Indochina’s Hotels

As with any area that had travelers for business and pleasure, a variety of hotels appeared on the scene French Indochina. Certainly, most were concentrated in the major cities, but even small towns could claim their local hotel or two.

This exhibit provides a survey over the range of hotels that served Indochina prior to the creation of the independent states of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The glimpse into the hotels is through a paper trail consisting of three basic categories:

- hotel stationery
- hotel baggage labels
- picture postcards

Larger hotels could afford to have personalized stationery printed for use by the hotel as well as guests. Typically, the stationery consisted of letter sheets and envelopes bearing the name of the hotel and its logo. Groups of hotels sharing common ownership took advantage of economy of scale by printing stationery that incorporated the names of several hotels. These stationery items could be used by any one of the hotels.

Baggage labels would have helped in sorting the luggage of an arriving ship to facilitate getting the right bags to each hotel. But beyond their functionality, baggage labels were a form of cheap advertisement for the hotel. Guests who wanted to let their travels be known allowed hotel staff would affix labels to their luggage. Since the traveler’s baggage may be seen by a large number of potential customers, hotels sometimes created elaborate labels that far exceeded simply identifying the hotel. Bright colors with detailed scenes beaconed travelers to exotic destinations.

Picture postcards were generally of two types: those that were scenic as any notable building might be and those freely distributed by hotel for use by its guests. In the latter case, picture postcards represented another avenue for low-cost advertising by the hotel. Hotels hoped that messages home from tourists written on hotel postcards would stimulate follow-on business.
Indochina’s Hotels

A special problem exists for picture postcards. In French, the word “hotel” can mean a place that provides temporary lodging for people who are traveling, exactly the same as the word means in English. However, in French, the word can also apply to any substantial building. For example, “hotel de ville” means “city hall.” Because of the popularity of picture postcards, virtually every building in Indochinese cities appeared on them at one time or another. The caption correctly identified the building as a hotel of some sort, but it was not a place that offered temporary lodgings.

This example from the town of Tay-Ninh looks like a place that could conceivably accommodate travelers, but l’Hotel de l’Inspection is a government building that houses the Bureau de l’Inspection, an independent agency similar to the US government’s Inspector General.
Cie Française Immobilière

Extensive properties belonging to the “Cie Française Immobilière” chain are identified in the corner imprint of the chain’s stationery. Based on later letters, the company changed its name to “Société Foncière de Tonkin et du l’Annam.”
Société Foncière de Tonkin et du l’Annam

On a letter sent to The Library of Congress in 1937, the arched lettering at the top of the imprint identifies the hotel chain as “Société Foncière de Tonkin et du l’Annam.”
Grand Hotel
Hue, Tourane, Quinhon

The Morin Frères chain of hotels included three named Grand Hotel in the cities of Hue, Tourane and Quinhon in Annam.
Morin Frères
Grand Hotel
Hue, Tourane, Qui-Nhon, Bana

Later, the Morin Frères chain added a hotel at Bana to those at Hue, Tourane and Qui-Nhon. The chain’s baggage label was considerably larger than those of its competitors.
Angkor les Ruines Hotel
Angkor

The “corner card” impression identifies the Angkor les Ruines Hotel as part of the “Société des Grands-Hotels Indochinois” (“S.G.H.I.”) group.

POSTAL MARKINGS
ANGKOR-LES-RUIINES CAMBODGE  19-11 28
slogan handstamp
REVERSE
PNOMPENH CAMBODEGE  19-11 28
Hotel des Ruines d'Angkor
Angkor

The stationery for the Hotel des Ruines d'Angkor was less ornate than that of many of the other hotels serving tourists at the Angkor Temple complex.

POSTAL MARKINGS
ANGKOR CAMBODGE  5-4 31	slogan handstamp
REVERSE
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE  6-4 31
Auberge Royale des Temples
Angkor

The baggage label for Auberge Royale des Temples conveniently identifies the establishment’s location with respect to the famous ruins. The label provides an eyelet for attaching the label to a luggage handle with string.
Hotel Morin-Frères
Bana

The town of Bana was located in a highland retreat area. Hotels there catered to those who wanted to escape the heat and humidity of coastal areas.
Hotel Central
Can tho

Signage for Cantho’s Hotel Central employed both French and Vietnamese.
Hotel Beauséjour
Cap Saint Jacques

Although smallish by hotel standards, the Hotel Beauséjour had an air of exclusivity owing to the rock wall that surrounded its grounds.
Hotel Cap St. Jaques
Cap Saint Jacques

Appearing to be a souvenir for hotel guests, this card uses the spelling “Cap St. Jaques” (with no letter “c” as compared as to “Jacques”) for both the town’s and the hotel’s names. Further adding to the geographical confusion, it carries the dateline “Saigon” at the upper right.
Grand Hotel
Cap Saint Jacques

Towers in front of the Grand Hotel at Cap Saint Jacques probably supported wires with the colony’s telegraph service.
Hôtel Mottet
Cap Saint Jacques

The image in the top postcard shows that the Hôtel Mottet lost part of its roof during the typhoon of 1 May 1904.
Chapa Hotel
Chapa

A postcard's image shows that the Chapa Hotel's orchard was located in an isolated flat area among the rural hills of Tonkin.
Hotel Joulin
Chapa

Comparison of images shows that the Chapa Hotel and Hotel Joulin were one in the same, likely with different names over time.
Hôtel Jourlin
Chapa

The view upon arriving at Chapa and the Hôtel Jourlin gives the traveler a sense of its remoteness in the mountainous territory.
Hotel Dong Khan
Cholon

The Hotel Dong Khan’s baggage label was shaped in the form of a parallelogram shape as a way to make it stand out from the usual rectangles and circles.
Grand Hôtel des Caps
Cua-Tung

With automobiles situated out front, the Grand Hôtel des Caps appeared more modern than its urban counterparts. A view from the restaurant shows its ocean side setting.
Grand Hotel of Dalat
Dalat

The sender selected stationery from the Grand Hotel of Dalat for a registered airmail letter to Paris in 1934.

POSTAL MARKINGS
DALAT ANNAM 5-4 34
registration label
airmail label
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 6-4 34
Evidently, Dalat’s Grand Hotel consisted of multiple buildings. This postcard depicts the hotel’s restaurant as an isolated structure.
Dalat’s Grand Hotel offered individual chalets. Although separated from one another, they were located close to the hotel’s amenities.
Hotel du Parc
Dalat

Stationery for Dalat’s Hotel du Parc featured a bird’s eye view of hotel printed in blue ink at the upper left.

POSTAL MARKINGS
DALAT ANNAM 19-2 40
slogan handstamp
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 20 FEV 40
LE FLEIX DORDOGNE 10-4 40
The Hotel du Parc, one of Dalat’s many hotels, was a complex featuring a large, multi-story building.
Grand Hotel Desanti
Dalat

The Grand Hotel Desanti, another of Dalat's hotels, offered individual chalets to its guests.
Langbian Palace
Dalat

This view of the hotel shows a number of automobiles occupying a garage with no walls, no doubt simply providing protection from the sun.

The caption on the postcard identifies the name of the hotel with a single word “Langbian” rather than two words as was sometimes the way the hotel was referred to.
Langbian Palace
Dalat

The corner imprint of early stationery from the Langbian Palace in 1924 identifies the hotel's location as well as its proprietors.

POSTAL MARKINGS
DALAT ANNAM 2-6 24
Lang-Bian Palace
Dalat

Unlike many examples of the period, this model of Langbian Palace stationery lacks any images. At the extreme upper left is the abbreviation “S.G.H.I,” which stands for “Société des Grands Hotels Indochinois.”

POSTAL MARKINGS
DALAT ANNAM 15-9 27
framed R with manuscript registration number
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-9 27
Lang-Bian Palace
Dalat

The sedate blue used for printing airmail stationery for the Langbian Palace Hotel was, no doubt, selected to convey a sense of the elegance of the property.
Lang-Bian Palace
Dalat

Airmail stationery for the Langbian Palace Hotel was printed in a sedate blue, no doubt selected to convey the elegance of the property.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-11 39
registration label
Langbian Palace
Dalat

The Langbian Palace was a dominant feature of the landscape at Dalat.
A colorful baggage label conveyed the image of an unspoiled area as part of the hotel's message of escaping from the ordinary.
Store and Hotel of Dap Cau
Dap-Cau

The sign on the front of the building on the right reads “MAGASINS ET HOTEL DE DAP CAU.”
Grand Hôtel
Doson

While hotel postcards typically depicted the view from the street, occasionally a card featured one of the hotel’s high points as in this case of the lower image of the Grand Hotel’s terrace alongside the beach at Doson.
Le Pagodon
Doson

From the image on this picture postcard, Le Pagodon appeared to be a beachside resort hotel.
Hotel des Colonies
Haiphong

The awning on the front of the Hotel des Colonies advertises for the Café Hotel des Colonies.
Hotel du Commerce
Haiphong

Typical of the era, Haiphong's Hotel du Commerce employed stationery noting the manager's name, but little else about the hotel.

POSTAL MARKINGS
HAIPHONG TONKIN 7 MARS 03
REVERSE
JONZAC CHARANTE INF'RE 7 AVRIL 03
Hotel du Commerce
Haiphong

Ma chère grand-mère

C'est à toi, cette fois-ci, que je me permets de vous écrire. Ce n'est qu'au bout de mille lettres que je me permets de vous écrire une lettre, mais enfin je me permets de vous écrire cette lettre. Vous avez raison, je vous écris maintenant pour vous dire combien j'aime vous voir. J'ai écrit à ma mère, elle m'a répondu qu'elle était en France et qu'elle veut venir me voir. Je pense que vous avez raison, car je me sens seul sans vous. Je vous aime tant et je pense à vous toutes les nuits lorsque je me couche. Je suis content de vous voir et je vous aime terriblement. Je vous embrasse chaudement.

Tous mes respects,

Votre fils,

[Signature]
Hôtel du Commerce
Haiphong

A period postcard locates the Hôtel du Commerce in Haiphong on Rue Paul-Bert. The postcard also notes that the hotel was built in 1886.
Grand Hotel du Commerce
Haiphong

Apparently by 1939, the name of the hotel had evolved from the simple “Hotel du Commerce” to more distinctive “Grand Hotel du Commerce”
L'Hôtel de l'Europe
Haiphong

True to its name, the L'Hôtel de l'Europe, with its architecture and verandas, would not look out of place in a European capital city.
Hotel Huu Nghi
Haiphong

A later style label publicizes the Hotel Huu Nghi located in Haiphong, Vietnam.
Hotel Yen-Tan
Haiphong

Curiously, as indicated in its stationery, the address for Hotel Yen-tan consisted of six street numbers on Boulevard Amiral Courbet in Haiphong.

POSTAL MARKINGS
HAI-PHONG TONKIN 16-9 31
Chinese Hotel
Haiphong

The Chinese Hotel in Haiphong appeared to be a step down in elegance from the many hotels depicted on postcards of the period.
Hotel du Coq
Hanoi

A period postcard shows that both the Hotel du Coq and the Hotel Metropole were located on Rue Henri Rivière in Hanoi.
Because the sender overfranked Hotel de la Paix stationery for a registered, airmail letter to Paris in 1931, it was handstamped “Franked by Sender.”

POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 23-9 31
registration and airmail labels
framed “Franked by Sender” handstamp
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 28-9 31
MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION 12-10 31
The large Grand Hotel Métropole was one of the major hotels in Hanoi. It was part of an Indochinese hotel chain called Société Foncière de Tonkin et du l'Annam.
André Leralle was a prolific philatelist who mailed covers to himself from around the world. Evidently, at one point in 1926, he stayed in apartment 132 of Hanoi’s Grand Hotel Métropole.
Grand Hotel Métropole
Hanoi

Hotel stationery was imprinted along the left side "Par avion Costes et Bellonte" for the distance record flight that the two pilots were attempting from Hanoi to Paris in November 1929.

POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 17-11 29
airmail label
flight cachet
REVERSE
PARIS R.P. DISTRIBUTION 21 • XI 1921
Grand Hotel Metropole
Hanoi

Dan Sweeney, whose signature appears at the lower right, designed this label for the Grand Hotel Metropole in Hanoi.
Hotel Metropole
Hanoi

This variation in name indicates that the hotel was simply called “Hotel Metropole” at one point.
A registered 1931 airmail letter from Hanoi to France used stationery from the Hotel de France.

POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 6-4 31
registration and airmail labels
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-4 31
Hanoi Hôtel
Hanoi

Like many urban hotels, the Hanoi Hotel included a sidewalk café, which faced the main street and presumably projected a welcoming environment to prospective patrons.
A wartime mailing to French India using Hotel Splendide stationery was examined by censors prior to leaving Indochina.

POSTAL MARKINGS
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 24-11 40
censor’s resealing tape
Military Authority football
Hotel Splendide
Hanoi

A piece of notepaper, imprinted "HOTEL SPLENDIDE HANOI," was filled in with guest services.
The reverse of the Hotel Splendide’s baggage label served double duty with a street map showing the location of the hotel.
Terminus Hotel
Hanoi

A handstamp on the reverse of an airmail envelope shows that the sender was a guest or an employee of the Terminus Hotel in Hanoi. Presumably, the hotel was located in the immediate vicinity of Hanoi’s train station.

POSTAL MARKINGS
MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION SÉCHES DU RHONE 19 • () 1936
REVERSE
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 11- () 236
Hotel de Hongay
Hongay

For a mailing to France, the sender used stationery from the Hotel de Hongay to post a letter from Haiphong in 1910.
Grand Hotel des Mines
Hongay

Mining was a dominant industry in the area around Hongay. The handstamp of Hongay’s Grand Hotel des Mines was a low cost way of creating “personalized stationery.”
Grand Hotel
Hue

A photographic postcard depicts the Grand Hotel de Hue (sign visible above the entry).
Establishments Morin-Freres
Hue

A photographic postcard depicts a Morin-Freres structure. Because the edifice lacks any signage, rather than one of the chain’s hotels, the building likely housed the corporate offices of Morin Freres.
Hotel de Provence and Hotel de la Page
Kampot and Kep

Sister hotels at Kep and Kampot were run by F. H. Joly. Based on the Kampot postmark on this envelope, it had originated at the Hotel de Provence located there.

POSTAL MARKINGS
KAMPOT CAMBODGE 8-5 28
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 10-5 28
Hotel stationery used rectangular frames to set different portions of the imprint located across the top of the envelope.

POSTAL MARKINGS
KOMPONGCHAM CAMBODGE 17-2 37
registration label
REVERSE
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 18-2 37
LIMOGES HAUTE-VIENNE 1-3 37
Hotel Caralp
Nam-Dinh

The postcard image of the Hôtel Caralp at Nam-Dinh shows that it employed minimal outside advertising.
Grand Hotel de la Plage
Nhatrang

The Grand Hotel de la Plage was a beachfront hotel at Nhatrang. Postcards depict sides of the hotel facing toward and away from the beach.
Grand Hotel Beau Rivage
Nhatrang

The corner imprint on this envelope shows that Nhatrang’s Grand Hotel Beau Rivage was situated on the beach. Indeed, "rivage" means bank or shore.

POSTAL MARKINGS
NHA TRANG ANNAM 7-12 34
registration and airmail labels
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 8-12 34
Grand Hotel Beau Rivage
Nhatrang

A postcard posted in 1934 shares the same image of the beach and buildings that appeared on the hotel’s envelopes.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 19 JUIN 34
REVERSE
NHA TRANG ANNAM 18-6 34
Grand Hotel Beau Rivage
Nhatrang

An oval baggage label from the Grand Hotel Beau Rivage shares the same image as the hotel’s stationery.
Hotel Beaurivage
Nhatrang

The caption on this period postcard identifies the name of the hotel as “Hôtel Beaurivage” with a single word as compared to the way the hotel was sometimes referred to with two words “Beau” and Rivage.”
Hotel Beau Rivage
Grand Hotel de la Plage
Nhatrang

In 1936, a registered letter was posted with the stationery of the sister hotels in Nhatrang. The hotels were identified using simple block text.

POSTAL MARKINGS
NHA-TRANG ANNAM 17-7 36
registration label
REVERSE
REIMS-PRINCIPAL MARNE 27-7 36
Grand Hotel Beau-Rivage
Nhatrang

This example of hotel stationery from World War II exhibits a slight variation in the hotel's name. As opposed to earlier examples the words “BEAU” and “RIVAGE” are connected with a hyphen.

Interestingly, the letter is addressed to another hotel, the Hotel du Parc in Dalat.
Hotel le Royal
Pnom-Penh

The sender, almost certainly a tourist, used stationery from Pnompenh’s Le Royal Hotel for posting a letter from Angkor to London in 1933.

POSTAL MARKINGS
ANGKOR CAMBODGE 4-1 33
slogan handstamp and routing instruction
airmail label and canceling “X” handstamp

REVERSE
Pnompenh CAMBODGE 6-1 33
Marseill-gare-avion boxeS DURHone 18 • I 1933
Hotel le Royal
Pnom-Penh

The corner card imprint on the Hotel Le Royal was partially obscured by one of the postage stamps.

POSTAL MARKINGS
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 17-8 38
airmail label
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 18-8 38
MARSEILL-GARE-AVION BORCHES DU RHONE 23 • I 1938
Grand Hotel Manolis
Phnompenh

A tourist embellished his envelope from Phnompenh’s Grand Hotel Manolis with an array of contemporary postage stamps for a mailing to London in 1939.
Grand Hôtel
Phnom Penh

The early postcard at the top shows Phnom Penh’s Grand Hotel without any nearby vegetation while the later one below shows the hotel surrounded by dense trees.
Grand Hôtel
Pnompenh

The view of Pnompenh's Grand Hotel shown in this postcard from the early 1900s includes a telephone pole in the foreground. While a horse-drawn carriage is still present, the postcard is evidence that Pnompenh had adopted modern communications typical of a major city.
Select Hotel
Pnompenh

Posted from Pnompenh, Cambodia, in November 1927, this envelop from the Select Hotel was handstamped with the “Found in the Box” marking. The loss of the stamp at the lower right happened after the markings were applied to the front of the cover and was not a factor in the mailing being singled out. The reason for the handstamp was that excessive postage had been affixed to the envelope. The implied message was “don’t blame the post office for the sender overspending on postage.”

POSTAL MARKINGS
Pnompenh CAMBODGE 28-11 27
Found in the Box handstamp
Hotel Sukhalay
Phnompenh

Phnompenh’s Hotel Sukhalay employed a unique pyramidal design for its baggage label.
Royal Hotel
Phnompenh

A picture postcard posted in 1950 shows a view of the Royal Hotel in Phnompenh, Cambodia.

POSTAL MARKINGS (REVERSE)
PHNOMPENH CAMBODGE  21-9 1950
Hôtel Clément
Quang-Yen

The Clement Hotel at Quang-Yen appeared to be surrounded by water. Access to the hotel was via a causeway.
Quinehone Hotel
Quinehone

Although this postcard does not specifically identify the hotel and villas, the complex is likely called the Quinhone Hotel.
Hotel Caravelle
Saigon
The elegant Terrace Restaurant of the Continental Hotel is depicted on a period postcard.
An early version of Continental Hotel stationery was posted from Saigon to Boston in 1893. Foreign mail postage was paid with a 25-centime Commerce stamp. Commerce definitive stamps were being phased out with the arrival of Indochina’s Navigation and Commerce stamps in 1892.
Continental Hotel
Saigon

The sender of this mailing affixed a portion of the rear flap of a Continental Hotel envelope to the front of his Continental Hotel envelope. Sent to La Paz, Bolivia, the sender may have wanted to make certain the addressee knew where to send a response.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE  19-3 31
REVERSE
LA PAZ BOLIVIA  XXX 11 31
Stationery for the Continental Hotel, which was presumably distinct from the “Continental Palace Hotel,” shows its logo to have consisted of a rather complex combination of the letters “C” and “H.”
A picture postcard is labeled “Hôtel Continental” but the marquis in the picture says “CONTINENTAL PALACE HOTEL” indicating that they were one in the same.
According to the envelope’s imprint, the main hotel for the “Société des Grandes Hotels Indochinois” was the Continental Palace in Saigon.
Continental Palace Hotel
Saigon

This version of the Continental Palace’s stationery carried a simple identifying imprint on the back flap.

POSTAL MARKINGS
HONG-KONG 18 JUN 16
REVERSE
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 12-6 116
Dan Sweeney, a prominent period artist, designed a label for Saigon’s Continental Palace Hotel.
Continental Palace Hotel
Saigon

The Continental Pace Hotel's oval label depicting a tiger evoked images of an exotic locale.
Continental Palace Hotel
Saigon
Grand Hotel Continental
Saigon

The logo for the Grand Hotel Continental employees a red sunburst design. The address for telegraphic communication is identified as “CONTINENT-SAIGON.” The hotel’s stationery carries the same Grand Hotel Continental logo at the upper right.

REVERSE POSTAL MARKINGS
POULO-CONDORE COCHINCHINE 24 MARS 10
Je viens de recevoir le 
ment de vous avoir 
depuis 6 années. Vous 
avez assez bien 
partout 
recherché pour 
moi.

Par merveilleux 
Voisin 
Ville d'Europe 
pas vent-vent.

J'en espé gratuite mon 
temps ci enfin une 
fois du lettres en 
 Angola. Je suis 
autant de sorte pour 
heure 
Prèse — Donc —

Grand Hotel Continental 
Saigon
Grand Hotel
Saigon

An aerial view of Saigon’s Grand Hotel shows a prominent dome at the corner of the building. The Saigon Palace Hotel had a similar dome also located on the corner of the building where two streets intersected.
L'Hôtel Majestic
Saigon

With balconies on all rooms facing the street, the Hotel Majestic was another large building that mimicked the architecture of mother France.

A later souvenir card shows that the outside of the formerly ornate hotel had undergone extensive remodeling.
Hotel Majestic
Saigon

The design elements for the Hotel Majestic’s label showed that the establishment catered to guests arriving in Saigon by ship.
Another Hotel Majestic label more closely followed the format of contemporary labels.
Hotel Majestic
Saigon
Majestic Palace
Saigon

Stationery simply identified the establishment as “Majestic Palace” without the word “hotel.” Franked with 66 cents worth of postage, the mailing must have exceeded 5 grams as the letter was cited as with a handstamp that reads “insufficient postage for air transport.”
Majestic Palace
Saigon

This form was used for sending guests’ hotel baggage to a ship in the port of Saigon. The form has entries for the passenger's name, the ship's name, the passenger's cabin number and his destination.

To ease travelers' concerns, the form notes “ENGLISH SPOKEN.”
Hotel Des Nations
Saigon

From the postcard description, the Hotel des Nations was located across the street from city hall.
Hôtel des Nations
Saigon

The Hotel of the Nations faced a public square with Saigon’s statue of Francis Garnier, the noted military explorer of Indochina.
Stationery for Saigon’s Hotel des Nations was shared with its restaurant – Café des Nations.
Hotel des Nations
Saigon

Sai gon, le 21 septembre 1901

Veuillez la tenir pour le général Poitte, et
souhaite que vous pourrez accepter la
mort de mon ami enfin, en réponse à ma lettre
souhaitant de vous embrasser

Mes chers parents,

Ma mort sauvage, car il
s’est arrêté de la canne-

Par Jésus, cette lettre qui a
voulu dire n’oublie pas de
venir de la trier, n’a d’autre but
que de vous faire comprendre
que le courrier n’est pas bien tâcher.

Vous êtes tous nours. La
Mamie est en bonne santé.
Ne lui parlez pas de
Veighaup car mon cœur entre
Vous parler. Peux vouloir
ne pourrai pas vous écrire
en 1 Veighaup par le
courrier qui devra arriver en
France.

Le 1er de novembre,
ne c’est les M. M. en en peut savoir
pour moi.
Hotel des Nations
Saigon

Declaration of the hotel’s address on a baggage label indicates a more modern approach toward conveying information.
Hôtel des Nations
Saigon

The Hotel of the Nations faced a public square with Saigon’s statue of Francis Garnier, the noted military explorer of Indochina.
In contrast to the traditionally sedate business stationery, this envelope for the Grand Hôtel de la Rotonde features large bold print in red ink.
Grand Hôtel de la Rotonde
Saigon

Tables and chairs on wide sidewalks made Saigon’s Grand Hôtel de la Rotonde reminiscent of Parisian hotels.
Grand Hôtel de la Rotonde
Saigon

The label for Saigon’s Grand Hôtel de la Rotonde incorporated a blank area at the lower left where the name of the hotel guest could be entered.
Saigon Palace Hotel
Saigon

A postcard from 1933 depicts the Catinat Street entrance to the Saigon Palace Hotel.
Saigon Palace Hotel
Saigon

With the advent of regular airmail service from Indochina to Europe, hotels included airmail envelopes among their stationery items available for guests.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 4-1 34
flight cachet
REVERSE
MARSEILLE-GARE-AVION BCHES DU RHONE 17 • I 1934
ANNECY HAUTE-SAVOIE 18.1.34
Grand Hotel
Saigon

An aerial view of Saigon’s Grand Hotel shows a prominent dome at the corner of
the building. The Saigon Palace Hotel had a similar dome also located on the corner of
the building where two streets intersected.
Grand Café de la Terrasse Hôtel
Saigon

This hotel apparently took its name from its restaurant – the Grand Café de la Terrasse (Grand Terrace Café).
Grand Café de la Terrasse Hôtel
Saigon

The Terrace Hotel's stationery also promoted its restaurant, Grand Café de la Terrasse, with a two-color corner imprint.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SAIGON A COCHINCHINE 13 AOUT 09
framed R with manuscript registration number
REVERSE
BANGKOK 1. 18. 8. 09
BANGKOK.2 18. 8. 09
Terrace Hotel
Saigon

The Terrace Hotel's stationery also promoted its restaurant with a two-color corner imprint.
Hotel de l'Univers
Saigon

Saigon’s Hotel de l’Univers fronted one of the city’s many tree-lined streets.
Hotel de l'Univers
Saigon

Nineteenth century stationery for the Hotel de l'Univers employed a simple form of return address at the upper left of envelopes. As multiple streets are given in the return address, it is likely that the hotel was large and had multiple entrances.
Hotel de l'Univers
Saigon

A Hotel de l'Univers envelope posted in 1900 advertises food and drink and promotes a related property located at Cap Saint Jacques.

Because the post office was unprepared for the turn of the century, digits for the year “00” had to be created by removing the central portions of the “99” date plugs.
Hotel de l'Univers
Saigon

Evidently, the Mottet & Company operated a general supply store as well as the Hôtel de l'Univers in Saigon and Grand Hôtel and Sanatorium in Cap Saint Jacques.
Grand Hotel de la Plage
Sam-Son

Sam-Son was famous for its beautiful beach. The town's major seaside hotel took the name “Grand Beach Hotel.”

POSTAL MARKINGS
SAM-SON ANNAM 24 OCT. 07
REVERSE
THANH-HOA ANNAM 24 OCT. 07
NANCY MTHE ET MILLE 27-11 07
Grand Hotel d'Angkor
Siemreap-Angkor

Stationery for the Grand Hotel d'Angkor exploited the most prominent local tourist attraction, the temple complex at Angkor, by depicting the Angkor Wat temple across the top of the envelope.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SIEMREAP-ANGKOR CAMBODGE 16-4 38
REVERSE
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 16-4 38
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17-4 38
Grand Hotel d’Angkor and Hotel des Ruines
Siemreap and Angkor, Cambodia

Posted in 1935, this envelope shows that A. Messner controlled both the Grand Hotel d’Angkor at Siemreap and the Hotel des Ruines at Angkor. The reverse of the envelope depicts a large image of the Bayon.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SIEMREAP CAMBODGE 30-10 35
REVERSE
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 31-10 35
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 1-11 35
Grand Hotel d'Angkor
Siemreap-Angkor

Another envelope shows that Grand Hotel d’Angkor at Siemreap and the Hotel des Ruines d’Angkor at Angkor were under the control of the same corporate entity.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SIEMREAP-ANGKOR CAMBODGE 14-12 36
slogan handstamp
REVERSE
PNOMPENH CAMBODGE 16-12 36
SAIGON-CENTRAL COCHINCHINE 17 DEC 36
Grand Hotel d'Angkor
Siemreap

A slogan handstamp promoting tourism for the Angkor temple complex was applied to an envelope from the Grand Hotel d’Angkor.

POSTAL MARKINGS
SIEAMREAP-ANGKOR CAMBODGE 14-4 39
slogan handstamp
REVERSE
PHNOMPENH CAMBODGE 14-4 39
CHICAGO, ILL. AIR MAIL APR 29 1939
Grand Hotel d'Angkor & Hotel des Ruines  
Siemreap-Angkor

One baggage label served the sister hotels of Grand Hotel d'Angkor and Hotel des Ruines both located in Siemreap.
Grand Hotel d'Angkor
Siemreap

The Grand Hotel d'Angkor made use of the prime tourist destination as the central design feature in its colorful baggage label.
Grand Hotel d'Angkor & Hotel des Ruines
Siemreap-Angkor

In 1933, an imaginative tourist cut off the top portion of the hotel's menu and fashioned a postcard from it. The unique mailing took a month to reach Paris.

POSTAL MARKINGS
PARIS XVII AVENUE WACRAM 4 FEVR 33
REVERSE
ANGKOR CAMBODGE 3-1 33
Hotel de la Cascade d'Argent
Tam Dao

Panoramic views of the Hotel de la Cascade d'Argent at Tam Dao depict its mountainous setting.
Hotel de la Cascade d'Argent
Tam Dao

The view shown on this picture postcard makes the Hotel de la Cascade Argent appear as an isolated building situated in a mountainous setting.
Hotel Grangier
Thanh-Hoa – Sam-Son

The roadside location of the Hotel Grangier likely indicates that I was located on the road between Thanh-Hoa and Sam-Son.
Grand Hotel Reynaud
Thanh-Hoa and Sam-Son

A picture postcard’s caption is ambiguous as to where the Grand Hotel Reynaud in the image was located – either Than-Hoa or Sam-Son.
Hotel de la Terrasse
Tong

As the imprint indicates, the Hotel de la Terasse was located at Tong, Tonkin. The major military airport in the North was situated Tong.

POSTAL MARKINGS
TONG TONKIN 2-12 38
registration and airmail labels
framed “Hanoi-Marseille” route marking
REVERSE
HANOI R.P. TONKIN 2-12 38
PARIS-V DISTRIBUTION 10-12 38
Hotel Morin-Freres
Tourane

On a picture postcard, the location of the Hôtel Morin-Frères is identified unconventionally as “ANNAM-TOURANE.”
Hotel Baud
Tuyen-Quang

The rural setting of the Hotel Baud was obvious from a period postcard.

POSTAL MARKINGS
TUYEN-QUANG TONKIN 28 JUIN 10
REVERSE
TUYEN-QUANG TONKIN 28 JUIN 10
HANOI TONKIN 29 JUIN 10
While identifying the location as Tuyen-Quang, a period postcard fails to specifically identify the hotel pictured on it. Written below the eave, it appears to be the Hotel des Messageries.
Hotel Constellation
Vientiane

To demonstrate its hospitality, Vientiane’s Hotel Constellation advertises what club’s hold their meetings at the hotel.
Settha Palace Hotel
Vientiane

Built around 1932, Vientiane’s Settha Palace Hotel remains in operation today.
Lang Xang Hotel
Vientiane

The triangular shape of the Lang Xang Hotel’s baggage label along with its image of an elephant made it distinctive among the hotel labels of Indochina.
Vietri Hotel
Vietri

Although not specifically identified as such, the hotel shown on this picture postcard was presumably called the Vietri Hotel.

POSTAL MARKINGS
VIETTRI TONKIN 14 JULI 11
REVERSE
VIETTRI TONKIN 14 JULI 11
BOULOGNE S-MER PAS DE CALAIS 17-8 11
Grand Hotel de Vinh
Vinh

Imprinted information shows the location of Vinh’s Grand Hotel on “Rue de la Poste” opposite the Resident’s building.