



Nile Valley: Beni Suef to Qena

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Best Places to Eat

- » Koshary Nagwa (p174)
- » Dahabiyya Restaurant (p174)
- » Al-Watania Palace Hotel (p182)

Best Places to Stay

- » Al-Safa Hotel (p184)
- » Al-Watania Palace Hotel (p181)
- » City Center Hotel (p172)
- » Horus Resort (p174)
- » House of Life (p186)

Why Go?

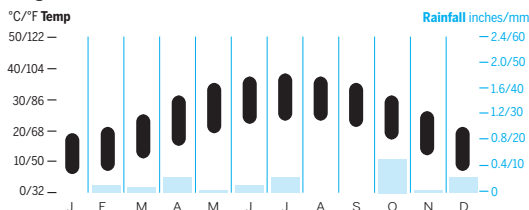
If you're in a hurry to reach the treasures and pleasures of the south, it is easy to dismiss this first segment of Upper Egypt between Cairo and Luxor. But the less touristed parts of the country almost always repay the effort of a visit.

Much of this part of the valley is less developed than the other valleys – you will see farmers still working by hand, although they're also having to grapple with the issues of modernity, particularly problems with pumps and water shortages.

But however much a backwater this region might seem, it played a key role in Egypt's destiny as its many archaeological sites bear witness – from the lavishly painted tombs of the early provincial rulers at Beni Hasan to the remains of the doomed city of Akhetaten, where Tutankhamun was brought up, and the Pharaonic-inspired monasteries of the early Christian period.

When to Go

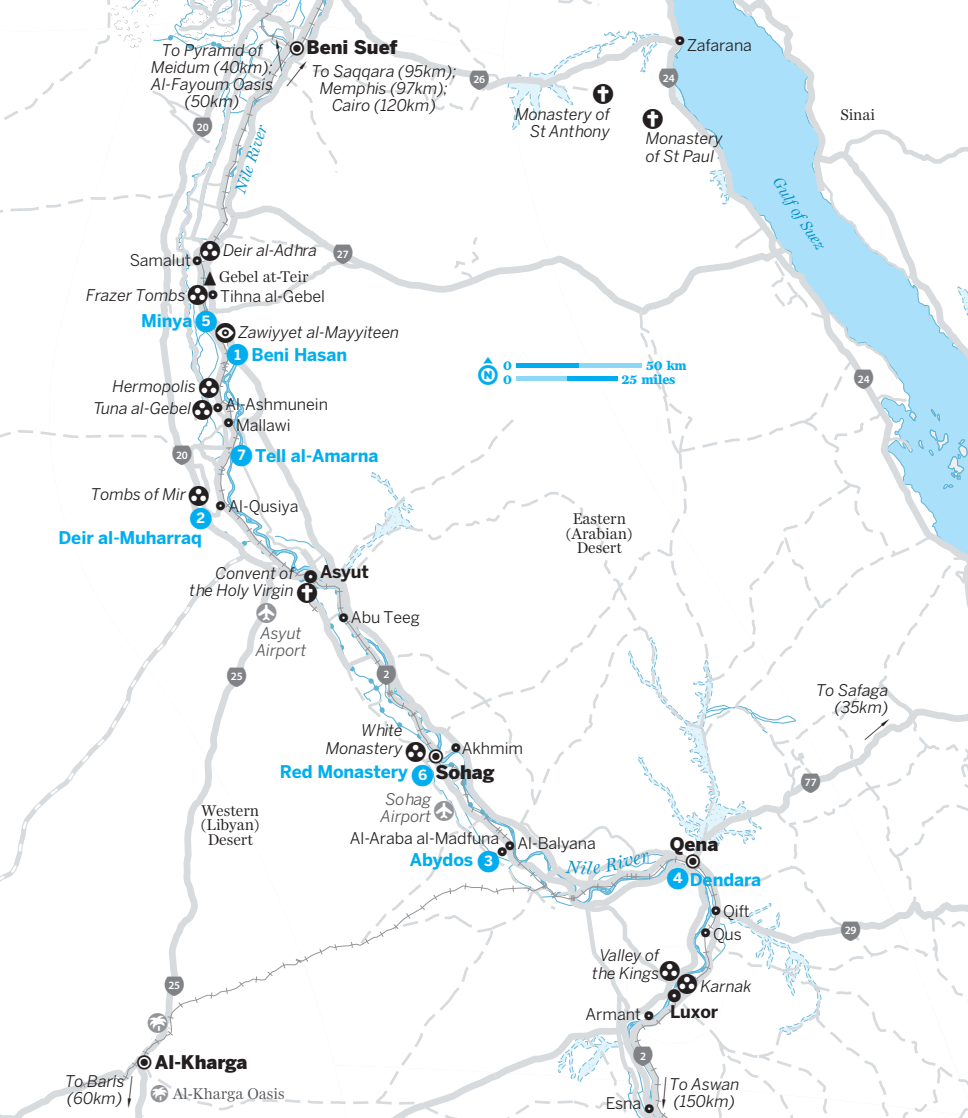
Asyut



Apr Sham el Nesim, the spring festival is celebrated in style in the region.

Aug Millions of people arrive to celebrate the Feast of the Virgin outside Minya.

Oct-Nov The ideal touring time, with the light being particularly beautiful.



Nile Valley: Beni Suf to Qena Highlights

- 1 Admire lithe dancers, hunters and even wrestlers in the finely painted tombs at **Beni Hasan** (p175)
- 2 Visit the Coptic monastery of **Deir al-Muharraaq** (p179) to see why Copts claim to be heirs to the ancient Egyptians
- 3 Gaze upon some of ancient Egypt's finest temple

- reliefs at the **Temple of Seti I** (p185) in Abydos
- 4 Marvel at one of the best-preserved temple complexes in Egypt in Dendara's magnificent **Temple of Hathor** (p187)
- 5 Hang out in the elegant colonial centre of **Minya** (p172)

- 6 See the frescoes at the **Red Monastery** (p183), one of the finest buildings from late antiquity
- 7 Wander through the lush countryside around **Akhetaten** (p179), the doomed city of the heretic king Akhenaten