

Retreat | Reveal | Renew

Find inspiration in Ho Chi Minh City

Vietnam's business hub may be one of Asia's most high-octane cities. Yet a new cultural scene is emerging, as a generation of designers, artists and entrepreneurs reimagine its look and feel. Here's where to tap into that creative energy – and the quieter spaces that inspire it

STORY — *Joshua Zukas*



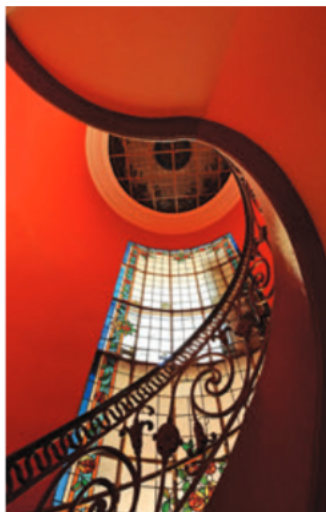
Retreat

Despite its density, Ho Chi Minh City makes space for greenery. Temple courtyards like the **Jade Emperor Pagoda** and parks such as **Le Van Tam** soften its concrete edges, while the **Saigon River** brings cooler pockets of calm. Increasingly, design-led venues build on this connection to nature, blending architecture with tropical planting and open-air spaces.

Upstream, **An Lam Retreats Saigon River** tucks low villas into lush riverside gardens, using timber, stone and thatch to create a rustic, immersive setting. Downstream, rooftop concepts like **Cocoa Project Kitchen** bring greenery into the city, while nearby, Peruvian-Japanese restaurant **Yunka** occupies a curved heritage building, where StudioDuo's flowing interior pairs Nikkei cuisine with soft geometry and layered greenery.



Jade Emperor Pagoda



Museum of Fine Arts

Reveal

Ho Chi Minh City's landmarks and museums offer insight into its past, but to glimpse its creative present, immerse yourself in its art scene. Start at the **Museum of Fine Arts**, set in an ochre colonial mansion with tiled floors, wrought-iron balconies and a serene inner courtyard. While the architecture stands out, it's the collection that truly dazzles, spanning centuries of Vietnamese art, including contemporary works shaped by the country's modern history.

Nearby, the café-lined streets around Pasteur Street host galleries such as **Gallery Medium**, presenting curated exhibitions by Vietnamese artists. Further east, **Galerie Quynh** anchors the city's contemporary scene, staging ambitious shows by leading local and international names.

Renew

Ho Chi Minh City can feel relentlessly chaotic, with its constant traffic, heat and noise pushing many visitors towards the open arms of their hotel spa. Luxury properties like the **Park Hyatt**, in the city centre, and **Mia Saigon**, in a quieter setting across the Saigon River, have become citywide favourites for their polished wellness experiences.

Beyond these, independent spots provide a more local take on relaxation. **Noir Spa** stands out for its immersive treatments delivered in near-total darkness, heightening the senses while skilled therapists use firm massage techniques to ease travel-weary muscles. Meanwhile, **Moc Huong Wellness**, with multiple locations across the city, focuses on botanical therapies inspired by Vietnamese healing traditions. 🌿

Singapore Airlines flies to Ho Chi Minh City 21 times weekly.



Moc Huong Wellness