

**A Homage to Burma Dhamma Pilgrimage Tour with Alan Clements
Organized and Guided by his dear Dhamma friend, Ms. Snow Aye
10 Days/9 Nights - February 10-19, 2020 (Monday to Wednesday)**

- Day 1 Feb 10, 2020** – Arrival and check into hotel in Yangon (after Mahasi retreat ends)
- Day 2 Feb 11, 2020** – Yangon – visit various places of Dhamma and cultural significance
- Day 3 Feb 12, 2020** – Yangon - Bagan flight: visit shrines and temples in the ancient capital
- Day 4 Feb 13, 2020** – Bagan: continue visiting cultural heritage sites and sunset river cruise
- Day 5 Feb 14, 2020** – Drive Bagan - Monywa into the heart of Burma; visit monasteries; 5 hrs
- Day 6 Feb 15, 2020** – Visit Monywa & Sagaing Hills, on to Pyin Oo Lwin (hill station) 5 hours
- Day 7 Feb 16, 2020** – Drive Pyin Oo Lwin to Mandalay: visit Dhamma sites & Mandalay Hill
- Day 8 Feb 17, 2020** – Visit famous Dhamma sites and on to Amarapura & back to Mandalay
- Day 9 Feb 18, 2020** – Fly Mandalay-Yangon (stop at Aung San Suu Kyi's home, NLD office, Sayadaw U Pandita's meditation centre, and other Dhamma sites).
- Day 10 Feb 19, 2020** – Departure (or continue on, as you wish, anywhere in the country)

If you wish to continue your journey, Alan will suggest a number of key places and people to visit, and/or you can reside for some time at the Mahasi Meditation Centre to practice.

(The itinerary may change based on in route necessities or circumstances beyond our control)

FEES, PAYMENT SCHEDULE & DEPOSIT UPON APPLICATION

The Pilgrimage Tour is limited to 10 people

Produced by

Myanmar Compassionate Hands Travels and Tour Co Ltd

In conjunction with

World Dharma Productions
WorldDharma.com / Schedule
Email: contact@worlddharma.com

DAY 1 Feb 10, 2020 Monday ARRIVAL TO YANGON stay at Summit Parkview Hotel (D)

Upon arrival to the YANGON International airport or transferring from the Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha Meditation Centre in Yangon (MSY) (at the end of the ten-day Wisdom of Mindfulness retreat at noon) you will be welcomed by Ms Snow Aye and her Compassionate Travel Myanmar team and transfer to the hotel.

As many of you know, Yangon is a charming (and at times, challenging) city with numerous monasteries, pagodas, churches, mosques, mansions, colonial buildings, and a diverse multi-religious heritage, that is undergoing a radical transition to modernity. While the country as a whole is a complex tapestry of numerous languages and ethnicities, a breathtakingly beautiful (often traumatized) population, emerging ever-so-slowly from over five decades of violent dictatorship, tortuous totalitarian rule and ethnic wars. Regardless of circumstances, we will face everything and everyone, as best as we can, with the universal qualities of *metta* (loving-kindness), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (sympathetic joy) and *upekka* (equanimity).

After relaxing at the hotel or returning from a city stroll or a quiet walk in the park, there will be a Dhamma orientation meeting with Alan, followed by a welcome dinner at the historic restaurant, “House of Memories”, where General Aung San (Aung San Suu Kyi's father, who was assassinated when she was two years old) had his office during the horrors of the Second World War that were being fought within the country.

Both General Aung San and Aung San Suu Kyi are two of most notable figures in Burma's recent history. You will learn a lot about them both, as well as a number of other key people in Burma's unfinished struggle for democracy, along with several of the country's great Dhamma and meditation leaders, over the ten days of the Pilgrimage.

Many of you also know that this is Alan's final trip to Burma after 42 years of active involvement. Also, this is the first time he has invited people to travel the country with him, and see Burma through his eyes, as well as your own as well, of course. You are invited, should you wish, throughout the tour, to take notes, record, and or film anything and everything you want.

Afterward dinner, please go out on the town, if you wish, and do what moves your heart. Yangon, rarely sleeps, while most of the city's 50,000 or so Buddhist monks and nuns get up at 3 am to study, meditate and or tend to monastic duties. Otherwise, take rest and sleep in and we will meet in the morning for breakfast.

Overnight stay: Summit Park View Hotel in Yangon

Dinner @ House of Memories with Traditional Myanmar food (or vegetarian, if desired)

DAY 2 Feb 11, 2020 (Tuesday) Yangon Visit Summit Park View Hotel (B/L/D)

We will start with a morning tour, led by Alan, of the internationally famous Mahasi Sasana

Yeiktha Mindfulness Meditation Centre in Yangon (the 20 acre home of the worldwide mass lay mindfulness movement that began in 1947, and where Alan lived both as a Buddhist monk and lay person, off and on, from 1977 to 1987).

We will then have lunch with the Nuns, Monks and lay meditators at the Centre (MSY), before meeting with the Head Monk and Senior Meditation Teacher, the Venerable Sayadaw U Sobhana (formerly Mahasi Sayadaw's personal attendant). If for any reason the Sayadaw is called away, we will visit with the Second Senior Meditation Teacher, Venerable Sayadaw U Tejinda. There will also be a short Dhamma talk followed by a question and answer period.

From MSY we will visit Maha Passana Cave where the Buddhist Sangha commemorated the Sixth Great Buddhist Council in the 1950s. The chief objective of the Council was to recite all the teachings of the Buddha according to the Pāli Canon of Theravada Buddhism and examine them in minute detail to see if any of them had been altered, distorted or dropped.

The late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, (Alan's preceptor as a monk and first meditation teacher,) was one of the two Chief Monks to preside over this 3-year long Council.

Afterwards we will visit the nearby Kaba Aye Pagoda, built with the intention of World Peace.

We will then continue toward city center; and visit the famous Bo Gyoke Aung San covered market for shopping of “all things Burmese - clothing, jewelry, art, etc.”

Later in the day we will visit the Independent Monument of Myanmar inside the Bandoola Park near SULE PAGODA - built over 2000 years ago, and drive along colonial style buildings, the river front and Chinatown. And we will have a second late lunch or snack at a local teashop-cum-restaurant.

There will be the option for those who want to either rest or enjoy the Shwedagon Pagoda from a lake view. by visiting KANDAWGYI PARK and ROYAL LAKE, and the beautifully built KARAWEIK ROYAL BARGE.

Also, optional: visiting the 65 meters long CHAUK HTET GYI reclining Buddha image, which was built about 100 years ago.

We will complete our day with a special visit to one of the world's most spectacular monuments, the SHWEDAGON PAGODA, a magnificent 300-foot-high golden bell dome structure that illuminates the city's skyline. Legend states that the sacred hairs of the Buddha are enshrined here. The SHWEDAGON is an iconic symbol of the country, and one of the great wonders of the world.

We will then have dinner, with a chance to talk over the days experiences and integrate them into the Dhamma, while preparing to mindful move forward into our next adventure, the following day.

Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Hotel: Summit Park View Hotel in Yangon

Day 3 Feb 12, 2020 Wednesday Yangon - Bagan flight * Bagan Umbra Hotel, Deluxe (B/L/D)

After breakfast we will transfer to the airport for our flight to BAGAN – Burma's ancient capital from the 9th century with over 2,000 temples. Upon Arrival, you will be warmly welcomed by the Compassionate Travels Myanmar team.

We will visit the SHWEZIGONE PAGODA, the first stupa built in Bagan by King Anawratha in 1059 A.D.

We will continue our tour to GUBYAUKGYI (Wet-Kyi-Inn) temple with mural paintings from the 12th century.

Then onto the THARABAR GATE from 12th century.

Lunch will be at local restaurant.

We will start our tour again with the most beautiful architectural style of Bagan, the famous ANANDA TEMPLE, with 4 standing Buddha images and sandstone carvings of the life of Prince Siddhartha until he became the Buddha.

We will visit the ANANDA OAK KYAUNG Monastery with mural paintings from the 17th - 18th century.

We will then continue with the most treasured art of Lacquer ware Cottage Industry, which is the best of Bagan handicrafts and produced since the time of Myanmar Kings.

We will complete our day with sunset over Bagan from sunset viewing mounds.

We will then have dinner, with a chance to talk over the days experiences and integrate them into the Dhamma, while preparing to mindful move forward into our next adventure, the following day.

Meals Included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Hotel: Bagan Umbra hotel Hotel in Bagan

Day 4 Feb 13, 2020 (Thursday) BAGAN - Bagan Umbra Hotel, Deluxe Room (B/L/D)

Visit Hnat Pyit Taung area – one of the first places where intensive meditation practice started in Myanmar - and visit the largest Buddhist monastic education school in the area, and perhaps in all of Myanmar.

We will then select from the following, a day tour of a number of Bagan's most impressive temples and pagodas from the 9th to the 12th century:

- **Dhamma Yangyi**, the biggest temple in Bagan.

- **Sula Mani Temple**, decorated with murals and Terracotta glaze plaques.
- **Khay Min Ga temple**, with spectacular views of Bagan and surrounding areas.
- **Hti Lo min Lo temple** – famous for its mural paintings and being two stories.
- **Lay Myat hnar temple**, a complete monastic compound.
- **Payar Thone Su temples**, 3 temples connected inside with the latest painting left from the ancient Bagan period.
- **Ta Yoke Pyay temple** with exquisite stuccos.
- **Kyat Kan Gu caves and monastery**: an original place for the practice of meditation from ancient times.
- **Nanda Manya temple** with intricate mural paintings.
- **Shin Phyu Shin Monastic Complex** to learn about Monasteries of Bagan Period.

We will then enjoy the tranquility of sunset on the famous Ayeyarwaddy River by private boat.

And then dinner, with a chance to talk over the days experiences and integrate them into the Dhamma, while preparing to mindful move forward into our next adventure.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Hotel: Bagan Umbra Hotel in Bagan

DAY 5 Feb 14, 2020 (Thursday) Bagan - Monywa Win Unity Hotel Monywa(B/L/D)

After breakfast we drive from Bagan to Monywa. After an hour or so, we will visit Pakkokhu - the center of Buddhist studies in Myanmar and the famous Shwe Ku Pagoda.

We will then continue driving toward Monywa for 4 more hours. Once there, and after we check into the hotel and rest briefly, we will visit the following places:

- **Maha Ledi Monastery**: established by the legendary Ledi Sayadaw, December 1, 1846 – June 27, 1923. Ledi Sayadaw wrote many Dhamma books that were accessible to lay persons and was responsible for spreading Dhamma to all levels of society as well as reviving the traditional practice of Vipassana (insight) meditation, making it more available for renunciates and lay people alike. The current Sayadaw is the 10th in the lineage from Ledi, and there are many sites in and around this monastery commemorating the life of this great Buddhist monk. We will also be privileged to offer Sangha Dana here.

- **Pho Win Taung Caves:** Hundreds of caves curved from sandstone cliffs and adorned with ancient Buddha images and mural paintings.
- **Thanboddhay Pagoda:** Established by Ledi Sayadaw's student, Mohnyin Sayadaw, this site served as a retreat center for many Burmese fleeing the carnage of World War II, and many began (and would go on to continue) a deeper meditative practice here. It is a site of 864 stupas, 7354 relics, and 573,888 distinct Buddha images.
- **Bodhi Tataung Pagoda:** founded by Sayadaw U Narada, who vowed to plant 1,000 Bodhi trees around the world (which is what "Bodhi Tatang" means) and ended up planting 18,000! It also has a standing Buddha statue that is 426 feet high and a reclining one of 300 feet.

We will return to the hotel, chill, then have dinner, with a chance to talk over the days numerous experiences and integrate them into the Dhamma, while preparing to mindfully move forward into our next adventure.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Hotel: Win Unity Resort Hotel (B/L/D)

DAY 6 Feb 15, 2020 (Friday) Monywa - Pyin Oo Lwin * Win Unity Hotel POL (B/L/D)

After breakfast we will drive (for 5 hours) to the famous hill station, **Pyin Oo Lwin** (known during the British occupation of where the wealthy built mansions to luxuriate during the hot season, and today, where many of Myanmar's ethnic hill tribes converge to sell or trade their crafts, foods and wares, along with Burma's most famous flower market and a town with many horse driven carriages).

On the way after driving about 2 hours; we will visit the world famous **Sagaing Hills** – a spectacular complex of hundreds of monasteries, shrines and temples. We will visit **Kaung Hmu Daw Pagoda**, Sitagu Buddhist Academy and Sagaing Hill, Nunnery and monasteries. We can also visit **Soon Oo Punya Shin Pagoda** and **Umin thone Sei Cave** with 45 sitting Buddha images.

Once we arrive to Pyin Oo Lwin, we will pay our respects to the renowned meditation teacher, Pa Auk Sayadaw and Dr Nanda Marla Bivamsa - Rector of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University and Dhamma Sahaya Buddhist center.

We may also visit **Maha Ant Htoo Kanthar Buddha image** and **Pwe Kauk waterfall**, The Market and colonial style buildings.

We will return to the hotel, relax, then have dinner, with a chance to talk over the day's experiences and integrate them into the Dhamma, while preparing to mindfully move forward

into our next adventure the following day.

Overnight at Win Unity Resort Hotel at Pyin Oo Lwin .

Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner (B/L/D)

DAY 7 Feb 16, 2020 (Saturday) Pyin Oo Lwin – Mandalay.

After breakfast we will check out from the hotel and leisurely walk around the beautifully cared for **National Kandawgyi Garden** with exquisite flowerbeds, walk-in aviary, local and cultured orchid garden and butterfly museum, that includes varied types of unusual trees and bamboos.

We will then drive to Mandalay (for 2 hours) and visit interesting places in Mandalay, that will include: **Ku Tho Daw pagoda** which is UNESCO world heritage site known as the seat of the Fifth Great Buddhist Council that took place in 1871 under the auspices of King Mindon of Burma. The objective was to recite all the teachings of the Buddha according to the Theravada tradition and examine them in minute detail to see if any of them had been altered, distorted or dropped.

It was presided over by three elder monks, Mahathera Jagarabhivamsa, Narindabhidhaja, and Mahathera Sumangalasami in the company of 2400 monks. Their joint Dhamma recitation lasted five months and at the end, 729 marble stone slabs were inscribed with the complete teachings of the Buddha, called the Tipitaka.

These slabs (knowingly or unknowingly) became the foundation for almost every traditional (and not so traditional) Theravada-based Buddhist book in the world. There were four Great Buddhist Councils that preceded this one.

We will then choose a number of other sites to visit, from the following:

- **Maha Muni Buddha image**, the most revered Buddha image of Myanmar covered with thick layers of gold leaves.
- Drive through workshops of marble stone carving and golden umbrellas for Pagodas.
- Handicraft workshop where they make beautiful tapestries, traditional puppets, delicate wood carvings and stylish, interesting and delicately portrayed statues from different materials.
- Gold leaves workshop where they produce gold leaf for Pagodas and Buddha images.
- **Shwe Nan Daw Kyaung** = Golden Palace monastery which was the palace of King Mindon whom is the founder of Mandalay city in 1860.
- **Shwe Kyin monastery** where over 200 monks and novices saying their evening prayer or enjoy sunset from Mandalay Hill on Ayeyarwaddy river and cityscape of Mandalay.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Hotel: Mandalay City Hotel or similar in Mandalay (B/L/D)

Day 8 Feb 17, 2020 (Sunday) Mandalay - Amarapura

Visit various places around Mandalay and Amarapura, that will include:

- **Maha Gandayone monastery** where over 1,300 monks and novices are staying and will perform dana for all monks, novices and trainee novices = Pho thu daw.
- Famous silk and cotton weaving factories of Amarapura where they produced the best and most exquisite Myanmar traditional hand-woven silk longies and Shawls since the time of Myanmar kings.
- **Bar Ga Yar monastery** where they kept ancient Buddha images.
- The world's longest teak wood bridge (4,000 feet=1.2 km) called U Bein Bridge.
- **Optional after dinner:** A hugely interesting and enjoyable show performed by the nationally famous Mustache brothers. The founder, U Par Lay, was Alan's friend who served many years in prison under hard labor for his spoken word shows satirizing the dictatorship. U Par Lay passed away several years ago and his brothers and family carry on the tradition. The show, performed in the living room of their home, will teach you about the history of Myanmar. The show is on every night at 8.30pm and costs 10,000k. There are only about thirty seats and one just turns up. U Par Lay was Burma's Robin Williams. There is no one who could remotely replace him. Regardless, the Mustache brothers are iconic.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Hotel: Mandalay City Hotel or similar in Mandalay (B/L/D)

Day 9 Feb 18, 2020 (Monday) Mandalay – Yangon Flight in the morning and we can visit some of the places below:

After Breakfast check out from Mandalay hotel to airport, one-hour flight to Yangon and will visit more places at Yangon and shopping at Scott Market.

Possible places to visit –

- Stop at Aung San Suu Kyi's home entrance.
- General Aung San House museum.
- the NLD Office and

- the home of NLD Senior Member U Tin Oo (92 years old and former General of the Army and Buddhist monk, and Alan's long-time dear friend and Mentor. U Tin Oo cannot speak from a stroke but his mind is alert.
- Visit Sayadaw U Pandita's Shwe Taung Kone Panditayama monastery in Golden Valley. Sayadaw U Pandita passed away at 95 years old in 2016. He was Alan's Dhamma teacher and meditation guide from 1982 – 2016.

Have dinner at the Alamanda Inn in Golden Valley or Padonmar Restaurant Lawn.
At dinner we will talk over the entire tour.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Hotel: Summit Parkview Hotel or similar in Yangon (B/L/D)

Day 10 Feb 19, 2020 (Tuesday) Departure

For those who are interested we will go to the Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha Meditation Centre for either breakfast or lunch and afterwards pay our respects to the Senior meditation teachers and receive their blessings.

We will then go to the Mahasi Shrine within the Centre for a final group meditation and talk by Alan and closing discussion.

We will then return to the hotel to check out and onto the airport.
Check out time 12 noon.

Included:

- *Hotel room (see below)
- *Transportations: Domestic Air fare, private car, Private boat, sunset cruise
- *Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner with set menu (vegetarian or traditional food).
- *All Entrance Fees and zone fees.
- *English Speaking guides throughout.
- *Porter charges at Airports.
- *Private boat at Sunset Boat.
- *Complimentary Refill Water bottles and unlimited water refill.
- *Snacks, fruits and biscuits, dried fruits on the bus going from town to town, city to city.
- *Dry and wet tissues for cleaning, mosquito repellent, small first aid kit in use.

Excluded:

- *Round trip international airfare to and from Burma.
- *Dana (Tips) to Tour guides, hotels, and restaurants.
- *Insurance (travel and medical both are excluded).
- *Special dinner arrangements and drinks, wine etc.

FEES, PAYMENT SCHEDULE & DEPOSIT UPON APPLICATION

The Pilgrimage Tour is limited to 10 people

Produced by

Myanmar Compassionate Hands Travels and Tour Co Ltd

In conjunction with

World Dharma Productions

WorldDharma.com / Schedule

Email: contact@worlddharma.com