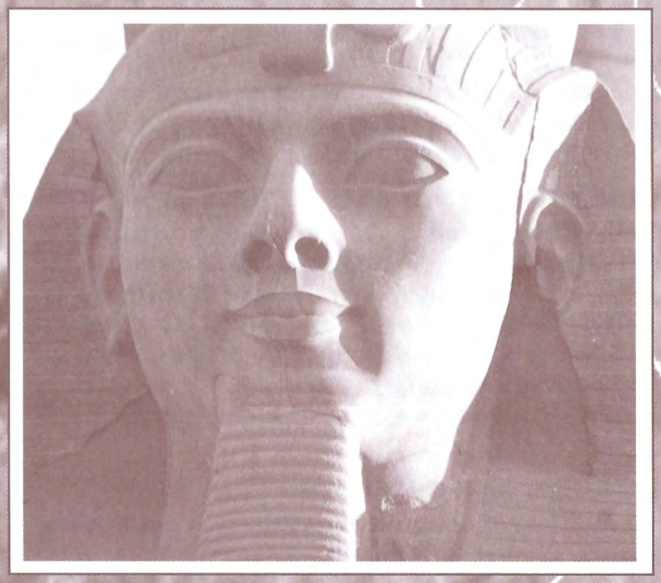
EGYPT

with

ENCOUNTER OVERLAND

From CAIRO
21 Days
2,500 miles (4,000kms)



ITINERARY GUIDELINE FROM CAIRO

Day 1: In Cairo—Museums & bazaars.

Day 2: Cairo—Pyramids & Sphinx. To Alexandria (approx 4 hrs drive).

Day 3: Alexandria. Mediterranean coast to El Alamein (approx 2 hrs drive) & Marsa Matruh (approx 3 hrs drive).

Day 4: Around Marsa Matruh—Ubayyad beach & coves.

Day 5: Inland to the Great Sand Sea & Siwa Oasis (approx 5 hrs).

Day 6: To Bahariya Oasis (approx 5 hrs).

Day 7: Western Desert to Farafra & Dakhla Oases (approx 7 hrs).

Day 8: On camel-back into dunes & desert rock formations, overnight.

Day 9: Return Dakhla & drive to Kharja Oasis (approx 3 hrs).

Days 10 & 11: Desert tracks across El Wahat el Kharja to the Nile & Luxor (12—14 hrs).

Day 12: In Luxor—Valley of the Kings, Temples of Amun.

Day 13: Luxor & to Aswan (approx 5 hrs).

Days 14 & 15: In Aswan—Island & Temples of Philae (and optional day side-trip to Abu Simbel).

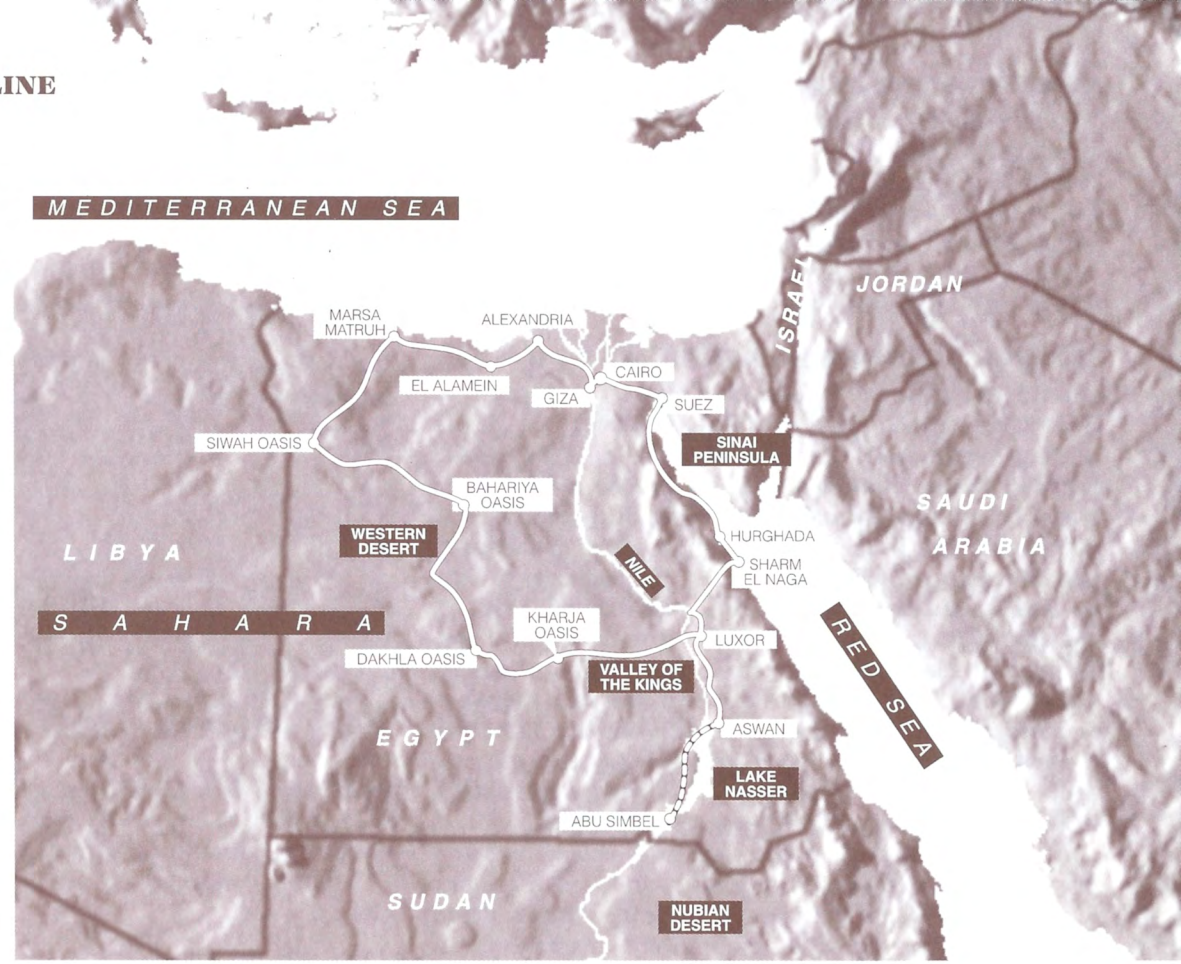
Days 16 & 17: By felucca sailing boat down Nile to Kom Ombo. Temples & tombs of Kom Ombo.

Day 18: To the Red Sea & Sharm el Naga (approx 6 hrs).

Day 19: Sharm el Naga—Red Sea beaches & coral reefs.

Day 20: Red Sea to St Anthony's Monastery (approx 5 hrs).

Day 21: Gulf of Suez to Suez Canal & Cairo (approx 5 hrs). Evening arrival, end arrangements.



PLEASE NOTE

The above is intended as a guide only and to indicate a typical itinerary and its highlights. While our intention is to adhere to this, it should be understood that group interests and wishes together with the constraints of weather, road conditions and local restrictions can alter our exact route, its activities and timings.

HIGHLIGHTS & ROUTE

CAIRO (Days 1 & 2)

The Egyptian Museum contains the world's finest collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts, and the fabulous Treasures of Tutankhamen. The crowded streets and artisans' bazaars, long history and loud presence of this incredible city of the Nile. The great Pyramids of Giza and the inscrutable stare of the Sphinx.

MEDITERRANEAN (Days 3 & 4)

To Alexandria—crossroads of North Africa, city of Cleopatra, the Roman & Byzantine empires. Along the Mediterranean coast to El Alamein—cemeteries, memories and relics of terrible warfare in the desert. Near Marsa Matrouh are the country's best sand beaches at Ubayyad, the crystal-clear waters and turquoise depths of Agiiba's beautiful cove.

WESTERN DESERT & OASES (Days 5-11)

Inland, skirting the infamous Qattara Depression to Siwa Oasis at the edge of the Great Sand Sea. Thick palm groves cluster around freshwater springs and salt lakes in this ancient Bedouin oasis. South from here the shifting seas of dunes stretch 400 miles/650 kms to the Tropic of Cancer—unknown, and impassable to camel, human or vehicle. In 525 BC the legendary Army of Cambysses disappeared into a sandstorm here. Alexander also came to this wild and lonely place to consult the oracle—part of his coronation hall still stands among the relics of the desert. New roads into the Western Desert have opened a route to the oases of Bahariya & Farafra. Development has brought its concrete consequences, but the great oases—low lying depressions of freshwater and sulphur springs and the cool shade of date palms—remain as timeless as the traditions and ways of their peoples. They are studded with history and desert lore, aloof and proud in their isolation. From Dakhla Oasis we travel by camel for a day and a half across the dunes and rose-hued landscapes to small and remote oases, hidden rock springs & pools, and the solitude of the sands. Then for two days, from Dakhla to Luxor, we drive the emptiness of the Wahat el Kharja—along ill-defined and seldom used desert tracks to the green lifeline of the Nile.

THE NILE (Days 12-17)

Luxor was the southern capital of the Pharoahs—Egypt's richest area of colossal monuments and amazing past. Here is the great temple of Amun at Karnak (Thebes) and the crags of the Valleys of the Kings where the Tomb of Tutankhamen was discovered. A day's drive along the banks of the Nile is Aswan on the northern tip of Lake Nasser. The great river is studded with rocks and islands amongst which glide graceful white feluccas, the traditional shallow-draft sailing boats of the Nile. On one of these islands is Philae and the lovely

temples of Isis. Gleaming gold and white pillars of sculpted rock are built across time—by Egyptians, Greeks & Romans, all honouring the island where the first land emerged from the primordial waters of Chaos.

(Optional 1 day return trip by chartered vehicle to the southern end of Lake Nasser, to the Sun Temple & statues of Ramses & Nefertari at Abu Simbel. Fronting this incredible rock temple, four colossal statues of Ramses II guard the southern approaches to Egypt. Approx US$ 60).

From Aswan we board simple Nile feluccas to sail slowly down stream (one & a half days) to Kom Ombo's temples and the tombs of the 'Old Kingdom'.

RED SEA & SUEZ (Days 18-20)

A short drive across the eastern desert brings us to Sharm el Naga on the Red Sea—an undeveloped peninsula jutting into the brilliant reefs of coral and clear waters in this scuba-divers' paradise. Time to rest and relax, swim & explore the coral reefs (or even take a one day diver's certification course—approx US$40). Along the Gulf of Suez to the Monastery of St Anthony—of caves, well-springs and churches where Moses and the Exodus are reputed to have rested before their crossing of the Red Sea. To today's Suez Canal and tomorrow's promises from the minarets of Cairo.

GROUP SIZE & STAFF

24 max including EO staff. Plus local guides Cairo, Pyramids & Sphinx, Luxor & Karnak, Valley of Kings & Queens, St Anthony's Monastery; with camel drivers from Dakhla Oasis, & felucca crew Aswan—Kom Ombo.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

An easier project with few physical demands. Between May & October the heat of southern Egypt can be difficult if you are unused to hot climates.

INCLUDED IN PROJECT COST

All transport, food (except as noted under Meals Cooking & Food below), camping equipment & supplies, hotel in Cairo on Day 1, local guides, camping fees, entrance fees & activities as detailed from Day 1 in Cairo until arrival back in Cairo on the evening of Day 21. There are no kitties or similar en route payment funds.

PROJECT COST DOES NOT COVER

Flights to/from home & Cairo, transfers to/from airport & airport taxes, vaccinations, visas, personal insurance, laundry, snacks, drinks, some lunches in major centres (minimal cost), personal clothing/equipment & items of a personal nature. Some individual entry fees to museums/sights (minimal cost). Accommodation and meals in Cairo before/after the expedition.

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED

Standard EO truck equipment including 2 person tents, campbeds, kitchen/dining tent, tables & stools, light,

cooking equipment & utensils, mosquito nets, first aid kit etc.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

A warm sleeping bag, a medium sized bag or backpack and a daypack. Personal clothing and strong footwear, water bottle, personal medicines & toiletries etc. No specialised clothing or equipment is necessary and you probably already have most of what is needed. Loose fitting, lightweight cotton clothing is best for the hot desert areas. Except in the beach resorts you should also avoid shorts or revealing dress as the oasis towns are very conservative in Islamic codes of conduct. A complete suggested clothing list is included in our pre-departure information. Soft bags or frameless backpacks are the most suitable kinds of luggage to bring. Most airlines flying in and out of Cairo have a 44lbs/20kg baggage limit.

TRANSPORT

EO expedition truck, on camelback for one & a half days from Dakhla Oasis, felucca sailing boats on Nile Aswan—Kom Ombo (2 days).

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel in Cairo (1 night), Nile felucca (1 night). Otherwise camping throughout. Occasional basic campground facilities in main centres only, usually extending to simple washing/showering & toilet arrangements. Otherwise open "bush" camping with no facilities other than standard EO truck equipment. (No facilities on overnight camel trip from Dakhla). Your involvement is needed in camp setup, domestic & day to day routines etc. Accommodation in Cairo on the night of Day 21 is not included.

MEALS, COOKING & FOOD

Hotel/restaurant meals on Day 1 in Cairo. Camp cooked breakfasts & evening meals, picnic lunches. Expedition members are involved in daily fresh food shopping & cooking. (Fresh vegetables, fruit, meat where available, eggs, bread, cereals, cheese, preserves, supplemented by canned & dried goods in areas where no fresh supplies available). Meals prepared by camel drivers on overnight camel trip from Dakhla Oasis, and by felucca crews on Nile. In larger cities where a day is spent in individual sightseeing or activities away from the truck, lunch will sometimes be at your own expense. The cost of these occasional lunches is minimal. (Evening meal in Cairo on Day 21 is not included).

PASSPORTS & VISAS

You will need a passport that is valid for not less than 6 months after the end of the expedition, and which contains not less than 2 blank pages. All nationalities require a visa to visit Egypt, which is best obtained before leaving home. EO or your agent can advise you of the current visa & consular fee applicable to your nationality/passport. We can also assist you in obtaining a visa.

INSURANCE & MEDICAL

Everyone must have individual personal travel insurance. Various policies are available, but they must include a minimum of £20,000 or US$30,000 for medical, hospital & additional expenses including emergency repatriation. No vaccinations are required if you are arriving in Cairo directly from Europe, North America or Australasia, but several are strongly recommended. Their up to date details are given in our pre-departure information.

The Nile region and Upper Egypt are malarial risk areas between April & October and you should bring a small supply of malarial tablets. The most effective types for this area as recommended by the UK Tropical Disease authorities are also detailed in our pre-departure information.

PERSONAL SPENDING MONEY

To cover personal day to day expenditure en route—drinks, snacks, occasional lunches in major centres, optional activities, some museum entry fees & some souvenirs.

(The optional activities—Abu Simbel and a 1 day diving course on the Red Sea—do not need to be arranged in advance, so no need to decide on them until you get there).

You should budget an additional £25/$40 per day that you spend in Cairo after or before the project to cover hotel, meals & incidentals. (Good buys can include ornate copper & brasswork, gems & jewellery, gold & silver, papyrus paintings, silks & alabaster, carpets, kilims, tapestry & hand tooled leather. Many small 'treasures' need not cost much at all. Credit cards are accepted only in larger shops & establishments in Cairo and the major cities). Apart from the above, EO has no hidden expenses, funds or kitties to surprise your spending money in Egypt.

ARRIVING AT START OF THE PROJECT

There will be a pre-departure meeting at our Cairo hotel at 8.00am on Day 1. (If you are arriving early, Cairo is a

frenetic & fascinating city: Goldsmiths bazaar & the soukhs, horse racing at Gezira, football matches complete with armed riot police, river taxis on the Nile, the camel market, opera & ballet, theatre, cinemas, cafes & an unusual nightlife). Reservations at our Cairo hotel before departure may be made through EO, with payment by you directly to hotel on arrival.

LEAVING AT END OF PROJECT

Arrangements end on arrival at our Cairo hotel on the evening of Day 21. Only very late night flight connections out of Cairo could be made on this day. Any flight connections could be met the next day.

COMBINATIONS & CONNECTING PROJECTS

"Egypt" is neither part of, nor a section of, any other EO project.

INTERESTING READING

Gods, Graves and Scholars (C.W. Ceran), Incidents in Zafraani Alley (Gamal al-Ghitani), In Search of the Forty Day Road (Michael Asher). A full list of recommended reading in history, guidebooks and fiction is given in our pre-departure information.

SPECIFIC DETAILS

On the best ways to organise and carry your spending money, on clothing/packing lists, how to get from Cairo airport to our hotel etc are all contained in our pre-departure information.

OTHER COSTS/EXPENSES

Return flights .....

Visas .....

Vaccinations .....

Insurance .....

Personal spending money .....

TOTAL_____

AGENT'S STAMP

CLIMATE

Representative for **Cairo and Mediterranean Coast.** Hot summers, cool/warm winters. Some rain in winter, decreasing inland.

MEDITERRANEAN

		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
CELSIUS	High	18	21	24	28	33	35	36	35	32	30	26	20
Daily Average	Low	8	9	11	14	17	20	21	22	20	18	14	10
FAHRENHEIT	High	65	69	75	83	91	95	96	95	90	86	78	68
Daily Average	Low	47	48	52	57	63	68	70	71	68	65	58	50
Relative Humidity		61%	59%	57%	60%	64%	68%	70%	68%	63%	61%	60%	60%
Rainfall in mm		48	23	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	33	56

Deserts, inland Egypt and Red Sea. Very hot summers, hot winters. Cool/cold at night. Chance of hot Khamish winds and sandstorms March-June.

DESERT

		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
CELSIUS	High	23	26	31	36	39	42	41	41	39	37	221	25
Daily Average	Low	10	11	14	19	23	26	26	26	24	22	17	12
FAHRENHEIT	High	74	78	87	96	103	107	106	106	103	98	87	77
Daily Average	Low	50	52	58	64	74	78	79	79	75	71	62	53
Relative Humidity		29%	22%	17%	15%	15%	16%	16%	18%	19%	21%	26%	31%
Rainfall in mm		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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