

WAGAZINE

Winter * 2020

ISV

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF VIETNAM



Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International School

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2020

has come to an end

The second edition of our magazine - a new channel of communication to the ISV community - has been published. Until now, the new school year has already travelled six months, which means ISV successfully wrapped up the first semester of the 2020 – 2021 academic year. Every student of ISV has had an opportunity to achieve and make memories over the past few months. We are certain their personal learning journeys will continue as they step into the upcoming 2021.

Despite opening the school during the concerning situation of Covid-19, it is safe to say that this first semester gained favourable outcomes. Parents of ISV students continued to be informed of what their children encountered in the classrooms and participated in workshops and presentations at school, and online, to share this understanding. The parents further enjoyed added communications through the PTA meetings and additional workshops of interest run by the PTA. University Counselling continued, blending in school work with Mr. Colin and Ms. Chau online with Ms. Alyssa, for Grade 11 & 12 students to look for a suitable university as well as research on necessary information about scholarship and the applying process. The studying environment at ISV has been stable, safe and effective despite the pandemic.

Teachers' professional development days were successfully organised with some led by professional experts. All workshop trainings were developed to enrich teachers' pedagogy and improve ISV's classroom methodologies.

Besides academics, students of ISV have happily gone through the last months of 2020 with cheerful curriculum-based events. They got to demonstrate their creativity and talent through the Halloween disco, Cross Country Day, as well as various club activities. This culminated in the Festival of Lights.

In-school, sports events were an astounding spotlight during the last few months of 2020 at ISV. The Cross Country Day and Aquathlon, live streamed for the first time, were held with enthusiastic and exciting cheering from all four houses. Congratulations to all houses on a successful tournament and may the best team get the House trophy at the end of the school year.

There were lots of other highlights that happened at the end of 2020 that brought excitement and joy to ISV's students, which will be described in more detail in the next pages of the magazine. Please flip to the next page for a better view of the mind-blowing life at ISV.

With this, the open letter will end here. We wish you a delightful 2021 with lots of joy, luck and happiness.

Event highlights

On the 30th of October, ISV students had a chance to show their friends and teachers their special costumes they had prepared. The costumes were diverse: from scary monsters to magical creatures, from beautiful princesses to famous singers, not to mention unique characters such as a M&M candy or a bag of potato chips. Such a wonderful chance for the students to show their excellent creativity and cleverness.

Amazing songs were sung by groups of students, creating a festive and slightly scary atmosphere for Halloween. In the end, students performed a catwalk to show off their distinctive outfits. The Halloween spirit was wonderfully explored and the ISV students had a very exciting day.



Halloween Disco

International Day



This year's International Day was celebrated throughout the week by both ISV students and parents. ISV parents prepared delicious lunches for the children, including appetizing traditional dishes from various countries and continents like America, Korea, Europe, India, Philippines, China, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Not only tasting food from different nations, students also had the chance to learn about the many cultures in our school community and in the world.

On the official International Day, students and teachers performed a colourful flag parade with national flags from more than 30 nations. They dressed in their traditional costumes to proudly present their country. Throughout the day, a number of booths were made up, displaying books, pictures as well as other items about each country. Children stopped by and learned about the variety of nations, and shared with each other what they found out to broaden their knowledge.

Cross country day



Cross Country Day, live-streamed for the first time, represents sport spirit and healthy competitiveness, that is why students of ISV got to show off their athletic skill through running races. Students were divided into groups based on their age and ran to gain points for their respective houses. All runners from four houses: Dragon, Tiger, Phoenix and Unicorn tried their best and achieved impressive results. Aside from running to acquire points, students were able to choose to join a friendly race in various fancy-dress costumes to show their sports spirit. Dozens of students participated in this race with unique outfits, creating an exciting and bustling vibe for the event.

Aquathlon

On a chilly Saturday morning (7th December) Grade 4 - 9 students successfully took part in the ISV Aquathlon (a replacement for the usual trip to take part in the event in Singapore). They competed in their grade level, in boys and girls' categories, with the winners receiving a beautiful trophy and all students who participated received a well-earned medal for their great effort. Families supported the event by tuning into the live stream of the event. They showed wonderful sporting spirit through swimming and running, despite the cold weather. This is such an excellent way for students to enter the world of multisport, and to add something different to their usual sports routines. A hearty congratulation to all of our athletes for their remarkable achievements.



of lights



Festival

On 17th December, students of ISV had a chance to say goodbye to their friends and teachers before starting the Winter Break, celebrating the holiday season to come and the end of the first term of the school year by enjoying the annual Festival of Lights. The success of the event was contributed to by many teachers, staff and students who have been planning, preparing and rehearsing for it, especially the two-months long dedication of Mr. Daniel, with ample support by Ms. Jessanin and Mr Manuel.

Students of both PYP and Secondary sections enjoyed the various performances (in two separate sessions) from their very talented friends. Students showcased their hard earned skill by playing various instruments in solo and duet piano performances, choir performances and singing. Our Grade 6 & 7 students, who are taught in conjunction with IntroArt, premiered their term-old violin skills with excellent group pieces. Besides these musical talents, there were also girl groups dancing to famous K-pop songs, and the teachers' performances received a lot of approval and applause from students. Both the audience and the performers joined together to sing classic Christmas songs to end the event.

The Festival of Lights was warmly welcomed by everyone, and it was a most suitable way to end the first term. We hope everyone will have a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.



PYP parents workshop



Another two successful PYP Parents workshops were presented on October 23rd and November 20th, where parents were given an overview of text types. Throughout levels from Pre-K to Grade 5, ISV uses 8 different text types, which assist with learning how to read and write for a specific purpose.

PYP Parents talked and did some exercises about each text type, as well as how to apply those text types in real-life situations with their children. As a result, parents can better understand their child's studying at ISV, and figure out effective communication methods to assist with their child's learning.

The workshop gave PYP parents the chance to share with each other about parenting experiences, and, at the same time, to have a clearer vision of ISV's education.

Teacher Professional Development

Over the 12th and 13th of November, PYP and Secondary teachers attended different workshops and training to develop their professional skills and improve ISV within the IB framework.

As for the PYP teachers, their training was divided into four sections, consisting of Creating POT Rubrics, EAL Strategies, Language and Mathematics in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Specialist Text Type Description and LOTE-Creating POT Rubrics. The teachers had the opportunity to develop their skills in developing writing progressions, including the specialist teachers, as all of our teachers are English Language teachers and expected to assess writing within their specialist area.

For the Secondary professional development, Secondary staff undertook an IB workshop on embedding critical-thinking into all our Secondary classrooms entitled 'Theory of Knowledge for Subject Teachers', delivered by an experienced IB workshop leader, Stephan Anagnost from UNIS, and supported by Ed Forward (our TOK coordinator). Teachers delved into the key components of TOK, reflecting on the nature of knowledge and how students across the Secondary would apply key parts of TOK in their subject areas to greater appreciate not what but how knowledge is produced.



ISV Admission Updates



Thy Khanh Do PHO

Ever since her enrollment in September 2019, Khanh Thy, our current G8 student, has never failed to amaze ISV with her brilliant mind. Lately, she has successfully secured an outstanding academic scholarship award for her upcoming academic year 2021-2022. Let's meet our excellent student, Khanh Thy, sharing her thoughts about ISV.

Being asked about her journey to ISV, Thy said: "When I was introduced to ISV, I didn't really think much about it because it's not like I'd be able to enroll there. I immediately reconsidered when I heard of the scholarship programme that ISV offered and how it could go up to increase high

Scholar's story

percentages. And with encouragement from my parents and support from teachers, I planned my study approach with high effort, hard-working... Finally, I managed to successfully secure a scholarship that could help me and my family's financial burden."

Thy and her family were very happy to receive the academic scholarship. Thy shared: "Studying at ISV certainly has developed me very much. It has helped me understand how to be more independent and responsible. The school provides an excellent environment for learning that is suitable for everyone to develop their performance. I've learned how to improve myself from people and how to improve people from my own experiences as well."

Talking about her target for the future, Thy surprised us with her maturity: "I can't just simply stop there, I still have a long way to go after all. The scholarship might seem really high for some people, but for me, there's never enough, I try to aim for the most because there's always room for improvement, especially for hardworking people with the belief."

Thy strongly believes if she tries harder, with an appropriate study plan, plus the support from teachers, friends and family, she could reach beyond her level.

Thy's spirit and effort are admirable. We wish her every success in her study at ISV and in her future endeavours.

Mass exam

On November 22th, our mass exam for the Early Offer Programme had been held successfully with the participation of more than 30 students applying to Grade 6 to Grade 10 of the 2021-22 academic year. The students all took three tests, each of them were different based on their academic level.

For the first stage, Grade 6 - 9 took a computer-based test which included a 90-minute online English Literacy, Quantitative Reasoning & Non-Verbal Reasoning. The successful candidates then took a written Maths and English writing test.

Grade 10 students took slightly more challenging exams. Their Stage 1 computer-based exam took 120 minutes with sections relating to Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Non-Verbal Reasoning and Spatial Reasoning. Their Stage 2 written tests were also accessing their Maths and English writing abilities.

Already, 12 students have received a scholarship and secured a place at ISV for the next academic year.



Class highlights

G7/G6 Ancient Civilisation Exhibition

Towards the end of our semester here at ISV, right before everyone would have a warm holiday season, Grade 7 and 6 students had an exhibition to showcase their research and knowledge on different civilisations. Through both photo, text and verbal illustrations, students have shown their effort in acquiring deeper knowledge about the life of middle age and ancient civilizations, their interesting culture, achievements and the legacy that we can still see.

Teachers and especially other students were genuinely excited when they heard what Grade 6 and 7 students presented, and really happy that they had the chance to learn new knowledge.



Grade 10 IGCSE

Mr. David's History students have brought history to life having fun drawing and decorating their posters of their own interpretations of important history characters. A round of applause for their creativity even in their exam.



Grade 6

In English with Ms. Monika, the Grade 6 students have been exploring Myths & Legends and how these stories are still important in our lives today. Working in small groups, they produced profiles of the gods and presented their posters to their classmates.

PYP Arts classes

Pre-K and K1 students learned how to use art tools safely and properly. They also learned about line, patterns and American artist Laurel Burch. K2 and Grade 1 students researched about a Japanese artist - Yayoi Kasuma and investigated what art tools were best for making perfect dots. While Grade 2 learned how to draw a self-portrait by studying how to control the pencil with different grips and facial proportions.



Article by student

Hanoi in my Heart



Sadhika Kapoor

And, also how my receptionist would always make sure we had an umbrella every time we stepped out of the building in the rain. It was surprising, again all strangers! And now let me tell you a hilarious encounter of my father with a Vietnamese man. Once my father was driving a scooter, when all of a sudden, his scooter broke down. While dragging the scooter to the sidewalk of the road, he met a gentleman who offered his help. My father stood there grateful for the help while the man started fixing the scooter. It turned out that he himself was watching videos on his phone on how to fix one and was no professional. Ultimately, in the urge to help my father, the man ended up dismantling the whole scooter without realizing that he couldn't fix it. When I think about it, I laugh really hard. It turns out that the people I met weren't special, they just wanted to communicate, even though the language was different, they knew how to speak the language of humanity and friendship. These Hanoians have a heart bigger than their city!

When my family first shifted to Hanoi, I didn't know that such a city even existed. Unexpectedly, I travelled to what I was soon supposed to call home, the city of Hanoi.

Being a pilot's daughter, I had travelled most of the world so, it should have been no surprise seeing new people and their lives.

My first glance through the car window, made me realize the difference. People were dancing about the streets, stopping by at food vendors now and then, the breeze going by ever so smoothly for the children flying kites. I heard noisy traffic passing by and Vietnamese women screaming as if to compete along. My love for this city wasn't instant, it was built through observations, interactions and experiments. Let me take you through this love story of a hustling-bustling city and a home-sick girl.

My first encounter with Hanoi's charm was when my father lost his phone. It was late night, he was returning home from the airport in a taxi when he lost his phone or rather forgot his phone right there in the taxi. After hours of panicky search, we all called the number and the phone was received by the driver, but the language was the barrier. Finally, our English-speaking receptionist had explained the matters to the driver. The real surprise was when the driver had arrived outside the building with the phone in his hands even though he had already driven very far away. I was taken aback that night, why did he help my father, a complete stranger? In another incident I remember, a grab driver had offered us a lift to the airport without asking for a single penny.

As for the food, I cannot say I tried much of it. Although the fresh aroma of cooked pork and Bun cha surrounded me, I never tried it because of my food habits. Although, I have quite enjoyed what I can try like Bánh mì with all those fresh vegetables and chewy bread and, Phở, which is more soothing than a blanket on a cold winter day. The food is delicious yet healthy. Now that I find my mom doing her own Vietnamese cooking, I feel more related to this city than ever before. It's true that no fancy food chain has ever lasted long in Hanoi as the people believe in dining as a family and preserving their traditional food practices.

Here comes my favorite part, the festivals in this astounding city. Whenever, Tết comes to Hanoi, a sudden kind of excitement diffuses in the air. We all huddle around in my classroom and discuss our favorite traditions from eating mooncakes to lighting lamps. Even though I am not Vietnamese, I have equal fun in celebrating the festivals. At the times of Tết, the roads are full of scooters and other vehicles with family and relatives travelling around to spend quality time together but, there is no religious showcase. Hanoians value their family and friends and seek the blessings of God for each-other's safety and happiness.



In addition to this, Hanoi has incredible places to visit too. Although my favorite place is the West lake, I have seen many other locations that are equally beautiful such as the Old Quarter. As an Indian, Old Quarter to me is just like Chandni Chowk, with the same mood-lifting hustle-bustle and cultural spirits. I haven't yet visited the historical places in Hanoi however, I am sure that they would be just as enjoyable as my previous experiences.

Now to the language spoken here, Vietnamese has been the most mysterious language ever to me! It has always been my passion to read, write and speak other different languages. When I first came to Vietnam, I would often watch local people as they communicated in Vietnamese, it sure seemed fun to learn this language. My family gradually learned the basics like the numbers and for once I was very proud that I could tell my age without hesitating, "mười hai!" or when I wished "Chúc mừng năm mới" to everyone in my school! I often try my best to communicate in Vietnamese with the locals as a friendly gesture. This is because I really appreciate their efforts of conversing in foreign languages and I also wish to give back even if it just means wishing my bus driver "Cám ơn" after he drops me home.

I feel like it is a blessing to reside in this beautiful city. I sometimes watch people and find everyone going about their lives but with happiness and value for each-other. I haven't seen individuals but families or friends hanging out. I don't know about you but, the annoying noises, busy streets, strange smells that lure you away, electric wires hanging over your head and the lakes that surround you no matter where you go; all make me feel like home. It is truly amazing to see people, traditions, food, culture and festivals blend in to create Hanoi. Hanoi is not just a city but a place that resides life's most amazing wonders and surprises. I may not live here for my entire life, but I would surely remember this stay forever!



Students life

Interesting figures



94

applications sent

Before the Winter Holiday, our students sent applications to:

Bulgaria: 1	New Zealand: 1
Canada: 20	Singapore: 1
Hong Kong: 2	United Kingdom: 19
Germany: 1	United States: 32
Netherlands: 7	Vietnam: 5

In addition to the countries to which applications have already been sent, students will also apply to universities in Australia, Italy, Libya, Norway, South Korea and Sweden.

University Acceptance:

- Mount Allison University
- NHL Stenden
- University of Auckland
- York University
- York University
- University of Calgary
- Washington University St. Louis
- University of Glasgow
- University of Indiana - Bloomington
- University of Calgar



TEDx @ ISV Youth

Despite the ongoing Covid situation that means many events are postponed or with restricted audiences, the ISV TEDx event 2020 successfully took place, with our senior students and Mr. Simon as the official organisers. The event was officially licensed by TEDx organisation, named TEDxYouth@ISV 2020, and was inspired by the theme “Through the Looking Glass”.

The seven speakers (from both ISV and other schools) were invited to share their own stories and ideas of happiness and a meaningful, happy life. The event has been planned and prepared since August 2019, and was set to be held in March 2020, but was postponed due to the pandemic. Since most of the organisers are senior year students, the event brought so much joy and meaning to them as it was one of their last contributions to the ISV community.

We would like to congratulate and thank all of the members of the organiser team, and the speakers who delivered a memorable event and speeches. Your hard work is appreciated by everyone.



ISV Panthers

Panthers is the ISV school's sports team, including basketball, volleyball, and football. The Panthers represent ISV at sporting events, ranging from festivals to competitions and tournaments. With their excellent skills, the Panthers have brought our school many admirable achievements.

One of the events that the Panthers appear for ISV is in the Hanoi Activities Conference (HAC) - an international schools organisation. Matches and tournaments against other schools have the participation of ISV Panthers, bringing our school remarkable accomplishments. Alongside competing in HAC, the teams have training sessions several times a week to improve their skills. In-school house tournaments are another chance for students to challenge themselves and boost their physical health.

The Panthers basketball, volleyball and soccer teams have four divisions, which are Youth (G3-5), Middle School (G6-8), Junior Varsity (G9-10) and Varsity (G11-12). The swimming team consists of G3-12 students who compete in galas with other HAC schools.

ISV Orchestra

The ISV Orchestra had their first training on December 5th, 2020 in the music room on the third floor. An orchestra is a large instrumental ensemble typical of classical music and is the perfect chance for students to show their capability in playing the piano, violin, cello and many other instruments. Each student presented their great musical skills and talent in playing different instruments. They practiced some classic songs and improved their personal skill while learning to work with each other as a team.

The ISV Orchestra had their first performance at the Festival of Lights (December 17th, 2020) which impressed the whole school. Their harmony and excellent skills left everyone breathless as they performed several classical songs with violins, pianos and cellos. The ISV Orchestra will surely bring even more impressive performances in the future.

There, the ISV swimming team is known as the Orcas. Our Orca swim team has swimmers from all grades from Grade 3 to Grade 12. They participate in the annual HAC swimming event as well as other invitation events throughout the school year.

G11 students have published a Facebook page and an Instagram account called "ISV Panthers" where sports events, competition results and training are updated regularly. This page helps the ISV community to keep track of Panther and Orca athletes and their activities. For more detailed information about the Panthers and Orcas, please follow the link below or scan the QR code for direct access.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/isvpanthers>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/isvpanthers/>

QR Code:





Christmas

Christmas is a familiar yet never-gets-old holiday in December to commemorate the birth of Jesus. Christmas is celebrated on December 25th and the night of 24th in all over the world and has long become one of the biggest fiestas in many countries. As Justin Bieber said, “it’s the most beautiful time of the year”, we definitely cannot miss out on such a cheerful and exciting festival.

movies

One of the most ideal ways to celebrate Christmas is to watch a movie with loved ones. A list of classic Christmas movies will give families a wonderful bonding time on a cozy Christmas night

Home Alone 1 & 2

Speaking of Christmas movies, Home Alone absolutely cannot stay off the list. This is the most classic Christmas film of all time despite only being produced in the 1990s. Its funny content never fails to bring a good laugh to families during Christmas nights.

A Christmas Carol

Based on the novel of the same name by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol had received a lot of optimistic feedback when it was released in 2009. The combination of artistic paintings and meaningful contents made A Christmas Carol became an ideal film to watch on Christmas Eve.

Rise of the Guardians

Based on a novel called The Guardians of Childhood, Rise of the Guardians brings back happy childhood memories with a bunch of fantasy characters such as Santa Claus, Sandman, Tooth Fairy, Easter Bunny and Jack Frost. An ideal movie to watch on winter nights.

songs

Music is something indispensable during festive seasons. These Christmas songs will definitely lift your holiday spirit up to the clouds!

Mistletoe – Justin Bieber

Mistletoe was released in 2011 with a sweet and tender melody, which softly evoke the Christmas spirit within each of us. It has become one of the most popular Christmas pop songs ever since. With its soft R&B tune, Mistletoe is a perfect track for this winter holiday.

Santa Tell Me – Ariana Grande

Ariana Grande is a familiar name in the pop music industry. Santa Tell Me was written in 2014 and had become famous along with her other tracks in her EP Christmas Kisses. Her sweet and melodic voice makes Christmas parties become much more lively.

All I Want For Christmas Is You – Mariah Carey

This can be considered as one of the most classic Christmas songs of all time. All I Want For Christmas Is You has never been forgotten during Christmas parties all over the world, and this year is no exception.



Traditional meal recommendations by PTA

Philippines

- Lechon - this is the Filipino version of Christmas turkey. It is roasted pig over charcoal. Filipinos usually have this for special occasions.
- Bibingka - this is a sweet rice cake with salted egg, sugar, butter. This is cooked in a claypot lined with banana leaves. This is sold everywhere during the Christmas season, especially outside churches.
- Fruit salad - this is also served in almost all family or special occasions. It is made of fruit cocktail mixed with condensed milk and sometimes with coconut meat.
- Pancit palabok - this is a stir fried noodle dish with eggs and annatto seeds, which gives it a yellow colour. It is topped with different kinds of seafood like shrimp, squid and mussels.
- Puto bumbong - this purple-coloured dessert is a mix of glutinous rice, coconut milk and sugar, poured into a bamboo tube then steamed. It is served with butter, sugar and grated coconut. This is also usually only sold during Christmas season, outside churches.
- Queso de bola - this is a Christmas staple to all Filipinos. It is cheese shaped like a ball and coated in red wax. This is usually given as a gift to friends.
- Pork barbecue - this is a usual party food in the Philippines. It is pork slices marinated with soy sauce and ketchup then skewered and grilled.
- Sweet ham - this symbolizes Christmas to Filipinos. This is usually given as gifts and always a part of Christmas baskets and noche buena, the meal during Christmas Eve. It is pork marinated in pineapple juice so it is sweet and flavorful.

England

We'd celebrate with a dinner with ham joints, the meat from the pig representing moving forward in life and eating well. Combined with green cabbage which represents good luck and money. For dessert, we enjoy English Trifle. A layered dessert of sponge, fruit and cream. Yummy!

Spain

In Spain they have a very famous tradition of eating 12 grapes on the chime of the midnight clock counting down into the New Year. Every second you eat a grape. If you eat all in time it is good luck for the whole year!

Tết Holiday

Many Asian countries share the same period of the year to celebrate their lunar calendar new year, commonly called Lunar New Year. Here in Vietnam, the traditional holiday is called Tết Holiday, or Tết Nguyên Đán, and this is the most important holiday for Vietnamese. The original meaning of this holiday is to celebrate the arrival of Spring, hence, Tết Nguyên Đán, can be understood as “Feast of the First Morning”. As the most important holiday of Vietnam, the occasion has its own traditional food, customs and decorations. Vietnamese take these traditions genuinely seriously, therefore, it will be very interesting to discover them.



Bánh Chưng

The most universal traditional dish that is loved by both North and South part of Vietnam. The ingredients of Banh Chung were traditionally the crop that can be easily found readily everywhere, especially in times that we were not as wealthy. Glutinous rice is wrapped around mung bean, pork, along with other seasoning ingredients, and then everything will be tightly covered by banana leaves and boiled. The origin of this traditional dish stems from a folk-tale of Prince Lang Lieu, living under the King Hung Dynasty. This dish is a must have on the Tết dining table.

Giò chả (Vietnamese sausage)

Giò chả (Vietnamese ham/sausage) is another traditional food in Tết holiday, and usually served with Xôi (sticky rice) and Bánh Chưng. Giò is different from Chả since Giò is boiled and Chả is deep-fried. Chả is also made of lean pork and ingredients, but Chả is not wrapped by leaves and boiled but deep-fried in oil.

Chả or Nem, depends on which side of the country you are in, is called with each of those names. The dish is prepared by wrapping thin rice paper on lean pork and other vegetables that are chopped to small pieces and then deep fried. On the other hand, an equally important dish that is always presented is Giò, which is also made of lean pork but smoothly ground, wrapped by banana leaves and boiled, just like Bánh Chưng.

Xôi (Sticky Rice)

This is one of the most diverse dishes that can be made from many different kinds of sticky rice and even herbal ingredients, such as Xôi Gấc. The variation of Xôi can be easily changed due to the sticky rice or the ingredients used. For example, Xôi lạc is made of sticky rice and peanut, Xôi Đỗ Xanh (sticky Rice with mung bean), and the most unique version is Xôi Gấc, which is the combination of sticky rice and a special red fruit grown in South East Asia, the fruit is called “momordica cochinchinensis”, but we could all agree that Gấc is much shorter.

Traditional Customs

Lucky Money in Red Envelope (Lì Xì)

As a collective society, it is a tradition for nuclear families to reunite on the first day of Tết. On this day, as pray for luck and prosperity for the year ahead, children would wish their elders the best wishes, and then receive a red envelope that contains a small amount of money as a wish for luck. The tradition is called “Lì Xì”.

Xông Nhà, or choosing a specific person to enter the house first

Similar to horoscope, Vietnamese also have their Zodiac signs, hence, we believe that if a person with a sign that would bring luck for the year, he or she will be the first one to enter the house. This ritual is particularly significant for certain people, therefore, it is important to bear this in mind during the holiday. However, there is also a belief that a person with good temper, morality and success would also do this.

Decorations

The most original tradition to decorate is to build a “Cây Nêu”, which is basically a lucky charm that is made of long bamboo pole (5-6m), on top of the pole depending on the region, there will be good luck charms, paper fish, cactus branches, etc.

However, the most important tradition of Vietnamese is to have at least one peach flower tree (Northern Vietnam) or *Ochna integerrima* (Central and Southern Vietnam). In addition, people also like to have a small decoration kumquat tree in the living room. As kumquat trees have a bright orange color fruit and white little flowers, Vietnamese believe that those symbols are representative of fertility and prosperity.



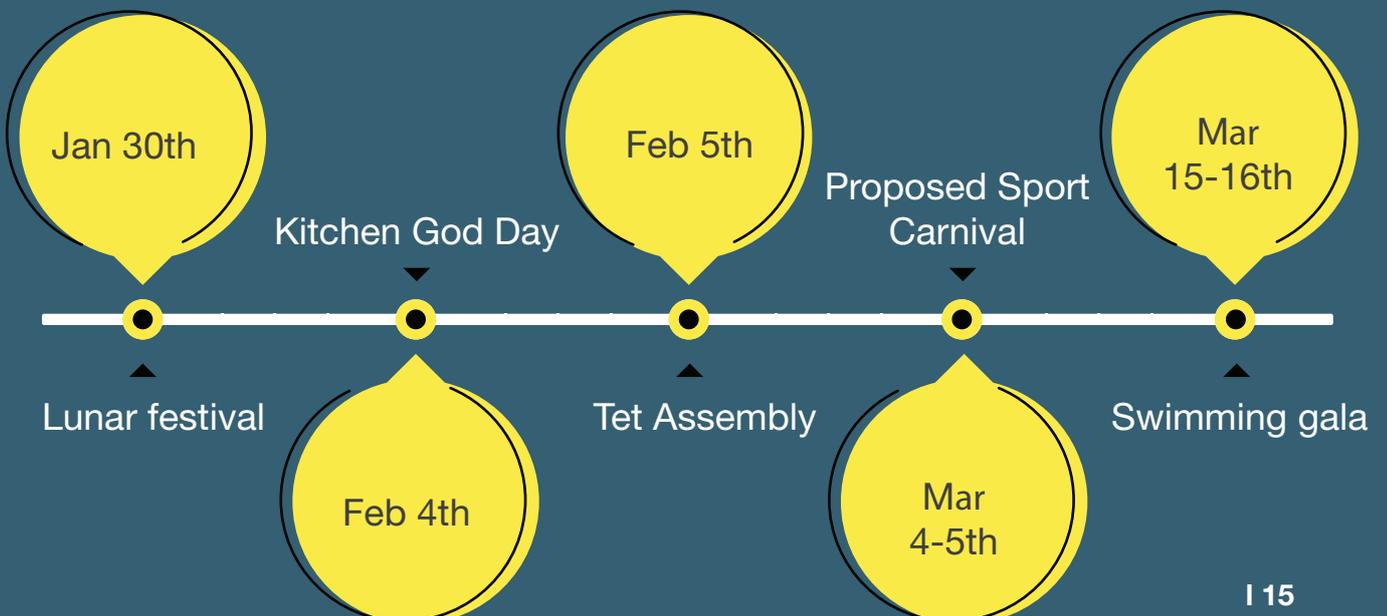
International Day of Education

On the 24th of January, the International Day of Education is celebrated, which was proclaimed by The United Nation. The day was to remind us of the importance of providing quality education for children who do not have the privilege of going to school. According to the United Nations, while many children are receiving top-quality education, there are a total of 258 million others do not, 617 million are not capable of just reading and doing basic maths. Remarkably, only less than 40% of girls living in sub-Saharan Africa stop education after lower secondary school while 4 million other young refugees are out of school.

Hence, it is important for us to remind ourselves of how lucky we are to be able to go to school, and that it is our shared responsibility to ensure education for those who do not have the privilege to. This year's celebration stresses the profound ways that learning can "empower people, preserve the planet, build shared prosperity and foster peace."

"Because, now more than ever, we need to mobilize. UNESCO, on the occasion of the International Day of Education, is issuing a call for action - action for education. High-level political authorities and citizens, States and associations, teachers and parents of students: everyone, in their own way, has a role to play in making the right to education a reality for all. It is our responsibility to future generations." - Audrey Azoulay, Director General, Message on the occasion of the International Day of Education

Upcoming events





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