



Follow the “trial of the ancestors” with local villagers as guides and sampil local cuisine at a “jungle picnic” or a Kayah barbecue by the scenic lakes. Any trip to the state gives visitors the opportunity to enjoy rare cultural insight and experiences as well as encourage locals to continue to preserve their long-held customs.



### HANDICRAFTS

Handicrafts play an important role in domestic, artistic and spiritual life. Bamboo is a basic raw material for local communities in Kayah. Several unusual musical instruments are crafted from bamboo and other woods. Villagers are skilled, not only at creating woven bamboo items like baskets, but also at weaving traditional fabrics on the loom. Visit the local workshops to see how indigenous products are made and purchase souvenirs. Many items are for sale, while others (like the frog drums) are considered highly sacred, and only played on special occasions.



### FOOD

Kayah's cuisine is simple, fresh and healthy. Enjoy exploring the vibrant wet markets selling fresh, local produce and try local dishes and snacks. Small producers also make a variety of specialties of which Kayah sausage is the region's most famous.

These tasty, meat sausages are seasoned with Kayah pepper, which is harvested in the surroundings of De Maw Soe and Pan Pet villages. The pepper's unique flavour imbues the sausages with a fragrant aroma of herbs and spices. Millet wine (known locally as “rice wine”) is definitely worth trying too.



### FESTIVALS

There are two kinds of traditional Kayah festivals: some are social feasts, while others are related to spirituality. The most important festival is “Kaehtoebo Tagundaing”, held annually in April. On this occasion, traditional offerings are made to the spirit guardian. This festival is held to request “peace for the region, fair weather and a successful, bountiful harvest, free from all dangers”. In October “kawhyin htoke” festival (glutinous rice wrapping) takes place. Other important festivals are held for hunting, house-warming and funerals.



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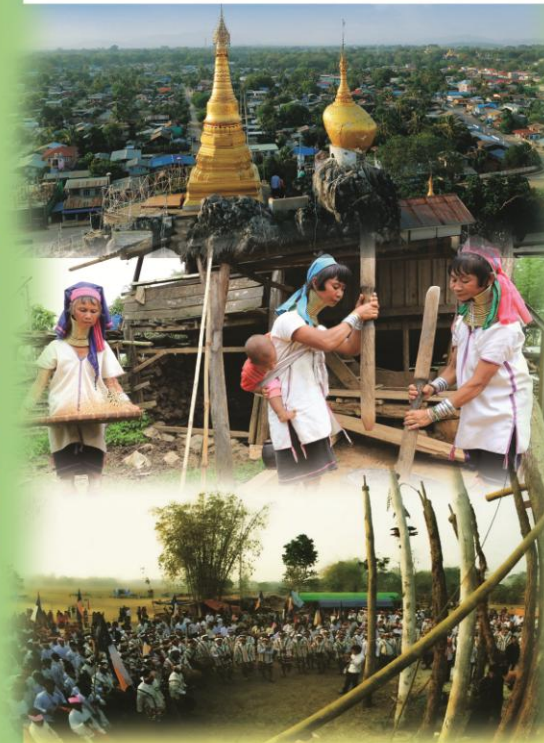
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# KAYAH STATE

## Hidden Beauty of the East

**Climate:** Mild- generally warm and temperat

**Location:** South East Asia

**Borders:** Shan State, Kayin Stae and Thailand

**State Size:**11.670 sq km /4,506 sq miles

**State Capital:**Loikaw

**Population:**286,627 (2014)

**Lineage:** 9 different tribes including Kayah, Kayin and Padaung, but primarily inhabited by the Karenni ethnic group, also known as Red Karen or Kayah, a Sion-Tibetan people.

**Languages:**Kayah Li, Myanmar / Burmese, limited English

**Religions:** Catholicism, Buddhism, Chrestianity, Baptism & Animism

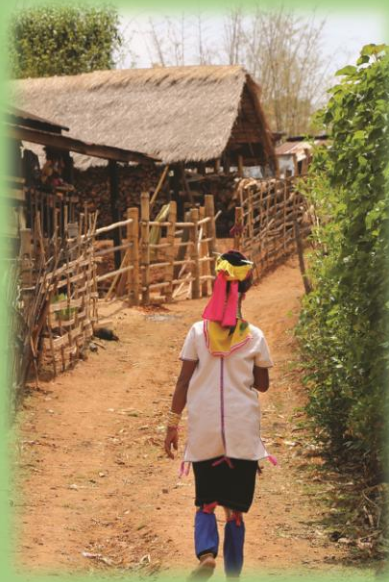
## PEOPLE

Kayah was know as Karenni State until late 1905s, before it was renamed Kayah Stae. Its various tribes and clans also spread into neighbouring states, this, coupled with its remoteness and incredible ethnic texture has endowed kyah and its populace with a fascinating heritage of historical intrigue. Myanmar's smallest state is quite probably the most culturally diverse. Visitors can choose to simply enjoy local hospitality or delve deeper into its unique history.



## TRADITIONS

While visitors will find Kayah's lush landscapes, and weave of cultures visually enchanting, experiencing the endearing warmth of the people, their sense of humour and passion to share their traditions, crafts and music is what truly sets Kayah apart from other destinations. The state is rich in teak and other hard-woods and bamboos. Many of these natural resources are used to make musical instruments, cooking utensils and handicrafts.



## NATURE

Kayah's landscape is aweave of fileds, rolling hills and lush forests. Those who enjoy fresh air and outdoor activities can now enjoy soft adventure trekking, accompanied by local guides. These inspiring characters have lived wtih the forest since childhood. Their deep knowledge fo wild foods, natural dayes, herbal medicines and local legends helps to bring the relationships between nature and local people alive, adding insight of adventure. Additionally there are scenic lakes, waterfalls and caves to visit many of which remain very rural and untouched.



## PLACES

Closed for over half a century, recently opened to visitors and finally accessible by air and road, Kayah is one of South-east Asia's last frontiers for inspiring authentic travel. Its tranquil yet appealing capital, Loikaw , is usually the base for visitors. Small local villages offer the perfect insight into the traditional way of community life. The scenery is natural tapestry of forest and mountains. Visitors will enjoy breathtaking, unspoilt views, especially in its south.

## LOIKAW

The capital of Kayah state,Loikaw, was named by the Shan, to describe the dividing point between two mountains: the Shwe Taung and Thiri Mingalar Taung. Loi means mountain and Kaw means separate in their own language, the Kayah call Loikaw ""Siridaw,, menaing an auspicious settlement. The town's most iconic site is Taung Kwe Pagoda, also known as Broken Mountain, which offers stunning panoramic views of the urban area and surrounding mountains. The reclining Buddha, the colourful, bustling market, the museum, churches and traditional craft and product workshop are also worth visiting.

## VILLAGES

Exploring local villagers is , for most visitors, athe highlight, of their trip to Kayah. Communities such as Hta Nee La Lah and Pan Pet offer vibrant contrasts of customs, costume, Languages and loacal dishes. Villagers can be shy at first but take some time to discover and share in their way of life and their traditions. You can find that they are gentle, fun-loving and friendly folk. Hta Nee La Leh (a 45- minute drive from Loikaw) and Pan Pet (a 1-hour drive from Loikaw) offer extraordinary insights into the culture of the Kayah and Kayan ethnic communities respectively.

