

Simple Beauty

Text

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Images

TheO Pham

At Dechiu Hotel in the coastal Vietnamese town of Hoi An, waves crashing on the shore of nearby An Bang Beach set a gentle tempo to the days. Breakfast starts with freshly squeezed juice and whatever has been harvested from the cafe's farm. A walk on the beach, a bike ride through the rice fields into town, or hours spent curled up with a book on the daybed are but a few of the activities available for the day ahead. Life generally takes a more leisurely pace here — at least slower than what I'm used to — and it feels discernibly easier to be present and in the moment.

This petite beach bolthole is the brainchild of self-taught designer TheO Pham. Growing up on the northern coast of Vietnam in a small traditional house built by her father, Pham had, despite the farming family's modest means, an idyllic childhood. Surrounded by nature, she developed a love for simple pleasures. But the eldest of six siblings dreamt of moving to the city, where she would be the first in her family to attend university. That dream came true, but two years in to an economics degree in Hanoi, she left her studies to pursue her love of art and design.

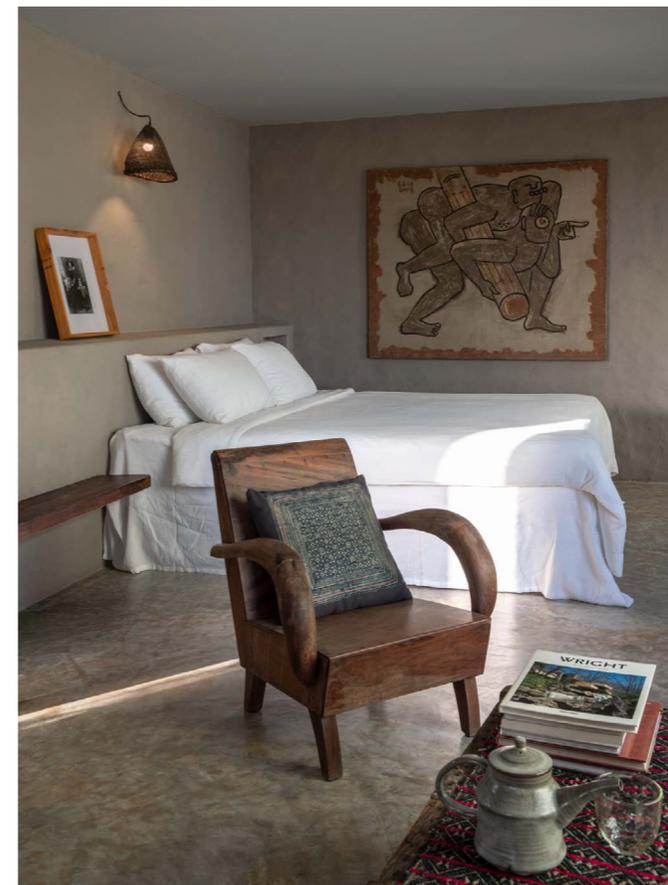
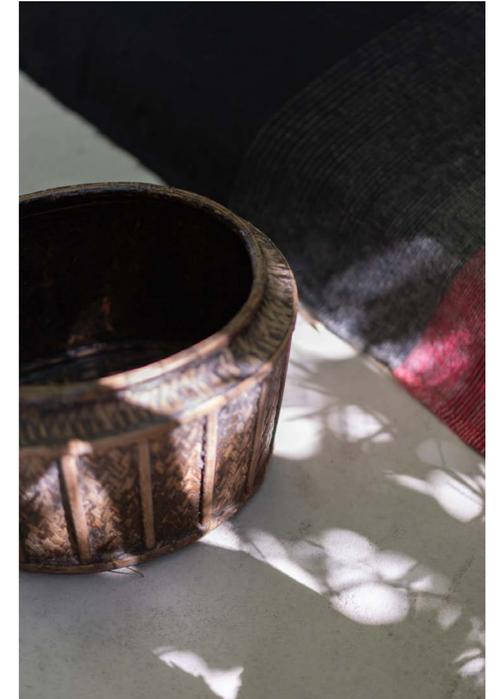
Pham's approach doesn't centre on technical drawings or plans, but on emotion and memory. She builds models that she continues to tinker with right through construction, making changes based on instinct as the building takes shape; some might say she's more of a sculptor than an architect. As a self-trained designer, Pham's entire process is visceral and intuitive, and she's careful about who she works with



and for. The builders are a crucial part of this process, as she believes that something special can only be created when everyone working on the project does so with passion.

Dechiu is the realisation of a long-held dream, and it's become a repository for Pham's accumulation of traditional handmade Vietnamese objects, crafts and textiles that she's collected over decades. These reappropriated and often repurposed cultural relics and remnants are thoughtfully spread throughout 12 rooms across three floors.

The hotel is a place where the designer says she feels at home — and like all good hosts, she's done her best to make sure guests do too.



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Dechiu Hotel was dreamed up by owner TheO Pham, who brought to life a coastal bolthole where guests can experience Vietnamese hospitality amid her vast collection of traditional handmade objects, crafts and textiles, and locally sourced pieces

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The design of the hotel and its twelve rooms is inspired by the simple pleasures of Pham's childhood on a coastal farm. A self-taught designer, Pham created each of the rooms based on her own experiences and developing practice