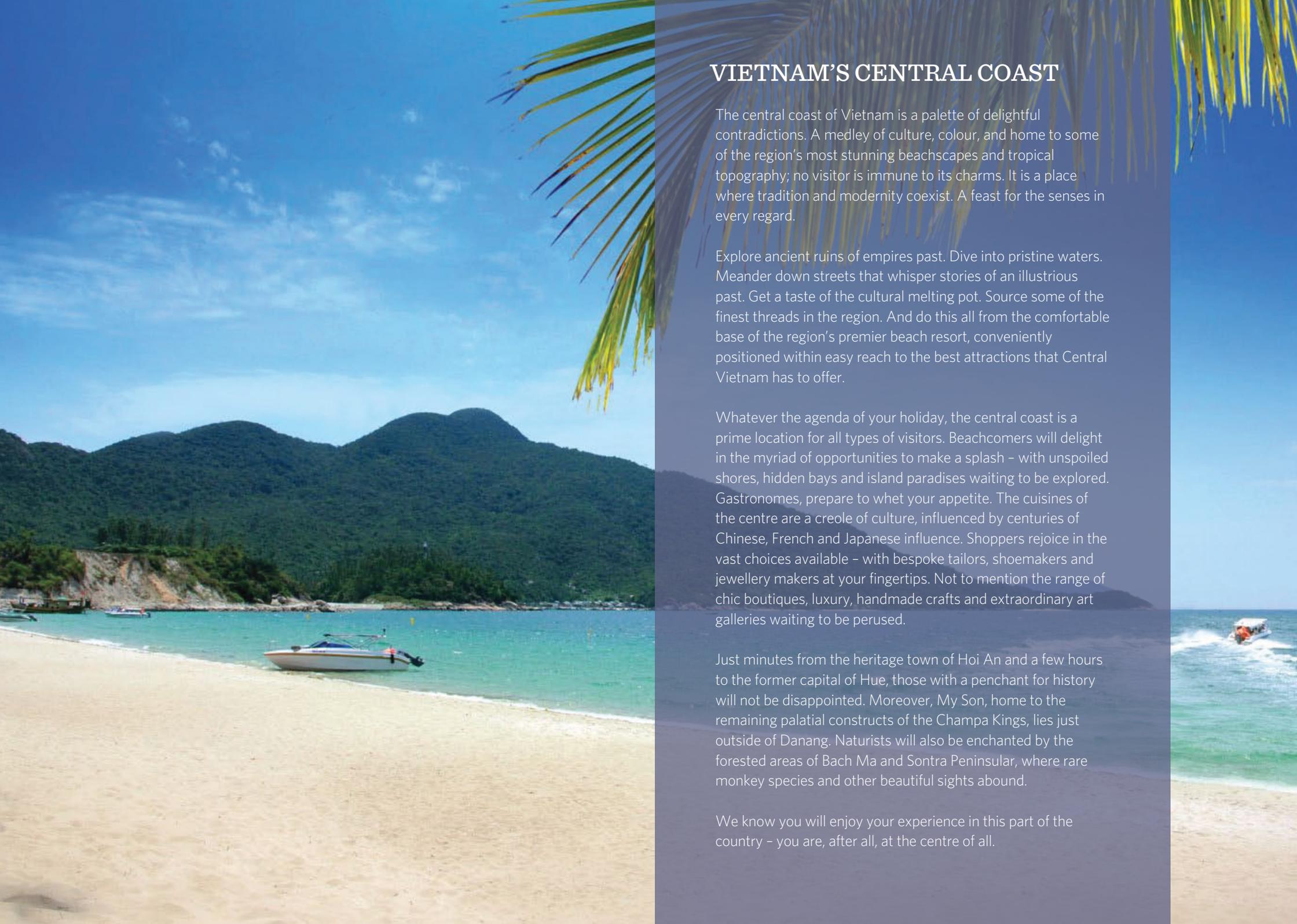




DESTINATION
DA NANG



VIETNAM'S CENTRAL COAST

The central coast of Vietnam is a palette of delightful contradictions. A medley of culture, colour, and home to some of the region's most stunning beachscapes and tropical topography; no visitor is immune to its charms. It is a place where tradition and modernity coexist. A feast for the senses in every regard.

Explore ancient ruins of empires past. Dive into pristine waters. Meander down streets that whisper stories of an illustrious past. Get a taste of the cultural melting pot. Source some of the finest threads in the region. And do this all from the comfortable base of the region's premier beach resort, conveniently positioned within easy reach to the best attractions that Central Vietnam has to offer.

Whatever the agenda of your holiday, the central coast is a prime location for all types of visitors. Beachcomers will delight in the myriad of opportunities to make a splash – with unspoiled shores, hidden bays and island paradises waiting to be explored. Gastronomes, prepare to whet your appetite. The cuisines of the centre are a creole of culture, influenced by centuries of Chinese, French and Japanese influence. Shoppers rejoice in the vast choices available – with bespoke tailors, shoemakers and jewellery makers at your fingertips. Not to mention the range of chic boutiques, luxury, handmade crafts and extraordinary art galleries waiting to be perused.

Just minutes from the heritage town of Hoi An and a few hours to the former capital of Hue, those with a penchant for history will not be disappointed. Moreover, My Son, home to the remaining palatial constructs of the Champa Kings, lies just outside of Danang. Naturists will also be enchanted by the forested areas of Bach Ma and Sontra Peninsular, where rare monkey species and other beautiful sights abound.

We know you will enjoy your experience in this part of the country – you are, after all, at the centre of all.



NEARBY ATTRACTIONS



MARBLE MOUNTAINS

These limestone outcrops consist of a cluster of five distinctive hills once famous – as per the name – for their marble content. While the marble itself has long been carved out from the mountains, they remain an attraction because of the pagodas, shrines and cave grottos within. One cave is particularly famous, because at certain times of the day a shaft of light will filter in over the large Buddha statue. There is plenty to explore up the main mountain and visitors can either take the stairs or use the newly-built elevator. Avoid crowds by going early morning or late afternoon. There are plenty of decent vantage points atop the main outcrop that overlook the East Sea and mountains beyond.



HOI AN ANCIENT TOWN - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

Once one of the country's most important trading hubs, Hoi An still has a cosmopolitan heart. Stroll the streets to soak up the vibe. With over 100 registered 'ancient houses', there is plenty of architectural soul. Besides the museums, market, landmarks and old houses, the streets of Hoi An are lined with cafes, bars, boutiques and art galleries. Pedestrianized for the most part of the day, a wander through the old town can be enjoyed at a pleasant pace, without the disturbance of motorized vehicles. Check the calendar upon your arrival. If you're in town during the full moon, the Hoi An Legendary Full Moon night is not to be missed - fully pedestrianized and only lit by lanterns, the town is particularly enchanting with locals making offerings to their ancestors and performances filling the night air with traditional music and poetry. Moreover, Hoi An's beaches are worthy of mention - with swimming and dining options that have garnered a reputation throughout the country.



BANA HILLS

Another former colonial residential area Bana Hills is now a major tourist attraction within the Danang province. Located on Chua Mountain in the Truong Son Mountain range – only 30km from Danang city – you catch a cable car across a jungle canopy to the Bana Hills resort, a recently developed theme park. While it might not suit everyone's taste, the view on a clear day from the cable car is magnificent and there are some quaint nature walks and pagodas to discover around the lower part of the mountain.



CHAM ISLANDS

If snorkelling or diving are on your itinerary, then the Cham Islands are a must-visit. This group of eight islets offer the most active and colourful marine life in Vietnam. The main Cham Island is also home to soft squeaky sand beaches – with corals around the rock areas as well as unique jungle terrain to explore. You can easily organize a day trip by speed boat from the resort.



MY SON SANCTUARY - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

Considered Vietnam's most significant archaeological site, the My Son ruins mark the chief place of worship for the former ruling Champa Kingdom. The Champa were an Indianized kingdom who reigned over southern and central Vietnam from the 7th century and into the early 19th century. Their rule peaked over 500 years ago. Visitors to My Son will see Hindu god statues and architectural influences from Cambodia in the unique stone vestiges. Half day trips to My Son are popular, usually finishing with a boat trip back into Hoi An. If you leave early you will avoid a throng of tourists. The journey through the countryside to My Son is also wonderfully picturesque.





HUE - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

Located on the bank of Song Huong- Perfume River; Hue, the capital of Thua Thien Hue province in Central Vietnam, is 700 km southern Hanoi, 1100km northern Ho Chi Minh City, and only a few miles from the sea. Not until 1945 was Hue the national capital, the political, cultural and religious center of Vietnam under the control of Nguyen Dynasty. Most well-known for its historic values; Hue had been recognized as one of the World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.



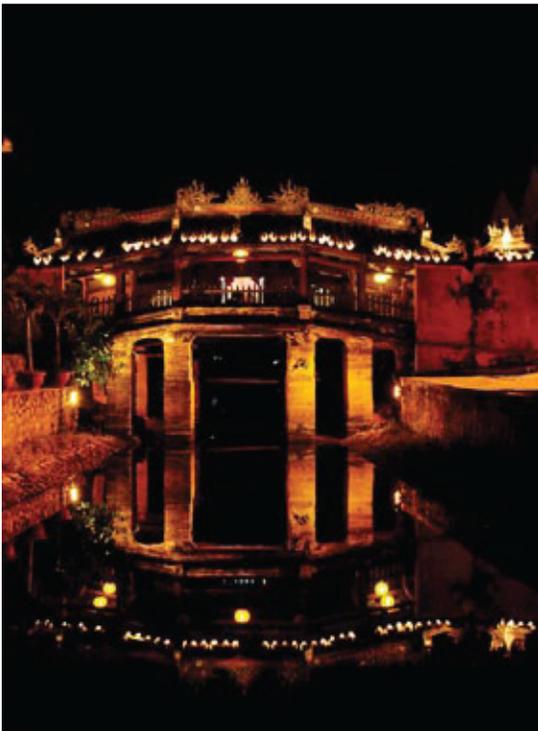
BACH MA NATIONAL PARK

During the French occupation, colonialists favoured the forest reserves of Bach Ma for their residences – with the mountain providing cool respite from the tropical heat. These days, Bach Ma is a huge and active national park that is home to rare species of butterflies, pheasants, monkeys and other wildlife. Lush jungle, waterfalls and other natural wonders await intrepid explorers. Only a few hours from Danang city, Bach Ma National Park will provide an ideal jungle adventure – and plenty of opportunities for budding nature or landscape photographers. Registered guides can be organized for overnight treks and the entrance fees go back into the park’s restoration.





HOI AN ANCIENT TOWN - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE



OVERVIEW

Hip. Historic. Happening. While those words may seem incongruous, they are all fitting descriptions of the heritage town of Hoi An. Don't be fooled by the term 'heritage'. While the quaint streets of Hoi An are UNESCO-protected and do ooze history, there is a definitive undercurrent of cool in the old quarter. Once one of the country's most important trading hubs, Hoi An still has a cosmopolitan heart. Stroll the streets to soak up the vibe. With over 100 registered 'ancient houses', there is plenty of architectural soul. Besides the museums, market, landmarks and old houses, the streets of Hoi An are lined with cafes, bars, boutiques and art galleries. Pedestrianized for the most part of the day, a wander through the old town can be enjoyed at a pleasant pace, without the disturbance of motorized vehicles. Check the calendar upon your arrival. If you're in town during the full moon, the Hoi An Legendary Full Moon night is not to be missed – fully pedestrianized and only lit by lanterns, the town is particularly enchanting with locals making offerings to their ancestors and performances filling the night air with traditional music and poetry. Moreover, Hoi An's beaches are worthy of mention – with swimming and dining options that have garnered a reputation throughout the country.

ATTRACTIONS IN THE OLD TOWN

Hoi An has a number of old houses, museums and performing arts centres. Many require an entrance fee. To make it easy on tourists, visitors can purchase one ticket that is valid for five different attractions. These can be purchased from any of the several tourist information or ticket booths. One ticket costs 90,000VND. Please be warned that buying a ticket is for entering specific attractions only; there is no charge to enter the old town and simply stroll the streets.

JAPANESE-COVERED BRIDGE

The iconic Japanese-covered bridge is the symbol for Hoi An, perhaps because of the town's multicultural history. While guidebooks claim that it once linked the Chinese and Japanese quarters together centuries ago, it was actually designed as a landmark for Japanese merchants as they entered into the Hoi An port. It signified that the town was friendly towards traders. The ornate roof is made in the Japanese style, while the intricate timberwork inside it is demonstrably Chinese. The bridge is thought to have been built in the 1590s by the Japanese and it hosts a small shrine inside. It is also guarded on each end by astrological statues – the dog and the monkey – which symbolize the years when construction started and was completed. The best vantage point to capture the bridge on camera is on the opposite side of the river, on An Hoi peninsular. It is oft lit up at night (especially on weekends and for special occasions) which makes for a vivid snapshot when its colourful reflection is on the water.

Location: West end of Tran Phu St

Cost: Free (unless you want to enter the shrine, then a ticket is required)



HOI AN MARKET

From the 1st Century, Hoi An, originally known as Lam Ap Pho, was one of Asia's foremost sea trading ports; forming the commercial centre of the Champa Empire until as late as the 10th Century. The town was quite literally one big market and today it continues to thrive as its commercial centre. Famous along the spice route, cinnamon, black pepper, ginger and turmeric were key trading commodities during the Champa era. In later centuries, the interaction of foreign powers such as the Chinese, Japanese and Portuguese was more significant, leading to the cultural - and culinary - melting pot that exists today. Experience the livelihood of this market with fresh produce as well as arts, crafts and souvenirs all found within. Expect to see some interesting local characters, as well as experience vibrant colours and pungent smells! There is also a modern - and hygienic - open air food court serving local 'street food' fare including the famous Hoi An noodle dish, Cao Lau.

Location: East of the old quarter between Tran Phu St and the river.

Cost: Free



TAN KY OLD HOUSE

Hoi An has a plethora of recognized 'old houses', and while Tan Ky is not the oldest, it is certainly one of the best preserved. It's also centrally-located near many of the town's most famous restaurants. Its dark timber façade, antiquated doorway and inner-courtyard are typical of Chinese-Fukkein design. Look for the intricate bird carvings inside.

Location: 101 Nguyen Thai Hoc St

Cost: Ticket required



TRAN FAMILY CHAPEL

One of the better family-run houses, this was built by one of the mandarins of the royal court - Tran Tu Nhap. The house is museum-like, with many artefacts including a 250 year old family history book. Be sure to toss the yin and yang coins at the family altar for good luck.

Location: 21 Le Loi St

Cost: Ticket required



QUAN CONG TEMPLE

In honour of the Chinese general Quan Cong – a symbol of justice and integrity – this temple is festooned with inspiring, colourful statues and artwork. Enter through a majestic gate of bold red and gold. The rain sprouts designed as carp fish are a quaint feature.

Location: 24 Tran Phu St

Cost: Ticket required



CANTONESE CHINESE ASSEMBLY HALL

This lively hall near to the Japanese bridge is a tourist favourite. Jackfruit tree columns form much of the framework inside and colourful Chinese motifs feature throughout, while the open courtyard in front is peppered with cherry blossom trees during the spring and summer months.

Location: 176 Tran Phu St

Cost: Ticket required



BA LE WELL

This famous Champa well is fabled to be the traditional source for water used to steam Hoi An's Cao Lau noodles. These days it is more of an isolated tourist attraction. Its square-shaped mouth indicates its old age – 10th century.

Location: Kiet Giang lane off Phan Chu Trinh St

Cost: Free



HOI AN MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE

This museum hosts various relics relating to the different historic phases of Hoi An (Sa Hunyh, Champa, Dai Viet and Dai Nam cultures) as well as documents narrating the development of the heritage town.

Location: 7 Nguyen Hue

Cost: Ticket required



TRA QUE HERB VILLAGE

Hoi An's unique and famous cuisine owes much of its credit to this organic herb village, comprising a commune of 'artisans' who grow various herbs and salad vegetables. The commune itself is over 150 years old and the soil is fertilized by mineral-rich river weed pulled out of the nearby delta. See the farmers in action after 2pm.

Location: Hai Ba Trung, 2.5 km from the old town.

Cost: None if you explore yourself, however, it may be easiest to book a bicycle tour.



THUAN TINH ECO ISLAND

Catch a boat over to this ecological island zone for unspoiled greenery and relaxation. Paddle through water coconut groves; enjoy hot pot lunch or salads. This is one of Hoi An's best kept secrets and home to one of the coveted 'magical spinning tables'.

Location: About 3km out of old town off the river. Hire a river boat skipper to get there.

Cost: Boat transfer (approximately 100,000VND per person) and lunch. Or inquire with the resort about a tour.



CAM KIM ISLAND

Renowned for its woodcarving village (Kim Bong) Cam Kim island also boasts beautiful countryside. You can find other crafts here too including the colourful woven sedge mats and the locally-made "basket" fishing boats.

Location: Across the Thu Bon river, approximately 5km out of old town. Get a boat from the main dock on Bach Dang St.

Cost: Boat transfers are 10,000VND each way. Hire a bicycle in advance for 20,000VND for the day; bring it onboard the boat.



THANH HA POTTERY VILLAGE

The Hoi An potters have long mastered their craft, having once providing the royal family in Hue with interiors and also supplying general building materials to Hoi An town. Watch the artisans in action here while looking for bargains to take home!

Location: 3km west of old town

Cost: Only for purchases; not essential.



AN BANG BEACH

The preferred locals' beach among expats in Hoi An, An Bang is a serene stretch of restaurants and beach that remains fairly free of touts and crowds. Excellent beachside dining options are found here – possibly the best on the central coast. It is also patrolled by the An Bang Lifesaving Association.

Location: Main coast, before turning right to old town. An estimated 4km from old town.

Cost: Beach access is free.



Let's make it
good to be away

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