



THE HOI AN POST

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Spring the season for
rebirth, renewal and regrowth



MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN

A warm welcome to all our Hoi An guests at spring time.

Please enjoy this edition of the Hoi An Post, with suggestions of what to see and do around Hoi An, as well as EHG updates.

We touch on some of the recent initiatives the management of La Siesta Resort & Spa have recently introduced to the Resort, including the launch of a new Red Bean menu. On the subject of La Siesta's well-known restaurant brand, we review what makes Red Bean deliciously consistent across all branches and from Hanoi to Hoi An. Strolling around Hoi An ancient town one will quickly appreciate why this iconic town is consistently voted one of the world's top destinations. While a short way northwards along the coast is another winner. An Bang Beach with its serene presence, white sands and sparkling waters was recently ranked number 16 in the top 25 best beaches in Asia. If you love fireworks then you will love the Da Nang International Firework Festival (DIFF) - one of the most fiercely competed for awards in the world. This year's theme is 'The Legend of Bridges'. Taking place over five nights, this eight-nation competition is expected to entertain audiences with dazzling displays.

EHG and all the staff at La Siesta Resort & Spa wish you a happy and prosperous spring period.

Thank you for reading and please enjoy your stay in Hoi An.

Do Van Dan (Mr.)
Chairman/CEO

Elegance Hospitality Group



Inspired initiatives at

When Vuong Dinh Manh joined the Elegance Hospitality Group about 9 years' ago he was fresh out of travel and Tourism College. He started working as part of the Sales team at Elegance Hotel and then made his way up the ranks to junior management. When EHG opened its first property in Hoi An in 2013 (Essence Hoi An Hotel & Spa) Manh moved to Vietnam's iconic cultural town to be part of the set up team. He intended to stay a short time to up the operations and return to Hanoi once the hotel was up and running. However, five years on he is still in Hoi An. During this period Manh has become a leading member of the team that transformed Essence Hoi An Hotel & Spa into La Siesta Resort & Spa, EHG's first 5-star standard property.

Demonstrating perseverance, sheer hard work and an open-minded approach, Manh gained the respect of his peers and teams. This quietly calm young man has now taken the helm of the Resort, with a promotion to Acting General Manager.





La Siesta Resort & Spa – leading the team



La Siesta Resort & Spa is now firmly on the map in Hoi An consistently in the top three hotels in the region. The Resort continues to go from strength to strength. The team with Manh's guidance has spearheaded a number of exciting initiatives and charity works, which now take pride of place in the Resort's calendar. One important weekly activity makes a difference to so many lives. A heart-warming philanthropic tour, conceived by the management, takes guests to visit 112 disabled children and adults, orphans and the elderly who live at Hoa Binh (Peace) Village in Tam Dan commune, south of Hoi An.

From charity to musical entertainment. In December La Siesta Resort & Spa introduced Hoi An, the media and local community to the delights of international opera when renowned opera singer Stephen Sanchez was invited to perform at La Siesta Resort & Spa's Christmas 'Opera under the Stars' event. This event was first of its kind in the town and Sanchez's first ever visit to Vietnam.

On the cuisine-front Redbean Hoi An has launched a new menu as the F&B team takes the restaurant's experience and offering to another level. Redbean is fast becoming one of Vietnam's most iconic restaurant brands renowned not only for its culinary creativity and its commitment to the values of Vietnamese cooking, but also for its excellence in customer service and immaculate modern contemporary design. Just as Hoi An town has an iconic image, so Redbean has a strong mission statement setting the standards to which others aspire.

It is initiatives such as these, inspired by Manh and the team, which are cementing La Siesta Resort & Spa's position firmly on the map, elevating the Resort's standing in the community and helping to maintain a leading position in the tourism and hospitality industries.

A NEW YEAR, A NEW RED BEAN MENU



Mid-January saw the unveiling of Red Bean Hoi An's new traditional menu for 2018. Ever since the first restaurant opened in 2014, the Red Bean brand has gone from strength to strength. Red Bean Hoi An opened shortly after and very soon made a name for itself. All the outlets deliver creative menus featuring national favorites as well as culturally relevant dishes depending on the region. The Red Bean Hoi An restaurant team, led by Head Chef Nguyen Van Ha, has long been delighting diners with modern and innovative Vietnamese cuisine inspired by classic Quang Nam province recipes, Hoi An specials as well as national dishes.

Friday evening 12 January 2018 saw Red Bean restaurant and its picturesque courtyard in full swing as La Siesta Resort & Spa welcomed 70 special guests from the media, tourist representatives, the local business and local dignitaries to visit the restaurant and sample the new Red Bean menu.

The Resort's Restaurant Manager Mr Vu and Acting General Manager Mr. Vuong Dinh Manh hosted the evening, which showcased more than 10 tantalizing new dishes. These included BEEF IN COCONUT, BEEF TRIO, GRILLED CHICKEN IN BAMBOO, SEA BASS IN BANANA LEAF, BUN CHA HANOI and many more which highlighted both the traditional ways of cooking as well as the art of culinary presentation.



Red Bean has always focused on stimulating the taste palate with authentic Quang Nam province cuisine from other regions. In addition to the new dishes, the new 2018 menu features a number of exclusive "signature" dishes including Red Bean Hoi An spring rolls - a triangular adaptation of the traditional spring roll, Red Bean Hoi An Salad incorporating handpicked lotus stems from nearby Dai Loc village lakes and special Chef's salad featuring key local ingredients from Tra Que village. The menu of course embraces many of the region's most iconic dishes including the quintessential Cao Lau (invented in Hoi An), Mi Quang, Tam Huu and Hoi An Chicken Soup.

Invited guests were welcomed with drinks on arrival before an informative speech by Mr. Manh who introduced the key staff and set the scene for the evening's proceedings. The beautifully designed buffet was arranged inside the restaurant and demonstrated Red Bean's innovativeness in incorporating diverse local produce including meats, seafood, vegetables and herbs.

Head Chef Nguyen Van Ha commented that "the new menu showcases more local and traditional dishes using the best ingredients from Tra Que village, hand selected fresh seafood and as many organic products as possible. We have focused on the innovative use of flavors, colors and the elements central to Hoi An's cuisine".

In addition to the A La Carte menu, four set menus have been designed and packaged by the team, each featuring a selection of some of the most traditional and local dishes.

The evening was accompanied by popular Hoi An based Filipino band and traditional Vietnamese music.



EHG's foray into the world of the casual fine dining restaurant trade began when the group opened the first Red Bean branch in 2104. Red Bean Classic (ground floor of La Siesta Hotel & Spa) was a newbie in the restaurant scene but soon became a runaway success. A realization that a product with great potential had been created, led to the opening of two additional branches in Hanoi (Red Bean Trendy and Red Bean Central) and one in Hoi An (Red Bean Hoi An at La Siesta Resort & Spa). The past four years has seen the brand become a serious player on the dining stage. The driving force behind Red Bean is for it to become one of Vietnam's leading restaurant brands serving modern Vietnamese cuisine with high quality and innovative ideas always staying faithful to the roots and values of truly authentic Vietnamese cooking.

Across all four Red Bean branches and from Hanoi to Hoi An, the rules are the same. Consistency is a major factor in Red Bean's meteoric rise. As with any similar business, its products and services define Red Bean across all branches. Food and service being the two biggest consistencies without which the vision and dream are meaningless.

Although the red bean chain has expanded, the founding members remain close to the business ensuring the clarity of rules and the vision at the forefront of the operation.

Consistent authenticity. Apart from high quality and standards, Red Bean really does create authentic Vietnamese food. The USP of a successful restaurant brand is often the taste of a particular signature dish. Often when restaurants open more branches, the importance of taste gets lost. Alternatively, restaurants may adapt their dishes to suit the taste palate of visitors. However, neither of these apply to Red Bean. Instead, the restaurant stays true to the values and traditions of Vietnamese cuisine, respecting the requirements of each dish and each region. Red Bean branches in Hanoi focus on northern cooking and dishes while the Hoi An branch features mainly the cuisine of Hoi An and Quang Nam. Hanoi and Hoi An menus feature different items but the authenticity is maintained regardless of location.

Consistent service. As part of the EHG operation, all Red Bean staff abide by EHG's exceptionally high levels of quality and superior service. Restaurant and kitchen staff go through targeted staff training programmes. Across the operation, kitchen procedures are the same while restaurant service is uniform in terms of speed, quality and courtesy. Diners are greeted with the same courtesy, waiting staff are confidently knowledgeable about all dishes and demonstrate good interpersonal skills. The assurance is one of a consistent experience across all Red Bean restaurants.

Consistency of location. The Red Bean management decided not to create one brand style in terms of interior design or mass-produce the menu across all branches. Instead, each Red Bean restaurant is defined by its own personality, design and ambience consistent with its location. Even its name inks it to the property which houses it. Enter any Red Bean restaurant and one enters an environment consistent with the location.

Across all branches from Hanoi to Hoi An Red Bean serves authentic regional food, using the highest quality ingredients, with top class service underpinned by a strong operational ethos.

Hanoi: Red Bean Classic (94 Ma May), Red Bean Trendy (12 Nguyen Quang Bich) and the newest branch Red Bean Central (1 Cau Go)

Hoi An: Red Bean Hoi An (132 Hung Vuong)





Why Hoi An is one of Vietnam's top destinations

For visitors to Vietnam one of their must-see destinations is the ancient, picturesque town of Hoi An, the translation of which is "peaceful meeting place". Although the town has had a turbulent history, thankfully it was virtually untouched during the Vietnam War (or American War as it is known in Vietnam) thanks to the co-operation of both sides in the conflict.

UNESCO declared the old town a World Heritage Site in 1999 to honor its wonderful preservation and great example of a South-East Asian trading port of the 15th to 19th Centuries, with buildings displaying a unique blend of local and foreign influences. Today there are strict rules in place to safeguard the old town's unique heritage and more than 800 historical buildings have been preserved, so much of the town looks as it did several centuries ago.

Many of the old houses also offer short guided tours, for which a town ticket must be purchased. However, of all the sites in Hoi An probably the most iconic is the beautiful Japanese Covered Bridge. The Japanese community first constructed this bridge in the 1590s to link them with the Chinese community across the stream. Over the centuries, the ornamentation has remained relatively faithful to the original Japanese design. The entrances to the bridge are guarded by statues: a pair of monkeys on one side, a pair of dogs on the other. Entrance to the bridge is free but should you wish to visit the small temple built into the bridge's north side a ticket is required. The bridge is especially beautiful at night when it is lit with hundreds of colored lanterns for which Hoi An is famous.

A few steps down from the Japanese Covered Bridge is Phung Hung Old House, admission is by ticket. The entrance hall is decorated with exquisite lanterns, wall hangings and embroidery. The suspended altar is particularly impressive.

There are several pagodas in Hoi An, among them Chuc Thanh Pagoda at Khu Vuc 7, Tan An. Founded in 1454 it is the oldest pagoda in the town and contains many ancient artifacts. Phac Hat Pagoda at 673D Hai Ba Trung has a huge central courtyard containing hundreds of potted plants and bonsai trees. The façade is constructed of colorful ceramics and the elaborate roof is decorated with dragons. Phuoc Lam Pagoda at Thon 2a Cam Ha was founded in the mid seventeenth century, the Head Monk was An Thiem, a child prodigy, who became a monk at the age of eight.

One of the most notable places of worship is Quan Cong Temple at Chua Ong, 24D Tran Phu, founded in 1653 and dedicated to Quan Cong. He was an esteemed Chinese general, worshipped as a symbol of loyalty, sincerity, integrity and justice. Notice should be taken of the carp-shaped rain spouts on the roof surrounding the courtyard. The carp is popular in Hoi An and a common symbol of patience in Chinese mythology.

Hoi An has four museums highlighting the history of the region.

The Museum of History and Culture at 13 Nguyen Street was originally a pagoda built in the seventeenth century and is adjacent to the Guan Yu Temple. The Hoi An Folklore Museum at 33 Nguyen Thai Hoc Street is the largest two-storied wooden building in the town. The Museum of Ceramics is located at 80 Tran Phu Street in a wooden building originating from 1858 while The Museum of Sa Huynh Culture is at 149 Tram Phu Street and displays over 200 artifacts from the original settlers of the Hoi An site.

As a break from sightseeing there are numerous places to eat, ranging from typical pavement establishments right up to five star hotels. At night there is nothing more delightful than a stroll along the Bon River, decorated with hundreds of Hoi An's signature colored lanterns, a lasting memory of a most fascinating town.

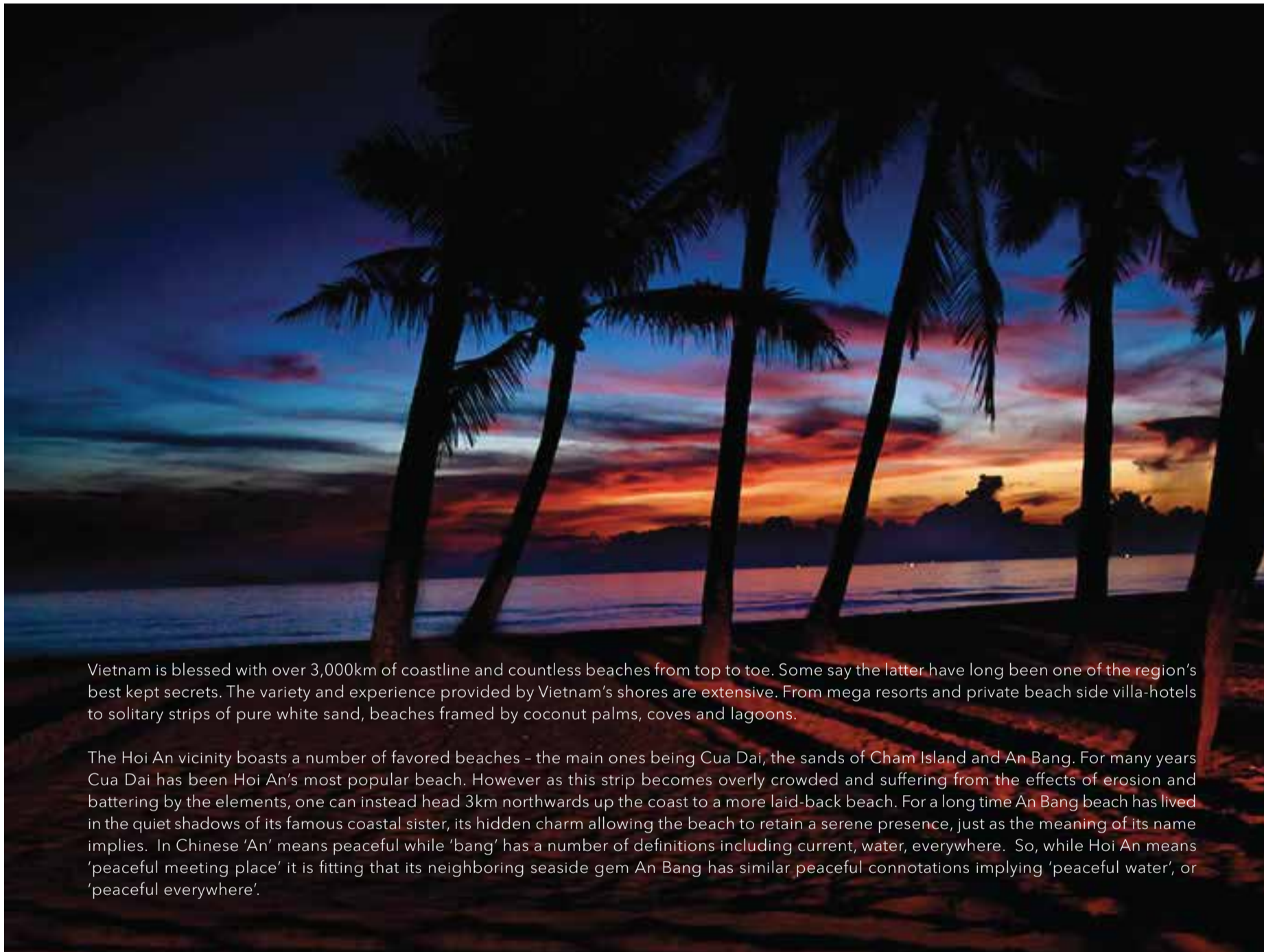


Exclusive offer just for in-house guest of La Siesta Resort & Spa

10% Off for all services from 60min up



Peaceful waters and white sand



Vietnam is blessed with over 3,000km of coastline and countless beaches from top to toe. Some say the latter have long been one of the region's best kept secrets. The variety and experience provided by Vietnam's shores are extensive. From mega resorts and private beach side villa-hotels to solitary strips of pure white sand, beaches framed by coconut palms, coves and lagoons.

The Hoi An vicinity boasts a number of favored beaches - the main ones being Cua Dai, the sands of Cham Island and An Bang. For many years Cua Dai has been Hoi An's most popular beach. However as this strip becomes overly crowded and suffering from the effects of erosion and battering by the elements, one can instead head 3km northwards up the coast to a more laid-back beach. For a long time An Bang beach has lived in the quiet shadows of its famous coastal sister, its hidden charm allowing the beach to retain a serene presence, just as the meaning of its name implies. In Chinese 'An' means peaceful while 'bang' has a number of definitions including current, water, everywhere. So, while Hoi An means 'peaceful meeting place' it is fitting that its neighboring seaside gem An Bang has similar peaceful connotations implying 'peaceful water', or 'peaceful everywhere'.

The preservation of An Bang's tranquility with a local hippy feel, together with relatively little development, a crystal blue sea and fine white sands have catapulted the beach to the dizzy heights of one of the world's most beautiful beaches. In 2011 CNNGo (CNN's online streaming platform) listed it in the top 50 most beautiful beaches worldwide, while CNN awarded it a place in the top 100 best beaches in the world (at #86). Most recently in 2016 TripAdvisor ranked An Bang at #16 in the top 25 best beaches in Asia.

The beach was originally frequented mainly by the locals at weekends and evenings; however, with increased Hoi An tourism and favored by the expat community, An Bang beach has reached a wider spectrum. Yet, despite being the new sun and sea hotspot, it has been able to preserve a peaceful mellow atmosphere, which the longer established beaches are losing.

An Bang village, with its 4km stretch of soft white sand, is small, cozy with a host of exquisite boutique homestays, mini hotels, guesthouses, and even camping on the beach. A network of rural winding lanes leads down to the beachfront dotted with bohemian bars and local street food huts creating a hippy carefree environment.

An array of dining options tempt the taste palates with some spectacular ultra-fresh high quality seafood dishes, Vietnamese BBQs, a selection of western fare and beachside dining. Chilled out bars overlooking the ocean, often with live music, add a groovy late night vibe.

The main strip is informally divided between café and restaurant establishments. For the price of a drink or meal, one can relax on a sun lounger all day under the coconut palms. Alternatively, if one does not fancy any refreshments the beach furniture, umbrellas or hammocks can be rented for a nominal amount.

An Bang is very family-friendly. Swimming conditions are great and there are a number of opportunities to go paddle boarding and surfing.

The community makes a concerted effort to keep the beach clean, which enhances the picturesque experience. A common sight are the iconic Vietnamese coracle fishing boats scattered around on the sand, making great photo opportunities, while the beach affords stunning views of nearby Marble Mountains and Cham Island's rugged outline.

Spend a day at An Bang beach. Relax and unwind. Let the white sands and blue waters calm the soul.



WHEN TO GO

March to September peak season, dry season with best weather conditions, plenty of sunshine, calm waters. NB: June and July has blistering sun, temperatures rising to 30°C.

October to February the colder, rainy season. Nighttime temperatures may drop to 15°C. November is prone to flooding and stormy weather. The beach with its rough seas at this time is an atmospheric place to be.

September to March is the surf season with spectacular wave conditions.

HOW TO GET THERE

An Bang Beach, 6km from Hoi An town center, is in easy distance of a leisurely cycle ride. The bike parking fee for a day is about 10,000 vnd. Or take a xe om motorbike taxi or regular taxi for about 80,000 vnd

La Siesta Resort & Spa runs a complimentary shuttle bus to/from An Bang beach for guests who have use of the Resort's secret beach. Please contact reception for information



HAPPY HOUR SPECIALS

Every afternoon and evening beverage specials include two for the price of one. Choose your favorite happy hour spot. The Red Bean garden courtyard or the east wing Temple bar opening onto the saltwater pool.

Happy Hour applies to classic cocktails, beers, mixed drinks and house wine by the glass

From 16:00-18:00 and 20:30-22:00 daily



Spectacular fireworks

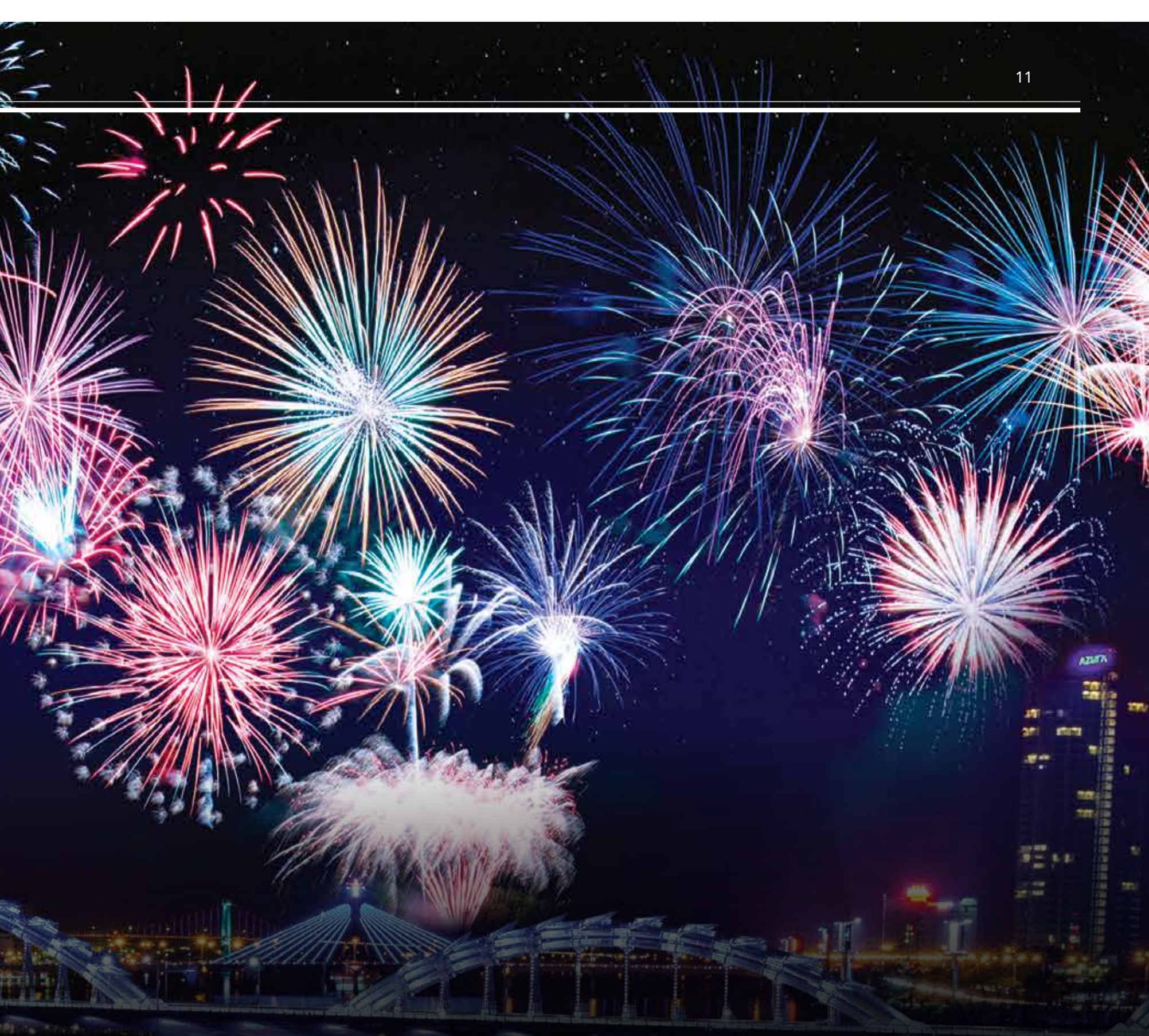
These days, firework festivals and competitions are hugely popular all around the globe but the Da Nang International Firework Festival (DIFF) is one of the most fiercely competed for awards in the world. It is one of the biggest, most exciting and original events in the World Firework Calendar with amazing displays for all the family to enjoy.

The idea for this event stemmed from a desire to create *cultural activities on an international scale for locals and tourists*. Da Nang was selected as Vietnam's sole location for this annual international fireworks competition, which has a different theme on each occasion.

This year it is 'The Legend of Bridges'. This illustrates the connections created, increased socio-economics and tourism and the joining-together of once remote towns and districts that the Festival brings about. It also commemorates **Vietnam's Reunification Day (April 30)**.

The festival was held for the first time in 2008. At that time, just four teams participated and the audience was very sparse. This year, 2018, eight world-class teams will take part in this 10th Anniversary and the organizers expect thousands to attend.

- POLAND - Surex Firma Rodzinna
- SWEDEN - Goteborgs FyrverkeriFabrik
- PORTUGAL - Luso Pirotecnia
- HONG KONG - Vulcan Fireworks
- VIETNAM - Team Da Nang
- USA - Atlas Pyrovision
- ITALY - Martello Srl (Italy were the 2017 winners)
- FRANCE - Tamaya Kitahara



This year for the first time, instead of being held over two nights, displays will be spread over five nights between 30 April and 30 June with eleven displays by teams from around the world painting the skies with fantastic colors. The festival will also feature a street carnival, food festival and a flash mob dance performance for students.

The main location is the Han River port, while stages and stand locations are at Tran Hung Dao Street and Olalani. Other supporting events take place at Asia Park (International Cuisine Corner), SunWorld Ba Na Hills (Beer festival) and the Dragon Bridges and along the banks of Han River ...

The discovery of fireworks, or the formulation of gunpowder, is believed to have occurred by chance approximately 2,000 years ago in China by a chef mixing ingredients. Then in 1560 European chemists made gunpowder as explosive as possible by formulating a ratio of ingredients - Salt Peter 75%, Charcoal 15% and Sulphur 10% - ratios which are still used today. The accolade for developing fireworks into a true art form goes to the Italians when they developed aerial shells that launched upwards and exploded into fountains of color. Such displays grew more and more elaborate over the years, but initially the only colors fireworks could produce were orange and yellow, using steel and charcoal. Then in the 19th century, pyro technicians had the technology to introduce reds, greens and blues into the displays, a process that continues today.

When not watching the firework displays visitors can explore the city of Da Nang, Vietnam's third largest city after Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi. The best time to visit is between April, September avoiding the monsoon season, though it is extremely hot, July, and August. Situated on the coast of the South China Sea Da Nang is a major port with good public transport links in easy reach of Hue and Hoi An.

So come and thrill to the firework displays and enjoy the excitement of the competition whilst taking advantage of all that Da Nang has to offer.

The schedule for the events, all commence at 20.00hrs:

30 April - Opening Ceremony with Vietnam and Poland

26 May - France and USA

02 June - Italy and Hong Kong

09 June - Sweden and Portugal

30 June - Closing Ceremony with displays and the final round

Speaking Vietnamese

1. Hello! - Xin chao! (sin chow!)
2. Goodbye - Tam Biet
3. How are you? - Ban co khoe khong? (ban co kwe khome?) also, Ban the nao?
4. I'm fine, thank you! - Cam on ban toi khoe (gahm un ban thoy kwe)
5. And you? - Ban thi sao? (ban ty sao?)
6. What's your name? - Ban ten gi? (ban thane zee)
7. My name is... - Toi la (thoy la...)
8. Thank you - Cam on (gahm un)
9. You're welcome - Khong co' gi (khom go zee)
10. Yes - Vang (vung)
11. No - Khong (khome)
12. Excuse me/Sorry... - Xin loi (seen loy)
13. Can you help me? - Ban giup toi duoc khong? (ban zoop thoy duc khom?)
14. I'd like to eat - Toi muon an (thoy moowan un)
15. I'd like a drink - Toi muon uong (thoy moowan oowanh)
16. Good - Tot (thote)
17. Bad - Khong tot (khome thote)
18. What is this? - Cai nay la gi (guy nai la zee)
19. How much? - Bao nhieu? (bow nyew)
20. Too expensive - Mac qua (mahk qwa)
21. Where is the nearest internet shop? - Cho internet o dau? (choh internet uh doh)
22. Where is the nearest bank? - Nha bang o dau? (nya bung uh doh)
23. Hotel - Khach San (khack san)
24. Too Hot - Nong qua (nom qwa)
25. Too Cold - Lanh qua (lang qwa)
26. Coffee - Ca phe (cah feh)
27. Hot black coffee - Ca phe nong (cah feh nom)
28. Hot Coffee with milk - Ca phe sua nong (cah feh sua nom)
29. Tea - Tra (chah)
30. I like - Toi thich (thoy tick)
31. I am happy - Toi vui (thoy vuoy)
32. I am tired - Toi met (thoy mate)
33. Where is an ATM - Cay ATM o dau ? (kei a te mo uh doh)



ABOUT EHG

Elegance Hospitality is a group of hotels renowned for our well-equipped facilities and sophisticated service. Founded in the early 2000s, we have developed from our first hotel in Hanoi to the current chain of 5 boutique hotels in Hanoi's Old Quarter and one outstanding resort in Hoi An Town. Our distinctive collection of properties redefines the very concept of boutique and luxury hospitality.

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