



Red Sea Coast

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

- » Wadi Lahami Village (p382)
- » Al-Quseir Hotel (p381)
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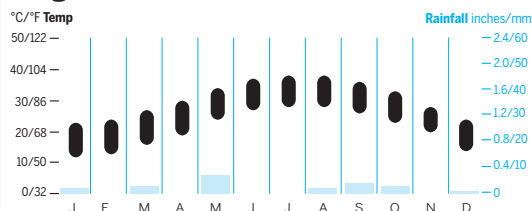
Why Go?

Egypt's Red Sea coast has never loomed large on any independent traveller's itinerary, yet some of the most important sites in Christianity's early evolution lay tucked away amid the barren mountains of the north. Venture south of brashly loud and proud Hurghada and you'll not only find some of Egypt's best diving but also the epically wild expanse of the Eastern Desert. Criss-crossed by trade routes dating back to the far reaches of prehistory, and scattered with ancient rock art and lonely ruins, this little visited area is a desert adventurer's dream.

Back on the 'Red Sea Riviera', famous (or infamous, depending on your view) for being a bargain bonanza of cheap package holidays, overdevelopment has pockmarked the coastline deeply, leaving a trail of mega-resorts and half-finished hotels in its wake. Dig a little deeper into this region though, and the Red Sea may just surprise you.

When to Go

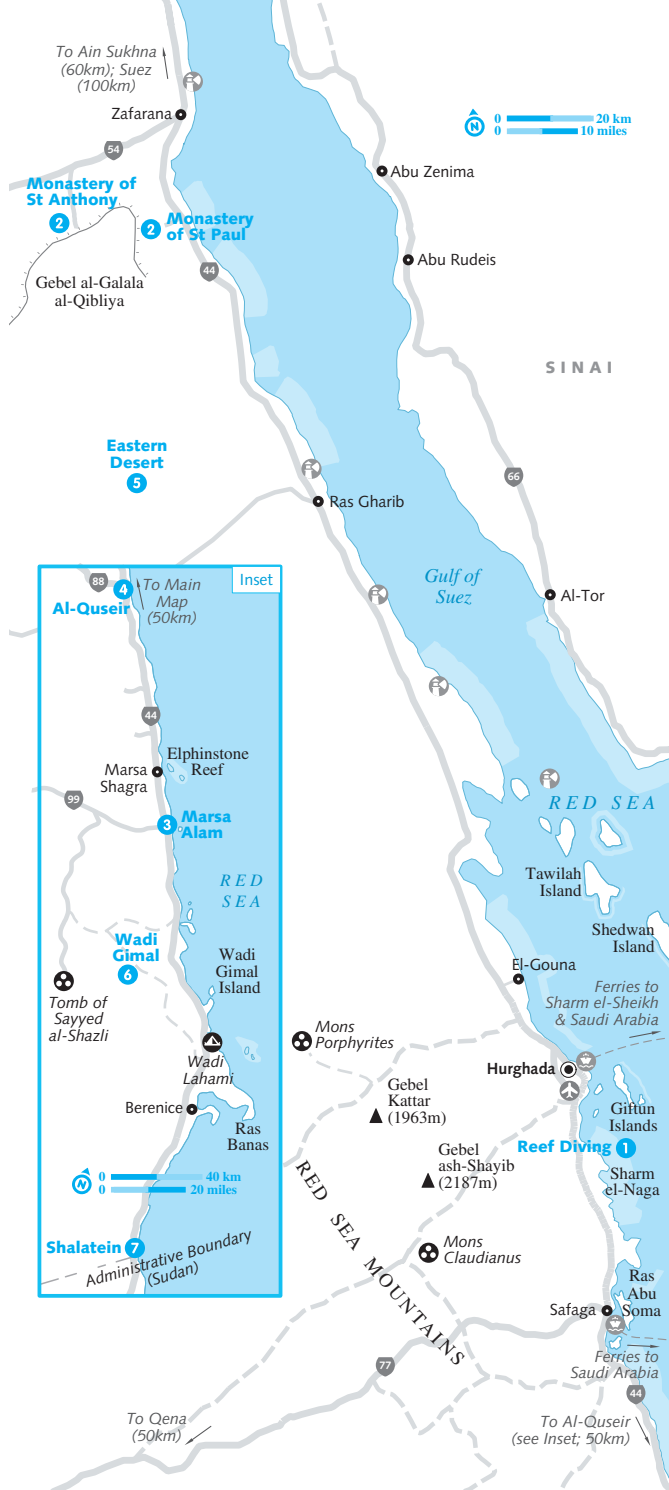
Hurghada



Feb A good time to bargain hunt as generally produces the cheapest resort deals.

Mar–Apr While temperatures stay mild dust off your explorer hat and head to the Eastern Desert.

Sep Migratory birds arrive en masse in the deep south.



Red Sea Highlights

- 1 Make a diving date with the **world class reefs** off Hurghada and discover why the Red Sea was catapulted onto the tourism stage in the first place.
- 2 Reflect on monasticism's centuries-old roots at **St Anthony's** and **St Paul's**.
- 3 Plunge into the lesser-known kaleidoscope-hued **reefs of the deep south** from one of the beach camps around Marsa Alam.
- 4 Wander the **old town of Al-Quseir**, where the streets are imbued with an evocative yesteryear haze.
- 5 Trek through wadis, mountains and endless expanses of sand in the **Eastern Desert**.
- 6 Explore remnants of Rome's mighty emerald mines from **Wadi Gimal**.
- 7 Head to **Shalatein's camel market** and village souq, with its ramshackle frontier vibe and meld of cultures coming to sell, haggle and buy.