



A Dancer's Guide to Egypt



by Keti Sharif



Ahlan wa Sahlan! Welcome to Egypt!



Most bellydance enthusiasts want to come to Egypt at some stage – whether it be for the amazing costumes and trinkets, the dance and music or for the ambiance of the country and its people. Egypt has always experienced popularity as a tourist destination for its pyramids and temples, historical monuments and culture; but now with festivals, safe travel and a fresh dance scene, Oriental dance tourism has exploded! For first time visitors or seasoned travelers, there are some helpful tips for a great holiday to Egypt.

I hope you enjoy this “dancer’s” travel guide!

Preparing for your trip to Egypt

What to pack

Pack light as Egypt has warm to mild weather: 2 pairs trousers/jeans, 3 t-shirts, 2 long sleeved shirts, knee to calf length skirt for ladies or knee length shorts for men, cardigan or lightweight jacket, scarf or pashmina style wrap plus one or two sets of dressy clothes for special events. One good pair of sports shoes, pair of sandals, one pair of dressy shoes, flip-flops for the pool, bathers, sunhat, sunglasses, journal, pen, mobile phone, camera, i-pod, vitamins, toiletries, antiseptic wipes, sunscreen. A copy of itinerary and passport. Laptop if you like. Don't forget you can buy clothes there! For classes, take a change of exercise style clothes and any footwear you usually use for dance class.

Where to Stay

Depending on your budget and time spent in Egypt, you can book hotels online, this is usually the best way as they are often discounted or you can get a package. Downtown has many eclectic funky old-style hotels that are really affordable, like the Cosmopolitan and Victoria. I personally like several non-fancy but handy and clean hotels in Zamalek – Mayfair, President and Flamenco. For a bigger budget and preference for a swimming pool try the beautiful Marriot in Zamalek (a former palace) or the larger 5 star hotels in Garden City like Grand Hyatt, Four Seasons, Semeramis, Concord, Ramses Hilton or Nile Hilton. If you are staying for longer in a group, try Craig's List online or Holiday rentals for an apartment serviced or un-serviced, depending on your needs.



Visas and entry If you have obtained an Egyptian entry visa in your passport before traveling, go straight to the passport counter. If you need to get a visa on entry, go to the airport bank (just before the passport counter), buy visa for aprox \$20 USD then go to the passport counter. Airport banks use the daily exchange rate, so you can safely change some money there. Collect luggage and pass through customs. At the airport you can get a taxi (around 80le) or arrange a transfer to hotel. You can expect them to ask for a tip, 10-20le is fine. Note: Your entry visa is valid for one month. Please check with your country whether you can obtain a visa at the airport (most countries allow this) or do you need to arrive with one, because its cheaper to get it on arrival.

Your Itinerary Its best to make a rough plan of where you will be going, where you will be staying and what main sights you wish to visit before you travel. Go online for real travel experiences that could help you structure a trip or if you feel safer try a travel company first time. The main thing is to try and ENJOY the experience by not trying to cram too much in at once! Give yourself time to go slowly, enjoy the scenery and relax!

You've arrived! What now?

Taxi travel

From the airport you can get a government taxi for approx 80 le. At the end of the trip you can give the driver 10-20le tips. When you are using taxis in Cairo, note that taxis pulling up to and waiting for passengers right in front of the hotel are usually more expensive so go to the street outside the hotel to catch a black and white cab. Name your destination. You can fix a price, but if so be prepared to haggle a bit. Or you can jump in and when alighting, simply give the cab money as though you were a local! It is approx 5 le for a trip in the same suburb, 10le for 2 suburbs, 15 le for 3 suburbs, 20le for a trip of 30 min to 30-40 le an hour respectively.



Good Inexpensive Communications - Did you know that your laptop can be very a handy thing in Egypt?

Avoid expensive hotel business centres for emails, try to source a local net café as soon as possible, or better still bring a laptop as Egypt is extremely "wireless" these days with many great coffee houses and cafes offering free internet. A laptop can be great for instantly downloading photos or keeping a blog! And don't forget Skype for friends and family "live" from great locations in Egypt – where they can see you talking right in front of some of the most amazing monuments!

Save on phone bills with an Egyptian sim

Leave your sim card at home in an old phone, with someone who can take calls. Get an Egyptian sim card in Cairo (they are cheap) plus some credit. You'll feel safer - store all Egyptian contacts on this phone. To sms overseas from Egypt cost local prices.

Become a Power-Traveler to enjoy the best of Egypt!

Jet Lag Busters

Arriving early in the morning? Try not to nap, but have a restful day. Arriving in the evening? Rest the first night and try to get to bed by 11pm – not much earlier or later! On a flight that gets in at an awful hour? Straight to bed even if its for a few ours. Wake up at 7am the next day to get set for Cairo time. Peppermint tea, peppermint oil, ginger tea and sunlight are all jetlag busters, so bring some favourite tea bags and relax by the pool! Yoga stretches also help with jetlag.



Wear the right shoes!

At the Pyramids and Giza and Sakkara, wear closed sports shoes as you will be walking over sand and pebbles. The Bazaar streets are sandy too, so wear good walking shoes. Save the high heels for nightclubs and dinner rendezvous, or buy new in Egypt! At the hotel, or for suburban visits and excursions, sandals are fine.

Keep fresh wipes with you

Arabic food is often eaten by hand - bread, dips, etc. Its a good idea to carry antiseptic wipes with you and wipe your hands before eating. Antibacterial foods help; raw ginger, ginger tea, garlic, lemon...even a nip of white spirit (vodka, gin, rum) works wonders!

Power-Travelers eat regular snacks

Travel, jet-lag or late dinners can cause low blood sugar, and the fast pace of Cairo agitating with the "low sugar grumpies"! Keep some almonds, raisins or health bars in your bag, plus a few pieces of fruit. Need a protein fix? Vacuum packed envelopes of tuna with a plastic fork, nuts or a few boiled eggs from the hotel breakfast. Those zip-lock plastic bags are great for travelers too.

Bottled Water

It is sensible to always carry a bottle of water with you, and avoid drinking from the taps. Bottled water is very inexpensive in Egypt when you buy it from local stores rather than from the hotels. You can brush teeth and wash fruit with bottled water, but there is no need to be paranoid as intestinal flora often take a few days to adjust to the new environment. Yup!

Medications and toiletries

Any pharmaceuticals are inexpensive and readily available in Cairo, in case you need antibiotics or have tummy problems. If you take medications, bring them plus have a copy of the name of the medication with you just in case. You may wish to pack yourself a small travel kit with the basics - immodium, aspirin, antiseptic cream, a few band-aids and a muscle balm. Contact lense fluid and toiletries are easy to find. Hairdressers and beauticians are easily available and the fees are very affordable if you wish to get a blow dry, pedicure or beauty treatment for a big night out!

What to eat

Egypt offers a variety of delicious cuisine. If you are traveling for the first time, or have a sensitive stomach, you may wish to eat cereals and cooked vegetable dishes the first day and gradually introduce fresh produce. Salads and fresh fruits are fine as long as they are fresh or served in a good hotel or cafe. Egyptian, meat, chicken and fish is excellent and recommended; superb Egyptian cuisine. However, avoid eating meat and cheeses from street vendors. If you wish to have take-away from street vendors, felafel and tameya sandwiches are best, delicious under \$1!

Down to important business - Shopping...

Shopping in Egypt is great!

You can buy cotton clothes, shoes, costumes, Bedouin rugs, trinkets, Islamic lamps, leather goods, handbags, music cds, henna, spices, apple tobacco, perfume bottles, perfume oils, Arabic music, DVDs, shishas, fabrics, weavings, ramadan tent fabric and so much more! Khan el Khalili is the best place for trinket shopping, but there are fixed price shops around too.



Tipping is a way of life in Egypt. It is polite to give 1LE to toilet attendants in hotels, shops and road houses. Porters usually get 10le (\$2) for carrying bags to the room. Guides and drivers are also tipped as their wages are low, the easiest way to do this in a group is for each person to give 5le (\$1). A small tip goes a long way in Egypt and the people are grateful. It is customary to give a tip of 10% of the bill at a restaurant. It is a good idea to try and keep small change in your wallet at all times for tips.



Bargaining is easy! Practice your Arabic, smile, have a joke with the shop owners before you start bargaining. When they give you a price, cut down to a third and say - "but its much cheaper in that other shop". If you still don't get your price, say thank you and walk away. This usually works. The trick is to not look too interested. Keep a sense of humour when bargaining at the markets and aim for 50% of initial price. Use your intuition, its usually right. Try not to gush over gorgeous things and give away your enthusiasm....

Service charges and taxes

Dining out? Food at restaurants and hotels often carries an additional 22-25% service charge and tax, often this is not shown on the menu price, so be sure to add it in - often it is written in fine print.

Currency You can withdraw money from most ATMs with your bank or credit card, in LE (Egyptian pounds) converted at the daily rate. There is usually a bank fee involved. You exchange foreign cash at any bank. Hotels have safes.

Being kind and cheerful always gets you further!

Please "Min fad luk" and Thank you "Shokrun" will get you better service and the Egyptians will say "Ah! You speak Arabic!" At cafes - to call a waiter, say "Iau samahkt". Egyptians are friendly, open-hearted and like to joke.

Some of Keti's favourite trinket-shopping places in Cairo



Jewellery, Cotton clothes, shoes, kaftans - Ramses shopping annexe, Yamama centre Zamalek, Zamalek shops on Mirashli and Gezira el Wosta, Talat Harb square, Tahrir square Downtown, NEW City Stars Heliopolis, Arcadia Market, Dandy Mall Maadi.



Egyptian cotton towels, sheets, bathrobes - Omar Efendi store in Mohandisseen, Nefretiti herbs sells beautiful soaps, Egyptian oils and cotton bathrobes and towels from unbleached organic cotton. 26 Gezira el Wosta st, Zamalek. Cottons from Khan el Khalili's non-tourist quarters - Attaba shopping area. Or traditional downtown shops sell cotton and Ramadan tent fabric. Amazing contemporary fabrics - beautiful Islamic and Sufi designs on cotton available in Zamalek, Ahmed Heshmat st (no. 31).



Lamps, mother of pearl jewellery boxes, books, trinkets - Khan el Khalili, Talat Harb Square and Tahrir Square, most hotel galleries. Khan el Khalili bazaar City Stars!

Tribal and Berber style jewellery - Nomad, Hilton and Zamalek, African souk at Khan el Khalili, Sinai shops and bazzaars. Fair Trade women's handicrafts in Zamalek. Caravanserai on Mirashli st Zamalek sells amazing Bedouin trinkets and home items.



Musical Instruments – Mohammed Ali St.

Ouds - vary as quality differs, but from about 250 LE and up to 1200 LE. Quanoons, Arabic flutes, nays and other wind instruments available. Percussion is the best buy. Reqs should be around 65le and quality mother of pearl tablas (4 bolt) 300 LE - 400 LE. Cheap tablas aluminium - around 100 LE. Best to shop around as all stores are close together and get the best price. Better deals when group purchases together! Go after lunchtime, evening shopping is the best.

Keti's favourite nightlife, cultural and music places to visit



Makan Cultural Centre - Downtown at 1 Saad Zaghouel, has live Shows, traditional Sudanese and authentic Zaa'r nights +20227920878. Cheap, around 20le with great traditional artists.

Ferries - Nile Maxim Ferry, Pharonic Princess, Golden Nile, Grand Hyatt Marquis - all have bellydance or folkloric shows and great food! Worth it for a fun night out and shows are not too late!

Hotels - Ramses Hilton folk show, Marriot Empress nightclub, Sheraton (Dina sometimes dances there), Parisianna, Grand Marquise Boat, Flamenco Hotel, City Stars Hotels Heliopolis and most summer time schedules in Cairo's main hotels feature dance shows. The Nubian Village in the Le Meridien has a great show featuring Liza and the orchestra plus a Nubian show afterwards. The food is excellent and plentiful, very affordable.

Theatres/Music - Balloon theatre often has folkloric shows, El Ghomhoreyya Theatre, the Sawi Cultural Wheel in Zamalek, Al Azhar Park (an Aga Khan Foundation project for public events and concerts), Cairo Opera House, Cairo Jazz club, After 8 music lounge, Mohitos Bar, Moon Deck. The Townhouse Gallery in Zamalek exhibits contemporary Cairean artists, call +2025768086.

Great restaurants - La Bogega, Zamalek, Sequoia Zamalek, Blue Nile Boat may restaurants, Abu Sid Zamalek, Nagib Mafouz Khan el Khalili, El Tabouli, Casablanca @ Moroccan Cairo Sheraton.

Best source for what's happening in Cairo: www.yallabina.com

Cairo's Dance Festivals 2009

Nile Group Dance Festival Apr, Jun, Nov 2009
www.nilegroup.net

Ahlan wa Sahlan Dance Festival Jun 2009
www.raqiahassan.net

Sphinx Festival – Egyptology and the Arts Dec 2009
www.sphinxfestival.com

Cairo dancers, teachers, artists

Top dance performers 2008/2009:

Look out for the top dancers, Randa Kamel often has a gig on the Grand Hyatt's boat the Marquise along with Hanadi and is also at the Tivoli Heliopolis. Lucy usually does a Thursday gig at her nightclub, Parisianna. Petite Syrian artiste Soraya and Hanadi are at the Casablanca Moroccan Restaurant at the Cairo Sheraton. Nour el Ayoun and Rabab dance at the Fairouz Lebanese Restaurant at City Stars. Nile cruises with dinner plus show include the Marriot's Boat the Nile Maxime with French Ketty and Argentinian Asmahan. Nile Golden and Nile Pharaoh host more international artists - Dunya, Joanna, Leila and Lorna plus Egyptian dancers Doa and Amar. These boats sometimes stage lunchtime shows, which can be quite convenient. Liza Laziza has a show at Le Meridien Pyramids at the Nubian Village.

*** I recommend you contact hotels where the events are held. Shows are seasonal - dancers rotate schedules.

Dance teachers available - private lessons or classes by request:

Aida Nour	Giza	+20122730234	www.welcome.to/aidanour
Ashraf Mahdy	Mohandiseen	+20124262018	www.ashrafmahdy.bravehost.com
Asmahan	Mohandiseen	private	www.asmahanshow.com
Diana Tarkhan	Dokki	+20105181677	www.dianatarkhan.com
Dina	Mohandiseen	private	contact via www.raqiahassan.net
Doaa Sallam	Heliopolis	+20105186544	www.doasallam.com
Farida Fahmy	Zamalek	private	www.faridafahmy.com
Farouk Moustafa	Downtown	+20107140372	contact via www.nilegroup.net
Freiz	Mohandiseen	+20127331334	www.fly.to/freiz
Hassan Khalil	Moquattam	+23832450/02	www.hassan-khalil.org
Katia	Giza	+20105244442	www.katiaofcairo.com
Kazafy	Downtown	+20101408689	www.dancemix.at/kazafy
Keti Sharif	Zamalek	+20104087539	www.ketisharif.com
Leila	Dokki	+20235897443	www.leilainegypt.com
Liza Laziza	Gardern City	+20123669734	www.oceana.net.au/Liza/html
Lorna	Maadi	+20101500902	www.bellylorna.com
Lubna Eman	Moreotaya	+20106683132	www.go.to/lubnaemam
Mahmoud Reda	Downtown	+2010984051	contact via www.sphinxfestival.com
Nour	Mohandiseen	+0105108410	www.nour-orientaldance.com
Outi	Haram	+20104759048	www.outiofcairo.com
Randa Kamel	Giza	private	contact via www.raqiahassan.net
Raqia Hassan	Dokki	+20123292386	www.raqiahassan.net
Tito	Dokki	+20101506563	www.danceparty.at/tito
Yasmina	Haram	+2012 3141283	www.yasminaofcairo.com



Costume shopping - Designers & Ateliers

Egyptian Prices - Really excellent quality "professional" bellydance dream costumes purchased in Egypt generally range from 1500-2500 LE (\$300-\$500 USD) with full trimmings - and should include veil and accessories, with excellent stitching and beadwork. But quality does vary, and some designers charge in USD - so designer prices can get quite steep, around \$1200 for a glamorous top-of-the-range outfit. Luckily you can find bargains, especially Baladi style dresses and two piece costumes for around \$100-\$200 USD, especially at Khan el Khalili. Funnily enough, tacky downtown lingerie stores sell the most amazing tight, colourful lycra fitted dresses that look like Baladi dresses - obviously meant to be sexy nightwear - but no-one would guess! Around \$20!



Here are some of the main designers around Cairo.

Hallah Moustafa's private Atelier in Giza, where dancers can get tailor made costumes and see her workshop. An ex-LA haute couture designer with excellent costumes and unique, designs. She's creating designer bellydance jeans too! +20101029085 www.hallahmoustafa.com

Eman Zaki's Atelier in Mohandissen (actually lives right next door to Raqsia Hassan) is great and her service is very professional. She does all the measurements herself. Beautiful tailored costumes, great prices - 42 Mesaha St, behind Pyramisa +20123702949 www.emanzaki.com

Khan el Khalili Mr Mahmoud Gawfar - a huge three storey bellydance store with practically everything available, plus a selection of scarves, zills, swords, candelabras, jewellery, saidi sticks and dresses, veils and special cabaret costumes. No website just ask for him by name, they all know him there. Be warned - he hardly ever smiles and his prices are generally very fixed, but he is pretty consistent and for larger orders, he gives a small discount. Where buses park near Al Azhar mosque, go straight until Perfume Bazaar and turn into the alleyway left. +20225897443.



Ahmed Omar - near Mahmoud is upstairs just before the entrance. He has excellent and unusual tie-dyed hip scarves and some one-off designs that are very funky once in a while. Entrance from Perfume shop by Mahmoud's, go upstairs.

Yasser in Khan el Khalili, near El Fishawi café - tiny store but there is a lot up there. Its best when he's in because he gives better prices. Turkish style designs, best prices on zills and earrings. Email yasserbelly@hotmail.com +2012361485.

Al Fahem, Khan el Khalili - nice but fairly average quality bellydance goods of all kinds, with costumes too - but they have a website to view their items www.oriental-dancer.com

Hanan Mahmoud characteristic velvet creations with attention to embroidery and detail. She can design things to order from her studio in Masr Gedida (New Cairo). +20101524892 see her designs online www.queenhananmahmoud.jeeran.com

Oriental Moon Atelier is personable - manager Fady and administrator Hibba offer visits to their warehouse - 115 Omaret Tawfik, 7th Floor, Nasr City +20108099980 www.orientalmooncairo.com

Amera Khattan's are pricey but very beautiful. She does some very modern elegant ensembles. 27 Basra St. (ground floor) Mohandessin. She travels a lot so call first. +20122139971

Ahmed Daa El Dine is a designer who has a workshop in Mohammed Ali St. where you can also get professional instruments and tablas. Fresh designs. 117 Mohammed Ali St, +20123106196



Madam Abla unfortunately passed away in Dec 2006, however her business is carried on by her Nephew Hussein Ramadan and the tailors that know the workmanship. Abla's timeless designs are still the most sought after in Egypt. Madame Abla's former office 11 El Emary St. Bab el Khalk Abla's nephew Hussein can be emailed hramadan90@hotmail.com or +2010492865.

Sahar Okasha – Designer of Dina's costumes, based in Manial, contact privately +20123138248 for a visit.

Aida Nour, a dance teacher creates lovely costumes – you can see her personally in Giza +20122730234 or visit www.welcome.to/aidanour

Tribal

For Tribal, Baladi, Traditional village or Bedouin styles, try Nomad stores, there is one in the Nile Hilton. Also in Zamalek.

Dancers, a little Arabic language can sure help!

Counting and Numbers

1 wahid, 2 etnein, 3 talata, 4 arba, 5 khumsa, 6 setta, 7 sabba, 8 tamania, 9 tessa, 10 ashra, 11 hidasher, 12 etnasher, 13 talatasher, 14 arbatasher, 15 khamastasher, 16 settasher, 17 sabatasher, 18 tamantasher, 19 tessatasher, 20 eshreen, 21 wahid wa eshreen, 27 sabba wa eshreen, 30 talateen, 40 arbaeen, 50 khumseen, 100 meyya, 125 meyya wa khumsa wa eshreen

Your Basic Greetings and common questions!

Hello and welcome - ahlan wa sahlán, answer - ahlan bik! - hello back!

Good morning - sabah el kheir Good evening - misae el kheir

How are you? - Izzayak/izzayik? I am fine thanks to God - Ana kwaiss/a el hamdulillah

See you again, God Willing - a shoufak tani, inshalla

Where you from? - enta/enti minein? I am from... - ana min...,

What is your name? - ismak/ismik eh? My name is... - ismi...,

Goodbye - maasalema

Traveler's manners...

Yes - aiwa, No - la, Maybe – yimkin, It is possible – mumkin, It is not possible mish mumkin

Thanks - shukran, You're welcome – afwan, Sorry - ana asif/a, Pardon? - efandim?

Where is... feyn..., What? - eh?, Why - Leh? When - emta, please - minfadluk/ik, Alright - tayyib,

I am tired - ana taebana, I am happy - ana mabsoota, I need a taxi - Aiza taxi, Right - yemeen,

Left - shemel, Straight ahead - ala tool, Good - kwaiss, Very good - kwaiss awi

Shops and cafes tea – shey, coffee - ahwa, sugar - sokar, mint tea - shey bi nea-nea, milk - laban, water - maya, toilet - hamam, room - oda, hotel - fonduk, house - beyt, tips - baksheesh, money – filus, How much is this - bi kam di?, Can I look at this - mumkin ashouf? Thats very nice - di helwa, Too expensive! - da ghali awi! No thanks, I do not want it - la shukran, ana mish aiza, Ok - meshi, today - inaharda, tomorrow - bukra



Dear Diary...

Travel Tip – buy an Egyptian notebook and glue stick! Keep a journal daily and all your tickets, entry passes and business cards – glue them straight in and write journal notes next them for great holiday memories!

Finally – the sights you MUST see!

The Sphinx

The Giza Pyramids Plateau is just 10 Kms from Cairo. The Sphinx is open 8.30am-4.30pm daily and the office can be contacted at +2023838823. The Sphinx was carved out of limestone and is named so by the Greeks - it has the body of a lion and a head of a woman - one of Egypt's most fantastic monuments.



Pyramid of Cheops (Khufu)

Cairo, Egypt The Pyramid of Cheops (Khufu) is open 8.30am-4.30pm daily and the office can be contacted at +2023838823. It is the oldest and largest of the pyramids on the Giza Plateau. It contains an estimated 2.3 million blocks averaging 2.5 tons. You cannot climb the pyramid anymore, but you can go inside it and look around at the King's and Queen's chambers.

The Pyramid Sound and Light Show

Open these hours: Winter: 6.30 pm, 7.30pm, 8.30 pm daily; summer: 8.30pm, 9.30pm, 10.30pm daily and the office can be contacted at +2023857320. This is an awesome light show of the Sphinx and Pyramids and three times a night there is a story that goes along with it – you'll hear the narration by Omar Sharif. Touristy, but an incredible sight to behold - make sure you see it.



The Egyptian Museum of Antiquities

This amazing Museum is on Midan Tahrir in central Cairo behind the Nile Hilton, the office number is +2025742681. The Egyptian Museum is open the hours: 9am-5pm daily. It has the world's greatest collections of Egyptian artifacts - more than 136,000 artifacts from every period of pre-Islamic Egyptian history and on the top floor is a mummy museum, which has the mummy's of Egypt's mightiest Pharaohs. King Tut's exhibit is a must see – and the Pharaonic jewellery collection is beautiful and timeless.

The Citadel

Just 13 Kms far from downtown Cairo, near Khan el Khalil, the Citadel is open from 8am-5pm daily and the office can be contacted on +2025129619. The Citadel offers breathtaking views of Islamic Cairo and it is in a castle setting. It was built in the 12th century and it has characteristics of Mohammed Ali - the early 19th century leader who freed Egypt of the Mameluk reign and begat Egypt's Royal lineage.

An-Nasir Mohammed Mosque

The An-Nasir Mohammed Mosque is open from 9 am – 4.30 pm daily. It was built between 1318 and 1335 and is a beautiful example of classical Mameluk architecture. You will love looking around at its exquisite interior. This was once the main mosque that was used by the Citadel.





Step Pyramid of Saqqara

In Saqqara, about an hour from Cairo, the first Step Pyramid can be visited. It is open the hours: 8am-5pm daily, but there is not a phone number available for contact. This was the first pyramid built in Egypt, so it is amazing it still stands. There is special permission needed to enter the pyramid, but many find it a most extraordinary experience touring the hall and the Great South Court. While there visit Darshour and the Bent Pyramid and Djoser's Pyramid, plus the Solar Temple of Ra – the only Pyramid with an actual altar in front of it. There are wonderful remnants of the altar to be seen.

The Coptic Museum

The Coptic Museum is in Mari Girgis St, Old Cairo (Misr al-Qadimah) Cairo. The museum is open the hours: 8am-5pm daily and can be contacted at: +2023628766. This incredible historic museum is filled with paintings, textiles, metal, wood, glass and ivory craftsmanship that you will just love looking at, much from the Byzantine era. Take your time through this great museum and enjoy all the beautiful works of art you will see. While in the area, visit the Hanging Church.

Off the beaten track – more amazing places to see in Egypt



Luxor and Aswan – Take a Nile cruise and visit ancient temples, where one third of the world's antiquities reside. A must for those who wish to see these timeless monuments and the fertile crest of Upper Egypt. The sunrise balloon trip over the Valley of the Kings is spectacular. In Aswan, visit the High Dam and Winter Palace where Agatha Christy and Churchill stayed.

Alexandria - The beachside port town with the world's oldest library is a two and a half hour train or coach trip from Cairo. See King Farouk's Palaces at Montaza and Greco-Roman Museum.

Sinaii – Visit the Monastery of St Catherine's, experience the rugged Sinaii desert, with camel train tours and night safaris under the stars.

Red Sea - Hurghada, Sharm El Sheik, El Gouna, Dahab, etc - another lively summer playground, the coast is popular with Egyptians and tourists year round, the weather is lovely and the beaches are fantastic. Lots of night spots, bars and shows too. Great shopping and holiday atmosphere. Divers say its one of the world's best diving areas. Nuweiba has a great eco-lodge for fun holidays.

Siwa Oasis and the White Desert – Travel to the northern coastal Bedouin town of Marsa Matruh then down to Siwa's lush oasis and springs, complete with eco-lodges and historic monuments. Then to the Western Desert with its magnificent natural rock formations – a legacy from when the desert was once sea - a photographer's paradise. Also see the Golden Mummies, the most well preserved mummies in the world, excavated only a few years ago in Bahariya Oasis, on the way to back to Cairo from the White desert, as you drive through the Farafra Oasis.

Wishing you a happy Egyptian Adventure!

Compliments from www.ketisharif.com