PRINCIPIA LIFELONG LEARNING
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Footsteps of Faith: A Biblical Exploration of Egypt

Egypt Traveler Q&A

PACKING

Do you recommend using only carry-on luggage? Or is larger-sized luggage typically needed?

Some find they can manage with a carry-on and a personal item, especially if they pack light and are comfortable doing laundry or rewearing items. However, most travelers prefer a modest-sized checked suitcase.

Porters typically assist with luggage at hotels and load the coach bus. The main times you will handle your own bags are in airports and at the St. Catherine hotel the first night of the Sinai extension. For that reason, we recommend bringing only as much luggage as you can comfortably manage yourself.

If you prefer more flexibility in clothing choices or anticipate bringing home purchases, a medium-sized checked suitcase may be the better option.

Are hiking shoes needed for the Mt. Sinai climb, or will my regular day-to-day shoes be sufficient?

Specialized or heavy hiking boots are not required, but we strongly recommend sturdy, closed-toe walking, trail, or athletic shoes with very good traction.

The main trail up Mount Sinai is manageable for many travelers, but the final section includes uneven stone steps and rocky surfaces. Regular casual shoes or shoes with smooth soles are not recommended.

Because the climb begins very early and temperatures at elevation can be considerably cooler, comfortable layers and a warm outer layer are also important.

The Mt. Sinai hike is optional. You may hike to the summit, go part way, or choose not to hike at all.

The notes mention to keep your shoulders covered. Does this mean that a sleeveless top is not a good idea?

Egypt is generally a conservative country, and many travelers find that clothing covering the shoulders and knees attracts less attention and feels more appropriate. While you may see other tourists in less conservative attire, we recommend lightweight clothing that covers the shoulders and knees when visiting cities, markets, and religious sites. If you bring sleeveless tops, you can also carry a light scarf or shawl for additional coverage when needed. There will be times such as on the Nile and at the post-tour resort in Sharm El Sheik, when you may feel more comfortable in cooler, less conservative attire.

Will regular cameras such as those on an iPhone or other mobile device work inside pyramids?

Yes. Smartphones such as iPhones and regular personal cameras can be used for personal photography.

The passages and chambers inside the pyramids are illuminated, although the lighting is considerably dimmer than outside. Modern phones generally handle these conditions quite well.

Personal, non-commercial photography is generally permitted at Egypt's open archaeological sites. Please do not use flash inside enclosed archaeological areas, and always follow any instructions posted at the site or given by Holy Kemet, your Egyptologist, or site officials.

Should we bring gifts to people in Egypt who we meet? Like candy?

You are not expected to bring gifts.

During our visit to Besaw Island, we will have an opportunity to meet members of the local fishing community and may meet some of the children. Principia and Holy Kemet will have some appropriate items available for the group to share.

If you personally wish to bring something small, useful items such as pencils, pens, crayons, small notebooks, or coloring materials are preferable. We recommend that gifts be distributed in coordination with Holy Kemet rather than independently.

We are also exploring the opportunity to voluntarily contribute to a small group collection that would be put toward a local school or community need for a meaningful and lasting impact.

TRAVEL/TOURING

I am connecting through London on my way to Egypt. Do I need a UK Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)?

If your flight itinerary includes a connection in the United Kingdom, we recommend obtaining a UK Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) before departure. U.S. and Canadian passport holders may be required to have an ETA if they need to pass through UK border control during their connection, and unexpected flight changes can sometimes make this necessary even when it was not originally anticipated.

Having an ETA in advance can help ensure a smoother travel experience and provide flexibility if travel plans change. The ETA is linked electronically to your passport and is currently valid for two years. Applications are typically processed within a few days, but travelers should apply well before departure.

We recommend applying only through the UK government's official **ETA website** or by downloading the UK ETA **app**.

Do I need Global Entry? I have TSA Pre-Check. Does that help?

If you have TSA PreCheck, you're already receiving the primary benefit most travelers use when departing from the U.S.

Global Entry mainly helps when returning home through U.S. customs after an international trip. Travelers who expect to travel internationally on a regular basis may find Global Entry worthwhile, but it is entirely optional for this trip. Processing times can vary. Travelers who receive conditional approval

may be able to complete their interview through the Enrollment on Arrival program when returning from this international trip.

Is it better to take my passport with me in an undergarment wallet or to leave it in the hotel safe and just take a copy with me?

For most routine sightseeing days, we recommend keeping your original passport securely stored in the hotel safe and carrying a paper photocopy and/or digital image of the passport identification page and Egyptian visa.

However, there will be days when you should carry your original passport, such as domestic flight days, major transfers, and when traveling through areas where identification may be requested at security checkpoints—particularly during the Sinai extension.

Holy Kemet will advise the group whenever original passports need to be carried.

Before leaving home, we strongly recommend making both paper and digital copies of your passport and keeping those copies separately from the original.

Are there immunization requirements involved for our trip?

No special immunizations are required for travelers coming from the U.S., Canada, or Australia. The only exception is for travelers who have recently visited certain countries in Africa or South America, in which case proof of Yellow Fever vaccination may be required.

Have I already paid for the balloon ride in Luxor, and if not when and how do I pay for it?

None of the optional activities or extra services listed below have been prepaid. These items are to be paid locally in Egypt in U.S. dollars (cash).

The applicable costs are:

- **Giza - Great Pyramid of Khufu/Cheops – Interior Entry:** $35 USD per person
- **Saqqara – Step Pyramid of Djoser Interior/Underground Entry:** $30 USD per person
- **Luxor Hot Air Balloon Ride:** $150 USD per person
- **National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC) Excursion on Oct. 30:** $75 USD per person
- **Extra Night at Le Méridien Cairo Airport – Double Room:** $225 USD per room, per night, including breakfast
- **Extra Night at Le Méridien Cairo Airport – Single Room:** $200 USD per room, per night, including breakfast

Please note that all of the above must be paid locally in cash in U.S. dollars and have not been included in your prepaid tour cost.

There is no need to make these payments immediately upon arrival. Your Holy Kemet Tour Guide/Tour Director will advise you during the trip when and where the appropriate payment should be made. We recommend bringing the required U.S. dollar cash with you to Egypt and keeping it securely stored until your Tour Director advises you that payment is due.

I'm arriving a day early. How can I join the private tour offered on October 30?

Holy Kemet is offering an optional excursion on Friday, October 30 to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC), followed by lunch.

NMEC presents the story of Egyptian civilization across its different historical periods and includes the extraordinary Royal Mummies Hall, where many of Egypt's ancient kings and queens are displayed.

This excursion is suitable for travelers who are arriving in Cairo on October 28 or October 29. Travelers arriving on October 30 before approximately 10:00 a.m. may also be able to join, provided their flight arrives on time and they are able to complete airport arrival formalities and reach Le Méridien Cairo Airport before departure.

The excursion includes: round-trip transportation from Le Méridien Cairo Airport, an English-speaking Egyptologist/guide, museum admission, lunch, bottled water, and customary tipping.

We anticipate departing at approximately 11:00 a.m. and returning at approximately 3:00 p.m., allowing plenty of time before our 7:00 p.m. group gathering at Le Méridien Cairo Airport.

The cost is $75 USD cash per person, to be paid locally in Egypt.

Drinks other than the included water would be an additional cost.

If you would like to participate, please email **pll@principia.edu** so Principia and Holy Kemet can finalize the arrangements.

OTHER

Can I drink the water in Egypt?

We recommend drinking bottled water rather than tap water. Bottled water will be readily available throughout the trip.

Could you please provide the name of the Christian Science practitioner who will be supporting our trip?

Elizabeth Crecelius Schwartz, CSB