



## Myanmar

Cultural Trekking Adventure

# PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



## Itinerary

## Myanmar • Cultural Trekking Adventure

**12 Days • 11 Nights**

Yangon – Heho – Kalaw – Pindaya – Danu – Pa-O – Inle – Ngapali

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌿 Stunning Swedegon Pagoda, Yangon
- 🌿 Culture and adventure
- 🌿 Nga Pali Beach
- 🌿 Trekking through the Pindaya Highlands

### TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Cultural Trekking Expeditions
Tour Start	Yangon
Tour End	Yangon
Accommodation	Hotel, Village Monastery, Homestay
Included Meals	11 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 3 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium

Time to explore South East Asia's best kept secret: Myanmar

*"Years of isolation have kept Myanmar an unspoiled gem, with creaking teak monasteries and temples of stone, gracefully ageing in a cycle-paced society. Myanmar is truly an extraordinary country - its people, its landscapes and its culture are all unique. Travelers who visit Myanmar are welcomed by gentle, smiling people and some of the world's most impressive monuments". Wanderlust*

# Overview

A fantastic trip where we experience the best that Myanmar has to offer - including visiting some of Myanmar's most interesting temples and ancient ruins, trekking off the beaten track, the stunning annual balloon festival as well as well as spend time at one of Myanmar's most beautiful beaches (like Thailand's).

Myanmar has been off the travel agenda for the last 2 decades, but now is an excellent time to visit this amazing country, which at last looks set to emerge from isolation and repression and advance towards a more democratic future.

# Itinerary



## DAY 1: YANGON ARRIVAL

Transfer to hotel and depending on arrival times, we can drive downtown to central post office where we can start a walking tour along the Strand Road and the jetty, to observe the ways of life of the people on Yangon River. Then walk along Pansodan Street, famous for the most impressive colonial buildings to be found in Yangon and busy sidewalk markets.

*Overnight hotel*



## DAY 2: FLY TO HEHO / CYCLING TO KALAW (B,L)

Fly to Heho on the morning flight. After arriving at the Heho Airport we will cycle to the former British hill station of Kalaw. Stop on the way to enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Upon reaching our destination we can explore the surrounding pine forests and colonial houses while inhaling the cool mountain air.

*Overnight in hotel at Kalaw.*

## DAY 3: KALAW TO PINDAYA TREKKING (B,L,D)

Today we will start trekking in the direction of Pindaya, hiking past several traditional villages of the Palaung tribe. They are thought to be the earliest inhabitants of Myanmar and they still live a very traditional lifestyle. We will learn about the seasonal crops they grow, which include the leaves used to produce the ubiquitous cheroots. We will arrive at a local monastery or homestay where we will enjoy dinner and have welcome chance to relax.

*Overnight at village monastery or homestay in Ywadow Village.*



## DAY 4: TREKKING THE PINDAYA HIGHLANDS (B,L,D)

The trek to Pindaya continues with several stops at different tribal villages, such as Danu and Pa-o. We will get a fascinating introduction into their culture and learn about their ancestral customs. A packed lunch will be enjoyed at one of the villages on the way.

*Overnight homestay in Shan Ywa.*

## DAY 5: TREK TO PINDAYA (HALF DAY TREKKING) (B,L,D)

We wake up to the cool mountain air and enjoy breakfast before setting out on a full day of unchallenging trekking. Along the way we will be exposed to the spectacular natural scenery of the surrounding mountains. We stop by several villages, enjoying the sight of women in colorful ethnic clothing and experiencing more of their rural way of life.

*Drive to a hotel in Pindaya and overnight stay*



## DAY 6: PINDAYA - INLE (CYCLING) (B,L)

Today we enjoy a scenic unchallenging bicycle ride to Nyaung Shwe (at the head of Inle lake) passing traditional villages, Pindaya caves and inviting countryside scenery. Accompanied by a support vehicle, you are free to cycle part or all of the way. On our approach to Inle Lake, learn about the people living in stilted houses on the lake shore.

*Overnight at hotel, Nyaung Shwe*



## DAY 7: INLE (B)

Today leave the hiking boots and bikes behind for some spectacular sightseeing around and on the waters of Inle Lake. Explore the Lake's morning market, visited by local hill tribes people and the Inthar before passing stilted houses. Be awed by the iconic leg-rowing fishermen of the lake. Following a visit to the monastery and lunch, stroll around the Pah-Oh villages of Indein and meet the local people.

*Overnight at hotel, Nyaung Shwe*

## DAY 7:, FOR BALLOON FESTIVAL PROGRAM (B)

If you are travelling at the time of the Balloon Festival

Today leave the hiking boots and bikes behind for some spectacular sightseeing around and on the waters of Inle Lake. Explore the Lake's morning market, visited by local hill tribes people and the Inthar before passing stilted houses. Be awed by the iconic leg-rowing fishermen of the lake. Following a visit to the monastery and lunch, stroll around the Pah-Oh villages of Indein and meet the local people. Day sightseeing should be finalized at around 03:30 p.m. At about 04:30 p.m. we will leave the hotel and drive to Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State, through picturesque landscape (appr 45 mins) . The lighting balloon will be start at around 09:00 p.m and finishes at around 12:00 a.m. or even later depending upon your interest . Then, you will be transferred back to your hotel in Nyaung Shwe and overnight . Today is the last day of the festival and you can enjoy many colorful demonstration of the most famous balloon makers.

*Overnight at hotel, Nyaung Shwe .*

## DAY 8: FLY TO NGAPALI ON THE MORNING FLIGHT (B)

Free time and leisure in Ngapali (a delightfully quiet and laid back resort that can be used as a base for further adventures) or just to chill out on the white sandy beaches and eat at the spectacular restaurants beneath the palm trees, where the fish and seafood dishes are to die for.

*Overnight hotel*

## DAY 9 & 10: NGAPALI BEACH (B)

Free time: Ngapali Beach

*Overnight hotel*

## DAY 11: NGAPALI / YANGON (B)

Fly back to Yangon to continue our exploration of this amazing City.

*Overnight hotel in Yangon*



## DAY 12: DEPARTURE (B)

If time allows before departure transfer you can take a last walk about of the downtown area, with its Hindu temples, synagogues, churches and mosques, markets and tea shops.

***Our Myanmar Adventure ends here although there are a number of extensions to the trip that can be arranged, or it can be tailored to suit***

## Additional Considerations

This trip can be combined with the water festival or better known as the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda Festival, if you are planning to travel in October. The Phuung Daw Oo Pagoda Festival is where four Buddha Images from Phaung-daw-oo Pagoda are carried on a royal barge and conveyed around 14 villages on the Lake. The large crowds of people gather on the lake-shores to celebrate the occasion. It is really a splendid sight.

You can also combine this trip with an amazing traditional Burmese balloon festival if you are planning to travel in November. This balloon festival is one of the most popular festivals in Myanmar. The hot-air balloons are made up of hand-made paper, beautifully designed with colourful fireworks and firecrackers. The festival is also a competition between the town's various quarters as to who can send up the most elaborate firework displays and decorated hot air balloons. It has to be seen to be believed!

## What our clients have said

*"The recce was great, hugely enjoyable and instructive....thanks for arranging such a great trip"*

-L.Codsi

## Important Information

### INCLUDED

- 🍽️ All meals as described (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)
- 🏠 Accommodation with meals as per program
- 🚗 Transfers
- 🏞️ Sightseeing with entrance fees
- ✈️ Domestic flights
- 🗣️ Service of an English speaking guide throughout the trip (excluding the beach stay).

### NOT INCLUDED

- Meals other than mentioned
- International flights
- Visa fees
- Airport tax
- Drinks
- Personal expense
- Insurance
- Any service not mentioned above



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## Additional Information

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ACTIVITY DURATION	2-5 hours
SEASON	January-December
BEST TIME TO GO	November-May
GROUP SIZE	2-8 pax
EXPEDITION SCHEDULE	Annual Group Departure or Tailor made to suit your dates.

**DIFFICULTY LEVEL**

Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'Medium' level (2-5 hours per day). This means that you will need an average level of fitness.

