

Egypt travel guide

Courtesy and hospitality are important when doing business in Egypt. The host of a business meeting will usually offer tea or a small snack before commencing. It's polite to refuse the first offer, but once the host insists, the guest should then accept.



Alcohol is legal, but should be avoided until visitors know their Egyptian colleague's attitude towards drinking, and, if acceptable, should be drunk in moderation. It is not considered suitable for women to over-indulge in alcohol. If invited to a business lunch, expect food to be lavish and plentiful.

Throughout the Arab world, it is considered bad manners either to display anger or to openly criticize another person in public. Tact and diplomacy are always required. In social life, punctuality is almost laughable. For business, visitors should be on time but expect locals to be often late, and do not take offence. Men should not offer to shake a woman's hand, and vice versa, unless clearly invited to do so. Men and women should dress smartly for business meetings – suits and tie for men; suit for women or smart trousers/skirt/jacket – and always dress modestly. Shoulders and knees should never be shown.

Economy:

On taking power in 1970, Anwar al-Sadat introduced a policy of *infitah* (openness) towards investment. Egypt's economy underwent rapid growth during the 1970s with the quick expansion of the oil industry, tourism and the Suez Canal, and it has continued to expand in subsequent decades.



The tourist sector is expanding rapidly, particularly along the Red Sea and Mediterranean coasts, despite sporadic terrorist activities of Islamic fundamentalists. Agriculture, which relies on irrigation from the Nile, employs one-third of the working population. Foreign aid, especially from the USA, is an important source of government funds.

Internet:

There are internet cafés in the main cities, including Cairo, Alexandria, Dahab and Luxor. Even small, more remote towns including Siwa will have at least one venue, usually in the market area. Connection is usually reliable. Tourists can also access the Internet in hotels, with in-room Wi-Fi available, though often at a costly price.



Media:



The Egyptian press is one of the most influential and widely read in the region, while Egyptian TV and the film industry supplies much of the Arab-speaking world with shows from its Media Production City. Press freedom is encouraged. Press laws which allow prison sentences for libel have encouraged self-censorship on sensitive issues.

EXERCISES

1. At a business meeting in Egypt,

A. *refusing* food or drink is acceptable

B. *tea* will be offered when they reach a deal

C. it is bad manners to repeatedly reject the drinks offered

2. Which one is right?

A. *Women* are not allowed to drink alcohol

B. *Women* can drink alcohol but only moderately

C. *Foreign* people shouldn't drink alcohol in any case

3. Choose the correct option.

A. *Local* people are always on time

B. *Shaking* hands is banned to women

C. Foreign business people are required to be punctual

4. In the 1970s...

A. *Islamic* activists prevented its economy from growing

B. Egypt's economy was based mainly on three sources

C. *Egyptian* oil industry grew rapidly without any foreign help

5. With regards to media and communication...

A. *Internet* connection in hotels is expensive

B. *there* is no Internet access in small towns

C. *journalists* have their work censored before it is published