



# THE POWER OF TRAVEL VIETNAM

Like a lot of avid travellers, I have a wish list of places I hope to visit before I am too old or unable to travel. I just returned from Vietnam; a country I wanted to visit primarily to see Halong Bay. The name alone has always evoked for me a far away place, mystical, mysterious, and of great beauty. I fell in love with Vietnam—a country, a culture, a story...not a war.

From Halong Bay to the Mekong region, with stops in Hanoi, Danang, Hoi An, Hue, and Ho Chi Minh, I discovered a country miraculously preserved, intact, simple, full of life. During the whole trip my enjoyment came from watching endearing scenes of daily life:—A family of 4 squeezed tight on the seat of a small motorcycle; all generations together, early in the morning on the beach or in the streets, doing their warm up exercises before going to work; men drinking tea while reading the paper sitting on a tiny plastic chair on the side walk; students leaving school perched high and proud on their old fashioned bicycle, wearing their traditional Vietnamese white uniform, their long black hair enhancing the beauty of the image; hundred of motorcycles honking their horn as they drive all over town or on the main country roads; children stopping for a breakfast noodle soup on their way to school from a street vendor; women carrying all kinds of products on a bamboo stick balanced on their shoulders; and farmers working on their rice fields, little dots in a sea of green.

In our times of financial crisis and cut backs, Vietnam gave me an inspiring lesson on how to be creative with very little. Rather than hunkering down and turning inward, I believe that travel is the only real antidote—a good way to keep our sense of balance and awareness. It is refreshing, stimulating, and uplifting.

Call me when you are ready to seize the moment and change your life by enjoying simple pleasures.

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Fondly,  
*Murielle*



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