

The Road to Mandalay

Updated to **FSX** – **MSFS** – **P3D5** – **P3D6** - **XP12**

*By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking lazy at the sea
There's a Burma Girl a-settin', and I know she thinks of me
For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple-bells they say
"Come you back, you British Soldier, come you back to Mandalay."
Come you back to Mandalay, where the old Flotilla lay
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
On the road to Mandalay, where the flying-fishes play
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the bay.
(Rudyard Kipling)*

This charter is nothing to do with Messrs Crosby and Hope (although the "Burma Girl" may have borne a resemblance to Dorothy Lamour), but is a celebration of the "old Flotilla" and it's short-lived aerial offspring and explores part of the coast of Burma (now Myanmar, visits Moulmein (Mawlamyine) and follows the Irrawaddy River (the road) from Rangoon (Yangon) to Mandalay.

In 1865 (the same year that Kipling was born), Robert Findlay, an East Indian merchant engaged in the Burmese teak industry, and Peter Denny, a Scottish shipbuilder, formed the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, to move timber, freight, and passengers. 4 paddle steamers and 3 cargo flats (barges) were built by Denny at Dumbarton, dismantled, shipped to Burma by Paddy Henderson, a Scottish shipowner, and reassembled. Henderson was also responsible for the running of the new line. The Flotilla was manned mainly by Indian crews, under European (mostly Scottish) captains and officers, and rapidly expanded, becoming the world's largest river shipping line. By the 1930's it had over 600 vessels (all Clyde-built) and carried over a million passengers annually, quite apart from the teak (and oil from the Yeangyuang oilfield?). In 1942, the fleet was scuttled to prevent it's use by the Japanese. After WW2, some new ships were ordered, but with Burma gaining independence in 1948, the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company became the "Government Inland Water Transport Board" (the new organisation retains the black-and-white funnels of the Flotilla).

I think flying-fishes unknown on the Irrawaddy*, but in November 1934 the de Havilland Fox Moth floatplanes of the new Irrawaddy Flotilla and Airways Company Limited started a service from Rangoon to Mandalay, via Prome (Pyiy) and Yenangyuang. By January 1935 a route from Rangoon to Moulmein and Tavoy (Dawei) had been added. The following year, the fleet had expanded to 4 Fox Moths and 2 4-engined Short Scion floatplanes, but the company was unable to maintain services, and dropped Mandalay from the schedule in 1937. They ceased operations in 1938.

**China isn't "across the bay" either, and the view from the "old Moulmein Pagoda" includes the Thanlwin River but not the sea - Mr Kipling wrote exceedingly good poems and stories, but was sometimes a little hazy on geography and natural history.*

Although this charter is written for DC-3s, and I haven't created any "wet strips", XC-47 pilots who want to wet their floats are welcome to alight on the river near the airfields - especially at Magway (gravel runways and floats are a BAD combination).

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<<< Special Remarks (*with reference to original documents*)>>>

Since the original release of this charter, various nav aids have been decommissioned, others came into operation, or nav aid type and/or identification were changed.

Between the various simulators, there are also differences in placement of airports and/or nav aids.

Ask your navigator to check the flightplans, and let him amend them before starting your engines ;-)

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1. DAWEI (TAVOY) TO MAWLAMYINE (MOULMEIN)

Note : Runways allocated by the original documentation are Dep. VYDW Rwy 33, Arr. VYMM Rwy 04.

Dawei is a rather isolated from most of Burma, and although there are magnificent beaches in the neighbourhood it has not yet capitalised on the tourist industry. It is a significant Burmese Buddhist centre and has one of the largest reclining Buddhas (74m long, 21m high) in the country. There is also a large military presence to guard the Yadana gas pipeline.

From – To	Flight Description			Course (Leg) Deg	Distance (Leg) NM
	Dep. Rwy : check WX	Init. Alt: 4,500 ft	Apt Elev: 84 / 83 ft		
Dawei (VYDW), Myanmar To Mawlamyine (VYMM), Myanmar	Departure: VYDW, 15-33 (5,500 x 100 ft, Asphalt / 11,997 x 99, Cement / 12,048 x 98, Concrete / 12,307 x 98, Concrete / 12,060 x 100, Concrete) Tune NAV1 to DWI VOR/DME (112.0). Set OBS to 346°. Set altimeter. Take off, and start climb to 4,500 ft.				
	Enroute: <i>To WP1 (VYYE).</i> After take off, turn and track 346° OB from DWI VOR. Waypoint reached overhead Ye Airport, DME reading 75 NM. <i>Towards MM NDB (330.0).</i> Turn right to 351°. Tune ADF to MM, and fly towards NDB.			346 351	75.0 70.0
	Approach : VYMM, 04-22 <i>To runway.</i> As soon as airport is in sight, adjust heading, fly to Mawlamyine Airport, runway in use, and land.				
	Length: 5,412 / 5,300 / 5,221 / 5,307 / 5,313 ft	Width: 150 / 143 / 151 / 151 / 150 ft	Surface: Asphalt		
Flight No: 852-02-01	Arrival Airport Elev: 150 / 78 / 78 / 50 ft			Estimated totals for this flight>>>	145.0 NM

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2. MAWLAMYINE (MOULMEIN) TO YANGON (RANGOON)

Note : Runways allocated by the original documentation are Dep. VYMM Rwy 04, Arr. VYYY Rwy 21.

Moulmein was the capital of British Burma from 1827 to 1852 and became the main port for the export of teak. In shipping terms it now comes third to Yangon and Patheingyi. The city is sandwiched between the Thalwin River and a ridge on which its principal stupas (pagodas) stand. The “old Moulmein Pagoda” is probably Kyaikthanlan Paya, the tallest and most conspicuous of the stupas, although the “Burma girl’s” view would have been of the Thalwin River, not the sea. To the north, near Shampoo Island, is the 2 mile long Thalwin Bridge, only completed in 2004.

From – To	Flight Description			Course (Leg) Deg	Distance (Leg) NM
	Dep. Rwy : check WX	Init. Alt: 4,500 ft	Apt Elev: 150 ft		
Mawlamyine (VYMM), Myanmar To Yangon Intl (VYYY), Myanmar	Departure: VYMM, 04-22 (5,412 x 150 ft / 5,300 x 143 ft / 5,221 x 78 ft / 5,307 x 78 ft / 5,313 x 78 ft, Asphalt) Tune ADF to MM NDB (330.0). Set altimeter. Take off, and start climb to 4,500 ft.				
	Enroute: <i>To HGU VOR/DME (112.30).</i> After take off, turn and track 296 / 297 / 297 ° OB from MM VOR. Tune NAV1 to HGU. Fly to VOR as soon as signal is received.			296 / 297 296	90.0 / 89.0
	Approach : VYYY, 03-21 (ILS 21, IYGN, 109.90) <i>To runway.</i> Turn left to 213° and ride the 213 / 214° OB from HGU. As soon as airport is in sight, adjust heading, fly to Yangon Intl Airport, runway in use, and land.			213 / 214	12.5 / 12.4
	Length: 8,126 / 11,214 / 11,232 / 11,232 / 11,246 ft	Width: 200 / 188 / 197 ft	Surface: Concrete / Asphalt /		
Flight No: 852-02-02	Arrival Airport Elev: 109 ft			Estimated totals for this flight>>>	
					102.0 NM

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3. YANGON (RANGOON) TO PYAY (PRONE)

Note : Runways allocated by the original documentation are Dep. VYYY Rwy 21, Arr. VYPY Rwy 07.

*Yangon (originally Dagon) was quite an unimportant town until the mid-18th century, when it became an important seaport. The present layout of the city centre dates largely from it's rebuilding by the British following the 2nd Anglo-Burmese War (1852). The principal stupa, the Shwedagon Paya, stands 2 miles north of the centre and totally dominates the skyline and is **MUST** for tourists. Myanmar's capital. Yangon comes across architecturally as a mixture of the picturesquely dishevelled and the half-finished, and bustles with entrepreneurial energy. The airport is currently being enlarged (which may account for runway 3 being closed).*

From – To	Flight Description			Course (Leg) Deg	Distance (Leg) NM
	Dep. Rwy : check WX	Init. Alt: 4,500 ft	Apt Elev: 109 / 110 / 106 ft		
Yangon Intl (VYYY), Myanmar To Pyay (VYPY), Myanmar	Departure: VYYY, 03-21 (8,126 x 200 ft, Concrete)				
	Tune NAV1 to HGU VOR/DME (112.30). Set altimeter. Take off, and start climb to 4,500 ft.				
	Enroute:				
	To HGU VOR/DME. After take off, turn and fly to VOR			33 / 34	12.5 / 12.4
	To VYPY. Turn and track 333° OB from HGU VOR. Maintain heading and fly to destination.			333	119.0
	Approach : VYPY, 07-25				
	To runway. As soon as airport is in sight, adjust heading, fly to Pyay Airport, runway in use, and land.				
	Length: 4,500 / 4,435 / 4,401 / 4,503 ft	Width: 150 / 137 / 131 ft	Surface: Asphalt		
Flight No: 852-02-03	Arrival Airport Elev: 120 / 120 ft			Estimated totals for this flight>>>	131.0 NM

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4. PYAY (PRONE) TO MAGWAY (MAGWE)

Note : Runways allocated by the original documentation are Dep. VYPY Rwy 07, Arr. VYMW Rwy 34.

Pyay can be pronounced as either “pyay” or “pyi”. The British, presumably unable to cope with this, renamed it Prome. It’s been an important trading town for centuries, but it’s multitudes of neighbouring stupas and ruins attract more archaeologists than tourists. Shwesandaw Paya is even larger than Yangon’s Shwedagon Paya, and is claimed to house 4 strands of the Buddha’s hair. There is also a large figure of the Buddha wearing spectacles.

From – To	Flight Description			Course (Leg) Deg	Distance (Leg) NM
	Dep. Rwy : check WX	Init. Alt: 4,500 ft	Apt Elev: 120 / ft		
Pyay (VYPY), Myanmar To Magway (VYMW / VY02), Myanmar	Departure: VYPY, 03-21 (4,500 x 150 ft, 4,435 x 137 / 4,500 x 150, 4,401 x 150 / 4,503 x 131, Asphalt)				
	Tune ADF to MW NDB (305.0). Set altimeter. Take off, and start climb to 4,500 ft.				
	Enroute: To MW NDB. After take off, turn to 348 / 349°. As soon as MW signal is received, fly to NDB.			348 / 349	83.0 / 82.0
	Approach : VYMW, 16-34, 01-19 / VY02, 01-19 To runway. As soon as airport is in sight, adjust heading, fly to Magway Airport, runway in use, and land.				
	Length: 4,800 / 8,489 / 8,532 / 8,533 / 8,587 ft	Width: 100 / 90 / 200 / 98 ft	Surface: Gravel / Asphalt / Concrete		
Flight No: 852-02-04	Arrival Airport Elev: 275 / 298 / 278 ft			Estimated totals for this flight>>>	
					83.0 / 82.0 NM

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5. MAGWAY (MAGWE) TO BAGAN

Note : Runways allocated by the original documentation are Dep. VYMW Rwy 34 , Arr. VYBG Rwy 36.

NOTAM: *Pilots of aircraft approaching or departing VYBG (Bagan) near dawn or dusk should beware of hot-air balloons engaged in tourist flights.*

From – To	Flight Description			Course (Leg) Deg	Distance (Leg) NM
	Dep. Rwy : check WX	Init. Alt: 4,500 ft	Apt Elev: 275 / 298 / 278 ft		
Magway (VYMW / VY02), Myanmar To Bagan (VYBG), Myanmar	Departure: VYMW, 16-34 (4,800 x 100 ft, Gravel), 01-19 (8,489 x 90 ft, Asphalt, / 8,532 x 200 ft / 8,533 x 200 ft / 8,587 x 98 ft, Concrete) Tune NAV1 to MW NDB (305.0). Set altimeter. Take off, and start climb to 4,500 ft.				
	Enroute: <i>To BGN NDB.</i> After take off, turn and track 359 / 358° OB from MX. Once established at cruise altitude, tune ADF to BGN. Fly to the NDB. <i>To VYBG.</i> Turn to 48° OB from BGN.			359 / 358 48	60.0 / 62.0 61.0 1.0
	Approach : VYBG, 16-34, 18-36 <i>To runway.</i> As soon as airport is in sight, adjust heading, fly to Bagan Airport, runway in use, and land.				
	Length: 6,000 / 8,505 / 8,542 / 8,545 ft	Width: 100 / 92 / 98 / 100 ft	Surface: Asphalt		
Flight No: 852-02-05	Arrival Airport Elev: 300 / 359 / 358 / 356 ft Estimated totals for this flight>>>				61.0 / 62.0 63.0 NM

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6. BAGAN TO MANDALAY

Note : Runways allocated by the original documentation are Dep. VYBG Rwy 36, Arr. VYMD Rwy 01.

Not merely Bagan, but Old Bagan, New Bagan, and Nyaung U, and officially known as the “Bagan Archaeological Zone”, even 2 days isn’t enough to do Bagan justice. Apart from all the ruins, temples, cart rides, boat rides, balloon rides, and making a visit to the Mahagiri shrine at Mt Popa, there is the question of where to get the best sunset views of the town.

NOTAM: Pilots of aircraft approaching or departing VYBG (Bagan) near dawn or dusk should beware of hot-air balloons engaged in tourist flights.

From – To	Flight Description			Course (Leg) Deg	Distance (Leg) NM
	Dep. Rwy : check WX	Init. Alt: 4,500 ft	Apt Elev: 300 / 359 / 358 / 356 ft		
Bagan (VYBG), Myanmar To Mandalay (VYMD), Myanmar	Departure: VYBG, 16-34 (6,000 x 100 ft) / 18-36 (8,505 x 92 ft) / 8,542 x 98 ft / 8,545 x 100 ft), Asphalt Tune ADF to BGN NDB (335.0). Set altimeter. Take off, and start climb to 4,500 ft.				
	Enroute: <i>To MIA NDB.</i> After take off, turn and track 063° OB from BGN. Once established at cruise altitude, tune ADF to MIA NDB. Fly to the NDB. <i>To VYMD.</i> Turn and track 013 / 327° OB from MIA NDB.			063 013 / 327	66.0 1.9 / 0.9
	Approach : VYMD, 17-35 (ILS 17, IMIA, 110.50) <i>To runway.</i> As soon as airport is in sight, adjust heading, fly to Mandalay Airport, runway in use, and land.				
	Length: 14,050 / 13,997 / 14,051 / 14,061 ft	Width: 200 / 178 / ft	Surface: Concrete / Asphalt / Asphalt		
Flight No: 852-02-06	Arrival Airport Elev: 300 / 301 / 297 ft Estimated totals for this flight>>>				68.0 / 67.0 NM

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Congratulations, you've made it!

Mandalay was founded as recently as 1857 (on the site of several earlier towns), and was the last royal capital of Burma (the British took over in 1885 after the 3rd Anglo-Burmese War).

Myanmar's second city, it's more laid-back than Yangon, but much dustier. While you're here, apart from the Payas and the Palace, take a hike up Mandalay Hill, and get in some evening entertainment by visiting the house of the Moustache Brothers Troupe (they're officially banned from performing) and the Mandalay Marionettes and Culture Show (brilliant puppetry!).

To the north and the east, the hills are now starting to close in on the river valley (I forgot to mention that it's now called the Ayeyarwady, not the Irrawaddy), and beyond them the mountains offer challenging flying – but that is a tale for another day.