

Samkar Lake



Samkar Lake is located in the southern part of Inle Lake. Both lakes are connected through Belu Chung creek with a strong current. Inle Lake is 20 metres higher than Samkar Lake.

Around 1970, MoePyel Dam was built to store water to supply two hydroelectric power stations, with the support from the Japanese government. It was a Japanese war reparations project, resulting in two lakes, Pekon and Samkar. It is believed that around 60 villages were flooded to create the Samkar Lake and its residents were moved to the nearby area.

There are many places to visit and explore around, including hidden villages surrounded by mountains landscape. We can find many small villages of different ethnic groups, like Innthar, Shan and Pa-O.

During your journey from Nyaung Shwe or Inle Lake to Samkar Lake, you will pass numerous types of plantations and rice fields. You will also find ruins of stupas coming out of the lake. With the dense vegetation, it creates a surreal landscape. If you decide to take a boat ride, it will take around 3 hours to reach this breath-taking scenery.

Around Samkar Lake, there are three main villages where you can explore pagodas and interact with friendly people. The first one is Thar Kaung Pagoda with over 200 stupas dated from the 13-18 century, and recently most of it have been reconstructed. The next village is Samkar Village where you can find an ancient pagodas complex.



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During the cold season, many of the pagodas get partially covered by water. During the rainy season, the water level goes down and you can see the pagodas completely. 30 minutes away by boat, you will find Lwe Nwe Phayar Taung Village. You can find the first goldsmith in that part of the lake and also handbag maker. You can learn how to row a boat by one leg and a 30 minutes' walk will bring you to a hot-spring located at Pa-O village. There you can enjoy an easy trekking and appreciate the view from the top of the hills. You can also visit hidden caves at another small village just an hour away by car.

Samkar Lake also has the 5-day market. The rotation schedule starts at Samkar, Phayar Taung, Lon Kan Village, Nam Toke villages and Pekon Town. At the market, you can see ethnic groups from the mountain that come and sell their products from their farms, such as fresh vegetables, longyis (traditional clothes), handmade bags, handmade jewellery, and food stalls with delicious local snacks and dishes.

During some months of the year, it is possible to enjoy local festivals. As the majority of the local people around the lake are Buddhist, they celebrate full moon days. Some villages host a big festival followed by market, live music, volleyball competition and beautiful Buddhist ceremony at the monasteries. It is a moment when all the villagers get together and cook food to welcome all the visitors.

The festival happens around November at Thar Kaung Monastery (full moon day of Tazaungmone). In December or January, it happens in Phayar Taung Monastery and the next full moon day happens at Htiri Village, followed by Nam Toke village on the next full moon day. This festival is celebrated with rice offering for the monks. It is a beautiful procession that happens around the main pagoda of the village. Many villagers from around the lake will come to do their good deeds and pay respect to the monks and Buddha.

Another two festivals also happen at Phayar Taung village. One is during the month of November when many people visit to the local monastery to offer robes to the monks. The other one is during the full moon day of Kason when the locals celebrated Buddha day by pouring water at Bodhi tree.

At Samkar Lake, you can find most cultures and places remain untouched. This is the beauty of this place.



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