

A night scene of a Buddhist stupa, likely the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon, Myanmar. The stupa is illuminated with warm golden lights, and numerous floating lanterns (sky lanterns) are visible in the dark blue sky, creating a magical atmosphere. The stupa's tiered structure and spire are clearly visible, and the overall scene is a beautiful representation of Myanmar's cultural heritage.

# TRAILS OF MYANMAR'S PAST

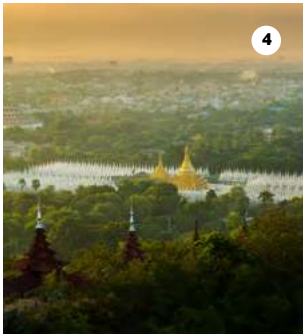
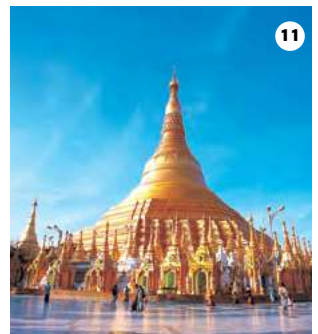
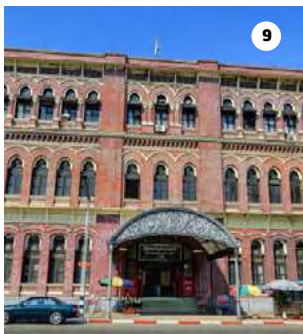
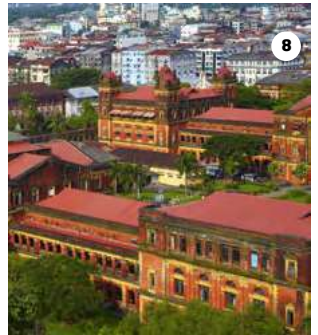


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# INTRODUCTION

Myanmar has a recorded history dating back to more than 10,000 years. Here is your chance to visit Myanmar, using Trails of Myanmar's Past as your guide to the ultimate understanding of Myanmar's history.

Before Myanmar was a country, it was home to the Bronze Era civilisation of Southeast Asia. Evidence has shown that the people of this era figured out systematic plans for everything they did, which can be seen in the rooms they built and the creations of tools.

When the country was formed, it was ruled by majestic kings and many religious beliefs flourished. It is a country with rare insight into civilisation and diverse ethnic lifestyles.

It is time for you to explore the deeper, lesser-known side of Myanmar.

**Mingalaba!**



## A DISTINCTIVE CAVES WITH INTERESTING LAYOUTS

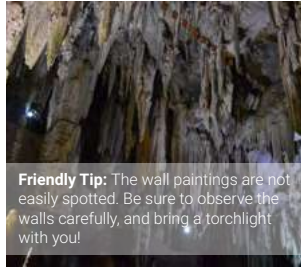
Two caves of Pyadalín, 200 yards from each other, have very different layouts that are worth exploring. The bigger cave is huge, about 800 feet in length and complete with an interesting and complex interior that ignites the adventurer in you, making you feel like you are Indiana Jones as you unearth Myanmar's history. The smaller cave is only 30 - 40 feet deep and has a wide opening, giving you an alternative caving experience, where you get to experience a relaxed but equally exciting exploration of Myanmar.

## B WALL PAINTINGS

Drawn by some of the earliest inhabitants of Myanmar using red ochre, the wall paintings still remain till this day, although the red stains are starting to fade due to the weather and vandalism. You will be able to spot the illustration of human hands, fish, bulls and bisons. There are also cupules, or dome-shaped depressions made on the walls by hand.

## C ANCIENT ARTEFACTS

Charcoal and bone were found in this cave, radiocarbon dated to 1,750 and 13,000 years BP. There are also 1,600 sturdy stone artefacts found, evidence of a civilisation's progression into modernisation. The artefacts consist of roughly made choppers, rings, scrapers and other cutting tools. The bigger cave also has chambers with stupas in them, to many people's wonder as to how the religion gained such quick influence.



**Friendly Tip:** The wall paintings are not easily spotted. Be sure to observe the walls carefully, and bring a torchlight with you!



# PYADALIN CAVES

- WHAT TO EXPECT -



## D IMPRESSIVE LIMESTONE FORMATIONS

When it comes to caves, there is one thing you must not miss: the limestone formations. Step into these two caves and be awestruck by the impressive interior filled with stalagmite and stalactite. These natural structures in the cave are a result of accumulated minerals that come in water drippings, taking millions of years to form.



### Why you should visit Pyadalín Caves

- Listed as a UNESCO Heritage Site.
- It is a rare attraction, even in Southeast Asia.
- Enjoy unique caving-historical adventure.



### **A** EXOTIC EXPLORATION

Inle Lake is a must-visit if you are in Shan State. There is a wildlife sanctuary nearby, so this is your chance to observe rare aquatic species that are only available in Myanmar and also migratory birds. You also get to see Myanmar's one and only floating farms at Inle Lake.



## FURTHER DISCOVERIES

### **C** ETHNIC GROUPS

Shan State has a number of distinctive people that represent unique culture and traditions. Take a walk along the villages and see how many groups you could identify just by their outfits and accessories! There's even a particular group that was known to practise real head-hunting in the past!



### **B** LASHIO

Enjoy a laid-back journey through Shan State and admire the scenic view as you take in the authentic countryside surroundings barely touched by modernisation. You can also have a relaxing, warm dip amidst Shan State's chilly air in the hot springs available at Lashio!



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### **D** KAKKU PAGODA

Make a stop at Kakku Pagoda and watch the villagers, mainly from the Pa-O ethnic group, sell goods and produce in traditional ox carts. You can even browse through the items and buy some trinkets for yourself to contribute to the villagers' earnings!





Photo Credit: Wikipedia



#### DID YOU KNOW?

Out of the many skeletal remains found in more than 20 graves between 2014 and 2016, one of the skulls had a drill hole on it. This is evidence of one of the earliest surgical procedures performed to relieve brain pressure.

## BUDALIN TOWN

### WHAT TO EXPECT

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AN **UNEXPECTED** FIND  
In 1997, initially looking for a spot for his banana plantation, a humble farmer from Budalin, Monywa District found a national treasure at Nyaung-gan that makes Sagaing Region one of the places in Myanmar rich with findings from the Bronze Era.

#### **A** UNEARTHED TREASURE

What luck that a monsoon brought heavy rain to the unknown archaeological site of Budalin Township, revealing skeletons and pots buried underneath, and people realised that the area was no ordinary land – it was a location for burial sites, from the Bronze Age, which they also call the Nyaung-gan Bronze Age Cemetery. The skeletal remains and tools at the sites are now protected with strong glass boxes with steel frames, with buildings surrounding all sites to protect them from harsh elements.

#### **B** ABUNDANT IN ARTEFACTS

Excavation activities at the site revealed more findings like bronze artefacts and weaponry like spears, points, axes, and ceramics and stone artefacts that could only belong to the first few inhabitants of the area, between 1,500 BC and 500 BC. Further digging projects also unearthed more than 150 artefacts, including human skeletal remains, polished rings and beads made of stone.



## **A** BODDHI TATAUNG

3 statues of the Buddha are placed here along with one magnificent golden pagoda. The statues are placed standing, lying on the side, and one image is even sitting with a cobra snake at its back. The standing Buddha is so big that there is a room in it with a detailed wall painting that tells multiple stories of the Buddha. You will also find a section depicting hell – now that’s an experience you can hardly find elsewhere.

## **B** HAND-WOVEN CANE WARE

Saging Region has some of the best-skilled cane weavers. You will find impressive handcrafted products made using the high quality canes in the region, which contribute largely to the country’s economy. Witness cane weavers produce intricate and detailed woven products by hand.

**FURTHER  
DISCOVERIES**



## **C** RIVERSIDE TOWN

Besides the archaeological site in Budalin, Monywa District is an impressive riverside town, shining with its own charms. You will find many boats by the river where locals usually bathe and wash their clothes. Spend a great time relaxing by the river during sunset as you observe the humble daily life of the locals.

## A MANDALAY PALACE

Mandalay Palace has witnessed interesting occasions throughout Myanmar's history. Right after the second Anglo-Burmese War in 1852, King Mindon took the throne of Burma in a bloodless coup, with Amarapura as the capital city. Wanting a fresh start for himself and his people, King Mindon decided to move the capital to Mandalay.

To convince more than 150,000 people to move with him, the king came up with the story that he had dreamed thrice that he had to relocate his court to Mandalay. This prompted his people to obey his orders, resulting in the construction of Mandalay Palace, mostly reusing materials from the former palace at Amarapura.

When the King died in 1878, King Thibaw Min inherited the royal throne, but the throne did not last long. The British established their reign in 1885, obtaining surrender from the new King. The Queen, however, was defiant, and she chose her own exile over bowing to the British.

# MANDALAY

- WHAT TO EXPECT -

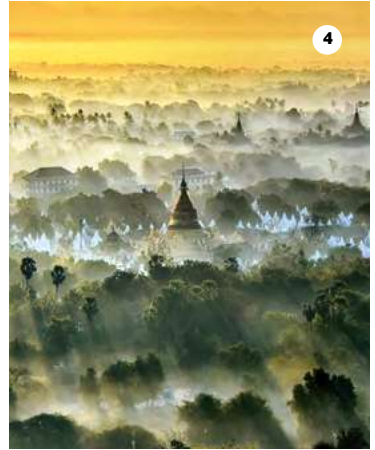


### DID YOU KNOW?

According to legend, Mandalay Hill was prophesied to be the site of a Buddhist centre, which influenced King Mindon's decision of moving the capital to Mandalay.

## B IGLASS PALACE

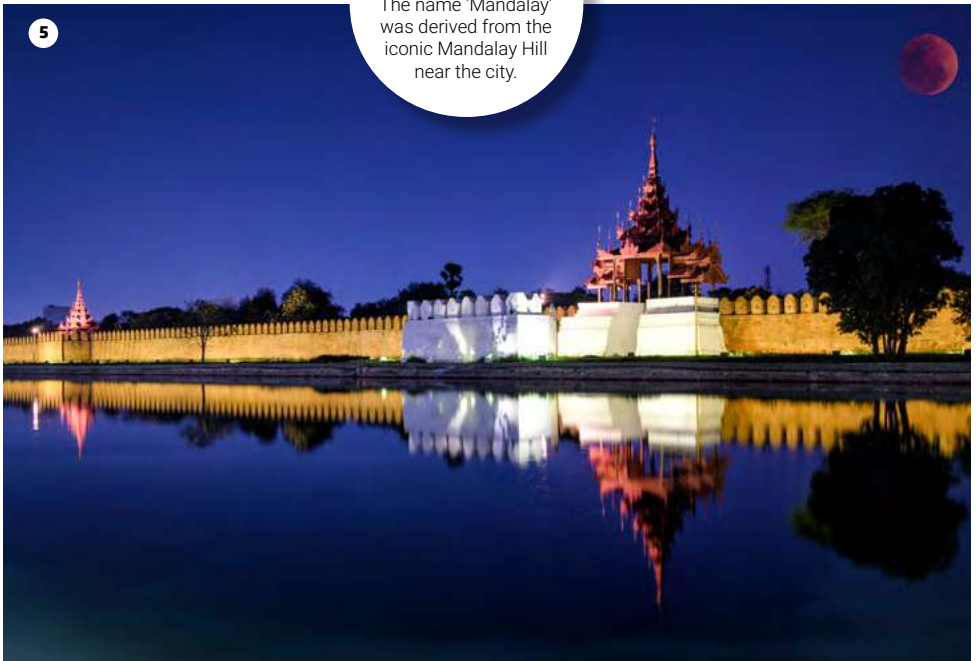
It is believed that King Mindon made this beautiful glass palace as his main living palace. Many meaningful ceremonies took place in the palace, like the nomination of the Chief Queen, the formal ear-piercing of the princess, and the New Year celebration between the King and Queen.



### FUN FACT:

The name 'Mandalay' was derived from the iconic Mandalay Hill near the city.

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## **A** DETAILED HANDICRAFT

Weaving. Stone carving. Wood carving. Bronze casting. You name it, Mandalay has it. Go around Mandalay if you have time to spare, and look for workshops that feature Myanmar's authentic and traditional ways of making certain products, all by hand. You will learn (and buy!) a lot from the lessons.



## **B** TASTY DELICACIES

You will taste new flavours that you can never replicate outside of Myanmar! Head to any stall on the street and try any of their food, like mohingha, noodles, and other snacks. The people of Myanmar have a unique taste palette, which incorporates the combination of at least two flavours in a dish. From soup dishes to deep-fried food, you will surely find something to suit your palate.

## **C** U-BEIN BRIDGE

Here's your chance to walk on the longest wooden bridge in the world! U-Bein Bridge is a 1.2 km long bridge built over a lake, and is one of the best attractions in Mandalay with awesome spots for stunning photographs. The sunset view is simply mesmerising here.

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### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The locals LOVE having mohingha as their breakfast. The cooking style of the rice noodles with fish soup dish also varies at each stall, so remember to try them out at different stalls!





# PYU CITIES

- ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES -

**FUN FACT:**  
Pyu cities in Myanmar are a testimony that Buddhism was assimilated into Southeast Asia nearly 2,000 years ago.



Retrace civilisation at the oldest sites with architectural remains at Beikhtano, Hanlin and Sri Ksetra, the 3 ancient Pyu cities of Myanmar.



Photo Credit: Google

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The civilisation at these Pyu cities built water canals and tanks for agricultural purposes, with some of them still functioning!

## REMNANTS FROM THE PAST

If visiting archaeological sites intrigues you, look no further. Hanlin City, Sagaing Region is home to plenty of pre-urban prehistoric habitation. The palace citadel is complete with an Assembly Hall, and you will be surprised by how well thought out the design of the hall was, with 84 wooden pillars and brick platform built by people in the past.

## SRI KSETRA

Sri Ksetra is a large Pyu city located at the irrigated landscapes of the Ayeyarwady River. There were temples with brick walls and timber roofs. It is recorded that in the 7th century, the civilisation began building temples completely out of bricks, in which arches and vaults were used to support the structure, showing the first few signs of modernisation.





## **A** INTACT STRUCTURES

These Pyu cities feature some of the best, well-kept structures that still have intact remnants despite having undergone thousands of years of harsh elements. This shows the determination of past civilisations in developing sturdy structures so they could build a city and live in the area for the long term.



## **B** NATIONAL MUSEUM OF YANGON

If you've missed out some things from the Pyu cities, you can always visit the National Museum at Yangon. There is also a collection of artefacts brought from the cities for those only visiting Yangon.

## **C** AGAINST ALL ODDS

Sri Ksetra has unique stupas that are bell-shaped and smooth, but these are not the only selling point. The stupas in Sri Ksetra are still intact despite having been subject to so many thousands of years of harsh weather, even surviving a major earthquake.



# COLONIAL ERA REMAINS

## A ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL

This cathedral features a Dutch structure. The colour of the bricks used makes the church look even more like a Dutch-era building. This lovely church made of bricks attracts many tourists to Yangon each year.



## D MINISTER'S OFFICE

The Minister's Office dons the exact look of a classic Victorian building. The large building has a structure with red bricks, with arches neatly lining the verandah. It is said that this office is the grandest colonial structure.



## B BOGYOKE AUNG SAN MARKET

This is not just a market. The exterior of this building features a Victorian-era design, showcasing a unique combination between a busy, Southeast Asian market and a Western building. The pretty Victorian design paired with the cobblestone street will surely give you awesome Insta-worthy shots!



Photo Credit: Google

## C YANGON GENERAL POST OFFICE

This building was first used by a Scottish firm that specialises in rice milling and shipbuilding. Years later, this red-brick building is converted into a General Post Office.



## FURTHER DISCOVERIES

After spending time looking for Colonial Era Buildings, you can unwind in Yangon while visiting peaceful religious sites: the pagodas.

### **B** KYAUK TAW GYI PAGODA

This is where you will find Myanmar's largest marble Buddha image, placed in the temple. You can make some offerings or donations to the temple and the monks. This is where you will get to observe how locals get by their daily lives.



### **A** SULE PAGODA

You will find this pagoda in the middle of an area with busy traffic, but this is what makes the pagoda even more unique. During the night, this pagoda glows from the reflected light below it, making it look heavenly and beautiful. This pagoda enshrines a few strands of the Buddha's hair.

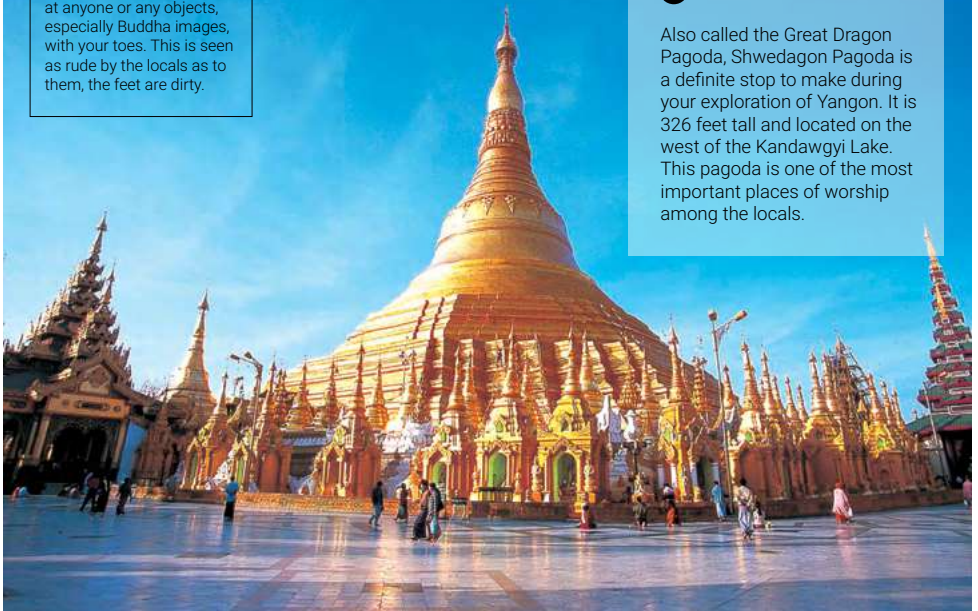
**FRIENDLY TIP:**  
Remember to remove your shoes before entering any of the religious sites in Myanmar.



**Friendly Tip:** It is best for you to avoid pointing at anyone or any objects, especially Buddha images, with your toes. This is seen as rude by the locals as to them, the feet are dirty.

### **C** SHWEDAGON PAGODA

Also called the Great Dragon Pagoda, Shwedagon Pagoda is a definite stop to make during your exploration of Yangon. It is 326 feet tall and located on the west of the Kandawgyi Lake. This pagoda is one of the most important places of worship among the locals.



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## NOTICE TO TOURIST FOR APPLYING e-VISA

**You will need the following before you apply**

- a. Your passport must have at least (6) months validity.
- b. You have to upload one **COLOR PHOTO (4.6 cm X 3.8 cm)** taking during last (3)months.
- c. Visa, Master, American Express , JCB credit cards or Alipay are accepted for Online Visa payment.

**Tourist Visa processing information**

- a. The validity of e-Visa approval letter is 90 days from the issued date. If it is expired, entry will be denied.
- b. Length of stay is (28) days from the date of arrival in Myanmar.
- c. e-Visa service is non refundable.
- d. You will receive an email acknowledgement within 1 hour after successful payment.
- e. The processing time is up to 3 working days (Myanmar time) for normal Tourist Visa, and 24 hours for Tourist Visa Express Service. In all cases, processing time starts when the application acknowledgement e-mail is sent, after application is submitted and online payment is successful.

**Rules**

If the applicant has child(ren) under (7) years old on the same passport, you have to put the name of that child, date of birth in the minor section of the application form.

- Tourists must stay in registered hotels, motels, inns, guest house and resort during your stay in Myanmar.
- The applicant should complete individual personal data whether passenger is FIT or package tour.
- There are Restricted Areas for Foreigners and Tourist travelling in the country. For more information of restricted areas go to [mip.gov.mm](http://mip.gov.mm).
- e-Visa is a only valid for a single entry. Re-entry will require a new visa.
- Currently passengers with an e-Visa enter via the following :

1. Yangon International Airport
2. Mandalay International Airport
3. Nay Pyi Taw International Airport
4. Tachileik Land Border Checkpoint
5. Myawaddy Land Border Checkpoint
6. Kawthaung Land Border Checkpoint
7. Tamu Land Border Checkpoint
8. Rih Khaw Dar Land Border Checkpoint
9. Htee Khee Land Border Checkpoint

We will announce other port of entry in due course.

- If you are visiting Myanmar via a cruise, please contact your tour agent for pre-arrangement Visa on Arrival. You will not be able to use e-Visa to enter Myanmar via seaport.
- If the decision is to not allow entry, you may return by the same flight.
- Singapore citizens (Singapore passport holders) do not require a visa for tourist visits of up to 30 days