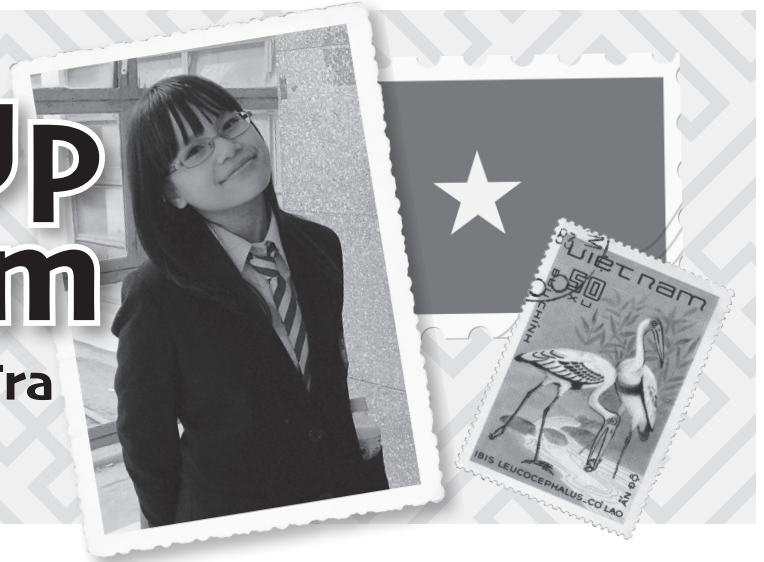


Growing Up in Vietnam

by Do Tran Thu Tra



- 1 Hi, I am 13 years old. I live in a beautiful country in Southeast Asia—Vietnam. It is a peaceful country that has a wonderful history and great culture. My memories of this place are filled with happiness and joy. Now, with all my respect and love to my country, I shall tell you about Vietnam.
- 2 My country is small and beautiful. It is also long and narrow. You can find many high mountains, tropical forests, and a long coastline. We have special parks to protect all the unusual wildlife that we have in Vietnam. If you come and visit our parks, you may see tigers, elephants, and monkeys. China is our neighbor to the north, and Laos and Cambodia are our neighbors to the west. The South China Sea lies to the east, where you will find some lovely beaches. Many people live in the countryside, where they grow rice, coffee, soybeans, and tea, as well as many other things.
- 3 But because we are small, many countries have tried to invade us. Let's look back at Vietnam's amazing history.
- 4 From the beginning until recently, Vietnam was a country under the rule of kings. They fought many battles. They defeated many enemies. At one point, our country was divided into two countries—North and South Vietnam. After a long war, our country was put back together. Just because Vietnam is small doesn't mean it will surrender to the enemy.
- 5 Vietnam was once one of the poorest countries in the world, but it has proved its worth by improving the people's quality of living in recent years. We make clothing and shoes for people all over the world. We also sell seafood and rice to many other countries.
- 6 Every year millions of foreigners arrive in Vietnam. They come to Vietnam not just for their vacations, but also to



Ho Chi Minh City

Go Team Red! Tra and her classmates visit the Hanoi Museum.

see Vietnamese culture and lifestyle. Vietnamese culture has been influenced by Western culture, but still we have our own culture that is different from others.

- 7 Wherever you go in Vietnam, north or south, you can see the traditional dress *ao dai*. We are proud whenever foreigners wear *ao dai* in Vietnam and in other countries. It is the symbol of Vietnamese culture.
- 8 In addition to clothes and food, Vietnam is famous for its beautiful places, such as Ha Long Bay, where there are magical rock formations and other beautiful beaches and landscapes that cannot be easily forgotten. Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, is famous for its ancient and traditional style. In the old section of the city, there are still streets that were named for the goods and wares that were made and sold there. For example, Hang Doa Street is where silk weavers once wove beautiful silk items.

- 9 Ho Chi Minh City is famous for its modern, busy life and shopping. It is home to more than eight million people. If you need a quiet place, you should try Hanoi. But if you prefer noisy and exciting places, please see Ho Chi Minh City. Everyone is always welcome.
- 10 We celebrate New Year's twice a year. Like most of the world, we celebrate New Year's on January 1, but we also celebrate the Vietnamese lunar year in February. This is called Tet. People will wear their traditional costumes, give gifts to friends and family, and decorate their city with flowers.
- 11 Vietnamese people are peaceful, loving, hardworking, and friendly. They want to make friends with people around the world.
- 12 And that's my amazing homeland—Vietnam.

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Test Questions

Circle the correct answer.

1. What is Ha Long Bay known for?

- a. modern lifestyles
- b. beautiful landscapes
- c. traditional clothing
- d. delicious food

2. How are cities in Vietnam different from each other?

- a. Some cities have friendly people, and some cities do not.
- b. Some cities are quiet and traditional, and some cities are busy and modern.
- c. Some cities have battles being fought, and some do not.
- d. Some cities are very cold, and some cities are very warm.

3. Why is Vietnam a good place to visit?

- a. It has friendly people and beautiful cities.
- b. It is small and surrenders to its enemies.
- c. There are not any noisy or busy cities.
- d. The culture is the same as Western culture.

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Test Questions (*continued*)

4. What does *foreigners* mean as it is used in the following paragraph from the passage?

Every year millions of **foreigners** arrive in Vietnam. They come to Vietnam not just for their vacations, but also to see Vietnamese culture and lifestyle.

- a. traditional clothing
- b. kings to rule Vietnam
- c. new invaders
- d. people from other countries

5. What is the main idea of the passage?

- a. Vietnamese culture is different from Western culture.
- b. Vietnam has many interesting cities to visit and explore.
- c. Vietnam is a fascinating country with an interesting culture.
- d. Vietnamese people are kind and hardworking.