

## Vietnam - Make Yourself at Home in Historic Binh Thuy Village

It lies on the right bank of the Can Tho River along Highway 91 just six kilometers from the city centre, and, despite the rapid urbanization in recent times, has maintained the typically rich culture of the land. It still reflects the elegance and graciousness of its first house owners.

It also has around 20 houses built in the original style, using a combination of southern Vietnamese western architecture.

The Vuon Lan house is one of them. It was built in the 1870s but remains in good shape. The house is in the traditional chu dien (square) pattern. It has a gate, then a garden, large yard, anteroom, and a guestroom. The latter was built and decorated in western style with luxurious furnishings including embroidered pictures.

After the guestroom is the main room which was designed in southern Vietnamese style and used for worshipping ancestors.

It has plenty of furniture, all made from precious wood, with sophisticated Vietnamese carvings, and in 19th century style. These include wardrobes, cupboards, tables and chairs, and a large altar. There are also many ancient pots and jars on display here.

There are two bedrooms either side of the main room. Behind it are a dining room, kitchen and shed. Behind the house are big orchards, fishing pond and rice field.

In the garden is a 10m-high African cactus that is nearly 300 years old.

The owner of the house, Duong Minh, said he was the fifth generation in his family to inherit the house.

The house has hundreds of rare antiques that speak volumes about the life and culture in olden times. Minh listed oil lamps, beds, wardrobes, pottery, and ceramic pots and jars among them.

He showed some oil lamps with their really unique shapes such as butterfly and cylinder.

"Every day, we receive dozens of domestic and foreign tourists, many of whom want to research the house's architecture," he said.

He revealed that the city administration had injected a significant amount of money to restore Vuon Lan and many other old houses in the village, hoping to attract tourists.

### About the Author

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