



## Myanmar - "Burma...quite unlike any land you know about"

All year: 15D/14N ex London or 13D/12N Yangon to Yangon

'Burma...quite unlike any land you know about', said Rudyard Kipling and it still rings true today. From the faded Victorian splendor and breathtaking [Shwedagon Pagoda](#) of Rangoon (Yangon) to the ancient cities of historic Mandalay, the spectacular temples of Bagan, colonial hill-stations, the justly celebrated Lake Inle and myriad traditional hill-tribes of the picturesque Shan Plateau.

On this 2 week Burma tour we'll explore this amazing country by local train; rickshaw, horse and cart, Irrawaddy cruiser, bicycle and on foot and by road and river with the emphasis, as usual, on both famous sites *and* lesser known ones to discover the local culture, bustling markets, authentic cuisine and incredibly friendly people that comprise this highly varied and truly fabulous country. Southeast Asia as it used to be – an unforgettable trip!

**Day 1** Departure from UK.

**Day 2** Arrival in Yangon (Rangoon), and check-in to a comfortable, downtown hotel close to the famous Scott Market. Time to relax before an afternoon walking orientation tour of the city followed by a scenic sunset boat cruise on the Rangoon River.

**Day 3** Morning departure for a fascinating and unusual train journey on the [Rangoon circular line](#). The (very) slow local train completes a loop through the suburbs and outlying villages providing an original and behind the scenes view of local life and Rangoon – a great introduction to Burma. After lunch we'll take a stroll through the picturesque Kandawgyi Lake Gardens before a sunset visit to the incredible [Shwedagon Temple](#), Burma's most sacred & certainly one of its most awe inspiring sites.

**Day 4** Morning flight to Mandalay and time to relax or explore the area before an afternoon trip to the nearby ancient city and former 14th to 19th century capital of Ava (Inwa). Discover the ruined city, temples and villages by horse and cart before a sunset visit to the iconic [U Bein Bridge](#) – reputed to be the longest wooden bridge in the world.

**Day 5** Day tour and scenic drive to the old British hill-station of Pyn U Lwin located on the edge of the Shan Plateau. The small town's 1,200m altitude meant it was a popular and cool retreat for the former British colonists and many historic buildings remain as well as its famous botanical gardens. We'll time our return journey for sunset (and sundowners), on the Mandalay riverside with spectacular views over the Irrawaddy River.

**Day 6** Early morning departure by boat down the Irrawaddy to Bagan; bucolic river scenes, mountain views and a great way to arrive in the historic ancient city. Late afternoon orientation visit and sunset at the site of the ruined 11th to 13th century capital – still containing over 2,000 chedis, stupas, pagodas scattered across a riverside plain and certainly one of the most incredible sites of Southeast Asia!

**Day 7** Visit Bagan at your leisure. Armed with a map, hat and torch (to discover temples' hidden stairways), roam the country lanes by bicycle, hire a pony and trap, visit the best known temples or find some hidden chedis of your own. Your guide will be on-hand to advise and recommend but we'd like to let you spend some time at this phenomenal site at your own leisure and pace.

**Day 8** Morning departure by road, heading eastwards to the distant Shan Plateau. Our first stop will be Mount Popa – one of the country's most sacred sites located on the summit of an extinct volcano which rises dramatically and near vertically from the plains below. Local style lunch in the town of Meiktila before a scenic climb up the Plateau itself to our destination, the charming little town and old hill-station of Kalaw.

**Day 9** Morning hike through the surrounding hills to visit one of the local Palaung hill-tribe villages; a scenic walk, mountain views, visit to the village and chance to meet some of its friendly inhabitants. Afternoon return to Kalaw and some time to wander around the small town, and perhaps explore the market or sit in a local tea shop and watch the world go by?

**Day 10** Day trip through the picturesque countryside of the [Shan Plateau](#) taking in, firstly, one of the local farmers' markets before heading to the town of Pindaya to visit the spectacular [Shwe Umin](#) cave temples. Lunch by the lake and a chance to check out the traditional umbrella making which Pindaya is famous for. In the afternoon we'll continue our scenic route to Nyungshwe – gateway town to the famous Inle Lake.

**Day 11** Day boat trip around the picturesque lake including visits to a lakeside village market, a traditional hand rolling cheroot factory, a fascinating lotus weaving project and the highly unusual floating gardens.

**Day 12** Morning departure across the lake and up river to the small lakeside village of In Dein from where we'll hike through the picturesque landscape to visit the site of a ruined Shan city, known as the Shan Bagan, where myriad ruined stupas dot the lush vegetation. Return to Nyaungshwe for lunch and an afternoon at leisure.

**Day 13** Free morning at Lake Inle to do your own thing; cycle to the extraordinary Red Mountain Winery, check out the local market, visit a local village by canoe or just relax in a tea shop before an afternoon return flight to Yangon.

**Day 14** Free time to perhaps do some last-minute shopping or souvenir hunting at the famous Scott Market and a late afternoon departure.

**Day 15** Morning arrival in UK.

**Notes:** This tour is offered with or without a return flight from London. Persons not wishing to take up the flight option should join the tour in Yangon on day 2 of the itinerary & depart in Yangon on day 14.

**Highlights:** Yangon, Shwedagon, Mandalay, Ava ancient city, U Bein Bridge, Irrawaddy boat trip, Ruins of Bagan, Kalaw, Pindaya cave temple, Lake Inle, local markets, local train ride, Shan Plateau, traditional hill-tribes, local food, beach extension

**Accommodation:** hotel, guesthouse

**Transport:** domestic flight, boat, minibus, horse and cart, train

**Meals:** full board except for lunch on days 7, 13 & 14 and dinner on days 7, 9 & 12

**Fitness:** easy – moderate. About 3 to 4 hours hiking on day 10

**Visa requirements:** A Myanmar visa is required to be obtained in advance from your nearest embassy. A visa is valid for 3 months from the date of issue so do not apply for your visa until three months before your return date.

E-visas are now available for many countries <http://evisa.moip.gov.mm>

You are applying as a Foreign Independent Traveller **NOT** a Package Tour Group. The hotel for visa purposes is the Asia Plaza Hotel, Rangoon c/o Tour Mandalay (our Ground Handler). You should not require any other details.

For UK residents wishing to apply for a visa at the Embassy, the website is [www.myanmarembassylondon.com](http://www.myanmarembassylondon.com). Payment is made by postal order.



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