

Hue city – college



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THUA THIEN HUE AND HUE CITY 1. Basic information Area: It has the natural area of 5, 053. 9 square meters spread in the long and narrow land, with the average width of 60 km and the length of 127 km. It is along the direction of North West – South East parallel with the coast, with various terrains of mountains, hills, coastal plains and lagoons. 2. Location a. Geography location Locates in the North Central Coast of Vietnam, approximately in the center of the country at latitude of 16-16°8'N and longitude 107°8'-108°2'E. Borders Quang Tri Province to the north and Da Nang City to the south, Laos to the west and the South China Sea to the east. The province has 128 km of coastline, 22, 000 ha of lagoons and over 200, 000 hectares of forest. b. Administrative Division Thua Thien-Hue is divided into eight districts: • A Luoi • Huong Thuy • Huong Tra • Nam Dong • Phong Dien • Phu Loc • Phu Vang • Quang Dien The capital city of Hue is its own municipality. Hue comprises 27 administrative divisions, including 27 urban wards: • An Cuu An Dong • An Hoa • An Tay • Huong So • Kim Long • Phu Binh • Phu Cat • Phu Hau • Phu Hiep • Phu Hoa • Phu Hoi • Phu Nhuan • Phu Thuan • Phuoc Vinh • Phuong Duc • Tay Loc • Thuan Hoa • Thuan Loc • Thuan Thanh • Truong An • Vinh Ninh • Vy Da • Xuan Phu • Huong Long • Thuy Bieu • Thuy Xuan 3. Geography Patterns a. Landforms The province has a complex topography. It is made up four different zones: a mountainous area, hills, plains and lagoons separated from the sea by sandbanks.

The terrain gets lower in the east, of which the west is mainly hills with the most height of less 500m and main features of wide top, slope side, mostly hundreds width " bowl-shaped" hills. The large rivers' basins create downwrapping including narrow coastal plain covering the lagoon area of 22,

000 ha, such as Tam Giang, Ha Trung and Cau Hai lagoons, An Cu area and three gates to the sea: Thuan An, Tu Hien and Lang Co. In the plain, the terrain is 5m – 30m long sand-banks parallel with the coast. b. Mountains

The mountains, covering more than half the total surface of the province, are along the west and southwest border of the province, their height varying from 500 to 1480 meters. The hills are lower, between 20 to 200 meters, with some points at 400 meters, and occupy a third of the area of the province, between the mountains and the plains. The plains account for about a tenth of the surface area, with a height of only up to 20 meters above sea level. Between the hills are the lagoons which occupy the remaining 5 percent of the surface area of the province. Bach Ma Mountain
Location: Bach Ma (White Horse) Mountain is located in Phu Loc District, 60km from the south of Hue City. Characteristic: It is about 1, 450m above sea level in a transition zone of the northern and southern climate, so it bears a temperate climate, similar to SaPa, Tam Dao, Da Lat, etc. The green vegetation is abundant all the year round. The animals are also rich with chirps and calls all days and nights which sound both wild and familiar... Bach Ma Mount also has many limpid brooks and picturesque waterfalls.

At the 16th kilometer on Cau Hai – Bach Ma road, turning left and walk for 20 to 30 minutes, tourists will also find 400m high, 20m wide Do Quyen Waterfall which suddenly appears as if it were suspended in the sky... In the summer, rhododendron flowers are blooming on both sides of the fall like two huge flowery silk carpets. In the centre of the resort is Bac (Silver) Waterfall, only 10m high and 40m wide and look like a spotless white curtain

swayed by the wind. More than half a century ago, the French recognized the beauty of Bach Ma and began to develop it.

Within 5 years (1942-1946), 139 villas were continuously built under the foliage of old trees and by sheer cliffs. From the top of Bach Ma, people can view landscapes of Hai Van Pass, Tuy Van Mount, Cau Hai Lagoon with heaving fishing boats and even the shimmering electrical lights of Hue city at night as well as the huge and boundless Eastern Sea. • Ngu Binh Mountain
Location: Ngu Binh Mountain is located in Hue City
Characteristic: Ngu Binh Mountain was called Bang Son (Even Mount) and renamed Ngu Binh by Emperor Gia Long. It was chosen as a screen in front of the Hue Capital City.

The 105meter Ngu Binh has a striking and symmetric figure. On both sides of the Bang Son (Even Mount) are 2 small mounts called Ta Bat Son (Left Mount) and Huu Bat Son (Right Mount). Its top is flat with pine trees everywhere. After observing that Bang Son resembled a screen, the Nguyen Dynasty decided to build up Hue which became known as their “ Forbidden Purple City. ” Emperor Gia Long approved the design of geomancers which chose this mount as a front altar of the imposing and solid defending wall system, and renamed it Ngu Binh. Together with the Perfume River, Ngu Binh Mount is the second invaluable gift endowed by Nature to Hue.

These two mingle with each other creating the Romantic Mountain and river beauty of Hue. For a long time, this beautiful mount and the blue limpid Perfume River have become the symbol of Hue City. Therefore, people often call Hue “ The land of the Perfume River (Huong River) and Ngu Binh Mount” or “ Huong-Ngu Land”. For many centuries, many generations of poets and

travelers have recognized it a wonderful place to admire nature. On fine days, from the top of Ngu Binh Mount, people can view all the sights of Hue City with magnificent palaces, ancient pagoda roofs and the blue limpid Perfume River winding in and out...

Right in front of people's eyesight stretch boundless pine forests on the hills and large plains of Huong Thuy, Phu Vang, Huong Tra Districts with green plants and trees. In the distance is the endless dark purple Truong Son range hidden behind silver clouds... Towards the east is a dim white sand strip and Thuan An Estuary in the distance with the deep blue Eastern Sea. Some kilometers away from Ngu Binh Mount is Vong Canh Hill, another beautiful spot of Hue which reflects itself charmingly in the Perfume River, opposite to Ngoc Tran Mount.

From the Vong Canh Hill, people can behold green fruit gardens with areca palm, longan, orange, mandarin, grape fruit shades, etc. Mingling with pine trees, grey roofs of pagodas and temples, as well as the ancient and meditative tombs... The Perfume River looks like a soft silk strip winding at the foot of the hill. Once tourists come here at mist fading dawn or in sunset, they will understand and are heartfelt the romantic beauty of a hill, a river, a corner of Hue's sky... • Mount Tuy Van Among the vast lagoon of Chu Hai, Mount Tuy Van rises up and looks prominent in the surrounding landscape.

With such a high position, it has a wide view of Thuan An Estuary – a significant “gate” of Hue Citadel to the East Sea. Mount Tuy Van (Mount Blue Clouds), which stands in Dong Am Village (Thuan Thien Huong Province), is

given several beautiful names in its long and interesting history. It was first called M? Am, later renamed Thuy Hoa and now Thuy Van. However, the local people informally call it Tuy Van. It is about 60 km from the center of Hu? to the East, Mount Tuy Van seems to be half a world away. This waterfront retreat is where you can leave the bustling city life behind, and being pampered in the generous nature.

After passing serene villages and lush green paddy fields, my special guide – the culture researcher H? T? n Phan and myself followed a lane paralleling C? u Hai Lagoon to meet a several market stalls before reaching the foot of Mount Tuy Van. A carved stele with Chinese characters saying “ Mount Tuy Van” to the left serves as a landmark. Nui Ban c. Bodies of water Kong River is also the Thai name for the Mekong River. The Kong River is a river in Southeast Asia. The river originates in Thua Thien-Hue Province in Central Vietnam and flows 480 km through southern Laos and eastern Cambodia.

It joins the Mekong River near Stung Treng town of Cambodia. Part of its course forms the international boundary between Laos and Cambodia. •
Perfume River (Huong River) Location: Deriving from Truong Son Mountain, the two springs Ta Trach (Left Tributary) and Huu Trach (Right Tributary) meet at the junction of Bang Lang fork and create the Perfume River.
Characteristic: Looking like “ a silver sword upright to the sky”, Perfume River is really an invaluable godsend to Hue City. From Bang Lang to Thuan An estuary, the Perfume River is 30km long (The river level is not much above that of the sea) so that the river runs very slowly.

The colour of the Perfume River is darker when it runs along the foot of Ngoc Tran Mount – the Jade Cup Temple (Dien Hon Chen) – where there is a very deep abyss. The Perfume River is beautiful sight from its source, and runs among mountains, forest trees, plants, etc, bringing with it fragrances of tropical flora. The river runs slowly through the verdant and shady villages of Kim Long, Nguyet Bieu, Vy Da, Dong Ba, Gia Hoi, Dinh market, Nam Pho, Bao Vinh, mingling with the odors of flowers of Hue... The river with the shimmer blue limpid colour is like a pearl in the sun.

Boats are rowed up and down with remote, meditative and deep folk melodies at deep night. It is an eternal pleasure for many generations of tourists who go boating to behold the poetic landscape, to listen to the folk melodies of Hue in tranquil nights. The views on both sides of the river with the citadel, town, gardens, pagodas, towers and temples, etc. and their reflections in the waters make the already loveable river even more poetic and musical. Many people think that Hue city has peaceful, gentle and tranquil landscapes mostly thanks to the Perfume River.

This river brings to the city a meditative poetic characteristics and the harmonious limpidity exhaling from a land of age-old culture. Together with the Perfume River, 105m Ngu Binh Mount is the second invaluable gift endowed by Nature to Hue. These two mingle with each other creating the Romantic Mountain and river beauty of Hue. For a long time, this beautiful mount and the blue limpid Perfume River have become the symbol of Hue city. Therefore, people often call Hue “ The land of the Perfume River (Huong River) and Ngu Binh Mount” or “ Huong-Ngu Land”. • Tam Giang Lagoon

Location: Tam Giang Lagoon is located in Huong Tra District, Thua Thien-Hue Province. Characteristic: Tam Giang Lagoon has a depth of 2 – 4m, in some places, of 7m, the immense water surface is an area of important economic activity bringing high income with its sea products. Thua Thien-Hue Province plain along the sea coast has many lagoons, such as those of Tam Giang, Thuy Tu, Lap An, into them are converged the water of almost all the rivers of the province of Thua Thien Hue before going to the sea, through the mouths of Thuan An, Tu Hien, or through the great lagoon of Lang Co.

Tam Giang and Cau Hai are the two biggest lagoons with fresh water, the two most representative lagoons in Vietnam with a length of 70km, they form an ideal habitat for many sea species all along the province. Yearly thousands tons of sea products are brought on here (fish, shrimps and others). In the recent years, the cultivation and raising of sea products, mainly the raising of shrimps and cultivation of “ gracilaria” has developed in this zone of lagoons. • Mineral Stream of My An Location: My An is located in Phu Duong Commune, Phu Vang District, 7km east of Hue, on the way to Thuan An Beach.

Characteristic: This stream can be compared to various well-known mineral streams, such as Koundour (former Soviet Union) or Pavel Banis (Bulgaria). In June 1979, geological and meteorological expedition No. 79 discovered this natural stream. After multiple scientific studies and experiments, the project “ Studying medical qualities of the mineral stream in My An” came to the conclusion that the mineral water in My An includes every micro-element necessary for the human body. Tests concerning the medicinal value of the mineral water have had positive results.

The water of this stream can be used to successfully treat several skin and venereal diseases, rheumatism, digestion, mental, respiratory and other chronic diseases. At present, many local and foreign patients come to My An for self-treatment. Huong Giang Tourist Company and related administrative bodies of Thua Thien – Hue have begun to take advantage of this mineral source by developing what will be the first tourist resort in Central Vietnam to focus on medical treatment by mineral water. • Canh Duong Beach

Location: Canh Duong Beach is located about 60km from Hue City, between the two mountains: Western Chan May and Eastern Chan May.

Characteristic: Canh Duong is one of the most beautiful beaches of Thua Thien-Hue Province with the length of 8km, 200m wide, bended in arc shape. Gradually sloping beach, white and fine sand, transparent and limpid sea water and fairly windless, the beach is ideal for all activities of tourism and sport. • Thuan An Beach Location: Thuan An Beach is situated in Phu Vang District, near by Thuan An Mouth, where Huong River runs to Tam Giang Lagoon and then to the sea... far from Hue 15km. Characteristic: Only 15 minutes by car, tourists are able to reach the beach.

Plenty small boats, junks drift up and down the river in the left of the route, and on the right there are houses, temples, pagodas, rice field, and gardens successively spread out... In the beginning of the 19th century, King Minh Mang named the place as Thuan An, assigned to build Tran Hai frontier post for the defense of the Capital. Thuan An is a very enjoyable place for all tourists after a full day to visit Hue Citadel, mausoleums, pagodas, and Hue scenery... Thuan An is also the place, where Hue people gather to enjoy the fresh air and sea-bathing in summer time.

Intensive activities of the beach lasts from April to September, while Hue temperature being fairly hot. Sometimes, tourists are very crowded, and there are not enough places for their camping. Besides sea bathing, tourists are able to visit Thai Duong Temple, where Thai Duong Goddess is very esteemed by villagers or visit the temple devoted to the whale, the sacred animal of the local people. • Lang Co Beach Location: With its 10km in length, Lang Co Beach bordered a section of the National Highway Number 1A, near Hai Van Pass, and 24km from Bach Ma Area.

Characteristic: In Lang Co Sea, there are various kinds of shrimps, lobster, sea shrimp, crab, butter-fish, mackerel fish, oysters... Lang Co Beach is an attractive, island-like stretch of palm-shaded white sand, with a crystal-clear, turquoise lagoon on one side and 10 kilometres of beachfront on the other. With its gradually slopping, white sand beach, the average depth of less than 1m and the average temperature in the bathing season of 25°C, Lang Co is an ideal beach for tourists. The beach is best enjoyed between April and July.

From late August till November nuns arc frequent, and from December to March it can get chilly. Not far from the beach, there is Chan May scenery, Lang Co fishing Village. d. Climate Characteristics The climate is similar to central Vietnam in general: a tropical monsoon climate. In the plains and in the hills, the average annual temperature is 25°C, but in the mountains only 21°C (statistical yearbook 2004). The cool season is from November to March with cold northeasterly winds. The lowest average monthly temperature is in January: 20°C.

In the cool season temperatures can fall to 12°C in the plains and the relative humidity is high, between 85 and 95%. Then follows a warmer period from April to September with average monthly temperatures up to 29°C in July, reaching up to 41°C at times. It is very humid in July. The relative humidity is lower, sometimes down to 50%. The annual precipitation in the province is 3200 mm but there are important variations. Depending on the year the annual average may be 2500 to 3500 mm in the plains and 3000 to 4500 mm in the mountains. In some years the rainfall may be much higher and reach more than 5000 mm in the mountains. 3] The rainy season is from September to December – about 70 percent of the precipitation occurring in those months. Rainfall often occurs in short heavy bursts which can cause flooding and erosion, with serious social, economic and environmental consequences. The floods of November 1999 led to 600 deaths and affected 600, 000 homes. 4. Human / Cultural Characteristics a. Population (& ethnic groups) Population: 1. 090. 879 habitants (540. 172 male; 550. 707 female) (2010) Major ethnic groups are Viet (Kinh), Ta Oi, Co Tu, Bru Van Kieu, Pa Koh, Hoa. b. Religion

Hue is a multicultural city, with a large number of religion co-existing. The major religions followed by the Hue population are Buddhism (which blends forms of Taoism and Confusianism), Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism), Islam, Cao Daism and the Hoa Hao sect. In Hue, Buddhism is taken a bit more seriously than elsewhere in Vietnam, with more monasteries than anywhere else and the nation's most famous monks. Buddhism was introduced to the area during the 16th century, during the southward expansion of the ethnic Vietnamese people under the Le Dynasty.

Prior to this, Dai Viet, the predecessor of modern Vietnam, had been mainly restricted to northern Vietnam, particularly the Red River Delta. During the times of the Tran Dynasty, Dai Viet made repeated raids south into modern day central Vietnam, which was then the location of the Kingdom of Champa, which was a Hindu culture. However, the Vietnamese were unable to gain a conclusive result over the Cham, who often fought back and reclaimed territory. The border was often shifted back and forth, and in one instance, the Champa under Che Bong Nga managed to raid and attack Hanoi in the late 14th century.

Dai Viet began to gain ascendancy with rise of the Le Dynasty in 1428, which saw a rise in the military strength of the country. Emperor Le Thanh Tong, regarded as one the greatest in Vietnamese history, led a 1471 Vietnamese invasion of Champa, which resulted in a decisive victory, with large numbers of prisoners and land captured. The conquest signalled the end of Champa as a military threat to Dai Viet, and over time, the remnants of Champa were whittled down by further acquisition of land.

This set forth the gradual process of Vietnamese migration south into the new territory, and the modern city of Hu? began its life as Thuan Hoa in the 16th century, when Nguyen Hoang, the leader of the Nguyen Lords took up a post as Governor of Thuan Hoa, and built up the city. The Nguyen Lords and the Vietnamese that followed them south brought with them Buddhism into a hitherto Hindu area, and the rulers were known for their patronisation of the Buddhism, in particular with their funding of the construction and recognition of many historic temples in the city.

They also recruited and invited Buddhist monks from China to set up temples and religious congregations in the area to expound the dharma. BUDDHIST CRISIS The city was long regarded as a centre of Buddhist scholarship in Vietnam, and in 1963, the temples and Buddhist centres of Hu? were the scene of activism among the local population during the summer, which was the subject of a nationwide political crisis known as the Buddhist crisis. At the time, the city was part of South Vietnam.

South Vietnam's Buddhist majority had long been discontented with the rule of President Ngo Dinh Diem since his rise to power in 1955. Diem had shown strong favouritism towards his fellow Catholics and discrimination against Buddhists in the army, public service and distribution of government aid. In the countryside, Catholics were de facto exempt from performing corvee labour and in some rural areas, Catholic priests led private armies against Buddhist villages. Discontent with Diem exploded into mass protest in Hu? during the summer of 1963 when nine Buddhists died at the hand of Diem's army and police on Vesak, the birthday of Gautama Buddha. In May 1963, a law against the flying of religious flags was selectively invoked; the Buddhist flag was banned from display on Vesak while the Vatican flag was displayed to celebrate the anniversary of the consecration of Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc, Diem's brother. The Buddhists defied the ban and a protest that began with a march starting from Tu Dam Pagoda to the government broadcasting station was ended when government forces opened fire.

As a result, Buddhist protests were held across the country and steadily grew in size, asking for the signing of a Joint Communique to end religious inequality. The pagodas was a major organising point for the Buddhist

movement and was often the location of hunger strikes, barricades and protests. As the tension increased and opposition to Diem increased, the key turning point came shortly after midnight on August 21, when Ngo Dinh Nhu's Special Forces raided and vandalised Buddhist pagodas across the country, rounding up thousands of monks and leaving hundreds dead.

Across Hue, the approach of government forces were met by the beating of Buddhist drums and cymbals to alert the populace. The townsfolk left their homes in the middle of the night in an attempt to defend the city's pagodas. At Tu Dam Pagoda, monks attempted to burn the coffin of a monk who had self-immolated during previous protests. Government soldiers, firing M1 rifles, overran the pagoda and confiscated the coffin. They also demolished a statue of Gautama Buddha and looted and vandalized the pagoda.

An explosion was set off by the troops, which leveled much of the pagoda. Many Buddhists were shot or clubbed to death. The most determined resistance to the Diem regime occurred outside the Dieu De Pagoda. As troops attempted to stretch a barbed wire barricade across the bridge leading to the pagoda, a large crowd of pro-Buddhist laypeople and anti-government protesters tore it down with their bare hands. The crowd then fought the heavily armed military personnel with rocks, sticks and their bare fists, throwing back the tear gas grenades that were aimed at them.

After a five hour battle, the military finally won control of the bridge at dawn by driving armored cars through the angry crowd. The defense of the bridge and Dieu De had left an estimated 30 dead and 200 wounded. Ten truckloads of bridge defenders were taken to jail and an estimated 500

people were arrested in the city. The total number of dead and disappearances was never confirmed, but estimates range up to several hundred. After the deposal of Diem, the temple later became the centre of anti-American and anti-war protests by Buddhists and students against the Vietnam War.

During a period of chaos and protest in 1966, the temple was stormed by police and the army under General Ton That Dinh, who had been sent in by Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky to quell the anti-government protests. Many monks were arrested, along with their supporters and student protesters. The equipment that the protesters used, such as radio, were confiscated. c. Language The people follows the official language of Viet, or what is known as Han-Viet (Chinese-Vietnamese). In the past, Chinese was used as the official written script, but gradually the Vietnamese developed their own script, Chu Nom.

However, with the coming of catholic missionaries, there was further development, with a romanced script being used to represent the national language, called Quoc Ngu. d. History Hue originally rose to prominence as the capital of the Nguyen Lords, a feudal dynasty which dominated much of southern Vietnam from the 17th to the 19th century. In 1775 when Trinh Sam captured it, it was known as Phu Xuan. In 1802, Nguyen Phuc Anh (later Emperor Gia Long) succeeded in establishing his control over the whole of Vietnam, thereby making Hue the national capital.

Hue was the national capital until 1945, when Emperor Bao Dai abdicated and a Communist government was established in Ha Noi (Hanoi), in the

north. While Bao Dai was briefly proclaimed “” Head of State”” with the help of the returning French colonialists in 1949 (although not with recognition from the Communists and the full acceptance of the Vietnamese people), his new capital was Sai Gon (Saigon), in the south. In the Vietnam War, Hue’s central position placed it very near the border between North Vietnam and South Vietnam. The city was located in the South.

In the Tet Offensive of 1968, during the Battle of Hue, the city suffered considerable damage not only to its physical features, but its reputation as well, most of it from American firepower and bombings on the historical buildings as well as the now infamous massacre at Hue. After the war’s conclusion, many of the historic features of Hue were neglected, being seen by the victorious regime and some other Vietnamese as a “ relics from the feudal regime”, but there has since been a change of policy, and some parts of the historic city have been restored”.

The Vietnamese Communist Party doctrine officially described the Nguyen Dynasty as “ feudal” and “ reactionary. ” There has since been a change of policy, however, and many historical areas of the city are currently being restored. ? The Nguyen Dynasty (??) was the last ruling family of Vietnam. Their rule lasted a total of 143 years. It began in 1802 when Emperor Gia Long ascended the throne after defeating the Tay Son Dynasty and ended in 1945 when B? o D? i abdicated the throne and transferred power to the State of Vietnam. During the reign of Emperor Gia Long, the nation officially became known as Vietnam (?? , but from the reign of emperor Minh M? ng on, the nation was renamed D? i Nam (?? , literally “ Great South”). Their rule was marked by the increasing influence of French colonialism; the nation

was eventually partitioned into three, Cochinchina became a French colony while Annam and Tonkin became protectorates which were independent in name only.

2 Origins The Nguyen family had been one of the major families in Vietnamese history, dating back to the days of the Hero-Emperor Le Loi. Due to a civil war and the weakness of the Later Le Dynasty, the Nguyen and the Tr? h (another of the major families) joined together in opposition to the M? c. Nguyen Kim, the leader of this alliance, was assassinated in 1545 by a servant of the M? c. Kim's son-in-law Trinh Kiem, took over the alliance because Kim's sons were too young. In 1558, Nguyen Hoang, the eldest son of Nguyen Kim was given lordship over the southern, newly conquered provinces of Vietnam. He ruled from the city of Hu? for the rest of his life and established the dominion of the Nguyen Lords in the southern part of the country. While the Nguyen Lords, like the Trinh, paid tribute to the Le Emperor, the reality was they ruled, not the king.

Nguyen Hoang and his successors continually expanded their territory by making Kampuchea a protectorate, and by invading Laos, Champa and many small countries in the area. The Nguyen lords styled themselves as “ Lord”

Birth of the dynasty It was Nguyen Phuc Nguyen (or Lord Sai), Nguyen Hoang's son, who started the Nguyen Phuc family name. 200 years later, Nguyen Phuc Khoat was the first ruler of the line who styled himself King (Vuong in Vietnamese), as the Trinh Lords began to do so in the North. Nguyen Phuc Anh finally united Vietnam for the second time in 300 years. He started a dynasty and styled himself Emperor Gia Long.

After Gia Long, other rulers of the dynasty would soon run into problems with Catholic missionaries and, subsequently, the involvement of Europeans in

Indochina. His son Minh Mang was then faced with the Le Van Khoi revolt, when native Christians and their European clergy tried to overthrow him and install a grandson of Gia Long who had converted to Roman Catholicism. This was only the start as frequent revolts were launched by the missionaries in an attempt to Catholicize the throne and the country. Emperors Minh Mang, Thieu Tri and Tu Duc, were opposed to French involvement in the country and tried to reduce the growing

Catholic community in Vietnam at that time. The imprisonment of missionaries who had illegally entered the country was the primary pretext for the French to invade and occupy Indochina. Much like what had occurred in Qing China, there were also numerous incidents involving other nations (European) during the 19th century. The last Nguyen Emperor to rule with complete independence was Tu Duc. After his death there was a succession crisis as the regent Ton That Thuyet orchestrated the murders of three emperors in a year. This allowed the French to take direct control of the country and eventually gain complete control of the monarchy.

All emperors since Dong Khanh were chosen by the French and had only a symbolic position. e. Clothing The Hue people wears the traditional Vietnamese clothes, which are light, thin, and well-ventilated kind of clothing. Men wear brown shirts and white trousers. Their headgear is simply a piece of cloth wrapped around the head and their footwear consists of a pair of plain sandals. Women wear light brown-colored short shirts with long black skirts. Their headgear consists of a black turban with a crest at the front. On formal occasions, they wear a special three layered dress called ao dai, which is a long gown with slits on either side.

The design of the modern-day ao dai, a Vietnamese national costume, evolved from an outfit worn at the court of the Nguyen Lords at Hue in the 18th century. A court historian of the time described the rules of dress as follows: Outside court, men and women wear gowns with straight collars and short sleeves. The sleeves are large or small depending on the wearer. There are seams on both sides running down from the sleeve, so the gown is not open anywhere. Men may wear a round collar and a short sleeve for more convenience. This outfit evolved into the ao ngu than, a five-paneled aristocratic gown worn in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Inspired by Paris fashions, Nguyen Cat Tuong and other artists associated with Hanoi University redesigned the ngu than as a modern dress in the 1920s and 1930s; later, in the 1950s, Saigonese designers tightened the fit to produce the version widely worn by Vietnamese women today. While the ao dai and conical hat are generally seen as a symbol of Vietnam as a whole, the combination is seen by Vietnamese as being particularly evocative of Hue. Violet-coloured ao dai are especially common in Hue, the color having a special connection to the city's heritage as an ancient capital.

In those olden days, it was very common to see young Hue ladies in purple or green Ao Dai selling mussel rice or tofu in the street. Until the war was almost over, conical hat sellers often wore traditional dress too. Every ethnic group among the Hue population has its own fashion of clothing. Over the years, the traditional clothing of all ethnic groups in Vietnam has altered, but each ethnic group has individually preserved their own distinctiveness. f.

Typical / Traditional food and drinks Hue food can be considered a cultural

form, as it brings to tasters, not only food, but also the cooking arts of Hue people.

Particularly, there are 3 types of Hue cuisine – traditional food (or folk dishes), royal cuisine and vegetarian food. Hue has preserved over one thousand dishes in the ‘ Hue style’ of cooking, including royal dishes of the Nguyen Kings. A king’s menu is made up with many dishes of ambrosia, which are meticulously prepared and sophisticatedly decorated. Folk dishes remain popular with local people who have a diverse menu of hundreds of dishes to choose from. These delicacies are prepared by the ladies of Hue in a clever, intelligent manner using skilled techniques and providing an attractive flavour and charming colour.

In the making of these dishes, quality is considered more important than quantity; as is the arts of presentation and its delicate appreciation. When anybody enjoys a vegetarian meal from Hue, he or she is likely to remember the pure tastes forever. The depth of Hue culture is represented through Hue style. The cuisine of Hue draws from throughout Vietnam, but one of the most striking differences is the prominence of vegetarianism in the city. Several all-vegetarian restaurants are scattered in various corners of the city to serve the locals who have a strong tradition of eating vegetarian twice a month, as part of their Buddhist beliefs.

Another feature of Hue dishes that sets them apart from other regional cuisines in Vietnam is the relatively small serving size with refined presentation, a vestige of its royal cuisine. Finally, another feature of Hue cuisine is that it is often very spicy. TRADITIONAL FOOD Hue beef noodle

soup This is considered regional dish which is very popular in Vietnam. it is made from easily-found ingredients such as beef, beef legs, vegetables and the most important is Hue paste. Beef bones or pig bones are stewed with a lot of lemongrass to create the sweet broth. It is served hot with a variety of vegetables.

Mussel rice This is also a daily dish of Hue people. Making mussel rice is very simple. In fact, the main ingredients are mussel and leftover rice.

Furthermore, they go with roasted with peanuts, sesames, Hue paste, crispy pig skin, chilli sauce and a variety of raw vegetables. It's served cool with hot mussel broth. All of them create a perfect combination which gives us distinctive impression. Hell rice (com Am Phu) Hell rice is a speciality of Hue locals which not only attracts foreign tourists to Vietnam but also has become more popular in many countries where Vietnamese people are working and living.

The most typical feature of the dish is the harmonious combination of nutritious ingredients and culinary art. In fact, it is made of rice, pork, egg, pork sausage, carrot, cucumber. When the rice is well-done, put in a bowl and flip it onto a round plate. Place other ingredients around the plate. The dish is served hot with sweet and sour sauce. Hue pancake (Banh khoai) It is the traditional speciality of Hue city and also favourite dish of international tourists visiting there. It is rice pancakes and stuffed with bean sprouts, shrimps, and beef.

It like pancake in the south, but it is smaller and served with very special sauce. Hue cakes: (Banh beo, Banh bot loc, Banh nam)- steamed rice cake

with diced shrimps(Banh beo) , translucent steamed tapioca flour cake with shrimps (banh bot loc) They are made from rice flour (banh nam, banh beo), tapioca flour, shrimps, and pork. Banh bot loc, small dumpling-like bites made from tapioca flour and stuffed with shrimp before being wrapped in banana leaves and cooked by steam. Banh bot loc is usually served with a dipping sauce and can be eaten by hands or with chopsticks.

Hue tom chua (fermented shrimps) It is one of the famous speciality which is considered a refined and high-class dish in Hue. Local women known for their skills, intelligence, and hard work create attractive dishes from fermented ingredients such as small fish, pork, bean curd and especially shrimps. Sweet soups Hue is well-known for its variety of sweet soups. One of the most distinctive sweet soups is che bot loc heo quay (roasted pork sweet soup). Roasted pork is covered by tapioca flour. Then, boil them and put in sugar soup.

HUE'S ROYAL CUISINE Peacock spring roll (nem cong) Grilled phoenix (ch? phu? ng) Dragon salad. VEGETARIAN FOOD Lotus rice Seafood salad h. Arts, architecture and music Arts Hue fine arts and handicrafts are extremely polychromatic and diversified. Based on standardized decoration modes originating from China, Vietnamese artists has truly created a fine artistic identity of decoration with unique character of Hue. Moreover, Hue decorative fine arts inherits the best of Cham fine arts, especially of western decoration fine arts.

Hue decorative arts interpret and develop the folk-arts. In the Nguyen Dynasty, there were a wide range of traditional handicrafts, such as wood

carving, mother-of-pearl inlaying, three or five weapons inlaying, red painting and gilding, ivory and bone carving, ceramics inlaying, gold-silver ware making, weaving, embroidering and knitting. All these crafts were raised to a higher level of elegance and delicacy. As for painting, there were many famous artists in the fields of landscape painting. Sometimes actual orchids and bamboo were used within the painting.

Other styles included glass painting and plaques of Nom poetry in Chinese characters complimenting each picture. Hue is especially proud of its first Vietnamese artist of oil painting, namely Le Van Mien (1870-1912) and the young pioneers who came to prominence in the following generation. In sculpture, the ancient capital of Hue witnessed a new developing period, which was represented by articles carved of wood, bronze and stone. Wooden pieces especially exhibited high sophisticated and aesthetic skills. In applied fine arts, Hue used to be well known for producing high quality blue ceramics.

Looking through the ages of national artistic creation, this truly is an appreciated development in the evolution of Vietnamese arts. ? Architecture Hue is one of the main cultural, religious and educational centers of Vietnam. So far, Hue remains to be the only originally historical vestiged city in Vietnam. Many of Hue's attractions are found along the banks of the romantically named Perfume River with 11km length. This valuable construction includes more than 100 architectural works, which are the reflection of the life of Emperors and mandarins under Nguyen's reign.

Architecture in Hue is the combination of royal architect, folk, religious ones, traditional and modern sides. On December 11th, 1993, it was classified by UNESCO as the world cultural heritage. On the north bank of the river is the Imperial Citadel, built along the line of Peking's Forbidden City, enclosed by 10-metre thick walls and surrounded by a moat. A few kilometers further up the river are perhaps Hue's best-known religious site. Inside the citadel, there are still wonders. For example, the seat of the Nguyen emperors occupying a large, walled area on the north side of the river.

Inside the citadel was a forbidden city where only the concubines, emperors, and those close enough to them were granted access, the punishment for trespassing was death penalty. If you like something mysterious and valuably architectural, you should take a visit to the tombs of ancient Kings. Situated in the middle of the hills on the Southern bank of Perfume River are very beautiful tombs of Nguyen Kings. Among these tombs are the four famous ones with the name and the arrangements of the tomb reflecting each Emperor's points of view, personality, and tastes.

This is majestic Gia Long tomb, imposing Minh Mang tomb, poetic Tu Duc tomb and magnificent Khai Dinh tomb. No architects who would like to discover ancient architecture of Vietnam could ignore Hue's old citadel vestiges. Besides, the garden house is a typical and unique characteristic, contributing to the greater beauty of Hue. Yet, Hue garden houses seem to have been forgotten. Many garden houses have disappeared and researchers are warning that if there are no suitable solutions, Hue garden houses won't exist in the future.

Garden houses began two hundred years ago, during the Nguyen dynasty in the former capital city, Hue. While the royal family lived in the palace, many other royal relatives lived in private residences or smaller palaces in villages such as Nguyet Kieu, Vy Da and Kim Long. They were aristocracy, enjoying gifts of land and gardens across the city. Owners of the garden houses used strict rules of geomancy to build houses. All rations of the house, from the front gate to the back door were calculated carefully.

The direction of the house was chosen carefully so that it can welcome winds and avoid ghosts and the harsh weather of the central region. Behind the front gate is a wind- screen that was made of bricks, usually bearing legends or being planted with jasmine to prevent both wind and the curious eyes from outsiders. It also creates openness for the garden and reduces the separation between the house and its surroundings. Behind the wind-screen are rockworks or small ponds with lotus flowers. There are two rows of hibiscus, roses, and laurel along the path leading to the main house.

The houses are solemn and bear an old atmosphere removed from modern life. The houses have elegance and soul, and love for art of the owner. Houses turn their backs on the road for two reasons, firstly good direction choice, suitable to the owner's age and an escape from the noise and effervescent atmosphere of urban life. The houses are divided into three spaces: the left for men and the right for women, and in the middle an altar to pray Buddha or ancestors. ? Music Tuong Art (classical opera) derived its style of development back in the 17th century, under the reign of the Nguyen Lords.

The Chinese Buddhist Monk Thich Dai San was invited to a performance of classical opera in 1695 by Lord Nguyen Phuc Chu. In his book “ A Voyage to Cochinchine in the year 1792-1793”, J. Barrow brought to the readers a scene of classical opera in the time of the Tay Son movement. During the Nguyen Dynasty, Tuong art was ranked as a national art form and given much more favorable conditions for its development. Right inside of Dai Noi area, there were theatres known as Duyet Thi Duong, Tinh Quang Vien and Thong Minh Duong. Constructed at Khiem Lang (Tu Duc Tomb), there was the Minh Khiem Duong Theatre.

Thanh Binh Thu, where a staff of Tuong performers were trained, was established in the time of Minh Mang. Ban Hieu Thu (editorial staff) was settled under the reign of Tu Duc and specialized in polishing, adjusting, editing and composing libretti of classical opera. It is possible to conclude that the Nguyen Dynasty has greatly contributed to the development of art and the improvement of libretto. Needless to say, the devotion and enthusiasm of nationwide artists and Hue’s populace have further enriched the fertility and model of classical opera, which deserves to be the pinnacle of Vietnam art.

Hue traditional erudite music is typically known in appellation of Ca Hue (Hue Tune) and consists of a singing group and orchestra. Ca Hue is an ad hoc system of over sixty works for vocal and instrumental music, which was categorized into two main kinds of accent: one of the north and one of the south, along with a system of vocal expression, featuring various states of feelings. The former typically consists of cheerful and solemn rhythms, whereas the latter is a melancholy, lamentable and wailful rhythm.

Ca Hue is concrete and strict in structure which through time has gradually developed into a perfect type of musical drama with specific features of professionally erudite music in construction, lyrics and performing style. Together with vocal music of Ca Hue, there are various musical instruments, such as the Tranh (16-chord zither), Ty (Chinese four-chord lute), Nhi (two-string Chinese violin), Nguyet (Vietnamese two-chord guitar), Tam (Vietnamese 36-chord zither), Bau (monochord), Sao (flute), a pair of castanets and percussion drum.

The techniques of playing musical instruments and singing in the Ca Hue style are extremely fine and elegant and typical of local colour. Ca Hue is originated from Hue accent, and so it is closely related to Ho Hue (Hue chanty) and Ly Hue (Hue folklore). Ca Hue is the bridge between royal music and folklore. Ca Hue is in natural harmony with Ho Hue (Hue chanty) and Ly Hue (Hue folklore) without any restrictions on sound, tempo, and the style of utterance. Hue Royal Music for ceremonies and rites is a diversified system, which has derived from eight kinds of royal music for ceremonies and rites under the Le Dynasty.

In the time of the Nguyen Dynasty, Vietnamese royal music developed into Grand or Minor music with a system of great compositions. Hue Royal ballet is a unique artistic heritage from Vietnamese Dynasties with over fifteen great plays of dancing, inclusive of offerings, congratulation, protocol, royal party and classical drama based on narrative. A wide range of dancing plays are beautifully imposing and performer-extensive, describing the charming attraction and techniques and skills of Vietnam royal dancing and singing.

The performances express the advanced development of Vietnamese traditional dancing and singing over time.

Nha nhac is the most popular form of imperial court music, specifically referring to the court music played from the Tran Dynasty to the very last Nguyen Dynasty of Vietnam, being synthesized and most highly developed by the Nguyen emperors. It is based on earlier Vietnamese imperial court music, its primary influences coming from Ming Dynasty's imperial court and later the music of Champa. Along with nha nhac, the imperial court of Vietnam in the 19th century also had many royal dances which still exist to this day. The theme of most of these dances is to wish the kings longevity and the country wealth.

Classical music is also performed in honour of gods and scholars such as Confucius in temples. 5. Tourist's attractions and destinations • Hue Citadel [pic] Location: Hue Citadel is situated on the Northern bank of the Perfume River. Characteristic: With an area of 500ha and a system of three circles of ramparts, namely from outside to inside: Kinh Thanh Hue (Hue Capital Citadel), Hoang Thanh (Royal Citadel) and Tu Cam Thanh (Forbidden Citadel). This construction started in 1805 under the reign of Emperor Gia Long and completed in 1832 under the reign of Emperor Minh Mang.

Under Nguyen Dynasty, the Kings had ordered to build ramparts, palaces and constructional works for royal. Over 200 years to now, it is still original with nearly 140 small and large constructions. The Citadel, square in shape, is almost 10km in circumference, 6m high, 21m thick and 10 entrances. On the top of the walls that surround it, 24 bastions are established for

defensive purposes. Besides, the Citadel has an ancillary gate connecting the Tran Binh Bastion called the Thai Binh Mon (Peace Gate). Hue has chosen to be the capital city of the Southern Kingdom by all Lords Nguyen and officially became the capital under Tay Son Dynasty. For approximately 400 years, Hue has become a great landscape and architectural site. Hue royal complex has been officially recognized by the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Ngu Binh Mountain in the south is used as a front screening elevation. Two sand dunes of The Con Hen and Con Da Vien on the Perfume River are chosen as geomancy condition “ dragon on the left, tiger on the right” to protect the capital city. • IMPERIAL ENCLOSURE

Housing the emperor’s residence and the main buildings of state, the Imperial Enclosure (admission 55, 000d; Time 6. 30am-5. 30pm summer, 7am-5. 30pm winter) is a citadel-within-a-citadel, with (6m-high walls that are 2. 5km in length. The enclosure was badly bombed during the French and American wars, and a large part of it is still park-like ruins. Restoration of the least damaged sections and the complete rebuilding of others is an ongoing project. The Enclosure is divided into several walled sections, with the Forbidden Purple City (opposite) at its centre.

The formal state palaces are between this and the main gate. Around the perimeter are a collection of temples and residences, the better preserved of which are along the southwestern wall. Situated along the opposite wall, nearest to the main gate are the ruins of the Thai To Mieu temple complex (now housing a plant nursery) and behind it the University of Arts, housed in the former Royal Treasury. To the rear of this is a park and lake, spreading into the far corner, where a couple of elephants are kept. This is a

fascinating site, which you could easily spend the better part of a day exploring.

It's completely iniquitous that most day tours include a only brief stop here – it's easily reached on foot from anywhere in Hue and much more enjoyable as a leisurely stroll. • Flag Tower Location: The Flag Tower, also called the King's Knight, is the focal point of Hue City. Characteristic: It is commonly known as a flagpole, but viewed from the Imperial City; it is really a huge structure of three flat-top pyramids, one lying on top of another. It was built during Emperor Gia Long's reign, in 1807, and later improved by his son, Emperor Minh Mang.

According to the Thuc Luc (Nguyen Dynasty's Chronicle), the flag-tower is 17. 40m high and consists of three terraces. The first is 5. 60m high, the second, 5. 8m, and the third, 6m. The higher the terrace is, the smaller its surface is. On the third terrace, are 8 little buildings housing one canon each and two sentry-boxes at opposite ends. The 29. 52m flag-staff was originally made of wood. It was replaced by a new one in 1846 by Emperor Thieu Tri and again in 1914, with French assistance, with a cast-iron one after having been destroyed by a typhoon.

Forty-three years later, after the return of the French colonialists (1947), the staff was again destroyed. So it was in 1948 that a 21m concrete staff was erected. In feudal times, a yellow flag flapped everyday on top of the staff. It was replaced with a larger one on festive occasions (The Nam Giao Offering Ceremony, for example). Made of wool or velvet, this 4m by 3. 6m flag was brocaded with a dragon design in its center and fringed with serrated lace.

The Nine Holy Cannons Location: These nine holy cannons are housed in two buildings beside the The Nhan and Quang Duc Miradors in the Citadel of Hue.

Characteristic: Each cannon is 5. 10m long and weights more than 10 tons. Their barrels are elaborately inscribed with the titles, position order, weight, instructions, and writings on fights against the Tay Son Dynasty. On January 1st 1803, Emperor Gia Long ordered all bronze wares of the Tay Son Dynasty to melt into nine cannons. The work was completed at the end of January 1804. The cannons were named after the four seasons and the five elements: Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth. They are the “ Holy Invincible Generals”.

Originally, they were positioned in front of the Ngo Mon Gate, at the foot of the Royal Citadel wall, but later on, they were moved by order of Emperor Khai Dinh to the present-day location. The cannons have never been used for military purposes and just play a symbolic role as guardian spirits for the Citadel • Royal Citadel or Imperial City The Imperial City is located in the centre of the Citadel where established highest offices of Vietnam’s feudalism and sanctums honouring the cult of deceased Emperors.

The Citadel, also has a nearly square form, with more than 600m long for each side, built of brick 4m high, 1m thick, around which is ditched a system of protection trench. Access to the Imperial City can be made by four entrance gates. Ngo Mon Gate is only used for the King. Royal Citadel consists of more 100 beautiful constructional works divided many sectors: – Sector for the Ngo Mon Gate and the Thai Hoa Palace: This is the place for setting up various grand ceremonies. – Sector for worship shrines of the

Kings Nguyen: Trieu Mieu, Thai Mieu, Hung Mieu, The Mieu and Phung Tien Temples Sector for internal affairs office: Storehouse for precious objects, workshop for manufacturing various useful articles. – Sectors for the Kham Van Palace and the Co Ha Garden: place where the princes are studying or enjoying. Imperial Citadel (Dai Noi) The former imperial seat of government and Hue's prime attraction, this is a great sprawling complex of temples, pavilions, moats, walls, gates, shops, museums and galleries, featuring art and costumes from various periods of Vietnamese history. Thanks to its size, it is also delightfully peaceful – a rare commodity in Vietnam.

The citadel was badly knocked about during fighting between the French and the Viet Minh in 1947, and again in 1968 during the Tet Offensive, when it was shelled by the Viet Cong and then bombed by the Americans. As a result, some areas are now only empty fields, bits of walls, and an explanatory plaque. Other buildings are intact, though, and a few are in sparkling condition. For the rest, while restoration has been going on for 20 years, there is still quite a long way to go. Allow several hours to see it properly. Entry 55, 000 dong open 06: 30-17: 00. Principal Gate (Ngo Mon)

Location: Principal Gate is located in front of the Throne Palace and facing the Flag Tower. Characteristic: Ngo Mon is the main entrance to the Imperial City. Ngo Mon is a huge construction, U-shaped and consisting of two parts: below is a foundation made of brick, Thanh and Quang stone, above is a pavilion made of wood and roofed with tiles. The longest and widest sides of this 5. 2m high foundation are 50m and 27m respectively. Ascent to the top can be made by two open stone staircases on both sides. There are five

entrances, the main one being Ngo Mon, paved with Thanh stone, and with red-lacquered doors reserved for the Emperor.

The two side-entrances, the Left and Right Gates, were for civil and military mandarins and, inside the branches of the U, are two more gates used by soldiers, elephants, and horses on the royal procession. The upper part is the Ngu Phung Pavilion (Pavilion of Five Phoenixes) in the middle, flanked by two wing belvederes of two stories. Viewed from above, the pavilion resembles a group of five phoenixes with beaks joining and wings widespread. They form two rows, two roofs each surrounded with a roofed gallery. The middle section of the roof is covered with yellow enameled tiles and others with dark green ones.

Along the roof ridges are designs of head-turning dragons, banyan leaves and bats with golden coins. Panels along the eaves are decorated with ceramic mosaics of prunes, orchid, chrysanthemum and bamboo. They are bright and harmonious, and very resistant against the rains, typhoons and the passage of time. The upper story is supplied with wooden partitions and was exclusively reserved for the Queen Mother and the Emperor's wives. They could look through windows shaped like circles, gongs or fans, but blinds prevented them from being seen from the outside.

The lower story was left open except for the middle compartment which is paneled and supplied with glass-doors. There sat the Emperor on festive occasions. Behind his seat were a big bell and a large drum, which enhanced the importance of the ceremonies. Besides, the drum was often used to herald closing-time of the Imperial City. At this signal, sentries would fire the

cannons of the Flag Tower and close, or open, the gates of the citadel. Two Chinese characters meaning “ Ngo Mon” on the front of this construction had originally been gilded with genuine gold.

All structural components such as partitions, columns rafters’ doors and banisters are lacquered red and yellow. Ngo Mon was also the site where the Emperor received homage from his subjects and ceremonies took place such as: Ceremony of Proclamation of Doctor Lists (successful candidates in the national examination), Calendar Offering Day... On the side of the road passing the Ngo Mon stand two stone steles inscribed with “ Tilt Your Hats and Dismount” reminding passers-by to tilt their hats and get off horses when passing this sanctum. Ngo Mon was damaged during the wars and underwent several restorations

Throne Palace (Dien Thai Hoa) and Great Rites Court Location: Throne Palace (Dien Thai Hoa) faces the Ngo Mon Gate and lies right on the central axis of the Hue Citadel. Characteristics: The Throne Palace, or Palace of the Supreme Harmony, was the building for great court’s meetings. It was constructed in 1805 by Emperor Gia Long and used later in 1806 for his coronation. The emperor’s coronation hall, where he would sit in state and receive foreign dignitaries. In 1833, it was moved onto a foundation of 2. 33m high by Emperor Minh Mang. It is 44m long, 30. 50m large, 11. 0m high and contains a 5-compartment, two-bay main building connected with a 7-compartment, two-bay front building. The columns are lacquered red and decorated with golden dragon designs. On the roof ridge rest two dragon designs paying homage to the moon. Eaves and roof corners are ornamented with head-turning dragon designs. These and the moldings along the eaves

are inlaid with multicolored ceramic chips. The roof is covered with yellow enameled tiles. Over the middle compartment hangs a carved board with big Chinese characters “ Thai Hoa Dien” (Palace of Supreme Harmony).

Inside is the throne, covered by a golden canopy with brocaded circular dragon designs. Above each compartment hangs a colorful glass-sided hexagonal or octagonal lantern. In 1839, in an attempt to adorn this historic monument, Emperor Minh Mang ordered the framework to be lacquered red and gold. It was later supplied with European-styled paving by Emperor Thanh Thai, in 1899, and colored glass door on front and back sides by Emperor Khai Dinh, in 1923. (It was originally left open and shaded with blinds only). The interior decorations include some jugs and other antiques.

On the court stands a line of carved pedestals, each with a vase for rare plants. Constructors of the Throne Palace have succeeded masterly in creating two contradictory features: cool in summer and warm in winter. From the throne in the center, one can also distinctively hear sounds made anywhere in the palace. Of this phenomenon, no researcher in acoustics or architecture could ever give an exact explanation. The great court in front of the palace, known as the Great Rites Court (or Esplanade of Great Salutation), is paved with Thanh stones and consists of two terraces: the upper was reserved for high-ranking civil and military mandarins.

On both sides of the court are two rows of small steles called Pham Son showing the positions mandarins should take according to their ranks. The lower terrace, beside the Trung Dao (Central Path) Bridge, is for elders and village authorities in ceremonial occasions. At both corners of the court stand

two bronze Kyilins. Kylin is traditionally a harbinger of peace and a reminder of ritual solemnity. Between Ngo Mon Gate and the court is the Thai Dich Lake (Grand Liquid Lake), dug in 1833 and spanned by the Trung Dao (Central Path) Bridge. The bridge, secured by iron banisters, connects the two monuments.

At both ends we find a gateway elaborately carved with five-clawed dragon designs in high relief (dragons among clouds on bronze columns). Though symmetrically built, the two columns with two dragons, one slithering down and one soaring up really create an attractive liveliness. The Throne Palace is the site where solemn ceremonies took place such as: the Coronation Day, the Crown Prince Coronation Day, the Ambassador Receiving Ceremony, Emperor's Birthday Anniversaries, etc. Great meetings were held here twice a month while regular ones took place in the Can Chanh Palace (Palace of Audiences) behind the Great Golden Gate.

The Palace was seriously damaged in 1968 during the American bombings. Typhoons, rains and floods have aggravated the calamity and thus deprived the monument of original appearance • Halls of the Mandarin: The buildings in which the mandarins prepared for court ceremonies, held in Can Chanh Reception hall, were restored in 1977. The structures are directly behind Thai Hoa Palace on either side of a courtyard, where there are two gargantuan bronze vac dong (cauldrons), dating from the 17th century.

Halls of the Mandarin may be categorized by the superb tombs of the Nguyen Emperors, several extraordinary pagodas and the remnants of the Citadel, where the country's emperors once dwelt, reigned and entertained

from. The halls build a square, the fourth side of which was once a partition separating the more unrestricted part of the fortress from the emperor's personal residence which was the "Forbidden Purple City." Inside the Halls of the Mandarins what you will notice and get mesmerized by is the ornate tiled interior.

And from these pieces of art you will be able to get the essence of Vietnam's artistic cultural in its glorious past. The 19-20th Century capital of Vietnam under its final royal rule, Hue is a quiet and attractive city, home to some of Vietnam's most impressive feudal remnants, and Halls of the Mandarins are few of those wisely restored pieces of sculpture. The hall to the left has been set up for cheesy tourist photos; you can pose in Imperial costume on the throne for 20, 000d, while two flunkies will pose with you for 40, 000d. The opposite hall houses a collection of gowns and porcelain from the Nguyen era.

Behind the courtyard are the ruins of the Can Chanh Palace, a large hall for receptions. • Forbidden Citadel Located inside the Imperial City, behind the Throne Palace, the Forbidden Purple Citadel is reserved for Emperor and his family. Constructed early under reign of Emperor Gia Long in 1804 with brick walls of 3. 72m high, 0. 72m thick, about 1, 230m in circumference. Its front and back sides are 324m each while either left and right side is more than 290m including 50 architectural constructions of different sizes and 7 gates for facilities of entrance and exit.

Dai Cung Mon (the Great Palace Gate) is in the front side for the Kings. Can Chanh Palace (the place for daily working of Emperors). Can Thanh

(Emperor's Private Palace), Khon Thai Residence (Queen's Private Apartment) reserved for the Queen. Duyet Thi Duong house (Royal Theatre), Thuong Thien (the kitchen for the Kings' food), Thai Binh Lau (King's reading room)... In addition, there are also famous royal tombs and temples of Kings Nguyen outside Hue Citadel. Seven tombs with different aspect are not only a wonderful arch but also combining beautiful, imposing nature and poetic of Hue.

Ancient Hue including Perfume River and Ngu Mountain, palaces and citadels, tombs and temples with hundred of historic years are being embellished and recovered by material contribution of Vietnamese and International community in order to keep Hue City as World cultural heritage. Royal Theater (Duyet Thi Duong) Location: Royal Theater is located in the east of the Quang Minh Palace (Palace of Brightness) in the Forbidden Citadel. Characteristics: The Royal Theater was the oldest of Vietnamese traditional stage that remained. It was closed after the end of the monarchy (Jan 8th, 1945).

During the U. S temporary occupation it was used by the South Government for the Hue Music College (present-day Hue Art University). The Royal Theater was built by Emperor Minh Mang in 1826. It was large, rectangular-shaped with curved eaves, similar to those of Hue pagodas and communal houses, supported by two rows of iron-wood, red lacquered columns decorated with intertwined dragon and cloud designs. On each column hung a painting of Hue scenery in a golden frame, carved with dragon designs. The sky-blue ceiling above was painted with figures of sun, moon and stars, symbolizing the universe.

The building was connected with the royal living quarters by snaky roofed galleries. A square-shaped stage occupied the central part of the floor. No decoration was used to distinguish the real world from the theatrical one. Behind the stage were two doors. Actors and actresses made their entrances from the right-side and exited on the left. Behind the wall was a large room for storing scripts, theatrical headgear, footwear and props. The highest position of this room was occupied by an altar dedicated to two founders of the court opera theater.

The room opened onto the court east of the Forbidden Citadel (this entrance was used by actors and actresses). Across the stage was a high tower of two levels. The top level, next to the western wall, was reserved to the queen, concubines and maidservants. On the ground level was a carved chair for the Emperor. These two levels were kept separated by a bamboo blind which offered the spectators a good view o