

Cham Island worth a visit

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A visit to the UNESCO World Heritage town of Hoi An in the central province of Quang Nam would be incomplete without dropping by Cu Lao Cham (Cham Island), an archipelago off the coast of the central province.



Many boats are seen at a wharf

Situated about 15 km from the ancient town of Hoi An, Cham Island comprises eight islets of different sizes with each boasting a different feature and thus creating a picturesque landscape that waits to be discovered.

Recognized as the world's biosphere reserve by UNESCO in 2009, the archipelago has many rare and valuable flora and fauna species and historical sites associated with the development in the past of the commercial port town of Hoi An.

Once arriving in Cham Island, nature enthusiasts should explore the largest islet, Hon Lao, covering an area of 1,317 hectares and home to more than 600 households with over 3,000 residents, who mostly earn a living by catching fish and catering to tourists. A prominent venue on the island is Hai Tang Pagoda, which was built 250 years ago. Despite the ups and downs of history, the ancient pagoda has remained a common sacred site for local residents to practice religious beliefs and attracted thousands of tourists from far and wide every year.

Previously, the provincial government decided not to construct a cable car system connecting the mainland and Cu Lao Cham while restricting the number of visitors to this nature reserve, said Dinh Hai, director of the provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Cu Lao Cham is known as an ideal hideaway for tourists to Quang Nam Province. While developing tourism products, the province will also pay proper attention to the conservation of the nature reserve, Hai added.



Hai Lang Pagoda is a renowned sacred pagoda on Cham Island



Source: <http://www.southchina.com> view of Hon Lao, the largest islet in Cu Lao Cham on mainland Quang Nam