

## **Da Lat - City of Eternal Spring**

Da Lat city is probably one of Vietnam's most well-known vacation destination with many romantic [hotels in Da Lat](#). Since the turn of the century, Da Lat has been the vacation spot for well-to-do Vietnamese and foreigners. It is the unofficial honeymoon mecca of Vietnam. Located on Lam Vien (Langbian) high lands, part of the greater Central high lands of Vietnam (Cao Nguyen Trung Phan), the city is 1500m above sea level and is 305km from Saigon. The name Da Lat originates from the hill tribe people in this region. It literally means Stream of the Lat people.

## **Da Lat History**

The first person to explore this region was Mr. Nguyen Thong. Approximately 25 years later, in 1893, Dr. Yersin, a French immunologist discovered Dankia high lands while on an expedition to the Langbian high lands. Dankia is 10 km from the city of Da Lat. This region reminded Dr. Yersin of his homeland, and particularly the similarities between Da Lat's evergreen forests and those in the Swiss Alps. He made the recommendation to the government to form a resort town with health spas for government officials and foreign dignitaries in Dankia.

Not long after, Dr. Tardiff, also a French citizen, had an expedition through this region and visited Dankia and Da Lat. He recommended Da Lat to the government due to the favorable water source and locale. At the time, South Vietnam was under French rule, and was known as Cochinchina. The Governor of Cochinchina personally visited Dangkia and Da Lat and decided to take Dr. Tardiff's recommendation.

## **Dalat Central Market**

One of Da Lat's charm is the laid-back way of living of the local people. On any given day, from early morning to late at night, Da Lat's Central market is bustling with activities. Unlike most market in Vietnam, Da Lat's market has an open promenade where people can walk about. At the end of the promenade is a stair leading to the Le Dai Hanh Street, one of Da Lat's major thoroughfare.

Da Lat enjoys favorable weather year-round. During the winter months the average temperature in Da Lat is 10°C. During the summer months the average temperature here is 18°C. The locals claim that Da Lat is Vietnam's botanical garden in the middle of a pine forest. Many of the countries' fruits and vegetables come from this part of the country.

## **Ho Than Tho - Lake of Sorrow**

Lake of Sorrow is located approximately 5 km northeast of the city. According to local lore, the lake was named during the war between Vietnam and China. As the story goes, long ago there lived a young couple in this area. They loved each other very much and often met by the lake to enjoy the tranquil setting of this area. At about the time when they spoke of building a future together, Vietnam was in the state of war with foreign invaders from the north. There was a general call for able-body young men to take arms. The young man, Hoang Tung, being extremely patriotic, decided to join the army of king Quang Trung - Nguyen Hue to help defend Vietnam.

The young couple decided to meet by the lake to say their goodbye as Hoang Tung was leaving with his garrison for the north. His betrothed Mai Nuong, being equally patriotic, decided not to be a burden in his mind, lest he won't be able to perform his

duties, decided to commit suicide by drowning in the lake. When the time came for the two to meet, Hoang Tung found that she has passed away.

The people in this region heard of the young couple's story and decided to rename the lake Ho Than Tho or Lake of Sorrow. Several variations of the story are published. One version along this line claimed that Hoang Tung did not show up at the appointed time. Mai Nuong was heartbroken and spent many days by the lake to wait for him. Hopeless, Mai Nuong committed suicide by jumping into the lake.

### **Xuan Huong Lake**

Da Lat is also famous for its many waterfalls and lakes, one of which is Ho Xuan Huong (Xuan Huong lake). This man-made lake was a site where many indigenous people of Langbian high land made their homes. In 1984, the lake was emptied for renovation purposes. At the bottom of the lake, scientists found many relics belonging to the hill tribe that once lived in this area. Xuan Huong lake is shaped like the crescent moon. Visitors to Da Lat and the town's people use the lake as a place to meet and talk. The lake is also where many honeymooners come to visit.

Xuan Huong lake is the most beautiful lake in Da Lat. It is approximately 5 km<sup>2</sup>. In 1919 a dam was formed on a branch of Camly river creating a small lake. In 1923, another dam was built further downstream to create yet another lake. During a severe storm in 1932, both dams were destroyed. Between 1934-35, a larger dam was built of boulders (site of Ong Dao bridge today) below the sites of the two previous Dam creating one large lake named Ho Lon or Large lake. Ho Lon was later renamed after Ho Xuan Huong, a famous Vietnamese poet in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century.

### **Dalat Waterfalls**

Prenn fall is located at the foot of Prenn pass and is about 10 km from Da Lat. Around the fall area was once a thriving wild life refuge. Visitors to the fall can visit the various habitat of the animals in this region. Today, Prenn fall is a destination to visit in Da Lat. A local compared the scenery at Prenn fall to those drawn in paintings. The water falling from the top of the fall creates a sheet of silver pouring into a pool of water at the bottom. Behind this sheet of water is a wooden and bamboo bridge where visitors can cross behind the water.

Gougah fall is approximately 40 km from Da Lat. The fall is located 500 m to the left of route 20. Guga is 17m high. Its waters path is naturally split in half mid-way down the fall. The path to the right flows calmly to the bottom, while the path to the left has great turbulence and mist as the water strikes the rocks on its way to the bottom.

### **Scenic Dalat**

A small stream fed from Xuan Huong lake pours into Cam Ly fall leading to Suoi Vang (Gold Stream). Many people believe the name Camly has its origin in Han Viet. Cam means sweet and Ly means where the land absorbs the water. The river and fall were given the name Camly to signify a stream of cool fresh water leaving an impression (absorb) in the heart of the visitors. More probable however is the fact that Camly is the Vietnamese pronunciation for K'Mly, name of the chief of Koho tribe who made their home in the Xuan Huong valley during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Thung Lung Tinh Yeu (Valley of Love) is now a park developed by the local government to attract tourists. The valley is approximately 5km from the center of town. At the floor of the valley is Da Thien lake. To go to the lake there is a small dirt path used for horses. Recently the park attendants have built a series of steps

leading to the bottom of the valley. Lake Da Thien is quite small and there are peddles and motorized boats for rent.

Source: [Đặt khách sạn](#)