

Indochina: Vietnam. Cambodia, Laos

Images Left Behind

As we began the year 2017 cruising with our sons to Mexico, Diane and I are ending the year dancing on the jet stream across the Pacific at 655 mph in our usual seats (Seat 57 C and 57L) on Air China flight 903 to Beijing with our final destination the Indochina nations of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

It rained as we landed at 1:00am at Ho Chi Minh City aka Saigon with an unrelenting sultriness temperature that assaulted the very dermis of our bodies reducing the water content of our bodies by 75% and yearning for a new change of clothes. The deplaning process of 300 passengers from our Air China flight marched quietly into the silent custom /immigration terminal where they hurriedly asserted their positions in their respective immigration lines, Vietnamese Passport Holder and Foreign Passport Holders. We lost two days at the International Dateline, but what's a lost day when your first destination is in the Land of the Ascending Dragon. Absent of the scrutiny and delays with our San Francisco Vietnamese Consulate Visa, we were cleared without incident and pushed headlong into the chaos of main

terminal with our freedom intact and the ambience of anticipation for our new photographic quest.

It was sign from heaven as we passed the deluge of Taxi drivers shadowing our attention for transportation into Ho Chi Minh City and finding our Asia Limousine Service chauffeur conspicuously waving a sign with our names both in English and Vietnamese. After confirming our identity and papers, he introduced himself as Gerry Nguyen and presented his credentials as an Asia Limousine Driver. Having a driver at 1:00am in the morning was indulgent expense to ease the rigors of a 22 hours arduous flight that ravaged the spirits on our aging bodies.

We had booked our accommodations at the New World Saigon Hotel the day before to ensure our room would be available at 2:00am that morning.

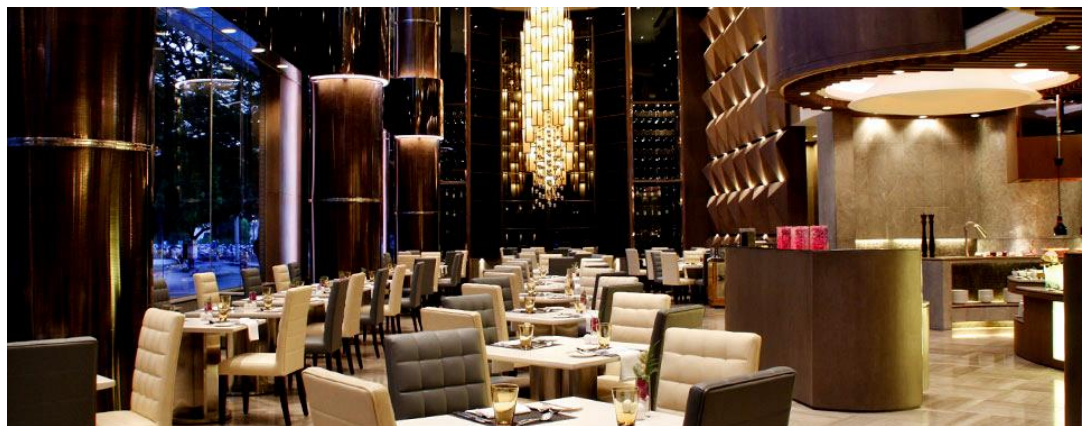
Only twenty minutes from Tan-Son Nhat International Airport, we arrived at the New World Saigon Hotel, located in the core area of Ho Chi Minh City on Le Lai Street, Quan 1 76. At the Hotel Entrance, we were greeted there by an elegantly dress bellman who directed his staff to attend to our luggage. We were escorted to the Registration Desk into the main lobby of the hotel

and handed off to Brian the New World Manager who treated us with the formality of cultural attaches without portfolio and provided with an upgrade room based on avatar smiley faces. We're here in Saigon until December 1.

With everything working like clockwork, we faced a major problem with my luggage being held hostage by Beijing Airport Security. It was my Lithium Battery Charger that was stored in my luggage that caused this delay. Living in Ho Chi Minh City without a change of clothes required the purchase of new soccer jerseys, Nikon Camera Batteries/and a Charger, other necessary toiletries at the Ben Thanh Mall with 3000 Vendors hawking everything from Perfumes to Chicken feet. The cost for this misfortune was 1,000,000 Dong or \$44.00.

With exception of my suitcase, Diane's pre-planning of every aspect of our photographic Odyssey melded like the mechanisms of Timex Watch (made in the Philippines).

Morning Photos: Girl @Tao Dan Park



Breakfast @ The New World Saigon Hotel



Morning Traffic - Awaiting a Green Light



At the Bazaar Ben Thanh Market



Talking Heads On Malaysia Street

The American War



Having coffee with a young Dr. Mi, a Cardiologist at the a Heart Convention here at the New World Saigon Hotel, the American War aka Vietnam War was a lost memory left in the history books with the youth of Vietnam only looking to their

future in the new economic boom that has morphed this socialist

society into to a hybrid dragon breathing new fire in Vietnam's Economic arrival into the 21 Century.



From our observation Ho Chi Minh City is a city not unlike Las Vegas where business and pleasure are synonymous. Life begins with the sun setting in the west and we are doing our best to experience Saigon's nightly offerings. We started our evening with relaxing

body scrub and massage to rejuvenate our aging life force (chi)

and ending with dinner at the Dao Place's iconic Culinary Cuisine de Vietnam.





November 27, 2017

With the advent of sunrise in the Lounge of the Hotel, background guitar music by Leo Kotte and a coffee latte with a fruit tart, our day begins, as we edit the photographs for inclusion in **Exhibition 2018 – Indochina – Images Left Behind.**

Diane and I consider ourselves very fortunate at this stage in our life to undertake another photograph project, but call us lucky that we still have the physical and mental prowess to make this dream a reality.

