Cairo Travel Guide

Discover Cairo: Where Ancient Wonders Meet Modern Energy

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Things to do in Cairo

Ancient & Historical Sites

Cairo is the gateway to Egypt's most iconic ancient wonders. Stand before the last surviving wonder of the ancient world, explore pharaonic tombs, and discover archaeological treasures that span over 5,000 years of civilization.



Must See

Pyramids of Giza & Great Sphinx

3-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The **Pyramids of Giza** are Egypt's most iconic landmarks and one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Built over 4,500 years ago, the complex includes the **Great Pyramid of Khufu** (originally 147 meters tall), the Pyramid of Khafre, and the Pyramid of Menkaure. The enigmatic **Great Sphinx** guards the plateau with its lion's body and pharaoh's face. You can enter the pyramids for an additional fee, ride camels across the desert, and Khufu’s boats are displayed at the Grand Egyptian Museum; its official page lists the Khufu’s Boats Museum as open daily. *Arrive early morning to beat crowds and heat, and beware of aggressive vendors and unofficial guides.*



Must See

Citadel of Saladin

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The massive **Citadel of Saladin** was built in the 12th century by the legendary Muslim leader Salah ad-Din (Saladin) to protect Cairo from Crusader attacks. This medieval Islamic fortress complex was crowned 700 years later with the magnificent **Mosque of Muhammad Ali**. The Citadel offers stunning panoramic views over Cairo and contains several museums including the Military Museum and Police Museum. The fortification walls, gates, and towers provide excellent examples of medieval military architecture. Allocate time to explore the entire complex including the mosque, ramparts, and museums for a comprehensive historical experience.



Top Pick

Saqqara Necropolis

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Saqqara is Egypt's largest archaeological site and home to the **Step Pyramid of Djoser**, the world's oldest stone pyramid built around 2650 BCE. This vast necropolis contains eleven pyramids and numerous mastabas (ancient tombs). Key attractions include the beautifully decorated **Mastaba of Ti**, the **Serapeum** (underground galleries for sacred bulls), and the **Pyramid of Unas** with its pyramid texts. Located just 30 km south of Cairo, Saqqara offers a less crowded alternative to Giza while showcasing the evolution of pyramid construction.



Notable

Memphis Ancient Capital

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Once the glorious capital of ancient Egypt, **Memphis** now stands as an open-air museum in the village of Mit Rahina, 19 km south of Cairo. The site is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** featuring the colossal **statue of Ramesses II** lying majestically in the museum building, along with the impressive **Alabaster Sphinx**. Though much of the ancient city has been lost to time, Memphis provides crucial context for understanding pharaonic civilization and is best combined with a visit to nearby Saqqara.



Notable

Bab Zuweila Gate

30-45 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

Bab Zuweila is the only surviving southern gate of medieval Islamic Cairo's walls. Built in 1092, this spectacularly preserved gate features two towering minarets from the adjacent Al-Mu'ayyad Mosque perched atop it. Visitors can climb to the top for exceptional views over Islamic Cairo's rooftops and minarets. The gate beautifully depicts medieval military architecture and served as an execution site during the Mamluk period. It's located in the heart of the historic district, making it easy to combine with visits to Khan el-Khalili and other Islamic monuments.

Tips for Ancient & Historical Sites

- **Book combination tickets:** Save money by purchasing combined entry to Giza, Saqqara, and Memphis
- **Hire a guide:** The historical context greatly enhances the experience at these sites
- **Timing matters:** The Ministry’s current Giza Plateau listing gives opening hours of 8:00 AM–4:00 PM daily.
- **Photography:** Bring cameras but note that photography inside pyramids may require additional permits

- **Combine attractions:** Visit the Citadel and Muhammad Ali Mosque together in one trip
- **Best photography:** Morning light is ideal for photographing the Citadel's exterior
- **Climb for views:** Don't miss climbing Bab Zuweila's towers for panoramic perspectives
- **Bring water:** Limited shade and facilities; stay hydrated during exploration

Museums & Galleries

Cairo's museums house the world's most significant collections of Egyptian antiquities, from golden death masks to mummified pharaohs. These institutions offer climate-controlled sanctuary from the desert heat while providing deep insight into Egypt's extraordinary past.



Must See Book Ahead

Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM)

3-4 hours Book Ahead

Map

The **Grand Egyptian Museum** is the world's largest archaeological museum, located near the Giza Pyramids. With over 100,000 artifacts displayed across state-of-the-art facilities, the GEM showcases the complete **treasures of King Tutankhamun** including items never before displayed. The museum's striking pyramid-inspired architecture features a huge triangular entrance and multiple glass triangular elements. *Note: check the museum's official site for current opening hours and which galleries are open.* The GEM offers interactive exhibits, multimedia presentations, and stunning pyramid views, representing a modern complement to Egypt's ancient heritage.



Must See

Egyptian Museum (Tahrir Square)

3-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Located in downtown Cairo's Tahrir Square, the **Egyptian Museum** houses over 120,000 artifacts spanning thousands of years. Mariette was appointed director of a new museum in 1858; the current Tahrir museum opened in 1902, it remains one of the world's most important museums. The collection includes the famous **golden mask of Tutankhamun**, royal mummies, delicate pharaonic jewelry, colorful vases, and rare artifacts. The **Royal Mummies Hall** is particularly impressive, displaying actual preserved pharaohs. *The museum is not air-conditioned, so visit in the morning for comfort.* Consider hiring a guide to fully appreciate the historical context of the extensive collection.



Top Pick

National Museum of Egyptian Civilization

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The **National Museum of Egyptian Civilization** offers a comprehensive journey through Egypt's history from prehistoric times to the present day. Located in Fustat (Old Cairo), this modern museum features the relocated **Royal Mummies Hall** where visitors can view the preserved remains of Egypt's greatest pharaohs including Ramses II and Hatshepsut in a climate-controlled, respectful environment. The museum also showcases Egyptian culture through crafts, textiles, and daily life artifacts, providing a broader perspective beyond the pharaonic era.



Notable

Coptic Museum

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Located in Coptic Cairo, the **Coptic Museum** holds over 16,000 artifacts documenting the presence and evolution of Christianity in Egypt. Founded in 1908, the museum's collection spans from early Christian times through the Islamic era, featuring manuscripts, textiles, icons, woodwork, and metalwork gathered from monasteries across Egypt. The museum building itself is beautiful, and its **lush green grounds** provide a peaceful retreat. This is essential for understanding Egypt's Christian heritage and the Coptic Orthodox Church's significant role in the country's history.

Tips for Museums & Galleries

- **Combo visits:** Combine GEM morning visit with afternoon Giza Pyramids tour
- **Gift shops:** Museum gift shops, especially at the Egyptian Museum, offer premium quality souvenirs
- **Photography rules:** Check current photography policies; some areas prohibit cameras
- **Stay hydrated:** The Egyptian Museum lacks air conditioning; bring water

Religious Sites

Cairo is known as the 'City of a Thousand Minarets' for good reason. The city's skyline is punctuated by stunning mosques, churches, and religious monuments representing Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, showcasing centuries of religious harmony and architectural brilliance.



Must See

Mosque of Muhammad Ali (Alabaster Mosque)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Perched atop the **Citadel of Saladin**, the **Mosque of Muhammad Ali** is Cairo's most photographed mosque. Built between 1824-1857 in Ottoman style, it features grand domes, gleaming alabaster walls, intricate interiors, and soaring minarets. The mosque offers spectacular **free panoramic views** of Cairo, and on clear days, you can even spot the Giza Pyramids in the distance. The courtyard's clock tower was a gift from France's King Louis Philippe. *Remove shoes before entering and dress modestly (women should cover shoulders and hair).* Visit early morning for the best light and fewer crowds.



Top Pick

Al-Azhar Mosque

45 minutes - 1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

Built in AD 972, **Al-Azhar Mosque** is one of Cairo's oldest surviving mosques and houses one of the **world's oldest universities**. This magnificent structure features bright masonry, intricate wooden ceilings, and ornate windows. Al-Azhar remains one of the most important centers of Islamic learning globally, and its courtyard and prayer halls showcase beautiful Islamic architecture spanning multiple dynasties. The mosque is located in Islamic Cairo, making it easy to combine with Khan el-Khalili bazaar visits.



Top Pick

Sultan Hassan Mosque

1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

Completed in 1363 during the Mamluk era, the **Sultan Hassan Mosque** is a masterpiece of Egyptian Islamic architecture. This massive structure was built for Sultan Hassan el-Nasir and features stunning architectural intricacies, towering minarets, and an impressive courtyard. The mosque's size and detailed decorations never fail to impress visitors. It stands near the Citadel and faces the equally breathtaking **Al-Rifa'i Mosque** across the square, creating a dramatic architectural dialogue between two eras.



Top Pick

Coptic Cairo & Hanging Church

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Coptic Cairo is the ancient heart of Egypt's Christian community, featuring five historic churches, the Coptic Museum, and the site of the first mosque built in Egypt. The star attraction is the **Hanging Church** (Al-Muallaqa), built in the 4th century and suspended above two Roman gate towers of the ancient Babylon fortress. Other highlights include the **Church of St. Sergius and Bacchus**, believed to have sheltered the Holy Family during their flight to Egypt, and the **Ben Ezra Synagogue**. The narrow streets and ancient architecture create a peaceful atmosphere away from Cairo's bustle.



Notable

Ibn Tulun Mosque

45 minutes - 1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

The **Mosque of Ibn Tulun** is one of Cairo's oldest mosques, built in 879 CE. It's renowned for its peaceful atmosphere, huge open courtyard, and distinctive **spiral minaret** inspired by the ancient ziggurat of Samarra in Iraq. This architectural marvel is one of the few mosques in Cairo built around an open courtyard, and its simplicity creates a serene environment. Visitors can climb the spiral minaret for panoramic views. The mosque is exceptionally well-preserved and offers a glimpse into early Islamic architecture in Egypt.



Notable

Cave Church (St. Simon's Monastery)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Located in the Mokattam Mountain area (known as Garbage City), the **Cave Church** is one of the world's largest Christian churches, carved directly into the mountain. Also called **St. Simon's Monastery**, this remarkable site features biblical stories and paintings on the cave walls and can accommodate up to 20,000 worshippers. The church serves the Zabbaleen Christian community who work in waste collection. The journey through Garbage City is eye-opening, and the church itself is an architectural and spiritual marvel demonstrating faith and resilience.

Tips for Religious Sites

- **Prayer times:** Muslims pray five times daily; you may need to wait until prayers finish to explore mosques
- **Modest dress required:** Cover shoulders and knees; women should bring a scarf for mosque visits
- **Remove shoes:** Always remove footwear before entering mosques
- **Friday visits:** Many shops and some sites close or open late on Fridays (holy day)
- **Respect silence:** Maintain quiet and respectful behavior in all religious sites

Neighborhoods & Districts

Cairo's markets are sensory explosions of color, scent, and sound. From medieval bazaars to modern malls, shopping in Cairo ranges from haggling for spices and lanterns to browsing international brands.



Must See

Khan el-Khalili Bazaar

2-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Established in 1382, **Khan el-Khalili** is Cairo's most famous market and one of the world's oldest continuously operating bazaars. This vibrant open-air marketplace is a **UNESCO World Heritage site** filled with over 4,000 shops selling everything: brass lanterns, hand-punched metal lamps, perfume oils, spices, papyrus, silver and gold jewelry, textiles, leather goods, shisha pipes, and Egyptian antiques. The narrow, winding alleys buzz with energy haggling is expected and part of the cultural experience (start at 30-50% of asking price). The bazaar is surrounded by beautiful medieval mosques and Islamic architecture. *Open daily 9:30am-11pm, though many shops open late (around 3pm) on Fridays.* Evening visits offer magical atmosphere with glowing lanterns.



Must See

Islamic Cairo

Half day to full day No Booking Needed

Map

Islamic Cairo is the medieval heart of the city, featuring narrow streets, ornate mosques, and centuries-old architecture. This **UNESCO World Heritage area** centers around **Al-Muizz Street**, one of the oldest streets in Cairo with stunning examples of Mamluk and Fatimid architecture. The district includes Khan el-Khalili bazaar, Al-Azhar Mosque, Sultan Hassan Mosque, Bab Zuweila gate, and dozens of other historic monuments. Walking through Islamic Cairo feels like stepping back in time expect to encounter traditional crafts workshops, spice vendors, and local cafes. *Best explored on foot with comfortable shoes.* The district is particularly magical in the evening when lit up.



Notable

Downtown Cairo

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Downtown Cairo is the commercial, transportational, and cultural hub of modern Cairo. Built in the 19th century with Parisian-inspired boulevards, this area features Belle Époque architecture, busy streets, shops, cafes, theaters, and bookstores. Key landmarks include **Tahrir Square**, the Egyptian Museum, and Talaat Harb Street with its classic cafes and shops. The district showcases Cairo's cosmopolitan past with faded grandeur and vibrant street life. Downtown is excellent for people-watching, affordable local dining, and experiencing everyday Cairo life. *Can be chaotic with heavy traffic; stay alert when crossing streets.*



Notable

Zamalek Island

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Zamalek is an upscale island district in the Nile River known for leafy streets, art galleries, boutique hotels, embassies, and cosmopolitan dining. This affluent neighborhood offers a quieter, greener alternative to central Cairo with attractions including the Cairo Tower, Gezira Arts Center, and the Opera House complex. Zamalek features numerous restaurants serving international cuisine, trendy cafes, and shops. The island's tree-lined streets and elegant architecture make it popular with expatriates and affluent Egyptians. It's ideal for evening strolls, fine dining, and experiencing modern, upscale Cairo.

Tips for Neighborhoods & Districts

- **Bargaining expected:** Start at 30-50% of initial price; walking away often results in better offers
- **Best timing:** Visit mornings (before 11am) for fewer crowds or evenings (after 6pm) for magical atmosphere
- **What to buy:** Hand-punched lanterns, perfume oils, spices, papyrus art, silver jewelry, Egyptian cotton
- **Avoid Friday mornings:** Many shops closed or open late due to Friday prayers
- **Stay hydrated:** Bring water, especially in summer months (June-August)
- **Beware scams:** Agree on prices before services (photos, camel rides); stick to reputable shops

- **Walking Islamic Cairo:** Wear comfortable shoes; streets are uneven and exploration requires walking
- **Combine attractions:** Link Islamic Cairo with Khan el-Khalili and Al-Azhar Mosque visits
- **Downtown traffic:** Use metro or walk; traffic congestion is severe
- **Zamalek dining:** Reserve tables at popular restaurants, especially weekends

Parks & Gardens

Amidst Cairo's urban intensity, parks and gardens offer peaceful retreats. These green oases provide respite from the heat, beautiful landscaping, and spaces for relaxation and family activities.



Top Pick

Al-Azhar Park

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Al-Azhar Park is a stunning 30-hectare green oasis created on what was once a neglected area. This beautifully landscaped park features manicured gardens, fountains, walking paths, children's play areas, and several excellent restaurants with panoramic views of Islamic Cairo and the Citadel. The park represents one of the world's most successful urban renewal projects and provides a peaceful escape from Cairo's hustle. It's particularly popular with families and offers stunning sunset views. The park also contains a restored section of the 12th-century Ayyubid Wall. *Small entrance fee applies.* Perfect for picnics, leisurely strolls, or simply relaxing with a view.

Tips for Parks & Gardens

- **Sunset visits:** Evening visits offer cooler temperatures and stunning sunset views
- **Dining options:** Several restaurants within the park offer meals with panoramic views
- **Family-friendly:** Excellent destination for families with children; open spaces to run and play
- **Entrance fee:** Nominal entrance fee; bring small Egyptian pounds

Landmarks & Monuments

Cairo's landmarks offer unique perspectives on this sprawling metropolis. From observation towers to historic squares, these sites provide both visual splendor and cultural context.



Top Pick

Cairo Tower (Zamalek)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Standing 187 meters (613 feet) tall, the **Cairo Tower** is the tallest structure in North Africa. This distinctive lotus-shaped tower in Zamalek offers incredible **360-degree panoramic views** of Cairo from its observation deck and rotating restaurant. On clear days, you can see the Pyramids of Giza in the distance along with the Nile snaking through the city. Built in 1961, the tower has become an iconic Cairo landmark. The observation deck provides excellent photo opportunities, especially at sunset. *Entrance ticket required; restaurant reservations recommended for dining.*



Notable

Tahrir Square

30 minutes - 1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

Tahrir Square (Martyr Square) is a prime location in Downtown Cairo and the heart of modern Egyptian history. This famous square was the focal point of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Surrounding the square are major attractions including the **Egyptian Museum**, the Mogamma government building, the Arab League headquarters, and various hotels and shops. The square represents the intersection of Cairo's ancient and modern identities. It's a central transportation hub with easy access to the metro, making it an ideal starting point for exploring downtown Cairo.

Tips for Landmarks & Monuments

- **Best timing for Cairo Tower:** Visit late afternoon for daytime and sunset views
- **Photography:** Bring cameras for panoramic city shots
- **Restaurant option:** Consider dining at the rotating restaurant for extended views
- **Tahrir as hub:** Use Tahrir Square as a central point for navigating downtown attractions

Tours & Activities

The lifeblood of Egypt, the Nile River offers unique perspectives on Cairo. River cruises, traditional felucca rides, and waterfront dining provide memorable experiences on the world's longest river.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Nile River Cruises & Felucca Rides

2 hours (dinner cruise) or 1 hour (felucca) Book Ahead

Experience Cairo from the water with **Nile cruises** and traditional **felucca sailboat rides**. Dinner cruises offer multi-course meals, live entertainment including belly dancing and Tanoura shows, and illuminated views of Cairo's skyline. For a more authentic experience, hire a traditional felucca sailboat for a peaceful sunset sail these ancient wooden boats with white sails have plied the Nile for centuries. **Zamalek island** in the Nile offers departure points and features upscale hotels, restaurants, and gardens. Nile cruises range from short 2-hour dinner cruises to multi-day voyages south to Luxor and Aswan.

Tips for Tours & Activities

- **Book in advance:** Popular dinner cruises fill up quickly; reserve ahead
- **Sunset felucca rides:** Most magical time for traditional sailing
- **Negotiate felucca prices:** Agree on price and duration before boarding
- **Bring a jacket:** Evenings on the water can be cool, even in summer
- **Camera ready:** Spectacular photography opportunities of illuminated Cairo

Day Trips & Excursions

Beyond Cairo's boundaries lie additional ancient wonders and natural escapes. These day trips extend your Egyptian adventure to lesser-known pyramids, desert landscapes, and historic cities.



Top Pick

Alexandria

Full day (10-12 hours) No Booking Needed

Map

Alexandria, Egypt's second-largest city, sits on the Mediterranean coast about 220 km north of Cairo (2.5-3 hour drive). Founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, this historic port city offers a different atmosphere from Cairo with sea breezes and Mediterranean culture. Key attractions include the modern **Bibliotheca Alexandrina** (library), the **Citadel of Qaitbay** (built on the site of the ancient Lighthouse of Alexandria), the Catacombs of Kom el Shoqafa, Montaza Palace gardens, and the Corniche waterfront promenade. Alexandria is famous for seafood restaurants and cooler coastal climate. *Best visited as a full-day trip; consider staying overnight to fully explore.*



Notable

Fayoum Oasis

Full day (8-10 hours) No Booking Needed

Map

The **Fayoum Oasis** lies about 100 km southwest of Cairo and offers desert landscapes, waterfalls, and ancient sites. This fertile depression below sea level features **Lake Qarun** (ancient lake), **Wadi El-Rayan** with spectacular waterfalls and lakes, **Wadi El-Hitan** (Whale Valley UNESCO site with 40-million-year-old whale fossils), and the **Hawara Pyramid**. The oasis is popular for desert safaris, sandboarding, camping, and birdwatching. The area showcases Egypt's natural beauty beyond ancient monuments and offers authentic rural Egyptian life. *4x4 vehicle recommended for desert areas; bring sun protection.*



Notable

Dahshur Pyramids

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Dahshur, located 40 km south of Cairo, contains several pyramids from the Old Kingdom including the famous **Bent Pyramid** and **Red Pyramid**. The Bent Pyramid is unique for its unusual bent shape (angle changes midway), while the Red Pyramid is Egypt's third-largest pyramid and one of the best preserved. Visitors can enter the Red Pyramid's burial chamber. Dahshur is far less crowded than Giza, offering a more intimate pyramid experience. The site provides excellent photography opportunities and insight into pyramid construction evolution. *Can be combined with Saqqara and Memphis for a full pyramid day trip.*

Tips for Day Trips & Excursions

- **Hire drivers:** Private drivers or organized tours recommended for day trips
- **Start early:** Leave Cairo early morning to maximize time and avoid traffic
- **Pack essentials:** Bring water, snacks, sunscreen, and comfortable clothing
- **Alexandria seafood:** Don't miss trying fresh Mediterranean seafood in Alexandria
- **Desert trips:** Fayoum requires sturdy vehicles; book reputable tour operators

Nightlife & Entertainment

Immerse yourself in Egyptian culture through traditional performances, cultural centers, and unique local experiences. From mesmerizing Sufi dancing to vibrant sound and light shows, Cairo offers entertainment that brings history to life.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Sound & Light Show at the Pyramids

1.5 hours Book Ahead

Map

The **Pyramids Sound and Light Show** is a spectacular evening experience where the pyramids and Sphinx are illuminated while narrating Egypt's ancient history. Lasers, colored lights, and dramatic music create an unforgettable atmosphere as the Sphinx tells stories of pharaohs and civilizations. Shows are offered in multiple languages including English, French, German, Spanish, and Arabic. The 50-minute show combines historical narrative with visual spectacle. *Bring a light jacket as desert evenings can be cool.* Shows run nightly with different language schedules; advance booking recommended during peak season.



Top Pick

Al-Tannoura Egyptian Heritage Dance Troupe

1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

Experience the mesmerizing **Tanoura dance**, a traditional Sufi whirling performance at the Wekalet El Ghouri Arts Center in Islamic Cairo. This spiritual dance features performers in colorful multilayered skirts spinning continuously for extended periods, creating hypnotic visual effects. The free shows (held Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings) also include traditional Egyptian folk music and sometimes other cultural performances. The historic caravanserai setting adds authentic atmosphere. *Arrive early to secure seating as shows are popular and free admission means they fill quickly.* Photography allowed; bring camera for stunning shots of spinning dancers.

Tips for Nightlife & Entertainment

- **Book sound & light shows ahead:** Popular times sell out, especially during peak tourist seasons
- **Tanoura shows:** Free but arrive 30-45 minutes early for good seats
- **Evening entertainment:** Many hotels and Nile cruise boats offer dinner with belly dancing shows
- **Photography welcome:** Most cultural shows allow photos; flash may be restricted

Food & Dining

Real, highly-rated Restaurants in Cairo, sourced from Google Places (rating above 4★).



ENOCI Bistro★★★★★ 4.9 (4,330)

1-2 hours

Map

ENOCI Bistro is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.9★ from 4330 reviews. Located at 1085 Nile Corniche, Qasr El Nil, Cairo Governorate 11332, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Thursday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 AM



Cairo Vista Restaurant & Bar★★★★★ 4.9 (267)

1-2 hours

Map

Cairo Vista Restaurant & Bar is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.9★ from 267 reviews. Located at 11613, 29 El Falaky Street, Ad Dawawin, Abdeen, Cairo Governorate 11613, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Tuesday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Thursday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Friday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 AM



Al Khal Egyptian Restaurant★★★★★ 4.8 (2,420)

1-2 hours

Map

Al Khal Egyptian Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.8★ from 2420 reviews. Located at Omar Ibn El-Khattab, Masaken Al Mohandesin, Heliopolis, Cairo Governorate 11737, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM



Gemini restaurant&Cafè★★★★★ 4.8 (4,099)

1-2 hours

Map

Gemini restaurant&Cafè is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.8★ from 4099 reviews. Located at Mamsha Ahl Masr Cornish El Nile, سوق العصر، بولاق، محافظة القاهرة 11111, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- Thursday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- Friday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 AM



Culina★★★★★ 4.8 (454)

1-2 hours

Map

Culina is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.8★ from 454 reviews. Located at 1113 Nile Corniche, El Nil, DownTown, Cairo Governorate 4272080, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- Tuesday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- Wednesday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- Thursday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- Friday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 1:30 – 5:30 PM
- Saturday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- Sunday: 6:30 – 11:00 AM, 12:30 – 4:00 PM



Dahabiya Cairo★★★★★ 4.7 (1,423)

1-2 hours

Map

Dahabiya Cairo is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.7★ from 1423 reviews. Located at 106 Nile St, Ad Doqi A, Dokki, Giza Governorate 3753452, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Thursday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Friday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM



LUUMA★★★★★ 4.7 (15,589)

1-2 hours

Map

LUUMA is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.7★ from 15589 reviews. Located at Abou El Feda, Zamalek, Cairo Governorate 4271104, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM
- Tuesday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM
- Wednesday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM
- Thursday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM
- Friday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM
- Saturday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM
- Sunday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 AM



Lavender Restaurant & Lounge★★★★★ 4.7 (1,893)

1-2 hours

Map

Lavender Restaurant & Lounge is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.7★ from 1893 reviews. Located at 9 El Gabalaya St, Al Gabalayah, Zamalek, Cairo Governorate 4270101, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM
- Tuesday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM
- Wednesday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM
- Thursday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM
- Friday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM
- Saturday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM
- Sunday: 4:00 PM – 4:00 AM



The Grill Dining & Lounge★★★★★ 4.7 (913)

1-2 hours

Map

The Grill Dining & Lounge is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.7★ from 913 reviews. Located at Cornich, Semiramis InterContinental, El Nile, قصر الدوبارة، قسم قصر النيل، محافظة القاهرة 11511, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM



Gingko★★★★★ 4.7 (318)

1-2 hours

Map

Gingko is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.7★ from 318 reviews. Located at Nile City Towers 2005 B, Nile Corniche, Boulaq Num.1, Bulaq, Cairo Governorate 11311, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Tuesday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Thursday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM



La Terrace Restaurant & Lounge★★★★★ 4.6 (1,404)

1-2 hours

Map

La Terrace Restaurant & Lounge is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.6★ from 1404 reviews. Located at St President Hotel، 22 Taha Hussein, Abu Al Feda, Zamalek, Cairo Governorate 4271150, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM
- Tuesday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 7:00 AM – 11:30 PM



Zitouni★★★★★ 4.6 (1,318)

1-2 hours

Map

Zitouni is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.6★ from 1318 reviews. Located at 1089 Nile Corniche, Qasr El Nil, Cairo Governorate 11519, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 6:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM



Zeeyara Restaurant★★★★★ 4.5 (728)

1-2 hours

Map

Zeeyara Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.5★ from 728 reviews. Located at In front of Bayt، 114 Al Moez Ldin Allah Al Fatmi, Al Suhaymi، El Gamaliya, Cairo Governorate 11621, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Tuesday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Thursday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 AM



La Zisa★★★★★ 4.5 (173)

1-2 hours

Map

La Zisa is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.5★ from 173 reviews. Located at 1189 Nile Corniche, Boulaq Num.5, Bulaq, Cairo Governorate 4311102, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM



ZAZA CUISINE by the Nile★★★★★ 4.5 (6,332)

1-2 hours

Map

ZAZA CUISINE by the Nile is a highly-rated restaurant in Cairo, rated 4.5★ from 6332 reviews. Located at Mamsha ahl masr Infront of fairomnt hotel Nile city, وبالق1، وبالق، محافظة القاهرة 11765, Egypt.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Open 24 hours
- Tuesday: Open 24 hours
- Wednesday: Open 24 hours
- Thursday: Open 24 hours
- Friday: Open 24 hours
- Saturday: Open 24 hours
- Sunday: Open 24 hours

Practical Information

Optimal Travel Seasons

The **best time to visit Cairo** is during the cooler months from **October to April**, when temperatures are pleasant for sightseeing and outdoor activities.

Season-by-Season Breakdown:

- **October-November (Fall):** Excellent weather with temperatures 20-28°C (68-82°F). Less crowded than winter peak. Ideal for pyramid visits and outdoor exploration.
- **December-February (Winter/Peak Season):** Most popular tourist season with temperatures 14-22°C (57-72°F). Expect crowds at major attractions but comfortable weather. Evenings can be cool; bring layers. Higher hotel prices during Christmas and New Year.
- **March-April (Spring):** Pleasant temperatures 18-28°C (64-82°F). Occasional sandstorms (khamsin winds) possible in March-April. Good balance of weather and fewer crowds.
- **May-September (Summer/Low Season):** Very hot with temperatures 28-40°C (82-104°F), sometimes exceeding 40°C. Best avoided unless you handle extreme heat well. Advantages include lowest hotel rates, minimal crowds, and locals take vacations. If visiting in summer, plan indoor activities during midday heat (10am-4pm) and outdoor sightseeing early morning or evening.

Ramadan consideration: During the Islamic holy month (dates vary yearly), many restaurants close during daylight hours, and site hours may change. However, evenings come alive with special meals and celebrations.

Getting Around Cairo

Cairo offers multiple transportation options, though traffic congestion is severe, especially during rush hours (8-10am, 4-7pm). Plan extra travel time accordingly.

✈ Airport Transfer

- **Cairo International Airport (CAI):** Located 22 km northeast of downtown. Uber reports an average CAI ride of EGP 281 and 35 minutes; check the app for your actual fare, or hotel shuttles. *Avoid unlicensed taxi drivers soliciting inside terminals.*

Metro System:

The **Cairo Metro** is the fastest, cheapest, and most reliable way to navigate Cairo. Three operating lines connect major districts:

- **Line 1 (Red):** Runs north-south including Helwan to El-Marg, passing through Sadat Station (Tahrir Square/Egyptian Museum)
- **Line 2 (Yellow):** Runs through Giza and connects to downtown
- **Line 3 does not serve Cairo International Airport; use a taxi, bus or ride-hailing service from the airport.**
- **As of June 2026, adult metro fares are EGP 10–20 depending on the number of stations. Purchase at station booths. Trains run 5:30am-midnight (later on weekends).**
- **Women-only cars:** First two cars of every train are reserved for women. Men may receive fines for entering.
- *Note: Metro doesn't reach Giza Pyramids directly; use taxi/Uber for pyramid visits.*

Taxis & Ride-Sharing:

- **Uber and Careem:** Most recommended for tourists. Reliable, cashless payment, no haggling. Widely available throughout Cairo. Download apps before arrival.
- **White taxis:** Metered taxis with air conditioning. Ensure driver uses meter or agree on price before departure.
- **Black & white taxis:** Older, often no meter. Always negotiate price before entering.
- **Typical fares:** Downtown to Giza Pyramids: 80-150 EGP by Uber; Downtown to Islamic Cairo: 30-60 EGP

Buses:

Public buses are very cheap but crowded, hot, and difficult for non-Arabic speakers to navigate. Not recommended for tourists.

Private Drivers & Tours:

Hiring private drivers or joining organized tours is comfortable and efficient, especially for visiting multiple sites or day trips. Expect 400-800 EGP per day for private drivers. Hotels can arrange reliable drivers.

Walking:

Walking is excellent for exploring specific neighborhoods (Islamic Cairo, Zamalek, Downtown) but impractical for longer distances due to heat, traffic, and distances between major sites. *Always stay alert when crossing streets; traffic rules are loosely followed.*

Shopping in Cairo

What to Buy:

- **Papyrus Art:** Hand-painted scenes on authentic papyrus. Ensure you're buying real papyrus (flexible, doesn't crack) not banana leaf imitations. Expect 50-300 EGP for quality pieces.
- **Spices:** Saffron, cumin, hibiscus tea (karkade), and spice blends. Khan el-Khalili spice vendors offer aromatic selections.
- **Perfume Oils:** Egyptian perfume oils (attar) including jasmine, lotus, and musk. Buy from reputable shops; test quality.
- **Brass & Copper Items:** Hand-punched metal lanterns, trays, coffee pots. Look for intricate handwork.
- **Jewelry:** Gold (sold by weight), silver, and cartouche pendants with hieroglyphic names.
- **Egyptian Cotton:** World-famous for quality. Galabiyyas (traditional robes), towels, and textiles.
- **Shisha Pipes:** Decorative water pipes in various sizes and designs.
- **Alabaster & Stone Carvings:** Statues, pyramids, scarabs. Check for quality; avoid cheap painted plaster.

Where to Shop:

- **Khan el-Khalili Bazaar:** Best for traditional souvenirs, spices, lanterns, jewelry. Haggling essential.
- **Tentmakers Street (Khayamiya):** Beautiful appliqué textiles, cushions, and wall hangings. Near Khan el-Khalili.
- **Coppersmith Street:** Traditional metalwork including lanterns and trays.
- **Modern Malls:** City Stars (largest in Egypt), Mall of Egypt, Cairo Festival City for international brands and air-conditioned shopping.

Bargaining Tips:

1. **Initial Price Rule:** Expect initial prices 3-5x the final price. Start offering 30-40% of asking price.
2. **Stay Friendly:** Bargaining is a social interaction; remain cheerful and patient.
3. **Walk Away:** If the price doesn't meet expectations, politely walk away. Sellers often call you back with better offers.
4. **Buy Multiple Items:** Purchase several items from one vendor for better discounts.
5. **Cash is King:** Bring Egyptian pounds; credit cards rare in traditional markets.
6. **Know Market Prices:** Visit several shops to gauge price ranges before committing.
7. **Fixed Prices:** Museums, malls, and some upscale shops have non-negotiable prices.

*Scam awareness: Beware of shops offering '*special factory tours*' or '*brother's shop*' often high-pressure sales tactics. Stick to your itinerary.*

Annual Events & Festivals

Major Celebrations:

- **Ramadan (Dates vary - Islamic calendar):** The holy month of fasting. Special atmosphere with festive evening iftar meals, decorations, and extended evening hours for shops and cafes. Expect limited daytime dining options but vibrant nightlife.
- **Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan):** Three-day celebration with family gatherings, gift-giving, special foods. Many businesses close; festive atmosphere citywide.

- **Eid al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice):** Four-day Islamic holiday. Expect closures and family-focused celebrations.
- **Coptic Christmas (January 7):** Egyptian Orthodox Christians celebrate with midnight masses at churches throughout Cairo, especially in Coptic Cairo.
- **Sham el-Nessim (Spring Festival - Monday after Coptic Easter):** Ancient Egyptian spring festival celebrated by all Egyptians with outdoor picnics, eating salted fish (fesikh), and family outings.
- **Cairo International Film Festival (November):** Major film festival showcasing Egyptian and international cinema.
- **Abu Simbel Sun Festival (February 22 & October 22):** While in Aswan (not Cairo), many Cairo-based tourists visit Abu Simbel when sunlight illuminates the temple's inner sanctuary.

National Holidays:

- **Revolution Day (January 25):** Commemorates 2011 uprising
- **Sinai Liberation Day (April 25):** Celebrates return of Sinai Peninsula
- **Labor Day (May 1)**
- **Revolution Day (July 23):** 1952 revolution commemoration
- **Armed Forces Day (October 6)**

Note: Government offices, banks, and some businesses close on national holidays and Islamic holidays. Tourist sites remain open but may have modified hours.

Sample Day Itineraries

Day 1: Ancient Wonders

Morning (7:00 AM - 12:00 PM):

- 7:00 AM: Early start to **Giza Pyramids Complex**. Enter Great Pyramid interior if desired.
- 9:00 AM: Visit the **Great Sphinx** and Solar Boat Museum
- 10:30 AM: Optional camel ride around pyramid area
- 11:00 AM: Drive to nearby **Saqqara** (30 minutes)

Afternoon (12:00 PM - 6:00 PM):

- 12:00 PM: Explore **Step Pyramid of Djoser** and Saqqara complex
- 2:00 PM: Lunch at a local restaurant
- 3:30 PM: Quick visit to **Memphis** open-air museum
- 5:00 PM: Return to Cairo

Evening:

- 7:30 PM: **Sound and Light Show** at the Pyramids
- 9:00 PM: Dinner at a restaurant near your hotel

Day 2: Museums & Islamic Cairo

Morning (9:00 AM - 1:00 PM):

- 9:00 AM: Visit **Egyptian Museum** in Tahrir Square (arrive at opening to avoid crowds)
- 10:00 AM: Tour Tutankhamun galleries and Royal Mummies Hall
- 12:30 PM: Walk around **Tahrir Square** area

Afternoon (1:00 PM - 6:00 PM):

- 1:00 PM: Lunch in downtown Cairo
- 2:30 PM: Metro or taxi to **Islamic Cairo**
- 3:00 PM: Explore **Khan el-Khalili Bazaar** - browse shops, enjoy atmosphere
- 5:00 PM: Visit nearby **Al-Azhar Mosque**

Evening:

- 6:30 PM: Traditional Egyptian dinner at Naguib Mahfouz Cafe in Khan el-Khalili
- 8:00 PM: Optional **Tanoura dance show** at Wekalet El Ghouri (if scheduled night)

Day 3: Citadel & Coptic Cairo

Morning (9:00 AM - 1:00 PM):

- 9:00 AM: Visit **Citadel of Saladin**
- 9:30 AM: Explore **Mosque of Muhammad Ali** and enjoy panoramic city views
- 11:00 AM: Visit Citadel museums (Military Museum, Police Museum)
- 12:00 PM: Photo opportunity from Citadel ramparts

Afternoon (1:00 PM - 5:30 PM):

- 1:00 PM: Lunch near the Citadel
- 2:30 PM: Travel to **Coptic Cairo**
- 3:00 PM: Visit **Hanging Church** and Coptic Museum
- 4:00 PM: Explore **Ben Ezra Synagogue** and Church of St. Sergius
- 5:00 PM: Walk through the peaceful Coptic quarter streets

Evening:

- 6:30 PM: Dinner at a local restaurant
- 8:00 PM: Optional **Nile River felucca ride** at sunset

Day 4: Modern Cairo & Relaxation

Morning (10:00 AM - 1:00 PM):

- 10:00 AM: Visit **Grand Egyptian Museum** (GEM) near Giza
- 10:30 AM: Explore Tutankhamun galleries and modern exhibits
- 12:30 PM: Museum cafe for coffee/snack with pyramid views

Afternoon (1:00 PM - 5:00 PM):

- 1:00 PM: Lunch at GEM restaurant or nearby
- 2:30 PM: Travel to **Zamalek** district
- 3:00 PM: Visit **Cairo Tower** for 360-degree city views
- 4:30 PM: Stroll through Zamalek's tree-lined streets, visit art galleries or boutiques

Evening:

- 6:00 PM: Relax at **Al-Azhar Park** for sunset views
- 7:30 PM: Dinner at Al-Azhar Park restaurant with Citadel views
- 9:00 PM: Optional shopping at modern mall (City Stars or Mall of Egypt)

Day 5: Day Trip Options

Option A - Alexandria (Full Day):

- 7:00 AM: Depart Cairo for Alexandria (2.5-3 hour drive)
- 10:00 AM: Visit **Bibliotheca Alexandrina**
- 12:00 PM: Explore **Citadel of Qaitbay**
- 1:30 PM: Seafood lunch at waterfront restaurant
- 3:00 PM: Visit Catacombs of Kom el Shoqafa
- 4:30 PM: Walk along the Corniche
- 6:00 PM: Return to Cairo

Option B - Fayoum Oasis (Full Day):

- 7:00 AM: Depart for Fayoum
- 9:00 AM: Visit **Wadi El-Rayan** waterfalls
- 11:00 AM: Explore **Wadi El-Hitan** (Whale Valley) fossils
- 1:00 PM: Lunch with oasis views
- 2:30 PM: Visit Lake Qarun for birdwatching
- 4:00 PM: Return to Cairo

Option C - Pyramids Extension (Half Day):

- 8:00 AM: Visit **Dahshur** - Red and Bent Pyramids
- 11:00 AM: Return to Cairo
- 1:00 PM: Lunch in Zamalek or Maadi
- 3:00 PM: Spa or pool relaxation at hotel
- 7:00 PM: Farewell **Nile dinner cruise** with entertainment

Important Notes: *These itineraries are flexible suggestions. Adjust based on your energy levels, interests, and Cairo's traffic conditions. Allow buffer time between activities. Consider hiring guides for ancient sites to enhance understanding. Stay hydrated and protect yourself from the sun.*

Best Photography & Instagram Locations

Iconic Pyramid Shots:

- **Classic Pyramid Panorama:** From the panorama viewpoint area south of the three pyramids. Best timing: sunrise (6-7am) or late afternoon (4-5pm) for golden light. *Get all three pyramids in one frame.*
- **Sphinx Close-ups:** Early morning (7-8am) when site opens for minimal crowds and soft light on the Sphinx's face.
- **Camel Silhouettes:** Sunset shots with camels and pyramids create dramatic silhouettes. Hire a camel handler willing to position for photos.
- **Desert Perspective:** Walk to the south desert area for distant pyramid shots with rippled sand dunes in foreground.

Islamic Cairo Instagram Spots:

- **Al-Muizz Street:** Narrow medieval street with hanging lanterns, colorful shops, and mosque minarets. Best: late afternoon when shops are lit and crowds moderate.
- **Khan el-Khalili Lanterns:** Colorful brass lanterns hanging in shop fronts. Evening shots with glowing lanterns are magical.
- **Bab Zuweila Rooftop:** Climb the gate towers for stunning rooftop views over Islamic Cairo's minarets and domes.
- **Al-Azhar Park:** Sunset shots from the restaurant terrace with the Citadel and Cairo skyline. Golden hour (5-6:30pm) offers perfect lighting.

Modern Cairo Views:

- **Cairo Tower Observation Deck:** 360-degree panoramas. Visit late afternoon to capture both day and night city lights. Pyramids visible on clear days.
- **Citadel Viewpoint:** From Muhammad Ali Mosque terrace for sweeping city views. Morning or late afternoon light recommended.
- **Zamalek Island Cafes:** Nile River views from waterfront cafes, especially during sunset (5-7pm).

Hidden Gems:

- **Hanging Church Courtyard:** Beautiful wood-carved ceiling details and colorful icons in soft natural light.
- **Ibn Tulun Mosque:** Spiral minaret and massive empty courtyard create minimalist architectural shots. Best: midday for strong shadows and geometric patterns.
- **Fishawi Cafe:** Historic cafe in Khan el-Khalili with traditional decor, perfect for atmospheric shots of Egyptian cafe culture.

Photography Tips:

- **Golden Hours:** Shoot during first hour after sunrise (6-7am) or last two hours before sunset (4-6pm) for warm, flattering light.
- **Drone Photography:** Restricted at most archaeological sites. Obtain permits from Ministry of Antiquities if planning aerial shots.
- **Interior Photography:** Many museums charge extra fees for cameras. Flash prohibited in most locations.
- **Respect & Permissions:** Always ask permission before photographing people, especially women. Offer small tips for posed shots with locals.
- **Equipment:** Bring lens cleaning cloth - dust is constant. Keep backup batteries as you'll shoot extensively.

Electricity & Adapters

Voltage: 220V

Frequency: 50Hz

Plug Types:

- **Type C (European 2-pin):** Most common - two round prongs
- **Type F (Schuko):** Two round prongs with grounding clips

What You Need:

Travelers from countries using different plug types (US, UK, Australia, etc.) will need **adapters**. Most modern electronics (phones, laptops, cameras) are dual voltage (110-240V) and only require plug adapters. Check your device's power supply label.

Universal adapter recommended: Brings flexibility for multiple device types and potential variations in outlets.

Where to Buy:

- Purchase adapters before departure from electronics stores or online
- Available at Cairo International Airport shops (more expensive)
- Electronics stores in Cairo (Downtown, Zamalek, malls)

Power Cuts: *Occasional power outages occur, especially in summer. Hotels typically have backup generators. Bring portable chargers for phones and devices.*

Egyptian Cuisine & Dining

Must-Try Dishes:

- **Koshari:** Egypt's national dish - layers of rice, pasta, lentils, chickpeas, topped with tomato sauce and crispy fried onions. Filling, vegetarian, and delicious. Try at Abou Tarek (famous koshari chain).
- **Ful Medames:** Slow-cooked fava beans with olive oil, lemon, and garlic. Traditional breakfast served with bread (aish baladi).
- **Ta'ameya (Egyptian Falafel):** Made from fava beans (not chickpeas like elsewhere). Crispy outside, green inside. Breakfast staple.
- **Mahshi:** Vegetables (zucchini, eggplant, peppers, grape leaves) stuffed with herbed rice mixture.
- **Molokhia:** Green soup made from jute leaves, served with rice or bread and chicken/rabbit. Distinctive flavor - love it or hate it.
- **Hawawshi:** Spiced minced meat stuffed in baladi bread and baked. Egyptian street food favorite.
- **Shawarma:** Thinly sliced meat (chicken or beef) in pita with tahini, vegetables.
- **Kebda (Liver):** Fried liver sandwich, popular street food. Try at El Shabrawy restaurant.
- **Kofta & Kebab:** Grilled ground meat skewers or meat chunks, served with rice, bread, and salads.
- **Feteer:** Flaky layered pastry, served sweet or savory. Egyptian 'pizza'.

Desserts & Sweets:

- **Om Ali:** Warm bread pudding with milk, nuts, and raisins. Egyptian comfort dessert.
- **Basbousa:** Semolina cake soaked in sweet syrup.
- **Konafa (Kunafa):** Shredded phyllo pastry filled with cream or nuts, soaked in syrup.
- **Baklava:** Layered phyllo with nuts and honey.

Beverages:

- **Karkade:** Hibiscus tea, served hot or cold. Refreshing and tart.
- **Sobia:** Sweet coconut milk drink.
- **Sahlab:** Hot creamy drink made from orchid root powder, topped with nuts and cinnamon. Winter favorite.
- **Sugarcane Juice:** Freshly pressed, sweet and refreshing.
- **Turkish Coffee:** Strong, thick coffee served in small cups.
- **Mint Tea (Shai bi Na'na):** Sweet tea with fresh mint.

Where to Eat:

- **Street Food:** Koshari shops, falafel stands, juice vendors - cheap, authentic, delicious. Look for busy stalls (high turnover = fresh food).
- **Local Restaurants:** Abou Tarek (koshari), Felfela (Egyptian cuisine), Zooba (modern Egyptian street food), Kazaz (grilled meats).
- **Historic Cafes:** Fishawi Cafe (Khan el-Khalili - oldest cafe), El Fishawy, Naguib Mahfouz Cafe.
- **Fine Dining:** Sequoia (Mediterranean, Nile views), Osmanly (Ottoman cuisine at Kempinski), Crimson (Four Seasons).
- **International:** Zamalek offers Italian, French, Asian restaurants.

Dining Tips:

- **Tap Water:** Avoid drinking tap water. Stick to bottled water (confirm seal is intact).
- **Street Food Safety:** Choose busy vendors with high turnover. Avoid pre-cut fruit.
- **Tipping:** 10-15% in restaurants. Small bills (5-20 EGP) for basic service.
- **Eating Hours:** Lunch 1-3pm, Dinner 7-11pm. Egyptians dine late.
- **Ramadan:** Most restaurants closed during daylight fasting hours. Hotels and tourist areas remain open.
- **Vegetarian Options:** Abundant - koshari, ful, ta'ameya, mahshi, salads.
- **Spice Levels:** Egyptian food is generally mild. Request 'harr' (spicy) if desired.

Tourist Passes

Egypt Tourist SIM Card

Purchase a local SIM card for affordable data and calls. **Major providers:** Vodafone Egypt, Orange Egypt, Etisalat (We). Available at airport arrivals, official stores, and authorized dealers. Tourist packages offer 10-30 GB data starting from 200-400 EGP. *Bring passport for registration.* 4G coverage is good in Cairo. Highly recommended for using Uber, maps, and staying connected.

www.vodafone.com.eg

Cairo Pass (No Official City Pass)

Note: Unlike European cities, Egypt's Ministry of Tourism lists an official Cairo Pass for archaeological sites and museums in Greater Cairo; check current terms and price with the Ministry. Purchase individual attraction tickets at site entrances. **Combination tickets** are available for related sites (e.g., Giza-Saqqara-Dahshur combo ticket saves money). Consider hiring guides who may access discounted group rates. The **Grand Egyptian Museum** requires advance online booking. International Student ID cards (ISIC) offer 50% discounts at most archaeological sites and museums.

grandegyptianmuseum.org

Travel Insurance

Highly recommended for Egypt travel. Ensure coverage includes: medical emergencies, trip cancellation, lost luggage, and evacuation. Check if policy covers adventure activities if planning desert safaris or diving. Medical facilities in Cairo are good but expensive for foreigners without insurance. Keep insurance documents and emergency numbers accessible. **Popular providers:** World Nomads, SafetyWing, Allianz Travel Insurance.

www.worldnomads.com