Although it is traditionally believed that Pahto Thamya pagoda was one of the five pagodas which King Taung Thu Gyi built, its designs and inner mural paintings indicate that it could belong to the time of King Saw Lu or King Kyansittha. In any case, it is a cave pagoda of early period of Bagan. The dome-like sloping roof of this pagoda is one architectural characteristic of early Bagan monuments.

The name "Patho-thamya" is derived from the fact that the stupa on the top were surrounded by many small stupas along the terrace and at the corners. Those at the corners are original work. The small stupas were commonly called "pahto-thamya" (sons of the stupa).

The bell shaped principal stupa in the center was constructed differently entirely from other stupas. The main body has 12 angles. At the bases of the angles there used to be naga heads. Upon the main body is the relic chamber, on top of which are concentric rings of plaster mouldings. The 1975 earthquake damaged the concentric rings which were now restored by the Archeology Department.

In each of the four walls were installed five perforated brick windows. At the north and south devotional halls there is no such window. There is a spiral staircase built in the thickness of the north wall of the devotional hall. It leads to upper storey where there are small surrounding stupas. Inside the niches of these stupas are Buddha statues of plaster moulding. They are the original works still unspoilt. The earthquake of 1975 damaged one original statue of plaster in the northern niche but it had been restored.
On the inner walls of the surrounding stupas are the frescos in which were depicted artists in action such as drumer playing his drum and dancer dancing. On the inner walls of the devotional halls are big pictures of Buddha now faded by years of soot collected on the surface of the wall. Also presented in these paintings are the episodes from Buddha's life- Mother queen Maha Maya giving birth to son Sidattha, the Brahmen astrologers reading the palm of Prince Sidattha; Prince Sidattha going out to the Royal Park; Prince Sidattha's renunciation of mundane life; Prince Sidattha cutting his hair to become monk etc. On the central walls are found big pictures of Buddha.
Pahto Thamya Temple

There used to be Buddha statue's in all niches but many had been stolen. Only five are left. Inside the niches on either side of the entrance to the image house are two stone images of Buddha, each three feet high. These are original stone sculptures of high skill.

There are thick wooden beams above the inner perforated windows and at the entrance of the eastern arch-way. In the image house there are two disciples of the Lord Buddha on either side of the Buddha image. They are original works, but are in perfect condition. The Buddha image of plaster moulding was restored later.

The stuccoes of floral motifs on the ornamental backdrops of Buddha's thrones are accomplished decorative artwork of this pagoda.

{tab=Architecture}

A vertical view of the side of Pahtothamya
Pahtothamya Temple, early A.D 11th Century
Pahto Thamya Temple

It has a unique stupa on its top

Buddha image inside Pahtothamya
Pahto Thamya Temple

The plaster artworks of Pahtothamya Pagoda

{/tabs}