



Delight in a traditional Tet Lunar New Year feast



A new year, a new beginning

Tet is everything
to all people

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F&B Promotion for early 2018

Delicious La Siesta
celebrations for Tet
Lunar New Year &
Valentine's day

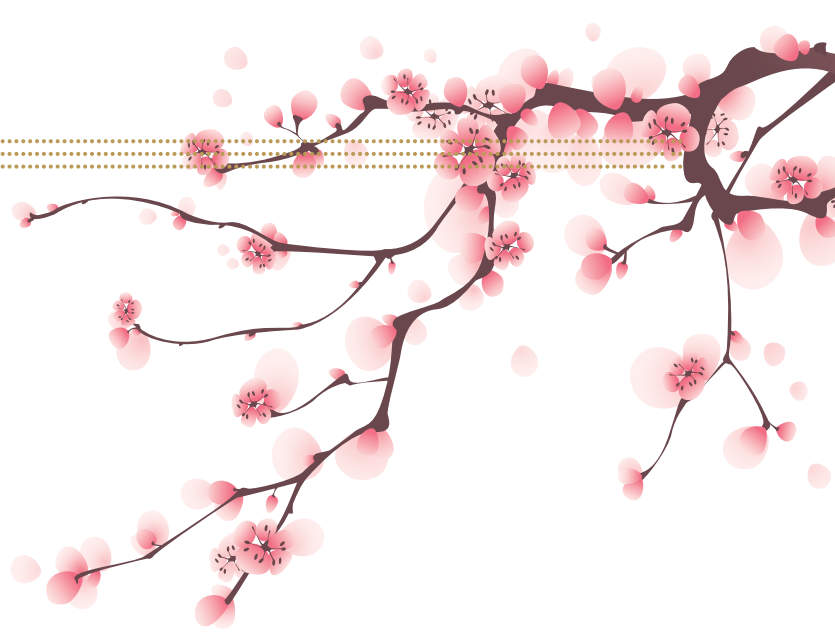
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Chef Interview

Executive Chef
Dinh Van Manh

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Do Van Dan (Mr.)
Chairman/CEO
Elegance Hospitality Group

Message from chairman

A warm welcome to all our Hanoi guests.

Please enjoy this edition of EHG Post, with ideas of what to see and do around Hanoi.

Savor EHG's culinary delights and F&B promotions during the first few months of the year. These include welcoming 2018 with a sumptuous New Year's Eve dinner, delighting in a traditional Tet Lunar New Year feast or enjoy a romantic Valentine's Day celebration for two. EHG Post talks to Red Bean Executive Chef Dinh Van Manh about his vision for Red Bean and what inspires him. Meanwhile, Hanoi is famous for its street food and we explore some of the city's most delicious street food dishes and look at how street food culture arose. Hanoi's creative scene continues to develop and the newest hub promoting talent, imagination and originality is Hanoi Creative City, recognizable from a striking graphic dragon illustration the height the tower it occupies.

As we head into the Year of the Dog, those visiting during February can delight in Tet Nguyen Dan celebrations. Tet is Vietnam's most important festival and public holiday where we welcome the Lunar New Year and the arrival of spring.

EHG and all the staff wish you a happy and prosperous Lunar New Year. May all your wishes come true.

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We are able to combine a five-star experience with a



A new year, a new beginning

Governed by tradition, taboos and legends, Tet Nguyen Dan (Tet) welcomes the Lunar New Year and spring's arrival. It is Vietnam's most important festival and public holiday. The lunar and solar calendars are linked in Vietnam. The former dictates the observance of festivals and rituals according to cycles of the moon. Hence, Tet dates are not fixed. The New Year starts on the first night of the first moon of the first month of the lunar calendar.

Also known as The *'Feast of the First Morning of the First Day'*, it is when the new and good replace old and bad elements. People turn one year older as traditionally the New Year determines one's age. Custom dictates actions and thoughts at the start of the lunar New Year influence one's fate and prosperity for the coming 12 months. Also high on the agenda are family reunions and paying respect to the ancestors.

An Tet literally means "to eat Tet" and food plays a central role in the celebrations. Dishes synonymous with Tet include Banh Chung and Banh Day. Compact savory "cakes" of sticky rice filled with beans and meat, wrapped in dong or banana leaves. They are named after a famous Vietnamese legend honoring the son of King Hung Vuong VI who conjured up square and round sticky rice "cakes". Banh Chung is square representing the earth while the round Banh Day symbolizes the sky. Other traditional dishes include Xoi Gac - sticky rice with "gac" fruit. This is an auspicious red colored dish symbolizing luck and achievement. Boiled chicken, eaten with sticky rice and Banh Chung, is another popular dish attributed to the ancestors. Such food features in a family's lunar New Year's Day feast, accompanied by ceremonial words to honor the ancestors.

Three parts form the Tet period:

- **Tất Niên** the seven day run up to Tết
- **Giao Thừa:** New Year's Eve
- **Tân Niên:** first days of the new year

Preparations start early. People honor their ancestors and make offerings at family altars. Homes are cleaned and decorated with colorful flowers. Kitchens are stocked with food. Debts settled. New clothes purchased. Streets adorned with lights, flowers and festive red 'Chuc Mung Nam Moi' happy New Year banners. Legend says each home has three kitchen gods overseeing the household's affairs. On the 23rd day of the 12th lunar month, each kitchen god (On Tao) returns to the Jade Emperor on a carp fish. He delivers his annual report on the family, returning on New Year's Eve. People clean their houses and offer sacrifices in order to aid the god's journey and ensure a good report.

New Year's Day is reserved for families, the second day for friends and traditionally the third for teachers. Elders and children receive lucky money in red envelopes and households observe the custom of 'xong dat' or 'xong nha'. Vietnamese people believe that the first person to visit one's home on New Year's Day dictates the coming year's fortunes. Therefore, this individual should be successful with a good character and moral values.

Tet is infused with numerous traditions, taboos and greetings. Families and friends greet one another with auspicious words and phrases such as Chuc Mung Nam Moi (*happy New Year*), Suc Khoe Doi Dao (*may you have plenty of health*), Tien Vo Nhu Nuoc (*may money flow like water*).

A Five Fruit Tray (*Mam Ngu Qua*) is placed on the ancestral altar symbolizing a family's wishes and gratitude to Heaven and Earth. Regions vary in their arrangements and choice of fruit depending on colors and connotation of the sound of the word.

Red and yellow colors are everywhere, symbolizing good fortune, prosperity and happiness while flowers abound. The streets and homes of North Vietnam are decorated with peach blossom, while the south prefers apricot flowers. Each household displays two trees. A kumquat tree with orange fruit representing fertility and abundance for the coming year and a decorated artificial bamboo pole-tree (*cay neu*).

In the run up to Tet, cities and towns are awash with color and pre-celebration activities. Lion dances and parades, a cacophony of beating drums, bells and gongs ward off evil spirits and New Year Eve firework displays light up the night skies.

Tet is everything to all people. A celebration of the union of nature, humankind, traditions, culture, the living and the dead.

Tet 2018 calendar

- 7 days statutory holiday
- 15 February - Vietnamese New Year's Eve
- 16 February - Vietnamese New Year's Day
- 17-21 February inclusive - Tet holiday

down-to-earth personality.



F&B promotion for early 2018

Delicious La Siesta celebrations for the Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet) and Valentine's Day. Red Bean restaurants and the Gourmet Corner tempt the taste buds with special Vietnamese and western set menus, à la carte dishes accompanied by a selection of quality beverages.

La Siesta Central, La Siesta Trendy, La Siesta Classic and La Siesta Diamond invite you to:

- welcome all things new and the coming of Spring with Tet celebrations
- enjoy a romantic table for two on Valentine's Day with champagne, candles and roses

RED BEAN CENTRAL RESTAURANT

7th Floor, Hanoi La Siesta Central Hotel & Spa
Add: 1 Cau Go Str., Hoan Kiem Dis., Hanoi
Tel: (84-24) 3938 0963, Ext: 705

Lunar New Year (Tet) celebrations

15, 16 & 17 February 2018

Vietnamese Tet set menu

Prices start at 950.000vnd++/set/person

Lunar New Year's Eve Fireworks Countdown

20% discount for in-house guests

Lake View Balcony & Twilight Sky Bar beverage packages

15 February 2018

Prices start at 790.000vnd++/person

Valentine's Day

14 February 2018

Romantic lake view dinner set menu

Prices start at 1.050.000++vnd/set

10% discount for in-house guests



RED BEAN TRENDY RESTAURANT

8th Floor, Hanoi La Siesta Trendy Hotel & Spa
Add: 12 Nguyen Quang Bich Str., Hoan Kiem Dis., Hanoi
Tel: (+84-24) 3923 4026

Lunar New Year (Tet) celebrations

15 and 16 February 2018

Special Vietnamese Tet set menu

Prices start at 780.000vnd ++/person

Discount 10% for guest in house

Valentine's Day

14 February 2018

Romantic dinner with special 5 course-set menu for couple

Prices start at 1.690.000vnd++/couple

RED BEAN CLASSIC RESTAURANT

Ground Floor, Hanoi La Siesta Hotel & Spa
Add: 94 Ma May Str., Hoan Kiem Dis., Hanoi
Tel: (+84-24) 3926 3641, Ext 8105

Lunar New Year (Tet) celebrations

15, 16 and 17 February 2018

Ân Tết set menu

Holiday A la carte menu

Prices start at 680.000vnd ++/person

Late afternoon and late night happy hours

Valentine's Day

14 February 2018

Valentine's Day set menu

Prices start at 1.200.000vnd ++/couple

Late afternoon and late night happy hours



THE GOURMET CORNER

12th Floor, Hanoi La Siesta Diamond Hotel & Spa

Add: 32 Lo Su Str., Hoan Kiem Dis., Hanoi

Tel: (+84-24) 3935 1632

Lunar New Year (Tet) celebrations

15 and 16 February 2018

Traditional Vietnamese set menu

Special highlights à la carte menu

Prices start at 750.000vnd ++/person

Valentine's Day

14 February 2018

Romantic Valentine for couple

+ Roof top Gourmet corner: Set Valentine menu for

two at 1.150.000 vnd++/person

+ Bottle of prosecco/ Red / White wine

+ Chocolate gift





Chef interview **Executive Chef Dinh Van Manh**

At just 32 years of age, Manh is Executive Chef of Red Bean restaurants. We talk to him about what motivates him, his vision for Red Bean and why Elegance Hospitality Group's signature restaurant operation is a special place to dine.

Born into a farming family in Ha Tay province on the outskirts of Hanoi, Manh followed his siblings into the hospitality industry. At 18 years old, he enrolled in Hanoi Tourism College to study food and beverage. Here he developed the confidence and a passion to become a chef. His desire to introduce diners to the very best of Vietnamese cuisine drives this quietly gentle and very humble young man.



What inspired you to become a Chef?

Like many Vietnamese, my mum taught me the basics of Vietnamese cooking. Later on, my brother working at the Daewoo Hotel introduced me to restaurant life. However, I was 20 years old when everything fell into place. At college, my teachers and I realized I had a natural ability to become a Chef. With their support and mentoring, I gained confidence and the belief in myself.

How did you eventually become Executive Chef at EHG?

After graduating, I trained under Executive Sous Chef Nguyen Huu Phuoc at the Sheraton Hotel for two years. This was followed by a stint as Commis Chef at the Hilton Hanoi Opera Hotel before joining the Asia Group as Chef de Partie at the Silk Path Hotel. A great opportunity then presented itself in the role of Executive Chef at Noi Bai airport. After 4 years there and following a creatively fun and challenging interview with EHG, I am proud to be the Executive Chef of Red Bean restaurants in Hanoi.

Why do you like working at Red Bean and EHG?

EHG maintains an exceptionally high level of quality in all areas and a superior service. Moreover, the design and ambience are equally important - each Red Bean restaurant is beautifully designed. I also love the story behind the Red Bean name, and my freedom to experiment with menus.

What makes Red Bean different to other restaurants in the same category?

Apart from high quality and standards, at Red Bean we really do create authentic Vietnamese food. Many restaurants adapt their dishes to suit the taste palates of visitors, but at Red Bean, we do not do this. We stay true to the values and traditions of our nation's food and respect the requirements of each dish. At Red Bean restaurants in Hanoi, we follow the northern way of cooking and compromise on nothing.

What is Red Bean's signature dish?

The menus vary between branches and each has its own signature dishes. These include Flame Wok Fried Beef, Pomelo Salad dishes and Panna Mango sticky rice at Red Bean Central. At Red Bean Classic, the leading dishes are mushroom soup, Cha Ca and passion fruit ice cream, while Red Bean Trendy features Beef in Coconut, Hanoi Grilled Fish and Chicken Lemongrass.

What process do you follow when planning the Tet Lunar New Year menus?

At Red Bean, our aim is to introduce diners to the very best selection of traditional Tet foods. Some dishes appear only at Lunar New Year while others are more common during this period. At Red Bean Central, I prefer to welcome diners with Banh Tet. This is a round shaped version of the square Banh Chung. Ingredients include sticky rice, mung beans, pork rolled in a banana leaf into a cylinder shape. After removing the leaf, the cake is sliced into round pieces, like mini versions of the circular plate on which it is served. Following Tet traditions and being in the north, we decorate Red Bean restaurants with peach blossom and kumquat trees.

On behalf my team we welcome everyone to celebrate Tet in style.



The culinary art of street food

Eating street food-style is a social affair; Vietnamese people seemingly don't like dining solo but prefer the company of others. Illustrative of the nation's cultural fabric, it is diverse and delicious, crowded and noisy, mobile and inclusive.

Street food vendors include mobile hawkers serving one type of dish such as bun dau mam tom (tofu, noodles and shrimp sauce). They balance equipment and ingredients either end of a bamboo pole. Food stallholders without a fixed storefront serve a small variety of dishes from the same spot each day (such as banh mi baguettes), while permanent street food eateries have extensive menus, and tables and chairs overflowing onto the pavements.

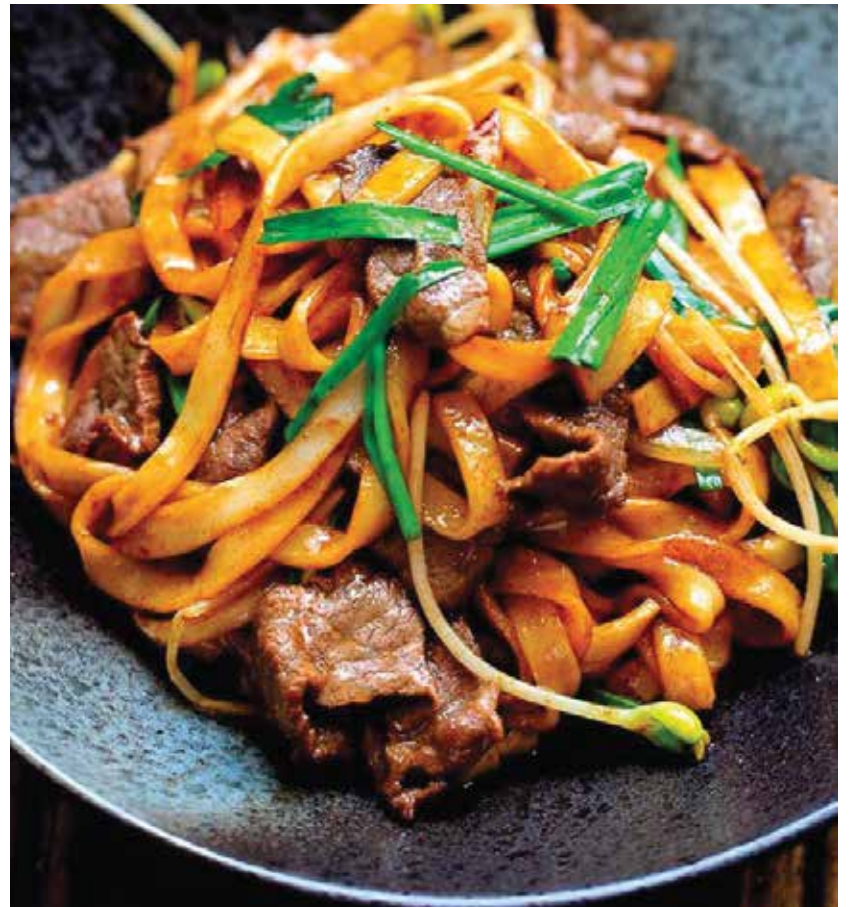
Street food dining declined during the post-war period due to scarcity of ingredients and food rationing. However, it revived with the 1986 Doi Moi reforms. Increased economic opportunities and daily movement of people encouraged the demand for quick, cheap and nutritious street food.

The best way to enjoy it is to perch on a tiny plastic stool, share a table with fellow diners, outside shop front stalls and pavement cafes, down hidden alleyways, in crowded markets, by bus stops, offices and schools, within a whisker of motorbikes whizzing by

Vietnamese eat on the go with seemingly limitless appetites - on the way to work, a mid-morning break, lunch, a snack on the way home, dinner with family, a midnight feast...

Come on our mini 24-hour Hanoi street food tour as we savor a number of dishes typically enjoyed at certain times of the day.

Whatever you fancy, street food dining is an informal, improvised nature of eating. the ultimate in al fresco dining and fast food.



Hoa Lu – Tam Coc 1 day trip

Featuring awe-inspiring sceneries, stunning architectures, intriguing history of the past and friendly local to meet. This day trip is perfect to take a break from Hanoi



A day of refined exploration

An iconic day-tour, marvel at the hidden splendors of Halong Bay designed for those who have limited time. Five hour cruise off the beaten track via crowd avoidance route aboard the region's finest luxury day-ship cruise line, explore the isolated captivating archipelagoes that romances the senses.



La Siesta Trendy – on top of the world in Agoda awards

La Siesta Trendy Hotel & Spa has been recognized as one of the top favorite partners of Agoda's Vietnam market. Our property has been named a winner of Agoda's 2017 Gold Circle Awards, recognized for exceeding guest expectations and offering a unique world-class service.

EHG and La Siesta Trendy are looking forward to receiving this prestigious award at a special ceremony in Saigon on 18 January 2018.

All the management and staff would like to take this opportunity of thanking our guests who have stayed at La Siesta Trendy for your amazing support and wonderful reviews – all of which have contributed to us receiving this honor.



A social hub of creativity

In 2015 the Goethe Institut in Hanoi invited German street graffiti artist and illustrator, Julian Vogel to Hanoi for the Sound Stuff Festival. While he was in Hanoi he made his creative mark on a 22 storied tower block in an area south of Hoan Kiem Lake, near the Pasteur gardens. Extending the height of the block is a winding monotone-colored dragon, designed as a stunning graphic illustration, complete with gigantic feathers cascading around it.

This is the face of Hanoi Creative City which is the brainchild of Architect Doan Ky Thanh. Back in mid-2013, the site of former abandoned pharmaceutical factories, nostalgically reminiscent of the old communist style, was transformed into Hanoi's first "art district". This was Zone 9. The complex was spontaneously transformed by artists and architects into a cool hip area with fashion, bars, restaurants and a bubbling alternative art scene. Sadly, this initiative, which had become a popular hangout place for young Hanoians, was short lived when a fire during construction work forced the area to close.

However, the Zone 9 vision lived on when Hanoi's largest and newest arts complex opened its doors on 5 September 2015. Doan Ky Thanh, one of the Zone 9 'founders', searched for a suitable area to create a new arts center. Not far from the ill-fated Zone 9, he found the half completed Kim Khi Thăng Long complex originally designed for offices and residential purposes. After negotiating a 10-year lease with the owners, the tower (with about 10,000m² of space) and surrounding skate park area have been transformed into one of the country's largest creative spaces, with particular emphasis on creatively talented teenagers and young adults.

Old containers scattered around the complex and stacked up have been fitted with windows and transformed into trendy cafes, shops and creative spaces. The skate park/open space is used for hosting outdoor events such as live music and street sport activities. A vibrant external bright red 'fire escape' type of staircase leads up to the 6th floor.

On its opening day, known as Creative City Day, nearly 2 years ago, the complex held a series of public events including a flea market, dance performances, freestyle footballing and other sports activities, day long live music concerts together with the opening of some shops, cafes and restaurants.



The initiative supports and promotes the development of creative ideas with a business-minded vision. "This is my social enterprise. I want to contribute to the community" explains Thanh. His dream has become a success story. Different areas and units are now home to over 40 establishments including craft and boutique shops, café-bars and restaurants, jewelry and fashion designers, publishing, architecture and innovation. Many startups showing real entrepreneurial spirit have a presence. While hip events and exhibitions, training courses and cultural programmes and specialized workshops are regularly on the timetable.

For art lovers, on the 5th floor Tet Art is a leading art fair connecting some of the most influential Vietnamese artists. The 15th floor is home to the Nhà Sàn Studio. This Collective was set up in 1988 by two artists and is Vietnam's longest established non-profit experimental art space which, since its conception, has supported some of the country's most imaginative and avant-garde artists.

For the energetic, Dóo entertainment's high tech recreation area occupies the 6th and 7th floors with a variety of games, sports and activities including rock climbing, indoor golf and kids play area. The 10th floor is home to Swequity Ultimate Fitness gym.

Aspiring adult and child models will be pleased to know BB Academy and Entertainment, a model training center owned famous twin models Thuy Hang and Thuy Hanh have a presence on the 12th floor.

Ingenuity is shown through a store called Lọ Mọ. This start up business was established by Nguyen Quang Hoa who resigned from working in a bank. On sale are recycled objects such as water pipes and glass bottles turned into decorative pieces. Creative Lab by Up recently opened a 'creative playground' for those who want to see their imagination come to life.

In the 1990s and early 2000s Hanoi's creative spaces were supported largely by international cultural organizations such as the British Council, L'Espace, the Goethe Institut and so on. Now, independent initiatives like Hanoi Creative City are surging ahead, spurred on by a generation of young business-minded Vietnamese. For Thanh and his founding team three objectives are central to their project - to give start-up businesses a chance, inspire creative communities and to support disadvantaged entrepreneurs. Hanoi Creative City is a unique commercial venture turning ideas and possibilities into a reality.

Hanoi Creative City

1 Luong Yen
Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi
Open daily 08:30-22:00

Speaking VIETNAMESE

1. Hello! - Xin chao! (sin chow!)
2. Goodbye - Tam Biet
3. How are you? - Ban co khoe khong? (ban co kwe khome?) also, Ban the nao?
4. I'm fine, thank you! - Cam on ban toi khoe (gahm un ban thoy kwe)
5. And you? - Ban thi sao? (ban ty sao?)
6. What's your name? - Ban ten gi? (ban thane zee)
7. My name is... - Toi la (thoy la...)
8. Thank you - Xin Cam on (sin gahm un)
9. You're welcome - Khong co' gi (khom go zee)
10. Yes - Vang (vung)
11. No - Khong (khome)
12. Excuse me/Sorry... - Xin loi (seen loy)
13. Can you help me? - Ban giup toi duoc khong? (ban zoop thoy duc khom?)
14. I'd like to eat - Toi muon an (thoy moowan un)
15. I'd like a drink - Toi muon uong (thoy moowan oowanh)
16. Good - Tot (thote)
17. Bad - Khong tot (khome thote)
18. What is this? - Cai nay la gi (guy nai la zee)
19. How much? - Bao nhieu? (bow nyew)
20. Too expensive - Mac qua (mahk qwa)
21. Where is the nearest internet shop? - Cho internet o dau? (choh internet uh)
22. Where is the nearest bank? - Nha bang o dau? (nya bung uh doh)
23. Hotel - Khach San (khack san)
24. Hot - Nong (nom)
25. Cold - Lanh (lang)
26. Coffee - Ca phe (cah feh)
27. Hot black coffee - Ca phe nong (cah feh nom)
28. Hot Coffee with milk - Ca phe sua nong (cah feh sua nom)
29. Tea - Tra (chah)
30. I like - Toi thich (thoy tick)
31. I am happy - Toi vui (thoy vuoy)
32. I am tired - Toi met (thoy mate)
33. Where is an ATM - Cay ATM o dau? (kei a te mo uh doh)



ABOUT

Elegance Hospitality is a group of hotels renowned for our well-equipped facilities and sophisticated service. Founded in the early 2000s, we have developed from our first hotel in Hanoi to the current chain of 5 boutique hotels in Hanoi's Old Quarter and one outstanding resort in Hoi An Town. Our distinctive collection of properties redefines the very concept of boutique and luxury hospitality.

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