



Red Sea Coast

Includes ➔

Red Sea	
Monasteries	352
El-Gouna	354
Hurghada	357
Safaga	365
Al-Quseir	365
Marsa Alam & Around	368
Eastern Desert	369
Berenice	372
Shalatein	372

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Zia Amelia (p356)
- ➔ Restaurant Marianne (p367)
- ➔ Le Garage (p356)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Wadi Lahami Village (p368)
- ➔ Captain's Inn (p354)
- ➔ Oberoi Sahl Hasheesh (p361)
- ➔ La Maison Bleue (p356)

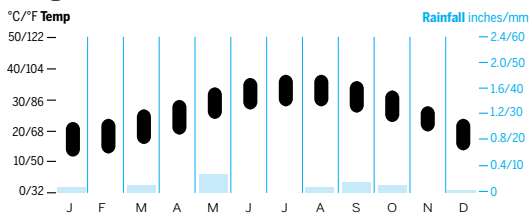
Why Go?

Some of the most important sites in Christianity's early evolution lie in the Red Sea coast's northern barren mountains. Venture south of brashly loud and proud Hurghada and you'll not only find some of Egypt's best diving but also the epic, 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 pock-marked the coastline deeply, leaving a trail of megaresorts 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

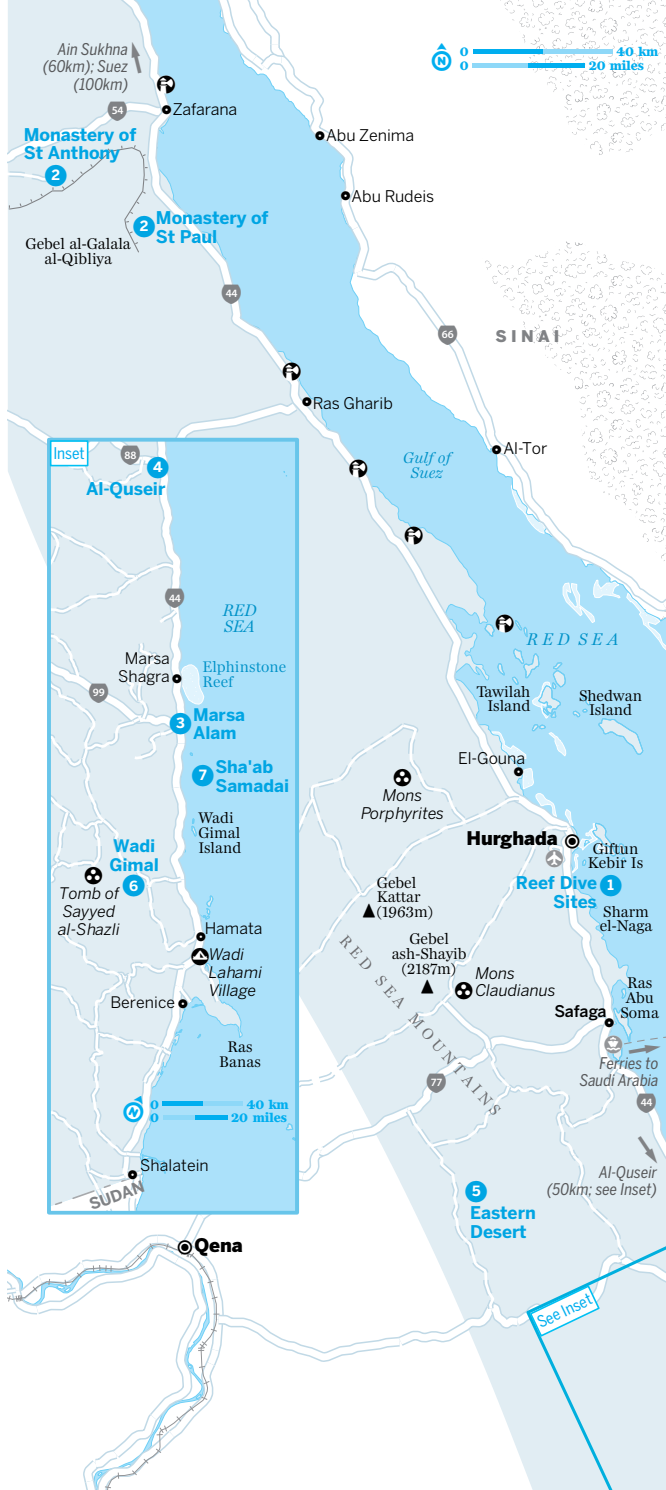
Hurghada



Feb Time to bargain hunt. February generally produces the cheapest resort deals.

Apr Discover Egypt's modern music scene with three days of bands at the 3alga-noob Festival.

Sep Grab your binoculars as migratory birds arrive en masse in the deep south.



Red Sea Coast Highlights

- 1 Make a diving-date with the **world-class reefs** (p357) off Hurghada to discover why the Red Sea was catapulted onto the tourism stage.
- 2 Reflect on monasticism's centuries-old roots at the monasteries of **St Anthony** (p352) and **St Paul** (p353).
- 3 Flop down at one of the chilled-out beach camps around **Marsa Alam** (p368).
- 4 Wander the old town of **Al-Quseir**, (p365) where the streets are imbued with an evocative haze of yesteryear.
- 5 Trek through wadis, mountains and endless expanses of sand in the **Eastern Desert** (p369).
- 6 Explore remnants of Rome's mighty emerald mines in **Wadi Gimal** (p371).
- 7 Observe pods of spinner dolphins up close at the kaleidoscope reef of **Sha'ab Samadai** (p369).