



Irrawaddy Voyager

Private Tour | 12 Days | comfortable

Rangoon – Mandalay – Mingun – Amarapura – Bagan – Rangoon

- Wander through the parks, colonial buildings and the golden Shwedagon Pagoda of Rangoon.
- Explore over 3,000 temples on the plains of Bagan
- Walk along the world's longest teak bridge in Mandalay
- Encounter the ruins of the Mingun Pahtodawgyi in Mingun
- Relax in Amarapura, bounded by the Irrawaddy River and a former capital of Burma



Irrawaddy Voyager tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Some meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking Local Guides
- Visa fees for UK and EU passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with ABTA, ATOL and IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Private Tours:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of South East Asia on a more personal fully-inclusive tour. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Comfortable Pace:

'Irrawaddy Voyager' is a **comfortable paced** tour. Although this is one of the easiest pace of tour Wendy Wu Tours offers it still requires a reasonable level of fitness.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time often on uneven surfaces
- You will be required to get on and off the boat without assistance

Of course, our local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Itinerary – Irrawaddy Voyager

Days 1-2: UK to Rangoon

Meals included: None

You will be met at Rangoon airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours and transferred to your hotel where the remainder of your day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Rangoon - With a population of over 5 million, Burma's former capital possesses a peaceful atmosphere with colonial boulevards and tranquil lakes. This charming city thrives by night with bustling streets filled with stalls selling everything from locally made handicrafts to fruit and cigars.

Day 3: Rangoon

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch

Today explore Burma's capital Rangoon and enjoy a full day of sightseeing the city's most famous attractions. Visit the Sule Pagoda, the Bogyoke Market and the sacred Shwedagon Pagoda.



Destination Information

Sule Pagoda - Situated in the centre of Rangoon, octagonal in shape and standing 44 meters tall. According to legend, remnants of the pagoda are over 2,500 years old, having been built during the time of the Buddha.

Shwedagon Pagoda - Located on top of Singuttara Hill, where many locals and Buddhists come to worship. Shwedagon Pagoda is thought to have been built between the 6th and 10th centuries; however, it has been rebuilt many times. It is here that eight strands of Buddha's hair are said to be kept. The pagoda is covered in gold and contains diamonds, rubies and emeralds.

Bogyoke Markets – A vast covered marketplace selling an array of handicrafts, food, jewellery and clothing.

Day 4: Rangoon to Mandalay

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

This morning transfer to the airport for your 1 hour and 20 minute flight to Mandalay, your guide will not accompany you on the flight. On arrival you will travel on the Pandaw Cruises shuttle bus from the airport directly to the ship to board your river cruise.

Please note that you will not be accompanied by a Wendy Wu tour guide for the Pandaw cruise section of the tour.

Once checked enjoy a short sightseeing tour of Central Mandalay visiting the palace and hill areas and local crafts workshops. Return to your ship and sip on a welcome cocktail before settling down to dinner served in the bistro-style dining room.



Destination Information

Mandalay - the second largest city and the last royal capital of the Burmese Kingdom. Located along the Irrawaddy River and centred around the Royal Palace, Mandalay is within easy distance to former colonial hill stations and ancient cities.

Day 5: Mingun

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today wake up to the ever-changing river bank surrounding and enjoy visiting local villages. Take a morning walk in Mingun including visits to the Mingun Pagoda and the Mingun Bell. This afternoon continue sailing upstream.



Destination Information

Mingun - A riverside village home to many unique pagodas and the world's largest ringing bell, weighing over 87 tonnes!

Mingun Pagoda - Constructed under the order of King Bodawpaya. He had grand plans to build the pagoda as high as 500ft; however he died during construction so today it sits incomplete. If completed, the pagoda would be three times the height it is now!

Day 6: Kyauk-Myong

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Start the days touring at a local pottery workshop close to Kyauk Myong before cruising up the river to explore the town and its multiple pot villages. Return to your boat and continue to cruise along the Irrawaddy.

Day 7: Ava

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Arrive in Mandalay early for a morning excursion to the picturesque Sagaing Hills known for its many religious and monastic centres. This afternoon visit Ava and next we explore the ancient capital of Amarapura by coach and sampan. This evening enjoy the Sunset over the U Bein bridge, the longest teak bridge in the world.

**Destination Information**

Sagaing Hills - Affording spectacular views of over 500 stupas, monasteries and nunneries that dot the landscape looking onto the river below.

U Bein Bridge - This teak wood bridge built 200 years ago spans 1.2km across the Taung Thaman Lake and is the longest teak bridge in the world.

Day 8: Yandabo

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Cruise downstream throughout the early morning and arrive at Yandabo village, famous for its production of terracotta pottery from the river bank clay. Spend some time wandering through the village before returning to your boat.

Destination Information

Yandabo - a village on the Ayeyarwady River in central Burma. The Treaty of Yandabo which ended the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824–1826), was signed here on 24 February 1826.

Day 9: Pakokku

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Leave your vessel to visit Pakokku. Sightseeing today is by tuk tuk, visiting the local markets and town centre. Returning to your cruise you will arrive in Bagan in the early afternoon to explore the cities many monuments by coach.

**Destination Information**

Pakokku - a quiet and traditional country town on the banks of the Irrawaddy, located 25 kilometres north of Bagan and now connected by a new road and rail bridge across the river.

Day 10: Bagan

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, you will tour some of the 3,000 UNESCO recognised stupas on the spiritual plains of Bagan. Later in the afternoon, visit a traditional lacquer workshop before returning to your boat for your farewell dinner.

**Destination Information**

Bagan - It is believed as many as 13,000 temples and stupas once stood in the area around Bagan; however, invasions, war and natural disasters have reduced most of these to rubble. Despite this, Bagan is home to more than 2,200 standing ancient temples and is Burma's greatest architectural site.

Day 11: Bagan to Rangoon

Meals included: Breakfast

This morning you will disembark your cruise and take the Pandaw Cruises shuttle bus to Nuang U airport for your flight back to Rangoon. On arrival you will be met by your local guide and transferred to your hotel where rest of the afternoon is at leisure.

**Day 12: Depart Rangoon**

Meals included: Breakfast

Your guide will meet you at your hotel and transfer you to the airport according to your flight time.

Irrawaddy Voyager Travel Information

Visas

A visa is required for entry into Burma. A standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. We will require your passport, 2 completed visa application forms per person and 2 passport photos taken within the last 6 months, to process your visa. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, passports will usually be returned within 4 weeks of your tours scheduled departure. Any passports and visa applications that require an express 2-week service, or that are received in our office less than 6 weeks prior to departure will incur a £60 per passport express fee. In rare cases, you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the embassy. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as possible.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24-hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. These details will be available to your national escort should they be required. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Eating in South East Asia

Southeast Asia is home to an incredibly rich food history. The local cuisine is known for its intense flavours, spices and some of the freshest ingredients you can find. In general, meals include either rice or noodles and are packed full of flavour. Lemongrass, ginger, lime leaves, coriander, fish sauce and soy sauce are used in most local dishes. Whilst Southeast Asian food has a reputation for being hot and spicy, each region actually has its own distinct characteristics. Vietnam, for example, is perhaps best known for its fresh and aromatic dishes – relying heavily on flavours from fresh herbs such as mint, basil and dill.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. Most meals (excluding drinks) are included in this tour, please see the itinerary for details. When dining in Southeast Asia, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In Vietnam, dishes are normally placed in the centre and people serve food for themselves with their own chopsticks and bowl. In Thailand and some other countries in Southeast Asia, fork and spoon are used for most dishes and chopsticks are typically provided to eat noodles. Usually chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in Southeast Asia is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.

Please refer to your travel guide for more information on Southeast Asian cuisine, including information for travellers with restricted diets.

Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and South East Asia. All private tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

This tour includes 7 nights aboard a Pandaw Cruise Ship.

Transport

Coaches: Air conditioned 4-seater cars are used on our private tours for all transfers. Roads in South East Asia have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Development in South East Asia

Although South East Asia is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

Tipping Policy

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and South East Asia is no exception. Tipping is included in the price of our standard group tours but we do not include the cost in our private tours. The recommended tipping amount in Burma is approximately \$7 - \$10 per person per day though of course this is at your discretion.

Climate

Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Itinerary changes

It is our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

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