Short-term Study Abroad
January 2018

Course Title: Global Business Project: The Ecosystem of Food Industry in Vietnam

Destination: Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Course Objective:

This course will provide students with a thorough understanding of Vietnamese culture, business environment and opportunities, focusing on the food and beverage (F&B) industry. Students will learn the evolution of Vietnamese cuisine, food culture, and the development of e-commerce in the food industry in Vietnam. By the end of the course, students will be able to conduct market and industry research to assess business opportunities and provide business and marketing strategies for executives in a cross-cultural environment.

Students will apply their learning from MBA courses and related studies as well as working experience in marketing, industry analyses, and international business to engage in a company specific consulting project.

Students will conduct desk research in Washington, D.C. and field work in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Students will produce quantitative and qualitative analyses to assist IZZI ASIA to develop a business and marketing plan to expand their business footprint in Vietnam and abroad. The project will evaluate both IZZI ASIA’s business platform and content of its traditional and e-commerce businesses. The project will include, but is not limited to, customer segmentations, industry trends, competitive analyses, and business and marketing strategies.

Client Company: IZZI ASIA, Vietnam

IZZI ASIA is a service provider in the food & beverage industry in Vietnam. IZZI ASIA creates a platform to connect businesses and consumers along the supply chain of the F&B industry in Vietnam and abroad. In addition, IZZI ASIA provides product design, sales, marketing, operative automation and serves as an incubator, mentor, and accelerator for Vietnamese companies in the F&B industry.

Two remarkable flagship products of IZZI ASIA are FoodIzzi and Food Fest. FoodIzzi is a multi-functional online platform that connects enterprises and end-consumers. Food Fest is a mega event with performances, culinary competitions, and modern entertainment. FoodIzzi and Food Fest promote Vietnamese cuisine, the contemporary arts, and entertainment programs of Vietnam to domestic and international visitors.
IZZI ASIA headquarters is located in Hanoi, Vietnam. The company has 60 employees.

Bios of IZZI ASIA Executives


Chef Jack Lee: Chef Lee is a Vietnamese – American chef who has extensive experience and is recognized as one of the finest chefs in the food industry. After graduating from the California School of Culinary Arts and the Le Cordon Bleu program, he began refining his skills by working at a variety of restaurants with influential Chef Humberto Contreras, Chef Douglas Dodd, and Chef Bruno Lopez of the Hotel Bel-Air. Chef Lee’s impressive versatility and mastery of Asian and California-French cuisine led to his position as The Banquet Chef at Hotel Bel-Air where his career flourished, catering to the Birthday parties of Oprah Winfrey, Patti Labelle, and Nancy Reagan. In addition, Chef Lee successfully handled several entertainment industry events from small, personalized dinners for Angelina Jolie and Kobe Bryant to big events such as the Oscar celebration for the movie “Million Dollar Baby” with Clint Eastwood and Hilary Swank and Oprah Winfrey’s “Wedding of the Century”. Chef Lee’s expertise has also served royals such as the Prince of Brunei and many political fundraiser attendees.

Company website: http://izzi.asia/

Project Description:

The project will conduct quantitative and qualitative analyses to assess business opportunities of the core businesses of IZZI ASIA in Vietnam and abroad. The analysis will focus on the evolution of Vietnamese cuisine and food culture from agricultural farms to e-commerce. Findings will provide key inputs for IZZI ASIA to develop business and marketing strategies to expand their traditional and e-commerce business lines at home and abroad.

The project will be organized in a Consultative format. Students will work under faculty mentorship. Prior to arriving in Vietnam, students will conduct desk research in Washington D.C. and will discuss issues with IZZI ASIA executives via phone and email. While in Vietnam, students will be working with IZZI ASIA executives and their clients. Interviews and field trips are expected to be conducted in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Information gained through direct immersion is used to redraft or strengthen the final report to IZZI ASIA.
The project will cover at least the following three key fundamentals.

1. **A market analysis of Asian cuisine and food products in the U.S.:** The project will provide quantitative and qualitative analyses to assess the market segment of Asian food in the U.S., especially Vietnamese cuisine. The analysis will identify consumer profiles (demographic group, economic group, geographic, etc.), food trends (organic, healthy, non-GMO, etc.), wholesale and retail distribution channels (Asian stores vs non-Asian stores, packaging (plastic, glass, paper), and pricing (high end vs low end). Findings will help IZZI ASIA to refine business and marketing plans to identify targeted consumers in the U.S. to expand Vietnamese food products to U.S. markets. The desk research will be conducted in Washington D.C.

2. **An assessment of e-commerce for food services industry in Vietnam:** The project will provide quantitative and qualitative analyses to assess business opportunities for online food services in Vietnam. The analysis will assess consumer segments, restaurant participants, business strategies, marketing strategies, IT platforms, food contents, and similar online platforms in the U.S. and other countries. Findings will help IZZI ASIA to develop a business plan to expand FoodIzzi to serve Vietnamese residents, tourists, and expat communities in major cities in Vietnam. The research is a combination of desk research, discussions with IZZI ASIA executives, and field trips to restaurants and platform participants in Hanoi and HCMC, Vietnam.

3. **A comparative analysis of Vietnamese cuisine and food culture:** The project will provide quantitative and qualitative analyses to assess the uniqueness of Vietnamese cuisine and food culture in global markets. The analysis will include the popularity of Vietnamese cuisine among different demographic and economic groups as well as a comparative analysis of food cultures in food festivals in other countries. Findings will help IZZI Asia to benchmark Food Fest with other food festivals in other countries and to improve the platform and contents of Food Fest. The desk research of food festivals in other countries will be conducted in Washington, D.C.

**Course Assignments and Due Dates:**

Students are expected to conduct desk research in Washington, D.C. from late October through December 2017 and to conduct field research and interviews in January 2018 in Vietnam. Findings and recommendations will be presented to IZZI ASIA executives on Friday, January 12, 2018 in Vietnam.

Students will form into smaller groups between 2 and 3 people to complete assignments, including conducting desk research and field research and interviews.

Suggested milestones of research assignments and deadlines are below.

1. **Assignment #1 (due in class on Saturday November 18, 2017):** Students will conduct desk research to collect information of IZZI ASIA and its products FoodIzzi and Food Fest. Information includes, but not limited to, capacity, comparative advantages, and business objectives in the next 3-5 years.
2. Assignment #2 (due in class on Saturday December 2, 2017): Students will conduct desk research of Asian food trends in the U.S., including customer demographic and profiles, market size, and food products.

3. Assignment #3 (due in class on Saturday December 2, 2017): Students will conduct a competitive analysis of Food Fest's competitors and FoodIzzi in other countries. The analysis will focus on the infrastructure as well as food contents.

4. Assignment #4 (due in class on Saturday December 2, 2017): Chef Jack Lee is creating a new line of product of Southeast Asian spices in Vietnam to export to the U.S. Students will conduct desk research to gather basic information of the FDA approval process for importing spices, if any.

5. Assignment #6 (due in the afternoon on Thursday January 11, 2018): Students will work with IZZI Asia staff in Vietnam to fill research gap to finalize the business and marketing plan for IZZI ASIA. A group meeting on January 11, 2018 to go over findings and rehearse the final presentation.

6. Assignment #7 (on Friday morning January 12, 2018): Students will present the final report with findings and an action plan to IZZI ASIA executives in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The project work will be a combination of desk research, field research, and interviews in Washington, D.C. and in Vietnam. Cooking sessions and video production at IZZI ASIA facilities during the trip may be included.

Reading Assignments:

- Articles on culinary tourism in different countries and regions.

Class Time & Locations:

The course will be conducted both in Washington, D.C. and Vietnam.

GW, Washington D.C.: Due to time differences, students should expect to have phone calls with client companies at nighttime in Washington, D.C.
- Class #1: Saturday October 28, 2017 (noon – 5pm)
- Class #2: Saturday November 18, 2017 (noon – 5pm)
- Class #3: Saturday December 2, 2017 (noon – 5pm)
- Students are expected to work with IZZI ASIA during the winter break prior to the trip.

IZZI ASIA, Vietnam:
- The in-country dates are between Sunday, January 7, 2018 and Saturday, January 13, 2018 in Vietnam. Students are expected to check in to the hotel by Saturday night January 6, 2018. The in-country portion of the program will conclude after dinner on Saturday, January 13.
- Students will work with IZZI ASIA executives and Chef Jack Lee in Hanoi and Ho Chi
Minch City, Vietnam.

Instructor:
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## Tentative Itinerary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saturday January 6, 2018 Arrival in HCMC</th>
<th>Sunday January 7, 2018 HCMC</th>
<th>Monday January 8, 2018 HCMC</th>
<th>Tuesday January 9, 2018 Hanoi</th>
<th>Wednesday January 10, 2018 Hanoi</th>
<th>Thursday January 11, 2018 Hanoi</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Check-in</td>
<td>Breakfast at the hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group meeting at the hotel</td>
<td>Company visit (10am – noon)</td>
<td>Fly to Hanoi</td>
<td>Working with Izzi Asia (10am-5pm)</td>
<td>Working with Izzi Asia (10am-2pm)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Program Kickoff (10am-12am)</td>
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<td>Student arrival</td>
<td>Lunch on own</td>
<td>Lunch on own</td>
<td>Lunch on own</td>
<td>Working lunch</td>
<td>Working lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City Cultural Tour</td>
<td>Company visit (2pm-4pm)</td>
<td>Meeting at Izzi Asia (4pm-8pm)</td>
<td>Working with Izzi Asia</td>
<td>Free afternoon (2-7pm)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Welcome dinner with Chef Jack and Guests</td>
<td>(Optional) Dinner with Chef Jack and guests to discuss VN cuisine.</td>
<td>Working dinner with Izzi Asia.</td>
<td>(Optional) Dinner with Chef Jack and guests to discuss VN cuisine.</td>
<td>Working dinner with Izzi Asia. (7-9pm)</td>
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<td>2 contact hours</td>
<td>4 contact hours</td>
<td>4 contact hours</td>
<td>7 contact hours</td>
<td>6 contact hours</td>
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<tr>
<th>Friday January 12, 2018, HCMC</th>
<th>Saturday January 13, 2018 HCMC</th>
<th>Sunday January 14, 2018 HCMC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast at the hotel</td>
<td>Breakfast at the hotel</td>
<td>Leaving Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation at Izzi Asia (9am-1pm)</td>
<td>Discussion with Chef Jack (11am-1pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch with Izzi Asia</td>
<td>(Optional) Lunch with Chef Jack</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flying back to HCMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dinner on own</td>
<td>Closing dinner (7pm-10pm)</td>
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<td>4 contact hours</td>
<td>2 contact hours</td>
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