



BenThanh Tourist

Your best guide in Vietnam

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Population: 4,858,000.



In this, the largest of Vietnam's cities, you'll see the hustle of Vietnamese life everywhere, and there is something invigorating about it all. Contrasting images of the exotic and mundane abound. There are the street markets, where bargains are struck and deals are done; the pavement cafes, where stereo speakers fill the surrounding streets with a melodious thumping beat; and the sleek new cafes and pubs, where tourists chat over beer, pretzels, coffee and croissants. A young office worker manoeuvres her Honda Dream through rush-hour traffic, long hair flowing, high heels working the brake pedal. The sweating Chinese businessman chats on his cellular phone, cursing his necktie in the tropical heat. A desperate beggar suddenly grabs your arm, rudely reminding you that this is still a developing city despite the trimmings.



The city churns, ferments, bubbles and fumes. Yet within this teeming 300 year old metropolis are timeless traditions and the beauty of an ancient culture. In the pagodas monks pray and incense burns. Artists create masterpieces on canvas or in carved wood. Puppeteers entertain children in the parks, while in the back alleys where tourists seldom venture, acupuncturists treat patients and students learn to play the violin. A seamstress carefully creates an *ao dai*, the graceful Vietnamese costume that could make the fashion designers of Paris envious.



Hình 4.18: Màn hình giới thiệu thông tin sơ lược về thành phố Hồ Chí Minh