

Lower Mekong Initiative Conference
Transnational Cooperation to Respond to Infectious Disease Threats

Hanoi, June 17-18, 2010

Some spotlights in Hanoi for the weekend trip

1. President Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum

President Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum in Hanoi is an important landmark of the city and stands integrated to the political and social history of Vietnam. Hanoi in Vietnam, which has a history dated back to 3000 years, even otherwise has several monuments, scenic beauty and reserves of history imprinted through the strife-torn colonial and political regimes. However, Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum draws special emphasis because it testifies about Uncle Ho in Vietnam.

The famous revolutionary and statesman of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, is revered as the father of Viet Minh independence movement in 1941. This Vietnamese leader later founded the communist regime partially in Vietnam in 1950 and served as both the Prime Minister and President of North Vietnam. Known to the world as Bác Ho or Uncle Ho' meaning "he who enlightens," he also inspired the foundation of Ho Chi Minh City. Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Hanoi is located in 5 Pho Ngoc Ha and you will feel a wave of awe and mysticism hitting you when you watch the corpse preserved in the mausoleum.

After his death on September 2, 1969 at Hanoi from cardiac failure, Ho Chi Minh . was embalmed and put for view in this granite mausoleum. Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Hanoi was built on the basis of the model of Lenin's Tomb in Moscow. Though Ho Chi Minh wished that he be cremated after his death and his ashes buried on three hilltops spread in the three main regions of Vietnam, his body was embalmed following the tradition upheld by other Communist leaders across the world.

Location: 3 Ngoc Ha, Hanoi

Tel: 04-38455168

Price: Free Admission

Opening hours: Tue - Sun

7:30 - 11:00 during winter; 7:00 - 10:30 during summer

2. Ho Chi Minh Museum

The Ho Chi Minh Museum in Hanoi is a dedicated museum. It was built in memory of a great man whose name is written in golden alphabets in the history of Vietnam. The special person was a great revolutionary and statesman and went on to become first the Prime Minister and then the President of North Vietnam. The great man was none other than Ho Chi Minh. The common people of Vietnam are indebted to him for what he has done for his country and as a mark of their gratitude the museum was dedicated to him apart from a city and a

mausoleum which also shares his name. The Ho Chi Minh Museum in Hanoi is the preserver of everything memorable related to the great revolutionist, Ho Chi Minh. The Museum consists of five extensive floors and was inaugurated on 2nd September, 1990, celebrating the 100th birthday occasion of the beloved President.

Location: 3, Ngoc Ha Street, Hanoi

Tel: 04-3846-3757

Price: Admission 15,000 VND (~\$0.75)/foreigner

04-3846-3757 ext. 176 - Education Department for scheduling and translation support

Opening hours: Tues - Suns: 8: 00 - 11:30 am and 1:30 to 4:00 pm

Monday and Friday: 8:00 - 11:30 am

3. Hoa Lo Prison (aka “Hanoi Hilton”)

For sheer gruesome atmosphere alone, this ranks near the top of the must-see list. It was constructed by the French in 1896 mainly to house political prisoners, and the Vietnamese took it over in 1954. It was subsequently used to house prisoners of war. From 1964 to 1973, it was a major POW detention facility. U.S. senator John McCain was a particularly famous inmate, as was Pete Peterson, the ambassador to Vietnam, and Lieutenant Everett Alvarez, officially the first American pilot to be shot down over Vietnam. Their stories are told from the Vietnamese perspective in photographs and writings grouped in one small room. To the west is the guillotine room, still with its original equipment, and the female and Vietnamese political prisoners' quarters. The courtyard linking the two has parts of original tunnels once used by a hundred intrepid Vietnamese revolutionaries to escape in 1945. Only part of the original complex is left; the rest of the original site was razed and is ironically occupied by a tall, gleaming office complex popular with foreign investors. There are basic English explanations, but this is a good spot to have a guide, who is certain to be armed with a tale or two.

Location: 1 Hoa Lo St, Hanoi

Tel: 04/3824-6358

Price: Admission 10,000 VND (~\$0.6)

Opening hours: Mon-Sun 8am-4:30pm

4. Temple of Literature and National University (Van Mieu-Quoc Tu Giam)

If Vietnam has a seat of learning, this is it. There are two entities here: Van Mieu, a temple built in 1070 to worship Chinese philosopher Confucius; and Quoc Tu Giam, literally "Temple of the King Who Distinguished Literature," an elite institute established in 1076 to teach the doctrines of Confucius and his disciples. It existed for more than 700 years as a center for Confucian learning. Moreover, it is a powerful symbol for the Vietnamese, having been established after the country emerged from a period of Chinese colonialism that lasted from 179 B.C. to A.D. 938. It is a testament to the strong cultural heritage of the Mandarins. As such, it stands for independence and a solidifying of national culture and values.

What exists today is a series of four courtyards that served as an entrance to the university. Architecturally, it is a fine example of classic Chinese with Vietnamese influences. Still present are 82 stone stelae -- stone diplomas, really -- erected between 1484 and 1780, bearing the names and birthplaces of 1,306 doctor laureates who managed to pass the university's rigorous examinations. Beyond the final building, known as the sanctuary, the real university began. Damaged in the French war, it is currently being restored.

Location: Quoc Tu Giam st, Hanoi

Tel: 04/3845-2917

Price: Admission 10,000 VND (~\$0.6) and 50,000 VND (~\$2.6) for an guidebook in English

Opening hours: Daily 8am-5pm

5. National Museum of Vietnam History

In the system of national museums, the National Museum of Vietnam History was early founded on the material basis of the Louis Finot, a museum of the Ecole Française d'Extreme-Orient (French School of Far East) which was built in 1926 and completed in 1932. It was designed by Ernest Hébrard. In 1958, the Vietnam Government officially took over this cultural building and started to research, collect and supplement materials and objects, converting the contents from eastern arts into national history. On 3 September 1958, the National Museum of Vietnam History was officially opened for visitors.

Location: 01 Pham Ngu Lao St., Ha Noi

Tel: (04) 38241384 - Reception

Price: Admission 20,000 VND (~\$1)

Opening hours: Daily 8-11:30am and 1:30-4:30pm

6. Museum of Ethnology

In the whole of Hanoi, the Museum of Ethnology is the most exciting place to visit and missing a visit to this place will mean skipping an important part of Hanoi's history and cultural background. A superb administration has made this museum stand out among the crowd and had made this museum the seat of Vietnam's cultural heritage. Renowned over whole of Vietnam, this Museum caters to a dual purpose. On one hand it conserves and exhibits the 54 ethnic groups of Vietnam like the Muong, Thai, Tay, Yao while on the other it is dedicated to the cause of aiding researchers in their work as it is a vast repository of knowledge on the ethnic groups. As a genuine ethnographic museum, the Museum of Ethnology takes extreme measures to collect, research, preserve and exhibit the works. The construction work started in 1987 but the museum was made open to public viewing only in 1997. Since then it has attracted large number of people consisting of both local and visitors. The Museum plans to cover in future and add to its rich collection the cultures and civilizations of the rest of the countries in South East Asia.

Location: Nguyen Van Huyen, Nghia Do 6km (3 3/4 miles) West of town

Tel: 04/3756-2193

Price: Admission 25,000 VND (~\$1.25)

Opening hours: Tue - Sun 8:30 am - 5:30pm

7. Museum of Vietnamese Revolution

The Museum of Vietnamese Revolution in Hanoi was established in 1959 and documents country's struggle for independence and also the history of the Communist Party. The museum showcases the images from 1858 to the present.

The visit to Hanoi Museum of Vietnamese Revolution would be a time to understand the changing times of the society that ranges from the Vietnamese streets to the seats of power. The objects on display offer insight into the culture of Vietnam.

The artifacts in the Museum of Vietnamese Revolution in Hanoi include a jar of 1920's that stored the revolutionary documents, Japanese Buddhist Drum that was played during the rally and Vietnam's first sewing machine. Here one would find several photographs and other documents capturing the moments of independence.

The display at the Museum of Vietnamese Revolution in Hanoi can be highlighted in the following topics- National Liberation Movement of Vietnam against the French before the Communist Party was established (1858- 1930), Independence struggle under Communist Party (1858- 1975) and construction of the Socialist regime (1976- 1994).

Location: 25 Tong Dan or 216 Tran Quang Khai, Hanoi

Tel: 04/3825-4151 ext. 110: contact Department of Education and Communication

Price: Admission 10,000 VND (~\$0.60)

Opening hours: Daily 8-11:30am and 1:30-4:15pm

8. Women's museum:

This **Women's Museum in Hanoi** features among the must visit places in Hanoi. It is one of its kinds and is solely dedicated in honor of the brave Vietnamese women who had played an integral part in the social and political scenario of Vietnam. The Museum is a living symbol of the sacrifices and contributions made by the Vietnamese women. All the four floors of the Museum consist of artifacts and photo graphs related to women taking part in social evils, wars and doing party promotion works.

The Museum came into existence on the celebrated day marking the 65th anniversary of Vietnam Women's Union on October 20th, 1995.

Location: 36 Pho Ly Thuong Kiet, Hanoi

Tel: 04-3825-9936

Price: Admission 10,000 VND (~\$0.6)

Opening hours: Mon - Sun 8am-4pm

9. Fine Arts Museum

The rich legacy and colorful tradition of Vietnam and its capital, Hanoi is best reflected through the six national museums. **Fine Arts Museum in Hanoi** occupies a significant position among the six national museums as it traces the origin of artistic culture in Vietnam and presents a promising account of the development of Vietnam's artistic fervor.

Location: 66 Nguyen Thai Hoc St, Hanoi

Tel: 04-3823-3084

Price: Admission 20,000 VND (~\$1)

Opening hours: Mon - Sun 8:30am-5pm

10. Army Museum:

Army Museum in Hanoi spread on an area of 10,000 square meter was founded on Dec, 22nd 1959. It offers a vivid and fascinating history of the Vietnam War under the leadership of Vietnam's communist party and of president Ho Chi Minh.

Hanoi flag Tower, a national historic cultural monument, shares the adjoining ground with the **Army Museum**. The construction of 31 meter high Hanoi flag Tower got completed in 1972. The history of Vietnam's struggle for peace, independence and freedom of the nation is best captured in the thousands of exhibits displayed in the **Army Museum**.

The exhibits primarily comprises of maps, scale models, military weapons and personal belongings of individuals associated with war the best part of the museum is that all the displayed items are accompanied by English translations.

Army Museum displays a wide collection of military waste including a Mig fighter, anti aircraft missiles, tanks, and remarkable heap of wreckage from a US B52 bomber and French prop driven plane that were both blast in the Hanoi area and the tank that explode through the gates in Saigon during the battle for liberation.

Location: 28A Dien Bien Phu Street, Hanoi

Tel: 04-6955-4661 or 6955-2583 for reception

Price: Admission 20,000 VND (~\$1.00)

Surcharge: 20,000 VND for photographing or 50,000 for filming

Opening hours: Tue-Thu and Sat-Sun 8-11:30am and 1:00 - 4:30pm