

# ENIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

## CRUISE THE IRRAWADDY DELTA IN MYANMAR

In 1277 Marco Polo described Myanmar as the 'fairest land in all the world'.



He remarked with awe on the country's many golden towers and named the place 'The Golden Land'. The crowning glory of this golden land - the vast Irrawaddy River.

Many years ago the river carried entourages of ancient kings and explorers and was perhaps the country's most travelled route. While royal entourages may be rare today, the scenery alongside the river has remained almost untouched by the last hundred years of human history.

The extensive river, which starts



high in the Himalayas on the fringes of Tibet and southwest China, has been the lifeblood of the country for centuries, dominating the lives of those living along its banks.

Observing people at work and at play, against a backdrop of dense jungle and teak forests, magnificent temples and ancient villages, is to follow a course of hundreds of years of history.

Whether viewing the unfolding scene through the window of your cabin, the sweeping windows of your ship's dining room, or from its spacious sundeck, you will be absorbed by scenes of life along the river bank.

The Irrawaddy's two largest ports are at the capital Yangon, where the cruise on the 'Delta Queen' begins and at Patheingyi, a town 190 kilometres west of Yangon, where passengers disembark and head to the beach.

One of the southwestern region's best-kept secrets is Ngwe Saung, an isolated beach on the Gulf of Bengal, two hours west of Patheingyi. A walk along the 14 kilometres of isolated beach will take you along a piece of coastline that time hasn't touched.

A tour visiting the above and inclusive of transfers, some meals accommodation and an English-speaking guide would cost in the region of \$355.



### Superstitions

Meet Mr. Stone, the 10th passenger. He sits on a chair looking remarkably like a stone. Don't be surprised to see passengers talking to him. He needs to be seated, included and fed just like anyone else. Nine just isn't the number of people you should travel with.