

Vietnamese eating culture

I. Overview about Vietnam cuisine:

1. Overview:

Vietnamese cuisine includes Vietnamese foods and beverages, and features a combination of five fundamental tastes (Vietnamese: ngũ vị) in overall meals. Each Vietnamese dish has a distinctive flavor that reflects one or more of these elements. There are Common ingredients that are used almost every Vietnamese meals including fish sauce, shrimp paste, soy sauce, bean sauce, rice, fresh herbs, fruit, and vegetables. Additionally, French cuisine has also had a major influence due to the French colonization of Vietnam.

Vietnamese recipes use lemongrass, ginger, mint, Vietnamese mint, long coriander, Saigon cinnamon, bird's eye chili, lime, and Thai basil leaves. Traditional Vietnamese cooking is greatly admired for its fresh ingredients, minimal use of dairy and oil, complementary textures, and reliance on herbs and vegetables. With the balance between fresh herbs and meats and the selective use of spices to reach a fine taste, Vietnamese food is considered one of the healthiest cuisines worldwide.

2. Characteristic of Vietnamese food

Vietnam is an agricultural country of origin of the hot, tropical monsoon. In addition, Vietnam's territory is divided into three regions is markedly North, Central, South, along with the 54 ethnic groups. The main characteristics of geography, culture, ethnic, climate has defined specific characteristics of each region cuisine - domain. Every region has a typical taste. That contributed to the Vietnam cuisine rich and diverse. This is a cultural diet using lots of vegetables (boiled, fried, as melon, eaten raw); types of broths especially sour soup, while the number of nutritious food from animals is often less. The meats used most commonly pork, beef, chicken, geese, ducks, all kinds of shrimp, fish, crabs, snails, mussels, clams, oysters, ...

II. Features of Vietnamese cuisine by region

Cuisine in the North - Central - South region has a unique flavor with its culinary style, contributing to the richness and variety of Vietnamese cuisine culture. Going from North to South through Central, everywhere you have an opportunity to experience plenty of delicious food. The quintessence of the Northern culinary with a clear taste, just once eating is unforgettable



1. The subtlety of harmony in the Northern cuisine

Northern cuisine is very focused on the use of spices to prepare, but the taste, the seasoning has its characteristics, unlike anywhere else. The food in the North is always harmonious, and the spices have mutual support, blend, not spicy like the Central dishes, not as sweet as the taste of the South. It is the balance of Northern cuisine that creates the elegance, sophistication and focus that Northern cuisine always makes anyone admire because the natural flavor is still fully preserved when trying Northern food.

These eating habits have rooted in the customs and personalities of the people here. Northern people are known as their skill, sophistication, and preciseness, so cuisine must be always followed the rules, principles and especially on holidays, it needs more attention.

Typical dishes of the Northern people: Hanoi Pho, "banh mi" Hanoi, Hanoi bun cha- Noodle with grilled pork, Ho Tay shrimp cake, bun oc Snail vermicelli, Bún thang Hanoi combo noodle soup (chicken, egg, pork & sausage), bun Rieu cua- crab paste vermicelli soup, spring rolls, etc.

2. Central cuisine- Spicy, simple but delicate

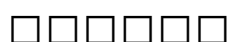
The Central region is barren, sunny, windy, and stormy all year round, not favored by nature like the North or the South. Perhaps so that the people here always respect and turn great products into dishes that bring very personal flavors, which one once enjoyed will never forget.

Unlike the North and the South, Central cuisine is relatively sophisticated, focusing on the form and presentation until the name of the dish. Besides the colors, spices is also noticed by the Hue people or the Central people. In particular, chili is an indispensable spice in most dishes. Most central provinces have the sea, so it's not surprising that chili is used a lot in dishes because it helps fishermen feel warmer. And this spicy that has created an unmistakable identity for Central cuisine.

There is a special thing that you can clearly see that Central cuisine is the harmony of both Royal and street cuisine. If royal cuisine is heavy on etiquette and sophisticated but luxurious, street food is simple but also great. The parallel development not only makes the cuisine of the Central region more special, but also contributes to the overall cuisine of the three regions. Typical royal dishes, specially Hue cuisine-the cradle of Central cuisine (MỠ CUNG ĐÌNH, Honey Beef, Hue beef noodle, Hue tea, filter cake, duck cake, bun, little ram, cake, double cake ...)... Additionally, simple but delicious street food Cao lầu, bánh bèo, bánh bột lọc, bánh xèo,....

3. The Southern cuisine - sweet, diverse styles

Although the South does not have a long history as the North and the Central, Southern cuisine is extremely various. Southern dishes are often seasoned with sugar or the sweetness of vegetables and the fat of coconut water. Not only absorbing the culinary elite from all regions of Vietnam but also Southern food acquires the cuisine of other ethnic groups such as Cham, Khmer and many other countries.



Southern cuisine is famous for dishes such as cá kho tộ, thịt kho nước dừa, cơm tấm, ... or wild dishes of the West of the river such as Hotpot of the West, bánh canh cá lóc, types of fish sauce, ...

III. Vietnamese Traditional Must-try dishes

1. Pho Hà Nội

Talking about Vietnamese cuisine, indispensable Pho. Pho is a special gift in Hanoi, not only in Hanoi, but it is only the most delicious only in Hanoi. Pho must be a "classic" Pho, prepared with beef, clear and sweet broth. The noodles are not overcooked, the meat is not chewy, lemon chili with onions is enough.

Give it a try to popular Pho store in Hanoi:

Phở Thìn

- Address: 13 Lò Đúc, Hai Bà Trưng, Hà Nội
- Opening time: 6h00 – 20h30
- Price: 40.000đ – 60.000đ

Phở 10 Lý Quốc Sư:

- Address: số 10 Lý Quốc Sư, Hoàn Kiếm, Hà Nội
- Opening time: 6h30 – 22h30
- Price: 50.000đ – 70.000đ

Phở gia truyền

- Address: 49 Bát Đàn, Hoàn Kiếm, Hà Nội
- Opening time: 6h00 – 10h00 | 18h00 – 20h30
- Price: 30.000đ – 55.000đ

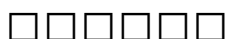
2. Bún chả Hà Nội

The typical bun cha Hanoi is a mix of flavourful barbecued pork, noodles, and fish sauce, plus a side of sweet and sour sliced papaya, carrot and herbs.

Popular Bun cha store in Hanoi:

Bun cha Hàng Quạt

- Address: 74 lane, Hàng Quạt, Hoàn Kiếm, Hanoi
- Price: 30,000 VND-35,000 VND



Bún chả Đắc Kim- Hàng Manh

- Address: 1 Hang Manh, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
- Opening time: 8h-22h
- Price: 50,000 VND-60,000 VND

Bún chả Hương Liên

- Address: 24 Lê Văn Hưu, quận Hai Bà Trưng, Hà Nội
- Opening time: 10h-22h, với giá cả rất bình dân từ
- Price: 40.000VND- 60.000 VND

3. Bánh mì:

Banh mi is influenced by French colonialism. Banh mi is a signature food of Vietnamese people, particularly in the morning. With an appropriate price ranging from 10,000VND- 30,000VND, banh mi filled with pickled vegetables and choices of filling such as pate, fried egg, sausage, pork, butter, cilantro, chilies, and hot peppers.

Famous delicious Banh mi store in Hanoi:

Bánh mì pate Lãn Ông

- Address: 8 Cha Ca, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
- Price: 20.000 VND-35.000 VND

Bánh mì 38 Đinh Liệt

- Address: 38 Dinh Liet, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
- Price: 25.000VND-30.000VND

Bánh mì Bà Dền, Lò Sũ

- Address: 34 Lo Su, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
- Opening time: 6h-22h
- Price 25.000-45.000 đồng

Banh mi store you can not ignore in Hoi An, Hue

Bánh mì Phượng:

- Address: 2B Phan Chau Trinh street, Hoi An
- Opening time: 6h-22h
- Price: 10.000 VND-30.000 VND

Bánh mì Madame Khánh

- Address: 135 Tran Cao Van, Hoi An
- Opening time: 7h-19h30
- Price: 10.000VND-20.000VND



The most popular Banh mi for locals and tourist in Ho Chi Minh city

Banh mi Huynh Hoa

- Address: 26 Le Thi Rieng, Ben Thanh Ward, District 1.
- Price: 33,000 VND/ baguette (from \$1.5 USD)

4. Bún bò Huế

Bun bo Hue is one of the classic Hue's dishes, although this noodle dish is popular in all three Vietnamese region. Other localities call "Hue beef noodle soup", "Hue original beef noodle soup" to refer to the origin of this dish. Hue beef vermicelli is not the same as other beef noodles in other localities: big noodles, spicy broth, thin, non-chewy, very soft beef, when trying, you will feel the taste of the typical Hue flavor. The right flavor of Bun bo hue when eating in Hue

Bún Bò Huế O Cương Chú Điệp

- Address: 6 Trần Thúc Nhẫn, Thành Phố Huế
- Opening time:: 6h30 – 11h00
- Price: 15.000 – 30.000 VND

Bún Bò Huế O Phương

- Address: 24 Nguyễn Khuyến, Thành Phố Huế
- Opening time: 9h00 – 21h00
- Price: 30.000 – 35.000 VND

Quán Cẩm – Bún Bò Huế

- Address: 38 Trần Cao Vân, Thành Phố Huế
- Opening time: 6h00 – 10h00
- Price: 20.000 – 40.000 VND

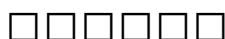
5. Spring roll:

Goi Cuon- Vietnamese spring roll is typically wrapped in rice paper with various of ingredients such as pork, prawn, salad and dip into peanut sauce or fish sauce.

Famous spring roll store in Ha Noi:

Quán bánh tráng Tráng Bàng Văn Cao

- Address: 47 Văn Cao, Ba Đình, Hà Nội
- Price: 90.000 đồng/portion



Đà Nẵng quán

- Address: 79 Trung Hoa, Cau Giay, Hanoi
- Opening time: 10h30-21h
- Price: 50.000VND-100.000VND

Give it a try to popular store in Ho Chi Minh city:

Gỏi cuốn Tôm Nhảy LLQ

- Address: 424 Lạc Long Quân, Phường 5, Quận 11, TP.Hồ Chí Minh.
- Opening time: 11h – 21h
- Price: 6.000đ – 25.000đ

Gỏi Cuốn Ngon Ngon

- Address 322/13 An Dương Vương, Phường 4, Quận 5, TP.Hồ Chí Minh
- Opening time: 17:00 - 21:00
- Price: 10.000đ - 30.000đ

6. Cơm tấm- Broken rice:

Com tam is one of the most popular dishes in Ho Chi Minh city. Com tam- broken rice is made from broken rice grains. Com Tam (Saigon-style broken rice) is usually served with a caramelized pork chop, pickled vegetables, steamed egg cake, fried egg, and garlic chive oil.

Cơm tấm Bà Nghiền

- Price: 40,000 VND – 50,000 VND
- Opening time: 8 AM – 8:30 PM
- Address: 84 Dang Van Ngu, Phu Nhuan District.

Cơm tấm Tài

- Price: 25,000 VND- 50,000 VND
- Opening time: 06:00 - 10:00 | 16:00 - 21:00
- Address: 1 Nguyễn An Ninh, P. 14, Quận Bình Thạnh, TP. HCM

IV. Table manner in Vietnam

1. Some features in Vietnamese meal you should know

Rice plays a important role in daily meal: there is no surprise that rice is included in every single meal. Since far from now, our country depends on rice cultivation, rice is our staple food.



Vegetables and meat (or fish) are included: In Vietnamese table, there are diverse food in one meal consist of two main courses like roasted pork, fried fish, etc, one vegetable dish(boiled or stir-fried vegetable) and a bowl of soup.

2. Dishes are put around a tray:

All dishes are placed around a tray. According to Vietnamese ancient opinion, the round shape represents happiness, fullness, and togetherness. All family members sit in a round and easily talk to each other. Everyone has their bowl of rice and eats together with other food. Traditionally, Vietnamese people use chopsticks to pick food. And spoons are used to eat soup, so visitors could have a chance to learn how to use this eating utensil when coming to Vietnam. After the meal, dessert is included as a kind of seasonal fruit: watermelon, mango, apples, and so on.

3. Tips on dining table in Vietnam:

Always wait the oldest start first: In Vietnam, almost more than two generations live under one roof, so showing your respect, caring, and politeness to the elderly is necessary.

Do not stick your chopsticks vertically in the middle a bowl of rice: this action considers as disrespectful act in Vietnam because it looks like incense on an altar.

Do not select the food: It is quiet impolite to try to select the food and leave over a not good part for other.

Remember to finish all food you choose: it is an act of respect to the host and not wasteful anything.

Say thank you to the host after a meal : Make sure the landlord knows you feel highly pleased with the meal. And do not forget to give them a compliment about skillfulness and hospitality.

