



## Palms, Pyramids and Pharaohs

### EGYPT

A riding holiday filled with adventure, culture and mystery. You will be riding fabulous **Arabian horses**, exploring local villages and seeing Egyptian temples up close. Admire the **Pyramids of Giza**, the oldest of the Seven Wonders of the World, gallop across the desert and ride to the **Red Sea**. During this incredible, culture-packed week you will visit the fascinating city of Cairo, ancient Thebes and the Royal Tombs of the **Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens**. This holiday is designed for those who want to understand the Egyptian culture, food and people while also travelling on horseback through this mystical land.

Trail Riding	 8 days (7 days riding)	 From £2,399		Open to non-riders
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### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Discover three incredible destinations in one holiday (Hurghada, Luxor and Cairo)
- Enjoy a variety of adventures and activities: riding, swimming and exploring on foot.
- Witness the Great Pyramids of Giza and the mythical Sphinx.
- Be immersed in the Egyptian culture, history, food and people.
- Fly across the desert on powerful Arabian horses and take them for a swim in the Red Sea (weather dependent)

## Day 1 — 1: ARRIVE IN CAIRO

Fly to Cairo, Egypt (flight not included). You will be transferred to your hotel where you will spend the night. There will be a welcome dinner at 8pm overlooking the pyramids.

## Day 2 — 2: GIZA RIDE, GEM VISIT AND FLIGHT TO LUXOR - 2 hours riding

You will meet the team for breakfast at 8:15am to catch up on the plan for the day. Departure from the hotel will be at 9am, and after a short ride to the horses, you will start the trip with an exciting ride across the desert to the pyramids at Giza.

Before you start, there is a safety briefing and the local guides will explain the history of horses in the area. These proud horses are in their element out in the sand dunes. Here you will witness first-hand the incredible energy, bravery and stamina of the Egyptian horse.

Lunch will be at a local restaurant in town followed by a visit to the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), described as the world's largest archaeological

museum. A short, evening flight will take you down to Luxor, our base for the next four days.

All guests will need to purchase an internal flight between Cairo and Luxor (please contact us for details).

## Day 3 — 3: VALLEY OF THE KINGS - 2 hours riding

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Your horse adventure begins in the morning. You'll travel by tuk-tuk to the stables, where Emma and her team will introduce you to their home and horses. The Bedouin-style yard, crafted by local Egyptians, is based on the West Bank of the Nile boasting several stables as well as lush plantation fields, where they grow their horses' food. The facility is home to horses, donkeys and camels and very much holds a 'farm atmosphere'. You will be given a tour of the stable and then enjoy an introductory ride through the bustling streets and river tributaries that make up Luxor's West Bank, finishing up at the Nile. Watch as the feluccas sail calmly by in the late afternoon light. This is also a lovely spot for some photos with your new four-legged friend, against the iconic Nile setting.

After lunch at the hotel, you'll head out to see the Temple of Hatshepsut, an impressive mortuary temple built into the cliffs, showcasing unique terraced architecture honouring one of Egypt's few female pharaohs. Next, you will visit the legendary Valley of the Kings, home to 63 magnificent tombs, along with an Egyptologist whose knowledge will transport you back to the land of the Pharaohs. Here you will marvel at the tombs' intricate hieroglyphs and the sheer size of these well-preserved catacombs. The landscape is dramatic; great cavernous cliffs of limestone and sedimentary rock with the imposing Al-Qurn, the peak of the valley, resembling a pyramid, a nod to the Old Kingdom. This site has fascinated archaeologists since the 1900s yet the area is so vast a new tomb chamber was discovered as recently as 2005.

You will end the afternoon at the Colossi of Memnon, two massive stone statues that have stood since 1350 BC, famous for their incredible height and historical significance. You'll wrap up the day with a dinner party, featuring local music and dancing.

## Day 4 — 4: LUXOR - 4 hours riding

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You'll enjoy a full day in the saddle today, which is a great opportunity to really bond with your horse as you canter happily along long, dusty farm tracks surrounded by verdant farmland. You'll see the farmers in the fields, working the earth as their ancestors did. Horses are revered in Egypt so they always bring a smile to people's faces as you pass through the Bedouin villages and the local children love the spectacle of our bejewelled steeds prancing proudly through the streets. As you get to know your horse's personality you will be amazed at how kind-hearted and generous they are, despite their hot-blooded nature. Sensitive and inquisitive, they are also incredibly brave; nothing phases them in these bustling environments -- this stems from their strong sense of self. Stop for lunch at a villa. In the heat of the day, you can enjoy the pool and unwind before heading home to the stables, a ride of approximately 1 hour bringing you back to your hotel for mid-afternoon. At around 5pm the group will reconvene for sundowners, cruising down the Nile watching the sun set on the calm waters. To complete this epic day, you will be joined by a professional belly dancer after dinner, who will teach you all about her art and give you some moves to take home!

## Day 5 — 5: KARNAK TEMPLE AND MOUNTAIN RIDE - 2 hours riding

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A morning of sight-seeing awaits you today. You will cross the river to the East Bank, along with your guide, first making your way to the world-famous Karnak Temple. Dedicated to the gods Amun, Mut and Khonsu, Karnak is said to be the largest religious monument ever built and it took over 2000 years to complete. Your Egyptologist guide will talk us through key elements of its history and structure bringing it to life before your eyes. From here you will walk to the Mummification Museum, a small but well-curated museum dedicated to the art of mummification, which aims to provide an understanding of the ancient Egyptian belief system as well as the process itself. Finally, you'll visit Luxor Temple, a breath-taking structure steeped in history, the entrance alone is over 200ft wide! Unlike many temples constructed to honour the gods, Luxor Temple was built in dedication to the rejuvenation of kingship. It is one of the many projects commissioned by Ramesses II during his long, successful reign.

Sailing back across the Nile you will enjoy an alfresco lunch back at the hotel, before setting off for a late afternoon ride into the desert. You will ride up the escarpment to mount Thebes, looking down over the city, to take in the glorious colours of sunset shimmering over the surrounding sands. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

## Day 6 — 6: SUNRISE TRAIL AND TRANSFER TO RED SEA - 2-3 hours riding

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A very special morning. You rise before dawn, making the short journey to the stables in darkness. Ride out into the deserted streets with the sun a mere glow on the horizon. Make our way out into farmland, trotting along rural tracks, until there before us is the Valley of the Kings. Bathed in the light

of the morning sun, scores of hot air balloons rise gracefully into the sky like lanterns. The overall sight is breath-taking, but it is truly unique when enjoyed from the back of a beautiful Egyptian horse. Stop for breakfast overlooking Habu Temple and have time for a fascinating tour of the site before the return ride.

From here, you will be collected for a tour of the Temple of Hatshepsut, considered one of the most impressive mortuary temples in all of Egypt. It represents not only her devotion to her god, Horus, but is also a reflection of her peaceful and prosperous reign. Set against the backdrop of a striking red cliff face it is a dramatic sight to behold. After lunch and showering, you will journey north-east to Hurghada on the Red Sea, endeavouring to arrive in time for a spectacular sunset. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

## Day 7 — 7: HURGHADA - 4 hours riding

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A variety of options are open to you this morning. A relaxing lie-in, late breakfast and some downtime by the pool is a popular one! Alternatively, for the restless adrenaline junkies, we offer an exhilarating quad bike safari across the dunes. Lunch will be at the hotel before you go for an exciting ride across the Eastern desert. Known as 'yalla country', the desert's vast open plains allow us to really let your horses go and revel in their speed and endurance.

As the sun sets on another glorious day, we ride home together, content, reflective and grateful as ever for the gift in life that is the horse. After a freshen up, you will head down to the marina at Hurghada. Once a typical fishing village, it has become famous for its extensive fish market. Your final evening will be spent sampling a feast from the sea, dining on fresh produce straight out of the morning's catch. Overnight at the hotel.

## Day 8 — 8: SWIMMING WITH HORSES AND DEPARTURE - 2-3 hours riding

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No trip would be complete without our famous swimming with horses experience. This is the grand finale to an amazing week. The horses love the cool, refreshing waters and glide effortlessly across the bay, their tails streaming out behind them.

Check out from the hotel is at 11am. For those who would like lunch or a late departure you are welcome. There is an extra charge payable locally.

There is also an option to stay an extra day and do a full-day boat trip to Dolphin House, where you can snorkel in the Red Sea and swim with wild dolphins. Contact your travel advisor for details.

### DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Price details

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No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.

- International flights are not included, but can be booked upon request. Please make sure your flight to Cairo lands at lunch time/early afternoon, so you make it on time for the 8pm arrival dinner. Please also ensure that your flight home from Hurghada departs after 2pm.

- The domestic flight from Cairo to Luxor is not included. All guests will need to purchase an internal flight between Cairo and Luxor on Day 2 leaving at 6pm - please contact us before booking your flights.

- Rates are per person and based on two riders sharing a twin or double room. To guarantee a single room, there is a single room supplement of approx. £500 / €580 / \$670. There is no single supplement if you are willing to share.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 riders and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.

- Airport transfers are not included. Transport from Cairo International Airport on Day 1, and to Hurghada International Airport on Day 8, will be invoiced at £70 / €80 / \$95 per person.

- Tickets to local sites are not included in the price and are payable locally by card. You can expect to spend approximately £95 / €110 / \$120 on entrance fees.

- A tip of US\$150 per person (in cash) is payable on arrival and covers tips for everything during your stay: transfers, hotels, housekeeping, restaurants, horse guides, Egyptology guides and water taxis in all locations on your trip.

- It may be possible to arrange a photoshoot during your stay - please contact us for prices and to prebook.

- You may also add an additional dolphin day at the end of your trip. This is from 8am until 3pm and includes swimming with wild dolphins, snorkelling and lunch. All snorkel equipment is included (plus your extra night on night on day 8). The price is an additional £250 / €290 / \$335 per person if sharing a room, or £350 / €405 / \$470 for a single room.

- Families with children will be offered "family weeks" independent from our normally scheduled weeks that are tailored for adults and solo riders. Please contact us and we will make a plan.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

## Price includes

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### SUPPORT TEAM

English-speaking horse guide

### LOGISTICS

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

1 support vehicle

A team of grooms

### MEALS

Full board accommodation in guesthouses or hotel

Mineral water

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

### TRANSPORT

International flights

Domestic flight between Cairo and Luxor

Airport transfers

### EXTRAS

Tips to the local team - please see "Tipping"

Site entry fees - payable locally by card

### INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation

Visas and personal purchase. You will have to purchase a tourist visa at the airport (around £20)

## Optional

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### ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

## Horses

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You will find three types of horses: Arab, Arabian Cross and Baladi. They are renowned for their stamina and are ideal for long distance rides in the

Egyptian desert. Each location (Hurghada, Luxor, Cairo) has its own stable so you will be riding different horses during the trip.

## Guide & local team

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Your guides speak English and Arabic collectively. Your hosts and drivers all speak English.

## Minimum riding ability

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### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

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You must be a rider of at least an intermediate level, meaning that you must be comfortable on a horse at all paces (walk, trot and canter) and you must be used to riding in open spaces and over different types of terrain. The horses are sensible and well-mannered but they are fit and forward-going, not suitable for novice riders.

There is a maximum rider weight of 90kg/ 14st/ 198 lbs.

### PACE

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The main pace of the trail is the walk, with good opportunities for trots and canters. You can spread out in the desert in Cairo and Hurghada, where there are plenty of open spaces, but riding in Luxor is mostly on tracks and therefore in single files.

### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

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The horses are groomed and tacked up for you. You can help with this (in Luxor especially) but this is not mandatory.

### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

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Having some trail riding experience is a bonus, but this is not mandatory. Reasonable health and fitness levels are required. Please note that some of the days are non-riding days: this holiday is designed for you to embrace the Egyptian culture, their local customs and ancient history.

### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

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English or Endurance tack.

No saddlebags.

We strongly recommend that riders wear a helmet - you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

## TRAVEL INFO

### COMFORT

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In Cairo you will be stay at a 2-3\* hotel with a rooftop. In Luxor, you will stay at a garden hotel with a bar and a pool, not far from the stables. In Hurghada, you will stay in a hotel by the sea.

### MEALS

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All meals are provided for on this riding holiday.

Breakfast: Pancakes, juice, bread, cheese and eggs, tea and coffee.

Lunch: salads, falafels, rice, aubergine, grilled chicken.

Dinner: hot meals (tajines with chicken, meat or fish), rice, salads, mussels

Water is provided on the ride. Soft drinks & alcohol are payable locally.

### CLIMATE

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Hot temperatures are common all year round. Temperatures generally range from 18-25C during winter and spring. This ride does not run in the summer as it is too hot for riders and horses. Rain is not common, and blue skies with sunshine is the norm every day.

Even though the day temperature is usually very hot during the day, it will become much cooler at night once the sun has set. For this reason we recommend you take some warmer clothes to keep you warm during the evenings and nights.

### TIPS

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Tipping in Egypt is a way of life. It is considered a norm to leave small tips in services you have received, such as restaurants, hotels, drivers, tour guides, etc. A tip envelope of \$150 (or the equivalent amount in euros or GBP) will be given to your guide on day 1 and distributed during the week to

cover all of the tips mentioned above. This way you don't have to worry about currency exchange and wondering if you should have tipped or not.

## **PACKING LIST**

### Head

- A riding helmet is strongly recommended. We recommend you take your own to ensure the right fit.
- Sun hat when not riding
- Sunglasses-with a cord attached so they don't fly away when galloping.
- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the sun and dust.

### Upper body

- Thermals (long or short sleeved)
- Long sleeved shirts to provide protection from the sun.
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper.
- Light waterproof jacket- although it doesn't rain much Egypt, it is better to be prepared.

### Legs

- Lightweight riding trousers or jodhpurs. We recommend riding in them at home to ensure they won't rub during your holiday.
- Casual clothes for the non-riding days (jeans or walking trousers)

### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may take long chaps or long boots.
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the non-riding days.
- Several pairs of socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

### Nightwear

- Pyjamas

### Other useful items:

- Swimsuit and a small travel towel
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Swiss army knife or equivalent (in your Check-in Luggage!!!!)

### Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent - a must in Egypt, please take a high quality spray
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Hand wash gel

### Our Recommendations

- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (passport, camera, sunscreen, lip balm etc)
- Any liquids in your hold luggage, such as shampoo, moisturizer, over 100ml should be decanted into small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- In your hand luggage take any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes is highly recommended - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .