



The Tet flower road will return to Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City this Friday, highlighted by a giant dragon blowing blooms, as the city starts celebrating the Year of Dragon.

With the Lunar New Year starting Monday next week, work to transform Nguyen Hue Street into a street of flowers began on January 10.

The 12 meter long, five meter tall dragon has water hyacinth to form its scales. The dragon was made by painter Minh Phuong in around a month. It was made from pieces of styrofoam that were stuck together, covered with cloth and then plastered with lime. The water hyacinth for the dragon scales were brought from the Mekong Delta.

Four trucks were used to carry the big dragon from District 7 to Nguyen Hue Street in the city center. The road is complemented with five smaller dragons.

Besides many miniatures all made from flowers, more than 100,000 flower baskets were brought to fill the road.

The flower road this year is themed "Vietnam – My homeland," showing the beauty of all regions of the country and its islands, as a call for national unification, said Tran Hung Viet, general director of Saigontourist, chief organizer of the city Tet celebrations.

A part of the street depicts the legend explaining the origin of Vietnamese people, whose father was a dragon and mother a fairy. The parents gave birth to a hundred eggs that hatched into a hundred people, half following the father to the coastal areas and half to the mountainous areas to develop the country until now, the story goes.

Many miniatures showing the coastal life are also displayed at the road, including white sand beaches, ranges of coconut palms, many coracles, besides hills of snails, shells and pearls, all made from flowers.

The flowers and decorations will be removed on the night of January 26, from 10 pm, the fourth day of the Lunar New Year.

HCMC is also opening 59 flower markets to especially serve the holiday, including three major ones at the September 23rd Park near Ben Thanh market, Le Van Tam Park at the Dien Bien Phu and Hai Ba Trung corners, and Gia Dinh Park in Go Vap District, which surrounded by

Nguyen Kiem, Hoang Minh Giam and Ho Van Hue Streets.

All the markets will be open for one week between January 16 and 22, the last day of this Lunar Year.

*By Mai Vong – Quang Thu, Thanh Nien News*