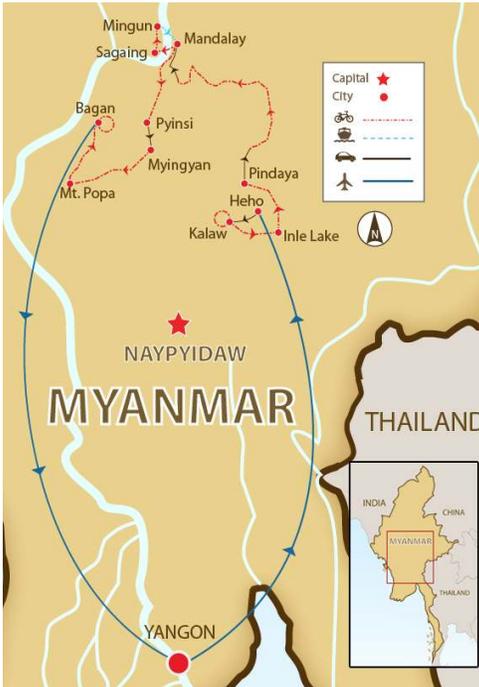


Guided Mountain Bike

Myanmar



Myanmar Adventure

Burma, or Myanmar as it is now known, is the western gateway to Southeast Asia, straddling two of Asia's great rivers and the mountainous foothills of the Himalayas. The diversity of its people, culture, and topography combined with a rich history, make it one of the region's most fascinating and beautiful countries.

On this journey we explore central Burma, travelling from the Irrawaddy River plain up to the Shan Plateau and all along we will be greeted by warm, friendly people few tourists get to meet. From the heights of Mt. Popa we will cycle down to the ancient city of Bagan and cycle amongst the pagodas, stupas, and temples dominating a river valley that once formed the centre of a great and deeply religious empire.

A boat ride up the Irrawaddy will take us to ancient temples that we will reach by bicycle. We arrive at Kipling's Mandalay and explore the surroundings before we head up to the Shan lands, home to a multitude of tribal people, and a fantastic contrast to lowland Burma. In the mountains we enjoy cooler weather and the colonial charm of Kalaw, where the officers of the Raj went to escape the summer heat. We then head down to the wondrous Inle Lake and embark on a relaxing full day boat trip where we can marvel at the Intha fishermen, who famously manage to row with their legs.

A truly wonderful adventure.

Fast Facts

- This trip offers the best of cycling on quiet country roads, and touring all of the best sights in the country
- 7 full days and 3 half days of cycling
- Domestic flights included
- Most meals and sightseeing tours as mentioned
- All equipment and guide services
- Van support

Tour Details 2020

January 12-25
February 9-22
March 8-21
May 10-23
July 12-25
August 9-22
September 13-26
October 11-24
November 8-21

Cost: US\$ 2900 per person
Single Supplement: US\$ 650
Bike Rental: US\$ 250

Length: 14 days / 13 nights
Grade: Intermediate

Starts / Ends: Yangon

Day 1 Yangon

We will meet at the hotel at 7 pm for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant for some traditional Burmese dishes. **D**

Day 2 Yangon - Heho - Kalaw 28 km

We have an early morning flight to Heho and then a short transfer to our hotel in the former hill station of Kalaw. This cool, peaceful town amidst pine trees still retains its colonial feel. After lunch we'll prepare for an afternoon ride through the countryside of Kalaw. This off road ride will be a perfect introduction to your bike and give you a chance to warm up your cycling legs. There will be some up hills but we will be cycling through some stunning countryside making the effort worthwhile. **B L D**

Day 3 Kalaw - Inle Lake 80 km

Today we have a fabulous ride down off the plateau to the famous Inle Lake. Though we cover many kilometres, the last section has two sweeping downhill, which take us directly to the shores of Inle. We will be on both paved and dirt roads, taking us through the Burmese countryside. We ride alongside one of Asia's most beautiful inland waters to Nyaung Shwe, located north of the lake. **B L D**

Day 4 Inle Lake 30 km

We'll spend the day exploring Inle Lake, from the shore and on the lake. In the morning we'll start with a 20 km ride on the shores of the lake, riding through villages and past temples. After a lakeside lunch we'll board a boat and cruise to Inlein temples, floating gardens, monasteries and the Intha fishermen, who famously manage to row their boats with one leg. In the evening we'll have a treat and visit a vineyard for sunset and dinner. **B L D**

Day 5 Inle Lake - Pindaya 65 km

Today we leave lovely Inle and head back up to the Shan Plateau. Shan State covers almost a quarter of Myanmar and is home to several different ethnic groups. Again we will be cycling on both dirt and paved roads, and though overall we will be climbing, there will be some downhill. There is one major 10 km-long climb today but the gradient is gentle. Our destination is Pindaya, home to limestone caves that house thousands of Buddhas. We'll have a visit to the caves before dinner. **B L D**

Day 6 Pindaya - Mandalay 53 km

An hour transfer will bring us to the start of our ride down to Burma's second city, Mandalay. Initially the ride will be undulating through a patchwork of fields before we start a 30 km descent. We'll be passing many villages on the way where you'll be greeted by "hellos" from the children. When we reach the bottom of a hill we'll hop back into the support vehicles for a short transfer to Mandalay. **B L D**

Day 7 Mandalay - Sagaing - Mingun - Mandalay 45 km

We head out of the city of Mandalay behind to explore the towns of Sagaing and Mingun on the opposite side of the Irrawaddy River. We cycle first to the famous U Bien bridge, the longest teak bridge in Asia, where we'll have some excellent photo opportunities. We then ride along the river past Sagaing, an important religious and monastic centre and subsequently home to numerous monasteries and stupas.



Day 7 Continued...

We continue on our photogenic cycle route to Mingun where we'll visit the ruins of Pahtodawgyi. This massive unfinished stupa would have been the largest in the world if completed and now might be the largest pile of bricks in the world, but is nonetheless impressive. We'll also see the Mingun bell which weighs 90 tons and is the largest ringing bell in the world. After a lunch of local specialties we'll have an easy return via boat. Relax and watch life go by. **B L D**



Day 8 Mandalay Monasteries 26 km

This morning we explore Mandalay by bike. Visit Shwenandaw Monastery, aptly named "Golden Palace," or head to Zegyo Market and shop at the bazaar or head to Mandalay Hill for sunset. The afternoon and evening you are free to explore on your own. **B L**



Day 9 Mandalay - Pyinsi - Mt. Popa 95 km

We start early and ride from the hotel along the banks of the Irrawaddy River. Following pretty back roads we take a very small and short ferry so we can ride by the capital of the ancient Ava Kingdom. Here we'll see remnants of a city wall that protected the city that ruled upper Burma for nearly two centuries, from 1364 to 1555. We continue our ride through fields of millet, sesame, cotton and many varieties of peas and beans to the town of Pyinsi. Here we pack up the bikes and transfer to Mt. Popa. **B L D**

Day 10 Mt. Popa Rest Day

Today we climb the almost 900 stairs to the top of Popa Taung Kalat. As you walk up you will pass dozens of nat (spirit) shrines and see pilgrims who come to honour the spirits. From the top you will have a panorama of the surrounding plains. The views are excellent and photographers will get some great shots. We stay at a magnificent resort with spectacular views of the temple. The rest of the day you are free to relax by the hotel's infinity pool overlooking the temple, or for those more adventurous there are hiking trails in the national park. We meet up for dinner. **B L D**



Day 11 Mt. Popa - Bagan 60 km

Wake up to superb views! After breakfast, start with an easy descent from our lofty heights. We take a different route down, snaking around the mountain as we ride through small villages and palm gardens, coming across farmers plowing their fields with wooden plows and water buffaloes. We ride into Bagan, which is littered with thousands of temples along the banks of the Irrawaddy River. Our riverside hotel offers a refreshing pool to cool down in. **B L D**



Day 12 Bagan Temples 30 km

Bicycles are the perfect way to explore the temples of Bagan; we take a morning cycle around the Archaeological Zone stopping to see a variety of temples. When it starts to get hot we'll return to the hotel for a relaxing afternoon by the pool. Enjoy sunset over the river or take your bike to catch the setting sun from the top of a temple. The views across the plains studded with chedis will be a lasting memory. **A morning scenic hot air balloon ride can be arranged (optional) to enjoy stunning aerial views of the surrounding areas, exquisite temples and golden stupas. **B L D**



Day 13 Bagan - Yangon

In the morning we transfer to the airport and fly back to Yangon, viewing from the air some of the terrain we have covered by bike. We arrive in time to take a trishaw ride in downtown Yangon. In the evening we'll meet up for a farewell dinner. **B L D**

Day 14 Yangon

The morning is free for shopping. We can visit Bogyoke Aung San market before heading to the airport for the flight home -- or to a Thai beach resort. **B**

What to Expect

What will the weather be like?

Myanmar has a tropical climate with fairly high humidity. There are three seasons: from March, to June, it is hot and dry with temperatures between 27 and 35°C. Evening temperatures are in the 20s. July, to October, is Thailand's rainy season. The cooler months are from October to February. Average temperatures are between 20 and 30C.

Trip Profile:

This is a touring trip using mountain bikes and we cycle 515 km on country lanes and quiet roads. Though 95% of our riding will be paved, the road can be in poor condition in spots. There is little traffic, even on the main highways, which makes for excellent bicycle touring. The first few days riding are flat rides or on gentle rolling hills and cut through rice fields, ancient cities and scenic countryside. Passing through many villages, you will find the people curious, friendly and polite. We share the road with ox carts, cyclists, and waving children. This trip is a touring bike journey suitable for anyone with a reasonable level of fitness. There are some long rides, and one or two tough climbs; participants who cycle the whole distance should expect a fairly challenging two weeks. But with the excellent support, inexperienced riders, and even non-riding partners, can be catered for and are more than welcome to join this tour. The trip is fully supported; an air-conditioned bus follows us for the entire journey.

What are the hotels like?

We use a wide mixture of accommodations. Hotels and guesthouses are of tourist class standard or better with private facilities and hot water. Facilities in the village stays are obviously quite limited, but we make sure you have clean bedding, mosquito nets, and plenty to eat. We use several Asian style Inns or Lodges that are highly comfortable as well as being in tune with the local environment and spirit of this tour. *****Please note: Due to the popularity of Myanmar as a destination hotel rooms are extremely hard to guarantee. Though we will do our best to adhere to the original itinerary, we cannot be held responsible for any last minute hotel changes. Any changes will be to another hotel of the same or higher standard.*****

SAFETY

Wearing a helmet is required on this biking adventure and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle.

Getting There

- Fly into Yangon via the east or west. We generally fly via Bangkok. From our Yangon hotel we organize the first transfer.



Extra Info

Passports and Visas: All nationalities require a valid passport. A visa is required for all visitors to Myanmar and must be procured from a Myanmar Embassy.

Please make sure your passport is valid for a minimum of 6 months beyond the duration of stay in Myanmar. Regulations change quickly, but at the moment the easiest method for those flying in is to obtain an E-visa for US\$ 50.

Extra Costs

Day 12 Recommended morning activity:

Start your day with scenic hot air balloon ride and enjoy the stunning aerial views of surrounding area, including the exquisite temples and its golden stupas. Contact us for details.

Airport pick up and drop off

How to book your holiday

- Contact our office to make sure there is space available. One of our travel planners will walk you through the entire process.
- Download the reservation form from our site and send in completed form by fax or email. Once this is done, your space is confirmed and a pre-departure packet will be sent.
- A deposit is required immediately, and final payment is due 60 days prior to the trip departure. Terms & conditions are outlined in our Reservation Form.
- Plan your air travel as soon as possible.
- We encourage you to purchase travel insurance, either through us or a travel insurance provider directly.
- Ensure you are in proper health for the trip chosen. Contact us, for more information on vaccinations, inoculations, and fitness requirements.