A GUIDE TO VIETNAM
Saigon is, by air:

- 2 hours from Angkor
- 3 hours from Bangkok
- 3 hours from Singapore
- 4 hours from Hongkong
- 4 hours from Manila
- 13 hours from Tokyo
- 25 hours from Honolulu
- 30 hours from San Francisco
- 30 hours from Paris
- 41 hours from New York.
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Viet-Nam is situated in Southeast Asia at the juncture of East and West. Located on the eastern edge of the Peninsula of Indochina, it is bordered by China to the north and by Laos and Cambodia to the West. To the east, its lengthy coastline extends over 1260 miles along that part of the Pacific Ocean called the China Sea.

Today, following the Geneva Armistice of 1954, Viet-Nam is partitioned along the 17th parallel, which is the dividing line between Communist North Viet-Nam and the Free Republic of Viet-Nam in the South. This pamphlet is limited to South Viet-Nam, below the 17th parallel, since North Viet-Nam, with its innumerable picturesque sites, is not open to tourists at the present time.

The total area of Viet-Nam is 127,000 square miles or nearly double that of New England; 65,000 sq. mi. lying south of the 17th parallel, and the remaining 62,000 to the north.

The population totals 25,000,000 for the entire country, with 12 million in South Viet-Nam and 13 million in the North.

Viet-Nam lies at the crossroads of capitals and well-known cities of the Orient: Bangkok, Rangoon, Hong Kong, Taipei, Tokyo and Manila . . . Her varied climate and topography provide many a rich contrast and repeatedly prove to be an appealing source of wonder to the tourist on his voyage of discovery.
INTRODUCTION

SCENIC CONTRASTS

If Viet-Nam is your destination, many delights are in store for you in the relaxed atmosphere of one of the Far East's most picturesque countries. Engagingly diversified in its many scenic contrasts of broad expanses of green rice fields, stark mountain ranges and luxuriant forests, Viet-Nam also provides the special features of a sea-coast nation: limitless stretches of white, sandy beaches lying under the cooling shade of inclining evergreens.

A view of the Memorial Temple built for war heroes in Saigon.

DIVERSIFIED ARCHITECTURE

The cities too, reflect the colorful flavor of the Orient, and the historical wealth of ancient lore still resides in the many palaces and temples of days gone by. Yet side by side with these serene remnants of yesterday stand modern buildings along spacious boulevards, feverish shopping centers and lively night clubs, especially in the cosmopolitan districts.
WORKS OF ART

Your first few moments in Viet-Nam will bring exclama-
tions of admiration at the host of precious works of
art, at least one of which you will want to bring home
with you. Their value is commensurate with the well-
founded reputation of their craftsmen.

Many of these art objects and crafts are available to
you during your visit. They include finely carved statu-
ettes of ivory or rare woods, painted silks of iridescent colors, and lacquer tableaux and screens for which Vietnamese artisans are justly famous. Also, for smaller souvenirs or gifts, you will find straw hats, mats, and wooden shoes made to order while you wait. These and many fine pieces of pottery are plentiful in the shops of Saigon and Cholon, as well as in the individual handicraft centers throughout the country. You may even order lacquer screens and tableaux to fit your specifications and design.

THE PEOPLE

The Vietnamese people are well-known for their energetic dynamism, their hospitality and their courtesy. Vietnamese women, wearing a graceful flowing costume of silk pantaloons under a long tunic split on both sides, are famous for their distinctive charm.

In the Highlands of Viet-Nam, however, there remain many different small aboriginal groups who live in colorful tribal villages and still preserve their traditional costumes. They are believed to be the descendants of the original inhabitants of the peninsula, before the arrival of the Vietnamese immigrants in this area many centuries ago. In this regard, they are reminis-

Vietnamese woman in the typical country style costume of Northern Viet-Nam consisting of a head scarf, a long tunic worn over a sleeveless blouse, a pair of pants and cotton or silk sash. The tunic is slit in front and at the sides and held together by a sash. A large conic hat is used on the days of bright sunshine.
cent of the American Indians. There are many groups among these tribes: Tho, Man, Moi, Rhade, Thai, Meo... For the tourist, their tribal villages will offer a rare treat in the picturesque clothing of the inhabitants, elephant rides, ancient dances and simple country life.

Today, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam is carrying out a vast program designed to raise the standard of living and the educational level of these groups.

RELIGION

The population in Viet-Nam is about 90% Buddhist and 10% Christian and most of the Christians are Catholics. The Buddhism practiced in Viet-Nam is one of two branches of this religion called the “Great Vehicle,” the other branch being the “Small Vehicle” practiced in

Through ancient portals such as these walk Vietnamese Buddhists as they enter the sacred walls of their Buddhist temples, whether in the cities or in the sparsely populated countryside. Great Vehicle Buddhism is the main religion in Viet-Nam.
India, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. The "Great Vehicle" branch is liberal and tolerant and does not require attendance at religious ceremonies or a compulsory period of priesthood for men. Actually the most important aspect of Vietnamese religious life is ancestor worship which results in a reverence for the elders and strong family ties.

This re-enactment of the victory of the Trung Sisters over the Chinese invaders takes place every year in March to commemorate the day when, in the year 40 A.D., two young Vietnamese heroines rode out on their elephants and led their forces into battle for national liberation.

FESTIVALS AND HOLIDAYS

As is to be expected in a country such as Viet-Nam which is rapidly emerging as a modern nation while maintaining many age-old traditions, the holidays and festivals are a mixture of the old and the new. The modern influence is reflected in the traditional Christmas, New Year's Day, Labor Day (May first), and the National Holiday which falls on October 26th and commemorates the proclamation of the Constitution. However, a visitor from abroad seeking something new will undoubtedly be more interested in the "old" festivals, the holidays whose origins stretch far back into antiquity. Three of these are worth special mention, for the tourist who finds himself in Viet Nam while one of them is being celebrated is in for a rare treat.
The most important of the traditional festivals is Tet or the celebration of the first day of the lunar new year. This celebration usually falls in February with the coming of spring, more identifiable in the central and northern parts of Viet-Nam. Although Tet is primarily a religious and family affair, the general atmosphere of festivity is most exciting. Preparations begin many days in advance. A good month before Tet there appears as if by magic around the central markets of Viet-Nam from the tiniest village to the capital, a multicolored belt of small shops made of light wood, mats and cardboard, decorated with loving care in merry emulation of plicated garlands, and fancy lanterns. At night this new fairyland is lit up and customers crowd around the heaps of fruits, toys, linen, perfume and a host of other articles. The trees are lit with thousands of lanterns. In Saigon the festival is particularly brilliant. The pavements are flooded with flower shops, and boulevards are adorned with long luminous garlands. Firecrackers, feasts prepared days in advance, the exchange of presents, houses expressly decorated for the occasion with flowering branches, these are only a few of the sights that await the tourist fortunate enough to be in Viet-Nam during this joyful season.

SPRINGTIME IN VIET-NAM

Springtime in Viet-Nam coincides with the Tet Festival, or Vietnamese Lunar New Year. It is characterized by blooming apricot and peach flowers.
Another important national holiday is the celebration of the Trung Sisters' day. In the year 40 A.D. two courageous Vietnamese women, the now-famous Trung sisters, rode into battle on elephant-back to regain the country's independence. This event is celebrated yearly by a dazzling parade on the sixth day of the second lunar month (usually in March or April). Two Vietnamese girls, dressed in the full regalia of ages long past, ride elephants through the streets of Saigon. They are escorted by brilliantly-uniformed guards carrying raised swords, and mounted blue-and-red-costumed women officers. The procession is followed by colorful parades.

The third festival we shall mention here has, with the course of time, become one for children. The Mid-Autumn Festival falls on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month (usually in September or October). The origin of this festival stems from a dream of Emperor Duong Minh Hoang. He dreamed one night that he traveled to the land of fairies where there was much celebrating, merrymaking, dancing, and general gaiety. When he awoke, he decided to inaugurate these festivities on an annual basis. The celebration became gradually a festival for children, including the distribution of gifts, and colorful dragon dances. It is during this feast that the Mid-Autumn pastries are served, the Banh Nuong, or Banh Trung Thu, a sort of tart filled with ham, nuts, eggs and other ingredients, and the Banh Deo, a very sweet almond pastry. These delicacies are not made at any other time of the year.
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR TOURISTS *

EXCHANGE RATES

At present, tourists enjoy a special rate of approximately 72 piasters to the dollar on the free market. (The official rate is 35 piasters to the dollar.)

VISAS

American tourists visiting Viet-Nam for less than a week need only a valid passport. If you stay for over one week, you must obtain an Entrance Visa. Applications should be made at the Embassy of Viet-Nam in Washington, D. C.

VACCINATION

In order to enter Viet-Nam you will need a certificate of vaccination against smallpox and cholera.

MOVIE FILMS

16 mm. movie films with scenarios and all 35 mm. and larger movie films must have authorization upon entry into Viet-Nam, from the Department of Information in Saigon. Requests for authorization should be made in advance through the Embassy of Viet-Nam in Washington.

ACCESSIBILITY

Viet-Nam is readily accessible from any European or Asian port, and from America, from any point connecting with Europe or the Far East.

PLANES—Pan American planes leave Los Angeles and San Francisco twice a week stopping at Honolulu, Wake Island, Guam, and Manila, and arriving in Saigon three

*The information given in this chapter is subject to modifications.
days later. From Paris, easy connections to Saigon can be made through well known airlines such as Air France, KLM, SAS, TAI, and Air Viet-Nam.

**SHIPS**—Or, if you prefer a leisurely boat trip, convenient connections are available from most European ports. The trip is an exciting one from Europe leaving from Marseilles (France) and stopping over at Port Said, Aden, Bombay, Colombo, and Singapore, and arriving at Saigon 20 days later via the French Lines which represent the Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes. The American President Lines sail monthly from New York and San Francisco. There are also many cargo vessels destined for Viet-Nam, but the dates of their departures are determined by cargo requirements. Consult your local tourist office for sailing schedules of such vessels.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Air Viet-Nam (Tel. 22 446-47 and 21 624-25-26) has a regular service between Saigon and these major cities in neighboring countries: Hongkong, Bangkok (Thailand), Phnompenh, Siemreap (Cambodia), Vientiane, Seno (Laos). It also provides rapid connections between Saigon and the main centers of interest in Viet-Nam: Banmethuot, Dalat, Hue, Kontum, Nhatrang, Pleiku, Phuquoc, Quinhon, Tourane. For some popular resorts, for instance the well-known Nhatrang seaside resort, Air Viet-Nam organizes week-end tours, leaving Saigon on Saturdays and returning early on Mondays, with accommodations at the Hotel Fregate and the Hotel Nautique and sightseeing tours in Nhatrang.

In Saigon, cars can be rented for as little as $4.00 a day (without chauffeur) and gas is not expensive, less than 35 cents a gallon. Drivers' permits may be obtained from the Department of Public Works. Cars can be rented from LOC-AUTO, 93 Marechal de Lattre de Tassigny, Saigon (Tel. 20-250). There are many attractive drives around Saigon that are worth taking such as the Tri-An Falls via Bienhoa at a distance of 22½ miles from Saigon; the hunting grounds of Chauthanh, about 47 miles from Saigon; Honquan with its beautiful scenery about 60 miles from Saigon; and many others. Air Viet-Nam also
provides special week-end, and three and five-day tours to the world-famous Angkor Ruins. This former capital of the Khmer civilization is believed to have been built between 800 and 1,200 A.D. and the extraordinary richness of the buildings have attracted tourists from every corner of the world. Prices for an entire week-end start as low as $33.00.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

*Clothing.* If you plan to stay in the Southern part of Viet-Nam, you will want to have light clothing. Further north the evenings are cool, especially in the Highlands. In-between-season garments would be appropriate. A raincoat is a must.

*Tipping.* As in many European restaurants and hotels, tips are often included at the end of a check or bill under an item called "service." When the service is not included, a tip of 10 to 15 per cent of the total is customary.

*Accommodations.* As any experienced traveler knows, it is not always possible to find all the comforts of home in a foreign country. Viet-Nam has only recently been opened to tourism, and she is still recovering from the effects of war. For the most part facilities are adequate and occasional inconveniences are compensated by the charm of an exotic land.

*National Tourist Office.* In Viet-Nam detailed information on what to see and do, can be obtained from the National Office of Tourism: Nha Du Lich Quoc Gia, 195 Duong Cong Ly, Saigon. Branch offices are located in Dalat, Hue and Nha Trang.
SAIGON:
PEARL OF THE ORIENT

Saigon is one of the most important international harbors as well as one of the largest and most beautiful cities of Southeast Asia. Its picturesque residential quarters, together with lively market places and ancient temples have won for the city the name of *Pearl of the Orient*. It is also called the "Paris of the Far East" by many tourists. Large shady boulevards and modern shopping centers and night clubs lend a western flavor to many quarters of this exotic city.

Of the city's two million inhabitants, 350,000 are of Chinese origin, 20,000 are Europeans, and 5,300 Asians from neighboring countries. The American community numbers nearly 2,000.

Saigon is the twin city of Cholon whose cosmopolitan population completes the meeting of East and West. Saigon itself covers a rectangular area about ten miles by three miles and is linked to a twenty-mile long inlet from the sea permitting ocean-going vessels to come right into Saigon Harbor. It receives approximately 750 such ships a year.

*Climate.* Although situated in the "Deep South" of Viet-Nam, Saigon is in the maritime zone, and therefore rarely becomes exceedingly hot as do the non-water-bound tropics. The evenings are usually cool. April, the warmest month, averages temperatures in the 90's. In the Saigon area winter is practically non-existent: December has an average of about 74 degrees. If you go during the months of June through September, however, bring your galoshes, for that is the rainy season with sudden showers alternating with sunshine.

*Sights.* Besides the peculiarly Asiatic flavor of the city, its cosmopolitanism and bustling commotion, Saigon offers a wealth of beauty and interesting sights. Foremost is the Botanical Garden which contains one of the richest collections of orchids and equatorial plants known.
In the National Museum are stores of treasures depicting the evolution of Vietnamese and neighboring cultures. It is here that many relics of the ancient Cham civilization repose.

You will notice, too, the contrast of the many turn-of-the-century monuments side by side with modern buildings.

The main street of Saigon is Duong Tu Do (Liberty Street) which is both a fashionable shopping center and a theatre district as well as the site of several important government buildings such as the National Assembly, the Department of National Economy, the Department of Finance and the Department of the Interior. At one end of Duong Tu Do stand the Post Office and the Saigon Cathedral, and off to one side, in plain view, is the impressive Executive Mansion of the Republic of Viet-Nam known as Independence Palace. At the other side, the
street ends at the river which is bordered here by a long dock that is excellent for strolling because the picturesque River of Saigon is an attraction in itself. As the tourist wanders along Liberty Street he is likely to be photographed by professional cameramen who offer him an optional card for a souvenir picture that will be ready within 24 hours. Liberty Street is also well-known for its fashionable "salons de the." The main ones are La Pagode, and Aux Delices where, in a relaxing atmosphere, tea, coffee, liquor, French pastries, and ice cream are served. An increasingly large number of restaurants, theaters, and night clubs are now air-conditioned.

Saigon also offers many facilities to the sport-loving visitor with its yacht clubs, its "Cercle Sportif" with swimming pool and tennis courts. Also to be mentioned is the horse racing at the Phu Tho race track in the suburbs of Saigon.

Saigon at night: riverside drive Bên Bach-Dâng.
**Shops.** By now you have no doubt been struck by the colorfully assorted crowd bustling about at precipitous speeds and just barely managing to avoid the varied forms of vehicular life scooting about the crowded streets. Lest you be tempted to ride the ancient "cyclos" or pedicabs to your destination and miss the many fine shops on the way, may we remind you that many shops carry the finest of Viet-Nam's pottery, lacquer screens and hand-painted silks, as well as a large assortment of other luxury goods. You might also enjoy bargaining with the owner who often expects some sort of beating down on the price. This, however, is not the custom in the few department stores where a price tag is attached to the article. Some of the best known are: Nguyen Chi Hoa, Thanh Le (Art Shop), Alfana Kim Thinh, Caffort, and Finkateur.

**Accommodations.** There are several air-conditioned hotels. The Majestic Hotel, for example, is well equipped with private baths and showers, a dining room and bar from which you can look out onto the River of Saigon with its many yacht clubs and where ships from all over the world weigh anchor.

Or there is the Saigon Palace Hotel which also offers air-cooled rooms for about $5.00 for a single room and $10.00 for a suite. The prices at the Catinat Hotel start

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*Information on hotels, restaurants and other commercial agencies is cited in this publication only as an indication. It is subject to change, and does not purport to be exhaustive.*
at $5.00 for a single, air-conditioned room, and at the Continental Palace at about $8.00 which includes breakfast and one other meal. A ten per cent service and taxes will be added to all hotel bills. The Catinat is less luxurious than the others but it has a swimming pool and terrace. A new hotel, the Caravelle, has been recently opened on Tu Do Street, near the building of the National Assembly. All its rooms are air-conditioned.

Restaurants. When you are ready for a hearty meal—Vietnamese, Chinese, French, or American style, there is a wide variety of restaurants to choose from. Here are some mentioned at random: Saigon Tuu Gia, and Tu Do for those delicious Vietnamese dishes; Guillaume Tell, L'Amiral, Le Bodega, Le Relais and The Mayfair for French cooking, and even some cafeterias where your familiar hamburger and hot dog are served.

My Canh, a “Floating Restaurant” on the Saigon River, has been opened recently, offering French and Chinese meals at reasonable prices: Chinese menu for 4 persons at 600 piasters (approximately $8.00) and for 12 persons at 1800 piasters (approximately $24.00).

Food. Although both American and European—especially French—food are available in Saigon, a few well-known Vietnamese dishes are described below for the gourmet who is feeling adventuresome.

“Cha-gio” is very close to the Chinese egg roll. It is a kind of hot pastry served as a first course or hors-d’oeuvre. It is filled with seafood and meat, eggs, vermicelli (fine noodles), mushrooms and vegetables, all finely chopped. The crust of rice flour is crisper and more delicate than that of the Chinese egg roll.

“Pho” is a soup which resembles consomme with beef and noodles, but it is actually a more complicated dish. The bouillon base or broth is difficult to make, its preparation is lengthy, and the result is a delicate and unusually flavored soup. The meat that is added to it is also very tasty as it does not lose its flavor in the making of the broth, it is added separately at the last minute.
“Beef in Seven Dishes” is a favorite with Americans in Viet-Nam. Each dish contains beef, but while some dishes have vegetables, others have chunks of beef, or slices, still others ground beef shaped into small balls or patties. They have also different special sauces, and one of the dishes is a soup.

“Cha-lua” is a crisp loaf of lean pork that requires hours of preparation. One of the secrets of the very special flavor of this meat dish is the addition of a touch of cinnamon.

“Nuoc-mam” is a sauce made from fish which is used in every Vietnamese meal. It has a stronger smell than the well-known soy sauce, but it is very tasty, especially when mixed with lemon and hot pepper. Its addition to the majority of Vietnamese dishes lends them a subtle and indescribable flavor that has made this cuisine justly famous.

Tea is usually served after meals and it is safer than unboiled water. There is a wide choice of bottled mineral waters. Vietnamese beer is excellent, but a real Vietnamese dinner is often accompanied by a Vietnamese liquor made from rice (Ruou Trang) which is to be sipped in small quantities. The cosmopolitan restaurants serve French wines, and other foreign liquors and wines imported from England and America are usually available.

CHOLON: TWIN CITY OF SAIGON

For an even more lively picture and a taste of the blending of civilizations you must visit the Chinese quarters of Saigon—Cholon, often called the twin city of Saigon. It is at an appetite-whetting stroll of three-quarters of a mile from Saigon and should be seen especially at night.

Night Clubs. When all shops have closed for the day, the hour sounds for Cholon’s night clubs to take over. You should really make the rounds to savor the different flavor and atmosphere of each. To name just a few, there are the Arc-en-Ciel, and Dai-Kim-Do in Cholon. In Saigon there are the Kim-Son, the Tu-Do, the My-Phung, known
CENTRAL MARKET— Saigon's Ben-Thanh Market (left facade) fronts busy Tran-Hung-Dao Boulevard and Le-Loi Boulevard (right background). The latter honors the half-legendary Vietnamese Emperor who received a magic sword from a mythical golden tortoise and with it vanquished invading Chinese armies. Although thousands of cars now roar through Saigon's streets, the bicycle, abetted by the scooter and ubiquitous "cyclo" pedi-cab, remains king of the road.

for its beautiful hostesses, and the Van-Canh as well as the Baccar. Any taxi driver or resident can direct you to them.

Transportation. Taxis are always available and exceptionally cheap. Fares vary according to distance from 6 to 15 piasters, that is between 8 US cents and 20 US cents! There are, however, minimum charges and special night rates. But for more exotic transportation you will enjoy riding those "cyclos" or pedicabs we mentioned earlier. They are pedal-propelled carriages in the form of comfortable three-wheeled armchairs and are ideal for a smooth ride along Saigon's shady boulevards. There are also the exciting motor-tricycles, with the seat for passengers in front of the driver. Even though, with some drivers, they are not the world's safest conveyance, these vehicles are cheaper, and, as you can well imagine, it is worth the experience of riding in one of them. There are also buses in the Saigon-Cholon area which run regularly, but they are usually very crowded.

Pagodas. One of the striking features of Saigon and the surrounding area is the contrast of the old and the new. Temples and pagodas are plentiful with their characteristic architecture, their serene calm, their impressive
Nguyen Hue Street connecting the City Hall with riverside drive Bến Bach-Dằng, is lined with numerous flower booths which face additional competition from roving flower merchants carrying their fresh flowers in large bamboo baskets as shown above.

A sidewalk of Saigon
One of the attractive aspects of Saigon sidewalks is the graceful presence of Vietnamese women in their traditional attire, which consists of a long tunic slit on both sides over white or dark silk pantaloons.
ROAD MAP OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

17th Parallel
Quang Tri
To Savannakhet
Hue
Bay of Tourane
Da Nang
Quang Ngai
Kontum
Pleiku
Binh Dinh
Qui Nhon
Tuy Hoa
Nha Trang
Dalat
Bien Hoa
Xuan Loc
Saigon
Phan Rang
Ca Na
Phan Thiet
Vung Tau
Long Hai
Ba Ria
My Tho
Can Tho
Vinh Long
Can Gio
Phu Quoc Island
Ca Mau
Ha Tien
Long Xuyen
Ca Mau Point

- Railways
- National Roads
- Provincial Roads
- Road Under Construction
- National Boundaries

Scale
0 km 100 kms 150 kms
Fish nets spread out near the port of Nha-Trang; the nets, sustained by poles, are lowered into the water to capture fish lured into them by created noises.
statues and their age-old altars. Of the many pagodas and temples in Saigon alone, you should visit the famous Temple of Marshal Le Van Duyet laced with numerous inner courtyards. The Pagodas of Truong Thanh and Phat An should also be visited for their historical and religious significance.

**BEACHES**

With 1260 miles of coastline stretching from north to south, winding in and out of craggy rock formations, Viet-Nam naturally abounds in a glittering array of white sandy beaches bathed by the Pacific Ocean. They are easily accessible and provide swimming and boating in the luminous waters found only in this part of the world. They can be reached either by boat (Vietnamese junks or excursion boats), train (equipped with pullman and dining cars and now being air-conditioned), by car (rented) or by air (Air Viet-Nam).

**CAP SAINT JACQUES**

*Cap Saint Jacques* is the closest seaside resort to Saigon and it has ample provisions for the tourist. Because it is the nearest summer resort for Saigoners it is very popular and attracts large crowds in the summer.

**LONG HAI AND NUOC NGOT BEACHES**

Near Cap Saint Jacques, *Long Hai* and *Nuoc Ngot* Beaches are also most enjoyable for those who prefer calmer, smaller resorts with surroundings closer to nature.

**CANA AND NHA-TRANG**

*Cana* and *Nha-Trang* are further north. They are lovely beaches and their expanse of sand is richer and smoother. Nha-Trang’s beach is regarded as one of the most splendid in the world and one of the East’s most
enchanting bathing spots. Stretching four miles along the sea, it languishes lazily under gracefully overhanging pine trees of a special variety called "philao" which serve as gentle umbrellas to shade you from the sun. The water here is a particularly rich shade of blue and forms a striking contrast with the richly foamed waves as they break on the cliffs or along the finely grained sand. Nha-Trang is an ideal year-round resort, and its beauty is breath-taking. The landscape is a veritable symphony of colors with the dark green of the mountains and pine trees, the deep blue of the sky and glittering sea, the sparkling white of the endless stretches of sandy beach, and the soft green of the surrounding hills. Lovely villas, beautiful flowers, and charming fishing boats skimming along the water all add to the charm of this haven for tourists.

Nha-Trang itself is a fairly large city which stretches daintily along a bay of coral reefs and atolls. Glass-bottomed canoes reveal the seafloor like a giant fish-bowl, making these boat trips a real source of enchantment for those who are fascinated by the underwater world.

Nha-Trang is a port of some considerable importance and you will probably want to watch the fishermen at work hauling in their nets and washing them in the clear blue sea. The city is also noted for its Oceanographic and Fisheries Institute which specializes in marine fauna research, the industrial extraction of fish oils, and the preparation of fish-flour which is expected to become a significant element in Viet-Nam's food supply.

A short distance from the city are some of the remaining traces of the ancient Cham civilization, the Po-Nagar sanctuaries lying at the foot of a 75-foot high tower. They date back to the ancient kingdom of Champa and are one of the silent testimonies of a civilization which flourished there in the seventh century.

Cana beach is flanked by colorful atolls and coral reefs which attract some fairly rare specimens of miniature fish and starfish.
POINTS OF INTEREST
IN THE
SOUTHERN PROVINCES

BIEN-HOA: FAMOUS CERAMIC CENTER

Traces of the ancient Cham civilization are also preserved in Bien-Hoa where stands the Temple of Buu-Son, where the visitor may admire a granite statue of fifteenth century origin. Only recently unearthed, it was hidden for several centuries in the trunk of a tree.

These pieces of art in pottery, bronze, and lacquerware displayed at the Saigon museum afford a glimpse of some aspects of Vietnamese ancient culture.

Bien-Hoa is famous for its Art School. It is there that Vietnamese craftsmen have won renown for their infusion of modern methods and techniques with the painstaking attention of their ancient worksmanship. You can visit the famous ceramic workshops any time during the day including Sundays.

Hunting, too, is popular in the surrounding Cum Tien Plateau and the Lagna Plain. Since Bien-Hoa is only 26 miles from Saigon, these hunting grounds are the nearest to the capital.
Slender reeds bend gracefully over the tranquil Golden Stream in the province of Kien-Hoa.

HA-TIEN: SOUTHERN PORT

Set cosily at the foot of a hilly promontory, Ha-Tien, 200 miles west of Saigon and only 4 miles from the Cambodian border, is one of southern Viet-Nam’s best situated ports. From there one can visit the nearby islands which are rich in tropical vegetation. The junks at your disposal are of excellent nautical quality and are often decorated at the prow with the traditional “lucky eye.” As you recline in the shade of the giant wings of its unfurled sails and bamboo roof, you will be well protected from the hot sun which beats down heavily on these southern waters in the summer.

A peaceful view of the Ha Tien coastal region in Southern Viet-Nam.
ISLAND OF PHU-QUOC

It is worth making a visit to the Island of *Phu-Quoc* which is less than fifty miles from Ha-Tien. Phu-Quoc specializes in the production of Vietnamese fish sauce, *nuoc-mam*, one of the main items of the Vietnamese diet. The island is also well-known for the extraction of copra from its many cocoanut trees and for the raising of tortoises for their luminous shells. The island itself is as large as Bermuda or Martinique, and, according to many tourists, fully as enchanting. For the fishing enthusiast, the wide and varied choice of marine fauna offers wonderful opportunities for every kind of fishing.

THU-DAU-MOT: LACQUER CENTER

For more of that very fine craftsmanship you saw in the pottery of Bien-Hoa you will want to visit *Thu-Dau-Mot*. Only 23 miles from Saigon, it is the center of Viet-Nam's fine lacquer work which requires painstaking application of layer upon layer of lacquer and then paint or inlay to achieve the effect that is so highly prized. Besides the art school there, one can visit the individual artists' studios where you may watch the skilled craftsmen at work. They will take orders for a design that might especially appeal to you.

TAY NINH: THE HOLY SEE OF THE CAO-DAI SECT

62 miles from Saigon is *Tay Ninh*, the Holy See of the Cao-Dai Sect, an original religious sect created in the thirties which is based on a synthesis of various Oriental and Western religions. The Cao-Dai Temple at *Tay Ninh* is well-known for its original architecture and the picturesque rites celebrated there.

Nearby is the *Ba Den* Mountain visited often by excursionists.
CAMAU POINT: SOUTHERN TIP OF VIET-NAM

For a more daring enterprise, the adventuresome tourist may wish to visit Camau Point, the extreme southern tip of Viet-Nam which is an ideal duck and wild-fowl hunting area. Scarcely higher than the sea, it consists of a broad swamp that barely supports a half-drowned forest that is almost entirely deserted. Extensive irrigation canals now cut fine patterns out of the mangrove-laden woods where you will want to do your hunting, and they also provide a handy pathway for your junk.

Camly Falls, among the many spectacular waterfalls in Central Viet-Nam.
THE HIGHLANDS AND
THE CENTRAL PROVINCES
OF VIET-NAM

DALAT: EXQUISITE MOUNTAIN RESORT

In many respects Dalat is the jewel of Viet-Nam. This exquisite town surrounded by pine hills which overlook glittering lakes is the pride of the Highlands of Central Viet-Nam, a former summer capital, and a haven for honeymooners. Dalat is indeed a most gracious and charming mountain resort for those seeking cool refreshing breezes and an abundant choice of water sports and hunting. It is also a fairy-land of cherry-blossoms and old-style villas framed by carefully tended gardens and lawns.

Dalat, a mountain resort and former summer capital in the Highlands, stretches daintily amidst pine hills and lakes. It has an ideal cool climate the year round, brightened by gay sunshine.
The Suoi Vang, or Golden Brook in Dalat, reflects pine hills in its limpid waters.

Preu waterfall in Dalat.

DALAT AND ITS SURROUNDINGS
In the dry season from May to November the continually blossoming flowers fill the air with their fragrance and contribute to the creation of an atmosphere that can truly be called balmy—a comfortable 68 degree average in the summer and a mild 60 degrees or so in the winter. Most remarkable of these flowers is a special breed of yellow orchids which grow in abundance.

You might want to take the famed walk of the 99 views and have the tamed deer come up to you to eat out of your hand. Or you might enjoy the quiet “Woods of Love” or the dreamy “Lake of Sighs.”

Charming picnic areas are numerous around Dalat, especially near small waterfalls such as the falls of Gougah, Lien-Khang, or Pongour, or the refreshing Suoi Vang, or “Golden Brook,” which can be reached through shady winding lanes that cross the forest.

For the sportsman there is excellent yachting and swimming in a large lake surrounded by pine-covered hills. Nearby tennis courts and one of the Orient’s best-planned golf courses are available. The hotels in Dalat are comfortable and have served the nation’s elite for decades. They are equipped with modern facilities and their prices
The Highland Plateaux in Central Viet-Nam are characterized by a pleasantly cool climate and charming landscapes. Above, the "Ocean Lake" surrounded by verdant hills.

are lower than those of resort hotels in America. Dalat is 14 hours by train from Saigon and one hour by plane; planes leave Saigon four times a week.

BANMETHUOT: PARADISE FOR HUNTERS

Two hours away from Dalat lies Banmethuot, a paradise for hunters. Its surroundings are rich in stag, roebuck, peacock, pheasant, wild boar, black bear, wild oxen, panther, tiger, and elephant. Should you wish to take a

Big game hunting is a popular sport in many regions of Viet-Nam; the skins are valuable, and the sport a delight.
guide along for useful pointers, professional hunters are available to supply helpful hints. (See section on hunting, page 37.)

THE BAY OF TOURANE

Fully the equal of the Bay of Naples, Tourane, 94 miles south of Hue, besides offering all the fascinating rock formations associated with caves, has yielded many fine archeological relics of the Cham civilization. The excavations of scholars from the Institute of Far Eastern Studies in the regions of Mi-Son and Tra-Kieu are now on display at the Tourane Museum which is also well worth a visit.

For a special treat you might like to drive to the "Col des Nuages," a mountain pass 19 miles away, to get a good bird's eye view of the bay. The marble in the surrounding mountains is of an unusual quality. Nearby there is a sanctuary which is still visited today.
HUE: ANCIENT IMPERIAL CITY

Now we come to the high point of your trip. Hue, near the 17th parallel, dividing line between Free Viet-Nam and the Communist North, is the ancient capital of Viet-Nam, and a living repository of Viet-Nam's dynastic past. Being the capital of the Emperors of the last dynasty, Hue contains all the symbols of bygone days. We might also mention the proverbial grace and beauty of its women as another attraction of this ancient city.

*The Phung Tien Dynastic Temple within the walls of the Imperial Palace is but one of the many testimonies of the last dynasty of Emperors in Hue, the former imperial capital in Central Viet-Nam.*
The gates to the Imperial Palace in the former capital of Hue form an impressive structure from whose balcony the Emperor would sit to watch entertainment on the lawn in the foreground.

The Linh Mu Temple in Hue was built in the early 19th century during the reign of Emperor Gia Long. It stands on the banks of the River of Perfumes and its clear bell, which is rung every evening to call the Buddhist monks to prayer, is not only dear to the hearts of the citizens of Hue, but has inspired poets and writers for over a century.

Po-Nagar Ruins—These remnants of a 75-foot high 10th century Cham tower are among the vestiges of the former Kingdom of Champa which was located in what is now the lower part of Central Viet-Nam.
THE IMPERIAL PALACE AND THE RIVER OF PERFUMES: The Imperial Palace still stands, enfolding within its inner wall all the glory and mystery of its historical monuments. The extensive citadel, six miles in perimeter, formerly housed the Emperor’s Palace and 2000 courtiers and servants. Its walls are Vauban in style with bastion-doors opening onto the quiet banks of the River of Perfumes, one of the most engaging sights in the entire country. Once you pass through the rear gates you will find yourself in the midst of the gardens and parks adorning the city’s administrative center. The center also includes museums, a university, a library, and the Hall of Annals. Most of these buildings are in the traditional style with grace and elegance that lend them a characteristic distinction. Upon entering by the main gates you cannot fail to notice the high lacquered columns in the spacious halls. You will also admire their sacred doors painted with golden dragons, the imperial throne, the dynastic temples with their enormous bronze urns, and the esplanade where in the old days the mandarins on special ritual days would line up in strict order of precedence, attired in their brocade court robes to render official homage to the Emperor.

After a busy day of sight-seeing you might take in one of the city’s most pleasant forms of relaxation and head for the River of Perfumes to take a ride in one of the “sampans” which are a kind of canoe-junk propelled by the Vietnamese counterpart of the Italian gondolier. At night, they glide smoothly along the quays; comfortably stretched out on cushions provided for just this purpose, the dreamily inclined tourist can rock to his heart’s content accompanied by the nostalgic songs of the sampaniers played on an intriguing sort of oriental guitar.

When you return to the city, you might wish to explore the right bank which extends into the modern residential quarter whose neatness and symmetry in no way detract from the engaging charm of the old section.

IMPERIAL TOMBS: Still within the confines of the King’s screen, two artificially-linked hills which protect the city from “evil spirits,” are the massive Imperial
Tombs built in the old dynastic and highly decorative style. There are six outstanding tombs that should be visited: those of the Emperors Gia-Long, Minh-Mang, Thieu-Tri, Tu-Duc, Dong-Khanh, and Khai-Dinh.

Nearby the impressive Esplanade of Sacrifice, flanked by row upon row of centuries old pines, supports the altar of Heaven and Earth where every three years the monarch came to offer the prayers of the people to the Supreme Being.

Magnificent parks were designed and planted during the lifetime of each sovereign on a site chosen by him. Today these pleasantly shaded gardens evoke the memories of past centuries and their age-long solitude invites the pensive wanderer to calm and meditation.

GAME HUNTING IN VIET-NAM

Viet-Nam is famous for its big game hunting. Elephants, buffalos, gaurs (wild oxen), bears, tigers, and panthers abound in the hunting areas of the highlands. Wild fowl is also plentiful and includes peacocks, partridges, and pheasants. Hunting facilities are well-organized and reasonably priced, and both the amateur and the professional will find it possible to make arrangements for all types of hunting. Hunting grounds may be reached by rented automobile and rental fees are nominal. In some regions such as Banmethuot, small modern bungalows are available for rent. Experienced guides will lead the hunter on elephant back or by buffalo cart and fees are surprisingly low. Detailed information on entry of fire-arms, hunting fees, hunting regulations, special taxes, and dates of hunting seasons can be obtained at the Embassy of Viet-Nam in Washington, D. C., or the National Office of Tourism at the following address:

Nha Du Lich Quoc Gia
195 Duong Cong Ly
Saigon, Viet-Nam
Independence Palace, the Executive Mansion of the Republic of Viet-Nam, in Saigon.
CONCLUSION

This pamphlet deals primarily with the physical aspects and the picturesque side of Viet-Nam. There is, however, another aspect of Viet-Nam which cannot fail to captivate the tourist: the stimulating picture of the Free Republic of Viet-Nam which remains attached to its ancient heritage while working for economic and social progress. Vast programs of community development, construction, social reform, education, and modernization, all contribute towards a transformation that is taking place so rapidly that it is impossible for the visitor to remain unaware of it.

Placed at the crossroads of the Far East, and for the time being divided between a Communist regime in the North and a free democratic system in the South, Viet-Nam plays no small part in the ideological contest between the Communist and the Free Worlds.

However, “The Balcony of the Pacific,” as Viet-Nam is often called by Western visitors, is not only in a strategic position in Southeast Asia, it is also, and above all, an enchanting, hospitable land.
VIET NAM'S HISTORY AT A GLANCE

2879-258 B.C.
   Legendary Period

207 B.C.
   Formation of Kingdom of Nam-Viet

111 B.C.
   Conquered by Chinese Empire.

40-43 A.D.
   Short Independence under the Trung Sisters.

544-602
   National Independence restored by Ly Nam De.

938
   Viet-Nam regains independence: Beginning of the era of great national dynasties

939
   Ngo Dynasty.

967
   Dinh Dynasty.

980
   Earlier Le Dynasty.

1010
   Ly Dynasty.

1225
   Tran Dynasty.

1288
   Viet-Nam repels Mongol invasion under Tran Dynasty: Victory of Bach Dang Giang over Kublai Khan's Armies.

1407
   China invades Viet-Nam.

1428
   Le Loi becomes Emperor after successful struggle against Chinese invasion.

1532-1592
   First partition of Viet-Nam: Le Dynasty in the South, Mac Dynasty in the North.

1592
   Reunification of Viet-Nam under the Le Dynasty.

1674-1802
   Second partition of Viet-Nam: Princes Nguyen in the South and Princes Trinh in the North.

1802
   Reunification of North and South Viet-Nam. Nguyen Anh becomes Emperor Gia-Long of Viet-Nam, the founder of the last royal dynasty.

1867
   Southern Viet-Nam becomes French colony.

1883
   French Protectorate over Viet-Nam.

1940-45
   Viet-Nam occupied by Japanese Forces.

1945

1946

1948
   France recognizes Viet-Nam as an independent State within the French Union.

1949
   Ex-Emperor Bao-Dai returns as Chief of State of non-communist Viet-Nam.

1954

1955
   Ngo Dinh Diem elected in national referendum Oct 26; Proclamation of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

1956

1959
   Election of Second National Assembly.
Press and Information Office
Embassy of Viet Nam, Washington 8, D. C.