

# Myanmar

[Yangoon](#) , [Bago](#) , [The Golden Rock](#) , [Mandalay](#) , [Maymyo](#) , [Bagan](#) , [Inle Lake](#) , [Tachilek](#)

---

[Back to index](#)

---

Travel time: May 98.

Myanmar has a lot of impressive landscapes, historical sights and friendly people **but** the "government" treat their citizens very badly. Streetchildren collected by the police have to build up roads, beggars have to work in quarries or as minesweeper if they were discovered.

Police and militaries are very corrupt. A lot of territories are forbidden for foreigners or you have to fly because it's not allowed to travel overland.

You have to stay in "tourist hotels" and pay them in USD or FEC. The cheapest are between 3 to 5 USD if you bargain hard. It is possible to stay in local accommodations and travel in "no go areas" but if the police will discover this you'll get little problems but your driver/hotel manager/guide will get be arrested and you can't help them any more. Remember this if you travel here.

By arriving at the international airport you have to change 300USD in FEC (Foreign Exchange Currency) witch is not as good as cash dollars. At the exchange counter they accept cash and traveler cheques but they have no machine for credit cards yet! If you have only a credit card the lady behind the counter will ask you for a "gift" (5USD, no cosmetics) and you must not change.

Change your money at the black market in Yangoon (jeweler shops/hotel). For one USD you can get 270 to 290 Kyat if you change a lager amount (100USD or more). For FEC you get 10 to 15 percent less. At the countryside the rate is not as good as in big cities.

In the moment there is really no possibility to cross the border from India or Bangladesh overland.

If you want to travel overland from Myanmar to Thailand the only possibility is to fly to Tachilek (for example from Heho near Tounggyi for 60USD) because there is no go area between and the army controls very well. At the border to Mae Sai it takes a while but it is possible to cross also with a stamp in your passport "land route not permissible" and they didn't check my exchange certificate.

## Yangoon

The White House Guest House at Kon Zay Dan St. has friendly English speaking staff, laundry service, good rooms and a nice view from the rooftop. A double bed room with van and breakfast cost about 5USD p.p. if you bargain well.

At the corner Kon Zay Dan St / Mahabandoola Rd. is a tasty ice cream bar. Cheap lunch is available at the Bogyoke Market (closed at Monday), dinner form 5 to 9 pm at Mahabandoola Rd and the side roads.

[Up](#)

## Bago

Try to find the funny looking trishaw driver named Mr. Manni. He is a very friendly guide, knows the area as well and speaks good English.

[Up](#)

## The Golden Rock

The entrance fee for this area is 6USD if you are student. If you want to stay overnight at the top there is only one tourist hotel and the cheapest hut cost 15USD. It's a nice walk down to the bottom (4 to 5h).

[Up](#)

## Mandalay

Stay at the Nylon Hotel. The cheapest rooms with breakfast are on the rooftop (3USD for a single with own shower/toilet). Ask for a room with van and switch on the aircon yourself (outside our room) because they charge extra for aircon. Friendly English speaking staff. There is a good ice-cream bar round the corner.

Entrance fees are high: Palace garden 5USD, Mandalay hill and Pagodas 3USD each.

There are several ferries to Bagan available. Two government run daily (12/18 h) except Monday and Saturday for 10/16 USD. The local ferry two times a week (36 h) are not allowed for foreigners but you can "arrange" it. For additional money you can sleep on the ship the night before departure.

[Up](#)

### **Maymyo**

It's a problem to get a pickup from Mandalay (3h) because you have to pass a checkpoint and several drivers got problems by having foreigners on board. The other problem is to get the local price (75 Kyat one way).

[Up](#)

### **Bagan**

A very impressive area with more than 2000 old pagodas. Entrance fee is 10USD for the whole area. Good accommodation for 3USD (single with AC, own shower/toilet and breakfast) at Eden Hotel in Nyaung-U.

If you want to visit Mt. Popa let the hotel arrange it. Otherwise you may be charged 10 times more back to Bagan. I haven't had a chance to pay a proper price. So I walked back through the desert which was very hard.

[Up](#)

### **Inle Lake**

Stay at Gipsy Guesthouse with very friendly staff (double 3USD p.p. with van, shower/toilet and breakfast). If you stay more than two days you get a very good dinner for free cooked by the owners wife.

[Up](#)

### **Tachilek**

It's expensive to stay here (7-10 USD minimum). Crossing the border to Thailand see above!

[Up](#)

---

[Back to index](#)