EGYPT UNCOVERED

Your passport to adventure

Map Image

Country(ies): Egypt

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: A/C minibus/coach, sleeper train & felucca sailboat

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 18

Days: 9 days

Start Location: Cairo, Egypt

End Location: Cairo, Egypt

Meals: Breakfasts - 8, Lunches - 2, Dinners - 3

Highlights:

The Pyramids & Sphinx, antiquities of the Egyptian museum, romantic Philae Temple, Abu Simbel option, traditional felucca sailing, ancient Valley of the Kings

Day 1: Arrival in Cairo and Hotel Transfer

Upon your arrival, our team will greet you at the airport, assist you with securing your visa and luggage, and transfer you to your hotel to begin your journey. They will assist you in settling in, familiarise you with the local area, and provide details of tomorrow's plans. The remainder of the day is at your leisure. If you arrive earlier, you may wish to embark on an evening dinner cruise along the Nile or experience an awe-inspiring sound and light show at the pyramids (both can be booked locally upon arrival).

OVERNIGHT:

Cairo hotel

MEALS:

EXTRAS:

Day 2: Excursion to Cairo, Pyramids, Sphinx & Museum Visit

Our journey through Egypt begins with a visit to the Egyptian Museum in the heart of Cairo. Home to the remarkable Tutankhamun exhibit, the museum also houses a vast collection of other ancient Egyptian relics. A local Egyptologist will be guiding you during this and all of your other excursions, offering a wealth of knowledge and a passion for both Egyptian history and their country as a whole. After the museum, we proceed to Giza on the outskirts of Cairo to see the Sphinx and the three grand pyramids of Egypt. The Great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops), standing at 500 feet tall and 750 feet wide at its base, is a staggering man-made wonder made of massive stone blocks with a smooth limestone exterior. Over time, much of the casing has been removed, exposing the core structure. Alongside the smaller pyramids of Khafre (Chephren) and Menkaure (Mycerinus), the awe-inspiring view of these colossal monuments emerging from the desert is truly remarkable. You will have the chance to venture inside the pyramids if you wish, although your guide cannot join you (a limited number of tickets are available for the Great Pyramid).

In the evening, we will head to the station to board the overnight sleeper train to Aswan (approximately 12 hours).

OVERNIGHT:

On board train

MEALS:

Breakfast,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Arrival in Aswan, Nubian Village, and Philae Temple

This morning, we arrive in Aswan and head to our hotel with views of the Nile, which is at its most stunning here, featuring cascading rapids, lush green islands, and feluccas gliding back and forth. Aswan itself is a vibrant blend of African and Middle Eastern cultures, which you can best experience by wandering through the lively markets. It is also part of the ancient Nubian region, which once stretched across southern Egypt and northern Sudan along the Nile. Many of the descendants of the Nubian people still reside here, and we will visit a local Nubian village to admire their colourful homes, simple lifestyle, and enjoy a traditional lunch.

Our tour continues this afternoon with a visit to the Temple of Philae, a stunning island complex dedicated to Isis, which has been reclaimed from the rising waters of Lake Nasser. We reach it by a scenic boat ride. The evening is free for exploring Aswan’s spice and general markets, as well as strolling along the popular Corniche by the Nile. Alternatively, you can take a camel ride across the sands on the far bank of the Nile to St. Simeon’s monastery. For those who have chosen the Abu Simbel option, an early night is recommended to prepare for a very early departure tomorrow.

OVERNIGHT:

Aswan hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast,Lunch

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Journey to Aswan, Optional Visit to Abu Simbel, Felucca Sailing Tour

This morning, we have the option to begin our journey early to visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Abu Simbel. These remarkable temples, constructed by Ramses II, are among Egypt's most iconic landmarks and attractions. For those not visiting Abu Simbel, there is the option to explore Aswan's bustling markets, enjoy a walk along the Corniche by the river, or visit the Nubian Museum, which offers a captivating collection that highlights the history and culture of the Nubian people in the region.

At lunchtime, we will board our traditional Nile felucca to sail down the river. Cruising on a felucca is one of the most delightful ways to experience Egypt, as you glide along, observing rural Egyptian life on the banks of the Nile. Our Nubian crew will be at the helm, guiding the boat and providing entertainment, while also preparing meals on board. A separate facilities boat will join us intermittently throughout the day and anchor with us overnight. This boat is equipped with a toilet

and showers for comfort, as well as a hygienic kitchen where the crew will prepare a tasty evening meal. Tonight, you will sleep on the felucca deck, with mattresses, blankets, and mosquito nets provided. Alternatively, you may opt to extend your stay with an additional night in the Aswan hotel. In this case, you would remain in Aswan overnight and reunite with the group the following morning, when they leave the felucca at Komombo. All other scheduled activities remain unchanged.

OVERNIGHT:

On board felucca

MEALS:

Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 5: Felucca Sailing, Edfu Temple, Luxor Exploration

After breakfast on board, we say goodbye to our felucca crew and travel north from Aswan to Edfu, where we will explore the magnificent Temple of Horus. We will then continue our journey further north to Luxor. Luxor is built on and around the ancient city of Thebes, and it is home to the largest concentration of ancient ruins in the Nile Valley, if not the world. To the west of the Nile lies the City of the Dead, with its mortuary temples and rock-carved tombs, while to the east stand the Temples of Luxor and Karnak. In the evening, we offer an optional walking tour of the smaller Luxor Temple, which is centrally located and beautifully illuminated at night.

OVERNIGHT:

Luxor hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 6: Luxor West Bank Exploration with Free Time

We cross the Nile early this morning to begin our exploration of Luxor’s West Bank. This region, home to the Valley of the Kings, houses the ancient tombs, which continue to unveil their mysteries, making it one of the most significant archaeological sites globally. Our tour covers several of these Pharaonic tombs, as well as the temples of Queen Hatshepsut and Medinat Habu,

and the grand Colossi of Memnon.

A breathtaking hot air balloon ride over the west bank of the Nile is available this morning (be prepared for an early start to witness the sunrise as the balloon ascends).

In the afternoon, you have free time to unwind and enjoy the amenities of your luxurious 5-star hotel along the Nile. Alternatively, you can further explore Luxor, shop or wander through the market, visit the Mummification Museum, or take a felucca ride to the nearby Banana Island. For those seeking a deeper dive into Egyptian history, additional sightseeing options are available. Notable sites such as the Ramesseum, Workers' Village, and the Valley of the Queens on the west bank of the Nile are all worth visiting. Your guide will be delighted to arrange any additional excursions for you (additional costs will apply to cover transport, entrance fees, and the guide's services).

OVERNIGHT:

Luxor hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 7: Excursion to Luxor, Karnak Temple

You have the morning to yourself today, allowing for a well-deserved lie-in after a series of early mornings. Following lunch, we will explore the vast Karnak temple complex, which was once the religious heart of Thebes and Upper Egypt. This monumental site was connected to Luxor by a grand avenue lined with sphinxes, and the entire complex was linked to the Nile by a canal, through which the sacred boats of the god Amun would travel. As you walk through a smaller avenue flanked by sphinxes, constructed by Ramesses II, you will arrive at the grand pylon entrance. Inside the expansive Courtyard, there are three chapels dedicated to the gods Amun, Khonsu, and Mut. The stunning Hypostyle Hall, with its 134 towering columns, is adorned with intricate carvings of gods, pharaohs, and hieroglyphic inscriptions.

In the evening, we will head to the station to board the overnight sleeper train back to Cairo, a journey of approximately 9 hours.

OVERNIGHT:

On board sleeper train

MEALS:

Breakfast,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 8: Cairo, Optional Excursions, and the Hidden Alleys of Khan el-Khalili Market

We arrive back in Cairo this morning and transfer to our hotel. The remainder of the day is free for you to explore Cairo at your leisure, or you may choose to join an optional tour. Options include a city tour of Cairo, which visits Coptic Cairo, the Citadel, and the Mohamed Ali Mosque, or a half-day excursion to Saqqara, Dashour, and Memphis, where you can delve into the history and development of pyramid construction. Another full-day option takes you further into the desert outside Cairo to visit the World Heritage Site of the Valley of the Whales at Wadi Rayan.

In the late afternoon, we will embark on a guided walk through the back streets and bazaars of central Cairo. We'll pass through the impressive Bab al-Futuh gateway and explore streets filled with shops selling metalwork, spices, pottery, fabric, jewellery, and much more, before gradually entering the bustling Khan-el-Khalili bazaar. There will be time to pause for a tea and a shisha pipe, and perhaps sample an early dinner of Egypt's unofficial national dish, Kushari, before returning to our hotel.

OVERNIGHT:

Cairo hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 9: Cairo and transfer to the airport for departure

You have some free time today for any last-minute sightseeing or shopping before we take you to the airport for your departure flight.

OVERNIGHT:

N/A

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Included:

- All accommodation as outlined in the itinerary
- All transport and transfers in private air-conditioned vehicles
- 24-hour airport arrival and departure transfer service
- Overnight sleeper train in private twin-berth cabins (flight upgrades available)
- Sightseeing tours as specified in the itinerary
- Services of a local Egyptologist guide for all sightseeing excursions
- Meals as detailed in the itinerary

Excluded:

- International flights (upon request)
- Visa charges (most nationalities can obtain on arrival)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Entrance fees (budget approximately US$81)
- Gratuity fund (budget US$65)
- Beverages, snacks, guide gratuities, and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Hotel gala dinners (refer to Tour notes)
- Any additional items not listed above

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.

Hot air balloon in Luxor

Hot air balloon in Luxor

From $130.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

An early morning departure is required for this popular optional tour, designed to capture the sunrise over the Valleys of the Kings & Queens, ancient temples, and desert scenery. We prioritize the earliest flights possible, as their timing aligns with the sunrise; therefore, departure times may fluctuate. This flight offers roughly one hour of aerial viewing.

The approximate cost is $170.00, and booking is exclusively available locally through your tour guide, who will provide the most up-to-date pricing.

Alexandria day trip

Alexandria day trip

From $125.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

Discover Alexandria, a 2.5-hour drive north of Cairo on Egypt's Mediterranean coast. This full-day tour showcases the city's highlights, including the Roman amphitheatre, the Catacombs of Kom al-Shoqafa, Pompey's Pillar, Fort Qaitbey (exterior view), and the modern Library of Alexandria. Depending on time, you may also visit Fort Qaitbey's interior and Montazah Palace gardens. A seafood lunch is provided. This tour requires either a late-night departure flight on your final day or an extra day added to your trip.

Pricing is based on a minimum of two travellers; solo supplements apply. Entrance fees (approximately USD 18) are not included.

Cairo city tour

Cairo city tour

From $75.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This half-day guided tour of Cairo commences in the Islamic quarter, featuring the Citadel of Saladin, home to the renowned Alabaster Mosque of Mohammed Ali. We then proceed to the Coptic area of Cairo, where the Romans erected the fortress of Babylon. The Church of St. Mary, more commonly known as the Hanging Church, was built upon the remnants of two fortress towers. Our next stop is St. Sergius, believed to be the resting place of the Holy Family. The tour concludes at the bustling Khan el-Khalili bazaar. The entrance fee budget covers the Coptic Museum, the Citadel, and the Sultan Hassan Mosque. Please be aware that depending on the day's schedule, it may not be possible to visit all of these sites.

Entrance fees for visited sites are not included (budget approximately USD 17).

Prices quoted are based on a minimum of two persons travelling. Solo traveller supplements are applicable.

Saqqara, Dashour & Memphis

Saqqara, Dashour & Memphis

From $90.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This half-day guided tour, venturing to the outskirts of Cairo, offers a fascinating insight into the history and evolution of pyramid building, and the wider narrative of Egyptian civilisation. Our explorations are centred on the area of ancient Memphis, a former capital of Egypt.

We begin with a visit to Saqqara, a vast desert necropolis constructed for the kings and nobles of the Old Kingdom. Here, we'll see Zoser's 'step' pyramid and the adjacent Imhotep Museum, where we can delve deeper into the history of Memphis and the surrounding region. Next, we journey to Dashur to witness one of the subsequent attempts at pyramid construction. Dashur's 'bent pyramid' – a testament to the ongoing learning process – is a captivating site, retaining much of its original limestone casing. We will then return you to your hotel.

Prices quoted are based on a minimum of two persons choosing this option. Entrance fees to the sites visited are not included (budget approximately USD 18). Solo traveller supplements are applicable.

Luxor Museum tour

Luxor Museum tour

From $40.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

The Luxor Museum, though smaller than Cairo's Egyptian Museum, boasts a beautifully curated collection with significant artefacts. Highlights include a colossal red granite head of Amenhotep III, a calcite statue of the crocodile god Sobek, and items from Tutankhamun's tomb, such as boats, sandals, and arrows. The museum also houses objects from periods following Pharaonic Egypt.

The museum typically opens from 9 am to 2 pm and then again from 5 pm to 9 pm. Your guide will confirm the current opening times and arrange a guided visit that complements your other sightseeing activities.

Prices are based on a minimum of two people travelling. Solo traveller supplements apply. Entrance fees to the museum are not included (budget approximately USD 9).

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

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

From $105.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This option allows you to extend your tour by an additional day, with accommodation at the

same hotel as your main tour (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer remains included. Prices are per person, based on two people sharing. Please note that single-room and peak-season supplements are applicable.

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

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

From $105.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This option allows you to begin your tour a day early, staying at your tour hotel (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer remains included. Prices are per person, based on two people sharing. Please note that single-room and peak-season supplements apply.

Abydos & Dendara

Abydos & Dendara

From $100.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This option arranges a fascinating day trip from Luxor to the temples at Abydos and Dendara. These less-visited sites offer a unique glimpse into ancient Egyptian history

and architecture.

Dendara, dedicated to the goddess Hathor, is a remarkably well-preserved temple that often captivates visitors, becoming a personal favourite. Nearby Abydos, the cult centre of Osiris, god of the dead, features a vast necropolis that once served as a pilgrimage and burial site. This historically significant site originally housed at least ten temples.

Please note that this excursion involves approximately 6 hours of total driving time to and from Luxor, requiring a full free day in your itinerary.

Pricing is based on two people travelling and includes return transport, an expert Egyptologist guide, and tours of both sites. Solo traveller supplements apply. Entrance fees to the sites are not included (budget approximately USD 7).

Wadi Rayan day trip (Valley of the Whales)

Wadi Rayan day trip (Valley of the Whales)

From $110.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This tour offers a striking contrast to the Pharaonic sites encountered on your main itinerary. Departing Cairo, we journey to the Fayoum region, where we'll explore the Wadi Rayan Protected Area. This area surrounds a freshwater lake, nestled amidst the desert, fed by surplus irrigation water from the Fayoum. You'll find several waterfalls here (a popular backdrop in Egyptian pop music videos), and a bird hide offering excellent views of the lake's avian population, particularly during the winter migration. We'll also visit the Springs

Oasis area, a rare example of an uninhabited Saharan oasis, home to a diverse array of flora and fauna, including the Dorcas Gazelle, Ruppell's Sand Fox, and Fennec Fox.

Before lunch, we'll pause at the sand dunes around Wadi Rayan for a spot of sandboarding. Following a packed lunch, we'll venture into the dramatic desert and mountain landscapes of Wadi Hitan (Valley of the Whales). This World Heritage Site is globally recognised as a pivotal location for understanding whale evolution. We'll embark on a 2-3km walk to observe various fossilised whale specimens, exposed on the desert surface, alongside fossilised mangroves and the remnants of crab burrows.

This tour requires a full free day in Cairo, but can also be arranged directly after your return from Luxor/Aswan via the overnight sleeper train. Alternatively, it can be incorporated into any tour with the addition of extra days at the beginning or end. Prices are based on two or more persons travelling, with a supplementary charge for solo travellers.

The price includes lunch in Wadi Hitan and all entrance fees.

Abu Simbel overland

Abu Simbel overland

From $140.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

The temples of Abu Simbel, built by Ramses II, are a true highlight of any trip to Egypt. Their impressive scale is matched only by the fascinating story of their relocation. When Lake Nasser was flooded, these magnificent

temples were in danger of being submerged. In a remarkable feat of engineering, the entire complex was dismantled and rebuilt further up the hillside, where it stands today as a testament to both ancient Egyptian prowess and modern ingenuity.

To witness this marvel in the best possible light, we depart Aswan very early in the morning (around 3-4am), aiming to arrive at Abu Simbel as the sun rises. You'll then enjoy a guided tour with one of our expert Egyptologists, followed by free time to explore at your own pace, before we return to Aswan (approximately 3 1/2 hours drive each way, with around 2 hours at the temples). This tour is carefully designed to ensure you won't miss any other activities on your itinerary.

We choose the overland route to Abu Simbel as flight schedules are unreliable, leading to a more fragmented and less restful journey. Furthermore, flying is significantly more expensive.

Please note that entrance fees to the site (approximately US$17, with a 50% discount for children) are not included in the tour price and should be paid locally. A minimum of two people is required for this tour to operate.

Single room supplement (EGSGNA)

Single room supplement (EGSGNA)

From $515.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This tour is based on twin-share accommodation, where solo travellers are paired with another same-sex member of the group. Should the final group composition

preclude a room share, you will not be required to pay the single supplement. However, if you wish to guarantee a single room for the duration of the tour, please add this option to your booking.

Please note: Single supplement prices are subject to seasonal variations.

Felucca to Hotel upgrade

Felucca to Hotel upgrade

From $60.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

If you’d prefer a bit more comfort instead of sleeping on the felucca deck, this option offers an additional night in a hotel in Aswan. You’ll rejoin the group after their felucca cruise. Your time in Aswan is free to relax or explore, with optional sightseeing tours available locally upon request.

Please note: Single room supplements apply.

1. Felucca Sailboat

This tour includes an overnight felucca sailing experience. Feluccas are traditional, basic Nile sailboats, offering a charming and leisurely way to journey along the river. You will sleep on the boat's deck (mattresses and some blankets are supplied, although we recommend bringing a sleeping sheet, blanket, or a light sleeping bag, especially during the colder winter months from November to February). The boat lacks toilet facilities, but a support boat will join you multiple times throughout the day and evening, providing access to a toilet and hot showers. Mosquito nets will be provided for sleeping, but it is advisable to bring mosquito repellent for the evenings and early mornings. Your Nubian crew will prepare all meals aboard the felucca and offer entertainment in the evenings.

2. Transport

Our tours incorporate a variety of transport options. Our aim is for you to truly experience the country you're travelling through, while also ensuring you feel refreshed enough to enjoy each new leg of the journey. In Egypt, we avoid using public tourist buses or overnight coach trips, as we understand that passengers often struggle to sleep on board, leaving them fatigued for the days that follow. All of our vehicles are air-conditioned, with many fitted with speed limiters, and each one is thoroughly inspected and checked daily. Some 4WD vehicles used for desert safaris may not have air conditioning, as they are only used for short durations.

For the overnight train trips from Cairo to Aswan (approximately 12 hours) and Luxor to Cairo (approximately 9 hours), we use the overnight sleeper train. This train offers private twin-berth cabins with spacious seats that convert into fold-down beds, complete with sheets, a pillow, and a blanket. The cabins are lockable and feature a washbasin and a storage cupboard, and meals (an airline-style evening meal and breakfast) are provided. If preferred, you can opt to upgrade to flights for these journeys.

3. Dates & Prices

We operate regular small-group tours on this itinerary, typically commencing on most Saturdays throughout the year. All departures are guaranteed with a minimum of 2 travellers and a maximum of 18. Departure dates and prices can be found on our website or on a dedicated dates & prices sheet, available upon request.

4. 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.

December 2024 update: As of December 2024, we are required to provide a copy of your passport photo page to the Egyptian Authorities prior to your arrival. Our sales team will request this from you prior to your trip start date. It is not yet clear if this will be a temporary or permanent requirement.

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 visa2egypt. 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) 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. If flying into Cairo International Airport our representative will have met you by this stage and will assist with the process.

Imporant Note: Due to recent changes in the visa regime for Canadians, a visa on arrival or e-visa will no longer be possible for Canadian Citizens entering Egypt after October 1st 2023. Until further notice Canadian passport holders must obtain a visa prior to arrival, from the nearest Egyptian Consulate.

All African & 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.

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5. Transfers

Our Egypt tours include a 24-hour airport meet & assist service in Cairo airport, your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers. Our representative will meet you in the immigration hall of Cairo airport before you get to passport control (if you are flying into Sphinx International Airport, our representative will be waiting outside, after you have passed through immigration and re-claimed your luggage). They will assist with visa formalities before helping you collect your luggage and taking you to your hotel.

Your airport transfers are only included on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary, plus on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

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6. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don’t normally include international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we’ll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Nearly all our Egyptian tours start and finish in Cairo. You can fly into Cairo International Airport (CAI) or Sphinx International Arport (SPX).

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Travel Zoo / Groupon Flight Inclusive Packages
Encounters Travel occasionally offer flight inclusive packages - In this case, your international flights will be included as per the package you have purchased. Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to

contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

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7. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We pride ourselves on being a small group operator, as this allows travellers to connect better with their companions and fully engage with their guide. Having a great guide is of little benefit if you're stuck behind 30-40 others trying to catch a glimpse. That's why we'll never place you on a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and a single guide. Instead, our Egypt small-group tours are capped at 18 travellers.

Shoestring tours accommodate a maximum of 26 participants. For dedicated Nile Cruise tours, sightseeing excursions may involve larger boat groups, although you can book a private Egyptologist guide for an additional fee (advance booking required). Specialist escorted tours and workshops may have varying group sizes—please refer to the Tour Notes for specifics.

In Egypt, we work with fully trained, local English-speaking graduate Egyptologist guides who will accompany you during all sightseeing in Cairo and the Nile Valley. Additionally, we have permanent local representatives in all major towns, cities, and Red Sea resorts who manage the practical aspects of your tour. For desert excursions, we partner with local Bedouin guides.

While most of our tours are guided in English, we also offer a limited selection of small group departures led by experienced Egyptologist guides fluent in French or Spanish. These are marked clearly alongside the departure dates. Private tours with guides fluent in other languages, such as German, Italian, or Polish, can also be arranged—please get in touch for details and pricing.

On certain itineraries, one guide may accompany you in Cairo, with another taking over for the journey between Aswan and Luxor.

At Egypt Uncovered, we exclusively employ local Egyptian guides and representatives. This ensures you gain the most authentic and insightful experience of Egypt and its incredible sites. Visit our website to learn more and discover profiles of some of our renowned Egyptian guides.

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8. Entrance Fees

Our Small Group tours do not include entrance fees to the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. We do however normally include these in prices for Tailor-Made and Escorted tours. Please check the Inclusions and Exclusions section below the tour itinerary for a details about your tour and the amount you may need to budget. This amount is subject to change and will be reconfirmed in Egypt at the start of your tour. A 50% discount for minors or ISIC card holders is often, but not always available.

Your guide will be happy to collect payment for all the entrance fees at the start of the tour, and pay them for you as you go along if you wish. This payment is normally collected in US Dollars cash together with payment for any Tipping Kitty used on the tour, though you may also pay with Egyptian Pounds or other currencies, converted to USD. Local exchange rates are set on a monthly basis and based on local bank rates so may not match the exact rates you may find online on the day.

Entrance Fee Increases:
Please note that whilst we make every effort to keep the amounts we advise for local entrance fees as up to date as possible, these amounts should be considered a guide only due to fluctuating exchange rates and local rate changes imposed by the Egyptian government. We are aware that the Egyptian Government will be updating their entrance fees in November 2024 and our website will be updated at that time to reflect the revised fees.

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9. Tipping

Tipping is very much a part of Egyptian culture and customs. To make our prices more transparent and so it is easier for you to budget and less hassle while in Egypt, on our small group tours we organise a 'Tipping Kitty'

which needs to be paid as a local payment and will be around US$30-80 depending on the length of your trip. Payment is collected in US Dollars cash or can also be paid with Egyptian Pounds or other currencies converted to US Dollars at our local monthly exchange rate, or by credit card (3% fee). This kitty provides tips for a wide range of people you'll meet along the tour including hotel porters, housekeeping staff, train and station staff, drivers, site guards, local reps etc. Please check the Included/Excluded notes below the tour itinerary for more information on how much to budget for this kitty.

Your Egyptologist guide (and Bedouin guides in the desert) is not included in this kitty and you may tip them at the end of your tour subject to your satisfaction with and appreciation of the service they have provided. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. We are often asked to provide a guide however, and can suggest that approx. USD 10-15 per person per day would be appropriate.

Children under the age of 12 do not need to pay this tipping kitty.

On private/tailor-made tours we can also arrange a tipping kitty if you wish, or you can tip people as you go along the tour. Your guide will be happy to help advise either way.

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10. Accommodation

Most of our small group tours use high quality hotels at the Egyptian 5-star level in Cairo, Aswan, Luxor and Hurghada, all with swimming pools and a choice of restaurants and bars.

However, some of our lower budget trips (eg. Egypt Express, Pharaonic Encounters and Sands & Seas) use good quality 3 and 4-star level hotels, all with air-conditioned en-suite bathrooms. On some tours we also use a Nubian styled hotel in Aswan which is full of character and has a great location by the Nile and in the heart of a Nubian village.

Our private/tailor-made tour itineraries use a wider mix of hotels, from comfortable mid-range hotels at the 3-4 star level (generally the best available in some of the less visited places included in the particular itinerary) up to some of the very best deluxe 5-star properties in the country.

Please check the Accommodation tab on the tour page or download these Tour Notes for details of the normal hotels used. On our group tours, these hotels may change from time to time for other properties of a similar standard. If you would like to guarantee a particular hotel, please request a tailor-made tour.

Nile cruise tours are generally based on Egyptian 5-star level boats - perhaps equivalent to a decent international 4-star hotel standard. Please check the Accommodation section on the tour page for details. Deluxe 5-star level boats, all-suite boats, and Dahabiyas are also available on private and tailor-made tours. Please contact us for details.

Accommodation is based on twin, triple or double en-suite rooms/cabins with air conditioning. All couples will be given a private double room/cabin. Triple cabins are not available on Nile cruise boats.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

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$180 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 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.

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11. Voltage - Egypt

The sockets in this area are two-pronged and provide 220 volts. Universal adaptors can be found in most airport shops if you haven't already got one. Standard European adapters will also work, though they may fit a bit loosely in the sockets. Every hotel room comes equipped with electrical sockets for charging devices like cameras and phones. Hair dryers are typically available upon request at the hotel reception if not already provided in your room. If you're travelling with US appliances, you'll need both a voltage converter and a plug adapter.

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12. 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.

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13. What to take

Luggage: Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Egypt. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips – you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

Luggage limits: There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

Clothing: Most of your time in Egypt will be in a hot climate. However, at night, and especially in the deserts, the temperatures can drop quite dramatically. So you must pack for cool conditions. Formal dress (eg. suits & ties) is not required on the cruise boats or in 5-star hotel restaurants. Long sleeves are recommended to protect from mosquitoes if you are on the felucca. Modesty rates highly in Egypt, especially for women, so to respect the local culture & people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). In the centre of Cairo, and when visiting any mosques, legs and arms should be covered.

Other items: If you will be travelling on a felucca then we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner all year round for comfort, and a light sleeping bag in the winter months (November to February). We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, small towel, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

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14. Time

The time zones for Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon are GMT +2, while the UAE operates on GMT +3. Daylight saving time has been implemented intermittently in the past. Currently, Egypt is expected to maintain a consistent time zone of GMT +2 from 2016 onwards, with no changes planned for daylight saving, though this could alter with little notice, affecting flight schedules and times. In Jordan and Israel, a one-hour daylight saving shift is typically observed from the end of March to the end of October, changing the time to GMT +3. The exact dates of this shift vary each year, and in some cases, the adjustments may not take place at all.

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15. Health and Vaccinations

It's important to ensure you have full medical insurance coverage, including for emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Vaccination requirements and other health precautions depend on both your destination and where you are travelling from. We advise speaking to your GP, a healthcare provider, or a travel clinic to get the latest details on the necessary vaccinations for your trip. You should also make sure that you are up to date with any vaccines and boosters recommended for your general health at home, including those for occupational risks, lifestyle factors, and pre-existing conditions.

In addition, the following vaccinations are typically advised for travel to countries in this region:

- **Egypt**: Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A
- **Jordan**: Tetanus, Hepatitis A
- **Israel**: Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis
- **Lebanon**: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A

Malaria is not commonly present unless contracted abroad, so malaria prophylaxis is generally not necessary.

For further details, refer to the following links: Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon

Important Note: We are aware that some places in Egypt use 'black henna' instead of pure brown henna. Black henna contains a chemical dye called PPD (paraphenylenediamine), which can cause severe allergic reactions and scarring. To be on the safe side, we recommend avoiding henna tattoos in Egypt unless you are certain they are made with pure brown henna.

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16. Airport Transfers

This tour includes a meet-and-greet service and airport transfer on the first day. Our representative will be waiting with an Egypt Uncovered signboard or your name clearly displayed for easy identification. If you are unable to locate our representative, emergency contact numbers will be provided on your tour confirmation voucher.

A transfer to the airport is also included at the end of the tour. Please review the tour itinerary and your flight times carefully. Most international flights departing from Khartoum are scheduled in the early hours of the morning. If you have upgraded to a 4 or 5-star hotel in Khartoum, only a day-use room is typically included for your final day. A full night's stay is provided at the standard 3-star hotel. If you require a full night’s accommodation in an upgraded hotel, an additional charge may apply.

Refunds are not available for missed transfers or parts of your trip due to incorrect flight details or delayed arrivals. Any additional expenses incurred to join the group will be your responsibility.

If your flights are scheduled to arrive before the tour starts or depart after the tour ends, we can arrange extra accommodation and airport transfers. We will strive to book these at the same hotel as the main tour, subject to availability (upgraded hotels can also be arranged upon request). Please note that if you do not book additional accommodation through us, arrival and departure transfer services will not be included, and you will need to organise your own transport.

Arrival Procedure

Be prepared for potential delays at immigration, especially if you are obtaining a “visa on arrival” (refer to the Passports and Visas section). After passport control, proceed to baggage reclaim, where further waiting times are common. Once you collect your luggage, you will need to show your baggage receipts (typically attached to your boarding pass), and your bags may be manually inspected by airport staff. This is standard procedure to ensure no prohibited items, such as alcohol or inappropriate materials, are brought into Sudan. Be aware that some magazines with certain images might also be considered inappropriate and could be confiscated without return.

After completing these formalities, you will find our representative waiting just outside the glass doors with an Egypt Uncovered signboard or your name clearly displayed.

original

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correct

Printed on: Saturday 31st of October 2026

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.
