

THAILAND, BURMA AND SINGAPORE

15 DAYS



- Each departure limited to 20 guests
- Luxury hotels and cabin on "Road to Mandalay" and Eastern & Oriental Express
- Three a la carte meals a day (table d'hote on ship and train)
- Beverages of your choice with meals except on Eastern & Oriental Express.
- Professionally escorted
- All sightseeing, including entrance fees and special events as indicated in the itinerary
- Arrival and departure transfer by private car
- All gratuities (also your tour manager's) except to crews on ship and train
- Porterage of 2 suitcases per passenger
- Airport departure taxes

Thailand was known for centuries by outsiders as Siam, a country as remote as China. Modern and predominately Buddhist, it is a Southeast Asian kingdom in which the past and the present mingle in harmony. Emphasis is placed on the Buddhist's time-honored, non-confrontational approach to life, and on the ideals of charity, tolerance, and loving kindness. Your journey continues as you cruise the Ayeyarwady River through

the "Golden Land" of Myanmar - once known as Burma - a country of glittering pagodas, fertile rice fields, and peaceful monks. You board the luxury **Eastern & Oriental Express** and travel southward through the ever-changing landscape of Malaysia - mountains, rainforests, and miles of virgin coastline on your way to the "Lion City" of Singapore.

If you have a few more days to spare, fly on to Bali to cruise the Spice Islands aboard the "**M/V Oceanic Odyssey**" (the latest and most luxurious addition to the fleet in this part of the world). After four relaxing days on the sea, check into a luxury resort on Bali for four more days before returning home.

COMBINE THIS TRIP WITH BALI!

Day 1 (Friday)

USA - BANGKOK

Depart the States on your flight to Thailand. Situated in the central part of the Indochina peninsula (almost equidistant between China and India), historically it has been a migratory, cultural, and religious crossroads.

Day 2 (Saturday)

BANGKOK

Upon your arrival in Bangkok in the evening, you are escorted to your five-star hotel - **The Oriental**, on the banks of the Chao Phya River. The marble-clad lobby, lush with wood and leather appointments,

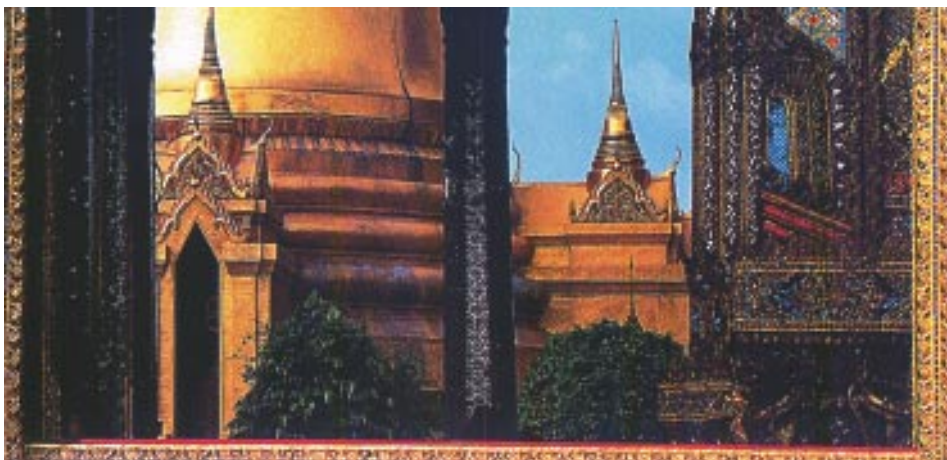
provides access to the gardens, pools, river view terrace, and shopping area. Teak chandeliers reminiscent of Thai bells hang overhead. The private accommodations are plush with silks and polished teak accents; service here is peerless and can even astonish.

Once you have settled in, join your travel companions and tour manager for refreshments.

Day 3 (Sunday)

BANGKOK

After breakfast this morning, you board a motor launch to cruise on the Chao Phya River - one of the focal points of Bangkok. You pass a succession of major landmarks, such as Buddhist temples, foreign embassies, churches, residential palaces, and floating markets. You visit the Temple of the Dawn (*Wat Arun*), one of the river's major landmarks;



Golden Palace - Bangkok



Floating Market

and see the Royal Barges (51 in all), splendidly carved boats used during the rare Royal Barge Procession, when the King of Thailand takes gifts to the monks of Wat Arun. And you tour the floating market, the Grand Palace, and the Emerald Buddha Temple by boat.

On your tour of the Jim Thompson Thai House Museum, you hear about the American architect who came to Thailand after World War II. Highly gifted as a designer and textile colorist, he contributed substantially to the growth and worldwide recognition of the Thai silk industry.

His canal-side house represents the best of traditional Thai architecture; it is actually a combination of six teak structures (some are at least two centuries old) which were dismantled and transported from other sites. In his quest for authenticity, Thompson adhered to the customs of early builders and employed carpenters skilled in traditional methods to rebuild at the present location. Thompson filled the home with his impressive collection of paintings, porcelain, statuary, and antique furniture.

This evening, you sip cocktails aboard a luxuriously renovated river barge;

and later, your Thai dinner is served at the beautiful temple-styled **Sala Rim Naam** restaurant, overlooking the river. Your superb meal is accompanied by classical Thai dancing. (B,L,D)

Day 4 (Monday)

BANGKOK – YANGON, MYANMAR (BURMA)

This morning you fly northwest to Myanmar and the city of Yangon (formerly Rangoon). It lies in the fertile delta country of southern Myanmar on the wide Yangon River about 20 miles from the sea. The city is so full of trees and shade that some districts seem to be in a forest, making it very different from other Asian cities. You visit the Schwedagon Pagoda – the holiest of Buddhist sites in Myanmar; its golden stupa dominates the city from its hilltop site. The pagoda dates back about 2,500 years, and legend says it was built to house eight sacred hairs of Buddha.

Rudyard Kipling called the Schwedagon “a beautiful winking wonder”, and it really is a magical place with a bell-shaped superstructure covered in 60 tons of gold leaf. On top are gold and silver bells studded with rubies, sapphires, topaz and diamonds. At the six-storied

Kyaukhatgyi Pagoda, you see a huge (over 200 feet high) reclining Buddha. This temple also doubles as a monastery and is a center for the study of Buddhist manuscripts.

You check into the **Strand Hotel**, in the city’s best location across from the Yangon River, near the British and American embassies. This legendary establishment was built by the famous Sarkies Brothers (Raffles in Singapore is also their design). It has hosted royalty and such notables as Rudyard Kipling, Somerset Maugham, and U.S. President Taft. The sweeping porte cochere opens to a stunning three-story marble-floored atrium capped by a lovely stained-glass ceiling. Your individual luxury suite has fine lacquerware and local handicrafts set amid grand teak furniture and period architecture. (B,L,D)

Day 5 (Tuesday)

YANGON

Today you visit more of this city of contrasts with its mixture of colonial history and Buddhist heritage. You visit the National Museum to see exhibits of belongings of the last two kings of Myanmar, including the 26-foot-high gilded Lion Throne.

You go to Scott’s Market, built in 1926, named after Mr. C. Scott, the Municipal Commissioner of the city at the time. Nowadays, it is called Bogyoke Aung San Market in honor of the late national leader, General Aung San. Here, you find 1,600 shops selling beautiful lacquerware, gold-threaded embroidered cloth, handicrafts, foodstuffs, clothing, and jewelry.

This evening, join your travel companions for dinner in the classically elegant dining room at the Strand, which serves local and international fare. (B,L,D)

Day 6 (Wednesday)

YANGON – MANDALAY

Today, you fly to the former royal capital of Mandalay; this sprawling



Young monk

cultural center is the most “Burmese” of Myanmar’s cities. Upon your arrival, you board the new luxury cruise ship managed by the Orient Express Group - “**Road to Mandalay**”. This cruise ship once sailed the Rhine River; after being completely renovated in 1995, it was brought here to provide the most luxurious mode of travel on the Ayeyarwady River between Mandalay and Bagan.

You have lunch on board the ship and then tour the city. Mandalay was the last capital of Myanmar before the British imposed colonial rule in 1886. You see the moated grounds of the Royal Palace. It was the last surviving example of royal Burmese wooden buildings; sadly, it was destroyed during WW II. The present government has partially reconstructed it, which gives you some idea of what the original structure was like. The few remains salvaged from the old buildings are on display.

Near one of the stairways to Mandalay Hill, you visit the Kuthodaw Pagoda. Large carved teak doors painted a rich vermilion open onto a gallery and a



‘Road to Mandalay’

touch of sweet, it has a wonderful, delicate flavor that reminds one of apple with the smooth texture of ice cream.

On board the **Road to Mandalay**, you have your own luxurious en-suite cabin with all the amenities of larger cruise ships – restaurant, lounge, bar, boutique and observation deck. This evening, you dine in the Pagoda restaurant decorated with stunning carvings and paneling. Talented local chefs prepare a sumptuous menu offering local specialties. (B,L,D)

Day 7 (Thursday)

CRUISING THE AYEYARWADY RIVER

Your breakfast is served onboard before you make an excursion upriver to Mingun. You see the 90-ton Mingun Bell, constructed for the Mingun Pagoda. It is said to be the largest uncracked bell in the world. (The largest bell in the world, although flawed, is in Moscow.) The main attraction here is the Mingun Pagoda; had it been completed, it would have been the largest in Myanmar – 465 feet high.

Returning for lunch onboard the



Cabin - 'Road to Mandalay'

small gold-topped stupa. Row upon row of white miniature pagodas cover the 12 acres of the temple’s shaded grounds.

The Kyaukdawgyi Pagoda is adjacent to the same Mandalay Hill stairway, and here is the renowned Buddha image carved from a single block of pale green marble. It was roughly hewn in a quarry a few miles north of Mandalay; and a canal was dug specifically to bring the 800-ton figure to Mandalay. It is said to have taken 10,000 men two weeks to drag it to the pagoda. At the Zegyo Bazaar, you see metal ware and Burmese silk, as well as local produce for sale.

Do try the fruit called *mangosteen*, which has five white segments inside its hard purple shell; a touch of tart and a

Road to Mandalay, spend a relaxing afternoon on the sun deck, or swimming in the pool, as you cruise the Ayeyarwady. This river is Myanmar’s main communications artery and was known as the “Road to Mandalay” by British colonists. Rudyard Kipling wrote of this: “On the road to Mandalay/ Where the flyin’ fishes play/ An’ the dawn comes up like thunder outer China ‘crost the Bay!” The river essentially divides Myanmar in two; originating in Tibet, it is joined by the much smaller Chindwin River

south of Mandalay. Before it reaches the sea, it divides into the sprawling delta region – one of the richest farming areas in the world. (B,L,D)

Day 8 (Friday)

BAGAN

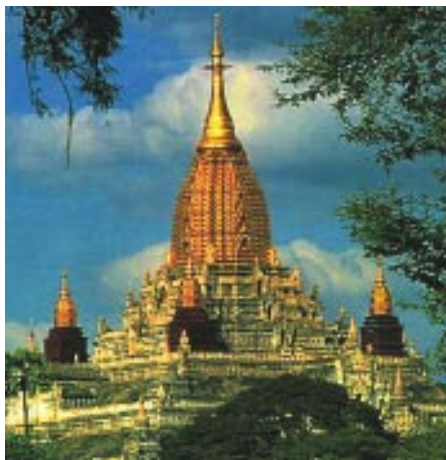
You arrive in Bagan and breakfast before disembarking to tour the city. Bagan was founded in 849 AD at a strategic location on the banks of the Ayeyarwady. The site was considered to have considerable mystical significance because it was close to Mount Popa, the most important center of spirit worship in Myanmar, which pre-dated the arrival of Buddhism.

For over two hundred years, from 1057 to 1287 AD, the Burmese kings held court here. The city was sacked by Kublai Khan in 1287 AD and was never rebuilt; today it is one of the most significant archaeological sites in all of Asia. There are 2,217 pagodas still standing and another 2,000 ruined temples – all the remnants of Myanmar’s architectural Golden Age. Once there were probably thousands of palaces and houses, but because they were built of wood, all have long since rotted away. Today, it is a deserted city of fabulous brick temples and pagodas. You visit the most famous Ananda Temple, distinguished by its golden stupas. After lunch, join the afternoon sunset tour of Bagan before returning to the ship for the evening. (B,L,D)

Day 9 (Saturday)

BAGAN – YANGON

Your breakfast is served on board before departing for your flight to Yangon. Upon arrival, you take an excursion outside Yangon to Inle Lake. The lake is



Ananda Temple - Bagan

covered with lush surface vegetation; and it is here that you find the extraordinary “leg-rowing fisherman”. In order to navigate their way through the dense water plants, the locals stand at the aft of their boats (not unlike Venetian gondoliers). Rather than using a pole to propel the boat forward, they steady their long oar with the lower half of one leg while they maintain their balance with the other leg.

At the **Inle Lake Hotel**, in a beautiful setting overlooking the lake, you are served lunch, where you select from tasty Burmese curry and rice dishes and a variety of locally-caught fish, as well as international entrees.

Later, you fly on to Bangkok and check into the **Sukhothai Hotel** – the only other establishment in town to share top honors with the Oriental. The interiors are embellished with wonderful ancient art. Magnificent temple facades are displayed at the impressive bar, and tabletops showcase the museum-quality terra-cotta statuettes and pottery. Throughout the hotel, glassed-in courtyards hold shallow pools embellished with scaled-down replicas of Thailand’s finest archeological finds. The accommodations are luxurious – lustrous silks, teak, oxidized metal, antiques, and fresh flowers. (B,L,D)

Day 10 (Sunday)

BANGKOK

You visit the Grand Palace and see the Emerald Buddha – only 26 inches, but the most venerated of all the thousands in the country. And you go to *Wat Traimitr*, site of the renowned Golden Buddha; this huge figure was originally thought to be made of stucco, and it was only by accident that it was discovered to be solid gold weighing 5½ tons.

This afternoon is yours to shop for



Compartment - Eastern & Oriental Train



Lounge - Eastern & Oriental Train

souvenirs to bring home. Thai silk is perhaps Thailand’s best known craft, but jade green celadon ceramics, wood furniture, lacquerware, gems and metal art objects are all favorite purchases. Alternately, try out the large elegant lap pool in the landscaped courtyard at the hotel. You dine this evening at one of the gourmet restaurants at the Sukhothai. (B,L,D)

Day 11 (Monday)

EASTERN & ORIENTAL EXPRESS

Mid-morning, you board the **Eastern & Oriental Express**, a luxury train maintained by the highly regarded Venice Simplon- Orient Express, to start your journey southward. Settle into your beautifully refurbished compartment with private bath before lunch is served in the restaurant car.

In the afternoon, there is a stop for your visit to the infamous River Kwai Bridge and an excursion by boat along the river. Bombed several times in 1945, and rebuilt after the war, the curved spans of the bridge are the original sections. Returning to the **Eastern & Oriental Express**, relax in your compartment as afternoon tea is served.

Refreshments and cocktails are available in the bar cars before sitting down in one of the restaurant cars for your gourmet dinner. Later, join your travel companions and enjoy the music provided by the resident pianist. (B,L,D)

Day 12 (Tuesday)

EASTERN & ORIENTAL EXPRESS

This morning, breakfast is brought to you in your compartment as you follow the changing scenery outside your window – mountains, rainforest, and miles of untouched coastline – as you journey from Thailand into Malaysia. After lunch, sit with your companions in the Observation Car and watch the scenery unfold in front of you – rice paddies, working elephants, picturesque villages - before the train pulls into Butterworth, in Penang state.

Your guided excursion takes you to the colonial town of Georgetown on the island of Penang, just across the North Strait from the mainland. The British named the town in honor of King George III, but it is unmistakably an Oriental

ACCOMMODATIONS

Bangkok –The Oriental (2 nights), Condé Nast Traveler Gold List '99

Renowned for its unique ambience of timeless colonial-style elegance in an exotic Eastern setting in the center of Bangkok, on the bank of Chao Phya (“River of Kings”), this is one of the world’s truly great hotels.

Yangon – Strand Hotel (2)

Built at the turn of the century, overlooking the Yangon River, The Strand is a national landmark. Recently renovated to its former glory, the hotel recalls the colonial era of the 1920s and '30s.

Ayeyarwady Cruise – Road to Mandalay (3), Orient-Express Ship

Road To Mandalay is a deluxe river cruiser in Myanmar (Burma), a land of unspoiled beauty. With the style and comfort for which the Orient-Express is famous, this journey is the perfect way to explore the fascinating Ayeyarwady river between Mandalay and Bagan.

Bangkok – Sukhothai Hotel (2), Leading Hotels of the World '99

The Sukhothai is unusual for many reasons but mainly for its location: in the middle of a six-acre estate of scenic gardens in the diplomatic and business heart of Bangkok. The hospitality, service and comfort are steeped in graceful tradition.

Bangkok to Singapore – Eastern & Oriental Express train (2)

The Eastern & Oriental Express is the ultimate highlight of a visit to the Far East. The style and splendour of the E&O, with its elegant compartments, delicious cuisine and superb service, combined with the adventure of a journey through the heart of Asia, provide a unique travel experience.

Singapore – Raffles (2), Condé Nast Traveler Gold List '99

One of Asia’s most famous landmarks underwent a complete restoration several years ago. Raffles is more than just a hotel, it’s a piece of history. Opened in 1899, Raffles is one of the oldest and most desirable hotels in the world today. This spectacular hotel has won more than 25 awards since it’s re-opening in 1991.

town. You travel partly by trishaw – a unique combination of bicycle and wagon – as you see the Clan Piers (a village built on stilts over the sea) and pass municipal buildings evoking memories of colonial splendor. You also visit Fort Cornwallis; its ramparts are still guarded by old cannons.

After returning to the E & O Train in Butterworth, relax before dinner when you are offered a delicious variety of dishes prepared by master chefs. (B,L,D)

Day 13 (Wednesday)

SINGAPORE

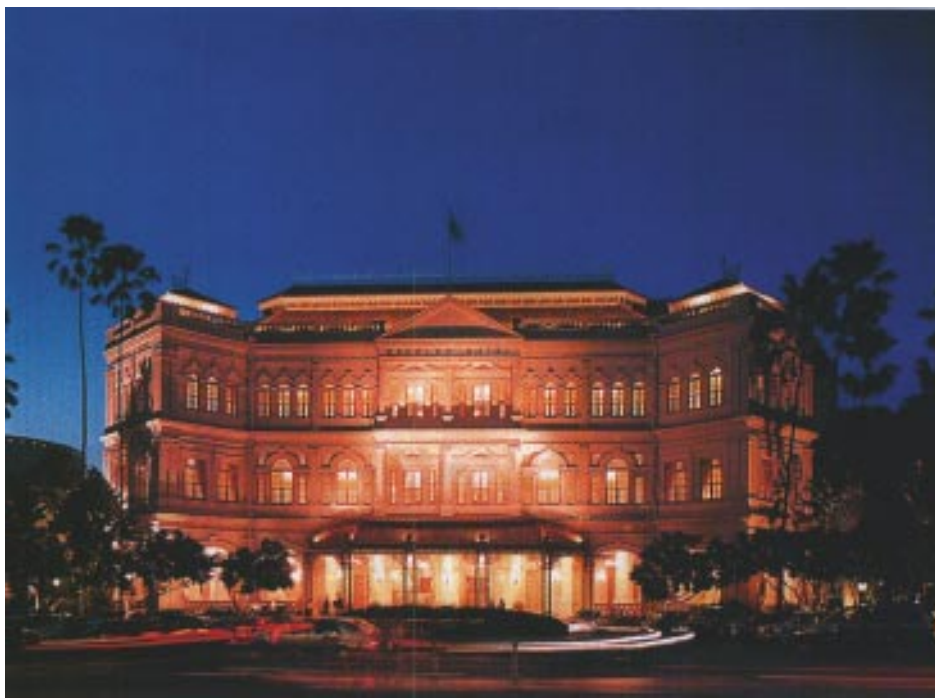
Enjoy your breakfast this morning as the train crosses the causeway over Straits of Johor for a morning arrival in the city-state of Singapore – the “Lion City”. (According to legend, a 13th-century Malayan prince named the island after spotting what he thought was a lion. (There is no record of any on the island; he probably saw a tiger, as there used to be many here.) Its geographical position and commercial success were major influences on the composition of its population. Here is a unique multi-faceted society – a young nation with a vibrant and diverse cultural heritage - living and working together in harmony.

Your city tour takes you through the native, Chinese, and European districts. You visit the Colonial District, with its many handsome edifices of a by-gone era. At the National Museum, you see an amazing collection of Asian artifacts, particularly the Haw Par Jade collection.

You stop at the Botanical Gardens, founded in 1859; there are rolling green lawns punctuated with bursts of color from a profusion of orchids and other flowers. In contrast, the landscape includes areas of primary forest with a huge diversity of plant species.

You are escorted to **Raffles Hotel**, one of Asia’s best-known hotels, and a favorite of Rudyard Kipling, Jean Harlow, Somerset Maugham, Noel Coward, and Joseph Conrad, among others. Recently renovated to its 1915 splendor, it recaptures the past at its best and enhances it with modern amenities. Fortunately, it reopened with the renowned Long Bar intact. The hotel was originally a tiffin house; “tiffins” are tiered lunch cans used by Indian workers – one tier for curry, one for vegetables, and one for rice.

The low-rise Greek revival buildings surround landscaped courtyards threaded with shaded pathways and dotted with palm trees. The bright white atrium has Persian rugs, oversized ginger-jar planters,



Raffles - Your hotel in Singapore

and a wonderful teak stairway leading to private guest rooms. This evening, you dine in the distinctive **Cheng’s** at the hotel, a nouvelle-Continental and Asian spot, which emphasizes the healing power of food. Exquisite gardens are dramatically lit for delightful strolls tonight after your meal. (B,L,D)

Day 14 (Thursday)

SINGAPORE

This morning, you go to the southern side of Singapore to Mt. Faber; at the peak of the hill you have a great view of the harbor and Sentosa Island to the south. Then take the cable car across to Sentosa – its name means “tranquility” in Malay. It has been developed as a recreational area for Singaporeans and tourists.

At Underwater World (Asia’s largest tropical oceanarium) you see over 2,000 species of fish; there is a 100-yard submerged acrylic tunnel; and you travel under the water on a moving walkway to view the marine life. You also see the fascinating Pioneers of Singapore Museum with an exhibit of Singapore’s history from the 14th century up to 1945.

Tonight, you join your travel companions for a farewell dinner at one of the distinguished local restaurants to sample local curries. (B,L,D)

Day 15 (Friday)

SINGAPORE – USA

For those of you who must end your journey today, you are escorted to the

airport to board your flight back to the States. (B)

OR (JOURNEY EXTENSION) TO BALI

DATES	
Depart-FRI (from USA)	Return-FRI
Mar 10	Mar 24
Nov 17	Dec 01
2001 Dates:	
Mar 09	Mar 23

COST PER PERSON	
Land Portion (Double occupancy)	\$ 7,490
Single supplement	\$ 2,115
Domestic Airfare	\$ 310
International Airfare (from NY)	\$ 1,090

All airfares are subject to availability and to change by the airlines. Cancellation penalties and surcharges may apply. Fares from other U.S. cities, as well as First and Business Class rates, are also available.

FOR RESERVATIONS, PLEASE TELEPHONE TOLL FREE: 1-888-377-8023