



Cairo Outskirts & the Delta

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Best Places for History

- ➔ Memphis (p144)
- ➔ Imhotep Museum (p145)
- ➔ Bent Pyramid (p151)
- ➔ Pyramid of Meidum (p156)
- ➔ Tanis (p162)

Best Sights Off the Beaten Track

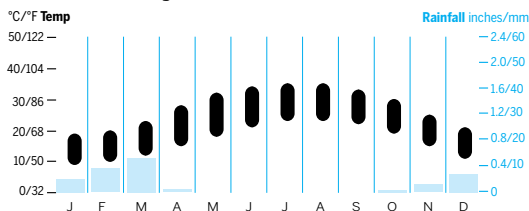
- ➔ Tunis (p155)
- ➔ Serapeum (p148)
- ➔ Qasr Qarun (p154)
- ➔ Wadi Rayyan (p154)
- ➔ Birqash Camel Market (p160)

Why Go?

Typical Egypt itineraries rarely take in the area right around Cairo because little of it can honestly be put in the 'must-see' category, except of course for the majestic ancient site of Saqqara, which lies on the city's southern edge. Thanks to speedy minibuses and good trains through the Delta, it's easy to get from Cairo's confines to open green fields; ancient sites you'll have all to yourself; modern Coptic monasteries with roots 17 centuries deep; and the not-for-the-squeamish action of a live camel market with camels that come from deepest Sudan. Every destination here can be visited as an easy day trip or a leisurely overnight excursion from the capital.

When to Go

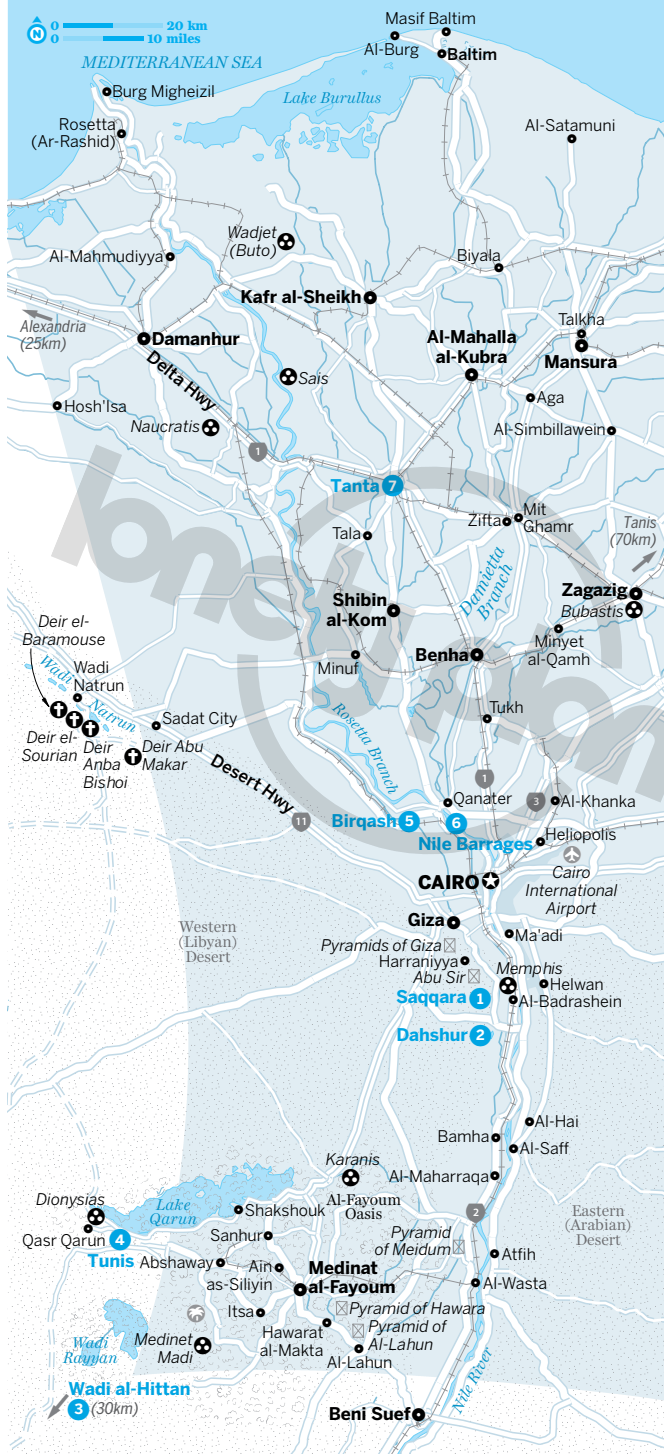
Medinat al Fayoum



Dec–Feb The best time to visit shadeless Saqqara and other pyramids.

Jun–Aug Summer heat can be paralyzing in Cairo. Cool off at Lake Qarun in Al-Fayoum.

Oct The *moulid* (saints' festival) of Al-Sayyed Badawi in Tanta draws a million Egyptians.



Cairo Outskirts & the Delta Highlights

- 1 Explore the half-buried ruins and amazing Old Kingdom art at **Saqqara** (p144)
- 2 Penetrate the heart of the Red Pyramid at **Dahshur** (p144)
- 3 Go sandboarding and fossil-spotting in the desert sands of **Wadi al-Hittan** (p155)
- 4 Chill out in the funky arts colony of **Tunis** (p155)
- 5 Immerse yourself in the sights, sounds and smells of the **Birqash Camel Market** (p160)
- 6 Pile on to a merry boat of day trippers to see the **Nile Barrages** (p160) at Qanater
- 7 Take a comfortable train trip to the Delta city of **Tanta** (p161), just to eat some sweets and enjoy the view