

Cycle Myanmar (Burma)



Duration: 10 days

Myanmar, or Burma as it is still known, is a country of jungles, mountains and fertile plains, with graceful pagodas dotted across the diverse landscapes. Cycling is the perfect way to discover the friendly culture of this land almost untouched by tourism.

From Mandalay we head for Bagan's ancient temples, before riding east through hot dry lowlands, passing small villages, teak plantations and rice paddies before tackling the long winding road up into cooler jungle-clad hills. A great descent brings us to the shores of beautiful Lake Inle, where we have time to relax and see the local way of life.

This is a fascinating route combining Myanmar's cultural highlights with fabulous cycling and an insight into the everyday lives of the local people.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart London

Day 2: Arrive Mandalay

We arrive in Mandalay, the last royal capital, and a thriving city with many temples and colonial buildings preserving its history. Time permitting, we'll enjoy sunset at the famous U Bein Bridge, the world's longest teakwood bridge, before dinner and a trip briefing. Night hotel.

Day 3: Mandalay – Myingyan – Bagan

We drive south out of the busy city to Myingyan and start our cycling challenge! It's a scenic day in the saddle, as we head south through small bustling villages dotted across the agricultural plains. These central lowlands are quite dry, and it is likely to be hot and quite dusty, though many of the roads are tree-lined and shady. Our highlight today is the vast plain of Bagan, the remains of an ancient kingdom and one of the most unforgettable sights in Myanmar. At its height in the 11th-13th centuries, Bagan was home to over 10,000 pagodas; although many of them were destroyed, over 2000 remain. We ride among them on sandy tracks, temples and stupas of many sizes rising up into view. This wonderful day ends by climbing the steep steps to the top of one of the many pagodas for the magical sunset over the plain before heading to our hotel in the adjacent modern town of New Bagan. Night hotel.

Drive approx. 3 hours; cycle approx. 78km

Day 4: Bagan – Mount Popa

Leaving Bagan and its enchanting temples behind, we ride southwest towards Mount Popa, an extinct volcano rising to 1518m above the central lowlands; it can be seen for miles around. As we cross the rolling plains we pass fields of sesame, ground nuts and corn. There are also miles of magnificent palms, which are used to produce palm sugar and toddy, the local alcoholic offering – we'll stop at a toddy climber's hut for a chance to discover more! At Mount Popa, there's the opportunity to climb the 777 steps to the top, and visit the Popa Taungkalat Shrine, with its many statues depicting the spirits who are revered here. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 60km

Day 5: Mount Popa – Meikhtila

We continue east through the lowlands. Today is our longest day, and it will be hard at times despite most of the terrain being flat, but there is always plenty to watch as people go about their daily lives! We'll see local people working in the fields, and many people riding old metal bicycles, often balancing an array of local produce; we will feel quite humble on such modern bikes! Friendly waves and smiles accompany us as we pass villages, and there are plenty of chances to stop at the roadside for a cold drink or a tasty snack. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 115km

Day 6: Meikhtila – Kalaw

If there's time we'll head out for a look around the fascinating market before hitting the saddle. The landscape changes before our eyes today, as we leave the hot dry plains for the lush green hills of the Shan highlands. We pass farmland, forest and teak plantations on flat roads; as we approach the hills we start to see rice paddies and plenty of water-buffalo, and the vegetation around us becomes much greener and denser. Motorbikes and small tractors buzz past as we pedal along the quiet tree-lined roads, becoming progressively hillier. After a long winding climb on a beautiful tree-lined road, with wonderful views, we enjoy a lovely descent into a small town and continue on into the hills. It's hot, hard work but the scenery is wonderful and you'll have the perfect excuse to make plenty of photo-stops! Our vehicle picks us up before the last steep climb into Kalaw; lying at 1285m, this was the summer retreat of the British colonials escaping the heat of the lowlands, and it's a wonderful place to

end our day's ride. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 86km

Day 7: Kalaw – Indein – Lake Inle

Our last day is shorter, but spectacular! After a small climb out of town we sweep downhill, joining tracks which take us through the rolling hills and farmland of the Shan Plateau, passing paddy-fields and small villages perched on the hillsides. The villages are home to hill-tribes such as the Palaung; their different cultures and colourfully woven clothes show us yet another side to the country. There is plenty to immerse yourself in as we cycle through and, however tired your legs may be after the past few days, you'll want today to be longer! We have a wonderful 10km descent to Indein, an impressive temple complex on Lake Inle where the pagodas are overgrown by trees and vegetation; we'll have time to explore. Our challenge ends on the shores of Lake Inle, where motorised canoes take us to our hotel on the lake. After time to freshen up we'll have a great evening to celebrate our achievements. Night hotel.

Day 8: Lake Inle – Yangon

Today we enjoy discovering the local way of life on Lake Inle, where stilted villages and floating gardens demonstrate the innovative local culture. We explore the creeks and waterways by boat, discovering the craft workshops, temples and houses built on the lake. One of the highlights will no doubt be to watch the leg-rowing fishermen, an unique way of fishing that the local people have developed, which allows them to use two hands to cast their nets. A boat then takes us out into the open, northern part of the lake, where we enjoy the views en-route to He ho. Here we take a short flight to Yangon. Night hotel. *(Dinner not included)*

Day 9: Yangon; flight departs

We have plenty of time to explore the sights of Yangon, where the main highlight is the magnificent golden Shwedagon Pagoda, before heading back to the airport for our flight home. *(Lunch and Dinner not included)*

Day 10: Arrive UK

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All transport from London to Mandalay / Yangon return
- All food (other than three meals) and accommodation
- Discover Adventure leaders; doctor with group of 15 or more participants; local guides and drivers
- Vehicle support and backup equipment on the trip
- 21-speed mountain bike (Trek/Giant or equivalent)
- Entrance to Bagan and any other sites visited as part of the itinerary

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Any meals specified 'not included' in the itinerary
- Travel insurance
- Cycle helmet (compulsory) and 2 water bottles
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks
- Tips for the local guides and support crew
- Inbound airport departure tax
- Burma entry visa
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions and activities (e.g. shrine visit on Mt. Popa)
- Airline taxes: we cap these so £250.00 is the maximum you will pay
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

GRADE | YELLOW

All our trips are designed to provide a challenge. Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **YELLOW** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors. Trip duration, accommodation and living conditions are also taken into account. Some sections will feel more challenging than others, but the grade reflects the overall trip. Unusual weather conditions can also have a significant impact.

The Accommodation icon indicates the living conditions while trekking/cycling. While there are usually several factors that present a challenge, the Challenge icon indicates the trip's most challenging element, for most people.

[Trip grading explained](#)

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Leaders & Trip Support

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader. Usually leaders are based in the UK or other English-speaking countries and lead for us regularly throughout the year in many different countries. In some instances, trips are led by in-country guides with a wealth of knowledge about the region; they have been trained by us to provide the level of support

expected on a Discover Adventure trip.

Trip Doctor

An expedition doctor or medic accompanies the group (dependent on group size.) Their role is to look after the well-being of the whole group and deal with any medical incidents. They help the crew to ensure the trip runs smoothly, and encourage you when things get tough. The total number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group.

Local Support Crew

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, assisted by drivers, porters, cooks and other support staff, depending on the type of trip. Local guides know the area well, and are a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. Not all support crew will speak English well, but are very friendly and approachable. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

Your leader will arrange a collection of tips for the local support crew at the end of your trek, and you will be provided with a guideline amount in advance. Tipping is not obligatory, but once you see how hard they work on your behalf you will be happy to donate something! All our local crew are paid wages, but bear in mind that the average wage in many countries may be less than you would spend on an average night out.

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with communication devices (eg phones, radios and/or emergency satellite phones), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary, should local conditions dictate. Pre-trip administration - such as medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

Flight Information

Group flights usually leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick on scheduled airlines and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your journey may involve a transit en route; details of route and flight times will be confirmed several months before departure. We do not always use the same airline for each destination; if you wish to know the probable carrier and flight times, please call for details. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure. Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline. If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost.

Accommodation

We stay in a variety of hotels/lodges ranging from quite simple, friendly guesthouse-style to more international-style hotels in larger towns or cities. Standards are generally good, in great locations, but there may be a night or two where facilities are more basic, as you'd expect in very remote, untouristed or rural areas.

Roomshare Arrangements

Our trips are sold on a shared accommodation basis, usually twin-share. Occasionally we may use hostel-style accommodation.

You can tell us if you are travelling with someone else on the trip when you book or within your passenger portal, and we will do all we can to accommodate this request. It is important that both people complete the room share request on their bookings. For customers booking and travelling together, including same-sex couples, a double bed can be requested if available.

If you're not familiar with anyone in the group, rest assured, we always pair you with someone of the same gender (as per the information you provided when booking, or passport markers), and a similar age where possible. We're actively working to improve our system's gender restrictions to be more inclusive, and we've recently made significant strides in this area. If you identify differently from the gender marker on your passport and would like to discuss this before booking, please feel free to reach out to us.

Food & Dietary Requirements

The food provided is plentiful, often local in style and freshly-cooked, and will give you plenty of energy. Sometimes we enjoy a buffet-style lunch-stop, other times we might have packed lunches. On some trips we stop at small local restaurants. Dinners are generally eaten at our accommodation each evening. In some regions there may be less variety than you are used to, and in others fresh meat or produce can be harder to come by. Any meals not included are listed in the itinerary and are generally on travel / free days, giving you the opportunity to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit different budgets.

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Please do not expect as much variety as you would have access to at home – we may be in very rural or remote areas, or among people of a different culture who may not understand your requirements, however willing they are to help. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat we strongly recommend you bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

Luggage

Your luggage, food, water and equipment is transported for you from one night-stop to the next. If there is easy road access this is done by vehicle; if not porters, mules or even camels might carry your bags, depending on the terrain.

Space is limited and hard-sided luggage is not suitable, so it is essential that your kit is packed in a soft bag, rucksack or expedition kitbag. Ask us about our specially-designed low-cost kitbags if you don't have one already. You should also bring a small daypack to carry for items needed during the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until the evening.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Challenge Grading

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[Trip grading explained](#)

Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you with all necessary information 6 weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check [Fit For Travel](#) for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by email or post. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration, administration and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge, and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a

minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge. Our typical groups run with approximately 15-25 participants; however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run. Occasionally it may be possible to still run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.



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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 15 Jul 2025, and the challenge is subject to change.