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Myanmar Travel Information 2007 1



Welcome to Myanmar

Myanmar lies at the crossroads of Asia's greatest civilizations, China and India. Before 1989, Myanmar came to be known under different names: Suvanabhumi and anglicized versions of Myanmar. It was well known for its ancient archaeology and rich culture. Myanmar stretches from the islands of the Andaman Sea in the south, right up into the Eastern Himalayan mountain range, giving a variety of marvelous people and enriched nature.

History: The earliest primates known today as Pondaung Man, resided in Pondaung, northern Myanmar about 40 million years ago. After those era, many city states emerged, and then came the (3) empires. The First Myanmar Empire (AD 1044) founded after King Anawrahtar organized the whole country into a single sovereign. Founding of the Second Myanmar Empire was in AD 1287, at Hantharwaddy (Bago) Dynasty. The last empire was in AD 1752 founded by the Konbaung Dynasty. Though many years passed away, you will find the country remains unspoiled unlike any destination you might have been to. Visiting this living paradise will give you an experience of a life time.

Location: Myanmar is situated in southeast Asia and is bordered on the north and northeast by China; on the east and southeast by Laos and Thailand; on the south by the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal; and on the west by Bangladesh and India. It is located between latitudes 09°32'N and 28°31'N and longitudes

92°10'E and 101°11'E. The country covers an area of 676,577 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

People: Myanmar is made up of over 100 national races, of which the main national races are Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. Population is estimated to be over 54 million.

Weather: Seasonal changes in the monsoon wind directions create summer, rainy and winter seasons. The best time to visit Myanmar is during October to May, however upper Myanmar is good to travel round the year.

Tour Operators: Get all the information you want about tour operators at our web portal: www.myanmartravelinformation.com

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COVER: (right) Karaweik, the golden mythical bird of Myanmar.

Yangon City

Established: around 250 years ago
Location: Latitude: 16° 47' N, Longitude: 96° 08' E
Temperature: min 16° C - max 34° C
Population: 5 million

The commercial capital of Myanmar is Yangon. It was founded in 1755 by King Alaung Paya (1752-1760 AD), the first emperor of the Third Myanmar Empire, at the base of Shwedagon Pagoda called Dagon. Yangon has a unique charm, with its old colonial buildings, tree-lined streets, bustling local markets, and tranquil lakes.

Where to Visit

There are famous golden pagodas that glisten amongst the trees and buildings like Shwedagon Pagoda, Sule Pagoda, Botataung Pagoda and Chauk Htat Gyi Buddha to name a few.

Shwedagon Pagoda, is the also known to be 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. Around the main stupa are more than 100 smaller pavilions and halls. Next to the Shwedagon is Maha Wizaya Pagoda. 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.

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. 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, meaning 1,000 leaders, 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. Ngazun Htat Gyi Buddha, is just across the road from Chauk Htat Gyi. It is also a giant Buddha status in a sitting position. Koe Htat Gyi pagoda is another famous pagoda in Yangon, in Sanchaung Township. Other than the ancient pagodas, you can also visit the Kyauk Taw Gyi Buddha which is the largest marble Buddha in the world sculptured out from a single piece of stone.



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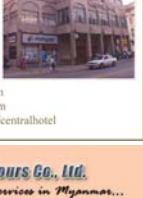
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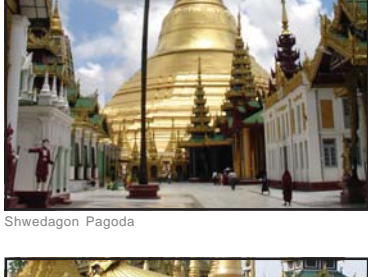
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Shwedagon Pagoda



Shinpyu, Novicehood ceremony



Yangon Central Railway Station

The Allied War Memorial at Htaukkyant is also another tour destination. The National Museum is another interesting place to visit. It houses the famous Lion Throne of last Myanmar Kings. Priceless ancient artifacts and historic memorabilia are also on display, including golden shoe of the last Myanmar King and some documents written on gold plates.

The Karaweik is a classy modern restaurant, in the form of a huge Myanmar mythical bird, standing in the Kandawgyi Lake. Traditional dances, small scale Myanmar orchestra, and puppet shows are performed every night. Kandawgyi Nature Park, is a newly renovated park which is not far from Shwedagon. The Karaweik is located in this park. You can see the water fountains, the green sceneries, and the marble elephants. There are also four types of recreation zones for families and tourists. To do shopping in Yangon, Bogyoke Aung San Market is a must. It is situated in the heart of Yangon and was built in 1926. It is one of the preserved colonial buildings. It consists of 1641 shops. A lot of souvenir, jewelry, handicraft, sculptures, and tapestry shops can be found there. Vendors in this market

are generally easier to communicate in English than other shopping centers.

National races village, constructed by Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs, is situated in Tharketa Township, on the left of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge. This was aimed to expose the traditional way of living of the National races in Myanmar.

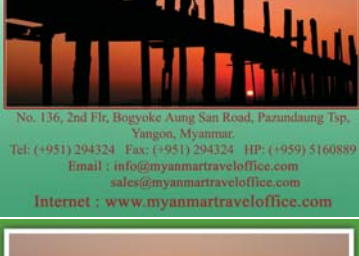
Yangon Zoological Garden has been inaugurated since 1906. It is a World Class zoo with over 59 species of animals, 63 species of birds, 17 species of reptiles on the fauna side. On the flora side, there are over 15,000 trees and plants.

Yangon Vicinity — Thanlyin, formerly known as Syriam, is just across the river from Yangon, spanned by one of the longest bridges in Myanmar. A half-an-hour's 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 of 16th century, an 18th century Portuguese Church, and a century-old Sacred Heart Church are there. Kyaik Kauk Pagoda is built on a hillock on the road to Kyauk Tan. It is an imposing golden stupa similar to the Shwedagon pagoda. Another destination is the Yaylei Pagoda, meaning 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 catfishes, often jumping out of surface to snatch tit-bits of food thrown at them.

Yangon Vicinity — Bago: The historical town of Bago, situated about 75 kilometers northeast of Yangon, was founded in 573 by two Mon princes, which later developed it into the capital of Second Myanmar Empire. Shwemawdaw Pagoda, located in the heart of Bago, is even 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 under earth in the scrub jungle, until an Indian contractor dug up 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.

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A guardian Ogress in Shwedagon Pagoda Compound



Karaweik, in Kandawgyi Nature Park



Lighting festival in Yangon

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 not long ago. For ecotourism trips, Moeyingyi and Pho Kyar Camps are popular destinations. The Moeyingyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary is located within 40 square mile area where the birds from many parts of the world can be observed. Pho Kyar Forest Camp is a place having a special privilege of occupying a prime location, a little forest bordering with a stream running in zig-zag way within the area and providing an abundance of water supply for local settlement and elephants bathing.

Yangon Vicinity — Taungoo, also known as Kaytumadi. Located 175 miles from Yangon and is the only place for the tourists where you can get good accommodation on Yangon-Mandalay road. It is one of the main gateway to Bago Yoma.

Yangon Vicinity — Pyay, was formerly known as Prome. It is an important commercial center for trade between the Ayeyarwady Delta, Central and Upper Myanmar and the Rakhine State. Pyay is only 161 km north of Yangon and on the way to Bagan. The ancient 'Pyu' Capital lies 8 km south-east of Pyay. Archaeological discoveries indicate that the city attained its height of prosperity between the 5th and 9th centuries. Shwesandaw Pagoda is a major destination in Pyay. The Sehtatgyi Buddha Image is an enormous seated image near Shwesandaw Pagoda. Shwemyatman Buddha Image, Shwe Nat Taung Pagoda and Akauk Taung are also popular places around Pyay.

Yangon Vicinity — Patheingyi, was formerly known as Bassein. It is the main coastal town in the Ayeyarwaddy Division. There are two famous beaches in this region. Chaung Thar Beach is about 40 km from Patheingyi and only about 5 hours drive from Yangon. It is an attractive wide beach with a muddy delta look. Not only coconut palms but also casuarinas trees can be found at the back of the beach. Two small islands can be seen offshore. The crab dishes of Chaung Thar Beach are also delicious and well-known. Refreshing coconut juice on the beach is unforgettable. Another one is Ngwe Saung Beach. Ngwe Saung is one of the loveliest and most pleasant beach resorts in Myanmar. About 48 kilometres from the town of Patheingyi, Ngwe Saung, with a beach frontage on the Bay of Bengal with its clear blue waters, its white crested waves, sandy beaches and unspoiled and pollution-free natural surroundings, is indeed one of the best places to select for a holiday interlude of rest and relaxation.

Where to Stay

- **Summit Parkview Hotel Yangon** 350 Ahlone Road, Dagon, ☎ 211888 www.summityangon.com
- **Central Hotel** 335-337, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Pabedan ☎ 241001 www.centralhotel.yangon.com
- **MiCasa Hotel Apartments** 17, Kaba Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin, ☎ 650933 www.myanmar.micasahotel.com
- **Mother Land Inn (2)** 433, Lower Pazundaung Rd, Pazundaung ☎ 291343 www.myanmarmotherlandinn.com
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- **Hotel Halpin** 89A, Corner of Pyay Road & Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Dagon ☎ 226695 www.hotelhalpin.com
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Where to Shop

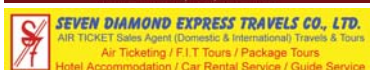
- **Highlight Gems** Counter No. 6, First Floor, Myanma Gems Museum, 66 Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Mayangone ☎ 665816 www.highlightgems.com



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"This is Burma,
and it will be quite unlike any land you know about..."

Rudyard Kipling
Letter from the East 1898



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Mandalay

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

Mandalay, the old capital of the third Myanmar Empire, has grown a lifestyle strongly influenced by conservative tradition and culture. 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 hub of the northern Myanmar. With Buddhism, conservative culture, and traditional arts, Mandalay abounds in historical sites and cultural memorials.

Where to Visit

Mandalay Palace was first built by King Mindon when he shifted his capital from Amarapura in AD 1861, to fulfill an old prophecy. It was built of teak wood on raised brick plinth, gilded with gold and vermillion. This square-shaped palace wall is 2 miles long on all sides. There are 12 gates, 3 on each side. The wall of the bricks are 25 feet high. It was the official capital and royal palace of the last Myanmar King Thipaw, until British captured him in 1885 and took him to India. Some buildings including wooden pavilions are original and some have been rebuilt as replica. Maha Myat Muni Buddha, located in the southwest part of the city, is a 4 meter high seated image, cast in bronze and weighs 6.5 tons. The crown is decorated with precious diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. This Buddha image is highly venerated, as it is said to be made in front of Buddha himself, and thus its face is believed to be most revered. The image is completely covered with 15 cm-thick gold. Mandalay Hill has 230 meters in elevation and commands a magnificent view of the city and surrounding countryside. As a legend goes, Buddha, on His visit, made a prophecy that a great city would be founded at the foot of this hill many years later. U Bein Bridge: Constructed in 1849, crossing the Taung-thaman 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 many storms and floods for centuries. The bridge is named after its donor Mayor U Bein. Atumashi Monastery in Mandalay is a monastery beautifully decorated with white and golden paints. Sanda Muni Pagodas are located near the Mandalay Hill. Sanda Muni is a large collection of slender whitewashed ancillary stupas on the grounds. Kuthodaw, the world's largest book, consist of many small pagodas. Each stupa is connected and set in the middle of a thirteen-acre field of 729 shrines. Each shrine contains a marble slab, inscribed with the Pali script text of a portion the Tipitaka, Theravada Buddhist bible.



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The moat of Royal Mandalay Palace



Mingun Bell, World's largest ringing bell



Ancient caves at Phowin Taung, Monywa

The Golden Palace Monastery is the most significant of Mandalay's historic buildings, remaining as the sole major survivor of the former wooden Royal Palace built by King Mindon in the mid-nineteenth century. It is fragile yet grand example of 19th century Myanmar teak architecture and also a significant masterpiece of the wood-carving art.

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, home of over 400 Buddhist monasteries, are known as a major religious retreat. Kaung Hmudaw Pagoda: About 10 km from Sagaing, it is an enormous dome-shaped pagoda, built by King Thalun in 1636. Umin Thonse Pagoda: It has many Buddha images in a crescent shaped colonnade. Mural paintings in Tilawkguru cave temple, built in 1672, are very interesting.

Mandalay vicinity -- Monywa lies 136 km northwest of Mandalay and situated on the eastern bank of Chindwin River. Thanboddhay Pagoda: First built in 1303 by Monywa Sayadaw. The solid section of the monument is said to enclose 7,350 relics and other holy materials. Mt. Po Win Caves: So many religious or spiritual statues and murals carries a number of legends and they were outstandingly decorated, dating back to the 17th and 18th century AD.

Mandalay Vicinity -- Mingun: Located about 11 km from Mandalay, on the opposite bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River. Great Mingun Temple would have been the world's tallest building in 1800s, if it was completed. Over 20,000 workers toiled for 20 years on the construction of this great temple, which was unfortunately abandoned due to the death of King Bodawpaya in 1819. A 15-foot miniature model nearby tells the details. It was completed only up to the first terrace, 162 feet, which actually was 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 is *the world's biggest ringing bell*, as well as the second largest bell on earth. Located near the Mingun Zedi on the west bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River, it was made of bronze and weighs 55,555 vises (~100 tons). Mya Theindan Pagoda was 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 by 1838 earth quake.

Mandalay Vicinity -- Pyin Oo Lwin: A pretty little hill resort, 67km east of Mandalay. Pyin Oo Lwin (formerly Maymyo) was established by the British as a cool retreat from the heat of the central Myanmar plains. National Kandawgyi Garden, is a 30-acre park containing, 4840 trees mostly pine varieties, 575 different floral species and many exotic fruits and flowers. Pwe Kauk Fall is about 8km from town. It was called Hampshire Falls during British times. It's a very pleasant picnic spot. Peik Chin Myaung cave is near Wetwun village. It is at the entrance to the Peik Chin Myaung ravine, with many beautiful springs. As lime piled

up, the hillock took formation. Geologists estimate that it could be between 230 million and 310 million years old. The '2006 Flower Festival' of Kandawgyi Garden was held in honor to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the Garden.

Where to Stay

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Myanmar Travel Information 2007

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The Golden Rock, Kyaikhtiyo



Passage on the Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda



Visitors climbing the Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda in baskets

Kyaikhtiyo

Location: Latitude: 17°30' N,

Longitude: 97°07'E

Temperature: min 8°C - max 36°C



Where to Visit

Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda is also well known as the miracle **Golden Rock**. It is located in the Mon State, eastern Myanmar. Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda stands on a gold-gilded boulder precariously perched on the edge of a slopy cliff. In Mon, Kyaikhtiyo means 'the pagoda carried on the hermit's head'. The boulder itself was said to be floating miraculously up in the air, carrying the tiny pagoda with of holy Buddha relics in it. Over many centuries, it has descended bit by bit, and it is now intact with the cliff. However, being intact only for about 1 square meter, this still is a miracle that this golden rock has survived many earthquakes and storms for over 2400 years. Regular coaches reach only Kinpun Base Camp at the foot of the hills. Special trucks driven by well-trained drivers can now drive you up to Mt.Yathae, from which visitors trek uphill for about 45 minutes. Porters and palanquins are available to carry luggages and pilgrims who are too old or too weak.

The famous legendary pagoda on the Golden Rock is about 160 Km from Yangon and 11 km of hiking from the base camp at Kyaikhto.

Visitors can also go by car up to a point about a mile away from the Pagoda.

The rock on which the pagoda lies is a granite stone. The volume of the rock is about 244 metre cube, the density is about 2.5 Ton / metre cube, the weight about 611 Tons, the height is about 8.15 m. The small pagoda on top of it has a volume of 9.25 metre cube, the weight is 19 tons and the height is 10 metre.

Hsu Taung Pyay Zedi, Muso Paya, Arpaw Gu, Hman Gu, Nay Yaung Khan Gu, Kyi Kan Pasat, Myathabait Zedi, Yadanar Man Aung, Aung Chanthar Zedi, Bo Bo Ni Nat Kun, Nat Yay Twin, San Yay Twin, Kyauk Nagyin are some of the nearby attractions in Kyaikhtiyo.

The Kyaikhtiyo pagoda is one of the most ancient and celebrated of all pagodas in Myanmar. The 9000 candle lighting festival is a popular festival among the events in Myanmar.

Kyaikhtiyo Wildlife Sanctuary was established in 1998. It covers a total area of 180.05 Sq. km. It is situated in Tropical Rain forest type. Recorded birds are only 50 species, the others are not yet recorded. There are also about 50 species of butterflies. Trekking at Mt. Kyaikhtiyo can also be enjoyed. The distance is 1,102m.

Kyaikpawlaw Hmeshindaw Buddha Image is a famous place in Kyaikhto. "Hmeshin" means living mole. The pagoda is said to possess great influence because the image enshrined in it has a mole on its face. Every year, there is a festival held in the name of this Buddha image. Locals from all parts of the country visit the mysterious image with the moving mole.

Where to Stay

• **Kyaik Hto Hotel**, Kyaikhityo Yin Pyin, ☎01-663341 • **Mountain Top Hotel**, Five minutes walk from the Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda • **Golden Rock Hotel**, Courtyard of Kyaikhityo Pagoda, near Yatheiktaung car parking ☎ 035-70174



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A Naga Man at the Naga New Year Festival



Dancing and singing at Naga Festival



Another Naga Man from a different tribe

Naga Festival

Among many festivals of Myanmar, Naga New Year Festival is one of the most exciting events for both local and foreign visitors. Naga New Year Festival takes place in the Naga Land, Sagaing Division. Naga ethnic tribes belong to the Tibeto-Myanmar group. The location of the festival alternates between the villages of Lahe and Layshi from year to year.

The Chin and the Naga composes about 3 percent of the total population of Myanmar. The Naga tribes earn their livelihood through agriculture and livestock breeding. There is cultivation of paddy, corn, soybean and other pulses, as well as vegetables like garlic, onion, cauliflower and fruits. They also grow tea and coffee on the hill slopes. They breed pigs, goat, chickens and cattle. They weave their own clothing and blanket.

The Event

Naga New Year Festival is usually held in January. This year, the event took place on the 14th and 15th of January and in the village of Lahe. The annual festival is celebrated with participants from about 30 Naga clans. Each clan sends some delegates to this festival. The clans differ in dress and styling. Some wear red clothing with feathers decorated as their hats, some with black clothing and white stripes, while others wear colourful hand-made dresses. The tatoos on their faces also mark the tribes. At this festival, one can encounter the colourful dresses, animal horns, tiger fangs, bear claws and other interesting and unseen decorations. The accessories show the title of their clans and also an honour for their bravery. Other than the colourful clothing and the animal's claws, they also wear silver and bronze accessories.

Many local and foreign visitors come to this festival to meet the amazing Naga people and their way of living. They live in the same manners as the old days to keep their culture alive. They live small houses, made of wood, with their families. They keep their jewellery as their inherited values from their ancestors.

At this festival, there is a great festival feast served and cooked by the Naga women. Red and white Naga wine, made from rice, are served in bamboo cups. During the festival, the clans pray and sing for good harvest and food for their coming new year.

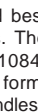
On 14th January, the New Year Festival pole is set up and all Naga tribes gathered at the opening ceremony. On 15th, many tourists and local people attend the occasion and gifts are exchanged. On the eve of the festival, a bonfire was set and all joined the occasion. They sing songs and dances at the festival in the meaning of good health, wealth, happiness, good climate and good crops for the coming new year. The aim of the festival is to keep friendship and amity with the Naga tribes.

How to get to the Naga Land

From Yangon one can travel by air to Mandalay and then to Khamti. Travelling from Khamti by four-wheel trucks to Lahe takes about 6 hours. First consulting with tour operators from Myanmar would be the best tip for your interest in travelling to this exotic land. For more information please visit www.myanmartravelinformation.com.



Bagan



Established: 1200 years ago

Location: Latitude: 21°10' N,

Longitude: 94°51' E

Temperature: min 10°C - max 43°C

Although earliest Myanmar civilizations emerged as Pyu city states since BC 4000 or so, Bagan actually was the first capital of the first wholly-united Myanmar Empire (846-1368 AD). Situated on the right bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River and approximately 90 miles (145 km) southwest of Mandalay, lies the magnificent Bagan. Over 2000 Buddhist shrines, temples, pagodas, and remains of the royal palace cover the whole Bagan plain of 42 sq km.

Where to Visit

Ananda Temple is the finest and best preserved among all Bagan temples. The Ananda, built by King Kyansittha (1084-1113AD), is significantly different in form. The temple is said to represent the endless wisdom of Buddha. Thatbyinnyu Temple was one of King Sithu's (1113-1167 AD) finest legacies to the Bagan region. Located just inside the southeastern corner of the old city wall, Thatbyinnyu is Bagan's tallest temple at almost 200 ft. Shwegugyi, meaning 'Great Golden Cave' was built by King Alaungsithu (1113-1167AD) This temple is an early example of a transition in architectural styles which resulted in airy lighter buildings, built in 1131. The Gadawt Palin (Temple of the worshipping throne) was built during the reign of King Narapatisithu (1174-1211AD) and completed during the reign of his successor, Nadaung-mya (aka. Htilominlo, 1211-1234). Bupaya Pagoda is situated right on the river bank of the Ayeyarwaddy. This pagoda has been claimed to be the oldest in Bagan, dating back to 3rd century AD. The Maha Bohdi Temple, erected during the reign of King Nadaungmya, is 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. Dhammayangyi Temple, one of the most artistic and massive shrines, was built by King Narathu, who ensured sole copyright of artwork of this temple, by killing hundreds of workers who built it, so that these masons can no more produce high quality artwork as same as this. King Narathihapati (1256-1287) was the king who built Mingalarzedi Pagoda, later defeated by Mongol troops, who destroyed Bagan along with the First Myanmar Empire. It could be the last pagoda built during the Bagan era. It is noted for its fine proportions and for the many beautiful jataka tiles around its three square terraces. A very similar structure, Shwezigon Pagoda is located in Nyaung Oo, 4 miles to the northeast of the ancient city of Bagan.

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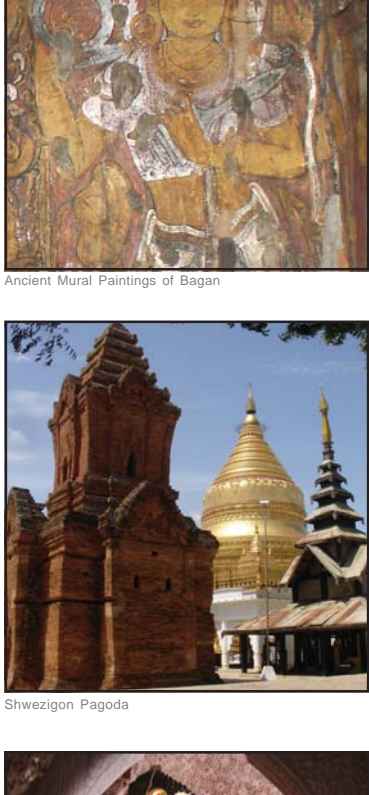


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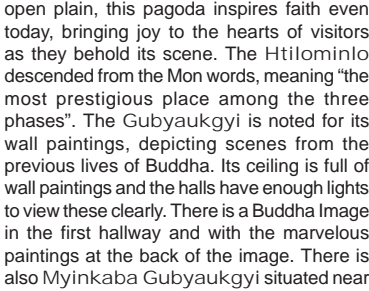
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Ancient Mural Paintings of Bagan



Shwezigon Pagoda



Sitting Buddha Image inside Htilominlo Temple

It is 160 feet high and 160 feet wide at the base. Built in the early Bagan period on an open plain, this pagoda inspires faith even today, bringing joy to the hearts of visitors as they behold its scene. The Htilominlo descended from the Mon words, meaning "the most prestigious place among the three phases". The Gubyaukgyi is noted for its wall paintings, depicting scenes from the previous lives of Buddha. Its ceiling is full of wall paintings and the halls have enough lights to view these clearly. There is a Buddha Image in the first hallway and with the marvelous paintings at the back of the image. There is also Myinkaba Gubyaukgyi situated near Wetkyi-Inn Village. Manuha Temple is on the right side of the main road going south from Bagan, and right in Myinkaba village. King Manuha's inscription says that it was built in AD 1067 about a decade after the Mon king was brought to Bagan. A portico in the north, paved with green glazed stones and having niches holding stone relieves of Buddha, provides access to the Nagayon. The walls of the corridor have niches holding stone sculptures depicting the 3 Buddhas previous to Gotama Buddha, as well as paintings showing scenes from the Jatakas and the Final Life of Gotama Buddha. The Lawkananda Stupa is believed to have been built in 1059 by King Anawrahta. It is located on a promontory above a small bay in the east bank of the Ayeyarwaddy that probably served as a port for Bagan and marked the southern extent of the city.

Other than the ancient pagodas and temples, the museum and the lacquer shops are also the main tourist attractions. Archaeological Museum is 3-storey building, beautifully decorated with

contemporary Myanmar traditional arts. Its ceiling tiles are one of the most beautiful part of the museum. The ground floor exhibits arts and crafts of Bagan era, languages and literatures, archaeological designs, portraits of the Bagan's lifestyle and battle fields. On the first floor, portraits of famous Bagan shrines, artifacts, and Buddha images. From the top floor, you can see the most scenic view of Bagan and its prehistoric pagodas. The Bagan Archaeological Museum is one of the most important places you should visit while you are in Bagan. Nann Myint Viewing Tower is the ideal one stop viewpoint for visitors to Bagan to see the wonders of over 2,000 ancient Buddhist Temples and Pagodas of 11-13 century A.D.

Bagan Lacquerware: Lacquerware means a handicraft which produces materials made of bamboo, wood and thick varnish, usually black. Myanmar lacquerware is one such product, whose art goes back to the 11th century. Myanmar traditional lacquerware emerged in the early part of Bagan period. This is how Myanmar lacquerware is made. On a framework of woven strips of bamboo, mixtures of sap resin with clay and ash are carefully built-up and finally polished with the ash of wood. The designs are then etched or painted by hand. The most traditional lacquerware is of a unique terracotta color, with scenes from the 550 previous lives of Buddha or activities of royal families. Etched and then filled in with green pigment, many types of lacquerware are produced: boxes, vases, trays, bowls, and even coffee tables.

Bagan Vicinity - Mt. Popa is an extinct volcano, estimated to have erupted over 320,000 years ago. Popa is popularly recognized as an abode of many spiritual beings. To Myanmar people, Mt.Popa is same as Mt.Olympia is to Greeks, where all sorts of mythological gods live in. It's just a few hours drive from Bagan.

Where to Stay

• **Aureum Palace Hotel & Resort**, 41 Shwe Taung Gyar Rd, Bahan, Yangon, ☎95-1-502648 www.aureumpalacehotel.com • **Zagawah Palace Hotel**, Myat Lay St, Naratheinkha Qtr, Bagan Myothit, Bagan, ☎95-61-60305 www.hotelinbagan.com

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Inle Lake



Location: Latitude: 20°46' N, Longitude: 97°01'E
Temperature: min 12°C - max 28°C
Population: 80,000

Inle Lake is a huge lake (22 km long and 10 km across) located in Shan State, over 900 meters above sea-level, and it is outrageously beautiful. The strangest thing about Inle is native lake-dwellers, living on 'floating islands'. Have you ever seen an island in your life which floats around? This is no magic. No miracle. No joke. It's real!

Inle Lake is one of the most significant and productive ecological system supporting an immense variety of plants and animals and yielding great wealth for Myanmar through its occurrence of floating islands and the living style of the natives.

Floating islands are collection of floating weed and water hyacinth, which later piled up and hardened, that even vegetation can be grown, and even houses can be built on top of them. These floating islands can be cut, dragged by boats, or even be sold like a piece of land!

This vast picturesque lake is one of the main tourist attractions in Myanmar. Besides, it is the home of some 80,000 Inthars (native lake-dwellers) in 17 villages. Many Inthars live in their huts and wooden bungalows on floating islands, while some live by the villages lakeshore. Inle Lake, natural and unpolluted, is famous for their amazing lifestyle and its incomparable scenic beauty. You have to find out why this unique leg-rowing custom is practiced by Inthars.

Living Legend: Why do they live a harder life on water, and not on land? There goes a folk tale that today's lake-dwellers are descendants of some Myanmar troops centuries ago. They were once sent to exile by an angry Emperor.

The order of exile was 'to leave *his land*'. But these Myanmar troops were so royal and smart, that they left Myanmar land obeying the emperor, by living on water in Inle Lake, but never left the country they love so much!

Where to Visit

Phaungdawoo Buddha Images are in a set of five, cherished by Bagan Emperor Alaung Sithu, dedicated to five Buddhas of this planet Earth. These Buddha images are famous because many prayers came true, after praying at Phaung Taw Oo. Try yourself.

Nyaung Shwe is the capital town for Inle Lake area. One of the most colorful markets in Myanmar is the 5-day market of Nyaung Shwe, which is opened only on every 5th days. Women from various hill tribes that live in the Inle Lake region come to sell their home products, fruit and vegetables in this market.

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Inle Phaungdawoo Pagoda Festival



Inle fishermen, the lake-dwellers



Busy floating market of Inle

Indein, one of the 17 small villages of Inle Lake is on the west end. Visitors have to take 5-km boat ride from Ywama village, which is next to Nyaung Shwe. A Buddha image is enshrined inside a whitewashed stupa, on the summit of a hill. Below the stupa around the hill are a cluster of hundreds of ancient stupas. Many of them are ruined and overgrown with bushes.

Nga Phe Kyaung: This wooden monastery was built on stilts of Inle, about 2 centuries ago. Century-old wooden sculptures can be seen there. It is widely known as 'Jumping Cat Monastery' because cats from this monastery can jump and leap through hoops.

Boat Competition : During the Phaung Taw Oo Pagoda festival, there are traditional boat races. The boats are rowed by one-legged rowers. Each boat contains about 100 person. This event is one of the main attractions to Inle.

Taunggyi

Taunggyi is situated in southern Shan State and is the capital town of Shan States. It is 4,712feet above the sea level and has a moderate climate. Also located about 500 kilometers north of Yangon and about 300 kilometers southeast of Mandalay. It is situated on a high plateau surrounded by high mountains.

Hot-Air Balloon Festival : In Taunggyi, the people celebrate the Tazaungdine festival with Kahtein as well as the sending up fire-balloons into the sky. Balloons in the shape of elephant, ox, horse, bird, pig, fish, owl and parrot are sent up. This is the biggest festival in the country. It is attended not only by Taunggyi residents but also by other locals from all over the country and international tourists.

Pindaya

Pindaya is a small quiet town perched on the bank of the placid Botoloke Lake. The Pindaya Cave, containing thousands of Buddha images, is the main destination in this region. It is a huge cave where hundreds and thousands of Buddha images in various size and shape are donated and 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. Shwe U Min Pagoda festival is held annually on the fullmoon day of Tabaung, which is the last month of Myanmar Lunar Calendar.

Inle Vicinity — Kakku Pagodas are a group of over 2,000 stupas, only about 33 miles away from Taunggyi. Most of them are many centuries old, and it is a newly opened destination.

Inle Vicinity — Kalaw 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 resort in the British colonial period, and it is still a peaceful quiet place. At an altitude of 1,320m it is pleasantly cool and a good place for hiking amid pines, bamboo groves and rugged mountain scenery. Those living around Kalaw are from four ethnics groups, Palaung, Pa-O, Danu and Taung Yoe.

Where to stay

- **Paramount Inle Resort**, 27 Inya Myaing Rd, Kamaryut, ☎ 502901 www.amazing-hotel.com/paramount.htm
- **Amazing Nyaung Shwe Resort**, 27 Inya Myaing Rd, Kamaryut, ☎ 502901 www.amazing-hotel.com/ns.htm
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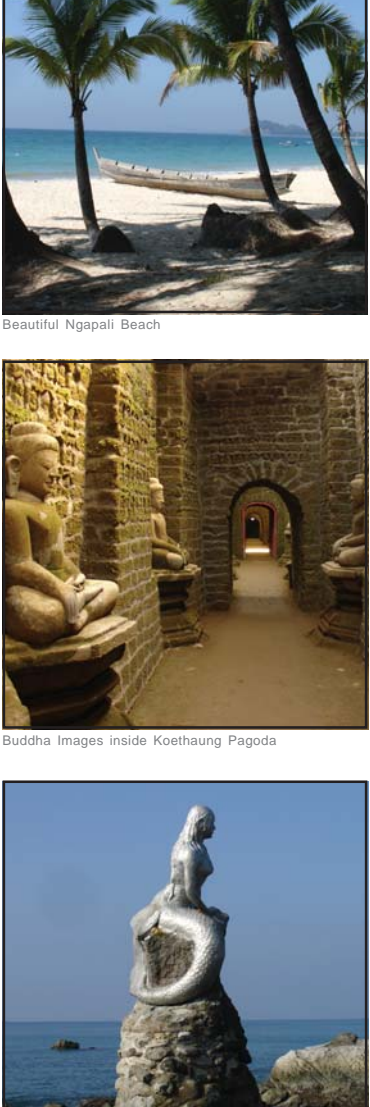


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Beautiful Ngapali Beach

Buddha Images inside Koethaung Pagoda

The fantasy mermaid of Ngapali Beach

Ngapali Beach

Location: Latitude: 18°30 N, Longitude: 94°15'E



Temperature: min 13°C - max 38°C

Beaches of Myanmar belong to the most beautiful southeast Asia beaches list and they are however still nearly undiscovered. Among them, Ngapali is the most beautiful. It is famous for its natural and unspotted beauty up to this day. The beach stretches miles after miles 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 clean cobalt blue, without any dangerous marine creatures. The beach here is transparent and the sea is tranquil. Bicycle tours, bullock cart tours can be arranged to visit the nearby villages. Fishing boats can be hired to some islands nearby.

Where to Stay

- **Ngapali Beach Hotel** Rm 224/ 225, 2nd Floor, Summit Parkview Hotel, 350, Ahlone Rd, Dagon ☎ 214748 www.ngapalibeachhotel.com
- **Aureum Palace Hotel & Resort**, 41 Shwe Taung Gyar Rd, Bahan ☎502648 www.aureumpalacehotel.com
- **Amazing Ngapali Resort**, 27, Inya Myaing Rd, Kamaryut ☎502901 www.amazing-hotel.com/ngapali.html
- **Amata Resort & Spa**, Corner of West Horse Race Course St & Sayar San St, Yankin ☎542535 www.amataresort.com

Mrauk U



Location: Latitude: 20°25' N,

Longitude: 93°11'E

Temperature: min 13°C - max 38°C

Mrauk U is located near the west coast of Myanmar. It is the 15th century ancient city in Rakhine State. There are round about 70 stupas and the remains of the magnificent Royal Palace in Mrauk U. Mrauk U is accessible by daily flight from Yangon. 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 is a good collection of ancient artifacts unearh around the city.

Shitthaung Pagoda, meaning 80,000 Pagodas, is located half mile away from Mrauk U. It consists of 80,000 pagodas of various sizes and forms. Originally built by King Minbagyi in 1535 as a fortress against the Portuguese invasion. Similarly Koethaung Pagoda, meaning 90,000 pagodas, was built by King Thaikkha in 1553. It is the biggest pagoda in Mrauk U area. The whole series of pagodas were built with sandstones. Andaw Pagoda houses a tooth relic of Buddha, obtained from Sri Lanka. Laymyetnha Pagoda was built by Rakhine King Saw Mon. Dukkan Thane was used as an Ordination Hall before, but now it is an interesting place to visit. The new Mrauk U Museum is located near the palace site. It displays some old artefacts of Vesali, Launggret and Mrauk U periods.

Where to Stay

● **Mrauk U Prince Hotel:** 117, 2nd Floor, Shwe Bon Tha St, Pabedan ☎ 286701

Ngapali Beach Hotel
Thandwe, Myanmar.
www.ngapalihotel.com
www.ngapalibeachhotel.com

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Palm trees of Ngwe Saung Beach



The beauty of Ngwe Saung Beach



The sandy shore of Chaung Thar Beach

Ngwe Saung Beach



**Location: Latitude: 17°00' N,
Longitude: 94°25'E
Temperature: min 13°C - max 38°C**

Ngwe Saung is a newly opened beach resort on the west coast of Myanmar. It is an unspoilt virgin destination, with crystal clear water and clean white sand. Beauty and distance of this beach may make it very popular in the near future. It is a very romantic beach, which stretches 15 km of white sand against the blue sea. There are newly constructed bungalows with local flavor but equipped with modern facilities. Fringed with coconut trees, almost all hotel buildings usually face toward the beach. Diving-fishing facilities and boat tours to nearby islands can be arranged. At Ngwe Saung Beach, one can find varieties of sea fishes, marine plants and also coral reef. This beach is so natural that you will be able to find sea shells, jelly fishes, and crabs on the shore. Moreover crab-arts on sand are interesting to watch in evenings. The smell of fresh air, the taste of delicious seafood, and the heat of the sun, will make your holidays complete.

Lovers Island (Chit Thu Myar Kyun) can be reached on foot in early mornings and afternoons for romantic moments. This is an extraordinary island, because it is an island for ½ day (when the tide is high), and part of the coast on another ½ day (when the tide is low).

Where to Stay

- **Sunny Paradise** 90 A/B, Kabaraye Pagoda Rd, Bahan ① 546002 www.sunnyparadise.net
- **Aureum Palace Hotel & Resort**, 41 Shwe Taung Gyar Rd, Bahan, Yangon, ① 95-1-502648 www.aureumpalacehotel.com

Chaung Thar Beach



**Location: Latitude: 16°45' N,
Longitude: 94°30'E
Temperature: min 13°C - max 38°C**

Located 40 km to the west of Patheingyi in Ayeyarwaddy Division, Chaung Thar is about 5-hour drive from Yangon. It is an attractive wide beach with Ayeyarwaddy delta look. Not only coconut palms but also casuarinas trees can be found along the beach. Two small islands can be seen offshore. Chaung Thar is rich in food too. Delicious Crab curry and other sea foods are popular, with great taste and low prices. Fresh coconut juice will make you relax here.

There are quite a few islands to visit near Chaung Thar Beach. Some of these islands are The' Phyu Island, Pho Kalar Island, and Kyaut Maung Nhama. Speed boats are also available for rent. While listening to the whispers of the wind and beat of the ocean waves as you relax in your rattan chair, you will surely find yourself relaxing and all your stress and tensions slipping away. You can stroll along the seashore and visit nearby villages to sample the local cuisine, and buy ornaments made of sea shells, mother of pearl, fossilized marine flora, unusual coral formations and many more. These can be great souvenirs on your way home.

Western coast of Myanmar, including Ngapali, Ngwe Saung, and Chaung Thar, were never disturbed by Tsunami disaster.

Where to Stay

- **Hotel Max Chaungtha Beach Hotel** ①042-24966
- **Lai Lai Chaung Tha Beach Hotel** ①042-22587

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Zagawah Palace Hotel



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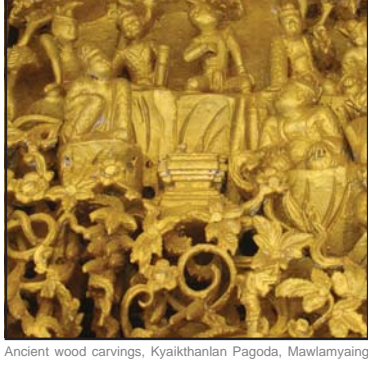
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Website : www.myanmartravellandtour.com



Ngwe Saung Beach : Direct Line (95 1) 4481 096, (95 42) 40227 ~ 9, Hp : (95 9) 520 0591 ~ 3, Email : tmwsp@tmw.com.mm
Yangon Reservation Office : No.90(A/B), Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Tel : (951) 546 002 ~ 8, Fax : (951) 546 001/9, Email : tmwlynn@mptmail.net.mm, Website : www.sunnyparadise.net



Ancient wood carvings, Kyaikthanlan Pagoda, Mawlamyaing



The historical train at the Death Railway



Kachin Manaw Festival

Mawlamyaing

Location: Latitude: 14° 52' N, Longitude: 96° 51' E

Temperature: min 24° C max 29 ° C

Mawlamyaing is the third largest city in Myanmar after Yangon and Mandalay. It is situated 300 kilometers south east of the nation's capital at the mouth of the Thanlwin river. It is the capital of Mon State with a population of almost 300,000 people. The town's signature landmark is Kyaikthanlan Pagoda built in 875 AD.

The Thanlwin Bridge, the longest road-and-rail bridge in Myanmar is the most prominent landmark in the area. It stretches a distance of 11,000 feet over the Thanlwin river connecting the country's south eastern region with its commercial city, Yangon. Mawlamyaing is generally considered to be off the main tourist trail for most travellers to Myanmar but the town does have a charm of its own with its rich history, buildings with colonial style architecture, World War II era wooden buses, and its close proximity to the historical Thai-Myanmar "Death Railway", making it a fascinating place to visit. The newly opened

Myitkyina

Location: Latitude: 25° 22' N, Longitude: 97° 24' E

Temperature: min 10° C max 32 ° C

Myitkyina is the capital city of Kachin State. The town is situated in a flat valley that becomes extremely hot in the summer and very rainy during the monsoon. There is an abundance of fruit in this state. The "Myitson" the confluence of the Mekha and Malika Rivers, 45 km north of town, forming the great Ayeyarwaddy, flowing through the whole country. It is a sight seeing attraction for local and foreign visitors.

Myanmar's famous jade mines are in Hpakant. Hpakant is renowned for its finest jade resources, accessible from Myitkyina via Moekaung and Karming. Recent discovery of the world's largest jade stone, estimated to be over 2000 tons, becomes a tourist interest, especially for Far East Asian tourists who believe jade brings luck, wealth, and auspiciousness. Kachin Manaw Festival is held annually in Myitkyina. It is usually around New Year or the first week of each year. Most Kachins are Christians. There are also some Chinese

Temples in the city. Myitkyina is a place where giant fruits abound such as apples, grape fruits, limes, pineapples and assortment of oranges including the giant avocados and apricots. Kachin Manaw Festival is held annually in Myitkyina. It is usually around New Year or the first week of each year.

Where to Stay

• **Sumpra Hotel:** No. 10, Thida Aye Quarter Shatapru ☎ (074) 22298

• **Popa Hotel:** Railway Station, Myitkyina ☎(074) 21746



The Rawang tribe



Colourful Eng or Akha Ladies



Chin woman with a tatoos on the face

Over 100 Nationalities

Myanmar's heterogeneous population is formed up of over 100 different national races, grouped into 8 major nationalities.

Padaung tribe is probably the best well-known tribe from Myanmar, often called 'long-neck women'. Traditionally Padaung women wear an uncomfortable stack of copper rings around their neck permanently. This practice pushes the collar bones down and chins up, which makes their necks as long as 14 inches. 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 simple and honest Padaung people. Kyaing Tong is the perfect town for cultural and eco-tourism to see a number of different ethnic cultures at a single destination. Just a few miles north of Kyaing Tong, there is a hilly Eng village called Nant Lin Taung. It is the custom of Eng people using strange kind of herbs to color their teeth black. Every Akha village is distinguished by their carved wooden gates, presided over by guardian spirits. Akha are known for their wonderfully colored handicrafts and clothing. The Danu tribes live mostly in the Pindaya cave area. Their language is a close dialect of Bamar. Palaungs produce the best type of tea in Myanmar. It takes about two to four hours through the hills to a closest Palaung village from Kalaw. The obvious custom of the Pao men and women is their culture of wearing only black at all times. The Naga tribes live in the Naga Hill area of the Sagaing Division. Naga's biggest festival is New Year festival of January after the harvest and it is called Kaing Bi. Men's tatoos indicate his villages and tribes. This occasion is the perfect opportunity to see variety of different Naga people.

Useful Contacts

NOTE: All telephone numbers below are in this area code:

country code: 95, area code: 01

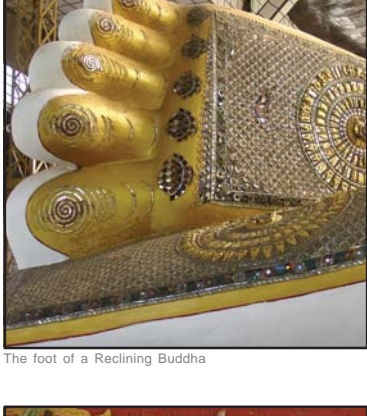
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The foot of a Reclining Buddha



Sculptures on the walls



Taunggyi Hot-air Balloon festival

Traveller Information

Accommodations: Over 16,000+ hotel rooms of all categories to suit each traveler's price range. Banking / Money Exchange: Exchange of US dollars to FEC has become optional. Check the internet for current exchange rates. Money exchangers are not found everywhere. Business Hours: 9am-5pm for private companies. 9:30-4:30 for government offices, Monday through Friday. 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. Prior applications required. Antiques and archaeologically valuable items are not allowed for export. 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: National Museum, Gems Museum. Public Shopping: Bargaining is acceptable in most places, unless it is declared fixed price. Jewelries and handicrafts are most popular souvenirs for visitors to Myanmar. Souvenirs: Generally it is a great bargain for tourists to buy precious jewelries, sculptures, lacquerware, handicrafts, tapestries. Make sure your expensive souvenirs come along with an export permit. Transportation: Taxis are available everywhere. For exclusive transport, contact car rental services. Express Bus Terminals: No border-crossing bus lines at the moment. Domestic highway bus terminals are Aung-Yadanar and Sawbwargyi-Gone, both about 10 miles from downtown Yangon. Travellers' cheques: Not widely accepted as it takes weeks to clear them. 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. Public Holidays: Some holidays are different every year, so please check the holidays before you come to Myanmar. Clothing: Light, casual cotton wear, sandals or slippers are best for summer. A cardigan or light jerkin for winter and quick drying clothes and an umbrella during the rainy season. Accessories: Insect repellent, sun block, sunglasses, hat, umbrella will be useful. Medicines: Medication for diarrhea and cold are suggested to bring with you.

TOURIST CENTER: Myanmar Travels and Tours (MTT) No. 77-91, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada, Tel: (+95-1) 374281, 378376, 371910, 252859 Fax: (+95-1) 254417 Email: mtt.mht@mptmail.net.mm.
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