



## Myanmar Off The Beaten Path

**Note:** Price printed on this PDF is valid until **02-05-2025** and is subject to change without notice due to Partner changes and currency fluctuations

**Visit:** Yangon - Mandalay - Hsipaw - Pyin-Oo Lwin - Pakkoku - Kalaw - Inle Lake - Yangon

### Detailed Itinerary

#### Day 01: Day 1: Yangon Arrival

Upon arrival at Yangon Airport you will be greeted by your tour guide and transferred to your hotel. You will be free at the rest of day to make your own exploration to discover the city. Overnight in Yangon.

#### Day 02: Day 2: Yangon pagodas, tea rooms & markets

We enjoy a tour of Yangon and its famous religious monuments today. In the heart of downtown we begin with a photo stop in front of Yangon City Hall, before visiting the Sule Pagoda, which is a peaceful place to

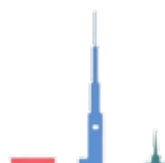
retreat from the bustle of the city. The pagoda is near Maha Bandoola Park which is encircled by a host of colonial buildings and heritage sites, including Independence Monument and the High Court. We also visit the golden hollow Botahtaung Pagoda, which was originally built over 2500 years ago. We enjoy lunch at the Yangon Tea House (own account), which is reminiscent of the grand tea houses of colonial times and serves a delicious cup of traditional tea. Moving on we take a stroll around the colourful Bogyoke (Scott) Market, which sells an array of goods, including gemstones, handicrafts and clothes. Then we visit the giant 70 metre-long reclining Buddha of Chaukhtagyi Paya at Chaukhtagyi Pagoda, which has a crown encrusted in diamonds and other precious stones. Later this evening we visit the most revered Buddhist temple in Myanmar, the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda, where locals gather to make offerings and prayers. Standing at 90 meters tall, the gold leaf central stupa dominates the city's skyline and turns vivid hues of yellow, orange and red when the sun begins to set. Overnight in Yangon. (B)

### **Day 03: Day 3: Yangon to Mandalay – Hsipaw**

This morning transfer to Yangon airport for a flight to Mandalay(cost not included). We then travel by road to Hsipaw. On arrival set off on a guided walk (approximately 6 hours) through panoramic scenery with paddy fields and seasonal crops, small creeks, Shan villages, local schools (we will hopefully get an opportunity to visit a school), the grave of the first prince of Hsipaw, a local nunnery, and a wooden monastery. Learn about Shan life and see and witness first hand traditional industries like cheroot (cigar) rolling and bamboo weaving. Overnight in Hsipaw. (B)

### **Day 04: Day 4: Dokthawaddy River trip**

Tip! Wake up early this morning and walk through the 'candlelight market'. This busy morning market is filled with people from the nearby villages- including Shan and Palaung hilltribes- who gather in the predawn hours to trade their wares and produce. The market usually lasts from 3.30 until around 6 AM- thus, the stalls are illuminated by candlelight! If you wish, try a bowl of local Shan noodles here before returning to the hotel. After breakfast, we will set off for a boat journey along the Dokehtawaddy River. It's a 15 minute walk to the river jetty where our private longtail boat is waiting. We cruise upstream for around 30 minutes to a fruit plantation where we'll disembark for a walk through the plantation, village and then up to a 150-year old monastery (approx 40 minutes walk). After visiting the monastery, we will return to our boat. The next part of our boat trip takes us to the confluence of the Dokehtawaddy River where we'll stop for a swimming break and to take photos of the beautiful setting. We then continue to a hilltribe village and we can take a stroll around the village to meet with the locals and learn more about their culture, traditions and lifestyles. We then return by boat to Hsipaw, arriving mid afternoon. The rest of the afternoon you can wander around the town and perhaps enjoy the sunset views over the river from one of the many hilltop temples. Overnight in Hsipaw. (B)



**Day 05: Day 5: Hsipaw – Kyaukme / Naung Cho (by train) – Pyin-Oo Lwin – Mandalay**

After breakfast transfer to Hsipaw railway station for departure to Naung Cho via Kyaukme. The train departs at 0930 and arrives Naung Cho at around 14:00. Traveling by train in Myanmar is quite a different experience as compared with developed countries. However, despite the apparent lack of modern comfort and convenience, it is enjoyable to mingle with the local travelers. Also, a long train ride is a chance to observe how locals travel around, and the many vendors hawking and peddling their wares give some real 'couleur locale' to it all. After hardly 90 min. there is a brief transit stop at Kyaukme. Then, continue direction Naung Cho. Around 13:00 the line starts to plunge and snake its way down the Gokteik gorge, rising up again on the other side leading to Naung Cho. The train suddenly slows down, and crosses over the famous Gokteik Bridge at a snail's pace. The bridge is over 700 metres long and its construction was finalized by the American Pennsylvania Steel Co. in 1901. The bridge spans an abyss nearly 300 metres deep. After crossing the Gokteik bridge, get off the train at Naung Cho station and continue by private car via Pyin-Oo Lwin (the former summer capital for the British colonial administration) to Mandalay. Overnight in Mandalay. (B)

**Day 06: Day 6: Mandalay – Ava – Sagaing - Amarapura**

After breakfast at the hotel, we embark on a journey to the Ancient Kingdoms of Myanmar near Mandalay. We transfer 15km to Ava (Inwa), the ancient capital of Shan and Burmese Kingdoms for over four centuries. Crossing the Myint Nge River by ferry, the small roads of Ava are explored by horse cart. We visit the Bagaya Teak Monastery, over three hundred years old yet well preserved and still in use by local monks; the Nanmyin Watch Tower, the last standing structure of the Ava dynasty palace compound also known as the "Leaning Tower of Ava"; and the Maha Aungmye Bonzan Monastery (also called Me Nu Oak Kyaung), a 300-year old architectural wonder with graceful archways. We continue to the Ancient Kingdom of Sagaing, located across the mighty Ayeyarwaddy River. From the Sagaing Hills, we enjoy views of the hillside dotted with countless pagodas and pay a special visit to a monastery to learn about the life of Buddhist devotees. We continue to another beautiful ancient capital, Amarapura, famous for its textile industries. There, we visit a cottage industry workshop to learn how Myanmar longyis and traditional fabrics are woven. Continuing to the U Bein Bridge, a simple yet remarkable teak structure that spans 1,2km over Taungtaman Lake. U Bein Bridge, silhouetted by the setting sun, is a magical experience and a photographer's dream. Overnight in Mandalay. (B)

**Day 07: Day 7 - Bagan – 'This is Bagan' Tour**

Breakfast at the hotel. Your guide will meet you at the hotel and transfer to airport for your flight to Bagan(cost not included). You'll start the full day tour of fantastic Bagan by AC car, with an experienced guide, visiting the World Heritage site's best known temples. (See Bagan topbar for information on this

region).(B) Start the day climbing a pagoda to get a first impressive view over the whole area. From here, the guide plans his way to some of the other amazing temples that have been here for hundreds of years. Places like the Ananda, Dhammayangyi, Sulamani, and Thatbyinnyu will certainly impress you. Around 4pm we continue the tour by horse cart to Pythagyi Pagoda for sunset with some refreshing drinks served. The best part of this tour: whenever you see a temple you like, just ask your guide to stop to have a look at it. Simply pick your own favorite temple! Overnight in Bagan.

### **Day 08: Day 8: Bagan – Pakkoku – Cruise down the river**

Pick up from your hotel and drive to Pakkoku, an unspoilt small town famous for its tobacco trade and weaving workshops. Explore Pakkoku market which offers a vast array of items from locally-grown peanuts, sesame and rice, fish and vegetables, textiles and agricultural apparatus. Then, we visit a weaving workshop to see how characteristic Myanmar cotton blankets are made. Continue to a cheroot maker where skilled young women can make hundreds of cheroots in a day. Also stop by a monastery and meet a monk to learn about monastic life, Buddhist principles and his perspective on the faith. Proceed to Thiho-Shin Pagoda, built by King Alaungsithu. The pagoda contains a sacred Buddha image presented by the King of Ceylon 800 years ago, which is celebrated in an annual lunar festival falling in June/July. Return to Bagan by boat (about two hours downstream) enjoying the riverbank scenery on the way. Arrive in time for sunset over Bagan's many pagodas. Upon arrival at the jetty, transfer back to hotel. Overnight in Bagan.(B) **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY** Sunrise Hot Air Balloon Flight Operated: Daily between October & mid-April, 5.30-8.00 or 8.30am Imagine floating over thousand year old pagodas and the mighty Ayeyarwaddy River, as the sun rises slowly from the horizon over the misty fields and temples. The magic of Bagan has inspired visitors to Myanmar for centuries. One of the most remarkable sights in Asia, where ancient temples dot the landscape as far as the eye can see. The flight duration is approx. 45min to 1hr depending on wind and air currents and other local factors. Balloons team will pick you up from the hotel and transfer to the launch site. After briefing session, set off for the spectacular flight. Upon landing enjoy glass of champagne and light snack prior transfer back to your hotel.

### **Day 09: Day 9: Bagan – Heho – Green Hill Valley Elephant Camp – Kalaw**

In the morning, transfer to the airport for your domestic flight to Heho(cost not included). You are picked up from the airport at Heho and driven via Kalaw and on through the hills to Green Hill Valley Elephant Camp in Magwe (approximately 2-2.5hours). Receive a welcome from the team with refreshment and a briefing about the project. A short walk brings you to the river, where you can join in feeding and bathing the elephants - they love the water and being scrubbed and washed clean! You are also welcome to join in the camp's forest conservation programme by planting a teak tree here. Enjoy lunch at the Lodge, with a view of the valley and the opportunity to see butterflies, birds and orchids. In the afternoon, drive back to Kalaw, formerly a British hill station (approximately one hour). Check-in at your hotel and the remainder of the afternoon is at leisure. Overnight in Kalaw, Lunch at Elephant Camp.(B/L)

**Day 10: Day 10: Kalaw – Shwe Nyaung – Inle Lake**

After breakfast enjoy strolling through Kalaw, visiting the local market, the tiny railway station and perhaps walking up the hill to see the old Catholic church (if open). Transfer to Kalaw Station for a 13:30 hours departure on the 'slow train' from Kalaw to Shwe Nyaung, a wonderfully scenic trip across the forested slopes of the Shan Hills and pretty patchwork fields. The train is picturesque and simple - your open window carriage is of wooden-slatted benches shared with villagers laden with fruit and vegetables to sell. At country stops vendors of snacks and drinks ply their goods through the open windows. (Please note that the train can frequently be delayed, so consider this a local adventure! (In case of cancellation you may travel by car instead.) Arrival at Shwe Nyaung Station, transfer by car and boat to your hotel on Inle Lake. Overnight in Inle Lake. (B)

**Day 11: Day 11: Inle Lake**

If it coincides with your visit you will explore one of the 5-day rotating markets in the area - a fascinating insight into the life-style of the ethnic Pa-O, Danu and Intha people who visit these markets to buy and sell. During today's excursion by boat on Inle Lake we see the famous leg rowers and the typical floating gardens where fruit and vegetables are grown, and learn about local methods of fishing and village life. A highlight may be a visit to the traditional village of Paukpar, with neat rows of bamboo houses. If possible we will stop and visit a family for Shan tea. In the afternoon we visit Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, home to five gold leaf-covered Buddha figures, and the holiest religious site in southern Shan State. We also visit the boat construction workshop at Nampan village and stop to see some traditional handicrafts - silk weaving on wooden handlooms in Inpawkhon village, a cheroot-maker's workshop and a blacksmith's forge. Continue by boat to visit Nga Phe Kyaung Monastery, one of the oldest monasteries on the lake, where you can see exquisite Buddha statues which are more than 200 years old. Return to your hotel by boat as the sun lowers and the light softens over the lake. Overnight in Inle Lake. (B)

**Day 12: Day 12: Inle Lake – Taunggyi – Kakku – Inle Lake**

Pick-up from your hotel and travel by boat to Nyaung Shwe, from where you drive up through pine-clad hills to Taunggyi (about 1 hour, 31 km), the capital of southern Shan State and a former British hill station. Visit the local market where ethnic minority people sell their produce, and a cheroot maker's where skilled young women can make hundreds of cheroots in a day. Approximately 2 hours drive from Taunggyi in countryside inhabited by the Pa-O people lie the 'lost' ruins of Kakku, a pagoda encircled by dozens of small stupas. Little is known about the origins of this unusual place - the Pa-O believe that the original pagoda dates back some 2,000 years. Wander through the stupas which are decorated with fine stucco work and Buddha images - some in good repair, others not. Visit a Pa-O village and a large monastery on the way back to Taunggyi. Continue from here to Nyaung Shwe where you board your boat and return to your hotel. Overnight in Inle

Lake. (B) Note: During this tour, you will be exposed to a lot of sun, do carry a hat and bring along sun cream.

### Day 13: Day 13: Inle Lake – Heho – Yangon departure

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to Heho airport for your flight back to Yangon and have connecting flight to next destination. (B)

#### Inclusion

- 12 nights' Accommodation in Double/Twin room with daily breakfast - check in time is 14:00 and check out time is 12:00 - All transfers and transportation with air-con vehicles (types of vehicles depending on the number of pax).
- o 2 pax : Saloon - ENGLISH speaking Stationed guides - All entrance fees as detail program
- 02 bottles of mineral water per person per day on bus on days of transfer and sightseeing only

#### Exclusion

- Airfares (international and domestic) - Meals - Drinks - Visas fees for Myanmar - Mineral water beyond that supplied - Early check in or late check out - Insurances - Optional excursions and activities - Additional transfer required due to any emergency situation - Items of a personal nature (Phone calls, laundry, beverages...) - Peak season surcharges if any - All not mentioned above

#### Note

Supplement for Domestic and Regional Airfare as applicable Supplement for optional activities available on request No early check in or late checkout is included except those indicated in the program. Generally, the check in time is 14.00 pm and check out time is 12.00 pm. Visa into Myanmar is required except for countries who have signed the visa exemption contracts. Remarks: Passport must be valid 6 months ahead since the time of departing the visited country Compulsory dinners on Dec 24th (Christmas), Dec 31st (New Year) or Myanmar New Year will be advised at time of booking. HOTELS 3\* Hotels City Hotel Room Type Yangon Hotel Shwe Yee Superior Hsipaw Tai House Resort Superior Mandalay Nwe Waddy Hotel Superior Bagan Royal Aykare Lodge Superior Kalaw Dream Villa Hotel Superior Inle Lake Inle Garden Hotel Villa 4\* Hotels City Hotel Room Type Yangon Rose Garden Hotel Superior Hsipaw Riverside @ Hsipaw Resort Deluxe Mandalay Eastern Palace Hotel Deluxe Bagan Amata Garden Resort Bagan Amata Deluxe Kalaw Kalaw Heritage Hotel Superior Garden View Inle Lake Amata Garden Inle Resort Deluxe 5\* Hotels City Hotel Room Type Yangon The Strand Hotel Superior Suite Hsipaw Kumudra Hill – Mountain View Hotel Deluxe Mandalay Mercure Mandalay Hill Resort Superior Bagan Aureum Palace Hotel & Resort Jasmine/Orchid Villa Lake View Kalaw Kalaw Heritage Hotel Heritage Suite Mountain View Inle Lake Inle Princess Resort Lake Houses

## Tour Dates & Pricing

