

Travel with Gina & Pam . . .

SEE THE REAL MYANMAR



January 24 - Feb. 7, 2017 (15 Days)

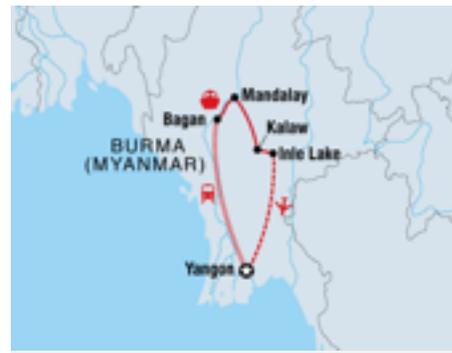
LAND PRICE: \$1865 pp

Internal Air (within Myanmar): \$365

Int'l Air: starting at \$950 from the USA

Small group: Minimum 4, Maximum 12

Single Supplement: \$295



- Tour **Yangon** with its beautiful pagodas, giant Buddhas and countless historical sites. See the magnificent golden Shwedagon Pagoda at sunset watching the meditative sweeping of the temple.
- Visit **Bagan**, once the site of 10,000 temples, pagodas and monasteries and still the home of the largest number of Buddhist ruins in the world.
- Explore remote **Mindat** with its ethnic Chin minorities.
- Enjoy a scenic boat ride along the tranquil waters of **Inle Lake** with its mesmerizing leg-rowing fishermen - a truly authentic Southeast Asian experience.



HIGHLIGHTS:

Isolated from the rest of the world for decades, Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) is rich in ethnic diversity, fairytale pagodas, bustling local markets, remote hill tribe villages, and genuinely friendly people who decorate their faces with circular designs made of white tree bark powder. Myanmar was once the richest country in Asia and is now on the brink of change, reaching out to the world and leaping into the modern world. Located in the crossroad of Asia between India and China, with the right moment of social, economic and political reforms. This is the time to see Myanmar - while it still resembles the SE Asia of twenty years ago!

Myanmar is the largest country in SE Asia – twice as large as Vietnam and approximately the size of Great Britain and France combined. There are over 135 ethnic groups each with their own languages and customs. The history of Myanmar dates back before the time of Buddha in the fifth century BC. In the early 1800s after a series of wars, Myanmar became a British Colony, and only on January 4, 1948 did it become an independent nation.



ITINERARY:

Day 1, Jan. 24, 2016 (T) Arrive YANGON

MEALS: (D)

Min Gala Ba! Welcome to Myanmar. Morning or early afternoon arrival to Yangon. The group will meet at our Yangon hotel. Mid-afternoon guided tour to the spectacular golden Shwedagon Paya Temple (which Gina believes is the most beautiful Buddhist temple in the world!). Over 2600 years old, this gold-gilded pagoda is studded with diamonds and gems. The Pagoda is 100 meters high and covered with over 3 thousand kilograms of gold. The most revered and peaceful place for all Buddhists. It's a particularly impressive sight at sunset as we watch the meditative sweeping of the temple floor. "Welcome dinner" to meet your fellow travelers. Note: If you wish to arrive a day or two early we can help to book your Yangon hotel and suggest local sightseeing options.

Day 2, Jan. 25 (W) YANGON

MEALS: (B)

After breakfast we'll take a walking tour of Yangon with our English-speaking guide seeing the 19th-century British colonial styles mix with Chinese, Indian and local influences including City Hall, Sule pagoda which is believed to have built about 2200 years ago, the 100 year old Strand Hotel, Bokyoke Aung San market (formerly known as Scott Market built in 1920 with wide choices of jewelry, jade, rubies, precious stones, clothes, and paintings).

Yangon was regarded as the princess of Asia because of it's beautiful parks and lakes. Formerly known as Dagon, Yagon is the most cosmopolitan city in Myanmar with a population of 5 million people. Yangon literally means 'End of strife'. It was founded by the king from upper Myanmar in the year 1752 and changed from Dagon to Yangon. When the British annexed Myanmar (Burma) in 1885, they renamed it as Rangoon because they find it hard to pronounce it properly as locals.



Day 3, Jan. 26 (Th) YANGON to BAGAN

MEALS: (B)

This morning we fly to Bagan—home of the largest number of Buddhist temples, stupas, pagodas and ruins in the world. In late afternoon we will take sunset boat tour. Bagan is an archaeological site where Theravada Buddhism was first introduced to the Kingdom. It was once the site of 10,000 temples, pagodas and monasteries and still has over 2,000 brick and gilded ruins. Tomorrow we will spend the entire day at the archaeological ruins.

Day 4, Jan. 27 (F) BAGAN

MEALS: (B)

The Kingdom of Bagan was the capital of first Myanmar emperor from 11 to 13 century. King Anawrahtar built Bagan in 1044-1077 AD. There were 11 Kings in Bagan and Buddhism was the main religion during reign of Bagan period. In the 9th century, the Pagan Empire embarked on a building spree that lasted 250 years and produced 10,000 temples, pagodas and monasteries. This ancient city still has over 2230 ancient monuments within 19 square miles. and is a stunning sight to see.

In the morning we'll ride on electric bicycles through thousands of years of history of this archaeological site with our English-speaking guide. The bike ride through Bagan is easy, on flat terrain and at a leisurely pace. However if you prefer not to bike, we can arrange a pony cart to take you around the sights for \$10 per pony cart. Free afternoon to view more temples and watch the sunset over the ancient city. We'll have the chance to see the gilded Shwezigon Pagoda, Gubyaukgyi & Htilominlo Temples, Dhammayangyi Pahto, Shwesandaw Paya, as well as the Ananda Pahto Temple, considered to be the most beautiful temple in Bagan. Opportunity to climb to vantage points with magical views.

Optional excursion for sunrise this morning, take a 45-minute hot air balloon ride over Bagan with breathtaking views of the stupa-studded landscape. Advance booking is required as places are limited and this activity is based on weather. Cost: approx. \$TBD.

Day 5, Jan. 28 (SAT) BAGAN to MINDAT MEALS: (B, L, D)

Drive Bagan to Mindat. Overnight in Mindat hotel. Mindat offers a unique opportunity to experience the life of the Chin and the beautiful mountain scenery. The major ethnic Chin group in Mindat is K'cho and is divided into three main tribes: Muun, Makang and Dai. In Myanmar, "Chin" means basket and K'cho people were called Chins because of the basket they use to carry goods.

The K'cho women are famed for their tattooed faces, an extraordinary custom began in the eleventh century when some young maiden girls tattooed, disfiguring their faces to protect them from slavery or capture by the ruling princes. Now you can only see those women in Mindat. The young women of Munn tribe in Mt. Victoria region are especially keen to do this custom with diverse tattoo designs.

The K'cho people earn a living practicing shifting cultivation, trapping, hunting and logging. They often grow rice on one piece of land for one to four years before moving. However, today some groups have settled permanently. A K'cho Chin house usually has only one room. All activities including cooking, eating and sleeping take place on the floor. Mats are rolled out nightly for sleeping and then rolled up or stacked away during the day. If you are invited to come to their house, it is polite to take off your shoes before you enter since the floor is center of home life.

People in Mindat are famous for their nose flute instrument. A man plays this very unique musical instrument when he asks a woman to marry him, as a means of proposal. The woman also plays the nose flute as a token of her acceptance to get married.

Day 6, Jan. 29 (SUN) MINDAT MEALS: (B, L, D)

After breakfast, we'll visit the local neighborhood of Mindat, the Mindat market, and see the Nose-flute women. Transfer to the start of our trek, hiking to local ethnic Chin villages and overnight in a Chin village (Family Homestay).



Days 7, Jan. 30 (M) MINDAT

MEALS: (B, L, D)

After breakfast, we'll explore more local villages and transfer back to Mindat. Overnight in Mindat hotel.

Day 8, Jan. 31 (T) MINDAT to BAGAN

MEALS: (B, L)

Overland transport back to Bagan. Free evening in Bagan.

Day 9, Feb. 1 (W) BAGAN

MEALS: (B)

Enjoy a free day in the area of Bagan. Spend more time exploring the stalls at the archaeological site, the cafes in town, or the nearby Nyaung U Market – one of the more interesting markets in the country. Other places of interest include the Archaeological Museum and the Royal Palace. Taxis to these local sites cost around \$5. Another option is to take a day trip to Mt Popa, a mountain topped with monasteries and stupas. Climb the 777 steps to enjoy incredible views from the top and make a visit to the strange shrine devoted to the 37 Nat spirits. Transport to Mt Popa starts around \$60 and the cost can be split between participating group members.

Day 10, Feb. 2 (TH) BAGAN to MANDALAY

MEALS: (B)

Flight to Mandalay. Mandalay, now the second biggest city in Myanmar, was also the last capital of the Burmese King's dynasty. We'll settle into the hotel and go to the Mandalay Marionettes Theatre.

Day 11, Feb. 3 (F) MANDALAY

MEALS: (B)

Free day to explore the many historical sights in and around Mandalay. Suggestions include a visit to three nearby ancient cities. Amarapura, an ancient capital in 1782 offers the 200 year old U BEIN teak bridge built when Amarapura was the Royal capital. Mahagandayon, a famous Buddhist monastery, where more than a thousand monks live and study. Bagaya Monastery, with a superb collection of Buddha statues. Mahamuni Pagoda. The Shwe Inbin Monastery. The Golden Palace Monastery. Kuthodaw Pagoda the world's largest book, made of marble. Mandalay is also a major crafts center for silk and cotton weaving. Mandalay Hill for sunset.

Day 12, Feb. 4 (SAT) MANDALAY to INLE LAKE

MEALS: (B)

Flight to Heho and overland transfer to the lakeside town of Nyuangshwe. Free afternoon to explore the local area and rest & relax.

Day 13, Feb. 5 (SUN) INLE LAKE

MEALS: (B)

Guided boat tour of Inle Lake. We'll see local life on the lake including fisherman who use a distinctive leg-rowing technique on their boats.



There is also a floating market which circles the lake every five days. Visit villages where you can browse local handicrafts. Free evening.

Day 14, Feb. 6 (M) INLE LAKE

MEALS: (B)

Free day to visit the Mingala morning market, Nyuangshwe's oldest Buddhist monastery, Yadana Man Aung Paya, Shwe Yan Pyay Monastery. Phaung Daw U Pagoda, home to gold-leaf Buddha statues. Or visit Phaung Daw Oo Paya, the most religious site in the region. Stop in the silk-weaving village of Inn Paw Khone, where weavers create traditional longyi and other garments from the fibrous lotus root. Visit a cigar factory in Nampan Village, where women hand-roll cheroot cigars. See a traditional puppet show. Take a cooking class. Hike the mountains to the Pindaya Caves, one of the Golden Caves in Shan state. Pilgrims flock here to worship the 8,000 golden Buddha images within the caverns, tunnels and chambers of the huge limestone cave.



Day 15, Feb. 7 (T) INLE LAKE to HEHO to USA

MEALS: (B)

Overland to Heho and flight to either Yangon, Mandalay, Bangkok or back to the USA. Note: If you are flying out today, book a flight post-4 pm as domestic flights are often delayed and you could arrive late from Heho and miss your outbound flight.

INCLUDED IN LAND PRICE:

Meals (14 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 4 dinners)
Accommodation (14 nights)

TRIP DEPOSIT & REFUND POLICY:

This trip is small, only 6-12 people, and fills quickly. A \$300 trip deposit holds your place on this trip. This \$300 deposit is fully refundable up to 120 days prior to the trip departure to Myanmar. Land refunds are 75% refundable up to 90 days prior to trip departure; 50% refundable up to 60 days; 25% up to 45 days; no refund at 44-0 days. Air refunds are based on airline policy.

To pay your \$300 trip deposit, go to www.GinaHenry.com and click on "Travel with Gina" and you will see the "Paypal" credit card option. Or you can pay with credit card by calling Gina at 512-751-5096. You can also mail a check or money order to: Gina Henry / Go Global Tours, PO Box 632222, Nacogdoches, TX 75963.

TRIP INSURANCE is highly recommended. Gina recommends TRAVELGUARD Gold Insurance. To book this insurance, go to www.GinaHenry.com (click on “Travel with Gina” to see the TravelGuard logo).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Gina Henry at 512-751-5096 or email GinaHenryTravel@gmail.com