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**MAGICAL MYANMAR**

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**Duration: 15 days / 14 nights**

*Overview: Yangon – Pindaya – Inle – Kalaw – Mandalay – Monywa – Bagan – Yangon.*

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| Trip planning | Mai Phuong (Ms) |
| Guest names | Lisa Brazell |
| Number of guest | 2 adult (1 double/twin room) |
| Traveling style | Leisure pace |
| Dates of traveling | Dec 26th 2014 – Jan 9th 2015 |
| Room Preference | Non smoking, nice view |
| Meals | TBA |
| Destinations | Myanmar |
| Version | Version 1 |
| Validity  Code | Jan 2015  XT 1406131166 – V1 |

**ITINERARY**

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| **Day 1 (Friday, 26/12/2014). Arrive in Yangon** |
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| Mingalabar and welcome to Myanmar! The former capital Yangon, also known as Rangoon, remains Myanmar largest city and continues to be the country's the  most important commercial hub and gateway for most of its international visitors. Its colonial background and religious legacy make it one of the most mesmerizing  and genuine places in all of Southeast Asia. Upon arrival at the airport you will be warmly welcomed by your guide who will take you to your hotel for check in.  (after 14:00). Afternoon is free for relaxing after the long flight. Meals on your own. Overnight at hotel. |
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| **Yangon Shwedagon (3).jpg** |
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| **Day 2 (Saturday, 27/12/2014). Morning City Walking Tour – Yangon sightseeing (B)** |
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| In the morning, You’ll be taken downtown and start your tour on Mahanbandola Road where the Immanuel Baptist Church, originallybuilt in 1830, is located.  Continue east passing a couple of alleyways crammed with food stalls and markets. Turn right onto Pansodan Street with its manystalls selling second-hand and  photocopied books. You’ll pass the High Court Building, the grand Inland Water Transport offices and even grander Myanma Port Authority building until you’ll  reach Strand Road. Your next stop will be the majestic Strand Hotel in order to get a better look at the Pansodan Jetty and examine the hustle and bustle on the  Yangon River. Walk along Strand Road until you’ll see the Customs House and the Law Court, an impressive-looking colonnaded building. Turn north onto  boisterous Bank Street and up onto Sule Pagoda Road, where you can consult one of the many fortune tellers who hang out under the trees. Be sure to make a  photo stop at Sule Pagoda, downtown’s symbol whose construction dates back to over 2,000 years ago standing in the middle of the heat-stained Mahabandoola  Garden. After a complete rotation seeing the twice rebuilt City Hall continue west down Mahanbandoola Road through the chaotic Indian and Chinese quarters.  Explore the gold shops of Shwe Bontha Street and have a look from outside at the Moseh Yeshua Synagogue on 26th street. You’ll reach Theingyi Zei market,  where you can engage in a little pickled-snake hunting. Exit onto Anawratha Road until you crash into the Sri Kali temple.  Then, enjoy a trip to Kyaukhtatgyi Pagoda to see a 70 meter long reclining Buddha statue around the size of a blue whale. Most countries and cultures have  examples of what might be termed “quintessentially……” and the drinking of tea can certainly be describes as “quintessentially Burmese”. To share in this staple of  Myanmar living, a visit to the Modern Tea Shop is a must. Here, in addition to the obvious “cuppa”, you will also find a wide choice of delicious morsels to sample  while you soak up the atmosphere and observe the locals as they use the drinking of tea as a backdrop to both social and professional conversations. You should  also be alert to the slightly unusual way that the tea is made. Afterwards, you continue. No Myanmar expedition can be considered truly great if it’s lacking a visit to  the legendary Shwedagon Pagoda. Ready for an amazing experience? The visual delights present there alone, are worth the trip. Witness the colors transform on  the 100-meter chedi which is literally enclosed in over 40 tons of gold leaf. Shwedagon is largely considered to be the most important religious site for the  Burmese; most visitors report that the tripis extremely memorable and still etched into their minds. Descend the eastern stairway to find a row of shops at the base  of the temple selling various religious items. Here you will find monks robes, alms bowls, offerings, incense and other unique Buddhist objects. As your browse the  stalls your guide will explain the use and rituals of Myanmar’s Buddhist people. Next turn down a hidden laneway to discover a busy market tucked amid a  labyrinth of small alleys. Fresh produce, rice, noodles and a variety of dry goods are on sale in this atmospheric little market. After sunset head on to Chinatown for  a change of scenery and check out the dragons and incense of the colorful Khen Hock Keong Chinese temple. Explore the vibrant street stalls where vendors sell  all kinds of fruit, vegetable and other goods or simply just walk around and soak in the atmosphere of this little China in Yangon.  Meals on your own. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 3 (Sunday, 28/12/2014). Yangon – Heho – Pindaya (B)** |
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| After enjoying your breakfast you will be transferred **without guide** to the airport for your domestic flight to Heho. Upon arrival at the Heho airport, you are to proceed by road to Pindaya (59 km – 2 hours), a quiet town on the banks of the serene Botoloke Lake. Home to the local Danu people, Pindaya can only be reached by small and windy roads which snake their way through mountain ranges from Mandalay, Inle Lake, or Bagan. Visit the renowned Pindaya caves,a unique site housing thousands of Buddha images estimated to have been formed more than 200 million years ago. The opening of the cave involves a walk past the Shwe U Min Pagodas – giant white stupas which climb out of the ground. Pindaya is also known for its paper umbrella cottage industry. Important products are the handmade red-lacquered and oiled umbrellas which are used by monks and nuns. Stop at a small umbrella making family shop and try to findout about the unique traditional paper making process and tools. The rest of the day is at leisure to do as you please. You will have enough time to take a walk through this charming town and soak up the local atmosphere. Meals on your own. Overnight at Pindaya. |
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| Day 4 (Monday, 29/12/2014). Pindaya – Inle Lake (B) |
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| Breakfast at hotel. Then transfer by car to Inle Lake. Upon reaching the edge of the lake, you will board a private motorboat and begin heading out onto Inle Lake,  one of Myanmar’s most spectacular and breathtaking sights. Its calm waters are dotted with floating vegetation and fishing canoes, to which scenic hills provide  the perfect backdrop. Along the way you will pass several villages that are built on stilts overthe lake, which are inhabited by the local Intha people. Observe the  daily activities of the local leg-rowing fishermen and see their ‘floating gardens’, which are built up from strips of water hyacinth, earth and anchored to the bottom  of the lake with bamboo poles. You will also visit Nga Hpe Chaung Monastery, which houses loads of early Shan Buddha Images. This particular monastery is  famous for its unique ‘jumping cats’ which have been trained to jump through hoops in mid air. Proceed to the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, the lake’s main haven,  which contains five sacred images of Buddha decorated in gold leaf. Don’t miss to explore the local crafts of Inle Lake with a stop at the weaving village of  Inpawkhone, renowned for its weaving from the stems of lotus flowers, and a cheroot factory, where traditional Burmese cigars are handmade. If time allows you  will also pay a visit to the local silversmith and a pirogue workshop in the village of Nampan. The day will come to a close with a return trip by boat back to your  hotel. Meals on your own. Overnight at Inle Lake |
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| **Inle Lake Houses.JPG** |
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| Day 5 (Tuesday, 30/12/2014). Inle – Indein – Inle (B) |
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| After breakfast you’ll pay a visit to the lake’s morning market (the market is open every day apart from dark moon and full moon calendar days). The market’s location rotates between the lake’s villages in a 5 day schedule and is also visited daily by the lake’s inhabitants as well as the surrounding natives who also come to sell and trade their wares. A 1-hour boat ride down a small canal will take you to the Pa-Oh village of Indein, positioned on the western shores of Inle Lake. Take a leisurely stroll around the village before ascending the moss-covered stairway to the top of a hill. Once you’ve arrived at the summit, you will be greeted buy an iconic Buddha image which sits enshrined among hundreds of stupa ruins and overgrown shrubbery. Here, from the peak, you will also be rewarded with mesmerizing views of the placid surroundings. The Indein Pagoda complex is undoubtedly one of the most amazing sites around the shore of the lake and it consists of hundreds of small stupas which are overrun by moss and greenery. Then it’s time to embark on a 45 minutes trek to Sae Ma village. Along the way, you’ll enjoy the natural beauty and panoramic vistas of the area while basking under the shade of the bamboo grooves in the area. Upon arrival at the village, observe the daily lifestyles of the rural inhabitants. On your boat ride back, should time allow, you'll stop at the Inthar Heritage House to learn more about the history and culture of the lake's indigenous people and enjoy a delicious coffee and cake (snack break not included). As an exciting day comes to close transfer back to your hotel for some well deserved relaxation. Meals on your own. Overnight at Inle. |
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| **Day 6 (Wednesday, 31/12/2014). Inle Lake free day (B)** |
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| Today is free at your own leisure. You can simply relax or do personal activities if you wish. Meals on your own. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 7 (Thursday, 01/01/2015). Inle – Kalaw (B)** |
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| After enjoying your breakfast you proceed by road (app. 1 hour) through the scenic Shan Hills to Kalaw. Founded as a hill station by the British civil servants fleeing the heat of the plains, Kalaw still feels like a holiday resort: clean air, calm atmosphere leafy and green streets and some of the best trekking characterize this unique settlement. Upon arrival you’ll start your walking expedition into the Shan Hills.  You will face an easy climb down a small mountain which will take about half an hour. At the foot of the hill you will find yourself in a lush forest where the predominant pine trees share the space with the more exotic cheroot leaf and the occasional orange grove. After about two hours you will reach the Palaung village of Panenebin, at 1300m above sea level. The Palaung people live in traditional, but modern, stone and brick houses with each one being home to a micro community of six to eight families. You will notice that the staple produce of the Palaung are cheroot and tea, with each family having its own mini plantation. After exploring the village and chatting with the locals you will have a chance to rest and relax before beginning the return hike to where you were dropped off in the morning. Meals on your own. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 8 (Friday, 02/01/2015). Kalaw – Mandalay (B)** |
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| After breakfast you will embark on a 275 km drive (7 hours) that will eventually bring you to Mandalay. Your voyage will continue along a slender, twisting and rutted road that traverses the Shan Hills.  Welcome to Mandalay! Mandalay, the second largest city of Myanmar and one of the ancient royal capitals is often perceived and described in literature as Asia at its most traditional, timeless and alluring but those who go meet a booming and vibrant city located on the banks of the Irrawaddy River. However, despite the energy and thriving business it's where the cultural heart of Myanmar lies and tradition of music, dance and drama are still alive. Upon arrival you’ll be transferred to your hotel. Stretch your legs, freshen up and shake off the effects of the journey. As a beautiful day comes to an end take off for a spectacular sunset experience to the summit of Mandalay Hill, rising 240 meter above the city. At the top the reward is a full panoramic view, the hazy blue outline of the Shan Hills to the east, the Mandalay Palace and the city sprawl to the south and the Ayeyarwady to the west while the sun starts to sink. Meals on your own. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 9 (Saturday, 03/01/2015). Mandalay (B)** |
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| Have a visit directly south of Mandalay Hill stands the Kyauktawgyi Pagoda, known as the pagoda of the Great Marble Image. Admire the huge Buddha, carved from a single block of marble. It’s said that the colossal marble block took 10,000 men almost two weeks to transport it from the riverside to its current location. Proceed to Kuthodaw Pagoda, frequently dubbed as “The World’s Biggest Book” for its collection of 729 marble slabs inscribed with Buddhist teachings. Then it’s off to the Shwenandaw Monastery, the Golden Monastery which is the only enduring structure from the Royal Palace of the 19th century. This impressive structure is celebrated for its remarkable woodcarvings.  Once the sun starts to set, you’ll want to stroll along the legendary U Bein Bridge, which was built in 1782 when Amarapura was the Royal center of attention. It spans 1.2 km across the shallow Taungthaman Lake and is said to be the longest teakwood bridge worldwide. Enjoy this very special atmosphere as the late afternoon sun casts long shadows and illuminates the local people heading home. As a stunning day comes to an end head back to Mandalay for the night.  Meals on your own. Overnight stay in Mandalay. |
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| Amarapura U Bein Bridge (2).jpg |
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| **Day 10 (Sunday, 04/01/2015). Mandalay – Sagaing – Mandalay (B)** |
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| After breakfast at the hotel, cross the bridge over the Irrawaddy River in to Sagaing. With 600 ivory colored pagodas and monasteries, Sagaing Hill is generally seen as the spiritual hub of Myanmar and claims residence to around 3,000 monks and nearly 100 meditation shrines. You’ll visit pagodas such as Swan Oo Pon Nya Shin, U Min Thone Sae and Shin Pin Nan Gyaing. Continue to Sagaings local market, a less visited tourist site. We’ll head over to a small pottery village which is recognized for manufacturing ubiquitous water pots to observe the tradesmen here applying their traditional methods for producing their goods. Return to your hotel and set your afternoon free at your own leisure. Lunch and dinner on own account. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 11 (Monday, 05/01/2015). Mandalay – Powintaung - Monywa (B) (140 km – 3 ½ hours)** |
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| On this particular morning you will depart from Mandalay for an engrossing 3 hour drive to Monywa; which is best described as a characteristic Burmese municipality situated on the eastern banks of the Chindwin River. On the way to Monywa be sure to stopover at Thanboddhay Pagoda, an enormous Buddhist temple that happens to be covered with more than 500,000 images of Buddha. You may also want to stop by the Boditahtaung Pagoda which houses the biggest Buddha likeness in Myanmar, measuring in at 100m long x 27m high.  In the afternoon, you will cross the Chindwin River by ferry and advance toward Po Win Taung by local open air jeep. This astonishing structure is composed of 947 sandstone caves that have been hollowed out of the surrounding hills and contains what is considered to be the best gathering of mural paintings and Buddhist statues in Southeast Asia. After your charming visit to Po Win Taung has concluded, you will be whisked just a few hundred meters away to Shwe Ba Taung. Many travelers really enjoy spending their time exploring this fascinating site, the monasteries and temples are literally carved into the stony slender cliffs. Afterwards, it’s off to your lodgings for the night. Lunch and dinner on own account. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 12 (Tuesday, 06/01/2015). Monywa – Pakokku – Bagan (B) (96 km – 3 hours)** |
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| Departure from Monywa will begin directly after breakfast. You will be travelling along the calm eastern river. This particular path is rarely taken by travellers; it takes you past genuine traditional villages where you will most likely see farmers climbing palm trees in order to extract the juices that they will use to produce palm tree sugar. A quick stop at Ah Nyeint, Ah Myint and “Ma U Ah Le” villages will give you a chance to learn first-hand about the way of life and culture of these rural inhabitants. Then it’s off to resume your journey toward Pakokku, a thriving market town on the west side of the Ayeyarwady River. Pakokku is famed for its tobacco and thanaka (logs that are ground into a face paste cosmetically) but most for making the best 'slippers' in the country.  On this special afternoon you will be boarding a local boat in Pakkoku for a relaxed, two-hour journey downriver to Bagan. On the way you’ll stop at Kyauk Gu U Min temple on the eastern side of the river This beautiful temple has exquisite stone carvings depicting religious figures and flowers. The temple itself is built into the side of cliff and behind the main hall of the temple is access to a quiet and tranquil cave. Inside the cave there are several small recessed alcoves which are ideal for meditation. Legend has it that the cave was built during the 13th century for the locals to hide from the invading Mongols. After your exploration of Kyauk Gu U Min, you’ll continue by boat to Bagan.  Welcome to Bagan, known to be one of the greatest architectural sites in Asia. When Bagan was the centre of Myanmar from the 11th to 13th centuries the monarchs built multitudes of massive stupas and pagodas, scores of which are still present on the shores of the Irrawaddy River. The majesty of Bagan with more than 4000 red brick temples on a plain of the size of Manhattan Island is one of the highlights of a Myanmar holiday that will soothe the eye of every traveller. Once you’ve reached the shoreline of Bagan, you are transferred to your hotel. Lunch and dinner on own account. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 13 (Wednesday, 07/01/2015). Bagan (B)** |
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| Discover the best of Bagan with this full day guided tour. Not simply a chance to see the splendid Bagan temples, this excursion also introduces you to the Burmese culture, allows you to see traditional craftsmen at work and takes you up the mighty Irrawaddy River to a decidedly unusual ‘cave’ temple! Your fist port of call is the temple of Thagyar Pone with its panoramic views of the Bagan plains. The temple is an exquisite example of the magnificent architecture to be found in and around Bagan. From here you will have a look around the Ananda Temple – one of the most exalted of Bagan’s temples. We will ensure that our tour reaches this point before the majority of tourist arrive, enabling you to enjoy the splendor of the temple in relative tranquility.  And so, on to the village of Myinkaba and the temple of Gubyaukgyi. You will not fail to be awe struck by the astonishingly beautiful murals and carvings. You will also get the chance to drop into the two smaller temples of Manuha and Nan Paya – both noted for their excellent examples of Buddha statues. Next on the agenda is your chance to learn more about the local culture with a visit to two workshops producing Bagan’s most famous products - lacquer ware and wood crafts. Watch in amazement as the skilled craftsmen use traditional techniques passed down through generations to create beautiful items. Lunch can be taken at Shwe Myanmar, much favored by the locals because of the delicious curries on offer. Later in the afternoon you will journey on by traditional horse cart for an excursion that passes Thatbyinnyu, the tallest temple in Bagan, gigantic Dhammayangyi Temple noted for its remarkable brickwork, and of course, Sulamani Temple. Take pleasure in an extraordinary sunset over the plains, which will be viewed from the higher verandas of one of these 3 temples. Lunch and dinner on own account. Overnight at the hotel. |
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| **Day 14 (Thursday, 08/01/2015). Bagan – Yangon (B)** |
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| Today is free at your own leisure. You can simply relax or do personal activities if you wish. And in the good time transfer **without guide** to your flight to Yangon. Arrive Yangon airport and transfer with your driver **no guide** to your hotel for check in. Meals on your own. Overnight at the hotel. |
| Yangon Shwedagon Pagoda (2).jpg |
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| **Day 15 (Friday, 09/01/2015). Yangon Departure (B)** |
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| Breakfast at the hotel, In the good time transfer **without guide** to your departure flight, Meals on your own.  **SERVICES END.** |

ACCOMMODATION

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| **LOCATION** | **OPTION 1** | **OPTION 2** |
| Yangon | Thamada hotel (Superior Room) | New Aye Yar hotel (Deluxe rom) |
| Pindaya | Inle Inn (Bamboo Hut) | Inle Inn (Bamboo Hut) |
| Inle lake | Paradise Inle resort (Superior Room) | Shwe Inn Tha Floating resort (Deluxe Room) |
| Kalaw | Dream villa resort (Superior Room) | Dream villa resort (Superior Room) |
| Mandalay | Queen Mandalay (Standard Room) | Ayarwaddy river view hotel (Superior room) |
| Monywa | Win Unity (Standard Room) | Win Unity (Superior Room) |
| Bagan | Sky Palace hotel (Superior Room) | Aye Yar River View Resort (Deluxe Room) |

QUOTATIONS

**The prices are quoted in US Dollars per person**

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| **Group size /2 adults** | **Price per person in US Dollar** |
| **Land cost per person – OPTION 1** | **US$ 1,783** |
| **Land cost per person – OPTION 2** | **US$ 2,057** |

***\*\*\* Price is subject to change depending on the availability of hotels\****

DOMESTIC AIRFARE

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| **Flight Detail** | **Price per person in US Dollar** |
| Yangon – Heho | **US$ 123** |
| Bagan – Yangon | **US$ 123** |
| **TOTAL PER PERSON** | **US$ 246** |

***\*\*\* Domestic airfares are subject to change without notice***

TOUR INCLUSIONS

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| **Services included** | **Services excluded** |
| * Accommodation on shared twin room basis with daily breakfast * Meals as mentioned in the program (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D= Dinner) * Activities and sightseeing as mentioned in the program * English speaking guide (local guide) * Ground transportation with air conditioned vehicle (where available) with drivers. * Entrance fees for visits mentioned in the program (except camera fees) * 1 bottle of water per day and refreshing towels on touring days | * Drinks during meals * Travel insurance * Personal expenses (souvenirs, laundry etc.) * Early check in and late check out from hotel * Tips for guides, driver and other suppliers * Any other services/items not mentioned in inclusions * International airfare and tax * Domestic airfares Yangon – Heho ; Bagan – Yangon (**US$ 246 per person**) * Option is quoted separately * Myanmar visa |