

## Content

You can click the links below using the hand-shaped pointer.



Presented by Dr ZIT





1. [Shwezigon Pagoda](#)
2. [Kalasa \(\*kalasha\*\) pot \(တလသာအိုး\)](#)
3. [37 Traditional Nats \(၃၇ မင်းနတ်\)](#)
4. [Nat Spirit "The son is one month older than his father." \(အဖထက် သား တစ်လကြီး\)](#)
5. [King Bayinnaung Bell Inscription](#)
6. [Ananda Temple](#)
7. [Thatbyinnyu Temple](#)
8. [Dhammayangyi Temple](#)

### The Four Wonders of Bagan

There is a saying related to the temples of Bagan:

ထူမေ့ရုံ၊ အမြင့်သဗ္ဗညု၊ အနုအာနန္ဒာ၊ တန်ခိုးအရာရွှေစည်းခုံ ။

Massiveness that is Dhammayangyi, Loftiness that is Thatbyinnyu, Grace that is Ananda, Almighty that is Shwezigon

			
Dhammayangyi	Thatbyinnyu	Ananda	Shwezigon

The temple with the most massive structure is Dhammayangyi Temple, the tallest one is Thatbyinnyu Temple, the most artistically exquisite and beautiful is Ananda Temple, while the one with the almighty and grandeur is Shwezigon Pagoda.

The Gawdawpalin Temple, from the later Bagan period, is considered the most complete and beautiful example of Myanmar artistry.

[Dhammayangyi](#) Temple is noted for its massiveness. King Narathu built it in AD 1170 and finished it in 3 years. Scholars interpret the name "Dhammayangyi" to mean "The Light of Buddha's Teaching."

“Thatbyinnyu” means "omniscience," which the Buddha attained when he became enlightened. It was built by King Alaung Sithu in AD 1144. It is the tallest structure in Bagan. (201 feet high)

**Ananda:** It is said that every Myanmar should visit Bagan (Pagan) and without visiting Ananda Temple, you cannot say that you have visited Bagan. It was constructed by King Kyansittha in AD 1091.

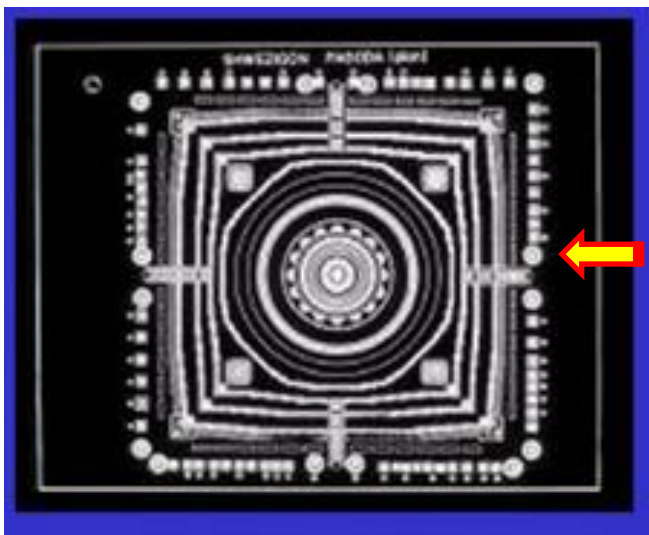
**Shwezigon:** Scholars opine that the name Shwezigon is derived from “Zeyabon”. King Anawrahta started building it, and it was finished by King Kyansittha in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.

**Shwezigon Pagoda** <https://baganpaper.com/shwezigon-pagoda/>

[Press here to go to Content](#)

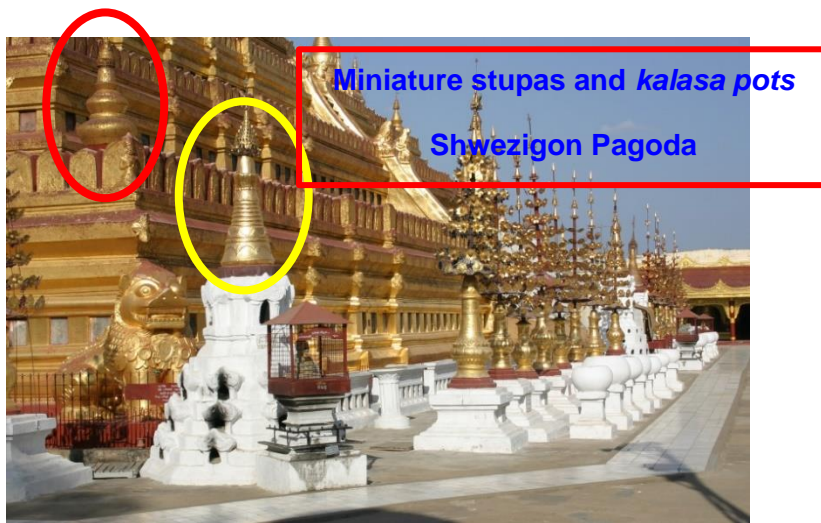
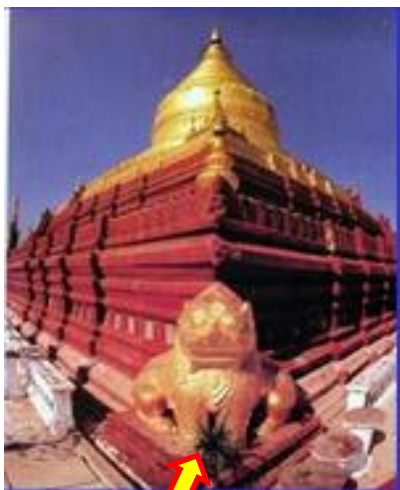
The Shwezigon zedi is a massive stupa, built during the 11<sup>th</sup> century. It is a great example of the final stage in the evolution of stupa architecture during the Bagan period. King Anawrahta started building it, and it was finished by King Kyansittha in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD. It is the prototype of all cylindrical stūpas in Myanmar.

It was built to enshrine several sacred relics of the Buddha, such as his collarbone, frontlet bone, and a duplicate tooth relic from Kandy, Sri Lanka.




It is a bulbous type Pagoda and 102 feet tall. The unique design of the Shwezigon pagoda can be seen in its layout. It was built on five terraces. The **first three terraces are square, the fourth is octagonal, and the fifth is circular.**

The three lower terraces are decorated with terracotta tiles showing scenes from the previous lives of the Buddha.



Lions with twin bodies stand at the corners of the base. The pots called **kalasa** are placed at the corners of the first and second terraces. The top terrace is decorated with small stupas.

**About Kalasa (kalasha) pot**

[Press here to go to Content](#) 



**Miniature stupas and kalasa pots  
Seinnyet-nyima Pagoda**



At the terraces of pagodas and temples are ornamented with miniature stūpas and *kalasā pot*.

The word '*kalasā pot*' seems to refer to the '*kalashā*' (meaning a water pot, a rain vase) which is a prominent part of the Hindu temples.

In Hinduism, the *kalashā pot* held the creative element, or the nectar of immortality churned by gods and demons from the cosmic ocean.

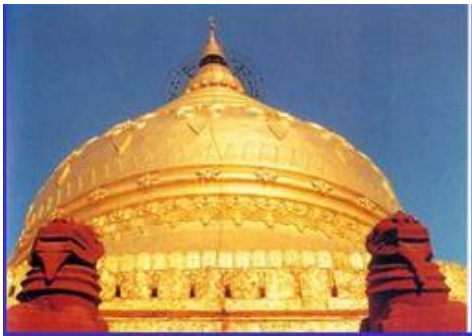


There are 45 encased stupas in Bagan, and Shwezigon Pagoda is one of them. People believe it contains the relic of the Buddha's frontal bone and a tooth. Architecturally, the Shwezigon Pagoda is more advanced compared to the Lawkananda Pagoda.

Out of over three thousand pagodas and monuments in Bagan, only four are made of stone, and Shwezigon Pagoda is one of them.



These stone structures are [Shwezigon](#), [Nan-paya](#), [Kyauk Gu U Min](#) and [Pitaka Building](#) commonly known as [Set-ku-teik](#) at the foot of Tu-yin mountain hill near Mya Kan Lake.



The upper part of its dome, which is shaped like a bell, is decorated with lotus petals, both facing up and down. On top of it is a finial shaped like a plantain bud.



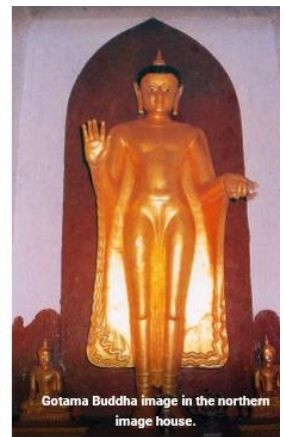
**Kaukusanda**



**Kaunagamana**



**Kasapa**



**Gotama**

On each of the four sides of the Shwezigon Pagoda, there is a small temple called "Kyey Gu Taik." Each temple holds a 13-foot-tall standing Buddha statue, created in the Gupta art style. In the eastern temple is the statue of Kaukusanda Buddha. In the southern temple is Kaunagamana Buddha. In the western temple is Kasapa Buddha, and in the northern temple is Gotama Buddha. The statues are placed in a clockwise direction.

Shwezigon Pagoda is one of the first symbols of the success of pure Theravada Buddhism. It is also the **first pagoda to include images of nats**, which are pre-Buddhist spirits with the power to do good or harm. King Anawrahta, who built the pagoda, placed images of **37 traditional nats** on the lower terraces.

This brought nat worship and Theravada Buddhism together, creating a unique and lively religious experience in Myanmar. This also helped Theravada Buddhism grow.

The presence of the 37 Nat statues within the Shwezigon Pagoda complex raises questions about King Anawrahta, who strongly promoted Theravada Buddhism. However, according to King Anawrahta's own words, **“People will not come for the new religion of Lord Buddha. Let them come for their old gods, and slowly they will accept the new faith of Buddha.”**

This statement suggests that King Anawrahta included Nat statues in the Shwezigon Pagoda to attract people who still believed in the old deities, gradually guiding them towards embracing Buddhism.

[Press here to go to Content](#)



Images of two guardian nat spirits **Father Shwe Nyo Thin** and **son Shwe Saga** housed in a brick building on the south-west corner of Shwezigon Pagoda.

The strange name of the these nat images displayed in the Shwezigon

Pagoda precinct is as follows: (အဖထက် သား တစ်လကြီး) “The son is one month older than his father.”

King Anawrahta summoned people for royal service, and the son arrived a month earlier than his father. As a result, the son was appointed to a position one month earlier than the father. So, (အဖထက် သား တစ်လကြီး)

**King Bayinnaung Bell Inscription**

[Press here to go to Content](#)



The Bell inscriptions are now located at the *Shwezigon Pagoda* in Bagan and were donated by King Bayinnaung in 1557 AD. (UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2017.)




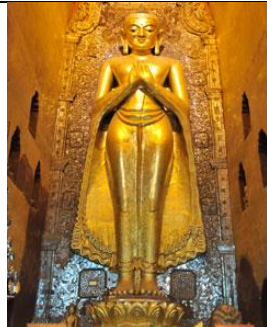
See more: <https://baganpaper.com/shwezigon-pagoda/>



**Ananda Temple:** It is said that every Myanmar should visit Bagan (Pagan) and without visiting Ananda Temple, you cannot say that you have visited Bagan. It was constructed by King Kyansittha in AD 1091.

[Press here to go to Content](#)

See more my personal website: <https://baganpaper.com/ananda-temple/>

			
Standing Buddha Statue Facing East Ananda Temple. (18 <sup>th</sup> century replacement)	Standing Buddha Statue Facing South Ananda Temple (Original)	Standing Buddha Statue Facing West Ananda Temple. (18 <sup>th</sup> century replacement)	Standing Buddha Statue Facing North Ananda Temple (Original)

The unique architecture of Bagan period can be seen at the original images of Standing Buddha Statue Facing North and Facing South. A closeup view gives a stern expression of the face but a distant view from the devotional hall provides a smiling face.

**80 Scenes of the Life of Buddha (Part-1) (Figure 1-40)** <https://baganpaper.com/80-scenes-of-the-life-of-buddha/>


**80 Scenes of the Life of Buddha (Part-2) (Figure 41-80)** <https://baganpaper.com/80-scenes-of-the-life-of-buddha-part-2/>

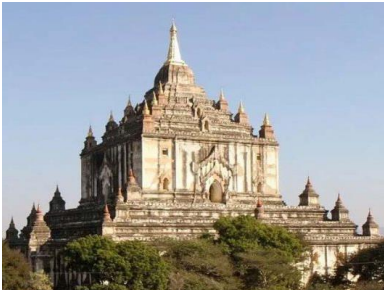
**Glazed Plaques of Four Lokapalas and 28 Senior Generals of Yakkhas at Ananda Temple**

<https://baganpaper.com/glazed-plaques-of-four-lokapalas-and-28-senior-generals-of-yakkhas-at-ananda-temple/>

**See Ananda (360° View)** <https://baganpaper.com/ananda-360/>

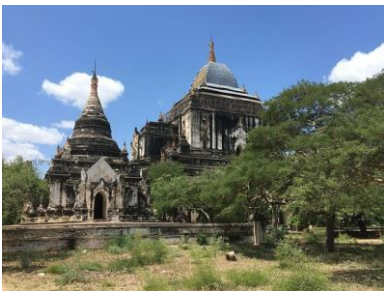
**Thatbyinnyu Temple** <https://baganpaper.com/thatbyinnyu-temple/>

[Press here to go to Content](#) 



Thatbyinnyu Temple was built by **King Alaung Sithu in AD 1144**. It is the tallest structure in Bagan. (**201 feet high**)

The name “Thatbyinnyu” is an original name. It is one of the attributes of the Lord Buddha., “Thatbyinnyu” means “**Omniscience**” which the Lord Buddha attained on becoming enlightened. In the Temple are circumambulatory vaulted corridors, four-terraced devotional stupa, vihara (monastery) and the library. It is a big complex structure with seven terraces in all facing east.



There is a cave pagoda on the north-east of the precinct. It is traditionally known as “Tally Pagoda” (ဂရီချိုးဘုရား). It is said that for every 10,000 bricks used in the construction of Thatbyinnyu one brick was kept aside to count the total number of bricks used in the whole structure. The “Tally Pagoda” was built of the bricks so kept aside.

သဗ္ဗညုဘုရား၏ အရှေ့တောင်ဘက်၌ အုတ်ခုံပေါ်တွင်တည်ထားသောစေတီတစ်ဆူရှိသည်။ ယင်းစေတီကို "ဂရီချိုးဘုရား" ဟု ခေါ်ကြသည်။ သဗ္ဗညုဘုရားတည်ရန်အုတ်ဖုတ်စဉ်က အုတ်တစ်သောင်း ရှိသော အုတ်ဖိုတစ်ဖိုအတွက်အုတ်တစ်ချပ်ကျဖြင့် ဂရီချိုးမှတ်သားထားသည်။ တစ်ချပ်စီရေတွက်မှတ်သားထားသောကြောင့် ဂရီချိုး ဘုရားဟုအမည်တွင်နေခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။



On the south-east stand **two big stone posts** which supported the cross bar on which **a bronze bell of extraordinary size was once hung**. The bell was dedicated by King Alaung Sithu to Thatbyinnyu. **The bell had disappeared**. On the capitols of the two stone posts are found floral designs carved out of stone.

The big bell was vandalized long ago. Judging by the space of 18 feet between the two stone posts, the bell must have the diameter of at least 15 feet in which case it could have been larger than the Mingun Bell in size if not in weight.

See more: <https://baganpaper.com/thatbyinnyu-temple/>

**Dhammayangyi Temple** <https://baganpaper.com/dhammayangyi-temple/> [Press here to go to Content](#)



“Massiveness that is  
**DHAMMAYAN**  
Loftiness that is  
**THATBYINNYU**  
Grace that is  
**ANANDA**”

As this saying goes, Dhammayan Gyi Temple is noted for its massiveness. It is a cave pagoda. It is said that King Narathu built it in A D 1170 and finished it in 3 years. The king reigned only 3 years. Viewed from a distance its shape is like an Egyptian pyramid.

## Art and Architecture



**Stucco Curving** Lion trampling in the mouth of *makara* (Dhammayangyi Temple)  
မကရ်းခံတွင်းခြင်္သေ့နင်း



Reinforcement Sand Stone  
(Dhammayangyi Temple)

See more: <https://baganpaper.com/dhammayangyi-temple/>