

Beat: Travel

## Yen Bai Tourism Year kicks off

### Vietnam Travel

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**USPA NEWS** - The Yen Bai Tourism Year kicked off with art performances and cultural activities on May 19 in the northern mountainous province.

More than 300 professional artists including singer Trong Tan, Minh Tuyet, Dang Duong and Tung Duong joined the performance themed Lung Linh Sac Mau Yen Bai (Glamorous Yen Bai). The event also features Inh La Oi, a traditional folk melody of the Thai ethnic group in Yen Bai province, performed by American singer Kyo York.

Along with music and art, the characteristic images of Yen Bai – rice terraces, ban flower (orchid tree flower – the signature flower of the region) and stilt houses were also featured to bring audiences a sense of Yen Bai and the northwest region.

The event also gathered Miss Tourism winners from previous years to showcase a fashion collection named Colours of Northwest of designer Viet Hung. The collection depicts the unique beauty of 30 different ethnic minorities and the landscapes of northwestern parts of Vietnam.

“Besides focusing on cooperating with neighbouring provinces in the northwestern regions, Yen Bai is also creating several unique and attractive tourism products to call for more investors and draw more visitors to explore the scenic Mu Cang Chai terraced field, the “hunt for clouds” at Ta Xua, Ta Si Nhu peak, experience paragliding in Khau Pha pass, or enjoy Ho Thac Ba eco tourism. From Yen Bai, visitors can easily continue their journey to famous Sapa in Lao Cai province, Moc Chau in Son La or the Hung King temple in Phu Tho province,” said Chairman of the Yen Bai People’s Committee Do Duc Du, in a workshop on introducing tourism products and enhancing tourism investment held on May 19 afternoon.

“Yen Bai has huge tourism potential, the depth of culture in ethnic minorities is also a factor to create unique tourism products, drawing more visitors,” said deputy head of General Department of Tourism, Ha Van Sieu at the workshop.

Sieu suggested the province should work out solutions on planning, enhancing infrastructure, and developing tourism based on the community towards sustainable development.

Following the opening event, a two-day festival honouring the Mother Goddess of Forest Worshipping Practice will begin on Saturday at Dong Cuong temple (known as the birthplace of Mother Goddess Worship Practice) in Yen Bai with several activities – the practice of len dong (going into a trance); a ritual in which practitioners become mediums for 36 different deities, involving music, singing, dancing and costumes; a carnival recreating the Mother Goddess; and an exhibition of photos and paintings depicting the practice.

“This is the first time Yen Bai province, and Van Yen district specifically, has had the chance to host a festival featuring the Mother Goddess Worship Practice. The major activities focus on honouring this traditional practice and folk artists involved,” said Chairman of the Van Yen district’s People’s Committee Vu Quang Hai.

A paragliding festival was also held on May 13-14 and again on May 20-21 in Khau Pha pass, Mu Cang Chai district, one of the longest mountain passes in Vietnam with a height of more than 1,200 meters above the sea level, looking over a breathtaking view of Yen Bai’s stunning natural scenery.

Mu Cang Chai festival is also set to be held in September. The festival will feature ethnic Mong performance of khen (local traditional bamboo instrument); a paragliding festival, goat fighting and local sports and traditional products. It aims to showcase the Mu Cang Chai’s landscape and local ethnic groups’ culture.

Earlier in February, the 2017 Lao Cai – Northwest National Tourism Year event began, with various activities aiming to turn tourism into a spearhead economic sector of the country.

Upcoming National Tourism Year activities include a horse racing festival, to be held in Bac Ha in June; Vietnam Mountain Marathon

in Sapa in September; Bat Xat Terraced Field festival and the third O Quy Ho Mountain Bike Race in October.

The northwest region of Vietnam comprises eight provinces, namely Dien Bien, Ha Giang, Lao Cai, Yen Bai, Hoa Binh, Lai Chau, Son La and Phu Tho.

The region is home to more than 30 ethnic groups, with diverse tangible and intangible cultural heritage, historical sites and spectacular landscapes.

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