

October 2016 VIA Myanmar Tour Schedule

Day 1: Thurs, Sept. 29 – Assemble at 9 a.m. at San Francisco International Airport for 11:55 a.m. departure.

Day 2: Fri, Sept 30 – Travel Day.... Enjoy crossing the International Dateline!

Day 3: Sat. Oct 1 – Arrive in Hong Kong at 7 pm. Depart to Yangon, arriving at 00:15am. After immigration, transfer to Panorama Hotel, Yangon.

Day 4: Sun, Oct. 2 – After breakfast, walk with Pre-Collegiate Program (P-CP) students from hotel to the ferry to cross the river to Dalat, a working class suburb of Yangon. Catch a charter bus to Kawmu in the Irrawaddy Delta. Aung San Suu Kyi represents this district, and we will visit a mobile library run by a foundation named after Daw Suu Kyi's mother.

Day 5: Mon, Oct. 3 – We begin our rounds of political and cultural visits in Yangon arranged and accompanied by our P-CP hosts. Travelers will have at least two options in each half-day for these two days (Oct. 3-4) in Yangon. Dinner with Yangon students hosts, who then will take us to the spectacular Shwedagon Pagoda, the center of Burmese Buddhism and the country's best-known symbol.

Day 6: Tues, Oct. 4 – P-CP students introduce us to their society, city, political life and NGOs for the second day.

Day 7: Wed, Oct. 5 – In Yangon, breakfast with members of 88 Generation for views on current political environment. Fly to Mandalay, the historic capital and the country's second-largest city. After settling into our hotel and having lunch, we'll visit U Bein wooden bridge for sunset.

Day 8: Thurs Oct. 6 – In Mandalay, meet U Nayaka, the Buddhist monk who, in 1994, set about building a completely free school for children whose parents couldn't afford a public school. Phaung Daw Oo School now has 6,000 students and a medical clinic. We'll visit classes and talk informally with students. In the late afternoon, we meet with local students and young monks studying at an English tutoring center for informal conversation.

Day 9: Fri, Oct. 7 – We'll see Golden Palace Monastery and a nearby pagoda with the world's largest stone books. Shortly before sunset, we make a steep climb up Mandalay Hill for a sunset view of the city, the Irrawaddy River and the faraway mountains of Shan State, where we visit soon.

Day 10: Sat, Oct. 8 – Fly to HeHo, gateway to Inle Lake. Before Inle, we trek through villages and agricultural lands in nearby Kalaw. Non-trekkers proceed to Inle Lake to our hotel on stilts over the water.

Day 11: Sun, Oct. 9 –A full day on the waters of Inle Lake visiting exotic floating gardens and marketplaces.

Day 12: Mon, Oct 10 – After early morning birding or possibly a cooking class in Nyaungshwe, we take a charter bus to Taunggyi, capital of Shan State. In Taunggyi, expect to visit a wholesale auto parts operation, winery, and cheroot factory.

Day 13: Tues, Oct 11 – Visit market in Taunggyi, which has become larger with the influx of Chinese goods and people. Dinner with families.

Day 14: Wed, Oct. 12 – Fly from Taunggyi to Kyaing Tong. Visit local ethnic villages around Kjaing Tong.

Day 15: Thurs, Oct. 13 –Additional village visits; possible visits to Yunnan border and to NGO in Golden Triangle.

Day 16: Fri, Oct 14--Bus to Thai border, then to Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Day 17: Sat, Oct. 15 – Visit BEAM, a school for Burmese migrants in Thailand and a long-time VIA post. Or enjoy Chiang Mai in the morning. We'll keep several day rooms at the hotel. Depart Chiang Mai at 6:25pm, Dragon Air 233, and arrive in Hong Kong at 10pm.

Day 18: Sun, Oct. 16 – After two-hour layover, depart Hong Kong for SFO at 1am. Arrive 9pm Pacific Time (Oct. 16, Sunday).

Travel agency:

Avia Travel, Sue Lai

P.O. Box 8432, Berkeley CA 94707

www.aviatravel.com

Tel: (800) 950 2842 or (510) 558 2150

Skype: avia.travel

VIA (Volunteers in Asia) 870 Market Street #656, San Francisco, CA 94102 USA

Phone: (415) 904-8033 Fax: (415) 618-0509