

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eB-dNrB68Y>

Hi, I'm Steve and I've been living in Hanoi for the past two years. I've become fascinated by the **legacy** and **influences** left by the French following their ruling of Vietnam from 1887 until 1954. From the **architecture** through to the **cuisine** the results are all around us, I'd like to guide you through Hanoi to view some of these **legacies**

Architecture

In certain cities—most notably Dalat, Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) and Hanoi—there are still wonderful examples of French **architecture**, with their high arches, balconies, columns and pleasing **symmetries**. Some of the more remarkable buildings are the Hanoi Opera House, the Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica of Saigon and the many **colonial villas** and **mansions** in the hills surrounding Dalat. Even today, rich Vietnamese still build villas with French **architectural** features, whereas government buildings tend to be more **austere**.

Linguistics

While China has undoubtedly had more **influence** over the Vietnamese language, anyone with even a **rudimentary** knowledge of French will hear **familiar** words in Vietnam. The words for cheese, neckties, butter, bread, father (pa), beer and many, many others are all **phonetic** copies of French words.

Besides sharing words, Vietnamese as you see it today only looks the way it does because French **colonial authorities promoted** the **Romanized** version created by Alexandre De Rhodes, a Jesuit **missionary** who also helped to bring about the next major **cultural influence**.

The **colonial** French—behind their **facetious** notion of spreading **civilization** to their **colonies**—did leave behind modern **infrastructure** which Vietnam still uses to this day. The famous Reunification Express, -the railway line between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City- was originally built under French rule. Many of the roads and bridges in Vietnam were also first built under French supervision. Probably the most famous example is the Long Biên Bridge in Hanoi, **formerly** the Paul Doumer Bridge.

One **unsung** hero of French **infrastructure** is the **sanitation** system they left behind, especially in Ho Chi Minh City. Without French **infrastructure**, this city of almost ten million would've been much smellier.

Religion

Catholics in Vietnam make approximately 7% of the population. Holidays like Easter and Christmas are not nearly as widely **celebrated** as they are in the West, have their own Vietnamese **traditions**. It's common to see people wearing a cross around their neck, and many families have an **alter** to Jesus in their home, near their **ancestor** shrine.

Vietnam is officially atheist, but the government doesn't interfere with people practice in their faith these days. Also, some of the most famous buildings in Vietnam are churches.

Cyclos

Long since replaced by bicycles and motorbikes, you can still find these holdouts of the French **colonial** days in the **touristy** areas around the country, near the Citadel in Hue, District 1 in Ho Chi Minh City and in Hanoi's Old Quarter.

They **conjure** images of French **aristocracy chauffeured** around Saigon, fanning themselves under the **scorching** midday sun. They're a strange **reminder** of a different era.

Cuisine

Many **staple** foods in Vietnam are French **dishes modified** to include local ingredients: omelets, baguettes, croissants and anything fried in butter.

Certain ingredients—cauliflower, zucchini, pate and potatoes, among others—were introduced to Vietnam during the colonial years. Some dishes arose from the demands of French authorities and their families, while others came from Vietnamese cooks, **incorporating** their new ingredients. Much of what we know as distinctly Vietnamese **cuisine** has French **influences**.

Vocabulary

legacy - *noun* (law) a gift of personal property by will

influence - *noun* causing something without any direct or apparent effort; a power to affect persons or events especially power based on prestige etc; a cognitive factor that tends to have an effect on what you do; one having power to influence another; the effect of one thing (or person) on another; *verb* have and exert influence or effect; shape or influence; give direction to; induce into action by using one's charm

architecture - *noun* the profession of designing buildings and environments with consideration for their esthetic effect; an architectural product or work; the discipline dealing with the principles of design and construction and ornamentation of fine buildings; (computer science) the structure and organization of a computer's hardware or system software

cuisine - *noun* the practice or manner of preparing food or the food so prepared

symmetry - *noun* (mathematics) an attribute of a shape or relation; exact reflection of form on opposite sides of a dividing line or plane; balance among the parts of something; (physics) the property of being isotropic; having the same value when measured in different directions

colonial - *adj.* composed of many distinct individuals united to form a whole or colony; of or relating to or characteristic of or inhabiting a colony; of animals who live in colonies, such as ants; *noun* a resident of a colony

mansion - *noun* a large and imposing house; (astrology) one of 12 equal areas into which the zodiac is divided

villa - *noun* pretentious and luxurious country residence with extensive grounds; country house in ancient Rome consisting of residential quarters and farm buildings around a courtyard; detached or semidetached suburban house; Mexican revolutionary leader (1877-1923)

austere - *adj.* of a stern or strict bearing or demeanor; forbidding in aspect; severely simple; practicing great self-denial

influence - *noun* causing something without any direct or apparent effort; a power to affect persons or events especially power based on prestige etc; a cognitive factor that tends to have an effect on what you do; one having power to influence another; the effect of one thing (or person) on another; *verb* have and exert influence or effect; shape or influence; give direction to; induce into action by using one's charm

rudimentary - *adj.* being in the earliest stages of development; not fully developed in mature animals; being or involving basic facts or principles

familiar - *adj.* having mutual interests or affections; of established friendship; well known or easily recognized; within normal everyday experience; common and ordinary; not strange; (usually followed by 'with') well informed about or knowing thoroughly; *noun* a spirit (usually in animal form) that acts as an assistant to a witch or wizard; a person attached to the household of a high official (as a pope or bishop) who renders service in return for support; a person who is frequently in the company of another

phonetic - *adj.* of or relating to the scientific study of speech sounds; of or relating to speech sounds

authority - *noun* official permission or approval; the power or right to give orders or make decisions; an authoritative written work; an expert whose views are taken as definitive; (usually plural) persons who exercise (administrative) control over others; freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities; an administrative unit of government

promote - *verb* change a pawn for a king by advancing it to the eighth row, or change a checker piece for a more valuable piece by moving it the row closest to your opponent; be changed for a superior chess or checker piece; give a promotion to or assign to a higher position; contribute to the progress or growth of; make publicity for; try to sell (a product)

Roman - *adj.* of or relating to or derived from Rome (especially ancient Rome); relating to or characteristic of people of Rome; of or relating to or supporting Romanism; characteristic of the modern type that most directly represents the type used in ancient Roman inscriptions; *noun* a typeface used in ancient Roman inscriptions; a resident of modern Rome; an inhabitant of the ancient Roman Empire

missionary - *adj.* relating to or connected to a religious mission; *noun* someone who attempts to convert others to a particular doctrine or program; someone sent on a mission--especially a religious or charitable mission to a foreign country

cultural - *adj.* denoting or deriving from or distinctive of the ways of living built up by a group of people; relating to the raising of plants or animals; of or relating to the shared knowledge and values of a society; of or relating to the arts and manners that a group favors

facetious - *adj.* cleverly amusing in tone

civilization - *noun* a society in an advanced state of social development (e.g., with complex legal and political and religious organizations); the social process whereby societies achieve civilization; the quality of excellence in thought and manners and taste; a particular society at a particular time and place

infrastructure - *noun* the stock of basic facilities and capital equipment needed for the functioning of a country or area; the basic structure or features of a system or organization

former - *adj.* referring to the first of two things or persons mentioned (or the earlier one or ones of several); (used especially of persons) of the immediate past; belonging to the distant past; belonging to

some prior time; *noun* the first of two or the first mentioned of two

unsung - *adj.* having value that is not acknowledged; not famous or acclaimed

sanitation - *noun* making something sanitary (free of germs) as by sterilizing; the state of being clean and conducive to health

celebrate - *verb* have a celebration; assign great social importance to; celebrate, as of holidays or rites

tradition - *noun* an inherited pattern of thought or action; a specific practice of long standing

alter - *verb* remove the ovaries of; make an alteration to; make or become different in some particular way, without permanently losing one's or its former characteristics or essence; cause to change; make different; cause a transformation; insert words into texts, often falsifying it thereby

ancestor - *noun* someone from whom you are descended (but usually more remote than a grandparent)

tourist - *noun* someone who travels for pleasure

conjure - *verb* engage in plotting or enter into a conspiracy, swear together; ask for or request earnestly; summon into action or bring into existence, often as if by magic

aristocracy - *noun* the most powerful members of a society; a privileged class holding hereditary titles

chauffeur - *noun* a man paid to drive a privately owned car; *verb* drive someone in a vehicle

scorching - *adj.* hot and dry enough to burn or parch a surface; *adv.* capable of causing burns

reminder - *noun* an experience that causes you to remember something; a message that helps you remember something; someone who gives a warning so that a mistake can be avoided

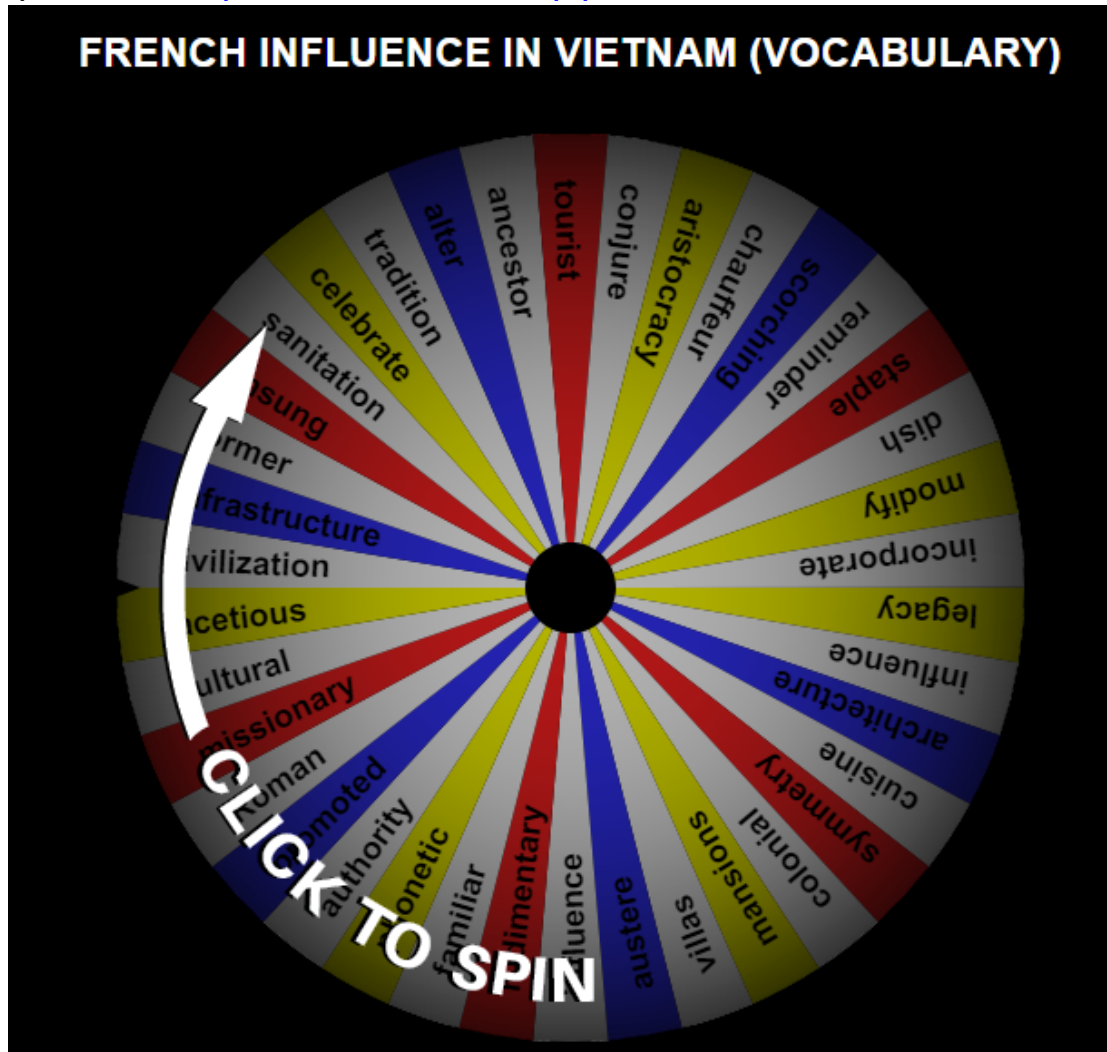
staple - *adj.* necessary foods or commodities; *noun* paper fastener consisting of a short length of U-shaped wire that can fasten papers together; a short U-shaped wire nail for securing cables; a natural fiber (raw cotton, wool, hemp, flax) that can be twisted to form yarn; (usually plural) a necessary commodity for which demand is constant; material suitable for manufacture or use or finishing; *verb* secure or fasten with a staple or staples

dish - *noun* a piece of dishware normally used as a container for holding or serving food; directional antenna consisting of a parabolic reflector for microwave or radio frequency radiation; a particular item of prepared food; the quantity that a dish will hold; an activity that you like or at which you are superior; a very attractive or seductive looking woman; *verb* make concave; shape like a dish; provide (usually but not necessarily food)

modify - *verb* make less severe or harsh or extreme; add a modifier to a constituent; cause to change; make different; cause a transformation

incorporate - *adj.* formed or united into a whole; *verb* unite or merge with something already in existence; form a corporation; include or contain; have as a component; make into a whole or make part of a whole

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“Supper was the usual savory **cuisine** and pleasant conversation.”

“You need to have at least a rudimentary understanding of technology before you can upload a video on that website.”

“The Sanctuary was plain to the point of **austere**, with no luxuries.”

“**Sanitation** decreases the death-rate, religion keeps up the birth-rate.”

“We need to spend more money on maintaining and repairing **infrastructure**.”

“Most countries are no longer ruled by the **aristocracy** but by elected officials”
