

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

EGYPT & Turkey

(Updated on Jan 2023)

Passport and Visa

- Passports must be valid for at least 6 months behind the completion of your trip. Enough blank visa pages in valid passports are required for entry and exit stamps.
- U.S. Resident Aliens need both passport and Alien Resident Card for re-entry to the United States.
- Carry emergency contact person's name, address and telephone number with you.
- Keep travel documents, passport, personal necessities and valuables with you at all time. Leave a copy of the important documents to your family or pack another separately from the original itself. We suggest you scan and email a copy to yourself for easy online access. This will help speed up the replacement process.
- Be sure you have all the necessary documents and money before leaving for the airport.
- Entry visa is required for all non-Egyptian passport holders traveling to Egypt. U.S. citizens can apply for Egyptian E-visa at <http://visa2egypt.gov.eg/eVisa/Home> prior to departure, or obtain a renewable single entry 30-day tourist visa upon arrival at Egyptian airport for a 25 USD fee. To find more information on visa to Egypt, check the website: <http://egyptembassy.net>, <http://egyconsulatela.com/visas/>
- U.S. passport holders are required to have visa to enter Turkey. You have to obtain entry visa online at www.evisa.gov.tr/en/ prior to departure. Then, upon arrival at the Turkish airport, after claiming your luggage, you may go directly to the passport control booths.

Consular Information

The U.S. Department of State provides Country Specific Information Sheets for every country in the world, as well as Travel Alerts and Warnings. Find this information by calling 888-407-4747 or 202-501-4444, or online at travel.state.gov.

Baggage

Ritz Tours welcomes each passenger to bring one suitcase and one carry-on bag. Due to the limited capacity for luggage storage on the vehicle. Ritz Tours does not accept more than one suitcase per person in order to avoid any additional charges for excessive luggage.

- Baggage charges and insurance are at the owner's responsibility. Baggage allowance varies by airline and is subject to change at any time. For up to date baggage allowance, restrictions, and fees, always check with the appropriate airlines before traveling.
- It is recommended that all checked luggage has a lock (TSA approved combination locks are recommended) and use Ritz Tours luggage tags showing your tour code, name, telephone number, and address.
- DO NOT pack prescription medicine, valuables and other personal necessities in checked luggage. Keep them in your carry-on bag.
- Consider including one night's essentials for whole family in one of the suitcases or in your carry-on bag to avoid inconvenience in case of loss or delayed flight.
- Baggage allowance on coach: Ritz Tours welcomes each passenger to bring one suitcase and one carry-on bag on coach. Due to the limited capacity for luggage storage on the vehicle, Ritz Tours does not accept more than one suitcase per person in order to avoid any additional charges for excessive luggage.

- Consult www.tsa.gov for information on TSA approved locks and USA airport luggage restrictions.

Health an Insurance

1. Travelers are strongly advised to purchase travel insurance prior to departure for your own protection.
2. It is important to familiarize yourself with any potential health issues or concerns related to your destination, and so we strongly recommend consulting the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for up-to-date information on required and recommended vaccines and medications. Visit them online at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel or call 800-232-4636.
3. Take care from the sun, which can often feel cooler than it really is due to the cool coastal breezes and lack of humidity. It is advisable to drink plenty of water when staying outside during the day.
4. Plan to visit your doctor or local travel clinic at least 4-6 weeks before departure to allow time for any vaccinations to take effect or to fill any prescriptions. Consult your doctor for suggestions on prevention and treatment.
5. Pack your prescription medicine in your hand luggage in sufficient quantity for the duration of the trip and make sure it is fully labeled.
6. In case of illness during your trip, please immediately notify your tour manager and local guide for assistance.

Weather

- Use a website such as www.weather.com to find average temperatures and rainfalls during your travel times.
- Egypt lies at the crux of Africa and the Middle East, and is bordered by Sudan in the South, Libya in the West, and Israel in the East. The southern area by Luxor and Aswan is known as “Upper Egypt”, as the Nile flows from here “down” through the capital city, Cairo, to the Mediterranean Sea near Alexandria. Throughout Egypt, days are commonly warm or hot, and nights are cool. Egypt has only two seasons: a mild winter from November to April and a hot summer from May to October. In the coastal regions, temperatures range between the lowest 41°F in winter and the highest 108°F in summer. Local daytime temperatures range as follows for the year (°F).
- Turkey: The climate in Turkey has a vast diversity depending on the diverse topography and latitude. Aegean and Mediterranean coastal areas enjoy the typical Mediterranean climate. There is hardly a drop of rain during the sunny and hot summer (April to October). Winters are mild and rainy in these regions, and it very rarely snows at coastal areas. Turkey occupies a landmass slightly larger than Texas.

Electricity

Egypt electrical current is 220V, 50Hz, and sockets take the standard continental European dual round-pronged plug. Travelers are advised to bring international converters and adapters for the trip.

Clothing and Things to Bring

- Use a website such as weather.com to find average temperatures and rainfalls during your travel times.
- Egypt is a country very used to tourists, and for sightseeing in popular areas such as the Pyramids or the main sights of Upper Egypt, shorts and T-shirts is fine. However, you should allow for a more conservative dress code when walking in central Cairo and other cities, and especially in rural areas.
- To respect the local culture, when visiting mosques or other religious sites, casual, comfortable clothing covering knees and elbows is best.
- Around the pool at your hotel or on a cruise, low necklines, sleeveless shirts, or shorts can be comfortably worn. At the beach resorts, feel free to dress as you would at home.

- Be wary of sunburn, use sun-block lotion, wear a hat, and avoid too much activity in the hotter parts of the day. Good sunglasses will protect your eyes.
- Other things we suggest you bring are insect-spray, swimming suit, slippers, mouth-muffle, first-aid kit, binoculars, flashlight, aspirin, and over-counter medicine for flu, indigestion, motion sickness.

Arrival Airport and Customs

- Arrival Airport and Customs, our English speaking tour manager and local tour guide will meet the group inside the airport before the Immigration and Customs, holding the distinctive “Ritz Tours” signboard.
- Use Ritz Tours’ name badge and luggage tag. These help us identify you and your luggage quickly.
- Duty free allowance to Egypt: 200 cigarettes, 25 cigars or 200 g tobacco; 1 litre of alcohol; perfume for personal use; gifts to the value of EGP500.00. Cash, travelers’ cheques, credit cards and gold over the value of EGP500.00 must be declared on arrival. Drugs, firearms and cotton may not be brought into the country. The export of any antiquity or any item older than 100 years without a license is forbidden.
- Duty free allowance to Turkey: 200 cigarettes; 1 liter of alcohol. All kind of meat, vegetables, fruits and food are prohibited from being brought into the country

Language

Egypt: Arabic is the official language of Egypt, English and French are widely understood and spoken.

Turkey: This country’s official language is Turkish. English is popular among the younger generation.

Time Differentials

Egypt: 6 hours ahead of New York (U.S. EST), 9 hours ahead of Los Angeles and San Francisco (U.S. PST).

Turkey: 7 hours ahead of New York (U.S. EST), 10 hours ahead of Los Angeles and San Francisco (U.S. PST).

Currency and Credit Cards

- The currency in Egypt is Egyptian Pound (EGP, or LE), which is divided into 100 piasters. Notes come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 200 pounds, while coins in everyday use in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 25, and 50 piasters and 1 pound. Foreign currency can be exchanged at airport, bank, and hotels. As of January 2023, the exchange rate is: 1 USD = 26.45EGP.
- There's a limit of 10,000 USD that you are allowed to bring in or take out of Egypt. There is no limit to the amount of hard currency that you may bring in, but sums that exceed 10,000 USD should be declared on arrival.
- The currency of Turkey is Lira (TRY). 1 lira = 100 kurus, Coins: 1, 5, 10, 25, 50 kuruses and 1 lira, Bank Notes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 lira. You can easily exchange money at airports and hotels. Better have some local money with you at all time for the smaller purchase and not to change a lot of money at once due to the unruly fluctuation of the value of Lira. Pocket money are usually needed for using public washroom. As of January 2023, the exchange rate is: 1 USD = 18.78 TRY
- There is no limit to the amount of foreign and Turkish currency to be brought into Turkey. More than US\$5000 worth of Turkish currency cannot be taken out of the country. Up to US\$5000 worth of foreign currency can be taken out of the country.
- It is suggested to inform your credit card company of your traveling and to confirm your credit line prior to departure.
- Major credit cards such as Visa and Master Card are accepted in Egypt; however we suggest traveling with sufficient US dollars to be exchanged for local currency for small payments.

Food and Drink

- Tour fare does not include any drinks. During your stay in Egypt, it is advised to drink only bottle water and to avoid eating from street stalls.
- Arabic food is the main type of food in Egypt. Muslims are prohibited from eating pork. Hotels generally have substitutes such as beef sausages and veal rashers on their menus.
- Turkish dishes are mainly cooked of meat (beef, lamb, and chicken – pork is not eaten).

Shopping

- Although the local guides will be happy to assist you with any shopping requirements, Ritz Tours does not assume responsibility for any items purchased at shops while on tour. You are never required to purchase any items while on tour and must be responsible for your own purchases. Any after sales correspondence must be between the passenger and the shop in question.
- Popular Egyptian souvenirs include perfume, crystal, papyrus painting, cotton shirts, etc.
- Bargaining and shopping is part of Turkish culture but bargaining can only be done in tourist areas. Here are a few of products that you can bring home from Turkey: Leather clothing, carpets, silk, earthenware, coffee, olive oil soap etc.
- It is travelers' responsibility to observe US Customs restrictions when bringing in any goods from tour. Consult the US Customs and Border Protection website at <http://www.cbp.gov> for details.

Culture and Photography

- Egypt is a Muslim country, please respect their religion and dress conservatively. When visiting churches and mosques, women should not wear anything short or sleeveless.
- Do not take photographs of military installations or airports. Film is readily available in all tourist areas.
- If you are taking photographs of local people, always ask their permission beforehand. Your guide can assist you in this.
- Turkey is a predominantly Muslim country, 98% of Turks are Muslim. Never speak badly of the Islamic religion, as Turks are sensitive of their heritage and culture. Turks are a very friendly, polite and hospitable people. But, big cities in Turkey, especially Istanbul, are not immune to petty crime. Tourists are highly recommended to follow common sense to stay safe.
- It is advisable to carry your camera in a dust-proof bag. Photography or camera fees are applicable at most sights and museums; your guide can give you details of the latest charges.

Telephone and Internet Access

- Egypt international access code 00, country code 20; USA international access code 011, country code 1.
 - Call from Egypt to USA: 00 + 1 + City code + Local number
 - Call from USA to Egypt: 011 + 20 + City code + Local number
- American Consulate in Cairo, Egypt: Tel: (20-2)2797 3300, or visit: <http://egypt.usembassy.gov>
- Turkey International access code is 00, country code 90, Istanbul area code 212.
 - Call from USA to Istanbul, dial: 011 + 90 + 212 + local number
 - Call from Istanbul to USA, dial: 00 + 1 + Area Code + local Number
- U.S. Embassy in Istanbul, you may visit the website: <https://tr.usembassy.gov>, Tel: +(90)(212)335-9000
- Free Wi-Fi is provided in most of hotels in Cairo. Free WiFi is also available on board the Nile River cruise ship, but for email browsing purposes only.

Tipping

Please note that gratuities are not included in your tour cost. Tipping is customary in Egypt, and their purpose is to encourage and reward quality service. Our tour managers, local guides, drivers, hotel porters and other service personnel do their utmost to make your trip smooth and pleasant. Gratuities are a way of showing your appreciation and also constitute a large part of their monthly income. However, tips are NEVER mandatory. Ritz Tours suggests tipping in the following manner (per guest per day in USD). Clients pay the number of days from their arrival to departure:

Egypt

- Local guide: US \$ 5 x 9 days = \$45
- Driver: US \$3 x 9 days = \$27
- Airport staff \$1 x 6 times = \$6
- Cruise staff \$3 x 5 days = \$15
- Tour manager from the US: US \$8 x 9 days= \$72

Total \$165 per person (Egypt portion)

Turkey

- Tour manager from the US: US \$8 per guest per day
- Local guide: US \$5 per guest per day
- Local driver: US \$3 per guest per day

Other Notes

- Respect your tour guides, drivers, and other group members. Refrain from talking when the tour guide is speaking.
- Travelers' safety has always been our number one concern. For your safety, you should notify the tour guide ahead of time if you plan to go out at night or roam in your free time alone.
- Always be cautious when staying at a hotel. Never allow strangers into your room.
- Keep an eye on your personal belongings and valuables at all times.
- Read carefully your itinerary and hotel information prior to the tour. Leave a copy to your family.
- A nice and smooth trip counts on every group member's high cooperation. It is important to follow the indicated meeting time and meeting point. Use the round name badge provided by Ritz Tours for easy identification. To make your trip as enjoyable as possible, allow enough time for flight check-in, security screening and boarding: at least 4 hours for international travel during Covid-19 period of time.

For flight delay, cancellation, or any emergency, please contact Ritz Tours immediately:

Office Hours:

Mon-Fri 9:00am-5:30pm Pacific Standard Time

Headquarters: (626) 289-7777, 1-888-345-7489

After office Hours: (626) 677-3415