



Packing Tips & Travel Info

Country Code

+20

Time difference

UTC+02:00

Visas & Passports

U.S. passport holders require a visa to enter Egypt. For visits of up to 30 days, a Visa can be purchased on arrival at Cairo, Hurghada, or Luxor Airports. The fee is \$25.00 (USD, EUR, GBP currency accepted). Cash only.

Visitors to Egypt must hold passports valid for at least six months beyond their date of entry. There must be at least two free pages left in your passport.

It is useful to carry photo ID with you at all times. It is recommended to get several good quality photocopies of your passport (which can be carried on your person in lieu of your physical passport and makes replacing a lost passport easier).

Arrival information

Upon exiting the aircraft at Cairo International Airport, look for an Egitalloyd representative. The representative will assist you with your luggage, visas, and hotel transportation. **Visas require \$25.00 USD per traveler in cash.** You will need to complete the Egypt Arrivals documentation which is usually handed out on the flight (please ask your cabin crew).

Currency & Tipping

The local currency is the Egyptian pound (called a ginay in Arabic, and written £E or LE), divided into 100 piastres. Egyptian banknotes come in denominations of 25pt, 50pt, £E1, £E5, £E10, £E20, £E50, £E100 and £E200. There are coins for 5pt, 10pt, 20pt, 25pt, 50pt and £E1.

It can sometimes be difficult to get change for large bills, so it is always advisable to have smaller notes/change on hand for taxis and tips. There are a large number of banks and exchange offices that can exchange cash. Many tourist shops, restaurants, and bars will accept dollars or Euros at rates that are relatively close to the local ones. Credit cards (Visa, Mastercard, and American Express) are widely used in Egypt in hotels, most shops, restaurants, and cafes.

We recommend that you withdraw \$100-\$200 worth of Egyptian pounds per person from an ATM at the beginning of your trip, rather than carry large amounts of cash. Note that you **cannot** exchange pounds back into other currency at the end of the trip.



Travelers' cheques are not easily cashed, and most banks, including international banks, will not accept them. They have been replaced by credit/debit cards.

Most tips are included in your tour price. You may wish to tip hotel staff and drivers you encounter apart from the tour. During dinners apart from the group, you should tip wait staff at restaurants. You may see a "service charge" on your bill. This service charge goes to the restaurant, not the server, it is good etiquette to tip your server about 10% in addition. Tipping is a part of the Egyptian culture, and excellent service should certainly be rewarded.

Electricity

The current in Egypt is 220V, 50Hz. North American travellers with appliances designed for 110V should bring a converter. Most sockets are for two-pin round-pronged plugs (as in Continental Europe).

Clothing/Packing

- Earplugs help muffle noise.
- Mosquito spray.
- Torch/flashlight for exploring dark tombs.
- Handheld fan.
- Light scarf or bandana to protect the back of your neck.

Sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunscreen are must-haves. Comfortable walking shoes, such as sneakers, would serve you best. We recommend avoiding sneakers with mesh fabric as they will collect sand at the sites.

Men will need a jacket for dinner at the Winter Palace in Luxor or the dining room at the Old Cataract. Women may want to pack something suitable for a night at a nice restaurant. In Cairo, shorts are generally not worn in cities; trousers and slacks are the norm. It would not be good form to wear anything that rests above the knees. Shirts should not be sleeveless or contain slogans. A shawl or a scarf will work for the unpredictable shifts in temperature.

At night, temperatures can dip, and evenings on the Nile may get cool, so a sweater and light jacket or wind breaker are recommended.

Egypt is predominantly Muslim, although there is a sizeable Christian population. With this in mind, women should avoid wearing tight clothing, keep their shoulders and knees covered, and avoid very revealing necklines. When visiting a mosque, women will be asked to cover their hair and perhaps their arms and legs, although this is not mandatory. Both men and women will be asked to remove their shoes before entering a mosque. Dressing with relative modesty is a way of respecting the local culture; the Egyptians are going to feel more relaxed around you and are thus more likely to talk to you and involve you in their lives and culture.

It is best to take light-colored and natural rather than synthetic fabric clothes, as these are



excellent for coping with potential heat, although all hotels, cars, and shops will be air conditioned. Shorts and t-shirts are widely accepted for sightseeing in Upper Egypt (Luxor and Aswan).

Some of our hotels will feature impressive swimming pools.

Climate/Weather

Cairo: Temperatures in November fluctuate between 59 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit with an average of 8 hours of sun.

Luxor/Aswan: Temperatures in November fluctuate between 54 and 84 degrees Fahrenheit with an average of 10 hours of sun each day.

Health and Safety

We strongly recommend that you and your traveling companions are aware of the health requirements of the region, most specifically vaccinations or boosters that you may need. Check with your doctor for any necessary inoculations.

COVID vaccines are highly recommended. Vaccinations are not checked upon entry and one can return to the US without a recent covid test.

Neither ARCE, nor Egitalloyd travel is responsible for any accommodations due to quarantine should you require it. It is highly recommended that you purchase refundable international flights or a travel insurance plan that can assist with quarantining or tour cancelation, should the need arise.

It is recommended that you take along your preferred digestive and respiratory cold medication.

Communications

Wifi is widely available though is a bit spotty in Middle Egypt. You may want to contact your cellular provider to inquire about temporary overseas use. SIM cards are available in Egypt for a modest fee at mobile phone shops. To obtain a SIM card, you will need to present your passport.

Tap Water and Food Preparation

It is generally safe to eat freshly-prepared cooked food in hotels, on Nile cruise boats, and in mainstream restaurants. When selecting a restaurant, choose a clean and reputable place, eat only freshly prepared, cooked foods, and avoid all uncooked food including raw fruits and vegetables. It might be best to stay away from street food in general. Tap water in many locations is not potable. Drink bottled water only. It is also recommended to use bottled water to brush your teeth. Well-known brands of bottled beverages are generally considered to be safe if the seal is intact, and can be purchased at most restaurants and tourist locations. We will have an abundance



of bottled water for you on the bus each day.

Brief stomach discomfort is quite common for first-time travelers to Egypt; it is best to bring along any medications that work for you, as it may be hard to purchase the over-the-counter items you have grown accustomed to.

Security

Security is a matter of common sense, and the same precautions should be taken in Egypt as in other countries. Do not carry large sums of money, keep a close watch on your handbags and wallets etc. when walking in crowded areas, and avoid walking alone at night. Valuables and money should be locked in a safe in your room or in reception and you should not let porters who are not introduced by a representative of the company take your baggage.

You will notice a large amount of armed security in virtually every town. This is common and is not cause for concern. We will have armed security (concealed) on the bus with us, and when we travel on certain roads, we will have armed police escorts. All of this is standard operations in Egypt and does not indicate that there are any issues.

You will notice persistent sales and tipping (*"baksheesh"*) requests when you visit most of the sites. If you walk around the pyramids alone you will get inundated. While the sales techniques do get relentless, impinging on personal space, there is no need for concern. Respond politely; intoning *la shukran* (no thanks) with your hand on your heart, while briskly moving on, will dissuade most street peddlers. If necessary, escalate to a gruff *khalas* ("Enough!").

There is very little pickpocketing in Egypt. At most sites, people will follow you right up to the bus. If you are not interested in the objects they are selling do not make eye contact.

The buses will be locked at all destinations.

Insurance

It is always advisable to obtain good travel insurance to cover the worst possible scenario.

Alcohol

There are duty free shops in the airports in Cairo and Luxor should you wish to purchase alcohol upon arrival. Tourists are permitted to purchase up to 2 bottles of alcohol per person on arrival, although there is a new excise tax (\$13.50) per bottle that makes it hardly "duty free." Beer, wine, and spirits are sold in most upscale restaurants and also in most of the hotels. Imports are very expensive.

Photography

Photography is permitted in most of the historical sites and museums in Egypt with your cell



phone camera. You may have to buy an inexpensive permit to use a regular (non-cell phone) camera. Your guide will advise you.

Egyptians are well known all over the world for their tolerance and hospitality. However, it is always polite to ask permission before taking a photograph of people (especially women), stores, or products. Photography of, or near, military official installations, army bases, airports, dams, bridges and train stations is not permitted. If you are ever in doubt, please ask your guide, although in most places where photography is prohibited there will be signs to notify you.

Traffic and Taxis

White local taxis in Cairo are highly unpredictable and not recommended. If you would like to arrange a taxi, your hotel will be able to arrange a reliable car. **It is recommended to use Uber, which operates in English and is commonly used.** The traffic in Cairo is notoriously bad, and at rush hours, short journeys can often take hours. Plenty of time will always be allowed for transfers, and, in particular, to the airport.

Laundry

Most hotels will provide laundry services, although dry cleaning will only be available in the big-city hotels. The service is inexpensive and efficient for all basic garments, although we advise hand-washing delicate fabrics.

Embassy Information

5 Tawfik Diab Street

Garden City, Cairo

Egypt

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Fax: (20-2) 2797 3200

<https://eg.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/cairo/how-to-contact-us/>



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