



ANDAMAN EXPLORER

THE MERGUI ARCHIPELAGO



PRESS RELEASE

Pandaw Announces New Burma Itinerary

River Cruise Pioneer Launches Limited Edition Mergui Archipelago Sailings

Pandaw River Expeditions has announced a new, limited edition, itinerary in Burma's extraordinary Mergui Archipelago. The move follows the successful launch of Pandaw's first ocean cruise onboard the *MY Andaman Explorer*, a classic 1960's motor yacht acquired in 2016 and, lovingly, refurbished by Pandaw founders, Paul and Roser Strachan.

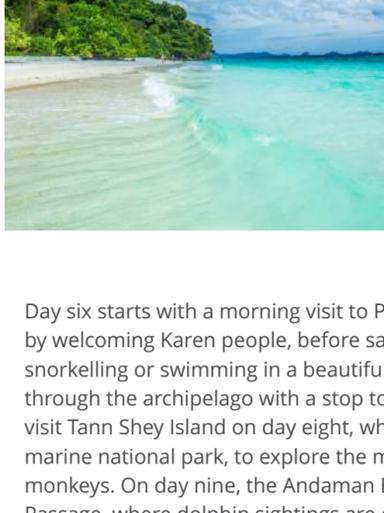
The *MY Andaman Explorer* began sailing a seven-night 'Mergui Archipelago' itinerary around the Mergui Archipelago's 800 unexplored islands in November 2017 and now Pandaw has developed a new 10-night 'Burma Coastal Voyage' sailing for the ship, offering even more choice for customers. The 'Burma Coastal Voyage' will depart from Burma's largest city, Yangon, providing greater ease for guests who, previously, had to take a flight to the town of Kawthaung to embark the ship. Once in the Mergui Archipelago, the new itinerary will visit a number of different islands to the original, seven-night sailing.

The 10-night "Burma Coastal Voyage" has four departure dates confirmed for late 2018 and early 2019 - 5 & 18 November 2018, and 5 & 18 January 2019.

Pandaw founder and CEO, Paul Strachan said, "Our first foray into cruising in the Mergui Archipelago has been a terrific success, with many a first and some quite extraordinary discoveries in this rarely visited coast, with its thousand islands and diverse marine life. In view of this success, we have decided to introduce a new, extended itinerary with four confirmed departures, that will cover the entire distance between Rangoon and Kawthaung. These voyages will include exciting stops at the old coastal ports of Mawlamyine, Myeik and Dawei."

"In addition, we will explore several little-known islands with opportunities to snorkel or kayak up rivers into the mangrove forests. So evocative of Kipling, Maugham and Collis, we find these lively coastal ports full of architectural interest, whether colonial or Buddhist. Likewise, we have identified key islands, some with communities of Baptist Karens loyal to the KNU, others with the Mokkein sea gypsies who speak an unusual sort of Malay. But the majority are totally deserted with pristine white beaches, coral and diverse bird and sea life, not to mention the odd reptile like giant monitor lizards."

For the southbound route, passengers will embark in Yangon and set sail down the Yangon River to cruise out to sea. On day two, the *Andaman Explorer* will moor in the estuary at Kaikkame and passengers will travel by car to Thanbyuzayat to visit the war graves and to explore Mawlamyine, an important colonial outpost that was annexed by the British in 1824. On day three, the ship cruises all day, with passengers enjoying an island stop to swim and explore ashore. Day four will see the ship anchor in the mouth of the Dawei creek while guests visit the sleepy, tropical town the creek is named after. On day five, *Andaman Explorer* will anchor off Myeik, allowing passengers to spend a full day exploring the many architectural marvels of the old British port town.



Day six starts with a morning visit to Port Maria in Lun Lun Island, populated by welcoming Karen people, before sailing to Bailey Island for spectacular snorkelling or swimming in a beautiful bay. On day seven, the ship will cruise through the archipelago with a stop to swim and snorkel. Passengers will visit Tann Shey Island on day eight, which forms the main part of Lampi marine national park, to explore the mangroves by kayak and spot wild monkeys. On day nine, the *Andaman Explorer* will sail the Loughborough Passage, where dolphin sightings are common, and stop to visit a Mokkein sea gypsy village on Phi Lar Island. On day 10, the ship will moor off Coxcombe Island to explore the secret lagoon by swimming or by kayak. *Andaman Explorer* will then continue to Kawthaung, the bustling port city where the cruise ends. After an evening discovering the city and a last night onboard, passengers will transfer to Kawthaung Airport for flights to meet their onward connections.

The *Andaman Explorer* features 10 generously proportioned suites, with separate sitting room area and private bathrooms. The ship is floored with Carrara marble throughout and boasts a saloon, dining room and two teak observation decks.

Prices for the "Burma Coastal Voyage" start from US\$4,450 per person, based on two people sharing a cabin and US\$6,350 for single occupancy and this includes 10 nights on *MY Andaman Explorer*, local transfers, all excursions as stated, entrance fees, guide services (English language), main meals, jugged coffee, selection of teas and tisanes, local soft drinks, local beer, local spirits, mineral water, crew gratuities, kayaks & snorkelling equipment. International flights are additional.

The original seven-night "The Mergui Archipelago" itinerary will continue to operate with departures available from January – April 2018, October – December 2018 and beyond.

Guests arrive in the departure port of Kawthaung via a flight from Yangon in Myanmar or a boat trip from Ranong, Thailand. From Kawthaung, located in the southernmost part of Myanmar, guests spend seven nights cruising to several national parks, islands and lagoons in the archipelago – including Naung Wee island to visit a sea gypsy village, Lampi Marine National Park with its mangrove forests and diverse bird life, the Nga Man group of one hundred and fifteen islands and Cockscomb Island with its limestone caves and hidden lagoon. The ship carries kayaks and snorkelling equipment, allowing guests to get up close to marine life as they explore the islands, beaches and coastal ports.

Prices start for the original seven-night itinerary start from US\$3,510 per person, based on two sharing and this includes seven nights on *MY Andaman Explorer*, local transfers, all excursions as stated, entrance fees, guide services (English language), main meals, jugged coffee, selection of teas and tisanes, local soft drinks, local beer, local spirits, mineral water, crew gratuities, kayaks & snorkelling equipment. International flights are additional.

For reservations and more information, call 0208 326 5620 or go to www.pandaw.com.

Notes to Editors:

Itineraries are indicational only and subject to change depending on weather, tide and the logistical decisions of the ship's master. Passengers will be required to climb in and out of Zodiac type tenders and up and down steep steps so must be reasonably fit and mobile.



PRESS INFORMATION

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About Pandaw

Pandaw River Expeditions is the pioneer of boutique river expeditions throughout Southeast Asia. The unique design of Pandaw's small but powerful shallow-draft ships, beautifully hand-crafted in teak and brass, allows them to sail through a tapestry of remote rivers and coastal routes in Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and China.

The original company, known as the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, founded in 1865, was acquired by Paul and Roser Strachan in 1995. Renamed Pandaw, following the discovery and acquisition of this last remaining Clyde-built steamer, the company has consistently cruised through new frontiers, pushing the boundaries beyond its original home of Burma. Pandaw brought its unique concept and style to expeditions along the Mekong River through Indochina in 2003, inaugurated new river cruises on the Ganges in India during 2009 and pioneered the first routes on both the Red River in Northern Vietnam and the Upper Mekong through Laos into China in 2015.

Pandaw believes in giving back to society. Paul Strachan, Founder & CEO, established the Pandaw charity in 2008 to support education and healthcare efforts in Burma. The charity is entirely sponsored by donations from Pandaw passengers and a profit share from Pandaw River Expeditions.

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