

# NO REQUEST TOO SMALL

*From a fleeting glance on a bus leading to a lifelong romance, to a private limousine for a precious feline cargo, no request is too small, or too difficult, for the people of ComfortDelGro.*



# VIETNAM: YOU CAN CALL ME BOND, TIEN BOND

BY NGUYEN HOANG NAM,  
TAXI DRIVER, VIETNAM TAXI







WE WERE VERY SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT SHE HAD BEEN USING OUR TAXI FOR SURVEILLANCE.



**A**s taxi drivers, we get to meet all kinds of people every day. Some are quiet, others talkative. Some are happy, others sad. Some are polite, others rude. For sure, our job can never be called boring.

Some days are, however, more interesting than others.

One of my friends, Cabby Nguyen Dao Tien, certainly has an interesting story to tell. He drives a taxi with darkened windows. One day, he received a request from a female passenger for a regular booking – to pick her up every day during lunch time for about two weeks. He was more than happy to take on the job.

For half a month, he would drive around, then he and the lady passenger would sit in the cab – and wait. For hours on end. He

didn't know what was happening nor did he ask. He just drove – and sat, and waited.

Then one day, his passenger called us to say she no longer needed the cab. Our operator took the opportunity to ask about her special request. We were very surprised to learn that she had been using our taxi for surveillance. She had suspected that her husband was having an extramarital affair and was tailing him and his “friend” to confirm her suspicions. The dark windows were, therefore, a necessity.

When we told Dao Tien about this, he was very tickled. Everyone called him Tien Bond for a while.



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I TURNED AROUND AND TO MY ASTONISHMENT, I SAW THE LITTLE BABY – STILL IN THE BASKET – IN THE BACK SEAT OF MY CAB.

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Like Dao Tien, I too have had an interesting experience in the time I've driven a cab. It happened one late evening, when it was raining heavily and the weather was cold. There were not many people on the road, and I drove slowly hoping for a fare.

Then I saw along the road, a young couple with a few kids and a baby. They flagged down my cab and everyone got in.

The baby, lying on the back seat, slept soundly, while the rest of the kids went on chattering non-stop. When we reached their destination, a small alley in District 7, they got out as noisily as they got in.

I drove away, in search of a new fare. Then, I heard a cry from behind. I turned around and to my astonishment, I saw the little baby – still in the basket – in the back seat of my cab. I stopped the taxi, and carried him out. The little boy was bawling.

I hastily rang the call centre for help and wanted to bring the baby back to headquarters immediately. I was, however, told to drive back to where I had dropped the family off. I did. But there was no one there.

The baby cried louder. By this time, the call centre was getting to be as nervous as I was – nobody had contacted them to get the baby back either.

I decided to wait at the spot – in the hope that the family would somehow find their way back there. Another 10 minutes or so passed – the longest in my life – and they finally did! I don't think I've ever felt greater relief.

So, whoever says driving a taxi is boring has obviously never driven one before. It is anything but!



# UNITED KINGDOM: A PURRRRRECT RIDE – ACROSS THE OCEAN

BY PETER BAILEY,  
GENERAL MANAGER, COMFORT EXECUTIVE



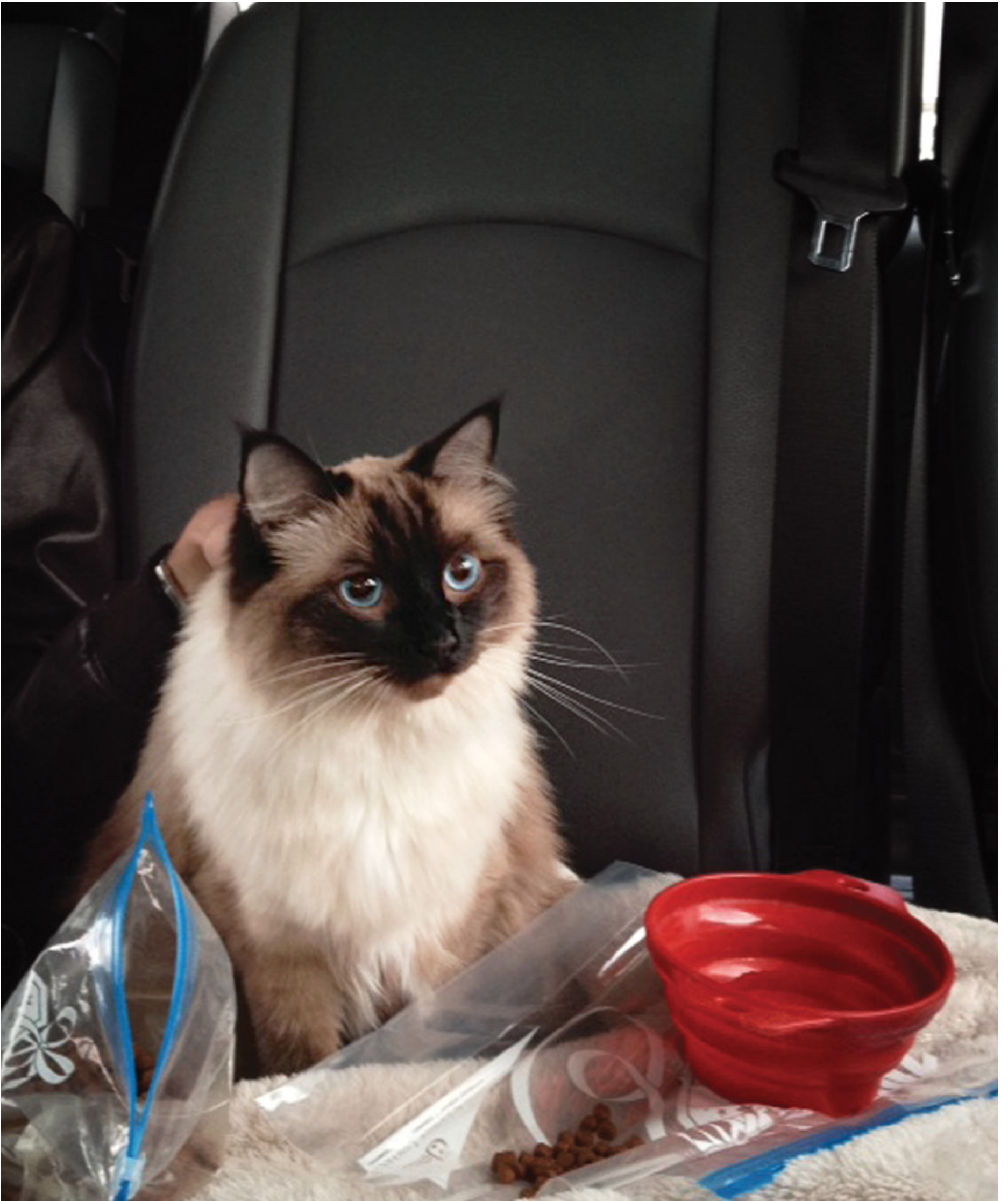
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ONE OF OUR LONG-STANDING CORPORATE CLIENTS WANTED US TO TRANSPORT HER AND HER CAT, BELLA, FROM HER HOME IN CENTRAL LONDON'S BELGRAVIA TO PARIS, ACROSS THE ENGLISH CHANNEL.

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THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY, JOHN MADE SURE THE PAMPERED FELINE WAS KEPT AS COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE. REGULAR STOPS WERE MADE TO LET HER STRETCH HER SILKY PAWS AND TAKE IN THE FRESH AIR.



In early 2012, we received a very unusual request – so unusual we thought we heard wrong. One of our long-standing corporate clients wanted us to transport her and her cat, Bella, from her home in Central London’s Belgravia to Paris, across the English Channel.

Yes, her cat that is half-Persian and half-Birman.

We were a little worried. It was going to be a long journey – one that would last at least eight hours. How would the cat fare in a confined space over such an extended period of time?

But no request is too large or too small for us. So we assigned one of our best drivers – John Eracli – to the job.

John, who has over 10 years of service with us, set off from his home in Essex in his luxury Black Mercedes Viano, and arrived in London at 4am to pick Bella and her owner up. They needed to be at Paris’ Charles de Gaulle Airport by midday to catch a

transatlantic flight to Miami. The trip from London to Paris had to be done by car because no airline flying out of the United Kingdom would allow a cat in the passenger cabin.

This was totally unacceptable to our client and so, our services were sought.

Throughout the journey, John made sure the pampered feline was kept as comfortable as possible. Regular stops were made to let her stretch her silky paws and take in the fresh air.

She was, by all accounts, a seasoned traveller, and better behaved than most humans.

When Bella and her owner came back from their sojourn in the sun, John was there to fetch them back to London.

Both customers are now regular passengers in John’s cab. And more importantly, they’ve become his good friends.



# SINGAPORE: THE LOVE BUS

BY PAULINE SIM,  
FAMILY LIFE CHAMPION,  
WEST COAST CONSTITUENCY, SINGAPORE



“  
OUR BUS HOLDS A PLACE IN THE SINGAPORE  
BOOK OF RECORDS FOR THE FIRST SPEED  
DATING SESSION TO BE HELD ON WHEELS.  
”











“

LOVE, AS THEY SAY, BITES WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT. AND MIGHT I ADD, IT SOMETIMES DOES SO IN THE MOST ‘UNROMANTIC’ OF PLACES.

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In the 80s, there was The Love Boat. Today, in Singapore, we have The Love Bus. In fact, our bus holds a place in the Singapore Book of Records for the first speed dating session to be held on wheels.

The speed dating session, which took place on 30 March 2011, involved 30 men and women. The men had to impress their respective lady partners during the time it took the bus to travel five bus stops. Once that time came, they moved on to the next lady and started the whole process again.

The bus, which operated on Service 99, continued to pick up passengers but kept the upper deck out of bounds to fare-paying passengers – giving the love-seekers enough “privacy” to get to know one another away from prying eyes.

As a marriage solemniser for six years, I have seen many young people start their lives together in posh hotels and different places of worship. Yet some of the most memorable wedding vows I have heard took place in the most unusual of places – public buses.

In fact, I once presided over a mass renewal of marriage vows involving 40 couples – again on board an SBS Transit bus. Some of the couples were newly married, others for a longer time, some even as long as more than 40 years. Whichever the case, one thing was clear: Love was in the air.

And with the bulk of the population travelling by bus every day, the bus seems to be one of the most fitting locations for a wedding. Certainly, love has blossomed for many during the course of a bus ride. I remember one couple who met on a bus when they were mere teenagers, exchanging shy glances across the aisle. Today, 20 years later, they’re happily married.

Love, as they say, bites when you least expect it. And might I add, it sometimes does so in the most “unromantic” of places. What matters most is that it bit. And that it lasts.