

GOLDEN MOMENTS

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Back on the tourist trail after almost 20 years, Yangon offers a whole new generation a wonderful taste of Myanmar's culture, cuisine and history

睽違近20年後，仰光重新開放旅遊業，讓旅人再度體驗緬甸文化、飲食和歷史

MORNING COMES early here. By 5am, the streets are full of vendors, all getting ready to cook breakfast for the city's hungry workforce. Chai is the country's morning drink of choice and is served in small glass cups, steaming hot and very sweet. The little wooden chairs outside the vendors' stalls are soon filled, as men and sarong-clad women stop for a hot drink before getting on with their day.

It is a familiar scene in many cities across Asia, but this is not one of the continent's more well-known visitor locales, such as Bangkok, Hanoi or even Beijing. This is Yangon, formerly known as Rangoon and, not so long ago, the capital of Myanmar, a country still more familiar to many as Burma.

Supplanted by Naypyidaw as the country's capital in 2006, Yangon remains Myanmar's busiest and most populous city. It is getting used to welcoming visitors again, with various political wranglings, both domestically and internationally, keeping it off the tourist trail for almost 20 years.

The drive from the gleaming, new international airport into Yangon takes you through dusty, bustling roads where street hawkers sell piles of old shoes and women walk by balancing heavily laden baskets of fruit on their heads. Barefoot monks in saffron robes shade their shaved heads from the hot sun with rattan fans, while bare-chested men in sarongs pedal rickshaws alongside diesel-belching buses and the occasional, somewhat incongruous, brand-new SUV.

In the city itself, the hotels are packed with business travellers. They are a disparate bunch, with Asia, Australia and the United States all well represented. New buildings are going up all the time and

這

個城市的晨光來得特別早。凌晨五時，街道上已擠滿小販，準備為飢腸轆轆的上班族炮製早餐。他們早上都喜歡喝奶茶，熱氣騰騰的茶以小玻璃杯盛載，味道香甜。小販攤檔外的一排小木椅不消一會便坐滿了人，男士與披著紗籠的婦女都會停下來喝一杯熱飲，再迎接一天的工作。

這是許多亞洲城市的常見景象，但這裡既非著名的旅遊城市如曼谷或河內，更非北京。這兒是仰光 (Yangon)，從前的英文名字叫 Rangoon，不久以前還是緬甸首都。緬甸的英文現稱為 Myanmar，但對很多人來說，Burma 這個舊名更為耳熟能詳。

於2006年，內比都取代仰光成為緬甸首都，但仰光依舊是緬甸最繁忙和人口最多的城市。近20年來，仰光發生過大大小小的政治動盪，引起國內外的關注，期間遊客幾乎絕跡。現在，旅遊業終於再度復甦。

從閃閃發亮的緬甸新國際機場出發前往仰光，沿途塵土飛揚、熙來攘往。路上隨處可見小販在兜售大堆舊鞋；頭上頂著一籃沉重水果的婦女在街上輕鬆走動；穿著橙紅色僧袍的赤腳僧侶用藤扇遮住剃度的光頭，以遮擋猛烈陽光；圍著紗籠的人力車車夫則赤裸上身，踩著人力車與噴著柴油氣味的巴士並肩前進；偶然，路上甚至會出現格格不入的全新運動型多用途車。

在市內，酒店都擠滿了商務旅客，他們當中包括來自亞洲、澳洲和美國等地的旅客。新建築如雨後春筍般湧現，建設工程此起彼落，走在街上，你已經可以感受到這個城市在翻天覆地的變革中，展現無窮活力。

The top of the stupa on Yangon's 2,500-year-old Shwedagon Pagoda is encrusted with 4,531 diamonds

擁有2,500年歷史的仰光大金寺，佛塔頂部鑲有4,531顆鑽石

FLY MYANMAR 遨遊緬甸

construction is everywhere. On the street, you can feel the energy of a city in the midst of a radical transformation.

Despite this rush toward modernisation and reinvention, the old ways persist in Yangon. The traditional breakfast of *mohinga*, a spicy fish soup with glass noodles and eggs, is still served on every street corner. For those with a sweet tooth, there is *palata*, a sweet dough rolled out in the style of a crêpe and then cooked on a hot grill and covered with sugar. Most hotels in Yangon serve breakfast buffets that include the best of Myanmar's traditional foods, including chai and mohinga.

The morning is also the perfect time to visit the 110-metre tall Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the wonders of the world and the most venerable structure of its kind in Southeast Asia. A gleaming golden reliquary, visible from all parts of this low-rise city, Shwedagon is the most sacred of all Buddhist sites for the people of Myanmar. Until recently, very few tourists visited the site, missing out on the chance to walk its warm, marble floors in bare feet. Today, it attracts hordes of tourists, but still exudes an air of calm and tranquility. The steep, wide marble stairs of the pagoda's many entrances are lined on either side with trinket shops and vendors selling everything from sandalwood beads to golden Buddha statues. The site remains sacred to the locals, so don't forget to remove your shoes before entering.

To the south-east of Shwedagon is Kandawgyi Lake, one of two major lakes in Yangon, surrounded by sprawling parkland, complete with forested paths and dozens of open-air cafés, all serving a variety of traditional Myanmar and Chinese dishes. While this is mainly a destination frequented by the locals, you can still find some menus in English as well as in Burmese. Sitting in the shade of the trees, this is a great place to eat lunch and escape the heat of the city before walking off your meal on the lakeside paths. There are always rickshaws and taxis waiting at every exit, so it's easy to get to your next destination.

No trip to Yangon is complete without a stop at Bogyoke



Karaweik Hall houses a floating restaurant on Kandawgyi Lake

位於皇家湖上的卡拉維宮是一座水上餐廳

FLY WITH US 港龍航程

Dragonair flies four times a week to Yangon (from 9 January)

港龍航空每周有四班航機飛往仰光(1月9日開始)

In Myanmar, boys enter monasteries as novice monks before deciding if they wish to stay

在緬甸，不少男孩會進入寺院當小和尚，長大後再決定去留



儘管正高速邁向現代化和創新，仰光仍然保留著傳統。街上隨處可以吃到傳統早餐魚湯米粉—放了辣椒的魚湯還可以加蛋。嗜甜食的人，不妨試試緬甸甜餅palata，那是以甜麵糰揉成的薄餅，在熱烤架上烤熟，然後蘸滿砂糖。在仰光，大多數酒店的自助早餐都會提供奶茶和魚湯米粉等緬甸傳統美食。

除了品嚐道地美食之外，早上也是參觀110米高的大金寺的最佳時間。大金寺不僅是世界奇景，在東南亞同類建築中也最為彌足珍貴。由於仰光市內的建築物不高，所以在任何角落都可以看到這座閃耀金光的佛塔，它也是緬甸民眾心目中最神聖的佛教聖地。還在不久之前，只有少數遊客到此參觀，許多旅客都錯過體驗赤足走在寺內暖和大理石地板上。今時今日，雖然大金寺已成為旅遊熱點，吸引大量遊客到訪，但寺內仍是一派恬靜安寧。旅客要進入佛塔，須爬上寬闊而陡斜的大理石階梯，兩旁都開設有雜貨店和小販攤檔，售賣檀香珠和金佛像等五花八門的商品。由於當地人仍然視大金寺為聖地，入內參觀之前，緊記要脫掉鞋子。

大金寺的東南方是皇家湖，是仰光兩大湖之一，湖畔有蜿蜒的公園和林蔭小徑，還有許多露天食店，提供多款傳統緬甸菜及中國菜。雖然來皇家湖的遊人大多是當地人，不過部分餐廳也會預備英文餐牌。這裡四周樹影婆娑，不妨坐在樹下享用午膳，遠離城市的悶熱。飽餐一頓後，可以到湖畔小徑散步。皇家湖各個出口均有人力車和的士等候乘客，你可以輕易前往下一個目的地。

來到仰光，不逛逛市內著名的翁山市集，便算不上是趟圓滿的旅程。市集位於市中心，是搜購手信的好去處，但須準備與當地小販議

Buy hand-painted lacquer souvenirs at Bogyoke Aung San Market (right)

人手繪畫的漆器工藝品，在翁山市集(右圖)內有售

Aung San Market, the city's main bazaar. Located in the city centre, it's a great place to haggle with the locals and buy souvenirs. Known for its colonial architecture and cobblestone streets, the market is dominated by antiques, Burmese handicrafts, jewellery shops, art galleries and clothing stalls.

If you're not in the mood for bargaining with market traders, opt instead for a visit to Mya Kyun Thar, an out-of-the-way park where you can hit golf balls into the Inya Lake, sip a drink on the outdoor terrace or look out over the waterfront home of Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese dissident who famously spent 15 years under house arrest. The park is on an island in the middle of the Inya Lake and is hugely popular with the locals.

As the day draws to a close, the hotel bars of Yangon's

價。市集建築充滿殖民色彩，道路鋪上鵝卵石，主要售賣古董、緬甸手工藝品，還有珠寶店、藝廊和服裝店。

如果你沒有興致與商販討價還價，不妨到較為偏遠的Mya Kyun Thar公園遊玩，一嘗把高爾夫球打進茵雅湖的滋味。你亦可在戶外平台上小酌一杯，又或在這裡眺望昂山素姬被軟禁15年的海濱大宅。公園位於茵雅湖中央的小島上，深受當地居民歡迎。

黃昏時份，仰光各大酒店的酒吧是品嚐雞尾酒和飽覽城市美景的理想地點。大部分的酒店大堂均設有接收良好的Wi-Fi網絡。由於市內擁有這種服務的地方不多，所以常常有熱衷於上網的人聚集於此。

悠閒地喝過醒胃的雞尾酒後，不妨前往

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leading hotels are perfect for evening cocktails while enjoying a great view of the city. Hotel lobbies are also largely assured of good Wi-Fi connections, something of a rarity in the city. As a result, they are often crowded with people keen to get online.

Once you've whetted your appetite with a couple of sundowners, the Saya San Road offers a long stretch of upscale dining options, including the live music favourite, Mr. Guitar. There's also a Chinese beer garden and a variety of restaurants featuring a range of Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Burmese cuisine. While exploring this part of town, it's worth taking in the nearby Fushan Si Chinese temple, believed to be the largest of its kind in Yangon.

Farther away from the main hotels, although undoubtedly worth the taxi fare, is the Feel restaurant on Yeiktha Street. This is one of the best places to sample typical Myanmar food and it's always packed. With no menus, just go to the counter and choose from the food available. There are always at least a dozen different noodle dishes to try and the helpful servers quickly bring you what you want.

For those looking for something a little more upmarket, there's Le Planteur, a modern European and Indochinese restaurant managed, since 2011, by Felix Eppisser, a Michelin-starred Swiss chef. Set in a red-brick mansion near the Singaporean Embassy, patrons can choose to dine in the restaurant's fabulous gardens, complete with Burmese parasols and lanterns. Should Le Planteur be fully booked, The Governor's Residence, with its choice of European or Asian cuisine, is a worthy alternative.

Yangon is changing fast and is relishing its return to being a tourist destination. As with any emerging holiday choice, it's best to head there before it is wholly geared to the needs of the global traveller, potentially losing its unique appeal in the process.

**Colonial-style mansion
The Governor's
Residence offers luxury
accommodation in Yangon**

仰光的Governor's Residence是一幢殖民地風格大宅，為旅客提供豪華住宿

**The architecture of Yangon's
Secretariat building recalls
the city's colonial past**

仰光的部長大樓歷史悠久，讓人憶起殖民歲月

Saya San Road; 那裡有多間高級食府可供選擇，包括大受歡迎的現場音樂演奏餐廳 Mr. Guitar。還有一個中國啤酒花園和各式的餐廳，中式、日式、韓式或緬甸菜兼備。來到這裏，不妨到訪附近的福山寺，參觀這間相信是仰光市內最大的中式寺廟。

在Yeiktha Street有一間名為「Feel」的餐廳，雖然離主要的酒店稍遠一點，但值得花一點錢乘的士前往。這是一嚐經典緬甸美食的好去處，總是門庭若市。餐廳沒有餐單，食客直接到櫃檯挑選食物，通常都有最少十數款的麵食供應，而且侍應很快便可為你奉上所選美食，讓你大快朵頤。

若選擇高級食府，可前往新加坡大使館附近的一座紅磚大樓內的餐廳Le Planteur，自2011年起由米芝蓮星級瑞士大廚Felix Eppisser主理，提供現代歐洲菜及中印菜式，顧客可選擇在美輪美奐的花園內進餐，四周更有緬甸太陽傘和燈籠點綴。如果Le Planteur已滿座，供應歐亞菜式的餐館Governor's Residence也是個不錯的選擇。

仰光正經歷急速轉變，再次成為旅遊勝地。就好像其他新興的度假城市一樣，在發展過程中很可能會失去原來的獨特魅力，因此最好在仰光全然蛻變為國際旅遊城市之前到訪，體會原汁原味的緬甸風情。■

Photos: Governor's Residence: Thomas Janzow; Dishes and colonial building: David G. McIntyre

