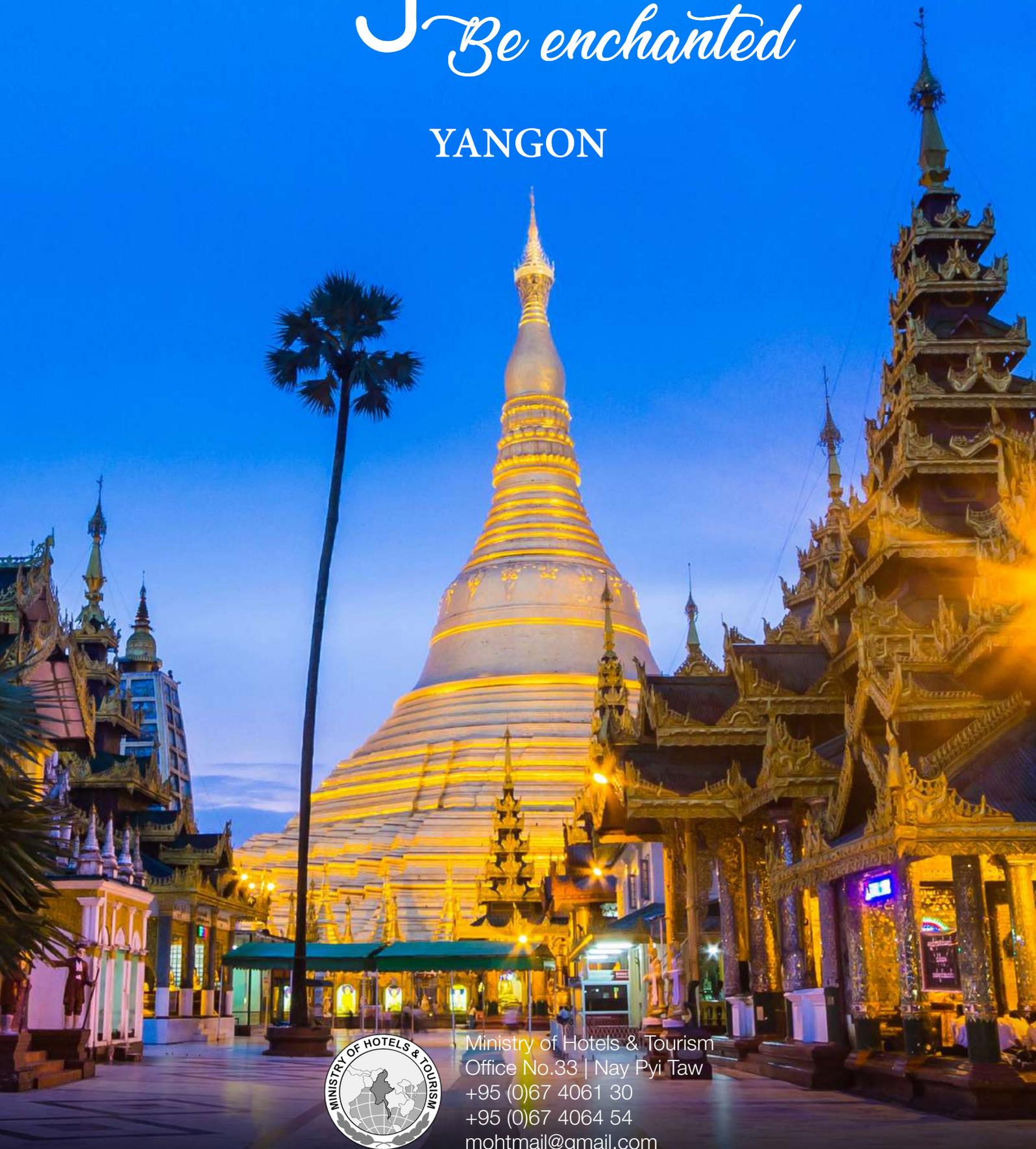


# myanmar

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YANGON



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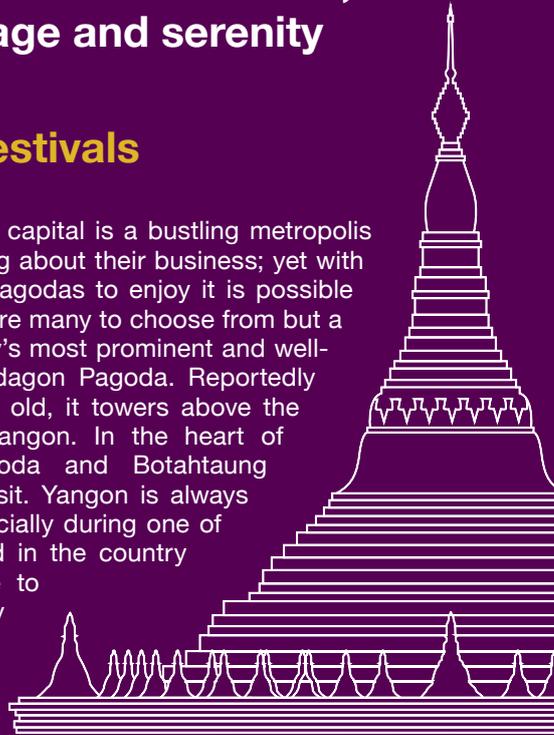
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# HIGHLIGHTS

**A surprising mix of commerce, cultural heritage and serenity**

## Pagodas & Festivals

Myanmar's commercial capital is a bustling metropolis where everyone is going about their business; yet with so many spectacular pagodas to enjoy it is possible to find serenity. There are many to choose from but a must-see is the country's most prominent and well-loved landmark, Shwedagon Pagoda. Reportedly more than 2,500 years old, it towers above the green landscape of Yangon. In the heart of downtown, Sule Pagoda and Botahtaung Pagoda are worth a visit. Yangon is always a fun place to be especially during one of the many festivals held in the country as its inhabitants love to celebrate, especially during Thingyan (Water Festival) in April.



## Places & Activities

Enjoy the hustle and bustle of the markets, shopping, food scene and nightlife of urban Yangon. For a busy city there is a surprising number of attractive parks and lakes which are veritable oases. Yangon Zoological Park, established in 1901, now boasts over 1,100 animals. People's Park, to the west of Shwedagon offers many activities from a water fountain show and a planetarium, to an old steam locomotive and an old Myanma Airways aircraft. Just a short distance from downtown, Inya Lake offers activities such as swimming, rowing and sailing. Meanwhile, sunset river cruises offer an alternative perspective of the metropolis.

## Environs

Bago, about 80km north of Yangon has attractions including Kanbourzathadi Palace, Shwemawdaw Pagoda, Shwe Tha Lyaung Pagoda. On the way you can stop to visit the impressive Allied War Memorial Cemetery, dedicated to the fallen from WWII. Thanlyin is about a 30-min drive from the city with attractions including an old Portuguese building, Kyaik Khauk Pagoda and Yele Pagoda on a small island. Meanwhile a small town on the Twante Canal is 2 hours away by boat from Yangon. Pottery is a major cottage industry there and places to visit are Oh-Bo Pottery Sheds, the local market and Shwesandaw Pagoda.





# WELCOME TO YANGON

## Home to nearly six million, this is a metropolis on the move

Formerly known as Rangoon, Yangon is a vibrant city in flux and undergoing modernisation which was once the administrative capital of the country. It remains a top commercial hub in Myanmar, with the port and the international airport as its main point of entry. The national pride of Yangon is the world famous Shwedagon Pagoda, said to be one of the oldest in Asia. Besides the many pagodas, the National Museum and Bogyoke Market also enable visitors to come closer to embracing the Myanmar culture.

Yangon has a wonderful array of colonial-era buildings to explore. The best way to discover them, and the downtown area (especially Chinatown) is on foot. The vibrant colours of street life, markets and people busy with their livelihoods have to be seen to be believed. If you prefer to be on the move, then the 46-km long Yangon circular railway offers travellers the chance to participate in, and catch glimpses of, the day-to-day lives of the city's inhabitants and experience their warm, friendly nature. Alternatively take to the river for a different, gentler perspective of this bustling metropolis.







# PAGODAS & FESTIVALS

## A spiritual odyssey commences with the majestic Shwedagon

Sublimely iconic, and revered locally as the most important place of worship, Shwedagon Pagoda is inspiring to all, even those who are not of the Buddhist faith. It can be seen from lots of Yangon's vantage points but is best appreciated close-up. Go just before the sun sets to capture "magic hour" or join the pagoda festival which takes place in late February or early March. It is also the perfect spot to enjoy other Buddhist festivals like Thadingyut (Festival of Lights) and witness the processions of novice monks. However, Water Festival also known as Thingyan, is one of the most exuberant public holidays.

Located in the very heart of downtown, near Independence Monument, High Court and City Hall, Sule Pagoda is also worth visiting, as are Chauk Htet Gyi (home to an enormous reclining Buddha), Botahtaung, Kabar Aye, Mae La Mu, Koe Htet Kyi, Swal Daw, Ngar Htat Gyi, Arr Lein Ngar Sint and Mindama. Yangon is home to a myriad of sacred places of worship from mosques, Hindu temples, churches, cathedrals and a synagogue. And for those who prefer to commune with nature, the parks offer plenty of opportunities to practice communal Tai Chi and yoga as the sun rises and the mists lift.



# PLACES

## Find sanctuary in what is dubbed the “Garden City of the East”

Although an incredibly busy city with eclectic architecture and an everchanging landscape, Yangon has a wealth of large verdant spaces such as Bogyoke Park, People’s Park and Inya Lake. Heritage rich downtown is a bustling hive of activity, yet even here there is an oasis of green with refreshing fountains in Maha Bandula Park, home to Independence Monument and imposing statues of the mythical chinthe (lion).



## Kandawgyi Gardens

Kandawgyi Gardens is a popular 260-acre park, lake and recreation area. It offers a fabulous view across the water towards the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda, an orchid garden, a playground for children, a mini zoo, souvenir shops, many local restaurants and Karaweik Hall, an impressive replica of the royal barge where you can enjoy dinner with traditional dances. Moreover, very close to Kandawgyi is Myanmar’s second largest zoo, Yangon Zoological Park, with a collection of nearly 200 species of animals.



## Heritage Buildings

Downtown Yangon is widely thought to have the highest density of colonial period buildings in Southeast Asia. The Yangon City Heritage List consists of nearly 200 edifices including religious structures, ancient pagodas and British colonial buildings. Walking tours map out some of the key sites, to take in the city’s finest examples of largely decadent architecture. Don’t miss the imposing red brick High Court, the legendary Strand Hotel, the sprawling Victorian elegance of The Secretariat and Yangon City Hall.



# ACTIVITIES & FOOD

## Get to know the city's diverse facets for a more rewarding stay

Throughout the metropolis, numerous food stalls, historical sites, art galleries, souvenirs and shops are yours to explore. Many places still retain some of the charm of a bygone era and there are many ways to become acquainted with the city.



## Markets

There are many markets worth visiting but the most popular one in Yangon is Bogyoke Market. Built in 1926 under the British rule it was formerly known as Scott's Market. With more than 2,000 shops and a big selection of handicrafts, souvenirs, clothes, gems, jewellery, antiques and art galleries, you can while away your time browsing, searching for that perfect gift for your family or eating at one of the many traditional Myanmar and Chinese food stalls in the market.

## Eating Out

In recent years Yangon has seen an explosion of eateries ranging from teahouses offering low-key traditional fare and fun fusion bistros, chic rooftops with panoramic views and lakeside venues serving Western specialties, all the way through to high-end 5-star hotels restaurants catering for discerning tastes. Don't miss the chance to sample a Burmese curry or a bowl of steaming mohinga with all the trimmings, the latter is widely perceived to be the country's unofficial national dish.



## Nightlife

Rather subdued in comparison to major cities in neighbouring countries, Yangon's burgeoning nightlife is evolving and becoming increasingly vibrant. Besides local beer stations, KTV (karaoke) lounges, local concerts, fashion shows and traditional dance performances, there are restaurants, pubs, bars, clubs and discos catering for hip Yangonites, expats and tourists. Quite a number, especially those that have sprung up in the past couple of years, either offer splendid views of the city, embrace its colonial heritage or are lakeside venues.

# ENVIRONS

## Outside the centre of the metropolis sample a diverse way of life

Experience the beauty of Yangon from a different perspective by taking a river cruise, particularly in the early morning as the sun warms the air or the final hours of a sultry day. Departing either at Botataung Jetty or Maw Tin Jetty you can discover the spectacular scenery of Yangon's waterways, observe the little-known lighthouse of the Twante Canal, enjoy the glow of the lights along the river banks as night falls and the glory of Shwedagon Pagoda. Venture further afield by exploring some of the places below.

**Hlawga National Park** is a 1,540-acre nature reserve with a museum of replica traditional Myanmar buildings, a 62-acre zoo with a rock garden and a lake just 25km from Yangon.

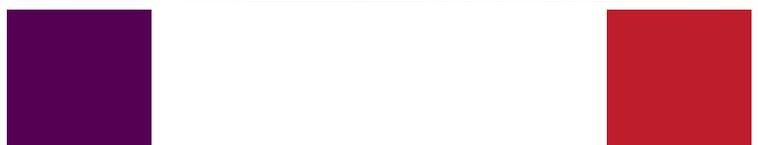
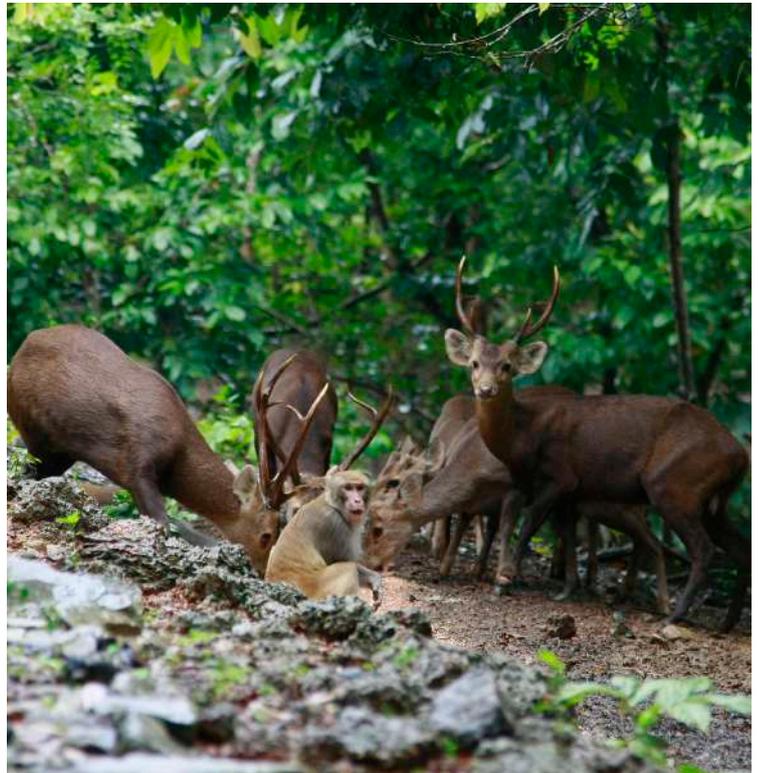
**National Races Village** is situated in a lush park near Thanlyin Bridge. It plays host to miniaturised landmarks from around the country, a playground, a lake, crocodile farm and bird sanctuary.

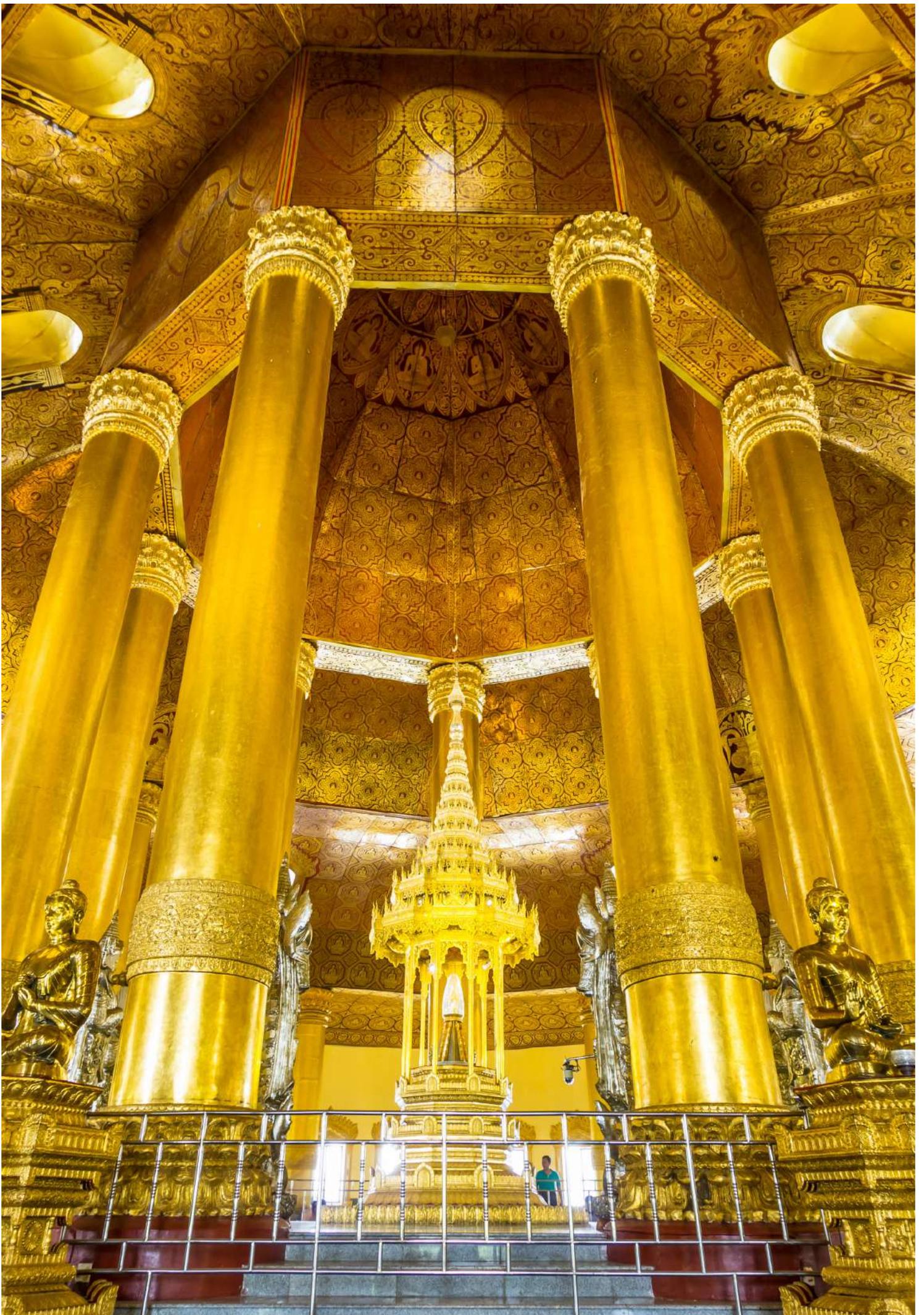
**Thanlyin** is a major port city of Myanmar, located across the Bago River from Yangon. The main tourist attraction in Thanlyin itself is Kyaik Khauk Pagoda.

**Twante** is a 2-hr boat ride across the river where you can visit Shwesandaw Pagoda and take a trishaw or a horse and cart to the pottery area to see traditional craftsmen at work.

**Allied War Memorial Cemetery** is suitably impressive yet tranquil. Found on the way to Bago, you can pay respect to the 27,000 fallen soldiers who died during WWII's Myanmar Campaign.

**Bago** is 80km from Yangon, and its most visited attractions are its pagodas, namely Shwethar Lyaung, and Kyaik Pun, Maha Kalyani Sima, Mahazedi, Shwegugale and Snake Pagoda.







## Myanmar with its cities and neighbouring countries

**Destination:** Yangon in Yangon Region

**Destination Climate:** Mild - generally warm & temperate

**State Borders:** Bago Region, Ayeyarwady Region, Kayah State & Mon State

**State Size:** 10,170 sq km / 3,927 sq miles

**State Capital:** Yangon

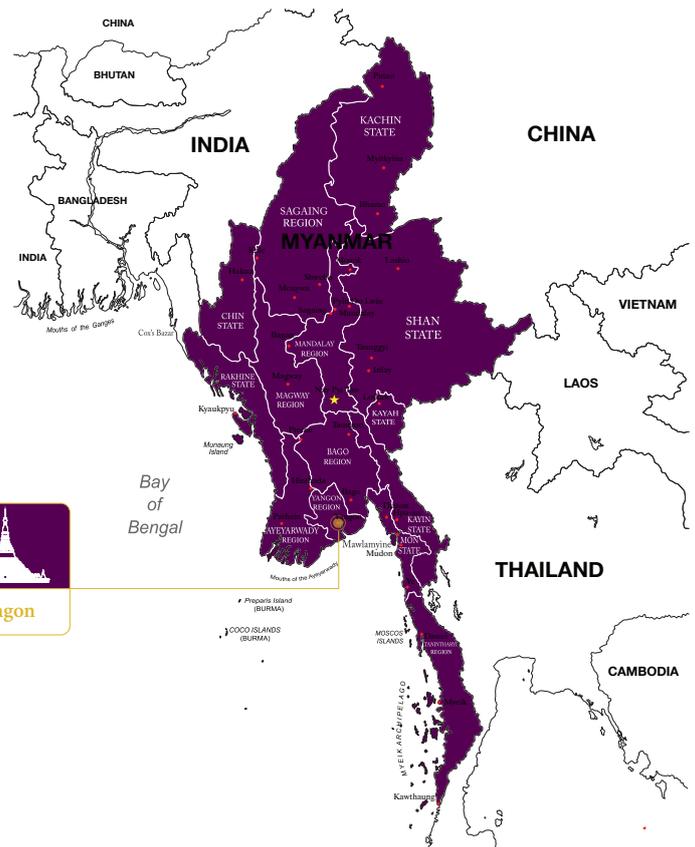
**State Population:** 7.3 million (2014)

**Destination Lineage:** Myanmar, Chinese, Indian & Engalo

**Destination Languages:** Myanmar/Burmese & English

**Religions:** Buddhism, Christianity, Islam & Hinduism

**How To Get There:** The former capital of Myanmar, and its largest city, Yangon, is often the first point of entry for most international visitors; usually arriving via its international airport or seaport. The city boasts a newly built and much improved "future-ready" terminal, equipped to handle all manner of international flights and over 20 million visitors a year. Those arriving via the borders or at Mandalay or Nay Pyi Taw International Airports can reach Yangon easily by road.





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