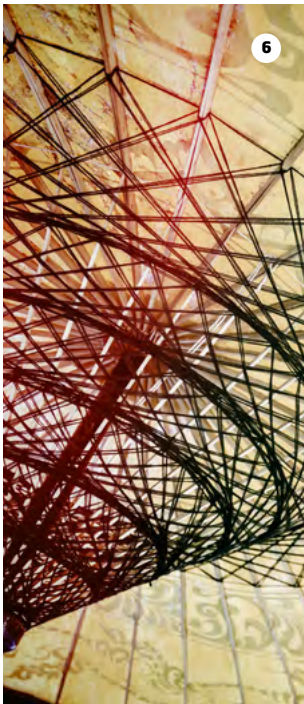
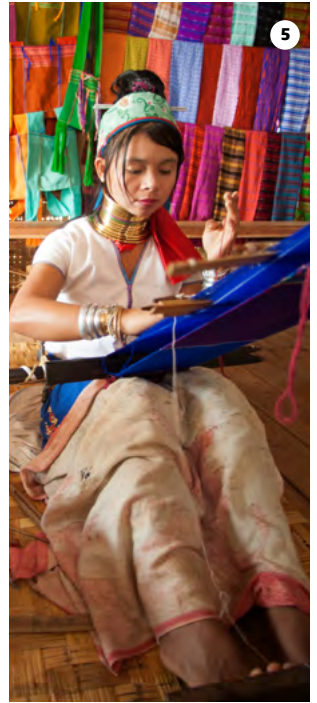
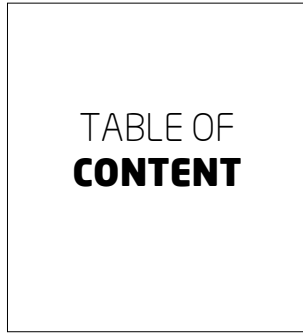
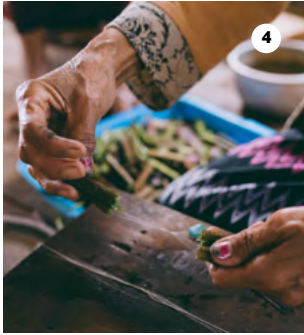
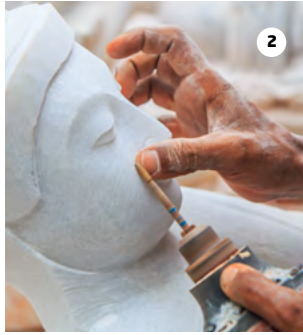
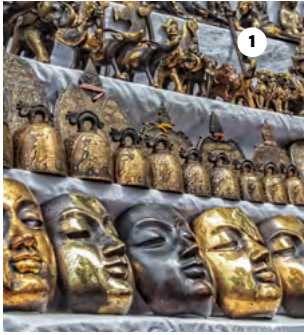


A collection of traditional Myanmar handcrafted brass bells and ornaments hanging from strings against a warm, golden background. The items include various sizes of bells, some with intricate carvings of figures and patterns, and teardrop-shaped pendants. The lighting is soft and warm, highlighting the metallic textures and the detailed craftsmanship of the pieces.

# **HANDMADE PASSION**

## **HANDICRAFTS OF MYANMAR**





## INTRODUCTION

The people of Myanmar are proud of their handicrafts. Fully made by hand with passion and care, these arts and crafts represent part of Myanmar's identity, as some of them have been passed down for generations, long before Myanmar's hidden gems were revealed to the world.

Still being made by hand even after all these years, tourists should visit Myanmar just to witness how these handicrafts and arts are made as the artisans skilled in producing handicrafts are getting fewer.

Various groups in Myanmar have developed their own methods in handicrafts and have learnt to express themselves in this art form. These handicrafts are the nation's precious culture, traditions and heritage that make it stand out from other countries.

## PAN SEL MYO (10 FLOWERS)

Myanmar has 10 famous traditional art forms. This concept began from the Bagan era, and was once used to lavishly decorate palaces and pagodas, and to produce belongings of the royal family. Now, Pan Sel Myo or the 10 Flowers concept is practised as part of the nation's culture, and recently a tourist attraction.

### 3 Panch (Painting)

The art of painting in Myanmar involves the illustration of animals and objects with multiple colours. Real-life images like humans, animals and scenery are painted by artists who caricatures human scenes.

Originating from Bagan, there is a strong presence of Buddhist influence in this form of art. The wall paintings in Bagan are considered to be the best Panchi in Myanmar, with realistic representations of animals and nature carefully hand-painted on walls.

### 4 Panyan (Brick and Stone Building)

The Panyan men or the Masons mainly use bricks, stones and concrete to build many types of attractive monuments in Myanmar. Most of the ancient pagodas in Bagan are from the hard work of these men.

The more complicated and detailed the designs get, the harder it is and the longer it takes for the Masons to build the monument. The art of brick and stone building is said to begin during the Pyu period.

### 5 Punpu (Sculpture)

Items sculpted from wood are highly sought after by avid sculptures collectors. Skilled craftsmen usually showcase their skills in creating sculptures by carving human beings, flowers and animals on wood, jade, stone and even bones.

The best creations of these craftsmen are usually Buddha images and figurines. Punpu art can be seen in Shwe In Bin Monastery and Bargayar Monastery, as they are well-known to have people with exceptional wood sculpting skills there.



### 1 Pantaut (Stucco Carving)

In the art of stucco making, complex designs are integrated into fine plaster. Design complexity can range from flowers, tribal patterns and animals to mythical creatures, and the craftsmen must be highly skilled to carve these features onto the stucco.

This form of art is practised during the Bagan period, and now, tourists visit Bagan to witness the authentic art form left behind by talented craftsmen.

Tourists can visit Menu's brick monastery at Innwa to observe one of the best Pantaut arts in the country.

### 2 Panbe (Blacksmith)

It takes years of hard work and patience to master the art of blacksmithing. Creating tools with iron was a great skill to have back in the days, where people relied on iron tools such as hammers, axes, knives, swords and scissors.

A blacksmith must be strong in order to create these magnificent iron products. Inle Lake is famous for its blacksmithing activities. Visitors can visit the area to witness real Panbes wield iron tools.

## 6 Pantamaut (Stone-Carving)

The most famous stone-carving products in Myanmar are in the form of religious items. Buddhism is Myanmar's main religion, so it is common for tourists to find stone Buddha images and religious inscriptions on smooth stone slabs. Locals who are skilled in this art take pride in their work. Some craftsmen also carve elephants, deer and other animals and floral designs, giving tourists more souvenir options.

Tourists can spot Pantamaut at Ananda Temple and Kyauktawgyi Pagoda. There are also fun and educational workshops available in Yangon and Mandalay.

## 7 Panpoot (Wooden Crafts)

Wooden crafts are also famous in Myanmar, making some tourists buy multiple Panpoot items as souvenirs due to the impressive designs carved on smooth wooden pieces.

The locals use a lathe turner, a traditional tool that helps the welder shape wood by pushing and pulling a long rope. Bigger wooden pieces can be used in making umbrella shafts, table and bed legs, guardrails and also pavilions.

## 8 Pante (Copper and Bronze Smithing)

Copper, bronze and brass are shaped into gongs and bowls for the monks. Some other items include cups, cymbals, bells and dishes.

This art also emerged during the Bagan period. Back then, copper bells were widely used at religious sites. When struck, it is understood that someone has done a good deed to someone, the temple or the public. Copper gongs are used as dinner gongs. Nowadays, tourists can buy little copper bells as souvenirs.



## 9 Panyun (Lacquerware)

In Myanmar, people use natural ingredients to decorate their bamboo products. These products are then coated with black paint.

It seems easy to make Panyun, but the process behind it is complicated. Bamboo or wood is first crafted to a desired shape. The first few layers of black paint application is done with consistency and care, allowing rests in between for the paint to settle in and dry properly.

After applying the right amount of bamboo strips, resin, clay and ash of fossil wood, designs will be immediately drawn by hand. Each item is first crafted using bamboo or wood. Then a detailed process of application is followed by a resting period often in an underground cellar for up to ten days. On a detailed framework of process, finely cut strips of bamboo, mixtures of thit-see resin with clay and ash are carefully built up and finally polished with the ash of fossil wood.

The designs are then etched or painted by hand on the surface of the paint. In the past, alms bowls for the monks, tea cups, bowls and cigar boxes are entirely made using the lacquerware technique.

## 10 Pantain (Goldsmithing)

Pantain, or goldsmithing, requires goldsmiths to be skilled jewellers who have a keen eye for gold quality. Gold is usually used to make accessories for the royal family. It is also used for building pagodas and stupas.

Golden embroidery is also considered a form of goldsmithing. Golden designs are embroidered and sewn on fabric and textiles that were worn by the royal family in the past.

Images of landscapes and monuments can also be embroidered using golden threads. Some of the fabrics produced can have glass beads and sequins added on the clothes.

# WEAVING



## 2 Silk Weaving

Silk weaving is a major profession of the people of Amarapura. Silk scarves are usually worn during special occasions and are seen as high class materials worn by high income individuals. Myanmar scarves are also highly sought-after by visitors to Myanmar.

### How Is It Made?

The right amount of silk thread needs to be wound together to produce a consistent and smooth texture. The threads are attached to bobbins on the traditional loom.

A weaver can weave silk threads using up to 300 bobbins, producing very detailed and fine designs, like flowers, pearls and diamonds. Silk products are expensive due to the complex process behind it.



## 1 Lotus Weaving

For generations, women from Inle Lake have been using lotus fibre to create woven scarves and clothing. Lotus woven textiles are known to keep the wearer warm when it is cold, and cool when the weather is hot. A single scarf could take up to a whole day to complete, and the finest quality is sold at a very high price.

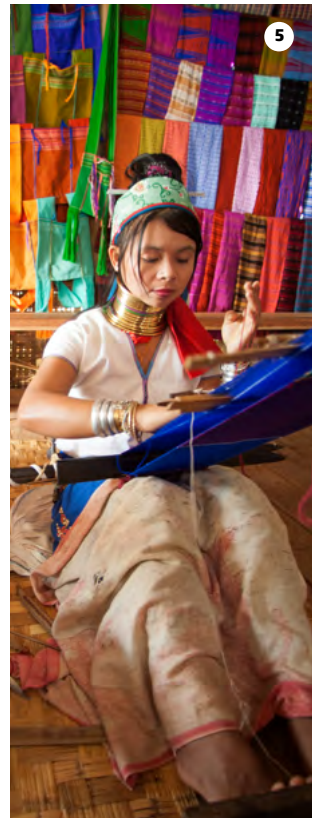
### How Is It Made?

Lotus weaving is an extremely delicate and intricate process. Lotus stems are divided into small pieces and the fibre is extracted solely by hand, with the help of a sharp blade.

The fibre is then soaked and rolled together to produce strands of threads.

The steps are repeated until long, fine threads are produced. The effort put in each step must be equal in order to maintain the quality of the thread, making this an art that requires patience.

After the long and thin thread texture is achieved, the ladies can finally begin the process of weaving authentic and traditional masterpieces.



## UMBRELLAS



6

## MARIONETTES

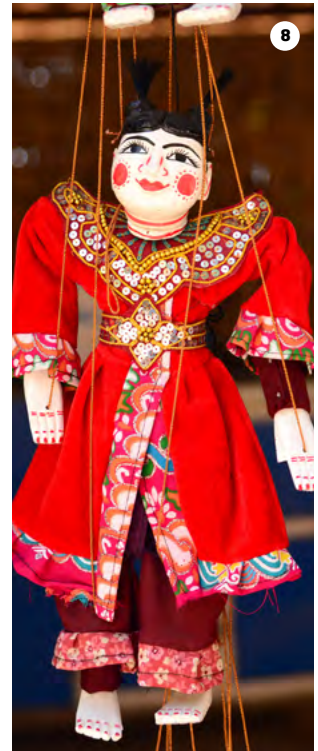
The people of Myanmar are proud of their marionettes. It is a traditional art that requires plenty of patience and skills. From making the marionette from scratch to performing with the puppets, each step is an intricate process that needs extra care and effort.

### How Is It Made?

These puppets are made by hand. The faces are attentively made to put as many details into them, especially facial expressions. The costumes fabric range from cotton to embroidered materials.



7



8

Most of Myanmar's finest umbrellas come from Patheingyi, the delta region. Myanmar umbrellas are made by hand with the slightest touch of care and perfection. The people of Myanmar use these umbrellas for cultural ceremonies and they are also sold as souvenirs to tourists. These umbrellas are long-lasting and strong despite being handmade.

The special feature of Myanmar umbrellas lies in the process. These pretty souvenirs require the effort of multiple umbrella makers. Each worker is responsible for each part of the umbrella, and it is passed on to the next worker to work on his or her part until it is complete.

### How Is It Made?

The bark of Mulberry trees are used to make the paper pulp. The pulp is soaked, boiled and separated according to the length of the fibre. Softened fibre is then mashed into a pulp that is flattened on a screen, that is then soaked in shallow water. Decorative items will be put on the surface of the water. The screen is lifted up for the decorations to fuse with the paper pulp. When the paper is dry, the designs will be imprinted on the surface. The 'printed' paper is then carefully peeled away from the frame of the screen.

The handle is carved according to sections: central pole, top notch, runner and ribs. A spring is added into the handle allowing users to open and close the umbrella. The printed paper is then cut according to the size of the umbrella, glued to a bamboo frame, and lacquered to make it rain-proof.