

# SYNOPSIS



## Myanmar - River Journey with Buddha's Blessing

### Myanmar - Flussfahrt mit Buddhas Segen

The river cruise ship "Road to Mandalay" goes on a trip which seemed impossible still a short time ago: In 2008 cyclone Nargis had laid waste to wide parts of Myanmar, and the "Road to Mandalay" also lay severely damaged in the dry dock. Now to her second maiden voyage western visitors come again to Myanmar to sail down the big stream of the country, the Ayeyarwady. It is a trip from one king's town to another, from Mandalay to Bagan. The film shows a proud captain, an engaged crew and international guests, all enjoying the overwhelming beauty of the countryside along the riverbanks and shores of the Ayeyarwady.

The "Road to Mandalay" is a ship with a moved history. Built in 1964 as "MS Nederland" as a Rhine cruise ship, it seemed to have her best days well behind her. After the political changes in Germany it dropped anchor under the name "Elbflorenz" as a hotel ship in Dresden. But in 1994 began the astonishing conversion: Aboard a special ship it went to Myanmar, and the Rhine steamboat was extravagantly converted into the "Road to Mandalay". However, in 2008 cyclone Nargis laid waste wide parts of Myanmar. Now for the first time after the disastrous cyclone the "Road to Mandalay" embarks on her journey down Myanmar's legendary river.

As the only film team onboard ThoRa Film was able to exclusively accompany this unique river trip, looking behind the scenes with crewmembers like rinsen Zachi Maung and culinary assistant Tunain who both work for many years aboard the ship and save a large part of her income. With their savings they started their own small businesses. Zachi leases a small load boat, Tunain owns a kiosk and a roadside phone store typical for country: simply a sunshade, two chairs and a mobile phone, nothing more. Like everybody onboard the two friends hope that they will be working and travelling for many more years to come onboard the "Road to Mandalay".

To make this happen they know that they need visitors from the west, but they are convinced that everybody who makes the trip will be rewarded with pictures and encounters that are hard to be found anywhere else in Asia today.

**Year:** 2010

**Run-Time:** 1 x 45 min.

**A co-production by ZDF/ARTE and ThoRa Film**

Available worldwide except for Germany and France

**Languages:** German (ORIGINAL)

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Format: 16:9

HD

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