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VIETNAM

JUNE 2014

NORTHERN COMFORT

A Must for Delicious
Hanoian Cuisine

PAGE 48

HEAVENLY ASCENT

Tackling China's Sacred
Buddhist Mountain

PAGE 66

THE POWER OF THREE

3D Printing at
Your Fingertips

PAGE 82

THE

Breakfast

CLUB





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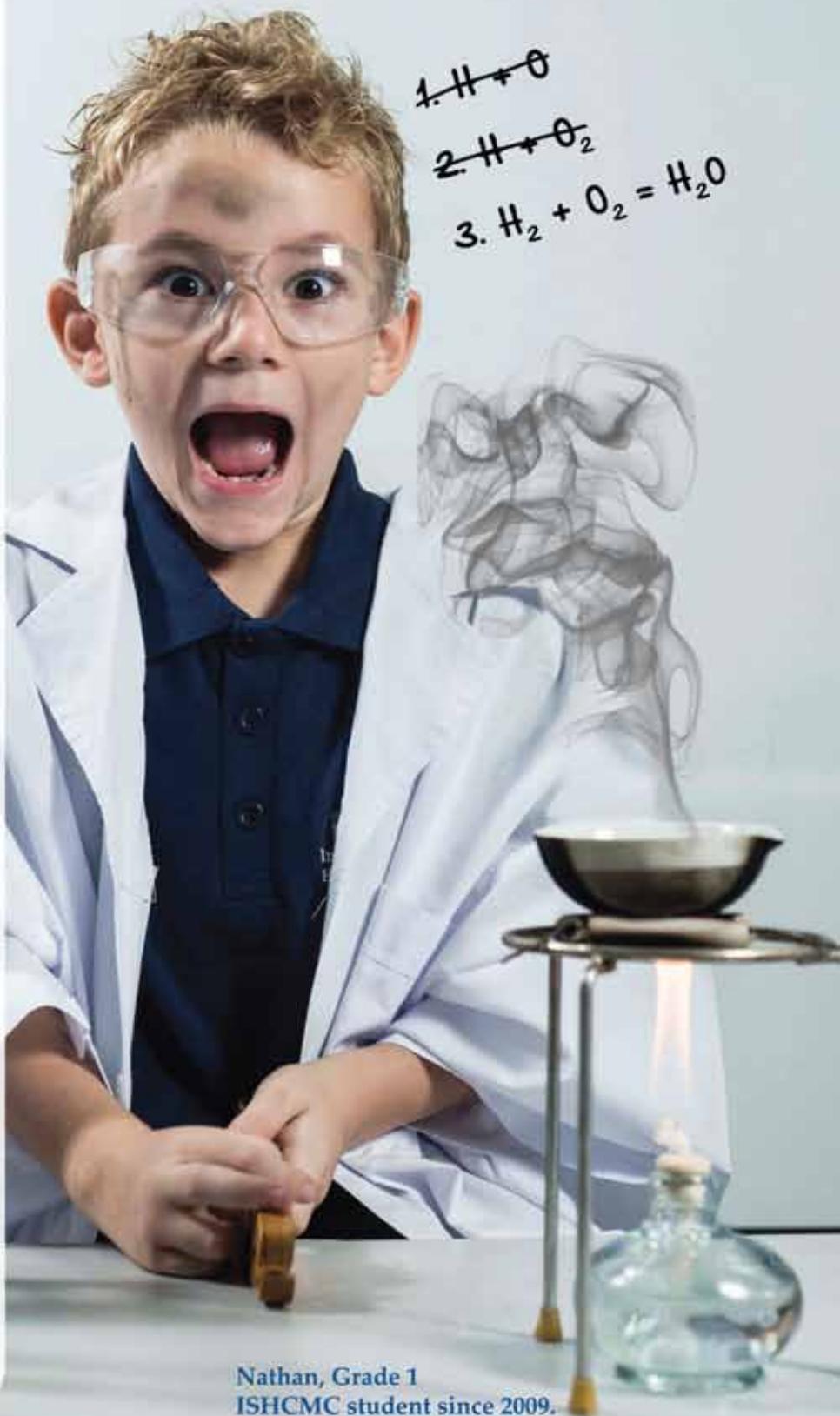
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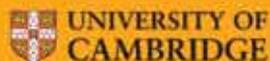


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Contents

COVER STORY

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

Waking up in the morning has never been more delicious



34

FEATURES

P10 DATEBOOK

With these events, you'll never have to be bored again

P16 TROI OI

See why three billion liters of beer, a 1,000-year-old stele and 39 new caves made our noteworthy numbers this month

P18 THE BULLETIN

Checking out the latest promotions and openings

P22 AHHH! OHHH!

A dynamic cultural performance that combines breakdancing, parkour, coracles, bamboo sticks and classical opera singing

P23 URBAN PLAY

A group of daredevils transform a construction site into a playground

P28 THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL

The city's youngest graffiti crew opens up about misconceptions, the police and their future

P30 HUMANS OF HO CHI MINH CITY

Sound bites from the sellers who make up The Crooked Tree street market in Binh Thanh

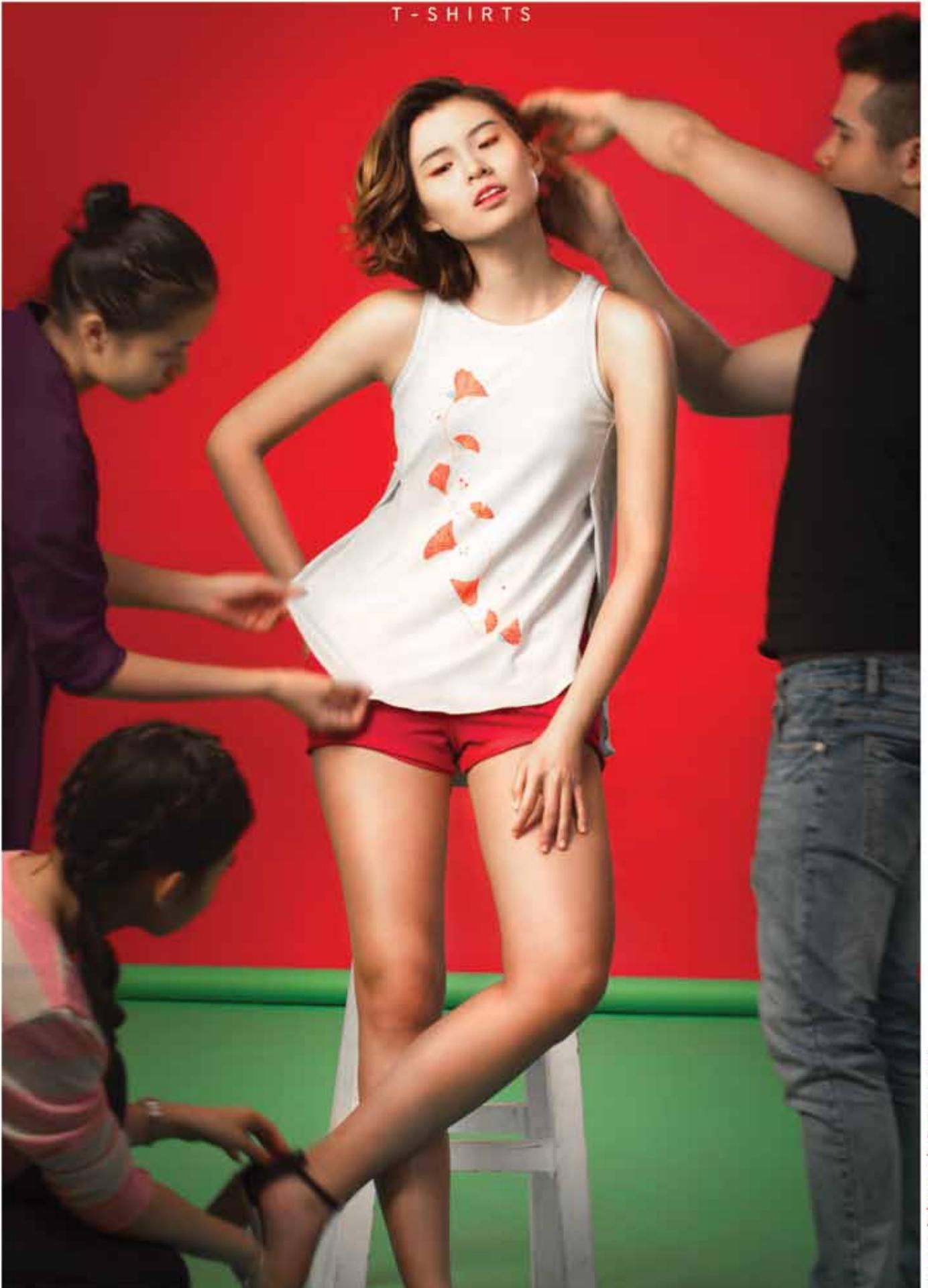
P48 RESTAURANT REVIEWS

Treat yourself to some creative Hanoian dishes like smoked goose breast with lemongrass to good ole fashion Southern American barbecue ribs and cornbread

P70 BEST OF BARCELONA

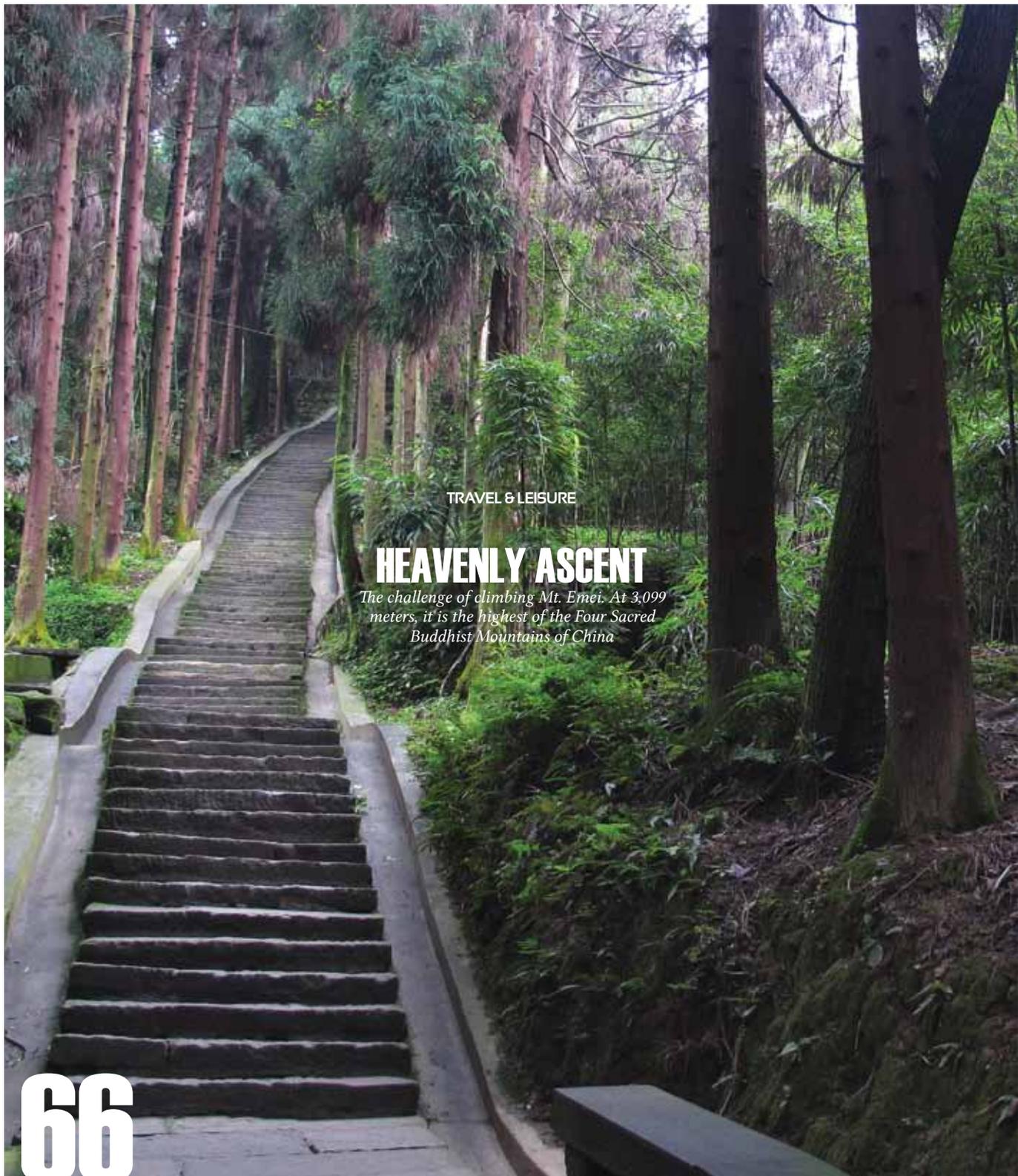
With its bustling art scene and bohemian vibe, this beachside city is a must for anyone traveling to Spain


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HEAVENLY ASCENT

The challenge of climbing Mt. Emei. At 3,099 meters, it is the highest of the Four Sacred Buddhist Mountains of China

66

P80 ROYALE CHIC

Haute couture meets imperial aspirations

P84 MY LIFE AS

A bone cleaner, exhuming bodies to make room for farmland

P92 THE POWER OF THREE

3D printing workshops for free

P92 THE POWER OF THREE

3D printing workshops for free

COLUMNS

P32 SAIGON MYTHBUSTERS

Medicinal urine: fact or fiction?

P74 LIFE'S A TRIP

How hotels are luring customers with free hotel amenities

P94 LEGAL EASE

The complicated process of opening up a café as a foreigner

P95 FOUND 404

Start exercising your thumbs, there's a new addictive mobile game out

Morning Glory

NEW YORK IS the city that never sleeps. Or slows down, for that matter. It's trample or be trampled. So it was that my favorite morning breakfast routine involved a sidewalk coffee cart that also sold cinnamon raisin bagels slathered with cream cheese, the perfect combination of the salty sweetness of the bagel along with the jolting bitterness of the coffee. It was also perfect for being commute-friendly — few moving parts to maneuver while half-running to make the Number 6 train.

Here, I really only get a chance to enjoy a nice breakfast (or brunch) on the weekends, when there's actual time to sit down with my fiancé and catch up on current events, family matters, and the occasional piece of gossip. Our breakfast requisites include good lattes, outdoor seating, newspapers (and magazines, of course!) and fluffy pancakes for me and a hearty English breakfast for him. Not counting the hotel buffet breakfasts, there are only a few joints that meet all these requirements in Saigon where we are loyal regulars. This month, however, our writers set about trying to find the best breakfasts from around the world. It's going to take us all summer to try all the different types of breakfasts Saigon has to offer, including Italian-style Eggs Benedict, healthy Japanese *natto*, and the Mexican-style breakfast burrito, but what's life without worthwhile goals?

In the last few months, I've been following with interest the *Humans of New York* Facebook page, with mundane

yet poignant snippets from the lives of my fellow Gothamites and wondering what deep dark secrets I would feel compelled to share with the blog's creator Brandon Stanton if we ever crossed paths. In our homage, *Humans of Ho Chi Minh City*, James Pham tells the simple stories of some of the people that we walk by every day and tend to ignore, either because we're just too busy or don't share a common language. They're the people we often get annoyed by because they're sprawled out on the street or sidewalk, blocking our path, keeping us from getting to our destination. This article, though, is a reminder that behind every nameless face, there's a story, a person, a history. We may be very different on the outside, but what they have to say overall mirrors who we ourselves are — just people trying to make a living, come home to a loving family and see a bit of beauty in the world.

With the tensions caused by the situation with China, travel there might not be the first thing on everyone's mind. But invisible man-made borders aside, the country itself is beautiful and a great place to explore. Having been there twice myself, I found that when you leave the pollution of the megacities of Beijing or Chengdu, the countryside remains breathtaking. I've walked through a living city made entirely out of mud, seen the largest seated Buddha carved into the side of a mountain in Leshan, Sichuan, and rode across the desert on a donkey.

Sergey Guryakov and Jenia Ustinova remind us that the journey is not always about the destination, as they take on the 54-kilometer ascent to the summit of Mount Emei and find a valuable lesson atop the sacred mountain.

Also in the travel section, our *Life's a Trip* column talks about hotel amenities, a topic near and dear to my heart, considering I'm a blatant hotel amenities thief. As I write this, I'm thinking of the kimono hanging on the other side of my bathroom door, the one from the St. Regis Hotel in Osaka, Japan that whisks me back there every time I put it on.

Finally, if you're looking for some amazing American-style BBQ, look no further than Quan Ut Ut. My fiancé took me there for my birthday last month because I was craving some down home BBQ and wanted to know whether the restaurant lived up to all the hype it's been getting. Short answer: It does. It's all about good ole fashioned BBQ as perfected in the American South with juicy ribs and wings, all kinds of tasty sauces, and cornbread to sop it all up with.

That's the thing I love about Saigon. While it's quintessentially Vietnamese, you can travel the world within its borders! ■

CHRISTINE VAN

Managing Editor

Datebook

Fill up your calendar with these exciting events



JUNE 4

What: Short Film Festival

Where: Decibel Lounge, 79/2 Phan Ke Binh, D1; 7:30pm

About: Impressions Short Film Festival is a bi-annual film program that aims to showcase cutting edge Vietnamese and Southeast Asian short films from new, upcoming filmmakers. The first event, Voices through the Prism, is organized by Decibel Lounge with the collaboration of Yxineff and Saigoneer. This is the first screening and art event that focuses on short films that have been presented throughout the Yxineff online festival since it launched in May 2010. The films selected will run for around 90 minutes in total.

Contacts: Email project@decibel.vn or zelda.rudzitsky@saigoneer.com for details



JUNE 5

What: Meet The Artist Reception

Where: 42 Nguyen Dang Giai, D2; 4:30pm - 7:30pm

About: The event will exhibit paintings from Quan Tho, an impressionist artist who has worked relentlessly painting nature and landscape. All visitors will enjoy finger food and wine, and can register for the drawing at 6:30pm for a chance to win prizes including a lamp from Couture Lamps, a set of two pillows, a two-hour interior design consultation with AHI Designer, or a USD100 discount coupon for upholstery and ceramic Buddha statue with special finishes.

Contact: Visit www.austinhomeinteriors.com for more details



JUNE 6

What: F3 Saigon Hash House Harriettes

Where: from Saigon Star International School, Khu dan cu so 5, Phuung Thanh My Loi, D2; meet at 6:30pm for a 7pm start

About: F3 Saigon Hash House Harriettes is the new chapter set up in April and organized by women but men are welcomed. It runs in the city or neighboring district on the first Friday evening of the month at 7pm - meet up location changes every month.

Contact: Visit www.saigonhash.com for details



JUNE 6

What: Frenemies

Where: VinGallery, 6 Le Van Mien, D2

About: VinGallery presents a new exhibition by street artist and illustrator Kristopher Kotcher. Kristopher's work is influenced by books and cartoons he loved as a child. He is also influenced by graffiti, lowbrow art and American folk art. He has practiced graffiti and street art for 12 years now, starting with traditional letter form graffiti and more recently, character street art. His street art name "Frenemy" was chosen because when people see street art they either hate it or love it, so Frenemy felt like the perfect fit. It is also the word he uses for his world of characters. Kris will be putting his stamp on the VinGallery space by creating an exciting mural using these characters. He will also be exhibiting some of his digital prints and gouache, ink and watercolor pieces.

Contact: Visit www.vingallery.com for details

JUNE 7

What: Music Festival

Where: Saigon Exhibition and Convention Center, 799 Nguyen Van Linh, D7; 4pm

About: Future Now Music Festival (FNMF) will be a one-night-only festival featuring DJ Afrojack who headlined both EDC (Electric Daisy Carnival) NY and Las Vegas to over 300,000 people, as well as UMF (Ultra Music Festival) in Miami, and Tomorrowland (in Belgium). Spectators will also have a chance to enjoy many performances and the comeback of the American hip-hop band – Far East Movement. EDM DJs in Vietnam including the duo Slim V & Nimbria, Mike Hao, DuyDuy, Looze Khuong, and Brian Vo, in addition to dance-pop queen Thu Minh will also be there. Prices start at VND500,000.

Contact: Visit www.facebook.com/FutureNowMusicFestival for details



JUNE 7-8

What: Dance Show

Where: Nha Van Hoa Thanh Nien, 4 Pham Ngoc Thach, D1

About: DanCenter presents 5, 6, 7, 8! - a full-length dance show about numbers, with 24 dance performances, 200 dancers on stage and seven featured dance styles. The show is set to take the audience on an adventurous exploration of numbers, with dance performances entitled The 7 Sins, 5 Senses, H2O, 911 and more. The 120-minute show will be infused with elegant jazz, graceful ballet, funky hip hop, energetic zumba, charming belly dance and soulful contemporary dance performances. All performances have been created by DanCenter's talented team of choreographers, including choreographer and TV dance show consultant John Huy Tran, Linh Rateau, joint art director of the 2014 Charming Vietnam Show, Rosie Pollard, guest choreographer from *So You Think You Can Dance Vietnam*, and many more. The show will also feature a special appearance from Urban Dance Group, with top dancers from popular TV dance shows like *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Got To Dance*. The show will start at 7:30pm on June 7, and 3pm on June 8.

Contact: To book, email reservations@dancentervn.com or call 3519 4490



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JUNE 12

What: Hip-hop Performance

Where: Ben Thanh Theatre, 6 Mac Dinh Chi, D1; 8pm

About: The French Institute in Vietnam presents a hip-hop performance "Silence, We turn!" with Pockemon Crew, the most titled in the world in the circuit of Battles. The choreography of Pockemon Crew is a combination of two very different things: hip-hop dance and 1930s silent movies. The combination is based on using the actions and movements from silent films to express the energy and dynamic of street dances. Sometimes gentle, sometimes frenzied, the energy of hip-hop is linked with the narrative power of the silent film.

Contact: Call 3520 6863 or email culturel@consulfrance-hcm.org for details



JUNE 12-15

What: Saigon Players' Show

Where: McSorley's Square, 4 Thao Dien, D2; 7pm

About: A four-day art event that will showcase visual and performing artists from Ho Chi Minh City. Live performances include the Saigon Players' production of Henrik Ibsen's play, *An Enemy of the People*. Poets, filmmakers, dancers and musicians will also be featured. Proceeds from this festival will go to Helping Hand Saigon and Little Rose Shelter. Ticket costs VND300,000.

Contact: Visit www.saigonplayers.com for details



JUNE 14

What: Art Market

Where: Snap Cafe, 32 Tran Ngoc Dien, D2; 10am - 4pm

About: This is a great opportunity for art lovers to come and grab first-hand designs such as handmade arts and crafts, paintings, drawings and limited edition prints, ceramics, sculptures, handmade jewelry, homewares and gift items. Photographers are welcome to showcase their works.

Contact: Visit www.vingallery.com for details

JUNE 14

What: Theatre Performances

Where: IDECAF, 28 Le Thanh Ton, D1; 8pm

About: The French Institute in Vietnam presents "Ulysses oi, where are you going?" from the Puzzle group and Thang Long theatre crew. The mythology of Ulysses will be redesigned and presented in a mixture of song and drama in the context of modern day Vietnam. A troupe of artists and an ensemble of musicians will present to the audience one of the greatest tales in ancient Greek mythology. The performances will be in Vietnamese and French and is free of charge.

Contact: Call 3520 6863 or email culturel@consulfrance-hcm.org for details



JUNE 16 - JULY 13

What: Summer Camps

Where: Bidoup National Park, Dalat - Ninh Binh

About: An adventure camp for kids from 11 to 17 years old, organized and operated by Asiamotions, is a great way for children to experience new activities, adapt to new situations, learn new skills and make new friends in a safe environment. Sessions will be held on June 16-22, June 23-29, June 30-July 6 and July 7-13.

Contact: Visit www.facebook.com/AsiaMotions for details

JUNE 18

What: CBC Networking

Where: Boudoir Lounge, Sofitel Saigon Plaza, 17 Le Duan, D1; 6pm

About: Enjoy an evening of drinks and networking with CanCham. Meet some new people while reuniting with some familiar faces as well. Mix and mingle and share some stories while expanding your network and enjoying some canapés and drink specials. Come out and meet some new contacts from all different types of industry sectors and other business chambers. CanCham and co-hosting members are entitled to free admission provided they show their membership cards while non-members are charged VND50,000.

Contact: Email hcmc@canchamvietnam.org for details

JUNE 19

What: Craig Thomas Gallery - 5th Anniversary Exhibition

Where: Craig Thomas Gallery, 27i Tran Nhat Duat, D1

About: To celebrate the fifth anniversary of its founding, Craig Thomas Gallery will be holding a group exhibition of 12 Vietnamese artists opening on June 19 and continuing through July 18. The work on display will include painting, sculpture and installation and will feature artists from throughout the country, many of whom have had solo exhibitions in recent years at CTG.

Contact: Visit www.cthomasgallery.com for details



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JUNE 20

What: Friendly Neighborhood Bike Ride

Where: Starts at The Bike Shop, 250 Nguyen Van Huong, D2

About: The Bike Shop is running its community Bike Ride every month to share the joy of cycling. The ride is organized in District 2 and ends up in a bar to share a drink and meet new neighbors. Bike enthusiasts from the age of 12 are all invited to join this fun event. Helmet, lights and smiles are mandatory.

Contact: Email thebikeshopvn@gmail.com for more info



JUNE 25

What: AmCham Palooza Party

Where: InterContinental Asiana Saigon, Corner Hai Ba Trung & Le Duan Boulevard, D1; 6pm

About: The monthly Palooza Party is a platform to develop new friendships, networking opportunities and information exchange. People from all age groups are welcome to attend. Free admission for members and VND100,000 for non-members including free canapés.

Contact: Email contact@amchamvietnam.com for details



JUNE 21-22

What: Wedding Fair

Where: Grand Ballroom, Mövenpick Hotel Saigon, 253 Nguyen Van Troi, Phu Nhuan

About: Couples can check out wedding cars from Mercedes Benz, the latest wedding dress collection by Koyuki, Minh Loc Makeup & Wedding Dress in combination with stylist jewelries, wedding rings by Cuu Long Jewelry. Professional photographers from BL Duy Studio and Ngoc Huy Studio will recommend you fashionable, creative wedding photography styles. Leading wedding experts and planners from Serenade, Chocolate Graphics, Y Tuong Card, and Vietnam Wedding Planner will help you plan your dream wedding. Future brides can have free consultation and special gifts from Lancôme who will reveal beauty secrets and makeup tips for your special day.

The Wedding Fair will feature lucky draw prizes. Exclusively during the event, guests can also receive 10 percent off on total bill for deposit for future wedding, 15 percent off on total bill for full payment of future wedding and complimentary upgrade to luxury suite for honeymoon stay including breakfast at Mövenpick Hotel Saigon.

Contact: Email dung.ngo@moevenpick.com for details

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JUNE 26

What: Canvas & Wine: Modigliani Self Portrait

Where: VinSpace Art Studio, 6 Le Van Mien, D2; 6:30pm - 9pm

About: Modigliani was a unique artist with a very particular approach to portraiture. With the help of a mirror you will have the fun experience of portraying yourself in his style. No previous experience in figure painting is needed.

Contact: Visit www.vin-space.com for details



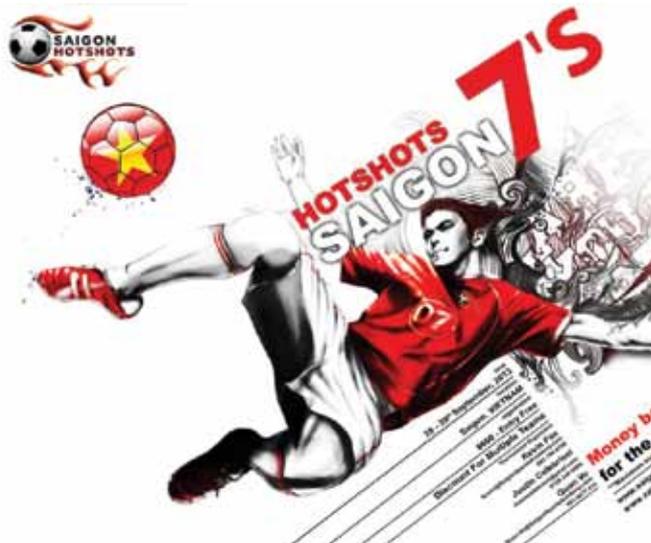
JUNE 28

What: Folks Blues Concert

Where: IDECAF, 28 Le Thanh Ton, D1; 8pm

About: The French Institute in Vietnam presents a Folks Blues concert with singer Mélissa Laveaux whose style is a combination of folk, indie pop and her signature percussive finger-style blues guitar all topped with her rich and gritty vocals. Born to Haitian parents in Montreal, Mélissa moved to France six years ago when she signed to No Format (also home to Chilly Gonzales and Julia Saar) and in 2008 released her debut album *Camphor and Copper*. Her new album *Dying Is A Wild Night* gives an intimate insight into her difficult first few years in Europe. The title is borrowed from American poet Emily Dickinson's *Dying Is A Wild Night And A New Road*, and is symbolic of her feeling towards cutting ties with her country. Entrance is VND100,000, 50 percent discount for students.

Contact: Call 3520 6863 or email culturel@consulfrance-hcm.org for info



JUNE 30

What: Deadline for Registration for Saigon 7's International Football Tournament

Where: RMIT, 702 Nguyen Van Linh, D7

About: Football team Saigon Hotshots will hold its second annual Saigon 7's International Football Tournament on September 20-21. The tournament will have two divisions - the Open and Masters Categories. The Open category is available to all teams with players aged 16+. The Masters category is available to all teams with all players aged 35+. Entry fee is VND12,600,000/team. Tournament fee covers pitch rental, referees, water stations on pitch, trophies for top finishing teams, captain's meeting, opening party allowance and awards. The open registration payment deadline is June 30. Teams failing to meet the deadline will be accepted on a first come, first served basis after that until the roster is full.

Contact: Visit www.saigonhotshots.com for details

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Troi Oi

The country by numbers



3 billion liters of beer a year are consumed by Vietnamese people, according to the latest numbers released at a conference held in Hanoi in May to review the ministry of health's new campaign to discourage unhealthy drinking. Consumption of beer in Vietnam has increased continuously, especially among young people and women. Apart from the beer, Vietnamese consumed more than 68 million liters of alcohol annually.

According to market survey company Eurowatch, Vietnamese consumed 32 liters per capita in 2012, the highest rate in Southeast Asia, third in Asia (after China and Japan) and 28th in the world.

The country's beer market recorded an annual growth rate of 15 percent in 2012, in spite of the fact that its per capita income that year was just USD1,540, among the lowest in the region, according to Eurowatch.

A government official said the increasing beer consumption has led to increasing traffic accidents and domestic violence, and a law prohibiting civil servants from drinking during working hours has not been effectively enforced.

Takeshi Kasai, the World Health Organization's representative to Vietnam, said consumption of alcoholic drinks is common among more than 70 percent of Vietnamese men, of which one in four drink at harmful levels.



2,500 year old relics accidentally unearthed in central Vietnam. The Co Tu minority people were digging the foundations for a new home in a resettlement area in Nam Giang District's Ta Binh Ward when they struck a trove of pottery pieces, vases, strings and pots buried under the ground. Most of the relics were thrown away, some agate beads given to children as toys.

A group of archaeologists from the Sa Huynh Culture Museum recently spent hours excavating the site, unearthing relics they believe belonged to the Sa Huynh civilization. Archaeologists dug up a single urn containing jewelry, precious stones and an iron statue of a horse. The statue dated back 2,000-2,500 years.

Considered one of the most prominent ancient Vietnamese cultures of the Iron Age, the Sa Huynh civilization is believed to have flourished between 1,000BC and 200AD in central and southern Vietnam.



1,000 year-old engravings on an ancient stele in Ha Nam Province were severely damaged when a team of workmen was hired to hastily restore the structure so it could be officially recognized as a national treasure.

According to Duong, a researcher at the Hanoi-based Han Nom Institute, local residents reported a group of workers hired by the district culture department used a grindstone, sandpaper and iron brushes to 'clean' moss from the stele's surface. "It was their ignorance that destroyed the treasure," he said.

Built in 1121 during the Ly Dynasty (1009-1225), the Sung Thien Dien Linh stele was among the additional 37 artifacts recognized as national treasures by the nation's Prime Minister late last year.

9th

century national heritage monastery which is gradually disintegrating. A national heritage recognition hasn't done much to protect a massive 9th century monastery that's rapidly decaying in central Vietnam. People in Quang Nam Province

are hoping that an application submitted in February for a "special" national heritage recognition will lead to greater effort to preserve it. The former site of the monastery was first recognized as a heritage site 14 years ago. During a recent visit, however, nearly all of the buildings had been consumed by trees and shrubs. Many sandstone relics, some of which may be as much as 1,000 years old, had been charred by local trash fires.

Historical documents show that the Khmer King Indravarman II had a Buddhist monastery built in 875 to worship the god Laksmindra Lokesvara Svabhayada.

It was excavated by French architect and archeologist H Parmentier in 1902 and was named Dong Duong, after a local village.



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The Bulletin

Promotions and News in HCMC and beyond..



VERY NGON ROBES

Try Very Ngon Homewares' newest addition - the unisex kimono-style robe for a multitude of occasions. The robe comes in three designs – the ever popular Duy Tan/ Boy Emperor; the lively Dong Khoi Street/Rue Catinat in Saigon and a new image featuring two opium smoking women from the north.

In addition to robes, Very Ngon Homewares have also added drawstring lingerie/shoe/whatever-you-like bags to their steadily growing range. Ideal for travelling, storage at home or as a lightweight gift, this accessory is generous in size, features a knotted drawstring and comes in a range of designs including the Saigon Opera House, Guitar Woman and Dap Cau Street in the north.

Very Ngon's latest tea towel design also features Hanoi's iconic building - the Opera House, completed in 1911, and was designed in the architectural likeness of the Paris Opera House.

Established in 2010, Very Ngon Homewares hand-prints home accessories using images of early 1900s Indochine. For further info or to order call Lise Nguyen-Owen (093 803 6920) or Nguyen Thi Minh Hieu (090 377 0291) or visit www.facebook.com/VeryNgonHomewares.

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For enquiries, email sales-dalat@anamandara-resort.com or call (84) 3555 888.

NEW BARBECUE GARDEN RESTAURANT

Barbecue Garden (www.barbecuegarden.com) opens a second restaurant at 134 – 136 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1. The 1200-meter-square Barbecue Garden 2 is a deep green garden decorated with sparkling lanterns. The outdoor section is open air with a retractable roofing system when the rain comes. The restaurant offers more than 100 barbecue dishes made of various ingredients, including pork, beef, chicken, wild boar, deer, goat, rabbit, lamb, fish, shrimp, squid and crab.

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EXHIBITION

Galerie Quynh presents Truc-Anh's second solo exhibition at the gallery on 65 De Tham, D1 from May 22 - July 19. Titled *oNiReaKHoWaRiGNoRaLiSME*, the show marks a stylistic shift from the artist's *Croire/Douter* series with its dominant black and white compositions to vibrantly colored painting.

This new body of work draws from the artist's continued interest in the dichotomy of belief and disbelief, of certainty and doubt, reality and imagination, and the ambiguity of chaos. The title of the exhibition, the first part which is pronounced 'oneiric', poses itself as a riddle and reveals some of the diverse ideas, concepts and sources of inspiration for the artist, which range from art and human history to the history of representation and contemporary popular culture. The 'isme' (ism) ending of the indecipherable word suggests a school of thought, to which the artist adheres and which he invites us to participate in. Truc-Anh will be giving an artist talk on June 17 at 6pm.

THE TASTE OF THAILAND

Experience the Best of Thai cuisine from June 2 to 8 at Novotel Saigon Centre (email h7965-mk@accor.com for info). The hotel is proud to host the Thai Food Promotion with Chef Warinn Tissaruk and Chef Patcharaporn Kaewrueng from Novotel Impact Bangkok. Tickle your taste buds with flavor of Thai with tom yum goong, beef massaman curry, mee kra-ti, pla rad prik - fried whole fish and much more.

MASSIVE PARKING AREA

Saigon's first multi-storey parking lot has just opened on Vo Van Kiet in District 1. The 10 level building can accommodate 1,000 cars and 500-800 motorbikes. The ground floor is designated to offer maintenance and washing services. It has five elevators for carrying vehicles and three for people. The Saigon Transportation Mechanical Corporation (Samco) is said to have invested USD24 million to build the massive car park. Car parking fee costs VND2 million per month (VND20,000 per hour).



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RMIT Vietnam's Executive Development Program will hold its first course in June as part of a significant initiative by the university to support growth in the number of Vietnam's highly skilled and qualified professionals. The program draws on its capability as a global university of technology, design and business with more than 10 years of operations in Vietnam. Program participants will have access to a pool of experienced facilitators residing in Vietnam, who bring international experience across a diverse range of disciplines including human resources management, marketing, communications, advertising, management, telecommunications, high technology manufacturing and energy.

The first program includes courses in accounting, leadership, creativity, risk management, project management, capital budgeting (finance) and intercultural competence. Courses consist of 21 hours of face-to-face learning supplemented by work-based activities and can be taken as a stand-alone or can be grouped to complete the full RMIT Vietnam Executive Development Program. The courses are designed to assist talented middle and senior managers and entrepreneurs to grow into well-rounded leaders for their organizations.

Visit www.rmit.edu.vn/develop-your-workforce for details

TREATS FOR FATHERS

On June 13-15, New World Saigon Hotel's (76 Le Lai, D1) Parkview Restaurant offers Father's Day brunch priced at VND1,200,000 per person including a free flow of house wine, draft beer and soft drinks, or VND1,350,000 per person including additional champagne and Father's Day dinner priced at VND960,000 including one glass of red or white wine.

On the same days, Dynasty will present a set menu to celebrate the influential role of fathers in society. Priced at VND630,000 per person and available for both lunch and dinner, the six-course set menu starts with roasted suckling pig and Cantonese style roast duck, double-boiled chicken soup with melon and dried scallops, and more. Dad will be treated to a shot of "Linh Chi Dai Bo" wine, and receive a special gift set, and a 20 percent discount voucher redeemable at Dynasty in July 2014.

Meanwhile, on June 1-30, The Lounge offers drinks for fathers with birthdays during the month of June priced the same as their age. Pricing for other guests starts from VND90,000 per drink. And on June 7-15, The Spa offers a 90-minute hot stone massage for VND1,370,000 per person, with an additional complimentary 30-minute neck and shoulder treatment.

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MÖVENPICK HOTEL SAIGON JUNE PROMOTIONS

Visit Mövenpick Hotel Saigon every Sunday in June for a lunch buffet featuring a wide range of family and children favorite dishes. The food package is priced at VND449,000++, 50 percent off for children under 12, complimentary for children under five. Entertainment such as clowns, games, face painting, balloons and a special gift await children.

Cafe Saigon's Seafood Night on all Fridays and Saturdays in June offers a food package for VND880,000++ per person. Lotus Court's Express Dim Sum Lunch every day is priced VND149,000++ per person and the Dim Sum Brunch every Saturday and Sunday at VND350,000++ per person.

Stay at Mövenpick Hotel Saigon and enjoy up to 30 percent off with its Summer Sunshine Promotions and Weekend Getaway Package. Starting from USD90 per night, Summer Sunshine offer is valid for stays between June 1 and September 30, 2014.

For booking inquiry, email hotel.saigon@moevenpick.com.

INTERCONTINENTAL JUNE PROMOTIONS

Market 39 (corner of Le Duan and Hai Ba Trung, D1) restaurant celebrates Children's Day on June 1 by offering children from 6-12 a buffet at VND400,000++ per child and complimentary for child under six (child must be accompanied by an adult). The buffet for adults is priced VND1,098,000++ each person including free flow of selected house wines, Tiger draught beer, soft drinks and signature cocktails.

And on June 15, Market 39 offers a lavish meal including champagne, salmon, steak, lobster and a variety of desserts to celebrate Father's Day. Father's Day brunch is priced at VND1,599,000++ per person including free flow of Veuve Clicquot Champagne, cocktails, house-wine, beer, soft drinks, coffee and tea. A buffet dinner is priced at VND1,098,000++ per person including free flow of selected house wines, Tiger draught beer, soft drinks and signature cocktails.



FUNDRAISER

The American School of Vietnam teamed up with Score Tech, Al Fresco's and Heartbeat Vietnam with the goal of raising USD5,000 in a one week fundraiser to save the lives of five children in desperate need of heart surgery. It is estimated that there are currently as many as 30,000 children in Vietnam in need of heart surgery. Heartbeat Vietnam identifies the most critical cases of children who need immediate surgery and provides them with life-saving surgery.

The American School of Vietnam has undertaken this fundraiser as a way of fulfilling one of its stated goals of altruistically giving back to the community. Students and teachers have actively raised money through a variety of activities, including: donation envelopes, bake sales, pizza sales, Tee shirt sales, carnival-style games, and a variety of other fun events. The fundraising week kicked off with an all-school assembly on May 19th with live music, videos, and guest speakers. The fundraising also had a "Fun Dress" week at TAS with themes each day, including: Red Shirt Day, Crazy Hat Day, Hawaiian Shirt Day, Cowboy/Cowgirl Day, and Superhero Day.

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Ahhh! Ohhh!

Part acrobatics, part dance, part circus, AO is all entertainment

TEXT BY JAMES PHAM IMAGES PROVIDED BY THE AO SHOW

IT'S KNOWN AS *The Machine* and right now at least, it's anything but well-oiled. In this particularly difficult sequence, dozens of bamboo baskets must make their way up to the top of a three-level platform, then zigzag down bamboo poles in a human-powered perpetual motion machine moving at dizzying speeds. One break in concentration on the part of just one group member and it all falls apart. During this afternoon rehearsal, tempers flare amongst the group of multi-talented 20-some 20-somethings. Before long, though, the team starts to gel, baskets are moving with clockwork precision and the final performers slide down in a fit of

giggles. This is AO.

With Vietnamese accents, *À Ó* is pronounced Ahhh! Ohhh! — expressions of surprise that this reinvented show has elicited from fans around the world — a giddy combination of acrobatics, contemporary cirque, dance, martial arts and music. It's *Stomp!* meets *Cirque du Soleil* meets hip-hop dance battle meets *Ringling Brothers* all set to the live soundtrack of Vietnamese opera, heart-stopping drum beats and haunting solos. There's no real storyline to the non-stop hour-long show other than the bamboo props that are part of every act — trays

doubling as lily pads or Matrix-style projectiles, coracles as launch pads or a giant pendulum from which performers hurl themselves, and huge bamboo poles that morph from delicate monkey bridges to the walls of a vibrant tenement. It's frenetic. It's sweet. It's chaotic. It's powerful. For all those disparate reasons, it shouldn't work. But exactly because of all those disparate reasons, it does.

Created in 2005 in Hanoi, the original show (called "My Village") went on to tour Europe and Asia, with more than 300 shows in three years. In 2012, the creators brought the show to Ho Chi Minh City, but with a distinctly southern vibe. Where the northern show is softer and more cultural, the southern cousin, just like its new home, is more brash, fun and out to impress.

Flipping Out

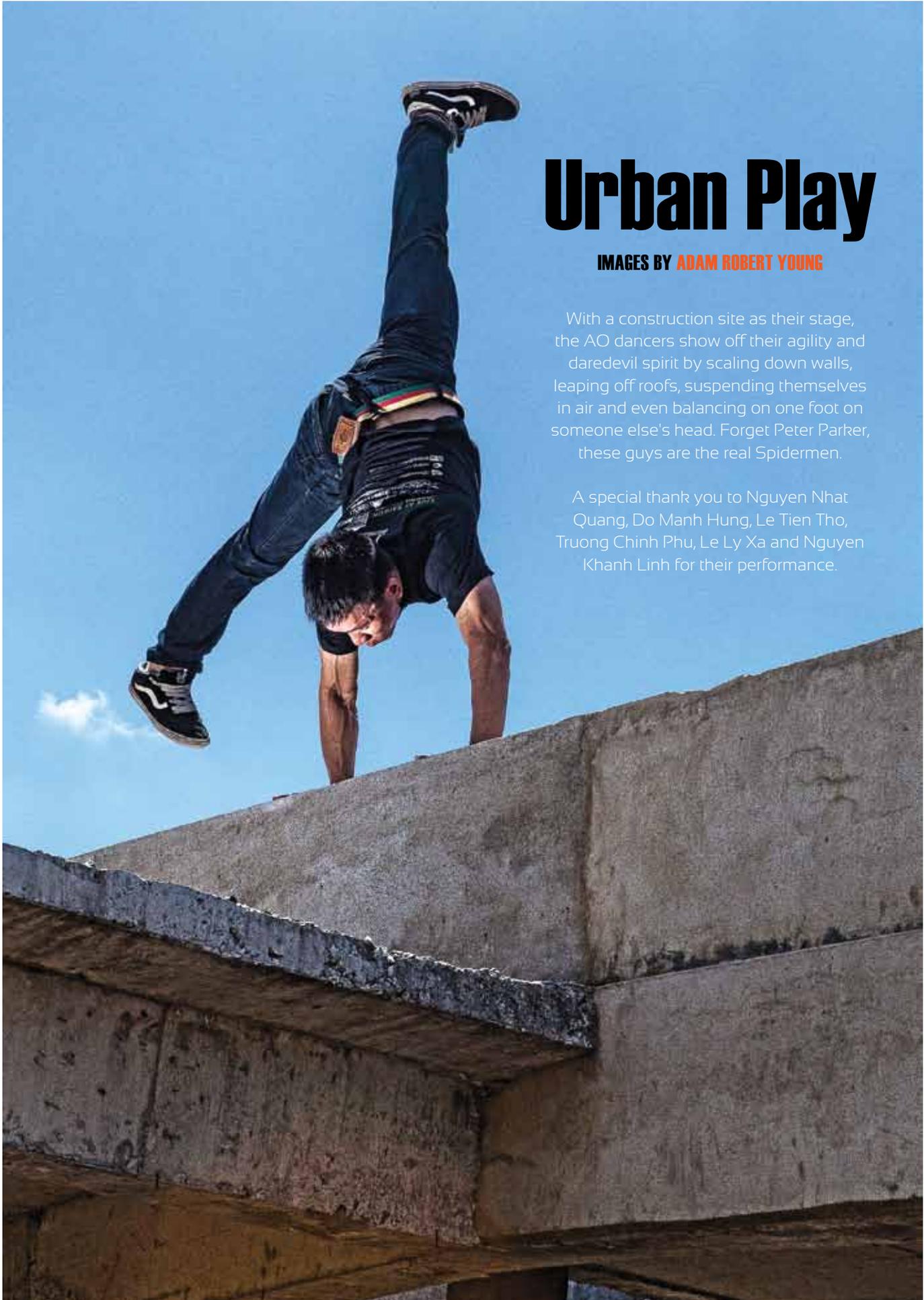
AO doesn't quite fit any mold, and that's probably because its 20 or so performers don't either. Each with a background in dance, stuntwork, Parkour or circus, they're more likely to be found actually doing *Spiderman* moves than watching them in a movie theater somewhere.

"Ever since I was a kid, I've never been able to sit still. Even while I was studying Business Admin (my parents wanted me to get an office job), I was doing hip-hop dancing in a crew, then Parkour then stuntwork," says Tho, 24, the troupe's star breakdancer and budding choreographer. "AO is all about working together. It just takes one person to mess up a performance. But what we're trying to achieve here is to dignify everyday [bamboo] objects, for people to remember Vietnam, for them to say 'ahhh! ohhh!' just like the name."

"This is so different from a regular circus," says Ly Xa, 27, who has been involved in circus training since the age of 11. "Those basic moves have been passed down from generation to generation. You could be doing those same moves for three to four years in the circus. With AO, it's all about the creativity. It's different every time. It's like life. It's no longer a performance," she says in between practicing contortionist moves balanced on an upturned basket.

Meanwhile, Chinh Phu, 22, uses his Parkour experience to map out exactly where he wants to land as he flips from the swinging bamboo basket boat suspended by ropes from the ceiling of the Saigon Opera House. "I'm the only boy in my family, so my parents are really worried about my health. When I was little and tweaked an ankle or something playing basketball, that was it; my parents hardly let me out of the house. I had to tell them I was going out to study, but in reality, I'd be doing Parkour in parks and on the city streets. I never imagined I'd be part of a contemporary circus show as great as this."

AO has three to four regular performances each week at the Saigon Opera House. Tickets for the electrifying hour-long show start at VND599,000. See www.aoshowsaigon.com for booking details. ■

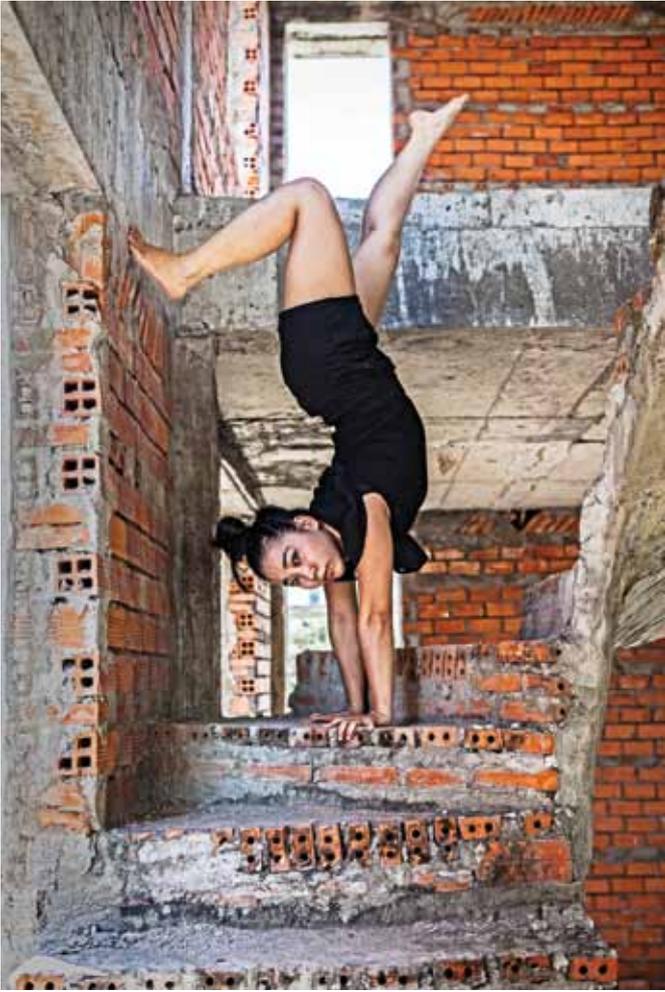


Urban Play

IMAGES BY **ADAM ROBERT YOUNG**

With a construction site as their stage, the AO dancers show off their agility and daredevil spirit by scaling down walls, leaping off roofs, suspending themselves in air and even balancing on one foot on someone else's head. Forget Peter Parker, these guys are the real Spidermen.

A special thank you to Nguyen Nhat Quang, Do Manh Hung, Le Tien Tho, Truong Chinh Phu, Le Ly Xa and Nguyen Khanh Linh for their performance.









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The Writing's on the Wall

Saigon's youngest graffiti crew speak about vandalism, jail time and their passion for art

TEXT BY **NPD KHANH** IMAGES BY **ADAM ROBERT YOUNG**

EVERY WEEKEND OR so a group of teenagers can be seen gathering in front of a long stretch of washed out wall near an alley off Dang Van Bi street, adjacent to the Truong Tho milk factory. "You hoodlum punks. Go vandalize somewhere else. Get out of here!" yells a lady when they get too close to her house. It's apparent that their presence is unwanted but they continue with what they're doing – spray painting the wall.

They may be only teenaged schoolboys but they're far from being hoodlums. They're Sons of God (SOG), a graffiti art

crew comprised of six boys between 17 and 18 years old. Buis is the leader with Cur, Krostic, Tin, T.O.X. and Thiinh completing the group. SOG started roughly a year ago stemming from a shared passion for graffiti artwork, and trouble with adults and the police along the way have only forged a tighter unity among them.

"We are, I think, a third generation crew since the start of graffiti in Vietnam in 2006. The first ones are UFO of Saigon and The Street Jockey of Hanoi," says Cur. "We formed our crew when we were 16, but many of us dabbled long before that.

Vietnamese graffiti artists really don't get any younger than us."

"We started out with the wrong idea of graffiti, like a lot of other young people who went along with the hype," explains one of the members. "We learned to draw from Japanese manga art. At first only copying, and then creating our own versions, our own style. It's about the same for 8x, 9x generation Vietnamese. For us, that was the one art form easiest to access."

Some of them already had a background in art, others were simply intrigued or



tagged along for fun.

"Somebody suggested the name Sons of God," says Tin. "It sounds really boastful and not actually that good. But then again, if you're going to leave your name on the street, you want people to remember it and for that, boastful does the job. Eventually, we agreed on it."

Their spray painting began the same way as countless other graffiti artists, with actual illegal defacing of public and private properties, one of which happened to be the subterranean wall of Thu Thiem tunnel.

"That one was a co-op job. Lots of crews came, not just us. We nearly got into trouble. The police came," remembers Cur. "In another session, a full-blown painting and not just a tagging or bombing, we got caught by the police. We ended up spending the night before Tet in the police station. My dad said, 'Take responsibility for your passion.' What he meant was that he wasn't going to bail me out the next time that happens."

And what's their opinion on the differences between the graffiti subculture in Vietnam and the West? "It's pretty friendly. It's not the same as the Western ones as all," states Cur.

"When I was younger, my uncle, who lived in America, sometimes came around to check out my graffiti art," says one of the crew. "He says even graffiti art in America doesn't have such a good reputation and that only the African-Americans in the black neighborhoods do it. People tend to stay away. It's not the same way here at all. Sure there are some rough kids, but all in all, the older crowd of graffiti artists are supportive and open."

Graffiti began its rise alongside hip-hop and breakdancing in Vietnam back in 2006, starting first in Hanoi. Like other youth fads, it has its highs and lows and once the hype fades, it is usually a small group of hardcore enthusiasts who remain. Vietnamese graffiti art has had three such highs.

"There are not that many of us," says Tin. "Not enough to foster the kind of overly competitive street environment that some would expect. We tag. We bomb. We mark our territory, but nobody's going to give you a good thrashing if you happen to step into their territory. Instead, we have co-ops where two or more crews will get together and do a shared job on one wall. It's our way of getting to know each other, and also our way of learning from each

other. Since we are the youngest, there's a lot to learn."

It was from these older groups that the Sons of God actually learned the proper way to view graffiti, as art and not vandalism. "We have learned to be polite and accommodating. We have asked for permission to paint on people's walls and houses instead of bombing a big one on theirs without asking. Our art is coming along. When something is beautiful, it's harder to dismiss it. What it all comes down to is a matter of trust. Once you have proven yourself trustworthy school kids, people don't find it that hard to let you paint on their walls," Cur says.

There comes a time when childhood whims and fun must end though, and that time is approaching for T.O.X. as college and adulthood is eminent this year. "We have our hopes and our ambitions. We have never actually earned money from our graffiti, but there are old bros before us who succeeded and made a living out of what they love, like the crews behind Saigon Outcast, or Zero Station and their Creative Space. Now it's our time of testing, and we've got to find out whether we will work a day job to feed our passion, or will our passion become our job and feed us." ■

Humans of Ho Chi Minh City

Celebrating the people we encounter on a daily basis but never get the chance to speak to

TEXT BY JAMES PHAM IMAGES BY NGOC TRAN



"After years of doing this, I have really good aim."



"This hat means I'm proud of my country. China had better watch out."



"I know it's a sin to kill animals. But they taste good."



"What's your greatest struggle right now?"
"If I don't make VND 100,000, my wife is going to be real mad."

Hoang Hoa Tham Market, Binh Thanh

BACK IN 2010, a 26-year-old unemployed bond trader turned a weekend hobby into an internet sensation. Since then, amateur photographer Brandon Stanton has posted more than 5,000 photos of everyday people to his Facebook page, named "Humans of New York" or HONY for short. What started out as a project to photograph 10,000 people and plot them on a map has spawned a huge following of more than 6 million fans on Facebook and Tumblr as well as a recent book. Looking back, Brandon says that the concept really took off when he started talking to his subjects and included brief quotes along with the photos.

"Somewhere along the way, HONY

began to take on a much different character. I started collecting quotes and short stories from the people I met, and began including these snippets alongside the photographs. Taken together, these portraits and captions became the subject of a vibrant blog," he writes on his site (www.humansofnewyork.com). Brandon has written a new chapter in photography. He produces, edits, curates and publishes his own work, making it freely available to share online, with no watermarks. The idea is so pure, so simple — that of connecting with your fellow man and listening to the stories behind the faces — that it has inspired more than 500 clones, including

Humans of Tel Aviv, Souls of San Francisco and Faces of Kuala Lumpur.

In an homage to Humans of New York, *Oi* set out to capture the faces and stories of Ho Chi Minh City. The setting was *Cho Cay Queo* (Crooked Tree Market) in Binh Thanh District, a vibrant stretch of 400 meters where everything takes place along the sidewalk on both sides of the street. There are no market buildings. There's not even a place to park. Instead, vendors sell from their homes, from makeshift stalls or from the backs of motorbikes, with customers walking from nearby neighborhoods or simply shopping from the seat of their motorbikes. ■



"These tea leaves will cure diabetes. Drink it for eight days and come back and see me. You can also boil them up and make a bath out of them; it's good for your skin. Or if you want to be dark like me, just don't rinse it off."



"I've been sitting in one market or another for 50 years."

THE MYTH:

Is it true that the locals use human urine to treat diseases?

YES. The use of human urine and other organic waste to treat illnesses is a traditional Vietnamese folk remedy called “*Nieu Lieu Phap*” (“Urine Therapy”) dating back hundreds of years. Traditionally, only the urine (and fecal matter) of young children, especially boys, was ingested orally or applied as a topical lotion. As to what specific diseases the substances were used for, the answers vary depending on who you ask. Old Vietnamese medicine texts state that the urine of young boys was used by new mothers to replenish blood lost during labor or by women as a remedy for erratic menstruation cycles.

An academic textbook called *Tat Den* by Ngo Tat To, a well-known Vietnamese author who wrote many classics that are still being taught in Vietnamese schools, states urine was used to resuscitate unconscious people suffering from heat stroke or other diseases. Other prescriptions for the use was as a health tonic for various ailments such as burns, open wounds, bug bites, dry skin, joint ache, AIDS, cancer, etc... There was also a time roughly 20 years ago, when urine from young boys was bought and sold at high prices. However, this is slowly fading and is now only practiced in the deep countryside.

‘Urine therapy’ is actually a global phenomenon and is an acknowledged alternative therapy, although a highly controversial one. It has been practiced by ancient Romans, referenced in the Bible (Proverbs 5:15), and the ancient Sanskrit text *Damar Tantra*. Urine therapy is also endorsed and practiced as an effective and low cost alternative treatment by various public figures such as the former Prime Minister of India Morarji Desai, the American pop singer Madonna, British actress Sarah Miles, and former Major League Baseball player Moises Alou... to name a few.

It was a foreign influence that revived this dwindling Vietnamese medical tradition when, in the 1980s, an American text endorsing urine therapy as an effective cancer and

AIDS cure was brought to Vietnam, translated, published, and distributed by the Da Nang publishing house. This book promptly instigated a wave of urine therapy practitioners and was the root cause behind the Vietnamese 80s “urine craze” (as it has been named by the Vietnamese media). Eventually

the book was discredited by both the American Cancer Society and the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Health and Welfare. All copies were confiscated and destroyed due to concern over its negative impact on the mass population of rural Vietnam where it had the most effect. ■



May Oi Reader Photo Contest Results

Indochina



Fan Favorite Winner
Submitted by ZUZANNA K.



Oi Favorite Winner
Submitted by ALEX R.



Fan Favorite Runner Up
Submitted by JULIANA G.



Oi Favorite Runner Up
Submitted by CLEMENT.

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June / July Oi Reader Contest

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- A DECADENT HOMEMADE CAKE?
- SPICY / SWEET / BIZARRE / BEAUTIFUL?

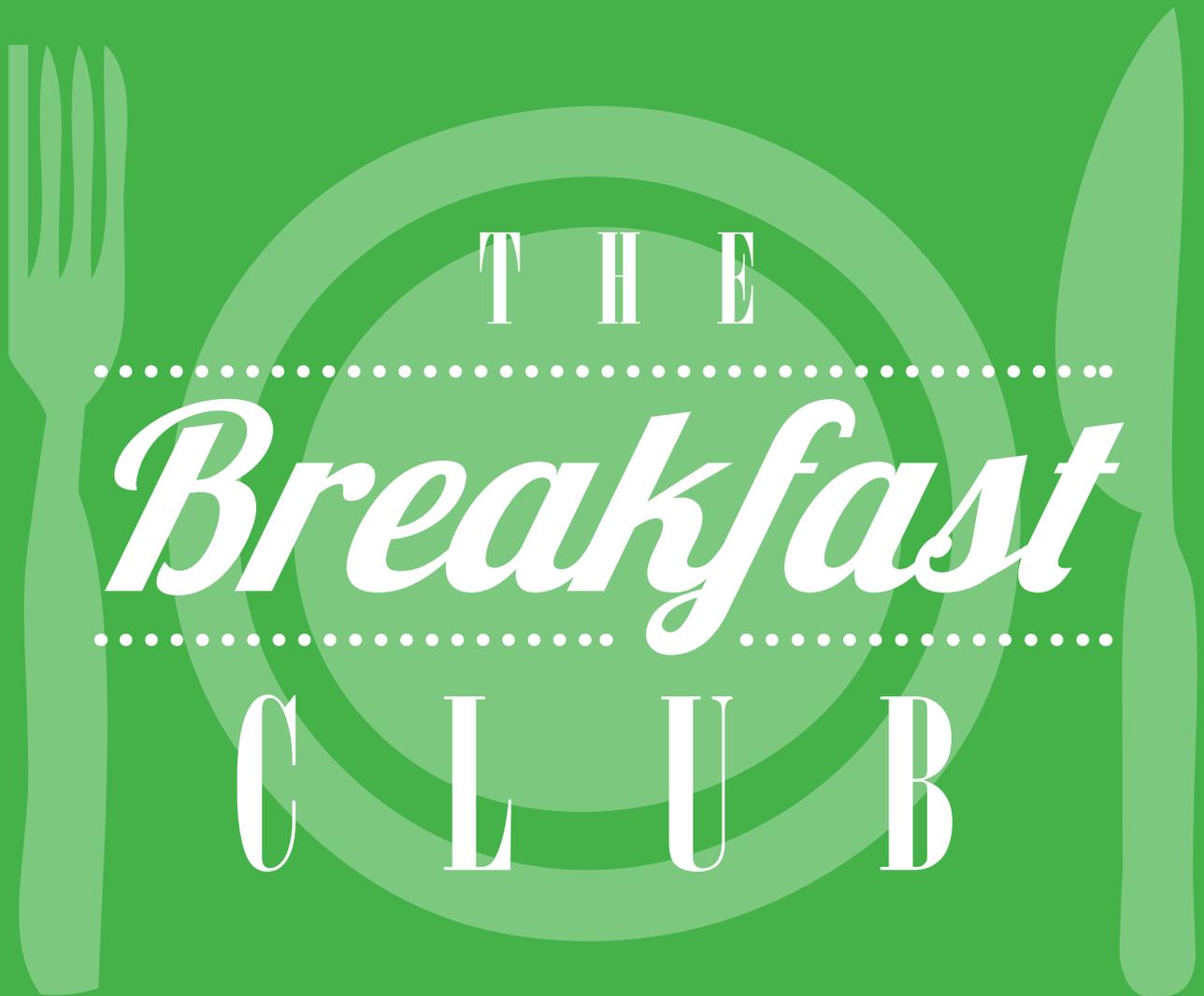




Dear Diners,

We accept the fact that we're sometimes overlooked in the rush to start the day. We might not be as sexy as lunch or dinner. But we think you're crazy to underappreciate us. You may see us as a banh mi or a McMuffin on the way to work. In the simplest terms with the most convenient definitions. But what we found out is that each of us is a lumberjack, a dosa, a schnitzel, a burrito, a crepe and a smoothie. Does that answer your question?

Sincerely yours....



TEXT BY JAMES PHAM, NPD KHANH, HUY TRAN, LYRA DACIO,
LOTTIE DELAMAIN, TRAN THUY HA MY & CHRISTINE VAN

IMAGES BY NGOC TRAN AND ADAM ROBERT YOUNG

Italian

BREAKFAST WITH A NEW YORK ATTITUDE



IF YOU HAPPEN to be in Italy and on the hunt for an elaborate egg and bacon breakfast, then you can *fuggedaboutit!* For Italians, breakfast is not the elaborate affair common elsewhere. Mattia, who hails from Milan and is currently a manager at Ciao Bella, recalls breakfast in his native country as “an espresso and croissant” or some variation of coffee and pastry. While in Rome, a *cornetto* (a croissant with either custard or jam) is more popular, and after engulfing that in five minutes it’s off to work.

“People are probably just uncomfortable with salt in the morning, sweet is usually desired,” says Mattia. And if there’s not enough time for a pastry, then at least a coffee fix to start the day is essential. Italian rationale is that appetites are usually saved for later in the day when the food selection supposedly gets better as the day progresses. However, those behind Ciao Bella believe that breakfast time is the perfect start of the day to whet your appetite and brings to the

table what an Italian breakfast would be if Italians actually had the time to sit down and eat before lunch.

Having managed an Italian restaurant in New York, proprietor of Ciao Bella Tony Fox brings to Vietnam his version of Italian morning dishes with a Big Apple attitude. The Eggs Ciao Bella (VND195,000) is a dish that revolves around a large grilled polenta cake - polenta is made from ground cornmeal and water and was once reserved only for peasants - but here it’s the star of the meal. The kitchen whisks and molds polenta cakes 24 hours in advance for easier grilling the next day to give them a crunchy exterior while maintaining a softer, smoother interior. When served, the polenta cake is placed on a bed of basil pesto, topped with honey roasted ham and melted Fontina cheese, and finally paired with two perfectly poached eggs covered in Hollandaise sauce and Tuscan potatoes on the side. Mixed fruit is also included to avoid any potential overdose of

savory flavors. This combination creates a rustic tasty breakfast. Inspiration comes from the American Eggs Benedict, “but the Italian part is all the Italian ingredients used to make this rich and creamy dish,” says Tony.

Still using all Italian ingredients (many imported), Crespelle (VND175,000) is the Italian equivalent of crepes. The key is to whisk the batter with perfect consistency - not too thick to be cakey, not too thin to tear the wrap - then “bake until the edges are burnt slightly golden brown” for a good crunch. Crespelle is then stuffed with leeks and mushroom, topped with a melting pecorino fonduta cheese and paired with two eggs and mixed fruit - allowing a to and fro battle of savory and sweet in your mouth while creating a light and luscious breakfast. These are just two from a variety of “regionally annotated peasant food” done to perfection with great ingredients.

Ciao Bella: 11 Dong Du, D1

Japanese

RISING WITH THE SUN FOR A MORNING FEAST

OVER THE LAST 150 years, many aspects of Japanese lifestyle, including breakfast, have been heavily Westernized. The percentage of people eating a Western style breakfast of bread and eggs is highest among salarymen and those who live alone, while students and people whose breakfasts are prepared by their mothers more frequently enjoy a Japanese style breakfast. Owner of Achaya Café, Ayako Fuji, has now taken on the role as substitute mother for the city's denizen by recently adding a traditional Japanese breakfast menu to her restaurant.

"A majority [of Japanese] eat *natto* as a healthy start to their day," says Ayako. "Eat it with soy sauce, the pickled vegetables (carrots, daikon and cucumbers) and the pork miso soup (made of thinly-sliced pork, carrots, potatoes and onions in a hot

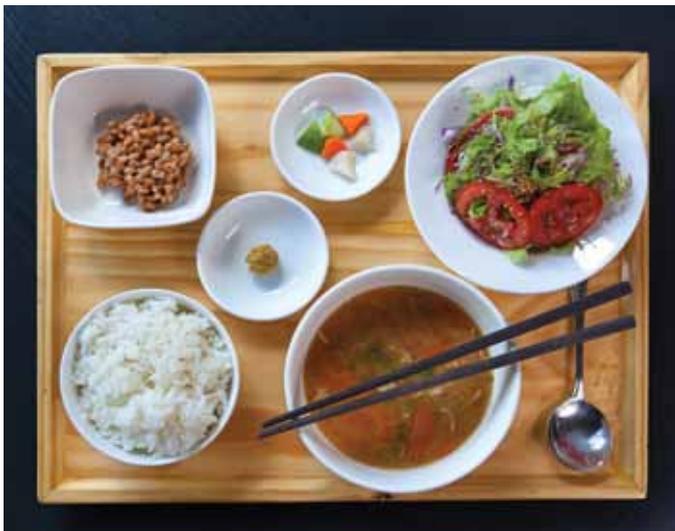
pork and miso broth)." *Natto* (VND98,000) is fermented soybeans, notorious for their pungent smell but paired with the right foods, chosen especially by Ayako, they become a delicious accompaniment to the dish. *Natto* takes two days to prepare in a consistent temperature of 40 degrees Celsius. If you are daring, stir in a bit of Karashi mustard paste - strong and spicy like wasabi - too much may cause an explosion, but a little is enough to go a long way. And to cool down your palate after that adventure, try the fresh salad that's included with the special *dashi* fish sauce dressing that's specially imported from Japan.

Another symbol of a true Japanese breakfast is the *sakeno siokouji yaki teishouku* (VND138,000) or better known as salmon. Yes, Japanese folks eat a great

deal of fish and breakfast is no exception. At Achaya Café salmon is imported for the sake of quality and then marinated in *shio-koji*, a natural Japanese seasoning (also imported) that helps tenderize and add a touch of sweetness without overpowering the dish. The perfectly cooked salmon - not too well done - is paired with a bowl of white rice, side salad, grated daikon and sesame spinach to refresh your palate.

A hearty Japanese breakfast provides energy all through the morning, without getting the 10am faintness one may experience after eating the usual breakfast quickie. And if you can venture beyond Japanese sushi, this place would be worth rolling out of bed for.

Achaya Café: 90 Le Loi, DI



American

EAT BREAKFAST LIKE A KING

BACK IN THE 80s, public service announcements in the US touted breakfast as “the most important meal of the day.” Evidence suggests that people who eat breakfast regularly generally consume more daily calories but are less likely to be overweight. Kids who breakfast may even have better cognitive function, test scores and school attendance, leading some school districts to have a breakfast program, especially for underprivileged children. Adelle Davis, an American pioneer in the field of nutrition, famously said, “Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a common man, and dinner like a pauper,” highlighting the importance of the first meal of the day.

While busy schedules have tended to reverse that order, Middle America is still in love with breakfast, championed by family restaurant chains like Denny’s and IHOP (International House of Pancakes), where breakfast foods are on offer all day long. The truism, “Everything is bigger in America,” applies equally to breakfasts, home of Lumberjack breakfasts which traditionally nourished brawny men for a hard day’s work cutting down trees or working in the fields. Denny’s Lumberjack Slam, two buttermilk pancakes, a slice of grilled ham, two bacon strips, two sausage links and two eggs, plus Hash Browns or grits and choice of bread,

comes in at 1,000 calories, 3,010 milligrams of sodium and a whopping 460 milligrams of cholesterol, unabashedly more than 50 percent of the recommended intake for the entire day. Americans love their breakfasts.

Vietnamese-American Tristan Ngo, chef / owner of The Elbow Room aims to recreate some of his favorite food memories growing up in California. “Nowadays in San Jose, Houston, Los Angeles, there is Vietnamese breakfast everywhere. But back in the late 70s, there was no *com tam*, no *pho*. So I grew up on strictly American breakfasts. Some of the best food I’ve had was the big warm raisin cinnamon roll at school with some milk and OJ.” Other of Tristan’s breakfast memories include selling tickets for USD2 pancake breakfasts as a kid (“If you sold a hundred, you got to go to summer camp for free!”) and finding a corner at Denny’s (the place to hang out before there was Starbucks) to study, fueled by all-day breakfast foods.

“Americans, we like sturdy, heavy foods. When I go back to the US, I love doughnuts, bagels, and proper egg muffins. There are specialty shops that make just bagels or just muffins. The portion sizes in the US are just ridiculous, though. Sometimes you can’t even finish one, but it sets you up for the whole day.”

At The Elbow Room, a rustic homage to

retro Americana, with its exposed brick, black and white vintage photographs and Nora Jones soundtrack, diners can order breakfast all day, including the Lumberjack (two pancakes, two eggs, bacon, smoked ham, home fries and toast, VND200,000), Eggs Benedict (two poached eggs, smoked ham on thick whole wheat bread, smothered in Hollandaise sauce with a side of home fries, VND140,000) and classic French Toast (four extra thick slices dusted with powdered sugar and cinnamon, served with maple syrup, VND125,000). Even better, splurge and get the blueberry pancakes (additional VND20,000) where the blueberries are mixed right in the batter. Topped with a slab of butter and drizzled with maple syrup, there’s nothing better.

“The secret to the perfect pancake is in the mix. Too thin and it’ll fall apart when you pour syrup on it. Too thick and it becomes hard. It has to be fluffy and that’s hard to do,” says Tristan. “San Francisco had a lot of small shops that did really good breakfasts. I’d even schedule my classes so I’d have time for breakfast. I’m trying to bring that kind of American-style breakfast to Vietnam. Two of everything. Now that’s a real breakfast!”

The Elbow Room: 52 Pasteur, D1



Turkish

THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS



STRADDLING ASIA AND Europe, and gateway to the Middle East, it comes as no surprise that Turkey combines the best of all worlds, past and present. Part of the late 13th century Ottoman Empire which spanned much of Southeastern Europe, Western Asia and North Africa, modern day Turkey shares a border with no less than eight countries. It borrows culinary influences from Greece to the west with its mint, olives and olive oil, from the spices of the Middle East and rich dairy products (think: yogurt, butter and cheeses) of the northern grassy highlands near the Black Sea towards Georgia and Armenia.

Jodi Ettenberg, author of *The Food Traveler's Handbook*, says "breakfast in Turkish is called '*kahvalti*' which means 'under coffee' or 'before coffee' because Turkish coffee is usually served later in the day". Recalling the month she spent in Turkey, Jodi observes: "The Turks are obsessed with their food. As with Vietnam, food is the focal point of the community. Breakfast is an incredible affair. It's meant to be spent sitting at a table loaded with cold meats, tomatoes, cucumbers, bread and cheese, and lasts hours talking to family."

Possibly nowhere in Turkey is the breakfast culture as strong as in the Kurdish-

majority city of Van, in eastern Turkey, where *Kahvaltı Sokak*, or "Breakfast Street," is just that — an entire street dedicated to specialty restaurants serving breakfast foods all day. It's not unusual for a breakfast spread to have flatbreads and crusty loaves to mop up the rich *kaymak* (Turkish-style clotted cream), honey dripping from the comb, homemade jams, *tahini* (sesame seed paste) or *cacik* (seasoned, strained yogurt with parsley, herbs and garlic). Hearty eaters may order a side of eggs, either hard-boiled or in the form of *menemen*, a mix between an omelet and scrambled eggs with the addition of tomatoes, green peppers and onions. A bowl of black and green olives might provide the salty, balanced with a plate of fresh fruit for its sweetness, along with more cheeses, like Van's own *otlu peyniri*, a semi-hard salty cheese flavored with wild mountain herbs, and slices of cucumbers and tomatoes to claim whatever space is left on the table. A pot of black tea presented in tulip-shaped glasses washes everything down.

Cindy Kawak, the French-Lebanese manager of Au Parc, says that her earliest memories of a Middle Eastern style breakfast was "just many things on the table".

"In the West, we start off with something to drink and then have snacks and then

proceed to the food. But in the Middle East, we like to eat and eat and eat. It's any time we can sit down with friends and family. On the weekends, brunch lasts from 11-4."

Au Parc's Turkish Breakfast (VND195,000) comes with a basket of homemade breads including a lovely sour dough typically found in Egypt, brioche and baguette, on which to slather a selection of honey and jams including mulberry and orange / kumquat along with a heavenly Marou chocolate spread. A separate basket of freshly baked pita, bread sticks and cucumber and carrot sticks is to scoop up the creamy hummus. A plate of local fruit balances out the saltiness of the feta and olives for good measure. Sensing the lavishness of the spread (weekend brunch also includes *menemen* or a spinach and feta omelet at VND260,000). Cindy is quick to add that "the base is healthy".

"If you take the ingredients — tomatoes, feta, olives and yogurt — it's healthy. But it's true that people spend their time to eat so that leads to quantity. Even if you just have breakfast, every five minutes your grandmother will tell you to eat something. It's just in the culture."

Au Parc: 23 Han Thuyen, D1

Indian

IDLING AWAY IN THE MORNING



INDIA IS HOME to 1.2 billion people, 2,000 ethnic groups, six of the world's major religions and countless minor ones, 22 officially recognized languages, 1,635 listed mother tongues, and an estimated 10,000 different dialects and variations. And when it comes to food, the numbers are just as high with the cuisine mainly divided into North and South along with at least 35 major regional styles dotting the Indian culinary landscape. So to answer the question - What do Indians eat for breakfast? - is probably as feasible as, say, trying to document the 10,000 existing Indian mother tongues and the number of people that use them.

Recently, however, a Southern Indian breakfast staple has come into vogue. While the world mostly knows Indian food through globalized Northern staples such as *paneer*, *korma* and *masala*, within India itself, spurred on by the spread of the internet and the increasing cultural exchange between regions, the combination of *mysore masala dosa* and *idli sambhar* are slowly taking over the breakfast tables across India.

"Northern Indian foods are, as a rule, heavy. There's a lot of butter, cheese, nuts, gravies. For breakfast, Northern is a bit too heavy for most people and that is why the lighter Southern dishes are better for breakfast," says Mohammad Taj, manager of Tandoor, one among a handful of authentic Saigon-based South Indian restaurants.

Hailing from Chennai, both *mysore masala dosa* and *idli sambhar* are vegetarian dishes, making them universally available to all Indians regardless of dietary limitations and a boon to vegetarians everywhere else. *Mysore masala dosa* (VND80,000) is stuffed *naan* with an outer layer of crispy rice batter skin covering a soft, rich filling of cooked potatoes, tomatoes, onions, and coconut. *Idli Sambhar* (VND65,000), on the other hand, comprises of two parts: *idli* (a savory, spongy rice cake that is ubiquitous to South Indian cuisine) and *sambhar* (a spicy hot vegetable brew made of lentils, chilies, coriander seeds and various spices). Coconut sauce and a tomato and onion sauce round out the flavor of the breakfast.

Simple, hearty and potentially addictive, the key to the popularity of the two breakfast dishes lies in their simplicity, low cost and the rich nutrients they provide. Their mild flavors are easy intermediaries between the more extreme spectrums of Indian cuisines thus making them far easier to eat for first timers.

"For as long as we can remember, we have always been eating these foods so it's difficult to say how and when they began," says Taj. "They are traditional home meals that are simple and cheap, and aside from preparation, do not take much time or skill to make. The key to making a perfectly crisp *mysore masala dosa* is in controlling the heat of the pan - exactly 85 degree Celsius. No more. No less. They are comfortable and they fill you with energy for the day. Once you are done, finish with a cup of steaming hot Indian *masala* tea and you will be filled with energy for the entire day."

Tandoor: 74/6 Hai Ba Trung, D1

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German


 H A V E I T H E R R W A Y

“GERMANS LOVE THEIR coffee and bread (*brot*) for breakfast. This is the traditional breakfast meal,” says Mike Thoma, owner of German Corner who’s originally from Moenchengladbach, Germany. Much like the typical Vietnamese who loves his *banh mi* for a quick brekkie, his German counterpart would grab a bread roll (*brötchen*), slather it with butter and less sugary but fruity jam, and devour. Or instead of jam, replace it with bacon, salami or ham. Bread is an essential part of German cuisine with 600 types of breads kneaded and baked in Germany daily. The more popular ones are the rye wheat, toast bread, whole grain and wheat rye. “The dark wheat bread alone is made from different corn varieties.”

For breakfast and brunch options, Mike, together with his wife Thuy Thien, have recreated his mom’s traditional recipes like the filling Goulash soup (chopped vegetables, onions, bell peppers, beef soup,

potatoes, VND85,000) and the crunchy Vienna style pork schnitzel with french fries and lime (VND220,000) – which can be relished with or without lime. According to Mike, the pork schnitzel is traditionally served with a choice of sauces like the Hunter sauce (mushroom), pepper sauce and the Gypsy sauce (vegetarian).

But it wouldn’t be German cuisine without the sausages and beer. So the Sausage Platter with five different kinds of sausages served with white cabbage and mashed potatoes (VND350,000) is an excellent choice. In Germany, there are over 1,500 sausages to choose from and you can enjoy a select five from the menu. The combination of the peppery cheese sausage, spicy chicken sausage, Bratwurst (pork sausage), mild sausage and their special pork-beef mix with cinnamon sausage takes your palate to a smorgasbord of flavors.

Another popular choice at German

Corner is the Butcher Platter of bread, butter, ham, meatballs, sausages, bacon and salami (VND320,000). “We love strong flavors in nearly all our dishes and we enjoy strong and heavy sauces,” says Mike. So pairing the meatball with spicy or Dijon mustard gives the meal an extra kick.

So where is beer in all this?

Strictly speaking, Germans don’t drink beer for breakfast. However, from brunch onwards, having a glass of beer is not unusual. A shandy – a mixture of 30 percent beer and 70 percent Sprite - would be a perfect match. Of course there are a number of authentic German beers to select from here, including Bitburger, Koestritzer Black Beer, Benediktiner Weisse, HB-Hofbrau Weisse, Schwarzbrau Exquisit, and Schwarzbrau Weisse (beer prices start from VND65,000).

German Corner: 1001 Nguyen Van Linh, Phu My Hung, D7



Mexican (sort of)

¡ BUENOS DIAS , VIETNAM !

TRY TO NAME the top five most popular Mexican dishes and high chances are that the burrito will be among that list, right alongside the taco and nachos. In the US alone, an estimated 386.26 million burritos are eaten every month. At the start of 2014, a new catering company unveiled the world's first hot burrito vending machine in Los Angeles, California. As a testament to the burrito's existing popularity, the Burrito Box, so called by its maker, became an overnight smash hit with young LA urbanites and the startup is now selling franchising rights on the concept.

Ironically, little do most people know that this iconic Mexican dish, as well as its breakfast variation, the breakfast burrito, was actually created in the US.

"If you go to Mexico," says Geoffrey Deetz, head chef and owner of El Gato Negro, a Mexican restaurant in Saigon, "you will see that mainly it's people from the northern province that eat the burrito. It's not so popular in other parts of Mexico. And their burrito is a different kind than what non-Mexicans are used to. It's simpler. Just a tortilla with a lot of meat and sauce, and they put it on a dish and eat it like Vietnamese eat rice. The breakfast burrito is actually an

American breakfast."

The actual origin of the modern burrito is a tricky one to pin down, having hailed from the countless no-name sidewalk stalls and mom-and-pop shops that dot the streets of urban America. Many claim to have been the original inventor and the story of how the burrito came about has many variations. However, there is one common theme among those different versions.

"The story is the burrito was made by a Mexican immigrant worker," explains Geoffrey. "He was making breakfast before work one day. His wife wasn't there and he got lazy so he just took the tortilla, put everything in, the meat, the rice, the beans, wrapped it up and called it a meal. His fellow co-workers thought it tasted good. Eventually he opened up his own shop selling his version of the burrito and from there it spread."

A traditional breakfast burrito (VND150,000), always up for grabs at El Gato Negro, is basically a flour tortilla (another foreign influence as traditional Mexican tortillas are made from corn) wrapped around cooked meat, rice, beans, lettuce, poached eggs and spices. The oblong shaped wrap is then covered in tin foil to preserve the heat

and to keep everything nicely packed up. When eaten, the foil is removed bit by bit so that the content won't spill.

The burrito, at its core, is a peasant food. Its ingredients are cheap and simple and the first wave of customers that catapulted it to international fame is the working class crowd: students and day laborers who didn't have the time to sit down for breakfast. It's a non-fussy comfort food that delivers a whole lot of bang, in both quantity and flavors, for your buck. "You can buy one of these for USD2 in America, right off the streets. It's so big. You pound down on it and you are filled up for the entire day."

In Spanish, "burrito" is slang for "small donkey" and while there are many interpretations for why this name came about, one theory purports that it showcases the burrito's versatility. Like a donkey that can carry a lot of baggage on its back, the burrito can pack a lot of different foods and flavors inside it, which makes it incredibly easy to transform and adapt to fit any hearty eater.

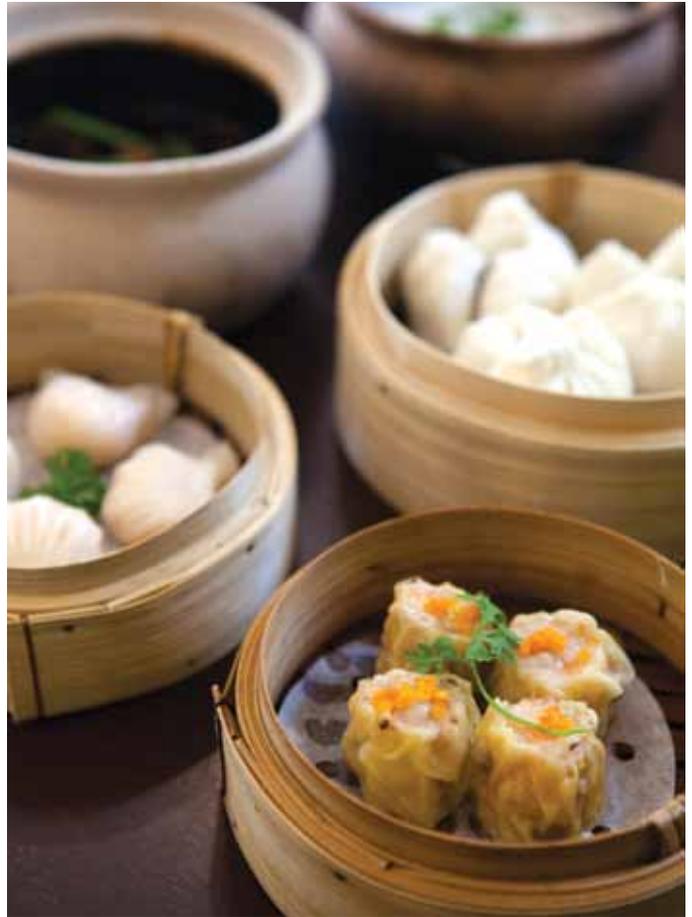
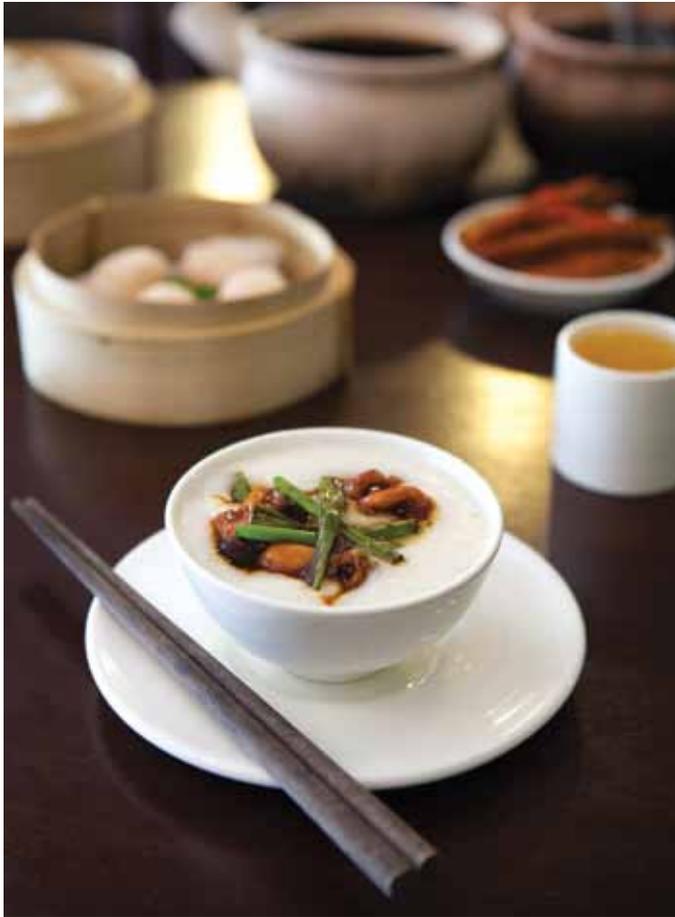
"I once made a *com tam* burrito," says Geoffrey. "Wouldn't that be a way to start out the day? *Com tam* and burrito in one go."

El Gato Negro: 13, Phan Van Dat, D1



Singaporean

WAKE UP, LAH. TIME FOR
FROG PORRIDGE, LAH



AMERICAN CHEF, AUTHOR, and television personality Anthony Bourdain once stated that Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo are the food capitals of the world where cuisines from every country can be found and anyone and everyone is crazy about food. But when asked, most people would be hard pressed to identify Singaporean cuisine and with good reasons.

Founded in 1819 by Sir Stamford Raffles and with only 195 years of recorded history, Singapore did not have a lot of time to develop its own unique cuisine. The foods and cuisine styles on offer are certainly diverse, but for the gourmand who wants to experience a uniquely Singaporean taste, there are only two choices: the chili crab and the Singapore frog porridge. Both of these are proudly claimed by Singaporeans as national signature dishes, but only one among the two bears the country name in its title and while it is sold and eaten everywhere in Singapore at all times of the day, the Singapore frog porridge is at its best as either a breakfast or brunch entry and paired with one or two servings of dim sum.

It is the 19th century Chinese immigrants who first brought their breakfast tradition to

a newly born Singapore where it took roots and persists till today. Despite China's vast culinary repertoire, the traditional Chinese breakfast is deceptively simple - dim sum and porridge, followed by a cup of steaming hot tea to cleanse the tongue. So simple in fact that while it almost comes across as boring, what most diners do not know is that this breakfast is a small, finely-tuned three-course meal in itself. A basket or two of bite size *dim sum* (VND30,000 - VND40,000 each) preps the palate then the main entree, Singapore frog porridge, follows.

Proper frog porridge is always served in two separate red claypots, the rice porridge (VND15,000 - VND30,000 per pot), thick and rich in one pot and fresh frog meat, flash braised and steeped in Kung Pao sauce (VND80,000 each), in another.

"The meat must be fresh, unmarinated and unseasoned so that the succulent meat can be tasted" owner and chef Long explains. And despite the popular joke, frog meat tastes a world of difference from chicken. "The sauce is prepared with herbs and spices. My special Kung Pao sauce recipe involves 14 main herbs. The cooking starts five minutes before eating. We flash cook the meat with dried

chili, spring onions, and Kung Pao sauce in a red claypot. The dish is then served to the guests in small porcelain bowls, rice porridge underneath and the frog and sauce in a separate layer on top."

Adding: "Most people find it difficult to distinguish Chinese cuisine and Singaporean cuisine. There's not much difference to be honest since so much of Singaporean culture and cuisine is deeply rooted in their Chinese origin, but the frog porridge is where the Singaporean modern spin is at. Chinese food favors strong fatty tastes with plenty of oil. Singaporean food, in this case the frog and sauce, is far more restrained and there is no cooking oil involved at all."

There is also a proper way to eat the porridge. "Never stir it up," Long insists. "Scoop it up cleanly so that the porridge, the sauce, and the frog are not mixed up together. Then you can taste the different flavors: the rich porridge, the sweet and salty Kung Pao sauce, the succulent frog meat and the red hot spicy chili. The first spoon is always the best."

*Geylang@Saigon: 134 Nguyen
Thai Hoc, D1*

English

EAT BREAKFAST LIKE THE QUEEN



IT'S A STRANGE culinary crown to wear, but one we Brits wear with enormous pride - the English breakfast is not only a source of huge national honor, but also fierce debate. Black pudding or not? Beans or no beans? Fried bread or toast? Less of a recipe, more an assembly of ingredients, but one thing is for sure – as with all simple dishes, the secret to success lies in the quality of ingredients.

The history of the English breakfast starts a long way back, in the early 1800s where it was the preserve of the English gentry. As wealthy landowners, the gentry were champions of British tradition and patrons of the rural economy. Breakfast was an opportunity to show off local produce, in particular, the region's meats, to guests and friends. Breakfasts were hearty feasts, showcasing the best of local cured meats, sausages, game and poultry – calorie-filled feasts were needed before a day's hunting, or a long journey across the countryside.

Later, as the industrial revolution swept the country, the full English breakfast became not just a meal for the wealthy, but also the working classes who'd charge up for a long day of manual labor with eggs, bacon, and regional extras such as black pudding, sausages, kidneys and hash browns. By the early 1950s roughly half of

the British population started their day with a full English breakfast, turning what was once a meal for the nobility into a national breakfast dish.

And what to drink with your English breakfast? English Breakfast tea of course. The English have been staunch tea drinkers since the 17th century when it began to be imported from China. The morning *cuppa* is thought to be the product of a marketing ploy by a Scottish tea master named Drysdale. Until the 19th century, tea was an afternoon drink and so to boost sales Drysdale created a blend of teas from Assam, Ceylon and Kenya, and rebranded it as "Breakfast Tea." It is this same blend that millions of Brits reach for every morning, today.

The full English breakfast is now a global phenomenon, and can be found gracing tables of some of the world's finest hotels and cheapest street corners. In Saigon, tea-obsessed Brit, Geoff Hopkins has opened a shop and café to showcase his own take on Britain's two most-loved culinary traditions.

Hatvala is a product of Geoff's extensive research into Vietnam's finest teas. He has scoured the country to unearth Vietnam's little-known tea farmers, and discovered a wealth of high-quality artisan producers, who now supply his café and beyond. As

a result the tea menu at Hatvala is rather more exotic than your local greasy spoon, but makes a welcome change from your average tea bag. There are wild teas such as the Wild Boar Black Tea from Yen Bai, fragrant Jasmine scented green tea, and a delicious floral Oolong tea from Moc Chau, all of which are brought to the table in their own percolator with a sand-timer to ensure it's brewed for just the right amount of time. Geoff is similarly obsessed with his coffee, all of which is sourced in Vietnam and roasted on demand.

And as you'd expect, true to his English roots, the English Breakfast (VND99,000) on the menu is an authentic feast – eggs of your choice, served with lashings of bacon, sautéed potatoes and in keeping with tradition, delicious sausages from high quality local butchers, Cochon D'Or. Packed with flavor and a subtle peppery heat, these classic English bangers made from only the highest quality pork, they are as good as anything you'd find in the UK.

Nothing says home like a full English, and even better when it's made by someone as proud of it as we are. The England's old landed gentry would be proud.

Hatvala: 44 Nguyen Hue, D1

Vietnamese

GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM!

LIKE THE COUNTRY itself, Vietnamese breakfast is a complex subject, changing in overall culture and flavor from north to south. Most Vietnamese don't cook breakfast at home, they usually have breakfast on their way to work. So it's common to see *banh mi* and sticky rice pre-wrapped in food carts and ready to go, and if they do have time to stop for breakfast it is usually pretty basic and quick like *pho* or *com tam*.

Up in Hanoi cold winters have sculpted unique breakfast dishes that can be found every morning along the streets and the *trung vit lon* (duck embryo) is by far the

dish of choice. Crack the top, suck out the steamy liquid inside (it's the best part) and then take spoonful after spoonful of the protein, garnished with Vietnamese coriander and ginger. For the fainthearted, *chao long* (rice porridge) is a dish that warms the Hanoian heart. Rice porridge filled with boiled pork offal like stomach, intestine, heart, kidney and many others come together to make a wholesome porridge. *Chao long* is served with a fried bread stick called *banh quay* which is made with wheat flour and originated in China.

Coming from Phan Thiet a personal favorite of mine, and very popular in

Central Vietnam, is *banh hoi long heo*. It's a dish of thin rice noodle woven into intricate bundles, which tastes similar to vermicelli. The dish is brushed with chopped spring onions in oil and is commonly served with boiled pork organs and spring rolls. To eat, select a sheet of rice paper, add herbs and noodles inside, top that with some boiled meat and a small spring roll, roll it all up, and then dip it in chili garlic fish sauce.

Quan Banh Hoi Nia: 187 Phung Van Cung, Phu Nhuan



West Coast, US

A LIQUID ALTERNATIVE

“CALIFORNIANS HAVE BEEN drinking smoothies as a healthy breakfast since the 1960s, but this concept really caught on in the 1990s when many people started to become more aware of the importance of natural foods for health and wellness. It is now pretty mainstream in the US, Australia, and even in Korea, the Philippines and Singapore,” says Luke Nguyen, a native of California and proprietor of the recently opened Guanabana Smoothies juice bar.

With Vietnamese consumers growing more concerned about chemically tainted food and recent news about noodles being bleached does he believe this trend will catch on here in Saigon? “There is definitely a small but growing trend among health conscious Vietnamese of having smoothies for breakfast, because smoothies provide the energy and nutrients to get through the morning. Most people still find it strange to have a smoothie in place of a bowl of *pho* or other traditional meals. Whatever people choose to have for breakfast, I think what’s important is that they minimize industrialized processed food, and choose whole natural foods instead.”

Ingredients for blends like Strawberry Swirl, Tropic Thunder and Orange Bliss come from a few trusted fruit suppliers that have ties to local farms in Dalat, Dak Lak, Long Xuyen, Long An and other farms in the Mekong Delta, while the herbal and nutritional supplements are all imported from the US.

Supergreen (VND65,000 for a small, VND75,000 for a large) is one of its more popular morning smoothies and is made with organic wheatgrass, alfalfa, spirulina (a type of blue-green algae that is rich in protein, vitamins, minerals, and carotenoids), chlorella (an algae that contains Vitamin C and antioxidants), apple juice, strawberries, mangoes and bananas. Vegetable haters will rejoice as the smoothie was easy to drink — the bitter leaves didn’t have a strong flavor because the apple juice cut through the blend, giving it a refreshing balance of both sweetness and tartness. None of the smoothies at Guanabana contain condensed milk or sweetened yogurt commonly found in Vietnamese smoothies sold from street carts and in cafes around the city.

“Foreigners typically drink smoothies during the day as a healthy breakfast, lunch, or afternoon snack. Vietnamese people traditionally drink *sinh to* as an evening dessert, one that is full of sugary condensed milk, which is why many of our Vietnamese customers are initially shocked by how sour our smoothies are,” says Luke. “However, about halfway through, our customers begin to appreciate the sweet and sour balance of the all natural fruit smoothies.”

And aside from the high vitamin and mineral content, these smoothies have probiotics from the frozen yogurt that aid digestion. Blending fruits and vegetables breaks open the plant cell walls that house the micronutrients far better than chewing can, allowing the nutrients to work wonders in the body. Blending also frees the *mirosinases* to produce anti-cancer compounds. All good news for those living in Ho Chi Minh City where pollution is getting worse and fast food franchises are seemingly opening up on every corner.

Guanabana: 23 Ly Tu Trong, D1



Wine & Dine

IMAGE BY ADAM ROBERT YOUNG





Thit gac bep

Northern Exposure

Delicious Hanoian cuisine that offers more than just bun cha

TEXT BY JAMES PHAM IMAGES BY ADAM ROBERT YOUNG

QUICK. THINK OF A Hanoian restaurant that's not streetside *bun cha* or Hanoi-style *pho*. Narrow it down to posh surrounds and an already tiny number just became non-existent. It seems Hanoian cuisine in Ho Chi Minh City has suffered the fate of Vietnamese cuisine worldwide, an entire range of unique and flavorsome dishes being represented by a paltry few which fall woefully short of presenting a true picture of what Hanoian food is all about. While many rave about *bun cha*, the part soup part noodle grilled pork dish, others find *pho* Hanoi a bland, veggie-less poor cousin to its more full-bodied southern counterpart.

Thankfully, the stylish brother/sister team of Tuan and Tu are trying to change the face of Hanoian cuisine in Saigon with their newly relocated eponymous restaurant (**Tuan and Tu's at 112 Pasteur, D1**). Originally opened nine years ago with

only two tables, Tuan and Tu's was more of a hobby than a commercial endeavor. With Tuan's regular job in public relations and Tu's work managing the family businesses including a spa and another restaurant, the living room and sofa space was simply an extension of their home kitchen, affording them the opportunity to re-create some of their grandmother's dishes. Word quickly spread of the affordably chic but impossible to reserve restaurant serving up something different, and Tuan and Tu's became *the* place for Saigon's glitterati to lunch. Over the years, the restaurant expanded, first from two to eight tables, and then a failed attempt at a larger space (Mam Son, opened briefly in 2012) to a just-opened space with 65 seats spread over three floors. The family duo have kept what works — a welcoming interior that has more the feel of a classy, early 20th century Indochinese residence than a restaurant. Dining areas in

the already narrow quarters are sectioned off creating intimate spaces while potted plants and pebbled walkways bring an element of the outside in.

Skippping the busy lunch period, we arrive on a quiet Saturday evening, less than two weeks after the restaurant re-opened. While the substantial menu does double duty for lunch and dinner service, there are specials available at dinner. For starters, we order the *oc nhoi thit* (VND105,000), fresh water snails stuffed with minced pork, tree ear fungus and the meaty snail meat, then steamed. The texture of the minced snail is rubbery but not in a bad way, a nice contrast with the more tender minced pork, aided by citrus notes coming from ginger leaves (and not the more ubiquitous lemongrass leaves used elsewhere).

An equally intriguing starter is the smoked goose breast with lemongrass



Oc nhoi thit

Cha ruoi

(VND175,000), a take on the smoked buffalo meat made by the hill minority tribes in the northwest of the country. It's serendipitous for Hanoians to have *thit gac bep* (literally "smoked meat made in the kitchen") as the supply is limited and haphazard, and is equally a find here, surprisingly tender and more akin to a sausage in casing than what you would expect of Vietnamese smoked meat. Slightly on the salty side, it's best washed down with a glass of Chilean or South Australian red wine.

But the appetizer to end all appetizers was the *cha ruoi* (VND95,000), a delicious, lightly

fried 'meat' patty made from seasonal sand worms. Because the worms only surface for two weeks of the year (late September to middle October) in the brackish mangroves and wetlands along the coast, they are considered a delicacy, their brief appearance likened to the fleeting beauty of women. Catch it before it's gone. Tuan and Tu re-create the traditional recipe, grinding the worms into a mash with spices and the flavors of dill and mandarin zest to temper the stronger flavors of the worms. Mixed with pork, the dish has almost a slightly gritty seafood taste, certainly different from

regular *cha* but one an uninformed diner would be hard placed to identify.

While the starters are adventurous, the mains are more comfortable, featuring homemade goodness like Crispy fried pomfret fish with a side of tangy mango salad (VND115,000), Squash stems sautéed with beef (VND85,000) and Rice field crab soup with melon (VND85,000).

If you're not lucky enough to make regular trips to Hanoi, Tuan and Tu's is a fine alternative, a restaurant that has found its niche, a lone but worthy guardian of Hanoian cuisine in Saigon. ■

Holy Smokes!

There's never been a better time to eat barbecue

TEXT BY JULIAN AJELLO IMAGES BY NGOC TRAN

WHENEVER I HEAR someone remark that America has no real cuisine, I simply reply, "American barbecue." Rooted in the South, barbecue applies heat indirectly by smoking. Wrapped in foil, various cuts of meat that would otherwise tend to be tough spend hours in a smoker where they are infused with the taste and smell of a variety of woods. Not to be confused with grilling meat, where the goal is to get the meat on the table as fast as possible by applying heat directly, an American barbecue's mission is to cook the meat slowly and with a low even temperature.

Those longing for, or longing to try, American barbecue must make a trip to **Quan Ut Ut** (168 Vo Van Kiet, D1). It's the project and passion of three partners - Tim, Mark and Albin. Tim and Albin, an Aussie and a Frenchman, have lived in Vietnam for a number of years and are no

strangers to the hospitality industry. After visiting Mark in his native Chicago and sampling his culinary skills, they decided to open a BBQ joint back in Saigon.

Wooden picnic tables, a grill, and a smoker box greet you with those first whiffs of smoky goodness when you arrive. Starters and sides like macaroni and cheese (VND45,000) are a welcome sight, but accounting for Vietnamese tastes means the amount of cheese is a light coating rather than a complete drenching. The crispy fried chicken skins (VND45,000) are best described as sinful. Served with ranch dressing, there is no mistaking these are about anything other than taste. They also make delicious cornbread (VND35,000) with yellow capsicum, served with honey butter on the side. One starter that stood out — and was a unanimous recommendation by the

owners — was the home-brined bacon (VND80,000). "When we tasted the batch made with the brine we came up with, we felt like kids on Christmas morning," gushes Mark. Quan Ut Ut also sells bacon to customers who wish to keep some at home - and you will.

However, these things merely set the table, so to speak. Quan Ut Ut's treasure is its ability to smoke meat. The pork shoulder (VND200,000), bacon, and ribs (VND300,000) are smoked using cashew shells. "We could have imported hickory or other woods typically used to smoke meat, but that would be very expensive," explains Tim. "We tried a variety of options including cacao, coffee, eucalyptus, longan, and rubber tree woods, but none of them were very good. When we tried the cashew shells we knew we had a winner."



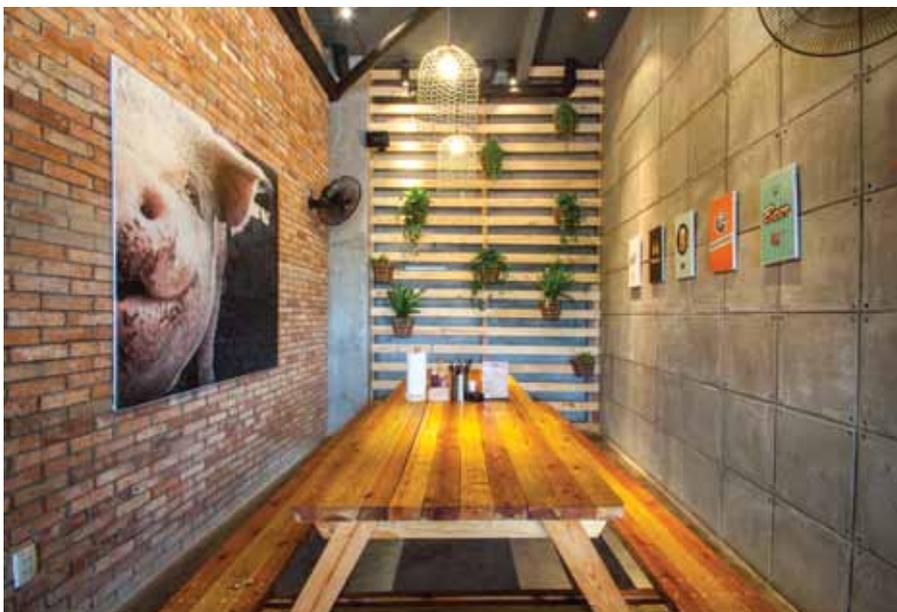
Barbecue sampler



Cornbread



Crispy fried chicken skins



“When we tasted the batch made with the brine we came up with, we felt like kids on Christmas morning”

Chicken (VND175,000) and pork belly (VND200,000) are smoked using sugar cane husks, giving them a sweet taste that is a wonderful departure from conventional wood flavors. They also offer sausages (VND250,000) that are prepared in casings that provide the wonderful snap proper casings should without detracting from the taste. The pork and chicken are sourced locally, while the beef used in their burgers (and rumor has it brisket is coming soon) is imported from the US.

Condiments are a big deal, and perhaps an even bigger secret than the meats themselves, when it comes to barbecue. Rather than single out a particular one they’ve opted to cover the gamut to satisfy any palate: Smokin’ Honey Bunny (a spicy honey-based sauce), Carolina Gold (a vinegar-based mustard favorite), Spicy Firecracker (a chili barbecue sauce to appeal to local tastes) and Sticky Fingers (a version of Kansas City’s tangy variety that will satisfy even the staunchest barbecue aficionados).

Our best advice is to try a little of everything. The barbecue sampler (VND550,000) includes pork shoulder, rib tips, chicken and sausage and comes with okra and corn on the cob. Be sure to generously dip into all the different sauces to find your personal favorite.

The last detail they’ve included, and which is as impressive as it is appreciated, is the sweetened iced tea. Any barbecue meal in the US served without sweetened iced tea is very close to blasphemy. Quan Ut Ut brews its own and enjoys switching up the flavors that include peach and raspberry. Refills are free. If you’re not a tea lover, they also brew their own beer in addition to serving several imports and domestics. And Albin is making sure those of us who love bourbon will have a fine selection to choose from; of course, you won’t get free refills on those!

I dare you to save enough room to try their dessert menu. I didn’t make it that far. But what I can tell you is that whether you make it to the dessert menu or not, you best wear your eatin’ pants. ■

>> The List

Wine & Dine

bakeries

ABC Bakery & Cafe

The bakery serves more than 30 different baked products ranging from baguettes to pizza slices, along with a wide selection of drinks such as coffee and fruit juices.
223-225 Pham Ngu Lao, D1

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

Cheesecake Ngon Oi's Pick

Cheesecake Ngon is a small boutique-style cheesecake shop. They use only top quality local and imported ingredients that give their cakes their signature smooth, creamy taste. They can provide cheesecakes for all occasions: birthdays, functions, cafe/restaurant supply or even just a single slice. With a range of flavors including passionfruit, raspberry, strawberry, lemon, coconut and of course original and a price starting at VND40,000 per slice.

44 Truong Quyen, D3
www.cheesecakesnow.com
3610 0211

Fly Cupcake

The shop specializes in various flavors of cupcakes.

74E Hai Ba Trung, D1
06 Pham Ngoc Thach, D1
www.flycupcake.vn

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 macarons 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 macarons.

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

L'amour Bakery & Cafe

More than just another bakery, L'amour is the perfect place for those whom are looking for respite from busy HCMC. This patisserie offers a large selection of European cake and pastry, fresh juice and coffee. You will also find pastas, salads, and sandwiches, ideal for lunch time.

Open from 6am - 10:30pm
24 Hai Ba Trung D1

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

Paris Baguette

Korean chain Paris Baguette offers fresh baked products such as cakes, pastries, bread, as well as assorted coffee and tea drinks. They also serve sandwiches and salads.

Nguyen Thi Minh Khai corner Cao Thang, D1
Vincom Center A, 171 Dong Khoi, D1
2 Cao Thang, D3
www.parisvn.com

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

Savouré 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

Ahoy Beer Club

Recently opened, this nautical themed bar serves local and imported beer along with food served by wait staff in sailor outfits.

79 Nguyen Cong Tru, D1

Allez Boo

A popular bar in Saigon featuring tropical bamboo decor, multiple levels and a DJ spinning funky beats. This unique bar offers a wide range of beers, shakes, spirits cocktails and food throughout the day.

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

Alpha

Alpha is a sports bar recently opened on the first level of The Manor. Offers weekly promotions such as Manor Mondays (happy hour all day for Manor residents), Teacher Tuesdays (happy hour all day for teachers), Thirsty Thursdays (two for one on all cocktails), Sport Saturdays (screening sports from around the world) and on Sundays movie nights by the pool and a roast dinner.

The Manor, Level 1, 91 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh

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

Blanchy's Tash

This cocktail lounge is a perfect place to relax with friends, meet with colleagues or just enjoy a cocktail or two. With plenty of

seating around the central bar as well as tables for couples or larger groups, plus a more intimate VIP area with comfortable sofas, you will find the right space for any occasion.

95 Hai Ba Trung, D1
www.blanchystash.com
090 902 8293

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.bluegeckosaiagon.com
4.30pm - 12am

Bootleg DJ Cafe

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

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

Broma Saigon Bar

Famously known for 'not being a bar' Broma is one of Ho Chi Minh City's most popular hangouts with prices ranging from VND30,000 - VND500,000. Broma is a more upscale option for those wishing to escape the cheap drinks in The Pham.

41 Nguyen Hue, D1
3823 6838
bromasaigonbar@gmail.com

Cargo Bar

Cargo Bar is a dedicated music and arts venue designed and committed to delivering diverse entertainment, along with a good drink menu.

7 Nguyen Tat Thanh, D4
www.facebook.com/cargosaigon

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

Chill Skybar

Offers the most stunning panoramic views of Saigon and a wide range of wines and cocktails personally prepared by Vietnam mixologist Le Thanh Tung.

Roof top, AB Tower, 76A Le Lai, D1
www.chillsaigon.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 **👍 Oi'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
fnf291182@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 Trong Quoc, D3
090 944 5544

Cold Beer Club

The bar features Beer of the Day Promotion all day, and also offers a 2 for 1 deal on the beer of the day. Prices start at VND30,000. The upstairs room can accommodate big groups.

64 Ton That Thiep, D1
3914 3999

Eon51

Eon51 includes a fine dining restaurant, a champagne lounge, a cigar bar and a heli pad cocktail bar. Spread on three levels, Eon51 is a destination for bespoke private and corporate events in Saigon. Levels 51-52, Bitexco Financial Tower, 2 Hai Trieu, D1

6291 8751
www.eon51.com
7am - 2am

Game On

Opened in July, Game On is Saigon's newest and biggest sports bar that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The bar also has an extensive drink menu that includes coffees, juices, beers, wines, vodkas and more. Besides being a good place to watch games, Game On also boasts a function room for corporate meetings or private parties.

115 Ho Tung Mau, D1
6251 9898

gameonsaigon@gmail.com
8am till 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

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

Hair of the Dog

A large space creating an interesting bar with an alfresco sidewalk area downstairs, and an upper lounge area overlooking the lower bar that allows for a view of the DJ station. If it follows its Hanoi theme, it will be a DJ music-focused nightclub.

194 Bui Vien, D1

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

Le Pub

In a brawny Australian snub to the effete

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indaba
Steakhouse

A nice, cozy place in the central district of Sai Gon that brings you the best in food and drinks.

Cocktail HAPPY HOUR from 17:00 - 21:00

Add: 35 Ly Tu Trong, D.1, HCMC
Tel: (08) 3824 8280 www.indaba.com.vn
<https://www.facebook.com/indabacafe/info>

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, DI
3837 7679
www.lepub.org

Lion Brewery and Restaurant

The brewery offers its signature Lion beer, brewed by its German master brewer, who trained in Germany, along with other kinds of beer. The Lion restaurant has two banquet halls that can accommodate 530 persons.
11-13 Cong Truong Lam Son, DI
www.lionsaigon.com

Long Phi

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, DI
3837 2704

Lush

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, DI
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, DI
3821 0151
5pm - 12am

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, DI
3915 3150
heinzvn@gmail.com
3pm - 1am

O'Brien's 🍷 O'i'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, DI
3829 3198
www.irish-barsaigon.com

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, DI

Purple Jade

Purple Jade is a stylish and chic venue with exceptional world class cocktails by the city's award-winning bartender along with snacks to melt away the bustle of the city.
First floor- InterContinental Asiana Saigon
Corner of Hai Ba Trung & Le Duuan
3520 9099
www.intercontinental.com/saigon



RED Bar

RED offers one of the longest Happy Hours in Saigon, from 9am - 9pm, with live music available from Monday - Saturday. This multi-level bar has a non-smoking floor and a function room along with a top quality pool table and soft-tip dart machines. A menu of Eastern and Western dishes also includes wood-fire pizzas.
70-72 Ng Duc Ke, District 1
2229 7017

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, DI
3823 4999
www.caravellehotel.com/en/1/15/325/products.aspx

Saigon Retro 🍷 O'i's Pick

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, DI
6278 2349
4pm - 2am

Shots Bar

A corner bar on Bui Vien that, along with drinks, serves a variety of food such as seafood, pork and chicken dishes.
207 Bui Vien, DI

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, DI
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, DI
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, DI
3824 2888
www.vascosgroup.com

Wine Embassy

For those looking to relax and enjoy a glass of wine after work, Wine Embassy is the perfect place with wine specialists and an interactive menu to help you pair your wine with crafted food.
13 Ngo Duc Ke, DI
3824 7827
www.wineembassy.com.vn
4pm till late
11am - late

Xu Bar

A cocktail hot spot with Coconut Martinis, Cranelo Sparkles and Passion Fruit Caprioshka on offer along with a variety of tapas with DJs and drink specials throughout the week.
71-75 Hai Ba Trung, DI
www.xusaigon.com

cafés

ABC Bakery & Cafe

ABC Bakery & Cafe has over 30 different kinds of baked goods such as baguettes, danishes, whole cakes, sliced cakes and even pizza. Together with its range of baked items, it is also has Western and Vietnamese coffee and juices.
223 - 225 Pham Ngu Lao, DI
www.abcbnc.com

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, DI
093 897 2050

Aisha Lounge

Aisha offers a menu studded with various Vietnamese drinks and food - although the belly dance show does evolve the spirit of the interior design.
63/1 Pasteur, DI
6660 9040
www.aishalounge.com

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

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, DI
3827 8588
facebook.com/angelinuscoffeevn

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, DI
3920 4090
www.bobbybrewers.com

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.
98 Phan Xich Long, Phu Nhuan

Bukafe - Cafe

This quaint cafe offers a Japanese style setting with chairs that have you seated on the ground. While offering elegant drinks and tasty simple dishes, make sure to catch the live bands. It won't set you back much either with inexpensive drinks.
43 Nguyen Huu Cau, DI
090 265 2635
bukafe.cafetruyen@gmail.com

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, DI
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, DI
3821 1009
www.fresco.com.vn

Cafe Runam

Cafe Runam (the name loosely comes from a traditional Vietnamese lullaby song for young children) is a three storey building with the first two floors designed and decorated in detail to offer different atmospheres for customers. The second floor is an intimate coffee lounge with big sofas and armchairs. Next to the lounge is a terrace where white wood tables and armchairs are surrounded by plants. Offers wide range of coffee, cakes as well as set menus.
96 Mac Thi Buoi, DI
08 3825 8883
www.caferrunam.com

Café Terrace

Cafe 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, DI

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, DI
3823 3279

Cake Durian Duiro

A chain of cafes selling durian inspired crepes and buns with prices under

VND100,000.

Kiosk in Le Thi Rieng Park, 875 Cach Mang Thang 8, D10
093 333 9365
www.banhhsaurieng.com

Centrofarms Coffee ☕️👍🏠 **Ol's Pick**

This recently opened cafe, located near the airport, sells its own eponymous brand of Centrofarm 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

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

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

Cooku's Nest ☕️🏠

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

13 Tu Xuong, D3
2241 2043

Crêperie & Café ☕️🏠

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

5 Han Thuyen, D1

Cryptic Acoustic Cafe ☕️🏠

Cryptic Acoustic Cafe features an architecture that blends classic and modern elements. Featured drinks include Cryptic frappe (the combination of coffee and Orion cake, banana and fresh cream), Cryptic soda (soda, flavored orange peel, lemon and fresh cream) and Cryptic yogurt (with yogurt, mango, strawberry, peach).

This place also holds acoustic and art performances.

343/6 To Hien Thanh, D10

DeJa Vu Cafe ☕️👍🏠

It is easy to mistake this cafe for someone's home as the tranquil atmosphere will have you tension free in no time. The peaceful setting is ideal for dates or low-key social events. Make sure to catch the live bands that frequent the cafe.

314/2 Dien Bien Phu, D10
6276 6966
info@dejavu.vn

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

Fe Cafe ☕️🏠

Fe Cafe brings you all kinds of scrumptious coffee, along with Vietnamese food and dessert. It offers breakfast, lunch, dinner and offers delivery as well. The interior is a mix of alternative and fancy, with wooden furniture, soft backrest pillows and decorative paintings.

26 Ly Tu Trong, D1
090 878 3788
www.facebook.com/fe cafe.vn
7:30am - 11pm

Gemmi Coffee ☕️🏠

This cafe serves a variety of food like salads, chicken dish alongside coffees and other beverages. Provides live solo piano music every night from 8pm.

193 D3 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3

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 Jean's ☕️🏠

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
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

ID Cafe ☕️👍🏠

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

Imagine Coffee shop ☕️👍🏠

One of the walls of this rustic cafe is literally covered with books. An easy place to get lost for an evening with prices

below VND100,000.

58 Ho Bieu Chanh, Phu Nhuan
090 956 0105
www.facebook.com/ImagineCafeShop
09 0956 0105
nguyenmai huan@gmail.com
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 ☕️👍🏠

This quiet ice cream shop is the perfect place for families and couples to indulge their sweet tooth. It offers a fresh release from the heat of Ho Chi Minh City.

11 Duong 41, D4
093730 3030
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
heserakesera.com

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

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

LightBox Cafe ☕️🏠👍🏠

This stunningly designed cafe also doubles as an event and photography studio, so make sure you dress to impress at this location because you never know who might snap your picture. They also serve vegetarian cuisine with prices ranging between VND300,000 - VND500,000

179 Hoa Lan, Phu Nhuan
3517 6668
www.lightbox.vn

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 Cupcakes.

151/1 Dong Khoi, D1
70B Le Loi, D1
www.lusinespace.tumblr.com
9am - 9pm

Le Tokyo Baum ☕️🏠

Popular Japanese cake cafe with quiet seating area, specializing in orange cakes.

46 Nguyen Van Trang, D1
3926 0388

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, D1
3827 7099
www.maycoffee.com

Minhu Coffee ☕️👍🏠

This specialty cafe offers a wood furniture interior setting, which resembles the cabins you would expect to see in the western North American frontier. Live bands are a regular feature at the cozy cafe and prices are inexpensive.

149/35 Le Thi Rieng, D1
3601 9319

Mojo Cafe ☕️🏠

This modern, chic café, restaurant and bar offers freshly baked homemade cakes, pastries, wood fired pizzas, light fare and superb coffee and smoothies for dine in or take away.

88 Dong Khoi, D1
08 3827 2828
www.mojsaigon.com

MTV Cafe ☕️👍🏠

Providing a relaxing atmosphere after a hard day's work with some of the top hits out today, MTV cafe is the perfect place to unwind with that special someone or just a cup of coffee.

65 Vo Van Tan, D3
3930 2597
mtvcafe.com.vn

MZ Coffee ☕️🏠

A cafe in a colonial villa that was built in the early 20th century. It boasts a broad selection of coffee, from fine Vietnamese condensed milk coffee to Italian Lavazza espresso, cappuccinos and lattes as well as wines and beers.

56-56 A Bui Thi Xuan, D1
39255258
www.m-zing.com

NYDC ☕️🏠👍🏠

A fun, dynamic and cosmopolitan place for food, desserts, beverages and not forgetting the company of good friends. Prices range between VND100,000 - VND300,000.

Diamond Plaza, 34 Le Duan, D1
3822 9992
www.nydc.com.vn

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, D1
3821 6127

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

Phuong Cac Cafe ☕️👍🏠

With indoor and outdoor lounge areas this cafe is a relaxing respite from the grind of Ho Chi Minh City. With live bands and drinks under VND100,000 it makes for the perfect getaway.

Bis 213 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D3
3932 7484

Phuc Minh Coffee ☕️👍🏠

Phuc Minh coffee is an airy, clean

environment providing a varied menu and delicious coffee. The staff is attentive and quick with a friendly approach. Prices start around VNĐ 25,000 for this simple cafe.
51 Hung Phuoc 4, D7

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, D1

Retrobite Diner Cafe

Inspired by the concept of 1960s Americana, bi-level Retrobite Diner Cafe features an interior that includes booths, retro egg chairs, jukebox and classic radio players. The menu is mostly American food with sandwiches, hamburgers, pastas, steaks, milkshakes, waffles and more.

6 Cong Truong Quoc Te, D3
3521 0673
 retrobite.vn@gmail.com
 7:30am - 11pm

Soho Coffee

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

185 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D1
3839 5038
 7am - 11pm

Starbucks Coffee

Has 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, D1

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, D1
3836 9220
 www.stellacaffe.com

The Blue Cafe

A spacious cafe divided into two different areas with a lush, outdoor garden seating lounge and an air conditioned in-door lounge. The Blue Cafe has live music with drinks under VNĐ100,000.
701-703 Phan Van Tri, Go Vap
3588 6824

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

The Library

The Library provides a welcoming atmosphere for those in search of tranquility, comfort and great drinks in the heart of Saigon

Ground floor - InterContinental Asiana Saigon
Corner of Hai Ba Trung & Le Duan

3520 9099

www.intercontinental.com/saigon

Tram Coffee ☝️ OI's Pick

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

The Myth Cafe

Escape the daily grind of Ho Chi Minh City with a trip into the mystical setting of Myth Cafe. With live bands and prices under VNĐ100,000 it's no wonder The Myth cafe is one of the best around.

176 Dien Bien Phu, D3
3820 9735
 thuyhangmtv@yahoo.com

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 cafe - serving gourmet Vietnamese street coffee.

26B-C Le Loi, D1

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

Vecchio Cafe

The interior features Italian ornate décor, dim lighting and antique furniture, enhanced by Italian music. Offerings include pasta, soup, chicken dishes, salad, beef dishes, gelato and beverages such as smoothies, fresh fruit juices and tea.

39/3 Pham Ngoc Thach, D3

Windows

A highly fashionable cafe near the 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, D1
38238408

Yogen Fruz

Serves frozen yogurt with 20 different kinds of fruits for you to choose from. This place also provides an environment where customers can relax and be social.

B3-15B Basement Vincom Center B, 72 Le Thanh Ton, D1
 www.yogenfruz.com.vn

Zoom Cafe ☝️ OI's Pick

This distinctive Vespa-themed Café has been a popular fixture in D1 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, D1
3920 3897

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, D1
3827 2566

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, D1
3822 8888
 www.saigon.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, D1
3822 2673

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, D1
3822 0033

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, D1
3827 2828
 www.libaisaigon.com

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, D1
3925 7777

Ocean Palace

A place for those who love Chinese food. The large dining room on the ground floor can accommodate up to 280 diners. Up on the first floor are six private rooms and a big ballroom that can host 350 guests.

2 Le Duan Street, D1
3911 8822

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 26, D6
3755 1577
 www.7ryquan.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 Chinatown. 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, D1
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, D1
3925 1111
 www.dimsumhouse.vn

Yu Chu

Yu chu is renowned for the quality and presentation of its authentic Cantonese and Peking cuisines along with its elegant décor. Watching the chefs prepare signature dishes such as hand-pulled noodle, dim sum and Peking duck right in the kitchen is a prominent dining feature here.

First floor, InterContinental Asiana Saigon
Corner of Hai Ba Trung & Le Duan
3520 9099
 www.intercontinental.com/saigon

french

Annamite

Annamite specializes in French cuisine within a modern setting.

21 Tu Xuong, D3
6777 8332
 www.annamite-restaurant.com

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

Augustin

Augustin is a romantic and charming French restaurant located just steps away from the Rex Hotel. Serves lunches and dinners and offers 10 percent discount on a la carte menu items.

10D Nguyen Thiep, D1
 www.augustinrestaurant.com

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

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, D1
3926 0699

Cocorico - Ga Nuong Phap

Serves an eclectic menu of roasted chicken (French style), pastas and Asian dishes.

127 Dien Bien Phu, D1
6292 0606
 www.cocorico.com.vn

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 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 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 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

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

L'essentiel

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

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
www.lebouchonsaigon.com

Le Chateau de Saigon

Situated in a small but romantic French villa, Le Chateau De Saigon Restaurant is designed to accommodate any kind of event. Whether it is dinner with family and friends, or a passionate evening with your loved one, Le Chateau De Saigon will provide a sophisticated and memorable dining experience.

45A Le Quy Don, D3
www.lechateausaigon.com

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

Le Steak de Saigon

Drawing inspiration from French steakhouses, Le Steak de Saigon serves imported and local meats, with beef fondue and table-side beef tartare as the most recommended. Aside from table service, the restaurant offers take-out and delivery as well.

15 Dong Du, DI
3822 4593
www.lesteakdesaigon.com

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

Le Rendez-Vous de Saigon

A new wine bistro that offers a warm and friendly atmosphere. Unwind either in their stylish downstairs bar, or lounge on cozy leather seating in the upstairs section with a balcony overlooking a courtyard in an alley. The venue offers a tasty selection of wines from France to South Africa, and a delectable menu of French cuisine.

9A Ngo Van Nam, DI
www.lerendezvousdesaigon.com
6291 0396

The Refinery

This Parisian bistro hidden away in its enclave on Hai Ba Trung is an exceptional venue, making for an elegant repatriation 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

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

Ashoka

Ashoka is one of the city's most popular and enduring Indian restaurants with a reputation for good food with a wide range of North Indian culinary dishes at a reasonable price. Large space for private parties, outdoor catering and free home delivery also available. Special set lunch veg/non-veg from VND90,000 upwards. Promotion (free trip to Cambodia) and discount available for people booking in groups.
17/10 Le Thanh Ton, DI

3823 1372
www.ashokavietnam.com

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.in
 11am - 11pm

Bombay Indian Restaurant

Located in DI near the Ben Thanh Market area, serving Indian & Halal cuisine. The ambiance 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, dovas, and vada from the southern region.

15B4 Le Thanh Ton, DI
8223 0173
www.ganeshindianrestaurant.com

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

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

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

italian

1960 Presidential Club

1960 Presidential Club is a member-only restaurant with an interior design inspired by Saigon in the 60s. You will experience more traditional style of Italian cuisine with an extensive menu led by chef Franco Buresi.

Floor 22 Sailing Tower, 111A Pasteur, DI
www.club1960.vn

Basilico Restaurant

Trattoria-style Italian eatery Basilico specializes in homespun recipes. Contemporary décor, casual ambiance, 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



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
tonyfox56@hotmail.com
www.saigonrestaurantgroup.com/ciao



Chef Mamma's

Chef Mamma's is located at Saigon's Superbowl Center offering a variety of Italian and Asian food. The restaurant opens from early in the morning until late at night serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

A43 Truong Son, Tan Binh

Da Vinci's

Da Vinci's is an Italian-American style pizzeria delivery offering pizzas, lasagna, spaghetti, calzones, salads and desserts. Their full menu is online at www.davincivietnam.com. Free delivery to districts 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and Phu My Hung.

Open 11am - 10pm.
Call 083 943 4982 or
SMS your order to 093 328 4624

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

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. The place lights up on romantic Thursday evenings with candlelight and light music.

17B Le Thanh Ton, DI
3823 1080
www.lahostaria.com

Lucca

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, DI
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.

175/1 Pham Ngu Lao, DI
3837 0760

Opera

Located at Park Hyatt Hotel, Opera is a contemporary, casual trattoria-style restaurant that specializes in authentic pizza made fresh from a wood-fired oven, pasta and homemade Italian dishes prepared from one large open kitchen.

Park Hyatt Hotel, 2 Lam Son Square, DI
3520 2357

Pendolasco

There leafy garden is perfect for all those people looking for some fresh air away from the hustle and bustle of the city. It also has a fully air-conditioned dining room. Offers large selection of Italian wines and Italian dishes such as wood fire oven pizzas, pastas, grilled food, among others.

87 Nguyen Hue, DI
www.pendolasco.vn

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, DI
012 0789 4444
www.pizza4ps.com

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, DI
3823 8998
www.pomodoro-vietnam.com

Sarpino's Pizzeria

Sarpino's Pizzeria provides authentic Italian pizzas made from gourmet ingredients.

125 Ho Tung Mau, DI
www.sarpinos.vn

Scoozy

An Italian restaurant that offers pizza, pasta, salad, special desserts and a wide variety of drinks. Provide dine-in, take away and home delivery services.

6 Thai Van Lung, DI

Japanese

Achaya Cafe

Achaya Cafe have two floors providing a nice atmosphere for meeting, relaxation or party. The menu is extensive with drinks and Western, Vietnamese food from sandwiches, spaghetti, pizzas, steak and special Japanese sweet desserts.

90 Le Loi, DI
093 897 2050

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, DI
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, DI
3822 0522

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, DI
3827 9083

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.

47 Phan Chu Trinh, DI



Blanchy Street

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, DI
3823 8793
www.blanchystreet.com
11am - 10:30pm

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, DI
3823 3955
www.cam-on.asia

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, DI
3825 8842

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, DI
3521 0008
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, DI
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, DI
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, DI
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, DI
3824 2754

Ichiban Sushi

Ichiban Sushi Vietnam serves fine sushi and signature drinks/cocktails in a lounge setting.

204 Le Lai, DI
www.ichibansushi.vn

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, DI
3829 0326

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, DI
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, DI
38245355
www.yakatabune-saigon.com

Kissho

Experienced chefs prepare teppanyaki, sushi, and yakiniku dishes before your eyes. In addition, an extensive wine list is available as well as an array of fine sake to complement the exquisite flavors of premium imported meat and seafood.

14 Nguyen Hue, DI
www.kissho.wmccvietnam.com

Kuru Kuru Shushi

A Japanese restaurant that features a rotating conveyor belt for the buffet, offering 50 different selections. It also offers an a la carte menu.

129 Nguyen Du, DI
www.kurukuru.com.vn

Kokokokko Pandora

Kokokokko is a combination of modern style fast food with the essence of ancient Japanese cuisine. The restaurant space is designed with high quality materials and features youthful and modern dynamic subtleties. With prices under VND100,00 Kokokoko is a must see.

4th Floor Pandora, 1/1 Truong Chinh, Tan Phu
3849 6840
www.kokokokko.com.vn

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 it 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, DI
3824 5994

Mus Mus

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, DI
3930 9185
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, DI
10am - 10pm

Robata Dining An

The restaurant has a downstairs bar and a second floor with private rooms that have sunken tables, sliding fusuma doors and tabletop barbecues. Popular with the Japanese expats, the menu serves up healthy appetizers, rolls, sashimi and An specialty dishes like deep fried chicken with garlic salt sauce An style (VND100,000).

15C Le Thanh Ton, DI
www.robata-an.com

Sakura Vietnamese-Japanese Restaurant

Cozy, friendly and modern Japanese restaurant near all of the attractions in the city center.

99 Suong Nguyet Anh, DI
6291 1036
sakurasaku.vn

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

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

Uraetei BBQ Restaurant

Uraetei 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
vicktis.com.vn

Vietnam Monde

Good for receptions, team meetings, relaxation, family dining, banquet and other special occasions. The recommended dishes include Kobe beef imported from Japan, Tepan Steak, Sashimi and Sushi. Average price per person is between VND100,000 to VND300,000.

7bis Korea Sailing, Ben Nghe Ward, D1
0838220187

Vui Vui

Vui Vui is a Japanese restaurant specializing in barbecue and Japanese-style hot pot. Offers a variety of set lunches including Yakiudon, Kimuchi Pokra, Suiyaki and Purukogi. The restaurant has two floors with each floor accommodating approximately 100 guests.

125A Tran Quoc Thao, D3
www.vuivui.net.vn

Wainosuke

Wainosuke is a Japanese and Italian

style restaurant. It serves food such as pastas, salads and steaks to name a few and wine from traditional Japanese to premium Italian wine.

37 Ho Tung Mau, D1
3821 4016
www.wainosuke-vn.asia

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

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 hanbols 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 Duc, 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

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 bimbap mixed rice dishes.

20 Ho Huan Nghiep, D1
3823 9000

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

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

Dragon Steak

Specializing in generous portions of Wagyu cuts; they're so enormous that the restaurant runs a cheery 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

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



Indaba Restaurant

Indaba Steakhouse combines German style steak and Italian coffee under one roof. Expect a fusion dishes like Indaba Spring Rolls, Mexican BBQ Spare Ribs, and Grilled Duck Breast served with sesame sauce, steamed rice and salad. The quaint and cozy restaurant is decorated in soft hues of red and black, complemented with soft jazz music. A German Viet Kieu with experience in restaurants in Germany helms the kitchen.

35 Ly Tu Trong, D1
www.facebook.com/indabacafe
Contact them at 3824 8280 or
visit www.facebook.com/indabacafe

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
www.steakhouse.com.vn

Pho 99 🍗 OI's Pick

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

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

thai

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

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.roththai.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

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

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.thaiexpress.com.vn

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

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

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

Banh Xeo An La Ghien

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

Binh An Village

Open every day for dining and other banqueting services, Binh An Village serves traditional country cuisine such as in house fried spring rolls, fresh lotus shrimp salad, selective grilled seafood and meats served with sticky pineapple rice. A jazz band is available for booking for private functions. It also offers special arrangements such as a Saigon boat cruise, DJ, traditional Vietnamese folklore music and more.

1163 Binh Quoi, Binh Thanh
3556 6099
 saigon@binhanvillage.com

Bonbon

Offers authentic Vietnamese cuisines as well as a modern global menu. It boasts hand-selected steaks and a world-class wine list. The restaurant is designed to be multi-functional, with the ability to continually change the layout and atmosphere for high-end group events, intimate romance or casual dinners.

Kumho Building, 39 Le Duan, D1
 info@bonbonrestaurant.vn
 6291 7788

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

Bo Nong

This performance venue features a traditional cultural show with Vietnamese cuisine. Established by Frenchmen Thibault Detraz and Jeremy Gremillet, who aim to bring the French passion for fusing live entertainment with dining.

143 Nguyen Trai, D1
 www.bo-nong.com

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.

73 Ly Tu Trong, D1
6276 2609
 www.bunsaigon.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

Cuc Cach Quan

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

Five Oysters

Serves local cuisine with an emphasis on seafood and beers starting at VND10,000. Open daily from 9am until late.

090 30 12123
 www.facebook.com/FiveOysters

Canh

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
 www.goldfish.vn

Grillbar - Eatery & Cafe

A new trendy kitchen and cozy restaurant with the concept of taking traditional Vietnamese charcoal grilled street food and serving it in a New York style cafe.

122 Le Thanh Ton, D1
38227 901
 www.grillbar.com.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

Hoang Yen

A venue for those who are looking for high-quality Vietnamese cuisine. Try some of the country's delicacies in a modern yet inviting atmosphere. The eatery's various clay pots are flavorful; some feature mam, a delicious fermented fish paste. While the restaurant's cuisine is light and healthy overall, those with a penchant for green veggies should definitely order one of Hoang Yen's assortment of edible 'flowers' – especially the sautéed hoa thien ly. It is recommended to order a few dishes and share them all.

7-9 Ngo Duc Ke, D1
148 Hai Ba Trung, D1
Parkson Hung Vuong, Third Floor, Hung Vuong Plaza, An Duong Vuong, D5
CRI- 12, 103 Ton Dat Tien, D7
 www.hoangyencuisine.com

Hum

Hum is a vegetarian restaurant where food are prepared on site from various fresh beans, nuts, vegetables, flowers, and fruits. Food are complemented with special drinks mixed from fresh fruits and vegetables.

2 Thi Sach, D1
3823 8920
 www.hum-vegetarian.vn

Khoai Restaurant

Specializes in dishes from Nha Trang.

3A Le Quy Don, D3
 www.rhoairestaurant.com

Lang Viet Oi's Pick

Lang Viet combines water puppet theater with Vietnamese northern cuisine. There are two performances in the evening (5pm and 6:16pm) and last for 45 minutes, with an option of a la carte dining, set menu or buffet afterwards. During the day, the restaurant serves breakfast and lunch, starting at 10am to 2pm. Their sister restaurant, Pho Xua, was once visited by Former President Bill Clinton in 2000.

36 Pham Ngoc Thach, D3
3829 9266
 www.langvietxua.com

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

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

Nam Phan

Nam Phan is a 200 seat restaurant that is accents Vietnamese cuisine with live classical music.

34 Vo Van Tan, D3

Nam Phat Restaurant

A Vietnamese restaurant that specializes in hosting social events such as weddings and business conferences. Traditional Vietnamese cuisine is the specialty with prices ranging from VND100,000 - VND300,000. The setting is of an elegant banquet hall.

21 Nguyen Trung Ngan, D1
3910 6488
 nhahangnamphat@gmail.com

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

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

Mitau

Mitau creates a gathering place for those who love Hue cuisine. The interior includes memorabilia, statues, bric and brac and golf trophies.

52 Hai Ba Trung, D1
3823 0767
 www.mitauhue.com

Nghi Xuan

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.quanangnon.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

Propaganda Bistro

Offers Vietnamese cuisine such as spring rolls and Vietnamese street food with a Western twist. Serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The restaurant features hand-painted wall murals.

21 Han Thuyen, D1
3822 9048
www.facebook.com/Propaganda-Saigon

Quan Bui Authentic Vietnamese Cuisine

Leafy green roof garden, upmarket restaurant with reasonable prices and a wide menu of choices. Open style kitchen advertises its cleanliness. Designer interior with spot lighted pictures and beautiful cushions give an oriental luxurious feeling – augmented by dishes served on earthenware crockery.

17a Ngo Van Nam, D1
3829 1515
(deliveries: 3602 2241 or 091 400 8835)

Quan An Ngon

Quan An Ngon appeals easily to tourists and local people alike in its unique concept: presenting the diversity of Vietnamese cuisine from different regions in a village market style. The restaurant is set in a large new building, which from its external yellow appearance is reminiscent of an old European villa; but inside its space is designed as an ancient Hue ruong house.

138 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, D1
3827 9666
www.quanngon138.com

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.

9th Floor, 12D Cach Mang Thang Tam, D1
3823 2232

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

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

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

Thang Bom Quan

Serves hot pot and special style BBQ.

49 Pho Duc Chinh, D1

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

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

(other) asian

Crawfish King

Crawfish King serves special menus with crawfish, lobster, mantis shrimp, American-style chicken wings, oysters, fruit beer, sea urchin and more. Offers free delivery for customers in D1 and D3.

63 Truong Dinh, D1
6272 7888
www.facebook.com/crawfishking63
7am - 12am

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

Little Manila

An eatery with indoor and outdoor seating serving your craving for Filipino cuisine such as the famous adobo, pansit (dried noodles), breakfast combinations like Longsilog (combination of longanisa (Filipino sausage), egg and fried rice), Tosilog (tocino, egg and fried rice) and more.

Ground Floor, Citiplaza, 230 Nguyen Trai, D1
52-1 Hung Vuong 2, Phu My Hung, D7
5410 0812

Long Monaco

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 1
364 Cong Hoa, Tan Binh
www.longmonaco.com.vn

western/international

27 Grill

27 Grill is an open kitchen run by Danish chefs Casper Gustafsen and Camilla Bailey and is known for its steaks. It also offers a spectacular view of the city. Opens from 5:30pm - 11pm.

Rooftop, AB Tower, 76A Le Lai, D1
www.chillisaigon.com

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

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

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)

Ben Style

Every sandwich comes wrapped with a label that displays its calories, protein, fat and carbohydrates content. A 544-calorie Cheesy tofu meatballs sandwich costs VND80,000 while a 281-calorie Chicken salad sets you back VND50,000. The chicken jumbo sandwich comes with a massive 638 calories, 59 grams of protein and 62 grams of carbohydrates, but only 16 grams of fat. Ben also offers meal plans for those who want to get fit and bulk up.

302 Co Bac, D1
090 691 2730

Beirut

Offers Lebanese and Mediterranean food with belly dancers every night from 8:30pm to 10pm and Latino dancers from 10pm to midnight.

74/13D Hai Ba Trung, D1
www.beirut.com.vn

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

Chuck's

Chuck's offers American comfort food like pancakes, omelets, burritos, fries, tacos, burgers and hotdogs.

27 Tran Nhat Duat, D1

Crab Pot

Crab Pot is a beer and seafood restaurant serving breakfasts, lunches and dinners of American, French, Seafood and Vietnamese cuisines, with delivery and catering services also.

65 Pham Ngoc Thach 6, D3

Gartenstadt

Gartenstadt serves German cuisine including sausage, sauerbraten, and pork knuckle. Known amongst locals and expats for its long tearwood bar, Gartenstadt is home to imported Schneider Weisse and Krombacher beer, as well as a large collection of choice schnapps. Private dining options are available on the second floor, including balcony seating overlooking scenic Dong Khoi Street.

34 Dong Khoi, D1
3822 3623

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
www.hogsbreathcafe.com.vn

Jaspas Wine & Grill

Jaspas Wine and Grill provides an extensive

wine list along with many "reinvented" Japas 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



MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Khoi Thom

Khoi Thom - "fragrant smoke" in English - is a unique venue, set in a bright, colourful al fresco decor inspired by renowned architect Ricardo Legoretta. A long way from Mexico, Chef Alejandro Torres's menu blends "Cocina Potosina" and timeless Mexican classics.

29 Ngo Thoi Nhiem, D3
www.khoithom.com

La Fenetre Soleil

La Fenetre Soleil, literally means 'window to the sun', showcases a fusion of Old World fittings such as exposed bricks, antique furniture and chandeliers with New World elements such as fur cushions and mosaic tiled and glass tables. Serves a range of cocktails, imported beer, coffee and smoothies together with a Japanese-Vietnamese fusion menu.

4 Ly Tu Trong, D1

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

Market 39

Market 39 showcases seven interactive live show kitchens, featuring a la carte all-day dining and an extensive buffet selection served daily during breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Corner of Hai Ba Trung & Le Duuan
3520 9099
www.intercontinental.com/saigon

Mogambo Bar & Grill

Mogambo is a darty, African-styled

restaurant with some the finest US & Tex-Mex and exceptional burgers.

50 Pasteur, D1
3825 1311

MZ Wine & Restaurant

MZ has a wine cellar featuring wines from the Old World to the New World. The restaurant serves Asian and Western cuisine with beefsteak and lamb dishes as the most suggested ones. Piano and violin artists perform daily from 7:30pm-9:30pm. Special arrangements like a live band and decorations are available upon requests.

56A Bui Thi Xuan, D1
3925 5258
www.m-zing.com

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

Located within New World Saigon Hotel, Parkview is a sophisticated restaurant with a view of the adjacent 23 September Park. Their buffets feature both Asian and international favorites along with local and imported fish, oysters, prawns, shrimps and snails. Every Sunday, the brunch buffet offers a fine fare including roisserie and steak specialties, with an ice bar serving up sushi and sashimi.

New World Saigon Hotel
76 Le Lai Street, D1
3822 8888
saigon@newworldhotels.com
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

Quán Ut Ut

Quán Ut Ut is Saigon's newest restaurant hotspot. Specialties include American BBQ, cashew-smoked pork ribs and burgers alongside fresh draft and imported beer. Open daily from 4pm til midnight.

168 Vo Van Kiet, D1
www.quanutut.com
3914 4500

Reflections

Reflections Restaurant is a fine dining restaurant with a menu that draws inspiration from every corner of the globe. It holds events showcasing Michelin-star chefs, wine pairing dinners and other culinary luminaries.

Level 3, Caravelle Hotel, 19-23 Lam Son Square, D1
0838234999

Saffron 🍷 OI's Pick

The first thing that will strike you when you enter Saffron is the terracotta pots. Located 50 meters from Ciao Bella, a popular Italian restaurant on Dung Du, this restaurant offers Mediterranean food, some with a distinct Asian influence added for further uniqueness. Guests are welcomed with complimentary Prosecco, fresh baked bread served with garlic, olive tapenade and hummus.

51 Hai Ba Trung, D1
382 48358

Shri

Shri offers unparalleled panoramic views of the city. Menu offers a broad range of dishes to suit most tastes with modern European styled starters, mains and desserts as well as a wide selection of grills and salads. Wine list is consists currently of over 270 bins with selections from both the Old and New World, with France, Italy, Spain, Germany and Austria as well as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, USA, Argentina and Chile all represented.

Level 23, Centec Tower, 72-74 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, D3
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

The Elbow Room

The Elbow Room on Pasteur is an American-style bistro with a long bar, exposed brickwork, white walls, and whirring 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
www.elbowroom.com.vn

The Hungry Pig

A sandwich bar that takes bacon very seriously, The Hungry Pig is a place where you can find bacon, wrapped in fresh-baked bagels and baguettes.

144 Cong Quynh, D1

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
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
www.xusaigon.com

Zest Bistro & Cafe

A casual restaurant featuring an American, French and fusion menu. Located across from the waterfront, just minutes away from the Bach Dang pier, Zest offers diners one of the nicest views in the city.

5 Ton Duc Thang, D1
3911 5599

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
7am - 2am daily

>>The List District 2

BAKERIES

Sweet and Sour

Offers custom made cakes, pies, tarts, brownies and cupcakes. It welcomes visitors to an open kitchen where they can watch and be a part of what makes its sweets special. Provides catering for special occasions.

AVA Residences, 40/4 Nguyen Van, D2
3519 3167

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

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

CAFES

Agnes Cafe - Dalat Coffee & Flower Shop

At Agnes Cafe they offer fresh coffee, smoothies and juices along with a delicious breakfast and lunch menu. This quaint and cozy cafe is a perfect place to meet up with friends or just relax to get away from the bustling traffic outside. They offer free delivery.

11A-B Thao Dien, D2

Shalom Coffee

Shalom Coffee is available for all your coffee and chocolate needs, warm snacks, cold refreshments, breakfasts and lunches.

53 Vo Truong Toan, D2
www.coffeeshalom.com

RESTAURANTS

FRENCH

Le Bacoulos

Le Bacoulos is a French restaurant, bar and lounge that serves French cuisine, bar food like burgers, fish and chips alongside vegetarian options like spinach soup and Greek salad. There's also a garden to unwind in with a glass of wine or enjoy a game of pool.

13 Tong Huu Dinh, D2
3519 4058
www.bacoulos.com

Gastro'home

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

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.

**14 Ngo Quang Huy, D2
 3898 2082
 www.lavilla-restaurant.com.vn
 *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**

INDIAN

Ashoka

Ashoka is one of the city's most popular and enduring Indian restaurants with a reputation for good food with a wide range of North Indian culinary dishes at a reasonable price. Large space for private parties, outdoor catering and free home delivery also available. Special set lunch veg/non-veg from VND90,000 upwards. Promotion (free trip to Cambodia) and discount available for people booking in groups.

**33 Tong Huu Dinh (Street 53), D2
 3744 4177
 www.ashokavietnam.com**

ITALIAN

Pendolasco – Thao Dien

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**

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**

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**

Jasmine Thai

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

Baniam Tree

A fine dining Vietnamese restaurant. Offers a set lunch, set dinner and international breakfast

River Garden, 170 Nguyen Van Huong, D2

Frangipani Hoa Su

Frangipani Hoa Su offers authentic Vietnamese cuisine with a variety of dishes from different parts of Vietnam ranging from pho, bun bo Hue to mi quang. It serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. It also has an open space and a VIP air-conditioned room together which can hold a maximum capacity of 500 people, making it an ideal venue for different types of events and functions.

**26 Le Van Mien, D2
 frangipani.restobar@gmail.com**

WESTERN/ INTERNATIONAL

Boathouse 🍷 Oi's Pick

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**

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**

Blue Crab 🍷 Oi's Pick

Blue Crab offers delicious seafood - prawns, scallops and lobster, crab, oysters, scallops and many more for rock-bottom prices. All of the seafood is sourced from the same supplier as a number of high-end hotels and restaurants in the city, ensuring the food is fresh and high quality. For meat-lovers there's also a wide range of dishes that include pork ribs and chicken wings. They offer weekly specials as well.

**49 Quoc Huong, D2
 3744 2008
 www.bluecrabsaigon.com**

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

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**

The Deck

Located on the banks of the Saigon River, this restaurant offers great international and Vietnamese fare.

**38 Nguyen U Di, D2
 www.thedecksaigon.com**

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
 www.vinovietnam.com**

>>The List District 7

BAKERIES

Dunkin' Donuts

This American doughnut and coffee franchise offers munchkins, croissants, donut sandwich and toasted sandwiches - along with the popular sugar raised, glazed chocolate mochi, glazed, chocolate coconut, cinnamon, Boston Kreme, Bavarian Kreme, strawberry-filled or chocolate frosted donuts.

59 Nguyen Duc Canh, D7

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

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

Sala Beer

Enjoy Asian and European dishes at Sala Beer and choose and enjoy more than 50 famous beer brands from around the world.

**Ground floor White House Hotel
 R2-25 Bui Bang Doan, Hung Phuoc 1, D7**

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

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
 www.baskinrobbs.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
 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
 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

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**

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**

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 mudpies and a whole range of Western comfort foods.

107 Ton Dat Tien, D7

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**

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.

S59-S61, Sky Garden 2 Apartments, D7

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

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

Bollywood

Complete North & South Indian Cuisine. Special Chaat & Tandoori Dishes. Parties, Events & catering service available, Daily Lunch tiffin and Set menus.
Free Delivery(All Phu My Hung)
22131481 - 22450096
0938069433
Hotline: 0906357442(English)
bollywoodvietnam@gmail.com
facebook: bollywoodvietnamindiancuisine
(for complete menu)

Spice India

Spice India offers a wide range of dishes that cater to any palette. Enjoy your curry with a side of Bollywood.
56-1 Bui Bang Doan, Hung Vuong 3, D7
093 841 6551
www.namaste-india.com.vn

ITALIAN

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

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
www.sarpinos.vn

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

JAPANESE

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

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

VIETNAMESE

Co Ba Vung Tau

Co Ba Vung Tau is a chain of traditional Vietnamese restaurants serving up their famous banh khot amongst an extensive menu of affordable Vietnamese food.
RI-72 Hung Gia 1, Bui Bang Doan, D7
5410 2027

Com Tam Ba Son

Com Tam Ba Son, Ba Son offers authentic Vietnamese broken rice (BBQ) and hu tieu sadec. The 35 year old recipes are handed down for more than 3 generations. It serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.
SB10-1 Nguyen Luong Bang, Nam Khang, Phu My Hung, Q7,
5413 3122

ASIAN

Cham Charm

Cham 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

Berru

Berru is a family-run Turkish restaurant offering a variety of Turkish specialties on the menu including kebabs, koftas, mezzes and soups. This is one of the few halal restaurants that imports all of their halal meat.
SC 3-1 Khu Pho My Khang, Nguyen Luong Bang, D7

Boomarang Bistro Saigon

Located in The Crescent by the Crescent lake, the spacious Boomarang Bistro Saigon serves Australian and other Western food in the most pedestrian friendly part of town.
107 Ton Dat Tien, D7
3841 3883
www.boomarang.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

El Camino

A small bar & restaurant situated in the heart of Phu My Hung. Relaxing outdoor saloon featuring inexpensive Spanish tapas and small plates from gourmet ingredients. Affordable selection of Spanish & French wines.
137 SB-02 Khu My Phat, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7
5412 4641, 3pm - midnight
www.facebook.com/elcaminovietnam

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 ambiance and genuine atmosphere.

Unit CRI-12, The Crescent, D7
3825 1879
www.elgaucho.com.vn

German Corner

The six month old restaurant is fast becoming known for its sausage, beer, and their Schweins Haxe or pork knuckles (served with white cabbage and mashed potatoes, VND 399,000). A number of German beer to select from including Bitburger, Koestritzer Black Beer, Benediktiner Weisse, HB-Hofbrau Weisse, Schwarzbrau Exquisit, and Schwarzbrau Weisse (beer price starts from VND 65,000).
A001 Nguyen Van Linh St., Phu My Hung,

Le Taj

Le Taj offers French cuisine and features a luxury atmosphere of black and white design. Besides a wide variety of menu choices, Le Taj brings you to the ultimate luxury appetite garnished with 24k gold leaf. Le Taj also impresses its guests with a large wine cellar featuring 150 types of international wine that adds to the dining and entertainment variety.
06 Phan Van Chuong, D7
090 535 0221

Salt & Pepper

Salt & Pepper Restaurant mainly serves Italian dishes.
103 Ton Dat Tien, D7
www.saltpepper.com.vn

Scott & Binh's Restaurant

This unassuming little bistro is making big waves with visitors to the city and resident expats alike. 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

supermarkets

100%

100% Alimentation.Generale.De.Qualite is the latest high-end grocery store to grace the streets of An phu. With a rustic charm 100% provides customers with 100% safe, natural and local products all sourced and manufactured in Vietnam. The shop only offers products that reach international food safety requirements and runs food events at the store. All products are available to order online at www.100percent.vn.com.

26b Thao dien, D2

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.
41A Thao Dien street. D2. 3744 2630
SB2-1 My Khanh 4, Nguyen Duc Canh, D7
16-18 Hai Ba Trung, D1

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
www.classicfinefoods.com



Le Cochon D'or

LeCochon D'or shop sells European and International meat that include ham, sausages, pate, terrine, and smoked specialties. A taste of home, because you and your taste buds deserve it! Customizes service available including door-to-door delivery.
64 Ngo Duc Ke, D1
3829 3856
8am - 7pm
www.ngp.com.vn

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

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

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

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

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

Shop Thai Duong

Beer, wine, & spirits importers. Previously known as Tan Mai.
54 Ham Nghi, D1

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.
15/5 Le Thanh Ton, D1

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

Travel & Leisure

IMAGE BY SERGEY GURYAKOV AND JENIA USTINOVA







Heavenly Ascent

The reward of tackling wild monkeys, hordes of snap-happy tourists and a 3,099-meter climb up Mount Emei in Sichuan, China

TEXT AND IMAGES BY **SERGEY GURYAKOV AND JENIA USTINOVA**

SHROUDED IN MIST, speckled with antiquated monasteries, and inhabited by bands of brazen macaques, the holy Mount Emei is the quintessential romantic image of ancient China. Two divergent paths of stairs and a smooth highway snake their way to the top, up more than 3,000 meters from sea level. There, Emei Shan promises to reward those who have come with some of the most spectacular scenery in the world - the Sea of Clouds, Buddha's Halo, Sacred Lamp, and Sunrise. As if these natural wonders are not enough, several magnificent temples and the ethereal statue of the many-headed Samantabhadra Bodhisattva riding the holy elephants preside over the Golden Summit.

Enticed by the promise of such rich rewards - a holy mountain that hosts ancient treasures throughout as well as spectacular natural wonders at the top -

we set out for our three-day, 54-kilometer ascent to the summit of Mount Emei.

Now, China has an interesting way of dealing with all things holy, ancient, or anyway special to its cultural and historic heritage: bedazzle, Disney-fy, and pave the way for mass tourism. At its base, Emei Shan is no different. The national park is filled with paved roads and stretches of relatively flat stairs that provide easy access. The first several hours of our hike were filled with wondrous 'antique' cement sculptures, serving as a backdrop for swarms of Chinese tourists playing emperor-poet for the day. A bit further in, we hit a very picturesque stream and countless bridges across the rocks as well as signs warning of "joking monkeys." And then we saw *them*.

Dozens of macaques were scurrying up and down trees and chain link bridges, a few fed by tourists in exchange for photo

ops. The whole scene was reminiscent of a zoo, except in a non-controlled environment. At one point a group of tourists who had just finished feeding the monkeys and taking pictures with them started to walk away, making their way across a lengthy chain-linked bridge. The monkeys, who clearly were expecting more for their troubles, followed, jumping one by one on each of the members of the group. In one swift motion backpacks were opened, belongings extracted, water and snacks consumed at lightning speed. Struggling was not an option - teeth barred, the "joking monkeys" refused to dismount their victims, biting and scratching those who put up a fight.

Terrified we seriously started to question whether our journey - filled with fake sculptures, hordes of tourists, and attacking critters - was going to be worth the effort. Thankfully, just around the



"We had climbed for so long, braved hordes of tourists and monkeys, slept in a room so damp and cold it could have been outside, surely the travel gods would reward us with a beautiful sunrise at the holy top..."

bend, away from the wild monkeys and agitated tourists, things started to look up - figuratively, and very, very, literally.

Up and Away

The crowds, mostly interested in photo ops and definitely not in trekking, thinned out quickly. More than halfway through the day, and the bridge of terror behind us, we faced a staircase up into the fog. There was no turning back. So up we went, climbing the sturdy cement steps leaving the theme park behind us. The ostentatious man-made intrusion of steps dissipated quickly into the natural beauty of the endless mountain peaks and rich vegetation bathed in fog. Further up the mountain, the carefully constructed steps are actually fused with nature. In places rockslides have eroded the perfect stones and broken down the concrete hand railings. Tiny pagodas and impressive monasteries - erected centuries ago in celebration of Buddhism - provide a perfect breakpoint from the endless climb. Weary travelers can breathe in the heady incense for spiritual strength and take out the thermos to warm up for the next hour on the Stairmaster to heaven.

And so it goes on, for as long as the physical strength holds or until the sun sets - whichever comes first. We clocked eight hours the first day, coming to a stop at the Hongchungping Temple.

Accommodation for those choosing to trek the mountain is beyond basic, but nothing that the brave souls undertaking the climb would blanch at. There is something to be said for sharing damp, cold quarters with the monks who tend to the holy grounds day in and day out. We turned on our electric heat blankets, filled up on hot tea, and drifted off to sleep to the sound of raindrops beating down on the window.

Day two began at dawn with stairs beckoning us onwards in the intense fog and rain. Filled up on delicious pancakes and Nescafe from Hard Wok café, we carried on. And on. Stairway of a hundred bends - impossible to verify the true number of hellish turns, as thoughts of sheer survival and perseverance caused us to lose count. But just as on the first day, day two was filled with jaw dropping scenery - the forests and waterfalls competing with pagodas and temples for the visitors' attention. Despite the ominous warning on the map of more 'joking monkey' areas, we made it through without coming into contact with the brazen critters until the base camp for the Golden Summit. A few times we heard the raucous noises from the forest along the way, yet no danger came our way.

Another eight-hour day of walking up and down thousands of stairs and we reached the reality check at the last plateau before the coveted mountain peak.



The area was filled with bussed-in tourists in ridiculous white high-tops, feeding the insatiable monkeys. Concession stands sold hot dogs and noodle soup, alongside a rental of parkas for the below freezing temperatures at the top. Exhausted and faced with fog so intense that we couldn't see our outstretched hands, we passed on the sunset at the summit, and hoped for better luck the next day. We had climbed for so long, braved hordes of tourists and monkeys, slept in a room so damp and cold it could have been outside, surely the travel gods would reward us with a beautiful sunrise at the holy top...

Defeat

And so, there we were, up at 4:30am, incredibly sore and freezing cold. We had put on all the layers that we had brought on the hike and began to walk through the rain and hail. Climbing more stairs, we kept our eyes on the prize: the natural wonders at the apex of Mount Emei. As the dawn began to break, the awful truth emerged - there would be no sunrise or any of the natural wonders at the glorious Golden Summit. But we pushed on, hoping for a miracle. Alas, it was not to be. We climbed 54 kilometers to reach the top, only to be handed a big fat dud of a view. The fog was so thick that we could not even see the famed Samantabhadra Bodhisattva statue or any of the temples at

the Golden Summit. The temperatures were frigid, and we were so tired. Defeated, we turned back and boarded the tourist bus to take us back to the base of the mountain.

Hours later and finally warmed up in our guesthouse, we reflected on our heavenly ascent up Emei Shan. Sure, we were disappointed in our luck, especially seeing others brandishing photos of the amazing sunrise they managed to capture just the day before. But you know what? Having climbed 54 kilometers of stairs through the fog, rain, tourists and brazen monkeys, our journey turned out to be more than just about the destination. To this day, our three-day trek was the most challenging adventure we have completed, and also the most rewarding. We did not see the wondrous Sea of Clouds or Buddha's Halo, but we have learned just how far and how hard we can go - which is a much more precious and special gift to us than the one we could take pictures of. The misty beauty that we saw on the way up, not shared with the crowds, is pretty mesmerizing as well.

BIO: *Sergey and Jenia set out to see the world and have a bit of fun in August 2013. They quickly realized that travel is not a sprint, but a marathon and are in it for the long haul. They blog about their quest for a sustainable travel lifestyle at www.housetolaos.com.* ■

IF YOU GO

Mountain Emei is open all year round. From what we hear, predicting a good sunrise and clear views up at the top is near impossible.

Tickets cost ¥185 (USD30) or ¥90 (USD15) with student ID. Ticket checkers are posted at a few areas throughout the bottom of the mountain, so make sure to hang on to your admission voucher.

Accommodation is available in temples along the two trails and at hotels at the base camp for the Golden Summit. Be prepared to pay top dollar the higher up you go, lack of quality notwithstanding. Also, mind your daylight as temples are spread out throughout the mountain, and there is nothing worse than being stuck in the forest at dusk with wild fauna on your heels.

Vegetarian meals are available at temples for a symbolic fee; otherwise a few meal stands and snack shops are scattered throughout the mountain. Try legendary pancakes at the Hard Wok café right before Hongchungping temple.



Best of Barcelona

Catalonia's seaside capital is a breezy antidote to manic Madrid

TEXT AND IMAGES BY **JESSICA BOWLER**

ANTONI GAUDÍ'S BUILDINGS, gorgeous beaches, and the popular central thoroughfare Las Ramblas - those all come to mind when you think of Barcelona. While they're definitely worth visiting, the Catalan capital is so much more than the typical "Top 10" sights. If you want to get off the tired tourist track and delve into the hidden side of the city, it's often only a matter of taking a few steps in another direction, quite literally. It's an experience far away from the overpriced dishes of microwaved paella they serve on Las Ramblas. Here's a guide to this enchanting city's best-kept secrets.

It's quite hard to find a truly undrinkable cup of coffee in Barcelona, but the city has a handful of exceptionally nice places. Try

the trendy Born district, with its narrow winding streets filled with interesting eateries. If you're by the Palau de la Musica Catalan, nip down a side street (Verdaguer i Callís, 12) to find the Antic Teatre (The Old Theater), which has a wonderful tree-filled patio perfect for a relaxing drink day or night. If you're lucky, you might be able to catch a performance or two as well; after all, it is a theater as well as a café.

Just a few streets down you'll find the Espai Mescladís (C/dels Carders, 35), a charming combination of an eco-friendly café, art exhibition, and social project. The food and drinks are locally sourced, and the art often focuses on issues specific to Barcelona, like a recent photography display of immigrants who had learned

Catalan. It's also a fabulous place for a coffee or tapas to hold you over until dinner time.

Stunning Views & A Tragic History

Barcelona isn't short on spectacular views; you can go up Montjuïc or to Parc Güell and see the city stretch from the mountains to the sea. But if you've got a little bit more time in your schedule, a stroll up to the bunkers at the Guinardó Park is decidedly worth the hike. Bordering the residential Horta-Guinardó district, this park has numerous trails for jogging or hiking.

Go all the way up to the top, and you'll see the remains of an old anti-aircraft defense shelter that locals refer to as "los bunkers." They've recently been

“Go all the way up to the top, and you’ll see the remains of an old anti-aircraft defense shelter that locals refer to as *‘los bunkers.’*”



Plaça de Sant Felipe Neri

cleaned up, and you’ll find a mixture of families out for the day and young people posing for glamorous photos against the spectacular backdrop. Take a picnic to the top and enjoy picking out landmarks like the Sagrada Família or the cable cars at the beach.

Plaça de Sant Felipe Neri lies right next to the Cathedral of Barcelona, but because it’s tucked away in the maze-like streets of the Gothic Quarter, it can be tricky to find. It was constructed on the medieval cemetery of Montjuïc del Bisbe and was named in honor of an Italian Jesuit preacher who was beatified in 1615. It is a much-loved spot, esteemed by locals for both its beauty and history. However it remains relatively unknown amongst tourists, meaning it has retained its authentic, unspoiled charm.

But don’t be fooled by its tranquil appearance. The square may be beautiful, but it has a very ugly history. This square was the scene of one of the most dramatic scenes of the Spanish Civil War. On January 30, 1938, in the midst of the combat between the Fascists and the Republicans, the nationalists dropped a bomb on the plaza, resulting in the deaths of 42 people, most of whom were children hiding in the church’s basement for safety. The plaza was left destroyed and it was decided that the architect Adolf Florensa would restore it, although you can still see the pockmarks left by shrapnel in the surrounding walls

Eating, Drinking & Gaudi

Hit Las Ramblas for dinner and you’ll end up with a wallet a whole lot lighter and a tummy not much fuller. Instead, try hitting Enric Granados, a semi-pedestrian street behind the University of Barcelona, for



Gaudí's La Pedrera

charming cafés in the lower section and chic restaurants higher up the street.

And if you’re on an even tighter budget, the Sant Antoni and Poble Sec neighborhoods are just a 10-minute walk away from Las Ramblas but bursting with cheap, delicious restaurants. My favorites are the terrace tapas bars on Career Blai, Caramba in Sant Antoni, and El Rincón del Cava in Poble Sec. Famous chef Ferran Adrià’s younger brother Albert also runs a slew of restaurants in the Poble Sec area, including the famous Tickets, though you may have to make a reservation months in advance in hopes of getting a coveted seat

at the dinner table.

“Gaudí” is practically synonymous with Barcelona, and the architect’s stunning Sagrada Família is the most iconic building in the city. Luckily for fans of Catalan *modernisme*, that’s just the beginning of the whimsical works you can find in the city. Gaudí’s two lesser-known works - the Palau Güell, right off Las Ramblas, recently opened up to visitors and has a roof to rival any of his more famous buildings; and the Casa Vicens in the artsy Gràcia neighborhood were just purchased with the intention of making it available to visitors (so if you were looking to buy a Gaudí



Hospital de Sant Pau

“It was an actual working hospital before undergoing four years of renovation. Now, all the medical activities take place in a newer, modern building, leaving visitors free to visit the original’s extensive grounds”

piece, you just missed the deadline!).

If Gaudí isn't your style, then the Hospital de Sant Pau may be your kind of place. Until very recently, it was an actual working hospital before undergoing four years of renovation. Now, all the medical activities take place in a newer, modern building, leaving visitors free to visit the original's extensive grounds. It often gets overlooked in favor of more famous buildings and, in all fairness, it is just up the street from the Sagrada Família, which is a pretty hard act to follow. But the Hospital de Sant Pau is actually the biggest art nouveau complex in the world, so you get great bang for your buck with

the €8 entry fee.

Secret Shield & Symbols

Perhaps the only thing that screams Barcelona even more than Gaudí is the FC Barcelona Fútbol Club. Many die-hard *azulgrana* supporters make something akin to a pilgrimage to visit the hallowed grounds of the Camp Nou stadium. Take a walk through the Born district, however, and you'll see why they *really* aren't joking when they say "fútbol is a religious experience here." The 14th-century Gothic church Santa María del Mar has an actual FC Barcelona shield hidden in the stained glass.

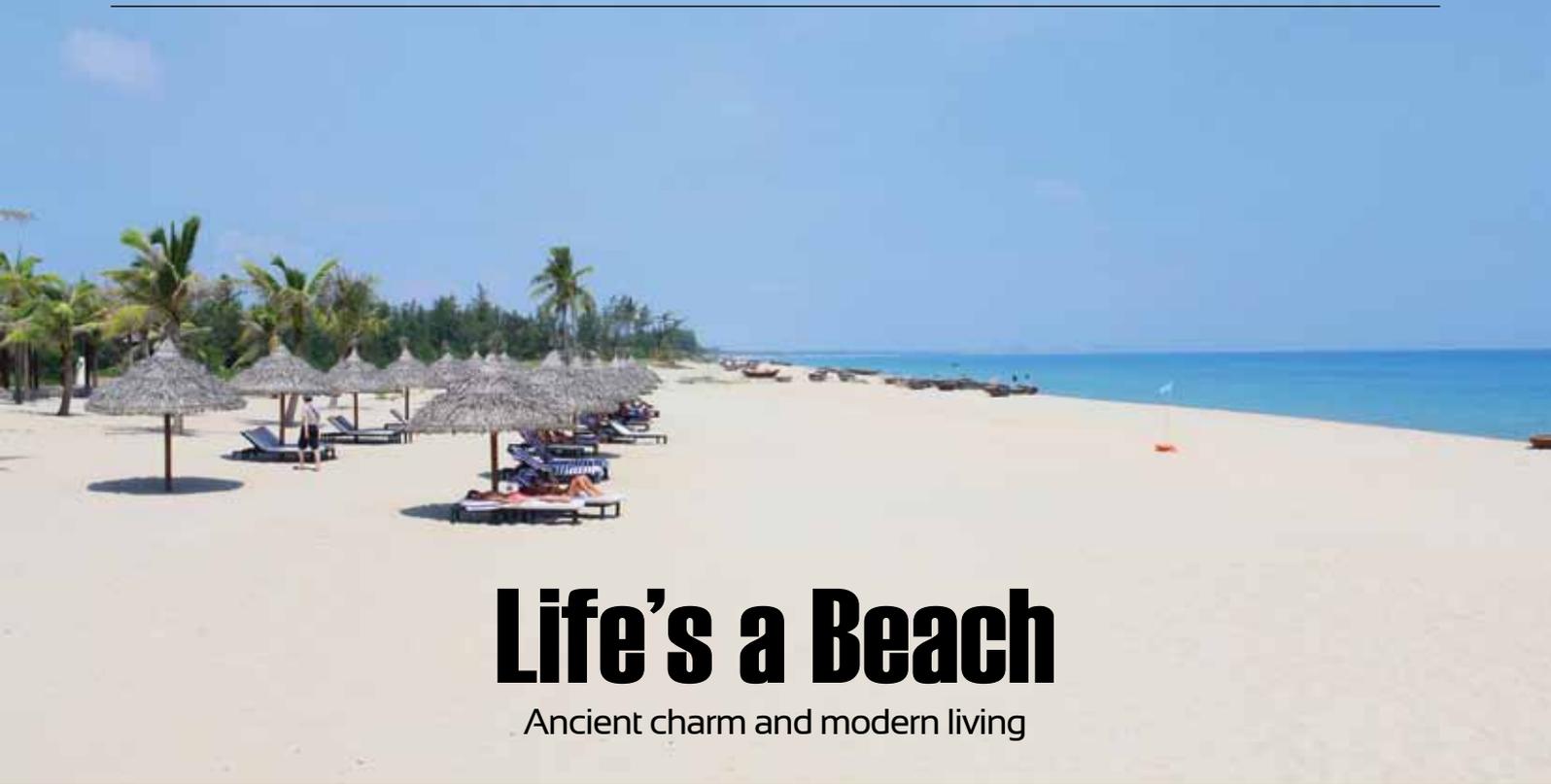
Why? The club's president helped

contribute some money to the restoration of the church, and in return they thanked the club with the shield. To find the shield, stand facing the altar and look to your left. You'll see a section of stained glass that looks decidedly more modern. That's where the shield is hidden, high up in the top level of the windows.

Not impressed with the tiny FC Barcelona shield? How about if I told you there was a secret symbol hidden all over the city? If you look hard enough, you'll start to spot bat sculptures all over Barcelona. They largely go unnoticed despite being on major city sites like Passeig de Gràcia (look on the lampposts) and the Boqueria Market (look at the entrance sign with the market's name).

The bat was briefly used as a symbol for the city, but is no longer in use. They don't make a big deal out of it, but if you keep an eye out you'll spot them perched on modernist markets, in the Ciutadella Park, and even on old versions of Barça jerseys.

BIO: *Jessica Bowler is a translator and travel writer based in Barcelona. A UK native who grew up in California, the Catalan capital charmed her on a study abroad summer and she hasn't looked back since. Read more about her travels at www.barcelonablonde.com.* ■



Life's a Beach

Ancient charm and modern living

JUST FIVE MINUTES FROM the ancient town of Hoi An, isolated on a strip near the gateway of Cua Dai, lies the beautiful **Boutique Hoi An Resort**. Step beyond the main entrance and you will be greeted with a calm wide open space. At the center of the garden is a large swimming pool that can rival an Olympic pool. Lining the edge of the pool are soft cushioned long lounge chairs under white canvas umbrellas that beckons to be lounged on and relaxed in. Beyond the garden is a beautiful white sandy beach that stretches out toward the majestic east sea with its blue clear waters, eagerly inviting you for an afternoon dip.

The architecture of the resort is based on a traditional colonial style of the early 1960s, depicting a simple but luxurious design. The red tiled roofs complement the white facade of the main buildings offering a picturesque reflection on the surface of the center swimming pool. The designs also incorporate much of the natural sunlight into the building to emphasize the ambiance of the colonial theme in its design.

As the name implies, Boutique Hoi An Resort has only 82 rooms and villas facing the sea with private balconies and some have direct access to the beach from private

terraces. The resort is small enough that they can provide special attention to guests to make their stay as enjoyable and memorable as possible. The rooms are divided into Superior, Deluxe, Boutique Deluxe, and Beach Villas. Guests staying in any of their spacious Beach Villas, which is only a few steps to the beach, can wake up every morning with a spectacular sight of the sun rising from the sea as it gingerly climbs up the horizon beyond the East Sea.

Only a few steps from the garden awaits the exclusive white sandy beach where guests can take a swim in the sea, or enjoy the breeze under the palm tree umbrellas that provide shade for the soft beach chairs that are dotted in the area. It also a great quiet place to catch up on a novel that you never had a chance to finish while sipping a cold refreshing cocktail, or two. Their Boutique Deluxe rooms are favorites for honeymooners and couples who want their stay to be as romantic and memorable as possible, each have their own private terraces for privacy. At night, they can view the reflection of the moonlight glittering above the sea and listen to the gentle sound of the clapping waves against the pristine beach.

Boutique Hoi An Resort includes a

few exquisite restaurants and bars. The main restaurant, Le Café, serves a buffet style breakfast while lunch and dinner are a la carte with various dining menus specially prepared by their chef with fresh ingredients and local catches of the day and Hoi An specialties. The Le Salon lobby lounge is the place to be with your friends or loved ones to enjoy your favorite cocktails in a colonial rustic atmosphere. Le Salon also boasts a great collection of wines from around the globe.

Right next to the large swimming pool is Le Spa where guests can be pampered by one of their therapists after a hard day out in the sun. After that, guests can visit the pool bar, La Piscine, right next to the pool to enjoy an ice cold beer or a favorite cocktail specially prepared by their talented bartenders along with various snacks and finger foods.

At Boutique Hoi An Resort one can relax and enjoy calmness and tranquility, soothing the mind as intended by nature, yet retaining the service of modern day amenities.

Visit www.boutiquehoianresort.com, call (0510) 3939 111 or email info@boutiquehoianresort.com for more info. ■





to have around when house guests forget to bring a toothbrush or a comb, but bringing out a nice branded shampoo from my cache months after coming home from a trip has the ability to instantly whisk me back to some exotic locale. Some people remember where they were the day JFK got shot or when man first stepped foot on the moon. Me? I remember when I last used that bottle of Pecksniff's calming hand lotion (the Renaissance Bangkok Ratchaprasong Hotel) or that L'Occitane Verbena vegetable soap (the Four Seasons Lanai, Hawaii). And I'm definitely not the only one. Suzanne Wolko, a business manager from Philadelphia (USA) says: "I love the Firmdale hotels in London. The amenities are Miller Harris and at each stay the room has a new gift like a spa nail polish set or aromatherapy sleep spray. I bring it all home and relive London with each use."

In writing this column, I polled some frequent travelers on what amenities impressed them the most. Some found pleasure in simple things. "I love it when a hotel has a bathrobe; just a little thing but feels very luxurious!" said Stephanie Raley. "I also love when hotels have really good in-room coffee. No, not old school pots with tired coffee, but Keurig's and Nespresso's. Hotel Le Germain in Toronto wins the day with an espresso machine!" added travel writer Christina Saull. Upgraded versions of the expected also scored big. "The shower at the Shangri-La Resort we stayed at in Penang Malaysia had three different sets of heads/jets and a party of 12 could have fit easily into it," said Mike Hinshaw. "Instead of a standard shower, I had a private outdoor lava rock shower at the Four Seasons Hualalai. It was great but I did find teeth marks on my soap so not sure who else enjoyed the shower," said Kristin Francis, an attorney from New York City.

Raiding the Maid's Cart

While some hotels look at the price of amenities as a cost, others view it as an investment. Khuc Khai Hoan, Executive

Housekeeper at the New World Saigon Hotel, says that in order to stand out, "the hotel monitors feedback and quality of amenities to ensure they are consumed with enjoyment. New World Saigon Hotel prides itself on offering a home away from home so it's really crucial that we offer the best amenities to ensure our guests can rest and relax in comfort." Those amenities include Elemis toiletries, a leading luxury British spa and skincare brand.

Personalized keepsakes also top my list of memorable amenities, like the high quality luggage tag that was once left on my suitcase at An Lam Villas Ninh Van Bay, prefilled out with all my details. Not only did it help my bag get to my room, but in a clever but useful marketing ploy, I still use it today. Repeat visitors to the Six Senses properties in Vietnam get initialed name tags on their bicycles. Each resort also has an extensive pillow and scent menu, offering a unique assortment of essential oils distilled on-site using lemongrass and/or kumquat clippings grown throughout the resort. The resort is in the process of creating a salt soak and seaweed soap in association with Spa Pure, using seaweed harvested in bays throughout Vietnam and formulated in conjunction with a local 'seaweed doctor'.

But according to Monica Majors of Six Senses in Vietnam, "it isn't the tangible gifts or amenities, per se, that play a role. Rather, it is the constant attention to details throughout a guest's stay. Take, for example, personalized service next to the pool: sunglasses cleaning; homemade atomizer spray; fresh fruit juices or skewers every 90 minutes. Or, random fresh fruit and healthy snack deliveries into the children's club during the day. A welcome or departure gift can definitely leverage memories after the guest leaves the hotel. Hopefully they are unique enough to create conversation later. The personalized bike tag sitting on someone's desk will surely initiate a conversation about a vacation. We all know that word-of-mouth is the best endorsement."

Can amenities sometimes be *too* good, though, tempting guests to raid the maid's cart or take what maybe they shouldn't take? Cassie Kifer who works in web communications in San Jose, California admitted: "I [once] took a pair of socks from a Japanese ryokan hotel. They were provided in the room with the traditional robe. They have a split big toe so you can wear them with flip flops — genius! I wasn't sure whether I was supposed to bring them home, but I did. I can't imagine they would wash them for reuse but maybe they do." For me, I'm partial to nice laundry bags, like the embroidered linen one from La Veranda Resort Phu Quoc. Not only are they great to separate dirty laundry from clean while on holiday, I like to use them after I come home to store all sorts of things from plastic bags to clothes waiting to be sent to the cleaner's.

Stéphane Eloit, founder of Natural Rendez-Vous which supplies exclusive bathroom amenities to high-end hotels in Vietnam and beyond, adds that the challenge of hotel amenities is they "must be special enough that people go 'wow!' but also must be acceptable by all: by French, by Japanese, by old, young, men and women.

"When it comes to amenities, the big challenge for many hoteliers is they see it as a cost, something to minimize or avoid. They say: 'I've got to spend, so I'll put out the cheapest thing I can'. But it's something they'd never use personally. What about the rest of your hotel? Do you drink the coffee there or bring your own coffee from home? That's the message you're sending here. But I have to warn them that if they move to higher quality products, not only does the cost go up, but guests will start using them more, leading to an increase in price per unit and quantity. [However], other hoteliers understand that it's a very special part of the property. There are three things that touch the customers' skin — sheets, towels and amenities. It's the one product you can take away and remember. They see it not as a cost but as an investment." ■

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

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, D 1
39208717

THREE STAR

EMM Hotel Saigon

The 56 air-conditioned guestrooms at EMM Hotel Saigon include laptop-compatible safes and minibars. Complimentary wireless and wired high-speed Internet access and in-room refrigerators are provided. 32-inch LED TVs are equipped with premium cable channels. All accommodations provide desks, safes, and direct-dial phones.

157 Pasteur, D3
01663221322

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
www.ibis.com

Sunland Hotels

Located about 35 minutes from Tan Son Nhat Airport, Sunland is a three star hotel with 90 rooms and suites. The hotel also comprise a Sky Bar and Sun Coffee Lounge.

302-304 Vo Van Kiet, D1
9922 3833
www.sunlandhotel.vn

Tan Hai Long Hotel & Spa

Three-star Tan Hai Long Hotel offers 106 rooms and suites, all boasting a view of the city and Ben Thanh Market. Its conference room can accommodate up to 110 people with modern facilities. It also houses two dining venues, the La Terrasse Restaurant and L'emotion Lounge Bar & Coffee.

14-16 Le Lai, D1
www.tanhailonghotel.com.vn
3827 2738

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, D 1
3829 9201
www.continentalsaigon.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, D 1
3829 3415
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, D 1
3822 4866
www.novotel.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
www.parkroyalhotels.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
3823 4999
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
www.equatorial.com/hcm

InterContinental Asiana Saigon

★★★★ **👍 Oi's Pick** 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

Lotte Legend Hotel Saigon

★★★★ 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
3823 3333
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
3829 5517
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
3844 9222
www.moevenpick-hotels.com

New World Saigon Hotel

★★★★ **👍 Oi's Pick** 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
3822 8888
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
3925 7777
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
3824 1234
www.saigon.park.hyatt.com

Pullman

★★★★ The 306-room hotel features a contemporary design, a wide range of technological facilities, four bars and restaurants and five meeting venues. Offers signature services including Welcomer, optimal connectivity with the Connectivity by Pullman concept (free high-speed wifi throughout the hotel, Quadriga's Personal Media Network mobile application), the Co-Meeting offer for business event and functions and Fit and Spa Lounge by Pullman.

148 Tran Hung Dao, D1

Renaissance Riverside Hotel

★★★★ A five-star hotel located in the heart of Saigon's business and entertainment district. The hotel's 336 rooms and suites offer an incredible view of the Saigon River as well as over the city. Each guest room is designed and furnished with discerning business and leisure travelers in mind. Choose a deluxe room or suite with large desk and ample lighting, in-room coffee and tea service, high speed internet, safe, well-stocked mini-bar as well as the jack bag (connectivity kit).

8-15 Ton Duc Thang, D1
3822 0033
www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/sgnbn-renaissance-riverside-hotel-saigon

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

★★★★ **👍 Oi's Pick** 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
3556 1145
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
3827 2828
sheratonsaigon@sheraton.com

Sofitel Saigon Plaza Hotel

★★★★ The Sofitel 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
3824 1555
H2077@Sofitel.com
www.sofitel.com/gb/hotel-2077-sofitel-saigon-plaza/index.shtml

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
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

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, Phuong 5, Dalat

Blue Moon Hotel & Spa

 Located in the heart of breathtaking Dalat, the Blue Moon Resort & Spa is designed to complement the natural beauty of the "City of Eternal Spring." Built opposite the popular and tranquil Xuan Huong Lake, Blue Moon is centrally located and convenient to Dalat's eating, shopping and entertainment spots. Much more than just a comfortable night's sleep, Blue Moon Resort & Spa invites you to experience true hospitality.
4 Phan Boi Chau, Dalat 67, Vietnam
www.bluemoonhotel.com.vn/bluemoon2

Dalat Edensee Lake Resort & Spa

 Dalat Edensee Lake Resort & Spa is perched on an idyllic location overlooking Tuyen Lam lake and gently undulating hills. It has four categories of rooms, including VIP villas, all with stunningly furnished rooms, spacious balconies offering sweeping mountain and/or lake view, and subtle finishing touches.
Tuyen Lam Lake, Zone VII.2, Dalat
(063) 383 1515
www.dalatedensee.com

Dalat Green City Hotel 🍷 Oi's Pick

Budget hotel in the center of Dalat. Five minutes from most major attractions

in Dalat. Newly refurbished. Beautiful mountain and city views from the rooftop. Features free WIFI, TV, snack bar in all rooms. Coffee shop downstairs. Airport pickup by private car. Motorbike rental. Tour information. Laundry. Computers in lobby for public use.

172 Phan Dinh Phung, Dalat
(063) 3827 999
www.dalatgreencityhotel.com

Dalat Train Villa & Cafe 🍷 Oi's Pick

Located near the Dalat Train Station, the Dalat Train Villa is for short or long staying guests. The villa is a restored 2-story French colonial-era villa. Next to the villa is a French train car, which has been renovated into a bar/cafe/restaurant. Romantic venue. From the lake, take first left after Dalat Train Station.
1 Quang Trung St, Ward 9, Villa #3

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

Fusion Maia

 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

Pullman Danang Beach Resort

 Located on the stunning white sands of Bac My An beach, the friendly and modern Pullman Danang Beach Resort is an oasis of fun. It has 187 guest rooms and cottages and offers warm and genuine Vietnamese service. The resort is perfect for a family holiday or a romantic beach getaway
Vo Nguyen Giap, Khue My, Ngu Hanh Son
(0) 511 395 8888
info@pullman-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
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

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

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 traveler.
1a Nghi Tam Tay Ho, Hanoi

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.
K5 Nghi Tam, 11 Xuan Dieu, Tay Ho, Hanoi

The Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi

***** 🍷 Oi's Pick
 Features include 364 rooms and suites, excellent French cuisine at Le Beaulieu, Vietnamese specialities 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
h1555@sofitel.com

HOI AN

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

Boutique Hoi An Resort 🍷 Oi's Pick

 Boutique Hoi An Resort offers 82 rooms and villas, with all rooms facing the sea with private balconies. Other facilities include spa with 3 treatment rooms and 5 massage pavilions, fully-equipped gym, restaurant, lobby lounge and pool bar and conference facilities accommodating 80 guests for dinner functions and 130 guests for cocktail

parties.
Group 6, Block Tan Thinh, Ward Cam An, Hoi An City
www.boutiquehoianresort.com

HUE

Ana Mandara Hue

 Located a scenic 15km drive from central Hue, this is 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

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

NHA TRANG

Evason Ana Mandara

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

Six Senses 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

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

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

Muine Bay Resort

Located in the Mui Ne Bay and overlooking the Hon Lao pristine island of blue sea, Muine Bay Resort includes 103 rooms in 4-stars standard of which 32 bungalows designed and inspired by the Cham Tower.
Khu pho 14, Mui Ne Ward, Phan Thiet

www.muinebayresort.com
0622220222



Novela Muine Resort & Spa

A 150-meter beach resort that offers luxurious accommodations, countless modern facilities and amenities with attentive services. A private and unique space in the heart of resort, Novela restaurant serves a daily breakfast, lunch, dinner and any other banquet with Asian and European cuisine. With two floors, guests can enjoy wining and dining and view the beautiful beach and sand hill.

96A Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Ham Tien Mui Ne, Phan Thiet
www.novelaresort.vn
(62) 374 3456



Princess d'Annam

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

The Cliff Resort and Residences

Offers 128 rooms equipped with a myriad of amenities such as 3D smart TV, safe and mini bar as well as private bathroom. It boasts an extensive lap pool, a kid's pool and pool bar as well as submerged on deck swimming pool chairs. Its restaurant serves a selection of local seafood specialties and Western cuisine.
Zone 5, Phu Hai Ward, Phan Thiet
www.thecliffresort-binhthuan.com

The Sailing Beach Resort

Offers a contemporary setting in sensual tropical harmony that befits its bay host. All 192 rooms, with spacious private balconies affording stunning ocean views, are scattered across tropical vegetation, ponds and rests steps from an endless beach.
107 Ho Xuan Huong, Phan Thiet

WindFlower Beach Boutique Hotel

Located in the resort capital of Vietnam – Mui Ne Bay, WindFlower Beach Boutique Hotel offers an intimate setting for guests to enjoy a getaway on the beach to its fullest. The hotel is home to 24 cozy deluxe rooms with services and sophistication that are expected from a beach boutique hotel.
76 Huynh Thuc Khang, Mui Ne (Vietnamese) (06) 2374 3969 / (English) 090 291 3969
www.windflowermuine.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.
Bai Xep, Phu Quoc

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

La Veranda

The most distinguished of Phu Quoc Island's hotels and guesthouses, La Veranda sports paddle fans, butter-yellow 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

Paris Beach Resort 🍷 Or's Pick

Owned and managed by a friendly and hospitable French-Vietnamese woman and her French husband, the resort is located about a 15-minute taxi ride from the airport. It has an outdoor swimming pool, a private beachfront, recreation room, bicycles and a restaurant serving local and French food. Each room or bungalow has air conditioning, a mini bar, cable TV and free Wi-Fi. They also offer tours around the island.
Cua Lap, Duong To, Phu Quoc

QUY NHON

Life Wellness Resort Quy Nhon

A hide-away style spa and beach destination set in 13.5 hectares of private mountainous land and beach. The tranquillity, splendid views, Cham-inspired architecture and surroundings are so far unmatched in Vietnam.
Ghehng Rang, Bai Dai Beach, Quy Nhon, Binh Dinh

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

VUNG TAU

The Grand-Ho Tram Strip

The Grand - Ho Tram Strip is Vietnam's first largest integrated resort and ultimately will include an 1,100-room five-star hotel, a world-class casino, restaurants, high-tech meeting space, an exclusive VIP area, as well as a variety of beach-front recreation activities. The first 541-room tower of this development opened in July 2013 with its casino including 90 live tables and 614 electronic game positions. The second 559-room tower is on track to open in 2015.
Phuoc Thuan Commune, Xuyen Moc District

cinemas & theaters



A O Show

A O Show is a unique blend of bamboo cirque, acrobatic acts, and theatrical visual drama.
It depicts the charming beauty of Southern Vietnamese life in villages & cities, where the richness of its culture remains despite inevitable urbanization. Live traditional music which echoes of rural work songs, scenic and lighting design makes the A O Show, which is performed at the 115-year-old historic Saigon Opera House, worth seeing when you visit Ho Chi Minh City.
7 Cong Truong Lam Son, DI reservation@aoshowsaigon.com www.aoshowsaigon.com



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, DI

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

Galaxy

Vietnamese cinema showing international and domestic films.
116 Nguyen Du, DI

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, DI

IDECAF Drama Theatre

IDECAF is a theater holding French cultural exchanges as well as offering courses in French.
31 Thai Van Lung, DI

Saigon Opera House

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, DI

serviced apartments

Diamond Island Luxury Residences

Diamond Island Luxury Residences offers 68 fully-furnished apartments, ranging from two- to four-bedroom units with private balconies providing panoramic views of the stunning surroundings. Each apartment comes with a fully-equipped kitchen, en-suite bathrooms, separate work and living areas. Each lavish space features plush interiors, modern amenities, elegant furnishings and carefully chosen trimmings and fixtures, creating a luxurious harmony of comfort and tranquility that will have you relaxed and recharged, and functioning at peak performance.
No 01 – Street No.104-BTT, Quarter 3, Binh Trung Tay Ward, D2
096 829 3388 / 3742 5678
www.the-ascott.com

InterContinental Asiana Saigon Residences

It's a 31-floor tower with 260 rooms; the Residences offers superb panoramic views of downtown area and is part of the Kumho Asiana Plaza - the city's finest integrated complex featuring commercial, hotel, residential and a diverse choice of dining and dining outlets. They will also benefit from the preferred amenities at the InterContinental Asiana Saigon next door.
Corner of Le Van Huu & Nguyen Du
3520 8888

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, DI

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, DI
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, DI
38229197

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

The Landmark

The Landmark features serviced apartments, offices, luxury dining, sports clubs, swimming pool at the rooftop of the building with great views of the Saigon River. It offers one bedroom, two bedroom and three bedroom units for rent. Amenities offered include wireless broadband internet access, 100 percent power backup, room service, maid service and laundry, 24-hour reception and airport shuttle service.
5B Ton Duc Thang, DI
www.thelandmarkvietnam.com

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, DI

Buffalo Tours

A premium travel agency that helps travelers customize their itinerary and destination packages. From corporate to small tour packages available.
81 Mac Thi Buoi, DI
www.buffalotours.com.vn

Exotissimo Travel

Exotissimo Travel offers tours to Vietnam, the region and the whole world!

Local and regional tours for family and visitors are quick and easy to arrange, from standard to higher-end versions. Less common requests are tailor-built for you by friendly online operators and/or the pleasant District 2 location office.
A District 1 presence will re-open soon.
41 Thao Dien, D2
www.exotissimo.com
anphu@exotissimo.com

Inside Asia Travel

Inside Asia Travel is a boutique luxury travel provider of tailor made travel arrangements for English speaking expats and travelers through Southeast Asia. Guests enjoy highly personalized, bespoke travel arrangements suited to individual tastes and budget.
www.insideasiatravel.com
3844 1005 (Ext: 221)

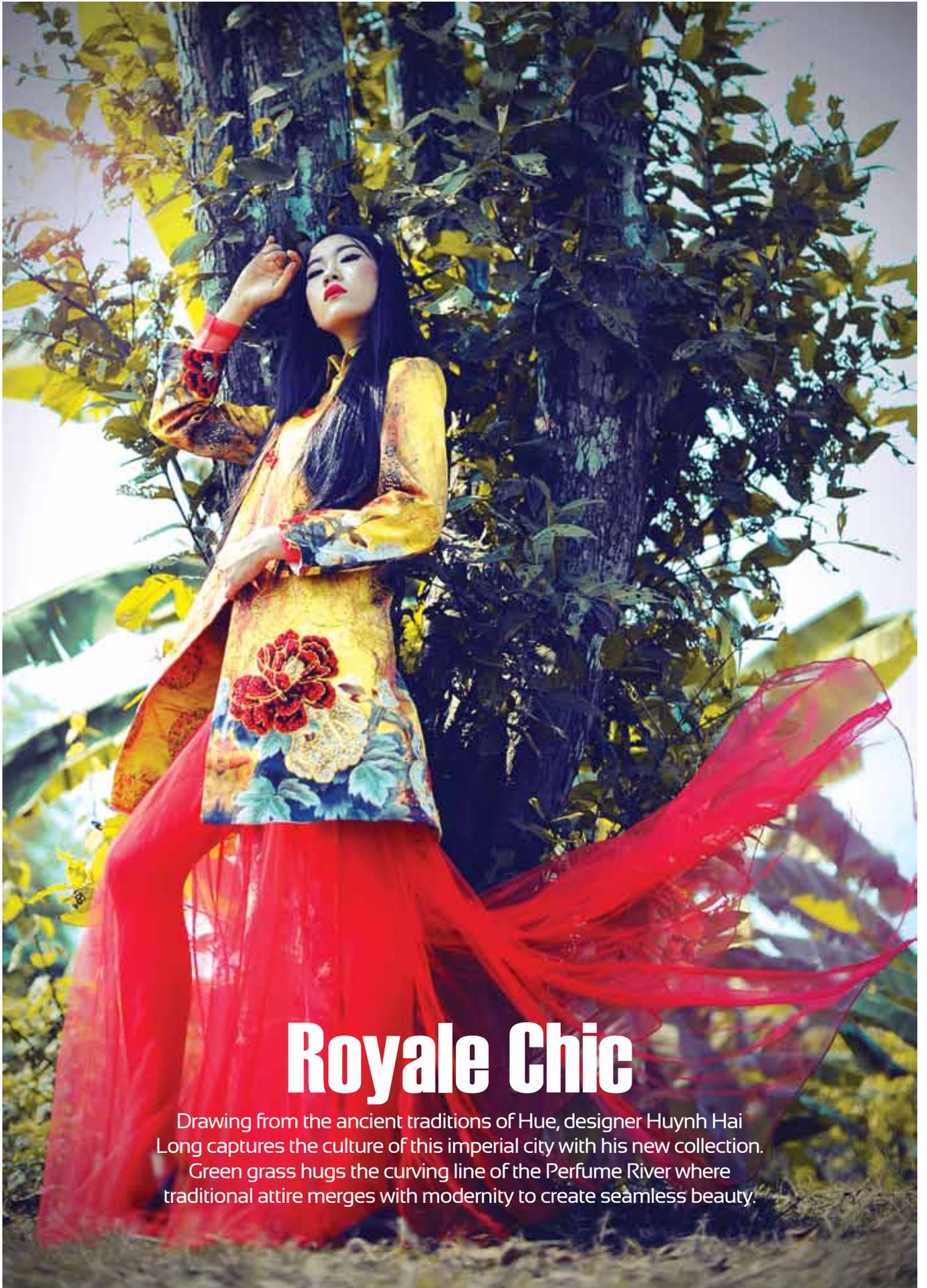
Saigon River Tour

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, DI

Living

■ IMAGE BY ADAM ROBERT YOUNG





Royale Chic

Drawing from the ancient traditions of Hue, designer Huynh Hai Long captures the culture of this imperial city with his new collection.

Green grass hugs the curving line of the Perfume River where traditional attire merges with modernity to create seamless beauty.





PRODUCER: NGUYEN TRA MY SET UP: HOANG DAO - HOANGDAO@SWOT.VN PHOTOGRAPHER: VU MINH TUAN MODELS: THUY TRANG, NGOC THUY - VIETNAM NEXT TOP MODELS



COSTUMES : HUYNH HAI LONG MAKE UP : DUY LEE - 093 9281566 (DANG MINH MAKEUP ACADEMY) HAIR & STYLIST : GIAU TANG - KIM HIEN LOCATION : HUE RIVERSIDE RESORT & SPA



My life as...

a bone cleaner, exhuming corpses to make room for farming

INTERVIEWED BY MICHELLE TA, NGO MAI HUONG, TINA THY PHAM
AND NGUYEN HA PHUONG NINH **IMAGES BY** ADAM ROBERT YOUNG

HELLO EVERYONE, MY name's Thanh and I'm 55- years-old. I live in Xuan Canh village in Tu Liem District. I'm semi-retired now; used to work in construction. But that's just one of my jobs [smiles]. On the other hand, I'm still doing another job that's not like any other. I'm a bone cleaner. If I had to, I'd put it that way. I'm not really one of those professionals like at Van Dien or the other cemeteries. I mainly exhume for relatives, neighbors, or other acquaintances who need my help.

I know a lot of people are freaked out by the work I do. One time, when I was being introduced to some new people, I decided to tell them I was a bone cleaner. I wanted to see how they'd react, and it was just as I expected! They grimaced unintentionally; eye contact wasn't natural like before, some of them even choked while eating. Exhuming bodies isn't my main job, but even so, it still hurts to see how people react; it's a decent job, so what's wrong with it? But ever since then, I don't introduce myself as a bone cleaner when I meet new people anymore. It's partly

because I don't want my kids to be put in an awkward situation. If adults behave that way, just imagine how kids will react.

My first time exhuming a body was in 1997; yup, that sounds about right. That was when one of my relatives asked me to do it. I guess everyone in the family thought I was the right age for the job. Because it was for a family member, I accepted. I thought nothing of it — just digging up bones, that's all. But when the grave was finally dug up and I got ready to open the coffin, suddenly I felt freezing cold and both my hands went numb.

I remember those sensations very well, the feeling of facing a different world for the first time, the world of the dead. When I opened the coffin lid and saw the remains inside, suddenly I felt confused, my hands and feet were shaking and I didn't know what to do. Somebody next to me gave me a nudge and I slowly remembered what I'd come there for.

You've got to exhume bones in the right order. You exhume the skull first, then the bones of the left arm, the right arm, the

thigh bone and shin bone of the left leg, then the right; after that, each rib bone, and then finally the vertebrae. My job is to climb down into the grave, lift each bone out of the coffin and clean the sediment off with water. Then I give it to someone else standing at the side of the grave, who washes it again with water that's infused with cardamom and cinnamon. After they're all cleaned, we put the bones inside a smaller coffin. By then, my work is pretty much done.

After I exhumed my first body, some other family members asked for my help. Gradually I got more and more familiar with the work. Then word started getting around, so after a certain point — I'm not even sure when — exhuming turned into another job of mine [smiles]. My wife, of course, doesn't want me to do this anymore. She wants me to retire completely, but when people ask me, I can't refuse. I do this job to help others, not to make a profit. Usually when I exhume for a close relative, I don't take any money, I just eat the meals they offer me in gratitude. As



“When the coffin lid was lifted, everyone was shocked to see the body with its flesh still intact. We had to pour two five-liter bottles of pure alcohol over the body to try to strip off its flesh”

for other people, I take about VND500,000 or VND700,000. The way I see it, the main thing is to help other people and accumulate merit for future generations.

My wife may not like this job of mine, but she’s still very caring. Every time I come home from exhuming a body, she heats up a tub of water with herbs in it for me. This helps get rid of the odor when I bathe. And before I head out, she prepares all my work clothes and gear for me: a raincoat, a mask, rubber boots, and gloves. I actually didn’t use gloves the first few times. To tell you the truth, those times were a bit disturbing.

Talking about disturbing, I have to tell you my most frightening story. It happened when I was exhuming a body not far from here, in fact. When the coffin lid was lifted, everyone was shocked to see the body with its flesh still intact. We had to pour two five-liter bottles of pure alcohol over the body to try to strip off its flesh. And even after all that, I still had to put the bones in a nearby pool of water to rinse them off. After coming home, I couldn’t eat, couldn’t sleep...

lost a few days because I was so haunted by the vision of what I’d seen. But I still couldn’t refuse when the next person came by and asked me to exhume a grave. My wife got really upset at me then, asking me if I wasn’t afraid of exhuming again. I kind of just smiled at her. What else could I do?

People usually exhume bodies at the end of the year when the fields are dry. According to the custom in these parts, we should exhume the body between midnight and 3am, when the winds are quiet and before the sun rises. People don’t want to expose human remains to sunlight; that’s what Vietnamese people believe, that yin and yang are opposed to one another. The family has to consider all these factors carefully when they’re choosing when to exhume the body. If the time is right, then it should be done, no sooner and no later.

I may not be a professional bone cleaner, but I’m pretty good. It’s partly because of my experience and partly because I’m careful about what I do. There was a time one winter — it was freezing cold and the rain was drizzling — I came down with

the flu right there at the cemetery. But the correct day and time had come. My sense of responsibility meant I just couldn’t let the family down. So I dragged myself to the graveside and got the job done. The thing I fear the most are nights when it’s rainy and windy, even if I’m wearing a raincoat, I’ll still be shivering by the end of it.

These days, people are cremating the dead more and more. I actually hope cremation becomes popular in places like my village, so we can save more land for farming. Cemeteries encroach on scarce farmland and pollute the soil and the groundwater. I’m not worried about being put out of a job; I just hope that we can find ways that the world of the living and the world of the dead can continue to coexist peacefully in the future.

Additional editing by Gerard Sasges
*Excerpted from **It’s a Living: Work and Life in Vietnam Today**, available in paperback on Amazon or as an e-book on iTunes (scan code).* ■



>> The List Education

education

SCHOOLS [CHILDREN]



ABC International School (ABCIS)

Inspected and judged an outstanding school by British Government Inspectors (October 2013), the ABCIS is one of the few schools worldwide awarded this Department for Education rating. Progress of students puts the ABCIS among the top 8% of schools in the world. Providing education for 2-18 year olds in a supportive and friendly environment, it delivers a culturally adapted version of the British National Curriculum supported by Cambridge & AQA IGCSE and AS/A levels. Students are prepared for Universities in the UK, USA, Australia, Korea and Canada.

Enquiries and Admissions
Tel: 5431 1833/34/35/36
Email: office@theabcis.com
www.theabcis.com



American International School

Founded in 2006, American International School (AIS) is a private, coeducational, university-preparatory school for students from preschool to grade 12. The language of instruction is English. The school offers standard American curriculum with a complement of performing arts, visual arts, music and sport programs.

Elementary School (10/2C Nguyen Van Cu, D1)
Middle School (35 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh)
High School (781/C1-C2 Le Hong Phong, D10)

APU International School

Operating since 2004, APU International School is a private coeducational international school enrolling students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Instruction is conducted in English, but there is an English Language Development (ELD) program available to students who require it. It is currently a member of the College Board, and is an official SAT testing site.

Elementary (501 Lac Long Quan, D11)
Middle and High School (286 Lanh Binh Thang, D11)
www.apu.edu.vn

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.aivietnam.com



British International School (BIS)

Inspected and approved by the British Government, BIS provides a British style curriculum for an international student body from pre-school to Year 13. The school is staffed by British qualified and trained teachers with recent UK experience. Fully accredited by the Council of International Schools and a member of FOBISIA, BIS is the largest international school in Vietnam.

An Phu Primary Campus
225 Nguyen Van Huong Street, D2
3744 4551
primary@bisvietnam.com
An Phu Secondary Campus
246 Nguyen Van Huong Street, D2
3744 2335
apsecondary@bisvietnam.com
Tu Xuong Primary Campus
43-45 Tu Xuong Street, D3
3932 0210
txprimary@bisvietnam.com
www.bisvietnam.com



Canadian International School

Now in its fifth year of operation with a student population of 700 students in grades K-12, CIS- VN has received approval from the Ministry of Education and Training in Vietnam and the Department of Education and Training in Ho Chi Minh City to accept both Vietnamese nationals and expat nationals. The school's language of instruction is English.

No 86, Road 23, D7
www.cis.edu.vn



Deutsche Schule Ho Chi Minh City International German School

Deutsche Schule (IGS) offers a German curriculum from Early Years to Grade 12 which is approved and supported by the German government. IGS is staffed by native German, Vietnamese and English speakers who have many years of teaching experience. We offer a link between Vietnamese and German culture, an international program with German standards and the immersion of German culture into everyday life.

12, Vo Truong Toan, An Phu
08 37 44 63 44
info@igs-hcmc.de
www.igs-hcmc.de



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
hibsvietnam.com



European International School HCMC

The European International School Ho Chi Minh City (EIS) offers a supportive and challenging academic education from Early Years to Grade 12 (K-12) an. EIS promotes inter-cultural understanding and respect, not as an alternative to a sense of national identity, but as an essential part of life in the 21st century. Its motto is "Educating Global Citizens".

Thao Dien Campus
730 F-G-K Le Van Mien Street
Thao Dien, D2
www.eishcmc.com



Fosco International School

Caters to pre-school children from 18 months to 4 years and elementary students from 5 to 12 years. It offers enrolment opportunities to both local

and expat children providing childcare services, comprehensive pre-school and kindergarten programs and an internationally aligned elementary school curriculum.

40 Ba Huyen Than Quan, D3
3930 5930
www.fis.edu.vn

Kids Club Saigon

Early childhood centers in Phu My Hung offering creative play-based programs for children ages 2 to 5. Known for unique facilities, experienced staff, high-quality learning resources, and small class sizes

79/7 Pham Thai Buong, D7
27/3 Ha Huy Tap, D7
5412 5944

www.kidsclubsaigon.com

Kinderworld International Kindergarten

KinderWorld International Kindergarten has been in operation since November 2006 and offers both international and local kindergarten services for children aged 1.5 to 5.5 years old.

The Manor Building, 91 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh
3514 3036
enquiry@manorhcmc.kinderworld.edu.vn

International School Saigon Pearl

ISSP is an elementary school for children 2 to 11 years of age. Offers an academically rigorous American curriculum. The school has several smartboards, projectors and an independent IT suite that allows students the opportunity to interact with technology to enhance learning.

92 Nguyen Huu Canh, Binh Thanh
082227788
www.issp.edu.vn

L'atelier

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

Montessori International School of Vietnam

The school seeks to enable all its pupils to achieve their fullest potential by providing them with a nurturing and stimulating environment, and by being sensitive and responsive to their individual needs. Their curriculum is designed based on Montessori methodology and practice, and is enhanced with a variety of programs.

42/1 Ngo Quang Huy, D2
3744 2639
www.montessori.edu.vn

Noah's Club

Providing high quality care & education for kids aged 1-6 in District 2. Various creative & fun programs, beautiful outdoor space with a warm family feeling and more.

No3, Duong so 4, Nguyen U Di, D2
3744 4709
noahandmum@yahoo.com.vn



Renaissance International School Saigon



Renaissance is an International British school providing an inclusive curriculum based upon the British curriculum complemented by the International Primary Curriculum and International Baccalaureate. The school has made a conscious decision to limit numbers and keep class sizes small to ensure each student is offered an education tailored to meet his or her individual learning needs. It is a family school providing a stimulating and secure learning environment with first-class facilities including a 350-seat theatre, swimming pool, mini-pool, play-areas, gymnasium, IT labs, music and drama rooms, science labs and an all-weather pitch.

74 Nguyen Thi Thap, D7
3773 3171 ext 120/121/122
www.renaissance.edu.vn



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
www.ssis.edu.vn



The International School Ho Chi Minh City (ISHCMC)

The most established school in Ho Chi Minh City is celebrating 20 years of success in 2013. ISHCMC is the only school in HCMC with full accreditation to teach all three IB programs to students from 2 to 18. ISHCMC is fully accredited by both the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the New England Association of School and Colleges (NEASC), two of the most prestigious international accreditation organisations. ISHCMC has 975 students from over 50 different nationalities enjoying recently upgraded facilities.

28 Vo Trung Toan, D2
www.ishcmc.com



Saigon Star International School



Saigon Star is a student focused international primary school offering high quality first class provision. Specializing in the British National Curriculum, all of the class teachers hold international teaching qualification. In the early years program, a Montessori specialist works closely with the main class teachers to ensure a high rate of progress. The school also provides specialists for children requiring extra support with ESL.

Residential Area No.5, Thanh My Loi Ward, D2
3742 STAR / 3742 7827
www.saigonstarschool.edu.vn



Singapore International School at Saigon South

Commenced operations in August 2008, The Singapore International School at Saigon South (SIS @ SS) is a purpose-built international school campus that has a capacity of 625 students. It operates classes from kindergarten to senior high school.

No 29, Road 3, Trung Son Residential Area, Binh Chanh
www.saigonssouth.sis.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



The American School of Vietnam



The American School of Vietnam (TAS) is a young school that has been granted candidacy by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), representing 20 nationalities. TAS provides an American-based curriculum with rigorous performance standards and a variety of academic offerings including Advanced Placement courses, university credit courses through our partnership with Missouri State University, and an Intensive ESL Program for English Language Learners.

177A, 172-180 Nguyen Van Hung st, Thao Dien ward, D2, HCMC
www.theamericanschool.edu.vn
08 3519 2223, 08 3519 2224
info@tasvietnam.edu.vn

SCHOOLS [ADULT]

Cetana PSB Intellis International College

PSB College is an Internationally-Recognized Singaporean Institution specializing in business programs ranging from Business Administration & Marketing, Accounting & Finance, to Hospitality & Tourism Management.

144-146-148 Le Lai, D1
www.psbcollege.edu.vn

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Health & Beauty



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

ladieswear

Anupa Eco Boutique **👉 Oi's Pick**

The boutique has been converted into an eco-boutique which houses the complete Anupa leather collections and semi precious jewelry as well as up-and-coming eco designers both locally and internationally such as ready to wear mens linen shirts, ladies cotton dresses, chicken leg watch straps, bamboo glasses and scarves with pendants.

9 Dong Du, D1
www.anupa.net / facebook: anupaluxury

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, D1

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, D1

Valenciani **👉 Oi's Pick**

Highly respected Vietnamese designer whose collections are featured in ELLE Vietnam and Vogue Vietnam.

IF/12 Saigon Centre, 65 Le Loi, D1
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, D1

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

gyms

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
www.aissportscentre.com

Amaryska Kamionko

Private fitness trainer, assisting in full body workouts, toning & strength training for females. Sessions often at clients' homes or at their designated

gyms.
personalfitnessathome.blogspot.com

Body By Jovie

Body By Jovie is a boutique personal training center and yoga studio, catering to individuals demanding diversity, challenge and results. It specializes in one on one session and also offer a full range of classes such as yoga, TRX suspension class, belly dancing, Zumba and outdoor boot camp.

Riverside Residence, Nguyen Luong Bang, D7
info@bodybyjovie.com
7am - 9pm (Weekdays) and 7:30am - 7pm (Saturdays)

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
28-30-32 Le Lai, D1
5 Nguyen Tat Thanh, D4

Christina Eberlin Yoga Teacher

Christina graduated from Virajati 300hr yoga teacher training in Thailand. She is offering private yoga classes and group classes. For more information you can reach her at

Christinaeberlin@gmail.com
or 093 849 2461

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.

Thao Dien, D2; 094 777 1326
www.cyril-and-you.com

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

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

Nicky's Zumba® Fitness Studio

They offer Zumba®Fitness, Yoga, Cross Fit, Pilates Personal Fitness, Nutrition Advice and Hip hop kids, Aerobic kids, ZumbAtomic®.

Available at: Panorama-Fitness (206 Tran Van Tra, D7), Fit & Fun Club (Sry Garden 2, D7), Cyril&you (49a Xa Lo Ha Noi, D2), and Sommerset (8 Nguyen Binh Khiem, D1).
093 406 0735 or 6680 7226
zumba.nutrition@gmail.com
www.zumba-saigon.com

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.

2B1 Chu Manh Trinh, D1

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

Star Fitness Bitezco

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

Spa InterContinental & Healthclub

Guests will have access to a 20-meter outdoor lap pool complete with a sundeck, a 160-square meter spacious fitness centre with the latest generation cardio and resistance equipment, plus a personal program of fitness classes.

3rd Floor, InterContinental Asiana Saigon

Corner of Hai Ba Trung & Le Duan, D1

spa@icasianasaigon.com

8am - 9:30pm

The Health Club

The Landmark Health Club is located on the 15th and 16th floors of The Landmark serviced apartments, and offers a fully equipped gym, rooftop swimming pool, and a squash court. It also features male and female changing facilities and saunas.

5B Ton Duc Thang, D1
hc@thelandmarkvietnam.com

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

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
www.xrockclimbing.com

Yoga Club

Yogo fitness center for both men and women

18 Street Number 2, D2

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.

161-161A Hai Ba Trung, D3
www.acc.vn

American Eye Center

Provides eye care services to adults and children by an American Board certified ophthalmologist with 17 years

of experience. The American standard facility is equipped with state of the art equipments for the early detection and treatment of important eye conditions such as Lasik, Cataract surgeries to Presbyopia, Glaucoma and Diabetic eye disease. Cosmetic procedures such as eyelid surgery and Botox injections are also available.

5th floor Crescent Plaza, 105 Ton Dat Tien, D7
08 5413 6758
www.americaneyecentervn.com

Animal Rescue & Care

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.

31-44 Thao Dien, D2
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

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

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

Centre Medical International

Centre Medical International was created in 1992 by Pr Alain Carpentier and Dr Duong Quang Trung, director of the health service of HCMC. In the heart of the city, just near the Notre-Dame Cathedral, French and Vietnamese doctors provide high quality medical service in 12 specialties: General and tropical medicine, Cardiology, Gynecology, Traditional oriental medicine, Ophthalmology, Speech and language therapy, Osteopathic, medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychomotor Therapy, and Dietetics. All our profits are dedicated to the Heart Institute which helps deprived Vietnamese children to pay their cardiac surgery.

1 Han Thuyen, D1
3827 2366
www.cmi-vietnam.com

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
www.saigonchiropractic.com

Diag Center International
Situating 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

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
www.vietnammedicalpractice.com
hcmc@vietnammedicalpractice.com
8am-6pm Monday-Friday, 8am-2pm Saturday

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

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

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

Saigon Acupuncture
Practitioner Christopher Booth, M.S., L.A.C., is now accepting new patients. Chris treats the following conditions with acupuncture: Chronic and Acute Pain, Neurological Disorders, Gynecological Disorders, Emotional & Psychological Disorders, among others.
161 Hai Ba Trung, D3
saigonacu@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/saigonacupuncture

Stamford Skin Centre
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.
99 Suong Nguyet Anh, D1
08 3925 1990 or 0908 453 338
www.stamfordskin.com

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

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

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

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

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

European Dental Clinic
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
www.europeandentalclinic-asia.com

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

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

Minh Khai Dental Clinic
French/American/Swiss managed clinic with well-maintained international-standard equipment.
199 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, Nguyen Cu Trinh, D1

Naomi Dental Clinic
A full service dental clinic under the direction of Japanese dentist Dr. Nakashima Miiko.
R4-45 Hung Huoc 4, D7
5410 3937

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

nails

Classic Nails
Located near Ben Thanh Market, Classic Nails is a professional salon with staff who are trained and experienced in designing complicated pattern. The salon only uses materials from reputable companies and always update with the latest colors. They also have sofas with a massage function and adjustable posture for the customer's comfortable and relaxation.
4 Phan Boi Chau, D1
3825 7047
9am - 8pm

Fame Nails
A place for your nail care near Ben Thanh Market. Besides classic manicure and pedicure, it also offers deluxe spa manicure and pedicure, nail art and enhancement, and services including waxing, facial, eyebrow shaping and eye lashes extension.
18 Pham Hong Thai, D1
www.famenails.com

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

OPI Nail Spa Nguyen Hue
Providing a full range of official products and services of the OPI brand.
103 Nguyen Hue, D1

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

Dermal Essentials
Dermologica, a Los Angeles-based company, is a revolutionary skin treatment system. Call Dermologica's therapists for a complimentary Face Mapping consultation.
108 Pasteur, D1

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

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

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 Bui, 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

Catherine Denoual

Supplies blankets, pillows, mattresses, tablecloths, cushions, and other luxury linens to reputable hotels, spas, resorts, and individual consumers.
 15C Thi Sach, D1

Gomo

Typical of the large furniture warehouses in North America and Europe, Gomo sells contemporary items for your home and office.
 7/30B, Road 13, Binh Hoa
 Thuan An Town, Binh Duong
 (0650) 376 5115
 www.gomo.com.vn

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

Premium Housewares

Providing high quality kitchenware and accessories, Premium Housewares presents its products in more than 70 countries worldwide.
 77 Pasteur, D1

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

Vscential

Vscential sells aromatic French lavender bouquets, fresh flowers, silk flowers, and handmade flowers. With 45 different types of essential oils available, there's a scent for everyone.
 Vscential
 dynamic Thai massage.
 238B Pasteur, D3
 www.vscential.com



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
 Open 10:30 am to close 11:30pm



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

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

Indochine Spa

Nestled in the heart of Saigon, Indochine spa will bring you back to an ancient time with peaceful melodies and aromatic scents. With our skillful therapists, Natural products with French formulation and high class cleanness environment, Indochine spa provides your senses with natural energy. Indulge yourself for a unique and amazing experience.
 69 Thu Khoa Huan st., D. 1, HCM
 3827 7188
 indochinespa@gmail.com
 www.indochine-spa.com.vn
 Open: 10:00-22:00

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



Kyoto Spa & Hair Salon

Body massage
 Foot massage
 Hair cut women and men
 32 Dong Du, Ben Nghe Ward, D1
 (Spa & Hair Salon)
 8A/4D1 Thai Van Lung,
 Ben Nghe Ward, D1 (Spa)
 0902 983 089
 loan_royal@gmail.com
 www.spakyotohcmc.com.vn



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

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
 100 Mac Thi Bui, D1
 1st floor, 103 Ton Dat Tien, Tan Phu, D7



Maison Mikio Boutique Salon

District 7's Premium Boutique Salon. Two floors providing full beauty services nestled in a quiet residential area in Phu My Hung's Garden Plaza 2 Complex. Equipped with a cafe, nail bar, 2 VIP rooms, and a spacious massage room - this boutique salon is like no other in Ho Chi Minh City.
 Garden Plaza 2 Complex
 8 Ton Dat Tien, Quận 7
 5412 4773

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

Moc Huong Spa

Moc Huong Spa is supported by top-ranking professional physiotherapists who combine Eastern with Western techniques resulting a full body wellness. Reasonably priced with a wide range of services that include manicure, pedicure, facial, both body and for your complete well being.
 9C Ton Duc Thang, D1
 3911 7118



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

Saigon Spa

Recommended inexpensive spa treatments with a full spa menu.
 1st Floor, 47 Dong Khoi, D1

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

Spa InterContinental

Spa InterContinental is a contemporary spa that has two double and five single treatment rooms, each with a private bathroom, a foot reflexology area, and luxurious changing and shower rooms. Combining the fresh, local traditional herbs and plants, an ambient lighting, soft scents and soothing sounds with the best of international brands, Spa InterContinental offers guests the professional spa expertise and a truly sensory experience. 3rd Floor, InterContinental Asiana Saigon
 Corner Hai Ba Trung & Le Duan, D1
 3520 9999
 spa@icasianasaiagon.com
 8am – 9:30pm

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 Bui, D1

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

Tri Siam

Well-respected salon on the edge of town, offering manicures & styling.
 76C Hai Ba Trung, D1

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

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

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

Zest Massage

Famous for its fish pedicures, Zest, located in the outer western region of District One, serves up some fairly

Business & Tech

IMAGE BY NGOC TRAN



The Power of Three

The future of 3D printing is now present in Vietnam

TEXT BY **NPD KHANH** IMAGES BY **NGOC TRAN & WINRIGO**



TO NON-TECH SAVVY PEOPLE, 3D printing, technology that can create physical objects in real life from virtual models, must seem like the stuff from sci-fi shows and books. To a small but gradually widening crowd of enthusiasts however, this technology, though only in its infancy, has been a reality since as early as 1984. But it's really been in the last several years that 3D printing has started to appear in the limelight of public consciousness.

"We don't actually have a community of 3D printing enthusiasts in Vietnam yet," says Toon Saten, a design professional and owner of Aardenburg Asia Co. "This is partly because there is not much awareness of the technology. Most people still think of it as TV show material. And partly because of the high price a single model demands." A two-year-old MakerBot Replicator, a

standard basic model, costs USD2,900 plus tax. On the other end of the spectrum is the ultra cutting-edge Stratasys uPrint at USD15,900, tax excluded. Then there's the cost of printing materials to take into account.

As far as Toon knows, there are only a handful of printers in the entire country, mostly owned by industry professionals with actual need or international schools with the resources to purchase one.

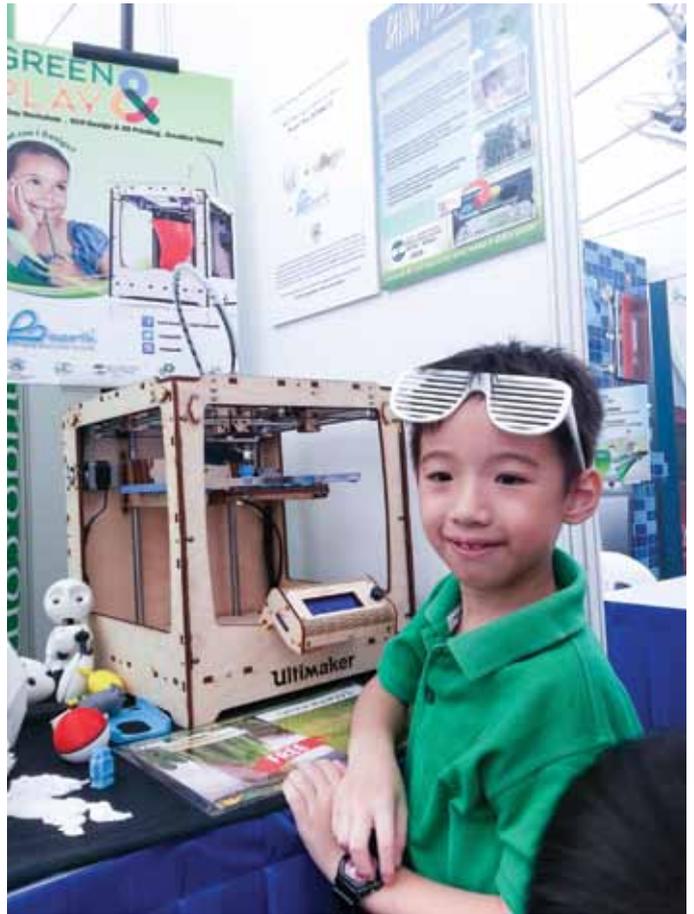
"I don't think most people even realize what they can do with it. We are not talking about technology that can only work in the hands of experts here, but rather an enabling tool in the hands of everyday people, like a pen," he explains. "Think of what you can do with it. Put a 3D printing machine in a biology class and have the students recreate the anatomy

of frogs or birds. Let them learn in a completely different way. In the hands of doctors, 3D printing technology can be used to create prosthetics with far more intricate and organic designs than ones made from cast molds."

According to Toon, there will come a point where 3D printing shops will be available just like your average black and white paper printing shops seen in the city now. "If you have something particular in mind, say, a cup, instead of going to the store, you would go to the 3D printer and have one printed out for you, exactly how you want it. It will take us maybe 10, 15 years to get there, but I definitely look forward to that kind of future."

Try It Out For Yourself

Toon's vision of the future is not far off. A



series of free informal 3D printing public workshops began last month in Go Vap. Offered by Erik Frankel, the founder and owner of Vietsbay (www.facebook.com/vietsbay), a cooperative group of designers, jewelers and sewers, the workshops featured a single Replicator 1.0 by MakerBot available for anyone willing to brave the long travel distance and Saigon heat to get to it.

“We have had a lot of people coming in to check us out,” says Erik. “A couple of designers and artists. A French guy named Hubert with a charity project to create prosthetics for disabled people with 3D printing tech. He’s been making a prosthetic hand for a Vietnamese who lost his real one due to a work accident.”

Erik does not charge for the use of the printer, during or outside of his workshops. “We simply ask that if possible, please help us replenish the printing materials, which do cost quite a bit, once we run out.”

The idea behind the workshop as well as the free-to-use 3D printer is all about fostering a community and to widen public awareness of 3D printing tech in Vietnam.

“I got this printer a year and a half ago,” he explains. “An impulse purchase. I love machines and since I work in retail and crafting, there’s always space for industrial production hardware in my place.” Aside from the 3D printer, Erik has at least ten other machines in his workshop: a

“If you have something particular in mind, say, a cup, instead of going to the store, you would go to the 3D printer and have one printed out for you”

Digitizer, which is the reverse of a 3D printer, a lightbox, two printers capable of printing directly onto fabric and wood, a handful of printing presses and several casting machines. “The MakerBot store was right in my neighborhood back in New York. I walked over to their place one day after a one and a half month crash course on 3D printing tech, and bought it.

“The thing I like about 3D printing is how much it changes the status quo in manufacturing. I have a background in retail. Anyone in retail or manufacturing, or any artisans for that matter, has a story or two to tell you about how their originality and creativity have been sold to someone in China with a big sweatshop and a lot of cheap labor. Now think about what 3D printing technology can do to break that age-old industrial model. There’s no need for a mold or a minimum quantity. No overhead cost. You don’t need

to manufacture 10,000 pieces of the same model to make it profitable. You want a one-off design? You want customizations to an existing model? We have a 3D printer ready; as long as you know what you want, we can do it!”

Erik’s future goal is to eventually turn his workshops into a full-fledged artist hub where he can put all his design hardware in one space, one café, where fellow artisans, creators and innovators alike can come, see the technology for themselves and experience it.

“We want to make people know that this technology is available and here they can tinker with it without having to pay a couple thousand dollars to get their own Replicator,” Erik explains. “We want to take away the power from the factory owners and the business executives and give it to the artisans, the artists, the creators and the designers.” ■



A member of the Paris Bar, **Hadrien Wolff** has been practicing law in Vietnam for more than seven years, currently as a partner of Audier & Partners based at its HCMC office. Having gained extensive legal experience in the Netherlands and Cambodia, **Marijn Sprokhereef** is an associate at the Hanoi office of the same firm. **Audier & Partners** is an international law firm with presence in Vietnam, Myanmar and Mongolia, providing advice to foreign investors on a broad range of legal issues.

Dear Hadrien,

My Vietnamese girlfriend and I want to open a coffee shop here. We are very excited about the plan and really can't wait to get started. However, I have little knowledge about the administrative procedures that we will need to go through. Can you give me some advice please?

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR startup plans! If you want to set up a business in Vietnam, one of the first questions you should ask is whether you, as a foreign investor, are allowed to conduct business in the economic sector in which you want to implement your project and, if so, whether you can do it by yourself or whether you would need to partner up with a Vietnamese investor.

When Vietnam became a member of the WTO on January 11, 2007, the government committed to gradually opening numerous service markets to foreign investors. Relevant to your plans of opening a coffee shop, Vietnam has agreed that for a period of eight years from the accession date, foreign service providers will only be allowed to supply food and drinks if they do so in parallel with an investment in hotel construction, renovation, restoration or acquisition.

I don't believe it is your intention to take on any of those projects, so you may want to wait until January 11, 2015 (the eighth anniversary of Vietnam's accession to the WTO), when these restrictions will, in principle, be automatically lifted.

The next issue that you need to decide on is the form under which you want to establish your business. The Vietnamese Law on Enterprises is a good starting point to learn about the different options that you and your girlfriend have. Until foreigners will be allowed to open a coffee shop in Vietnam, your girlfriend could solely develop the project and there are two suitable options for Vietnamese citizens establishing and

operating a small business.

The first available option is the so-called "private enterprise." On the positive side, the management structure of such a private enterprise is fairly simple and the owner has full autonomy in making all business decisions. In terms of financial risks and legal liability, however, the owner of a private enterprise is liable for all activities of the enterprise with his or her (private) assets. Furthermore, in order to establish a private enterprise, you would need to follow the sometimes burdensome rules under the Law on Enterprises to apply for a business registration certificate.

Fortunately, there is another option available for small businesses that is commonly used, and which could be a good solution for your girlfriend, the so-called "business household." One important advantage of this model is that the registration procedures are relatively easy. Please keep in mind though, that your girlfriend may only register a business household in one location, that she is not allowed to employ more than 10 people and that she will be liable with all her (private) assets for the business operation.

If you decide to wait for the food & beverage sector to open to foreign investors at the beginning of next year, Vietnamese law offers a corporate form that is especially suitable for small-scale foreign investments - the limited liability company. This option would offer you safety in terms of financial risk and legal liability but the registration process is, as for any foreign investment, more complicated and time consuming than the process applicable to domestic investment.

Now let's talk about the location, which is obviously very important! Unless you already have your own place where you can start serving coffee, you will need to find premises that are suitable for your purpose. In practice, when you apply for business registration, the Vietnamese authorities may require written evidence that you have ensured suitable premises. In practice, a lease agreement, or a so-called "Memorandum of Understanding" to be signed by you and your future landlord will do.

If you want to redesign and/or renovate the premises, you will obviously need to obtain the approval from your landlord, preferably in writing. Unless your building plans will not fundamentally change the premises, you will also need to apply for a construction permit with the district's People's Committee. Furthermore, you may need a food safety and hygiene certificate and you must ensure to meet the legal requirements on fire safety.

I hope the above will not discourage you from pursuing your plans. I would advise you to invest some time in working out your business plan first. Once you know what you want and how you want to do it then reserve some more time to go through the various administrative procedures. Keeping in mind the great satisfaction of serving *ca phe sua da* in your own coffee shop, I am sure you will manage. Cheers!

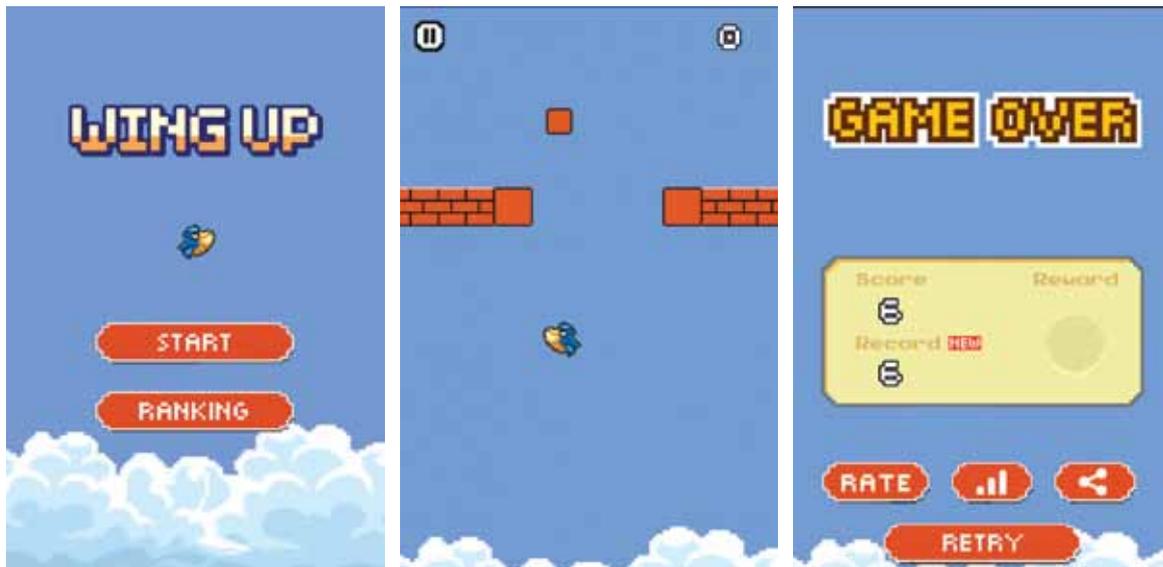
Every month, Hadrien and Marijn answer legal questions from Oi readers. If you have any legal questions you want answered, send them to legal@oivietnam.com. ■

Wing Up

Another addictive game from Vietnam



Anh Minh-Do is the editor at TechInAsia.com for Vietnam, focusing on technology startups, trends and companies. Minh is on the board of Starthub.vn - a database and forum for startups dedicated to the growth of Vietnam's business ecosystem.



THERE HAVE BEEN hundreds of Flappy Bird clones out ever since the simple game topped the charts across the world. Although there's been some innovation on the original concept from the creator Dong Nguyen's dotGEARS company like *Mr. Flap* or *Freaking Math*, most games have stuck to the original 'creature goes through pipes' format. But new games are still coming out of Vietnam - such as *School Cheater*, *1Path*, *Chien Binh*, *Sky Garden* and more - indicating that this country has a vibrant gaming community. Vietnam's capital is home to Dong Nguyen, and it's where many strong Vietnamese mobile gaming studios take up residence.

And now comes *Wing Up*, an iOS and Android game that takes inspiration from *Flappy Bird* and *Nintendo*. It was created by Tung Hoang, an unknown developer based out of Hanoi. *Wing Up* basically uses the same key principles of mobile gaming as *Flappy Bird*. Many of the more simple one-off mobile games we see today follow in these footsteps, so it's worth noting them here briefly:

— *One tap for action:* This, unlike other more complex games like *Horn*, *Oceanhorn* and *Bastion* make the barrier to entry for

new gamers very low.

— *One level:* This makes it so that the game is boiled down to the most basic question: can you do it or not? It also makes it easy to pass your mobile to someone else so they can continue your game or play a new one.

— *Very easy to replay:* One of the key things dotGEARS did was make it extremely easy to restart *Flappy Bird*. Although it was frustrating when the bird died, restarting was instant. This also made it easy to spend hours on a game that took less than a minute to play.

— *Simplified retro graphics:* *Flappy Bird* is certainly not a pioneer of retro games on mobiles. Long before *Flappy Bird* hit the scene, many mobile games used old-school graphics. This is a motif that all the clones and admirers have taken on.

— *Mobile ads:* Especially for Vietnamese developers, one of the biggest lessons from the success of *Flappy Bird* is that there is some serious money to be made from mobile ads. After all, Dong Nguyen was reportedly making over USD50,000 a day from *Flappy Bird*.

Each of these principles can be found on *Wing Up*, which puts its own spin on a bird flying through space concept. *Wing Up* brings two taps to the *Flappy Bird* world. Instead of flying horizontally, the bird flies upwards through the sky, much like other vertical platformers. In addition to pipes, the bird has to swerve around blocks as well. The game isn't much harder than *Flappy Bird*. Arguably, it's easier. The biggest difference between the two games is that *Wing Up* requires both thumbs to play because the bird must flap left and right to traverse the blocks. The blocks resemble the bricks that Mario had to navigate through in *Nintendo*'s flagship game. Where *Flappy Bird* took artistic liberties from the green pipes, *Wing Up* takes them from the brown blocks. But at its core, both these games are quite different. *Wing Up* just employs some of the core principles that *Flappy Bird* made popular and gives us a new take on birds flying through space.

Full disclosure: I have played hours of Wing Up to finally achieve 32 points, which once ranked me among the top 15 in the world. ■

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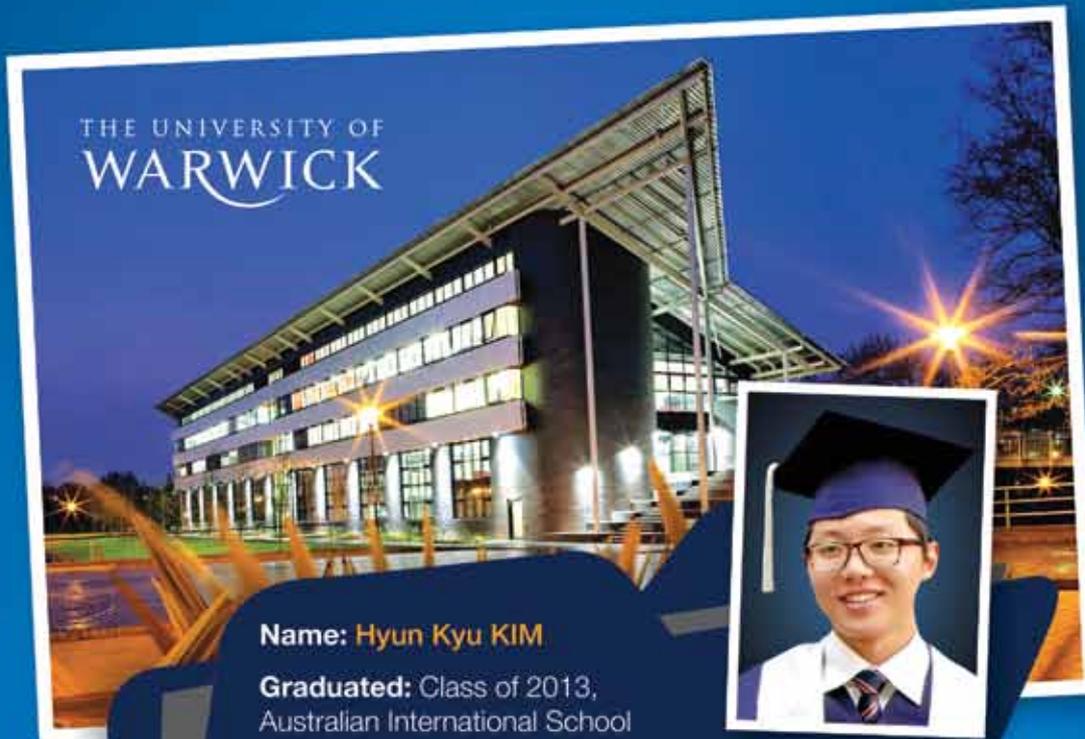
Boutique gym Body by Jovie celebrated their first anniversary with friends and members along with a night of music, buffet and, of course, challenging zumba classes to work off the food.

IMAGES PROVIDED BY **BODY BY JOVIE**

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IMAGES BY **NGOC TRAN**



Name: Hyun Kyu KIM

Graduated: Class of 2013,
Australian International School

Now: Majoring in Accounting and Finance at the
University of Warwick, UK

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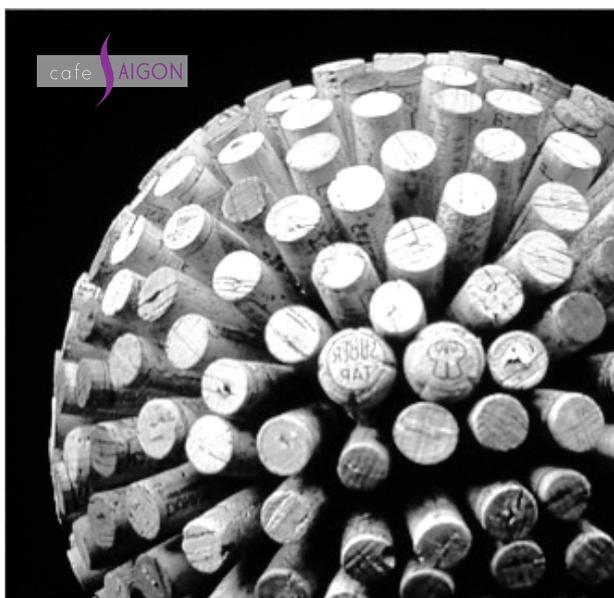
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