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# THE HEART OF MYANMAR (BURMA)

12 days, Yangon to Yangon

Trip code ABANG

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Burmese Political Satire Performance, Mandalay
- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Local Burmese Village Trek, Kalaw
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Arrival transfer
- Tour of Mandalay
- Boat trip and tour of Mingun village
- Burmese cabaret performance
- Visit Sagaing and the ancient city of Amarapura
- Visit Kyan Sithar Umin monastery and talk with a monk
- Irrawaddy River boat trip
- Guided tour of Bagan archaeological zone
- Visit Shwe Yan Pyay Monastery
- Tour Nyaung Shwe by trishaw
- Boat tour of Inle Lake including floating villages and markets
- Visit a cheroot factory
- Visit Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda and the Nge Phe Chaung Monastery
- Tour Shwedagon Pagoda
- Interesting articles, helpful tips, and photography advice from National Geographic before you depart
- Internal flights
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing July 10th, 2015 - July 7th, 2016

## ITINERARY

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**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

## YANGON

Arrive any time today. An arrival transfer is included.

Today is arrival day so there are no activities planned. You are free to relax and explore the city. Following a group meeting, we have an optional group dinner where you can sample some of the local cuisine.

Please note that most nationalities requires a visa to enter Myanmar (Burma); please double check this with your travel agent or local Myanmar Embassy prior to your arrival.



### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Arrival Transfer

Yangon International Airport - Yangon

Arrival transfer included.

#### ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Day 2

## YANGON/MANDALAY

Fly to Mandalay and explore this ancient city, including the Golden Palace Monastery, Kuyuk Taw Gyi Pagoda, Kuthodaw Pagoda, and Mahamuni Temple. Climb Mandalay Hill for magnificent views of the surrounding countryside. This evening, visit a local home and enjoy a local comedy cabaret performance by the infamous Moustache Brothers.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Plane

Yangon - Mandalay

1h30m

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... yup, it is a plane, actually.

Private Vehicle

Mandalay International Airport - Mandalay

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Mandalay Hill Climb

Mandalay Hill - Mandalay

Enjoy the climb up this 240m (790 ft) hill known for the plethora of pagodas and monasteries sitting atop it. Enjoy the view you've earned on the steep hike. Of course, if you prefer to save your energy, feel free to take the elevator to the top.

Shwenandaw Kyaung (Golden Palace Monastery) Visit

Mandalay

Enjoy your visit to this stunning monastery, known as the "Golden Monastery," that was originally part of the royal palace at Amarapura. Admire its delicate wood carvings of Buddhist myths. The monastery is a fantastic example of traditional Myanmar architecture.

Kyauk Taw Gyi Pagoda Visit

Mandalay Hill - Mandalay

View the massive marble Buddha at this beautiful pagoda. The marble is from Sagyin quarry and took 10,000 men almost two weeks to transfer from the riverside to its current location.

Kuthodaw Pagoda Visit

Mandalay Hill - Mandalay

Visit this stunning pagoda with its gold and white buildings in a traditional Myanmar style. Kuthodaw Pagoda is a Buddhist stupa that claims the honour of housing the world's largest book. A spiritually significant place for followers of Theravada Buddhism, this site will be fascinating to all visitors regardless of religion.

Mahamuni Pagoda (Buddha Temple) Visit Mandalay

Visit the 100-year-old legendary Arakan Buddha, which stands at 3.5m (11.5 ft) tall. Made of bronze and covered in gold leaf, this gorgeous Buddha is a major pilgrimage site. Gaze up at the stunning statue and learn more about the significance of this temple.

#### ACTIVITY

Visit a local home and enjoy a performance by the infamous Moustache Brothers. Banned from performing in public due to their political views, the Mandalay-based trio incorporate music, skits, and dance into their comedy cabaret which is presented in English but follows a traditional Burmese art form called a-nyeint pwe. This very unique experience offers local insight into the political climate of Myanmar (especially interesting in light of the recent election) and allows locals to share their views on current affairs.

Day 3

## MANDALAY

Take a boat to the village of Mingun to visit the pagodas and local craftspeople. Visit the spiritual centre of Myanmar at Sagaing and the ancient royal capital of Amarapura.

Embark on a boat trip up the Irrawaddy River from Mandalay to the riverside village of Mingun, enjoying the picturesque scenery of this river and the lifestyles of the local people who live and work on these waters. We continue by road to Sagaing. After lunch we visit Amarapura, a former capital whose name means "city of immortality."



### Meals included

Breakfast



### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Mingun Village Boat Trip and Visit Mingun

Take a relaxing boat trip in this serene village. Visit the Mingun Bell, which weighs more than 87 tonnes and is more than 3.7m (12 ft) tall. It's the world's largest uncracked bell and it's in good ringing condition.

Sagaing Hill Visit Sagaing

Covered with 600 white-painted pagodas and monasteries, Sagaing Hill is widely regarded as the religious centre of Myanmar. It is home to 3,000 monks and 100 meditation centres. Visit pagodas such as Swan Oo Pon Nya Shin and U Min Thone Sae while in the area.

Amarapura Visit Amarapura

Explore Amarapura, the former capital whose name means "city of immortality." Visit a silk-weaving workshop and then visit Mahagandayon monastery, where over 1,000 monks reside. Enjoy the magnificent view from U Bein Bridge, which is over 200 years old and made of teak.

Private Vehicle Mandalay

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Day 4

## MANDALAY

Continue exploring Mandalay and take some free time on your own.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Free Time

Mandalay

Enjoy some time exploring the markets, colonial era houses, and botanical garden in this cool and comfortable town.

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### Optional Activities - Day 4

Botanical Garden Visit

Pyin Oo Lwin District

Walk through the lush foliage and enjoy the flora and fauna of this beautifully groomed botanical garden.

Day 5

## MANDALAY/BAGAN

Relax and watch the sights on a full-day cruise down the Irrawaddy River to ancient Bagan.

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the jetty for the boat to Bagan (Nyaung Oo). The journey takes 7-11 hours depending on the time of year and water level. On board there is a small café selling drinks and light meals (sandwiches, snacks and instant noodles usually).

When water levels are insufficient for the boat, we will use the bus for that part of the journey. Boat cancellations typically happen between April and September.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Private Vehicle

Mandalay

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Ayeyarwady River Cruise

Mandalay - Bagan

11h-12h

177km

Enjoy a relaxing day floating down the Ayeyarwady. Watch daily life unfold along the river as you cruise by, taking a well-deserved rest from the hustle and bustle of exploration.

Day 6

## BAGAN

Explore the ancient sites of Bagan including Shwezigon Pagoda, Gubyaukgyi (Wetkyi-in) cave temple, and Manuha and Nan Paya temples. Also visit Kyan Sithar Umin monastery where we have a talk with a monk on Buddhism and daily life.

Enjoy two days exploring Bagan, the first (and very beautiful) capital of the Burmese and founded in the 11th century. This is one of the most important temples and pagoda complexes in Asia. We'll wander local markets, historical pagodas, a handicraft workshop, a local monastery, and ancient temples. Enjoy an unforgettable sunset over the plains from the upper terrace of one of the temples.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Bagan Temple Pass

Bagan

Enjoy a guided tour of beautiful Bagan. Visit the colourful Nyaung Oo Market and the golden stupa of Shwezigon Pagoda for an introduction to Bagan's rich history. Explore Wetkyi-In Gubyaukgyi, a cave temple with exquisite jataka mural paintings, and the elegant Htilominlo Temple, noted for its fine plaster carvings and glazed sandstone decorations.

Private Vehicle

Bagan

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Kyan Sithar Umin Monastery Visit

Bagan

You're invited to the Kyan Sithar Umin monastery to discuss Buddhism and daily life with one of the resident monks. You'll come away feeling at peace and in a new frame of mind.

Day 7

## BAGAN

Travel to the outskirts of town to a village in the middle of a toddy palm farm. Watch as the locals scale the trees and harvest the juice of the palm fruit and then process it into alcohol or molasses.

You have the option to take a hot-air balloon flight over the plains of Bagan.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Free Time

Bagan

Enjoy some free time to explore this beautiful city. The morning begins with more sightseeing, the schedule to be set by the guide and group depending on their interests. We recommend a visit to one of the morning markets as well as more temples.

Toddy Palm Farm Visit

Bagan

Learn more about this plant, which is important to Myanmar. It's also used to make palm wine.

Private Vehicle

Bagan

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

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### Optional Activities - Day 7

Ballooning in Bagan (Oct - Mar)

Bagan

Wake up early and enjoy light refreshments before your hot air balloon launch. Take to the air with a skilled pilot and experience the beauty of early morning Bagan. Drift over villages, temples, and serene landscapes as the sun rises in the sky. After landing, toast the unforgettable journey with a glass of champagne.

Please note that passengers must weigh less than 125kg (280 lb) to participate.

Day 8

## BAGAN/INLE LAKE

Travel by plane, bus, and boat to serene Inle Lake. En route, visit Shwe Yan Pyay Monastery, Nyaung Shwe by cycle rickshaw, and observe floating villages and gardens.

This morning, fly from Bagan to Heho and then travel by road to Nyaung Shwe, the gateway village to Inle Lake. Along the way, stop at the wooden Shwe Yan Pyay Monastery, which features beautiful carvings and a collection of Buddha images. Also visit around Nyaung Shwe by cycle rickshaw, passing the many monasteries and cruising along quiet residential streets.

We then board a boat and set off down the canal toward the main part of the lake, passing villages built on stilts over the lake, inhabited by the local Intha people.



### Meals included

Breakfast

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### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Plane **Bagan - Heho** 1h45m

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... yup, it is a plane, actually.

Private Vehicle **Heho - Nyaungshwe** 45m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Nyaung Shwe Visit **Nyaungshwe**

Visit Nyaung Shwe by trishaw, passing the many monasteries and cruising along quiet residential streets. You'll also visit the tomato house where the lake's freshly collected produce is sorted for distribution up country.

Boat **Nyaungshwe - Inle Lake** 1h

Board a boat and set off down the canal toward the main part of Inle lake. Pass villages built on stilts over the lake, inhabited by the local Intha people. Observe the leg-rowing fishermen and see their floating gardens built up from strips of water hyacinth and mud and anchored to the bottom with bamboo poles.

Day 9

## INLE LAKE

Explore the lake by boat and visit the morning market, floating villages, and a cheroot factory, as well as the Phaung Daw Oo pagoda and Inthien temple complex. Along the way, visit the home of a local chef and learn the basics of Burmese cooking. Sit back and relax in this charming setting on Inle Lake and enjoy a scrumptious home-cooked meal.

Depending on its location, we start with a visit to the morning market, which rotates locations on a five-day basis. (Note: there are no markets on full-moon or dark-moon days.)

Our boat then takes us down a winding river to Inthien, with its one thousand stupas dotting the hillside. Back out onto the lake we visit Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, the lake's main pagoda and monastery, which contains five sacred Buddha images covered in gold leaf. Explore the local crafts of Inle Lake with a stop at the weaving village of Inpawkhone and a cheroot factory, where typical Burmese cigars are made by hand. Mid-day, we are welcomed into a local chef's home and enjoy a home cooked meal of traditional Burmese dishes. This is a memorable demonstration and meal and a chance to learn more about family life and traditions in Myanmar.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Boat Inle Lake

Climb aboard and get your float on.

Morning Market Visit Inle Lake

Explore this daily market, which attracts people from the lake's shore who gather to buy and sell their wares. Keep an eye out for Pa-Oh, Inthar, and Shan people in their traditional outfits. Wander amid the stalls where your guide will explain what the local produce and goods for sale are.

Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda Visit Inle Lake

Visit the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda monastery. While open to everyone, only men are allowed to place a gold leaf on the images. Look through the shops selling traditional Shan and Myanmar items.

Nga Phe Chaung Monastery Visit Inle Lake

This beautiful monastery houses dozens of amazing Shan Buddha images.

Cheroot Factory Visit [Inle Lake](#)

Learn about how these typical Burmese cigars are rolled by hand at a factory where they're produced.

Burmese Cooking Demonstration [Inle Lake](#)

Visit the home of a local chef to learn about the basics of Burmese food, cooking and daily life. Sit back and relax in this charming setting on Inle Lake and enjoy a scrumptious home-cooked meal.

Day 10

## INLE LAKE/KALAW

Travel by boat and bus to the cooler air of this former British hill station. Take a half-day hike and enjoy lunch in the hills around Kalaw. Visit villages that have been helped by the Rural Development Society, a community-based organization that provides water, builds schools and libraries, and finances small-scale community projects.

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### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch

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### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Boat Inle Lake - Nyaungshwe 1h

Climb aboard and get your float on.

Private Vehicle Nyaungshwe - Kalaw 1h30m-2h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

#### ACTIVITY

Take a hike and enjoy a local lunch in the hills around Kalaw visiting villages that have been helped by the Rural Development Society, a community-based organization which provides water supply, microfinance, libraries, and schools to rural areas. Learn about this amazing organization and meet local people who have benefitted and become better able to support their families and their community.

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### Optional Activities - Day 10

Trekking Kalaw

Lace up your boots and get ready to enjoy a trek.

Day 11

## KALAW/YANGON

Fly back to Yangon and visit the Shwedagon Pagoda. Enjoy free time to explore and shop in the old capital.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Private Vehicle

Kalaw - Heho

45m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Plane

Heho - Yangon

1h

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... yup, it is a plane, actually.

Arrival Transfer

Yangon International Airport - Yangon

Transfer to hotel.

Shwedagon Pagoda Visit

Yangon

Enjoy your visit to this gorgeous pagoda, which is believed to be 2,500 years old. The central stupa, glittering in the soft morning light, is surrounded by dozens of intricately decorated buildings and statues and is considered to be the symbol of Yangon.

Depart any time today.

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## Meals included

Breakfast

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## TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Departure Day

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

## What's included

- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Burmese Political Satire Performance, Mandalay
- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Local Burmese Village Trek, Kalaw
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Arrival transfer
- Tour of Mandalay
- Boat trip and tour of Mingun village
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- Visit a cheroot factory
- Visit Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda and the Nge Phe Chaung Monastery
- Tour Shwedagon Pagoda

- Interesting articles, helpful tips, and photography advice from National Geographic before you depart
- Internal flights
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

## **What are the main highlights of this trip?**

Talk with a monk about Buddhism and daily life, learn the basics of Burmese cuisine with a cooking demonstration from a local chef, travel past floating villages on tranquil Inle Lake, explore the pagodas and monasteries of this ancient land

## **What are the main highlights of this trip?**

Talk with a monk about Buddhism and daily life, learn the basics of Burmese cuisine with a cooking demonstration from a local chef, travel past floating villages on tranquil Inle Lake, explore the pagodas and monasteries of this ancient land

## **Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?**

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## **Is there a travel disclaimer for my itinerary I should review before booking this trip?**

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?

### 1. SHWEDAGON PAGODA

From October 2018 to March 2019, Shwedagon Pagoda will be under restoration. In October and November it will be partially covered by bamboo scaffolding and from December until March it will be fully covered.

### 2. MONEY

Note that it is best to travel with US dollars in cash when visiting Myanmar. There are no ATMs and the use of credit cards and travellers checks is virtually impossible, as very few places are willing to accept them. Please arrive with enough US dollars, in good condition, to last you the length of your stay. Changing money into the local currency, kyat, is a good idea for small transactions and can be done upon arrival at any of the various money changers in town. Please note that if carrying US Dollars, they should be in excellent condition (ie- without any small tears, creases, marks or faded in any way) and printed recently (after the year 2001).

### 3. LUGGAGE WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Please note, there may be a weight restriction for the internal flight on this tour. Each passenger is allowed to carry one checked bag with a maximum weight of 15 kg (33lbs). Additional bags or excess weight charges may apply. These charges are the responsibility of the passengers.

## What is the group leader like?

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting- we think it's the best of both worlds.

## How large will the group be?

Max 16, Avg 12.

## What meals are included in this trip?

11 breakfasts, 2 lunches

## What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Private bus/van, plane, boat, walking.

## **Are local flights included in the cost of the trip?**

All local flights are included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Please note, there may be a weight restriction for the internal flight on this tour. Each passenger is allowed to carry one checked bag with a maximum weight of 15 kg (33lbs). Additional bags or excess weight charges may apply. These charges are the responsibility of the passengers.

## **Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?**

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## **Where will we stay during the trip?**

Hotels (11 nts).

## **Will I get my own room?**

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

## **What is the joining hotel?**

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

## What are the joining instructions?

An arrival transfer is included when you arrive on Day 1, or if you arrive up to three days prior provided that you have booked your pre-accommodation through National Geographic Journeys in our joining hotel. Due to customer experience and quality considerations, all services related to the tour must be continuous.

Our driver will be waiting for you with a National Geographic Journeys sign with your name on it, and they will be waiting for you outside the luggage hall. There most likely will be many signs, so please check carefully for your name.

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day. Upon arrival to the city on day 1, please make your way to the joining hotel via your included transfer. Details on where to meet your transfer can be found in your voucher notes or on the G Adventures app.

If you have booked pre-tour accommodations through G Adventures, please note that you must contact us to confirm the included arrival transfer. Check-in time at your start hotel will be in the afternoon.

Once you arrive at the hotel, look for a note or bulletin board in the reception with a note from your CEO. This note will give the details of your Welcome Meeting on day 1.

Your CEO will contact you at the hotel on Day 1 and make sure you are settled comfortably. If you arrive late, they will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning. Your CEO will organize a short meeting soon after arrival, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip.

## What happens if I experience problems when arriving?

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your CEO, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

## Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call the G Adventures Local Office and then our G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below). If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

### AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand

During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time)

From outside Thailand: +66 2 508 8630

From within Thailand: 02 508 8630

After hours emergency number:

From outside Thailand: +66 87 049 6074

From within Thailand: 087 049 6074

G Adventures Local Representative (Burma)

Emergency Number: +95 1 293 464

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## Are there any additional packing suggestions I should consider?

We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage. As a rule we try not to have to walk more than 15-20 minutes with your bags which is why we recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size (no XXL ones please!) as they need to fit with you in buses or on trains. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water, cameras and other electronics like ipods and mobile phones.

# What should be on my packing list?

## Conservative Dress:

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

## Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

## Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear
- Hat
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

**Smart Dress:**

- Smart outfit (For evenings out)

**Warm Weather:**

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear

## When can I do my laundry on this trip?

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## What are the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

Please visit <http://evisa.moip.gov.mm/> for the full details of the E-Visa approval letter process.

The cost of the visa is approximately \$50 USD.

When filling in the form please enter the following:

Purpose of Entry: Tourism

Address in Myanmar: please use the start hotel for your tour (listed in the Joining Hotel section)

Agency Name: SunBird Tours

Agency Contact Number: 0095 1 293464/ 294050

The approval process may take up to 5 business days and the letter is valid for 90 days from the date of issue. Once the evisa approval letter is received by email, print out the approval letter and bring it with you to present upon arrival.

## **What should I consider when planning my personal expenses and discretionary spending for this itinerary?**

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip:

We recommend roughly 300-350 USD for spending money on this trip. This can be exchanged on Day 1 in Yangon with some advice from your CEO. This allowance would cover food, drinks, camera fees and most optional activities (except for the hot air balloon). If you are a keen shopper and/or drinker, we recommend budgeting a bit more for those activities.

Please bring **ONLY** new, MINT CONDITION US dollars to Burma with you. Be specific with your bank when buying cash. If you are in the US, please be sure to go to your bank and request **NEW** bills- older bills with wrinkles, tears, rips, creases or marks will not be accepted.

## **What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?**

During this tour the local currencies you will use are the Burmese Kyat and the US Dollar. As currency exchange rates in South East Asia do fluctuate, we ask that you refer to the following website for the most up to date daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for each of the above mentioned currencies.

ATMs are available in every major town in Burma but they are not always accessible, may not be functioning or may be closed. We recommend bringing MINT CONDITION US dollars to Burma and exchanging it on arrival. See "Spending Money" for more information on budgeting.

Travellers cheques can be tricky, timely and expensive to exchange. While we do not recommend that you bring them as your primary source of funds, it is great to have one or two cheques in case of emergency. Thomas Cook or American Express travellers' cheques in US currency are the easiest to exchange. Cash advances can also be made with some banks but are time consuming and tend to have high fees attached. Credit cards can be used at some upmarket restaurants, and at some larger stores if shopping for big items. When purchasing US dollars please make sure that the notes are new and in good condition. Notes older than 2003, or with any tears or blemishes may not be accepted. Be fussy with your bank when buying cash!

## **How much emergency money should I bring on this trip?**

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$250 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## **Do I need to pay a departure tax?**

You may be required to pay a departure tax of USD20 upon leaving Myanmar.

## Should I be tipping on my trip?

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group.

Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$1.5-\$3.5 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$20-25 USD per person, per week can be used.

## What activities are optional on this trip?

### Pyin Oo Lwin District

- Botanical Garden Visit

### Bagan

- Ballooning in Bagan (Oct - Mar)

### Kalaw

- Trekking

## Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our CEO's are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

## What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

[www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

## What rules should I know before joining this trip?

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

## Is travel insurance required for my trip?

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

## What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

## How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

Earn 5% off your next G Adventures Tour (up to \$100 USD)\*

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us and to thank you for your time, we are pleased to offer a 5% discount (up to a maximum of \$100 USD) off your next G Adventures holiday. All you need to do is submit the form within 4 weeks of the completion of your tour, and you'll be able to join the thousands of travellers who have taken 2, 3, 4 or even 10 or more tours with us!

Discount cannot be combined with other offers or applied to 'Independent' style trips. Maximum discount value is \$100 USD (or equivalent currency). Valid for new bookings only. G Adventures reserves the right to withdraw or modify this offer at any time without notice. Limited to one discount per person.

## Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## How old must I be to join this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

## Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

## What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

## Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.