

Myanmar Trek

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Temples of Bagan (photo: Jenni Fogle)

Myanmar has recently become the spot for travelers seeking a glimpse of an old southeast Asian culture before the place gets too popular! Before sending an IMG team there, however, we had to find out for ourselves the ins and outs of the country. With that in mind we sent senior guide Jenni Fogle there during the spring of 2013 to do a reconnaissance and make sure everything was all set for our IMG expeditions to visit. Jenni is a world traveler and has led many Kilimanjaro climbs and Everest treks, so she was the perfect person to go and sort it all out. Jenni reports:

"When I first heard of Myanmar, and that the country just recently started using Wi-Fi and cell phones and has virtually no ATM machines, I had to check it out for myself! I wasn't sure quite what to expect, so I arrived with an open mind. I had a rough plan, but no details. Everything fell into place perfectly. I visited Bagan, which at one time housed more than 10,000 Buddhist temples, pagodas and monasteries. Currently over 2200 still remain. After Bagan I explored Yangon, Myanmar's capital and worked on logistics for some amazing IMG trips. The country is beautiful, the people are friendly and warm, and the food is delicious. What more could you want? I'll be heading back this fall to lead a couple of trips combining just the right amount of trekking and culture. Will you join me?"

Make no mistake, traveling in Myanmar is still the “wild, wild, west”. We have worked hard to iron out the kinks, but this remains real adventure travel! Our 14 day Myanmar expedition will interest and challenge even veteran travelers, with the chance to visit four completely different parts of the country. Starting in Yangon we spend a couple days exploring, then fly north to Bagan (Pagan), one of the most famous ancient cities sites of Southeast Asia (over 1000 years old) for a combination of day hiking, touring, and visiting important archeological sites. Then, the team will travel to the west into Chin State (which borders Bangladesh) for several days of trekking and touring the more remote villages of the Chin tribes.



Local girls (photo: Jenni Fogle)

For the final part of the trip, the team flies east to Heho in Shan State for five days of touring and trekking in this area (closer to the border with Thailand). The trip culminates with a day at Inle Lake before flying back to Yangon.

Our goal is to get a great feel for the country in two weeks and I think this itinerary is a winner. If you are up for a real adventure, join IMG guide Jenni Fogle for this fun trip. Please let me know how I can be of further assistance!

Eric Simonson
IMG Himalayan Programs Director

“IMG was above and beyond my expectations. This has truly become the trip of a lifetime and a life-altering one as well... Thank you for all of your hard planning and making sure IMG's services surpassed our hopes.”

—Ryan S.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml

Myanmar Trek

Dates, Prices, Program Descriptions:

Date: TBA
Landcost: \$4500

NOTE ON DATES: Dates are listed starting with the arrival day to Yangon to the departure day from Yangon for flights back home.

Costs included in trip fee: Transfers between hotel and airport in Yangon, hotels with breakfast for Yangon, hotels with all meals for rest of the trip, domestic flights and domestic airport taxes, ground transfers and transportation per itinerary, sightseeing tours and entry fees, trekking permits and fees, local guides.

Costs not included in trip fee: International round-trip air fare and airport taxes, personal sundries and beverages, personal expenses, gratuities, Myanmar visa (more information will be provided), costs incurred as a result of delays or events beyond the control of IMG and customary but optional tips for IMG staff. **REQUIRED Insurance:** IMG requires that all* trip participants purchase [Travel Insurance](#) that includes coverage for medical evacuation, repatriation and medical expenses for the duration of their IMG program. Trip Cancellation Insurance is strongly recommended. Trekking and mountaineering programs are true "adventure travel." **The insurance requirement does not apply to IMG customers on programs within the continental USA, but is strongly encouraged.*

Single room supplement: \$1000.00

To Join the Trek:

To confirm you on the program we need IMG Forms 1,2,3,4, copy of passport, and the Application Fee. The Form 5 (doctor form) can come later (up to 30 days prior to departure). Sign up information: www.mountainguides.com/pdf/IMG-Forms.pdf

Fee Payment Schedule:

Payment Due Date	
Application Fee	\$1,000
TBA	Balance

All IMG program fees are quoted in US dollars. All fees and payments are non-refundable and non-transferable. Payments must be received by IMG on or before the due dates noted above. Failure to submit payments on or before these due dates will result in forfeiture of fees paid and loss of program reservation. Our bank does not charge for incoming bank wires, however, please include wire fees charged by your bank or correspondent banks.

“I am on my way home from another amazing trip. I want to let you know how much I appreciate the knowledge, safety, and professionalism displayed once again by [the IMG guides]. Their interpersonal skills were equally evident. This makes my 3rd trip with IMG, and I just want to give credit where it's due and to say thank-you...”

—Walt E.

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Myanmar Trek Itinerary (2013 Example)

Day	Date	Overnight	Details
Day 1	Saturday, October 26, 2013	Yangon	Meet in Yangon, transfer to hotel
Day 2	Sunday, October 27, 2013	Yangon	Day in Yangon — Visit Sule Pagoda, Kandawgyi Lake, Bogyoke Market, Shwedagon Pagoda - Welcome dinner at hotel
Day 3	Monday, October 28, 2013	Bagan	Flight to Bagan. Spend day visiting Gubyaukgyi Temple, Shwezigon Pagoda, Ananda Temple, Nyaung Oo market and lacquerware factory. Sunset boat ride on Irrawaddy River.
Day 4	Tuesday, October 29, 2013	Kanpalet	Travel to Kanpalet/Chin state — 4500 feet elevation.
Day 5	Wednesday, October 30, 2013	Kanpalet	Trek to various nearby villages and return to Kanpalet in evening.
Day 6	Thursday, October 31, 2013	Mindat	Drive/trek to Mt. Victoria then drive to Mindat. Overnight in Mindat.
Day 7	Friday, November 01, 2013	Bagan	Return to Bagan by vehicle.
Day 8	Saturday, November 02, 2013	Bagan	Visit Mt. Popa and climb the 777 steps to Taungkalat. Visit toddy palm stand. Overnight in Bagan.
Day 9	Sunday, November 03, 2013	Kalaw	Morning flight to Heho in Shan State. Drive 1.5 hours to Pindaya. Visit Pindaya caves and Botoloke Lake. Drive to Kalaw. Overnight in Kalaw.
Day 10	Monday, November 04, 2013	Ywa Pu	Trek from Kalaw to Tar Yaw (about 3 hours) and Ywa Pu (about 1.5 hours). Overnight in Ywa Pu
Day 11	Tuesday, November 05, 2013	Hti Thein	Trek from Ywa Pu to Kone Hla, then Hti Thein for overnight in monastery.
Day 12	Wednesday, November 06, 2013	Inle Lake	Trek from Hti Thein to Nan Yoke and Inle Lake. Overnight at Inle Lake
Day 13	Thursday, November 07, 2013	Inle Lake	Day at Inle Lake — sightseeing/trek.
Day 14	Friday, November 08, 2013	Yangon	Flight to Yangon. Departure that evening or next morning.

“As I’ve come to appreciate from past IMG expeditions, the logistics, staff, and team members on this IMG trip were as good as ever before, and you guys delivered another once-in-a-lifetime experience...” —Mary H.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml

Myanmar Trek Personal Equipment Checklist

This equipment list is meant to help you compile your personal gear for the Myanmar trekking trip. Most items are required. Please consider each item carefully and be sure you understand the function of each piece of equipment before you substitute or delete items from your duffel. Keep in mind that this list has been carefully compiled by Eric Simonson, the expedition organizer. Don't cut corners on the quality of your gear. In order to assist our clients in understanding and selecting the appropriate equipment for this program, IMG has worked with online outdoor retailer Mountain Gear (www.mountaingear.com) to post gear lists, along with specific product recommendations, on the Mountain Gear website.

Travel Items

- Duffel Bags: One duffel will accompany you on the trek. Less is more...please pack carefully and do not bring the "kitchen sink"! You will also store some travel clothes at the hotel in Yangon while trekking, so a smaller additional bag with a lock might be handy. Tip: Bring 5 large plastic garbage bags to pack gear inside duffels to protect gear from rain.
- Daypack: Large daypack or bag with a shoulder strap, so you don't have to set it down while doing the duffel shuffle or handling travel documents while going through passport control and customs at the airport. It needs to be big enough to hold everything you'll need for an overnight stop.
- Locks: You'll want padlocks in Myanmar, but for flying out of the USA, it might be better to use plastic zip ties which can be cut by TSA staff if necessary (bring extra zip ties) or TSA approved locks.
- Travel Wallet: Important for carrying your important documents including passport, extra photos, duffel inventory list, and money. We suggest that you use a travel wallet that you can hang around your neck and place inside your shirt, or around your waist tucked under your shirt or trousers.
- Passport (valid for at least 6 months after the trip ends with sufficient extra pages for visa stamps and in **same name as airline ticket** (or with endorsement-for women who changed name w/ marriage).
- Good quality photocopy of your passport (first 2 pages) and several additional passport photos.

Trekking Gear

- Trekking Poles: Poles come in handy for balance and easing impact to your knees. Get collapsible poles that can attach to your backpack.
- Backpack: The travel pack may be big enough for the trek. You will want a pack big enough for carrying your sleeping bag and pad (if necessary).
- Pack Cover: Waterproof rain cover for your pack.
- Sleeping Bag: Rated to freezing.
- Lightweight sleeping pad
- Folding umbrella

Footwear

- Lightweight Shoes: Running/tennis shoes and sandals for camp, around town, etc.
- Hiking Boots: Medium-weight hiking boots, waterproofed and broken-in.
- Socks: 3 complete changes of socks, in a combination that you have used and know works for you. Make sure your boots are roomy enough for the sock combination you intend to use.

Clothing

- Base Layer: 1 pair synthetic long johns
- Mid Layers: One additional warm layer (wool sweater, another fleece jacket, shelled vest, etc, that can be worn in conjunction to the other layers).
- Shell Jacket: Waterproof/breathable jacket with hood.
- Shell Pants: Waterproof/breathable pants (full side zips are best).
- Trekking Clothes: Light hiking pants and / or hiking shorts for warm weather down low- NOT cotton. Shirts for hiking on nice days (t-shirts OK, quick-drying synthetic fabric far better). Look for construction that provides freedom of movement and/or stretch materials. Fabric should be a breathable synthetic that preferably holds up to abrasion and dries quickly. You can wear them over longjohns if it is chilly (it should not get too cold)!

- Casual Clothes: For travel/meals in dining rooms. You'll want a shirt or two with a collar to wear on flights and for restaurants. A sweatshirt or light jacket might be nice in the evening.
- Bathing Suit: Some of the hotels may have pools

Clothing Accessories

- Gloves: Light gloves for hiking.
- Hats: Warm wool or heavy fleece hat, sun hat and bandana.
- A "Buff" or light balaclava to breathe through in the cold dry air. Good for preventing "Khumbu cough"

Camp Accessories

- Headlamp: With several sets of extra batteries.
- Water Bottles: 2 water bottles with foam insulation shells. Bring a Pee bottle too.
- Water Treatment: Iodine tablets (Potable Aqua or similar) or iodine crystals (Polar Pure).
- Camera: With spare batteries, film and memory cards.
- Pocket Knife.

Personal Accessories

- Wrist Watch: With alarm and light for reading in the dark. We like the Suunto ones.
- Eyewear: Bring good sunglasses. For contact lens wearers, ski goggles with light color lenses (for use at night) might be useful in windy conditions that cause blowing dust.
- Vision correction: Bring extra prescription eyeglasses or contact lenses if you wear them. Lens solutions are not widely available, so bring enough.
- Skin Care: Maximum SPF sunscreen and lip balm.
- Basic First Aid and personal: Bring plenty of hand sanitizer (Purell). Also you'll want moleskin, tape, aspirin (many climbers take an 81mg aspirin every day to prevent stroke), ibuprofen / acetaminophen, Imodium and Pepto Bismol for diarrhea, Band-Aids, antacid, insect repellent, ear plugs, several rolls of toilet paper, small towel, soap/shampoo, a few disposable dust masks, hand cream (for chapped hands).
- Prescription Medications: 1) Antibiotic for upper respiratory problems (azithromycin) 2) Antibiotic for GI problems (Cipro or azithromycin); 3) Sleeping pills for jet lag; 4) Malaria Chemoprophylaxis, if needed based on travel plans; 5) Asthma medication, if any history.
- Cold medicine (Sudafed, etc), Chloroseptic or Tessalon Perles throat lozenges.
- Personal Snack Food: Approximately 5 pounds of personal snacks, also some drink mixes if you like these (add drink mix to your water bottle after giving iodine tablets 30 minutes of contact time).
- Books/videos/magazines. Plan on sharing among your team members.

Immunizations Checklist

- Tetanus-Diphtheria** - You should already have. Do you need a booster?
- Polio** -You should already have. Do you need a booster?
- MMR** -You should already have. Do you need a booster?
- Meningitis** - Recommended. Consult your physician.
- Hepatitis A** - Recommended. Consult your physician.
- Hepatitis B** - Not a bad idea. Ask your physician.
- Cholera** - Ask your physician. Not usually recommended any more.
- Typhoid** - Not a bad idea to be safe. The tablet form, Vivotif Berna, is good for five years.
- Rabies** - The new vaccine is easy. Myanmar has rabid animals.
- Malaria** – Malaria chemoprophylaxis is highly recommended. We recommend Malarone.

Consult your physician and visit the travel clinic at a major University Hospital or your local Public Health Department for the most up to date info on travel requirements, or check out the Center for Disease Control Website at www.cdc.gov.