

VIETNAM:



« Day Four – Back Flips, Kayaks and Limestone Pillar Islands

Day Six - Feel the heart of the Cobra »

Day Five - A Tiger Meal

June 13th, 2007 by ben

Today, I got up at 7, had a quick breakfast then headed off with my guide for more kayaking. Returning to the boat it was time for a relaxing cruise back to Halong City where we climbed aboard our transport to Hanoi. Arriving at 5pm, I wandered the streets and alleys of the Old Quarter for a while, experiencing that whole pulsing city life energy osmosis again, then headed back to my hotel for a sleep.



Awake at 7pm, it was time to feed. Out in the Old Quarter the strains of piano based samba/jazz -all Latin beats, sensuous do bop female vocals and horns - drew me in to 69 Bar. It's a nice place: exposed wooden rafters, terra cotta tiles, a stained wooden bar and a back lit selection of spirits - kind of early 20th Century French with Vietnam giving the flavour. Samurai-like swords and traditional to modern Vietnamese art adorns the wall. There are wrought iron framed, stained glass six-sided prism light shades with Chinese patterns, a beaming Buddha, flagons of rice wine and a little Buddhist shrine in the corner. A gorgeous Vietnamese girl in a deep red, gold embroidered, ao dai (the traditional and very sexy female dress of Vietnam) handed me a menu. A saxophone solo broke out on the sound system, riding beautifully over the rhythm section. I took a seat opposite a water feature and watched the water trickle over its curvaceous and tall, limestone miniature mountain scene – a kind of geological bonsai with small, to scale, tower pagodas drawing you into the microcosm of it all.



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Bar 69 sells Tiger Beer. It even has it on tap. I got myself a Tiger, ordered some deep fried Tiger prawns with pepper sauce and rice and settle down to write this entry.



Later on in the night, my mate Morgan from Sydney, Australia (who by coincidence was on the verge of commencing a South-Eastern Asian adventure when I heard of my win) arrived in town. We went out for a drink and Morgan, very much the video junky, showed off his new video camera. Prospective mini doco's for this site were discussed with enthusiasm.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, June 13th, 2007 at 9:57 am and is filed under Day five. You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed. You can leave a response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.

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