



SENNA WELLNESS RETREAT WELLNESS + CULTURAL HERITAGE

Senna Wellness Retreat spans more than five hectares and is situated on the Ong Tu hill in the Bac Ninh province of northern Vietnam, about 41.3km north-east of Hanoi and about an hour's drive by car from Hanoi airport.

The purifying medicinal plant Phan Ta Diep (*Senna alexandrina*) and the lotus flower are the inspiration for this retreat, with senna representing purity and renewal, and the lotus flower serving as a compass for living in harmony with nature and tradition.

Senna Wellness Retreat is a place where wellness and cultural heritage harmonise. With warm hospitality and a deep respect for local traditions, it has been created as an invitation to return to nature and is a doorway into the timeless cultural soul of Bac Ninh.

“We have to understand ourselves, our weaknesses and strengths to really be able to develop our capabilities and improve our own lives,” says CEO & Founder Vu Thien Ha.



THE MEDITATION HALL

The Meditation Hall is the most visible feature of Senna Wellness Retreat, with this space built entirely of incense and redwood. Meditation classes, sound bathing, yoga, and other physical and creative activities such as hat painting, pottery, candle making, and art therapy are available in this space.

Opportunities to express and investigate personal experiences are particularly expanded through art therapy. With the assistance and advice of an art therapist, the experiencer can explain, uncover, and resolve inner problems through the process of interacting with materials and instruments. We find our clients increase their self-awareness and confidence when they undertake these activities. Flower arranging (art to improve the aesthetic eye), craft, essential oil production, tea making and tea ceremonies are other forms of art therapy available.



SENNA WELLNESS CENTRE

Each treatment at the Senna Wellness Centre is individually tailored to help you achieve your goals of a healthy mind/body through a variety of activities and unique treatments.

All wellness activities and treatments are guided by experienced practitioners and designed not only to release tension and enhance physical wellbeing, but also to nurture and sustain natural energy flow and gently bring you back to a balanced state of being.

In addition to guided movement sessions, Senna offers quiet creative experiences such as sound meditation. These activities invite you to focus and gently reconnect with yourself.



TREATMENTS I EXPERIENCED

SENNA ORGANIC FACIAL

Senna's Signature Organic Facial incorporates the use of natural ingredients such as yogurt, cucumber, sesame, honey oatmeal and fresh milk, and has been created to enhance the appearance of your skin, and to make you look and feel more radiant on completion.

HYDROTHERAPY POOL

Senna's Hydrotherapy treatment uses the force and flow of warm water along with gentle physical movements to assist with injured or problematic body parts, and to help to rebalance and heal the body. Many people find this treatment helpful for chronic health conditions.

WATSU THERAPY

Watsu is a form of water therapy that involves stretching, massage and acupressure in warm water. The idea is that the resistance of water soothes physical tension and encourages relaxation, which supports overall health and may be used to alleviate pain and discomfort caused by a range of ailments.

HUNDREDS KNOTS BAMBOO RELIEF

Hundreds knots bamboo relief massage uses a warmed bamboo stick to work more deeply, in combination with Swedish or deep tissue techniques. This is a deeply relaxing treatment that works on tense muscles and that many find enormously restorative.



OUR CULTURE TOUR

Our first destination was the pottery village of Phù Lãng. The pottery tradition in Phù Lãng is very old (about 700 800 years) and is considered one of the three major centres of ancient pottery in northern Vietnam. Its products are known for their durability and for a fine but rustic aesthetic. The raw material includes red/pink clay from nearby areas (Thong Vát, Cung Khiêm in Bac Giang), which is transported by river. After that, we moved to the Đúc Thịnh pottery workshop, where we had the chance to see the artisan Đúc Thịnh create ceramic paintings (as shown in image above).

Our second destination was Đền Cũng – Gieng Ngoc, a historic temple and sacred well. The temple is dedicated to Mau Tam Phu (Mother Goddess of the Three Realms), a central figure in local belief systems. Many people come here, especially at the beginning of the year, to pray for luck, health, family and career. The people draw water to wash, bathe, or even cook, believing the water has purity and spiritual benefits - symbolically and for health and wellbeing.

Our third destination was the house of national artist Nguyen Thi Thiem, who is recognised for her active role in teaching Quan ho, a genre of Vietnamese folk music that is traditionally performed during spring festivals in northern Vietnam. The style of Quan ho is interactive singing



between male and female voices using response and improvisation, melodic ornamentation, and an exchange of poetic lines. It is known for its meaningful lyrics, beautiful melodies, and unique performance style. It is sometimes flirtatious and playful, but always elegant.

Bac Ninh province is the birthplace of Quan ho, which was officially designated an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2009, highlighting its importance to Vietnamese culture. We were invited to sit in the library of Nguyen Thi Thiem to listen to her singing Quan ho songs. Then she taught us how to make “trau têm cánh phuong” - a special style of preparing the betel leaf and areca nut in Quan ho culture. It is made by shaping the betel leaf so that it forms phoenix wings, which is both visually beautiful and culturally symbolic. In Quan ho performances, before singing, there is often a formal invitation to eat a betel piece from the singers/hosts to set the mood and to signal respect, politeness and relationship.