



Arriving in Hanoi/ HANU By Ethna Elizondo and Mireya Treviño

Getting to Vietnam from Monterrey took many airplanes and hours. We made stops in Dallas, Los Angeles and Hong Kong, where we actually toured for a few days before getting to Hanoi. Although we should have been tired and jetlagged, the idea of the days that would follow and the new things we would see energized the whole group. When we arrived at Vietnam, just with being in the airport it felt different, because everyone was so quiet and solemn, and our group had been very noisy throughout the trip, so we knew we had to be quieter. Army officers guarded the landing airplanes and directed us to the immigration section, where we were told to stand in the "APEC Delegation" line, which made us feel special.

When all ten of us had collected our belongings and made it through customs (an adventure in itself), we met another group of Mexicans arriving also for the program from SELIDER. We were all greeted by some of our Vietnamese hosts right away and were instructed to take the vans to the hotel. Some of us changed currency right at the airport and were surprised to find out that the exchange rate was 16,000 dong to one USD: Soon we had hundreds of thousands of dong in our pockets!

As we drove to the hotel, the first thing we noticed was that the driver was honking a lot, and first we thought that it was just him, but after some time we realized that everyone was doing the same thing! Although all this noise was kind of strange and annoying, it turned out to be funny and a true landmark from Hanoi. The ride to the hotel was long enough for us to get a view of the old buildings with the traditional pagoda-style rooftops and also to notice that houses are narrow on the front and usually three or more stories high. Getting to the old part of the city to the hotel was impressive because we saw more of the chaotic traffic in the city and the honking intensified.

When we arrived to the hotel in Vietnam it wasn't what we expected, since we originally thought we would be in a big hotel with all of the people of Voices of the Future; instead we were divided in small, nearby hotels. We were told that we would have roommates from different countries for the whole week and that made us a bit nervous. It can be strange to stay in a completely different country, with people you don't know, however the staff and the organizers were all very kind and friendly, which made it comfortable. But this was a good way to get to know all the members of the program. At first it was hard to get to be friends with all of the participants mainly because we speak different languages, but we spoke English at all times, so that barrier was erased easily and we became closer.

We first met the Canadian delegation and then we started meeting everyone else. We loved the feeling of a small town that the Old Quarter has, because we are used to a different setting in our city. Crossing the streets was scary because in Monterrey we don't have as many motorcycles and bicycles as in Hanoi (this is the main medium of transportation, whereas in Monterrey we have mainly cars) and the way of driving also felt very foreign. We aren't used to this transportation, so some of the members of VOF got the courage to try and ride a motorcycle and they said it is actually better than being on a car.

On Monday, when we went to Hanoi University (HANU), we had the formal welcome by Professor Lang who made sure we all got the agenda and handbook for the rest of our stay. We also got the information about what were we doing and basic data about the country.

We still have contact with the other members and we hope to maintain it for a long time, to see us again some day and to have achieved the goals that we have.





Trip Notes

We had a really good time, meeting everyone from all the different countries that were there, and making friends with people we had never seen before. It was a really good and exciting experience,



something that we never lived before, and definitely would like to have the opportunity to live again.

Mireya Treviño and Ethna Elizondo get a first sight of the Lake in Hanoi upon their arrival.



Traffic in Hanoi on a rainy, Sunday afternoon





Trip Notes



The first thing we noticed was the traffic and the honking.



Mireya Treviño posing by one of the many Welcome signs around the city.





Trip Notes



The introductory speeches at HANU.

Airline/Flt. No.	Destination	Gate	Time	Status
HEXICANA 905	HEXICO CITY	123	5:00P	ON TIME
BRITISH AIR 282	LONDON HEATHROW	121	5:20P	ON TIME
SINGAPORE 037	SINGAPORE	102	8:00P	ON TIME
BANTAS 026	RUCKLAND-MELBOURNE	120	8:30P	ON TIME
BRITISH AIR 268	LONDON HEATHROW	121	8:45P	ON TIME
PHILIPPINE 103	MANILA		8:55P	ON TIME
LUFTHANSA 453	MUNICH	122	9:25P	ON TIME
CATHAY PAC 883	HONG KONG	102	10:20P	ON TIME
EVA AIR 015	TAIPEI	105	10:30P	ON TIME
AMERICAN 7605	NADI FIJI	121	10:30P	ON TIME
CHINA AIR 007	TAIPEI	103	11:10P	ON TIME
BANTAS 094	MELBOURNE	120	11:15P	ON TIME
SINGAPORE 027	TAIPEI-SINGAPORE	104	11:30P	ON TIME
KOREAN AIR 012	SEOUL		12:10A	ON TIME
HEXICANA 137	HEXICO CITY		12:10A	ON TIME
CATHAY PAC 881	HONG KONG	102	12:20A	ON TIME
ASIANA 203	INCHON	122	12:30A	ON TIME
HEXICANA 111	HEXICO CITY-OAKACA		12:30A	ON TIME
HEXICANA 127	GUADALAJARA	123B	12:30A	ON TIME
HEXICANA 119	LEON/GUANAJUATO		1:00A	ON TIME

Getting to Hanoi took many flights.



Trip Notes





Trip Notes





Trip Notes

