

# EXPLORE!

## Tour Notes



### Burma by Bike (CBR 2015)



TOUR DURATION  
**14**  
DAYS



**Tour Style:** Classic  
**Tour Comfort:** Standard

**Tour Type:** Small Groups  
**Cycling Grade:** Easy

**tour Code:** CBR

#### Tour Highlights - Burma by Bike

- ✓ Easy Cycling through Burma - Along quiet backroads getting off the beaten track as well as visiting the major highlights
- ✓ Rangoon (Yangon) - Colonial grandeur, golden temples and street markets
- ✓ Inle Lake - Backwater boat trips and cycle rides across the Shan Plateau
- ✓ Bagan - Explore one of South East Asia's most spectacular archaeological sites by bicycle
- ✓ Mount Popa to Mandalay - Stunning cycling on a little travelled route from Burma's sacred 'Abode of the Gods' mountain through forests, farmlands and palm-thatched villages - a taste of real Burma
- ✓ Mandalay - Ancient capitals, river cruises and sunset from Mandalay Hill
- ✓ Shan Highlands - Tribal villages and the former British hill station of Kalaw

#### Tour Essentials

**Accommodation:** 11 nights Standard Hotel  
1 night Simple Hotel  
1 night Simple Guesthouse

**Included Meals:** 13 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 0 dinners

**Start Point:** Join tour: Yangon  
**End Point:** Tour ends: Yangon

**Included Bike:** 24 gear Specialized or Trek mountain bikes with front suspension except in Bagan

**Transport:** Bus, Boat, Bicycle  
**Countries:** Burma

## Burma by Bike

Burma is a tremendously friendly and welcoming country to visit. Decades of political isolation mean that many of the traditional ways of life remain unchanged in modern times, from the lowland Buddhist beliefs to the highland animist hilltribes. On this tour we cycle along rural backroads between the principal attractions of Bagan, Mandalay and Inle Lake. Additionally we get closer to the locals in less visited but equally rewarding places such as Popa and Myingyan. We have graded the cycle rides as easy and the presence of a support vehicle throughout gives you the option of not riding on any one day.

Should I go?

Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese pro-democracy leader, gave her blessing to the return of tourism to Burma in November 2010. National League for Democracy (NLD) leader U Win Tin said: "We want people to come to Burma, not to help the junta, but to help the people by understanding the situation: political, economic, moral - everything." This marked the end of the tourism boycott started in 1995 and the return of small groups and individuals to Burma has been endorsed by Burma Campaign UK and the Free Burma campaign. Explore are delighted to return to Burma after pulling out in 1995 in response to the call for boycott. We use a privately-owned Burmese agent for all of our services, and whilst each itinerary has been carefully planned to try and avoid using any service owned by or affiliated with the government or former military junta, we accept that some money will make its way into their hands. We strongly believe that by operating tours in Burma we contribute to the local economy in a positive way, whilst providing our customers with an insight into the culture, through direct interaction with Burmese people.

### Why Book this tour

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.

### Cycling Information

On this tour we cycle 308 km over nine days (an average of 34 km per day) with a further optional 20 km available. We mostly follow provincial roads with less car traffic (90% tarmac roads, 10% earth or gravel roads). The terrain is generally flat with some gentle slopes on limited sections. A support vehicle accompanies the rides throughout the tour. We have graded the route as easy.

### Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

### Tour Comfort: Standard

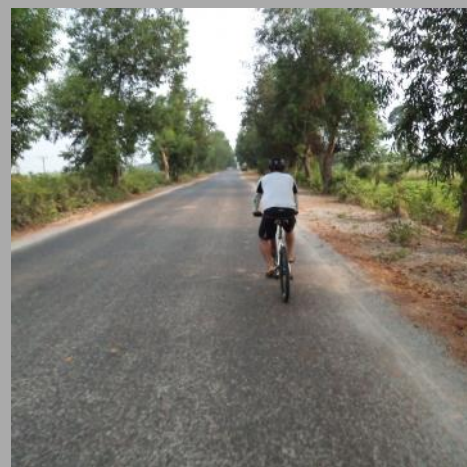
Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

### Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

### Cycling Grade: Easy

Suitable for cyclists who enjoy easy and relatively short rides on flat or gently undulating terrain. Ideal if you simply want to explore a region by bike at a relaxed pace.





## Your tour itinerary

### Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

### Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

### DAY 1 Tour starts Rangoon (Yangon)

Arriving in Rangoon today we have a chance to relax and freshen up before enjoying a late afternoon visit to the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda, the most revered Buddhist temple in Burma. Towering some 99 metres over the city, the pagoda's impressive golden stupa dominates the city skyline to the west of Kandawgyi Lake, making it the ideal spot from which to watch the sunset. Originally believed to be over 2,500 years old, this is the oldest pagoda in Burma and certainly one of the most beautiful in the whole of Asia. There will be an opportunity today to test your bicycles and make any necessary tweaks. The Shwedagon Pagoda Trustee has announced that a new layer of gold leaf will be applied to the main pagoda between September 2014 and February 2015. During the process the main pagoda will be clad in bamboo scaffolding and enshrouded in canvas with parts of the pagoda possibly visible depending on the timing of your visit. The Shwedagon complex is large with a number of surrounding statues and temples and locals will still visit and contribute to its special ambience as the holiest of Buddhist shrines.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** None

### DAY 2 Ferry to Dala, then cycle to Twante

After breakfast this morning we take the ferry downriver, towards the small township of Dala. From here we then cycle on to the town of Twante, situated midway along the 35 kilometres-long Twante Canal. Built during the 1880s, the canal connects the Yangon and Irrawaddy Rivers and until quite recently it was the quickest way to get from Rangoon to the Irrawaddy Delta. Known for its pottery, Twante itself is a quiet backwater of stilted wooden houses and horse-drawn carriages that provides us with a fascinating snapshot of the rural Burma of old. After time to wander around the market and lunch at a local restaurant we will return with our bus to Rangoon, arriving late afternoon. The bikes we ride on today are rented for the day in Rangoon and models vary. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 35 kilometres.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

### DAY 3 Fly to Bagan; sightseeing by bus and bike

This morning we fly to the archaeological site of Bagan, without doubt one of the most impressive religious sites anywhere in Asia. On arrival we will visit some of the most distinctive pagodas by bus, which may include the Shwezigon Pagoda, the 13th century frescoes and cave temple of Wetkyi-in-Gubyaukgyi and the Ananda Pagoda, one of the best preserved monuments in the entire city. Late in the day we will ride local style simple bikes between the temples and enjoy the sunset. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 20 kilometres.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

### DAY 4 Explore the temples of Bagan on two wheels

Bagan rose to prominence during the 11th to 13th centuries. At its height it presented a sea of colour and spectacle, with over 13,000 temples and pagodas spread across its expansive plains. Today just over 2,000 remain. After breakfast we continue our exploration of the archaeological ruins by bike, paying visits to the Sulamani Temple of King Narapatisithu and the finely crafted brickwork of the Dhammayangyi Temple, the largest shrine on the site. In the afternoon we continue sightseeing, this time by bus, ending with a memorable sunset from one of the temples. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 25 kilometres.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY

## 5 Cycle through picturesque countryside to Mount Popa

This morning we take a ride through the picturesque countryside to Mount Popa, Burma's sacred abode of the Nats (spirit gods). A volcanic plug that rises high above the surrounding landscape, the summit has rare flora and fauna and provides some fine panoramic views of the surrounding hills. The small temple on the summit is also home to troops of wild monkeys. Today's ride begins with a steady but gentle incline for the first 28km after which we have a tea break at Daung Zin junction. The ride from this point continues on slightly hillier terrain with some more inclines for the remaining 17km, but you have the option to ride in the support vehicle if you prefer. The cycle route ends at the foot of mount Popa where you have the choice to climb the 777 steps to the mountain-top temple or you can take the bus. We spend this evening at a simple guest house on the slopes of the mountain. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 45 kilometres

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY

## 6 Rural cycling through cotton fields to Myingyan

Today we head into the heart of Burma's cotton growing region, passing through the town of Taungtha en route to the port of Myingyan on the banks of the Irrawaddy River. Travelling by bike and bus we have a chance today to experience a little something of rural life, pedalling through forests and passing by palm thatch villages where ox carts are still the main form of transport. There may be the chance to stop off and watch the production of traditional 'toddy' palm juice. Toddy palms can be found throughout Myanmar and the juice is extracted to produce palm sugar, 'jaggery' and also fermented to make 'toddy wine'. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 58 kilometres

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY

## 7 Backroad cycling to Mandalay

The city of Mandalay was Burma's last royal capital and lies to the north-east of Myingyan. It continues to be the country's most historic and culturally rich region. As with yesterday, we cover part of the journey by bike today, travelling through to the small town of Myittha and up towards the eastern bank of the Irrawaddy River. Our route today is once again along quiet backroads with plenty of opportunities to observe rural ways of life. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 30 kilometres plus an optional further 20 kilometres

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY

## 8 Mandalay city tour followed by visit to Amarapura

We spend this morning exploring some of Mandalay city's major highlights, including the Jade market, the fish market, the world's largest boo at Kuthodaw Pagoda, the intricate wooden majesty of the Shwenanda (Golden Palace) Monastery and Mandalay Hill. After lunch we drive a short distance south to visit the former royal capital of Amarapura, perhaps best known for the 19th century 1.2 kilometres U-Bein footbridge that spans Lake Taungthaman. Later we pay a visit to the Mahagondayon Monastery, one of the largest and most important religious centres in Burma. No cycling today.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



**Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY

## 9 Boat trip on the Irrawaddy after morning cycle

This morning we drive to Sagaing, located some 20 kilometres from Mandalay. Overlooking the waters of the Irrawaddy River, Sagaing is considered one of Burma's most important religious centres and its hillside is covered in pagodas and temples. We spend some time exploring the temple sites on the hill, walking along trails that link them. Later we get on our bikes and continue along the river to the ruins of Mingun Pagoda - the worlds largest unfinished stupa. After visiting Mingun we embark on a boat for the 30 minute cruise back to Mandalay on the Irrawaddy River, arriving in the late afternoon. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 30 kilometres

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Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 10 Mandalay to Kalaw by bus and bike

We spend most of the day making our way up onto the Shan Plateau to the old hill station of Kalaw. Most of the journey we will make by bus stopping en route to cycle along a back road with little traffic through agricultural lands and authentic local villages with plenty of opportunity for interaction. Kalaw itself sits high on the western edge of the Shan Plateau and was a popular hill station in British colonial times to escape the summer heat. Nowadays it is still a peaceful and quiet place and we should arrive in the late afternoon. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 35 kilometres

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 11 Kalaw to Inle Lake, afternoon optional wine tasting

After breakfast we will drive for about one hour to the small town of Aung Ban from where we commence today's cycle ride. The route we bike is mostly downhill and leads us to Inle Lake itself. Surrounded by hills and populated predominantly by the Intha people, Inle Lake is one of the highest lakes in the country. Devout Buddhists, the local population of self-sufficient farmers and fishermen live in simple stilted houses of wood and bamboo, growing their food on floating gardens of grass and seaweed. Upon arrival we will check into our hotel in the town of Nyaung Shwe, the main entry point for excursions onto the lake. The afternoon is left free to relax or you may prefer to participate in an optional wine-tasting in a scenic location near the lake. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 30 kilometres

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 12 Sightseeing on Inle Lake by longtail boat

Today we leave the bikes behind and take to the waters on a longtail boat excursion on Inle Lake. We may get the chance to see a local market, some cottage industries, traditional boat making and silk weaving and, hopefully, come across some of the local fishermen practicing their uniquely distinctive rowing techniques. This involves them wrapping one leg around the oar, a technique devised to make it easier to see over the islands of reeds. In the afternoon we head to the western part of the lake to Indein village where we walk up a short distance to a hillside complex of 1,000 stupas (places of worship). From up here we can enjoy some great views of the lake setting. We spend this evening in the village of Nyaung Shwe. No cycling today.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 13 Fly back to Rangoon; free time to explore the markets

We drive to Heho for our flight back to Rangoon. If not visited earlier in the tour we recommend a stroll along Pansodan Street to take in the rich colonial architecture and bustling street markets. The remainder of the day is free for further sightseeing. You may choose to visit Bogyoke Market, formerly known as Scott's Market, which is filled with handicrafts from all over the country (closed on Mondays, full moons and public holidays). Alternatively you could head for Chinatown, to explore its temples and street markets before returning to the hotel. No cycling today.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 14 Tour ends Rangoon

The tour ends in Rangoon this morning after breakfast.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

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## Accommodation and Meals

### Accommodation Rating

Standard - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Simple - These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

### Food & Drink

Included meals: 13 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

## Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

### Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

#### Burma

**Lunch £:** 3.00

**Dinner £:** 5.00

### Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

#### Burma

**Bottle of Beer £:** 1.80

**Water £:** 0.70

### Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

### Optional Excursions

Inle Lake - Traditional massage - \$8

Mandalay - Moustache Brothers Alternative Comedy show - \$12, Traditional dance performance - \$12

Bagan - Hot Air Balloon US\$300-350 depending on Premium or Regular service and time of the year. Due to high demand, if you are planning on taking the optional hot air balloon excursion you may wish to consider booking this in advance to secure your place on the flight. Please refer to your tour notes to check which mornings you will be in Bagan and therefore able to do the excursion. We do not recommend booking on the day you are due to leave Bagan in case an early departure is planned. The balloon excursion does not form part of your included Explore holiday package. You can book and pay with the balloon operator directly: [http://www.easternsafaris.com/balloonsoverbagan\\_home.html](http://www.easternsafaris.com/balloonsoverbagan_home.html) Traditional massage US\$10; Optional sunrise US\$8;

Mount Popa Excursion - US\$42 (based on group size of 3-4 person)

Cameras and video-cameras are permitted in Burma for which some sites charge a small fee. Restrictions on photography include military facilities and any structure considered strategic (including bridges and train stations though this last may be loosely enforced).

### Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly you should allow approximately US\$40 for this purpose.

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## Foreign Exchange

### Burma

**ATM Availability:** ATMs are becoming more widely available and some hotels may have them, including the Panda Hotel in Yangon. You are more likely to find them in the larger cities, but they are now starting to appear in some of the smaller towns and villages. Please be aware that they are prone to occasional breakdowns so you would be wise to top up your cash before it runs out completely.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Credit cards are becoming more widely accepted but you should not rely on them. The places where you are most likely to be able to use them are in the cities of Yangon and Mandalay and there may be a charge.

**Travellers Cheques:** Not accepted.

**Local Currency:** Kyat.

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** Carry all your funds in U.S. Dollars cash, larger denominations tend to get better exchange rate. NB - PLEASE ONLY BRING NEW U.S. DOLLAR BILLS (BIG HEADS INSTEAD OF SMALL) AND THEY SHOULD BE NEW AND IN A PRISTINE STATE. ANY OLD, TORN OR MARKED NOTES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. U.S. Dollar bills with the series CB will not be accepted for exchange.

**Where to Exchange:** The official rate is far different from the market rate, we recommend you consult your tour leader for advice regarding the best place to exchange. The exchange booth at airport offers a very poor rate so we recommend you wait until getting into town (taxis accept dollars if agreed beforehand).

## Joining your Tour

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at [www.explore.co.uk](http://www.explore.co.uk), in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Important Information

### Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit [www.explore.co.uk/insurance](http://www.explore.co.uk/insurance). Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised

and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website [www.fca.gov.uk](http://www.fca.gov.uk) or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

## Visa Information

Burma: An e-visa is required to enter Burma and must be arranged prior to travel through the following website: <http://evisa.moip.gov.mm/>. Visas are valid for 90 days from issue and allow a 28-day, single-entry visit.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

## Vaccinations & Protection

### Burma

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A and B. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Although not compulsory, travellers may wish to immunise themselves against Japanese encephalitis. If travelling from a country in the yellow-fever zone within 6 days prior to entering Burma you will be required to produce a yellow fever vaccine certificate.

## Preparing for your Tour



## Altitude Description

N/A

## Bike Details

Your included bike is a 24 or 27 gear Specialized Hardrock or Trek 3900 mountain bike with front suspension and will be the correct frame size for your height. A water bottle holder is included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. Simple bike used in Bagan and on day 2 cycle to Twante. A support vehicle accompanies the rides throughout the tour. We provide spare parts and take care of the day-to-day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

## Climate

### Burma

Burma is a tropical country and has three seasons. Temperature and rainfall varies across the country; Rangoon, Bagan and coastal areas tend to have higher temperatures and rainfall. Cool season = October to February with average temperatures from 18-24C; at higher altitudes (Inle Lake, Kalaw) the temperature is slightly cooler and temperatures can drop down to about zero at night. Hot season = March to mid-May 25-38C; particularly hot in Bagan and Rangoon. Rainy (Southwest Monsoon) = mid-May to September 23-33C; practically all of the country's rain falls in this period. Monsoon period means that the beach extension is only possible from October to April.

## Clothing

Warm weather clothing is suitable for Rangoon, Mandalay and Bagan. The Shan highlands, Inle Lake and Kalaw are cooler and in the winter season temperatures may reach near zero at night. Please dress respectfully when visiting temples and religious sites, covering your torso, shoulders and legs to below the knee and easily removable footwear for convenience as you can only enter sacred sites barefoot. In general, as Burma is a traditional, conservative and largely Buddhist culture we recommend you do not wear revealing clothing.

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Bring cycle shorts, quick drying tops are ideal and you will need cycle gloves. You will need loose fitting, comfortable clothes for hot, humid conditions. Sunhat, sunglasses, long trousers and long sleeved shirt essential for protection from the sun.

## Equipment

Mobile phones: Your mobile will not work in Burma. Internet is available in Rangoon and Mandalay though should not be relied upon. Bring sunscreen, sunhat, sunglasses and insect repellent. Ear plugs often come in handy when travelling and you may wish to bring a small torch in case of power cuts.

On all Explore cycle holidays we recommend you bring along a cycle helmet, cycle glasses to protect against dust, sun etc, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (eg camelback or platypus). You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. We suggest that you bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling, alternatively you can leave things in the support bus and will be able to access sporadically throughout each day.

## Footwear

Comfortable walking shoes/sandals for sightseeing, trainers for cycling.

## Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Total allowance: 44lb/20kg. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

# General Information

## Country details

### Burma

**Population:** 60,282,000

**Size of Country:** 676,568 sq km

**Major Language:** Burmese

**Religion:** Theravada Buddhism, Hinduism

**Time Difference to GMT:** +6

## Electric Supply & Plugs

### Burma

3 Pin Flat

# Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

## Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditions, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

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## Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

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## Earth Matters

- [The Travel Foundation](#)

Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website [www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk](http://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk)

- [Tourism Concern](#)

Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>
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## Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety>

## Booking Your Holiday

### Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

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### Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

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### 100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

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### Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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