

# Burma Itinerary • September 7–23, 2015

## *Dharma Journeys Pilgrimage*



Venerable Amy Miller first encountered Tibetan Buddhism in 1987 at Nepal's Kopan Monastery. Ever since, she has engaged in study, meditation, Buddhist-center management as well as retreats and teachings worldwide — traveling extensively as a pilgrimage leader for the Institute of Noetic Science and our Dharma Journeys. Prior to this, Ven. Amy completed a solitary seven-month retreat at California's Vajrapani Institute, which she directed from 1995-2004.

She was ordained a Buddhist nun in June 2000 by Tibetan master, Ven. Choden Rinpoche. Ven. Amy has taught extensively since 1992 — her style emphasizes a practical approach to integrating Buddhist philosophy into daily life.

Ven. Amy is a co-author of *Buddhism in a Nutshell* (a publication of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition - FPMT) and is also a contributor to FPMT's online course, *Living in the Path*.

All proceeds from the pilgrimage go to Liberation Prison Project, for whom this trip has been organized.



*We are delighted to welcome back Ven. Amy Miller.*

On this pilgrimage to the Buddhist sites of Burma, Ven. Amy will give Dharma talks, lead daily meditations and pujas (a Buddhist ceremony including prayers and offerings). The program includes three full days of retreat in Bagan where over 10,000 monasteries, temples and pagodas (stupas) were constructed between the 11th and 13th centuries. Today over 2,000 temples and stupas remain.

Rinpoche has told us that it is good to do different practices on pilgrimage, to make people's lives very meaningful and very productive.

He has said, "Normally when people go on pilgrimage, they are just like tourists; maybe they take some pictures, and that's it. They don't use the places to collect merit or to meditate or to get some benefit for their minds. If it's just like sightseeing, then it won't be that much benefit."

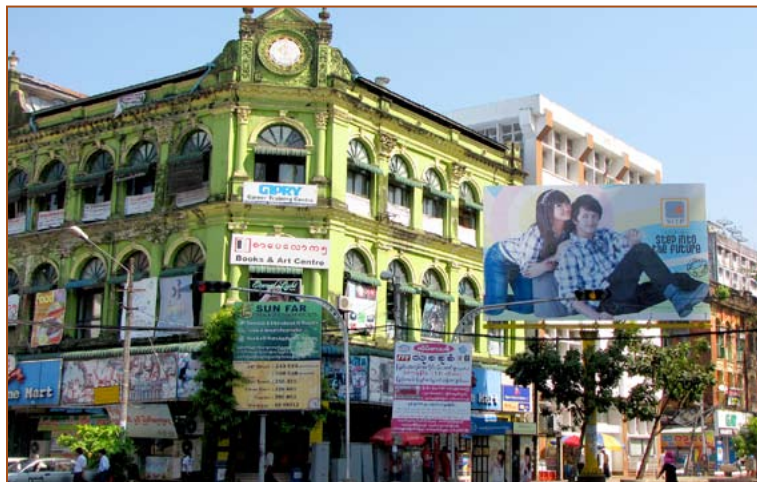
Rinpoche says that by doing pilgrimage, we receive blessings from the holy places where enlightened beings, great yogis and bodhisattvas have practiced. With the blessing entering our hearts, we are able to soften; our mind becomes subdued; and we are able to decrease the delusions. We are then able to develop bodhicitta (strong compassion) towards other sentient beings. And our guru devotion, renunciation, right view and understanding of emptiness, become stronger. Our mental continuum becomes Dharma. This is what pilgrimage does. As we've done in past years, we can dedicate all our efforts during the pilgrimage to world peace.

The group will meet in Yangon and explore important sites such as Kyaukhtatgyi and Shwedagon before traveling together to holy sites from Bagan to Inle Lake. There will be plenty of time for relaxing, sightseeing and shopping.

## Your Day By Day Itinerary In Detail...

**PreTrip Arrival (September 5–6, 2015):** Fly to our pilgrimage meeting point in Yangon, Myanmar (Burma). Travelers from the Americas 'lose' one day crossing the international date line. You must arrive in Yangon no later than Monday, September 7, 2015. We can arrange an early transfer and extra hotel nights on request.

### ◆◆◆ Start Of Pilgrimage Services ◆◆◆



**Day 1 (September 7, 2015):** Everyone meets in Yangon. Our local staff will transfer you to the hotel. Our first day is designed for relaxing or exploring the city on your own. The hotel offers a fine view of Shwedagon Stupa and is within walking distance of many interesting sights.

At 5:00 PM, enjoy a group visit to Shwedagon Pagoda. Learn about the history and importance of this site with your local guide and enjoy the magical scene as the setting sun casts gorgeous colors.

At 7:00 PM, enjoy a welcome dinner with the group.  
Overnight hotel in Yangon. **(Dinner)**

Summit Parkview Hotel  
350 Ahlone Road  
Dagon Township  
Yangon, Myanmar  
Tel: (95 1) 211 888, 211 966  
[www.summityangon.com](http://www.summityangon.com)



**Day 2 (September 8, 2015):** As a group, visit holy sites such as Kyaukhtatgyi Pagoda, home to a 70-meter long reclining Buddha and Shwedagon, the most revered temple in Burma. At each site there will be time for teachings, puja and prayer. Overnight hotel in Yangon.  
**(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**



**Day 3 (September 9, 2015):** Fly as a group to Bagan. Early morning transfer to the airport for a flight to Nyaung U.



Upon arrival in Bagan we'll take a relaxing tour through the temple area, passing by many monuments of historical and cultural significance. This is a fabulous introduction to Bagan and its 2000 pagodas. Then check in at your hotel (normal check in time is 2:00 PM. If our rooms are available we'll check in earlier). Free time in the afternoon to relax, sightsee and settle in. Then in the evening start the retreat portion of the pilgrimage at our pleasant hotel. Overnight hotel in Bagan.  
**(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Myanmar Treasure Resort, Bagan  
Khayay Road, Anawratha Quarter  
New Bagan, Bagan, Myanmar  
Tel: (95 61) 60443, 60445  
[www.myanmar-treasuresorts.com](http://www.myanmar-treasuresorts.com)





**Days 4, 5 & 6 (September 10,11 & 12, 2015):** On retreat in Bagan: A typical day on retreat consists of an early rise, followed by breakfast. Teachings and discussion take place until lunch but include a tea break. After lunch there is a two-hour free time for rest, swimming, quiet study as you'd like. More teachings and meditation resume until dinner, after which the day concludes with meditation. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**



**Day 7 (September 13, 2015):** In the morning visit to Ananda Temple, the largest and best preserved temple in Bagan, as well as Gubyaukgyi Temple, which is noted for its beautiful mural paintings on its inner walls and well-preserved plaster carvings on its exterior. Nearby is Manuha Temple and Nan Paya Temple, two smaller temples with nice Buddha statues and stone work. In the afternoon enjoy an optional river cruise. Overnight hotel in Bagan. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**



**Day 8 (September 14, 2015):** Discover one of Bagan's most famous legends as you follow in the tracks of King Anawrahta and his precious white elephant. The tale states that the King was given a replica of Lord Buddha's tooth and he placed this on the sacred elephant's back and set him free. The elephant stopped at four places around Bagan and later the King built stupas at each of these locations. Thus the local Burmese believe that by visiting all four of these places in one day your wishes will be fulfilled. Overnight hotel in Bagan. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**



**Day 9 (September 15, 2015):** A one-hour drive takes us to Mount Popa. This hilltop resort is the ideal place to relax - take a dip in the pool, go for a light trek through the surrounding forests or simply relax on the balcony and enjoy the views. Lunch at Popa Mountain Resort. After lunch continue driving four hours to Mandalay. Upon arrival, you will check in to your hotel in Mandalay. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Mandalay Hill Resort  
No.(9), Kwin (416.B), 10th Street  
At the foot of Mandalay Hill, Mandalay  
Tel: 95 2 35638  
[www.mandalayhillresorthotel.com](http://www.mandalayhillresorthotel.com)



**Day 10 (September 16, 2015):** Visit Kuthodaw Pagoda containing 729 marble slabs of Buddhist scriptures. Here the group will set up an extensive puja with beautiful offerings. Then visit Mahamuni Pagoda home to one of the country's most revered Buddha images which, over the years, have been covered with gold leaf giving it an almost "lumpy" texture.

After a break for lunch, continue to Shwenandaw Monastery the only remaining building from the 19th century Royal Palace. This grand teak building is known for its exquisite woodcarving. Then in the late afternoon head to the top of Mandalay Hill as the sun begins to set to enjoy magnificent views of the city and Irrawaddy River. Overnight Mandalay. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**



**Day 11 (September 17, 2015):** This morning, cross a bridge over the Irrawaddy River to Sagaing covered with 600 white-painted pagodas and monasteries. It is home to 5,000 monastics and 100 meditation centers and we will visit and make offerings at some beautiful pagodas. Free time in the afternoon and evening to explore Mandalay independently. Overnight Mandalay. (Breakfast, Lunch)



**Day 12 (September 18, 2015):** After a morning puja on the roof top of our hotel, visit Amarapura, a former capital whose name means “City of Immortality.” There we visit a silk weaving workshop and Mahagandayon monastery, where over one-thousand monks reside. Continue to U Bein Bridge for a walk along this 200-year-old teak bridge. The bridge was constructed of 984 teak posts that were once part of the deserted Inwa Palace. It is 1.2 kilometers in length, making it the world’s longest teak span. As we stroll along the bridge, enjoy the fabulous views of the surrounding farms and streams. Overnight Mandalay. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)



**Day 13 (September 19, 2015):** Fly to Heho and drive two hours through rolling hills to visit the Pindaya caves, home to over 8,000 images of Buddha. Overnight Pindaya. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Pindaya Inle Inn  
Mahanbandoola Road  
Pindaya, Myanmar  
Tel: (95 81) 66280, 66290, 66029



**Day 14 (September 20, 2015):** From Pindaya, a scenic two-and-a-half-hour drive leads to Nyaung Shwe, the gateway village to the beautiful Inle Lake. On the way, we’ll stop at the wooden Shwe Yan Pyay Monastery. Then board our private motorcraft to launch onto Inle Lake. Overnight at our hotel on Inle Lake. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Myanmar Treasure Resort, Inle  
Maing Thauk Village  
Inle Lake, Myanmar  
Tel: (95 81) 209481, 209482  
[www.myanmar-treasure-resorts.com](http://www.myanmar-treasure-resorts.com)



**Day 15 (September 21, 2015):** On Inle Lake. Board our boats to cross the lake and float down a small canal leading to the village of Indein. Visit ancient stupas partly shrouded by lush vegetation. Overnight at a hotel on Inle Lake. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)



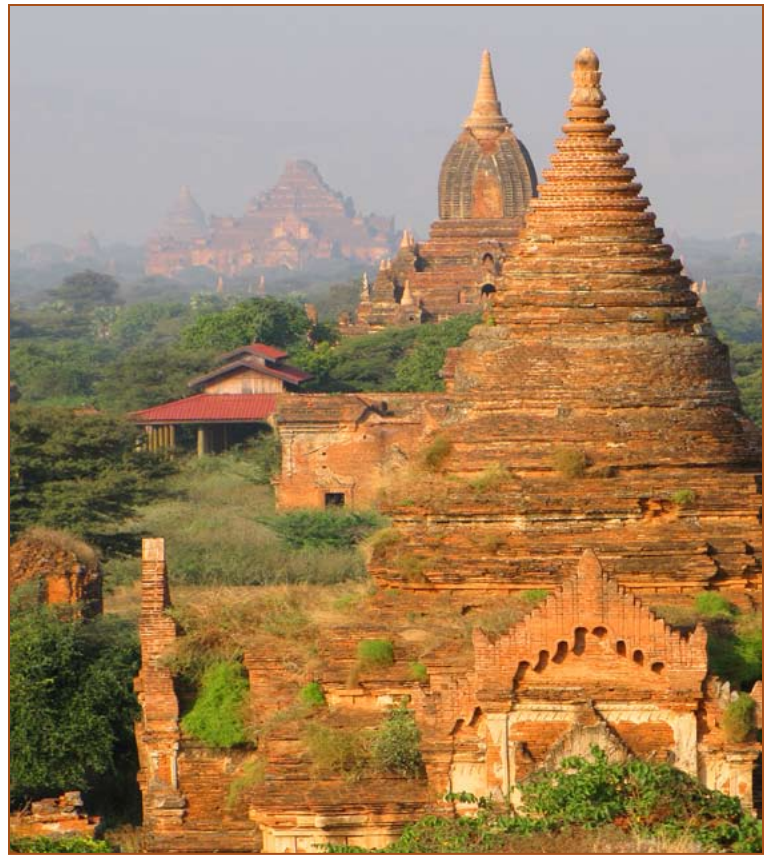


**Day 16 (September 22, 2015):** Depart Inle Lake and transfer to Heho for the flight to Yangon. On arrival enjoy a nice lunch together then check in at the hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to do as you like. (Breakfast, Lunch)



**Day 17 (September 23, 2015):** The pilgrimage ends with morning prayers and meditation at Shwedagon, dedicating our time together for world peace. Then transfer to the airport for departure. (Breakfast)

◆◆◆ End Of Pilgrimage Services ◆◆◆



**PostTrip Departure (September 23-24, 2015):** Return travel home or onward. Those in the Americas typically arrive home the same day — an effect of reverse travel across the International Date Line.

**Notes:** This is meant only as a guide to what our days will be like. Changes may be made as we go along and will be announced as well as posted when possible in the hotel reception areas. These changes will be based on local conditions, health and hotel availability. Times shown are all approximate and rounded off. Sturdy air-conditioned vehicles with will be provided. Included meals for each day have been shown as bold at the end of each daily description. Contact information is current and subject to change.

**Options:** You are welcome to arrive early or stay late as well as request additional touring and services at additional cost. Contact us if you would like information and suggestions for your visit.

— Effie Fletcher  
January 2015  
CST 2085690-40

