

ONCE UPON A NIGHT IN BAGAN

Experiences | Bagan



OVERVIEW

Bagan's notorious for its crowds and unforgiving midday heat and this tour attempts to address that. Starting late in the afternoon with a leisurely cruise along the Irrawaddy, go on to explore two of the ancient capital's most famous Buddhist monuments, before concluding the night with a slap-up dinner and cultural performance at one of our favourite local restaurants*.

**Note: Cultural performance is available from months of October to February only.*



PACE

Easy-going



TOUR PERIOD

Evening



HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience a cooler, quieter and spiritual side of Bagan
- Sneak 'backstage' as we admire a different perspective of Bagan's temple strewn landscape on a private Irrawaddy sunset cruise
- As darkness falls, come face to face with the Kassapa, Kakusandha, Konagamana and Gautama Buddha images inside the majestic Ananda temple
- Visit Shwezigon, the prototype of all Burmese pagodas, when it's softly illuminated at night
- Conclude the evening with a hunger busting meal at a local restaurant
- From October to February, it will be possible to wine and dine whilst enjoying a cultural performance



ITINERARY IN DETAIL

You will be collected by your guide at approximately 16:00 this afternoon and escorted directly to Bagan's bustling boat jetty.

As the majority of travellers start to flock towards the temple viewing mounds, take to the Irrawaddy in a private boat to enjoy a personal and equally impressive sunset experience. Cruising along the river with a beer (or soft drink) in hand, put your feet up and enjoy a unique perspective of Bagan's ancient temples, local life and the sky's ever-changing palette of red, yellow and orange hues.

Once back on land and as darkness begins to fall, we'll make our way to the 920-year-old Ananda temple, one of Bagan's grandest in terms of size and design. Built using a fusion of Mon and Indian inspired techniques, this striking monument houses four ginormous standing Buddha images, each of whom keep eternal watch over the temple's four entrances. These look particularly picturesque in the evening, as do the 554 embossed terra cotta tiles that depict the life of Buddha.

With the night having well and truly set, we'll now drive to see the mother of all Myanmar stupas, Shwezigon, illuminated in gold. Construction of the pagoda began in the mid-11th century during the reign of King Arawratha, but it was his son (King Kyansittha) who completed the build in 1102. No thanks to old age and numerous natural disasters, what you see today is a mish-mash of different periods. The lower level terraces are original, but the last 500 years has seen substantial touch-ups made to the upper and middle sections. After the earthquake of 1975, the decision was made to strengthen the structure using over 30,000 gold-gilded copper plates. As the prototype of all Burmese stupas, it's easy to understand why so many people, from kings to pilgrims, have worked so hard to maintain Shwezigon throughout the years.

For dinner, we've made a reservation on your behalf at Secret Home, a restaurant that serves fresh, locally sourced produce in what started off as the owner's living room*. If you're lucky enough to time your visit in-between the months of October and February, a live culture show can be enjoyed at the restaurant every evening from 20:00 to 20:45.

**Note: This is a reservation only. To avoid wastage and to make the arrangements more cost effective, we would recommend purchasing food and drink locally here.*



INCLUSIONS

- Transportation to/from hotel in an air-conditioned vehicle
- Use of private motorised boat
- Beer and soft drinks (on boat only)
- English speaking tour guide (for other languages, please enquire)
- Drinking water and hand towel



EXCLUSIONS

- Bagan zone fee
- Any meals
- Anything that's not mentioned



NOTES

- You will be expected to remove your shoes when entering temples – wearing footwear that is easy to take on / off is highly recommended
- The Ananda Temple Festival takes place in January or February each year; during this period, it will be full of people and far from quiet
- The Shwezigon Pagoda Festival takes place in October or November each year; during this period, it will be full of people and far from quiet
- In Myanmar, festivals can happen at any time of year which means we are unable to guarantee a crowd-free, quiet environment every time. Saying that, witnessing a Myanmar festival at night is a truly unforgettable spectacle.
- Please avoid showing too much skin. You may be refused entry if shoulders, midriff, or too much leg is exposed.
- The cultural performance at the local restaurant (Secret Home) is available from October to February only. This is a complimentary service so it will not be possible to reduce the cost of the itinerary if you visit outside of these dates.
- A supplementary fee may apply on certain days – Tour Mandalay will inform you of this beforehand.

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