

EGYPT · BEACHES · DIVING · WILDLIFE · DESERT · HISTORY

Red Sea coast

Egypt's Red Sea resorts are the nearest winter sun to the UK with a sea above 20°C all year: about five hours to Sharm el-Sheikh or Hurghada for coral reefs a short swim from the beach. Most visitors go all-inclusive. March–April and October–November are ideal; midsummer tops 35°C, and January evenings turn chilly.



The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to parts of Egypt.

Check whether Red Sea coast is affected in the latest FCDO travel advice.

🇪🇬 COUNTRY Egypt	📅 BEST TIME Mar–Apr, Oct–Nov	✈️ FLIGHT FROM LONDON 5h 20m direct ~£260–£650 return	💷 DAILY BUDGET £35–£180 ££ Moderate
☀️ WARMEST MONTH August (38°C)	🌊 SEA TEMPERATURE 21–29°C coolest–warmest	🕒 TIME ZONE Cairo +2h vs UK now	🌐 CURRENCY Egyptian pound £1 ≈ EGP 72.79

A Red Sea week usually means one resort hotel, plenty of snorkelling and two or three excursions. Sharm el-Sheikh, at the tip of Sinai, has the stronger reefs, with Ras Mohammed and the Strait of Tiran on its doorstep; Hurghada, on the mainland, is bigger and cheaper, and the base for Luxor trips. El Gouna suits couples who want restaurants and a marina, while Makadi Bay and Nabq Bay are built around large family all-inclusives. The sea is warm enough for most people all year, but northerly winds make winter afternoons breezy, and July and August heat limits sightseeing to early mornings.

Highlights

1

WILDLIFE

Ras Mohammed National Park

Egypt's first national park, at the southern tip of Sinai, protects reef walls that drop into deep blue water at Shark and Yolanda reefs. Boat trips from Sharm combine snorkelling stops with turtles and big shoals of fish.

2

ADVENTURE

SS Thistlegorm wreck

A British supply ship bombed in 1941 and now one of the world's best-known wreck dives, with trucks, motorbikes and rifles still in its holds. It lies in about 30 metres of water, so it suits qualified divers on a long day-boat trip.

3

BEACH

Giftun Islands

Protected islands under an hour by boat from Hurghada, with white-sand beaches and shallow reefs that suit beginner snorkellers and children. Pick an operator that moors on buoys rather than dropping anchor on the coral.

4

HISTORY

Luxor

Hurghada is about four hours by road from Luxor, close enough for a long day trip to Karnak and the Valley of the Kings. An overnight stay is far better, letting you see the tombs before the midday heat.

5

SACRED SITE

Mount Sinai and St Catherine's Monastery

Pilgrims and walkers climb Mount Sinai overnight to watch sunrise from the 2,285-metre summit, then visit the sixth-century monastery at its foot. It is a long trip from Sharm; check the FCDO travel advice for Sinai first.

Where to stay

WHERE TO STAY

Naama Bay, Sharm el-Sheikh

Sharm's original resort strip, with a walkable promenade, bars and dive centres; suits couples and divers who want to leave the hotel in the evening.

WHERE TO STAY

Nabq Bay

Newer, quieter resorts north of Sharm near the airport, with big family all-inclusives and reef shelves offshore; check the hotel has a jetty to the reef.

WHERE TO STAY

El Gouna

A lagoon town north of Hurghada with a marina, good restaurants and kitesurfing; suits couples and families who prefer a smaller, more polished resort.

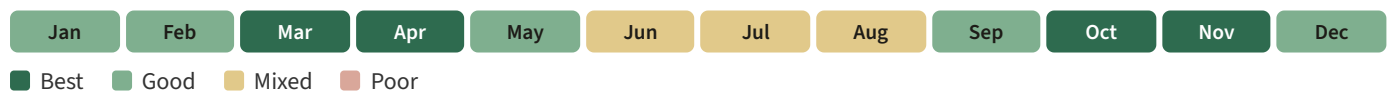
WHERE TO STAY

Makadi Bay

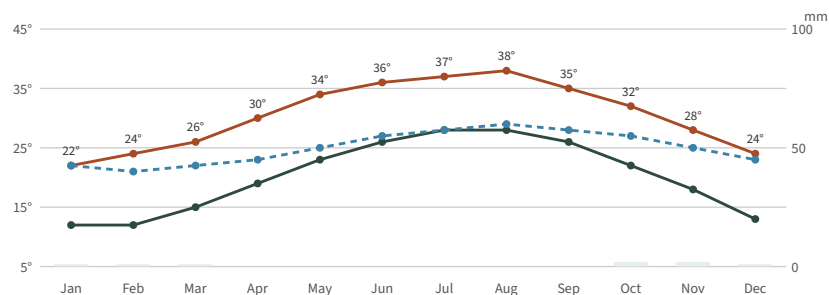
Self-contained all-inclusive resorts south of Hurghada with sandy beaches and decent house reefs; best for families who don't plan to leave the hotel much.

When to go to Red Sea coast

Best time: **Mar-Apr, Oct-Nov.**

**Average climate in Hurghada**

High °C Low °C Sea °C Rain (mm)

**How much does Red Sea coast cost?**

SHOESTRING

£35

per person / day
≈ EGP 2,548

MID-RANGE

£80

per person / day
≈ EGP 5,823

COMFORTABLE

£180

per person / day
≈ EGP 13,102

Per person per day excluding flights. Return flights from London typically cost £260 off-peak and £650 in school holidays.

Visas & entry for Red Sea coast

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

British passport holders travelling to Egypt normally need a visa.

If you are arriving by air to Sharm El-Sheikh and staying for less than 15 days at resorts in Sharm El Sheikh, Dahab, Nuweiba or Taba, you do not need a visa. You will get a free entry permission stamp on arrival at Sharm El-Sheikh Airport. If you plan to travel outside the resorts or stay more than 15 days, you must get a visa. You can get a visa at Sharm El-Sheikh Airport or online.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Dengue Hepatitis B Rabies Typhoid

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Egypt

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Thu 7 Jan 2027	Coptic Christmas Day
Thu 28 Jan 2027	January 25th Revolution and National Police Day (observed)
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Wed 10 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Thu 29 Apr 2027	Sinai Liberation Day (observed)
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Mon 3 May 2027	Spring Festival
Sat 15 May 2027	Day of Arafah (date may shift)

Sun 16 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Tue 18 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Thu 10 Jun 2027	Islamic New Year (observed, estimated) (date may shift)
Thu 1 Jul 2027	June 30 Revolution Day (observed)
Fri 23 Jul 2027	July 23 Revolution Day
Sat 14 Aug 2027	Prophet's Birthday (date may shift)
Thu 7 Oct 2027	Armed Forces Day (observed)

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Winter sun here is real but not hot: January highs reach about 22°C, evenings drop to around 12°C and the wind is brisk, so pack a fleece and check the pool is heated.

If snorkelling matters, choose a hotel with its own jetty onto a house reef rather than a sandy lagoon, pack reef shoes, and never stand on coral or feed the fish.

Plugs, money, phrases, emergency numbers and more: see our Egypt guide.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.