



# THE HOI AN POST

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## MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN

A warm welcome to all our Hoi An guests.

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.

Delight in the luxury living of our Resort's east wing reminiscent of the facade of Hoi An ancient town. Take your time exploring the town's alleys which is a major travel destination boasting a unique environment and a mouth-watering cuisine of local delicacies. A multitude of stunning places surround Hoi An. This edition features the wonders of Bay Mai Coconut Forest and the eco tours run by the local villagers. Finally, we are now in the festive season both traditionally Vietnamese and international. Hoi An comes alive with mid-Autumn festival activities (Tet Trung Thu), a major celebration in the Vietnamese calendar, while we end the year with Christmas as the town welcomes Santa and his Christmas entourage.

EHG and all the staff at La Siesta Resort & Spa wish you a happy end to 2017 and a prosperous and peaceful 2018.

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

**Do Van Dan (Mr.)**  
Chairman/CEO

Elegance Hospitality Group



# Tet Trung Thu mid

Hoi An is a town known for its festivals, and on Wednesday, October 4, visitors can experience one of the largest and most important festivals of the year.

The Mid-Autumn festival, or Tet Trung Thu, takes place on the 15th day of the eighth lunar month every year.

Corresponding roughly with the arrival of fall, the autumn festival (also known as the children's festival) commemorates the final rice harvest of the year. It is a time for families to meet and enjoy each other's company, spend time with wee ones, chase away bad spirits, and celebrate the moon.

### CELEBRATING CHILDREN

Originally a Chinese festival, it has been celebrated in Vietnam for thousands of years. In many ways, it is a larger representation of the monthly lunar festival.





# -autumn festival – celebrating the harvest

Children are at the center of the celebrations. In ancient times, it was believed that children held the closest connection to the sacred and natural world, being innocent and pure.

Pint-sized costumed dragon dancers go from shop to shop to ask to perform, and if successful, be rewarded with a bit of lucky money. Drums announce their arrival, and their presence is thought to bring good luck and fortune. The fierce, handmade dragon's head and body is controlled by the children.

The children are accompanied by 'Lord Earth' or Ong Dia, who wears a moon-shaped, smiling mask, and represents prosperity and wealth.

Other groups of children parade around the town, wearing masks and holding paper lanterns shaped like stars, moons and animals.

You can also see less cute but more professional dragon dancers top huge bamboo poles and spit fire at the more crowded places in the old town, competing to be the best.

All of this merriment is made more brilliant by the elegant old houses and colourful lanterns, including the small paper ones which float down the river in a stream of glowing light.

## CONNECTION WITH THE MOON

Another important part of the festival is the worship of the moon, a symbol of rebirth and harmony. The Mid-Autumn festival is also a time of fertility, and it used to be popular to start courtships or celebrate weddings at this time of year.

The festival is a time to drink, eat, and be merry, and residents present each other with 'moon cakes'. These treats are made of a mung bean or lotus seed paste, sometimes with an egg yolk hidden in the middle, and come in salty and sweet versions. Banh deo is a white cake, made from sticky rice and filled with a sugary mixture of lotus seeds, green beans, or pumpkin seeds. Banh nuong is a brown savoury cake, and consists of egg, pork fat, fried onion, peanut, and lemon leaves.

If you are lucky enough to visit Hoi An at this time of year, make sure to take part in the special celebration and honour family, children, and the moon.



THE STORY

# Luxurious living - inside the elegant rooms in East Wing

La Siesta Resort & Spa, a hidden gem tucked behind Hung Vuong Street close to the old town of Hoi An, sits in a lush tropical setting. In addition to two pools, a spa, a fitness center, a pair of unique gourmet restaurants, and its own temple, it also provides elegant and comfortable accommodation.

The resort's accommodation section is split into two wings. The original west wing holds 70 rooms and is a modern hotel, styled in traditional fashion with colourful yellow and cherry wood touches. The newly inaugurated east wing, built in 2015 and officially opened in March this year, is comprised of eight terraced townhouse villas. Fashioned to look like the iconic buildings of the old town, it holds 37 striking period-style suites.

The east wing at La Siesta Resort & Spa exclusively features private saunas and Jacuzzis and a free mini bar, in addition to other amenities such as luxury pillow selection, laundry and dry-cleaning services, air-conditioning, room service, and twice-daily housekeeping services. Flat screen TVs, free WiFi, and satellite television are also available in every room.



## TURNING THE CLOCK BACK

Stepping into one of these rooms is like stepping into Hoi An's history, with modern touches and convenience tastefully included.

The hallways are painted in a vibrant yellow, a traditional colour which represents prosperity and is often seen in Hoi An old town. Photos of Hoi An long past decorate the airy hallways, and twinkling candelabra enhance the feeling of stepping back in time.

Room styles include the Junior Suite (with balcony), Veranda Suite (with a pool view), Premium Terrace Suite, Junior Suite Villa (with a pool view), Duplex Suite (with balcony), and Duplex Villa Suite (with balcony). Each type of room includes a roomy king size bed, exquisitely varnished hardwood floors, and is accented with forest green, cream, and deep brown wood.

Some suites feature four poster beds, while white claw-foot bath tubs and marble showers add to the feeling of simple luxury. Rattan screens separate the open spaces into sections.



## SHARING THE EXPERIENCE

The Duplex suites are two floors, perfect for a family or a couple wishing for some extra space to enjoy each other's company. They include two bathrooms, a king size bed which can be split into two, and a double bed upstairs.

The Premium Terrace Suites on the 'executive' second floor include a private deck and sun loungers for a day's rest in the sun, or some quiet reading. There is also a ceramic-glazed tile Jacuzzi outside, and if there is a large party of guests, the terraces can be connected for optimal enjoyment or for a special occasion. Private wait staff can be provided for any event.



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

10% Off for all services from 60min up





**GROUND FLOOR GARDENS**

All first-floor rooms have access to a leafy back garden, where guests can be served food or drinks.

The Veranda Suite also opens out onto the pool, so that visitors can walk through the peaceful green tropical garden or go for a dip. In addition, it has a wooden bathtub which visitors can fill with traditional herbs for a relaxing soak, as well as a sauna.

**TRY OUT LUXURY TODAY**

At La Siesta Resort & Spa, we are dedicated to providing the customer with the perfect room and experience. Don't hesitate to contact reception if you would like to change or upgrade your room to one of our luxury suites in the east wing.



**OFF  
10%**





# BAY MAU, COCONUT FOREST ECO-TOURA TRIP THROUGH THE PALMS



One of the main attractions of Hoi An is the opportunity to experience lush, rich greenery and nature so close to the bustling hub of the old town.

Bay Mau coconut forest is a popular tourist destination only a few kilometres from the old town, perfect for those seeking a chance to explore the water and the Nipa palm forest.

Like many areas in the country, it was also a place of importance during the Vietnam War. It was a safe haven for reserve forces, affording a safe place from which they could make sorties into Hoi An proper.

Located in Cam Thanh village, the craft village features houses made from coconut leaves. Originally, there were 7,000 square meters of free-growing coconut forest. Situated near a mangrove estuary, it is a unique salt marsh ecological area with a submerged forest ecosystem.

It is home to many species of shrimp, crab, and molluscs. The salt marsh acts as a filter system, gathering waste in the water source before it flows to the beach.

Local families run the tours in the area, providing a sustainable, affordable eco-tour and supporting the local economy. Visitors are escorted through palm-covered passages in traditional woven round basket boats, which many fishermen in Hoi An still use today.

They will learn about the daily life of local farmers and fishermen and participate in traditional activities, such as a boat race, throwing a net, and enjoying freshly-caught seafood. Travellers who wish to see the area but stay off the water can also rent a motorbike (5 USD or less) or request a complimentary bicycle from reception and scoot through the towering coconut forest.

Ask at reception for information regarding this beautiful natural wonder.



**L A S I E S T A**  
R E S O R T & S P A  
HOI AN - VIETNAM

**BBQ GARDEN**  
*SATURDAY*  
**AO DAI DINNER PARTY**

**Only \$39**

Included Cocktail Show, Traditional Music, A glass of sparkling wine  
Starting from 7:00 PM





# Cao lau and other delicious local delights

Hoi An has several local delicacies which are available at small street food stalls and restaurants throughout the town.

There are a few items that will usually be on every menu: some popular favourites include the delicate white rose, a dumpling made of shrimp wrapped in steamed rice paper, and the deep fried wonton (filled with pork, seafood, or beef and topped with a tomato and vegetable sauce).

Mi quang is a regional delicacy made of thick noodles served in a few teaspoons of broth with shrimp, quail's eggs, herbs, vegetables, and sometimes peanuts.

Its sister dish cao lau (found only in Hoi An) is made with slightly thinner noodles in a salty broth, topped with greens, sliced pork, fried pork rind, and other goodies. These extra toppings include rice crackers, peanuts, and scallions. The dish is often served with lime and chilli paste.

There are many legends about the origin of cao lau and its unique taste. Some say that the broth and noodles are mixed with the ash of a tree that was originally taken from the Cham Islands, and is only known to a handful of families in Hoi An. Others say that the dish is made with water from a well dating from the time of the Cham people, located outside of town.

## THIT NUONG

In addition to these mouth-watering dishes, satay-style pork thit nuong is another must-try delicacy.

Sometimes served with thin vermicelli noodles and chilli, eaten with banana flour and herbs such as mint and coriander, it is also served as a skewer-cum-spring-roll, with rice paper, greens, and a spicy peanut sauce.

Usually costing less than 2 USD, it is a delicious, cheap treat.



## BANH XEO

Another common dish is the tasty banh xeo, or rice pancake. It consists of a piping hot pancake, mixed with egg and filled with shrimp and sprouts, as well as a tasty medley of herbs and vegetables such as coriander, mint, cucumber, and lettuce.

Rolled in crispy rice paper and dipped in a peanut satay sauce, it is one of the best dishes in central and south Vietnam. Add some chilli for extra kick.

## THE HUMBLE BANH MI

Many illustrious chefs and writers have praised this delicious, low cost staple, which costs less than 1 USD. The light, fluffy baguette comes with a variety of fillings, but the usual banh mi in Hoi An will consist of pâté, shredded carrot, green papaya, coriander, and mint. Some other additions might be spring onion, peppercorns, and roasted onion or garlic.

Barbeque pork is one of the most popular fillings, although egg, chicken, and a variety of other ingredients are available. So try one today, with a smooth, sweet Vietnamese coffee.

Check out the menu at the resort's Red Bean restaurant, specializing in Vietnamese favourites, for some of these local delights.

Happy eating!





# JEWEL OF THE EAST - HOI AN, TOP TRAVEL DESTINATION



Hoi An is no stranger to awards recognizing its uniqueness, charm, and attraction for tourists. In July 2017, Hoi An was voted seventh in the list of the top 15 tourist destinations in a recent survey of the readers of US travel publication *Travel & Leisure*. It lauded the town's rich history, ample green space, and cultural preservation.

Another US publication, the *Huffington Post*, also sang the town's praises in 2013 as one of the top seven destinations in Vietnam, citing its cuisine, pedestrian-friendly streets, and history as some of the top reasons to visit.

The readers of *British Wanderlust* magazine exalted the "beguiling river port" to the top destination worldwide to visit. The publication gushed that Hoi An "has the most complete ancient centre in Vietnam, great shopping and cuisine, and golden sandy beaches close to hand."

## ANCIENT CULTURE

Any visitor to Hoi An, especially the return devotees, understand what makes the town such a special place. Just one of those reasons is the beautiful old town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1999.

Ancient streets, lined with well-preserved timber and tile houses, look the same as they did in the port town hundreds of years ago. Temples and shrines pop up in unexpected places, while street vendors hawk delicious, unique street food.

Travellers can visit such historic sites as the beautiful and unique Japanese covered bridge, step inside traditional homes, gaze at colourful and exotic temples, and enjoy the chance to experience the history of the ancient center.

When the sun rises, visitors can beat the heat and try out some traditional Vietnamese coffee, the dark, mocha-flavoured roast served with condensed milk upon request. After that, visitors can enjoy a day of shopping, try out a cooking class, a farming tour, or paddle through the rice paddies.

Vibrant silks, decorated ceramics, and ancient bronze statuettes are sold in the many stores, while other businesses offer modern takes on Vietnamese clothing.

Tailors and shoemakers line the streets, and for those seeking a special souvenir, suits, dresses, shoes and other items can be handmade and ready to take home within a day or two.





## LANTERN LIGHT

When the day is over and visitors have had the opportunity to shop and learn about Hoi An's history, they can experience the town at night.

Once the moon comes out, the old town is at its most magical, especially on special lunar days. The time of the full moon brings a particular merry and interesting experience, with tables set with rich offerings, the drums of dragon dances filling the street, and the old town lit entirely by lamplight. Visitors can buy handmade lanterns in many brilliant colours.

Women and children sell glowing lanterns by the side of the river, and for a mere 5,000 VND, visitors can see the tiny candles float down the river in a great swath of light and colour.

Incense scents the air, and children run around the old town, shrieking with laughter. Step into any of the fine restaurants or bars, and you can enjoy a view of the river while eating Hoi An specialties such as white roses, fried wontons, cao lau, or mi quang.

Finish off dinner with some sweet gelato or homemade ice cream, or perhaps a sugary mango cake (banh xoai).



## THE DEEP BLUE

If you need some time away from the bustling center and a place to cool down, you can take a dip at one of the two beautiful beaches located close to Hoi An.

The busier An Bang beach is lined with seafood restaurants and offers a chance to try parasailing or jet skiing. The quieter Cua Dai offers similar gastronomic delights, with fewer tourists.

The best time to experience the blue is early in the morning, around 7 am, when the water is smooth and the beach is far less busy. The sunrise seeker can watch the red disc of the sun rise between the peaks of the Cham Islands, perhaps taking time to paddle board or kayak.

Whether you choose to dine, drink, shop, or relax at the side of the ocean, Hoi An is an unforgettable place – come experience what everyone is talking about around the world.





# Christmas in Hoi An – ‘ti

The magic of the Christmas season isn't far away, and both children and adults alike are anticipating the festive events of the holiday season in Hoi An.

The heritage site doesn't have white snow and reindeer, but Santa Claus still visits the busy tourist town and the residents celebrate with fervor.

Christmas is a highly-anticipated event for most, and helps keep the season merry right up to the biggest holiday of the year, the Tet New Year celebration.

While the majority of Vietnamese aren't Christian (only 8% out of 90 million consider themselves Protestant or Catholic, according to 2014 data), sociable Vietnamese people always enjoy a good party.

## VIETNAMESE TRADITIONS

At this time of year, it is common to see people dressed in Santa suits and reindeer antlers. Christmas decorations, such as fantastically decorated trees, stars, bells, and wreathes are common sights in the old town. The sound of cheery Christmas carols is everywhere, and Vietnamese residents exchange presents with friends and family.

Unlike the west, Christmas Eve is the highlight of the celebration in Vietnam, rather than Christmas Day. Some citizens will attend a Midnight Mass and return home to a huge Yuletide dinner, with duck, chicken or turkey as the main feature. Reflecting the French influence, a version of the French 'reveillon' (chocolate log cake) is served at many homes.

After the feast, children place shoes outside of their front door and tuck themselves into bed, eagerly awaiting the goodies that will fill their footwear to the brim.





# s the season

## FESTIVE EVENTS

There are an endless number of places to celebrate the season in Hoi An. The large blue and white Catholic church on Nguyen Truong To celebrates with a festive nativity scene and other events. Restaurants, hotels and resorts all create their own unique soirees for tourists and residents alike to enjoy the season.

While rain and cold can still disrupt the cheer, the weather will continue getting drier and warmer at this time of year.

Inquire at reception about events being hosted by La Siesta Resort & Spa, and for details about our special Christmas menu served at our two on-site restaurants.



# Speaking Vietnamese

1. What's up? - Có chuyện gì vậy?
2. How's it going? - Đạo này ra sao rồi?
3. What have you been doing? - Đạo này đang làm gì?
4. Nothing much. - Không có gì mới cả.
5. What's on your mind? - Bạn đang lo lắng gì vậy?
6. I was just thinking. - Tôi chỉ nghĩ linh tinh thôi.
7. I was just daydreaming. - Tôi chỉ đang trí đôi chút thôi.
8. It's none of your business. - Không phải là chuyện của bạn.
9. Is that so? - Vậy hả?
10. How come? - Làm thế nào vậy?
11. Absolutely! - Chắc chắn rồi!
12. Definitely! - Quá đúng!
13. Of course! - Dĩ nhiên!
14. You better believe it! - Chắc chắn mà.
15. I guess so. - Tôi đoán vậy.
16. There's no way to know. - Làm sao mà biết được.
17. I can't say for sure. - Tôi không thể nói chắc.
18. This is too good to be true! - Chuyện này khó tin quá!
19. No way! (Stop joking!) - Thôi đi (đừng đùa nữa).
20. I got it. - Tôi hiểu rồi.
21. Right on! (Great!) - Quá đúng!
22. I did it! (I made it!) - Tôi thành công rồi!
23. Got a minute? - Có rảnh không?
24. About when? - Vào khoảng thời gian nào?
25. I won't take but a minute. - Sẽ không mất nhiều thời gian đâu.
26. Speak up! - Hãy nói lớn lên.
27. Seen Melissa? - Có thấy Melissa không?
28. So we've met again, eh? - Thế là ta lại gặp nhau phải không?
29. Come here. - Đến đây.
30. Come over. - Ghé chơi.



## 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 6 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.

## HEAD OFFICE:

Room 703C, Hanoi Towers  
Add: 49 Hai Ba Trung Str., Hanoi  
Tel: (+84 24) 3862 2222

For media, please contact Ms.Anh:  
[anh.nguyen@elegancehospitalitygroup.com](mailto:anh.nguyen@elegancehospitalitygroup.com)