Fat Foreigners

Westerners are usually larger than Vietnamese people. They are not only taller, which is usually due to genetics, but also often fatter. It can be tempting to think that this is because they eat too much, and in some cases, you would be correct, but it is also because of the kinds of food available in Western countries.

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In Vietnam, fresh food is cheap. Meat and vegetables grown nearby and bought from the market are inexpensive. In Western countries, however, fresh food is expensive because it has to be quickly transported a long distance from huge, mechanised farms that are hundreds or thousands of miles away. Processed food, however, is cheap. This is food that is often already cooked. It is made from low quality, cheap ingredients and has a lot of sugar and fat added to make it taste good. It lasts a long time and so can be transported more slowly and more cheaply. In Vietnam, therefore, it is cheap to eat healthy food; in Western countries, it is expensive. Foreigners can therefore often be fatter than Vietnamese people not because they are rich, but because they are not.

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Why is fresh food in Western countries so expensive?

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How do manufacturers make cheap, processed food taste better?

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Which do you prefer: fresh food or processed food?