

## MYANMAR ITINERARY (October 2013)

### Day 1 – Thursday, October 17, 2013 - Arrival Yangon and Sightseeing



Pickup and transfer to Hotel (you may want to spend the previous night in Bangkok, and fly to Yangon on an early morning flight). Depending on arrival time, there should be time for some leisurely sightseeing on this first day, exploring the British colonial architecture, the **Bogyoke market** and the Indian and Chinese Quarters. The day may include visits to the **Sule Pagoda**; **Chaukhtatgy** (large reclining Buddha); and the magnificent **Shwedagon Pagoda**, dominating the Yangon skyline, rising 325 feet from its base, covered with 60 tons of pure gold and considered the MOST sacred site in Myanmar.

Yangon (also known as “Rangoon”) was the capital of Myanmar from 1885 up until 2006. It is still the largest city, with a population of 4 million, and is considered to be the most important commercial center.

Welcome Dinner at an authentic Myanmar restaurant.

Meals: Dinner only.

Hotel: Overnight in Yangon, Summit Parkview Hotel

## Day 2 – Friday, October 18, 2013 - Yangon to Inle (via air)



In the morning, we will fly to Heho and will proceed to our **Inle Lake** boat launch. We will be arriving during the annual 18-day **Paung Daw U Festival**, one of Myanmar's most famous festivals. We will be able to experience the magic of the vast Inle Lake while enjoying some of the festivities on our way to our accommodations, located directly on the lake.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Inle, Golden Island Cottages 1

## Day 3 – Saturday, October 19, 2013 - Inle Lake



Today we will have the opportunity to enjoy the main event of the **Paung Daw U Festival**, named after one of the most famous shrines in Myanmar, Paung Daw U Pagoda. This Pagoda houses five small Buddha images, which are believed to have mystic powers. It is on this day that these Buddha images are ceremoniously rowed around the Lake in an elaborately decorated, colorful barge which is towed by several long boats with many of the renowned **Inle Lake leg rowers** rowing in unison. They are accompanied by many other boats creating an impressive procession on the water. We will be able to view the barge as it is towed from village to village along the shores of the lake.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Inle, Golden Island Cottages 1



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#### Day 4 – Sunday, October 20, 2013 – Inle Lake



As we continue to enjoy the events surrounding the festival, we will also be able to see the **floating gardens and lake villages** of Inle Lake. We will have an opportunity to visit some of the villagers in their workshops, such as the silversmith, weavers and cheroot makers.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Inle, Golden Island Cottages 1

#### Day 5 – Monday, October 21, 2013 – Inle Lake



Today we will enjoy the morning mists over the lake as we travel to our drop off, where we will spend the day trekking, soaking in the village culture, and finding some hidden gems as we wander off of the beaten track. Upon our return, we may be able to again enjoy more of the Festival's activities or enjoy an afternoon of leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Inle, Golden Island Cottages 1



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**Day 6 – Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – Inle Lake to Heho Airport; Flight to Mandalay**



We have one last chance to experience the lake, as we depart early this morning to return to our boat launch, and then to Heho Airport for our flight to Mandalay. On the way into Mandalay from the airport, we will venture off the beaten track to visit **Paleik Town**. With its 300 temples, it is sometimes referred to as the "small Bagan." We will spend time walking amid the abandoned temple ruins, built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, covered in ivy and connected by dirt paths. We will then stop at **Shanlay Kyun Village** with houses made of all teak and located on the Irrawaddy River. We will be able to see the villagers at work, including the wood carvings, for which they are famous.

After lunch, we will check into our hotel, after which there will be free time to rest, or to explore the colorful **Zegyo market**. Later in the afternoon, we will head to the all-teak **U Bein Bridge** for its famous sunset views.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Mandalay, Hotel Queen

**Day 7 – Wednesday, October 23, 2013 – Explore outskirts of Mandalay**



Today we will visit **Sagaing** with its 600 white painted pagodas and monasteries. We will visit the nunnery, where we can donate food for their pantry, and notebooks for their studies. Time permitting,



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we may be able to stop by the local school to also drop off some supplies. We will explore, via horse-drawn cart, the **ancient city of Ava**, which served as the capital from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century before proceeding to **Mingun** with its white painted pagoda, and the monumental uncompleted stupa, which, if completed, would have been by far the largest in the world at over 500 feet. Mingun also boasts the world's largest "ringing" bell. We will then board our boat to return to Mandalay.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Mandalay, Hotel Queen

#### **Day 8 – Thursday, October 24, 2013 – Mandalay to Monyma (via ground)**



After walking along the walls of the ancient Mandalay Palace, and watching artisans make gold leaf, we will depart for **Monywa**. We will be able to explore some of the rural villages along today's route. In Monywa, we will visit the **Thahboddhay Pagoda** complex (which is reminiscent of the world-famous Borobudur Temple located in Java, Indonesia). It is said to contain over 500,000 images of Buddha.

We will also visit the **Laykyun Setkyar (Standing Buddha)** statue, which is reportedly the second tallest Buddha statue in the world at a total height of 129 meters (about 425 feet), as well as the longest reclining Buddha.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Monywa, Win Unity Resort



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**Day 9 – Friday, October 25, 2013 – Monywa to Bagan (via ground)**



This morning we will visit the sandstone caves of **Hpo Win Daung**, which date between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. With over 900 caves carved into the sandstone, this is considered by archaeologists to contain the richest collection of mural paintings and Buddha statues in Southeast Asia. Time permitting, we will explore more villages and sites as we proceed towards Bagan, arriving in time for one of Bagan's spectacular sunsets.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Bagan, Bagan Thande Hotel

**Day 10 – Saturday, October 26, 2013 - Bagan**



This morning, we will start to explore **Bagan**, the empire's capital from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and which may one day become a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its awesome display of over 2,000 ancient shrines, temples and stupas. Visits will include the **Shwezigon** Pagoda (built in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, it is completely covered in gold leaf, and is the most important shrine in Bagan); the **Ananda Temple** (built in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, this is the largest in SE Asia and houses almost 1,700 Buddha statues); **Kupyaukyi temple** (with its famous mural paintings); to name a few.



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We will also visit a lacquerware factory, before enjoying another Bagan sunset from the top of one of the pagodas.

Dinner will include a traditional marionette show.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Overnight in Bagan, Bagan Thande Hotel

#### Day 11 – Sunday, October 27, 2013 – Bagan



In the morning, we'll continue to explore more of the temples and pagodas of Bagan while biking through the countryside. (An additional option would be an early morning hot air balloon ride over the spectacular landscape). Afternoon free to rest or explore on your own.

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch (dinner not included)

Hotel: Overnight in Bagan, Bagan Thande Hotel

#### Day 12 – Monday, October 28, 2013 – Bagan to Mt. Popa



Today we will travel about 50 kilometers from Bagan to **Mount Popa**, an extinct volcano almost 5,000 feet high, where 37 ancient spirits ("nats") of Myanmar are said to reside. We may have the opportunity to observe village



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life along the way. Upon arrival, we will climb to the Mt. Popa cliff temple (777 steps), before returning to Bagan.

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch (dinner not included).

Hotel: Overnight in Bagan, Bagan Thande Hotel

**Day 13 – Tuesday, October 29, 2013 – Bagan to Yangon (via air)**



In the morning we will fly back to **Yangon**, with an afternoon at leisure or to further explore any sites we may not have been able to visit on Day 1. Farewell dinner at another popular Yangon restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast only.

Hotel: Overnight in Yangon, Summit Parkview Hotel

[May have the option of booking an afternoon international flight departure on this day, if preferred].

**Day 14 – Wednesday, October 30, 2013 - International Flight Departure**

Transfer provided from hotel to airport.

Breakfast included.

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PRICING: \$4,295, single occupancy  
[Double-Up Discounts of \$525 Available]  
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**Trip Includes:**

A small group of no more than 8 people  
Single Occupancy Accommodations in 3-star equivalent facilities  
(a discount of \$525 available for doubling up)  
Three in-country air flights  
English Speaking Guide  
A/C vehicles for ground transportation  
Boat transportation at Inle Lake  
Bicycle in Bagan  
All meals, with exception of three dinners and 2 lunches  
All entry, zone and camera fees  
Water and refreshing towels, as needed  
Tips for drivers

**Trip Does Not Include:**

International airfare or departure tax in Yangon (currently quoted at \$10 per person)  
Myanmar Visa fees  
Travel Insurance (required)  
Hot Air Balloon Ride in Myanmar (optional)  
Drinks or Personal expenses  
Early check in or late checkout with hotels  
Tips for guides and hotel staff



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