

Books, cultural experience to offer a glimpse of Việt Nam

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Guests will have the chance to learn about Việt Nam, particularly the history of Gia Định, Sài Gòn and modern-day HCM City, through stories of local residents and places featured in the books.



The poster for the cultural experience programme A Glimpse of Việt Nam. — Image courtesy of the organisers

HCM CITY — An experience programme designed to bring Việt Nam's history, culture and people closer to domestic and international visitors through books and storytelling will be launched in HCM City on October 12.

Entitled *A Glimpse of Việt Nam*, the programme is a collaboration between Hotel Grand Saigon, a member of Saigontourist Group, and the HCM City General Publishing House.

Through the introduction of a series of cultural activities involving stories, books and memories, the five-star heritage hotel seeks to expand its role beyond accommodation, becoming a space for cultural exchange and discovery.

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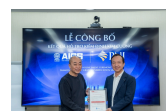
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local residents and places featured in the books.

The HCM City General Publishing House will work with the hotel to introduce selected publications on Việt Nam's history, culture, people and urban life to international visitors, creating more meaningful cultural experiences during their stays.

Established in 1930, Hotel Grand Saigon has witnessed many stages in the development of HCM City, preserving its historical, architectural and cultural values over the decades. The new initiative forms part of the hotel's efforts to develop cultural spaces and products that allow the city's stories to be told and experienced within its historic premises.

The partnership will focus on three main activities.

First is the launch of a set of Hotel Grand Saigon postcards, jointly developed by the hotel and the publishing house. Inspired by the hotel's history and its location on Đồng Khởi Street, one of the best-known thoroughfares in the former city of Sài Gòn, the postcards will offer visitors a glimpse into the property's heritage.

The second is the development of a Hồ Chí Minh cultural space at the hotel. The publishing house will provide digital content for the space, while the hotel will arrange a display featuring memorabilia related to President Hồ Chí Minh and selected books.

The final activity will be a quarterly programme to promote reading through workshops and discussions with authors and speakers at the hotel. The events will feature conversations with authors and researchers about history, culture, tourism and Southern Vietnamese cuisine, with a particular focus on HCM City.

Through these exchanges, writers and cultural researchers will bring the stories behind the books to life, offering visitors a deeper understanding of Việt Nam's cultural identity and everyday life.

The inaugural event will feature German-Vietnamese writer Isabelle Muller speaking on the theme *Việt Nam through the Lens of Two Cultures*.

She will share her experiences of discovering Việt Nam through the perspectives of two cultures, reflecting on the country's people, daily life and traditions, as well as the personal stories that have inspired her writing.

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German-Vietnamese writer Isabelle Muller will share her experiences of discovering Việt Nam through the perspectives of two cultures at the event. — Photo courtesy of the author

Müller is the author of *Loan – From the Life of a Phoenix, Daughter of the Phoenix – Hope Is My Way* and the novel *Only a Heartbeat Away*, among other works.

Her writing draws on the true story of her mother, Loan, a Vietnamese woman who overcame adversity with resilience and determination, becoming a steadfast source of support for her family and children. Her mother's strength also inspired Müller to overcome challenges and build a successful life.

Müller has also written the *Hip Hop* children's book series, including *Hip Hop in the Land of Ellsaby*, *Hip Hop and the Golden Forest* and *Hip Hop and the Master Singer*. Her works emphasise love for nature and fellow human beings, resilience in the face of adversity and the importance of helping one another. These humanistic values run throughout her writing.

Visitors during the event will also be able to explore *Take Việt Nam Home*, a display area featuring a curated selection of books grouped into three themes: history, culture and everyday life.

The collection aims to introduce international visitors to diverse perspectives on Việt Nam, its people and cultural identity, with particular emphasis on HCM City.

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