

A photograph of a large, ornate pagoda in Myanmar, silhouetted against a bright, hazy sunset sky. The pagoda has a tall, pointed spire and multiple tiers with smaller spires. The foreground is dark, and the background shows a vast landscape with many smaller pagodas and structures, all rendered in silhouette. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by oranges, yellows, and browns.

Myanmar (2014) “Stepping Back in Time”

by Rajesh Pamnani



Myanmar is a huge country, if you have the luxury of more time, there is so much to explore. But if you have only a week like I did, the main highlights for any visitor are Mandalay, Bagan and Yangon. I absolutely loved this country, not only did I imagine to capture some beautiful pictures, I also thought the people were some of the friendliest I have ever met. The scenery is absolutely stunning. Taking a trip to Myanmar is like taking a trip back in time.



A world Apart Myanmar retains its power to surprise and delight even the most jaded of travellers.
Yangon - Be dazzled by the “Golden Wonder” of Shwedagon Paya.
Bagan - Contemplate the 4000 sacred stupas scattered across the plains of Bagan.
Mandalay - Stare in disbelief at the Ruins at ‘Mingus’ ... the would have been the worlds largest Pagoda, mahamuni Paya during the Thandingyut festival of lights. This is a country where pious monks are more revered than rock stars.



Traditional Life:

In a nation of more than ethnic groups. Western fashion is yet to make in roads.

• Everywhere you'll encounter men wearing shirt like "Longyi".

• Women & Children smothered in "thanakha".

• Betel chewing grannies with - people travelling around in trishaws, and in the rural areas horses and carts.



Yangon (Myanmar)

In downtown Yangon (Rangoon), the decaying mildewed facades of grand colonial buildings straddling wide avenues hark back to the days of British rule. Today Yangon is a vibrant mix of Burmese, Shan, Chinese, Mon and Indian communities.

Across the city Hindu temples nestle next to mosques, churches and pagodas in a surprising show of religious liberalism.





St. Mary's Cathedral, Yangon







Shwedegon Paya

Visible from almost anywhere in Yangon, this is one of the Buddhism's most sacred sites. The 325 ft. pagoda, adorned with 27 metric tons of gold leaf and thousands of diamonds and other gems. It is believed to enshrine light have of the Gautam Buddha as well as relics of there former buddhas









Circular Train will give you a unique perspective on daily life in the city and the area around it. The station is a grand British colonial building that combines Burmese architectural style with functional Western elements. On the three-hour trip, you'll see the scenery change from city to rural, and pass by ponds, villages and scenes of farm life.





Thanaka is a yellowish-white cosmetic paste made from ground bark. It is a distinctive feature of the culture of Myanmar, seen commonly applied to the face and sometimes the arms of women and girls, and is used to a lesser extent also by men and boys.



Bagan :

The capital of the first Myanmar Empire, Bagan is one of the richest archaeological sites in South East Asia with structures dating from the 11th to 14th centuries. Whilst the temples do not rival those of Angkor Wat in scale, with 4000 stupas scattered across a dusty plain spanning 40 square miles, Bagan offers unrivalled vistas and uninterrupted panoramas. At sunrise and sunset the landscape is especially captivating, taking on an ethereal charm.









Padaung (Yan Pa Doung) Is A Shan term for the Kayan Lahwi (the group whose women wear the brass neck coils)









The Buddhist World : Monastic Life & Education

When a person wishes to join the Buddhist Order, he is first ordained as a novice. As a symbolic act of his renunciation of the worldly life, he is asked to shave off his hair and put on a robe appropriate to the monastic tradition, which he has entered. The Preceptor, who is a senior monk, then ordains him usually the abbot. The Preceptor and an instructor are then given the responsibility for guiding the novice through his period of monastic training. At the end of this period, the novice may receive the higher ordination as a monk (bhikkhu) or a nun (bhikkhuni).

An ordained member of the Order is provided with shelter, food, clothing and medical cares. His life is secure, though not luxurious. His time is spent on the following activities, namely

- (1) study, either in groups or individually;
- (2) the performance of assigned tasks for the maintenance of the monastic institution;
- (3) meditation;
- (4) participation in collective observances like the recitation of the disciplinary code on new moon and full moon days;
- (5) and the performance of religious services for the lay community.



Mount Popa is a volcano 1518 metres (4981 feet) above sea level, and located in central Burma (Myanmar) about 50 km southeast of Bagan (Pogon) in the Pegu Range.

Mount Popa is perhaps best known as a pilgrimage site, with numerous Nat temples and relic sites atop the mountain.





A dish of “Lahpet” is so loved by the Myanmar people that it can be aptly labelled as the National snack.

Pickled tealeaves and condiments of fried garlic, nuts and seeds.

The tealeaves come in many flavours; some are simply steeped in peanut oil or sour and sweet, or just spicy.



The homage offering called “Kadaw Pwe” is a green coconut with its banana, decked with a few flowers, the young leaves, and some small colourful paper banners & umbrellas.

It is an offering to the celestials controlling the weather, and gradually became a symbol of paying honour to Buddha.



Simple pleasure of travel

You can drift down the “Ayeyarwady” river in an old steamer or take one of the slow trains around the country. Best of all, one encounters locals who are gentle, humorous engaging, inquisitive and passionate.

They want to play a part in the world and to know what you make of their world. This is my essay on the connection with this amazing place.





Down on the banks of the Irrawaddy, men ferry back and forth loading up dispidated 1940s flotilla ships with an assortment of wares, the loads measured out in coloured sticks. Women chatter in groups, metal lunch-boxes in hand, in the early morning mist on the way to their work.





Mandalay:

Immortalized by Kipling and later Sinatra, Mandalay is one of the most alluring place names in the world. Home to 60% of Burma's estimated 500,000 monks, Mandalay's streets are awash with red robes.



Thidingyut Festival (Festival of Lights) at Mahamuni Buddha Temple, Mandalay



Each of 12 Full Moon days of the year by the Myanmar lunar calendar celebrates a festival. Thandingyut, the 7th month, means the End of lent and many annual pagoda festival take place all over the country. The Light festival to mark the day Lord Buddha came down from heaven after spending three months of the Buddhist lent there. Buddha's return is welcomed throughout the country with colourful illuminations.









The Yadanabon Bridge spans the Irrawaddy River (Ayeyarwady River) in the Mandalay suburb connects with Sagaing City









The much heralded new asphalt roads quickly give way to pot holes. Ox-drawn carts clatter through narrow streets leaving plumes of dust. Entering Burma is like “stepping back in time”.



U Bein Bridge is a crossing that spans the Taungthaman Lake near Amarapura in Myanmar. The 1.2-kilometre (0.75 mi) bridge was built around 1850 and is believed to be oldest and longest teakwood bridge in the world.









Taungthaman Lake is located in Amarapura near Mandalay, Myanmar. The famous U Bein Bridge spans across this Lake. You can see most of the fishermen prefer wading waist deep in the muddy water in search of fish.

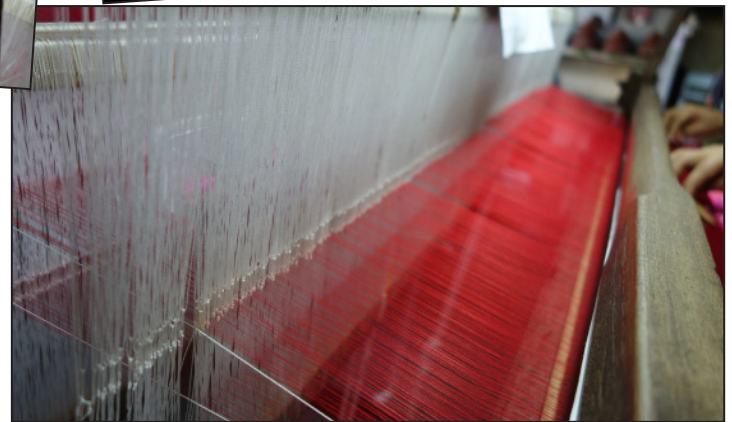




Mingun:

The Mingun temple is a monumental uncompleted stupa began by King Bodawpaya in 1790. It was not completed, due to an astrologer claiming that, once the temple was finished, the king would die. The completed stupa would have been the largest in the world at 150 metres (490 ft)





Weaving industry is one of the main professions of the Amarapura people. Over one hundred looms are used to obtain beautiful and intricate design and patterns as silk are worn in very special and ceremonial occasions. As a famous and interesting cottage industry.







A Guitar Making Workshop









Street Food in Myanmar

most bussinese people eat at home or on the street. (Rather than formal dining in options seen at Restaurants). Street food options can be over whelming and challenging (~seasonal fried cricket or grasshopper). Whatyou may see?

Samosa, Fruit Juices, Dosai, Bein Moun & Moun Pyar thalet, Mohinga, Grilled Foods, Lassi & Traditional Burnese Sweets.



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