KAYAH STATE

What is the ITC Inclusive Tourism Project?

The Netherlands Trust Fund IV Myanmaw Inclusive Tourism Project is implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and fund by the Government of the Netherlands. Among other activities, the project has trained local community members in the state capital of Loikaw and surrounding villages to develop and market new, fun, nature, cultural tours as well as providing support to country tourism branding and marketing and tourism outlooks.

For more information please visit: www.intertour.org/INTK4-Myanmar-tourism

Explore Kayah with trained local community tour guides by booking with a local Tour Organiser

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CULTURAL COMMUNITY TOURS

LOOKING FOR A WARM WELCOME AND A FUN, HANDS-ON, LOCAL EXPERIENCE THAT BENEFITS LOCAL PEOPLE?

GREAT LOCAL EXPERIENCES THAT CREATE REAL LOCAL BENEFITS

Kayan Sausage Experience. Learn to make Kayah’s signature dish!

This tour welcomes you into a local home, to learn how to make Kayah’s famous preserved sausage. The tour is from 09:00am to 12:00pm, for 2-6 participants. Each group pays a fixed charge of US$ 15 for the sausage ingredients (2-3 people), plus US$2 per person for the cooking class (2 hours). This includes local tax, sausage ingredients and guides during the cooking class by school master. Providing culinary experiences for tourists is an additional source of income for the sausage producers, and helps keep these traditional recipes alive.

Destinations: Kayah State
Destination Cities: Meik - generally warm & temperate
State Border: Shan State, Kayah State & Thailand
State Size: 11,670 sq. kms / 4,500 sq miles
State Capital: Loikaw
Destination Languages: 9 different tribes including Kayah, Kayin & Kayan (Pakant), but primarily inhabited by the Kayah group (a Shan-Thailand people)
Destination Religion: Christianity (minority Catholics & Baptist), Buddhism & Animism
How To Get There: Kayah, Myanmar’s smallest state, is packed with diversity and perfect for ‘off the beaten track’ experiences. To the north, Kayah borders Shan State; to the west, Thailand; to the south, Kayin State; and to the west, Kayin State. Newly opened to tourists, most visitors arrive in Loikaw, the state capital, by air from Yangon, by boat or road from Htee Khee Lake; or by road from Htee Khee airport.

*All inclusive booking is mandatory. Please exclude the cost of an English speaking guide, and tour operator service fee (10%) for booking the tour.

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**A WARM WELCOME TO KAYAH MYANMAR’S HIDDEN GEM**

Choose cultural community tours for a genuinely warmer welcome, and better, more inspiring experiences.

Would you like to explore Kayah’s mountains with expert forest guides, try your hand at traditional weaving, play a local instrument or enjoy a traditional Kayah lunch in a local home? Recently opened up to tourism, Kayah State offers visitors a rare opportunity to immerse yourselves in culture and communities in Myanmar’s smallest state.

**Pan Pet, Kayan Village**

**Nature trail into the green heart of Kayah**

In Pan Pet, Kayan village, guests can enjoy the ‘Nature Trail’, an easy forest walk with stunning views of the surrounding countryside. Along the way, your village guide will stop to share fascinating stories about local flora and beliefs. The Kayah Trail takes 2 hours including the on-route storytelling. A lovely ‘Angel’s Picnic’ is available.

**Hta Nee La Leh, Kayah Village**

**Discover ancient traditions**

In Hta Nee Le La Leh village, on a half-day tour, local community guides are trained to introduce you to traditional spiritual beliefs, local legends, and home-grown arts.

**Htay Kho, Kayaw Village**

**Experience remote, vibrant, local culture**

Inside Htay Kho village, visitors can experience a living, colourful culture. Local tour guides are proud and enthusiastic to introduce visitors to their fetching Kayaw traditions, vibrant textiles and jewellery. You can also learn about unique customs, such as the culture of carving wooden coffins for ones’ relatives.

**Daw Ta Ma Gyi, Kayaw Village**

**Deep insights into Kayaw culture**

Life in Daw Ta Ma Gyi moves at a very relaxed pace, ideal for taking time to really understand the local culture and way of life. In Daw Ta Ma Gyi, visitors can explore the village, stopping along the way to meet local artisans and musicians, who are preparing their traditional Kayaw arts, dress, crafts and culture. You can visit traditional, thatched Kayaw homes. Taste millet wine, learn about Kayaw dress, and try playing the traditional bamboo guitar.

**Deeper insights**

Tours have been designed to share special aspects of indigenous files that community members feel proud to share with guests. Trained, local community guides work as a team with professionals, English speaking guides. This teamwork allows you to learn about local life, from local people, in their own words.

**Benefiting local people**

Offering simple authentic services to visitors creates useful additional income for local community members. Before welcoming guests, villagers have been trained in skills such as safety, first-aid, tour guiding and accounting. Community members were introduced to local tour operators and tour guides who are committed to responsible tourism.

For all the following tours, the services of local community tour guides must be used when visiting these villages. Please be at tour start times and be patient, as the villagers and the number of tourists. Tour operators can book a tour and organise an English speaking tour guide for a 10% service fee.

**Share the life of local artisans**

On the ‘Artisan’ Trail in Salin Kan Kan village, guests visit local craftsmen and women making traditional Kayaw arts, jwellery and textiles of home. You can spend time with these artisans, and try your hand at making native crafts. A typical homemade lunch is available. In Yang Li and Don Khe Khin villages, you can meet local musicians, and visit small text shops not by the tumbling ‘Long necked’ Kayaw people.

**Relax by the Seven Lakes, enjoying a traditional Kayaw barbecue**

The guest with more time is a highlight of staying at Hta Nee La Leh is tasting a delicious Kayaw barbecue, on the banks of the Seven Lakes, one of Kayaw’s most iconic spots. Your guides will share with you the local culture and way of life of the ‘Long necked’ Kayaw people.

**Go off road, with real forest trekking**

Just outside Hta Nee La Leh village is the sacred mountain, Archana. Local community guides lead you to the top of the mountain. An early start is best treking until for hours through rich forest with marvelous views, and returning in approximately 3 hours (total 6 hours). On the way, you local guide will explain about traditional hunting life and the spiritual significance of the mountain. A highlight of the trek is enjoying a traditional, Kayaw shared picnic at the summit. Note: This is a highly isolated site.

**Unique, local cultural practices**

Really unique practices can be witnessed in Daw Ta Ma Gyi. For example, you can visit the Pheinle or ‘Women’s Shrine’ and learn about annual ceremonies which take place here to celebrate the role of women in the community. Another interesting highlight is the ‘Box beam village’ located just outside the village long way here, the Village is kept safe from fires and other dangers, with the protection of guardian spirits.

Note: Ask your local Kayaw Tour Operator to check with the MCHT to ensure Daw Ta Ma Gyi is open for visitors.