



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.

DOWNSTREAM ITINERARY

DAY 1

MANDALAY

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.

We start our Mandalay tour with a visit to the Mahamuni Pagoda with one of the country's most venerated Buddha images. Continue to a gold leaf and tapestry work shop and walk along the marble & stone carver's street. Visit a silk and cotton weaving work shop. Travel by bus to the famous "U Bein" bridge, it is about 1.2 km long and is said to be the world's longest teak wood bridge. It has been built in 1784. With small boats we sail over the Taungthaman Lake and enjoy the sunset.

[MORE ABOUT MANDALAY](#)

DAY 2

KYAUK-MYOUNG

Morning cruising. Afternoon visit the spectacular potteries near Kyauk-myoung 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 then third defile of the Irrawaddy.

[MORE ABOUT KYAUK-MYOUNG](#)

DAY 3

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. Later we go ashore and climb the Pagoda Hill at Tigyang with its stunning views of the Irrawaddy.

[MORE ABOUT KHANYAT](#)

DAY 4

KATHA

Arrive at 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 Irrawaddy Flotilla Company 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 continue to an elephant logging camp at Katha in the hardwood forests of the hills that surround the town and further upstream.

[MORE ABOUT KATHA](#)

DAY 5

SAIL UPSTREAM KYUNT DAW ISLAND

Transfer by local boat to visit Kyun Daw village where we visit countless small Pagodas.

DAY 6

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 7

TAGAUNG

We explore by foot the ancient city of Tagaung viewing the fortifications, a famous nat or spirit shrine and the archaeological area.

[MORE ABOUT TAGAUNG](#)

DAY 8

MINGUN

We cast off 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 Hill to the hilltop to enjoy an amazing view over the region and Irrawaddy.

[MORE ABOUT MINGUN](#)

DAY 9

AVA

Morning visit to Ava and explore the ruins, visiting Bagaya Kyaung, a 200-year-old royal monastery made of teak with elaborate woodcarvings. In the afternoon arrive at Yandabo village, famous for its production of terracotta pottery from the riverbank clay.

[MORE ABOUT AVA](#)

DAY 10

PAGAN

Full day's exploration of the 3000 plus Pagan monuments by coach.

[MORE ABOUT PAGAN](#)

DAY 11

PAGAN

Disembark after breakfast and transfer to your hotel. In the afternoon continue your exploration of Pagan by private guide.

[MORE ABOUT PAGAN](#)

DAY 12

MONYWA

Transfer from your hotel to the ship. Lunch on board. Afternoon excursion to see Thandboodi Temple, Bawdhi Tahaung statue and the night market in the evening.

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[MORE ABOUT MONYWA](#)

DAY 13

PHOWIN TAUNG & KYAUK KA VILLAGE

Morning Excursion by coach to Phowin Taung Hill where we visit the Phowin Taung Caves with beautiful mural paintings and Buddha statues dating back to the 14th and 18th centuries. In the afternoon, we visit the Kyauk Ka Village famous for the making of black Lacquer.

[MORE ABOUT PHOWIN TAUNG](#)

DAY 14

KANEE

The river narrows and the forested hills fall away to farmland. Enjoy a morning culinary demonstration by our head chef on how to prepare a traditional Burmese Ginger Salad. Arrive in Kanee and take an afternoon walking tour of the village.

DAY 15

MINGKIN

Morning cruise up river. After lunch, we explore Mingkin, 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.

[MORE ABOUT MINGKIN](#)

DAY 16

KALEWA

Morning walking tour of Minkin followed by cruise to Kalewa located at the confluence of the Chindwin and the Myittha Rivers, where we enjoy a walking tour.

[MORE ABOUT KALEWA](#)

DAY 17

MAWLAIK

Morning visit to Masein Village and then sail to Mawlaik, the town that 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!.

[MORE ABOUT MAWLAIK](#)

DAY 18

MAWLAIK ELEPHANT CAMP

Morning excursion by Tuk Tuk or coach to Bus to view the Teak wood Forest outside Mawlaik. Continue to the Pyar Swe Elephant Camp, a working camp where the elephants are protected in natural surroundings. We then sail to Kalewa where we overnight.

[MORE ABOUT MAWLAIK](#)

DAY 19

KALEWA

Disembark at Kalewa IWT Jetty and explore Kalewa with its markets and quaint wooden architecture. Continue to Kalay Airport for your onward flight to Rangoon or Mandalay (included in the price of this cruise).

[MORE ABOUT KALEWA](#)

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

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**](#)