



"The Grande Dame" of Women's
Adventure Travel Since 1982
2007 ~ Celebrating 25 Years!

DATES

February 10-21, 2007 Myanmar (Burma)
February 22-26, 2007 Optional Laos Extension

COST

\$3,995.00* (\$600 deposit)
Myanmar (Burma), includes all in-country flights.

\$1,895.00 * (\$200 deposit) for optional Laos
extension, includes all in-country flights.

* Prices based on 2006 exchange rates and all are subject to
change without notice.

RATING

Moderate

ACTIVITIES

Archeology, Boat Excursions, Cooking Class,
Cultural Exploration, Hiking, Natural History,
Sightseeing, Photography

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

- Enjoy the hospitality of the world's most friendly people, where Buddhism permeates all strands of cultural, ethical, and secular life.
- Explore the fabled cities of Mandalay, Yangon, Vientiane and Luang Prabang, and the ancient ruins of Bagan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Discover the charms of Inle Lake and its "leg rowers" in a magical world of floating villages and gardens, little-touched by the modern world.
- Walk to ethnic and tribal villages to meet and learn about the indigenous Hill Tribe peoples who live in remote villages in Burma and Laos.
- Combine the bygone era of two of the most exotic and least-explored countries in Southeast Asia, with luxury hotel accommodations and some of the region's best restaurants.

AdventureWomen is the oldest
adventure travel company for
active women over 30.

MYANMAR (BURMA) - A Land of Golden Pagodas and Optional Extension to LAOS

"This is Burma, and it will be quite unlike any land you know about," wrote Rudyard Kipling in 1898. More than a century later, Burma's lure endures as a place where time stands still. Everywhere you look there are temples and shrines. The air rings with the sound of gongs and chanted prayers. And every hill, tree, and building pulsates with a spiritual connection. Buddhism and nat (spirit) worship influence all aspects of life here.

Burma, now called Myanmar, and Laos are two of the most exotic and least explored countries of Buddhist Indochina. Here we have a rare opportunity to step back in time and experience the Asia of old. Our journey incorporates classic wonders and unique natural phenomena: the magic of Yangon and Mandalay; the ancient ruins of Pagan; the former colonial hill station of remote Kengtung; shimmering golden-spired temples; the floating gardens of Inle Lake; and fascinating tribal peoples.

Myanmar is the land of a thousand ancient golden pagodas, a deeply religious country with a rich cultural heritage and friendly, open-hearted people. Commercial tourism is in its infancy here, but its sublime beauty makes up for its lack of tourist infrastructure. The country's rural landscape is dotted with serene villages where people still work the land with buffalo and elephants.

Small, landlocked Laos has always been a place apart, and our optional extension continues our journey in this magical, little-visited country. Covered with steep mountains and thick jungle, Laos feels like a setting in a fairy tale. Young monks in saffron robes chant in unison in dusky pagodas; women place vases of fresh flowers in the spirit shrines that guard their homes; children splash and shriek in the shallows of the Mekong River.

Laos may be one of the last truly calm places on earth—no bright lights, no shopping malls, no amusement parks—just people going about their lives as their forefathers did. They grow rice and weave traditional cloth, moving through life as slowly as the water buffalo that plod back and forth in their rice paddies.

Once you've experienced the serene and tranquil beauty of this part of the world, you might not want to leave. Join AdventureWomen on this unique journey and experience the magic of Southeast Asia, a Land of Golden Pagodas, for yourself.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THIS TRIP

- For Myanmar (Burma). Domestic and international flights as indicated:
 - from Bangkok to Yangon;
 - Yangon to Bagan;
 - Bagan to Mandalay;
 - Mandalay to Kengtung;
 - Kengtung to Helo;
 - Helo to Yangon;
 - and from Yangon back to Bangkok.
- For the Laos extension. Domestic and international flights as indicated:
 - from Bangkok to Vientiane;
 - Vientiane to Luang Prabang;
 - Luang Prabang back to Bangkok.
- For the Laos extension, hotel reservations for the night of February 21 at the Amari Airport Hotel in Bangkok.
- Private airport transfers, luggage transfers, and all transportation throughout the trip.
- All sightseeing with a national English speaking guide in each country.
- Admission fees and permits to sites as per the itinerary.
- Private boat cruises, and all other activities and classes as listed in the itinerary.
- All meals as listed in the itinerary (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) and throughout the trip.
- 3- to 5-star luxury, centrally located hotel accommodations in twin-bedded, double-occupancy rooms.
- Iced mineral water and cold towels on sightseeing days (2 bottles of water per day).
- One AdventureWomen escort.

NOT INCLUDED

- Round-trip international airfare from your hometown to Bangkok. Please call Ciretta Green at Montana Travel (800-247-3538). She can help with:
 - International roundtrip airfare to Bangkok.
 - Hotel reservations the night before the trip begins in Bangkok (night of February 11) and after the trip (night of February 21 for Burma only, and night of February 26th for Burma with Laos extension) at the Amari Airport Hotel.
 - She can also help you set up any additional travel if you want to come early or stay longer in Bangkok or any other area of Thailand.
- Any airport departure taxes within and departing from Bangkok, Burma and Laos.

(continued on page 3)

HOW TO REGISTER

First, call (800-804-8686) or email (advwomen@.com) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. We will hold a space for you for 5 days while you are completing the application process, and making personal and travel arrangements.

Next, complete and sign the Trip Application form included in all of our brochures. We can also fax or mail one to you, or you can get the Trip Application form on our Web site by clicking "Book Now" on our home page. Include with the application the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa or MasterCard), personal check, money order or cashier's check. You can also register over the phone with a credit card. Once we have received your deposit and trip application, we will mail you a package of information verifying your registration.

Then, call our travel consultants at Montana Travel, 800-247-3538, and ask for Ciretta to make your airline reservations.

Note: We will only hold your space for 5 days without a trip application and deposit payment!

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE INTO BANGKOK

You will need to be in Bangkok, Thailand at the International Airport on February 12, 2007, for an 8:15 AM flight that will take our group from Bangkok to Yangon, Myanmar. Depending on the airline you use and your arrival time into Bangkok, you may or may not need to stay overnight at the Amari Airport Hotel (located inside the airport) on the night of February 11. The Amari Airport Hotel is the most convenient place to stay overnight in order to arrive on time for our early morning flight out of Bangkok on February 12. Ciretta Green at Montana Travel can help you with these arrangements. 800-247-3538.

For those doing the Myanmar (Burma) trip only, February 10-21
We return to Bangkok Airport from Myanmar on February 21 at approximately 12 Noon. If you are returning to the U.S. after the Burma-only portion of this trip, or extending your stay in Bangkok and need to make hotel and other reservations for the night of February 26 and beyond, please call Ciretta Green at Montana Travel. 800-247-3538.

For those continuing on with the optional Laos extension, February 22-26

We will stay at the Amari Airport Hotel (included in the cost of your trip) on the night of February 21 and fly to Laos the morning of February 22. We will return to Bangkok on February 26 by approximately 4 PM. A hotel reservation on the night of February 26 will depend on your international airline departure time and date from Bangkok to the U.S.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of the United States must possess a valid passport, which must be valid 6 months beyond your intended stay in Myanmar and Laos. If you do NOT have a passport, GET IT NOW! Please don't wait until the last minute. You should always carry 2 extra passport photographs with you in case of emergency (if your passport is stolen or lost.)

(NOT INCLUDED—continued from page 2)

- Gratuities to guides and drivers (as a guideline: approximately \$3-\$5 US per person per day for English-speaking guide; and \$1.50 - \$3 US per person per day for each driver, in U.S. dollars or local currency).
- A few meals as listed in the itinerary, and beverages (coffee, tea, extra bottled water, soft drinks, beer, wine, and liquor).
- Items of a personal nature and any optional activities.
- Visa costs for Burma and Laos. We will send you instructions about visas for Myanmar and Laos at a later date.

LIABILITY FORM AND FINAL PAYMENT

Part of what ADVENTUREWOMEN, INC. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. Please read the **LIABILITY FORM** carefully, sign it, and return it with the remainder of your balance due by **NOVEMBER 12, 2006.**

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure, and \$300 of your deposit is non-refundable. Should you cancel less than 90 days before your trip, the following penalties will apply:

60-89 days prior:
a 50% refund of total fees paid
1-59 days prior:
100% of total fees paid

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Information will be sent to you in your registration packet.

SWITCHING TRIPS

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a **\$75 fee to switch**. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

Visas

You will need a visa to travel to both Myanmar and Laos, and we will send you the necessary applications when applicable.

Vaccinations

The only vaccine required by international regulations for Myanmar and Laos is yellow fever. Proof of vaccination will only be required IF you have visited a country in the yellow fever zone within the last 6 days prior to entering either of these countries. The disease occurs only in sub-Saharan Africa and tropical South America, so I assume that no one will need a yellow fever vaccination!

No other special inoculations are required for travel to Myanmar or Laos, but you should be up-to-date on all vaccinations such as tetanus, typhoid and hepatitis A and B. Please consult your doctor or a travel-medicine clinic.

This trip is rated as MODERATE. You should be able to walk/hike 3-5 miles in hilly terrain on day hikes, be able to climb flights of stairs to monasteries, and walk on sightseeing tours within the villages and cities.

You must have your own health insurance, and not have any physical problems or conditions that would be adversely affected by walking at higher altitudes and the rigors of international travel.

POLITICS ASIDE.....

Why travel to Myanmar, when there has been so much controversy in light of the repressive military regime that has ruled the country since 1988? Many believe that staying away signifies a protest to the junta. Even our own government believes that isolating and imposing sanctions on Myanmar reduces the country's access to hard currency, and that this will somehow motivate the junta to become a democracy. Following the imposition of U.S. sanctions in 2003, tourism dropped sharply. The U.S. State Department now reports that as a result, 40,000 workers in Myanmar's garment industry immediately lost their jobs, and another 60,000 will.

At AdventureWomen, I believe that we as travelers carry torches that can illuminate a country. The people of Myanmar deserve our support, both economic and emotional. A growing number of tourists traveling throughout the country can bring hope and light, friendships and fresh ideas to the general population. It's the people, not the government, who benefit financially from our tourist dollars—the people who work in restaurants, hotels, crafts markets, travel companies—virtually all of which are privately owned.

A visit to Myanmar will put a human face on what is at stake there, and we cannot help but come away with a deeper understanding of the country and its people.

(ITINERARY—following on page 4)

NO SMOKING POLICY

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

On this AdventureWomen trip, international airfare is NOT included from the United States to Bangkok. International and domestic airfare IS included from Bangkok to Myanmar and return, and from Bangkok to Laos and return.

In order to facilitate group arrivals and departures into Bangkok, and to make sure that everyone arrives in time to catch our early morning flight to Myanmar on February 12, we ask you to work directly with our travel consultant at MONTANA TRAVEL to make your travel arrangements. Or, if you are booking your own air or using frequent flyer miles to get to Bangkok, please make sure that you have plenty of time to arrive in Bangkok prior to our 8:45 AM departure on the morning of February 12.

After booking your trip, please call CIRETTA at MONTANA TRAVEL, in Bozeman, Montana, to discuss your airline schedule to Bangkok, and to discuss any extra arrangements that you may want to make (i.e., staying in Bangkok either before or after the trip).

1-800-247-3538
OR FAX 1-406-586-1959
CANADIAN RESIDENTS,
please call 406-587-1188

When calling, please identify yourself as an ADVENTUREWOMEN TRAVELER. If you leave a message on CIRETTA'S voice mail, she will return your call promptly.

NOTE: The recent trend in travel is for travelers to finalize their plans much closer to departure time than was customary in the past. While we try to be as flexible as possible booking last minute registrants, we must often relinquish hotel space and air reservations 6 to 12 weeks prior to departure!

Please keep this in mind
when making your travel plans.

OUR EXCITING ITINERARY FOR OUR MYANMAR ADVENTURE AND OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO LAOS**DAYS 1 and 2, Saturday and Sunday, February 10 and 11, 2007 U.S.A. to Bangkok**

Fly to Bangkok, Thailand on your own. You will lose one day, due to crossing the International Dateline, and arrive in Bangkok on February 11. Overnight on your own at the Amari Airport Hotel (inside the airport) or at a hotel in downtown Bangkok (only if you arrive a few days early and have time to travel into the city).

DAY 3, Monday, February 12 Meet at Bangkok Airport. Fly from Bangkok to Yangon, then Hit the Ground Running our First Day!

Our exciting journey begins as we rendezvous at the Bangkok Airport for our 8:45 AM flight from Bangkok to the Burmese capital of Yangon (formerly Rangoon), where we are welcomed and transferred to our hotel.

After a short rest, we're off on a private guided tour of this fascinating city, the most cosmopolitan, interesting, and multi-ethnic city in Myanmar. We begin with a visit to Sule Paya, the geographic heart of Yangon, where its primary traffic circle is occupied by a 2000-year-old golden pagoda! We'll walk in the midst of historical colonial architecture and view the city's irregular jumble of commerce, teeming with life and entrepreneurial energy.

On this first day of our adventure, our welcome lunch is at what is considered to be one of Myanmar's "Top 5" restaurants, Sandy's Myanmar Cuisine. Located in a stylish colonial building, it serves excellent Burmese food on its outdoor patio that overlooks serene Kandawgyi Lake. Our lunch also includes a fascinating talk by a well-known Myanmar historian, Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt. Then after lunch we'll visit the art gallery of Myanmar's leading artist, Mr. Min Wei Aung, who often has art exhibitions in New York and London. His watercolor and oil paintings are unique and often depict typical scenes of Myanmar, with its monks and monasteries. We'll tour his studio and listen to his perspective about his style of painting.

Late afternoon we'll travel to the most important sight and landmark in Yangon, the awe-inspiring golden Shwedagon Pagoda, an ethereal complex of striking golden spires and a sacred mecca for Burmese Buddhists. According to legend, the original stupa (temple) is 2,500 years old. At dusk, we'll view a 1000-oil-lamp offering and religious chant as we watch the sun set on our first full day in this stunning city.

Returning to our beautiful Pansea Hotel, we relax before having dinner at the Karaweik Palace Restaurant. After such a full day, we might find it difficult to stay awake to watch the cultural entertainment of the evening!
[Lunch and Dinner]

Overnight in Yangon in deluxe rooms at the 5-Star Pansea Orient-Express Hotel. "Rare are the places that have the innate power to inspire happiness. In the very heart of the Burmese capital, the Pansea Yangon belongs to this limited category of hotels, which themselves alone justify the journey. This ancient colonial residence from the dawn of the century distills a perfume of luxury, tranquility and serenity. In the country of Golden Buddhas, the Pansea Yangon is the antechamber of happiness." - Hotel review by Le Figaro Magazine
Need we say more?

(ITINERARY—continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

DAY 4, Tuesday, February 13 *Mount Popa and the Ruins of the Ancient City of Bagan*

After an early breakfast at the hotel, we are transferred to the airport for our flight to Bagan, considered to be one of the most amazing sights in all of Asia. Rivaling Cambodia's Angkor Wat in its jaw-dropping scope, this 10th-century archeological wonder contains 3,000 temples from the original 13,000 that once stood.

Upon arrival in Bagan, we first travel by vehicle to Mount Popa, an extinct volcano that was last active 250,000 years ago. It is the most important nat worship (spirit worship) center in the country. Nat worship was an earlier form of belief before the advent of Buddhism in the 11th century. You will be fascinated as we explore the area's green fertile plains and lush vegetation, which is caused by the moisture of passing clouds at this high elevation. We'll also visit toddy-palm villages, observing the hospitality and every day life of the local farmers. We'll watch peanut oil being extracted by traditional methods from organically grown peanuts and view the process of making palm wine.

Lunch is served in a tropical forest at our home for tonight, the Popa Mountain Resort, beautifully situated at the base of the Mt. Popa. In the afternoon we'll view a display of mannequin-like figures representing the 37 figures of nat gods (a major pilgrimage destination) and walk the surrounding area. A special activity this afternoon is a horseback riding tour from the resort, where we are treated to a wonderful view of the sunset over the Bagan Plain.

[Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

Dinner is served at the Popa Mountain Resort.

Overnight at the spectacular, first-class Popa Mountain Resort in deluxe rooms. The hotel is located amidst the beautiful natural setting of legendary Mt. Popa and is comprised of tastefully designed villas fully equipped with modern facilities, private balconies and lavishly furnished interiors.

DAY 5, Wednesday, February 14 *The Ruins of the Ancient City of Bagan*

Happy Valentine's Day!!

After breakfast at the hotel, we return to Bagan for a full day of sightseeing. Breathtaking Bagan is one of the most important archeological sites in Asia and a truly stunning sight. Scattered over a remote and semi-arid plain near Central Myanmar are literally thousands of temples, stretching as far as the eye can see. They are mostly red brick and date back a thousand years to the glorious Bagan era.

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Individually, the temples are not spectacular, but their sheer numbers are overwhelming.

Our first stop of the morning is a local favorite, Nyaung Oo's morning market, where we'll see local crafts, a pottery shop, and vegetables used for medicinal purposes as well as medicine extracted from animal sources. We begin our exploration of Bagan with a visit to the Shwezigon Pagoda, supposedly built to enshrine one of the four replicas of the Buddha tooth. On to Gubyaukgyi Temple, which contains the oldest mural paintings in all of Bagan. Our final visit this morning is to the famous Ananda Temple, one of the finest, best preserved and most revered temples in Myanmar, followed by lunch at the Sunset Garden Restaurant.

This afternoon we'll spend time at the lacquerware gallery and studio of Mr. U Ba Nyein—third generation artist, owner, and the leading lacquerware producer in Bagan. Lacquer art is an important traditional art of the Bagan region, and young boys and girls learn this fine and delicate art form under the supervision of an artist who passes the skill down to the next generation.

We continue our exploration of Bagan with a visit to the ancient Bagan temples of Manuha and Nanpaya, both built in the early 13th century. Manuha contains a huge reclining Buddha. Nanpaya features unique sandstone carvings. Then we'll enjoy a relaxing and traditional horse cart ride through many temples and villages, meeting friendly village people and observing their way of life.

For our last visit of the day, we'll be taken to Ywahaunggyi Temple to enjoy a splendid panoramic view of Bagan's temples as we watch the sun set over the Ayeyarwady River.

Dinner tonight is at the Nanda Restaurant, which features a night view of the glowing gold Schwezigon Pagoda. After dinner, we'll be entertained by a traditional and fun Burmese puppet show performance.

[Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

Overnight in Bagan in deluxe rooms at the Thiripyitsaya Hotel, considered to be Bagan's premier 4-Star hotel. Aside from attractively appointed bedrooms and suites, it offers world-class cuisine and other amenities such as a spa and the biggest outdoor pool and sundeck in the area. Nestled on the banks of the mighty Ayeyarwaddy River, overlooking 800 years of history, this hotel, with its charming collection of villas, is located in one of the finest subtropical gardens in Asia.

(ITINERARY—continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

DAY 6, Thursday, February 15 *The Fabled City of Mandalay*

This morning after breakfast we depart the ancient capital of Bagan for our flight to Mandalay.

Often described as the most Burmese of cities, Mandalay is the spiritual, cultural, and traditional capital of Myanmar. Located on the banks of the Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) River, it is also the commercial heart of the country, and has long been known as a center of skilled craftsmanship. We begin at the landmark of Mandalay, Mahamuni Temple, one of Myanmar's most famous Buddhist sites. The temple's fame comes from its shrine centerpiece, a great gold Buddha statue.

We'll visit the embroidery gallery and view the fine work of the well-known artist, Mr. U Sein Myint, who has received awards for his paintings as well as his embroidery work. He owns a collection of ancient Burmese art from the last Kingdom of Burma. His embroidery hangs on the wall of the United Nations General Assembly Hall.

We'll also visit the Mandalay Cottage handicraft quarter to watch the very interesting process of gold-leaf pounding before enjoying lunch at the Little Bit of Mandalay Restaurant.

Mandalay was the capital of the last kingdom of Myanmar, so it is historically fascinating to visit the site of the grand Mandalay Palace, which was destroyed in fierce fighting with the Japanese in 1943. Only the huge walls and moat, the base on which the reconstructed palace stands, and a few masonry buildings and tombs remain of the original construction. We'll walk to the foot of Mandalay Hill to visit the Golden Palace teakwood monastery. From the top of the hill, we'll watch the sun set on panoramic views of the city.

For a change of cuisine tonight we enjoy a dinner of Thai cuisine at Ko's Kitchen Restaurant.

[Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

Our overnight in Mandalay is in deluxe rooms at the 4-Star Sedona Hotel. Nestled on four acres of landscaped gardens, Sedona Hotel Mandalay is ideally located in the heart of the city and faces the majestic Royal Palace and Mandalay Hill, sights that are a pleasure to behold.

DAY 7, Friday, February 16 *Kengtung's Hill Towns and Ethnic Peoples*

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll have free time to wander and explore the city on our own until we are transferred to the airport in early afternoon (↓)

for our flight to Kyaingtong (Kengtung). Lunch is served on the plane.

Kengtung is only accessible by air within Myanmar. This unique and isolated corner of Myanmar is perhaps the most scenic town in Myanmar's Shan State, and the base for our "light trekking" (walking) visits to fascinating ethnic minority towns and villages.

Surrounded by mountains and blessed by unspoiled temple and monastery architecture, this is the largest town in eastern Shan State. The name Kengtung means "Walled City of Tung" and refers to a mythological founder of the city. Laid out around Naung Tung Lake, its architecture ranges from run-down colonial-style houses to nondescript modern structures. Its most distinctive buildings are several large Buddhist temples and monasteries.

Upon arrival in Kengtung we are transferred to our hotel, and then taken on a short guided tour of the town. In the rugged hills surrounding Kengtung, fascinating arrays of tribal people live. Our visits to ethnic villages begin this afternoon with a walk to Wan Sai village and the Aku tribe. Kengtung district is an ethnic paradise and our village visits may incorporate sights of traditional longhouses, village handicraft centers, and vegetable farms. We'll also participate in a variety of village activities with the local people. Walking to Hill Tribe villages, where the residents still live very traditional lives, but welcome visitors, is the highlight of our time in Kengtung.

We'll end our day with a visit to Naung Tung Lake in the center of town, a popular spot for morning and evening strolls. Dinner tonight is at the Royal View Restaurant. [Breakfast, Box Lunch, Dinner]

Our next three nights will be spent in superior rooms at the Kengtung Princess Hotel. Kindly note that Kengtung is an area which has recently been opened up to tourism and our hotel is simple, yet comfortable.

DAY 8, Saturday, February 17 *Kengtung—Trek to Hill Tribes*

After breakfast at the hotel we'll begin our day with a morning visit to Kengtung's colorful bazaar and central market, which draws Hill Tribe peoples from all over the district. Fresh produce and household goods are the market's main goods, but there are also colorful handicrafts and even a water buffalo market twice a week.

We'll ride to the starting point of our 90-minute walk to Ho Kyin village and the Akha tribe, then walk to Nam Phi Phank where we'll meet the Lahu and Akha

(ITINERARY—continued on page 7)

**ABOUT ADVENTURE
TRAVEL TODAY
Please Read Carefully!**

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are *adventure travel vacations*, and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one *actively participates*, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an *active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends*. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a *good-natured realist* and have a sense of humor! *Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist.* The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. *Being on time is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!*

monastery perch over the lake on stilts and float on pads of reeds and earth. We'll observe the famous awkward-looking "leg-rowers": fishermen who stand at the stern of the boat precariously on one leg and wrap the other around the oar to propel the boat.

Before dinner we'll also have time to stroll around the lake and enjoy the beautiful scenery that surrounds the lake and our hotel. Tonight's dinner is on our own. [Breakfast]

Our next two nights are spent at the 4-Star Lake View Resort Hotel. The only deluxe boutique hotel on the shores of Inle Lake, the Lake View Resort Hotel is subtly and tastefully decorated with colonial style furniture and soft tropical hues. Each spacious room has a private terrace balcony with a panoramic view of the lake.

DAY 11, Tuesday, February 20 *More of Inle Lake*

After breakfast we have another very interesting private motorboat trip to visit the Shan States tribal market, which rotates through various towns in this region. It is a hodgepodge of bright flowers, flopping fish, exotic spices, and colorfully clothed tribal people.

We'll visit the landmark Phaungdaw Oo Pagoda, the holiest religious site in the southern area of the Shan State, and pass by more floating villages and gardens. We'll stop at the lakeside gallery of the designer Ms. Moe, who produces hand-woven fabrics from the lotus plants that grow on the lake. She makes everything from monk's

tribes, and on to Phata Akha village and to the Paung Ma Phai Akha tribe. After meeting our private car, we'll drive to the traditional blacksmith village of the Lahu, called Mong Zine village. Here we'll have a picnic lunch before visiting Joe Phyu village and the Wa tribe.

Tonight's dinner is Shan-style Yunnan food at Lot-Htin-Lu Restaurant. [Breakfast, Picnic Lunch, Dinner]

Overnight at the Kengtong Princess Hotel.

DAY 9, Sunday, February 18 *Kengtong — Hill Tribes and Waterfalls*

After breakfast at the hotel we walk to the Enn tribe village of Pin-Thauk, then on to our picnic lunch at the Pin-Tauk waterfall. After lunch we'll travel to Wan-Kan village to see the traditional sake rice wine-making process, then on to Wan-Lau village to visit the Shan paper works and see how paper is made from bamboo. There is beautiful scenery along this route, and we'll be driving through monsoon forests that open up to views of huge green rice fields that look like a patchwork quilt. The tribes in this area have distinctively different customs and beliefs than many of the other tribes.

Dinner tonight is Shan-style Cantonese food at Lok-Tha Restaurant. [Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

Overnight at the Kengtong Princess Hotel

Day 10, Monday, February 19 *The Floating Villages and Gardens of Inle Lake*

We have this morning free before our flight to Inle Lake. One suggestion is go get a professional traditional Myanmar massage! There are many places to do this, and our guide will help out with suggestions.

Arriving in Heho we are welcomed and driven by private vehicle to the jetty on Lake Inle. Our drive to the lake is over winding roads and through luxuriant rolling hills of the Shan plateau, dotted with colorful mustard seed and golden wheat fields.

Once at the lake we board our own private motorboat and are treated to an insider's view of life on the lake. Villages, farms and even a

(ITINERARY—continued from page 7)

robes to stylish shawls for women. High tea will be served as we listen to her talk about her works of art.

Continuing on we visit the ancient "Jumping Cat" teak monastery which contains 16th and 17th century lacquer Buddha images. It's called the "Jumping Cat" monastery because its monks have trained a few cats to jump through small hoops! Then we'll take a scenic trip up a narrow and winding entrance to the village of Indein to visit its 17th-century pagodas in an *Indiana Jones*-type setting.

Returning to the Helo airport, we'll fly to Yangon and transfer to our hotel. Tonight we'll enjoy a farewell dinner of western cuisine at our beautiful Pansea Orient Express Hotel. [Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner]

Overnight in Yangon at Pansea Hotel

DAY 12, Wednesday, February 21 Fly to Bangkok and Home, or Extend to Laos

After breakfast at the hotel we'll have a free morning in Yangon. Before saying good-bye to Burma and departing for the airport for our flight to Bangkok (depart at 10:05 AM and arrive Bangkok at 11:45 AM), we'll have lunch at the Padoma Restaurant.

[Breakfast and Lunch]

For those participants doing the optional Laos extension, we will overnight at the Amari Airport Hotel in Bangkok and fly to Laos the next morning, Feb. 22.

For those doing the Myanmar-only portion of the trip, you can choose to extend your stay in Bangkok, or fly back to the United States on February 22. Ciretta Green at Montana Travel (800-247-3538) can help you with hotel reservations for the night of February 21 and beyond.

DAY 13, Thursday, February 22 Optional Extension to Laos. Exploring Vientiane

Today we explore fascinating Vientiane, the new capital of Laos. With a population of approximately 500,000, Vientiane is the second-smallest capital city in Southeast Asia. Retaining a village ambiance, the city dates back to 1563 when King Setthathirat designated it the seat of the Kingdom of Lane Xang. Conquered by Siam and later by France, the city displays many architectural influences.

Our itinerary includes seeing many of the city's major historic sites, including the religious museums of Wat Sisaket, the oldest temple to have been survived from the Siamese war of 1828. Its cloister contains more than 8,000 Buddha statues. We'll also visit Wat Ho Prakeo, which contains a collection of Buddha (J)

statues, antiques, and artifacts found in around Vientiane; Pha That Luang ("The Great Sacred Stupa"), the single most important monument in Laos, which was built to cover the original small stupa that is said to contain a piece of the chest bone of Buddha; and Patouxay (Arch de Triumph), built quite recently in commemoration of those who died during the wars of the past.

We'll end our day with a cocktail reception at a textile gallery owned by Ms. Carol Cassidy, an American textile expert who has made wonderful efforts to preserve traditional Laos weaving methods.

Dinner tonight is at Tam Nak Laos Restaurant with Laotian cuisine. [Dinner]

Overnight at the Settha Palace Hotel. Built at the turn of the century, the luxury Settha Palace Hotel in Vientiane, Laos, has been restored to its original charm. French colonial architecture, period furniture, and landscaped gardens complimented by modern facilities are some of the features of this historic landmark in the heart of Vientiane.

DAY 14, Friday, February 23 Luang Prabang, a UNESCO World Heritage Site

This morning is free until our transfer to the airport for our flight to Luang Prabang, the capital of the first Lao kingdom. Located on the banks of the Mekong River in a great bowl surrounded by mountains, the old city has many historic Buddhist temples and monuments that date from the 14th century.

Seeing the majesty of Luang Prabang is like stepping back to a period when peace and tranquillity were in abundance. Laos itself is quite isolated from Indochina, but Luang Prabang is even more isolated than the rest of the country. Luang Prabang lies in the remote north-central part of Laos astride the Mekong River in a valley of spectacular natural beauty. In 1995 Luang Prabang was listed, along with the Taj Mahal and Angkor Wat, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Upon arrival in Luang Prabang we'll be met and transferred to our hotel for check-in.

This afternoon's sightseeing will include many of the city's pagodas and sacred temples in the town and surrounding areas. We'll visit the National Museum; the early 19th-century temple of Wat Aham; the 16th-century temple Wat Xiengthong, which more than any temple in Luang Prabang, epitomizes all the elegance and grace of Luang Prabang architecture; and Wat Mai, with opportunities to interact with the monks

(ITINERARY—continued on page 9)

(ITINERARY—continued from page 8)

at the temple. And, if time permits, we'll visit Phousi Hill, whose 328 steps lead to its summit and the best panoramic view of Luang Prabang.

Dinner tonight is at L'elephant Restaurant, one of Luang Prabang's most elegant Western eateries. The menu is French, the wine list international. Tonight we enjoy the time honored Barci ceremony with traditional music and dance at the UNESCO House. [Breakfast and Dinner]

Our next 3 nights are spent at the best hotel in town, the Pansea Luang Prabang. Sitting imposingly on top of the Hill of Kites (Phou Vao) outside Luang Prabang, Pansea Luang Prabang is the last word in understated luxury. It is a quiet, pleasant, and friendly hotel set amid the splendor of mountains and the tropical forest, and it offers breathtaking views of Luang Prabang. The huge rooms are finished in a spare modern Asian style and feature four-poster beds, large baths, day beds, and shaded balconies. The swimming pool looks out over the town and its surrounding hills and valleys.

DAY 15, Saturday, February 24 *Boat Trip on the Mekong River*

This morning, we are invited to assist in the pre-dawn giving of alms to the monks in the streets of Luang Prabang. After breakfast back at the hotel we are transferred to the pier and embark on a private speedboat trip on the Mekong River to visit the mysterious Pak Ou Caves, home of hundreds of gilded and wooden Buddha statues that are housed inside a towering limestone cliff. On our way back we'll stop to visit Ban Xang Hai, a village that makes traditional rice liquor. Then we'll cross to the other side of the Mekong River and walk a path through local villages and past traditional houses and old pagodas. We'll have opportunities to meet and interact with the locals, some of the friendliest people on earth.

We'll return to Luang Prabang in late afternoon, where we'll take a scenic drive to the Royal Theatre for a front row seat at a traditional Laotian Ramayana play.

A dinner at 3 Nagas's Restaurant, which features westernized Lao food in lavish surroundings, follows the play.

[Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner]

Overnight at Pansea Luang Prabang Hotel.

DAY 16, Sunday, February 25 *Cooking Class and Hill Tribes*

After breakfast, the well-known chef, Mr. Chandra, will take us to the colorful local Luang Prabang market to shop for food for our lunch today. We'll return to his boutique restaurant to learn about Laotian traditional cuisine by cooking our own lunch!

This afternoon we drive into the surrounding hills to visit a Hmong Hill Tribe village and a Khamu Hill Tribe village. About 100 years ago, the Hmong were gradually displaced from their ancestral home in the mountains of southern China and many settled in the hills of Laos. During the Vietnam war, the CIA actively recruited Hmong "warriors" in their secret war with the Pathet Lao communists, and many subsequently fled to Thailand (and the U.S.) after the fall of the Royal Lao government in 1975. Hmong villagers still practice ancient animistic rituals including animal sacrifices, and dress in traditional colorful handmade costumes and silver jewelry. Some are addicted to opium after years of using it medicinally. We'll have an opportunity to meet with several Hmong families inside their simple bamboo and wood homes, and to experience the fascinating lives of these friendly mountain people.

The Khamu were originally an aboriginal group living in the lower mountains of northern Laos and have a very different culture, language, dress, and religion from the Hmong. We'll also be able to visit a typical Khamu village.

Back to Luang Prabang for the night, and dinner on our own.

[Breakfast and Lunch]

Overnight at Pansea Luang Prabang Hotel

DAY 17, Monday, February 26 *Fly Back to Bangkok and Home*

Today is free until our transfer to the airport for flights to Bangkok and the U.S. We arrive in Bangkok at approximately 3:40 PM You can choose to stay overnight at the Amari Airport Hotel inside the airport, if your flight departs early on the morning of February 27. Or extend in the city of Bangkok or for other parts of the country.

[Breakfast]

CLIMATE AND WEATHER IN FEBRUARY

Our visit to Myanmar and Laos takes place during the dry season (November through May). Temperatures will vary according to the elevation. In the humid, low-lying Mekong River valley, temperatures can range from 59 F to 100 F, while in the mountains the temperatures can drop to 32 F at night. The month of February is generally considered the best time to visit this region, as it rains least and is not too hot. During this season it is best to bring a lightweight jacket in case the weather becomes very cool at higher elevations.

MONEY MATTERS

Myanmar's unit of currency is the Kyat. As of March 11, 2006, 1 U.S.D. was worth 6.44 Myanmar Kyats.

The unit of currency in Laos is the Laos Kip. 10,286.40 Laos Kips was equal to 1 U.S.D. as of March 11, 2006.

You can check the following website to find out the current rate of exchange: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

The best way to handle money in this part of the world is to bring in U.S. Dollars. Bring cash in smaller bills (not \$100s and \$50s). Credit cards are not widely accepted in most shops, nor in towns or villages. Travelers Checks have a 10% commission. It is probably easiest to bring U.S. cash that can be exchanged at hotels and in airports. Each day, make sure that you have enough small bills in local currency for your daily needs (snacks, shopping, etc.). Our national guide can advise us as to the most current exchange rate upon arrival.

In Bangkok, Thailand, however, you can pay for most anything with a credit card.

FOOD/MEALS/WATER

Burmese cuisine is an amazing blend of various influences, including Chinese, Indian, Bamar and Mon. Rice is the mainstay of a Burmese meal, and it is eaten with a choice of mild curry dishes with fish, chicken, prawns and lamb. Not much beef or pork is eaten because Buddhists and Hindus abstain from eating most meat from 4-legged animals. One of the culinary highlights of Burmese food (or Bamar food) is undoubtedly light, spicy salads made with raw vegetables or fruit tossed with lime juice, onions, peanuts, and other spices. Noodle dishes are often eaten for breakfast or as light meals during the day. We will also have available Western food in many of the hotels, along with traditional Bamar food. All of the hotels and restaurants where we eat, serve wonderful food!

In Laos, the emphasis is on simple, fresh ingredients coarsely blended into rustic dishes - or Thai food! We will eat very well in Laos, and in many of our restaurants there is a French/European influence.

Unboiled water is NOT safe to drink anywhere in Burma and Laos, and never use tap water even for brushing your teeth. Stick with bottled and sealed water and drinks. Depending on the restaurants where we eat, our guides will let us know about using ice and eating uncooked vegetables. Always peel your fruit.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT CHECK LIST

Luggage, Clothing, and Travel Accessories:

Three words of packing advice: LIGHT, LIGHT, LIGHT! It is best to condense your luggage into one manageable suitcase with wheels and one day pack or back pack (carry-on size). Also, a spare, very light duffel bag or day pack rolled or folded into your wheeled suitcase is useful to have to transport souvenir items home. There are wonderful handicrafts and weavings available in Myanmar and Laos.

We suggest you use your daypack as your carry-on bag during your flights. In it you should have all valuables and essentials: medications, passports and all important documents, cameras and film, a day's change of clothing, lightweight sleepwear and toiletries.

Put luggage ID tags on the outside AND inside your baggage. If your bag is lost and the outside ID tag and baggage stickers are dislodged, the airlines may open the bag to search for an ID inside your bag. (We will send you 3 tags for the outside of your bags.)

Pre-Departure Tasks

- Obtain or renew passport.
- Obtain necessary visa for Myanmar and Laos. Forms will be sent to you at the appropriate time.
- Evaluate and obtain trip cancellation, baggage, and medical insurance.
- Consult with physician for physical examination, immunization, and prescription medicine recommendations.

WHAT TO BRING—(continued on page 11)

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, quick drying and be able to breathe. Pay special attention to sun protection needs. Long sleeves and wide brim hats are highly recommended.

- Underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry.
- Sleepwear.
- Shirts: Long-sleeve, synthetic or cotton shirts because they are featherweight, durable, wrinkle-resistant, and dry quickly. Those with multiple, closed (velcro or zipper) pockets are excellent.
- Short-sleeve synthetic or cotton T-Shirts. Those with multiple, closed (velcro or zipper) pockets are excellent.
- Sweater/Jacket: Medium-weight sweater or jacket made of synthetic fabric (fleece) for cool evenings.
- Vest: A lightweight, multi-pocket, photo journalist-type vest is excellent for day use (use it to store film, cameras, binoculars, etc.).
- Pants: Full-length pants, preferably of quick-drying synthetic fabric with many zippered pockets. Convertible pants that convert from long pants to shorts save room and are very convenient for use during a long day.
- Hiking shorts, preferably of a synthetic fabric and to the knee (modesty is respectful here). You rarely see shorts in urban areas.
- Bathing Suit.
- Sun hat with a wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off.
- Gore-Tex rain/wind parka and/or sturdy poncho to protect day pack and camera gear from rain or water spray. (This can be your jacket, as listed above, as long as it is waterproof).
- Athletic socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for your lightweight hiking boots/or walking shoes.
- Sturdy, properly fitting footwear can make your trip much more comfortable and enjoyable. Good ankle support and good traction are critical. Lightweight hiking boots are excellent, OR very comfortable, lightweight walking shoes are another option.
- Sandals for boats, water, and for walking around towns (Teva-type sandals or similar: Merrill's, Keens, etc., or any thing that can get wet and dry fast).
- 3-4 cotton bandannas.
- One or two sets of nice, casual city clothes that are dressier for evening restaurants or social activities (maybe a lightweight skirt to be included).

Personal Items

- Passport.
- 2 passport photos for Myanmar visa, and 3 photos for Laos visa.
- 4 spare passport photos to bring on the trip (in case of lost passport/visa).
- Battery operated travel alarm clock.
- Extra batteries for cameras, alarm clock, etc.
- Small flashlight with extra batteries and bulb.
- Sunglasses, case (90% - 100% ultraviolet and some infrared protection).
- Contact lenses, cleaner, saline solution, extra eyeglasses with safety band.
- Money belt.
- Cash, credit cards (maybe some travelers checks if you plan to spend time in Bangkok).
- Address book, writing paper or journal, pen/pencil.
- Daypack (also serves as an airline carry-on bag).
- Plastic water bottle. Nalgene plastic is recommended as there is no plastic taste in the heat.
- Camera, gear, lots of film, lead bag or containers to protect film in airport x-ray machines if you bring film cameras. These days, digital cameras make more sense for traveling internationally.
- Locks for your suitcase and duffel bag (when left in rooms).
- Ziploc-type bags for packing shampoo or other liquids, or wet, dirty clothing.
- 1-2 heavyweight plastic garbage bags.
- Washcloth (not used in most hotels).
- Personal toiletries in small leak-proof bottles.
- Biodegradable bar soap (can double as laundry soap).
- Tampons or sanitary napkin supply (not always widely available).
- Thread, needles, safety pins for minor repairs.
- Insect repellent with the percentage of DEET recommended by your travel medicine physician. It's important that you bring an ample supply of good quality repellent. If you use DEET, try to wipe it off your hands before touching plastic surfaces such as your binoculars or cameras (DEET damages some plastics).

WHAT TO BRING—(continued on page 12)

WHAT TO BRING—(continued from page 11)

- Wash & Dries (or other antiseptic wipes) for hand washing and emergency toilet paper.
- A mini-sized English - Butanese, English - Lao, English phrase books/dictionary.
- Lonely Planet books on Myanmar (Burma) and Laos.

Personal First Aid Kit (*bring in small amounts and in small containers*)

- Foot powder for moisture absorption; cloth, not plastic Band-aids; about 10 individually wrapped alcohol pads; and a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream.
- Aspirin/ibuprofen, etc.
- Cold-symptom relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops.
- Adequate quantity of sweat-resistant sun screen with at least an SPF 15 rating or higher, and lip balm with sunscreen.
- Tweezers.
- Ace bandage.
- Antibiotics.
- Prescription medicines in their original bottles.
- Acidophilus enzyme (available in capsules in health-food stores). This often helps your digestive system get in shape for new "flora".
- Immodium, Lomotil, or similar anti-diarrhea medicine.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets and/or liquid (in leak-proof bottle).

Optional

- Small, lightweight binoculars.
- Pictures of your house, pets, and family (local people love to see this!).
- Reading material.
- Extra, lightweight duffel bag (empty, and packed inside your suitcase).

Last-Minute Reminders

- Make photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport, plus your visas (if they are stamped inside your passport) and put them in different locations (suitcase, carry-on bag, etc.).
- Record numbers of travelers checks (if you bring some) and store separate from the checks.
- Bring your 4 additional passport size photos to use in emergencies.
- Your valuables should be insured for the duration of the trip, but better yet, leave them at home (don't wear expensive gold and diamond jewelry).
- Remove extra credit cards, driver's license, and personal items from wallet or purse.
- Make sure passport, tickets, and visa are valid and in the correct name.
- Check with airline to reconfirm reservations and departure time (most airlines want to hear directly from the client for confirmations).

*Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen!
If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.*

AdventureWomen, Inc.
300 Running Horse Trail
Bozeman, MT 59715
800-804-8686 or 406-587-3883 (outside the U.S.)
Email: advwomen@aol.com