



# TONY TAN'S 2011 GOURMET TOUR OF VIETNAM

## 11 Day Tour Departing Melbourne 5 August 2011

I don't know what it is but every time I go to **Vietnam**, I feel as though I have returned to a place warm and friendly. Maybe it is the familiarity of being a child of the tropics or that my **Vietnamese friends** have imbibed in me that sense of belonging. Perhaps it is the cacophony of shoppers in the **lively markets** or the abundance of street life that gets to me. Or maybe it is the constant banter about the **food** that holds the key to this **fascination**. Or is it the generous people with their wonderful sense of joie de vivre? Whatever the reasons, if you have that sense of adventure and love the colours, the aromas and the excitement of enjoying **one of the world's greatest cuisines**, you will adore this year's culinary journey to Vietnam.

**For 11 days**, you will be seduced by this most beguiling country with its long fascinating history, its hauntingly beautiful lakes in the north, its frangipani-scented temples in the centre, its lush rice fields in the south; its resilient people and its **exceptional regional foods**. Your tour begins from **beautiful Hanoi**, not only the seat of power but also the centre for the arts, culture, music and poetry. The cooking is considered by many as more pure and **pho**, practically the national dish, emanates from here. From Hanoi, we travel to the **historic UNESCO-listed Hoi An**, not far from the former imperial capital of Hue, to experience the gutsy as well as the elegance and the refined cooking of the centre. Your final destination is **Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)**, the vibrant and cosmopolitan hub of Vietnam. The cooking here is robust and **free-wheeling southerners** are more open to culinary influences. Curries, an Indian legacy, and coconuts, which thrive in the heat, are constantly featured.

**Vietnamese cuisine**, we all know, is shaped by the country's long association with **Chinese rule, French colonialisation, Southeast Asian intrusions** and her **fierce individuality**. We also know **this exquisite** cuisine is characterized by the use of fish sauce, bountiful herbs and the restrained application of spices to create **that freshness** not seen in any Asian cuisine. The country's food scene is played as much as in the streets as it is in the home. Fast forward to the present and we have a thriving Vietnamese economy that not only sustains the **vibrant street-food culture** but also some **fantastic high-end restaurants**. This is partly due to the returning **Viet Kieu**-overseas Vietnamese – and also the *doi moi* policy which encouraged foreigners, especially French – to establish modern eateries. In the process, Vietnamese cooking is changing at an amazing rate and this makes the gourmet tour to **this exuberant country** all the more exciting.

Included in this deluxe tour are stays in five star hotels (including the **exclusive Nam Hai resort**), visits to **bustling markets, craft villages** and an excursion to the **lush Mekong Delta**. We will enjoy tours to major cultural and historical sights, as well as century-old temples and French edifices. We will also attend cooking classes on regional cuisines conducted by the best female chefs. Finally, we will dine in a wide variety of **hand-picked restaurants** to provide us with invaluable insights into what make the food of Vietnam so delightful and so relevant to the way we eat.

Naturally, there is **plenty of time to linger, to shop and to bask in a culture** that will remain with you long after you have returned home.



the unlimited cuisine company, in association with Jetset Travel South Melbourne

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## YOUR TOUR HOST

### Tony Tan

Tony was born on the east coast of Malaysia into a restaurant-owning family. He completed his formal training as a chef in Australia and in France at La Varenne. Since then Tony has become a prominent figure in Australian culinary circles, first on the Sydney scene and more recently in Melbourne. In Sydney, he ran his own highly successful restaurant, Tatler's Café. Since moving to Melbourne in 1985, he has managed Carlton's well-known restaurant, Shakahari.

Tony was a presenter on the SBS Television series *The Food Lovers' Guide to Australia* and coordinated the Asian Food Festival Awards in Melbourne in 1997. Over the years, he has presented Master Classes in Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne and Adelaide, while, internationally, he has taught in Singapore, Shanghai, Madrid and Auckland.

Recently, Tony won the Australian Travel & Tourism Award 2008 (The Kurosawa Collection) in the **Best Tour Operator** category.

He also writes regularly on Asian food and culture and established his own cooking school in 2001.

Note: Tony Tan will host the group and local guides will have charge of all organisational and practical matters. The tour is organised by Jetset Travel South Melbourne, in conjunction with the Unlimited Cuisine Company.



One Pillar Pagoda

## YOUR TOUR ITINERARY

### DAY 1 FRIDAY, 5 AUGUST 2011

Depart Australia to **Hanoi**, the gracious capital of Vietnam, a fusion of Asian and French influences. On arrival, you will be met by our local representative and transferred to the luxurious French-colonial style **Sofitel Metropole** for four nights. Home of Graham Greene where he partially wrote 'The Quiet American' and actors like Catherine Deneuve, Gerard Depardieu and Jane Fonda, this is one of Asia top historic hotels. Our hotel is located in the heart of the city, minutes walk to beautiful Hoan Kiem Lake and tree-lined boulevards, the old quarter and lush parks. If time permits, soak in the cosmopolitan vibe of the city and pop over to Café Au Lac, just behind the hotel, for a shot of local coffee.

### DAY 2 SATURDAY, 6 AUGUST

Morning bowl of *pho bo* at *Pho Bat Dan*, a local traditional restaurant. Soon after, we visit **Lo Banh pho Ba Ngoan noodle factory**. Owned by Mrs Ngoan since 1954, noodles made here use no additives and she sells noodles to all the famous pho shops in town. Following the visit, we set out for a **guided morning walking tour** of the **Old Quarter**, the city's ancient quarter that is unique in Southeast Asia. A square kilometer of 18th & 19th century architecture, as well as a jumble of new buildings, the streets are narrow and packed with local shoppers. In the 18th century each street was the home of a particular craft guild, many of which were founded by members of the villages surrounding Hanoi

After the visit, for lunch, we enjoy **Bun Cha**, another Hanoi specialty with grilled meat (*cha*), served with rice noodle (*bun*), some pickle and fish sauce. This is a dish rarely encountered in south Vietnam.

Not long after, we visit the **One-Pillared Pagoda**, built in 1049 in the shape of a lotus flower. According to a legend, King Ly Thai To, who was heirless, once saw in a dream the goddess of compassion (Avalokitesvara) sitting on a lotus who handed a boy to him. The King later married a peasant woman and a son was born to them. As a token of gratitude, he had the all-wood pagoda built and dedicated it to the goddess. Soon after, we visit **Temple of Literature**, a famous historical and cultural relic consisting of the Temple of Literature and Vietnam's first university founded in 1076.

Tonight we dine at the **chic Madame Hien Restaurant** on fine Vietnamese cuisine. Located in a French colonial building, this is one of the hottest restaurants in town serving both contemporary and traditional Vietnamese cooking. Expect perhaps their superb ravioli soup with mushrooms and lacquered pork with honey or beef with peppers. **BLD**

### DAY 3 SUNDAY 7 AUGUST

Join me for an early morning walk to Hoan Kiem Lake to enjoy a parade of tai chi practitioners and ballroom dancers After breakfast, we meet with our Vietnamese chefs Van or Hai who will take us on a visit to the bustling 1912 market to look at some of the ingredients that go into Vietnamese cooking including many fresh herbs such as hot mint, saw-leaf coriander and perilla - and understand why they are significant in Vietnamese cooking. After our visit, we return to the hotel's kitchen and learn to cook Northern Vietnamese cooking. Madam Hai, celebrated chef, will demonstrate how to cook the dishes, then it's your turn to have a go!

**Lunch** follows at the hotel's signature **Vietnamese**

**Spices Garden** restaurant. Considered as one of the best in the city, the restaurant is known for its traditional offerings like *banh cuon*, *fresh steamed rice rolls filled with minced pork and wood ear mushrooms* and chicken grilled with lemon leaves.

Afternoon free to explore the city's many cultural and historical sites. The Fine Arts Museum has reproduction and exquisite Vietnamese art pieces or do some exquisite shopping. Silk, bamboo, lacquered trays, silver and ceramics are good buys or just relax at the hotel or beside one of Hanoi's serene lakes.

At 3.30 pm, we attend the **Water Puppet Show**, a traditional and unique Vietnamese Art. This highly entertaining form of theatre uses the water surface as a stage. Standing waist-deep in the water, the master puppeteers are hidden behind a bamboo screen. The entire atmosphere is truly enchanting.

Rest of the evening at leisure. This is an opportunity to try some of the capital's French restaurants. The hotel's Le Beaulieu and Green Tangerine Restaurant are worth considering. **BL**

### DAY 4 MONDAY 8 AUGUST

This morning, after breakfast, we depart for Duong Lam village to visit a local tofu making 'factory' and a family run operation where fresh *bun* or rice vermicelli is made. After this, we enjoy a simple lunch with a local family. The owner will explain how *tuong*, a sauce made from soy beans and sticky rice, is often used in the cooking for their daily dishes.

We return to Hanoi in the late afternoon. Take advantage of some free time to visit Art Vietnam Gallery with its great contemporary art or you may visit Khai silk for their modern silk prints.

Our dinner this evening is at the legendary **Cha Ca La Vong Restaurant**. It is so lauded that the street where it is located is named after it. Ricketty and well-worn, this atmospheric joint serves **cha ca**, the sublime fried fish scented with dill and turmeric cooked on your table. Served with fresh rice vermicelli, it is one of key dishes no visitor to Vietnam should miss. **BLD**

### DAY 5 TUESDAY 9 AUGUST

After breakfast, we leave for the airport to fly to **Danang** in the Central Coast. Upon our arrival, we travel from Danang to Hoi An to the **Nam Hai**, the exclusive and beautiful resort along the pristine China Beach. With views of the nearby Cham Islands, this will be your luxurious retreat for three nights. Known throughout Central Vietnam for its fine Vietnamese, superb Indian and contemporary European cuisines, this hideaway is a gourmet's paradise.

Lunch at your leisure. Afternoon free to enjoy your retreat's facilities - the spa set in the lagoon is divine or just laze by the stunning pool. Alternatively, stroll through the nearby villages or explore historic Hoi An with its well-preserved 17th and 18th century Vietnamese, Japanese and Chinese buildings. Another option is to have your clothes made by one of the 270 tailors in town.

**Dinner** at the atmospheric **Brothers Café**. Famous for its super fresh seafood, it features dishes like salt and pepper crispy anchovies and grilled tuna as prawns cooked in tamarind sauce or try Vietnam's most famous dish, the spring roll (*cha gio*, *cha nem* or *nem*). These are various combinations of minced pork, shrimp or crab, rice vermicelli, onions, bean sprouts rolled in rice-paper wrappers. If available, try the region's famous *cao lau*, *flat noodles mixed with crispy croutons*, herbs and sliced pork. **BD**

(Included meals as shown in the itinerary:  
**B** Breakfast; **L** Lunch and **D** Dinner)



## DAY 6 WEDNESDAY 10 AUGUST

In the morning, we drive the short distance to the village of Tra Que, named after a local herb, to visit the organic farms where various greens are cultivated for Vietnamese cooking and traditional medicine. Using sea weed harvested from the local lake, the greens are known throughout the country. After this, we visit a Vietnamese baker to learn how *banh mi*, the famed baguette made with wheat and rice flour, is made. Immediately after this, we attend a cooking class on Central Vietnamese cuisine with Ms Vy at her restaurant, Morning Glory.

In the afternoon, we stroll through charming town of Hoi An on a guided walking tour to **Phung Hung House**, a 3-story shop house built in 1780; the **Quan Cong Temple** founded in 1653, the beautiful **Japanese Covered Bridge**, the **Hoi An Museum History and Culture**, and the colourful and lively local market.

This evening, we dine at one of the town's coolest and fun restaurants, **Mango Rooms**, located on the banks of the Thu Bon River. Operated by flamboyant American-trained Chef Duc, he fuses traditional Vietnamese with Western sensibilities. Expect perhaps salsa with corn chips, chicken with lemongrass or seared tuna in rice paper. **BLD**

## DAY 7 THURSDAY 11 AUGUST

This is a free day. If you like, organise a trip to visit My Son, Vietnam's most important Cham site. Or browse the antique and silk shops that are dotted in Hoi An. Or simply laze by the luxurious infinity pool or take in the spa treatment the Nam Hai is famous for.

Our final dinner in Hoi An at Bee Lounge on house specialties like the delectable **white rose** shrimp dumplings, grilled fish in banana leaf and calamari stuffed with minced pork. **BD**

## DAY 8 FRIDAY 12 AUGUST

Morning at leisure. Check-out hotel and transfer to Danang airport for flight to **Ho Chi Minh City** (formerly **Saigon**), the commercial and vibrant heart of Vietnam. On arrival, you will be met and transferred to the deluxe Park Hyatt for 3 nights. Located in the middle of District 1 and walking distance to major galleries and museums, this is the perfect location to orientate yourself in this wonderfully crazy, bustling city. Adding to this youthful chaos is some 4 million motorcycles, so crossing the road is an adrenalin rush of excitement, and pure faith!

Saigon is also the street food centre of the country. It is omnipresent and this is a great opportunity to try some of the best **baguettes** with local fillings like grilled pork with herbs and pickled daikon.

**Dinner at Restaurant Tib**, one of Saigon's top Vietnamese restaurants based on Imperial Hue cooking on perhaps an enchanting chicken with banana flower salad or sensational prawns rolls wrapped in fresh mustard leaves. *Banh beo*, tiny steamed rice cakes sprinkled with minced prawns. **BLD**

## DAY 9 SATURDAY 13 AUGUST

A morning departure for **Cho Lon**. Saigon's Chinatown. A thriving commercial centre, it's a fascinating maze of pagodas, restaurants, temples, jewelry and medicine shops spread over several streets. From here, we walk to the enormous **Binh Tay Wholesale Market**, with its beehive of stores selling varieties of rice, sugars, dried bamboo shoots and the much-sought after luxurious flower mushroom, the favoured shiitake mushroom for the cognoscenti. Look out also for fresh culinary and pharmaceutical herbs, pale but delicious strawberries and artichokes from Dalat, and cassia bark almost a meter long.

After this, we hop on a **cyclo** from Binh Tay Market to the ornate **Thien Hau Temple**, dedicated to the **Goddess of the Sea**, the guardian of travellers and sea farers.

**Lunch at Quan An Ngon** restaurant on the street foods of Vietnam. A simple no-frills eatery with complete with faux colonial trimmings, it has a cult following for both tourists and locals for its authentic food. Cooked by street food specialists, the green papaya salad is fantastic and so is the grilled calamari. Even the *che* – desserts such as sticky rice balls awash with coconut milk, are lovely.

After lunch, we continue our tour of the magnificent **Notre Dame Cathedral** and the French colonial **General Post Office**, right next to the Cathedral. Built by Gustave Eiffel of the Tower fame, its beautiful interior reminds one of a European railway station. Keep an eye out for the rococo **Hotel de Ville** and other French-built residential villas.

Rest of the day free to shop on **Dong Khoi Street** or at one of city's shopping malls for last minute purchases like lacquer ware, silks and silver-tipped chopsticks.

This is the time to consider dining in the city's several top French and contemporary restaurants like *Camargue*, *The Temple Club* and *Xu*. **BL**

## DAY 10 SUNDAY 14 AUGUST

This morning we leave for the town of **My Tho** in the Mekong Delta. Lusciously green and pancake flat, this heavily populated region is known as Vietnam's southern 'breadbasket'. Along the way, we pass verdant rice fields, coconut plantations, fertile orchards and tiny villages – some displaying racks of baguettes and sun-dried calamari.

Look out also for the local rice wine that is reputed to pack a hefty punch! Upon arriving My Tho, we travel by boat to cruise the **Mekong River** to visit to the unique local market – note: some vendors sell from the boats. After this, we visit a family known for their hand-made coconut sweet and enjoy refreshments in the shade of orchards.

From here, we head for the neighbourhood **Trung Luong Restaurant** to sample some Mekong specialties including the local delicacy, grilled elephant-eared fish (*ca tai tuong*, a local delicacy found only in the south) and a delicious savory made with glutinous rice flour.

After the long lunch, we return to Saigon.

Our final farewell dinner at one of the city's gems, **Com Nieu Restaurant**. Hidden behind an ancient bodhi tree, this family-run establishment serves the most delightful mussel soup, caramel fish and delicious rice cooked in a claypot with nuggets of pork. The latter is smashed – pure delicious drama! **BLD**

## DAY 11 MONDAY 15 AUGUST

The final day is free for last minute shopping opportunities or for history buffs, you may like to visit the **Reunification Palace**, the former seat of power in South Vietnam and the chilling War Crimes Museum or just relax. **B**

Transfer back to Australia.

## YOUR TOUR HOTELS

### SOFITEL METROPOLE HOTEL

15 Ngo Quyen St, Hanoi  
Tel: (84 4) 3826 6919

### THE NAM HAI

Hamlet 1, Dien Duong Village  
Quang Nam Province  
Tel: (84 5) 10 940 000

### PARK HYATT HOTEL

2 Lam Son Square  
District 1, Saigon  
Tel: (84 4) 3824 1234



### FURTHER INFORMATION

#### Tour Organiser: Janene Ferguson

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# TONY TAN'S 2011 GOURMET TOUR OF VIETNAM

## 11 Day Tour from 5 to 15 August 2011



the unlimited  
cuisine company

# BOOKING FORM

YOU MAY PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM

## TOUR INFORMATION

**TOUR PRICE \$6,250\*** per person, for twin share land only arrangement (Single supplement add \$2,500).

For international airfare ex Melbourne, please contact Janene Ferguson at Jetset Travel South Melbourne via the contact details above.

**TOUR PRICE INCLUDES** Domestic economy flights • Twin share accommodation • All tours and cooking demonstrations where indicated • Breakfast daily, 7 Lunches and 7 Dinners • Airport transfers if arriving and departing on group flight

**TOUR PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE** Drinks, lunch and dinner except where indicated • Luggage in excess of 20kg • Travel Insurance • Passport and Vietnam Visa fees • Items of a personal nature, eg. laundry, etc • International flights and Vietnam Departure Tax • Tipping and personal shopping

## PASSENGER DETAILS

Full name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (business) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Passport Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Please provide a photocopy of your passport with this booking form.

## TOUR DEPOSIT

To Jetset Travel South Melbourne:

I enclose a cheque for \$1,000.00 (non-refundable) per person as deposit for Tony Tan's Gourmet Tour of Vietnam, along with a copy of my passport, and wish to book (please tick):

Single accommodation or  Twin accommodation sharing with \_\_\_\_\_

Please nominate the city you wish to depart from \_\_\_\_\_

**EXTENDING YOUR HOLIDAY:** Jetset Travel South Melbourne can make all necessary travel arrangements should you wish to extend your stay.

## \*TOUR CONDITIONS I understand:

1. That full payment is due no later than 3 June 2011;
2. Cancellation must be received in writing. Cancellation fees are based on per person and are as follows: up to 60 days before departure date - loss of deposit only; 60 to 30 days before departure date - 50% of tour cost; 30 to 7 days before departure date - 75% of tour cost; inside 7 days before departure date - 100% of tour cost.

**We strongly recommend that all travellers purchase private cancellation, baggage and travel insurance at the time of booking, which Jetset Travel South Melbourne can arrange.**

3. That Jetset Travel South Melbourne, and the Unlimited Cuisine Company (the promoters) reserve the right to change the itinerary at

any time as a result of unforeseen circumstances. I hereby release the promoters from all responsibility for damages, injury, losses or delays suffered by me due to any reason whatsoever and understand that all expenses for the above will be borne by myself.

4. Prices and inclusions are correct at the time of printing, but may be changed due to currency fluctuations, increases in principles' tariffs, taxes and charges, and hotel/air tariffs; and
5. All prepaid ticket taxes are included but please note that they are subject to change at anytime.

I enclose my deposit of AUD\$1,000.00 per person, made payable to **Jetset Travel South Melbourne**, along with a copy of my passport, and acknowledge that the booking is made upon the above conditions, which I agree and understand.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 2011

**PLEASE RETURN** your completed booking form to Janene Ferguson, Jetset Travel, 234 Clarendon Street, South Melbourne Vic 3205, Australia. Or send via fax: +61 3 9696 0120 or email: jferguson@jetset.com.au

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