



Full Itinerary & Trip Details

Hidden Trails of Burma

- ✓ Fall in love with the colonial heritage of Yangon
- ✓ Hike up to one of Burma's most sacred pilgrimage sites
- ✓ Visit the vast plain of ancient temples at Bagan
- ✓ Trek the tribal highlands of the Akha, Lahu and Paluang

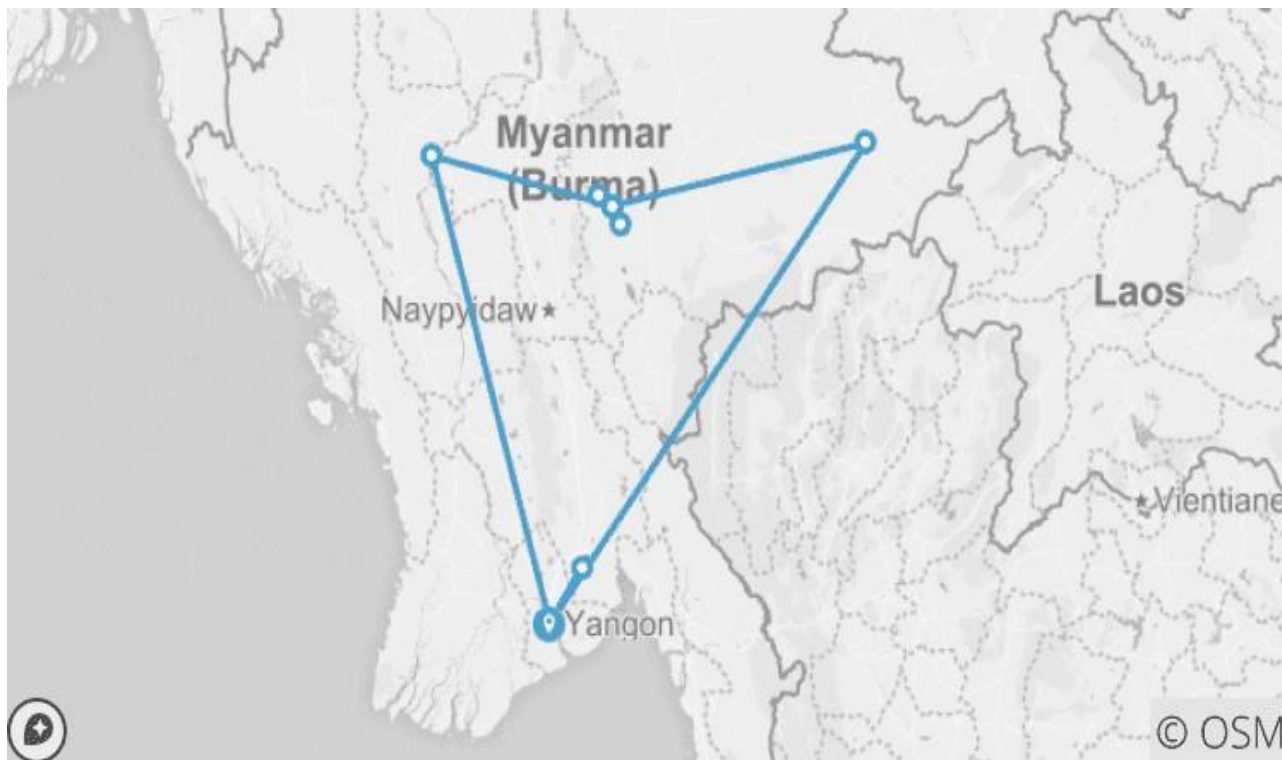
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Trip Overview



PRICE STARTING FROM

\$2,590

DURATION

14 days

IDEAL AGE

14 to 85 year olds

STARTS IN → ENDS IN

Rangoon → Rangoon

STYLE

Hiking & Trekking

Itinerary

Introduction

Discover both Burma's cultural highlights and some of its more remote corners whilst walking through beautiful landscapes. Trek to hilltribe villages in the Shan Highlands, admire the sunset across the temple plains of Bagan, join Buddhist pilgrims on a hike to Golden Rock and explore the tranquil surrounds of Inle Lake.

Rangoon (Yangon) - British colonial heritage and the golden Shwedagon Pagoda

Bagan - Breathtaking vast plain studded with over 2000 ancient temples

Inle Lake - Floating gardens, stilted villages and leg-rowing fishermen

Day 1: Join trip Rangoon (Yangon)

Start Point



Panda Hotel, Hotel reception,
Panda Hotel, Yangon



17:00

Arrive in Rangoon and check-in at the hotel.

Day 2: Hike up to Golden Rock for sunset

After a leisurely start, we drive for around five hours to Kin Pun at the foot of Mount Kyaiktiyo (the Golden Rock). Swapping to a local truck, we drive part way up the sacred mountain to Yatetaung and join local pilgrims on an ascent of one of the most sacred Buddhist sites in the country. We will carry our own overnight things in our daypacks and spend the night at a hotel on top of the mountain, allowing us the chance to enjoy the spectacle of sunset on the shimmering Golden Rock. Believed to be held in place by a single hair of the Buddha, the Rock perches precariously on the edge of the mountain, topped by a six metre high pagoda. The one-and-a-half kilometre ascent of Golden Rock is expected to take about 45 minutes. Time allowing, there's the option to extend the walk to the Mosdu Taung cave - an additional three kilometres taking one hour.

Day 3: Descend Golden Rock; drive back to Rangoon via Bago

This morning you can choose to rise early and watch the sunrise from the top of Mount Kyaiktiyo before breakfast. Saying farewell to the Golden Rock, we walk back down to Yatetaung and drive to Rangoon. The journey takes us by way of the historic town of Bago. Founded in 573AD, the town is home to a number of sacred shrines and pagodas including

the Shwemawdaw Paya (the Golden God Temple) the tallest pagoda in the country. If time allows we'll pay a visit to the pagoda, as well as the Shwethalyaung Reclining Buddha (the second largest in the world) and the Kyaik Pun Pagoda. We may also have time to take a look around Bago's local market, before continuing on to Rangoon. The return one-and-a-half kilometre walk to Yatetaung will take around 30 minutes.

Day 4: Fly to Bagan; explore the temples by bicycle

We catch an early flight this morning to Bagan, one of the most impressive religious sites anywhere in Asia. Bagan rose to prominence during the 11th to 13th centuries and at its height its 13,000 temples and pagodas presented a sea of colour and spectacle. Today just over 2,000 remain and include the Shwezigon Pagoda, the 13th century frescoes of Wetkyi-in-Gubyaukgyi and the Ananda Pagoda, one of the best preserved monuments in the entire city. Our explorations today will be by bicycle and we expect to cover around 20 kilometres around the temple complex. We plan to enjoy sunset from one of the upper terraces of the Shwesandaw Pagoda.

Day 5: In Bagan; explore villages and temples on foot

We continue our exploration around Bagan today on foot. Starting out from the 14th century Thitsawadi temple we follow flat sandy paths to reach the monastic university complex of Su Than

Pyay, part of which is still in a good condition. Continuing past fields of corn and cotton, we reach Thein Pyin Swan, a new monastery rebuilt with the assistance of the people of South Korea. Our next stop is the 12th century Pyatagyi monastery, a great place to enjoy the extremely photogenic panoramas of many of Bagan's major temples. The walk ends at the Dhammayangyi temple which is one of the most significant architectural structures in Bagan. In the late afternoon we will take to bicycles once again and enjoy a ride out to Minanthu Village to visit the three interconnected shrines of the Payathonzu Pagoda and watch the sunset from the Tayok Pye Temple. We expect to cover around two kilometres walking around the temples, taking us approximately two hours.

Day 6: Fly to Heho; trek to Yasakyi village and overnight in monastery

After flying to Heho this morning we drive on to the limestone caves of Pindaya, home to a remarkable collection of over 8,000 Buddhist images. We take a short tour of the site before continuing on to the start of our trek. The rest of the day then sees us trekking through villages and past tea plantations and chive farms, as we make our way towards our overnight stop in the remote village of Yasakyi. We overnight in the local monastery. Our accommodation will be basic (sleeping on individual mattresses in one large hall - mosquito nets provided), but the chance to interact with the villagers more than compensates for the rustic conditions. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 12 kilometres and will take around five hours.

Day 7: Morning trek back to Pindaya; drive to Inle Lake

The trek back to Pindaya takes us by way of an alternative route, passing through Danu villages and on to Taung Paw Gyi, from where we can enjoy a panoramic view over Pindaya. Stopping to have lunch in this lovely spot, we then continue back to the bus for the 85 kilometre drive to the beautiful setting of Lake Inle, high up on the Shan Plateau. Surrounded by hills and populated predominantly by the Intha people, Lake Inle is one of the highest lakes in the country. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 12 kilometres and will take around five hours.

Day 8: Explore Inle Lake by longtail boat; hikes to tribal villages

Devout Buddhists, the local population of Lake Inle are self-sufficient farmers and fishermen, living in simple stilted houses of wood and bamboo and growing their food on floating gardens of grass and seaweed. Today we have a chance to explore this idyllic spot by longtail boat, heading to Indain village where we visit an enchanting 17th century pagoda. Back on dry land we will walk through some of the villages around the lake around the base of Udaun Taung mountain. There should be plenty of opportunities to meet the tribal communities who live here. Today's walk today covers a distance of approximately six kilometres and will take around two hours.

Day 9: Fly to Kengtung; sightseeing in Kengtung

Returning to Heho this morning we then take a flight on to Kengtung, situated in the remote mountain valleys of eastern Shan State. Part of the Golden Triangle that encompasses neighbouring Thailand and Laos, Kengtung is a cultural and scenic gem that is home to dozens of minority tribes. On arrival we pay a visit to the Naung Tong Lake and the standing Buddha (the spot where the town was found over a thousand years ago), before heading up One Tree Hill to watch the sun set over the surrounding valleys.

Day 10: Hiking around the villages of the Akha people

An hour's drive out of Kengtung lies the village of Pan Kwai and the start of our trek through the Ho Kyin (Hochin) region. Leaving our vehicles behind, we hike out through a scenery of tea plantations and beautiful rice terraces to the explore the villages of the Akha people, hill-tribes who can trace their ancestry back to the Yunnan province of neighbouring China. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 14 kilometres and will take around five-and-a-half hours.

Day 11: Hiking through Akha and Lahu tribal villages

This morning we follow the main highway that runs between China and Myanmar, heading towards some tribal villages of the Akha and Lahu people. The hour's drive takes us to Pin Tauk (Kyaing Tong), from where we hike out to the outlying villages. The people in this region

still adhere to the old traditions, both in their dress and their customs. On the way back to Kengtung we plan to stop and visit a rice whiskey distillery and if time allows we'll also visit the village of Wan Pauk, home to people from the Paluang tribe. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 12 kilometres and will take around five-and-a-half hours.

Day 12: Visit Kengtung market; fly to Rangoon

Before we return to Rangoon we pay a visit to Kengtung's morning market, where we can bargain for traditional clothing, lacquerware and other souvenirs from China, Thailand and the valleys of eastern Shan. We also visit the Wat Jom Khan a tall, gilded chedi that can date its origins back to a visit by the Gautama Buddha. The stupa is topped by a golden umbrella which is inlaid with silver, rubies and diamonds and decorated with tiny golden bells. We fly back to Rangoon for the final two nights of the holiday.

Day 13: Walking tour in Rangoon

On our final day in Rangoon we will explore the rich history and architecture of the city on a walking tour. Listening to the stories of our leader, we hope to be able to enter some of the old buildings, many of which are virtually unchanged since the colonial era. In the late afternoon we visit to the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda, the most revered Buddhist temple in Burma, whose golden stupa dominates the city skyline, making it the ideal spot from which to watch the sunset and contemplate our time spent in Burma. The Shwedagon complex is large with a number of surrounding statues and temples and locals still visit and contribute to its special ambience as the holiest of Buddhist shrines. Our walking tour will cover around 2 kilometres and take us approximately two-and-a-half hours.

Day 14: Trip ends Rangoon

The trip ends this morning after breakfast.

What's Included

Accommodation

- 12 nights standard hotel
- 1 nights simple monastery

Guide

Tour Leaders are quite simply the glue that holds our tours together. They are chosen for their travel experience and people skills and are thoroughly trained by Explore, widely acknowledged as some of the best training in the industry. A Tour Leader's ultimate aim is to ensure everyone is well looked after and have a fantastic trip. They are there to ensure that the tour logistics run smoothly, that health and safety is adhered to and provide comprehensive briefings at the beginning and throughout the tour.

Meals

A key facet of our responsible approach to tourism is that we encourage our groups to eat in local restaurants that prepare locally grown food. We give customers choice as to their meals and do not use rather bland and impersonal hotel restaurants or all- inclusive options

13 Breakfasts

4 Lunches

1 Dinners

Transport

Bus, Boat, Flight

Others

All accommodation, activities and meals that are shown in the itinerary are included in the total cost of your trip You will also receive a complimentary transfer to and from the airport if you arrive on day 1 of the trip and depart on the last day and have provided your international flight information.

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