

Myanmar *Travel Information*

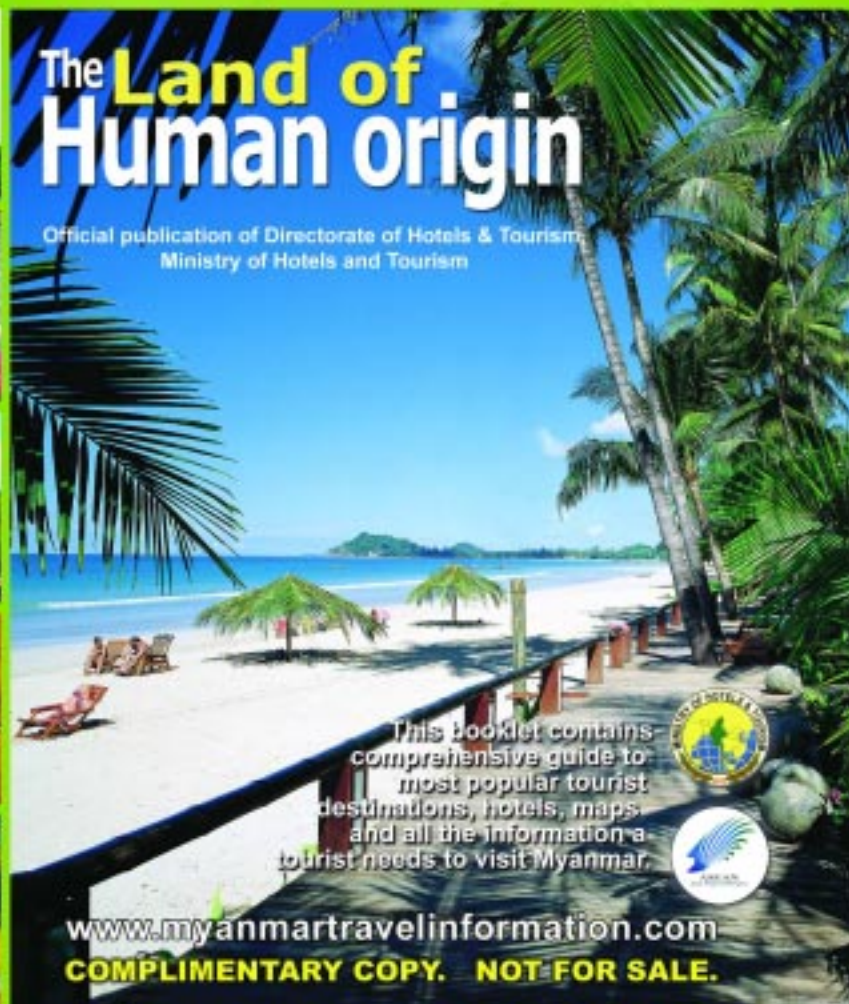
The Land of Human origin

Official publication of Directorate of Hotels & Tourism
Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

This booklet contains comprehensive guide to most popular tourist destinations, hotels, maps and all the information a tourist needs to visit Myanmar.

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Mythical bird Karaweik in Royal Lake, Yangon

Myanmar in Brief

Myanmar, this largest country in southeast asian peninsula, had many different names; once Suvanabhomi (Golden Land), later as Amarapura (Land of Immortality), and also as Yadanarbon (Land of Gems). Bordering China, India, and Thailand, Myanmar's culture is found to be excessively rich, which Myanmars are very proud of.

History : 3 Myanmar Empires, 800-year old language, abundance of precious stones, and 40 million years of history definitely have made Myanmar people to be over protective about their land. Thanks to all Myanmars, you will find the country remains unspoiled unlike any destination you might have been.

Besides, international scientists recently rewrote the history of mankind that Pondaung in Myanmar could be the earliest home of mankind. Do you know what it means?

This country could be the home of your great-great-grand parents millions of years ago. Visiting this living paradise will give you an experience of a life time. So let us welcome you to visit this wonderland.

COVER: (Right) A beautiful scene of Ngapali Beach (in front of Sandoway Resort), in Rakhine State, Myanmar.

Location : Southeast asia, between Thailand, China, India, and Indian Ocean. **Area** : 677,000 square kilometers (261,228 square miles) ranging 936 kilometers (581 miles) from east to west and 2,051 kilometers (1,275 miles) from north to south. The world's 40th largest country. **Population** : Over 60 million. 27th post populated country. **Time Zone** : GMT+6:30 **Climate** : Tropical, with average temperature of 30-35°C in summer (Mar-May), and 20-24°C in winter (Nov-Feb).

People : Myanmar is a union of 135 ethnic groups with their own languages and dialects. The major races are Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Myanmar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. **Festivals** : Myanmar is a Land of Festivals, a festival for every month of the year. Most festivals are cultural and religious. Majority are nation-wide celebrated while a few are distinctly regional. The dates of the festivals and special events are determined by the Lunar Year. **Food** : Myanmar food may be ranked between Chinese and Thai food. Let's say it is a bit richer than Chinese food, and less spicy than Thai food. **Religion** : Majority of the population are Buddhist.

Air Carriers to Myanmar : Myanmar Airways International (8M), Bangkok Airways (PG), Silk Air (MI), Air Mandalay (6T), Thai Airways (TG), Air China (CA), Biman (BG), Air India (IC), Mandarin Airline (AE), Phuket Airline (9R), Malaysia Airlines (MH), Druk Air (KB), Lauda Air (NG), Qatar Air (QR)



Three Men, Wundwin, Aungmye, Yangon



Arakan, Thabeikgyin, Dagon



Devanah Thabeikgyin, Yangon



East Chin, Myanmar, Chin



Arakan, Myanmar, Dagon



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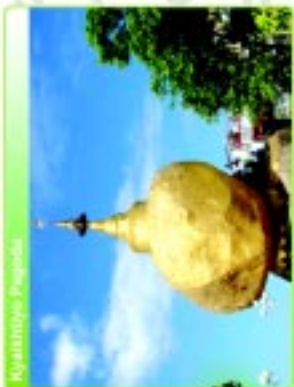


Arakan, Myanmar, Dagon



Arakan, Myanmar, Dagon





Distance between most popular tourist destinations in Myanmar.

YANGON	MANDALAY	BAGAN	INLE	KYAIKHTIYO
430	355	192	-	69



Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the greatest wonders of the world.

Yangon City

Established: around 2500 years ago
Location: Latitude: 16° 47' N, Longitude: 96° 08' E
Temperature: min 16° C - max 34° C
Population: approximately 7 million



Where to Visit

Yangon is the capital city, also one of the main gateways to Myanmar. Evergreen and cool with lush tropical trees, shady parks and beautiful lakes, Yangon has earned the title, 'The Garden City of the East'. Yangon, meaning 'end of strife', was renamed from Dagon by King Alaungpaya after he reorganized the third Myanmar Empire in A.D.1755.

The most famous pagoda in Yangon is the Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the greatest wonders of the world. It is a 2500-year old pagoda and also the first pagoda on earth. The perimeter of the base of the Pagoda is 1,420 feet and its height 326 feet above the platform. It is plated with more than 30 tons of gold, towering 98m over the city. A number of Myanmar kings and queens donated pure gold equivalent of their body weight to this pagoda throughout the history. The tip of the golden cone is set with rubies, diamonds, sapphires and topaz,

and around the main stupa are more than 100 smaller pavilions and halls. If you still have time, Maha Wizaya Pagoda is just next to Shwedagon. There is a very interesting thing if you are into architecture. There is a specially-designed hole on the ceiling, that only permits the sunlight to inside only a single day every year. That day is Myanmar New Year Day according to Myanmar lunar calendar. The National Museum houses the famous Lion Throne of last Myanmar kings. Priceless ancient artifacts and historic memorabilia are also displayed. Bogyoke Aung San Market is situated in the heart of Yangon. It is one of the most popular tourists destinations. A lot of souvenir, jewelry, handicraft, tapestry shops are there. Vendors in this market are generally easier to communicate in English than other shopping centers. The Karaweik is a classy modern restaurant, in the form of a huge Myanmar mythical bird, standing in the Kandawgyi Lake. Traditional dance performance, small scale Myanmar orchestra, and puppet shows are performed every night. It's often full. Make sure you reserve ahead. Kandawgyi Nature Park, is a newly renovated park which is not far from Shwedagon. You can see the water fountains, the green sceneries, and the marble elephants. Sule Pagoda is the landmark of the heart of Yangon, located near the City Hall and the Myanmar Travels and Tours office. It is said to be 2000-years old. The stupa is 46m high and it is in a strange octagonal shape.

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Throne of Last Emperor of Myanmar



Old colonial Building , Yangon General Hospital



Shwedagon Pagoda Guarded by Mythical creature, Lion

Kaba Aye Pagoda (World Peace Pagoda) was built for the 6th international Buddhist council in 1954. The World Buddhist Summit was held at the Maha Pasana Cave, near the pagoda. Botataung Pagoda, meaning 1,000 leaders, it is said to have the genuine hair relics of Buddha. The pagoda is hollow inside and it is a sort of a mirror-maze inside. Chauk Htat Gyi Buddha houses the fourth largest colossal reclining Buddha with an enigmatic smile on his delicate lips. The image itself is 67m long and famous for the 108 distinguishing marks/symbols on the soles of his two huge feet. Kyauk Taw Gyi Buddha is the largest marble Buddha in the world sculptured out from a single piece of marble stone.

Yangon Vicinity -- Bago (Pegu): The historical town of Bago, situated about 75 kilometers northeast of Yangon, was founded in 573 by two Mon princes and soon developed into the capital of the most important realm of the Mon people. Shwemawdaw Pagoda's height of 373 feet is taller than the famous Shwedagon Pagoda. Shwethalyaung Buddha is a famous reclining image of a huge Buddha, 180 feet in length and 52.5 feet in height. It was "lost" for many years as it was covered with earth in the scrub jungle, until an Indian contractor dug the place. The image was restored in 1881. It is also known as "the golden reclining image". Kanbawza Thadi Palace was built by King Bayinnaung, the founder of the second Myanmar Empire. According to the drawing record made by a minister 'Letwe Nawrahta' there were totally 76 apartments and halls. The replica of the palace was reconstructed in 1990 and finished in 1992.

Yangon Vicinity -- Thantlyin (Syriam): Thantlyin formerly known as Syriam is just across the river, spanned by one of the longest bridges in Myanmar. Half-an-hour drive by car or train, this colonial town was built by the British for its port and petroleum refinery plant.

The tombs of 2 famous Myanmar poets laureate of 16th century, an 18th century Portuguese Church, and a century-old Sacred Heart Church are there. Kyaik Kauk Pagoda: It is built on a hillock on the road to Kyauk Tan. It is an imposing golden stupa similar to the Shwe Dagon pagoda. Yaylel Pagoda means the pagoda in the middle of water. The pagoda complex comprises several buildings including a monastery. Pilgrims and visitors are ferried across to the pagoda. One can feed shoals of long river catfish, which surface to snatch tit-bits of food thrown at them.

Yangon Vicinity -- Pyay (Prome): Pyay is an important commercial center for trade between the Ayeyarwaddy Delta, but it is only about 6 hours drive from Yangon. The famous Shwesandaw Pagoda is well known in Pyay. Also the Srikeshtra, ancient Pyu capital can be visited. It's about 5 miles to the east of the city.

Where to Stay

SUPERIOR: ● **Traders Hotel**, 223, Sule Paya Rd, Kyauktada, 0242828 ● **Central Hotel**, 335/357, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Pabedan, 0241001 ● **Summit Parkview Hotel**, 350, Ahlone Rd, Dagon, 0211888 ● **MiCasa Hotel Apartments**, 17, Kaba Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin, 0650933 ● **Hotel Nikko Royal Lake**, 40, Natmauk St, Tamwe, 0544500 ECONOMY: ● **City Star Hotel**, 169-171, Mahabandoola Garden St, Kyauktada, 0370920 ● **Mother Land Inn (2)**, 433, Lower Pazundaung Road, 0291343 ● **Ocean Pearl Inn**, 215, Botataung Pagoda Road, Pazundaung, 0297007 ● **Royal White Elephant Hotel**, 11, Kan St, Hlaing, 0503986 ● **Classique Inn**, No. 53 B, Golden Valley Rd, Bahan, 0525557



Mandalay Palace and its moat, at the foot of Mandalay Hill

Mandalay City

Established: around 200 years ago

Location: Latitude: 21°58' N, Longitude: 96°04' E

Temperature: min 10°C - max 43.3°C

Population: over 1 million



Where to Visit

Mandalay, the old capital of Myanmar with the pure culture, was outstanding in the past. It is situated about 600 kilometers north of Yangon on the bank of the Ayeyarwaddy river. It is the second largest city in the country. Today, it is a major trading and communication center in the northern and central Myanmar. Buddhist Sasana, Myanmar traditional arts and crafts, with the life span of one hundred and forty two years, a city which abounds in historical sites, cultural memorials and Buddhist edifices.

Mandalay Palace: It was the first palace to be built in Mandalay, by King Mindon when he shifted his capital from Amarapura in 1861, to fulfill an old prophecy. It was built of teak wood on raised brick plinth gilded with gold and vermillion. **Maha Myat Muni Pagoda:** Located at the southwest of the town, the Mahamuni Buddha Image

is highly venerated. The 4m high-seated image is cast in bronze and weigh 6.5 tons, on which a crown is decorated with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. Mahamuni Buddha Image was being cast in front of the Buddha himself and some say that Mahamuni Buddha Image is the most look-alike portrait of Buddha himself. The image has completely covered with 15 cm thick gold and original shape is distorted. **Mandalay Hill:** It is 230 meters in elevation and commands a magnificent view of the city and surrounding countryside. The legend has it that the Buddha, on his visit, had made a prophecy that a great city would be founded at the foot of this hill. Amarapura lies on the left bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River. It is famous for the Silk Weaving Industry. **U Bein Bridge:** Constructed in 1849, crossing the Taung-tha-man Inn (Lake) is one of the main attractions for visitors. It is the longest teak bridge in the world; although a bit rickety in some parts it has withstood the storms and floods of over two centuries. The bridge is named after its donor U Bein. Innwa lies in the south of Mandalay and only 30 minutes drive away. This old city was long time capital of Myanmar, before Mandalay was built. Maha Aung Mye Bon Zan Monastery and Grand Bargaya Monastery are popular tourist destinations in Innwa.

Mandalay Vicinity - Sagaing: It lies 21 km southwest of Mandalay on the west bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River. It is an ancient capital of "Sagaing Dynasty". Sagaing Hills are known as a religious retreat



Engraved mountain of solid rock, Monywa.



Mandalay Palace



World's largest unfinished Pagoda at Mingun

where over 400 monasteries for monks and nuns are located. Kaung Hmudaw Pagoda: About 10 km from Sagaing, it is an enormous dome-shaped pagoda, built by King Thalun in 1636. Ominthonesal Pagoda: It has many Buddha images in a crescent shaped colonnade. Mural paintings in the Tilawkgaguru cave temple, built in 1672.

Mandalay vicinity - Monywa: It lies 136 km northwest of Mandalay and situated on the east bank of Chindwin River. Thanboddhay Paya: First built in 1303 by Monywa Sayadaw, the solid section of the monument is said to enclose 7,350 relics and other holy materials. Po Win Daung Caves: The caves and surrounding hills are named after U Po Win. Caves themselves contain Buddhist statues and murals dating to the 17th and 18th century.

Mandalay Vicinity - Mingun: Located about 11 km proverb from Mandalay, on the opposite bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River. Mingun Pahtotawgyi: Over 20,000 workers toiled for twenty years on the construction of the Pahtodawgyi Pagoda, which was unfortunately abandoned due to the death of King Bodawpaya in 1819. A 15-foot miniature model of the pagoda is in close proximity. It was completed to a height of 162 feet. Up to the first terrace is less than one third of the final height. This unfinished structure was badly damaged with cracks by the earthquake of 1838 but it is still the largest brick base in the world. Mingun Bell: It is a huge bronze bell near the Mingun Zedi on the west bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River. It weighs 55555 viss (100 tons). It is the world's biggest ringing bell. Myatheindan Pagoda: Built by King Bagyidaw in 1816, three years before he succeeded Bodawpaya as a king. It was built as a representation of the Sulamani Pagoda which, according to the Buddhist plan of the cosmos, stands atop Mount Meru. This pagoda was badly damaged in 1838 by a quake but King Mindon restored it in 1874.

Mandalay Vicinity - Pyin Oo Lwin: A pretty little hill resort, 67km east of Mandalay. Pyin Oo Lwin (formerly Maymyo), was a hill station established by the British as a cool retreat from the heat of the central Myanmar plains. Pyeik Chin Myaung, Pwe Kauk Fall and the Maha Anhtookanther Paya are tourist attractions in this area.

Mandalay Vicinity - Shwebo : It is 64 miles north of Mandalay on the motor and railroad to Myitkinya. It can be reached by car or rail from Mandalay under four hours. The ruins of ancient culture can be seen at Hanlin, a few miles south of Shwebo.

Where to Stay

CLASSIC: • **Sedona Hotel Mandalay**, 1, Corner of 26th & 66th St, Chan Aye Tharzan 036488 SUPERIOR: • **Mandalay City Hotel**: 26th Street, 82nd & 83rd Street, Chan Aye Tha Zan, Mandalay, 01 61700 to 61704 • **Mandalay Swan Hotel**, 44(B), 26th Rd, Bet: 66th & 68th St, Chan Aye Tharzan 035678 ECONOMY: • **Mann Myanmar Inn**, Block 802, Bet: 65th & 66th St, Chan Aye Tha Zan, 035604

Festivals around Mandalay

Kyaukse Dancing Elephant festival usually takes place around **September**. A huge elephant figure is made from bamboo and paper. It is a marvelous performance of 2 men together to dance in rhythm. The elephant dancers circles 3 times at the foot of the hill to pay homage to the Shwe Tha Lyaung Buddha. Mount Popa Nat festival shows the still active cult of the 37 nats in the forgotten land of Myanmar. Difficult to define but nats may be said to be somewhere between the spirits and the gods. Every year, in the month of **August**, this festival is held in Taung Byone with full of colors and attractions.



Silver-Sand beach and crystal clear water at Ngapali Beach

Ngapali Beach

The beaches of Myanmar belong to most beautiful Southeast Asia beaches and are however still nearly undiscovered. Among them Ngapali is the most beautiful among them all.

Situated about 7 km away from Thandwe, one of the ancient Rakhine towns and on the Bay of Bengal. It is said to have been named after the Naples of Italy by a homesick Italian. It is famous for its natural and unspoiled beauty up to this day. The beach stretches about 3 km with soft white sand fringed by coconut palms. It lies on one of the finest seaside in the country. It serves as the best ground for sunbathing and recreation such as beach strolling, cycling and so on. Unlike today's beaches of Asia, it is free of noisy beachside bars, crowded people and hawkers persuading you to buy their things. There are only natural scenic beauty of the blue sea, white sand and the lovely sun. The sea is cobalt blue, without any dangerous marine animals and clean.

Actually, Ngapali is not one single beach, but a series of beaches interspersed with small fishing villages stretching from Mazin where the airport is located, to Lontha on Mayo Bay where coastal steamers dock in a sheltered anchorage. Undoubtedly one of the best places for a relaxing holiday is Ngapali Beach near Thandwe in Rakhine

State, on the Bay of Bengal. This beach is 1 of the loveliest places in Myanmar; it is also one of the most unspoiled beaches in the world, with miles of pure white sands skirting the crystal clear waters of the Indian Ocean.

The water here is transparent and the sea is tranquil. Bicycle tours can be arranged to visit nearby villages. You can also explore the area with an ox truck. The villagers usually sun-dry their fish, shrimp and coconuts. These products are transported to Yangon and over the country. This is one of their main occupations. The best time to visit this beach is during October and May of every year.

Luxurious resorts are built among coconut palms, designed in traditional Southeast Asian elegance and is constructed in local materials of teakwood, ironwood and marble. Ngapali is accessible by flight which takes about 45 minutes from Yangon, by car about 14 hours drive along the Rakhine Yoma mountain range. Ngapali has 9-holes golf resort, where you can relax.

Where to Stay

- **Ngapali Beach Resort Hotel**, 2nd Flr, Summit Parkview Hotel Building, 350, Ahlone Rd, Dagon Tsp, Yangon, ☎ 211888, 211966
- **Sandoway Resort**, 201, Bo Myat Htun Road, Botataung Tsp, Yangon, ☎ 294612, 200883



Ngapali Beach Hotel

Thandwe, Myanmar



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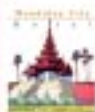
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Scenery of Bagan

Bagan

Formerly spelled as 'Pagan'
Established: 11th century AD

Location: Latitude: 21°10' N, Longitude: 94°51' E
Temperature: min 10°C - max 43°C



Where to Visit

Situated on the left bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River and approximately 90 miles (145 km) southwest of Mandalay, lies the most magnificent Bagan. It was the capital of the 1st ancient Myanmar Empire. It is a pilgrimage centre and contains ancient Buddhist shrines that have been restored and redecorated and are in current use. Ruins of other shrines and pagodas cover a wide area. The 42 sq km area of Bagan contains over 2000 edifices, the well-preserved pagodas and temples.

Shwezigon Pagoda: Built by King Anawrahta, founder of the first Myanmar Empire, and finished by King Kyansitthar in A.D 1084; the Shwezigon was held in special reverence by successive kings and became the prototype for later Myanmar pagodas. **Ananda Temple:** One of the finest, largest and best preserved of the Bagan temples. Built in 1091 by Kyansitthar, the temple is said to represent the endless wisdom of the Buddha. The central square has sides of 53 meters (175 feet) and rises in terraces to a height of 51 meters (168 feet)

above the ground. In the centre of the cube were 4 standing Buddhas, each of them, 9.5 meters (31 feet) high. Only those facing north and south are original, the east and west facing images are replacements for the figures destroyed by fire. **Thatbyinnyu Pagoda:** Located just inside the southeastern corner of the old city wall and tallest temple at almost 200 ft. In a monastery compound slightly southwest of the temple there are stone supports which one held the temple's huge bronze bell. **Bupaya:** Situated right on the river bank of the Ayeyarwaddy, has been claimed to be the oldest in Bagan, dating back to 3rd century A.D. The shape is extraordinary being in the shape of a gourd. It was completely destroyed when it tumbled into the river in the 1975 earthquake, but has been totally rebuilt. **The Bupaya** is also a favorite place to watch the sunset. **Sulamani Temple:** The Sulamani Guphaya is one of Bagan's premier temple attractions. The name itself means Crowning Jewel or Small Ruby. It was the first and most important temple of the late period (A.D 1170-1300) of Bagan monument building. **Dhammayangyi Temple:** Extending approximately 255 feet on each of its four sides, is Bagan's most massive shrine. It is built in the 12th century, displays the finest brickwork in Bagan. It remains one of the most unique and intriguing constructs on the Bagan plain. **Mingalar Zedi:** It was built in A.D 1277 It was completed just ten years before the kingdom's collapsed at the hands of the Mongols. **Htilominlo Temple:** Built by



Sunset of Bagan



HtaNaung Flower blooms beautifully



Lights on Ananda Pagoda

King Nadaungmya in A.D 1211, the 50 meters high Htilominlo is one of the largest temples of Bagan; and is noted for its fine plaster carvings. Gubyaukgyi Temple: It is noted for its wall paintings, depicting scenes from the previous lives of the Buddha. Manuha Temple: Situated in the southern end of Myinkaba village. In A.D 1059, the captured King Manuha had built himself this two-storey square white temple and through it conveyed a melancholy message. Gawdawpalin Temple : It was built during the reign of Narapatisithu A.D 1174 and completed during the reign of his successor, Nadaungmya. Mahabohdi Temple: It was erected during the reign of Nadaungmya A.D 1211, was modeled after the temple of the same name in Bodhgaya, India. It is a 140 foot high brick and whitewashed stucco structure characterized by a large square pyramidal tower and topped by a conical spire and umbrella. Dhammayazika Temple : It looks much like the famous Shwezigon, the Dhammayazika is unusual because it has pentagonal terraces instead of the usual square ones. Above the 3 receding terraces, which are ornamented with glazed Jataka plaques rises a bell-shaped dome, which merges directly into a sharply tapering conical finial.

Archaeological Museum It is now a three storey building built in an octagonal design as the base. The building is fully furnished with Myanmar handicrafts. The ground floor consists of the Main Hall, Arts and Crafts of Bagan Era, Languages and Literatures, Portraits of the Bagan's society and battle fields, Archaeological Designs. On the first floor, Ancient Pagoda's portraits, Ancient wall, Buddha's artistic designs, Buddha's images. On the top floor, you can see the most scenic view of Bagan and it's prehistoric pagodas. The Bagan Archaeological Museum is one of the most important places you should visit while you are in Bagan.

Bagan Lacquerware : Bamboo and wood that are used as frame or base in making lacquerwork are easily and cheaply available around the Bagan area. Lacquer from Thitsi Tree (Melanhorrea Usitata), is applied on the frame, which is native to Southeast Asia.

Bagan Vicinity -- Mount Popa: It is seismically an extinct volcano crater jutting high above the flat plains of Central Myanmar. It offers a steep climb to the top and many pagodas are built. Also believed to be the above of powerful guardian spirits.

Where to Stay

CLASSIC: • **Tharabar Gate Hotel**, Thazin Rd, Archaeological province, ☎70020 • **Bagan Thiripyisaya Sakura Hotel**, Archaeological Zone, Old Bagan ☎60048 • **Myanmar Treasure Resorts**, New Bagan ☎ 60443, 60445 • **Bagan Hotel**, Back of Gawdawpalin Pagoda, Thante St, ☎67311 SUPERIOR: • **Kumudara Hotel**, Corner of 5th & Dawna St, Pyu Saw Htee Qtr, ☎67080 • **Bagan Thande Hotel**, ☎70144 ECONOMY: • **Golden Express Hotel**, Wetkyiinn, Nyaung U, ☎652936

Festivals in Bagan

Ananda Pagoda festival is held one week preceding the Fullmoon day of Pyatho, usually in **January**. It is held for one week in Bagan. Villagers and pilgrims around Bagan roll in the sacred site of Ananda for the consecration. Villagers from nearby villages come to the festival with bullock wagons and camp for the duration. The wagons are colorfully decorated. Shwezigon Pagoda Festival Visitors offer candles and fireworks are offered to the pagoda. The festival runs from new full moon day of Tazaungmone (usually in **October**).



A village built on floating islands in Inle Lake

Inle Lake

Location: Latitude: 20°46' N, Longitude: 97°01'E
 900 meters above sea-level
Temperature: min 12°C - max 28°C
Population: 150,000



Where to Visit

Inle Lake is located in the heart of Shan State which shares borders with Thailand and Lao. And it climbs up to over 900 meters above sea level and outrageously beautiful. Inle Lake is located in the mountains so it is cooler than other areas. More than 30 hill tribes are living in the mountains. This vast picturesque lake, 900 metres above sea-level, is one of the main tourist attractions in Myanmar. The lake, 22 km long and 10 km across, has a population of some 150,000, many of whom live on floating islands of vegetation. Inle Lake, natural and unpolluted, is famous for its scenic beauty and the unique leg-rowing of the *Inthas*, the native lake dwellers. Inle Lake, natural and unpolluted, is famous for its scenic beauty and the unique leg rowing of the *Inthas*, the native lake dwellers. High hills rim the lake on both sides. The lakeshore and lake islands bear 17 villages on stilts, mostly inhabited by the Intha people. Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda is one of

the most revered Buddhist shrine in Burma. Bagan monarch Alaung Sithu of A.D 12th Century cherishes five images, dedicated to five Buddhas of this planet Earth, here. Taking Phaung Daw Oo as the landmark. The great lake could be toured around. Inle Lake is one of the small villages of Inle Lake located on the western bank of the lake. A Buddha image has enshrined at a whitewashed stupa, which is on the summit of a hill. Below the stupa around the hill are cluster of hundreds of ancient stupas most are ruins overgrown with bushes. Nga Phe Kyaung (Jumping Cats Monastery): A wooden monastery built on stilts of the lake, 4 years before the construction of Mandalay Palace. It's known as the Jumping Cat Monastery because the monks there have trained their cats to jump and leap through small hoops. Inle Vicinity -- Kakku Pagodas: Kakku is about 33 miles from Taunggyi. One of the Asia's largest and most spectacular ancient monuments is a wonderful Pagoda named Kakku. It contains over 2,000 stupas with origins dating back many centuries.

Inle Vicinity -- Taunggyi: It is situated in the southern Shan State and is the capital town of Shan States. It is 4,712 feet above the sea level and has a moderate climate. In November, to celebrate the Tazaungdaing festival, the city hosts a hot-air, or fire balloon festival.

Inle Vicinity -- Kalaw: It stands high on the western edge of the Shan Plateau. It is 70 km west of Taunggyi, about halfway along the Thazi-Taunggyi road. This was a popular hill station in the British days



Ferry Boat Stand, Inle Lake



Leg Rower, Inle Lake



Ballon Festival, Taunggyi

and it is still a peaceful and quiet place. At an altitude of 1,320m it is also pleasantly cool and a good place for hiking amid gnarled pines, bamboo groves and rugged mountain scenery. Those around Kalaw are from four ethnic groups, Palaung, Pa-O, Danu and Taung Yoo.

Inle Vicinity -- Pindaya: It is a small quiet town perched on the bank of the placid Botoloke Lake. Pindaya cave is a huge cavern where hundreds and thousands of Buddha images in various size and shape are installed since the 11th century. The most attractive place in Pindaya is the ancient Shwe U Min cave which contains about 8,000 Buddha statues, which are collected over the centuries.

Where to stay

INLE: • **Inle Regal Resort**, Inle Lake, Southern Shan State, ☎ 29312 • **Inle Lake View Resort**, Khaung Daing Village, ☎ 29332 • **Golden Island Cottages(I)**, Nanpan Village, ☎29390 ☎29312
TAUNGGYI: • **Taunggyi Hotel**, Shumyawkhin Rd, 21601 • **Hotel Empire**, 31, Bogyoke Aung San St, ☎ 23737
KALAW: • **New Shine Hotel**, 21, Pyhtaungsu St, ☎ 50028 • **Kalaw Hotel**, 84(A), University Rd, ☎ 50039 **PINDAYA:** • **Pi ndaya Hotel**, Shwe U Min Rd, ☎22221, 526318

Festival in Inle

The festival of Phaung Daw Oo is held during **October**. The festival takes about 18 days. It is the biggest occasion held in the Inle Lake, Shan State. The festival is held with great magnificence and pageantry. The holy Buddha's images are placed on a decorated royal barge and towed by leg-rowers around the lake. There are also Shan traditional boat races participated by leg-rowers.

Ethnic Groups

The Union of Myanmar was formed by 135 nationalities, and 7 major national races. Here, we'd like to present you the most popular and near extinction ethnic groups to international tourists.

Padaung tribe is probably the best well-known Myanmar tribe, often called 'long neck women'. Traditionally Padaung women wear an uncomfortable stack of rings around their neck permanently, which makes their necks longer. Their necks are as long as 14 inches. That is why it was their custom to start putting these copper rings on the necks of female children from the age of 4 to 6 years old. Kayah women, by the time they reached adulthood, almost always have 16 to 22 rings round their necks. You only have the chance to see them while they are alive and before this tribe goes extinct. To visit Padaung people, one has to go to Loikaw, then to Demoso, and then proceed to Pan Pet village which is home to the Padaung people of Kayah State. **Akha** people are known for their very exotic and extraordinarily beautiful costumes and their unique handicrafts. Akha people are found in the mountains of China, Laos, Myanmar and northern Thailand. Like Myanmar, Akha tribe originated in Tibet. Every Akha village is distinguished by their carved wooden gates, guarded by guardian angels. They live in raised houses, with large porches and steep roofs. Visiting Akha villages are very interesting. Most of their costume designs are assorted colors on black background, and they still weave them on foot-treadle loom. Also, **Pa-O** nationals live in Nant Bay village forming a long stretch of dwellings in Southern Shan State and lies between two mountain ranges running from south to north.



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Sea Paradise, Ngwe Saung Beach



Massage Tent on Ngwe Saung Beach



Pool side of Sunny Paradise Hotel, Ngwe Saung Beach

Ngwesaung Beach

Ngwesaung is a newly opened beach about 48 km from Patheingyi. It takes about 5-6 hours drive from Yangon. It was a hidden treasure beach. This is one of the most romantic and unspoiled beach, which stretches 15 km of white sand and blue sea. There are newly constructed bungalows with local flavour but equipped with modern facilities. Fringed with palm trees, all hotels face the beach. There are corals and diving is also available. Tours to nearby islands are also possible. Fishing can also be arranged. Beautiful natural sea shells can be collected on the beach. Ngwe Saung extends its warmest welcome to all visitors who wish to relax amidst the waving palms and balmy breezes of a truly memorable ocean resort.

Where to Stay

• **Myanmar Treasure Resorts**, 56, Shwe Taung Gyar Street, Bahan, ☎ 513300, Internet: www.myanmar-treasurebeach.com • **Sunny Paradise Resort**, 90 A/B, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Bahan, ☎ 546002-8, Internet: www.sunnyparadise.net

Chaung-Thar Beach

Located 40 km to the west of Patheingyi (Bassein) in Ayeyarwaddy Division. It is about 5 hours drive from Yangon to Chaung-Thar Beach. Chaungthar is the nearest ocean resort available to foreign tourists, being easily reached from Yangon in half a day by road. It is an attractive wide beach with a muddy delta look. Not only coconut palms but also casuarinas trees can be found along the beach. Two small islands can be seen offshore. The crab dishes of Chaung Thar Beach are delicious and well-known. Fresh coconut juice will make you relax here. There are 13 top class hotels in Chaungthar to cater to their every need.

Many nearby islands like The' Phyu Island, Pho Kalar Island and Kyaut Maung Nhama can be visited too.

Where to Stay

• **Hotel Max Chaungtha Beach Hotel**, 1, Ywama Curve, Ba Yint Naung Rd, Block (2), Hlaing, Yangon, ☎ 500123, 513009

Thingyan : Myanmar's Joyous Festival

Myanmar is a land full of festivals and fun. The most fascinating festival in Myanmar is Thingyan, which is held from 12th to 16th of April every year. It marks the changing of the old year to the new. Also known as Myanmar's New Year festival. The main feature of this festival is water throwing or pouring water on each other. Giving homage to the elders and to help and clean the elders are also another interesting culture of Myanmar. This year, to promote the tourism industry in Myanmar, we are going to hold the most joyous Thingyan in our ancient capital, Mandalay. This will be a great opportunity for your guests to enjoy. Don't miss it! Visit our web site for further information.





Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda, the Golden Rock



Htukkanthein Pagoda, Mrauk U



An ancient Buddha Image in Mrauk-U area

Kyaikhtiyo



Where to Visit

The famous legendary Kyaikhtiyo pagoda is also well known as Golden Rock. It is located in the Mon State. It is the largest domestic tourism centre located about 160 km from Yangon. Now, it is accessible by car. Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda stands on a gold gilded boulder precariously perched on the edge of the hill over 3,615 feet (1,100m) above sea-level. There are many legends about the pagoda and Nat (spirits) shrines along the 11km uphill hike from the base camp to the pagoda. There is also a popular belief that one will gain more wealth every time he climbs the Hill. The pagoda itself is only about 15 feet high, but it is a breath taking scene to see it in reality.

Kyaikhto Hotel located on the hill side is in full view of the pagoda. The pilgrimage season is from October to March. Coaches reach only Kinpun Base Camp at the foot of the Hills from which visitors trek uphill for about 11km. Porters and palanquins are available to carry luggage and pilgrims who are too old or weak.

Where to Stay

- **Kyaik Hto Hotel**, Kyaikhtiyo Yin Pyin, ☎01-663341, 01-245285
- **Golden Rock Hotel**, Malarphyu Village, ☎035-70174

Festival in Kyaikhtiyo

The pagoda festival attracts celebrities from all over the country annually beginning from **October to March**. The platform of the Pagoda is lightened up with nine thousand candle lights during the festival.

Mrauk-U



Where to Visit

Mrauk-U is located at 20.25°N Latitude and 093.11°E Longitude. It is the 15th century ancient city of Rakhine. There are round about 70 temples and stupas and the remains of the magnificent Royal Palace can be seen in Mrauk-U. The walls were painted with religious sculptures. Once it was the richest city in the whole southeast asian countries during the early ages. Today, the city is about 50 miles from the modern capital Sittwe. It is accessible by daily flight from Yangon. A new Mrauk-U Museum is located near the palace site. It displays some old artifacts of Vesali, Launggret and Mrauk-U periods, ranging from 8th to the 16th century. Also it as a good collection of ancient artifacts unearth around the city. Shitthaung Pagoda : Meaning 80,000 Pagodas is located half mile from the city. It was built by the great King Minbagyi during A.D 1535. First it was built as a fortress against the Portuguese. Koethaung Pagoda : Meaning 90,000 pagodas. It was built by Min Thaikha during A.D 1553. It is the biggest pagoda in Mrauk-U area. Sand stones are used to build this pagoda. Andaw Pagoda : Meaning the tooth relic of Buddha. It was built by Min Hla Raza during A.D 1521. The tooth relic was obtained from Sri Lanka. Laymyetnha Pagoda : Meaning four faces or sides. King Min Saw Mon built this pagoda during A.D 1430. Dukkanthein : It was used as an Ordination Hall before but now it is an interesting place to visit.

Where to Stay

- **Nawarat Hotel**, E-27, Yangon-Sittwe Road, Nyaungpinzay Quarter, ☎MU-146
- **Mrauk U Hotel**, Yangon-Sittwe Road, ☎043-23060



Kandawgyi Botanical Garden



Tharabar Gate, Bagan



Bamboo rafts being floated

Information for Visitors

Accommodations: Totally 16,004 (According to 2003 Stats) hotel rooms of all categories serves in the whole country to suit each traveler's price range. Banking / Money Exchange: Compulsory exchange of a few hundreds dollars has been withdrawn. Check the internet for current exchange rates. Money exchangers are not found everywhere. Business Hours: 9am-5pm. Government offices: 9:30-4:30. Major Credit cards are not widely accepted. Cash is always more convenient. Currency: National currency is Kyat. Departure: Export permit is required for some jewelries and artifacts. Antiques and archaeologically valuable items are not allowed for export. DOs & DON'Ts: • Not always necessary to shake hands. • Don't hug or kiss in public. • Don't touch any adult on the head. • Nodding means YES, and shaking head means NO. • When buying gems, sculptures, or any expensive souvenir, make sure it comes with an export permit. • Don't leave expensive items in your room. Use safe deposit box. • Beware of cheats, swindlers, imposters. • Carry some medicines for diarrhea. • On trains, keep windows shut. • Speed or distance descriptions are in miles, not kilometers. • Don't jay walk. Watch where you walk and what you step on. Drug Abuse: Trafficking drugs is a capital offence. Electricity: 200 volts AC, 50Hz. 110 volts is also available in some hotels. Language: Myanmar is the official language, English is widely spoken and understood. Museums: Popular museums are National museum, Drug Elimination Museum, Myanmar Gems Museum, Defense Services Museum. Public Shopping: Bargaining is acceptable in most places. Jewelries and handicrafts are most popular souvenirs for visitors to Myanmar. Souvenirs to buy is precious gem stones, jewelries, stone or wooden

sculptures, lacquerware, handicrafts, tapestries. Make sure your souvenirs come along with an export permit. Transportation: Buses and taxis are available. For exclusive trip contact to car rental services. Travellers' cheques: Not widely accepted as it takes weeks to clear the travellers' cheques. Weight & Measure: Common local unit of weight is peiktha (viss), which equals to 3.6 pounds. Most common unit of measure is feet and inches. Tourist information is available at the Arrival Hall of Yangon International Airport. Also at Head Office in downtown Yangon at 77-91 Sule Pagoda Road (Tel: 95-1-252859), Bagan Office (Tel:95062-70217), Mandalay Office (Tel: 95-2-22540) at Mandalay Swan Hotel, Taunggyi Office (Tel: 95-081-21611, 95-081-21302) at Taunggyi Hotel. Public Holidays in Myanmar are according to the Lunar Calendar, so you better check the holidays before visiting Myanmar.

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER: • Myanmar Travels and Tours (MTT) No. 77-91, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada, ☎374281, 378376, 371910, 252859 Fax: + 95-1-254417 Email: mtt.mht@mptmail.net.mm • Information: www.myanmartravelinformation.com • Hotel Reservation: www.myanmarhotelreservation.com • Myanmar Visa: www.visa.gov.mm

EMBASSIES IN YANGON: • Australia: ☎251810 • Bangladesh: ☎515275 • Brunei Darussalam: ☎510422 • Cambodia: ☎549609 • China (PRC): ☎221280 • Egypt: ☎222886 • France: ☎212178 • Germany: ☎548951 • India: ☎282552 • Indonesia: ☎254465 • Israel: ☎515115 • Italy: ☎527100 • Japan: ☎540400 • Korea: ☎515190 • Laos: ☎22482 • Malaysia: ☎220248 • Nepal: ☎545880 • Pakistan: ☎222881 • Philippines: ☎558149 • Russia: ☎241955 • Singapore: ☎559001 • Sri Lanka: ☎222812 • Thailand: ☎224550 • UK: ☎256918 • USA: ☎379880 • Vietnam: ☎545906



Myanmar's Colorful Puppets



Cloth Painting, Bagan



Pondaung Primates

Useful Contacts

AIRLINES: • Myanmar Airways International ☎252007 • Yangon Airways ☎383100 • Bangkok Airways ☎255122 • Silk Air ☎255287

CAR RENTAL: • Myanmar Travels & Tours ☎664472 • SM Tours & Transport ☎227133 • Khine Thazin Car Rental ☎663796, 707003, 700442

COURIER SERVICES: • Myanmar DHL ☎660515 • Overseas Courier Services ☎282706

CRUISES: • Pandaw 1947: www.pandaw1947.com ☎ • Pandaw River Cruises: ☎249255-9, www.pandaw.com • Delta Queen ☎246752 • Road to Mandalay:

CYBER CAFE: • Surf N surf ☎524067 • Cyber Hub Internet Cafe-1 ☎373521 • Global Internet (Ray Net) ☎652268 • Bee Internet Cafe ☎243427 • Cyber Knight ☎224810 • Geocomp ☎240400 • Innwa ☎514387

CLINICS: • Aung Yadana, www.aungyadana.com, 1, Yadana Rd, 16/2 Ward, Thingankyun ☎571065 • SSC (Shwegondaing Specialist Center) Shwegondaing Rd, Bahan ☎544128

Pondaung Primates

Today's most reliable proof of 'Human Origin'

Scientists believe that human originated from primates, or simply monkeys. The word 'primate' generally refers to mammals which have both hands and legs with highest intelligence among all other living beings. Therefore, to trace the human origin, scientists had to look into the earliest evidence of anthropoid primates. The discovery of many fossilized remains of Pondaung primates within the past few years, made this theory firmer, and also confirmed by French, Japanese, and other international scientists. French anthropologist *Dr. Jean-Jacques Jaeger* said "We didn't have that kind of information about Asia before, only Africa. Now we may have to change our whole story about anthropoid origins and evolution." The Pondaung area is situated in the northwestern part of central Myanmar which consists 2 mountain ranges namely Pondaung and Ponnyaadung. These 2 ranges are composed of the rocks of the Pondaung formation. The formation is almost entirely composed of massive quartz sandstones, brown on the weathered surface, but of a greenish tint in fresh stream sections. For more information, please visit : <http://www.myanmar.com/primates/>

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