

# Classic Journeys **ADVENTURE TRAVEL**

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**Dates: 16<sup>th</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

- ◆ **AMAZING TOUR OF MYANMAR**
- ◆ **PHOTOGRAPH MYANMAR'S GLITTERING BUDDHIST MONUMENTS AND FRIENDLY PEOPLE**
- ◆ **STUNNING LOCATIONS INCLUDING OLD BAGAN - HOME TO HUNDREDS OF GOLDEN PAGODAS AND ANCIENT TEMPLES, INLE LAKE DOTTED WITH FLOATING GARDENS AND STILTED VILLAGES. MANDALAY - THE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS HEART OF THE COUNTRY**
- ◆ **SUNSET ON INLE LAKE AND THE AYEYARWADDY RIVER**

## INTRODUCTION

Immortalized by the likes of Kipling, Masters and Orwell, the mystical land of Myanmar, (formally known as Burma) offers the traveller and photographer a kaleidoscope of colours and culture that will remain with you for a lifetime.

Join us as we explore and photograph perhaps the least discovered country in Southeast Asia. Until recently closed to western tourism, Myanmar stands as one of the world's newest destinations. Myanmar is known as the Golden Land not only for its glittering Buddhist monuments and rich cultural heritage, but also for the phenomenal natural beauty found in its forests, rivers, green valleys and seacoast. However, it is the inhabitants that give Myanmar its characteristic charm. They have often been described as the most friendly, open-hearted people in the world.

Our itinerary includes Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda which dominates the urban skyline, the ancient city of Bagan where thousands of gilded temple spires fill the valley, Inle Lake, where we will photograph local fishermen, bustling local markets and lakeside life seemingly unchanged for centuries. In Mandalay we will photograph monks crossing U Bein bridge, the longest teak bridge in the world.

Each location provides a wide variety of opportunities including early morning hill-tribe markets, street photography, fabulous landscapes, portraits and still life.

Burma, is a country of incredible diversity and our journey will be full of "authentic" travel experiences.

### **Day 01            Depart UK**

### **Day 02            Arrive Yangon**

Arrive Yangon Airport (formerly known as Rangoon), once the capital of Myanmar. This city is also called "Garden City of the East" because of its many parks and beautiful lakes. On arrival met at Yangon International airport and transferred to our hotel.



The afternoon is free to relax or begin your explorations of this amazing city. Late afternoon meet other group members and and enjoy dinner together. Overnight hotel (D)

### **Day 03            Yangon sightseeing**

We will visit the Shwedagon Pagoda. This is one of the most spectacular religious monuments of the world. The world famous stupa is 98 meters high and covered in gold. We will also visit the 70 meters long Reclining Buddha Chaukhtatkyi, a photo stop at the Kandawgyi Royal Lake, the Bogyoke Aung San (Scott) Market (closed on Monday and public holidays), the Botataung Pagoda, the two thousand year old Sule Pagoda, China Town and a fruit market. We will return to the Shwedagon Pagoda for sunset photography. A spectacular work of Burmese temple architecture, glowing in gold and adorned with diamonds, this is the holiest Buddhist shrine in Myanmar. Overnight hotel (BLD)



**Day 04                    Yangon - Bagan**

Morning transfer to the airport for the flight to Bagan. Our sightseeing and photography of one of Asia's most popular archeological destinations starts with busy Nyaung Oo Market. In the afternoon we visit Htilomindo Temple, Ananda Temple, Memalaungkyang Temple, with our final destination being Shwesandaw Pagoda where we photograph the vast pagoda-filled horizon at sunset. Bagan is one of the most significant ancient religious cities in Southeast Asia, fantastic temple ruins, making this one of the most amazing sights in Myanmar and a real wonder of the world. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 05                    Bagan – Popa - Bagan**

This morning we are up early and get into our horse drawn carriages for sunrise photography at the temples. After breakfast we have a day tour, through rural villages to Mt. Popa, a place of pilgrimage for Burmese of all walks of life. The mountain is an extinct volcano and according to legend, is the home of the 'Nats', or spirits. Close to the mountain is a village where we can see and photograph the palm sugar and oil cottage industries, which are in operation. Return to Bagan for sunset photography at Phat That Gyi Temple. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 06                    Bagan sightseeing**

Another early start for sunrise photography, this time at Minyangone or Shwesandaw Pagoda, depending upon lighting conditions. We return to our hotel for breakfast and then enjoy a guided tour of Bagan which will provide many photography opportunities. We will visit a lacquer workshop, Kyaukpataung City market, Chauk City Market and Minnanthu village. For those who wish we will return to Bagan temples for more sunset photography. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 07                    Bagan – Mandalay**

Fly to Mandalay, the economic centre of Burma and the country's 19<sup>th</sup> century capital. In the afternoon we visit Mandalay Hill and the City Palace. We will visit the Kuthodaw Pagoda at the foot of Mandalay Hill to see the world's largest 'book' (an entire Buddhist canon recorded on 729 stone tablets!). Mandalay hill is known for its abundance of pagodas and monasteries, and has been a major pilgrimage site for Burmese Buddhists for nearly two centuries. In the evening there is a night market to explore and photograph. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 08                    Amarapura – Inwa – Sagaing**

Today we travel to Amarapura, the City of Immortals, was a capital before Mandalay was built. In Amarapura we visit and photograph the Mahagandayone monastery, to observe the morning meal of hundreds of monks. We then go to Sagaing, a religious sanctuary with the town at the foot of the hills and hundreds of pagodas, monasteries and nunneries tucked into the surrounding valleys and hills. It's a photographer's paradise. The famous Sagaing Hill provides breath-taking views across the entire region and the clusters of pagodas that dot the surrounding hills. Sagaing, is a popular retreat for Buddhist devotees and the area is also famous for its silverware workshops. Overnight hotel (BLD)





**Day 09                    Mingun & Sunset at U Bein Bridge**

After breakfast we transfer across the city to Mandalay port where we will board our private boat for our 45 minute cruise along the Ayeyarwady River as far as the 18th century royal capital of Mingun, home to the world's largest ringing bell, weighing in at 87 tons. Mingun is also home to the unfinished Mingun Pagoda, which was built between 1790 and 1797 by King Bodawpaya. We return to Mandalay. Later in the afternoon we visit and photograph monks at sunset, crossing the U Bein Bridge, the world's longest teak bridge. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 10                    Mandalay – Heho – Pindaya – Kalaw**

Fly to Heho. Arrival at Heho airport and drive to Pindaya which is noted for its extensive limestone caves filled with Buddha images. It's a picturesque drive, passing through the PaO and Danu villages of Pwehla and Ji Chanzi and endless fields of dry cultivated mountain rice and potato. Along the way you will pass many farmers bringing their crops to the roadside by ox-cart, for collection by wholesalers from as far afield as Yangon or China.

Inside the Pindaya Caves are nearly 8,000 Buddha images that have been placed there over the centuries. Made of various materials and of different sizes, the statues are situated in every nook and cranny throughout the many cave chambers. We then continue our drive to Kalaw. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 11                    Kalaw – Inle Lake**

After breakfast we visit and photograph Kalaw market and then drive to Nyaung Shwe. Guided walking tour of Nyaung Shwe town including the many monasteries, pagodas and the local market before boarding a small boat and setting out onto Inle Lake. The narrow channels widen as we approach the lake proper, and you'll soon be crossing the broad and (usually) tranquil waters, with hills and mountains in every direction, the panorama is simply breathtaking. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 12                    Inle Lake sightseeing**

After breakfast we board our private boats to visit and photograph different lakeside markets where the hill tribes come to buy, sell and exchange all types of goods, including fish, produce, farm implements and handicrafts. The region is home to at least eight different tribes, who live both on and beside the lake. We will photograph the floating markets, floating vegetable gardens and visit several minority villages, including Inpawkhone, a floating village famed for its weaving. There will be time to visit the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, with its famous five golden statues and the old teak Ngaphechaung monastery. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 13                    Indain sightseeing**

Morning visit to the 5 days market (if today coincides with Inle market day) and continue our Inle Lake photography with a visit to Indain and its enchanting 17<sup>th</sup> century pagodas. To reach Indain and the nearby village we will take our boat up a small scenic creek that runs into Inle lake. We will visit and photograph the silk and lotus weaving industry, cheroot making and Shan traditional papermaking. If we are lucky we have a chance to see the "Padaung" (long neck) women who wear neck rings to stretch their necks. Overnight hotel (BLD)



**Day 14 Heho – Yangon**

After breakfast, transfer to Heho airport for the flight to Yangon. On arrival transfer to our hotel. Afternoon is free to relax, explore, shop and possibly one last visit to Shwedagon Pagoda for sunset. Overnight hotel (BLD)

**Day 15 Departure transfer**

Transfer to airport for your departure flight. (B)

*The day-to-day schedule should be taken only as a general guide. A variety of factors, including adverse weather conditions, difficulty with transportation and politics can lead to enforced changes. Because of this it is not possible to guarantee that any of our holidays will run exactly according to the planned itinerary. The trip leader will make any changes, which are necessary.*

B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner

**INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS**

If you would like Classic Journeys to book your international flights (UK clients), please tick the flight inclusive package box on the booking form. Please advise if you have a preferred airline you would like to travel with or if you have a preferred airport you would like to travel from. Classic Journeys will then book your international flights and advise you of the actual cost. To discuss your international flight options, please give the Classic Journeys office a call and we will advise on up to date flight prices and timings for your chosen trip.

**Baggage Allowance:** For hold luggage this is normally around 20kg and you should aim to keep to the airlines weight allowance. For internal flights the limit may be 15kg. Classic Journeys is not responsible for any excess baggage charges incurred.

**Land Only Clients:** Land only clients who are making their own flight arrangements should meet up with the group at the hotel in Yangon. We can arrange airport transfers if needed and will provide hotel contact details. If you have booked on a land only basis and are making your own flight arrangements, you must check with the Classic Journeys office that your chosen holiday has reached the minimum numbers required and is **guaranteed to operate** before paying for your air tickets. We cannot be held liable, in cases where we cancel your trip, for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made.

**PRICING**

If you choose the Land Only plus international flights package Classic Journeys will book your international flight and advise you of the cost. The price of the tour will be the Land Price plus the cost of international flights on your chosen airline. With most airlines, flights have to be paid for on making the flight booking and we will require full payment for the air tickets in order to purchase the tickets. In this situation we advise paying for your air tickets as soon as possible to secure the lowest fare. Airfares and taxes are subject to change and if the fare has increased before the final balance has been paid, the additional cost will be passed on and detailed on the invoice.

**IMPORTANT NOTES**

Myanmar is going through major changes at an elevated pace. We reserves the right to make any necessary amendments. We may need to look at alternative options to our preferred hotels, flight times and review costing accordingly. Many of the hotels now require up to a 50% deposit to guarantee bookings. We will inform you of the deposit requirement amount upon confirming your booking. Dealing with many of the local hotels, airlines and transportation suppliers in Myanmar has become rather unpredictable. Contracts are often recalled or even cancelled and sudden increases applied without prior notice. These types of events are beyond our company control. We do our best to honour quoted rates and always try to negotiate the best possible terms with our suppliers.

### **INCLUDED IN THE COST**

- Hotel accommodation on a twin share basis (unless single has been requested) for the nights listed in the itinerary.
- All meals from dinner on day 2 (arrival day in Yangon) to breakfast on day 15 (departure day from Yangon).
- Airport – Hotel – Airport Transfers.
- All internal transport as the itinerary
- Domestic flight tickets (Yangon/Bagan/Mandalay/Heho/Yangon)
- Local English speaking guides
- Boat rides, entrance fees at tourist sites

### **NOT INCLUDED IN THE COST**

- International flights
- Airport taxes
- Visa fees
- Travel Insurance
- Medical examination (if required) & vaccination costs
- Personal expenditure, bar bills, laundry, telephone calls, etc
- Porters, guides & other tips
- Meals not specified
- Personal clothing & equipment
- Optional trips
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond Classic Journeys control
- Anything not specified in the Cost Includes section

### **DEPOSITS**

Due to high demand and small number of rooms many of the hotels in Myanmar require up to 50% non-refundable deposit to guarantee reservations. We will advise the required amount on a case by case basis to guarantee the booking.

### **PASSPORT & VISA REQUIREMENTS**

You will require a passport valid for at least 6 months from the date of entry into Myanmar  
All travellers require an entry visa to Myanmar valid for the duration of their stay prior to their arrival and carry a passport which is valid for at least 6 months from the date of arrival in Myanmar.  
Passports should have at least 2 blank pages on arrival to Myanmar. We can obtain Visa on Arrival (VOA) permits for our group members for the full duration of your visit to the country.

### **GROUP SIZE**

This trip is definitely operating as Ann will be meeting John and Angela Walton in Bangkok (on their way from New Zealand) to fly to Yangon on the 17<sup>th</sup> March to commence this itinerary. This will be our first venture into Myanmar and promises to be an exciting adventure. There will be a strong emphasis on photography as Myanmar is one of THE best destinations for travel photography.

### **TOUR GRADE**

**EASY CULTURAL TOURING:** Most of this tour involves overland travel in comfortable vehicles. Some of the roads are poorly maintained and sections will have potholes. Be prepared for some early mornings.

## HEALTH & FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

The pace is considered easy and should enable anyone in good health to participate. While there are no specific physical requirements, it is important that travellers are in good health, have a positive attitude, a sense of humour and a spirit of adventure. Tours can consist of early starts, some long days or climbing into vehicles. Be prepared for some lengthy journeys, bumpy dirt roads or the occasional delay. The amount of walking involved in this trip varies.

Most of the sightseeing and exploring the cities will be on foot in order to take photographs. We carry a basic first aid kit but recommend that each person carry their own personal first aid kit including any prescription medication they require; a suggested contents list will be provided on booking in the country information dossier. We also provide details of the recommended vaccinations needed.

## ACCOMMODATION

Comfortable hotels throughout.

## SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS

If you are a single person booking this holiday you do not have to pay single supplements, if you are happy to share. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired with another single client of the same gender. However your booking is accepted only on the understanding that if no roommate is available then you accept a single supplement will be levied. Single supplements are payable if you specifically request to have a room to yourself. If you have requested single accommodation we will do our best to secure this although this may not always be possible.

## FOOD

All Meals included as specified.

## WEATHER

It doesn't get any better than March; arguably the best time of the year to travel in Burma. With no rain expected throughout the month and the chilly winter feel in the highlands now a distant memory; you can expect excellent weather across the country.

## INSURANCE

It is a condition of booking with Classic Journeys that you have adequate travel insurance cover. It is very important that you obtain insurance cover against the usual risks associated with adventure travel, from the date of booking until the date you return home. Please ensure that your insurer is aware of your Classic Journeys itinerary and agrees to cover the activities being undertaken. Please ensure that your insurance provides adequate protection against the two major concerns: medical / repatriation expenses while abroad and cancellation / curtailment charges in the event that you, a travelling companion or a close relative fall ill either before or during the trip. For trekking holidays your travel insurance must contain evidence of satisfactory cover for repatriation and helicopter rescue.

Classic Journeys do not provide any advice on travel insurance. Classic Journeys is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd. who are Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Campbell Irvine is a specialist travel insurance broker. The comprehensive policy they issue provides 24-hour medical emergency assistance and covers altitude and all adventurous activities undertaken on our holidays. For single-trip policies, the insurance provides cover for both UK and worldwide residents at very competitive rates. In addition an annual policy is available to United Kingdom residents.

To obtain insurance cover visit the insurance section of the Classic Journeys website and follow the links to the Campbell Irvine Ltd. website. Alternatively contact the Classic Journeys office and we will send you details and an application form.

**We require confirmation of your insurance, the policy number and 24-hour emergency telephone number who ever you take insurance with.**

*If you have any questions or would like to know more about any aspect of this tour, please do not hesitate to contact the Classic Journeys office.*

# Classic Journeys **ADVENTURE TRAVEL**

## **Our Experience is Your Guarantee**

Classic Journeys have a proven record of operating top quality, adventure holidays with over 25 years experience. Our ground agents and friends are the best in the business. They have an unsurpassed knowledge and ability for organising treks, expeditions, wildlife and adventure travel and all have excellent contacts, extremely important when dealing with local bureaucracy.

An important aspect of our success is our team of reliable and professional leaders, both western and local who ensure everything runs smoothly and efficiently. All our leaders are experienced, enthusiastic and have travelled widely. Working with our experienced and friendly staff, you can be sure of a high quality, personal service that many of our clients have come to expect.

## **Your Complete Financial Protection**



Classic Journeys is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator with an Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (ATOL 3022). The purpose of the ATOL scheme is to provide financial protection for your holiday arrangements. An ATOL is a legal requirement for anyone selling air holidays to the public. In order to obtain this licence we have to continually satisfy the very rigorous standards and provide a bond, you can book your holiday with Classic Journeys in complete confidence that your payment is fully protected.

## **How To Book**

Before making your booking please make sure that you have read the relevant tour itinerary. This can be downloaded from the tour page on our website, or you can request a copy to be posted to you from the Classic Journeys office. You should also read our General Information and Booking Conditions on our website. It is important that you choose a trip that is well suited to your experience and abilities. If you have any doubt or need to chat through any of our tours, please call the Classic Journeys office. Our advice is based on first hand experience and we are always happy to talk about our journeys.

**Provisional Booking:** It is sensible to check if places are still available on any Classic Journeys tour you are interested in before sending your booking form to us. We will be happy to hold open space for you for up to 7 days (up to 14 days if you live outside Europe) in order to give you sufficient time to send in your booking form and deposit.

**Definite Bookings:** To make a definite booking you must either complete and sign our standard booking form which can be printed off from our website at [www.classicjourneys.co.uk](http://www.classicjourneys.co.uk) and post it to us, or complete the on-line booking form and transmit it to us electronically. You also need to pay us the required deposit as detailed on the booking form. If you are submitting an on-line booking form and decide you wish to pay the deposit by credit or debit card, you can, if you are concerned about security, telephone your card details to us.

**Please note:** We cannot confirm a booking until we receive your completed and signed booking form. Any delay in submitting your booking form may put at risk your place on your chosen trip, or flights.

***If you would like further information, help with planning your holiday or details of extending your holiday, please don't hesitate to contact the Classic Journeys office.***