



# Egypt



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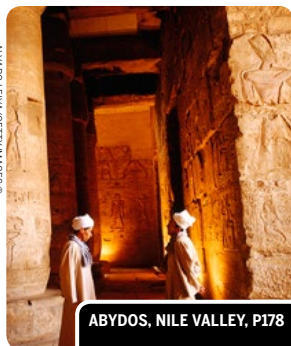
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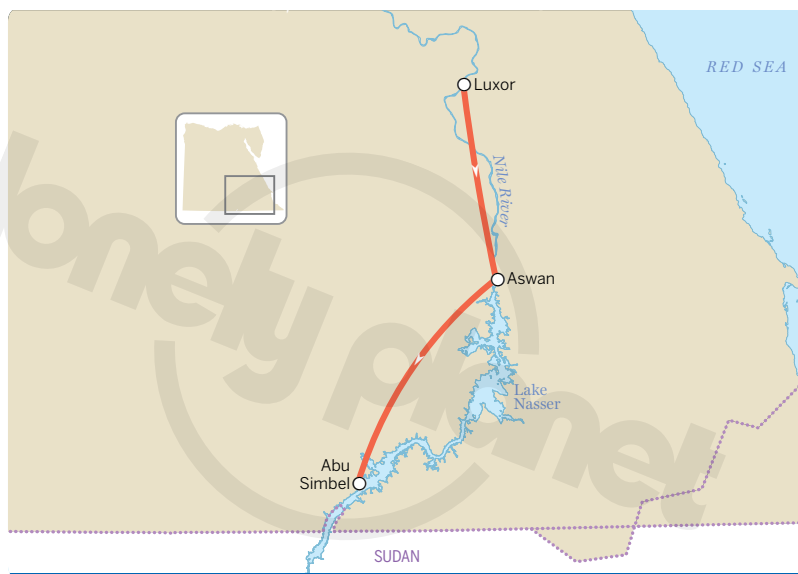
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# Itineraries



## 2 WEEKS From Luxor to Aswan

Many visitors now prefer to avoid Cairo altogether and fly direct to Luxor. As the largest open air museum in the world, there's plenty to keep you busy here. Spent a few days cruising the Nile, definitely the most relaxed way to see Egypt.

In **Luxor** spend two days on the east bank visiting the temples of Luxor and Karnak and the brilliant Luxor Museum, as well as strolling through the souq. In the next few days, cycle around the west bank of the Nile where the major sights include the Valley of the Kings, the Ramesseum and the Memorial Temple of Hatshepsut. Try to save some energy for the less-visited sights such as Medinat Habu, the Tombs of the Nobles and Deir al-Medina, which can be just as rewarding.

In the second week arrange four days sailing up the Nile to **Aswan** on a budget-friendly felucca or a luxurious dahabiyya; the shorter version is to find a taxi who will take you there and stop at the temples on the way. From Aswan you can visit the temples at **Abu Simbel**, perched on the edge of Lake Nasser.



4  
WEEKS

## Egypt Top to Bottom

In a month you can cover most of Egypt's main sights – a trip of nearly 2000km. This trip takes in Egypt's most romantic desert oasis and snorkelling in the Red Sea, as well as seeing the most important monuments along the Nile and enjoying the urban delights of Cairo.

On the first morning in **Cairo**, visit the Egyptian Museum to get a grasp on the country's long history. Spend a few days enjoying urban delights in the modern metropolis. Along with the top sites, make time to sit in one of the city's bustling ahwas (cafes), wreathed in sweet sheesha (water pipe) smoke. Then visit the Pyramids of Giza and continue to the necropolis of Saqqara.

Head south from Cairo on the sleeper train to **Aswan**, where you can soak up Nubian culture and make the side trip for a day or two to the awesome temples of **Abu Simbel**. Sail back down the Nile from Aswan to **Edfu** on a felucca, or take a taxi stopping at various temples along the way. Visit the vast temple complex of **Karnak**, and the **Temple of Luxor** on the east bank of Luxor, and hang out on the west bank in Luxor for a few days – there is so much to see here. For a great day out of Luxor take a boat or drive to the sacred site of **Abydos**, visiting the Ptolemaic temple at **Dandara** on the way.

When you've had your fill of ancient ruins, take a servees from **Luxor** to **Al-Quseir** for some days of snorkelling and relaxing on the beach. Head back to Cairo, and on the way take in the **Monastery of St Paul** and **Monastery of St Anthony**.

Pass through Cairo, take the train to **Alexandria** and spend a couple of days in its wonderful cafes and museums. From there continue along the Mediterranean coast heading for **Siwa Oasis**, one of Egypt's most idyllic spots. This is the best spot for hanging out for a few days, cycling around the oasis and perhaps going on a desert safari before heading back to Cairo.



2

## WEEKS Desert Escape

The Western Desert offers a wonderful mix of lush desert oases gardens, a great variety of stunning desert landscapes, and some interesting ancient monuments.

Begin a trip to the amazing Western Desert with a bus from Cairo or Asyut to **Al-Kharga Oasis**, and explore the Al-Kharga Museum of Antiquities as well as the Graeco-Roman temples and tombs.

From Al-Kharga, go northwest to **Dakhla Oasis** to see the fascinating hive-like, mudbrick settlements of Balat and Al-Qasr. Next, hop north to the small but quaint **Farafra Oasis**. From there you can make a two- or three-day trip to camp in the stunning **White Desert National Park**, and then head for the closest oasis to Cairo, **Bahariya**.

From Bahariya you can strike west across several hundred kilometres of open sands to **Siwa Oasis** as part of an organised desert tour, hiring a 4WD to drive the remote desert highway. Perched on the edge of the Great Sand Sea, Siwa is renowned for its dates and for being the place of the oracle where Alexander the Great was declared son of the god Amon.

1

## WEEK Urban Jaunt

Get a taste of contemporary urban life in Egypt's two largest cities. The heaving metropolis of Cairo allows you to wander through time in its different quarters. In Alexandria, soak up cafe culture and catch a glimpse of the Graeco-Roman achievement.

In **Cairo**, head to the Egyptian Museum to immerse yourself into Egypt's long history, and stroll through the faded elegance of downtown. The next day, visit the **Pyramids of Giza**, and continue to the necropolis of **Saqqara**. For contrast, on your third day, take the metro to Coptic Cairo and visit the excellent Coptic Museum. Take a taxi to Al-Azhar Park to enjoy lunch and great views over the city from the Citadel View Restaurant. Spend the rest of the afternoon wandering in Islamic Cairo. On your last day, cafe-hop in leafy Zamalek, take in some art galleries and ride the elevator up the Cairo Tower for a final view.

The next morning, take an express train to **Alexandria**. Visit the stunning Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Alexandria National Museum. On your second day, indulge in Alexandrian nostalgia: ride the creaking streetcar and tour cafes where the city's literati once sipped coffee.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



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**Coordinating Author:** *Cairo, Egyptian Museum, Cairo Outskirts & the Delta, the Nile Valley chapters, Siwa Oasis & the Western Desert* Anthony has been travelling around the Middle East for several decades and has lived in Cairo, as well as other cities in the region. His highly-acclaimed books include *Lifting the Veil, A Winter on the Nile* and *The Gates of Africa*. His latest, *Young Lawrence*, looks at the five years TE Lawrence spent in the Middle East leading up to 1914. He happily

spends several months each year along the Nile and is still looking for a plot where he can tread mudbricks and build himself a house. He tweets about Egypt and travel @anthony\_sattin.



### Jessica Lee

**Alexandria & the Mediterranean Coast, Suez Canal, Red Sea Coast, Sinai** Jessica first visited Egypt in 2004 and fell in love with late-night awya sessions, kushary and the Egyptian sense of humour. She returned in 2007 and spent five years working as an adventure-travel tour leader. For this edition of the guidebook Jessica made a happy return to Sinai, took moonlit strolls upon the rolling dunes that hem Al-Qasr, and seriously overloaded on caffeine attempting to find Alexandria's perfect coffee. She tweets about all things Middle Eastern @jessofarabia. Jessica also

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OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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