



Clockwise from left: U Bein Bridge at dawn; sea gypsies leaping for dinner; playful novice monks at a Bagan monastery; David Heath at work; *Burma: An Enchanted Spirit*.



BOOK

BEHIND THE LENS

Aung San Suu Kyi herself endorsed the stunning new photography book *Burma: An Enchanted Spirit*. David Heath has captured everything from sea gypsies to temple spires—and is using sales to help build a school in Rangoon.

What brought you to Burma in the first place?

I've always sought out exotic locales and ancient cultures, so I was intrigued by this once isolated land. Traveling there felt like I was being let in on a secret. From the moment I set foot in the country, I was under its spell. I was so impressed with the generosity, humor and compassion of the Burmese.

How has the country changed over the years?

Since I first started visiting six years ago, tourism has increased rapidly. After 50 years of isolation, their doors are now open to the world, resulting in heightened interest and investment. This charming land will soon change forever, but as the contemporary world comes

crashing in, I only hope that Burma will retain its spirit.

What are your tips for getting the perfect shot?

My number one tip for a great photo is to hire a trustworthy guide who speaks the language and knows where to be at the right time. Find someone willing to stay up late and wake up early to catch the sunrise.

What are some of your favorite under-the-radar destinations in Burma?

I have two favorite places, but by the time this goes to print they might not be so secret anymore! The first is Mrauk U, a tropical town located in Rakhine State. If you climb atop the hills, there are 360-degree views of temples. Once a little-known place,

tourists are starting to catch wind of its beauty. The second destination is the Chindwin River in the northwest. Its water passes through a gorgeous array of rural Burma; visitors will pass by lush landscapes, steep mountains and quiet villages. Keep an eye out for the colorful-looking onion farmers along its banks.

What surprised you most during the eight trips and 38 flights required to make this book?

The Burmese people are intoxicatingly genuine and surprised me with their enthusiastic support in creation of the book. And Burma's landscape is incredible. It's truly the most photogenic place I've been.

—DIANA HUBBELL

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF DAVID HEATH (3); COURTESY OF RIVER JORDAN; COURTESY OF DAVID HEATH