



Pandaw Cruises

EXPEDITION No 36

CHINDWIN & THE UPPER IRRAWADDY

18 NIGHTS

Chindwin, the loveliest of rivers. Our objective, Homalin is the capital of Nagaland and close to the India border. The river carves its way through mountains and forests and we stop at delightful unspoiled little towns.

Combine this with the scenic and remote Upper Irrawaddy. We journey off the beaten track for 10-nights all the way to Katha once home to George Orwell and the setting for Burmese days. Other highlights will be passage through the 3rd and 2nd defiles.

Cruise Price Includes: One way domestic flight Kalewa-Mandalay, Entrance fees, guide services (English language), gratuities to crew, main meals, local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes, 2 nights accommodation in Pagan, half day sightseeing of Pagan with private guide, Pagan Zone tax, transfer between ships.

Cruise Price Excludes: International flights, port dues (if levied), laundry, all visa costs, fuel surcharges (see terms and conditions), all beverages except local mineral water, jugged coffee, teas & tisanes and tips to tour guides, local guides, bus drivers, boat operators and cyclo drivers.

UPSTREAM ITINERARY

DAY 1

PAGAN

PLEASE NOTE: The itinerary for this expedition is indicative only. As we travel to remote areas, changes to the itinerary will inevitably occur. A flexible approach is required if you book this cruise.

Embark for lunch and followed by exploration of the 3000 plus Pagan monuments by coach. The ship will leave Pagan at 17:30.

[MORE ABOUT PAGAN](#)

DAY 2

YANDABO

Cruise past the confluence with the Chindwin River and arrive at Yandabo village, famous for its production of terracotta pottery from the riverbank clay. Cruise through afternoon upstream towards Mandalay.

[MORE ABOUT YANDABO](#)

DAY 3

AMARAPURA

Morning visit to Ava and explore the ruins, visiting Bagaya Kyaung, a 200-year-old royal monastery made of teak with elaborate woodcarvings. Continue to visit the ancient capital of Amarapura and admire the paintings in a temple.

[MORE ABOUT AMARAPURA](#)

DAY 4

KYAUK-MYOUNG

Visit the spectacular potteries near Kyauk-myung where the famous 50-gallon water pots are handmade. We see all stages of manufacture from the throwing of the pots to the weeklong firing in huge kilns. We return to the ship and enter the third defile of Irrawaddy.

[MORE ABOUT KYAUK-MYOUNG](#)

DAY 5

KHANYAT

Stop at Khan-nyat village with its many Buddhist monasteries and visit the former head teacher's house, which also includes his small museum collections. We go ashore and climb the Pagoda Hill at Tigyang with its stunning views of the Upper Irrawaddy River.

[MORE ABOUT KHANYAT](#)

DAY 6**KATHA**

We reach the enchanting colonial town of Katha, setting for George Orwell's Burmese Days. Little has changed since then. Of interest are the fire station's collections of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's ship's bells taken from sunken ships in the Second War. Katha was the final resting place of the old flotilla and here over a hundred ships were scuppered in 1942 in an Act of Denial before the advancing Japanese. We also visit an elephant logging camp at Katha in the hardwood forests of the hills that surround the town and further upstream.

[MORE ABOUT KATHA](#)

DAY 7**SAIL UPSTREAM KYUNT DAW ISLAND**

Transfer by Local boat and visit Kyun Daw village where we will visit countless small Pagodas.

DAY 8**2ND DEFILE OF IRRAWADDY**

Cruise through the 2nd Defile, the most dramatic of the three gorges with cliffs towering over the narrow channel. Sail downstream.

DAY 9

TAGAUNG

Walking tour of the ancient city of Tagaung viewing the fortifications, a famous nat or spirit shrine and the archaeological area.

[MORE ABOUT TAGAUNG](#)

DAY 10

MINGUN

Slip our moorings early in the morning and stop at Mingun to see the largest working bell in the world and the unfinished pagoda that is the largest single mass of brick building in the world. We also visit the Mingun Old People's Home originally established with the assistance of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company in the 1930s. Drive through the beautiful Sagaing hills to the hilltop to enjoy an amazing view over the region and Irrawaddy River.

[MORE ABOUT MINGUN](#)

DAY 11

MANDALAY

Disembark after breakfast and transfer to your hotel in Mandalay.

[MORE ABOUT MANDALAY](#)

DAY 12

MONYWA

Morning transfer from your hotel to Monywa to join your ship. Afternoon excursion to see Thandboodi Temple, Bawdhi Tahaung statue and the night market in the evening.

IMPORTANT: Please note that water levels drop dramatically as of December and we might not be able to reach Homalin. You will be well rewarded with alternative excursions. We will be cruising up to Mawlaik and return to Kalewa where you will be flown out to Yangon or Mandalay.

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[MORE ABOUT MONYWA](#)

DAY 13

PHOWIN TAUNG

In the morning, coach to the Phowin Taung Caves, where we will admire beautiful mural paintings and Buddha statues in riches. Beyond Monywa we enter the Upper Chindwin.

[MORE ABOUT PHOWIN TAUNG](#)

DAY 14**CRUISING**

The river narrows and the forested hills fall away to farmland we pass a number of attractive villages like Kanee where we can stretch our legs.

DAY 15**MINGKIN**

Mingkin was rediscovered by Paul Strachan in 1987 and described in some detail in his book *Mandalay: Travels from the Golden City*. It remains for Paul the most art historically interesting site in Myanmar (more so than the now spoilt Pagan) with its Konbaung court style teak monasteries sumptuously decorated. Mingkin may be described as the Luang Prabang of the Chindwin. The gateway town for the Chin State, we explore Kalewa with its markets and quaint wooden architecture.

[MORE ABOUT MINGKIN](#)

DAY 16

MAWLAIK

Morning explore Mawlaik replaced Kindat as the administrative capital but ironically the Myanma refused to move there from upstream Kindat. It was mainly settled with the company houses of the by the Scottish owned and run Bombay Myanmarh Trading Corporation in the 1920s and 1930s. There are many splendid 'Dak Bungalows' set around a verdant golf course. Mawlaik and the other towns of the Upper Chindwin can only be reached by boat so cars are few. There is a dreamy otherworldly quality to such places and truly one feels that one has travelled there in the Pandaw time machine!. Afternoon we pass the mouth of the Yu River which drains the Kubu valley that provided the route for a Lieutenant Grant to march to the relief of the Manipur garrison when the chief commissioner of Assam was massacred in a local rebellion.

[MORE ABOUT MAWLAIK](#)

DAY 17

SITTHAUNG

Sitthaung was the final resting place of a number of IFC steamers scuppered there in 1942 in an 'act of denial' from the advancing Japanese who were a matter of hours behind. We hope to find remains of these ships as we have in the past at Katha on the Irrawaddy. It was from here that the survivors of the Japanese invasion marched out to Tamu on the India border. Pantha was an important oil refinery belonging to the Indo-Burma Petroleum Co (Steel Brothers).

[MORE ABOUT SITTHAUNG](#)

DAY 18

TOUNGDOOT

Toungdoot or Hsawng-hsup in Tai, is an ancient Shan enclave which in British times still had a ruling sawbwa complete with palace and court. It will be interesting to see what has become of the royal family and their home and to see these Shan people so far from their Tai-Shan homelands. On the way to Homalin, the furthest navigable point on the Chindwin for vessels of our size. Alister McCrae wrote of his visit there 1935 'I loved the atmosphere of quiet and peaceful living there. At night I could hear greylag geese as they came in to the flooded land around us from far away north'. Bird in 1897 says little other than that Homalin is the headquarters of a township, but has very little trade'. Until we get there and explore the place there is not much we can say!

[MORE ABOUT TOUNGDOOT](#)

DAY 19

HOMALIN

Disembarkation and transfer to Homalin airport.

IMPORTANT: Please note that water levels drop dramatically as of December and we might not be able to reach Homalin. You will be well rewarded with alternative excursions. We will be cruising up to Mawlaik and return to Kalewa where you will be flown out to Yangon or Mandalay.

[MORE ABOUT HOMALIN](#)

STATEROOM

The Pandaw stateroom is the most celebrated feature of our ships.

Finished in brass and teak, the main and upper deck rooms are very spacious at 168 square feet (15.6 sqm). Much loved by all our passengers we have ensured that with each ship we build the stateroom remains the same. Our cabins do not have mini-bars, satellite TV's, internet or phones. Pandaw passengers usually want to escape from the tiresome features found in international business hotels.

Many passengers describe life on board a Pandaw more like being a guest on a private motor yacht than a cruise ship. Where we go and what we see is intrepid in extreme. What you come back to is a floating base of discreet comfort, caring service and all the good things one looks for in life. All our cabins have the same size and Pandaw signature amenities. Choose from Main Deck, Upper Deck or Premium Upper Deck (Mekong only).

Special to Your Stateroom

- Fruit and flowers on arrival
- Kimonos and slippers
- Spa-branded amenities
- Unlimited mineral water

PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

MANDALAY

Pick up from airport or jetty and transfer your hotel. Late afternoon short visit to Shwe Inn Bin monastery to see beautiful wood carving monastery and one of the main market places in Mandalay

DAY 2

MANDALAY

Sightseeing in central Mandalay with visits to the Royal palace and Mahamuni Pagoda, craft workshops and shopping. Afternoon hill areas and enjoy the view from pagoda platform.

DAY 3

MANDALAY

Explore the lost capitals of Ava and Amarapura, visiting the teak Bagaya Kyaung, Menu Ok-kyauung and after lunch, continue visit to a silk and cotton weaving work shop, then cross the U Bein Bridge and enjoy the sunset on the lake with small boat.

DAY 4

DEPARTURE

Transfer to airport or jetty.



4 STAR

Pre Royal Mandalay 3 nights

Mercure Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel lies at the foot of Mandalay Hill with a panoramic view of a myriad of pagodas and faces the distinctive architecture of the Royal Palace and its beautiful moat. Your visit enhanced by the fun-loving hospitable people of Myanmar whose lives remain simple and relaxed will become treasured and timeless memories.

Rates include:

Three nights at the Mercure Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel including breakfast, service and taxes; transfers to / from airport and a guide-led excursion; transfer from ship.

Rates exclude:

Lunch and dinner which are at your own arrangement in the hotel.

Note

- Please advise arrival flight details in order to arrange the transfer accordingly
- Check in time to hotel at 1400hrs
- Check out time from hotel at 1200hrs
- Early check in and late check out are subject to hotel room availability

* Please note that your hotel will be confirmed after we have received your deposit payment. Prices are subject to change. Hotel subject to availability. We will try to offer you an alternate accommodation if the requested hotel would not be available.

MERCURE MANDALAY HILL RESORT HOTEL

No. (9)

Kwin (416B)

10th Street At the foot of Mandalay Hill

Mandalay

Myanmar

Tel: +95 2 35638

[Visit Hotel Website](#)

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

ARRIVAL IN YANGON

Transfer from the jetty to the airport. Flight to Rangoon. Welcome by our representative and transfer to the hotel followed by excursion to explore the colonial 'Downtown' area.

DAY 2

DEPARTURE

After breakfast, Transfer to airport for onward flights.



5 STAR

IRRA Post cruise Rangoon

Well located in the center of Yangon and yet only 10 minutes drive from Shwedagon Pagoda, the elegant Sule Shangri-La Hotel is the perfect base for your pre or post stay in Yangon.

Rates include:

One night at specified hotel or similar, including breakfast, service and taxes; transfers to / from airport and a guide-led excursion to Downtown; one domestic flight to Yangon and transfers from ship.

Rates exclude:

Lunch and dinner which are at your own arrangement in the hotel or in one of the many nearby restaurants. Compulsory gala dinners at hotel 24DEC and 31DEC if any.

Public facilities include

2 restaurants, a lounge, bar, pool, free and fast WI-FI and gift shop. The spacious, air-conditioned and comfortable deluxe rooms include private bathroom with bathtub, satellite TV, mini-bar, hair dryer, iron, safe, writing desk and tea/coffee making facilities.

Note

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SULE SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, YANGON

223 Sule Pagoda Road

GPO Box 888

Yangon

Myanmar

Tel: +95 1 242 828

[Visit Hotel Website](#)

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

DAY 1

HEHO - INLE LAKE

Fly from Rangoon, Mandalay or Pagan to Heho - the gateway to Inle Lake. Drive to Nyaung Shwe to board a local motorboat and enjoy the sights & sounds of the lake such as leg-rowing fishermen and plenty of artisan workshops (blacksmiths, goldsmiths silversmiths, cigarette makers etc.). Overnight at Sanctum Inle Resort.

DAY 2

INLE LAKE - INDEIN

Enjoy half a day trip to Indein - a hidden village located in the middle of the Burmese jungle and easiest accessible by boat through narrow channels. Indein is famous for its collection of hundreds years old stupas. Return to the hotel after lunch and relax.

DAY 3

INLE LAKE - HEHO

After breakfast or lunch transfer back to Heho airport for your onward flight.



DISCOVER

2 Nights Mystical Inle Lake Post Tour

Inle is one of the biggest lakes in Burma. It's famous for its stunning location between the hills of Shan State, easy access by air (domestic flights only), relatively easy access by road and an out-standing amount of attractions, which could fill a medium-long holiday. From leg-rowing fishermen through artisans (blacksmiths, goldsmiths, silversmiths etc.) to mysterious pagodas submerged in the water in Sagar/Sankar on the quiet and wild southern part of the lake. No trip to Myanmar would be complete without visiting Inle Lake.

This programme connects well with our Southern Shan State Adventure programme (additional 2 nights) and Ngapali Beach extension as there are direct flights between Heho and Thandwe in high season.

Rates include:

All sightseeing as per itinerary, two nights at Sanctum Inle Resort (Deluxe Room or Hermitage Deluxe) with breakfast or similar, private vehicle with air condition, all sightseeing with English guide by car and boat as per itinerary, entrance fees as per programme, daily complimentary drinking water, return domestic flight to/from Heho.

Rates exclude:

International flights to/from Burma, porter fees for all transfers (airports &

jetties), personal travel insurance, visa to Burma, meals (lunch/dinner), any expense of a personal nature including but not limited to drinks, laundry, camera fees, phone calls, gratuities, souvenirs, etc. Others not mentioned in the itinerary.

Public Facilities

The Sanctuary Spa, Workshop Boutique, The Refectory Restaurant, The Cloister Bar.

Note

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- Early check in and late check out are subject to hotel room availability

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SANCTUM INLE RESORT

Maing Thauk Village

Inle Lake

Nyaung Shwe Township

Shan State

Burma

Tel: +95 (0) 1 860 4945 or +95 (0) 1 860 4946

[Visit Hotel Website](#)

River Conditions Warning!

The rivers you will sail on are subject to seasonal rises and falls of water level, in some places as much as 30 metres. Water levels can change dramatically overnight and a sudden rise can impede our progress upstream considerably and even prevent us from passing under certain bridges. A sudden fall can result in our being unable to get into certain places or go as far upstream as we would hope. Groundings on sandbars are not infrequent and are part of the excitement of any Pandaw expedition. Published itineraries are indicational only and subject to sudden change. In such events alternative itineraries will be provided and we do our best to ensure that if a stop is missed we make up for it with another stop. Passengers are thus forewarned and expected to be flexible and patient. River cruising in Asia can be a dramatic and adventurous experience - not like cruising the controlled waterways of Europe or America. Note also that we operate in areas with little or no developed infrastructure and subject to the strictures of local officialdom. Be prepared for this and it is all more the fun!

Useful Links

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[General Information & Life on Board](#)

[Visa Information](#)