



Siwa Oasis & the Western Desert

Includes ➔

Al-Kharga Oasis	269
Al-Kharga	269
Dakhla Oasis	275
Mut	275
Farafra Oasis	281
Qasr al-Farafra	282
Black Desert	284
Bahariya Oasis	285
Bawiti	285
Siwa Oasis	292
Qara Oasis	303

Best Natural Spring Soaks

- ➔ Cleopatra's Bath (p295)
- ➔ Bir Wahed (p295)
- ➔ Ain Gomma (p291)
- ➔ Bir al-Gebel (p278)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Camping in the White Desert (p284)
- ➔ Adrère Amellal (p300)
- ➔ Al-Babinshal (p299)
- ➔ Shali Lodge (p299)
- ➔ Under the Moon Camp (p291)

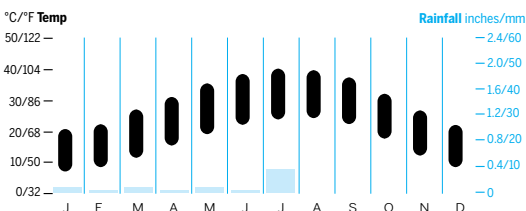
Why Go?

Older than the Pyramids, as sublime as any temple, Egypt's Western Desert is a vast sweep of elemental beauty. The White Desert's shimmering vista of surreal rock formations and the ripple and swell of the Great Sand Sea's mammoth dunes are simply bewitching.

Within this intense landscape five oases, shaded by palm plantations and blessed by a plethora of natural hot and cold springs, provide a glimpse of rural Egyptian life. Get lost exploring Al-Qasr's squiggling narrow lanes in Dakhla. Watch sunset sear across the countryside atop Gebel al-Ingleez in Bahariya. Take a stroll amid Siwa's sprawling date palms. Then once you've finished adventuring, kick back and just enjoy the laid-back pace of oasis life.

When to Go

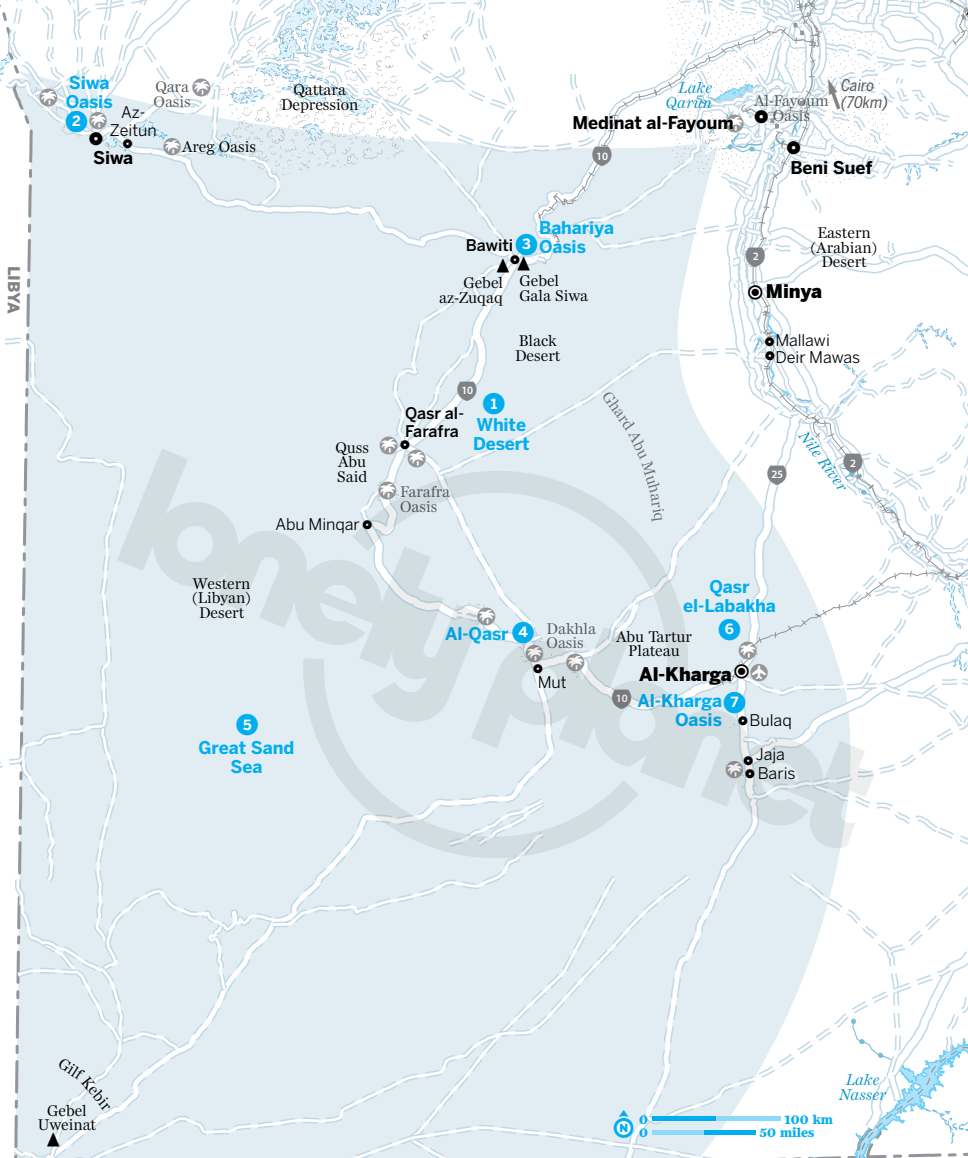
Siwa



Apr–May After winter, travellers thin out. See the White Desert without the crowds.

Sep–Oct Wander the oases' palm groves as the date harvest commences.

Nov–Mar Desert-expedition high season. Don your explorer hat and hit the dunes.



Siwa Oasis & the Western Desert Highlights

1 Gaping in awe at the geologic wonderland of the **White Desert** (p284).

2 Hitting the end of the road at **Siwa Oasis** (p292) to revel in the far-from-anywhere vibe and delve into the unique Siwan culture.

3 Soaking off the dust in one of the region's **natural**

springs, such as the palm-shaded pools amid Bahariya Oasis (p285).

4 Wandering through the lost-in-time, labyrinthine mud-brick town of **Al-Qasr** (p280).

5 Putting on your explorer garb to take a multiday safari

among the endless dunes of the **Great Sand Sea** (p303).

6 Scrambling around the old Roman fort at **Qasr el-Labakha** (p274).

7 Exploring the fascinating, and rarely visited, early Christian ruins of **Al-Kharga Oasis** (p269).