



Your passport to adventure

Sands & Seas

Country(ies): Egypt

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: A/C minibus/coach & sleeper train

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 18

Days: 9 Days

Start location: Cairo, Egypt

End location: Cairo, Egypt

Departs On: Saturday

Meals: Breakfasts - 11, Lunches - 2, Dinners - 4

Highlights: The great Pyramids & Sphinx, King tut's mask in the Egyptian museum, awesome Karnak temple, ancient Valley of the Kings, traditional felucca cruise, Red Sea at Hurghada

Places Visited: Cairo, Luxor & Hurghada



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive into Cairo, transfer to hotel

Upon arrival in Cairo airport we will be met by our ground staff who will assist with visa formalities and collecting your luggage. You'll then transfer across Cairo to your hotel, located close to the pyramids. The rest of the day is free for you to rest and recover from the flight. An optional evening dinner cruise on the Nile or sound and light show is available to be booked locally this evening for those interested (subject to your flight arrival time).

OVERNIGHT: Cairo hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Single room supplement (EGSGSS) || Extra day in Cairo - pre-tour

Day 2: Cairo, Museum & Pyramids tour

Your tour of Egypt begins with a visit to the Giza Plateau, site of Egypt's world famous Great Pyramids, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. We visit the great Pyramids of Giza and the ever enigmatic Sphinx, Memphis-first capital of the ancient kingdom to see the statue of Ramses II. Following on from the Pyramids we then head to the Egyptian Museum in central Cairo. Home to the fantastic Tutankhamun exhibit the museum hosts a huge number of other ancient Egyptian artefacts.

This evening we transfer to the station for the overnight sleeper train to Luxor (approx. 9 hours). A flight & hotel upgrade is available if you would prefer to skip the train journey.

OVERNIGHT: On board sleeper train

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: Internal flights upgrade

Day 3: Luxor, West Bank tour, free time.

We arrive into Luxor early this morning and cross the Nile to begin our tour of Luxor's West Bank. Here we visit the Valley of the Kings, one of the most important archaeological sites in the world, where the hidden tombs in this ancient burial site are still revealing their secrets today. Our tour includes several important Pharaonic tombs, along with the temples of Queen Hatchepsut and Medinat Habu, and the huge Colossi of Memnon.

Your afternoon is then free to relax at your hotel on the banks of the Nile. You can also head out into Luxor to do some shopping or explore the local markets, visit the mummification museum or take a felucca trip to nearby Banana Island. Further sightseeing options are available if you'd like a more in depth exploration of Egyptian history. A good example is the Ramesseum, Workers Village and the Valley of the Queens on the west bank of the Nile both of which are worth a visit. Your tour guide will help to arrange any extra visits for you (an extra cost will apply to cover transport, entrances and the guide's services).

OVERNIGHT: Luxor hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Luxor, Karnak temple

Your morning is free today and you can enjoy a welcome lie in after several early starts. After lunch we visit the massive temple complex at Karnak, once the religious heart of Thebes and Upper Egypt. It was connected to Luxor

by a sphinx-lined avenue, and the entire complex was in turn connected to the Nile via a canal, through which moved the sacred boats of the god Amun. Entering through a smaller sphinx-lined avenue, built by Ramesses II, you enter through the enormous pylon entrance. Inside the huge Courtyard are three chapels dedicated to the gods Amun, Khous and Mut. The Hypostyle Hall boasts 134 immense columns, carved with scenes of gods and pharaohs, and bold hieroglyphs cover the walls.

A spectacular hot air balloon flight over the west bank of the Nile is available this morning (expect an early start to catch sunrise as the balloon rises).

OVERNIGHT: Luxor hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Hot air balloon in Luxor

Day 5: Luxor to the Red Sea at Hurghada

We leave Luxor in the morning for a drive through the desert to the Red Sea beach resort of Hurghada (approx. 5 hours). Your stay here is on a 'soft all inclusive' basis, with food and drink included, but not alcoholic beverages. Hurghada is the perfect place to enjoy some scuba diving and snorkelling, and the excellent Red Sea marine life attracts divers from around the world. Other activities available include quad biking, camel rides, wind surfing, sea fishing trips, kite surfing and glass bottomed submarines. Our local rep based in Hurghada is available to help you make any arrangements. For those wishing a little gentler time, Hurghada itself has an interesting marina and old town to explore. Alternatively you can spend the next few days here relaxing on the beach and enjoying the year-round sunshine.

OVERNIGHT: Hurghada resort

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: Hurghada. Free time

The next few days in Hurghada are free for you to relax and enjoy the beach, or to take advantage of some of the adventurous activities on offer. Our local representative will be on hand to help assist with any arrangements.

OVERNIGHT: Hurghada - 5 star resort

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Hurghada. Free time at the Red Sea

You have another free day in Hurghada today.

OVERNIGHT: Hurghada - 5 star resort

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 8: Return to Cairo, Islamic Cairo and Khan-el-Khalili walk

We leave Hurghada this morning for the transfer back to Cairo by private minibus (approx. 5 hours). Upon arrival we check into our hotel in central Cairo. Then, in the late afternoon we take a guided walk through the back streets and bazaars in Old Cairo. We'll walk through the huge Bab al-Futuh gateway and explore streets dedicated to metalwork, spices, pottery, fabric, jewellery and anything else you can imagine as we gradually enter the more touristy Khan-el-Khalili bazaar. We'll have time for a break to try some mint tea and a shisha pipe and this is a great final opportunity to pick up some souvenirs of your time in Egypt.

This evening you could take a final evening dinner cruise on the Nile, or perhaps revisit the pyramids for a

spectacular sound and light show. You can also upgrade the drive back to Cairo to an internal flight if you wish (prices on request) or fly home directly from Hurghada instead of returning to Cairo (discounts available).

OVERNIGHT: Cairo hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 9: Cairo, departure transfer to the airport

Your time is free in Cairo today for some final sightseeing or shopping until we pick you up from your hotel and transfer you to the airport to catch your departure flight. A range of day trip options are available (subject to your flight time) and extra nights in Cairo may also be added if you would like to take advantage of these.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Alexandria day trip || Cairo city tour || Wadi Rayan day trip (Valley of the Whales) || Extra day in Cairo - post-tour

Included

- 7 nights accommodation in 5-star hotels
- 1 night on board overnight sleeper train in private twin-berth cabins (flight & hotel upgrade available)
- All transport and transfers in private AC vehicles
- 24-hour airport arrival and departure transfer service
- Sightseeing tours as detailed in the itinerary
- Services of a local Egyptologist guide for all sightseeing tours
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

Excluded

- International flights
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees (allow approx. US\$89)
- Tipping kitty (allow US\$60)
- Drinks, snacks, guide tips, and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Hotel gala dinners (see Tour notes)
- Any other items not mentioned above

Notes

Hotel Gala Dinners

Many of Egypt's hotels and Nile cruise boats arrange a very special gala dinner with entertainment in the evening on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Payment for these is often optional on Christmas Eve (24 Dec) but may be compulsory on New Year's Eve (31 Dec), whether you attend or not. Prices can range from around US\$50 to over US\$150 per person. Final decisions on prices and whether dinners are compulsory are made relatively close to the time. We aim to always select hotels that make their Gala Dinners optional, though this is not always possible. Gala dinner prices are therefore not included in our prices above, but will be added to your booking if they become required. More information is available on request.

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Single room supplement (EGSGSS)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$575.00

This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and would be happy to share a room, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you book then we will add the single room supplement to your booking and it will be payable with your balance payment unless we have arranged a room share for you by then. If a room share is arranged after you have paid the supplement then we will refund it to you. Room shares are arranged in order of booking.

Note: The price shown is a low season price. Slightly higher prices may apply during high and peak seasons - the exact price for your dates will be shown on the online booking form and is always available on request.

Wadi Rayan day trip (Valley of the Whales)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$170.00

This tour provides a great contrast to the Pharaonic sites you have visited on the rest of your tour. We leave Cairo and head to the Fayoum region where we head for the Wadi Rayan Protected Area, which surrounds a fresh-water lake in the middle of the desert, filled by the remaining irrigation water from the Fayoum area. There are several waterfalls here (popular in Egyptian pop music videos), and a bird hide which gives good views of the lakes birdlife, particularly in the winter months when the lake is an important stop for migrating water-birds. We also visit the Springs Oasis area, a rare example of an uninhabited Saharan oasis, and host to many different plants and animals, including Dorcas Gazelle, Ruppell's Sand Fox and Fennec Fox. After a stop for a packed lunch, we then drive into the stunning desert & mountain scenery of Wadi Hitan (Valley of the Whales). This World Heritage Site is accepted as the most significant site in the world to demonstrate the evolution of whales, and we take a 2-3km walk here to see several specimens of fossilised whales of different types sitting on the surface of the sand, as well as fossilised mangroves and the remains of crab holes.

This tour requires a full free day in Cairo, but can also be arranged straight after you arrive back in Cairo from Luxor/Aswan from the overnight sleeper train. We can also arrange it on any tour if you add extra days before and after your main tour. Prices shown are based on 2 or more people travelling, with an additional supplement due for solo travellers.

Hot air balloon in Luxor

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$150.00

This popular optional tour starts early in the morning so that you experience the sunrise over the Valleys of the Kings & Queens, temples and desert. We endeavour to use the earliest flights of the day as they are timed to fit with the rising sun, this means that times may vary. You get around 1 hour in the air.

Alexandria day trip

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$120.00

Alexandria is about 2.5 hours north of Cairo on the Mediterranean coast of Egypt. This city is the second largest in Egypt and this full day tour will include the Roman amphitheatre with its twelve semi-circular marble tiers, the Catacombs of Kom al-Shoqafa which is the largest Roman cemetery in Alexandria, Pompey's Pillar, Fort Qaitbey (from outside), the famous modern library before returning to Cairo. If time allows you can tour inside Fort Qaitbey (entrance fee extra) and we may also visit the Montazah Palace gardens. Lunch at a seafood restaurant is included.

Cairo city tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$75.00

This half day guided tour of Cairo tour begins with Islamic areas including the Citadel of Saladdin, boasting the famous Alabaster Mosque of Mohammed Ali. Then we head onto the Coptic area of Cairo where the Romans constructed the fortress of Babylon. The church of St. Mary was built over the ruins of two towers of the fortress whilst it is more commonly known as the Hanging Church next stop is St. Sergius which is said to be the resting place of the Holy Family. The tour finishes with time exploring the Khan-el-Khalili bazaar.

Nile dinner cruise in Cairo

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$75.00

This option offers an evening of cruising up and down the Nile through the centre of Cairo on a 5-star riverboat while enjoying some middle eastern cuisine as well as a traditional Egyptian Sufi and Belly Dancing show. A great way to spend a free evening in Cairo and see some more of the city. Transfers to and from your hotel are included.

Extra day in Cairo (5-star) - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$135.00

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to

availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Extra day in Cairo (5-star) - post-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$135.00

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Tour Notes

1. Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. In Egypt we do not use any public tourist buses or overnight coach journeys as we know that people don't sleep on board and end up very tired for the following few days. All the vehicles we use are air-conditioned, many are fitted with speed limiters, and all are inspected and checked daily. Some 4WD vehicles used on desert safaris may not always have air conditioning where they are only used for short periods.

For the overnight train journey from Cairo to Luxor (approx. 9 hrs) this tour uses the overnight sleeper train. This train has private twin berth cabins with large seats and fold-down beds with sheets, pillow & blanket. The lockable cabins also have a washbasin and storage cupboard, and an airline tray-style evening meal and breakfast is included. If you wish you may upgrade this journey to internal flights. You can also upgrade the Hurghada-Cairo drive to a flight if you wish - the normal drive takes around 7 hours.

2. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions.

In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

Egypt: Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A

Jordan: Tetanus, Hepatitis A

Israel: Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis

Lebanon: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A

Malaria is not generally present unless it has been contracted abroad; you do not need to take malaria prophylactics.

More information is available here: [Egypt](#), [Jordan](#), [Israel](#), [Lebanon](#)

Note: We are aware of some places in Egypt using 'black henna' instead of pure brown henna. Black henna contains a chemical dye PPD (paraphenylenediamine) which can result in severe allergic reactions and resultant scarring. To be safe we recommend avoiding any henna tattoos while in Egypt unless you are certain they are using pure brown henna.

3. Passports and Visas - Egypt

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

We recommend that you contact your closest Egyptian consulate or embassy for current information for your

nationality.

In general official advice is that all nationalities obtain their Egypt visas in advance, as we cannot guarantee that you can get them in the airport. An online e-visa is available through <https://visa2egypt.gov.eg/eVisa/>. Please do not use any other website as there are many scam sites offering Egypt e-visas.

In practice however, many nationalities (including British and European, Australian, New Zealand, USA, Canadian) can and do obtain their visas on arrival in Cairo airport. The process is much quicker and simpler, the cost is currently **US\$25 p/p** and must be paid in hard currency (i.e. GBP, USD or EUR) - you'll be given change in local currency if necessary. There are no forms to fill in and you don't need to bring passport photos. Visas are issued at one of the bank desks in the immigration hall, before you get to passport control. Our representative will have met you by this stage and will assist with the process.

All African and Indian nationals, and some others, will need to obtain their visas in advance.

For further information on your visa requirements, please either contact us or your local Egyptian embassy/consulate.

4. Time

The time in Egypt, Jordan and Israel is GMT plus 2 hours. Daylight saving adjustments have historically been applied in some years but not others. At present it appears that there will be no daylight saving changes in Egypt 2016 and beyond, though this may change at short notice (with a resulting impact on flight times and schedules). In Jordan and Israel, daylight saving of one hour is generally applied between the end of March and the end of October, making it GMT plus 3 hours. Exact dates vary from year to year and sometimes the changes may be scrapped altogether.

5. Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

6. Money - Egypt

The local currency in Egypt is the Egyptian Pound, often denoted 'LE'. The Egyptian Pound can vary significantly in value against the British Pound, but sticks fairly close to the value of the US Dollar. You do not need to arrange to bring any Egyptian Pounds with you to Egypt, as change facilities are available in all the hotels, airports and banks. You should try to obtain and keep hold of small denomination notes or coins on you during the tour as these are useful for toilets, tips and small purchases. ATMs are readily available in major towns and many local shops will accept VISA/Mastercard or Amex, but may charge fees of up to 10% - check before you pay. Travellers cheques are not recommended as they can not be changed in many places now, and can incur high fees.

While in Egypt you will need sufficient funds to cover meals not included in the itinerary, drinks, snacks, souvenirs and personal expenses such as laundry. These should generally all be paid for in Egyptian Pounds. You may also need to pay for the tour Tipping Kitty and site Entrance Fees while you are in Egypt. Payments for these may be made to your tour guide in hard currency (USD, GBP, EUR) at the start of your tour. Please see your tour Included/Excluded details for more information and guideline amounts for these.

It is difficult to recommend a level of personal spending money which will suit everyone as this can differ greatly, but as a guideline, we would suggest allowing USD 15-25 per person per day as a minimum. Allow more if you plan on

doing lots of shopping, or buying many alcoholic drinks.

7. Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour starting on Tuesdays throughout the year. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 travellers and a maximum of 18. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and on a separate dates & prices sheet available on request.

8. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You can pay your deposit or full balance online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer. We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

9. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

If you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally, or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

IMPORTANT: *We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.*

10. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and an ABTA Member (Y4447) and you can be confident when booking with us that your money is safe and protected. Financial failure insurance is provided through Affirma to protect all customers for the land portion of their tour.

Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

11. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Egypt Uncovered shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

12. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/EgyptUncovered

www.twitter.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

13. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's ['Travel Aware' campaign](#) which provides further useful and invaluable information.

['Travel Aware' campaign](#)

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Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
