



ASIA • MIDDLE EAST • AFRICA • SOUTH AMERICA

The Marsh Henstridge Somerset BA8 0TF UK

Tel + 44 (0) 1963 363400 Fax + 44 (0) 1963 363200

info@oasisoverland.co.uk

www.oasisoverland.co.uk

DAHAB DIVE PACKAGES

This Pre - Departure Dossier is relevant to your trip so please read it carefully - Updated: Dec 07

Open Water Learner Dive Package	8 Days	Cairo / Dahab £375
Advanced Dive Course Package	8 Days	Cairo / Dahab £350
Fun Dive Package	8 Days	Cairo / Dahab £325

All our Dive Packages include full PADI instruction and certification (where applicable and upon successful completion), plus all air, equipment, and transfers to dive sites - There are no hidden diving costs.

Cairo is an interesting and exciting city to visit and we recommend staying for a couple of days before or after your trip.

STARTING IN CAIRO

On arrival at Cairo airport, you can get your visa which costs US\$15 or GB£10. We can organise a **free airport transfer** to our departure hotel in the center of Cairo if you let us have your flight arrival details at least two weeks before your trip begins.

We use the 3 Star Havana Hotel, 26 Syria St, Mohandiseen, Cairo. This is a recently refurbished hotel and there are plenty of restaurants, cafés and banks nearby. All rooms are air-conditioned and have en-suite. If you wish to arrive some days before your trip departs, we can reserve a twin or double room for £10 a night per person, or a single room for £15, including breakfast. This rises to £12 per person sharing and £17 for a single room during the high season of July and August and over the Easter and Christmas/New Year holidays. If you arrive some days early we will still include your free airport transfer. These are excellent rates and we do not take a commission or booking fee. You can exchange Pounds Sterling and US Dollars Cash at the airport on arrival into Egyptian Pounds. (Travellers Cheques can only be exchanged at Thomas Cook). **In an emergency, or if you have flight delays, you may contact Keren, our Tour Manager in Egypt on 0020 122444529.**

Let us know your flight arrival details two weeks before your tour begins and we can arrange your airport transfer and book your hotel room at no extra cost. The person meeting you at the airport will have an Oasis Overland sign. Please note that if we do not receive your flight details two weeks before your trip starts, we cannot guarantee a free transfer. In this case you should then take a taxi direct to the hotel - approximate price £5GB. If you wish to reserve accommodation in Cairo after your trip ends, please let our staff in Egypt know when you meet them, they can arrange this for you, as well as your return airport transfer.

If you arrive some time before your tour departs and have some spare time Cairo is a safe and fascinating place to explore. From the hustle and bustle of down-town Cairo to the view from the top of the Cairo tower there is plenty to see. If exploring makes you hungry then an excellent, authentic Egyptian restaurant to try is Felfela, at 15 Talaat Harb Street. For £3 you can have a top class Egyptian meal.

**** Please be ready to hand our Tour Manager the following on arrival: 1 Passport Photocopy + Return Flight Details + Travel Insurance Details ****

FLIGHTS

To fly from London to Cairo return costs from around GB£240 up to GB£400. The lower fares book out quickly during busy times e.g. Christmas and Easter so it's best to book early. Contact us and we can direct you where to buy your ticket at competitive rates. **Remember when booking your return flights from Cairo that these must not be booked before 2am on the morning of Day 8 – Sunday. This will give you time to transfer to the airport and check in.**

VISA & PASSPORT REQUIREMENTS

Most nationalities require a visa for Egypt. For most nationalities this is obtainable at the airport on arrival in Egypt; the cost is US\$25 or GB£15. You can also obtain it in London at the Egyptian Consulate, 2 Lowndes Street, Knightsbridge, Tel 0207 235 9719 (Visa Hotline 0906 5508933 - 24 hours). Open 10-12, Mon - Fri. The visa costs GB£15 for a single entry for most nationalities and can usually be issued the same day if you visit the consulate.

SOUTH AFRICAN passport holders MUST OBTAIN THEIR VISAS FOR EGYPT BEFORE THEY TRAVEL.

Passports - Please bring 1 photocopy of your passport details page to give to our staff in Egypt. You'll need at least 3 blank pages in your passport, which must be valid for at least 9 months. If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport.

Open Water Learner Dive Package Itinerary:

Day 1 – (Sunday) – Cairo. Arrive and check into hotel. At 6pm you will meet with a member of our staff, who will be available to answer queries and give you tour information, and who will usually arrange an evening meal in a local restaurant, to which you are invited.

Day 2 – (Monday) – Cairo. With our local Egyptologist guide we will visit the Egyptian Museum and the Pyramids and Sphinx, where we also include a camel ride. Following a traditional Egyptian buffet dinner you will be transferred to the overnight bus to Dahab. (Three meals included).

Day 3 – (Tuesday) – Dahab. Arrive Dahab approx 9am and transfer to your hotel. After a few hours relaxation you will visit our Dive Center in order to meet your instructors, try on dive equipment, complete paperwork, and start classroom tuition for Day 1 of the Open Water Course.

Day 4 – (Wednesday) – Dahab. Today you will continue with Day 2 of the Open Water Course. This includes confined water dives in a specially reserved shallow area to gain basic skills and equipment familiarity. You will get to practice and develop the knowledge gained during your previous classroom work.

Day 5 – (Thursday) - Dahab. Day 3 of the Open Water Course includes completion of Confined Water work and progression onto your 1st and 2nd actual Open Water Dives!!! Expand your skills and fine-tune your buoyancy control under safe conditions in the spectacular Red Sea.

Day 6 – (Friday) – Dahab. The final day of the Open Water Course continues with 2 more Open Water Dives at some of the many exciting and beautiful local dives sites around Dahab. This is followed by your final written examination to qualify for PADI registration and the inevitable resulting celebrations!!!

Day 7 – (Saturday) - Dahab. This is a free day to relax in Dahab (or do optional extra dives if you have extra time) before transferring back to Cairo. Depending on when your international flight departs from Cairo you can choose to leave Dahab either after lunch or late evening.

Day 8 – (Sunday) - Cairo. The trip finishes on arrival in Cairo. Your return airport transfer is included from the Havanna Hotel at whatever time your flight departs.

Please note that departing international flights from Cairo must not be booked BEFORE 2am on Day 8 – early Sunday morning. Transferring from Dahab after lunch on Day 7 – Saturday, will allow you to meet flights departing Cairo only AFTER 2am Day 8 – early Sunday morning.

Extra accommodation can be arranged in both Dahab and Cairo if you wish to stay longer, either to dive, relax in Dahab, or see more of Cairo. The approx cost for this is £10 per person per night sharing, or £15 per single. Please let the Oasis office or our staff in Egypt know if you wish to do this.

Advanced Dive Course Package Itinerary:

Day 1 – (Sunday) – Cairo. Arrive and check into hotel. At 6pm you will meet with a member of our staff, who will be available to answer queries and give you tour information, and who will usually arrange an evening meal in a local restaurant, to which you are invited.

Day 2 – (Monday) – Cairo. With our local Egyptologist guide we will visit the Egyptian Museum and the Pyramids and Sphinx, where we also include a camel ride. Following a traditional Egyptian buffet dinner you will be transferred to the overnight bus to Dahab. (Three meals included).

Day 3 – (Tuesday) – Dahab. Arrive Dahab approx 9am and transfer to your hotel. After a few hours relaxation you will visit our Dive Center in order to meet your instructors, try on dive equipment, choose your specific specialty dives etc.

Day 4 – (Wednesday) – Dahab. Advanced Course Day 1: Usually consists of 3 Specialty Dives – first the Navigation Dive, and the other two of your choosing. Pick from a selection of adventure dives that introduce you to a new underwater experience each time, giving you greater confidence and understanding beyond the Open Water Level.

Day 5 – (Thursday) - Dahab. Day 2 of the Advanced Course includes a further 2 adventure dives of your choice. Examples include: Naturalist Dive, Night Dive, Deep Dive and Multi-level Dive. Explore the world famous Canyon and Blue Hole dive sites for a unique experience of deep and multi-level diving in the spectacular Red Sea.

Day 6 – (Friday) – Dahab. Today is a Free Day to relax in Dahab although many people will choose to book extra specialty dives (not included) to extend their new found knowledge and skills. Successful completion of the 5 Advanced Water Dives results in PADI registration and the inevitable celebrations with your instructors and fellow pupils!!!

Day 7 – (Saturday) - Dahab. A further free day to relax in Dahab or enjoy some of the many other optional activities such as Quad Biking, Camel Safaris and Wind Surfing. Depending on when your international flight departs from Cairo you can choose to leave Dahab either after lunch or late evening today.

Day 8 – (Sunday) - Cairo. The trip finishes on arrival into Cairo. Your return airport transfer is included from the Havana Hotel at whatever time your flight departs.

Please note that departing international flights from Cairo must not be booked **BEFORE 2am on Day 8 – early Sunday morning.** Transferring from Dahab after lunch on Day 7 – Saturday, will allow you to meet flights departing Cairo only **AFTER 2am Day 8 – early Sunday morning.**

Extra accommodation can be arranged in both Dahab and Cairo if you wish to stay longer, either to dive, relax in Dahab, or see more of Cairo. The approx cost for this is £10 per person per night sharing, or £15 per single. Please let the Oasis office or our staff in Egypt know if you wish to do this.

Fun Dive Package Itinerary:

Day 1 – (Sunday) – Cairo. Arrive and check into hotel. At 6pm you will meet with a member of our staff, who will be available to answer queries and give you tour information, and who will usually arrange an evening meal in a local restaurant, to which you are invited.

Day 2 – (Monday) – Cairo. With our local Egyptologist guide we will visit the Egyptian Museum and the Pyramids and Sphinx, where we also include a camel ride. Following a traditional Egyptian buffet dinner you will be transferred to the overnight bus to Dahab. (Two meals included).

Day 3 – (Tuesday) – Dahab. Arrive Dahab approx 9am and transfer to your hotel. After a few hours relaxation you will visit our Dive Center in order to meet the instructors, try on dive equipment, complete paperwork, and choose your specific dives.

Day 4 – (Wednesday) – Dahab. Today you will start the first two of your 6 included Guided Fun Dives at one of the many spectacular dive sites around the Dahab area. Explore the beautiful coral reefs and be overwhelmed by the selection of underwater marine life, while developing your skills obtained previously with your Open Water Qualification.

Day 5 – (Thursday) - Dahab. Today another two Guided Fun Dives are included. Expand your horizons with an underwater visit to the Eel Garden, the 3-Pools, or the Lighthouse Reef – or (if you have your Advanced Certification), take things a step deeper with the world famous Canyon and Blue Hole sites.

Day 6 – (Friday) – Dahab. Your final two included Fun Dive take place today, followed by your last night in Dahab and the inevitable farewell celebrations!!! You can choose to book optional extra dives during any of the days you are in Dahab.

Day 7 – (Saturday) - Dahab. This is a free day to relax in Dahab or enjoy some of the many other optional activities such as Quad Biking, Camel Safaris and Wind Surfing. Depending on when your international flight departs from Cairo you can choose to leave Dahab either after lunch or late evening today.

Day 8 – (Sunday) - Cairo. The trip finishes in Cairo after breakfast. Your return airport transfer is included from the Havana Hotel at whatever time your flight departs.

Please note that departing international flights from Cairo must not be booked **BEFORE 2am on Day 8 – early Sunday morning.**

Transferring from Dahab after lunch on Day 7 – Saturday, will allow you to meet flights departing Cairo only **AFTER 2am Day 8 – early Sunday morning.**

Extra accommodation can be arranged in both Dahab and Cairo if you wish to stay longer, either to dive, relax in Dahab, or see more of Cairo. The approx cost for this is £10 per person per night sharing, or £15 per single. Please let the Oasis office or our staff in Egypt know if you wish to do this.

NOTE: It is your responsibility to undergo a full medical examination before booking your dive holiday if you reply in the positive to any of the questions on the PADI questionnaire (available on our website or from the Oasis office / Travel Agency). The subsequent PADI medical statement form (for completion by a GP) can be obtained from any recognized PADI school or by calling the Oasis office. The most common conditions for being refused a dive course are asthma and diabetes so if you're affected by either of these or have any doubts about any other condition, we would recommend you undergo a medical before travelling. All dive course participants will be required to complete the medical questionnaire with your instructor at the beginning of the course. This is very easy in Dahab as there is a local doctor who will provide physical consultations at a cost of approx £5. There is also a specialist diving doctor in nearby Sharm el Sheikh who can be contacted for more specific questions.

There are also some technical issues involved with diving that you should consider. Due to the physical effects of diving on the human body, you cannot ascend in altitude for a minimum of 12 hrs after a dive. What this means is that you cannot climb Mt Sinai for 24 hours after diving (but you can climb Mt Sinai before diving). It also means there must be a minimum of 12 hours surface time before leaving Dahab (as you climb in altitude to drive through the mountains), and there must be a minimum 24 hour surface interval before flying.

IMPORTANT: New rules and regulations have been introduced by PADI for anyone wishing to undertake certain dive courses (Open Water, Advanced, Rescue). It is no longer permitted for dive centers to hire or lend course manuals / materials to students. Therefore most dive centers are either selling the various required manuals / materials or including them in new structured pricing. It is necessary for all dive centers to stock the required course materials – but at times they may be out of stock (especially as a lot of the dive centers are isolated and away from suppliers) It is recommended to purchase these required materials prior to travelling to Egypt – which is also useful if you would like to read and start to fill in the Knowledge Review section at the end of each chapter. This would assist with speeding up the course and allowing more time for diving when you arrive in Egypt.

Just as a guide – the materials below are *required* for the courses listed : Most retail for around £30 to £40 in the UK for a course pack. Buying items separately will be more expensive than buying them together. *RDP* = Recreational Dive Planner *eRDP* = Electronic

Open Water Diver - *PADI Open Water Diver Manual or Multimedia / Deluxe Data Carrier / RDP Wheel or Table or eRDP*
Advanced Open Water Diver – *PADI Adventures in Diving or Multimedia / Deluxe Data Carrier / RDP Wheel or Table or eRDP*
Rescue Diver - *PADI Rescue diver Manual / Diving Accident Management Work Slate*

There are additional / recommended materials that could be of use for your desired course. For more course, product and sales information log onto www.padi.com or www.watersportswarehouse.co.uk or call on 01736 751006. Also see London school of Diving info above.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical expenses and repatriation costs incurred overseas with a minimum sum insured of £500,000. We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". We can arrange comprehensive travel insurance for you if you wish, please consult our website or the back of our brochure for further details.

If you are arranging your own travel insurance and are considering undertaking any of the so-called 'hazardous activities', please ensure that your policy provides the appropriate cover, as some of these activities may be excluded from standard travel insurance policies. Please also be aware that the levels of cover of some policies may not fully insure you for the specific activities you may choose to undertake e.g. White Water Rafting is covered under some policies – but only up to a maximum Grade 3. In Africa - all White Water Rafting that is available is Grade 3+, so please check all of the policy details beforehand. It is essential that the travel insurance that you have arranged is designed to cover all, often hazardous activities that are on offer.

We have arranged a reasonably priced travel insurance, specifically designed for Overland Travel, through Campbell Irvine Insurance Brokers and AXA Insurers – which also provides a 24 hr worldwide emergency medical service through Specialty Assistance LTD. Due to its flexibility and the amount of hazardous activities included under the standard policy, the premiums quoted may initially appear more expensive than some other policies on offer. We are happy to email you a copy of our policy wording which includes a list of hazardous and sporting activities which are automatically covered whilst you are on your Oasis trip, as well as those subject to an extra load on the premium. Sub-Aqua diving is covered for no extra charge under the standard policy, down to a depth of 40m (subject to the detailed terms and conditions laid out in the policy document.)

Whether you choose to take out our policy or arrange cover elsewhere, please ensure that you read the small print very carefully. Certain terms and conditions will apply to all insurance policies and we would like to draw your attention to any exclusions relating to pre-existing medical conditions (this includes allergies). Please feel free to ask for more details. It is also important that when calculating the total duration for your insurance cover that you include your outward and return flights in the overall period of travel otherwise your policy may be invalid.

Repatriation -The Oasis travel insurance is available to anybody living anywhere in the world, irrespective of their nationality. This cover extends to include worldwide repatriation back to your normal country of residence in the event of a medical emergency– providing the appropriate premium has been paid. If you are a UK resident (this includes non UK passport holders / nationalities living and working in the UK) and are planning on returning to the UK, the insurers will arrange for you to be repatriated back to the UK if you become seriously ill whilst you were travelling, as this is deemed to be your normal country of residence at the time. Special consideration will be given if you prefer to be repatriated elsewhere – as long as the expense is to be the equivalent cost of repatriation to the UK. Alternatively - if you have planned to return home directly after your trip (e.g Australia, New Zealand, South Africa) – your insurance would provide repatriation to your ultimate destination in the event of a medical emergency – but please be aware that no medical expenses will be payable upon arrival in your normal country of residence. If you are arranging travel insurance elsewhere, please check where you may be repatriated to in an event of a medical emergency.

Payment-If you have decided to purchase your insurance via Oasis, please include the full payment of the policy you require when sending through your deposit payment and booking details. Payment can also be made at any time over the phone, by cheque made payable to: Oasis Overland Ltd or by bank transfer. **NB We can only issue travel insurance upon receiving full payment for the policy.** If you later decide that the policy does not meet your requirements, we offer a 14-day money back guarantee which allows for a full refund of the insurance premium, provided you have not travelled or submitted a claim.

Your tour leader will ask to see a copy of your insurance policy at the pre-departure meeting and you will be asked to provide the following details: 24-hour emergency medical telephone number, your policy number, confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping. **Our crew will collect these Insurance details solely for providing this information in the event of an emergency– and not to check all the details of the policy and/ or its content of cover are correct.** For this reason, please be aware that it is your responsibility to ensure you are fully covered for the different region/s and for the activities that you choose to undertake whilst travelling with Oasis.

It is a condition of booking with Oasis Overland – that it will not be possible for you to join the trip if you cannot produce details or information to prove you have adequate travel insurance at the start of your trip.

IMPORTANT - We strongly recommend that you take out your travel insurance at the time of booking as cover will commence for pre-departure cancellation from the date your policy is issued (all other sections of the policy will commence from the start date of your policy). This means that should you have to cancel your trip for an insured reason such as a medical emergency or bad accident preventing you from travel you may be able to claim back payment made for pre-paid trip costs and flights, subject to the standard policy terms and conditions.

NOTE: If you are interested in extra insurance cover for your **photographic equipment** – please contact Oasis and we will send you out a brochure. This policy has a 28 day money back guarantee if the cover is unsuitable or you change your mind. Please be aware that a lot of Insurance policies do not include a great deal of cover for Valuables–sometimes only up to £350 combined limit for cameras & electrical. Please be aware that most home and contents insurance policies may also include cover for photographic and electrical equipment whilst abroad.

TIPS & 'tipping kitty'

Tipping is usually expected and is a way of life in Egypt. Called 'baksheesh', it is often more than a reward for services well done, but as wages are extremely low, it is an accepted means of supplementing an income. Your Tour Cost **includes** tipping for all our Cairo staff and your Dahab Hotel staff and Rep. Tipping for other activities and restaurant meals you take in Dahab would be greatly appreciated by the local community.

FOOD & DRINK

Tap water is not always safe to drink but bottled water is widely available for between 30p - 60p for 1.5ltrs. Beer, wine and local spirits are cheap and easily available. **By general consensus of our groups the local spirits are considered quite 'rough'. If you don't drink beer but like spirits it is a good idea to take advantage of the duty free at the airport when you arrive in Cairo.** Advice will always be available on safe and delicious places to eat in both Cairo and Dahab.

ACCOMMODATION

Both our hotels in Cairo and Dahab are 3 star, with air-conditioning and en-suite bathroom facilities. Rooms are shared, usually twin rooms. It must be remembered that the Hotels we use are an integral part of Egypt and can suffer from common problems such as, electrical failure, plumbing faults and other technical difficulties. Unless unusual circumstances occur, our hotel in Dahab has a swimming pool and sun-lounge area and is only a few minutes walk from the beach.

CAMERAS & PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography - Mornings and late afternoons are often best for photos, as the midday sun can be very bright and lead to a washed-out look. A polarizing filter or lens hood will help to prevent this. It is advisable to have a good all-round carry case to protect your camera from dust and knocks. A few zip lock / plastic bags are good items to carry for protecting your camera and changing film in dusty / sandy conditions.

SLR Cameras - An easy to use instamatic will get you some good shots. If you want something really memorable it may be worthwhile investing in a SLR camera. An 80 to 210 / 300 zoom will get you some good people / wildlife shots. It can be difficult to buy film and often it may be old, out of date and expensive so bring enough with you (take slightly more film than you think will be necessary for the entire trip)

We can recommend **Clock Tower Cameras** for second hand cameras and lenses. They have good quality equipment and give a guarantee with most purchases. For advice and mail order call **Paul** or **Eddy** on **01273 706010** or visit their website: www.clocktowercameras.co.uk.

Digital & Video Cameras - If you are bringing either, it is advisable to bring a charger and spare batteries (see below). Most towns and cities have internet cafes where you can download onto CD/ internet sites. It is also advisable to bring your USB cable for your camera so you can connect your camera in the internet cafes. It is also recommended that you bring at least 2 memory cards of 512mb or higher as places where your cards can be burned onto disk are few and far between.

Chargers - You should bring at least one spare battery with you, as purchasing spares on route may be expensive and difficult and there will be times on the tour when you will not be able to charge from the mains supplies for several days at a time. It is worthwhile considering purchasing a spare battery so as you will always have a battery charged and ready to go. Bring your normal 230V mains charger as well as a travel adaptor plug as you'll come across virtually every type of socket ever invented plus a few others and at some of the hotels, hostels and restaurants we use, as you can charge from their mains supply.

It is forbidden to take photos of anything military. Bridges, border posts, and airports are also sensitive, so be careful or be prepared to have your film or possibly camera confiscated. As a matter of courtesy ask people's permission first, especially women, and in smaller poorer areas.

WHAT TO WEAR & WOMEN TRAVELLERS

What to wear - Keeping your arms, shoulders & legs covered will go a long way to prevent causing offence and hassle to you in Cairo. **This is true for men as well as women.** Avoid wearing tight or revealing clothing. Generally in Dahab you can wear what you like. People in the regions we pass through are generally conservative, especially about matters concerning sex and women. Muslim countries simply are not the place to make a feminist statement. Attitudes range from fairly liberal on the Red Sea coast, to fairly conservative in Cairo. If you are **not** prepared to fit in with the social code of the area you may be harassed.

PERSONAL HEALTH – VACCINATIONS – MEDICAL KITS

Vaccinations - There are no compulsory jabs needed although it is advisable to be immunised against; Tetanus; Polio; Typhoid, Meningitis and Hepatitis A. Consult your doctor or a medical clinic. Good clinics for malaria info and vaccinations are:

In London: Nomad Travellers Store and Medical Centre - Tel. 0208 889 7014 (Turnpike Lane Tube) 3-4 Wellington Terrace, Turnpike Lane, London, (they also sell medical kits & give a 10% discount on equipment & jabs to Oasis clients as well as having stores in Bristol & Southampton) .

Trailfinders Travel Clinic - Tel. 0207 938 3999 (High St Kensington Tube) 194 Kensington High St., London. Call for an appointment first.

In Scotland, Ailsa Travel Clinic, 42 Admiral St, Kinning Park, Glasgow, Ph. 0141 429 0913 has been recommended by past clients.

Clinics do not always give detailed medical advice over the phone. It is best to phone for their opening hours and arrange an appointment.

Personal Medicines - We advise you bring along your own small medical kit to include; antiseptic ointment; antihistamine cream; nurofen or equivalent pain-killer; eye drops/bath; anti diarrhea treatment; sun block; after sun/moisturiser; rehydration sachets; plasters; suitable antibiotics as recommended by your doctor for infected cuts and to treat severe dysentery. Most medications and toiletries can be purchased from pharmacies in both Cairo and Dahab but better to be prepared with the basics. We must be told if you have any pre-existing medical condition or are on any regular medication.

Malaria - The areas through which we travel are considered to be mostly malaria free but consult your doctor regarding the risks.

CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT

The less you take, the less you have to pack, wash and lug home: You can always pick up extras along the way. Please note that during November to February, while it is likely to be pleasantly warm / hot during the day, early morning sightseeing and evenings on the coast can be chilly. Please bring a couple of sets of warm clothes for these times. Laundry is available in most places.

The easiest and best way to travel is as lightly as possible, taking just what is necessary. Most people make the mistake of bringing too much luggage.

NOTE: The Red Sea remains at a constant warm temperature all year round making it the perfect choice for winter diving. You will also need warm clothes, sleeping bag, plus a torch if you wish to do the Mount Sinai climb, as it is very cold at the top!

Personal Effects-

- Sleeping Bag; 2 to 4 season bag (depending on season)
- Sleeping mat / thermorest
- Small day-pack or bag to carry your daily items
- Camera in a protective case, spare batteries, all the film you think you will need and a dust proof bag
- Money belt or pouch to hold your passport and cash etc.
- Reading Books
- Personal CD Walkman / I Pod
- Torch and spare batteries
- Hat and sun-glasses

Toiletries - Most toiletries are available

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Moisturiser
- Soap (in a container)
- Tampons (enough for the trip) / Contraception
- Towel
- Razors

Medical Kit – (bring your own basic kit, our vehicles carry a comprehensive one)

- Paracetamol / Aspirin
- Plasters
- Rehydration sachets, available from chemists or Boots
- Insect repellent containing DEET
- Suncream & blockout / Lip Balm
- Vitamin Tablets

LOCAL COMMUNICATION & CONTACT FROM HOME

Time - Egypt is 2 hours ahead of UK. Time is something that Middle Eastern people seem to have plenty of. Things that should take 5 minutes can take an hour or more. Try not to speed things up as this just leads to greater frustration.

Language - Arabic is the official language in Egypt, however English is widely spoken, although learning some basic phrases will be rewarded when meeting local people.

Email – By far the best way to receive news from friends and family is by email, you will be able to check your emails most days.

Online Diaries – A great variety of free “travel blogs” are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friends up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself (a great one is www.bugbitten.com). Most towns and cities have internet facilities, so you can update them regularly.

CURRENCY REQUIREMENTS & PERSONAL SPENDING MONEY

Bargaining - All prices are negotiable, especially in souqs and bazaars. Many travelers find it a hassle having to bargain for every thing you wish to buy, but prices are usually inflated so accept the tea or coffee offered, sit down, and if you are not happy, move on to another place. You are under no obligation to buy and don't be intimidated.

Things to buy - One of the highlights of an Egypt trip are the souqs and bazaars. There are numerous handicrafts and souvenirs - kilims (rugs), carpets, pearls, silver, gold, clothing, woven bags, olive and cedar wood carvings, silk, jewelry boxes, backgammon boards, leather goods, incense plus much more

Spending Money - It is best to take your money in **US Dollars or English Pounds Sterling cash only**, as you will get a better exchange rate in Egypt than you will in the UK before you leave. **Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn, or marked notes are often refused. Do not bring \$100 notes unless they are in excellent condition and post 1996. Scottish Pounds are not accepted.** It is easy to get local currency out of ATM machines and traveller's cheques are a pain to change. A credit card is useful for emergency spending and is accepted in some shops in Cairo (but not in Dahab); however do not depend on it. Allow about £10 – £20GB per day for personal spending on meals, drinks, curios, email, laundry etc. Of course this varies person-to-person depending on how much you eat out, drink, and how many souvenirs you buy.

Budget on optional excursions and any extra dives you may wish to book separately.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

These are approximate prices of most of the optional activities you can do. (Guide only - prices and exchange rates can change).

Pre or Post-Trip in Cairo:

Day Tour Sakara + Dashur (incl transport + entrances)	£10 - £15
Cairo Tower	£7
Mohammed Ali Mosque + Citadel Entrances	£8

Dahab: * You must allow a 12-hour delay from when you last dived before climbing Mt Sinai due to altitude.

2 Day Live Aboard Boat Diving	£80
Intro Dive (taster – no qualifications needed)	£20
Refresher Dive (necessary if haven't dived for 6 months)	£21
Desert Quad Biking	£20
Extra Fun Dives	£16
Overnight Transport Mt Sinai *	£6
Hire of wind surfer plus instructor	£5 - £10 / hour
Sunset Camel Safari	£5
Snorkeling Blue Hole, inclusive of transport and equipment hire	£4
Hire of snorkeling equipment	£1

PLEASE NOTE: Any extra dives booked locally through our Tour Manager are charged at NET RATES.
Unlike some of our competitors we do not add any booking fees / commissions for these – Compare our prices and see!!!!

RECOMMENDED READING - GUIDES - MAPS - GENERAL

Guide Books -

- Egypt on a Shoestring - Lonely Planet
- Arabic (Egyptian) Phrase Book - Lonely Planet

General Reading -

- Journey to the Orient - Gerard de Nerval
- Khul-Khal: Five Egyptian Women Tell Their Stories - Nayra Atiya

- Pillars of Hercules - Paul Theroux
- Mirror in Damascus - Colin Thubron
- The Hidden Face of Eve; Women in the Arab World – El-Saadawi Nawal
- Payback: America's Long War In The Middle East – John Cooley (For the politically minded)

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Kind Regards - The Team at Oasis

Please contact us if you have any questions. HAPPY TRAVELS!!

POPULAR DIVE SITES AROUND DAHAB + SHARM EL SHEIKH

LIGHTHOUSE REEF (all levels of divers)

From our confined diving area, glide over the sandy slope to towering coral pinnacles that form between 12 and 40 meters. An excellent site for divers of all levels, from the novice to the technical. The rocky wall, home to many soft and hard corals and invertebrates, wraps around the point with coral gardens extending and gradually sloping seaward to various depth ranges.

EEL GARDEN (all levels of divers)

Named for the huge colony of garden eels swaying like reeds in the gentle current. For divers of all levels. In the shallows, golden sands reflect the sun's light illuminating the rainbow of colours along the 6 meter wall, making this one of Dahab's most beautiful sites for both snorkellers and divers. From the reef wall the eel populated sands slope to coral gardens between 16 and 30 meters. Let the large schools of Red Sea Fusiliers guide you amongst surgeon and puffer fish and help you search for morays and stingrays.

CANYON (advanced & experienced divers only)

A must for experienced recreational & technical divers alike. This cavernous fissure penetrates through the coral bed, snaking its way down to a narrow exit at 52metres. Descend through a large opening to the huge 30metre cavern then take a moment to look at the looming walls that overhang and stretch to meet some 10metre above you. For the experienced technical diver, explore the snaking passage to the deep exit, or for the recreational, work your way from depth following the 'light' to the 18metre dome-exit in the glass-fish-filled 'fish bowl'. Easy entry/ exit to the dive site is through a shallow sandy-bottom lagoon that also offers fantastic snorkelling.

BLUE HOLE (advanced & experienced divers only)

The legendary Blue Hole provides world class recreational and technical diving. A hole in the reef table approximately 60 meters in diameter plunges to beyond 100 meters before sloping seaward through 'the arch' to extreme depths. For the experienced recreational diver, optimize this site through diving 'Bells to the Blue Hole'. Entering at the Bells, divers descend from the surface down a vertical crack (chimney) in the reef wall to 24 meters where they find themselves on a sheer wall that descends to over 1000 meters. Experience sub-space in the crystal clear open water as you glide along the wall past corals and under overhangs to an 8m saddle where you enter the Blue Hole. Here, the periphery of the Blue Hole is richly inhabited with corals that attract an abundance of coral reef fish, also making this site one of Dahab's premiere snorkelling sites. For the technical diver, experience the sensation of descending down the Blue Hole and suspending yourself under the 'Arch' at 55 meters or deeper.

THISTLEGORM (advanced & experienced divers only)

Travel through time and explore the underwater museum of SS Thistlegorm. Heavily laden with supplies for the British Army, the 415ft. cargo ship came to its final resting place on a 30 meter sea bed in the Straits of Gubal after being bombed by a German Bomber during World War II. Discover the sunken treasures of the wreck and the sea life that now inhabit it over 2 dives. The SS Thistlegorm screams to the keen wreck diver and adventure enthusiasts, it is an underwater journey that you will never forget.

RAS MOHAMMED (all levels of divers)

Internationally recognized as one of the world's top ten dive sites, Ras Mohammed is bursting with the wonders of the Red Sea. The warm waters surrounding Yolande and Shark Reef magnate a profusion of fish including great schools of barracuda, surgeon fish, snapper, bat fish and frequent visits from larger pelagics. From racing currents to sheer drop-offs and colourful coral gardens where giant morays, napoleons and turtles generally reside, this dive site will leave your heart racing with excitement.