Egypt Adventure

*Valid for departures before December 31*

# Introduction

Welcome to Sojourn Adventure Travel real life experiences... we hope that you enjoy exploring the world as much as we do.

Revel in a taste of Egypt's history, beauty and colour on this short but action-packed trip along the longest river in the world. Cruise the Nile on a felucca, discover the largest and most impressive pharaonic temples, chat and dine with interesting locals and live it up in this country of deserts, bazaars, monuments and good old-fashioned adventures.

# Original Style

This is how it all started; the trips that made us one of the world's leading operators of small group adventures. And they're still as popular as ever! Original trips are all about variety: the places, the people, the activities, and even the accommodation and transport we use. From home stays to market trips to visits to community projects, there's a new experience every day, with many activities included.

# Trip Map



# Itinerary

## Days 1-2 Cairo

Salaam Aleikum. Welcome to Egypt!

You can arrive at any time on day 1 as there are no activities planned until the important welcome meeting at 4pm. Look for a note in the hotel lobby as to where this important meeting will take place. If you are going to be late please leave a message with the hotel reception.

At the group meeting we will be collecting your insurance details and next of kin information, so please ensure you have all details on hand to provide to your leader.

After the meeting, there is the option of joining your fellow travellers for dinner.

If your flight is scheduled to arrive late we recommend that you consider booking a night's accommodation prior to the trip so you can ensure you are able to attend the important group meeting.

Check-in time at our joining point hotel is after 2pm. Early check-in is not guaranteed, however if you arrive early, luggage storage is available. Speak to the hotel reception on arrival.

Our first night is spent in a hotel.

Following the meeting, we head out to Khan al-Khalili to check out the madness and colour of this famous bazaar.

Wonderfully chaotic, crowded, and always colourful, Cairo is a fascinating mixture of modern city and ancient wonders. If you arrive early there are plenty of things to see and do. Take a walk along the Corniche or travel along the river by felucca. If the crowds and the noise of the city are too much, catch the metro into the oldest part of the city, the Coptic Christian sector. With its narrow cobbled streets and ancient churches, it is a haven of peace and quiet.

On day 2 we travel out to Giza to visit the unsurpassed pyramids and Sphinx. We will aim to get away early to avoid the heat and crowds for the experience. We make a stunning approach to the Pyramids across the surrounding dunes by camel allowing stunning panoramic views of this iconic sight. After our fun with the camels your local guide will take you through the amazing history of the area.

We will have some time to explore the Pyramids up close: Pyramid of Khufu (The Great Pyramid of Cheops), Pyramid of Khafre (Chephren) and the Pyramid of Menkaure (Mycerinus)- the smallest. From a distance Khafre's pyramid looks larger than Khufu's, but this illusion is due to the structure being built on higher ground. When they were built they were covered in white limestone- they would have been gleaming but now most of the casing stones have been removed but you can still see some on the apex of Khafre's pyramid.

If you wish to enter the inside of a Pyramid ask your Group Leader to assist. Entrance is not included although there is time to do so. Please note that the inside thoroughfares of the Pyramids are very small and very warm, so those suffering from claustrophobia should not attempt.

The statue of the Great Sphinx still retains the mysteries which have puzzled scholars, tourists and scientists for thousands of years. It is made from an outcrop of stone left behind from the quarrying for the Great Pyramid, it has been buried by desert sands, excavated and repaired many times. The body of the Sphinx is almost 60m long and 20m high. It was known as 'Abu Hol' or Father of Terror to the Arabic people. We don't know who first built the statue- this is one of the mysteries of the colossal monument.

Please note that you will be required to walk around the complex of the Pyramids. It can be very hot in the summer months so be prepared for some hot and sweaty walking with little relief. Don't forget to take some water with you.

After the pyramids there will be a break for lunch and a chance to try some of the local specialities for those who are hungry. We then head back to the city centre to visit the Egyptian Museum. With thousands of exhibits, it's easy to lose yourself in the many corridors - but don't miss the Tutankhamun rooms, where the famous golden death mask of King Tut and his gilded sarcophagi are displayed. The afternoon is free to continue exploring the city.

This evening, we board an overnight sleeper train to Aswan. Please ensure you return to the hotel with plenty of time to spare before departure for our train. Your leader will designate a meeting time and we will travel together to Giza Station in the early evening.

For your comfort we travel aboard a sleeper train with fold out beds (as opposed to a seater train) to Aswan (approx. 13 hrs). This is a very comfortable air conditioned, 2 berth cabin. All bedding is provided on board by the porter. Western style toilets are located in each carriage. In rare circumstances you may be paired with a group member of the opposite sex in your cabin dependant on the group configuration. On other occasions you might have the opportunity to share with a local person of the same sex, again determined on the group configuration. Included dinner and breakfast are served on board. If you are a vegetarian you may want to purchase something extra beforehand to supplement your meal as only a single type of meal is served for dinner which always includes meat.

## Days 3-5 Aswan/Nile Felucca

The Nile, Elephantine Island and white-sailed feluccas: welcome to Aswan. This Nubian city is Egypt's southern gateway to Africa and an important market town - take time here to check out one of the country's best bazaars.

After settling in we head out to enjoy the spectacular scenery around Aswan where the Sahara meets the Nile. We take a motor boat ride to a nearby beach where you can climb a sand dune for a rewarding view. Later in the afternoon we take a walk around the magical Elephantine Island for our first taste of Nubian life and visit a nearby village where we join a local family for dinner and an unforgettable insight into the life and culture of the local people.

On day 4 you have the option to travel to the temples of Abu Simbel. There are 2 ways to make the journey south to see these remarkable temples.

### Option 1: Flying to Abu Simbel

Some travellers prefer to fly to Abu Simbel from Aswan. The flight time is 40 minutes each way. Flights can be booked on-line through EgyptAir:- http://www.egyptair.com/English/Pages/Default.aspx#

Return flights vary throughout the season, the day of the week booked, and how far in advance you book, but expect to pay between 150-300USD

Due to the southerly location it is recommended to book the early flight and visit Abu Simbel at sunrise to avoid the heat

### Option 2: Private minivan

A less expensive option is to hire a minivan with other group members who are also interested. This can be organised from Aswan. The ride is 3 hours each way with a very early departure from Aswan at approximately 4AM.

Please note that Abu Simbel is an optional activity. Your group leader will not be travelling with you on this visit. The entrance fee is paid on arrival to the site, and if you wish a local guide can be hired on arrival.

For those that don't wish to travel to Abu Simbel a visit to nearby Philae Temple is highly recommended. Dedicated to the goddess Isis, Philae was painstakingly moved and reassembled after the construction of Aswan High Dam flooded its original island location.

Nights 3 & 4 we stay in a hotel and on day 5 we board feluccas to spend the day out on the river and then a night under the stars. Our Nubian sailing crew provides all the meals, which are hearty and delicious.

A felucca is a traditional wooden sail boat with broad canvas sails. The boat has a canopy that offers shade and protection from the elements; however there is no cabin or enclosed section. Please note that conditions are basic during our felucca trip but if you are prepared to rough it a bit you are sure to have the adventure of a lifetime. We sleep outside, on the deck of the felucca on mattresses. While blankets are provided, a sleeping sheet is recommended. During the colder months (October to March) it can get very cold at night (as low as 5 degrees) so a sleeping bag is recommended for this period. Unfortunately there is no sleeping bag hire available.

There are no toilets on-board our Nile felucca, but while sailing we will stop at the groups requests on the riverbank for toilet stops with nature. For your convenience at the completion of the days sailing we will assemble a western style toilet and tent close by on the riverbank. Any assistance from the group building the toilet tent is always much appreciated.

Please note that we may need to make slight alterations to our Nile itinerary throughout the year, depending on winds and currents. As the felucca is a sailing craft without any outboard engine, if there is no wind - we will not travel very far.

Nonetheless watching the sun setting across the Nile in the evening is a sight you will remember. This is the absolute highlight of the trip for many of our travellers.

## Days 6-7 Luxor

We say goodbye to our felucca and the crew before transferring by road to Luxor (approx. 3.5 hrs).

Situated on the banks of the Nile, Luxor was once the ancient Egyptian capital of Thebes. From the spectacular temple complex of Karnak to the unbelievable paintings and hieroglyphs in the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, this open-air museum is full of wonderfully preserved reminders of the Pharaohs.

On arrival to Luxor we take some time to freshen up before we head out to our Sojourn Adventure Travel Foundation Project - Animal Care Egypt, to check out the great work they are doing here for the local animals. Next is a late afternoon visit to explore the magnificent Karnak Temple, perhaps the most impressive of the entire ancient Pharaohs' monumental works. It is a jam packed day, but what a great introduction to this extraordinary city.

We start our West Bank tour early on day 7 transferring to the west bank of the Nile to the Colossi of Memnon - two 17 metres high statues on the West Bank. Carved from granite blocks they represent the Pharaoh Amenhotep III.

We then hop onto donkeys (in the winter months only of October - May) for a ride of a different kind through the nearby local villages and fields such as sugar cane (approx. 30 mins). We dismount our donkeys and continue on to the spectacular royal burial site of the Valley of the Kings to visit 3 of the most interesting tombs. Here your group leader will explain the history and legends of these remarkable people.

Please note that a visit to King Tutankhamen's tomb is not included in our visit, but can be arranged as an option with advance notice. Ask your Group Leader if you are interested for details.

After our fun in the Valley of the Kings we are invited to a local family's home for lunch to try some tasty traditional home cooking.

The rest of the afternoon of Day 7 is free before we catch an overnight sleeper train back to Cairo. Options for this afternoon would be to visit the Luxor Museum, the Luxor Temple or the Mummification Museum. You can hire a bicycle to ride out into the surrounding countryside. For a more upscale option perhaps check out the Winter Palace, a lovely 5-star historical building with wonderful views over the Nile - a great place for a refreshing cocktail.

## Day 8 Cairo

Returning to Cairo early in the morning on our overnight train, there is time for a farewell breakfast and a chance to reflect on the wonders we have seen.

You are free to depart at any time on day 8, but please arrange for departing flights after 3pm in case of any travel delays on the overnight train and bad traffic hindering your taxi or transfer.

# Physical Rating

Some easy physical activities are included in your trip. No physical preparation is required to make the most of the journey.

## Physical Preparation

Physical fitness levels:

A reasonable level of fitness is expected and will certainly help increase the enjoyment of the trip. Some of the archaeological sites and activities included involve a fair amount of walking.

Long and rough travel days:

There may be some long travel days and some rough travelling. Windy and rough roads make for some challenging travel experiences. If you experience travel sickness we recommend you consider medication to help ease the discomfort.

Early mornings:

On some long travel days we depart early in the morning to ensure we optimise our time at our next destination.

# Included Activities

This is a list of included activities on this trip. All other activities are optional and at your own expense. For a list of optional activities and sightseeing available on this trip, see the optional activities section below. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not be refunded.

* Khan al-Khalili bazaar visit
* Pyramids and Sphinx
* Camel ride at the Pyramids
* Egyptian Museum
* Aswan boat tour
* Nubian village visit and meal
* Overnight Felucca sailing trip
* Donkey ride (seasonal - not in Summer)
* Colossi of Memnon
* Valley of the Kings (3 tombs)
* Home cooked traditional meal with local family in Luxor
* Karnak Temple
* ACE (Animal Care Egypt) Sojourn Adventure Travel Foundation Project (if time)
* Comfortable overnight sleeper train (both directions- Cairo to Aswan & Luxor to Cairo)

# Optional Activities

We list the following optional activities for your information. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide only.

They are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Sojourn Adventure Travel nor included in price of this trip. If you do any of them, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Sojourn Adventure Travel.

These optional activities listed are suggestions about what is possible to do in each location. It may not be possible to do all activities listed in the time that you have. We recommend you do some planning in advance to decide what you most want to do in each location. Please note that the below prices are the entrance fees only and do not include transport fees to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated.

## Cairo:

* Citadel – EGP50
* Coptic Museum (Cairo) - EGP50
* Islamic Art Museum (Cairo) - EGP40
* Cairo Tower (Cairo) - EGP65
* Antiquities Museum Mummies Hall (Cairo) - EGP100
* Sufi dance performance at Khan al-Khalili (subject to performance scheduling) - free

## Giza Pyramids:

* Entrance to the Great Pyramid of Cheops - EGP100
* Entrance to the 2nd Pyramid of Khafre - EGP30
* Solar Boat Museum - EGP50
* Pyramids Sound and Light Show - EGP75
* Pyramid of Saqqara – 60EGP

## Aswan:

* Abu Simbel Temple Entrance - EGP90
* Abu Simbel transport by bus - EGP120
* Abu Simbel flight - from USD150 (book with www.egyptair.com)
* Philae Temple - EGP50 (+ EGP10 for boat)
* Philae Temple Sound and Light Show - EGP75
* Monastery of St. Simeon - EGP25
* Nubian Museum - EGP50
* Tombs of Nobles - EGP30
* Unfinished Obelisk - EGP30
* Kalabsha Temple - EGP35

## Luxor East Bank sights:

* Karnak Temple Sound and Light Show - EGP100
* Luxor Temple - EGP50
* Luxor Museum – EGP80
* Mummification Museum - EGP50
* Hot Air Balloon - USD110
* Bicycle hire - EGP10

## Luxor West Bank Sights:

* Tomb of Tutankhamun (KV54) (Luxor) - EGP100
* Hatshepsut Temple - EGP30
* Medinat Habu Temple - EGP30
* Ramasseum Temple - EGP30
* Valley of the Queens- EGP35
* Tombs of the Nobles – EGP30

## Shopping:

There are many opportunities to purchase souvenirs and handicrafts while on this trip. Popular purchases include: gold and silver jewellery, perfume and Pyrex perfume bottles, essential oils, papyrus art, alabaster statues and silver including cartouches (hieroglyphics).

While we do not make arrangements for specific shopping excursions due to our passengers feedback, there may be opportunities where your local guides can offer services if you are particularly interested. Please note it is customary for local guides (not Sojourn Adventure Travel Group Leaders) to accept commission from the factory or shop in exchange for their service.

You are under no obligation to purchase anything from local guides and we do encourage you to enjoy shopping in the markets to compare prices and quality.

Please note that in Egypt, silver is a common souvenir in the form of jewellery and other items. The silver in Egypt is generally stamped with '800' meaning that it is 80% silver and 20% other metal. This is a reduced quality to the silver you may be more familiar with which is '925'- higher quality.

## Hot Air Ballooning in Luxor:

There is a possibility of an optional Balloon Flight on the West Bank of the Nile in Luxor. There are many companies who offer flights. While we can arrange the balloon experience with our preferred operator, who has provided good and safe service in the past, we must advise that you are free to choose your own balloon flight operator if you have specific safety concerns. Please note this is an optional activity so any balloon flight is taken at your own risk.

You may notice other local agents around Luxor selling balloon flights at varying prices. You are free to choose your own options. Balloon rides organised through our preferred operators are sold at a fixed rate throughout the season. Ask your Group Leader to assist on arrival to Luxor.

Generally the activity is advertised as a flight over the Valley of the Kings. No matter what any agent says, this can not be guaranteed as the flight is entirely dependent on the direction of the wind. From our experience very few flights actually go over the Valley of the Kings and instead fly close to Hatshepsut and the Colossi of Memnon. While you may have booked a 'sunrise' balloon flight, please be aware that this does not always eventuate in time for the sunrise due to logistical reasons and weather conditions.

Got extra time before or after your Sojourn Adventure Travel adventure? Maybe there is an URBAN ADVENTURE in one of the cities that you're visiting on your trip?

Sojourn Adventure Travel's Urban Adventures are the city tour with a difference - there are more than 100 to choose from in over 30 cities around the world, with new trips added regularly. They are a great way to get under the skin of the city you're visiting, in just a few hours. To make a booking contact your local travel agent, Sojourn Adventure Travel consultant or visit [www.urbanadventures.com](http://www.urbanadventures.com)

# Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, participating in optional activities and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

# Tipping

Tipping - known as 'baksheesh' in the Middle East is an entrenched feature of the tourism industry. If you are satisfied with the services provided a tip - though not compulsory - is appropriate and always appreciated. While it may not be customary to you, it is of great significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels.

We recommend that any group tips are collected in a envelope and handed directly to the intended recipient as a collective 'thank-you' by the group. The below amounts are suggested figures in USD for ease of calculating budgets, but should always be offered in local currency.

**Restaurants:** Local markets and basic restaurants - leave the loose change. More up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill.

**Local guides:** Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your leader. We suggest US$1-2 per person per day for local guides.

**Drivers:** You may have a range of private drivers on your trip. Some may be with you for a short journey while others may be with you for several days. We would suggest a higher tip for those more involved with the group however US$1-2 per person per day is generally appropriate.

**Public toilet attendants:** When using public toilets there will most likely be an attendant that will expect a tip. 20-50 cents is appropriate.

**Felucca Captains:** If you are travelling in Upper Egypt many of our itineraries spend a night on a felucca. US$1-2 per person per day for felucca captains is appropriate.

**Desert Camp hosts:** If you have a night camping included on your itinerary US$2-3 is appropriate for the camp hosts.

**Your Group Leader:** You may also consider tipping your leader for outstanding service throughout your trip. The amount is entirely a personal preference; however as a guideline US$2 per person, per day can be used. Of course you are free to tip more or less as you see fit, depending on your perception of service quality and the length of your trip. Remember, a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.

# Important Notes

## Travelling in the Middle East:

The Middle East is a region which may be very different to anything you have experienced before. Heat, pollution, poverty and the crowds can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge. During our time here we have come to love this wonderfully different region but we know that we should always expect to encounter some difficulties along the way. You will come across very different attitudes to time keeping, public cleanliness, privacy and service. If you are able to travel with a lot of patience and a sense of humour, then we know that you - like all of us - will be captivated by the fabulous Middle East.

## Expense in the Middle East:

The Middle East is often misjudged as being an inexpensive destination. With tourism booming, the influx of cheap flights from Europe, prices for some items are becoming more equivalent to prices you would be used to at home. Eating in local restaurants, road side stalls and from markets can be inexpensive, but for nights out at tourist friendly restaurants you can expect to pay much more. Budgets are a personal choice but please bear in mind that you should not expect the Middle East to always be a budget destination.

## Student cards:

If you are a student and can produce a valid student card you will be able to get discounted rates at some of the historical sites. Entrance prices are clearly posted at the ticket booth entry points.

## Seasons for travelling in the Middle East:

Please note that as a desert region, the Middle East can have extreme weather!

Winter (approx. December to February) can be very cold. Consider bringing a sleeping bag, thermals, scarf, gloves and a warm jacket for travel in this period, especially on itineraries which include camping such as on a felucca, in a desert camp, or at a Red Sea beach camp. Some of our guesthouses/hotels do not supply heating. In many cases this would be a major financial and environmental strain on our hotels and the local towns. Summer (approx. June to August) can be very hot everywhere we travel, which means that it can be quite uncomfortable for those not used to the heat. Not all our hotels have air conditioning, and in those that do, it is not always functioning.

### Alterations to the itinerary:

While we operate successful trips in the Middle East throughout the year, some changes may occur in our itineraries due to inclement weather and common seasonal changes to timetables and transport routes. This can happen with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to the route while you are travelling.

### Armed convoys and security while travelling:

Occasionally you may experience armed security and convoys between select towns or regions. Convoys are used to ensure all travellers are transported safely and, in many cases, tourists are only allowed to travel in scheduled convoys of buses and jeeps. On rare occasions you may have an armed guard in your vehicle. We want to warn you so you are not alarmed. This is a practice designed to keep tourists safe, although at time it can appear a little overkill.

### Ramadan & the Eid ul-Fitr festival 2011:

In 2011 the important month of Ramadan will be in progress from the 1st August through till the 30th August, and the Eid ul-Fitr festival will be held directly at its conclusion for 3-4 days. Ramadan is a festival of sacrifice where the devout refrain from eating or drinking during daylight hours. During Ramadan business hours are shortened, including opening hours at some tourist attractions. Alcohol is not permitted during daylight hours and many restaurants will be closed. While you should expect some delays and inconveniences during this period, the month is a fantastic opportunity to travel in a Muslim country and witness this unique period, particularly the nightly celebrations when the sun sets and the fast is broken. Please note that although the Eid ul-Fitr festival can also be a fascinating time to travel it is a period of National holiday. Most government offices and businesses will be closed and some tourist site opening hours may be effected.

## Passport photocopies:

Please bring two (2) copies of your passport. These may be used to assist with hotel check-in, and sometimes at road security points.

A Single Supplement is available on this trip, please refer to your agent for further information. On the following nights the Single Supplement is not available:

* Day 2 Overnight train
* Day 5 Felucca
* Day 7 Overnight Train

# Group Size

Maximum of 12 travellers per group

# Accommodation

Hotels (4nts), felucca (1nt), overnight sleeper train (2nts)

The style of accommodation described in the day to day itinerary is a guideline. On rare occasions alternative arrangements may need to be arranged due to availability of rooms in our usual accommodation. A similar standard of accommodation will be used in these instances.

Additional accommodation:

If you have purchased pre or post trip accommodation, you may be required to change rooms at the start or the end of the tour.

Triple Sharing:

When we have 3 single female travellers or 3 single male travellers on a trip we occasionally make use of triple-share rooms.

# Meals

While travelling with us you will experience the vast array of wonderful food available in the world. Your group leader will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. On our camping trips we often cook the region's specialties so you don't miss out. To give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat generally not all meals are included in the trip price. This also gives you more budgeting flexibility. As a rule our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Please check the 'meal inclusions' section of these notes for details of meals included.

Allow USD $145 for meals not included.

## Meal Inclusions

4 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches, 4 Dinners

Breakfast is generally a very simple affair and typically consist of bread, jam & tea/coffee & on occasions tomato, cucumber, & juice (or similar).

# Transport

Overnight sleeper train, private bus, motor boat, felucca, taxi, camel, donkey (seasonal)

# Group Leader

All Sojourn Adventure Travel group trips are accompanied by one of our group leaders or our local partners' group leaders. The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. Sojourn Adventure Travel endeavours to provide the services of an experienced leader however, due to the seasonality of travel, rare situations may arise where your leader is new to a particular region or training other group leaders. Your leader will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see and recommend local eating venues. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects.

At Sojourn Adventure Travel we aim to support local guides who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit - and who better to hear it from than the locals themselves? If you were interested in delving deeper into the local culture then your leader can recommend a local guide service in the most of the main destinations of your trip.

# Joining Point

**King Hotel**Dokki  
Cairo  
The hotel has 90 rooms with ensuite bathrooms, television and air-conditioning. Other hotel features include laundry service, roof top bar and restaurant.

## Joining Point Instructions

It is by far the easiest option to take a taxi. Airport taxis shouldn't cost more than 100EGP (be prepared to bargain!). The drive can take between 40 minutes and 1 hour depending on the time of day and subsequent traffic conditions.

Alternatively Sojourn Adventure Travel offer a pre-arranged private transfer service option. Enquire with your Agent on booking. If you have pre-purchased an arrival transfer you will be met by a transfer officer in the immigration area from our local representative in Cairo - TravelMark Agency. Look for the Sojourn Adventure Travel Logo and your name.

If for any reason you should not make contact with the transfer officer by the time you have cleared customs as can occasionally occur as many flights tend to arrive at once, please call TravelMark Agency on the following numbers:

Mr Tharwat (+2) 0127 606 605

Mr Abdel Nasser (+2) 0123 603 748

Give your exact location in the airport (find a landmark) and you will be attended to promptly.

In the very unlikely event that this process fails, you can find taxis at the front of the airport to take you to your hotel. Please inform your group leader at the initial group meeting if this occurs.

If your flight is going to be early, delayed or cancelled please call ahead on the above numbers to explain the situation and advise alternative flight details

If this is your first trip to Egypt a transfer is recommended.

## Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems (and nor should you!) but if for any reason you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your trip leader.

If you have pre-booked an airport transfer (where available) and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions in the Trip

Notes. Should this occur, please apply to your travel agent for a refund of the transfer cost on your return.

No refund is available on missed transfers or portions of your trip owing to a different flight arrival or delayed flight arrival. Any additional cost incurred in order to meet up with your group is at your own expense.

# Finishing Point

**King Hotel**Dokki  
Cairo

The hotel has 90 rooms with ensuite bathrooms, television and air-conditioning. Other hotel features include laundry service, roof top bar and restaurant.

## Finishing Point Instructions

Check out time is 12:00 midday. Taxis can easily be hired from the street in front of the Hotel. Bargain for the fare and aim to pay approx 80EGP. Only the new yellow taxis have working meters. The drive can take between 45 minutes and 1 hour depending on the time of day and subsequent traffic conditions.

We can offer a pre-arranged private transfer service option. Inform your agent at the time of booking if you are interested.

# Emergency Contact

In the case of a genuine crisis or emergency, Sojourn Adventure Travel's local Cairo-based ground representative for the Middle East can be reached on Tel: +2 019 681 1067. For all other enquiries please contact our Reservations department which is open 24 hours, 6 days per week. For further contact details please use the following page: [http://www.Sojourn Adventure Travel.com/ourtrips/contact/](http://www.intrepidtravel.com/ourtrips/contact/).

# Emergency Funds

Please also make sure you have access to an additional USD$400, to be used when unforeseen incidents or circumstances outside our control (eg. a natural disaster, civil unrest or an outbreak of bird flu) necessitate a change to our planned route.

# Visas

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

## Egypt:

Most nationalities require a visa to enter as a tourist into Egypt. Visas are easily attainable on arrival at Cairo airport for most nationalities for USD$15 to be paid in cash, but please check with your travel agent or embassy before departure. On arrival to Cairo airport you buy your visa at any of the banks before proceeding to immigration. You will be given a stamp that you then need to put into your passport yourself. A single entry visa is valid for three months from date of issue and entitles the bearer to one month in Egypt. Multiple entry visas are not available at the airport or any border crossings.

# Laundry

Some hotels offer a laundry service which by western standards is generally inexpensive. Self-service laundries are scarce, but laundromats are not uncommon in the main towns. If using a hotel or laundromat service note that damage to clothing is occasionally encountered. Leave your delicate evening wear at home. Consider bringing some bio-degradable laundry soap and hand wash so that you can wash any precious items yourself.

# What to Take

What you need to bring will vary according to the trip style you have chosen, the countries you are visiting and when you are travelling. Generally speaking you should pack as lightly as possible. On the vast majority of our trips you are expected to carry your own luggage and although you will not be required to walk long distances with your luggage (max 30 minutes) we recommend keeping the weight under 10kg/22lb.

Most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags or backpacks with wheels are convenient although we recommend your bag has carry straps. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for daytrips.

The smaller your bag the better! There is often restricted storage space when travelling and if your bag does not fit in these areas, then often the only place to put it is on your lap. So for maximum comfort, aim to pack small and light! It is recommended that your bag can be locked as on some transport it may be necessary to store your luggage separately.

Temperatures in the Middle East are generally hot with little rain. This can become extreme during the summer months of June to August. In the months of December to March it can be very cool at night, particularly next to the river or the ocean and out in the desert where night temperatures can drop dramatically. Even in the hot months, it can get cold in the desert at night.

A light water and windproof jacket is useful and a hat essential. As the countries we visit are Islamic nations, women may find a headscarf useful.

Sleeping bags:

All of our hotel accommodation contains suitable bedding, and simple light bedding is provided during camping activities such as: overnight felucca, desert camps, or at the Red Sea Beach camp stay. Most Sojourn Adventure Travellers find the bedding provided here adequate, but for your own comfort and if you are particularly sensitive to the cold, consider bringing your own sleeping bag if your itinerary includes camping over the winter months (approx. Dec-Mar).

# Local Dress

When packing be aware that dress standards are conservative and you should dress accordingly. To respect the local culture and for your own comfort, we strongly recommend modest clothing. As a guideline, shoulders and knees at the minimum (and everything in between including midriff and cleavage) should be covered at all times. Wearing shorts and singlet tops is not appropriate and may well restrict your entry into sites of a religious nature, family homes, and will limit your local interaction opportunities in general. Loose, lightweight, long clothing (3/4 trousers that come to the calf is fine) is both respectful and cool in the predominantly warm climate.

# Checklist

The following checklist is to be used as a guide only and is not intended to be a complete packing list. Any other items that you wish to pack are at your own discretion however you should attempt to comply with the suggested luggage weight limit.

* Passport
* Visas required for this trip
* Travel insurance; including insurer details, 24hr emergency contact telephone number and policy number
* Flight Tickets
* Sojourn Adventure Travel trip confirmation voucher
* Photocopies of important documents to be kept separately (we recommend you keep a copy at home as well)
* Latest trip notes (this information)
* Money, cash, credit cards
* Money belt or pouch
* First aid kit, personal medication/prescriptions
* Prescription glasses or contact lens & solution
* Sunglasses
* High protection sunscreen
* Lip balm
* Hat
* Insect repellent, Insect bite cream
* Antihistamine
* Antibacterial gel
* Ear plugs
* Alarm clock
* Torch/flashlight and spare batteries
* Travel sickness tablets
* Swimming costume & towel
* Comfortable walking shoes with good grip (sturdy trekking shoes are recommended if your itinerary includes climbing Mt Sinai)
* Camera, film, memory card, spare batteries
* Day pack - for your personal needs during the day
* Local language phrase book
* Reading material
* Luggage lock
* Smarter clothes for nights out
* Toiletries
* Sleep sheet
* Travel plug/international adapter
* Mobile phone - check you have international roaming access
* Tampons (can be difficult to find on tour)
* Winter suggestions (Approx. Dec to Mar):
* Warm clothes
* Waterproof jacket
* Thermal underwear
* Gloves
* Beanie/wooly hat
* Sleeping bag (Not obligatory, but bring if you are particularly sensitive to the cold, and if your itinerary includes a desert camp, overnight felucca or Red Sea beach camp)
* Consider bringing some post cards/pins of your hometown to give to local people. Photos of your family to show local people help to get a conversation and the interaction started.

# Money Exchange

Currency exchange rates often fluctuate. For the most up to date rates please refer to the following website: [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com/).

The most convenient and cheapest way to acquire money is via an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) which are plentiful throughout all the main cities. Check with your bank for information on ATM international fees.

When leaving home don't forget your PIN and make sure you know the telephone number for cancelling your card if it is stolen. Keep this in a safe place. When using your debit card, check your receipts and keep them to compare against your statement when you get home.

We recommend that you carry some foreign currency cash for when ATMs cannot be accessed, have broken down or run out of cash. There are few problems changing money at the many banks and currency exchange facilities. Cash in USD, EURO & GBP are easiest to exchange.

Occasionally banks will allow cash advances on your credit card, but it is not recommended to rely on this.

While some banks and 5 star hotels will change Travellers' Cheques the process is time consuming and commissions can be high (up to 10%) and it can be difficult to change on weekends and public holidays. The easiest cheques to change are Thomas Cook or American Express in USD, EUR or GBP. Traveller's cheques are not recommended in the Middle East.

The currency of Egypt is Egyptian Pounds (EGP). It is easy to get money when you arrive at the airport by money exchange or from the ATM.

# Keeping in Touch - communication while on the road

If you need to be contacted while travelling we recommend email. Email cafes are generally available throughout the regions we visit, although it is possible you may be without email contact for several days on some itineraries. If someone wishes to contact you in an emergency while you are on one of our trips we recommend that they contact your local booking agent, or refer to our emergency contact details. We don't recommend that family and friends try to contact you through hotels, as they are subject to change and the reception staff may not speak English.

# Issues On Your Trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader/local partner may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction - if this is the case please ask the leader if you may speak to their direct manager.

You may also choose to provide details in your online feedback which we ask you to complete within 30 days of the end of your trip but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

# Health

All Sojourn Adventure Travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in the group travel experience. If in the opinion of our group leader or company representative any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, Sojourn Adventure Travel reserves the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund. We therefore ask that you read the itinerary in these trip notes thoroughly and then realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Please consult with your doctor if you have any doubts.

There are no specific health requirements for this trip. However, you should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information or for any necessary vaccinations before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements (including a spare pair of glasses) as they may not easily be obtained while on tour.

Sojourn Adventure Travel is very aware of the issues raised by H1N1 (swine) flu and these have been taken into consideration for all aspects of the trip you are about to take. In reviewing this itinerary we have followed the guidelines set out by The World Health Organisation (WHO) http://www.who.int/en/

Sojourn Adventure Travel reserve the right to make last minute changes to any itinerary in the very unlikely occurrence that an area should suddenly be deemed to be unsafe because of an outbreak of H1N1 flu.

Drinking water:

As a rule we recommend you do not drink tap water, even in hotels, as it contains much higher levels of different minerals than the water you may have at home. For local people this is not a problem as their bodies are used to this and can cope, but for travellers from places other continents drinking the tap water can result in illness. Generally this is not serious, an upset stomach being the only symptom, but it is enough to spoil a day or two of your holiday. Bottled water is widely available. Water consumption should be about 3 litres a day (this should be easy for most!) Rehydration salts, motion sickness tablets, and diarrhoea blockers are available from many pharmacies.

# Safety

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of our hotels have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Your leader will accompany you on all included activities however during your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your group leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your Sojourn Adventure Travel itinerary, and Sojourn Adventure Travel makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

We recommend that you take a moment to read through this information before travelling, and would appreciate any feedback on how well it is being implemented in the field.

### Fire Precautions & balconies:

Please be aware that local laws governing tourism facilities in the Middle East & North Africa may differ from those in your home country and not all the accommodation which we use has a fire exit, fire extinguishers or smoke alarms. Not all balconies measure up to standard dimensions.

### Seat belts:

Please be aware that local laws governing transportation safety may differ from those in the western world or from your home country and not all the transport which we use provides seat belts.

### Petty theft and personal safety:

Although we feel that the Middle East & North Africa is a very safe region to travel in, please be aware that there is always the risk of pick-pocketing and petty theft, particularly in the more touristy cities. We recommend that you exercise caution when walking alone at night and encourage you to walk in pairs or groups. Simple measures like carrying your day pack on your front, not hanging your bag over the back of your chair and wearing a money belt will reduce any chance that your valuables should go missing.

### Traffic conditions and driving on opposite sides of the road:

Traffic will no doubt be more chaotic than you are used to at home. Traffic rules are not always adhered to and the traffic can tend to move very fast. Be aware and alert! Depending on where you come from please note that drivers in this part of the world may drive on the opposite side of the road from what you are used to. Look both ways before crossing any road.

### Water safety:

Please take care when taking part in any activities in the ocean, river or open water where waves and currents can be unpredictable. It is expected that anyone taking part in water activities are able to swim and have experience in open water. All swimmers should seek local advice before entering the water.

# Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips. We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number has been seen by your leader.

If you have credit card insurance your tour leader will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number and emergency contact telephone number rather than the Bank's name and credit card details. Please contact your bank for these details prior to arriving in-country.

# Your Fellow Travellers

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part.

Please note that due to privacy reasons we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip prior to departure.

# Single Travellers

Our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a compulsory single supplement. Single travellers share with people of the same gender for the duration of the trip, in accommodation ranging from twin to multi-share. Please note some of our itineraries have accommodation booked on a mixed gender share basis - where applicable this will be specified in our Trip Notes. On a selection of our Comfort and Original style trips you have the option to pay a single supplement to ensure that you will have your own room (where available). Please refer to the important notes if this trip has a single supplement and any accommodation on the trip that the single supplement will not apply to. Please note that this only applies to accommodation during the tour, pre- and post-trip accommodation will be booked on a single room basis.

# Itinerary Disclaimer

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. Please note: occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. Our brochure is usually released in November each year. As such the information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you print and review a final copy of your Trip Notes a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans. For the latest updated trip notes please visit our website: **www.Sojourn Adventure Travel.com**