



Hidden treasure

With its grand mansions, leafy streets and creative boutiques, Truc Bach – sandwiched between the famous Old Quarter and the expat enclave of West Lake – has charmed many local business owners to set up shop in the area



1

54 Traditions

This place is part private collection, part antique shop. New York-born Mark Rapoport and Hanoi native Nguyen Thi Nhung opened the gallery to help people learn about the art, artefacts and culture of the country's 54 ethnic groups. Rapoport served as a medical volunteer during the Vietnam War while Nhung has spent her life developing a keen eye for significant cultural relics. Visitors can expect a personal tour of this terraced house, which overflows with storied items. 54traditions.com.vn

2

To Chim Xanh

With a name that means “bluebird’s nest”, this café and events venue is hidden within a jumbled courtyard surrounded by Soviet-era apartment blocks. The venue features a small library, a stage for music and lectures and a rooftop terrace with wraparound views of the encircling structures. Co-founder Vu Thi Thanh Binh wanted to create a space where people could share their passions, be it poetry, philosophy or knitting. Check their Facebook page for events, or simply pop in for a *ca phe trung* (egg coffee). fb.com/tochimxanh. bluebirdsnest.com



Words by JOSHUA ZUKAS; Photos by KHANH VD BAO



3

Manzi

Pioneers in Hanoi’s blossoming contemporary art scene, founders Tram Vu and Bill Nguyen sidestepped the bureaucracy of establishing an art gallery by opening a café in an old French villa and using art to decorate the space. Showcasing up-and-coming local talent, the exhibitions rotate but the quality remains reliably high. The upstairs gift shop is a great place to look for unique souvenirs. Check their Facebook page for regular events, which range from experimental music evenings to short-film festivals. fb.com/manzihanoi

4

Lang Thang

A motley mix of Hanoians and expats frequent this casual bar run by passionate young locals Sy Danh Truong An and Nguyen Duc Manh. They’ve crafted a space where people can connect over inexpensive drinks, board games and spontaneous live music from both patrons and staff. The interior is cosy, while tables and chairs spill out onto the street. The name of the bar translates as “wandering leisurely” – the true joy of a visit to Truc Bach. fb.com/langthang8b

5

Standing Bar

Hanoi’s finest craft beer pub looks westward over the twin lakes of Ho Tay and Truc Bach, making its second floor a great spot for a sundowner. Established to showcase Hanoi’s booming brewing scene, the pub offers a range of Vietnam’s best and newest craft ales and ciders on tap. Expect to try pints from East West Brewing, Heart of Darkness, Fuzzy Logic and more. The food menu rotates but focuses on beer-friendly snacks like yakitori and tapas. standingbarhanoi.com

