FLY and BiKE
internationaal gezelschap

Burma Adventure

14 Days/13 Nights
Departure Dates:

2009
4 October - 17 October
8 November-21 November
20 December - 2 January

2010
5 January -18 January
7 February - 20 February
16 May - 29 May
4 July - 17 July
3 October - 16 October
7 November-20 November
19 December - 1 January

If these dates don't suit your travel schedule, please **contact us** to talk about operating a private tour or customizing a tour for you or your group.

Burma, or Myanmar as it is now known, is the western gateway to Southeast Asia, straddling two of Asia's great rivers and the mountainous foothills of the Himalayas. The diversity of its people, culture, and topography combined with a rich history, make it one of the region's most fascinating and beautiful countries. However, critical political divisions have left it with a seriously lagging economy, and it remains a rural, undeveloped nation.

Our trip takes us from Kipling's Mandalay on the imperious Irrawaddy River, to the temples at Bagan, into the mountains of the Shan lands and the wondrous Inle Lake, before flying back to the capital, Yangon. We visit the ancient city of Bagan and cycle amongst the pagodas, stupas, and temples dominating a river valley that once formed the centre of a great and deeply religious empire. We will be greeted by warm, friendly people few tourists get to meet. We climb the 25 kilometers up to the Shan plateau, home to a multitude of tribal people, and a fantastic contrast to lowland Burma. In the mountains we enjoy cooler weather the colonial charm of Kalaw, where the officers of the Raj went to escape the summer heat. We relax at Inle Lake, enjoying a full day boat trip where we can marvel at the Intha fishermen, who famously manage to row with their legs. On our way back through Yangon we visit the Shwedagon Paya.

Prices

USD 1995 Tour
USD 170 Fiets

€ 350 Single Supplement

De prijzen in Euro vindt u op de website www.flyandbike.be

Trip Profile

This is a touring trip for mountain bikers and road cyclists. We ride 615 km on country lanes and quiet roads. There is little traffic, even on the main highways, which makes for excellent bicycle touring. The first few days riding are in the flat Irrawaddy basin and cut through rice fields, ancient cities and scenic countryside. Passing through many villages, you will find the people curious, friendly and polite. We share the road with ox carts, cyclists, and waving children. The second phase of the tour takes us east into the mountainous Shan state. There will be one tough climb up to the scenic British hill station of Kalaw - and several shorter ascents - but averagely fit cyclists will have no problems. The trip is fully supported; an air-conditioned bus follows us for the entire journey, so exhausted riders can skip the tougher sections if they wish. On major roads, riders can find their own pace and meet up at prearranged points along the way.

There is an unbelievable amount to see throughout the tour and we stop frequently to view temples, rural scenes (especially if riding during rice cultivation period) and villages.

Biking Conditions: Although this tour only covers around 615 kilometers in 6 full cycling days and 2 half days, it is still quite challenging. This trip has a variety of roads, some in quite good condition to broken tarmac roads, to vehicle wide dirt trails. There is no technical riding on this trip, but there are some long days.

Biking Difficulty

(out of five)

A variety of road surfaces from tarmac to vehicle wide dirt trails, some long days and hills make this a moderately difficult ride.

Suitability: This trip is a touring bike journey and suitable for anyone with a reasonable level of fitness. There are some long rides, and one or two tough climbs; participants who cycle the whole distance should expect a fairly challenging two weeks. But with the excellent support, inexperienced riders and even non-riding partners can be catered for and are more than welcome to join this tour.

Day to Day

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Day 1 – Arrive Yangon
We will pick you up at Yangon International Airport and shuttle you to our meeting point (the Seasons of Rangoon Airport Hotel) where we have rooms available for you to sleep or shower. You can also enjoy a swimming pool. In the afternoon we fly to Mandalay and transfer to the Red Canal Hotel.
Red Canal. D

Day 2 – Mandalay
In the morning we take a boat trip to Mingun, one of the ancient cities up the Irrawaddy River from Mandalay. We return in time for lunch and a swim in the pool. In the afternoon we shake off the cobwebs with a short ride around Mandalay, finishing with a climb up the hill that gave the city its name.
Red Canal. Ride 15 km. B D

Cycling Distance

615 kilometers

Cycling Days

8 full days

Day 3 – Mandalay - Myingyan
We start early and ride from the hotel to our first stop: U Bein's bridge, the longest teak bridge in the world. Following pretty back roads we ride through the ancient Ava Kingdom before reaching Kyaukse. We then pack up the bikes and transfer to Myingyan and our overnight stop.
KaungKaung Guesthouse. Ride 70 km. B L D

Day 4 – Myingyan - Bagan
Heading west along Highway 2, the group has a chance to find its own pace. The scenery is varied and the road good as we ride the flat Irrawaddy basin. At times there will be little shade. There are plenty of villages to stop at and we interact with locals who rarely come into contact with foreigners.
Bagan Hotel. Ride 65 km. B L D

Day 5 – Bagan temples
Bicycles are the perfect way to explore the temples of Bagan; we take a morning cycle around the Archaeological Zone before returning for a dip in the pool. The sunset, with views across the plains studded with chedis and temples is something you will never forget.
Bagan Hotel. Ride 30 km. B

There once was an estimated 13,000 temples and stupas at the 42 sq/km site of present day Bagan. Approximately 2,200 remain today, in various states of disrepair. Bicycling on the paths connecting the thousands of temples is the the best way to visit them.

Day 6 – Bagan – Mount Popa
Following the highway east, we make our first hill climb to the spectacular hilltop temple of Mount Popa. Popa soars 650 metres up out of the plains and the temple is populated by Burma's most revered Nats (spirits). The views are excellent and photographers will get some great shots. After lunch we climb up to the Nat Temple. We stay at a magnificent resort with spectacular views of the temple.
Popa Mountain Resort. Ride 60 km. B L D

Day 7 – Mount Popa - Meiktila
We have a fantastic downhill in the morning with stunning views of Popa Mountain before reaching Kyauk Padaung. It's then a scenic route to Meiktila. The road is good and the traffic light, while varied scenery and lots of stops make it an enjoyable ride. In the afternoon we get a feel for the mountains with some pleasant descents before we get to Meiktila.
Honey Hotel. Ride 118 km. B L D

Day 8 – Meiktila - Kalaw
This is the longest, toughest, but probably best ride of this tour. We get up early, leaving Mandalay Province and enter the Shan State. Mountainous Shan State covers almost a quarter of Myanmar and shares a long border with Thailand. It is home to several different ethnic groups and you will notice a change in the people, culture, and cuisine as we cycle into the mountains. We ride through Tazi and several smaller towns before the steep, winding 25-km climb to the hill station of Kalaw. We are rewarded with a cool, peaceful town, which still retains its colonial feel. We stay in the historic Kalaw Hotel, which served as resort quarters for British officers.
Kalaw Hotel. Ride 115 km. B L D

Day 9 – Rest Day in Kalaw
Today we have a rest day to recover after some long riding days. This gives you the chance to explore this old hill station. For those of you who want more of an active day an easy hike around the surrounding area will be an option.
Kalaw Hotel. B

Day 10 – Kalaw - Pindaya
A great downhill ride takes us to Aungban before we ride up into the hills once again. This time we head north to Pindaya. Riding along the Shan Plateau, we enjoy wonderful rural scenes; see Pa-O people working in the rice and vegetable fields. After checking into the hotel, we visit the famous Pindaya caves, which contain thousands of Buddhas.
Golden Cave Hotel. Ride 50 km. B L D

Day 11 – Pindaya – Inle Lake
With the hard riding behind us, we enjoy the ride down to Aungban. The last section has two sweeping downhills, which take us down to Inle Lake. We ride alongside one of Asia's most beautiful inland waters to Nyaungshwe. The town is located north of the lake. There are a variety of restaurants and dinner is your choice.
Paradise Hotel. Ride 92 km. B L

Subject to Change

In remote destinations abnormal conditions can prevail at any time, and all adventurous holidays can therefore be subject to unexpected change and we will do our best to adhere to the original itinerary and cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible when necessary.

Day 12 – Inle Lake
We give our legs some rest and enjoy a full day boat trip on Inle Lake. We take in the five-day market, Indein temples, floating gardens, monasteries and the Intha fishermen, who famously manage to row with their legs. Lunch is in a secluded bamboo forest by the lake. We then visit several Intha cottage industries.
Paradise Hotel. B L D

Day 13 – Inle Lake - Yangon
In the morning we transfer to Heho airport and fly back to Yangon, viewing from the air some of the terrain we have covered by bike. We arrive in time to take a visit the huge Shwedagon Paya, Burma's holiest religious site. Dinner is at Le Planteur (set dinner only).
Park Royal. B D

Day 14 – Yangon
The morning is free for shopping. We can visit Bogyoke Aung San market before heading to the airport for the flight home -- or to a Thai beach resort.
B

Nuts & Bolts

Bikes: Rental bikes included in the price.
The bikes are well-known makes of mountain bikes with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, disc/v-brakes and Shimano components and front suspension.

Safety: Wearing a helmet is strongly recommended on all our biking adventures and if you choose not to wear one you will be asked to sign a liability waiver. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Support: We will be supported by air-conditioned vehicles that have been specially modified for cycle tours. The vehicles follow us the whole time and are always available for tired cyclists. It is very easy to get bikes on and off, so you can rest when you are tired and cycle whenever you feel like it.

Guides: You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 8 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

The Nitty Gritty

Arriving and Departing: This tour starts and ends in Yangon. International flights to and from there are not included in the tour price. Domestic flights listed are included. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times.

Passports and Visas: All nationalities require a valid passport. A visa is required for all visitors to Myanmar and must be procured from a Myanmar Embassy.

Health: Recommended vaccinations include typhoid, polio, tetanus and Hepatitis A. A certificate for Yellow Fever is required if arriving from an infected area within the prior six days. Some areas of Burma may be considered malarial areas. Please check with your doctor prior to departure for the most recent information.

Weather: Myanmar has a tropical climate with fairly high humidity. There are three seasons: from March to June it is hot and dry, with temperatures between 27 and 40˚C, and with night temperatures in the 20s. The rainy season is from July to September, but temperatures are slightly lower, because of the effect of the rain. The cooler season (particularly in the mountains) is from September to February, with average temperatures between 20 and 30˚C. **It will be much cooler at night in the hills in Shan state, where we spend 4 nights, and adequate cold weather clothing – gloves, hats, jacket - is required.**

Food: Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Most meals are local dishes and feature noodles, rice, curries and soups. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink: Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price. Beer is freely available everywhere, but is NOT included in the price.

Extra Expenses: We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US$10, for incidentals. It is customary to tip local tour guides and drivers, however, the amount you give should be dependent on the level of service you receive. As a general guide we suggest US$ 3-4 per person per day is appropriate.

Money: Burma's everyday currency, the kyat, and should cover buying small items, bottle of water or a snack, while dollars are used for everything else and the euro is also increasingly being accepted. There are no ATMs in Burma. You can exchange money at the airport, guesthouses, shops, travel agencies or on the street.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Where differences exist in the information between this and previous information, this document is the correct version and supersedes the brochure or website.