

Northern Myanmar

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Best Places to Stav

- Hotel Pyin Oo Lwin (p264)
- → Mr Charles Guest House (p271)
- Malikha Lodge (p290)
- Hotel Madira (p277)
- Friendship Hotel (p281)

Best Places to Eat

- Club Terrace (p265)
- Jing Hpaw Thu (p278)
- Aung Padamyar (p264)
- Shamie Restaurant (p281)
- Shwe Lawon (p275)

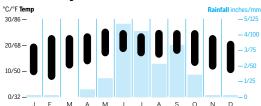
Why Go?

Rugged and remote, northern Myanmar offers a fascinating mix of ethnic minority peoples and the prospect of travel through some of the least-visited areas of the country. While much of this vast region remains off-limits, two main routes are accessible. One climbs rapidly from Mandalay to the British-era summer capital of Pyin Oo Lwin, and then continues across the rolling Shan Plateau to Lashio. The crisp evenings are a great relief from the heat of the plains, while hikes take visitors into timeless Palaung and Shan hill-villages.

The other option is taking a ride along the mighty Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) River. You'll need close on a week if you want to stop off along the way from Bhamo to Mandalay, but shorter itineraries are possible starting from Katha, the setting of George Orwell's *Burmese Days*. The lazy, meandering journey downstream provides great opportunities for genuine interaction with the locals. Far beyond Myitkyina lie the rarely seen, snow-capped peaks of Myanmar's Himalayas.

When to Go

Northern Myanmar



Nov-Feb Best time for river travel, with temperatures comfortable and water levels high.

Mar-May The Shan Plateau's cooler days offer an easy escape from the ferocious hot season. **Sep-Oct** Despite the rain, the best time to mount serious climbing expeditions in the far north.



Northern Myanmar Highlights

- 1 Walk to unspoilt Shan and Palaung villages from **Hsipaw** (p268), a laid-back plateau town with royal connections
- 2 Spend lazy days drifting down the mighty Ayeyarwady River starting from pretty **Bhamo** (p280) and taking in little-visited towns on the way
- 3 Enjoy the cool air and colonial architecture of **Pyin Oo Lwin** (p260), the British summer capital of Myanmar
- 4 Explore George Orwell connections in sleepy **Katha** (p283)
- 5 Head to the remote hills of northern Shan State and visit

the tea-growing, ridge-top town of **Namhsan** (p273)

- Brave the rough road to serene Indawgyi Lakeand mystical Shwe Myitsu
 Pagoda (p280)
- 7 Ride a bouncing train across the mighty **Gokteik Viaduct** (p267), Myanmar's longest railway bridge