

Indochina: Vietnam. Cambodia, Laos

Images Left

November 28.2017

It's 3:33 am and there's a quiet peace that permeates the atrium lounge of the New World Saigon Hotel. As a early morning witness to the hotel's daily preparation for its guests, staff members gather at the Hotel entrance exchanging morning pleasantries before starting their shift, while one staff member, dressed in his faded dark green uniform, seized the opportunity to sit at the grand piano in his work assignment area, offering his performance of Valse de Frontenac, a melodic tune, I hadn't experience since in our visit to Quebec City in the 1980's. His masterful rendition added the ambience of solitude, as I finished my coffee and donuts.

Our friend, Brian, the Night Manager, informed me that many of the custodial and maintenance staff have musical talents beyond their hotel position and supplement their income here at the hotel. It's apparent that this work ethos is not unlike an American characteristic, where hard work and ambition serve as the main ingredient to a country in a progressive stage of development. From the BBC Economic news Vietnam is the Sleeping Giant of Indochina with 7% GNP.

It's now 6:00am as the City of 14 million wake from its nightly slumber to the encyclopedic drone of motor bikes that dominant the concourses of Saigon. Street crossing is a perilous errand as Motor bikes outnumber pedestrians 7 million to 1. Diane and I had mastered the art of jay walking in New Delhi, but age is now a variable that may force us to use crosswalks with traffic controllers. After 4 days we are still standing.

Photo of the Day:

Post Office Saigon



Post Office Help Desk



Where the Children Play



Viet Heritage House – Vietnamese Cuisine



Servers



Old Friends



Saigon Siesta



Hindu Temple Saigon



Viet Cong Tunnels





Ben Thanh Mall