



Suez Canal

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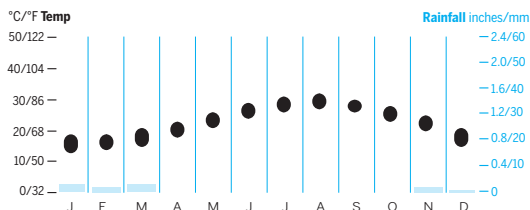
Why Go?

The Suez Canal, Egypt's glorious triumph of engineering over nature, dominates this region, slicing through the sands of the Isthmus of Suez for 163km, not only severing mainland Egypt from Sinai but also Africa from Asia. The canal was the remarkable achievement of Egypt's belle époque, an era buoyed by grand aspirations and finished by bankruptcy and broken dreams. This period also gave birth to the canalside cities of Port Said and Ismailia. Today their streets remain haunted by this fleeting age of grandeur, their distinctive architecture teetering into picturesque disrepair.

Although it's a region often bypassed by all but the most rampant supertanker-spotters, anyone with an interest in Egypt's modern history will enjoy the crumbs of former finery on display. And while the Canal Zone may have no vast ruins or mammoth temples, there's a slower pace to life here that those with travelling time up their sleeve will appreciate.

When to Go

Port Said



Apr Witness the riotous effigy-burning spectacle at the annual El-Limbo Festival.

Aug Escape the frazzling summer heat with cooling canalside breezes in Port Said.

Sep Spot flocks of storks as they head south, swooping over the skies across the Canal Zone.

Suez Canal Highlights

1 Commute from Africa to Asia in 15 minutes flat by jumping on the **ferry** (p355) from Port Said to Port Fuad and sampling life on the canal

2 Take a break from Egypt's usual hectic pace among the colonial-era villas of slumberous **Ismailia** (p358)

3 Explore the dreamy faded grandeur of **Port Said's waterfront quarter** (p355)

4 Admire more than 4000 objects from Pharaonic and Graeco-Roman times at the rarely visited **Ismailia Museum** (p358)

5 Feast on super-fresh seafood along **Port Said's Corniche** (p357)

6 Stroll down Port Said's **canalside boardwalk** (p355) for supertanker-spotting heaven

