

Each private luxury tour is custom to the wishes of each client. This itinerary is a sample. Our Sister Company, TRAVNET, may provide assistance with mileage points conversion. Do not hesitate to call Randy to create your custom tour.

Overview

The most pristine of the Southeast Asian Buddhist countries, Burma provides an insight into one of the world’s oldest religions untouched by Western influence, due in part to Burma’s self-imposed isolation. The touring activities here are varied, yet each as exciting as the last. Whether it is cruising down the Irrawaddy River, visiting the sprawling temple complex of Bagan, or relaxing at lush, green Inle Lake, Burma has something for everyone. However, a visit to Southeast Asia is not complete without also visiting Thailand, considered to be the number one travel destination within the region. One of the real draws of Thailand is that it is a land of contrasts, from the sandy beaches of Phuket to the rolling hill countries of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai and even the sprawling cosmopolitan city of Bangkok.

<p>BURMA</p> <p>Temperature Range Highs: Mid 90’s Lows: High 70’s</p> <p>Area 676,552 SQ KM 261,218 SQ MILES</p> <p>Population 48.7 Million</p> <p>Language Burmese</p> <p>Capital Nay Pyi Taw</p> <p>Currency Kyat</p>	<p>THAILAND</p> <p>Temperature Range Highs: High 80’s Lows: High 70’s</p> <p>Area 318,843 SQ KM 198,120 SQ MILES</p> <p>Population 68.8 Million</p> <p>Language Isan, Kam Mueang, Pak Tai</p> <p>Capital Bangkok</p> <p>Currency Baht</p>
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Day 1

Fly to Yangon

Through our sister company, premium air provider TRAVNET, we may assisted with your international airfare, as well as with mileage points conversion.

Meals: --

Accommodations: --

Day 2

Arrive Yangon

Upon arrival at Yangon and clearing immigrations, you will be met by your private guide and transferred to the Governor’s Residence.

Governor’s Residence (RL)

Similar to the other “luxury” hotels throughout Burma, the Governor’s Residence is in need of renovation from the many years of economic sanctions levied on the country. That being said, this Victorian (teak) boutique former mansion is our favorite hotel in Yangon. Located in the leafy embassy district of the city, the rooms have a nice aesthetic with local Burmese wares displayed throughout. The Governor’s Residence is a particularly special place in the evening, with the property and lush grounds illuminated.

Meals: --

Accommodations: The Governor’s Residence

Day 3

Yangon

After breakfast, you will begin your private touring of Yangon beginning with the Botataung Pagoda, a 131-foot tall stupa with relics of the Buddha inside. You will continue your tour with the following stopovers: the Scott Market with outstanding local crafts, Musmeah Yeshua (the city’s only synagogue), the famed Shwedagon Pagoda said to be over 2,500 years old, and The Last Mughal’s Tomb in Yangon.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodations: The Governor's Residence

Day 4

Fly Yangon/Heho – Inle Lake

Upon arrival to Heho, you will be transferred to Nyaung Shwe Village where you will take a thirty minute long boat ride (this is most fun!) to Inle Princess Resort. Situated on Inle Lake and surrounded by the Shan Hill, this place is a picturesque region surrounded by floating gardens and stilt houses.

Inle Princess Resort (RL)

Although somewhat dated, Bev, Zen and I feel the Inle Princess Resort is the finest resort in the area. Made up of 46 Shan-style wooden chalets, the staff and service here is most heartwarming. The resort's gardens and surrounding islands are lush, green and most welcoming. We felt we had our best Burmese massage at the small spa here. The sunsets here are beyond beautiful!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Inle Princess Resort

Day 5

Heho (Inle Lake)

You will begin your day with a visit to the Five-Day Market (Mine Thauk Market)—a rotating market that changes locations every five days and is where the local hill tribes come to buy and sell their goods, and Nampan Village. In the afternoon you will cruise through a lushly forested river to visit a collection of ancient Shan style stupas.

Day 6

Sagar

Today you will set out on a full day tour of Sagar, a lush relatively unexplored area that many of us consider the “real” Inle Lake. With few tourists venturing this far out, you may look back on this day as your truly authentic Burmese outdoor experience. Of special note here are the many sunken stupas (over 100) creating a serene, somewhat spiritual atmosphere.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Inle Princess Resort

Day 7

Fly Heho/Bagan + Irrawaddy River Cruise

Upon arrival in Bagan, you will have the chance to tour the Dhammayangyi Pahto Temple before being transferred to the Sanctuary Ananda River Vessel.

Sanctuary Ananda River Cruise (RL)

The Sanctuary Ananda is a 21 all-suite vessel that will surely lift Burma River cruising to a whole new high-touch, luxury level. Limited to 41 passengers, the Ananda will offer many nice amenities, including its own spa

and gym, and all cabins offering individually controlled air conditioning (a real blessing given Burma's stifling heat)!

The luxury suites offer private butler service, "monsoon" showers and L'Occitane en Provence bathroom amenities (yes, our beloved Provence on the Irrawaddy). Similar to the Paukan vessels, the new Ananda's shallow draft will allow village stopovers along the river which makes the cruising so much more culturally compelling. This is the big drawback for the large, ponderous Road to Mandalay luxury vessel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Sanctuary Ananda Cruise

Day 8

Irrawaddy River Cruise

For those who wish, a visit to the Sanctuary adopted village of Sin Kyun can be arranged. This wonderful community will show you the typical life of the villagers, a way of life seldom viewed by outsiders. The RV Ananda will then sail to Mingun, a journey that will give you a wonderful glimpse into river life on the Irrawaddy.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Sanctuary Ananda Cruise

Day 9

Irrawaddy River Cruise

Early in the morning you will proceed downstream to Bagan for a sunrise hot air balloon ride - an experience that is not to be missed! Following your hot air balloon ride and breakfast, you will be taken on a tour of the temples in Bagan, including the Ananda, complete in 1091 AD and one of the four great temples. You will then be transferred to Mount Popa, a pilgrimage site with numerous Nat temples and relics. Your day ends with a sunset candlelit dinner on a sandbank.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Sanctuary Ananda Cruise

Day 10

Arrive Mandalay + Fly to Chiang Mai

Upon arrival in Mandalay, you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Chiang Mai, connecting in Yangon. Once in Chiang Mai, you will be transferred to the Four Seasons.

Four Seasons Chiang Mai

We cannot imagine a luxury resort in Chiang Mai with better service or a more beautiful setting. The 98-pavillion Four Seasons Chiang Mai features landscaped gardens, water lily ponds, water buffalo (Zen loves the morning rides!), set in terraced rice paddies, creating a peaceful oasis. Though incredibly beautiful, there is pretention here: the service is subtle, heartfelt, natural, almost wabi-sabiesque in its delivery. Facilities include two swimming pools, a fitness center and a very nice spa, as well as cooking classes at the noteworthy Oriental Culinary Academy.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Four Seasons Chiang Mai

Day 11

Chiang Mai Private Touring

Your day begins with a visit to the Warrior's Market before taking a touristy (yet fun!) rickshaw ride to Wat Phra Singh, Chiang Mai's leading monastery and home to one of Thailand's most iconic images – that of the Pra Singh Buddha. You will continue to the Wat Suthep Temple, the temple is reached by climbing a naga(snake/serpent deities) balustrade staircase of 306 steps. We recommend taking the stairs as a nice, yet arduous fitness/spiritual introduction to northern Thailand; however there is a tram available for those less ambitious. In the evening, you may wish to stop at the Chiang Mai Women's Prison Massage Center, which offers full body massages by inmates at the women's prison as a part of their rehabilitation training program and as an opportunity for them to earn money prior to their release in six months.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Four Seasons Chiang Mai

Day 12

Chiang Mai Private Touring

In light of continuous evidence of animal abuse and neglect, we are currently researching elephant camps in Thailand that provide safe and natural conditions for their elephants, which are only treated in humane ways. Please note that we do not arrange or support visits to any elephant camps that offer elephant rides or have elephants performing unnatural acts such as painting or balancing on one foot.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Four Seasons Chiang Mai

Day 13

Chiang Mai Private Touring + Drive Chiang Mai/Chiang Rai

In the morning you will be taken to Chiang Dao, a lush jungle environment, ideal for biking and visiting the various hill tribes, such as the Akha. You will continue to the Palong hill tribe village, a people notable for their distinctive teeth decorated in gold. Following, you will be transferred to the Four Seasons Tented Camp in Chiang Rai.

Four Seasons Tented Camp Chiang Rai.

Although smaller (only 15 luxury "tents" in scale), the Four Seasons Tented Camp/Chiang Rai, Golden Triangle offers every bit of luxury service as its sister property in Chiang Mai. Set in a lush hillside overlooking Burma and Laos, the tented accommodations offer every custom amenity imaginable including amazing views of the Ruak River, Burma and the mountains of Laos, and green jungle and Golden Triangle. However, the main focal point here is the rescued elephants, which you can interact with in their natural habitat. We prefer this elephant experience to that offered by Anantara, another 5-star resort in the area that allows the riding of their elephants, a practice that has proven to be often harmful towards the animals.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Four Seasons Tented Camp Chiang Rai

Day 14

Chiang Rai Private Touring

You will first visit the ancient Lanna hill tribe town of Chiang Saen, captured by the Burmese in 16th century, sacked by King Rama I in 1803, and left largely abandoned until 1900 when it slowly started to become repopulated. You will then visit Chiang Rai's Hall of Opium Museum, where interactive displays and multi-media presentations offer a grim overview of the Golden Triangle's centuries old drug trade, dating back 5,000 years. Close to the very fields where millions of opium poppies once bloomed, the museum presents a full picture of the opium trade, its history and the blighted lives of addicts.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Four Seasons Tented Camp Chiang Rai

Day 15

Chiang Rai Free Day

Today is free for you to enjoy the amenities of the Four Seasons Tented Camp and interact with the elephants.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Four Seasons Tented Camp Chiang Rai

Day 16

Fly Chiang Rai/Bangkok

Upon arrival in Bangkok, you will have the chance to check-in and freshen up at the Mandarin Oriental before embarking on a half-day private tour of Bangkok via a klong. The klongs (canals) water excursion highlights the Thai way of life that at one time gave Bangkok the title of "Venice of the East." Although pollution-challenged, the Chao Phraya River is still a compelling part of life here. You will pass Wat Arun (Temple of Dawn), as well as many unique riverside neighborhoods. Many of the cultural highlights are in the city's historical core, Rattanakosin (or old Bangkok), which sits on a bend on the east side of the Chao Praya River. Here you will find the grounds of the Grand palace, the complex of buildings and gardens built when the capital was founded in 1782. Adjoining the Grand Palace stands the royal temple, Wat Phra Kaeo, which houses the revered Emerald Buddha, considered the most sacred Buddhist site in Thailand. To the south of the palace grounds is Wat Pho, site of the reclining Buddha.

Mandarin Oriental Bangkok (RL)

Founded in 1876, the 393-room Oriental really sets the standard for subtle, understated luxury – the service here is legendary. The State Rooms (River Wing), Author's Suite, and 2-Bedroom Family Suite are among our favorites – decorated in traditional Thai style with dark teakwood and bright Thai silk. Another plus is their amazing spa (accessible via ferryboat directly across the Chao Phraya River from the hotel). Other features include two pools, tennis and squash courts, and a renowned Thai Cooking School. Though we are not so keen on 200+ room size hotels, we will happily make an exception for this iconic Bangkok property (!)

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Mandarin Oriental Bangkok

Day 17

Bangkok Private Touring

You will embark on a 2 hour drive to the Ratchaburi Province, where you will board a private longboat to travel along the Damnoen Saduak River, meandering through a series of canals, before ending at the Floating Market. Since many of the dishes are cooked directly in the small boats, you will have an immense variety of local food to taste with satay and noodle soup. Following a late lunch, at a local restaurant (if you are still hungry!), you will visit a unique county market, located along a stretch of railway tracks. Every time a train passes, all the vendors pull away their tables/workshops from the tracks, only to replace them the second the train is gone – this is quite a fun sight.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Mandarin Oriental Bangkok

Day 17

Bangkok Private Touring

Your Bangkok touring begins with a trip to see the Emerald Buddha, sat atop an elevated altar, and housed within the former royal palace which features an intriguing blend of Italian Renaissance architecture and classical Thai roofing. You will continue to Wat Pho, built by King Rama I nearly 200 years ago and housing the gigantic Reclining Buddha or Phra Buddhasaiyas, 150 feet long and almost 50 feet high, covered entirely in gold leaf. Your touring ends with a visit Jim Thompson’s House, once home to the American silk entrepreneur, this remarkable accommodates Thompson’s vast collection of antiques and artworks from all over the Southeast Asian region. In the evening, you may wish to visit the Patpong Night Market, among the most diverse and interesting of Bangkok’s many markets.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Mandarin Oriental Bangkok

Day 19

Fly Bangkok/Home

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: --