

Myanmar Exploring - 12 Days

Brief Itinerary:

Day 1: Yangon arrival

Day 2: Yangon full day tour (B)

Day 3: Yangon - Kyaikhtito - Golden Rock (B)

Day 4: Golden Rock - Bago - Yangon (B)

Day 5: Yangon - Fly to Bagan (B)

Day 6: Bagan sightseeing (B)

Day 7: Bagan –Fly to Mandalay – city tour (B)

Day 8: Mandalay - Mingun - Sagaing - Mandalay (B)

Day 9: Mandalay - Fly to Heho - Inle Lake (B)

Day 10: Insein – Inle full day sightseeing (B)

Day 11: Inle free - Fly back Yangon(B)

Day 12: Yangon - Departure (B)

Remark:

B = Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner

Tour includes:

- Accommodation with daily breakfast at selected hotels
- Private tours and all services as mentioned in the itinerary
- Private transportation with air-conditioning
- 04 Domestic flights:
- Yangon – Bagan: \$110/pax
- Bagan – Mandalay: \$70/pax

- Mandalay - Inle: \$70/pax
- Inle - Yangon: \$110/pax
- Local station English speaking guides
- Entrance fees for all mentioned sights visited
- Private boat to visit Mingun and Inle
- Local ferry boat and Horse cart for Ava visit
- Open Truck from Base camp to Top of the Hill (shared with local people) in Golden Rock
- Water and cold towel on sightseeing

Tour excludes:

- International flights
- Other meals which do not mention in the itinerary
- Early check-in and late check-out at hotels
- Personal expenses (such as laundry, telephone, drinks, camera fee, etc.)
- Tipping for guides and drivers
- Compulsory personal travel insurance
- Myanmar Visa fees (contact our travel consultant for further information)
- Sedan chair Ks.20000 per person in Kyaikhtiyo (Hermit Camp to near the platform of Golden Rock Pagoda)
- Others not mentioned

Detail itinerary:

Day 1: Yangon arrival

Upon arrival, you'll greet by your guide who will accompany and transfer you to your hotel for check-in and relax.

Meal: None

Overnight stay in Yangon

Day 2: Yangon – sightseeing (B)

You'll be taken downtown and start your tour on Mahanbandola Road where the Immanuel Baptist Church, originally built in 1830, is located. Continue east passing a couple of alleyways crammed with food stalls and markets. Turn right onto Pansodan Street with its many stalls selling second-hand and photocopied books. You'll pass the High Court Building, the grand Inland Water Transport offices and even grander Myanmar Port Authority building until you'll reach Strand Road. Your next stop will be outside of the majestic Strand Hotel and 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 and have a glimpse of Independence Monument and 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 reach into the Sri Kali temple, Yangon's most colourful Hindu temples.

Visit Kyaukhtatgyi Pagoda to see a 70 meter long reclining Buddha statue around the size of a blue whale. Afterwards, you continue uptown in order to make a quick stop by the Royal Lake located in Kandawgyi Park which is very popular with local residents, especially in the early morning and around sunset. Catch a view of Karaweik Hall, a reproduction of a royal barge and enjoy a spectacular view of the Golden Shwedagon Pagoda. 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. The best time to visit Shwedagon Pagoda is at sunset when its gilded stupa is bathed in the fading rays of the sun and takes on a magical glow. Ascend 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. Then reach the platform which forms the base of the majestic temple. As the sun begins to dip low in the sky, 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 trip is extremely memorable and still etched into their minds.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Yangon

Day 3: Yangon – Golden Rock (B)

This morning, after breakfast at your hotel, we will take five hour journey to the well-known Buddhist pilgrimage site in Mon State – Golden Rock. It is built on the top of a granite boulder covered with gold leaves pasted on by devotees.

En route visit Kyakhat Wine Monastery where many monks live while studying Buddha's literature. This is a great chance for you to learn more about monastic life of young monks.

When reach the base camp, we travel by local open-air truck to the junction camp and then to Golden Rock or and spend 45 minutes walking to the Golden Rock. If you would love to use sedan chair, you should pay by your own account.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Kyaikhtiyo

Important Notes for visits to Golden Rock

What to pack

- Sturdy shoes as the way up to Golden Rock is very steep.
- A pullover, light weight jacket and/or scarf as it gets quite cold in the evening.
- Backpack: Leave your main luggage in Yangon and just bring a backpack or small overnight back.

Day 4: Golden Rock – Bago – Yangon (B)

Enjoy breakfast at hotel and head back to Yangon. We move to the base camp by open truck, then drive to Yangon. On the way, don't miss the chance to make a stop at Bago (or Pegu) to explore Shwemawdaw pagoda - the tallest pagoda in Myanmar. It always amazes anyone with its stunning architecture and great scale. Take time to visit Kanbawzathardi palace-a reconstruction of the original Royal palace from the second half of the 16th century and Shwethalyaung- one of the largest Buddha images in Burma; and Kyaik Pun pagoda which is known for its four towering images of the Buddha visible from far away; as well as the town market and a Mon neighborhood where the locals once produced woven textiles

Before reach Yangon, spend some time to visit World War 2 Cemetery and a workshop producing hand-made pots.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Yangon

Day 5: Yangon – fly to Bagan (B)

After enjoying your breakfast you will be transferred to the airport for your domestic flight 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 traveler.

Discover the best of Bagan today! 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 first port of call is an elevated temple with its panoramic views of the Bagan plains. This viewpoint will give you a taste of the sheer number of temples as well as some of their distinctive styles. 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 tourists arrive, enabling you to enjoy the splendor of the temple in relative tranquility. Continue to various other temples dotted around the temple plains to experience a variety of architectural styles in the area as well as the artistic wonder of the 9-14th centuries. Traveling amid the temples you will get a taste of rural Bagan life in this 'living museum' setting where farmers and families work amongst the monuments.

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.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Bagan

Day 6: Bagan – sightseeing (B)

After breakfast at your hotel, your guide and driver will pick you up to start your Bagan excursion. It's off to the vibrant Nyaung Oo Market, where the locals come to trade fresh produce and other goods daily. From here you will have a

look around the Old Bagan starting with a visit of the renowned Shwezigon Pagoda, constructed by King Anawrahta in the early 11th century as a religious memorial. Travel over dusty lanes and tree shaded roads past temples and monasteries to a small village. At one of the monasteries you will participate in a special traditional Buddhist ceremony.

From here you will journey on by horse cart for an excursion that passes Thatbyinnyu, the tallest temple in Bagan, gigantic Dhammayangyi Temple noted for its remarkable brickwork. Take pleasure in an extraordinary sunset from the upper terrace of one of the surrounding temples.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Bagan

Day 7: Bagan – fly to Mandalay (B)

This morning we take a short flight to Mandalay.

Arrive Mandalay and drive to Amarapura, Myanmar's penultimate royal capital. Amarapura means "City of Immortality", though its period as capital was relatively brief. You will start Mahagandayon monastery, home to more than a thousand young monks and renowned as a centre for monastic study and strict religious discipline.

After that we visit Mahamuni Pagoda. This pagoda houses one of the country's most honored Buddha images, completely covered in gold leaves that are every day applied to the statue by male devotees. Then 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.

Late afternoon, we move to 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. Sunset in U Bein Bridge.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Mandalay

Day 8: Mandalay – Mingun – Sagaing – Ava – Mandalay (B)

Head off to Mandalay jetty and embark on a private boat for a relaxed 1 hour journey on the Irrawaddy River to Mingun. Experience the sights and sounds of Mingun, starting with the celebrated MingunPaya, which would have been the world’s largest (if King Bodawpaya hadn’t died before it was finished). The construction of this enormous brick building was halted after a fortune-teller predicted the King’s death upon completion. An earthquake that hit in the 1800’s, split the monument and reduced it to partial rubble – it’s possibly the world’s largest pile of bricks. From the flat top you have a fine view of the HsinbyumePaya, Mingun village and the river. Carry on to the gorgeous alabaster Hsinbyume Pagoda, an unusual stupa with a couple of stories behind

it. It's supposedly a representation of the SulamaniPaya which according to the Buddhist plan of the cosmos, stands atop Mount Meru (the mountain that stands at the centre of the universe). Afterwards hop on over to the Mingun Bell that weighs 90 tons and is claimed to be the world's largest hung, uncracked bell still capable of ringing. Before returning to Mandalay by boat there'll be enough time to explore the small neighbourhoods throughout Mingun crafting traditional basketry and mingle with the friendly craftsmen and vendors.

Next, you will across 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 PonNya Shin, U Min ThoneSae and Shin Pin Nan Gyaing. Continue to Sagaing's 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.

Move to Ava which was the standing capital from the 14th through the 18th centuries. Cross the small river by ferry and travel in a traditional horse and carriage to the wooden Bagaya Monastery renowned for its extraordinarily elaborate woodcarvings. Be sure to check out the Nanmyint Watch Tower - also called "the leaning tower of Ava" - which is what's left from the remnants of the ancient palace and MahaAungmyeBonzan Monastery.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Mandalay

Day 9: Mandalay – Heho – Inle (B)

This morning return to the Mandalay airport for the flight to Heho, in the heart of the Shan State. Upon arrival at the Heho airport, you will proceed to Nyaung Shwe village. Along the way, you will have an opportunity to visit rural workshops that specialize in traditional Shan paper and unique handcrafted umbrellas. Also, be sure to stop in at the teak monastery of Shweyanpyay to witness the intricate wood carving artwork and craftsmanship of the monks there.

Then 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 over the 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. In the past this temple was known for its 'jumping cats' but these days there are only a few felines roaming around and none are jumping any more. Yet the Buddha images are still worth the visit. Proceed to the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, the lake's main haven, which contains five sacred images of Buddha decorated in gold leaf. There are also many traditional crafts originating on Inle Lake and, should you wish, we can stop for a visit to one making incredible woven items from lotus silk, boat builders (depending on the time of year), a cigar making workshop, blacksmiths or even silver smiths. The day will come to a close with a return trip by boat back to your hotel.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel.

Overnight stay in Inle

Day 10: Inle Lake – Indein (B)

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 by 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.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Inle

Day 11: Heho – fly back to Yangon (B)

This morning is your free time until check out hotel and transfer to Heho Airport to take flight back Yangon. Arrive Yangon and transfer to hotel for check-in and relax.

Meal: Breakfast at hotel

Overnight stay in Yangon

Day 12: Yangon departure (B)

Free until transfer to Yangon International Airport to take your departure flight home. Tour ends.

Meals on own account.End of tour services.