

# General Information for Egypt

## Traveling to Egypt requires a Visa on arrival

Once you arrive in Egypt, you will need a VISA upon arriving at Egypt airport to enter and travel throughout the country. You can purchase your VISA online beforehand [here](#), but it's honestly easier to get one at the bank in the airport. It costs \$25 US dollars or the single entry tourist Visa. They require us to pay them in cash, so make sure you bring some money with you.

But, if you forget your dollars at home, that's okay because they have ATMs to use in the airport. You must have a VISA before you can go through passport control.

## Airport Security is Everywhere

Flying in Egypt can be a little stressful. They will ask to see your passport/boarding pass at least five times. If you are flying to different cities throughout Egypt then you must have your flight confirmation and your passport out and ready to show them before you can even get through the front entrance of the airport.

Then you will have your bags screened before you even check in to receive your boarding pass. But wait, there's more. Once you get to the gate, to board, you have to go through security again and show your paperwork. Then again, while boarding the plane to the flight attendants.

So it's not like the US where you walk right in, check-in your bags, and only go through security once. Nope, you will have to show your documents every step of the way. My ultimate travel tips for you are to make sure you have all your documents well before stepping into the airport.

## Travel documents and more

Upon your arrival in Egypt, you will receive all your domestic travel and hotel documents. There is a welcome package that includes copies of your itinerary, this General Travel Guide, and your Contact List, among other things. The Contact List and General Travel Guide will also have been e-mailed to you well before your arrival in Egypt

## Currency is Egyptian Pounds

We recommend downloading the XE Currency app to your phone. This app will tell you the most correct exchange rate so you can shop responsibly and keep track of how much you're actually spending. Something to note though, Egyptians accept and actually prefer USD.

## You will need to carry cash while traveling to Egypt

With that being said, you will need to carry cash and lots of it. So our Egypt travel tips would be to bring some American dollars with you since they love it so much. You will have access to ATMs but only for EGP's. Please note that every time you use an ATM, you will get charged a conversion fee.

The hotel was the safest place to get cash from the ATM.

Make sure your bank knows that you are traveling to Egypt and if you can help it, just get cash from your hotel.

Some places accept cash only, while others will take a credit card. Very few places accept AMEX, so make sure to bring a Visa or Mastercard. Most ATMS will only allow you to get out 4,000 EGPs at a time.

## Tipping in Egypt is expected

Tipping in Egypt can be very frustrating especially on tour because we have so many drivers, local guides, and our cruise. If you read travel blogs everyone loves Egypt, but the number one complaint is that everyone seems to have their hand out for tips.

To make things easier for you, we have included the tips for all our tour guides and tours already, so you will only need to tip for services outside of You Can't Steal My Happy.

You will still need a few small bills for Bell boys at the hotel or cruise, \$3 to \$5 per trip (not per bag) per check in or check out, depending on the amount of baggage.

Waiters in a restaurant: please note that **almost all restaurants outside of the luxury hotels** that you will stay in levy a service charge, regardless of the number of diners. There is no need to add a gratuity in such cases, unless the service charge is tiny. In case such a service charge is not included and indicated on your bill, 10% is considered a fairly generous tip in Egypt. For dining at your luxury hotels about 10% is the average tip.

## What to Pack

You can find an excellent guide on what to pack and wear in Egypt [here](#).

**Clothing: Shorts and tank tops (or similar) are not recommended** for most sightseeing as they are not acceptable at religious attractions. Shorts and knee length skirts are acceptable in the larger cities when religious attractions are not on the agenda. However, **we recommend ankle length skirts and pants for ladies whenever possible, as well as tops that cover your upper arms.**

Please note that Cairo can be fairly cool during winter mornings and late evenings. Highs frequently are in the 60's during this period, with lows in the low 50's. The southern region, which includes Luxor and Aswan, is always on the warm side with temps in the upper 70's

You can dress as you do in the U.S. while exploring most attractions in the big cities and while you are at your hotels. When visiting religious monuments such as mosques and churches, even in the big cities, ladies and men are required to keep their legs and shoulders covered,

and shorts or mid length skirts are considered unacceptable. During sightseeing in all other areas, and at your lodging, normal clothes like T-shirts and shorts are fine.

**Comfortable Shoes:** Please bring a sturdy and comfortable pair of walking shoes as exploring the main sights in Egypt requires a significant amount of walking.

**Medicine and Medical Care:** A high level of medical care is available in Cairo, and Luxor, Aswan and the Red Sea resort regions have more than adequate medical resources. All of the Hotels that Look at Egypt Tours uses in these cities have skilled doctors on call that will pay a visit to your room for a very nominal charge. Although medicines with similar active ingredients to what are found overseas are available in pharmacies in Cairo, you should bring an adequate supply of whatever medicines you usually need. Please note that the civil aviation authority in Egypt has strict rules for liquids and medical paraphernalia for carryon bags and it is your responsibility to conform to these regulations.

**Other Useful Items:** Anti-bacterial hand wipes are recommended (they are also available in your vehicle) and we also recommend that you take a small quantity of your favorite mosquito repellent. Many of our hotels have international plug sockets that accept both Egyptian, American and other plugs. If they don't, you will need an adaptor plug (that also modulates voltage if needed) to charge your devices using U.S. power cord plugs. Usually, one is already placed in your room, but, if not, your hotels will provide these upon request. Look at Egypt Tours' colleagues will be happy to assist you in purchasing your own adaptor if you so desire.

## Clothing Recommendations

March temperatures in Cairo are between 70-75 highs - 50-55 lows and Luxor temps will be between 85-65. When packing for a trip to Egypt, feel free to choose clothing in which you would feel comfortable doing outdoor activities at home such as going on a long walk around a city. While you don't need athletic clothing, you do want to be comfortable while walking over sand and rocks at some points, such as on the Giza Plateau and in the Valley of the Kings in Luxor. You don't need a track suit, but you don't want to wear a ball gown or suit either. That's why we like to invoke analogies of clothing suitable for walking comfortably around an urban area.

## Leave Behinds

Cairo is one of the largest cities in the world, so although Egypt is still very much a developing country, Cairo and even Luxor, Aswan, Alexandria, and the Red Sea resorts still have everything you could possibly want or need to survive on a trip to Egypt.

If you're the type of traveler who absolutely needs your specific type of shampoo or soap, then by all means you should feel free to bring those. However, Egypt's five-star hotels often have better quality shampoo and soap than many of us use back home on a regular basis. Also things like hand sanitizer and sunscreen can easily be purchased locally in Egypt rather than wasting luggage space.

# Travel during your Exploration:

## For our domestic flights we will be traveling on Egypt Air

You can [click on this link](#) to see their specific baggage allowances and weight.

**Seat Assignments for flights:** Egypt Air allows seat assignment 24 hours before your flight and **we request that you do this yourself** – you can access the reservation on Egypt Air’s website by using your ticket number and passport. You will receive your ticket numbers before you arrive to Egypt

**Drive Times:** Our local tour operator Look at Egypt Tours does its best to provide guests with accurate drive times for each road journey. Besides other factors, these times vary based on the sort of vehicle being used. All drive times quoted are just for the actual drive, they do not include time used up when you take scheduled or unscheduled stops along the way.

## Communication

**Wired and/or wireless** internet is available at all hotels (except for the most remote locations) in Egypt. There is sometimes a charge for this service. Almost all hotels also have a business center that can be used for a charge. **Hotel charges for phone calls** are extremely high in most cases.

**WhatsApp or Similar Services** – **We strongly recommend** that, if you don’t already have it, you download WhatsApp on your phones. It is a free and efficient way to make local and international calls (to others who have the app) while traveling – our colleagues in Egypt all have the app and are used to dialing through it. **Most importantly**, it makes it easy for your Accompanying Egyptologist Tour Director Guide and our other colleagues to reach you throughout your tour, and for you to reach them.

## Other Things to Note

### Climate

Wear long sleeves, collared shirts, and long pants for maximum protection from the sun. Even a light scarf for both men and women is a good idea. You’ll notice that traditional local attire includes these themes for very good reason.

### Culture

While Egypt is very much a traditional Islamic country with conservative social norms, it is also very much a country that has thrived on tourism and foreign trade for thousands of years. So while most Egyptians tend to be conservative in their dress and appearance, they don’t expect foreign guests to do the same. This means that women do NOT need to cover their heads in public while in Egypt, as is the case in other countries in the region. Women will be requested to wear a scarf if entering a mosque or holy site.

It is also unusual for men in Egypt to wear shorts in Cairo. While it is ok for tourists to do so, especially at tourist sites, it is seen as a little odd for anyone to wear shorts while walking casually around a city in Egypt, although no one would ever comment on this to a tourist. When you arrive into Luxor and on the cruise you can pretty much wear shorts everywhere if its warm enough.

## Eating and Drinking Water

Tap water should 100% be avoided at all times. Bottled water is readily available. Food is safe at restaurants, but you should avoid the temptation eat street foods to avoid stomach issues on our short visit.

## Safety and Security in Egypt

Avoid excessive jewelry and do not openly show or carry large amounts of cash. You will notice that all group tours will have an armed guard. Armed guards are employed by tour operators so do not be shocked to see this practice throughout Egypt.

## Gay and Lesbian travelers

For the most part Egypt is gay friendly, but its not a safe destination for LGBTQIA+ travelers who wish to openly express sexuality. Public displays of affection for any travelers are advised against as they can draw unwanted attention.

## Alcohol

Beer and wine are readily available at most restaurants/stores. Hard liquor is best purchased at duty free as the selection is limited in cities. You can bring your own liquor aboard the boat just don't openly walk around with your bottle in public.

## Shopping

You are expected to bargain hard when you visit markets. If they want \$50 for something you must automatically start negotiating at \$25 and then hope you get it for \$20. Shopping in Egypt is a game and you must play aggressively so you don't overpay for items. Because you are American you are a target for overpaying for items because locals assume you have lots of money.

## Recommended Videos

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-obKX-mqjXQ&t=10s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cdUxZuarL0&t=5s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZU2Roq-emxw>

## Recommended Blogs

- <https://egypttravelblog.com>
- <https://theworldtravelguy.com/destinations/egypt-travel-guide-the-best-egypt-travel-tips-blog/>

## Recommended Podcasts

- <https://www.egyptianhistorypodcast.com>