

Preliminary Calendar Outline Burma (Myanmar) 2013

Dharma Journeys Pilgrimage



We are delighted to welcome back Ven. Robina Courtin, who led our successful pilgrimages for eight years to India and Nepal, including our first in 2001.

In this new pilgrimage to the Buddhist sites of Burma, our first to this extraordinary country, Ven. Robina will give Dharma talks as well as 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 century. Today over 2,000 temples and stupas still remain.

"I am so pleased to be able to lead this pilgrimage!" says Ven. Robina. "I've found over the years that people with even the smallest interest in Buddhism love to do the prayers and practices at the various holy sites. As my teacher Lama Zopa Rinpoche says, 'Then there is so much benefit for the mind.' Because we dedicate our activities to world peace, people feel as if they are doing something truly worthwhile."

The group will meet in Yangon and explore important sites such as Kyaukhtatgyi and Shwedagon before traveling together to holy sites from Bagan to Golden Rock.

There will also be plenty of time for relaxing, sightseeing and shopping. "Everyone can have fun as well!" says Ven. Robina.

The complete and final pilgrimage itinerary is in development and will be available soon!



*2013 Dharma Journeys Burma Pilgrimage
Preliminary Calendar*

Day 1 (September 1, 2013): Everyone meets in Yangon. Our local staff will transfer you to the hotel. Our first day is meant 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. Enjoy a welcome dinner with the group. Overnight hotel in Yangon. **(Dinner)**

Day 2 (September 2, 2013): 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 3, 2013): Fly as a group to Bagan. 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)**

Days 4, 5 & 6 (September 4, 5 & 6, 2013): 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 7, 2013): 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 8, 2013): 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 9, 2013): 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)**

Day 10 (September 10, 2013): Visit Kuthodaw Pagoda which contains 729 marble stone 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 11, 2013): 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 12, 2013): 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 13, 2013): 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)**

Day 14 (September 14, 2013): 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 a hotel on Inle Lake. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Day 15 (September 15, 2013): 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 16, 2013): Depart Inle Lake and transfer to Heho for the flight to Yangon. Overnight at our hotel in Yangon. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Day 17 (September 17, 2013): Depart Yangon early this morning for a seven-hour journey to Kyaikhtiyo and the Golden Rock. A huge boulder covered by gold leaf and delicately balanced on the edge of a cliff, Golden Rock is one of Myanmar’s main pilgrimage sites. The pagoda here is said to hold a hair of the Buddha, and Buddhists from across the country come here to pay homage. Overnight at our hotel close to Golden Rock. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Day 18 (September 18, 2013): Visit the Golden Rock again for a special puja and to see the rising sun. Starting at pre-dawn, local pilgrims gather by the rock to make offerings. This will be a relaxing day in a beautiful place. Overnight at our hotel close to Golden Rock. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Day 19 (September 19, 2013): On the way back to Yangon stop to see Shwemawdaw Pagoda and the Allied War Cemetery near Htaukkyan. This beautiful, peaceful cemetery is the final resting place for over 27,000 Allied soldiers. Overnight at the hotel in Yangon. **(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)**

Day 20 (September 20, 2013): Free day for shopping and relaxing in Yangon before a final group dinner. Lunch is on your own today. Overnight at the hotel in Yangon. **(Breakfast, Dinner)**

Day 21 (September 21, 2013): The pilgrimage ends with morning prayers and meditation, dedicating our time together for world peace. Then transfer to the airport for departure. **(Breakfast)**

◆◆◆ End Of Pilgrimage Services ◆◆◆

Notes:

- Pilgrims to drive everywhere in the best available bus except for three internal flights (Yangon to Bagan, Mandalay to Heho and Heho to Yangon.)
- All hotels are comfortable three-star hotels with attached bathrooms and services such as laundry readily available.



Pilgrimage Costing:

- Land cost for the entire trip, and the meditation retreat (not including overseas or internal airfares) is US\$5,990 (These costs are based on double occupancy and a minimum group size of 20. If the group size is smaller there will be a US\$200 surcharge.) All meals are included except one lunch and one dinner.
- International airfare from San Francisco to Yangon, Myanmar (Rangoon, Burma) at US\$1,300. For airfares from other cities please check online, contact us or your local travel agent. Please double check with us BEFORE buying your ticket that the routing is correct and that we have the minimum number needed to run the pilgrimage.
- Internal airfares are estimated at US \$375.
- If you would prefer to have a private room you'll be charged a single supplement of US \$2315.
- The pilgrimage is limited to 30 participants. The deadline for sign-up is June 1. Late sign-ups may be accepted if there is space available, with a service charge of US\$100. Sign-up before April 1 and receive a \$100 discount. Sign-up AND pay and in full before April 1 and receive a \$200 discount!
- A deposit of US\$500 holds your place. Payable by check in US funds to "Himalayan High Treks." The entire trip can also be paid by PayPal or credit card. We take VISA, MasterCard, American Express or Discover and can send you our bank transfer details upon request.
- All the profit will support Ven. Robina's Bodhicitta Trust. The trust supports her work for Lama Zopa Rinpoche, spiritual director of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, a worldwide network of Buddhist centers and activities.



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