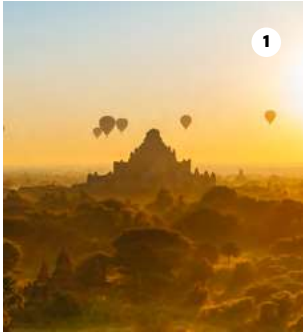


TRAVELLING SOLO IN MYANMAR

Travelling solo is fun, and those who have done it can surely attest to it. It makes you happy, gives you wings to fly and teaches you a lot about yourself. To be able to be happy without feeling the need to be with someone else is freedom in itself.

Solo travelling is addictive. Once you've experienced it, you will be itching to go back for more. Travelling on your own meets two basic desires of a free spirit – to get away and to see new places. As a country newly opened to tourism and still unaffected by mass urbanisation, Myanmar is blessed with untouched places that are the perfect getaway. A solo trip to Myanmar will fill you with contentment and satisfaction.



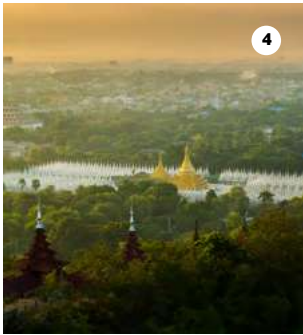
1



2



3



4

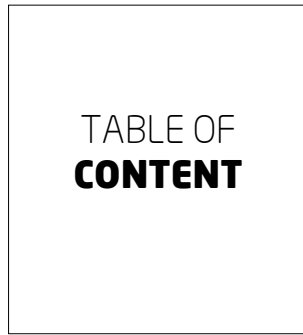


TABLE OF
CONTENT



5



6



7



8



9



10



11

REACHING MYANMAR

Myanmar enjoys good flight connectivity with the entire world. At present, the country has 3 international airports at

- 1 - Yangon
- 2 - Mandalay
- 3 - Nay Pyi Taw

Usually, tourists plan to arrive at one airport and depart from another which gives them the freedom to space out their itinerary.

GETTING AROUND



BY AIR

Myanmar has 25 domestic airports suitable for commercial flight landing. All the major destinations can be reached by air. Travelling by air is the only option to reach Putao, the quaint hill station surrounded by snow-capped Himalayan peaks.



BY BUS

Regular bus services are available to travel within a destination as well as move from one place to another. Most highway buses are air-conditioned and are pretty comfortable for long-distance travels. The drivers of the city buses do not speak English. Hence, communication can be a challenge.



BY TRAIN

Train services are available, although they might take more time than travelling by bus. Daily train services are available from Yangon, Mandalay and Bagan to different destinations. The train ride from Mandalay to Lashio takes you through the Gokteik Viaduct, the picturesque bridge through the hills.



BY BOAT

Taking a ferry is the most fun way to travel between Bagan and Mandalay. Daily ferry services are available, which take around 8 hours to complete. You will travel through the Ayeyarwady River and be able to watch the lives of the local people.





MYANMAR has a wide host of untouched places, each beautiful in their own right. In fact, one visit is not enough to explore the riches of the Southeast Asian nation. As a solo traveller, you have the entire country open to you. You can visit any place that you want.

Most Visited Places

- **YANGON**
- **MANDALAY**
- **BAGAN**



YANGON

The bustling city of Yangon has beautiful localities with amazing buildings. It has the perfect mix of modernisation and tradition with the downtown area giving the old world feel while the northern region gives a modern feel. The city combines great food, authentic experiences and beautiful monuments.



TO SEE

Yangon packs in itself a perfect mix of stunning monuments, colonial buildings, natural views and the authentic localities of Myanmar.

SHWEDAGON PAGODA

This glittering gold pagoda with an interesting history is the most important attraction in Yangon. The pagoda has an interesting architecture and is encrusted with precious stones including diamonds on top. While most travellers visit the Shwedagon during the day when the gold glisten under the sunlight, head to Shwedagon at night. The beautifully lit pagoda against the backdrop of the jet black sky is a sight worth cherishing for a lifetime.

Entrance Fee: 10,000 Kyats



SULE PAGODA

Sule Pagoda is believed to be older than Shwedagon. This pagoda is a captivating sight, standing tall with its grandeur. It is less visited than Sule. There are other attractions close to Sule Pagoda such as Immanuel Baptist Church and Maha Bandoola Park, which you can visit too.

Entrance Fee: 4,000 Kyats

BOGYOKE MARKET

Shopaholic or not, this colonial-style market will help you get the pulse of the local people. Shops sell local paintings and handicrafts here. This market has several street food stalls. Do try local delicacies such as dosa sandwich, samosa salad, street pancakes and barbecue meats.

TO DO

YANGON CIRCULAR RAILWAY:

If you want to get a feel of local Yangon, you got to take a ride on the Yangon Circular Railway. From the colonial era station to the Hungarian carriages imported in the 1960s, a ride on this train will take you back in time. The train passes through the Yangon city, thus enabling tourists to savour the sites on the way.

DOWNTOWN YANGON:

Walk around downtown Yangon and soak in the colonial feel. The buildings here have been maintained meticulously since Myanmar gained independence. Hence, visitors can see the best of British architecture in their full glory.

SIT AT A LOCAL TEA SHOP:

Tea shops are located at every nook and corner of Yangon city. Take a break from walking around the city and savour the famous tea of Myanmar. Many tea shops sell as many as 10 varieties of tea. They vary in taste and flavour. Tea in Myanmar is made using condensed milk and tastes divine.

TO EAT

Yangon is the food haven of the country. There are eateries all around selling everything that one can think of – from the traditional food of Myanmar to continental cuisine.

**A TRADITIONAL MEAL**

Rice is the staple of Myanmar and it is served with different kinds of curried dishes, sauteed vegetables, stewed meats and seafood. The dishes are prepared using different kinds of spices. Usually, some palm sugar or green tea is served at the end of the meal. You can enjoy a traditional meal in any of the eateries in Yangon.



Cost: Around 3,000 Kyats for vegetable dishes, 4,500 Kyats for meat dishes. Usually, a complimentary dish of vegetables is served with rice.

CHICKEN FEET SALAD

This delicious salad is made using homemade sauces. The salad packs in itself intense flavours of soy sauce, lemon, vinegar, brown sugar and roasted sesame.

Cost: 3,000 Kyats

Available at: 19th Street, Chinatown

NUTRIENT

Yes, there's a dish named Nutrient in Myanmar. It is a breakfast dish consisting of buttered bread soaked in milk and layered with soft boiled eggs. The dish is then topped over with Milo powder, raisins and pudding. This dish is a perfect balance of sweet and savoury tastes.

Cost: Around 2,250 Kyats

**TO SLEEP**

Being the largest city in Myanmar, Yangon has a range of accommodation options ranging from budget to five-star category.

West Yangon is the most thriving part of the city with Shwedagon Pagoda being closeby. Most travellers prefer to stay here.

GETTING AROUND IN YANGON

The downtown area is walkable and best explored on foot. **Taxis** are easily available for rent (cost: 1,500 Kyats to 3,000 Kyats depending upon the distance) for going around too. A trip to the airport can cost up to 8,000 Kyats. **Grab** also works in Yangon. Yangon has a bus system, although it might take some time to get a hang of bus routes. **Bus rides** are cheaper (200 Kyats – 300 Kyats). You can get the help of locals to find out the right bus for your destination.



MANDALAY

Often termed as the cultural capital of Myanmar, Mandalay is the second-largest city of Myanmar. Standing true to its name, Mandalay packs in itself cultural wonders that make it a popular choice among travellers.

TO SEE

MANDALAY ROYAL PALACE

The home of the last royals of Myanmar, this wooden palace extends over a sprawling area packing in itself several structures such as Clock Tower, Relic Tower, Hluttaw, Royal Mausoleums, Royal Mint and Watch Tower.

Entrance Fee: If you pay a Mandalay Zone Fee of 15,000 Kyats, you can visit the Royal Palace, Shwenandaw Monastery, Sandamuni Pagoda, Kuthodaw Pagoda, Maha Atulawaiyan Monastery and KyauKTaw Gyi Pagoda.



For carrying a camera to Mandalay Hill, you need to pay an additional camera fee of 10,000 Kyats.

SHWE IN BIN KYAUNG

This is a pagoda with a difference. This pagoda is completely made of teak, built in 1895 by wealthy Chinese jade merchants. The dark coloured majestic pagoda walls have detailed engravings which make this a favourite among travellers.

JADE PAGODA

World's first and largest Jade Pagoda is located in Mandalay. The pagoda has been built with jade pieces and slabs and costs around USD15 million. 30,000 jade Buddha statues line the pagoda's surface.



TO DO

CLIMB MANDALAY HILL

You cannot miss this pagoda studded hill from where the town has derived its name. You can climb the hill and enjoy the innumerable monuments located en-route. Head to the top before sunset to cherish the stunning sunset from atop.

WALK ON THE U-BEIN BRIDGE

Head to Amarapura, a small town located half an hour away from Mandalay, and walk on the longest wooden bridge in the world. Head out right before sunset to enjoy the mesmerising view of the sunset from the bridge.

READ THE WORLD'S LARGEST BOOK

The world's largest book is located at Kuthodaw Pagoda at the foot of the Mandalay Hill. The book has 729 marble slabs where Buddha's teachings are inscribed. There is also a gilded pagoda, several pavilions and hundreds of shrines in the same compound.



5

TO EAT

MONT DI

A traditional dish of rice noodles and chickpea flour tossed together with fishball, onion, beansprouts and pickled mustard. The dish is spiced with red chilli paste and oil. If you don't mind a little zing in your food, do try this out.

Cost: 1,500 Kyats

Available at: Shops in Strand Road

MOHINGA

This famous traditional food is available in a variety of flavours and tastes across Myanmar. There are shops in Mandalay which serve it with white carp fish. The soup has a rich spicy taste infused with the sweetened fish flavour. Some shops offer to top it up with chicken egg, duck egg, fish cutlet and chickpea fritters.

Cost: 500 Kyats

Available at: Shops in 19th Street, 83rd Street, 68th Street.

SHAN NOODLES

Several shops in Mandalay serve amazing versions of this world-famous dish. Shan noodles can be eaten any time of the day. Noodles are tossed with peanuts, fresh cilantro, onion and vegetables and have the perfect balance of sweet, salty and sour tastes.

Available At: Shops in 27th Street, 23rd Street and 81st Street.



6

TO SLEEP

Mandalay has a range of accommodation options ranging from budget to five stars. The most common area to stay in Mandalay is around 25th and 83rd Street. The starting prices of rooms for a solo traveller vary from 9,000 Kyats to 15,000 Kyats in the high season. Most accommodation is comfortable and clean.



GETTING AROUND MANDALAY

A range of options is available to travel around Mandalay. You can rent a **motorcycle** (10,000 Kyats – 12,000 Kyats per day) or simply opt for a private **taxi**. You can also opt for private tours, although since you are a solo traveller, you might be clubbed with other solo travellers or couples to form a tour group. If you don't mind that, you can try it out.

BAGAN

Bagan, the temple town of Myanmar, is another popular destination of tourists. A town with a strong historic background, Bagan has 2,000 temples spread across the Bagan Archaeological Zone. Spending a few days in Bagan can transport you back in time.



TO SEE

ANANDA TEMPLE

The most famous and the holiest temple in Bagan, Ananda Temple was built in 1091 AD. It's also one of the largest temples in Bagan with interesting architecture.

Location: On the left side of the southern stretch of Nyaung Oo Road.



SHWESANDAW TEMPLE

Popularly known as the sunset temple, head to this temple around sunset. You can climb up the stairs to enjoy the breathtaking sunset against the backdrop of hundreds of temples jutting out of the thick canopy of trees.

SHWEZIGON TEMPLE

A curiously gourd-shaped golden pagoda, this is the prototype of the Shwedagon Pagoda of Myanmar and was built in 1087. The entrance walkway to the temple is lined with souvenir shops.

Cost: All you need to pay is a Bagan Zone Fee of 30,000 Kyats and you can explore all the pagodas and temples of Bagan.





10

TO EAT

SET MENUS

Most restaurants in New Bagan have set menus where they serve rice and a few vegetable dishes. The food will taste like home-cooked food and is ideal for filling yourself up after a day of exploring the town.

Cost: 10,500 Kyats

CRISPY BEAN SALAD

Myanmar's local cuisine incorporates several kinds of salad, this being one of them. Enjoy the crunch in the beans while savouring the combination of sweetness and spiciness in the salad.

Cost: Around 3,000 Kyats

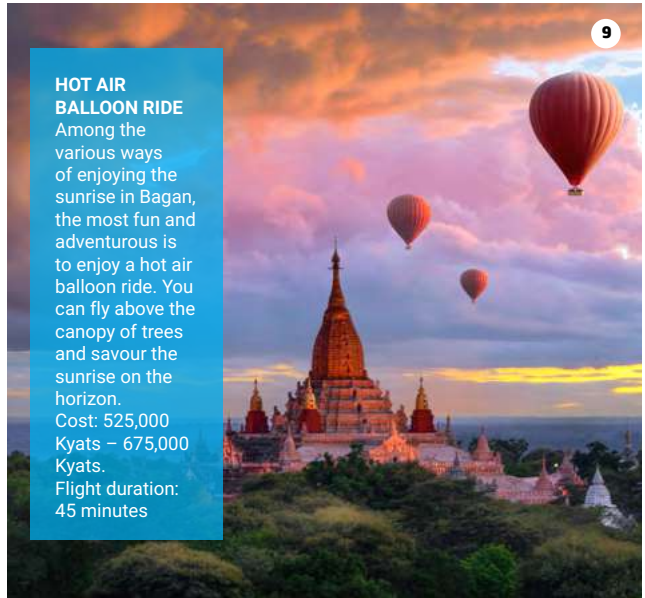
HSI GJE KHAU HSWE

A noodle dish served with chicken, fried beans, sesame paste, shallots and cabbage. Extremely refreshing, especially on a hot afternoon.

Cost: Around 2,250 Kyats



TO DO



9

HOT AIR BALLOON RIDE
 Among the various ways of enjoying the sunrise in Bagan, the most fun and adventurous is to enjoy a hot air balloon ride. You can fly above the canopy of trees and savour the sunrise on the horizon.
Cost: 525,000 Kyats – 675,000 Kyats.
Flight duration: 45 minutes

WATCH THE MESMERISING SUNRISE

Any visit to Bagan is incomplete without enjoying the gorgeous sunrise. The entire town gets converted into heaven when the first orange rays of the sun appear against the backdrop of thousands of temple tops jutting out of the thick canopy of lush green trees.

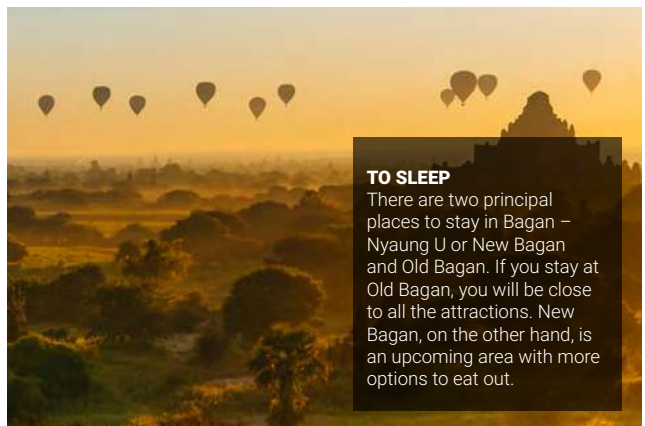
Best way: Take a hot air balloon ride or climb up Nyan Myint Tower

Ticket Fee: 15,000 Kyats

E-BIKE TOUR

You must have explored towns walking or on motorbikes. You can explore Bagan on an e-bike instead. This will give you the freedom to chart your own itinerary for temple exploration and will be more fun too!

Cost: 5,000 Kyats per day. You can also rent bikes which will cost you around 2,500 Kyats per day.



TO SLEEP
 There are two principal places to stay in Bagan – Nyaung U or New Bagan and Old Bagan. If you stay at Old Bagan, you will be close to all the attractions. New Bagan, on the other hand, is an upcoming area with more options to eat out.



TRAVELLING SOLO IN MYANMAR

TRAVEL TIPS

- Avoid venturing to unknown locales at night. While there is no question about safety, there can be dogs on the roads.
- Many places such as Putao have areas restricted to foreign travellers. Hence, ask around before venturing into unknown localities.
- It can rain anytime. Ensure to pack a raincoat and an umbrella.
- Avoid wearing ultra-short dresses. Ensure your knees and shoulders are covered while visiting religious places.
- You might have to remove your shoes before entering religious places. Hence, wear comfortable and easily removable shoes.
- You will have to exchange your home currency into Kyats for use in Myanmar. Ensure to carry crisp notes of your home currency for exchange. You might find difficulty exchanging soiled notes. Large denominations (such as USD100) will get you better exchange rates.
- It will be difficult to use foreign cards in shops unless you are in a major city such as Yangon or Mandalay. Hence, carry enough cash.

SAFETY

The locals of Myanmar are friendly people who love their guests. You will not face any problems travelling in Myanmar as a solo traveller. In fact, when the locals understand that you are travelling solo, they will take special efforts to help you.

Avoid wearing **ultra-short dresses**. Ensure your knees and shoulders are covered while visiting religious places.

ESSENTIAL THINGS TO PACK

Here's a list of things that you should carry to enjoy a comfortable trip in Myanmar.

- Comfortable shoes
- Bug spray
- Sunscreen
- Wet wipes
- Long shorts (at least knee length)
- Torchlight
- A pair of thin jackets
- Mini first-aid kit
- Tissues (tissues are not commonly used products in the toilets of Myanmar)
- Hand sanitiser
- Female hygiene products



TRAVELLING SOLO AS A WOMAN

EXPERIENCES

Some of the ethnic tribes of Myanmar are recognised by their women such as the long-necked women and the women with tattooed faces. These women are always happy to meet female travellers. They will make you feel at home and welcome you to their lives.



11

SAFETY

Women are respected in the country on the whole. Hence, as a solo woman traveller, you will not face any difficulty. The locals will be happy to help you.

Locals will treat you with **respect and care**. But they can be inquisitive about a woman travelling alone. **Please don't get annoyed.**

TRAVEL TIPS

- Locals will treat you with respect and care, but they can be inquisitive about a woman travelling alone. Please don't get annoyed. The curiosity is harmless.
- Skip wearing shorts and mini-skirts if you don't want to attract unwanted attention. It is generally hot in Myanmar (unless you are travelling to a hill station). Wear loose cotton clothes to feel more comfortable.
- It's usually sunny in Myanmar. Don't forget your sunscreen.
- Finding female hygiene products can be a challenge. Hence, ensure to carry your supply.

