

A Taste of Vietnam

26x30' in HD

Culinary icon Martin Yan travels through, and explores the breathtaking landscape, colorful history and stunning recipes from far and wide in Vietnam.

For months Martin travelled extensively --- by plane, train, boat, bus, car, motorcycle, bicycle, atop a water buffalo cart and on old fashion leg power --- throughout Vietnam, from its spectacular snow-capped mountains in the north to the intricate network of canals that make up the water world of the Mekong Delta in the south. He toured coffee plantations, dragon fruit farms and organic vegetable co-operatives.

He then returns to his kitchen to re-create some of these recipes in his signature style.

A Taste of Vietnam is both a visual and culinary treat ... truly!

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Episodes

Episode 101: The Chefs of Vietnam

Behind every creative Vietnamese dish is a creative Vietnamese chef. Some are award-winning professionals with years of international experience, while others are young rising stars. Coming from cities big and small, Martin cooks with a select few and shares with them creative ideas on Vietnamese cuisine.

Recipe: Duck with Tea Sauce, Orange-flavored Duck, My Long Noodle, Dungeness Crab with Tamarind Sauce.

Episode 102: Where Dragons Nest

Vietnamese legends detailed dragons descending from the heavens and nesting in Ha Long Bay. Martin sails these spectacular waters, exploring the many rugged caves inside the thousands of limestone islands. He drops by a floating village where children commute daily by boat to a schoolhouse on water.

Recipe: Crispy Fried Shrimp, Steamed Whole Fish in Spicy Bean Sauce.

Episode 103: An Ecology Tour

Martin gets up-close and personal with Vietnamese nature preservation by joining an eco- riverboat tour. Much to his delight, in addition to all the tips on nature, Martin also learns about the charming life of local fishing families, and how one can 'rock the boat' on an eco-river cruise.

Recipe: Banana Blossom Salad with Duck and Ginger, Grilled Spicy Lemongrass Lamb Chops.

Episode 104: Country Life, City Life

In Vietnam, many of today's city dwellers are only one generation removed from their country roots. Martin discovers that the long journey home to one's country roots can also be a short riverboat ride to a picturesque park outside Ho Chi Minh City.

Recipe: Grilled Meatballs, Grilled Shrimp, Young Coconut Drink.

Episode 105: Little Saigon

Vietnamese American communities are among the fastest growing ethnic neighborhoods across America. Martin visits a few of these vibrant communities in Northern California, sharing his personal immigrant experience with these newer generation of immigrants, and picking up many useful tips and recipes along the way.

Recipe: Sauteed Duck Breast Sandwich, Avocado Smoothie, Vietnamese Imperial Rolls.

Episode 106: The Folk Art of Vietnam

As so much of Vietnam is closely tied to its land and water, from farming to fishing, it is only natural that Vietnamese folk-art is inspired by the surrounding natural beauty. Martin visits the famous Water Puppet Show in Hanoi, tours a pottery village and admires the embroidery handiwork of a true master.

Recipe: Chicken Curry in Coconut Milk, Mung Bean Cake with Glutinous Rice.

Episode 107: Going Organic

Organic farming has a long history in Vietnam. Martin visits an organic co-op near the picturesque town of Hoi An in central Vietnam. Traveling north, he tours the organic garden of an ambitious and enterprising chef who works in an eco-friendly farm outside Vietnam's ancient city of Hoi An.

Recipe: Organic Vegetable Stir-fry with Kohlrabi, Pomelo Salad, Lemongrass Flavored Tea.

Episode 108: The French Connection

French missionaries first arrived in Vietnam in the 17th century, but the true French legacy is more prominent on the Vietnamese menu: from sidewalk cafes to the many east/west fusion dishes. Martin samples the popular Vietnamese sandwiches and explores how the traditional French baguette has taken on a Vietnamese twist.

Recipe: Spicy Beef Stew, Franco/Vietnamese Baguette, Lemongrass Coconut Crème Caramel.

Episode 109: Breaking Fast

Without a doubt the breakfast of champions in Vietnam is a steaming bowl of pho - but there's more! From the classic broken rice to traditional Chinese rice congee, Martin joins millions of early risers in Vietnam for breakfast at the famous Ben Thanh Market and drops by a most unique noodle and tailor shop in one.

Recipe: Eel Noodles, Beef Pho, Broken Rice, Duck Congee.

Episode 110: Life is a Beach

Endowed with the longest coastline in Southeast Asia, Vietnam is home to some of the most spectacular beaches in Asia. Martin spends the day exploring these natural wonders, sunning, frolicking, touring and most importantly tasting all the wonderful treats of the fabulous seaside resorts of Vietnam.

Recipe: Rice Paper Rolls, Clam Salad, Fresh Salad Rolls with Shrimp, Durian Tofu Dessert.

Episode 111: One-dish Wonders

Many popular eateries in Vietnam only feature one dish on their menus. The lack of variety does not deter their loyal customers. In fact, quite the opposite. Most of these places have customers wrapped around the block day and night. Martin joins the enthusiastic diners and samples the many one-dish wonders of Vietnam.

Recipe: Vietnamese Beef Hot Pot, Steamed Rice Noodle Roll with Mushrooms & Chicken, Nuoc Cham Fish Sauce.

Episode 112: Modern Vietnam

There is a modern side of Vietnam, and it is every bit as dynamic as all its Asian neighbors. Martin gets a taste (or two) of modern Vietnamese life. He learns how traditional Vietnamese recipes can take on a modern twist, and how much of Vietnam's tomorrow is already a part of Vietnam today.

Recipe: Steamed Mango Fish Roll, Shrimp and Corn Fritters.

Episode 113: Gone Fishing

With its endless coastline and countless rivers and canals, Vietnamese fishermen are never without a spot to cast their nets. Martin wakes up before dawn to lend a hand unloading the overnight catches from the fishing fleet. He hops on to one of the unique basket boats to check out the fresh seafood on board. Later he drops by a boat maker to see how these basket boats are still made by hand.

Recipe: Claypot Fish with Pineapple and Tomato, Clam Soup with White Wine.

Episode 114: Land of Fish and Rice

Vietnam is a land of plenty. Much of its land is fertile for farming, and its waters are rich with fish and seafood. Martin follows the cycle of rice cultivation and harvesting, and observes how rice is made into the popular rice noodle, and how fish is made into the Vietnamese national condiment, fish sauce.

Recipe: Golden Crisp Whole Fish, Grilled Meat Medallions over Rice Noodle Pancakes.

Episode 115: Romance of the Delta

Life takes on its own rhythm in the water world of the Mekong Delta. Martin visits a unique guesthouse where guests can harvest fruit in the orchard and cook the fish they catch in nearby ponds. The delta is also rich with coconut farms. Martin visits a home where they make unique coconut rice crepes.

Recipe: Cabbage Duck Roll, Jackfruit Sago Cream.

Episode 116: Where Heaven Meets Earth

An overnight train takes Martin from the urban sprawl of Hanoi to the Northern Highlands of Vietnam, where scores of the country's ethnic tribes have called home for centuries. Visiting the famous Sunday market at Bac Ha and the trekkers outpost of Sa Pa, Martin explores a land where the heavens meet the earth.

Recipe: Green Mango Duck Salad, Grilled Lemongrass Beef Skewers.

Episode 117:

Martin spends a day visiting Trung Do, a picturesque tribal village up in the Northern Highlands. At the ancestral temple, he learns about the history of the village and how their traditional way of life is preserved in this modern age. He is the guest of honor to a delectable feast that comes with tribal dance and music.

Recipe: Chicken and Mushroom Rice in a Claypot, Shaking Beef.

Episode 118: Village Living

In this age of technology, a large portion of the Vietnamese population still resides in small towns and villages. To truly appreciate this unique way of life, Martin visits a couple of villages near Hue, places where the old, simple and peaceful way of life is well respected and practiced.

Recipe: Spicy Beef Noodle Soup, Sweet and Spicy Shrimp.

Episode 119: The Charm of Old Hanoi

The historic district of Hanoi is a charming enclave where time stands still. On foot and on a local pedi-cab, Martin explores the twisting and turning roads and alleyways of this fascinating neighborhood. He visits small, family-owned shops and sidewalk cafes, and samples all the intriguing local street food.

Recipe: Hanoi Chicken and Vermicelli Noodle Soup, Papaya Salad, Rainbow Drink.

Episode 120: Cruising with Dragons

The best way to appreciate the legendary Ha Long Bay is on board a luxury cruise ship. Between morning Tai Chi and midnight squid fishing, there are excursions to the many islands and visits to villages where they make jam and wine out of a local flower. Back on board Martin keeps busy by lending a hand to the chef.

Recipe: Vietnamese Style Lemongrass Tofu, Stir-fried Squid and Pineapple.

Episode 121: Sleepless in Vietnam

Vietnam is a top coffee producing country in the world. Much of that production goes towards domestic consumption, as Vietnam is home to the most robust coffee and cafe culture in Asia. Martin travels to Buon Ma Thout, the ground zero of Vietnamese coffee to find out all about the national brew of 'ca-phe'.

Recipe: Coffee-flavored Ribs, Coffee Crepe Cake, Vietnamese Coffee.



Episode 122: The Floating Market

Martin and his friend Chef Suong rise early to catch the boat to the famous floating market of Can Tho. In the Mekong Delta, where there are more waterways than roads, it's convenient to set up a wholesale market on water. Martin shops by spotting the items on sale through hoisted poles on board and takes a coffee break along the floating cafes.

Recipe: Honey Roasted Chicken, Mangosteen Ice Cream.

Episode 123: Da Nang and China Beach

Da Nang is the perfect Vietnamese city in many ways. It's a modern business hub, a famous beach resort, and a center for culture and the arts. Martin explores the culinary side of Da Nang and how the city embraces metal, stone, water, fire and earth, the five natural elements in so many of its endeavors.

Recipe: Braised Duck with Ginger and Red Wine, Baked Omelette with Ground Duck.

Episode 124: Unforgettable Hoi An

Long considered one of the most spectacular spots in Vietnam, Hoi An is now a World Heritage Site. Martin visits this picturesque enclave to pay tribute to both its history and culinary delights. He learns how to wrap flower dumplings and make lanterns. Later he takes part in the paper lantern release ceremony by the canal.

Recipe: Shrimp Mousse on Sugar Cane, Vietnamese Clear Dumplings with Shrimp and Meat

Episode 125: Imperial Hue

For a hundred and fifty years, Hue served as the imperial capital of Vietnam. Much of its historical splendors are being restored. Martin visits the palaces and receives a lesson on royal cuisine by a local chef whose family served in the imperial kitchen. He visits a nearby temple where the royal cuisine takes on a religious twist.

Menu: Mini Banana Cakes, Lotus Steamed Fried Rice, Vietnamese Savory Crepes.

Episode 126: The Fruit of Dragons

Dragon fruit is a colorful and tasty treat that is highly favored all over Asia. Martin visits one of the largest dragon fruit farms in Vietnam to learn all about this exotic fruit. From a local chef he learns how versatile dragon fruit can be by staging an entire banquet using dragon fruit as a central ingredient.

Recipe: Shrimp & Fruit Salad for the Dragons, Vietnamese-Inspired Duck Cassoulet.

