



# Siwa Oasis & the Western Desert

## Includes »

Al-Kharga Oasis.....	281
Al-Kharga .....	281
Dakhla Oasis .....	287
Mut.....	288
Farafra Oasis.....	294
Qasr al-Farafra.....	294
White Desert.....	296
Black Desert .....	297
Bahariya Oasis.....	298
Bawiti .....	298
Siwa Oasis.....	304
Qara Oasis.....	316
Great Sand Sea.....	316

## Best Places to Eat

- » Kenooz Siwa (p313)
- » Abdu's Restaurant (p313)
- » Al-Babinsal Restaurant (p313)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Camping in the White Desert (p296)
- » Shali Lodge (p311)
- » Adrère Amellal (p312)
- » Under The Moon Camp (p304)
- » Al Tarfa Desert Sanctuary (p293)

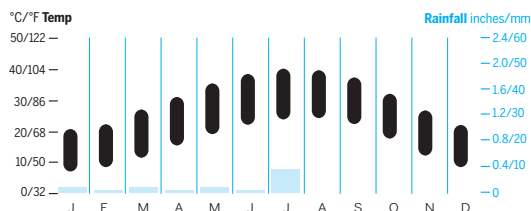
## Why Go?

Older than the Pyramids, more sublime than any temple, Egypt's Western Desert stretches from the Nile and the Mediterranean to the Sudanese and Libyan borders, rolling far into Africa, oblivious to any lines drawn on the map. It's a place of elemental beauty as alluring as it is forbidding, where massive sand dunes ripple and swell, sunsets sear the sky, and wind sculpts rock into surreal works of art.

Amid this intense landscape, five major oases rise like islands of greenery, where flourishing palm plantations engulf crumbling medieval towns that were once important outposts along ancient caravan routes. Far from the hassle and hustle of the touristic Nile Valley, they're among the best spots in the country to glimpse rural Egyptian life – or just slow down, snack on locally grown dates and olives, and swim in natural hot and cold springs in the middle of a desert.

## When to Go

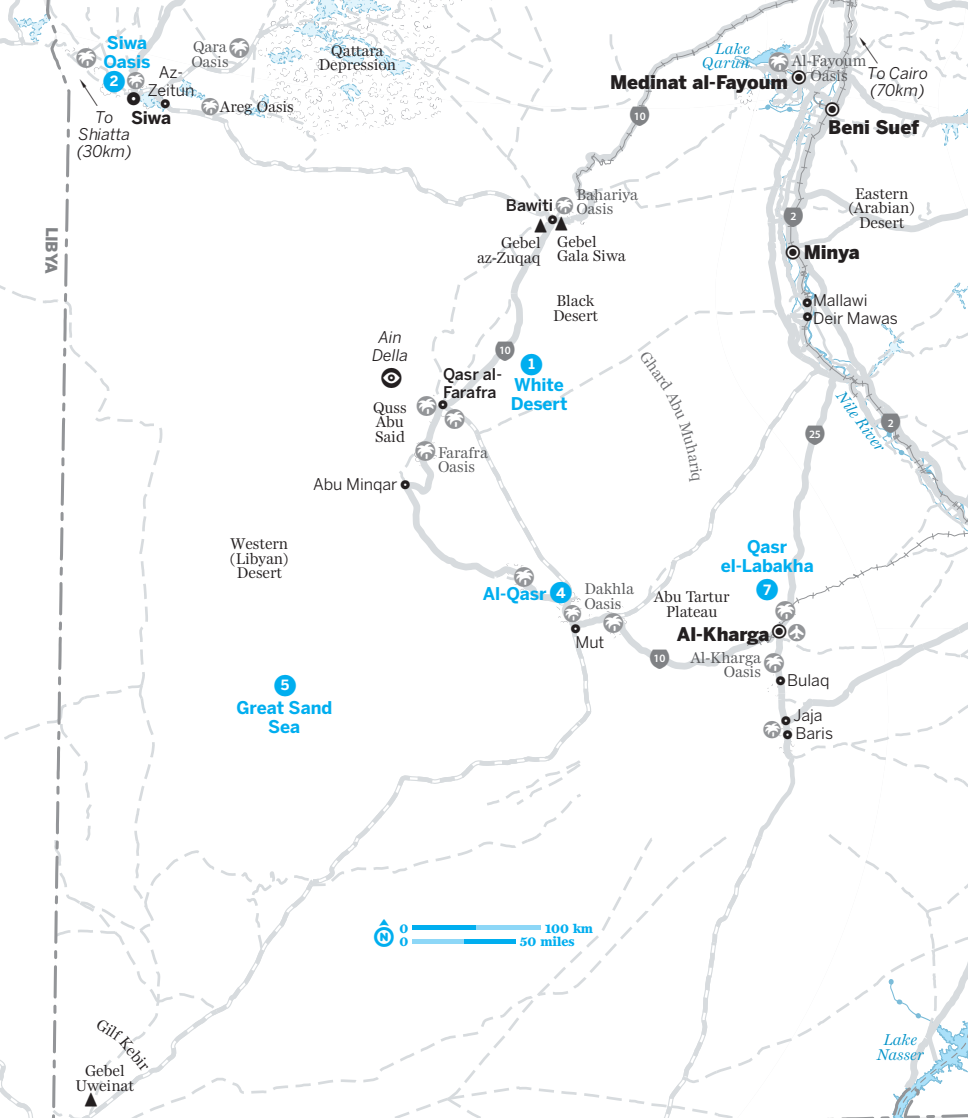
### Siwa



**Sep–Oct** It's hot but not brutal, and dates are being harvested.

**Dec–Feb** Pleasant daytime temperatures give way to cold nights.

**Jun–Aug** Ridiculously hot; low seasons see fewer tourists and more discounts.



## Siwa Oasis & the Western Desert Highlights

- 1 Exploring the geologic fantasyland of the **White Desert** (p296)
- 2 Soaking up the tranquil vibes and unique culture of breathtaking **Siwa Oasis** (p304)
- 3 Dipping into one of the numerous cool and hot **natural springs** (see boxed text p291) that lie scattered around the oases
- 4 Walking in wonder through the other-timely fortified mudbrick town of **Al-Qasr** (p292)
- 5 Taking a multiday safari among the endless dunes of the **Great Sand Sea** (p316)
- 6 Staying at one of the incredible **ecolodges** in Siwa or Dakhla Oasis (p313 & p293)
- 7 Scrambling around the old Roman fort at **Qasr el-Labakha** in Al-Kharga Oasis (p287)