

Myanmar

PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR



Myanmar formerly known as Burma is a mystical country centred amongst Southeast Asia's more common destinations, yet still remaining relatively unknown. After many years of harsh repression from the military regime, it has only recently opened up to the outside world. As such, Myanmar is one of the least developed and least Western-influenced countries in the world, providing many attractive and unique photographic opportunities. From ancient civilisations to the friendly and happy people, Myanmar promises to be a feast for the lens and is highly regarded as one of the best destinations in the world for travel photography.

Highlights

- Yangon, formerly known as Rangoon, with its impressive colonial and spiritual heritage and the magnificent 2500-year-old Shwedagon Pagoda.
- Inle Lake with its spectacular stilted villages, unique leg-rowing fisherman, bustling local markets and lakeside life.
- Mandalay, the centre of skilled craftsmanship and the religious centre of Buddhist Monks.
- U Bein Bridge, the world's longest teak wood bridge.
- Bagan with more than 2000 temples, pagodas and other religious structures dating back to the early 11th century.

Details

- Duration: **13 days**, including arrival and departure
- Departure date: **25th November 2017**
- Group size will be a minimum of **4 people** and maximum of **8 people**
- Price: 10 year celebration discounted price of **US \$4995** per person twin share for land only content until **30 June 2017**. Full price is **US \$5495** per person twin share for land only content. A small group surcharge of **US \$300** will apply for groups of 5 or less people.
- We will make every effort to match up single travellers who wish to travel at twin share rates. For anyone requiring a single room, there may be an additional charge of **USD \$749***.
- Optional hot air balloon flight: **US\$320**
- Return international airfare departing Sydney/Melbourne is estimated at or less than **AUD \$1300** depending on carrier and time when booked.



Included

The complete tour as per itinerary, four domestic flights within Myanmar, domestic airport and airline taxes/charges, arrival/departure transfers, clean twin share accommodation (3-4 star), in country ground transport by private air-conditioned vehicles with drivers, private boats as per itinerary and fully escorted by an experienced professional Australian photographic tour leader and local guides. All meals as specified in the itinerary (B/L/D), purified drinking water, admissions and camera fees.

Not included

Return international airfare to Yangon, visa, personal travel insurance (requirement of joining tour), hot air balloon flight, meals not indicated in program, additional beverages such as soft drinks and alcohol, activities during free time, laundry, items of personal nature, tips and gratuities, excess baggage fee.



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Tour Itinerary

Day 1: AUSTRALIA – BANGKOK – YANGON (D)

Upon arrival in Yangon we will be greeted by our local guide and taken to a local restaurant for dinner before being transferred to our hotel. Yangon, formerly known as Rangoon is known with its impressive colonial and spiritual heritage and the magnificent 2500-year-old Shwedagon Pagoda.



Day 2: YANGON (B,L,D)

After breakfast we visit Chauk Htut Gyi Pagoda (70 m long reclining Buddha image) followed by Kalaywa Tawya Monastery where over 1200 monks and novices reside. Here we enjoy a great photo shoot of the novices bathing and having their daily meal in the hall.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we travel downtown to see and photograph the old colonial quarter before visiting the lively and colourful China town. Dinner will be at a local restaurant with a great view over the city.

Day 3: YANGON – INLE LAKE (B,L,D)

We depart early for our flight to Heho. Upon arrival, we proceed to Nyaung Shwe, the main gateway to Inle Lake, stopping along the way to visit and photograph a traditional umbrella making workshop.

Our transport around the lake for the following two and a half days will be by long-tail boat, offering unique photographic opportunities. Our program will be dependent on where the five-day rotating markets are scheduled to be.

In addition to attending the local markets, we will also have the opportunity to visit cheroot, weaving and blacksmith workshops. Special photo shoots will also be arranged with local Padaung (Long-necked) women and the unique fisherman who row with one leg. We will also visit the famous Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda which houses five small gilded images of Buddha, which have been covered in gold leaf to the point that their original forms can no longer be seen.



Day 4-5: INLE LAKE (B,L,D)

The best time to photograph at Inle Lake is early morning, so we will be making the most of our time there. One morning we will enjoy a slow cruise through the stilted villages to photograph the houses and their reflections, as well as people going about their daily lives. On the second morning we enjoy an amazing morning shoot with the one-legged rowing fishermen.

We will also visit the Pa-oh village of In Dein where we will explore the village, visiting a local school, and wandering through the beautiful picturesque ancient stupas. There is much to see and photograph in Inle Lake, and our program will be finalised on arrival.

Day 6: INLE LAKE – MANDALAY (B,L,D)

Today we depart Inle Lake and return to Heho for our flight to Mandalay. Keen photographers are welcome to rise early and seek out vantage points around the lodge to photograph our final sunrise over the lake. We then return to Nyaung Shwe before visiting Shwe Yan Pyay Monastery, a popular photographic stop in Myanmar.

On arrival in Mandalay, we proceed to Me Nu Ok Kyaung (Me Nu's Brick Monastery) where we enjoy a special photo shoot with local novices/monks.



Day 7: MANDALAY (B,L,D)

This morning we rise early to photograph the sun rising over Mandalay Palace and the local monks/novices walking the streets of Mandalay to collect their daily alms.

After breakfast, we transfer to the jetty and take a private boat to visit Mingun, an unfinished pagoda which would have been the largest in the world if it had ever been completed. The pagoda is also location of the largest ringing bell in the world, weighing in at 90 tonnes. We will also arrange a special shoot at Hsinbyume Pagoda with local novices.

Lunch will be provided on the boat whilst we make our way back to Mandalay. In the afternoon we visit a local Nunnery before making our way to Amarapura, the former capital from 1783 to 1821 and 1842 to 1859. We end the day watching and photographing the sunset over U Bein Bridge from small Sampan boats. U Bein Bridge is a beautiful 200-year-old teak bridge said to be the longest in the world. The bridge's attraction however is the hundreds of locals, monks and fisherman making their way back and forth, affording us the opportunity to get some great silhouette shots.

Day 8: MANDALAY (B,L,D)

This morning we depart early for U Bein Bridge to photograph sunrise. This is a very different experience to the sunset shoot the day before, as there will be very few tourists on the bridge.

After breakfast we visit to Kuthodaw Pagoda, whose 729 marble stone slabs of Buddhist scriptures have earned it the title of the 'World's Biggest Book' and Shwe Kyaung Monastery, the only remaining building from the 19th century Royal Palace which is known for its exquisite woodcarving. Late morning we explore and photograph a street famous for marble carving before going to lunch at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon we travel to a pottery village outside of Mandalay and depending on the time of our return, we may have the option of venturing down to the Ayarwaddy River for sunset.



Day 9: MANDALAY - BAGAN (B,L,D)

This morning we depart early for our flight to Bagan. With more than 2000 temples, pagodas and other religious structures dating back to the early 11th century, Bagan is one of the world's greatest archaeological sites and one of the very best destinations for photography. The following days in Bagan will be filled with numerous photographic opportunities from beautiful sunrises and sunsets to architectural and controlled shoots with locals. There is also the option of booking a place on the popular hot air balloon flight at an additional cost!

Upon arrival we visit the main entrance passageway into Shwezigon Pagoda for a special photo shoot before proceeding to lunch.

Mid-afternoon we visit Shinpinthalyaung Temple with its 18m long reclining Buddha, Myay Bon Thar Phayar Hla and Ananda Temple, one of Bagan's best known and most beautiful temples. Sunset shoot will be at Pyathada Paya temple, a very popular location for tourists.

Day 10: BAGAN (B,L,D)

For those who have chosen to do the optional hot air balloon flight, it will be an early rise. You will be transferred to the balloon launch site by vintage bus, where after a briefing you board the balloon in time for sunset. The flight will last between 40 minutes and an hour depending on the wind and concludes with a champagne breakfast.

After breakfast we visit the less Pa Hto Tha Mya with its giant Buddha statue and Kyauk Gu Umin, a stone cave temple.

Mid-afternoon we drive to Sulamuni Temple in hope of photographing the goat herders in the late afternoon light. We then take a short drive to a hill near Oh Hpoke Kone where we will photograph sunset. Tonight we will enjoy dinner with a traditional marionette show.



Day 11: BAGAN (B,L,D)

We rise early to photograph sunrise from Shwe Gu Gyi Temple with the hot air balloons floating past in the distance. After breakfast back at the hotel, we go to less known Ta Mee Hwet Gu where we enjoy a special photo shoot with two Novices. We then stop to visit Hti Lo Min Lo Temple before enjoying lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch we go directly to a lacquerware workshop before visiting Nat Taung Kyaung Wooden Monastery where we photograph a couple of Novices in a very ornately carved doorway. We then continue to Swan Inn Wungyi temple for our final controlled shoot before sunset at North Gu Ni.

After dinner we have the option of returning to North Gu Ni to do some astrophotography or light painting.

Day 12: BAGAN – YANGON (B,L,D)

We arise early to prepare for our flight to Yangon, stopping to visit Shwezigon Pagoda on our way to the airport. On arrival in Yangon we visit and photograph Danyin Gone market before enjoying a train ride to downtown Yangon.

After lunch at a local restaurant we check into our hotel before catching a local ferry to Dala Town, offering us an opportunity to photograph the ferry activity and the town. We then continue to the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda for our final evening shoot.



Day 13: YANGON – DEPARTURE (B,L)

On our final morning we rise early to take a walk through the local fish market. We then return to the hotel for breakfast and preparation for our departure. Those interested in catching up on some last minute shopping can walk to the nearby Scott’s Market.

After an early lunch we travel to the airport for our departure.

Day 14: ARRIVE IN AUSTRALIA

Conditions

- A small group surcharge of **USD \$300** will apply to groups of 5 or less people.
- Pricing and itinerary subject to change without prior notice.
- Any unused services are non-refundable.
- Deposit required to secure booking and cancellation penalty will apply.
- All participants are required to take out comprehensive travel insurance as a condition of the tour. The travel insurance should cover you for medical costs associated with hospitalisation, emergency travel and repatriation back to Australia. Proof of adequate insurance is required as a condition of the tour. If you arrive without a policy, you will be required to purchase one prior to departing Sydney.
- It is also advisable to make relevant arrangements for your insurance to cover your luggage and camera equipment.

If you are interested in joining us on this fantastic photographic tour or require additional information, please contact:

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All images above were taken on past Myanmar tours



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