



D.U.Y Boutique | 70 Le Thi Rieng, D1

Candy Rox | 23 Ly Tu Trong, D1

Ha Nhat Tien | 380 Huynh Van Banh, Phu Nhuan

Le Thanh Hoa | 253 Vo Van Tan, D3

LAM Boutique | 1st floor, 76A Le Loi, D1

Gaya | 1 Nguyen Van Trang, D1

Swimsuit | **Candy Rox**
VND899,000

Bangles | **Le Thanh Hoa**
(Yellow) VND150,000 | (Orange) VND170,000 | (Brown) VND190,000

Scarf | **LAM Boutique**
Not for sale

Necklace | **Candy Rox**
VND599,000



IMAGE BY ALEX McMILLAN

Valentine's Day

Educator and fashion designer Valentine Vu spends most of his time arming his students for the realities of the fashion industry



IMAGE BY QUINN RYAN MATINGLY

Living in Saigon since 2009, James Allen has become steadily obsessed with the Vietnamese fashion industry, eager to promote homegrown talent through his work as a stylist.

VALENTINE'S FAMILY LEFT Vietnam in 1993 with very little to try for a new life in Canada. Both parents worked tirelessly with ambitions their son would become a doctor or a lawyer, a future Valentine quickly realized wasn't for him. Despite earning acceptance into medical school in Canada he had fallen in love with a Vietnamese fashion show he witnessed while vacationing in Vietnam.

But perhaps what influenced him most in his decision was his sexuality. "After coming out, I bloomed, and although it took me a while to find myself, I realized intensive studying and a nine to five just didn't suit my personality. On one hand fashion is an escape and accepting of gay people, and on the other it's technical and hardcore."

His father was furious, "What are you going to do with your life. Pick up garbage? Hem people's trousers for a living?!"

Valentine quickly realized that drafting patterns, sewing and everything else involved in producing garments were solid skills he could use to support himself and his choice soon paid off with a string of internships and employment with companies such as Club Monaco, LaSenza and Winner's Apparel Inc., all eventually leading to his first collection for L'Oreal Fashion Week.

After much indecision, and a potential return to education to complete his masters, Valentine applied and was accepted to Raffles Vietnam. The prospect of traveling and returning to the country of his birth was too good to pass up.

Five years later Valentine Vu is a teacher at ADS International Design & Art Center. He took a break from his busy schedule to share with us what he's learned from teaching fashion...

Are your students prepared for the realities of the fashion industry?

I find there are two kinds of students: one group is really green, the dreamers, as I like to call them, and the others are already established in family businesses or have been sewing for 20 years, owners of boutiques and manufacturing plants. This group usually wants to catch up to international standards.

With the trend in manufacturing at the moment, everyone is outsourcing, even the design labor. If they are manufactured here, with an international concept, they might as

well do it as a package deal and design them in Vietnam as well to cut costs. The future of manufacturing is here. It is for this that one needs good business acumen as well as design skills to make it big.

When they leave ADS what should they remember when preparing themselves for the real world of fashion?

They should take their technical skills with them. It doesn't matter how ambitious you



are as a designer, if you aren't grounded with a good foundation in technical skills then you won't make it very far. I can only support them with enough knowledge and technical skills, give them a sword and a shield, and let them go and fight for themselves.

Many designers here are actually from other areas of business and have the money to outsource all of these jobs. Money for

fashion is good, it speeds up your road to fame, but it doesn't guarantee you success, just a smoother ride. They are lucky to live in a wealthy family, they can travel. For me, fashion is culture; you need to be exposed to other cultures. Money doesn't guarantee success though.

How do you balance your life as a designer and your role as an educator?

I'm very greedy! Sometimes, I thank my ADD personality! I have a random process, anything can inspire me, and there is no logic to it. I deal with emotions. I need all these outlets to put all this energy into. I can teach in the week, design on the weekends, I can write articles, manage brands, launch labels, be a stylist, and even teach models how to walk. I'm greedy and I'm ambitious. Here, everything is available, you just need to put it together and go and get it. Flexibility and adaptability is the key.

What does the Vietnamese fashion industry need most right now?

A good education. Fashion is influenced, and is a reflection of what's current in a society. It's like food, to understand our culture, see what we eat on the street. The same goes for fashion.

The government needs to support new designers through funding, or by zoning certain areas of the city so that only Vietnamese designers and boutiques are allowed in. Not just international brands. We shouldn't just focus on tourists, but really celebrate Vietnamese identity. The fashion industry needs to step up its game and stop being so superficial about fashion. You need talent to back it up! Real designers are too busy to be fake and superficial. Enjoy the process, the A to B of it all. I believe when designers produce less "entertainment" fashion that's completely unwearable and start thinking more outside of the box, and expose themselves to different influences, then the fashion industry here will get global attention.

Moonface by Valentine Vu can be found in the Samuel Menswear Boutique located at 77 Dien Bien Phu, D1. Watch this space for an exclusive menswear collection created by the students of ADS' (www.adsvietnam.edu.vn) fashion department later in the year. Go to Oi's Facebook page for more information. ■

Gallery Glamour

At the recent opening of the second session of the San Art Laboratory, Oi caught up with some stylish art lovers who came out in support of the Laboratory's latest crop of homegrown artists

IMAGES BY **PINKY NGUYEN**



Ava
23 | Tourist
Dress | **Vintage boutique**
Shoes | **Vintage boutique**



Phuc
32 | Graphic Designer
Shirt | **Thailand**
Pants | **Thailand**
Shoes | **Thailand**
Bag | **TOC Handmade Leather**



Felix
21 | Student
T-shirts | **Zara**
Pants | **River Island**
Watch | **Omega**
Shoes | **Pedro**



Taka
30 | Manager
Shirt | **Japan**
Pants | **US**
Shoes | **Vietnam**
Watch | **US**



Arlette Quynh Anh Tran
26 | Assistant
Jacket | **Bogetta**
Jeans | **Miss Sixty**



Tra
29 | Promotion and Development Manager
Shirt | **Caro**
Jeans | **Tom Tailors**
Shoes | **www.zalora.vn**

>>The List Fashion



Atexpats is Ho Chi Minh City's first truly comprehensive insider's guide for foreign residents - website launching 2013

eyewear

Dilusso

Selling many famous eyewear brands under Italian manufacturers such as Dolce & Gabbana, RayBan, Versace and Bvlgari. Provides high-quality products at an affordable price.

29A Dong Khoi, DI
3824 6469
090 921 0192

Eyewear Hut

Eyewear Hut offers prescription glasses, contact lenses, ophthalmic lenses and other devices. They also stock popular brands such as Luxottica, DeRigo, Charmant, Marcolin, Dolce & Gabbana, D & G, Tom Ford, Salvatore Ferragamo and more. Also caters to kids.

135 Nguyen Hue, DI
3821 1695

Eyewear Plaza

The largest shopping center for eyewear in Ho Chi Minh City with more than 1,000 products including sunglasses and prescription glasses.

33 Nguyen Du, DI
3829 5051

Oakley

Decades of Oakley innovation have led to a full array of market-leading products including performance apparel and accessories, prescription eyewear, footwear, watches and electronics. The company continues to build on its heritage of authenticity by reinventing products from scratch to achieve superior quality and genuine innovation that delivers the unexpected.

28 Ton That Thiep, DI
3821 5712

Sunwear Boutique

With many locations around the city, this luxury eyewear store supplies many designer brands, including Burberry, Vogue, Blue Bay, and many others.

89-91 Nguyen Du, DI
3824 4397

ladieswear

Axara Paris - Saigon Center

Axara may have seduced the whole world, but its 2010 launch in Vietnam at the Vincom Centre is still making headway with modern young Vietnamese women entranced by its romantic, glamorous designs.

65 Le Loi, DI
3914 7655

Banana Shop

Banana Shop provides everything a girl needs to be noticed in Ho Chi Minh City. Whether it be undergarments, shoes, bags, or jewelry, Banana Shop delivers with unique products from Hong Kong and the United States.

128 Ly Tu Trong, DI
3829 0061

Bebe

The shop sells its brand of women's clothing and apparel, dresses, jumpsuits, shoes and bags.

1st floor, Saigon center, 65 Le Loi, DI
3914 4011

Cao Vinh Fashion

Specializes in formal Western-style shirts, Cao Vinh is distinctive if for

nothing else than its simple, intriguing website allowing customers to specify design elements.

69 Pasteur, DI
3824 5645
090 817 9129

Cashew

Fashion shop chain with 4 boutiques in HCMC. Specializes in women clothes and accessories. Designed by their own designers. Familiar brand in HCMC catwalk and Vietnam fashion industry.

38 Ly Tu Trong, DI
6683 9669

Diva Silk Boutique

Diva is all about silk, oriental glamour, luxury, and a feminine charm to match. The products in this little shop comprise both locally-woven first-grade silk garments and those imported from Thailand.

146 Dong Khoi, DI
3822 7153

Esprit

Hong Kong-based lifestyle apparel brand offering affordable casual streetwear from a two-story shop in the heart of downtown HCMC.

58 Dong Khoi, DI
3827 6085

Eva Gopa

Office fashion, street-style fashion, and evening dresses for women.

11E Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, DI
3910 3877

Fit

Caters to women in their 20s.

44 Luu Van Lang, DI

Gaya

A high-end shop that sells cocktail and party dresses by French-Cambodian designer Romyda Keth. Gaya has specializes in home interior products.

1 Nguyen Van Trang, DI
3925 1495

Kelly Bui

Launched in April 2010, the shop sells the most recent collections by the brand. The collections shown on the website are the same as those in-store.

BI-24, Vincom Center, 70-72 Le Thanh Ton, DI
3936 9386

Khai Silk

Khai Silk is a favorite among local celebrities for its high quality tailoring, fabrics and service.

81 Dong Khoi, DI
3822 2856

Kiwi Fashion

Kiwi offers contemporary designs at an affordable price. It was founded by former Vietnamese model Kim Hong Phung and houses the latest fashion trends exclusively designed by Josephine Geralda, one of the leading designers in London.

74C-74/1 Hai Ba Trung, DI
3824 8214
3822 1191

La Bella

A Vietnamese fashion shop that carries dresses, skirts, tops and a large selection of bags and purses.

58-87 Pasteur, DI
3823 0172
9am - 9pm

Lyn Around

This is the Saigon branch of the international high-class fashion label Lyn Around. It is famous for its girly girl and street style.

1st Floor, Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, DI
3821 6575

L'Usine

The central retail space offers famous fashion brands from around the world with full rotating stock.

First Floor, 151 Dong Khoi, DI
6674 3565

Maison de Bunga

Maison de Bunga is a specialty women's clothing store specializing in designers with floral motifs, hats, bags, and other accessories.

81 Pasteur, DI
3943 0990

Mango

Mango is a Spanish fashion design company with over 2,000 stores around the world. Ho Chi Minh City is home to several of its branches. Mango sells fashion clothing for women including dresses, skirts, tops and accessories.

Unit 2F-11, 2nd floor, Icon 68, 2 Hai Trieu, DI
6266 2111
1st Floor, 65 Le Loi, DI
3914 7464

Misa Collection

Well-known for tailoring bespoke ao dais.

67 Mac Thi Buoi, DI
3829 4007
098 330 0469

Ngan Private Collection

A collection of multi-brand fashion labels created by one of Vietnam's highly recognized fashion designers. Dedicated personal styling consultant available for those in need of their own stylist.

23 Ly Tu Trong, DI
6290 9391

Phuong My

A ready-to-wear fashion designer currently working from Ho Chi Minh City, producing feminine pieces using high quality fabric such as silk organza and lace using expert tailoring and construction which has earned her frequent coverage in the country's top fashion magazines.

81 Le Thanh Ton, DI
09 7271 7788

Shin

Vintage style ladies fashion, clothes and accessories by local designers.

122 Ly Tu Trong, DI
090 935 2369

Sifa Fashion

Known for selling office wear for women.

192 Ly Tu Trong, DI
3825 0618

Song - Valerie Gregori McKenzle

French bohemian chic designs that caters to sophisticated women.

75 Pasteur, DI
3824 6986

Sophilita

A simple Italian fashion brand with several branches in Vietnam, Sophilita mainly sells office, street, and casual,

womenswear.

15C Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, DI
6275 9019

Suite Blanco

Suite Blanco is a Spanish company specialized in the design, production, distribution and sale of all types of accessories and clothing for the modern woman and man looking for the latest trends at affordable prices. The chain now has 240 shops spread in 15 different countries including Vietnam.

Vincom Center A, 171 Dong Khoi, DI

Thuy Design House

A popular Vietnamese ready-to-wear designer creating seasonal collections using high quality materials with a minimalist design aesthetic. Thuy's friendly boutique carries a range of shapes and silhouettes that are often worn by the city's fashion conscious.

151/6 Dong Khoi, DI
www.facebook.com/thuydesignhouse

Umbrella

This fashion label caters to a higher end market with tailored bags to accessories.

35 Ly Tu Trong, DI
6276 2730
www.umbrella-fashion.com

Valenciani

Highly respected Vietnamese designer whose collections are featured in ELLE Vietnam and Vogue Vietnam.

1F/12 Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, DI
3821 2788
090 785 5788

menswear

Anna Vo Fashion Boutique

A popular designer currently in Saigon, Anna Vo produces seasonal collections inspired by her time in Europe and Vietnam as well as aiming to be both beautiful and functional. The boutique also carries pieces from her mother Thuy Nga's collections as well as high quality imported accessories. Each collection includes both menswear and womenswear.

23 Dong Khoi, DI
6675 4013

An Phuoc

An Phuoc Garment Manufacturing was established in 1992 with 50 workers and 40 sewing machines, specializing in manufacturing for exporting enterprises. Now it has transformed itself into a garment export company featuring handmade clothing and shoes.

182 Hai Ba Trung, DI

Bonjour

A fashion boutique at the Vo Van Tan/ Cao Thang T-intersection providing an exhaustive range of one-off fashion pieces and accessories with both a modern and vintage feel. Prices are affordable for both men and women and come in a range of sizes to suit most customers.

446 Vo Van Tan, D3

Maschio Shop

Colorful retro men's fashions, one of the quirkiest fine-quality local fashion stores in the central area.

168 Ly Tu Trong, DI
3829 2975

Mizada

Since its inception in 2004, Mizada has become one of the leading luxury fashion brands in Vietnam. Mizada caters to both women and women with products such as T-shirts, jeans, coats, scarves, and much more.

105 Le Thanh Ton, D1
6673 4199

San Sclero Manhattan

Fashionable, smart menswear from the Viet Tien Garment Company, specializing in garment manufacture and trade equipment since the mid 70's.

1st Floor Saigon Tax Trade Center, 135
Nguyen Hue, D1
3864 0800
090 316 6364

Santo Nero

Centrally-located purveyors of international Santo Nero brand "Italian gents wear".

23 Ly Tu Trong, D1

Veston Huy Hoang

Men's tailored fashions, specialising in suits. Expect to Pay: \$200 and upward for a suit, fabric included. Obviously, the better the quality of fabric, the higher the price. 70% of customers are foreigners.

65 Pasteur, D1
3822 4609
090 865 4988



U.S. POLO ASSN.

U.S. POLO ASSN. is an American fashion brand that carries trendy and cool polo style clothing for men. Their high quality items are ideal for casual wear as well as for a game of golfing or any other sports.

138 Nguyen Trai, D1
6291 3282
uspolo.hcm@gmail.com
www.uspoloassn.com
090 399 9551



shoes & accessories

Accessorize

Accessorize is devoted to bringing customers eclectic products with its own in-house design team. Accessorize is focused on sourcing globally in an effort to find well priced and good quality collections of fashion accessories following seasonal themes.

Vincom Center B, 70-72 Le Thanh Ton, D1

Adidas Performance Store

Sells running shoes and sportswear by the famous German brand.

2nd Floor Bitexco Tower, 135 Nguyen
Hue, D1
3821 2894
66 Le Loi, D1
3824 1455

Asian Fish

Serves made-to-order classic souvenirs, original ao dai designs, and is highly popular with Japanese customers. Also sells bags, sunglasses and clothing.

39/9 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3822 1839

Avocado

Airy and spacious shop for handbags and accessories.

117 Nguyen Thai Hoc, D1
0123 999 9099

Bam Skate Shop - VVT

Bam Skate Shop stocks a wide range of international brands for those in search of skating equipment and apparel.

228 Vo Van Tan, D3
090 878 9820

Cara Diamond & Jewelry Vincom

One of the better-appointed jewelry counters at Vincom B, Cara sells boldly-designed pieces at reasonable rates.

Shop B28, First Floor, 72 Le Thanh Ton, D1

Charles & Keith

Singapore-based fashion retailer specialising in shoes, handbags and accessories at a mid range price point.

17-18 Nguyen Trai, D1

Compa Jewelry store

Compa Jewelry Store specializes in diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds from the finest quality of raw materials that meet international standards. Compa Jewelry is also a manufacturer and importer of gemstones and fashion jewelry.

135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3915 2151

Doc Martens

Small central-city outlet of the popular international Doc Marten brand with an extensive stock of the latest styles.

39 Le Loi, D1
3821 4931

Hong Anh Collections - LTT

Using fabrics such as silk and taffeta, the brand caters to a younger crowd. Stocks clothing, handbags, jewelry and neckties.

75 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3824 3542

Ice Accessories

ICE and ICE Accessories are the newest brands from Duy Anh Trading Co., Ltd. under the creative direction of Adrian Anh Tuan. This high end fashion hub is now open at the Saigon Centre. Each ICE collection offers 100 types of fashionable designs and colors.

Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1
3521 0881

Ipa-Nima

With a focus on handbags and a design-first philosophy, Hong Kong expat Christina Yu's Ipa-Nima brand translates fashion trends into edgy accessories, steeped in soul.

77-79 Dong Khoi, D1
3515 3980

ITALY Shoes Shop

Modest Italian-style mens shoes at local prices in the central area.

186 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3827 9813

Kim Ngon Jewelry

A counter in Tax building that buys and sells jewelry made from gold and gemstones.

A37-A39 Counter, Saigon Tax Trade
Center, 135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3914 4874

Kimseng

An open storefront that sells gold and gold-related jewelry

50 Le Loi, D1
3823 4414
090 821 3245

Kita Diamonds

Quality diamonds specialist with a professional showroom.

82 Ngo Duc Ke, D1
3821 1510

Lam Boutique

The shop sells clothing for women only and most of the items on offer

are European casual vintage style with a touch of street chic. The clothes are made by the shop and has become quite popular among Vietnamese celebrities.

1st Floor, 71 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
090 671 2309

Le Hang Crystal Jewellery

With almost 20 years of experience in the design field, Le Hang's experienced group of staff create jewelry from fragments of Swarovski crystals.

101 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3827 3596

Lua Exclusive Boutique

Prestige shop that sells exclusive Vietnamese silks.

83 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3822 5292

Nine West

Originating in the U.S. Nine West has a built a name for itself by quickly translating runway trends into styles attainable on the high street, and in the case of Vietnam, the malls of district one. Collections found in store now include a wider range of accessories such as bags, belts and other lines of accessories.

Vincom Center B, 70-72 Le Thanh Ton, D1
Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1

Pandora

Pandora designs, manufactures and markets hand-finished and modern jewelry made from genuine materials such as sterling silver, pearls and gemstones at affordable prices.

6 Dong Khoi, D1
3822 3241

PNJ Nguyen Hue

PNJ was the first local jewelry company exporting products overseas. Since 1995, PNJ jewelry products have been introduced in Hong Kong Jewelry Fair, as well as exported to Denmark, Germany, US, Australia and is now entering the Dubai market.

Ground Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Center,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3914 4854

Puma

One of a network of Puma shops around town, this has a far more limited range than some of the other outlets, but scores on its convenient location.

1st Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Centre, 135
Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 7464

Saigon Jewelry Company Ltd

Formerly known as the Saigon Jewelry Holding Company, SJC specializes in manufacturing and trading gold and jewels. The brand is well-recognized throughout Vietnam as well as in the Asia-Pacific region.

1st Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Center, 135
Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 8844

Sapa Shop

Certainly one of the grooviest souvenir shops on Le Loi, much of the stock comprises ethnic handicrafts brought down direct from breathtaking Sapa.

76 Le Loi, D1

Shoes Hanoi

Cheap, centrally-located shoe store with babywear boutique at the doorway. Since 1929, they've been making and selling shoes for both men and women.

107 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3829 5753

Steve Madden

Considered the fashion footwear mogul of the 21st century, Madden has been responsible for the design and marketing of the company's trendsetting shoes for the past two decades. His collections are aimed

at fashion forward men and women, and also include bags and other accessories.

Vincom Center B, 70-72 Le Thanh Ton, D1

Sophia Jewellery

Fine jewelry sold in an annex to the lobby of the Oscar Saigon Hotel.

68A Nguyen Hue, D1
3822 8513

Tran Quoc Lan

Custom-makes shoes and sells shoes of all kinds.

97 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3829 5453

Tuyet Lan

Tuyet Lan's tailor will help you design your own garment or choose from a colorful selection of exquisite hand-embroidered pieces.

91 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3827 7038
090 392 6286

Viet Thanh

People still hunt Mekong crocodiles for their fine leather, and there's a healthy home-grown crocodile leather industry with this venue being one of the more upper-class of these establishments. Sells wallets, belts, handbags, keychains, and other small leather goods.

137 Dong Khoi, D1
3824 2735

tailors

ANH SILK

A little fashion shop near the Sheraton hotel selling both men's and women's clothing and with a fast turnaround tailoring service for silk garments.

151 Dong Khoi, D1
2211 9116

Cao Minh

Founded by Mr. Ly Minh in 1948, who dedicated his entire life to custom-tailoring works. Cao Minh Garment Private Enterprise was the first in Vietnam to successfully export its suits to Japan.

77 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3824 2547

Kim Dung Embroidery Tailor

Tailored outfits and specializing in Asian garments as well as Western suits and dresses for both domestic and foreign customers.

129 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3823 2077
012 7773 8146

Lam Tailor's

Considered the tailor of choice in the diplomatic community here, it had the honor to tailor a suit for President George W Bush when he was in Vietnam several years ago. They import their fabrics from England and Italy.

158C Dong Khoi, D1
3824 3830

Lan Vy

A small tailor shop near Ben Thanh market. Female tailor who specializes in shorts, skirts, business shirts and dresses.

217 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3822 5087

Minh Doan Tailors Shop

Specializes in suits for men and women.

120 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3823 1687

Phuong Anh

The shop stocks fine embroideries and brocade, with a 24 hour turnover tailoring service.

B4, 2nd Floor Tax Building,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
38213115
090 380 9758

Tailors Nhut

Well-known tailor for men's business and event suits as well as ladies' business wear. Pre-tailored products are available in-store.

232 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3822 5338

Viet Tien Garment Company

The company was established in 1976, and has been successfully manufacturing garment, textiles and accessories for fashion industry.

178 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3829 4350

watches

D & D

Purveyors of fine watches on Saigon's central strip - one place to go to avoid questionable merchandise.

68 Nguyen Hue, D1
093 847 1846

Luu Hung Phat

There's no shortage of vendors of watches in this part of town, but not many that can afford a plum spot on the central district's richest shopping strip.

56 Dong Khoi, D1
3824 4777
090 380 8909

Rhythm Showroom

An authorized importer and distributor of the Japanese Rhythm brand into Vietnam. Rhythm has 16 stores in HCMC; this Tax Building showroom is known as Shop Dang Nghi.

Ground Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Centre,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 3891

Swiss Watch

Straightforward, quality swiss watch products for the discerning Dong Khoi shopper.

41 Dong Khoi, D1
3827 6126
091 392 5212

Tan Tan Watch

Luxury watch retailers selling from a shop within the Kimdo Hotel foyer. Selling luxury branded watches such as Citizen, Movado, Enicar, Raymond Weil, Frederique Constant, Alfex, Mido, and Tissot - Swiss.

Kimdo Hotel, 133 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 8297

Thanh Phat Watch

Thanh Phat Watch is a famous long-standing wholesaler and retailer with many watch stores throughout the city. They specialize in selling high-end watches from Switzerland and Japan, such as Rado, Longines, Montblanc, and many more.

Ground Floor Saigon Tax Trade Center,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 3231

Topten

Topten has been an exclusive distributor of the luxurious Swiss watch brand Tissot since 2006. This outlet is a luxury watch showroom in the foyer of the Sunwah building.

Ground Floor, Sunwah Tower,
115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 9279

clinics

American Chiropractic Clinic

American Chiropractic Clinic is a chiropractic, physiotherapy, and foot care clinic in the Heart of Saigon. We are staffed by American and French-trained Chiropractic Physicians and Vietnamese Physical Therapists.

8 Trung Dinh, D3
3930 6667

Australian Clinic & Pathology Diagnostics

The Australian Clinic, Pathology & Diagnostics (ACPD) is comprised of a medical outpatient clinic and associated pathology laboratory. The clinic hosts highly trained and experienced medical specialists.

273 - 275 Ly Thai To, D10
3834 9941

Center Medical International

Center Medical International is an outpatient clinic fully-equipped to provide international standard comprehensive and specialized medical services. All physicians are either French or Vietnamese.

1 Han Thuyen, D1
3827 2365

Columbia Asia Saigon Clinic

Beautiful international clinic a short distance from the cathedral, with exemplary standards of healthcare for walk-in patients.

8 Alexandre De Rhodes, D1
3823 8454

Diag Center International

Situated in Ho Chi Minh City, Diag Center International is a diagnostic testing center, which consists of a team of thirty Vietnamese staff, and operates under French medical biologists and assisted by a group of Vietnamese medical technicians trained in France.

146 An Binh, D5
3838 1551

Hanh Phuc International Women & Children's Hospital

Hanh Phuc International Hospital aims to be the leading private healthcare provider for women and children in Vietnam. Designed and managed up to Singaporean standards, the 260-bed Hanh Phuc Hospital aims to provide a comprehensive range of quality healthcare services to women and children with a personalized touch and in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

2nd floor Saigon Trade Centre,
37 Ton Duc Thang, D1
3911 1860

Institute of Traditional Medicine

Established in 1975, the Institute of Traditional Medicine is a holistic research and teaching hospital. Patients are treated using traditional medicines, some of which are produced by the institute itself. Some doctors speak English and/or French, and acupuncture lessons are on offer.

273-275 Nguyen Van Troi, Phu Nhuan
3844 5954

Lotus Clinic

Lotus Clinic was established in 2007 as the first Japanese medical clinic in Ho Chi Minh City.

Lancaster Bldg , 22 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3827 0000

International SOS Medical Care

Located in the city center, the clinic is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing routine and emergency healthcare services as well as on-site laboratory and radiology services. Languages spoken include Japanese, Korean and French, among others.

167A Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
3829 8551

Perfect Skin lab

More than just a spa, this District 1 venue is a genuine skin lab that caters to each customer's unique characteristics and needs. The lab is the latest concept developed by Dermal Essentials, the elite distributor for Dermalogica, a skin care system researched and developed by The International Dermal Institute in

Vietnam.

1st floor, unit 9-10 Saigon Center,
65 Le Loi, D1
3910 0372

Stamford Skin Center

The Stamford Skin Centre has grown to include qualified specialists who treat general diseases of the skin such as acne, eczema and other forms of dermatitis, rosacea, psoriasis, and skin cancers.

254 Dien Bien Phu, D3
3932 1090
090 845 3338

Uc Chau Cosmetic Surgery

This central clinic performs straightforward cosmetic treatments, including enhancing the nose bridge, breast enlargement, eyelid folds, and wrinkle removal.

25 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
2212 3396
2212 3398

Victoria Health Care International Clinic

Victoria Healthcare offers the highest standard of healthcare, based on American and European practices, and offering compassionate and efficient service with the greatest respect for the patient.

79 Dien Bien Phu, D1

Vietnam Family Medical Practice

International clinic located in the Manor complex, within easy reach of high-rollers living around the Saigon Pearl area. The sister clinic is located beneath Diamond Plaza.

Ground Floor, 91 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh
3514 0758

dental

2000 Dental Clinic Trung Tam Implant

Established in 1999, 2000 Dental Clinic now has 65 dentists serving 3 locations offering the full range of dental care, including surgery, implants and extractions.

125 Le Thi Rieng, D1
3925 6501

Dang Luu Dental Centre

Dang Luu Dental Centre offers the full range of dental services, including implants, crown and bridges and teeth whitening. Orthodontic services are also provided. Some of the dentists have been foreign-trained.

34 Phan Dang Luu, Binh Thanh
3903 6636

Digital Dental Clinic

Digital Dental Care draws on well-known Korean consistency in service standards and precision equipment to offer a truly world-class service in the Phu My Hung area.

R4-35 Ton Dat Tien, D7
5412 2276

Elite Dental

With an atmosphere more reminiscent of a luxury hotel, this is one of the largest high-quality dental clinics in HCMC, established to answer expat demands for superb dental techniques and professional staff.

57A Tran Quoc Thao, D3
3933 3737

German International Dentistry

German International Dentistry offers excellent consultation services from experienced, international dentists so that you can make informed decisions about your dental care.

1489 Nguyen Van Linh, D7
3776 3777

Grand Dentistry

Grand Dentistry is an upscale dental office located in the ground floor of

Sunwah tower on Nguyen Hue street. It is noted for being very tourist/expat friendly. This dentistry features English speaking staff and expatriate dentists.

Ground Floor Sun Wah Tower,
115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 9446

Minh Khai Dental Clinic

French/American/Swiss managed clinic with well-maintained international-standard equipment.

199 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, Nguyen Cu Trinh, D1
3925 3399

Saint Paul

Saint Paul has facilities all over Ho Chi Minh City, and with the slogan "slight, exact, and painless," the doctors at Saint Paul aim to please even the most fastidious patients.

50 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3835 6159

Smile Dental Center

Quality dental care with whitening, cleaning, and orthodontic services. Japanese equipment and techniques.

173 Ton Dat Tien, D7
5413 6635

Starlight Dental Clinic

Award-winning quality care and personal service in clean premises, offering general dentistry, whitening and cosmetic surgery, implants, orthodontics, pediatric, and preventive dentistry.

2 Bis Cong Truong Quoc Te, D3
3822 6222

Westcoast International Dental Clinic

Large, international team of dentists and support staff from Canada, Australia, Japan, France, Italy, Thailand, and Vietnam. The clinic regularly hosts visiting dentists from many other countries.

27 Nguyen Trung Truc, D1
3825 7485

hairdressers

Art Hair

A small-time local Korean community hairdresser's with a highly-regarded service, presenting an ideal opportunity to be styled after the fashion of the most glamorous country in Asia.

R4-1 Hung Phuoc Villas, D7
5410 3154
090 663 2580

Hair Salon Nguyen The Hien

Nguyen The Hien is an upscale Vietnamese hair salon catering to both men and women. Named after its award-winning hairdresser and designer, the salon is decked out in stylish, modern décor.

102 Ham Nghi, D1
3821 2275

Hairlab

Hair salon without a hint of Asia, bright & clean with all the proper hair-tech on the first floor of the Saigon Center.

1st floor, unit 9-10, Saigon center,
65 Le Loi, D1
3910 4576
093 799 0880

His Salon - Gentleman's Barbershop

Popular men's salon with very good service and complimentary beer.

29 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3829 9455

Hung Pasteur

This salon offers a complete range of beauty treatments and services using quality imported products, drawing in a host of local celebrities and wannabes.

182 Pasteur, D1
3823 1118
090 391 9375

Just Men

A full-service salon for men. A spa and salon specializing in the unique styling and maintenance needs of men only. Masculine all-wood interior and dark brown Mercedes-style chairs. Specialising in hair, facial, massage, and relaxation for men.

40 Ton That Thiep, D1
3914 1407

Kim Hair Salon

An affordable hair salon in downtown Ho Chi Minh City. The range of services is focused on different hair treatments, but also includes manicures and pedicures.

2B Chu Manh Trinh, D1
3825 8643
090 823 9011

Masa hair

Beauty salon, make up, facial care and hair services – hair treatments and restoring damaged hair.

111 Ham Nghi, D1
3821 1282 / 093 777 5862

My Duyen

Cutting, perms, combs, hair washing, and dyeing - full services out of trendy Thai Van Lung.

20 Thai Van Lung, D1
091 927 7126

The Salon

Prominent ladies' salon & sanctuary - the sister venue to the well-known His Salon with its touts out on Ton That Thiep. Services include hairstyling, shampoo, hair removal, manicures, and pedicures.

Ladies' hair & bodycare sanctuary.
64 Ton That Thiep, D1
3914 3999

Vamp Hairline

Vamp Hair Line is a high-class Japanese hair salon offering quality hair care services.

9th Floor LANT Building,
56-58-60, Hai Ba Trung, D1
7303 3330
012 2768 8614

hospitals

Cao Thang Eye Hospital

The CT International Eye Hospital is one of the few dedicated, comprehensive eye institutes in the country. Internationally recognized staff diagnose and treat the entire spectrum of conditions of the eye, including complex problems such as diabetic retinopathy, retinal detachments, macular degeneration, glaucoma, and cataracts.

135B Tran Binh Trong, D5
090 588 6086

Cho Ray Hospital

Cho Ray Hospital is the largest healthcare service in Vietnam, providing full priority service for expatriates, with a staff including 696 doctors and 1350 nurses.

201B Nguyen Chi Thanh, D5
3855 4137

Columbia Asia International Hospital - Gia Dinh

Skilled and experienced doctors offer exceptional medical care at affordable prices with the latest in medical technology. Patients benefit from advanced medical diagnostics, treatment and personal care.

1 No Trang Long, Binh Thanh
3803 0677

DialAsia International Hospital

A specialist centre in kidney treatment for the expat community, DialAsia is a fairly well-reputed international hospital of nephrology & dialysis, offering medical consultancy in renal diseases, haemodialysis, and paraclinical examinations.

253 Dien Bien Phu, D3
3930 0828

FV Hospital

FV Hospital is a Vietnam's only internationally accredited healthcare facility. A wholly foreign-owned general hospital offering a wide range of medical and surgical services under one roof, equipped to care for patients from consultation and diagnosis through to the completion of treatment.

6 Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
5411 3334

Hoan My Hospital

Private hospital with a wide range of specialist areas, running for 15 years on Phan Xich Long.

Private owned hospital, has been run for 15 years
60-60A Phan Xich Long, Phu Nhuan
3990 2468
3995 9862

Saigon International Maternity Hospital J.S.C.

A private-owned hospital specialising in maternity, this was the first hospital to meet the Hotel-Hospital international standard in HCMC since the year 2000.

63 Bui Thi Xuan, D1
3925 3620

Traditional Medicine Hospital

This hospital is a major medical centre practising the essence of that millennia-old exploration into the rhythms of the human body and its connection to the natural world which firmly belongs to this region.

179 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
3932 6579

Tu Du Hospital

Tu Du is a large state hospital specializing in maternity, women, and children's diseases, family planning, and many other areas. Highly experienced doctors and staff provide affordable care.

284 Cong Quynh, D1
5404 2829

Vu Anh International Hospital - Obstetrics

Luxurious hospital facility offering modern care in a comfortable setting. The hotel also provides 12 VIP rooms for patients seeking 5 star medical services featuring garden access and designer furniture.

15-16 Phan Van Tri, Go Vap
3989 4989

nails

118 Nail & Beauty

118 Nail and Beauty is a salon and spa providing full services including oil, hot stone, foot and body massages, along with skin/nail care.

118 Pasteur, D1
3821 5313
090 372 8338

Kelly Pang

Nail salon established in 2004 as a small nail salon in Phu Nhuan, Kelly Pang has gradually become known as a training center and professional nail care facility throughout Vietnam.

214C Nguyen Trai, D1
6291 5477
012 2805 6789

OPI Nail Spa Nguyen Hue

Providing a full range of official products and services of the OPI brand.

103 Nguyen Hue, D1
2211 4956

pharmacies

Curewel International

Involved in marketing and distribution

of pharmaceuticals, as well as personal healthcare products, throughout Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius.

49/3 Bis, Tran Quang Khai, D1
38484493

Pharmacy Nguyen Hue

Small western medical pharmacy right in the central city CBD area, selling both domestic and imported medicines.

81 Nguyen Hue, D1
3829 3058

spas

An Nam Spa

Housed in a beautiful nine-story building with different areas for men and women, guests can enjoy a panoramic view of Saigon while calming their senses in a relaxing sanctuary.

26-28 Dong Du, D1
3825 1250

Dermal Essentials

Dermalogica, a Los Angeles-based company, is a revolutionary skin treatment system. Call Dermalogica's therapists for a complimentary Face Mapping consultation.

108 Pasteur, D1
3910 2038

Eden Spa

Extremely central, Eden is located in a quiet niche off Nguyen Hue in the commercial center. Owing to its expertise in skincare and first-class relaxing atmosphere, Eden has the gumption to claim a number-one spot in the discerning Japanese market.

19-25 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 3815
097 810 6868



Flamingo Spa

Flamingo Spa is an authentic Thai spa where all ingredients used are imported from Thailand. Guests arrive in a clean and friendly atmosphere for an optimal relaxing experience. Men, women and couples are welcome, and they offer a wide range of massages along with a sauna, jacuzzi facilities & VIP rooms.

13B Le Thanh Ton, D1
3822 1074
091 243 9601
FlamingoSpa.vn@gmail.com



Glow

A boutique day spa located in the heart of the city. In this relaxing, peaceful atmosphere, guests can enjoy a full range of massage/treatment options.

Kim Do Hotel, 129A Nguyen Hue, D1
3823 8368

Golden Lotus Foot Massage Club Sauna

Fully-featured massage establishment with pool, steam room, and hydraulic massage located in trendy Thai Van Lung. Various salt scrubs, and high-end beauty products imported direct from Korea are available.

15 Thai Van Lung, D1
3822 1515

HP Oxygen Spa

A safe haven from the dust and smoke

of the city offering an array of body/skin treatment options, including advanced skin care, an eye lightening process, body massages, hair care, and foot care.

Ground Floor, Yoco Building,
41 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3822 1286
093 800 2322

Huong Sen Spa

Located in a charming old French villa, Huong Sen Spa is a natural green oasis with skin, face, and body treatment services.

215 Nguyen Van Troi, Ward 12, Phu Nhuan
3842 2218
090 395 1902

Jasmine Spa

Experienced staff utilize exotic skincare products to comfort guests in this cozy urban sanctuary, which has has a large, loyal following that swears by its friendly and professional service.

45 Ton That Thiep, D1
3827 2737

Korean Style Sauna

Sauna and massage that serves mostly Japanese and Korean men - some of the more discerning expat clients. For a delicate touch.

15 Thai Van Lung, D1
3822 1515

L'Apothiquaire - Saigon South

This Japanese/French style spa is an exclusive distributor of organic French skin care products, and other exclusive products from around the world.

1st floor, 103 Ton Dat Tien, Tan Phu, D7
5413 6638



La Cochinchine Spa

Located in the Rex Hotel, this luxury spa and fitness centre combined with a swimming pool and bar has a particular style that is a combination of Vietnamese, French, Cham, Hindu, and Asian cultures. Luxury spa and gym located at the Rex hotel.

6F, Rex Hotel, 141 Nguyen Hue, D1
3825 1812
info@lacochinchine.net
www.lacochinchine-hcm.net
12pm-10:30pm



La Maison de L'Apothiquaire

This unique spa is situated in an artfully-designed villa and offers guests many therapeutic body and skin treatments. The luxurious villa also provides a yoga studio, enclosed garden, and many exclusive skin care products.

64A Truong Dinh, D3
3932 5181
100 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3822 2158
1st floor, 103 Ton Dat Tien, Tan Phu, D7
5413 6638

MIMI Clinic & Spa

Prestige Spa for celebrities holding frequent beauty events – and therefore one of the best-known local brands in medical aesthetics for over 10 years in HCMC.

32 Dong Khoi, D1
090 387 6666

Miu Miu

Spa with an elegant and charming décor, offering facials, body massages, and manicures. Pervaded by exotic oils and aromas, the staff provide counsel on unique skin-care products from Thailand and around the world in English, Vietnamese, and Japanese.

4 Chu Manh Trinh, D1
6659 3609

Oasis Salon & Spa

The original Oasis spa & beauty salon, this venue offers a full range of services at competitive prices. Full hair care, facial, massage, nail spa, beauty care & waxing services.

1st & 2nd Floor, 45 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 6469
090 337 0507
1st & 2nd Floor, 92 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3821 6469
090 337 0507

Saigon Spa

Recommended inexpensive spa treatments with a full spa menu.

1st Floor, 47 Dong Khoi, D1
6650 4806

Sense Spa

Sense Spa is a massage, skin, and body care haven with a plethora of high-end imported creams, lotions, and serums.

54 Dong Du, D1
6299 0964

Thann

Thann provide a range of natural hair and skincare products formulated from botanicals derived by combining the art of natural therapy with modern dermatological science.

Level 2, Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1
098 362 4497

Thalgo La Beaute Marine

Thalgo is on the cutting edge of spa treatments, and is renowned for its products and skilled therapists.

40C Ly Tu Trong, D1
3824 4990
090 360 6366

The Body Shop

A global manufacturer and retailer of naturally-inspired, ethically-produced beauty and cosmetics products. The Body Shop offers many kinds of skincare products, makeup accessories, hair & body care products, perfume, and bath milk.

87 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3823 5318

The Prime – Spa For Men

American skin treatments for men from top brands such as Dermalogica and Lab Series. Equipped with imported machines from Europe. The spa has five therapy services, including basic skin care, professional skin care, intensive therapy, eye therapy, body therapy – and a Prime special service package.

192 Le Lai, D1
3925 5743

Tri Siam

Well-respected salon on the edge of town, offering manicures & styling.

76C Hai Ba Trung, D1
3823 2554

Xuan Spa

One of the most luxurious spas in Ho Chi Minh City, Xuan is located inside the five-star Park Hyatt hotel. Services include packages such as Urban Retreat Package, Apricot blossom – Mai, Bamboo, and more.

2 Lam Son Square, D1
3824 1234

Yuan

Despite being labeled as a foot massage establishment, Yuan actually has a full range of services. Customers

usually make appointments. Yuan is especially geared towards Japanese expats.

1588 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3825 0795

Yves Rocher Botanical Beauty Spa

A famous international botanical cosmetic brand with a full range of products, The Botanical Beauty Spa Center combines the expertise of its beauticians with the efficacy of Yves Rocher treatments.

16-18 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3824 8782

Zest Massage

Famous for its fish pedicures, Zest, located in the outer western region of District One, serves up some fairly dynamic Thai massage.

60 Bui Thi Xuan, D1
6291 6835

art & crafts

Art Arcade

Art Arcade displays a wide range of original Vietnamese artwork in a charming passageway off of Dong Khoi.

151 Dong Khoi, D1
3824 4076

Beeline

Small shop with cute stuffs. Special traditional hand-embroidered bags, shoes, clothes, and souvenirs.

60-62 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3822 2364
155 Dong Khoi, D1



Blue Dragon

Blue Dragon designs 'recycled' fashion and décor. Eco-friendly bags, jewelry, and home accessories made of feed-sacks, rubber, billboard and paper.

1B Bui Vien, D1
2210 2084
9am - 10pm

Cao Lien Huong

Artistic & traditional handicrafts on Saigon's heritage street.

49 Dong Khoi, D1
3521 0445
091 806 0608

CD Paragon Leather - Caodong Boutique 2

Attractive leather souvenirs & handicrafts

Ground Floor, Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1
3915 1778

Chon Nhan Production & Trading

Chon Nhan Production & Trading specializes in making high grade fine art, especially bamboo works, oil paintings, lacquering, and carved furniture. They have experience in interior design and handmade crafts.

70D Nguyen Hue, D1
3667 0341
090 383 8355

Du Du

One of Saigon's higher-class souvenir shops.

78 Dong Khoi, D1
38276128

Em Em

Bright, unusual souvenir shop with

high-quality ethnic fashion accessories unavailable elsewhere. Special figurines and a tailoring service are also available.

38 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3829 4408

Em Oi

Funky souvenir shop with a twist, selling original designer T-shirts, handmade jewelry, recycled bags, and hand-crafted leather products.

124d Le Loi, D1

Ethnic Folk Art Anh

Fine ethnic folk products, mostly hand-made embroidered cloths, accessories and statues carved from horns and bones.

Lot B1-C11-C12 2nd Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Center, 135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 3716
090 360 7527

Fatima Shop

Fatima shop is manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer of customer handicrafts, lacquerware, embroidery goods, and silverware souvenirs.

3 Ton That Thiep, D1
3914 2403

Gia Gia

One of Vietnam's leading manufacturer and distributor of products made from precious stones. Range includes paintings, jewelry, precious stones used for medicinal purposes and fashion products.

135 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1
3823 5384

Hai Yen

Sells fully-rigged model ships and boats, situated next to the Oscar Hotel. Fine model ships & boats

68 Nguyen Hue, D1
3822 0280

Huong Nga Fine Art

Huong Nga designs, manufactures and sells high quality arts and crafts products in Vietnam and around the world.

41 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3823 8356

Loang Xoang

Owned by a husband and wife glasswork artist team, they mainly sell their creations through their website, Facebook page, and at the monthly handicrafts fair.

232/8/6 Ba Hat, D10
090 855 6665



MEKONG QUILTS

They produce high quality, hand-crafted bed covers, baby quilts, accessories and giftware.

1st floor, 68 Le Loi, D1
517-Sky Garden I,
Nguyen Van Linh, D7
6271 7758
www.mekong-quilts.org
9am-7pm



MH Craft

The shop has a collection of fine handicrafts, artworks, furniture, and all kinds of knick-knacks made from Vietnamese traditional materials such as egg shells, buffalo horns, bamboo, white clay, lacquer, and more.

33 Ton That Thiep, D1
3915 2913

090 382 7471

Na Sa Shop

Selling fine wooden sculptures from a small store at the back of a tiny retail enclave, sales staff insist that the particular wood chosen has natural medicinal properties.

35 Le Loi, D1
016 9778 8303

Ngan Quang Wooden Boats

Sells model-size wooden boats.

74/1 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3829 1814
091 822 9272

Nguyen Freres - Fine Furnishing

Spacious furniture establishment selling handmade goods of silk, mother-of-pearl, stone, brick, bronze, silver, indigo, wood, lacquer along with Buddha figurines, carved wooden screens, ceramic decorations, red lacquered boxes, water puppets, and lacquered statues.

2 Dong Khoi, D1
3823 9459
098 380 3070

Nhu Y Oriental Lacquerwares

Nhu y provides coasters, tissue boxes, wine bottle holders and boxes, cabinets, frames, plates, trays, vases, and many other items with unusual designs spattered with lacquer dots.

22 Ho Huan Nghiep, D1
3829 6138

Paper Paradise

Funky little retailer selling just about anything relating to paper and paper arts.

19 Do Quang Dau, D1
091 597 8896

Phuong Mai Gallery

Phuong Mai Art Gallery focuses on the contemporary art works of both up & coming and established artists from across Vietnam. The real deal in a district of mass-produced art retailers.

129B Le Thanh Ton, D1
3823 3181

Saigon Kitsch

Historic socialist pop-art culture is printed on t-shirts, coffee mugs, coasters and a raft of other goodies creating cool gifts for folks back home - or expats home in HCMC.

43 Ton That Thiep, D1
093 590 5675

Sapa Crafts & Fashion

Established in 1996, the shop sells clothes and bags reflecting the style of the picturesque village in the northern region of Vietnam after which it is named.

7 Ton That Thiep, D1
090 244 1256

SoCoLa Boutique

Unique souvenir items and crafts in an off-beat retail space. Highly unusual trinkets.

39/4 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3822 1839

books & magazines

Cua Hang Van Phong Pham

Large stationery shop with paints and supplies for artists, this is the place to come for art paper, easels, paints and brushes.

54 Le Loi, D1
3825 7986
091 917 0356

Fahasa - Le Loi

One of Vietnam's largest book chains with 56 stores around the country, Fahasa has a good range of English titles.

60-62 Le Loi, D1
3829 6386

Fahasa - Nguyen Hue

One of the largest book distributors in Vietnam with 35 years of operations, Fahasa provides a wide range of books – including English titles – from local to translated editions, as well as CDs, videos, puzzles and stationery.

40 Nguyen Hue, D1
3822 5796

Nam Phong bookstore

A second-hand bookstore specializing in French literature, selling mainly novels and nonfiction titles with a selection of second-hand folio editions. The website is in French only, with a built-in searchable database of all titles available.

94 Ho Tung Mau, D1
3914 7859

Parker & Waterman

A specialist luxury pens counter in the foyer of the Bitexco Financial Tower, This Parker & Waterman outlet sells precision-crafted pens with gold & platinum finishes.

Ground Floor Bitexco Tower, 2 Hai Trieu, D1
6291 8739

Phuong Nam Book

With a system of over 30 bookstores in Ho Chi Minh City, PNB sells & publishes hundreds of foreign-language titles. The Saigon Center store also has a wide range of children's books.

Level 2, Saigon Center,
65 Le Loi, D1
3915 1475

electronics & camera

Bose Showroom

Something of a connoisseur's choice, a look through this showroom in the Tax Building will demonstrate some fairly impressive speaker and sound system equipment.

Ground Floor Saigon Tax Trade Center,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 5944 0903723933

Canon Vinh Hung

Canon Vinh Hung has over 15 years of experience providing the citizens of Saigon with quality Canon cameras and other products such as photocopiers, fax machines, and photo printers.

103 Tran Hung Dao, D1
3837 1066

Lioa Electrics & Electronics

Hardware mart for power components, electrical appliances, and lighting systems. LIOA has more than 20 years of experience as the largest automatic stabilizer manufacturer in Vietnam.

138 Yersin, D1
6295 9077

Saigon Photo Center - Nam Ky Khoi Nghia

Saigon Photo Center has been providing an extensive range of photography services since 1991. They offer services such as photo printing, digital inkjets, equipment trading, camera sale, and equipment rental.

114 bis Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1
3825 8735

Maydocsach eBook Readers

Vietnamese distributors of Kindle and Nook eBook readers, including e-ink screen and color LCD versions. Providing free Vietnamese language eBooks.

149/2 Le Thi Rieng, D1
6678 4542
093 822 2489

Son Ha

They sell products such as TVs, Karaoke and stage systems, soundproofing, MP3

players, refrigeration, and appliances.

41 Huynh Thuc Khang, D1
3923 1938
090 820 3262

home & furnishings

AA Deco Company

AA Interiors provides high-quality fabrication and fit-out services for hotels, residences, spas, and so on throughout the city. Also sells many well-known furniture brands.

219 Nguyen Van Thu, D1
3823 0940
3744 2728

AkzoNobel Decorative Center

Dulux Paints specialist with attractive central-city showroom/store.

91-93 Nguyen Hue, D1
3915 3491

Authentique

An interior decorating shop featuring Vietnamese traditional styles with a small showroom in the busiest area of the city.

71/1 Mac Thi Buoi, D1
3823 8811

Canada Home Deco Company

Established by an expat Canadian couple in 2003, Canada Home Deco specializes in distributing high-quality blankets, pillows, bedspreads, and cushions.

158 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3822 3430

Catherine Denoual

Supplies blankets, pillows, mattresses, tablecloths, cushions, and other luxury linens to reputable hotels, spas, resorts, and individual consumers.

15C Thi Sach, D1
3823 9394

JB Oriental Heritage

Unique Kashmiri products stocked in a plush retail space in the Saigon Center, JB Oriental Heritage sells fine imported Asian products, including carpets and exotic rugs, handicrafts, and objets d'art.

Unit 20, Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1
3821 2892

Lam Bui Natural Home Goods

Founded in 2004 by a team of intrepid entrepreneurs, Lam Bui Natural Home Goods is a large, well-stocked home goods store with specialty old-style furnishings and decor items.

Unit 16-17, 2nd Floor, Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1
3914 3553

Mosaïque Decoration

Mosaïque Decoration takes all the unique beauty and craftsmanship of Vietnam and adapts it to contemporary home décor. Mosaïque offers unique lighting design, decorative embroidery, silk quilts, and other home accessories.

Ground Floor, Saigon Centre,
65 Le Loi, D1
3821 7233

Patina Home

A furniture and home-styling company specializing in antique reproduction collections, Patina Homes offers an exquisite range of handcrafted furniture, upholstery and home accessories.

SLOO8 Garden plaza, Ton Dat Tien, Tan Phong, D7
5412 4071

Premium Housewares

Providing high quality kitchenware and accessories, Premium Housewares presents its products in more than 70

countries worldwide.

77 Pasteur, D1
3824 7504

Red Door Décor

A well-known furniture store in Ho Chi Minh City offering products such as interior/exterior decorations, artwork, handicrafts, glass ceramics, garments, and textile materials.

31A Le Thanh Ton, D1
3825 8672

SB Furniture

SB Furniture is an award-winning furniture store with a reputation for excellent service and attention to detail. They specialize in products made with artificial wood, and cabinets for apartments and villas.

Unit 8-10, 1st Floor, Saigon Centre,
65, Le Loi, D1
0902157935

markets

An Dong Market

This boisterous wet market beneath the Caesar Hotel. Customers can find food carts, bulk raw ingredients, shoes, sandals, jeans, shirts, and many other goods.

36 An Duong Vuong, D5
3835 4773

Ba Chieu Market

An old market hosting nearly 800 independent businesses in central Binh Thanh district, famous throughout the city for its rich and diverse commodities. Fresh Food, groceries, crockery, household appliances, textiles, and apparel. Second hand clothing available at cheap rates.

40 Dien Hong, Binh Thanh
3841 2483

Ben Thanh Market

Saigon's most iconic tourist attraction, this Vietnamese souvenir bazaar is busy, hot, and full of most everything you'll need to pick up to prove you've been to Vietnam - you can also stock up on your entire quota of presents for family and friends here.

Quach Thi Trang Square, D1
3829 2096

Binh Tay (Cholon) Market

Binh Tay Market is the largest market in Saigon located in an elegant building of Chinese design in Cho Lon. The market caters mostly to wholesale trade, but also offers household items, makeup, and beauty products.

Le Tan Ke, Ward 2, D6
3857 1512

Tan Binh Market

Products here are targeted towards the locals, so don't expect to see luxurious or high-end products. The prices can't be beaten though. Bargain to your heart's content.

Le Minh Xuan, Ward 8, Tan Binh
3864 3711

Tan Dinh Market

Tan Dinh Market has been providing Saigon with a thriving market experience for decades. Customers can choose from food carts, clothing services, textiles, and fresh fruits and vegetables. Busy old-style market with impressive architecture, selling a great selection of fabrics and seafood.

48 Ma Lo, Tan Dinh, District 1
3820 1272

War Surplus Market (Dan Sinh Market)

Dan Sinh is known as the army surplus

market. Located just 5 minutes from the backpacker area and city center, it specializes in selling war surplus and military style clothing and items. It is also a good market for electronics and other types of imported industrial machinery.

104 Yersin, D1
3825 1130

supermarkets

Annam Gourmet

An upmarket deli-grocery chain offering gourmet groceries, cheese, organic products, gluten-free products, fruit and vegetables, gourmet deli, wine and other beverages. Features a deli café serving coffee, wine and foods. Regular shoppers can benefit from a loyalty card program.

16-18 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3822 9391

Sieu Thi Tax Supermarket

General supermarket in the centrally-located Tax Building.

1st Floor, Saigon Tax Trade Centre,
135 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 3849

wine & liquor

Bacchus Corner

Bacchus imports from most of the world's wine regions and supplies wholesale and retail customers. It encourages wine tasting in its Pasteur store using the unique Enomatic system, and staff are skilled in advising on wine matches with food.

158D Pasteur, D1
3829 3306

Beer Plaza

Beer Plaza has an extensive range of international beers in stock. Connoisseurs will be pleased to find all of their favorite varieties of beer along with unique glassware.

94-96 Le Lai, D1
091 816 6809

Boutique Collar

All about wine, lots and lots of wine. Priding itself in being the sole distributors of premium wineries around the world.

11 Suong Nguyet Anh, D1

Liquor City

Purveyors of fine international wines & spirits.

95, Suong Nguyet Anh, D1
090 240 9024

Shop Thai Duong

Beer, wine, & spirits importers. Previously known as Tan Mai.

54 Ham Nghi, D1
3821 5398
098 888 9496

The Warehouse

A premium wine importer, distributor, and retailer supplying wines from all over the world, the Warehouse also offers spirits, wine accessories, glassware and refrigeration to complement their customers' choices.

178 Pasteur, D1
3824 6629
090 921 0014

Vinifera

Established in 2002, Vinifera is one of the most reliable wine distribution companies in Vietnam. Offering prestigious wines from around the world at a great value.

15C7 Thi Sach, D1
3822 1141

Business & Tech

IMAGE BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY





Christian Taylor

Go East, Young Man

It used to be that the buzzword was “go west” to seek your fortune. But in the 21st century, it is Asia which attracts the young entrepreneurs

TEXT BY LOTTIE DELAMAIN IMAGES BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY

WHILE WESTERN NEWSPAPERS are awash with stories of unfettered immigration, overcrowded cities and increasingly fractious multi-cultural societies, what gets less air time, is the tide of emigration flowing in the opposite direction. Hundreds of educated, ambitious young people from the West are leaving their home countries to set up shop abroad. And Ho Chi Minh City is one of the many cities around Asia caught in the wave of reverse immigration.

It is estimated that 15 percent of British graduates now live abroad, the number of Spaniards living overseas has increased by 20 percent in just the last three years and in Ireland, a third of graduates plan to emigrate. And it's not hard to see why. The average house price in London is GBP625,000, youth unemployment figures in Greece stand at

nearly 60 percent and in America only 16 percent of those who graduated from high school between 2009 and 2011 have found full-time work. With the economies of the West still stalling, it is little wonder Generation Y has heard the roar of the Asian tiger and bought a one-way ticket eastbound.

Armed with nothing to lose and a few years experience working in Western economies, young people are flocking to Asia's fastest-growing cities. And many of them, inspired by the boom-town mentality of a country on the cusp of an economic awakening, have opted to set up businesses. Fresh off the boat, through their Western eyes, they see a plethora of opportunity in a market that's ripe for the picking.

But this doesn't mean pursuing the entrepreneurial dream isn't without its

challenges. While there is opportunity, realizing it is another story.

Bringing Home the Bacon

On leaving university, Christian Taylor opted to move to HCMC where his brother was living at the time. Uninspired by options in the UK, he came out for three months to teach English. Two years later he is still here and more committed to Vietnam than ever. In two month's time, he's hoping to open the doors to Saigon's first bacon bar, The Hungry Pig.

But it hasn't been a straightforward journey. He's been beset with hours of licensing paperwork and red tape, had two potential landlords pull the plug at the 11th hour and has found it hard building relationships in a new industry when he doesn't speak the language. However, after six months of hard



Tom Simpson

graft, he has just signed a lease, and the first bacon butty is set to be sold in July.

The concept is simple: the Vietnamese love pork (40 percent of meat consumed in Vietnam is from pigs); bacon - the jewel in the porcine crown - is yet to make it big in Vietnam, so why not introduce them to one another? And it's not just any bacon - this will be bacon that is home-cured and home-smoked by Christian and his team. The starting line-up of cures is set to include maple, hoisin, black-pepper and chili, served in your choice of Panini, baguette, wrap or good old fashioned white sliced bread.

A niche market, perhaps, but Christian is confident there's an appetite for this style of food. The fast pace of the city lends itself to fast-food, something big corporations like Burger King and KFC have been only too quick to muscle in on. The Hungry Pig is hoping to fill the same gap, but in a more sustainable way. The bacon is from high-quality well-bred animals and Christian is working with Saigon Children's Charity to recruit staff who've been trained through their vocational training programs.

So, if he was in the UK would he be doing this? "No way, the overheads would make it unfeasible. And it's just such a crowded market there. The joy of being in Asia is that people tend to copy each other - every coffee shop is the same as the last. So by doing something a bit different, you have a real opportunity." Christian is hoping curiosity will draw both Vietnamese and expats to the - slightly

unconventional - new kid on the block.

Sowing the Seeds of Change

Across town, Tom Simpson is a different kind of entrepreneur. Tom moved here in August last year having spent the last nine years working in digital planning in London. Frustrated by the limited career progression, the ever-more daunting task of trying to get on the UK property ladder and spending hours on London's swamped public transport system commuting, he asked a headhunter to keep an eye out for jobs abroad. Within weeks, he'd been offered a role in HCMC and moved out here.

Just nine months later he's handed in his notice and is taking his first steps into the self-made life. His company, The Seed, is a data management business that will enable companies to deliver online advertising more effectively. He says it's just one of a host of digital businesses that this market is crying out for, but there just isn't the expertise.

Tom sees the digital landscape here as being like London was 10 years ago. Not only does that mean that opportunities abound, but that Vietnam can leapfrog 10 years of digital revolution in the West through importing foreign expertise - like Tom. And he's not alone. The supercharged, evermore tech-savvy markets of Southeast Asia are proving to be first-choice destinations for young, tech entrepreneurs around the world. As blogger, Tomo, of Saigonist.com, observes, suddenly

"there's something we can call a scene...

There are wannabe entrepreneurs...There are hackathons. There are training programs. There are incubators." And for Tom, and others like him, it's hugely exciting: "It's like being in the Wild West."

As with Christian, Tom admits that the low living costs in Vietnam made making the leap that much easier. "When I was in the UK, I had a lifestyle that I had worked hard for - the thought of giving that up for a new business idea was a massive sacrifice. But living here, that decision is much easier. I've done the hard part, which was moving here. The rest is easy."

While cities like HCMC enjoy the benefits of this new breed of immigrants, and with Europe's economic outlook growing dimmer still, it looks as though it will be some time before the tide changes and they start heading home. ■

ADDITIONAL INFO

The Hungry Pig

www.thehungrypig.com
(coming soon)
144 Cong Quynh, D1

The Seed Plc

www.seedplc.com, launching
in July

Dear Hadrien,

I'm from the UK. My Vietnamese girlfriend and I are seriously thinking about getting married and looking to get all the paperwork in order. We're planning to stay in Vietnam. What kind of joint custody / joint property laws would affect us in the unintended event of a divorce?



IMAGE BY NAMQUAN

A member of the Paris Bar, **Hadrien Wolff** has been practicing law in Vietnam for six years, currently as a partner of **Audier & Partners**. He specializes in banking and corporate law, regularly advising major foreign banks and assisting foreign investors in setting up joint venture companies with Vietnamese partners in sensitive sectors such as media, power and natural resources



IN VIETNAM, FAMILY matters are governed by the Vietnamese Law on Marriage and Family. According to this law, and in respect of marriage and family relations involving foreign elements, foreign laws may apply if such laws are invoked by either the Vietnamese law or by international agreements that are signed by Vietnam.

With you being a UK citizen, this case would obviously qualify as a marriage involving a foreign element. So in theory, UK law may apply. Practically speaking, Vietnamese law provides that in case of a divorce between a Vietnamese citizen and a foreigner, with the Vietnamese citizen not residing in Vietnam at the time of requesting the divorce, the law of the country where the husband and wife permanently co-reside shall apply to such divorce. As you intend to permanently stay in Vietnam and as there are no relevant bilateral or international treaties relating to

this matter, Vietnamese law will therefore apply to your marriage, and also to a divorce if you are still residing in Vietnam at that time.

Under Vietnamese law, both parents have an obligation *to look after, care for, educate and rear* their children (minor and adult) who are disabled, have lost their civil capacity to act, have no working capacity or have no property to support themselves. When divorced parents do not agree on who will directly rear their children and on what will be their respective rights and obligations towards the children, a court shall decide on these matters on the basis of the children's interests, whereby the wishes of children older than nine years shall be taken into account. Children below three years shall, in principle and unless the parents agree otherwise, be directly reared by the mother.

Regarding joint property, Vietnamese law has two fundamental principles. Firstly, the

parties shall jointly agree on the division of the property and secondly, the personal property of each party shall belong to that party. Only if no agreement can be reached, a court shall settle the matter. To further guide the division of property, the Law on Marriage and Family states that joint property shall, in principle, be halved. Due consideration must be given to the status of the property, to each party's situation and to each party's contributions to the creation, preservation and development of the property. Furthermore, the legitimate rights and interests of the wife and the dependent children are to be protected, as well as the legitimate interests of each party to continue their income-generating labor. The joint property shall be divided either in kind or according to its value. In practice this means that the party that receives a portion of the joint property in kind with a higher value than to which he/she is entitled, must compensate the other party.

The above mentioned principles also apply to the *division* of a residential house (as long as it is located in Vietnam). In the case of a joint ownership, the party who will be allowed to continue using the house must pay the other party the value that he/she is entitled to. When the house is under private ownership, however, the house shall belong to its owner, except when the parties agree otherwise. If the house was newly built, upgraded, repaired or renovated, the owner must pay the other party a share of the value, depending on the latter party's contribution to maintaining, upgrading, renovating and/or repairing of the house. Furthermore, the owner of the house shall have an obligation to support the other party in seeking new accommodation, whereas the other party may stay in the old house for six months in order to find a new place to reside.

If you have any legal questions you want answered, send them to legal@oivietnam.com ■

Hello Moto

Revolutionizing the way Vietnamese people grab motorbike taxis



IMAGE BY NAM QUAN

Anh-Minh Do is the editor at TechInAsia.com for Vietnam focusing on technology startups, trends and companies. Minh also organizes events at Evecoo.vn



IN THE APRIL issue of *Oi* we wrote about Tappxi, a mobile app that's attempting to give travelers a better experience when taking a taxi in Vietnam. But guess what? Tappxi isn't the only interesting tech startup in Vietnam that is attempting to take transportation here to the next level. There's Alo Xe Om in Hanoi.

Xe oms, as you probably already know, are the motorbike taxi guys that we all see on street corners in every city in the country. Some of them sleep on their motorbikes throughout the night, and most of the time they're a rough bunch. Bargaining with a *xe om* driver can usually be a confusing process, especially when you don't know the exact price for the distance that you want to travel. That's where Alo Xe Om comes in.

Basically, if I'm looking for a *xe om*, I can call or text Alo Xe Om and they'll send the nearest driver on their system to meet me. In addition to that, the driver will have to abide by a fixed VND6,000 per kilometer fee (of which the company takes a 15 percent cut). So if I'm traveling from the Old Quarter to West Lake, Alo Xe Om will calculate the cost, and send the bill to me and the *xe om* driver. This way, I won't get bamboozled by the driver's wily ways.

They currently have over 800 drivers in their system and each person is interviewed by the company before incorporating them into the roster. At the beginning phase Alo Xe Om had over 1,000 drivers but had to cut the numbers down for quality reasons. Another great thing about the service is that it doesn't actually take away business from other drivers, but rather is an added benefit for the drivers themselves. If a driver signs on with Alo Xe Om they are privy to the company's large database of customers thus expanding their potential revenue. Alo Xe Om is set to come to Ho Chi Minh City by the end of this year so keep your eye out for these neon jackets. ■

Hi Paul,

I've been saving and have allocated some money for investing and since I'm going to be living in Vietnam indefinitely I would like to invest in the country. What stocks do you recommend, and besides stocks what are some other options for investing here?



IMAGE BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY

Paul McLardie is a partner and a member of the investment committee at **Total Wealth Management** in Saigon. Previously he was Head of Wealth Management for a firm in Moscow and before that spent eight years at Barclays Bank UK within the Private Clients and Large Corporate sectors

AS MORE AND more people decide that staying in Vietnam long term is not just a viable option but also one made out of choice, not necessity, this type of question is becoming more common. It is also very good to look to invest in your adopted country of residence. There are many ways to invest in Vietnam, but you will need to look carefully at the pitfalls before making your decision. I will break some of the most prevalent areas down:

Stocks

The VNINDEX at the time of writing has a year-to-date growth of +19.64 percent. This sounds pretty healthy, doesn't it? The flip side to it is that it's also the world's most volatile stock market since 2009. As quoted by Bloomberg: "The benchmark VN Index (VNINDEX) posted more 20 percent swings than every major equity market in the past four years as policy makers grappled with consumer prices, currency devaluations and bad bank loans."

The VNINDEX is a very volatile market and most of the individual stocks follow this route. You really need to understand the risk that is involved in investing in individual stocks within Vietnam. Your tolerance to risk will change throughout your life and please only invest on the VNINDEX if you have a very, very strong tolerance to risk and you understand the chance of loss.

Property

Investing in property in Vietnam has been one of the boom industries over the past decade. Although there has been a slowdown since 2008, just look around the city at the amount of derricks and cranes that are still around. As a non-Vietnamese, it has become easier to buy property here, but first read between the lines - it has become easier, not to buy a property, but to take a long term lease on an apartment. You are not allowed to "flip" the property and subletting is out. To me, the only real reason to buy a property here if you are a foreigner is if you know that you will be here

for a considerable amount of time and you calculate, that even with a very high mortgage rate, it will be less expensive than renting over that period of time. Though do you want to hold onto something that 10 years down the line you cannot get rid of for a price that you want?

Gold

The local gold market is used here by families and individuals to store their wealth and also as investment. They change some for currency or back into gold, dependent on how the market goes to make a small profit on the transactions. Again, sounds good, but are you an expert on gold or precious metals? Do you really know what you are being sold, even if it does have a certificate of authenticity? OK, so you buy the gold. What are you going to do with it now? Would you

really be happy with a few thousand dollars worth of gold hidden under your bed? I know I wouldn't be able to sleep.

It's great that you have decided to spend a prolonged period of time in this great country, but before investing here you really need to understand the propensity of risk and what you can afford to lose. Take your time and work it out. The other main way to invest your money is by starting a business here yourself, but that is another article on its own.

In the meantime though, it doesn't need to be money that you invest. You can always donate your time. There are many charities and foundations here crying out for the right people.

Have a finance question you want answered? Email us at finance@oivietnam.com. ■



>>The List Business



Atexpats is Ho Chi Minh City's first truly comprehensive insider's guide for foreign residents - website launching 2013

banks

Asia Commercial Bank

442 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
39290999

Bank of China

19th Floor, 115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 9949

Citibank

15/F Sun Wah Tower, 115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3824 2267
094 801 6318

Commonwealth Bank

65 Nguyen Du, D1
3824 1525
012 1861 8695

HSBC

Metropolitan Building, 235 Dong Khoi, D1
3724 7247

Mizuho Corporate Bank

18th Floor, 115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3827 8260

Standard Chartered Bank

Saigon Trade Center 1st Floor, 37 Ton Duc
Thang, D1
3911 0000

Shinhan Vietnam

100 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
3829 1581

Vietcombank

2bis-4-6 Le Thanh Ton, D1
3824 4797
www.vietcombank.com.vn

concierge

Giup.me (help.me)

A local concierge service fluent in English, Vietnamese and Mandarin to assist in all your personal needs from finding an apartment, domestic help and schools, to setting up a local company, renewing visas, car services and arranging medical/legal services. They charge a flat rate VND175,000 per hour.
7300 4487 (7300 GIUP)
service@giup.me
www.giup.me

consulates

Australian Consulate-General

47 Ly Tu Trong, D1
3521 8100
Mon-Fri: 8.30am - 12pm; 1pm - 5pm

Belgium Consulate

105 Duong Van An, D2
6281 8001
9am - 11.30am on Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri

Cambodia Consulate

41 Phung Khac Khoan, D1
3829 2751
Mon-Fri: 7.30am - 11.30am; 2pm - 5pm

Consulate General of Canada

10th floor, The Metropolitan, 235 Dong
Khoi, D1
3827 9899
Mon-Thur: 8.30am - 4.30pm

Chile Consulate

79/1/1 Phan Ke Binh, D1
3910 2903

China Consulate

39 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3829 5009
www.vn.china-embassy.org/eng/
Mon-Fri: 8.30am - 11am

China Consulate - Commercial Office

39 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3823 1142
ptmchn@hcm.vnn.vn
www.hochiminh.mofcom.gov.cn

Cuba Consulate

45 Phung Khac Khoan, D1
3829 7350
Mon-Fri: 8am - 11.30am; 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Denmark Consulate

115 Nguyen Hue, D1
3821 9373
Mon-Thur: 8.30am - 4.30pm; Fri: 8.30am - 3pm

Finland Consulate

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3827 2029

France Consulate

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3520 6819
www.consulfrance-hcm.org

Germany Consulate

126 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D3
3829 2455
www.ho-chi-minh-stadt.diplo.de
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3829 0130

Iceland Consulate

80 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D1
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3823 7050
www.india-consulate.org.vn
Mon-Fri: 8.30am - 12.30pm, 1pm - 5pm

Indonesia Consulate

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3825 1888
Mon-Fri: 8am - 12pm; 2pm - 5pm

Italy Consulate

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08 6258 6473
Mon-Fri: 8am - 12pm; 1pm - 4pm

Japanese Consulate

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kuwaitconsulate@gmail.com
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3829 7667
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3829 9023
malhcmnh@kln.gov.my
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Mexico Consulate

215 A-B Hoang Van Thu, Phu Nhuan
3844 5520

Mon-Fri: 8am - 3pm

Myanmar Consulate

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5449 2425
www.gmas.com.vn
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New Zealand Consulate

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3822 6907
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3821 5423
www.nordcham.com

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3822 1696
norcons@hcm.fpt.vn
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www.mfa.gov.sg
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South Korea Consulate

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3823 6800
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3744 6996

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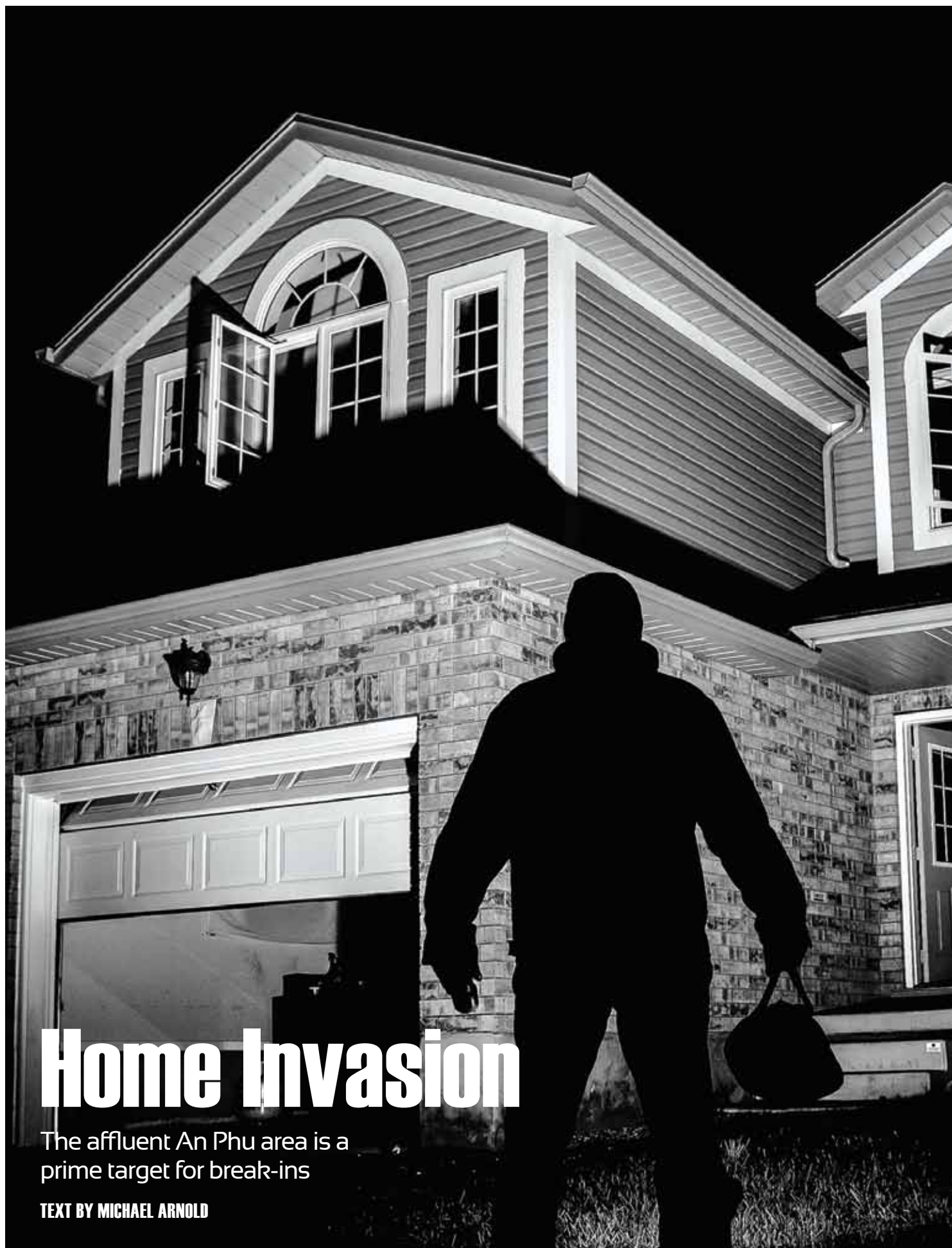
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The Outer Districts

IMAGE BY QUINN RYAN MATTINGLY





Home Invasion

The affluent An Phu area is a prime target for break-ins

TEXT BY MICHAEL ARNOLD



MOTHER'S DAY THIS year took on a particularly sad note for recently-arrived An Phu resident Irene Wong and her family. Three weeks after moving into what appeared to be a properly-secured compound with 24-hour security guards in attendance, the family fell victim to a well-orchestrated burglary that occurred in their home, as they slept.

"They must have been watching us," says Irene. "They had their eyes on us for sure. My husband had just withdrawn money from a nearby ATM. We were up late, so the theft would have had to have happened between 2am and 5am, with two security guards patrolling every half an hour. I think they were professional."

"They got in through a window we'd left open. They got away with all our gadgets – iPhone, iPad, a few other tablets – and the cash from our wallets. The guards saw nothing. We were advised to put the word out with local taxi drivers that we'd be prepared to buy our stuff back, but nothing came of it. They're gone," she adds.

Irene's story, sadly enough, is not uncommon these days. Residents of District 2 in particular seem to have been targeted for some time now, and the pattern is usually the same. Seven-year expat 'B' has seen it many times: "Nearly all the thefts that I've seen or read about have been thefts of opportunity. An unlocked door or window, an open window at night, valuables out in the open, etcetera"

"It's hard to say if people are being increasingly careless or if it's just that more crime is being reported via online channels. I do think that naivety plays a part in it. I do see a lot of expats who refuse to adjust to the fact that they're living in a place where this kind of petty crime is not just common, but likely to happen if you don't take precautions."

Why D2?

Just why District 2 is such an attractive target for criminals has less to do with its well-known concentration of wealthy residents (it's hardly the only district in this town that high-income families call home) and more to do with the perfect storm of its geographic location. Ho Chi Minh City is surrounded on all sides by poor rural areas, but while its inner sanctum is sheltered from opportunistic theft by a buffer zone – a suburban mass to the north, west, and south – District 2 is directly exposed to Dong Nai's industrial parks – packed with provincial workers who've come as close as they can get to the big city and who are still on a minimal wage, right across the river from an expat paradise.

Besides this, the district itself is huge – over twice the size of densely-populated Tan Binh, which has over three times as many people. Sparsely inhabited territories are tough to control – nicely compact Phu My Hung doesn't have half the trouble despite sharing a highly-targeted demographic. This is a factor that many newcomers to the district easily miss, with the cosmetic buildup of the An Phu and Thao Dien areas nicely masking the brooding quiet of the remaining space.

The lessons for Irene's family have been tough. "It's been especially traumatizing for the kids," she says, "and my two boys don't like to sleep alone anymore. We're more careful now. We have grills on the windows downstairs and don't leave valuables out in

"They got in through a window we'd left open. They got away with all our gadgets – iPhone, iPad, a few other tablets – and the cash from our wallets. The guards saw nothing"

the open anymore. We've learned that it's important to keep a low profile here."

Does this mean that District 2 is essentially a dangerous place to live? "It's safe, of course," claims long-term expat Pham Minh-Duc, who was himself a victim of a similar crime last October. "The problem is that expats aren't as paranoid as the locals are. The Vietnamese lock up everything, but the expats feel more secure because they're living in the compounds."

"What happened to me occurred between 1am and 3am – our neighbors heard noises at around that time. I wasn't there, but my family was sleeping – they even came into my wife's room while she was there. Exactly a month later at exactly the same time, the house in front of us was hit, exactly the same way," Minh-Duc retells.

"It's always the portable stuff they take now. No one steals TVs anymore. They're too heavy, and they're harder to sell. It's always the iPads. People really hate to lose those, especially with all the personal photos on them you'll never get back."

Duc has campaigned on local online forums to encourage other foreigners to pay more attention to security, the most effective way to avoid falling into the same trap. He strongly recommends locking every door and window at night, as well as ground-floor access points in the daytime while upstairs. Lock the doors to your bedrooms at night, pay closer attention to noises, and most importantly – don't leave your valuables out in the open.

"I can't recommend any security company," he says. "To me, it's useless. The guard will sleep at night and could be used as a source of information by thieves. You're better off investing in an alarm system that could dissuade people from visiting you. I've invested in quite an expensive system; it cost me USD1,500 but it's less than what I lost in the robbery."

He hasn't been scared away. "It's still a safe place to live compared to other parts of Asia," he says. "We feel very safe, actually. But perhaps that's the reason why we were robbed." ■

Reading Aloud

Spoken words are important to a child's development

DYLAN THOMAS ONCE said: "The first poems I knew were nursery rhymes and before I could read them for myself I had come to love just the words of them, the words alone. What the words stood for, symbolized or meant was of very secondary importance – what mattered was the very sound of them as I heard them for the first time... And those words

were, to me, as the notes of bells, the sounds of musical instruments, the noises of wind, sea, and rain."

Whether you're reading this column in hard copy or online, reading with understanding has always been essential for success, especially now in today's technological world. True, Apple's Siri and Google Glasses are voice-activated; however,

the case for promoting reading skills and comprehension goes beyond technology.

Reading aloud to children is an essential component to language development and is one of the most important activities for preparing them to succeed as readers. Children enjoy the repetition of nursery rhymes and poems. For literacy development, it is important for them to hear the rhythms, sounds and language patterns.

Mem Fox, author of many children's books, including *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*, says: "Rhyme, rhythm, and repetition are incredibly important in books for small children. When children are born, they've been used to the mother's heartbeat in the womb. When they're born, they're rocked and cradled. There is a rhythm to life itself. There's rhythm in the nursery rhymes and songs that are sung to children. And those rhythms and rhymes are like a bridge from spoken language to the written language."

Start from birth with the right book and know your child. Know what they can stand, know whether they need a very short book or not.

Things Babies Learn When We Read with Them by Julia Luckenbill lists some of the things baby can learn as you read together:

- Baby can explore how books are the same and how they are different by tasting and touching them.
- Baby's favorite pictures are always in the same place in a book.
- Things come in different colors, sizes and shape.
- Listening is part of communication and language, and includes listening and understanding.
- It's fun to play with language, and explore rhythm, rhyme and humor.
- When baby does something, another thing happens; if baby points at a picture, mom or dad will say its name. If baby drops the book, we might stop reading.

All this seems a little old-fashioned as we prepare to view the world through Google Glasses. ■



Lauralynn Goetz, B.A., M.M.Ed. US, is a director of an early childhood education center in Vietnam

IMAGE BY NAM QUAN





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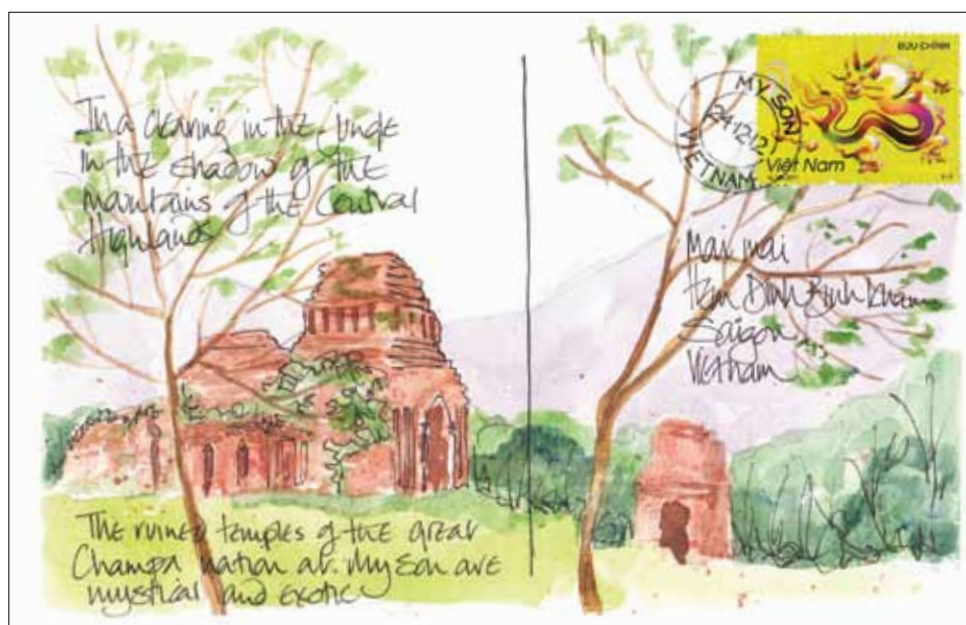


IMAGE BY NAM QUAN

A professional artist working in Vietnam, **Bridget March** has lectured at Leeds College of Art (UK) and practiced as a freelance product designer. She specializes in urban landscapes and aims to reveal the hidden treasures of city life and the richness of smaller town cultures through her illustrations. Bridget also holds drawing classes for beginners and improvers in Saigon. Find more of her work at BrushWithAsia.blogspot.com

Reliving History

The past holds on strong at this ancient site



AT THE CHAM Ruins in My Son, history replays itself like a ghostly video. Up here in the mountains, in the overcast misty silence, one can hear echoes of war planes that once flew overhead unleashing relentless bombs that thundered into the soft earth destroying much of the city.

This ancient Hindu temple city was established by the Champa between the 4th and 14th centuries and was dedicated to the worship of Shiva. It was also a place of burial for kings and national heroes and at one time was populated by some 70 temples.

One of the longest established religious sites in all of Southeast Asia, it formed part of the wider Champa kingdom that encompassed the Cham Islands off the coast, the commercial centre at Hoi An and the capital city of Tra Kieu. They are said to be set out according to auspicious *feng shui* principles. At My Son the ancient past mixes with the struggles of

21st century Vietnam to bring hope for a new future. Everything converges in this magical place.

Here, the air is cooler, wild flowers nestle in the forest floor, while lotuses grow unmolested in the streams, and the air hums with insects and birds. Scenic beauty gives way to the exotic mountainside.

My Son lies one hour west of Hoi An or Da Nang in a wide, verdant valley in the shadow of the Truong Son mountains through which the so called Ho Chi Minh Trail ran. This trail was a logistical supply route that mainly ran through Laos and enabled the north to send supplies and information to its troops in the south, and has been hailed as one of the greatest military engineering achievements of the 20th century.

My Son has been compared to Angkor in Cambodia but it is much smaller and

also older by some 500 - 700 years. Its builders used a method of mortarless brick construction that apparently repels any incursion of lichens and mould. The brick gives the buildings a distinctive terracotta color, rather than the gray of Angkor, and is striking against the rich greens of the lush forest.

In the 1890s, a French team of archaeologists led by Henri Parmentier recorded all the buildings in a beautiful set of detailed drawings. In 1999 UNESCO declared My Son a World Heritage Site. And thanks to Parmentier's work modern conservationists are able to start piecing the site back together again. But until that is completed visitors have to navigate around some deep bomb craters in between temples.

How apt that this religious site should have been dedicated to Shiva: the creator, the destroyer and the conserver. ■

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VIETBICE BUSINESS CENTER:

10/8 Yen The, Ward 2, Tan Binh, HCMC, Vietnam.

OFFICE AND FACTORY:

Area 3, 20 Phan Van Hon, Tan Thoi Nhat Ward,
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Fax: (+848) 3883 1672

>>The List District 2



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food & drink

BAKERIES

Voelker

French bakery selling fresh breads, pastries and chocolate
39 Thao Dien, D2
6296 0066
voelker-vietnam.com

BARS

Mcsorley's

Recently opened Irish pub with a swimming pool and outdoor patio. Serves pub grub with events and theme nights happening regularly.
4 Thao Dien, D2
3519 4659
www.mcsorleys.vn

Papagayo Saigon

A resort-style design and French Mediterranean food are the make-up of this newly opened hangout.
18 Tran Ngoc Dien, D2
6252 1333
11am- 3pm Tuesday – Sunday, 6pm –10pm

Buddha Bar

One of the long standing bars in the area, it has a pool table, darts, big screen tvs along with cheap beers and bar food.
7 Thao Dien, D2
3744 2080
5pm - 9pm, Monday - Sunday

restaurants

FRENCH

Gastrohome

New delicatessen shop offering western-fusion French food by French chef Stephane Courtin. Visit the shop or try their catering service.
100 Xuan Thuy, D2. 6281 9830
7.30am – 9pm

La Villa 🍷 Oi's Pick

This Colonial-style villa set in a quietly gentrified district 2 street is a cache of luxury with its beautiful poolside garden and cosy, scenic white-toned dining room area. Dine outside or in, on an off-the-cuff menu prepared by the French chef, based on the best market ingredients available on the day. Set amongst the flowers and with a ring of the lost charm of the Colonial era, this is an appealing and impressive venue for An Phu's high-profile community.
14 Ngo Quang Huy, D2
3898 2082
www.lavilla-restaurant.com.vn
Lunch (11.45 – 3pm), dinner (6.45 to late), Closed Sundays
*Reviewed in Oi March 2013

Trois Gourmands

Opened in 2004 and regarded as one of the finest French restaurants in town. Owner Gils, a French native, makes his own cheeses as well.
18 Tong Huu Dinh, D2
3744 4585
Open for lunch and dinner from Tuesday to Sunday

ITALIAN

Pendolasco – Thao Dien

The original Pendolasco has been an institution in Saigon since the late 90's, and this newer venue picks up on the success of the parent restaurant in the more gentrified An Phu area. Accordingly, the D2 Pendolasco is somewhat classier

than its namesake in backpacker-laden DI. Expect excellent classic Italian cuisine – wood-fired pizza, spaghetti, and tiramisu – cooked with a focus on fresh flavours and featuring the finest imported ingredients from Italy.
36 Tong Huu Dinh, D2
62532888
www.pendolasco.vn
info@pendolasco.vn
11am - 10pm

Sarpino's Pizzeria

Sarpino's Pizzeria is a famous pizza brand from Canada with three branches around Ho Chi Minh City that specializes in pizza, pasta and rice.
43 Thao Dien, D2. 3744 2132

JAPANESE

Tama River-Japanese Restaurant

Bottles of sake fill shelves along the wall behind the sushi bar, and unique Japanese paintings add a nice visual touch. Since opening four months ago, the restaurant has attracted a diverse clientele, from locals to expats.
14E1 Thao Dien, D2
3744 6782
10am - 2pm and 5 - 10pm

Chisana Hashi

Serves authentic Japanese cuisine including sashimi, sushi, tempura, sukiyaki and shabu shabu
River Garden, 170 Nguyen Van Huong, D2
6683 5308

THAI

Baan Thai

Baan Thai serves authentic Thai cuisine using a considerable variety of tastes and spices prepared by Thai chefs. Generally speaking, the cuisine leans more towards being authentic in taste than serving the more internationalised versions of Thai cuisine available elsewhere.
55 Thao Dien, D2
3744 5453
www.baanthai-anphu.com
11am - 11pm Sunday to Thursday. Open until midnight on Friday and Saturday

Jasmine Thai

A laid-back enclave of fine Thai dining in the high-class area of District 2, Jasmine Thai is a quiet, candle-lit affair awash in the ethereal tones of Thai traditional music. Thai is a cuisine that's difficult to get right even in Thailand, and in Ho Chi Minh City the quality and authenticity is known to vary – expect here variations on dishes you'll find throughout the Thai culinary tradition with features more common to those restaurants serving in Western nations.
85 Quoc Huong, D2
3519 0038

VIETNAMESE

Banlian Tree

A fine dining Vietnamese restaurant that serves authentic Vietnamese cuisine. Banlian Tree is part of the Khai Silk group so the design is extremely well thought out, gleaming wooden surfaces complementing the red signature walls. Offers a set lunch, set dinner and international breakfast
River Garden, 170 Nguyen Van Huong, D2
6683 5308
6.30am – 10.30pm

WESTERN/ INTERNATIONAL

Boathouse

With a great view of the Saigon River,

this restobar serves imported steak, healthy salads and much more in an alfresco environment.

40 Lily Road, An Phu Superior Compound, D2
3744 6790
www.boathouse.com.vn
7.30am – 11pm

Mekong Merchant

Set in a colonial house within an open-air courtyard surrounding, this restaurant serves delicious pizza, sandwiches, smoothies with an extensive wine list.
23 Thao Dien, D2
3744 4713
8am – 10pm

Snap Cafe

By day, Snap Cafe is a community-centered, family-friendly cafe and restaurant. By night, guests can enjoy live music, sports on the big screen, quiz nights, pool, foosball, and more. Serves international cafe fare, great food, icy-cold draught beer and wine by the carafe. The space is a large open-plan room with an attached garden and play area for kids. Holds regular movie screenings.
32 Tran Ngoc Dien, D2
35194532
www.snap.com.vn
7.30am - 10.30pm

The Deck

Located on the banks of the Saigon River, this restaurant offers great international and Vietnamese fare.
38 Nguyen U Di, D2
3744 6632
www.thedecksaigon.com
8.30am to late

Vino

They offer professional advice on selecting and tasting wines. The outdoor terrace area is the perfect spot to sample a new vintage and brunches on the weekends.
NO.1, Street 2nd, D2
6281 9059
www.vinovietnam.com

supermarkets

Annam Gourmet

An upscale deli and grocery chain offering gourmet groceries, cheese, organic products, gluten-free products, fruit and vegetables, gourmet deli, wine and other beverages. All locations, in District 1, 2 and 7, have a coffee lounge that serves breakfast, lunch, drinks and early dinner.
16-18 Hai Ba Trung, D1. 3822 9391
41A Thao Dien street. D2. 3744 2630
SB2-1 My Khanh 4, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7
5412 3263 / 5412 3264
www.annam-gourmet.com

An Phu Supermarket

Large supermarket stocking a wide range well-known international brands of dry goods along with fresh groceries, frozen meat and fish, fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese, wine, toiletries and more
43 Thao Dien, D2

Classic Fine Foods

Supplier of international brand foodstuff like Illy, Valrhona, Bonne Maman along with fresh vegetables, dairy, and meat.
No. 17, Street 12, D2
3740 7105
www.classicfinefoods.com

Metro

Wholesale suppliers of foodstuff, office

supplies, furniture, clothes and more. Entry is reserved for business owners only but foreigners can obtain a one-day pass by showing their passports.
Residential An Phu, An Khanh Ward 2
3740 6677
6am – 9pm, Monday – Sunday

business

LAW FIRMS

Nguyen Giap Law Firm

14 Tran Nao, D2
3740 7812
www.hangluatnguyengiap.com
8am - 5pm

Dang Khuong

26 Street 44, D2
8224 09726

MARKETING & ADVERTISING

Industrial Design Asia

Offers design engineering and innovation consultancy for plastics, consumer products, electronics, metal parts. Dutch industrial designers with over 10 years of working experience in Asia. Contact them to get a free quotation.
VILLA B, 12A Street Number 12, D2
3740 6388

Thanh Tung

Prints digital, cuts decal, LED signs, Braille and stainless neon materials to ensure compliance with quality.
373 Luong Dinh Cua, D2
090 952 1411

REAL ESTATE AGENCIES

Namhouse

Provides rental properties for home and office use, focusing in the District 2 area.
48A Tran Ngoc Dien, D2
098 900 7700
www.namhouse.com.vn

Snap Café

Has an extensive list of property rentals in District 2.
32 Tran Ngoc Dien, D2
3519 4282
www.snap.com.vn
7.30am - 10.30pm

health & beauty

DENTISTS

European Dental Clinic

This is the dental clinic's second location in Ho Chi Minh City. Experienced practitioners, latest technology, most dentists from UK and France. Offering state of the art technology, competitive pricing, and supreme quality, this dentistry is truly dedicated to their patients.
17-17A Le Van Mien, D2
091 874 9204 or 090 955 1916
www.europeandentalclinic-asia.com

Saigon Smile

With a group of experienced doctors and professional staff trained to do teeth cleaning, dental work and other teeth enhancing procedures.
96 Tran Nao, D2
6674 4255
8am to 8pm

Nu Cuoi Hoan My (Perfect Smile)

14-16 Tran Nao, D2
3740 7470
hoanmysmile@gmail.com
8am to 8pm

Dental Truong Thanh

276 Tran Nao, D2
5402 3009
www.nhakhoatruongthanh.com
8am to 8pm

FITNESS

Ais Sports Complex

Open to the public, the center has a 25m swimming pool, basketball court and an astroturf play area. Inquire about special packages.
APSC Compound, 36 Thao Dien, D2
3744 2549
www.aisportscentre.com

Cyril And You

French physical instructor Cyril specializes in sports conditioning, resistance training and senior training along with designing a personal fitness program to fit your needs. Holds regular sessions at Boathouse.
Thao Dien, D2
094 777 1326
www.cyril-and-you.com

NFTQ2

Besides an excellent weights and cardio area, the facility runs group classes including power yoga, pilates, circuit training, martial arts and spinning. The centre also contains a spa and a restaurant serving up calorie-calibrated meals to help members stay in line with individual fitness programs.
34 Nguyen Dang Giai, D2
3744 6672
www.nutrifort.com

Thien Nga (Swan) Club

Fitness club that has training equipment and a 25sqm swimming pool
751 Xuan Thuy, D2
3899 0012

X-Rock Climbing

With two locations in the city, this wall in An Phu stands at 26 meters. The center offers nine levels from beginners to hardcore.
503A Nguyen Duy Trinh, D2
2210 9192
www.xrockclimbing.com

Yoga Club

Yogo fitness center for both men and women
18 Street Number 2, D2
3897 6786

HOSPITALS & CLINICS

Animal Rescue & Care

A.R.C. was founded in 2010 to directly address the plight of abused and abandoned animals in Ho Chi Minh City. Abandoned and wild cats and dogs can be adopted or fostered from their online database. ARC also organizes several animal welfare education and low-cost spaying campaigns. New volunteers are always welcomed there.
31-44 Thao Dien, D2
arcpets@gmail.com
www.arcpets.com

An Phu International Clinic

An international standard clinic with a full range of specialist and modern medical equipment with a dedicated team of professors, doctors, experienced nurses.
251A Luong Dinh Cua, D2
6660 6602
www.dakhoaanphu.com

Family Medical Practice

With a nationwide operational advantage, they provide international standard medical services in a safe, professional and welcoming environment.
95 Thao Dien, D2
3744 2000
www.vietnammedicalpractice.com
hcmc@vietnammedicalpractice.com
8am-6pm Monday-Friday, 8am-2pm Saturday

SALONS & SPAS

J Hair Salon

Experienced stylist Jimmy Le provides

modern styling, healthy and fashionable hair care, along with professional blonde highlighting treatments.
33A Thao Dien, D2
090 934 2022

Saigon Dep

The clinic treats various skin diseases and offers skin care protection and prevention packages.
79 Xuan Thuy, D2
3899 0448
www.saigondep.net

Thao Dien Village

Within this tourist complex is a luxury spa and wellness center.
189 - 197, 197/1 Nguyen Van Huong, D2
3744 2222

The Royal Spa And Salon

Services include acrylic nails, facials, hair salons and massages
14E14 Thao Dien, D2
3519 4873
9am - 9pm

shopping

HOME INTERIORS

Austin Home

Furniture shop that stocks art deco pieces, cushions, fabrics and wooden ornaments for the home
20 Thao Dien, D2
3519 0023
6am - 6.30pm

Clic Clac Sofa

Sells sofas that double up as beds in various sizes and wood
327F Luong Dinh Cua, D2
5402 7434
www.clicclacsofa.com

education

SCHOOLS

Australian International School (AIS)

The Australian International School is an IB World School with three world class campuses in District 2, HCMC, offering an international education from kindergarten to senior school with the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), Cambridge Secondary Programme (including IGCSE) and IB Diploma Programme (DP).
Xi Campus (Kindergarten)
190 Nguyen Van Huong, D2
Thao Dien Campus (Kindergarten & Primary School)
APSC Compound
36 Thao Dien, D2
Thu Thiem Campus (Kindergarten, Primary, Middle & Senior School)
East-West Highway, D2
3742 4040
www.aisvietnam.com

British International School

Offers pre-school to secondary education under the English national curriculum.
225 Nguyen Van Huong, D2
3744 2335
www.bisvietnam.com

Horizon International Bilingual School

A bilingual school, HIBS opened in 2005 and applies 100 percent of the Vietnamese national curriculum, MOET, as well as providing students with an intensive English program along with teaching science and math in English.
6 - 6A - 8, 44 Street, D2
5402 24 82
hibsvietnam.com
info@hibsvietnam.com

L'atelier

A French language center offering classes in all forms to children and adults. Classes include spelling and grammar tuition after school, monitoring for the French education program, preparing for official tests (DEFL, DAFL, TFL, IB), and Vietnamese lessons, including extra-curricular activities during the holidays.
33/19 Quoc Huong, D2
3744 6844
www.latelier-anphu.com

Saigon Sports Academy

A multi-sports training school that teaches chess, swimming, tennis, soccer, among others.
28 Tran Nao, D2
7303 1100

Smartkids

An international childcare centre provides kindergarten and pre-school education for children between 18 months and six years old. A fun and friendly environment, the school focuses on learning through play.
1172 Thao Dien Compound, D2
3744 6076
www.smartkidsinfo.com

travel

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Exotissimo

With 20 years of operations in the region, they offer unique travel experiences with destination-based offices in Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Japan and China.
41 Thao Dien, D2
3519 4111
www.exotissimo.com
yen@exotissimo.com
9am - 9pm

Ha Nguyen

Specializes in providing tickets for Eva Airlines, Qatar Airways, China Airlines, Cathay Pacific, American Airlines, Singapore Air, Malaysia Airlines, Korean Airlines, Qantas Airways, Lufthansa, United Airlines and many other international airlines.
64B3 Xuan Thuy, D2
6674 9041

SERVICED APARTMENTS

Glenwood Serviced Apartment

A very modern property, located in the heart of the expatriate's residential area, steps away from Int'l schools and supermarket. Securities and

professional staffs are at your service.
248A Nguyen Van Huong, D2
0944 168 568

Fideco River View Apartment

The Fideco River View Apartment is located in a safe and secure area in district 2, offering tenants luxurious amenities with a panoramic view of Saigon.
14 Thao Dien, D2

Riverside Apts

Overlooking the Saigon River, the compound offers short and long term leases.
53 Vo Truong Toan, D2
37 444 111
www.riverside-apartments.com

River Garden Apartment

River Garden is the first luxury river-view condominium development in HCMC. It is located within a 15-minute drive of downtown and provides its occupants with stunning views of the Saigon River in a resort type of environment.
170 Nguyen Van Huong, Thao Dien, D2

Somerset Vista Ho Chi Minh City

Enjoy all the space you need for a balanced and enriching lifestyle while staying at the new Somerset Vista Ho Chi Minh City. It has an extensive array of modern facilities and provides convenient access to a hypermarket, international schools, a medical clinic, retail outlets and offices.
628C Hanoi Highway, D2
6255 9900
www.somerset.com/vietnam

Villa Song Saigon

Colonial-style, boutique apartments characterised by solid hardwood flooring and an outdoor swimming pool ensconced by verdant gardens.
197/2, Nguyen Van Huong, Thao Dien, D 2
37446090
0906099180
www.villasong.com



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www.oivietnam.com

>>The List District 7



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food & drink

BAKERIES

Savouré Bakery

Offering gourmet cakes and pastries with all the fine characteristics of the European gourmet tradition. Customers can choose from a wide array of baked goods including cakes, desserts, breads, cookies, wedding cakes, and moon cakes during the season.

Grand View, SD 4-1, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7 5412 2469
www.savourebakery.com

BARS

Peaches

A spacious, attractive restobar with comfortable, lounge-style seating and a bar area, this watering hole mixes three beers on tap and a large screen for live sports with a pan-Asian curry menu.

557-1 Sky Garden 2, D7 5410 0999

Ruby Soho

A popular district 7 spot with excellent and cheap range of cocktails, good food and great music! Listen to the likes of Jimi Hendrix, The Ramones or Beck while downing an ice cold one.

552-1 Sky Garden 2, D7 0120 325 9138

The Tavern

The Tavern is a Western pub & restaurant where patrons can play darts & pool, watch football or enjoy reasonably priced food and drinks.

R2-24 Hung Gia 3, Bui Bang Doan, D7 5410 3900

CAFES

Baskin Robbins

With more than 7000 branches in more than 50 countries, Baskin Robbins is the largest ice-cream chain in the world with flavors such as Baseball Nut and Lunar Cheesecake.

105 Ton Dat Tien, D7 7308 3131
www.baskinrobbins.vn

Bud's

Bringing the taste of American ice cream to Vietnam, Bud's Ice Cream has nine stores in Ho Chi Minh City. Apart from a variety of delicious ice cream flavors, Bud's also offers a wide range of Western and Vietnamese food.

SD - 04 Panorama Residential Complex, D7 3932 2778
www.budsicecream.com.vn

Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf serves some of the best coffee and tea from around the world. It also has a full line of baked goods made from high quality ingredients, most of which are from their own proprietary recipes.

Ground Floor, Crescent Mall, Ton Dat Tien, D7 3824 4527
www.coffeebean.com.vn

FB Deli Coffee

FB Deli Coffee features a unique black and white design and signature coffee beans imported from Italy. Guests can also enjoy many varieties of homemade cakes, along with Tiramisu, muffins, and sandwiches. All cakes 50% off from 7 to 10pm.

SE-1 My Khanh 2 Apartments, D7 5411 9696
8am - 10pm

The Fountain Coffee Ice Cream

Known for its Swiss ice cream with all

the fixings, Fountain Coffee also serves Western dishes in a spacious lounge area.

SB4-1 My Duc Residential Complex, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7 5412 3257

MOF Japanese Sweets & Coffee Crescent

Sourcing the majority of their dessert ingredients from Hokkaido, Japan, MOF serves up premium desserts and a Japanese restaurant menu.

101 Ton Dat Tien, D7 www.mof.com.vn/en 10am - 9.45pm

NYDC

Established in 1995 in Singapore, NYDC, The New York Dessert Café, aims to bring a piece of New York to Southeast Asia with their popular muddies and a whole range of Western comfort foods.

107 Ton Dat Tien, D7 5413 6523

S'cottage Restaurant - Café

Inspired by the mysterious wooden house in the Hansel and Gretel story, S'cottage serves up home-style meals in a spacious, fairy-tale inspired space.

SB-02 My Duc Residential Complex, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7 5411 1186

restaurants

La Cucina



La Cucina has opened on Crescent Promenade in Phu My Hung, with an open-plan kitchen that can accommodate 180 diners. Enjoy top-end dining featuring the best of Italian cuisine and a wide selection of imported seafood, prepared from the freshest ingredients in a relaxed, rustic atmosphere.

Reviewed in Oi April 2013
Block 07-08 CRI-07, 103 Ton Dat Tien, D7 5413 7932

CHINESE

Huong Vien Hunanese Restaurant



Serving China's little-known spiciest cuisine, the dishes of China's reddest province and the preferred taste of Chairman Mao, Huong Vien is well-decorated although a bit on the pricey side, with dishes averaging VND180,000.

559-561, Sky Garden 2 Apartments, D7 5410 4368

Ming Dynasty

Ming Dynasty serves authentic Chinese food in a setting reminiscent of an old Chinese palace. Specialties include dim sum, shark fin and abalone and dishes from Quang Dong.

23 Nguyen Khac Vien, D7 5411 5555

INDIAN

Ashoka

Ashoka is a small chain of slightly more upscale Indian restaurants serving both Northern and Southern Indian cuisine including curries, naan and tandooris.

S9-1 Block R13, Bui Bang Doan, D7 5410 1989

ITALIAN

Sarpino's



Sarpino's Pizzeria serves authentic

Italian pizzas as well as other Italian dishes such as oven-baked pasta, baked rice, wraps and salad, all at reasonable prices.

351 12-1 Grandview, Nguyen Cao Nam, D7 5412 2480
www.sarpinos.vn
9am - 10.30pm

Salt & Pepper Italian Restaurant

Located in the modern confines of The Crescent, this contemporary-styled Italian restaurant and pizzeria has an open kitchen and an outdoor terrace area. Serving up a range of pan-Italian cuisine, the menu includes a selection of salads, pastas, main courses, pizzas and desserts, all at affordable prices.

103 Ton Dat Tien, D7 | 5412 4848
www.saltpepper.com.vn
11am - 2pm, 6pm - 11pm

JAPANESE

Baby Spoon

Famous for its extensive omurice menu (fried rice wrapped inside an egg omelette), Baby Spoon offers contemporary Japanese-Western fusion cuisine. Baby Spoon omurice (green bell peppers, bacon, tomato sauce omurice) is the house specialty.

SB 2-1 Parkview, D7 3822 3356

Osaka Ramen

This sleek, open-kitchen contemporary eatery serves up Japanese noodles starting from VND78,000. There are also set menus, individual dishes and a range of smaller, appetizing sides.

SD04, LO H29-2, My Phat Residential Complex, D7 5412 3940

THAI

Nathalie's Phu My Hung



Nathalie's Phu My Hung is situated in an ideal location on a central corner in the district 7 high-profile metropolitan area. Serving delicious Thai cuisine in charming and romantic surroundings, the restaurant has two floors with a unified, simple decor and warm colourful tones throughout.

S9 Hung Vuong 3 Apartments, D7 5410 0822
www.nathaliesrestaurant.com

Thai Express- Crescent Plaza

Thai Express's interpretation of Thai food exhibits the best of the cuisine but with the edges softened for a global palate unused to the extremes of Thai style cooking. Averaging from 40,000 VND to 200,000 VND per dish, its price can't be beat for the same quality and deliciousness.

105 Ton Dat Tien, D7 5415 5556
www.thaiexpress.vn

VIETNAMESE

Co Ba Vung Tau

Co Ba Vung Tau is a chain of traditional Vietnamese restaurants serving up their famous banh xhot amongst an extensive menu of affordable Vietnamese food.

R1-72 Hung Gia 1, Bui Bang Doan, D7 5410 2027

ASIAN

Charm Charm



Charm is more like a museum than a dining venue, filled with the artefacts and sculpture of the Champa people and with gorgeous artworks and colourful

hangings on the walls. The upstairs area is a wide-open terrace with plenty of tables for a more relaxing atmosphere. The cuisine is pan-Asian.

2 Phan Van Chuong, D7

WESTERN/INTERNATIONAL

Boomerang Bistro Saigon

Located in The Crescent by the Crescent lake, the spacious Boomerang Bistro Saigon serves Australian and other Western food in the most pedestrian friendly part of town.

107 Ton Dat Tien, D7 3841 3883
www.boomerang.com.vn

Cham Charm

Famous for their extensive international nightly buffet featuring 8 types of oysters, American Angus beef and Australian filets, Cham Charm is devoted to Cham arts, culture and cuisine and is tastefully decorated with Cham artifacts and sculptural works.

02 Phan Van Chuong, Phu My Hung New Urban, D7 5410 9999

El Gaucho

El Gaucho Argentinian Steakhouse is an international chain of restaurants serving authentic Argentinian cuisine in a space reflecting modern yet rustic decor, giving it an inviting ambience and genuine atmosphere.

Unit CRI-12, The Crescent, D7 3825 1879
www.elgaucho.com.vn

Scott & Binh's Restaurant

A whole bunch of independent reviewers on tripadvisor can't be wrong – this unassuming little bistro is making big waves with visitors to the city and resident expats alike. Scott & Binh's offers comfort food for those craving a taste of the Western hemisphere, with the aim of giving guests a sense of having been invited into someone's home for dinner. With a menu replete with tasty sandwiches, burgers, pasta, and various other international dishes, this is an ideal guilty hideaway from Vietnamese cuisine for just one meal at least.

15-17 Cao Trieu Phat, D7 3920 8986
4pm - 11pm Tue-Fri; 11am - 3pm Sat; 4pm - 11pm Sun

supermarkets

Annam Gourmet

An upmarket deli-grocery chain offering gourmet groceries, cheese, organic products, gluten-free products, fruit and vegetables, gourmet deli, wine and other beverages. This location also features a coffee lounge.

SB2-1 My Khanh 4, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7 5412 3263/64

Citimart

Despite being smaller in floor size than some other supermarkets, Citimart, a large Vietnamese supermarket chain, carries a wide selection of imported goods.

SC-10 Green View, Nguyen Luong Bang, D7 5411 2238
B3-4, B3-5, B3-6 Ha Huy Tap, D7 3412 8008
S4-1 Hung Vuong 3, Nguyen Van Linh, D7 5410 1040

Lotte Mart

Lotte Mart is a South Korean supermarket chain with two branches in Ho Chi Minh City carrying a very wide

range of products.
469 Nguyen Huu Tho, D7
3771 8989

Veggy's

A specialized grocery store carrying imported products, Veggy's offers a wide range of international food imported from abroad and fresh produce grown in Vietnam.

554-1 Sky Garden 2, Pham Van Nghi, D7
5410 2613

business

BANKS

ANZ Bank

47 Phu My Hung
5410 1666
www.anz.com/vietnam/vn

HUMAN RESOURCES

Xage Consultancy

A human resource management consulting firm that develops people and organizations specializing in talent development, organizational development and outplacement.

35A-1-2, 1st Floor, Grandview C, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7
5412 3402

MARKETING & ADVERTISING

Xone FM

The first independently run radio station in Vietnam, Xone FM provides the latest and hottest songs in both English and Vietnamese via 10 channels throughout the country.

100 Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
5413 5341

REAL ESTATE AGENCIES

Anh Nguyen Real Estate

Anh Nguyen specializes in rental and sales of residences in Phu My Hung.
168 Ha Huy Tap, D7
090 958 2489

Vietnam Housing

Vietnam Housing specializes in helping Vietnam's foreign community with their long- and short-term real estate rental and purchasing needs.

R1-49, Hung Gia 3, D7
5412 5979

health & beauty

DENTISTS

Naomi Dental Clinic

A full service dental clinic under the direction of Japanese dentist Dr. Nakashima Mikio.

R4-45 Hung Phuoc 4, D7
5410 3937

HOSPITALS

David Shepherd Chiropractic Clinic

DSCC provides Chiropractic care for patients using state of the art physiotherapy equipment imported from USA. DSCC is managed and operated by American doctors who use modern and advanced technologies techniques to ensure safe, gentle, and effective treatment.

41 Noi Khu, Hung Gia 3, D7
5410 6242
www.saigonchiropractic.com

FV Hospital

French Hospital - Vietnam is a multi-specialty hospital equipped with modern equipment and providing a full range of medical services including medical and health advice, diagnosis and surgical treatment at a single point.

6 Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
5411 3333

SALON

Yuri

A full-range Korean beauty salon in the Lotte complex, with a chief focus on beautiful hair styling.

3rd floor, Lotte Mart, 469 Nguyen Huu Tho, D7
3775 2990; 093 481 8085

shopping

HOME & FURNISHINGS

Mekong Quilts

Mekong Quilts offers sustainable employment to women from poor rural regions of Vietnam and Cambodia who craft fashionable, quality silk quilts and home wares.

517 Sky Garden 1, Nguyen Van Linh, D7
6271 7758
www.mekong-quilts.org

LADIESWEAR

Aquamarine

Aquamarine and Xuan Thu are premium swimsuit brands for men, women and children.

3 Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
3842 7105

Vera

Vera is an international premium lingerie brand that is designed and made in Vietnam. The line offers cutting edge lingerie and is reasonably priced.

469 Nguyen Huu Tho, D7
3822 1152
www.vera.com.vn

education

SCHOOLS

ABC International School

Providing a caring and nurturing atmosphere for all its students, the ABC International School offers a combination of both British and international educations and qualifications.

Saigon South Campus 1 (Primary & Secondary)
#2, 1E Street, Khu Dan Cu Trung Son, Binh Hung, Binh Chanh
5431 1833 / 34/35/36
abcintschoolss@vnn.vn
www.theabcis.com

Kindermusik

The center is a music, movement and English-language program for children from birth to 7 years. Each lesson promotes early literacy and English language acquisition, social skills and more. Kindermusik programs align with standards and/or requirements for the US, UK, UE, TESOL Pre-K and IB Primary years.

Ground Floor, Crescent Residence2, D7
www.kindermusik-vietnam.com
090 709 9480

Renaissance International School Saigon

Opened in 2008, The Renaissance International School Saigon offers programs from Early Years to secondary curriculum, founded on the International British System. The four buildings on the school's one-hectare site include a 350-seat auditorium, a computer resource centre, gymnasium and 25 m swimming pool.

74 Nguyen Thi Thap, D7
3773 3171
www.rissaigon.edu.vn

RMIT International University Vietnam

RMIT International University Vietnam is the Asian hub of Melbourne-based University RMIT - Australia's biggest tertiary institution. The largest offshore campus in the world, RMIT Vietnam offers programs from business and management to design and micro engineering.

702 Nguyen Van Linh, D7
3776 1300

Saigon South International School

Founded in 1997, Saigon South International School seeks to accommodate an increasing need for American education for both local residents and expatriate families. SSIS enrolls over 850 students in Early Childhood - Grade 12 from over

thirty-three countries in a spacious six-hectare, well-equipped campus.

78 Nguyen Duc Canh, D7
5413 0901
www.ssis.edu.vn

Vstar School

Vstar School provides education from Grades 1-12 in a spacious 30,000m2 environment including a sports field and swimming pool.

Him Lam Residential Complex, Nguyen Huu Tho, D7
3821 3821

VLS Vietnamese Language School

Imparting genuine fluency in Vietnamese since 1994, VLS is one of the city's best-organised and most professional training centers devoted to the Vietnamese language, with classes for all levels.

R4-28 Hung Phuoc 2, Le Van Thiem, D7
3602 6694

recreation

CINEMAS AND THEATRES

Lotte Cinema

Lotte Cinema (Nam Saigon) has 1,336 seats in 6 theaters, showing movies in English and Vietnamese.

3rd Floor, Lotte Mart, 469 Nguyen Huu Tho, D7
3775 2527

Megastar Cineplex

Showing movies in English and Vietnamese, and Megastar offers more cinema screens than anyone else in Vietnam. Both the Crescent Mall and Parkson Paragon location s have 8 theaters.

5th Floor, Crescent Mall, 101 Ton Dat Tien, D7
5412 2222
5th Floor, Parkson Paragon, 3 Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
5416 0088

GYMS & SPORTS

The Crescent Wellness Club

Overlooking The Crescent complex's lagoon, this multi-purpose and organically designed fitness and wellness centre offers an array of modern facilities including a state-of-the-art gym, group fitness classes, yoga sessions, a squash court, swimming pool, steam bath and nutrition bar.

3rd Floor, Crescent Plaza,
105 Ton Dat Tien, D7
5412 1277

Urban Boutique Gym & Yoga Studio

Unique facility catering to the individual demanding diversity, personal attention and results. They are an alternative to the mainstream gym, striving on raw functional training, small group fitness & yoga combined with state of the art equipment. Come and experience the difference today.

Block B, Second Floor, Riverside Residence
Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
5417 1946; 0120 384 0961
bodybyjovie.com
info@bodybyjovie.com

Saigon South Golf Club

The closest golf course to HCMC's downtown area, Saigon South is a 9-hole, par 3 golf course and driving range situated behind FV hospital. There are foreign trainers to help golfers with golf skills. Equipment hire is available.

Nguyen Van Linh, D7
5411 2001

travel

HOTELS

Bizu Boutique Hotel Phu My Hung

The hotel's 24 guestrooms are all designed with guests' comfort in mind, featuring wireless Internet access along with all the basic facilities. Other features at the hotel include a restaurant, billiards, karaoke, 24hr room service 24hr, an elevator, laundry service/dry cleaning and meeting facilities.

15-17 Cao Trieu Phat, D7
5411 1008

Bizu Premier Hotel Phu My Hung

Twenty-five rooms spread over 5 floors provide modern comforts such as satellite/cable TV, bathtub, balcony/terrace, bathrobes, air conditioning.

7-9 Cao Trieu Phat, D7

Boutique Garden Hotel

Newly opened in 2012 and conveniently located close to Phu My Hung, FV Hospital and Tam Duc Hospital, guests can choose from 20 rooms.

R3-84 Hung Phuoc 3, D7
5410 5941

Hotel de Paris Saigon

The Hotel De Paris offers 24 budget rooms equipped with cable / satellite channels, a TV and free Wi-Fi. The hotel staff are available 24/7 and can help with booking tours and tickets. A concierge, a business centre and a lift are also available at the hotel.

4 Street 12, D7

Ibis Hotel Saigon South

The 3-star Ibis Hotel Saigon South is located in front of Saigon Exhibition and Convention Centre and only 15 minutes from the city centre. It features 140 rooms with free Wifi internet access, a restaurant/bar and 3 meeting rooms. There is a free Ibis shuttle available to and from the hotel to major corporate offices and the city centre.

73 Hoang Van Thai, D7
5410 1111
www.ibis.com

Sabena Hotel

The Sabena Hotel sits in a quiet, tree-lined street just off the major Parkway Nguyen Van Linh. The Saigon Exhibition & Convention Center, RMIT International University and The Crescent Mall are only 1km away.

24 Noi Khu Hung Gia 4, D7
5416 1000

Torino Hotel

Located on a peaceful and green neighborhood, this 10-room contemporary property is close to restaurants, cafés and shopping centers.

25 Road No. 2, D7
5410 5611

SERVICED APARTMENTS

The Crescent

The Crescent is located along the Crescent Lake in the heart of Phu My Hung New City Centre, offering an exclusive high-class lifestyle for locals and expats. This area consists of a variety of green parks, restaurants, luxury apartments, retail shops and entertainment venues.

101 Ton Dat Tien, D7

Garden Court

Completed in 2009, Garden Court is a luxury apartment building located close to schools, supermarkets and shopping centers and a golf course.

Garden Court, Ton Dat Tien, D7

Garden Plaza

Garden Plaza is a high class apartment building designed after modern Singapore buildings, comprising of four inter-connected 8-storey blocks.

Garden Plaza, Ton Dat Tien, D7

The Panorama

A complex consisting of six medium- and high-rises, from 6 to 24 storeys tall, The Panorama has 276 individual apartments and 51 stores.

The Panorama, Ton Dat Tien, D7

Sky Garden

Sky Garden is a huge complex of apartments including 42 buildings with more than 3,000 individual apartments set on 10.4 hectares.

Sky Garden, Nguyen Van Linh, D7
5410 1616

Faces & Places



Helping Others

The School of North America and the community participated in a 24-hour relay to help support Agent Orange victims.

IMAGES BY **NAM QUAN**

Summer Tea

To debut their new summer collection, Carlo Rino hosted a fashion show and tea party at their boutique in Vincom Center A.

IMAGES BY **NAM QUAN**



Grand Opening Party Saturday June 1st from 5pm - 7pm

Cocktails & Hors D'Oeuvres
Yoga, TRX Suspension, Belly Dancing Performances

Price Draws

Including fitness bands, heart rate monitors, memberships & gifts
Live DJ Jamie Snowball

For opening day only, we will give away discounts on memberships, personal training & yoga packages.
Join us to receive 2 weeks of complimentary classes and gym membership, assessment and club tours.

Tel: 0854171946

Email: info@bodybyjovie.com

Block B, Riverside Residence, Nguyen Luong Bang Street, District 7



Vietnam Star Automobile

Home of Mercedes-Benz in Vietnam



Mercedes-Benz

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S-Class



from 4.304.000.000 VND

GL



from 3.777.000.000 VND

M-Class



from 3.081.000.000 VND

Ho Chi Minh: **Phu My Hung Autohaus** – Hotline 0908 800 126
811-813 Nguyen Van Linh, Tan Phong, District 7.
Tel: (08) 5411 2280 | (08) 5411 2281 (Workshop)

Truong Chinh Autohaus – Hotline 0908 866 028
2 Truong Chinh, Tay Thanh, Tan Phu District.
Tel: (08) 3815 8888 | (08) 3815 7030 (Workshop)

Ha Noi: **Autohaus** – Hotline: 0915 368 468
386 Nguyen Van Linh, Long Bien District.
Tel: (04) 3875 8999 | (04) 3875 9000 (Workshop)

City Showroom
2 Ngo Quyen, Ly Thai To, Hoan Kiem District.
Tel: (04) 3935 1366 | (04) 3935 1371

Email: contact@vietnamstar-auto.com
Website: www.vietnamstar-auto.com



Lucca is an authentic Italian restaurant offering a mix of classic and contemporary dishes located in the heart of Saigon and within walking distance of principal financial institutions, the opera house and many major 5 star hotels. Lucca is distinguished by its casual European ambience coupled with fine dining and first class, friendly service.

88 Ho Tung Mau Street, Ben Nghe Ward, Dist.I, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
(+848) 3 915 3692