



Your passport to adventure

Egypt Revisited

Country(ies): Egypt

Tour type: Private

Transport: A/C Minibus & sleeper train

Group size: Min: 1 | Max: 0

Days: 10 Days

Start location: Cairo, Egypt

End location: Cairo, Egypt

Departs On: Any day

Meals: Breakfasts - 9, Lunches - 5, Dinners - 4

Highlights: Step Pyramid of Saqqara, Bent Pyramid at Dahshur, ancient capital of Memphis, Fayoum Oasis, Wadi Rayan & Valley of the Whales, Tel Amarna, Heliopolis, Abydos & Dendera

Places Visited: Cairo, Wadi Hitan, Fayoum, Minya, Asyut, Luxor & Tanis



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Cairo, transfer to hotel

You arrive at Cairo airport where we greet you and transfer you to your hotel. Our rep will help you settle into the hotel and its surroundings, and outline the plan for the next few days.

OVERNIGHT: Cairo hotel

MEALS: None

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

Day 2: Cairo, Saqqara, Dahshur & Memphis tour

Your first full day tour with our Egyptologist is centred on the ancient sites at Saqqara, Dahshur and Memphis where you learn about and see examples of the evolution of pyramid building. Saqqara lies 25km to the south of Cairo. Djoser's (Zoser's) Step Pyramid (built 4700 years ago) dominates the skyline and is believed to have been the ancient Egyptians' first attempt at Pyramid building. After leaving Saqqara behind we continue on to Memphis and Dahshur. In Memphis, one of Egypt's many ancient capitals you will see artefacts from many periods in Egyptian history including a large fallen statue of Ramses II. In Dahshur you will see what are thought to have been the first attempts to move from stepped pyramids (eg. at Saqqara) to true pyramids, similar to those on the Giza Plateau. The most notable examples you'll see are the Red and Bent Pyramids. You will have plenty of time to explore each of these locations before returning to Cairo in the afternoon.

OVERNIGHT: Cairo hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Wadi Hitan, the Valley of the Whales & Fayoum Oasis

This morning we drive straight to the Wadi Rayan Protected Area, which surrounds a fresh-water lake in the middle of the desert, which is filled by the remaining irrigation water from the Fayoum area. There are several waterfalls here, 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, which hosts 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. In the afternoon we drive to Fayoum Oasis where we will spend the evening at the Helnan Auberge Hotel right next to Lake Qaroun (subject to availability). In the evening we will take a tour of the Oasis.

OVERNIGHT: Fayoum hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Drive to Minya via Meidum Pyramids, afternoon tour

After leaving behind Fayoum Oasis we head back towards the Nile Valley to the city of Minya. Along the way we will make stops at the less visited pyramids of Hawara, Lahun and Meidum.

The Pyramid at Hawara dates from the XII dynasty. Constructed for the Pharaoh Amenemhat III, it probably once stood on the shores of Lake Qaroun. In antiquity it became known as the finishing place for the one-hundred kilometre desert endurance race, introduced by the Pharaoh Taharqa in 690BC. This event was devised in order to help train his army and in 2001 this event was revived, it is now held every November.

As with the Hawara Pyramid, the Lahun Pyramid also dates for the XII dynasty and was constructed for the Pharaoh Senusert II. The Lahun Pyramid was constructed much later their famous counterparts in Giza and employed a new and different technique. The core of the Pyramid consists of a rocky knoll onto which limestone pillars were placed. These pillars provided a framework for the mud-brick overlay, which was then covered by the outer casing. The architect was also mindful of flooding which had been seen in many of pyramids and constructed a trench which surrounded the pyramid; this was filled with flints and sand to act as a sponge. The removal of the pyramid's casing stones left the inner mud-bricks at the mercy of the elements causing the erosion which can be seen today.

After arriving into Minya you will have a little time to relax before your afternoon tours. Minya is known as the 'Bride of Upper Egypt', the name deriving from its elegant villas and its people, who are regarded as some of the warmest and honest people in the country.

Your afternoon tours will visit the Frazer Tombs and Tihna el-Jebel. The Frazer tombs, named after their excavator - Gary Frazer, consist of a number of rock-cut tombs from the V and VI dynasties. Today, generally 2 tombs are open to the public, these are tombs of dignitaries who were both named Nika-Ankh - the first of these tombs contains statues of Nika-Ankh, his wife, children and grandson, there are also a few hieroglyphs to see.

Continuing a little further north of out Minya, we visit the village of Tihna el-Jebel - home to the ruins of the Pharaonic town of Dehenet (aka. Acoris by the Greeks). Whilst here you will have time to explore the two unfinished, rock-cut temples to Amun and Sobek and also view the chapel to the Goddess Hathor which is located so high up on the cliff face that it is hard to believe that it was ever used for offerings!

After plenty of time to explore these sites, we return to Minya where we will spend the evening.

OVERNIGHT: Minya hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 5: Tours around Minya, afternoon drive to Asyut

Before following the Nile further south to Asyut, we have a few final tours close to Minya first, our first stop is at the tombs of Beni Hassan. The majority of the 39 tombs here are unfinished; however they demonstrate the transitional period between the traditional Mastaba type tombs of the Old Kingdom and the deep cut tombs which can be seen in the Valley of the Kings. During this Middle Kingdom period provincial dignitaries began to show their independence by commissioning grand burials in the local area, rather than at sites such as Saqqara. The tombs are decorated with Pharaonic iconography and unique murals which depict wrestling scenes.

Next we visit the once great city of Hermopolis. According to tradition, Hermopolis was the site where creation began on an ancient mound, close to the city. Two stone baboons are said to recall the now vanished Temple of Thoth. The original Temple of Thoth was created by the Pharaoh Ramses II, who used masonry from the city of Tell el-Amarna. The Temple once stood within an enclosure wall which covered approximately 650 square metres. Today, much of the city is in ruins; however a few remaining columns and statues give you a sense of how great this city once was.

Our final stop this morning is to the village of Tuna al-Gabel, whose name comes from the nearby ancient necropolis. In Pharaonic times, this region was a cult centre for pilgrims who came to pay homage to the god Thoth. These pilgrims often brought with them Ibises and Baboons which they gave to the priests to embalm - it is thought that in excess of 2 million of these animals were sacrificed here. The mummified remains of these animals were then

placed in a necropolis, which some believe stretches as far as Hermopolis. The best preserved site at Tuna al-Gabel is the tomb of Petosiris and his family. Petosiris lived in the time of Alexander the Great and the interior of the tomb demonstrates a fusion of Greek and Egyptian styles.

After breaking for lunch we will continue on to Asyut via the ancient capital of Tell el-Amarna (then known as Akhetaten). The great city of Amarna was founded by the Pharaoh Amenophis IV, who controversially expelled the much revered gods of ancient Egypt in favour of Aten (Sun) worship. Amenophis closed all of the temples dedicated to the 'Old Gods' in an act which many saw as heretical. It was during this period that Amenophis discarded his royal title in favour of his new name - Akhenaten (Servant of the Aten). He and his wife Nefertiti ruled Egypt from their new capital for around 12 years; however the later years of their reign is still shrouded in mystery. Following the death of Akhenaten his co-regent Smenkhkare ruled until he was succeeded by the famous Tutankhamun (then known as Tutankhaten). Tutankhamun heralded a return to the Old Gods and fronted the 'Theban counter-revolution'. Later, Pharaoh Seti I plundered the abandoned city of Amarna for Masonry, ordered priests to curse the site to deter reoccupation and destroyed cartouches and images of any pharaoh associated with the Amarna heresy. For this reason, Akhenaten and Nefertiti remained unknown until the 19th century.

Today, little remains of the city (or little has been discovered), however this site strikes many visitors as intensely evocative and mysterious.

OVERNIGHT: Asyut hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: Drive to Luxor via Akhmim, Abydos & Dendera

After spending the night in Assyut we continue south towards ancient Thebes – modern day Luxor. Our first stop along the way is to the rarely visited town of Akhmim. Akhmim was once referred to as being Egypt's oldest city, by the 16th century geographer - Leo Africanus. Akmimis have been building on the ground of their ancestors since pre-dynastic times. During the Pharaonic period the city was the capital of the Ninth Nome and even today the city retains its labyrinthine like streets, many of which haven't changed since medieval times. Today, not much remains of Ancient Akhmim, however whilst building a new school in 1981 a colossal statue was discovered, measuring 11 metres. The statue is of the Meryut Amun, the eldest daughter of Nefertari and is now on display. Nearby we will also visit the remains of a seated statue of Ramses II - This colossus of Ramses is believed to have once been as large as those found at Abu Simbel.

After visiting these monuments we cross the Nile to visit Abydos. In Pharaonic times, there was no better place to be buried than at Abydos. The ancient Egyptians believed that the entrance to the underworld was located close by and the site was the centre for one of the most important pilgrimages, the cult of Osiris. The Temple of Abydos was built by the Pharaoh Seti I and completed by his son - Ramses II. The main god revered in the temple was Osiris, however 5 others also have sanctuaries here. Along with the sanctuaries of the Gods, the temple was also designed to honour the deified, deceased Pharaoh - Seti I. We have an extensive tour of the temple before continuing on to Dendera where we visit the Temple of Hathor - the goddess of dance, joy and love. There have been shrines to the Goddess Hathor since pre-dynastic times; however the temple which exists today was a Greco-Roman creation, constructed between 125 and 60 AD.

OVERNIGHT: Luxor hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Luxor, west bank tour

Our morning today will be spent on the West Bank of Luxor where we will see some of the less visited sites. Our first stop will be the Ramesseum, or mortuary temple of Ramses II. In its day the Ramesseum would have rivalled the Great Temple of Abu Simbel in grandeur, however, because of its location on land which floods annually, much of

the temple was ruined throughout antiquity. Following the Ramesseum we visit the nearby Temple of Merneptah, one of Ramses' son's who ruled for around 10 years. The temple was constructed using much masonry from the nearby Temple of Amenophis III – you can see that some of the carvings were actually done over the top of the originals and that there are depictions of Amenophis III in the Temple of Merneptah. Unfortunately, much of the temple lies in ruins today, however some excellent carvings and statues can be viewed. Our final temple visit for today is to the memorial temple of Seti I, who also constructed the Temple at Abydos which we visited yesterday. Seti I died before this temple was completed, so his son Ramses II completed the construction. The temple was severely damaged during floods in 1994; however recent restorations have revealed the foundations of the Pharaohs palace. This is the earliest example of a Pharaonic Palace within a temple complex. The temple also contains a small chapel which is dedicated to Seti's father Ramses I, who passed away before he had chance to construct his own mortuary temple. After a break for lunch we continue our tours with visits to the Tombs of the Nobles and Deir el-Medina - the Workers Village. This evening is spent within our hotel on Luxor's East Bank.

OVERNIGHT: Luxor hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Hot air balloon in Luxor

Day 8: Luxor Museum & Karnak Temple tour

We visit the Museums of Luxor this morning before visiting Karnak Temple in the afternoon. The Luxor Museum houses an excellent collection of statues and funerary goods recovered from the Theban Necropolis and ancient temples. Our guide will ensure you see the museums highlights, but you will have plenty of time to explore on your own too. After leaving the Luxor Museum we visit the Mummification museum. The museum actually denotes more space to beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians surrounding the afterlife and death rather than mummification; however it's still an interesting visit. You can see some of the tools which we used during the mummification process, including a spoon and spatula which was used to extract the deceased's brain, which was considered an unimportant organ.

After some free time to have lunch, we travel to Karnak Temple where we will visit some of the less visited parts of the Temple. This tour can be flexible so if you have already been to Karnak, our guide will ensure you have time to explore the parts you haven't already seen. After time to explore Karnak we drive to the train station where we will catch the overnight sleeper train back to Cairo.

OVERNIGHT: Sleeper train

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: Hot air balloon in Luxor

Day 9: Arrive in Cairo, Tanis & Avaris tour

After arriving back into Cairo this morning, we have a full day tour around the Nile Delta area where we visit Tanis and Avaris. During Biblical times Tanis was known by the name Zoan, as referred to in the Bible. In the film the Raiders of the Lost Ark, Tanis was said to be the hiding place of the Ark of the Covenant. The city was founded late in the 20th dynasty and became the northern capital of Egypt during the 21st dynasty under the rule of Smendes. Tanis then remained Egypt's northern capital into the 22nd dynasty. There are many ancient sites at Tanis, including temples and a royal necropolis. In 1939/1940 Pierre Montet discovered the intact burial sites of Psusennes I, Amenemope and Shoshenq II which contained a large amount of Gold, Jewellery, Lapis Lazuli and many other precious items which are now housed in the Cairo Museum. This discovery wasn't publicised as much as Tut's discovery due to the breakout of World War II, however many of the treasures discovered rival those of King Tut.

Avaris is our next stop for today, where excavations underway since the 1960's have confirmed that this is indeed the site of Avaris, the long-vanished Hyksos capital. Much of the area is in ruins today, however one of the greatest discoveries was in 1991, when Minoan style frescoes were discovered in a Hyksos era palace, proving that strong links once existed between the Minoan on Crete, some 500 miles away.

After returning to Cairo in the afternoon the remainder of the day is free for you to catch up on some last minute

shopping or relax within your hotel before your flight home tomorrow.

OVERNIGHT: Cairo hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

EXTRAS:

Day 10: Cairo, tour ends with transfer to airport

Your tour ends after breakfast and we transfer you to the airport for your flight home.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Alexandria day trip || Extra day in Cairo - post-tour

Included

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- All transport and transfers in private AC vehicles
- Overnight sleeper train in private twin-berth cabins (flight upgrades available)
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Sightseeing tours as detailed in the itinerary
- Services of a local Egyptologist guide for all the sightseeing tours
- Entrance fees to sites visited
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (available on arrival for most nationalities)
- Travel Insurance (mandatory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Tipping kitty (allow US\$45)
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tour guide tips
- Hotel Gala Dinners (if charged by the hotels on 24 & 31 Dec, 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 (EGTMER)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$420.00

This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. Room shares are not available on this tour, so if you are single traveller then you will need to add this option to your 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.

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.

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 - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$59.00

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 - post-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$59.00

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 journeys from Luxor to Cairo (approx. 10 hrs) and 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 these journeys to internal flights.

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

This tour is designed as a sample tailor-made tour itinerary. As such we do not offer set group departure dates that you can join. Rather, the tour is available for you to do privately starting on any date of the year. Guideline seasonal prices are given below, based on 2 people travelling. If you would like to adjust the tour itinerary, or there will be more or less people travelling, please contact us and we will customise a price for you.

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](#)

14. Tipping

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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\$25-50 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 monthly exchange rate. This kitty provides tips for a wide range of people you'll meet along the tour including hotel porters, 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.

On private/tailor-made tours this tipping kitty is included in your tour price.

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 anything towards the tipping kitty.

15. 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 include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very provide suggestions for flights to go with your 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 airport (CAI).

16. 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. 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.

17. 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.

18. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There's no point in us providing great guides if you've got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won't ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our Egypt small-group departures to have a maximum of 18 travellers. Shoestring tours may have a slightly larger maximum group size of 35 people but rarely run with more than 20.

On tours including Nile Cruises, we normally send our own Egyptologist guide on board with you and arrange private sightseeing tours along the way rather than joining the larger groups arranged by the cruise boat. On some Private/Tailor-made tours we may set the tour pricing to be based on using joining these boat groups, though a supplement is always available for a private Egyptologist guide for tours from the boat (requires advance booking). Please check the Inclusions/Exclusions section for details of the guiding arrangements on your tour.

In Egypt we provide fully trained, local English-speaking graduate Egyptologist guides to run your tour and escort you during all of the sightseeing in Cairo and the Nile Valley. We also have permanent local reps in all the main towns/cities and Red Sea resorts who are also at your service, and will be handling all the practical arrangements for

the tour. We use local Bedouin guides for tours through the desert.

On some departures we may use one guide in Cairo, and a second guide for the Aswan to Luxor section.

At Egypt Uncovered we only use local Egyptian guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

19. 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, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

20. 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. Our private/tailor-made tour itineraries use a wider mix of hotels, from comfortable mid-range hotels at the 2-4 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 and shoestring 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 deluxe level boats - please check the Accommodation section on the tour page 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. Single travellers may choose to pay a single room supplement to guarantee themselves a single room throughout the tour. Alternatively, they may choose to share a room with one or two other travellers of the same sex.

Single travellers

On most of our Egypt tours, if you are happy to share a room/cabin with another traveller of the same sex, then if you are travelling solo, you do not need to pay the single supplement cost, even if you end up with a single room during the tour. This does not apply to all tours - please check the single room supplement option on your tour for full details.

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.

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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.
