

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Hidden Trails of Burma (HW 2017)



TRIPDURATION
14
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Tour Type: Small Groups
Trek Grade: Moderate

Trip Code: HW

Trip Highlights - Hidden Trails of Burma

- ✓ Rangoon (Yangon) - British colonial heritage and the golden Shwedagon Pagoda
- ✓ Golden Rock - Hike up to one of Burma's most sacred pilgrimage sites
- ✓ Bagan - Breathtaking vast plain studded with over 2000 ancient temples
- ✓ Inle Lake - Floating gardens, stilted villages and leg-rowing fishermen
- ✓ Shan Highlands - Trekking the tribal highlands of the Akha, Lahu and Paluang ethnic minorities

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 12 nights Standard Hotel
1 night Simple Monastery

Included Meals: 13 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 1 dinner

Start Point: Join trip: Rangoon (Yangon)

End Point: Trip ends: Rangoon (Yangon)

Transport: Bus, Boat, Flight

Countries: Burma

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Hidden Trails of Burma

After decades of relative isolation, the way of life in Burma (Myanmar) remains largely untouched by modern times. On this adventurous introduction to Burma we walk through remote lands and also spend time visiting the highlights of the country. We trek to hilltribe villages in Shan state, admire the sunset across the temple plains of Bagan, join Buddhist pilgrims on our hike to Golden Rock and walk in the beautiful surrounds of Inle Lake.

Should I go?

Signalling the end of a fifteen-year tourism boycott, Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese pro-democracy leader, gave her blessing for 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." The return of small groups and individuals to Burma has been endorsed by Burma Campaign UK and the Free Burma campaign. We are delighted to have returned to the country, having respected the boycott, we remain acutely aware of our ethical responsibility. We use a privately-owned Burmese agent for all of our local services, and our itineraries have been carefully planned to limit the use of services owned by, or affiliated with, the former military junta. This ensures that the Burmese people benefit as much as possible from our tours. We strongly believe that we contribute positively to the local economy, whilst providing our customers with the privilege of direct interaction with the local people, as well as an insight into the country's unique culture and heritage. On the 8th November 2015, 50 years of military rule came to an end when the NLD won a land-slide victory in Burma's first national vote. The country is embracing an unprecedented period of change, but with the military junta still retaining 25% of its seats. Visiting Burma now offers a fascinating insight into the politics of a country grappling with, and slowly embracing democracy and the 21st Century

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.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

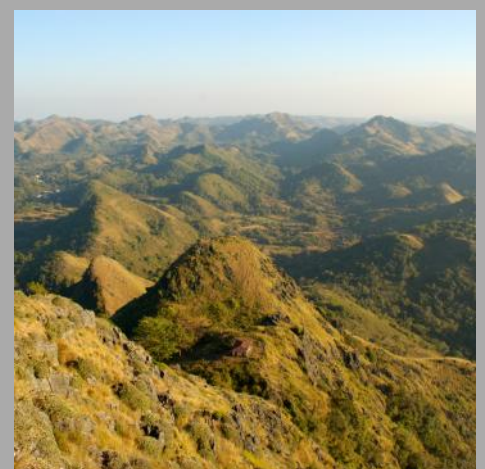
Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

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.

Trek Grade: Moderate

For those who are fit and active, these moderate walks are normally on good paths and tracks at low altitude. Days may include some fairly demanding ascents and descents, so previous experience is preferable but not essential.



Your trip 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.

DAY 1 Join trip Rangoon (Yangon)

Arrive in Rangoon and check-in at the hotel.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Hike up to Golden Rock for sunset

After a leisurely start, we drive for around five hours to Kin Pun at the foot of Mount Kyaiktiyo (the Golden Rock). Swapping to a local truck, we drive part way up the sacred mountain to Yatetaung and join local pilgrims on an ascent of one of the most sacred Buddhist sites in the country. We will carry our own overnight things in our daypacks and spend the night at a hotel on top of the mountain, allowing us the chance to enjoy the spectacle of sunset on the shimmering Golden Rock. Believed to be held in place by a single hair of the Buddha, the Rock perches precariously on the edge of the mountain, topped by a six metre high pagoda. The one-and-a-half kilometre ascent of Golden Rock is expected to take about 45 minutes. Time allowing, there's the option to extend the walk to the Mosdu Taung cave - an additional three kilometres taking one hour.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 3 Descend Golden Rock; drive back to Rangoon via Bago

This morning you can choose to rise early and watch the sunrise from the top of Mount Kyaiktiyo before breakfast. Saying farewell to the Golden Rock, we walk back down to Yatetaung and drive to Rangoon. The journey takes us by way of the historic town of Bago. Founded in 573AD, the town is home to a number of sacred shrines and pagodas including the Shwemawdaw Paya (the Golden God Temple) the tallest pagoda in the country. If time allows we'll pay a visit to the pagoda, as well as the Shwethalyaung Reclining Buddha (the second largest in the world) and the Kyaik Pun Pagoda. We may also have time to take a look around Bago's local market, before continuing on to Rangoon. The return one-and-a-half kilometre walk to Yatetaung will take around 30 minutes.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 4 Fly to Bagan; explore the temples by bicycle

We catch an early flight this morning to Bagan, one of the most impressive religious sites anywhere in Asia. Bagan rose to prominence during the 11th to 13th centuries and at its height its 13,000 temples and pagodas presented a sea of colour and spectacle. Today just over 2,000 remain and include the Shwezigon Pagoda, the 13th century frescoes of Wetkyi-in-Gubyaukgyi and the Ananda Pagoda, one of the best preserved monuments in the entire city. Our explorations today will be by bicycle and we expect to cover around 20 kilometres around the temple complex. We plan to enjoy sunset from one of the upper terraces of the Shwesandaw Pagoda.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 5 In Bagan; explore villages and temples on foot

We continue our exploration around Bagan today on foot. Starting out from the 14th century Thitsawadi temple we follow flat sandy paths to reach the monastic university complex of Su Than Pyay, part of which is still in a good condition. Continuing past fields of corn and cotton, we reach Thein Pyin Swan, a new monastery rebuilt with the assistance of the people of South Korea. Our next stop is the 12th century Pyatagyi monastery, a great place to enjoy the extremely photogenic panoramas of many of Bagan's major temples. The walk ends at the Dhammayangyi temple which is one of the most significant architectural structures in Bagan. In the late afternoon we will take to bicycles once again and enjoy a ride out to Minanthu Village to visit the three interconnected shrines of the Payathonzu Pagoda and watch the sunset from the Tayok Pye Temple. We expect to cover around two kilometres walking around the temples, taking us approximately two hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 Fly to Heho; trek to Yasakyi village and overnight in monastery

After flying to Heho this morning we drive on to the limestone caves of Pindaya, home to a remarkable collection of over 8,000 Buddhist images. We take a short tour of the site before continuing on to the start of our trek. The rest of the day then sees us trekking through villages and past tea plantations and chive farms, as we make our way towards our overnight stop in the remote village of Yasakyi. We overnight in the local monastery. Our accommodation will be basic (sleeping on individual mattresses in one large hall - mosquito nets provided), but the chance to interact with the villagers more than compensates for the rustic conditions. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 12 kilometres and will take around five hours.

Overnight: **Simple Monastery**



Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Morning trek back to Pindaya; drive to Inle Lake

The trek back to Pindaya takes us by way of an alternative route, passing through Danu villages and on to Taung Paw Gyi, from where we can enjoy a panoramic view over Pindaya. Stopping to have lunch in this lovely spot, we then continue back to the bus for the 85 kilometre drive to the beautiful setting of Lake Inle, high up on the Shan Plateau. Surrounded by hills and populated predominantly by the Intha people, Lake Inle is one of the highest lakes in the country. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 12 kilometres and will take around five hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8 Explore Inle Lake by longtail boat; hikes to tribal villages

Devout Buddhists, the local population of Lake Inle are self-sufficient farmers and fishermen, living in simple stilted houses of wood and bamboo and growing their food on floating gardens of grass and seaweed. Today we have a chance to explore this idyllic spot by longtail boat, heading to Indain village where we visit an enchanting 17th century pagoda. Back on dry land we will walk through some of the villages around the lake around the base of Udaun Taung mountain. There should be plenty of opportunities to meet the tribal communities who live here. Today's walk today covers a distance of approximately six kilometres and will take around two hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Fly to Kengtung; sightseeing in Kengtung

Returning to Heho this morning we then take a flight on to Kengtung, situated in the remote mountain valleys of eastern Shan State. Part of the Golden Triangle that encompasses neighbouring Thailand and Laos, Kengtung is a cultural and scenic gem that is home to dozens of minority tribes. On arrival we pay a visit to the Naung Tong Lake and the standing Buddha (the spot where the town was found over a thousand years ago), before heading up One Tree Hill to watch the sun set over the surrounding valleys.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Hiking around the villages of the Lahu and Akha people

An hour's drive out of Kengtung lies the village of Pan Kwai and the start of our trek through the Ho Kyin (Hochin) region. Leaving our vehicles behind, we hike out to the explore the villages of the Akha and Lahu people, hill-tribes who can trace their ancestry back to the Yunnan province of neighbouring China. Returning to Pan Kwai later in the day we then return to Kengtung via the village of Mong Zine Khun, where we have a chance to watch a traditional Lahu blacksmith at work. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 18 kilometres and will take around six hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



DAY 11 Hiking through tribal villages to Pin Tauk Waterfalls

This morning we follow the main highway that runs between China and Myanmar, heading towards the tribal villages of the Akha, Lahu and Ann. The hour's drive takes us to Pin Tauk (Kyaing Tong), from where we hike out to the outlying villages. The people in this region still adhere to the old traditions, both in their dress and their customs and we have ample opportunity to enjoy this cultural goldmine before heading back to Pin Tauk. If time allows after lunch we'll also visit some of the Paluang villages before returning to Kengtung. Our trek today covers a distance of approximately 22 kilometres and will take around five hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 12 Visit Kengtung market; fly to Rangoon

Before we return to Rangoon we pay a visit to Kengtung's morning market, where we can bargain for traditional clothing, lacquerware and other souvenirs from China, Thailand and the valleys of eastern Shan. We also visit the Wat Jom Khan a tall, gilded chedi that can date its origins back to a visit by the Gautama Buddha. The stupa is topped by a golden umbrella which is inlaid with silver, rubies and diamonds and decorated with tiny golden bells. We fly back to Rangoon for the final two nights of the holiday.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 13 Walking tour in Rangoon

On our final day in Rangoon we will explore the rich history and architecture of the city on a walking tour. Listening to the stories of our leader, we hope to be able to enter some of the old buildings, many of which are virtually unchanged since the colonial era. In the late afternoon we visit the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda, the most revered Buddhist temple in Burma, whose golden stupa dominates the city skyline, making it the ideal spot from which to watch the sunset and contemplate our time spent in Burma. The Shwedagon complex is large with a number of surrounding statues and temples and locals still visit and contribute to its special ambience as the holiest of Buddhist shrines. Our walking tour will cover around 2 kilometres and take us approximately two-and-a-half hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 14 Trip ends Rangoon

The trip ends this morning after breakfast.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 13 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 1 dinner included in the price of this trip. 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 Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip 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

Bagan - Sunrise visit to Temples from US\$ 8; Mount Popa Excursion approximately US\$ 42 (based on 3-4 participants); Traditional Massage US\$ 10;

Rangoon - Scott Market and sunset visit to Shwedagon Pagoda US\$4 transfer plus US\$ 5 entrance fees

Inle Lake - Winetasting US\$ 9; Traditional massage US\$ 8

Tipping - Tour Leader

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

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.

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 Trip

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, 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.

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

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>.

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 booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

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 www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

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.

You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with

details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Vaccinations & Protection

Burma

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A plus Polio and diphtheria. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Following the advice given by the Government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, we strongly recommend the wearing long sleeved shirts and the liberal application of insect repellent as a precautionary measure to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. These precautions should be taken at all times as the mosquitoes are also active during daylight hours. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

DAILY DISTANCES

| | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Day 2 | 1.5km 3km | 45mins/1hr |
| Day 3 | 1.5km | 30mins |
| Day 4 | | |
| Day 5 | 2km | 2hrs |
| Day 6 | 12km | 5hrs |
| Day 7 | 12km | 5hrs |
| Day 8 | 6km | 2hrs |
| Day 9 | | |
| Day 10 | 18km | 6hrs |
| Day 11 | 22km | 5hrs |
| Day 12 | | |
| Day 13 | 2km | 2.5hrs |

Optional Walks

Trekking Details

Walks on 9 days for between 30 minutes and 6 hours. For the walking tours and at Bagan, the timings include sightseeing. We have graded the overall walking level as Moderate.

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.

Clothing

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. 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.

Equipment

Mobile phones: Your mobile will not work in Burma. It is possible to buy a local SIM card for \$20 in order to make/receive international calls, as long as your phone is un-locked. SMS messaging is not possible. WiFi is available in most hotels.

Bedding provided in Yasakyi Village: For the night spent in the basic monastery you will be provided a sleeping mat or mattress, pillow, mosquito net and blanket or sleeping bag. You may choose to bring a sleeping sheet liner.

Walking Poles: These may be useful for the steeper sections on trek. Not available locally.

Sunglasses: A good pair of sunglasses are essential for protection against UV rays.

Sun Hat, High Factor Sun Cream/Block & Lip Salve: Bring suncream (Factor 15 or more) to protect your skin against the sun. A combination sunblock/ lipsalve is ideal for facial protection.

Torch/Batteries/Bulb: A small torch is essential for the overnight in Yasakyi. Street lighting in cities and rural areas can be very poor so a torch is useful to help light your way while out at night. Additionally power cuts can occur from time to time, particularly in rural areas. Remember to bring some spare batteries.

Cycling Helmets: We strongly advise that you bring your own helmet with you. Helmets are not available locally.

Footwear

We recommend you bring waterproof walking/hiking boots with good ankle support, plus trainers and/or sandals for travelling.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

On the overnight treks to Golden Rock and Yasakyi Village your main luggage will be left in secure storage and you will be required to carry your rucksack, large enough to carry essential items for the two days (bedding is already provided). In Golden Rock it is possible to arrange for a porter to carry your bags and this can be arranged and paid for locally.

Daypack

On the trekking days at Inle Lake and Kyiang Tong you will only be required to carry your day pack or light rucksack, large enough to carry essential items such as water, snacks and sun/weather protection.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

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, 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.

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.

Earth Matters

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, 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) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

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.

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

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 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip 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: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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