

## Siwa to Alexandria - 7 days

# go guide

don't leave home without it



A World Of Discovery



Take the road less travelled & discover coastal Alexandria and remote Siwa. Isolated by the desert sands and untouched by the modern world, the Siwans hold fast to their centuries old customs, traditions & belief in black magic.



### WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU GET

#### Trip Highlights

- El Alamein – World War II, Commonwealth War Cemetery
- Siwa oasis and village walking tour
- Siwa sights - Temple of the Oracle, Amun Temple and Cleopatra Spring
- Jeep safari – Great Sand Sea, golden sand dunes, cold lake, hot springs, fossil ocean and Bir Wahed
- Marsa Matrouh – Mediterranean seaside - beach & swim
- Libyan market – Marsa Matrouh
- Alexandria – sightseeing, Quat Bay Fort, Montazzah Palace, Library of Alexandria - forecourt, Catacombs, Pompey's Pillar, National Museum

#### What's Included

- 6 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners
- 3 nights Siwan 4 star Siwan style hotel, 3 nights 3 star hotels

- Bike ride tour of Siwa & swimming in natural springs
- 4x4 jeep safari into the Great Sand Sea
- Evening tram ride, downtown Alexandria
- Airport and departure transfer day 1 and day 7
- Escorted by English speaking tour leader
- Siwa - specialist local jeep drivers and local commentary
- Qualified Egyptologist guide for antiquity sights at Alexandria sites of antiquity
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private modern air-conditioned vehicles

#### What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: \$30-40 USD
- Entrance Fees: \$20-40 USD
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour leader. We recommend you allow \$3 - 5 USD per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1 : Cairo

Sunday. Cairo – El Alamein – Siwa. We set off at 7am on day 1 so unless you have combined this tour with our King Tutankhamen or Pharaoh's Adventure tour, you will need to book a night's pre tour accommodation in Cairo - please see website, brochure or call us for costs and details.

Arrival transfer: An arrival transfer is included on day 1 or if you have booked pre tour accommodation with us. Upon arrival at Cairo, after you have attended to customs and immigration formalities, you will be met by a representative from on the go. The prominent sign depicting our company logo easily identifies our representative. Cairo International Airport can appear to be a little chaotic to the uninitiated. This is normal! Our capable airport representative will streamline your arrival. You will then transferred to your hotel in central Cairo. Your Egyptian adventure will start from the moment you leave the airport! Dependent upon the hour of your arrival, Cairo traffic can be quite heavy and slow going. Roads can be crowded with

cars, trucks, motorbikes, bicycles, donkeys, horses and people. The cacophony of constantly sounding horns has to be heard to be believed! The later it is in the day, the smoother the traffic flow. For those arriving a day or two earlier than Day One of the tour, one of our staff will be on hand to advise on where best to enjoy your extra time in Cairo in advance of the tour commencing. There are plenty of attractions in Cairo. Our comfortable Cairo pre-tour hotel is centrally located to all attractions including restaurants, shops and city attractions.

Starting early (7am) we drive North-west toward the Mediterranean coastline, to the World War II cemeteries of El Alamein. In 1942 the Allies under Britain's field Marshal Montgomery halted the German-Italian advance towards the River Nile. Marked as a major victory for the Allies, though not without loss of life, with some 11,000 killed and 60,000 wounded. We visit the Commonwealth cemetery and recently erected memorials funded by the Australian and New Zealand governments. Through the arches and beyond the gardens, 7,000 white headstones commemorate the Australian, New Zealand and British soldiers who fought and died. Stopping for a light lunch in Marsa Matrouh we continue onward to Siwa. Evening walk and opportunity for dinner in a typical Siwan style restaurant. **Overnight - Siwa Oasis (B, L)**

#### Day 2 : Bike ride & Temple of the Oracle

Siwa. This morning we take a leisurely bicycle ride through the verdant date palm groves, visiting the local sights en route. Our first stop is the Temple of the Oracle - dating back to near 570BC, the Oracle has attracted pilgrims for years, and the most famous petitioner was Alexander the Great. Alexander visited Siwa in the spring of 331BC, seeking confirmation from the Oracle that he was the son of Zeus (whom the Greek's identified with Amun – the sun god and creator of all life in Pharaonic history) and therefore the legitimate ruler of Egypt and the lands he conquered. Unfortunately there is no record of the Oracle's response! The temple is a really spectacular sight and there are amazing views of the nearby Temple of Umm 'Ubayda and across the palm groves to the shimmering salt lakes.

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This Go Guide has been compiled with care and good faith. It gives an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. This document does not form part of a contract between the traveller and on the go and their affiliates. Any costs shown are subject to change though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of on the go

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We cycle to Cleopatra Spring for a dip in the pool as the spring fed warm water bubbles to the surface. This afternoon is spent at leisure, there is an optional sunset dinner and you can enjoy swimming and a campfire at the 'Great Saltwater Lake'. **Overnight - Siwa Oasis (B)**

### Day 3 : 4x4 Safari



Siwa. Today we visit Mountain of the Dead, also known as Tombs of Jebel Mawta. We explore the hill which is strewn with tombs of varying sizes, from the 26th Dynasty and Roman period. Continuing on to Old Shali - the old city abandoned in 1926 after 3 days of rain that literally melted the mud brick city! A hermetic labyrinth of secret corridors, homes, shops, granaries and mosques are all waiting to be explored.

In the afternoon we enjoy an exhilarating Desert Safari in 4x4 jeeps, bouncing across the massive sand dunes of the Great Sand Sea, stopping off at an amazing natural spring fed lake surrounded by miles of sandy desert. We also visit the site of an ancient ocean abundant with marine fossils and finish the day at a beautiful farm in the middle of the sand dunes, where we can swim in the bubbling hot springs of Bir Wahed and we'll enjoy a sunset dinner.

Siwa jeep safari - Our 4 x 4 Jeep safari through the great sand dunes of Siwa, is definitely an adventure! Climbing the massive corrugated steeps can be rough and tough and coming down more than a little hair rising. In undertaking the excursion we choose to use vehicles that are owned and driven by the residents of the Siwan community. Not only providing an income to the district, our drivers have plenty of local knowledge and years of experience in navigating their way through the ever changing sand dunes. The vehicles we use are typically strong and utilitarian. Common makes include older model 1980/1990 Jeep, Land Cruiser and Land Rover. Most vehicles are not fitted with passenger restraints and as such extra care is warranted. The choice to partake in the excursion is solely of a personal preference. **Overnight - Siwa Oasis (B, D)**

### Day 4 : Libyan market

Siwa – Marsa Matrouh – Alexandria. An early start, we drive along the north coast to Marsa Matrouh. The city has a beautiful 7km long sandy beach and a large Libyan/ Berber population distinctive in custom and dress. We stop for lunch, with time to visit the beach for a swim in the sea and to

explore the Libyan souq (market) if open, before driving onward to Alexandria. We'll be on the road for approximately 9 hours today. **Overnight - Alexandria (B, L)**

### Days 5-6 : Alexandria



Alexandria. The Mediterranean coastal city of Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great and boasts an impressive seafront corniche, along which are dotted, cafes and restaurants, catacombs, souqs and relics from a bygone age. The morning is free to relax or explore.

This afternoon sightseeing includes, the Montazah Palace, home to King Farouk – the last monarch of the Mohamed Ali dynasty who abdicated and fled to Italy; the Fort at Quat Bay, which resembles a huge sand castle and Pharos – Alexandria's great lighthouse which was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, towering 440 feet above the harbour. This evening we take a tram ride into the downtown area where you can indulge in a little retail therapy before enjoying a famous Alexandrian Fateer for dinner.

Day 6 - Today we visit the huge underground necropolis of the Catacomb of Shouqafa, which lies beneath 200 year old houses. These second century tombs have been extensively excavated since their rediscovery in 1900, when a donkey stepped through a thin part of the roof! The catacombs were originally a private crypt but later used for Roman burials. There were three forms of burial there, sarcophagi, in shelves and in urns of ashes after cremation.

We continue on to view Pompey's Pillar - the tallest ancient memorial column in Egypt, the National Museum and the Library of Alexandria. After lunch, we drive back to Cairo. **Overnight - Alexandria (1), Cairo (1) (B:1, D:1)**

### Day 7 : Cairo

Saturday. Cairo. Hotel check out and included onward transfer to airport or the start hotel of any subsequent on the go tour. (B)

### The Community of Siwa

Siwa was isolated for centuries and only became accessible by car in the 1980's when a road was built connecting it to Marsa Matrouh. This isolation has meant that Siwa retains centuries old customs and residents remain largely untouched by the development of the modern world and indeed commercialised areas in Egypt. For this reason

heightened sensitivity and respect is required when visiting Siwa. Siwan women are covered from head to toe at all times and sheer black fabric covers their faces. Therefore female travellers should please show respect, by keeping legs and upper arms covered at all times whilst in Siwa.

#### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

#### Visas

Visas are required by all visitors to Egypt. Visa forms are available from us. The Embassy of Egypt advises all travellers to procure their visa prior to entry into Egypt. However it still remains possible for nationals of some countries to procure their tourist visa upon arrival at Cairo International Airport.

Please note that in the event of visa refusal at port of entry, on the go cannot be held responsible.

All RSA passport holders must procure their Egyptian visa prior to departure.

When filling in an Egyptian visa form, you will be asked to provide your address in Egypt. For the purposes of this form, please use the following address: 68 Merghany St, Abou Ghaly Building Heliopolis, Cairo. Telephone: +2 02 241821 65

If your holiday incorporates a stay in Jordan, followed by further arrangements in Egypt (ie you travel to Jordan and then return to Egypt) you will need to procure a Multiple Entry Egyptian Tourist Visa that is only available before travelling to Egypt.

Please note that visa requirements are subject to change. Visa procurement is solely the responsibility of the traveller and not of On The Go Tours.

If travelling with us from Egypt to Jordan via Aqaba Seaport (the Jordanian port of entry if arriving from Egypt) a Jordanian Tourist Visa is obtainable upon arrival, free of charge for UK, EU, AUS, NZ, CAN and USA passport holders. For all other nationalities please check with your local Jordanian Embassy. On departure from Jordan, via land or sea, a 5JD departure tax of is applied to all visitors.

#### Climate

Temperatures in Egypt are generally high (25 - 30 degrees) and even hotter in the summer months from May to September, when the sun can be fierce and temperatures soar, so pack light comfortable clothing, sunscreen and a hat.

In Cairo and the Nile Delta region, winter (October to February) can be cooler - so take a jacket, long-sleeved tops and trousers for the cooler evenings. The south remains warm during this time but again, temperatures do drop in the evenings. Rainfall is negligible with the most falling along Egypt's Mediterranean coastline.

#### Health Requirements

It is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus and Polio, if you haven't had a booster in



the last ten years. Food and waterborne diseases are more common, so we recommend vaccinations for typhoid (valid 3 years) and Hepatitis A (validity varies). Vaccination requirements can change so please check with your local health care provider before travel.

## Currency

Egyptian Pounds (EGP or LE). Pounds Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are easily exchanged. You can obtain Egyptian Pounds (LE) at any major bank or your hotel. Exchange rates are subject to fluctuations.

- USD 1 = EGP 6.0
- GBP 1 = EGP 9.3
- AUD 1 = EGP 6.0
- EURO 1 = EGP 7.70

Funds collected in Egypt for entrance fees or optional excursion that you may wish to undertake are payable in local currency (EGP).

## Time

Egypt is two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)

## Essential Packing

- Sleeping bag for the felucca or for camping in the White Desert (if applicable to your tour).
- Lightweight cotton garments.
- Comfortable walking shoes for the Pyramids and Valley of the Kings
- DEET based mosquito repellent & antihistamine cream
- 2 pin, European electrical adaptor.
- Two spare passport photos & a photocopy of your passport
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs.
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume and torch
- Sleep sheet or sleeping bag if travelling with us to Jordan and staying at our Wadi Rum camp.

## Arrival Transfers

A complimentary airport arrival transfer is included in your tour. Upon arrival at Cairo Airport you will be met by a representative from On The Go Tours either just before immigration or in the baggage hall near the luggage belt of your respective arriving flight. The prominent sign depicting our company logo easily identifies our representative. Please have your tour voucher handy and make it available to our representative. After collecting your luggage you will be escorted to our awaiting transportation.

If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative (after waiting 20 minutes in the arrival hall) or your flight to Egypt is delayed, please call or send a text message to the emergency contact number as stated on your tour voucher.

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