

YOUR TOUR GUIDE TO

EGYPT

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C.I.T Travel
Egypt



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EGYPT

The ancient history of Egypt has been preserved through time and space in the amazing monuments and artefacts, which makes modern Egypt a mysterious place and fascinates every tourist.

The ancient Egyptians, along with the other ethnic groups, created a spectacular civilization, thus modern Egypt is a unique country where the Arabian, Islamic and Mediterranean cultures meet together, influence and enrich each other.

Egypt's rich history has created an incomparable mosaic of cultural and archaeological values; the country is home to one-third of the world's antiquities.

The mesmerising Pyramids standing there like guardians of time, the graceful Nile flowing through the landscapes, the mighty Sahara Desert embracing the horizon, and the pure beaches of the Red Sea – all these views are very impressive.

In the past, the country's name was "Kemet" – the "black land", it was associated with the alluvial soil which was deposited during the inundation of the River Nile.

This annual event provided Egypt with fertile land that due to the process expanded along the length of the river, especially in the Delta where many various crops give rich harvests.

The territory of Egypt is approximately 1,001,450 km² (386,662 miles²), neighboured by Israel and the Gaza Strip in the north-east; the Red Sea in the east; Sudan in the south; Libya in the west; and the Mediterranean Sea in the north.

Egypt is the third most populous country in Africa and the most populated in the Middle East. The majority of its 80 million population lives on/near the banks of the River Nile.

Only the area that borders the Nile and a few oases consisting 5.5% of the country's whole territory is used by its population, the other 94.5% is covered by the uninhabitable Sahara Desert.

The River Nile

The River Nile was the nourishing source of the ancient Egyptian civilisation, so the ancient tombs and temples are placed on the banks of the river.

The Nile is the longest river in the world that comes to Egypt from the territory of Sudan, flows north for about 1,545 km (960 miles) and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. From the Sudanese border to Cairo, it flows through a narrow cliff-lined valley, which, south of Edfu, is hardly more than 3 km (2 miles) wide.

From Edfu to Cairo, the Nile's width is about 7.5 km (4.6 miles), and most of the ploughland is lying on its western side.

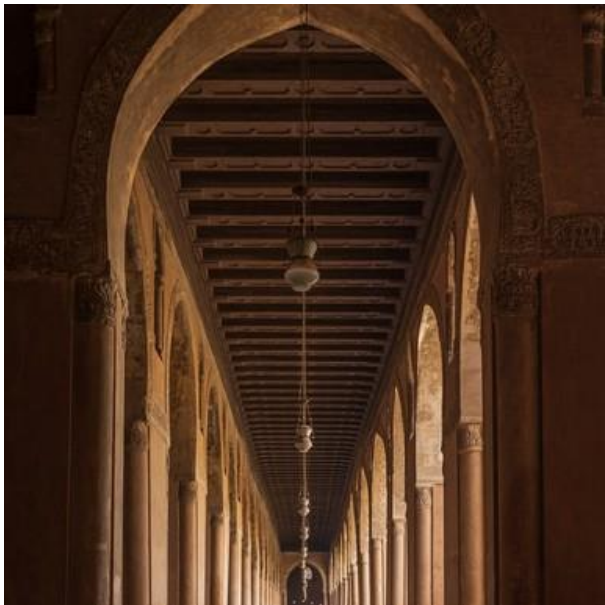
Just north of Cairo, the valley merges with the Delta before the River Nile joins with the Mediterranean Sea.

The ancient Luxor, which is lying about 676 km (420 miles) south of Cairo, represents the most dramatic historical place in Egypt, and it is considered to be the world's greatest open-air museum. In the past, when Luxor was the capital city of the New Kingdom Pharaohs, it was known as Thebes. Nowadays, Luxor is the place where more than half of Egyptian antiquities are kept, and it attracts visitors from all corners of the world.

The ancient city Aswan is known as the "jewel of the Nile". Its pink and grey granite looks through the Nubian sandstone, forming mountains, cliffs

and jagged outcrops. The River Nile is particularly clear and cold here, and the blue water waves magically contrast with the waves of golden sand on its banks.





COMING TO EGYPT

Note: This document is a travel guide only, to get up-to-date information please check with your nearest Egyptian Embassy.

All tourists must have a passport that is valid for six months beyond the intended length of stay.

There must be sufficient blank pages for entry stamps upon arrival.

Visas are normally obtainable at the airport upon arrival, but some nationalities may need a pre-arrival Visa.

Please note that passport holders are responsible for having the necessary documentation applicable for entry.

TIME ZONE

Egypt standard time is GMT
+ 2 hours

STAYING HEALTHY

Tourists do not need to be vaccinated unless they are arriving from countries where yellow fever is widespread.

It is better to drink a lot of water when staying outside during the day. Take precautions against the sun; though due to the cool coastal breezes and lack of humidity, it can often feel cooler than is. Short-term dehydration can result in a variety of unpleasant symptoms such as fever, headache and nausea. Drinking plenty of water can help the symptoms disappear quickly.

Please notify Sanctuary Retreats of any particular dietary needs or allergies at least 6 weeks before the start of your adventure. We will make every attempt to accommodate your request. Tourists with physical impairments, as well as those who require regular or ongoing medical treatment, should notify us of their health status at the time of booking (or, if this occurs after the reservation is made, at the time such a scenario occurs.) We strongly advise you to purchase comprehensive travel insurance to protect yourself in the event of a medical emergency.

TIPPING

As tourists are travelling on an independent itinerary, the cost of their programs does not include gratuities. Tipping is a very subjective matter, and should only be considered when the staff have gone above and beyond for you. If you want to acknowledge the staff's service, here you can find a rough guide. The sum given below is in US Dollars and is calculated per person per day.

Local Guides & Egyptologists

- 25 USD per day, for 1-7 people in a group
- 15 USD per day, for 8-15 people in a group
- 10 USD per day, for 16 or more people in a group

Tour Coordinators & Drivers

- 14 USD per day, for 1-7 people in a group
- 10 USD per day, for 8-15 people in a group
- 7 USD per day, for 16 or more people in a group

Taxis

- In Egypt, taxi drivers do not expect tips, but it would be polite to round up the fare.

Restaurants

- A service charge is usually included in the bill. If not, a customary tip would be equal to 10% of the total bill.

MONEY

Banks: Banking hours are typically from 9 am to 2 pm, Sunday through Thursday, with Fridays and Saturdays off.

Currency exchange offices are located in the main cities. It is possible to exchange major foreign currencies at the same rate as banks in most big hotels.

Currency: The Egyptian Pound (LE) is the official currency, and US dollars are often accepted at tourist attractions.

Credit Cards: Major credit cards, such as MasterCard and Visa, are generally accepted at most restaurants, nearly all hotels, and many stores. American Express is less prevalent, but it is still accepted at most big hotels. Diners Club Cards are practically unknown in Egypt.



LANGUAGE

Egypt's national language is Arabic. However, tourists won't face communication problems as English is widely spoken in hotels and shops, followed by French, most staff members in tourist areas speak German and/or Italian as well.

Useful phrases	
<i>Hello!</i>	<i>Ahlan</i>
<i>How are you?</i>	<i>Ezayak</i>
<i>I am fine.</i>	<i>Ana Kowayes</i>
<i>I am not fine.</i> <i>Thank you!</i>	<i>Ana msh kowayes</i> <i>Shok-ran</i>
<i>Beautiful.</i>	<i>Gameel</i>
<i>Goodbye!</i>	<i>Maa salaama</i>



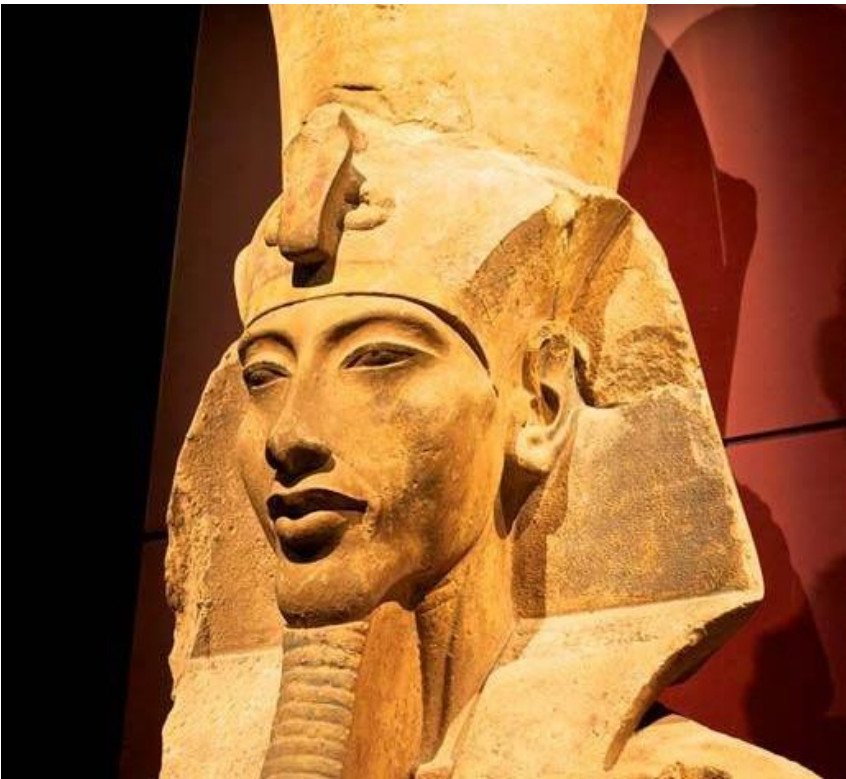
WEATHER

Days in Egypt are usually warm or hot, and nights are cold. The country has only two seasons: a mild winter (November–April) and a hot summer (May–October). The seasons differ in daytime temperatures and changes in prevailing winds. Temperatures in coastal areas range from an average minimum of 14°C in winter to an average maximum of 30°C in summer.

In the inland desert areas, temperatures vary greatly, especially in summer, when they may change from 7°C at night to 43°C during the day. Temperatures in the desert change less significantly throughout the winter, yet they may be as low as 0°C at night and as high as 18°C during the day.

In the winter, cold weather accompanied by slight frosts and even snow is common throughout the Delta and the northern Nile Valley. In most areas, Egypt receives less than eighty millimetres of precipitation per year. The majority of the rain comes along the coastline.

A unique feature of Egypt’s climate is the hot spring wind that blows across the country. The winds, which are called “khamsin”, normally come in April, although they can sometimes appear in March and May. Those winds can reach tremendous speeds and carry large amounts of sand and dust. Such sandstorms, which frequently occur with winds of up to 140 km/h, can lead to a sharp rise in temperatures up to 20°C in two hours.



SOUVENIRS

Shopping in Egypt is quite a relaxing process: luxury souvenir shops, hotel outlets, or local bazaars – you can feel that all those places have a mesmerising aura. The unique Khan El Khalili bazaar is a must-see place; it is a wonderful exhibition of beautiful gold and silver cartouches, carved alabaster, exquisite woodworks and a place where elaborately embroidered traditional jellabiya can be purchased at acceptable prices. An interesting vivid haggling is an integral part of the process that makes shopping in Egypt funny as well.

WHAT TO TAKE WITH

Usually, light cotton clothing is recommended for the warm months (April–September) and a light jacket for nights during the colder months (October–March).

- Blouses/shirts with long sleeves to protect you from the sun (short sleeves are also fine)
- Cotton t-shirts and tops
- Personal toiletries, sunscreen, lip balm and insect repellent
- Hat, sunglasses and prescription glasses
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera



RELIGION & ETIQUETTE

As a Middle Eastern country, in Egypt Muslim majority and the Christian minority stick to their traditions. As it is a tourist-friendly country, shorts and T-shirts are suitable for visiting famous places like the Pyramids or the main sights of Upper Egypt. When strolling around central Cairo and neighbouring places, especially in rural regions, you should accommodate for a more modest clothing code. To show respect to the local culture, tourists should wear casual, comfortable attire that covers their knees and elbows when visiting mosques, churches, or synagogues. When spending time around the pool at hotels or on a cruise, low necklines, sleeveless shirts, or shorts can be comfortably worn; and at the beach in the Red Sea resorts, it is quite normal to be dressed in typical beachwear.



LOCAL FOOD & DRINK

Savouring the variety of flavours, the local gastronomic delicacies offer, is one of the main issues when visiting Egypt. There are a huge number of first-class restaurants serving foreign cuisine throughout Egypt, particularly in its capital city of Cairo.

If you love robust meals, you will be delighted with the Egyptian cuisine. An abundance of spices and herbs in Egyptian food can please not just your taste, but also your eyes.

From stews with gravy to succulent grilled dishes and delicate salads, Egyptian food is a unique example of Middle Eastern, Turkish and Mediterranean gastronomic influences, incorporating many of the country’s traditional ingredients.

Those who love meat must try wonderful “tagjin lahma” (meat casserole/tajin) or delicious Circassian Chicken/ Chicken Sharkasia (chicken served with rice and creamy walnut sauce).

Egyptian cuisine also has a lot of sweet dishes, and Om Ali (bread pudding), or Konafa (a sugar-soaked pastry cooked in butter/oil and syrup) are the national favourites.

Egyptian meals are commonly completed with a fragrant glass of traditionally very hot and sweet mint tea.

Egyptian drinks are diverse and appeal to a wide range of preferences. The fruit juices are rich in natural vitamins; mango, lemon, sugarcane and guava are among the most popular. Traditional beverages have existed for hundreds of years and have evolved into an art form. One of the most popular is Karkade – a rich, sweet infusion of the dark red hibiscus flower, which is enjoyed cold but can also be served hot. Egypt's wines, in addition to juices and traditional beverages, have developed substantially in recent years, and tourists can enjoy locally made wines and beers throughout their trip.

PHOTOGRAPHY

It is common to get permission before photographing natives.

Those who are going to travel with digital photo and/or video equipment should take the proper charging gear for each piece of equipment. (Please note that you may also need the appropriate socket plug adaptor and voltage converter).