

Silk Steps

EXPLORE AND EXPERIENCE



Myanmar

A visit to Myanmar (Burma) is like stepping into a time capsule that has been locked for nearly four decades, where the Myanmar people carry on their quiet existence with a degree of modesty and reserve.

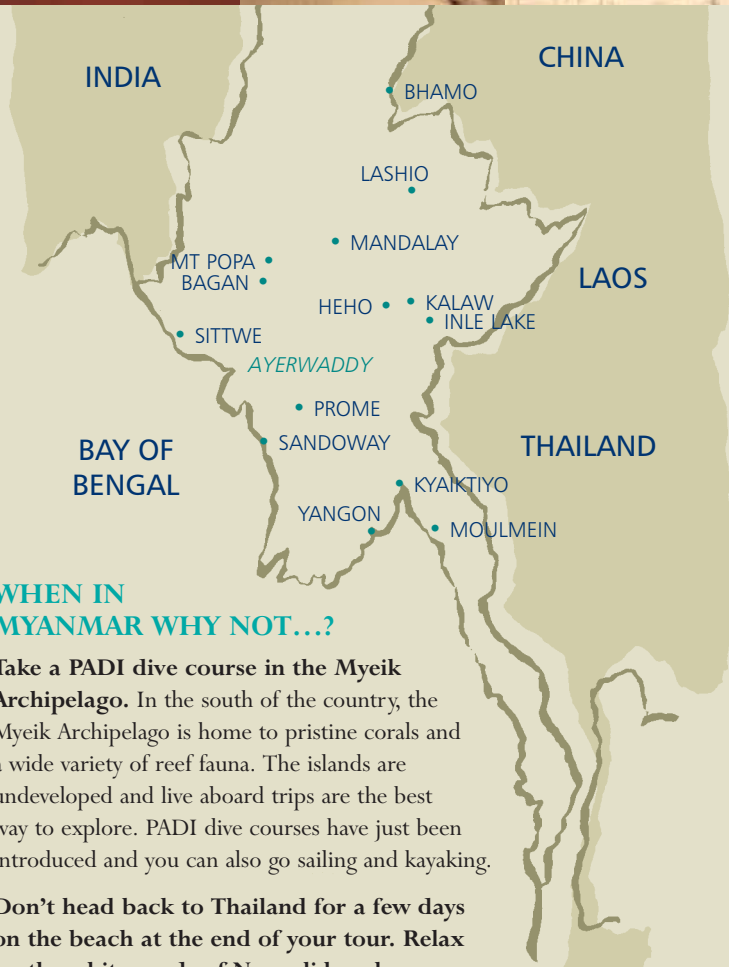
Visiting Myanmar can appear to give approval to the regime, but it also shows the people of Myanmar that they are not forgotten and does offer a contact with the outside world of which they would otherwise be deprived.

Our clients have the opportunity to make up their own mind on the current situation in Myanmar. To this end Silk Steps is working with a Yangon based private company to promote individual itineraries and small specialist group tours, using private enterprise services and hotels wherever possible.

WEATHER

The best time to visit Myanmar is in the cool, dry season from November to February. The weather is normally very comfortable, however in the Inle Lake area and Bagan the temperature can drop quite low in the evenings.

The temperatures start to rise in February and throughout March, April and May it can be very hot with temperatures reaching 40°C. From May until October the monsoon rain falls, mainly in the afternoons and evenings with high humidity.



WHEN IN MYANMAR WHY NOT...?

Take a PADI dive course in the Myeik Archipelago. In the south of the country, the Myeik Archipelago is home to pristine corals and a wide variety of reef fauna. The islands are undeveloped and live aboard trips are the best way to explore. PADI dive courses have just been introduced and you can also go sailing and kayaking.

Don't head back to Thailand for a few days on the beach at the end of your tour. Relax on the white sands of Ngapali beach. Myanmar's beaches are largely unknown but the white sands of Ngapali beach are home to a handful of excellent boutique resorts.

Go on a 4-day adventure and trek from Pindaya. Journey by foot from Pindaya through the countryside and villages of the Danu and Pao O tribes reaching Yasagi at 1835 metres. Overnight at the Yasagi Monastery and trek to the summit before dawn to watch the sunrise.

Take a boat trip from Yangon to Twante. Take a 2-hour boat trip from Yangon to Twante, famous for its pottery, and explore the town by trishaw.

Fly high over Bagan in a hot-air balloon. Soar into the sky at first light and look down on the ancient temples of Bagan which spread as far as the eye can see.

Cruise the Ayerwaddy River. Board the RV Pandaw to cruise between Bagan and Mandalay, a 2-night journey that hasn't changed much in the last few hundred years. View the rich and varied life on the riverbanks from the comfort of a wicker chair on a boat that transports you back to a gentler, slower age.



Suggested Itineraries

| Nights stay at: | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | Yangon |
| 2 | Inle Lake |
| 3 | Kalaw |
| 4 | |
| 5 | Mandalay |
| 6 | |
| 7 | Bagan |
| 8 | |
| 9 | Mt Popa |
| 10 | Yangon |

THE MYANMAR EXPERIENCE

A comprehensive itinerary that takes you through parts of Myanmar that vary greatly from each other. Spend a little time in Yangon, located on the banks of the Rangoon River, where old colonial buildings line streets interspersed by golden temples including the impressive Shwedagon Pagoda with its 91-metre-high dome covered in shimmering gold leaf. Leave the big city behind to travel to Inle Lake, where the fishermen use an unusual leg-rowing technique to steer their boats, and Kalaw, a colonial hill station surrounded by ethnic minority villages whose residents frequent the colourful local market.

Three nights are spent exploring the old capital of Mandalay where you can join the longyi-clad locals to browse in the night markets. From Mandalay you can visit another former capital, Amarapura before cruising along the Ayerwaddy River on a local boat to Bagan where you will be amazed at the thousands of spectacular pagodas and stupas scattered across a 40-square-kilometre plain - a relic to the Golden Age of Burma. Before returning to Yangon overnight on Mount Popa, a temple mountain on the edge of the central plains. You will be rewarded with astonishing views over the plains when you climb to the monasteries and temples on the mountain's summit.

Cost per person

(based on two people travelling in a twin/double room)

FROM £855.00



| Nights stay at: | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Yangon |
| 2 | Mruak-U |
| 3 | |
| 4 | Sittwe |
| 5 | Yangon |
| 6 | Mawlamyine |
| 7 | |
| 8 | Hpa An |
| 9 | Kyaiktiyo |
| 10 | |
| 11 | Ngapali Beach |
| 12 | |
| 13 | Yangon |

MYANMAR OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

This itinerary takes you to areas of Myanmar less frequented than the major sights of Bagan and Mandalay. Start in Yangon, which became the capital in the middle of the 19th century. The combination of its colonial heritage under the British and its spiritualism make it one of the most fascinating cities of South East Asia.

From Yangon fly to Sittwe on the Bay of Bengal in Rakhine State and then transfer to the jetty for a boat trip on the Kaladan River to Mruak-U, around 5 hours upstream. Here you will find a legendary lost city, which in the 15th century was one of the richest cities in Asia, but today is just a sleepy town. Visit the small village of Kyauk Daw, where the ancient Palace of the Arakahnase kings is located. Take the boat back downstream to Sittwe for an overnight before returning to Yangon. Drive south to the delightful tropical town of Mawlamyine, once a thriving teak port and one of the most relaxed cities in Myanmar, where seafood and pagodas are plentiful. Moulmein is also the site of an Allied prisoners of war cemetery. En route back to Yangon stop at Kyaiktiyo where a huge boulder covered in gold leaf is perched on the cliff edge. This boulder is a great site of pilgrimage for the Burmese people.

For the final leg of your journey fly from Yangon to Thandwe for a 3-night stay at Ngapali Beach. This three-kilometre stretch of unspoiled sandy beach was thought to have been named after Naples by homesick Italian soldiers who fought here during the first Anglo-Burmese War. The hotels are tucked away amongst coconut palms on a wide beach and here you can pass the time by watching the fishermen at work. Return to Yangon for one final night before leaving this enchanting country.

Cost per person

(based on two people travelling in a twin/double room)

FROM £1,083.00

Hotel Selection

The choice of hotels in Myanmar is endless and those detailed below are recommendations only. We can book most hotels throughout Myanmar, so please contact us if you would like alternative hotels.

YANGON

Luxuriate in **The Governor's Residence**, a beautifully restored former colonial mansion close to the Shwedagon Pagoda. This elegant mansion is set in gorgeous lotus gardens and it is difficult to believe that it is just a few minutes from downtown Yangon. The large rooms have teak floors and a grand granite bath. The hospitality is so welcoming that you are treated almost as house guests in this 48-room hotel.

The modern **Traders Hotel** is in a prime location close to the Sule Pagoda and Bogyoke Market. The smart rooms are decorated in a simple, unobtrusive style with all the facilities expected of an international-standard hotel. There are several restaurants serving Asian and international food, a swimming pool and health club.

INLE LAKE

Relax in a wicker chair on the deck of the **Inle Princess Resort Hotel** taking in spectacular views across Inle Lake of the Shan Hills. Designed using Shan and Intha ethnic architectural styles, the resort is set on stilts using native materials and the wooden stilt chalets are decorated with traditional handicrafts and each have their own balcony. Visit the nearby villages and pagodas by boat, go bird watching or join a meditation class.

The cottages of the recently renovated **Paradise Inle Resort**, on the west shore of the lake, are all built on stilts over the lake and in addition there are superior bungalows on the waters edge all with balconies with lovely views. The cottages are connected by a wooden walkway, giving the resort a local village feel.

MANDALAY

Located at the heart of the city opposite the majestic Royal Palace with lovely views of Mandalay Hill, the **Sedona Hotel** is surrounded by 4 acres of landscaped gardens. This international hotel has graceful rooms decorated in a fusion of ethnic and modern styles. It is an ideal base to explore Mandalay and visit the nearby former capital cities of Amarapura and Sagaing.

The recently renovated **Mandalay Swan** is also situated in the city centre opposite the Royal Palace. The hotel is set in tropical gardens with good-sized rooms all with excellent facilities. There are several restaurants with the Hot Pot Suki serving its famous, delicious steamboat dishes.

Ecoprojects

Balloons over Bagan

Balloons over Bagan is committed to the preservation of Bagan and its environment. To help ensure that the local people appreciate that preservation of the region and temples can benefit them, the company makes contributions from each flight to community programmes that benefit the local population.

KALAW

The charming **Kalaw Hotel**, located within the town limits, consists of three colonial-style buildings surrounded by spacious gardens. The rooms are all simply, but adequately furnished, with satellite TV and private bathrooms.

BAGAN

Just outside the old walled city of Bagan, the **Thiripyitsaya Sakura Hotel** is reached by a long tree-lined driveway giving the impression that you are in the countryside. The location in tropical gardens on the banks of the Irrawaddy River is glorious with panoramic views. All the rooms have large verandahs and are decorated in local style using teak wood.

The popular **Thande Old Bagan Hotel** has a great location in the southwest corner of the ancient walls of Bagan, next to the Ayerwaddy River. Many of the bungalow-style rooms have views of the river and it is possible to dine in the garden on the river bank between November and March.

NGAPALI BEACH

Set on a stretch of white sand, edged with coconut palms and lapped by an aquamarine sea, the **Sandoway Resort** has 55 luxurious cottages scattered throughout landscaped gardens. The cottage interiors are designed using luxurious fabrics and local handicrafts and the resort has been constructed from local hard woods, stone and marble.

A Silk Steps inclusive holiday price includes:

- Private return transfers between airports and hotels (unless otherwise specified)
- The services of English speaking guides and representatives at each stage of the tour. Between most places you will travel unescorted
- Accommodation in a standard room (shared twin) with private facilities (unless otherwise specified) with breakfast
- Government taxes and compulsory service charges
- All tours and sightseeing as specified, inclusive of entrance fees
- Economy class air travel within all countries on the scheduled services of the national or domestic carrier as specified in each tour
- The services of our local representative

Extras:

- International flights - please contact us for up-to-date prices
- Travel insurance
- Meals - unless otherwise stated
- Optional sightseeing other than specified
- International airport departure tax payable overseas
- Visa fees
- Single supplement (on request)

