



‘SAMPLING SAIGON’ with CHEF LUKE NGUYEN

GUIDE PROFILE

With an endless series of accomplishments under his belt, Australia-born Vietnamese celebrity chef Luke Nguyen has made quite the name for himself over his culinary career. At only 23, Luke realised his dreams by opening his first restaurant, the critically acclaimed Red Lantern in 2002. Luke is also the man behind the much-loved Fat Noodle, an Asian noodle bar concept at The Star in Pymont Sydney as well as in Brisbane.

While cooking is his passion, so is his love for imparting culinary wisdom. Luke is the author of seven best-selling and award-winning cookbooks, including *Secrets of the Red Lantern*, *The Songs of Sapa*, *Luke Nguyen’s France: A Gastronomic Adventure*, *Street Food Asia*, *My Vietnam: Stories and Recipes*, *The Food of Vietnam* and *Luke Nguyen’s Greater Mekong: A Culinary Journey from China to Vietnam*.

Luke has also been featured on numerous television series, including:

- MasterChef Vietnam
- MasterChef Australia
- Luke Nguyen’s Vietnam
- Luke Nguyen’s France
- Luke Nguyen’s United Kingdom
- Luke Nguyen’s Street Food Asia

In 2017, Luke took over the helm of Vietnam House, his very first outpost in Vietnam. Opened originally as Cafe L’Imperial in the early 1900s, the first Vietnam House opened in 1992 and quickly set a standard for the atmospheric appeal of high-end Vietnamese dining. Its incarnation elevates the experience through its posh decor and Luke’s distinctive culinary vision.



“With Vietnam House, I’m bringing together the strands of my heritage, my journey of discovery in Vietnam and my career in the culinary industry to make this place something very special.”

~ Luke Nguyen

In 2018, Luke became the official Food Ambassador for Vietnam Airlines, crafting the menus across all of the travel classes offered by the airline.



THE TOUR EXPERIENCE

Whether guests choose to travel by a chauffeured hotel car or by taxi, the journey begins in the late afternoon with a glimpse of some of the key landmarks located in the city's District 1 – such as the 139-year-old Notre Dame Cathedral, the historic Central Post Office and the magnificent colonial French Opera House.

From there, on the menu for the rest of this deep dive into Saigon's culinary world are:

- A pitstop for *banh mi* and Vietnamese coffee at favourite outpost (or two) of Chef's
- A short walking tour of residential back alleyways where communal living still thrives and where delicious home-cooking is served right out of residential kitchens
- A short boat ride to a popular riverside restaurant for cocktails and small bites at sunset
- Rooftop drinks and an introduction to an innovative take on street-food dishes at a local eatery that's hidden in the old market part of Saigon
- A stroll along Nguyen Hue Boulevard, the city's popular gathering place, before settling in for dinner with Chef at [Vietnam House](#), his signature restaurant in Vietnam
- An option to extend the evening (for up to two hours) with an exploration of the city's nightlife scene by way of an introduction to Chef's recommended drinking spots, depending on whether you're partial to hidden bars or rooftop cocktails

**Activities listed above are subject to accessibility and change without notice*