EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Indulge Itinerary Version (TMBU2)

CULTURAL DISCOVERY

TRIPDURATI
9
DAYS

Tour Type: Tailormade

Trip Code: TMBU2

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 3 nights Hotel
Included Meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Transport:
Countries: Burma

Tailormade Short Break in Burma

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.

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.

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 Depart UK

Depart the UK for your overnight flight

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Arrive Rangoon

Arrive at Rangoon and transfer to you hotel. This afternoon you visit the beautiful Kandawgyi Lake and the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda - the most revered temple in the country, which all Burmese Buddhists hope to visit at least once in their lifetime. Containing the relics of the past four Buddhas, its shimmering, 100 metre-high central stupa spire is covered in gold leaf and 4,531 diamonds, well and truly dominating the city skyline. And lastly you'll visit Chaukhtatgyi Paya; home to a giant 70 metre-long reclining Buddha, its serene features are topped by a crown encrusted in diamonds and other precious stones.

Included Meals: None

DAY 3 Fly to Bagan, Temple Sightseeing

This morning depart Rangoon and fly to Bagan. Today you have a sightseeing tour of Bagan's many distinctive pagodas such as Shwezigon, a prototype of later Burmese stupas; Wetkyi-in-Gubyaukgyi, a 13th century cave temple with interesting frescoes; Ananda Pagoda, one of the finest, largest and best persevered in Old Bagan, and Htilominlo Temple which is known to be the last Myanmar Style temple built in Bagan. Afternoon sightseeing highlights includes Sulamani Temple and Thatbyinnyu Temple which towers above the other monuments of Bagan. As the sun goes down you can watch the view over the temples.

Overnight: **Hotel**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Fly to Mandalay; Amarapura and Inwa sightseeing

Depart Bagan and fly to Mandalay. From Mandalay transfer to the ancient royal capital of Amarapura where you visit Mahagandayon monastery and the nearby U Bein bridge. At more than two centuries old and at 1.2 km long, it is the longest teakwood bridge in the world. Continue your journey to another former royal capital, Inwa, where you visit the 'leaning tower of Ava' and the elegant teakwood monastery Bagaya Kyaung.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Mingun and Mandalay

Taking a short ride upriver to Mingun, you visit the mammoth base of the unfinished pagoda which was due to be world's largest pagoda, however building stopped in 1819 due to the death of King Bodawpaya. You also visit the Mingun Bell, said to be the largest hanging un-cracked bell in the world. This afternoon enjoy a tour of Mandalay, including the highly revered Mahamuni Pagoda; a gold leaf hammering craft shop, Shwenandaw Monastery, noted for its exquisite wood carvings; Kuthodaw Pagoda, renowned as the world's largest book for its 729 stone slabs containing the entire Buddhist scriptures, and Mandalay Hill for views over the city and Ayeyarwaddy River.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Fly to Heho, visit Inle Lake

Depart Mandalay and fly to Heho. Transferring to Inle Lake, located approximately 900m above sea level, the lake is 20km long and 6km wide, where you have a long tailed boat trip to Innpawkhone Village. Here you will see lotus and silk weaving in production, visit Nanpan to discover traditional boat making methods, the cheroot (Burmese cigar) factory, continue to Phaungdaw U Pagoda and a short visit to Leshae Village where you can see the making of Buddha image from dried flower powder. Afterwards visit Nga Phae Chaung monastery and floating gardens.

Overnight: **Hotel**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Indainn sightseeing

Taking a boat ride along the small scenic creek that runs into Inle Lake, continuing your sightseeing visit to Indain Village. You walk a short distance to the Indain Pagoda complex, a collection of ruined and overgrown pagodas and stupas dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. Now in a state of picturesque disrepair, you can still see beautiful bas relief carvings and glimpses of Buddha statues.

Overnight: **Hotel**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 Fly to Rangoon, city sightseeing

Depart Heho and fly to Rangoon. A visit to Scott Market, noted for its variety of handicrafts and other items, provides an excellent opportunity for a shopping spree before a visit in China town. Also explore Pansodan Street, with its large and impressive colonial era buildings and sidewalk markets, followed by Botataung Pagoda, which as it is hollow, you can walk through and see many ancient relics and artifacts.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Fly to the UK

Free time until your departure flight

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches,0 dinners 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

Area Text: Burma - or Myanmar- is the 'it' destination of the moment, having featured in almost every recent travel magazine 'where to go' list.. It's a far cry from a few years ago when the travel media was debating whether it was ethical to go, human rights groups were advising travellers not to, and publishers were slammed for releasing books on Burma. A lot has changed in a couple of years. This Southeast Asian country lying on the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal, with Thailand and Laos on its eastern border, China to its north, and India and Bangladesh to its west, has gone from being a military junta isolated from the world - following a 1962 military coup d'etat which ousted the democratically elected government - to a nation pursuing democracy that opened up following the 2010 elections and the November release that year of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who'd been under house arrest for almost 15 years. After Aung San Suu Kyi encouraged tourists to visit, the international community lifted informal travel boycotts that had been keeping travellers away. Despite featuring in luxury travel magazines, Burma remains a rustic place to visit. Still relatively undeveloped, life moves at a snail's pace and modernisation has been equally slow, although, since the recent boom in tourism foreign investment is ensuring an improvement in infrastructure and the building of new hotels . Mildew-dappled colonial buildings dominate cityscapes, although shiny skyscrapers have been making an appearance. Most Burmese still prefer to wear the traditional lonyi to modern dress. Streets aren't illuminated with neon-lit signs like Bangkok and Hong Kong and there aren't Seven-11s on every corner. While 2012 saw the introduction of ATMs (mostly in Yangon), US dollars remain the main currency to exchange for local kyat, however if even slightly creased or marked are rejected. While a glut of shopping centres opened in recent years, they aren't the monumental malls of Singapore or KL and most locals still prefer to shop the markets. Each day sees more new cars on the streets, but they still

share the roads with horse carts, trishaws, bicycles, and motorbikes. Of course all of this is part of Burma's charm. Equally alluring are its gleaming pagodas, historic temple complexes that rival Cambodia's great Angkor complex, and lush landscapes distinguished by forested mountains, tranquil lakes, picturesque rivers, and impressive caves. The big four sights are Rangoon (Yangon), Bagan, Inle Lake, and Mandalay, which most tourists visit on organized tours, while destinations such as Pindaya Ngapali Beach and Hsipaw see more intrepid tourists. Travellers are also increasingly getting off-the-beaten-track, visiting traditional hill tribes and choosing home stays over hotels. Not yet jaded by tourism - tourists remain a novelty in Burma - the Burmese are some of the friendliest people you'll meet and encounters with locals are a highlight of a trip.

Foreign Exchange

Burma

Major Language: Burmese

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.

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.

Vaccinations & Protection

Burma

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A plus Polio and diptheria. 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

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.

General Information

Country details

Burma

Population: 60,282,000

Size of Country: 676,568 sq km

Major Language: Burmese

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.

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 & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one 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.

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, 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.

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

- 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
- 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
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

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 www.explore.co.uk/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 LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â 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: 2 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2. 3/ itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 3.

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