



# Sinai

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Wadi Itlah (p406)
- ➔ Lakhbatita (p392)
- ➔ Fairuz (p385)
- ➔ Fares Seafood (p384)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Sawa Camp (p399)
- ➔ Al-Karm Ecolodge (p406)
- ➔ Alf Leila (p391)
- ➔ Camel Hotel (p383)
- ➔ Dahab Paradise (p391)

## Why Go?

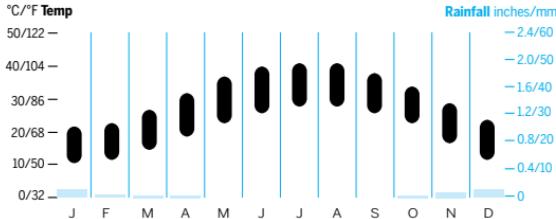
Rugged and starkly beautiful, the Sinai Peninsula's vast and empty desert heart has managed to capture imaginations throughout the centuries. Coveted for both its deep religious significance and its strategic position as a crossroads of empires, prophets and pilgrims, conquerors and exiles have all left their footprints on the sands here.

A springboard to the underwater wonders of the Red Sea, Sinai's seaside resorts serve up a medley of sun-drenched holiday fun that's a world apart from the rest of Egypt. Step away from the buzz of the coast, however, and Sinai's true soul can be found. Here amid the red-tinged, ragged peaks and endless never-never of sand, the Bedouin continue to preserve their proud traditions while dealing with the endless march of progress. On a star-studded night, surrounded by the monstrous silhouettes of mountains, travellers realise why Sinai continues to cast a spell over all who visit.

Note: due to security concerns, research was conducted remotely for this chapter, except Sharm el Sheikh.

## When to Go

### Dahab



**Mar** In the desert, spring's colourful flurry of life carpets the sands.

**Apr** Celebrate all things Sinai at the Dahab Bedouin Festival.

**Oct** Sneak in some autumn sun along the coast.

## Sinai Highlights

- ➊ Dive into **Ras Mohammed** (p378), an underwater fantasia of coral mountains and ghostly shipwrecks.
- ➋ Follow the footsteps of prophets and pilgrims on the time-worn rock stairs of Mt Sinai's **Steps of Repentance** (p404).
- ➌ View one of the world's most important collections of early religious art and manuscripts at **St Katherine's Monastery** (p401).
- ➍ Snorkel the **Lighthouse Reef** (p389) then relax with a beer, sheesha and new friends in the backpacker vortex of **Dahab**.
- ➎ Escape the crowds to laze on a beach, with a to-do

