

For tours departing beyond 2010, itineraries may be subject to change. This will be confirmed by the publication of the 2011 brochure (issued in Sep 10).

2010  
Tour Dossier

# EXPLORE!

## FAMILY ADVENTURES



## EGYPT Dossier Ref. FEG Land of the Pharaohs

**FEG26JUL10 Please note** – For operational reasons, this tour will spend 7 nights aboard the riverboat as opposed to 3 nights. The rest of the itinerary remains unchanged and all meals aboard the riverboat are included.

Amended 28 Apr 2010. Valid from 01 Jan 2010 to 31 Dec 2010  
Since first issue this dossier has been updated with amendments to the following sections: other sightseeing

As our itineraries may be amended from time to time, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers, please ensure you have the most up-to-date copy of this dossier immediately before you travel. You can download the dossier from our website, [www.explore.co.uk](http://www.explore.co.uk). Of course we will notify you of any significant changes, but sometimes minor changes may simply be added to the tour dossier.

### JOINING TOUR ABROAD

12 days/12 nights Land Only  
Luxor to Cairo

Join Luxor (day 1)

End Cairo (day 12)

Clients booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point in Luxor. Please refer to separate 'Joining Instructions' for name and address of hotel and time of rendezvous with tour leader.

### GROUP TRAVEL FROM LONDON

12 days/12 nights Tour including Connecting Group Flights  
London-Luxor-Cairo-London

Depart from London Heathrow Airport to join tour in Luxor (day 1 of itinerary).

Return from Cairo (day 12) and arrive London Heathrow the same day.

Passengers with non-group flights booked through Explore should refer to their individual confirmation invoice for flight details. Transfers from the airport are not included unless purchased in addition to the tour package.

### SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Among the many highlights on this tour, we particularly mention:

- \* **LUXOR** Calesh (horse drawn carriage) ride through Luxor and nearby villages.
- \* **LUXOR** Valley of the Kings and Hatshepsut Temple by donkey.
- \* **LUXOR** Tour of Temple of Amun at Karnak.
- \* **ASWAN** Felucca sailing.
- \* **ASWAN** Camel trek through desert to St Simeon's Monastery.
- \* **NILE RIVERBOAT** Cruise from Aswan to Luxor via Edfu and Kom Ombo temples.
- \* **SAFAGA** Full day boat trip on Red Sea, with snorkelling.
- \* **CAIRO** Guided tour of Pyramids, Sphinx and Egyptian Museum.

### Carbon Offsets Included

As part of our responsible tourism policy we offset carbon emissions from all customer and staff flights booked by Explore. Our carbon offset partner is Climate Care. If you are making independent flight arrangements to join one of our tours, may we urge you to offset your carbon emissions through Climate Care, or a similar offsetting scheme.

### Earth Matters

- As recycling does not exist in Egypt, we recommend that you bring your own water filter to reduce plastic bottle waste. Using biodegradable soap will also reduce pollution as waste water on the boat is untreated.
- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>

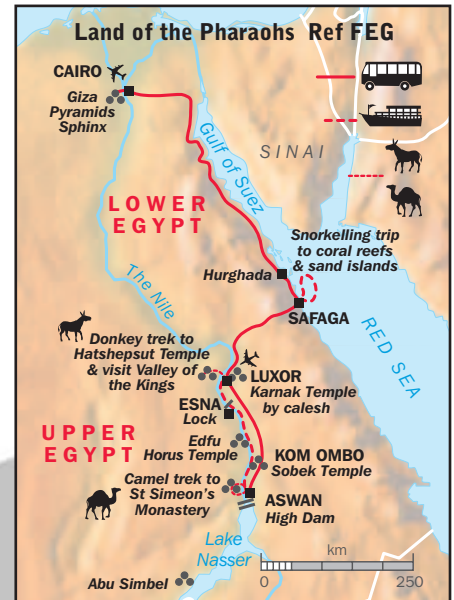
Our trip starts at Luxor, with perhaps the richest concentration of ancient sites anywhere in the world. We ride donkeys to Queen Hatshepsut's Temple, visit the wonders of the Valley of the Kings and visit the magnificent Temple of Karnak by calesh. Journeying south by train, we reach Aswan, site of the first Nile Cataract, which historically marked the boundary between Egypt and black Africa. Here, we ride camels, visit the amazing temples of Abu Simbel, and have the chance to eat dinner with a Nubian family in their traditional mud-brick home. From here, three days are spent sailing downriver to Luxor in our Nile Riverboat, with stops to marvel at the majestic temple sites situated along the riverbank. All cabins aboard the Riverboat have private en-suite facilities and are air conditioned. Facilities on board include a restaurant, bar, large sun deck and lounge area. The boat is chartered for the exclusive use of Explore groups. We then move on to the Red Sea, enjoying a boat trip across azure waters to a string of sandy islands and coral reefs, where we snorkel over an array of multi-coloured creatures. Finally, we arrive in Cairo, with a guided visit to the 4,500-year-old Giza Pyramids – amongst the most remarkable buildings on earth – and the enigmatic Sphinx, whose purpose continues to baffle archaeologists even today. We also discover the treasures of the Egyptian Museum, which houses the contents of Tutankhamun's tomb, discovered by Howard Carter in 1922, and leave you some free time to explore the capital at your leisure. Please note the hotels used on this tour all have swimming pools. We will take full advantage of the cooler mornings when sites are quieter, avoiding the heat of the day.

**Note: Some departures may operate on an alternative itinerary with different amount of nights spent on the riverboat. Should your tour follow an alternative itinerary, a letter will be despatched.**

### LAND ONLY ITINERARY

**Be Prepared:** while our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day route published below, a degree of flexibility is built into the itinerary. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

We will be taking full advantage of the cooler mornings to visit the sights at their least crowded and taking care to avoid the heat of the day. Summer departures can see temperatures averaging 37°C in Luxor and Aswan. Note that the drive from Hurghada to Cairo is a full days journey.



**Accommodation and Included Meals:** please find the key to our accommodation ratings overleaf, and note that included meals are indicated in the itinerary below and are shown on the day they are provided (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner).

Swimming opportunities – whether in swimming pools, rivers, lakes, the sea or the ocean – are indicated on the itinerary by the following icon:

**Day 1. Join tour Luxor**  
Arrive Luxor and check-in at hotel. **2 nights hotel H+.**

**Day 2. In Luxor; visit Karnak Temple; Calesh ride to outlying villages**

This morning we travel by 'calesh' (horse carriage) to the stupendous Temple of Amun at Karnak, the labour of numerous pharaohs. Dating from around 2000 BC, the scale and grandeur of the site is amazing: it covers the area of about 10 European cathedrals. The Temple Precinct encloses the Festival Temple of Tutmosis, the Hypostyle Hall built with 134 pillars carved all over with scenes of the King worshipping Amun, (the principle God of Egypt at the time of the Middle Kingdom), Hatshepsut's obelisks, a number of other temples and the Sacred Lake. In the Court of the Cachette an upstanding stele documents a pact between Ramses II and the Hittite king and is one of the first international treaties ever recorded. Later in the afternoon we set out on a relaxed ride, again by calesh, through Luxor's souq areas and out to some nearby villages. Here we have a small insight into everyday life in modern rural Egypt, where the tourist centres of Luxor seem miles away. **(Included meals: B).**


**Day 3. In Luxor; donkey trek to Hatshepsut Temple and visit the Valley of the Kings; bus to Aswan**

Rising very early this morning, we cross the Nile to enjoy an adventurous donkey trek passing through an enchanting landscape of irrigated farmland and mud brick villages en route, pausing to view the famous Colossi of Memnon, the last remains of the once mighty temple of Amenhotep III then on to the extraordinary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut,

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Egypt's only female Pharaoh, who usurped the throne from her son, the future Tutmoses III. The scale of the temple and its magnificent setting are breathtaking, but perhaps even more remarkable are the details - look out for the fine carving of the 'Expedition to the Land of Punt'. We then take a short taxi ride to the Valley of the Kings\* to explore some of the more important sites made famous in 1922 by the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun by Howard Carter. We visit three tombs with a local guide. In the afternoon we take a bus, following the green ribbon of the Nile Valley southwards to Aswan - Egypt's most southerly city and regarded traditionally as the frontier post of Upper Egypt. **2 nights hotel H+ (Included meals: B).** 

**Donkeys to Hatshepsut Temple**


The comfort and safety of both donkeys and their riders is of great importance to us. Given this, donkeys are available to travellers of 85kg/13st, or under. We shall provide taxi transfers to the site for non-riders, or indeed anyone preferring to make the journey by road.

**Day 4. In Aswan; optional visit Abu Simbel**


Today we have the chance to visit the fabulous rock-hewn temple of Abu Simbel. Cut into the rock face, this enormous structure was raised 61m to save it from inundation by the artificial lake created by the Aswan High Dam. The 20m high statues represent Ramses II, known as the Great Builder. Alternatively wonder the streets of this fascinating city. Sited on the east bank of the Nile, Aswan stands just below the first Cataract and is the meeting point of Arab culture with Nubia and Black Africa. The excellent souq here reflects the fusion between Arab and African cultures, and we recommend a visit at some point during your stay. Later on in the afternoon (weather permitting) we plan to sail by felucca amongst the granite islands that lie sprinkled across this section of the Nile. The felucca is the traditional means of transport on the Nile and has been used for centuries, and a late afternoon sail is a lovely way to absorb the colours and atmosphere of beautiful Aswan. In the evening we plan an optional visit by launch to a riverside village to eat with a Nubian family (friends of Explore for more than ten years!). **(Included meals: B, D).** 

**Day 5. Camel trek to St Simeon's Monastery; board Nile Cruiseboat; sail to Kom Ombo**


In the morning we cross the river by motor launch and meet our camels for an exciting journey across the desert to the abandoned Coptic monastery of St. Simeon, then return via a different route to the river. Around lunchtime we board our Nile Riverboat for a three day voyage downriver to Luxor. During our cruise, we see the intensive cultivation of the Nile Valley (mainly sugar-cane and maize) and at intermittent points are small villages which depend upon the river for their livelihood. We sail to the major settlement of

Kom Ombo situated on the east bank of the Nile today. Dating from the Ptolemaic period, the temple of Kom Ombo is unique in that it is dedicated to two gods. Both Horus and Sobek were worshipped; Sobek is the crocodile god - much needed at this spot as this stretch of the river was noted for crocodiles until early this century! We aim to visit the site in the relative cool of the early evening, when most of the other sightseeing groups have left. **3 nights twin berth accommodation aboard riverboat (included meals: B, L, D).** 

**Day 6. Sail via Edfu to Esna**

Today we sail to Edfu, the largest Egyptian temple after Karnak, supposedly marking the position where the god Horus met and vanquished his father Osiris's murderer Seth. Dating from the time of the Ptolemies (3<sup>rd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> century BC). A sacred falcon-headed god guards the Temple of Horus, which is in almost perfect condition. The temple is unusual in that the roof is still intact. We moor overnight at Esna. **(Included meals: B, L, D).** 


**Day 7. Sail to Luxor; free afternoon**

Early in the morning we pass through the lock in the dam at Esna, which was built in 1906 to regulate the Nile floodwaters, and, from there, sail on to Luxor. On arrival we have the afternoon free to enjoy further sightseeing in Luxor - or perhaps visit the souq to bargain for some souvenirs! Tonight is the last night on board our Riverboat and the crew will no doubt want to impress you with their Egyptian hospitality. **(Included meals: B, L, D).** 

**Day 8. To Safaga**


Today we have the opportunity to take an optional balloon flight over the Valley of the Kings. This is a wonderful way to survey the dawn over the desert and the experience of a lifetime! Later we recommend a re-visit to the west bank of the Nile, where we can visit the Valley of the Queens and Medinat Habu, famous for the large funerary temple built by Ramses III. Close by is Deir al-Medina, where you can visit the small and very personal tombs of the artisans and freemen who worked in the Valley of the Kings. Disembarking from our Cruiseboat around lunchtime, we drive across the barren mountains of the Eastern Desert to Safaga, Egypt's quieter coastal resort. This is our base for the next three nights, where the pace of life is a contrast to the hustle and bustle of the Nile. **2 nights hotel H+ (included meals: B).** 

**Day 9. In Safaga; boat trip to coral reefs**

The Red Sea is famous for its superb coral reefs and multicoloured fish. Living in such favourable conditions are schools of beautifully marked and iridescent species, alongside barracudas and green turtles. We include a full day boat trip to the islands and coral reefs around Soma Bay, a short drive south from Hurghada, and enjoy some leisurely hours either swimming, snorkelling or just relaxing. **(Included meals: B, L).** 

**Day 10. Travel to Cairo**

Leaving Hurghada, we make the long journey to Cairo. Initially travelling alongside the Red Sea coast, before turning inland across the desert to Cairo. Late afternoon we arrive in the bustling city of Cairo. In the evening you'll have the chance to go into Cairo's buzzing centre or relax over dinner by the pool.

**2 nights Hotel H+ (included meals: B).** 

**Day 11. In Cairo; visit Pyramids, Sphinx & Egyptian Museum**

Africa's largest capital, Cairo is situated mainly on the east bank of the Nile. This morning we drive to Giza, to visit one the seven ancient wonders of the world, the Pyramids, among the most impressive man-made spectacles in the world. Here, you can opt to venture inside a pyramid, or admire the Solar Boat, designed to transport the Pharaoh's soul to the afterlife. The complex includes the Sphinx, a crouching lion with a human head carved from solid rock, and the splendid Granite Temple in the afternoon, we visit the Egyptian Museum, which amongst its 100,000 artifacts contains the extraordinary treasures of Tutankhamun, complete with his Golden Mask. **(Included meals: B).** 

**Day 12. Tour ends Cairo**

**(Included meals: B).**

**The Nile by Riverboat**

**The Nile by Riverboat**

Our Nile riverboat, M/S Doma, offers a combination of the style and comfort you would normally associate with a large cruise ship, with the relaxed and intimate atmosphere of a smaller vessel. Chartered for the exclusive use of Explore and with only 14 passenger cabins, life on board M/S Doma is easy-going and informal: a perfect base from which to explore the sites of the Nile.

**About M/S Doma**

All cabins are air-conditioned and have private en-suite showers, washbasins and WCs, plus large picture windows. On the Middle Deck are a spacious dining area, bar and lounge - also fully air-conditioned - and on the Upper Deck there are fine, uninterrupted views across the Nile. There is no better way to enjoy the Nile sunset than sitting in the open air, perhaps with a drink from the small 'Deck Bar'. All meals are included whilst aboard the riverboat, prepared by our cooks and normally served in the dining room - though occasionally an alfresco buffet may be organised on deck. The cuisine is Egyptian-style and consists of 'continental' breakfasts, lunch and three-course dinners.

**EXPLORE ACCOMMODATION RATINGS :** An important feature of many Explore tours is the wide range of accommodation used, and since the beginning our philosophy has been to select accommodation to suit the itinerary - not the other way round.

To help gauge the comfort level on your chosen tour, we have graded the accommodation standards at all night-stops using the rating guide below. Please keep in mind however that standards can vary from one trip to the next, and occasionally we may need to change a night-stop without advance warning.

**Hotels / lodges / guesthouses - or similar**

**H++ :** Comfortable hotels, lodges or guesthouses with twin or single rooms and en suite facilities. With air-conditioning/heating where appropriate and with reliable hot and cold water. Generally good levels of service and often with added amenities such as restaurant, bar, gardens or swimming pool.

**H+ :** Standard hotels, lodges or guesthouses, usually with twin or single rooms and en suite facilities. These are generally standard, no-frills hotels with adequate amenities and service standards. Whilst comfort levels are perfectly acceptable to most, please don't expect too much! These are often small, family run establishments.

**H :** Basic hotels, lodges or guesthouses (also village houses, mountain huts, hotels etc often come into this category). Accommodation may be communal or dorm-style, and WC / washing facilities are usually shared. Running hot and cold water may be unreliable or even unavailable. These can be the most rewarding and memorable places to stay, but comfort levels are low.

**Camping**

**C++ :** Comfortable, full service camping generally in permanent, fixed camps with walk-in tents, proper beds and often with en-suite facilities and other amenities such as dining area, bar, gardens and a swimming pool. Your bed-linen is provided.

**C+ :** Standard camping in private or public campsites, usually with WC and washing / showering facilities in a shared ablutions building. Typically in two person tents, and some level of participation is often required. Generally bed linen or sleeping bags are not provided.

**C :** Basic camping in wild camps where facilities / amenities may be limited or non-existent. Generally there is no running water, and we dig a temporary bush toilet. Two person tents are often used, but occasionally we sleep under the stars. Participation normally required and sleeping bags usually not provided.

**Note:** other accommodation, for example, aboard boats or on overnight sleeper trains is described individually at the appropriate point in the tour itinerary above.

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## PERSONAL EXPENSES

You'll also need some extra money to cover meals not included in tour price. Also allow for other sightseeing, souvenirs etc, and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

### Foreign Exchange

**Local Currency:** Egyptian Pound.

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** Cash can be obtained in the UK prior to travel, Euros, US\$ and £GBP are readily changeable.

**ATM Availability:** Cash can be accessed through ATM machines in major towns.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Credit cards are rarely accepted.

**Travellers Cheques:** You may find it useful to bring some Traveller's Cheques as a back up.

**Additional Information:** Scottish notes and Australian Travellers Cheques are not accepted in Egypt.

**Camera/Video Fees:** At some sites an additional camera charge of up to £2 per site may be payable. Video filming fees can be as much as £20 at some sites, so budget accordingly.

Up-to-date information re: global exchange rates can be obtained at <https://www.currency-express.com/explore/>

### Meal Plan

**Local Food and Drink:** 11 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 4 dinners are included on this trip; please be prepared to pay for all other meals. Prices quoted are correct as of the date this dossier was originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location and the prices below are given as an average guide only.

	UK	Egypt
Coffee/Tea	£1.20	£0.70
Soft drink	0.80	1.00
Bottle of water	0.80	1.00
Bottle of Beer	2.50	2.00
2 Course Meal*	10.00	6.00
3 Course Meal**	18.00	8.00
Bottle of wine	10.00	12.00

Note: £ = UK sterling, not Egyptian pounds.

\*Cheap local fare in a small cafe or restaurant.

\*\*Typical food in a simple reasonably comfortable mid-range restaurant.

### Tipping

**Local Staff:** In this area, tipping is a recognised part of life. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. We suggest you allow £22 per person for tipping. Your tour leader will account for any organised tipping.

**Tour Leader:** At your discretion you might also consider tipping your tour leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Other Sightseeing

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below in £GBP (ie. UK sterling, not Egyptian pounds) for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date this dossier was originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

**LUXOR** Sound & Light at Karnak Temple £13; Guided visit to Valley of the Queens & Deir al Medina £23; Balloon flight over West Bank adult £90 children £45 (minimum age 5 years and basket height is 1.25 metres high); entry to Tutankhamun's Tomb £9.

**ASWAN** Visit Nubian Museum £5; Dinner in Nubian Village £6.

**ABU SIMBEL** Excursion from Aswan by bus £40 or by air £125.

**CAIRO** Walking tour of Old Cairo and Khan el Khalili £15. Visit to the Solar Boat at Giza £6; Entrance to Mummies Room Exhibition at the Egyptian Museum £10 (adult), £5 (child), Sakara and Dashur pyramids £22.

**SAFAGA** Scuba diving with equipment for qualified divers (please bring certificate and log book) £60; Introductory dive £60; Bubblemaker (PADI) for children is usually available.

**ALEXANDRIA** Visit the port city famous for its library and seafood.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Seasonal Climate

Winter in Egypt is cool (particularly on the Nile) and dry, Nov-Mar average day temperature 18°C. Summer temperatures Apr-Oct average 32°C, but can rise to 40°C. Winter nights are cold in the desert. Water temperatures in winter and early spring in the Red Sea are low and as one would expect of coastal areas wind can be moderate to high.

Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

### Visa Requirements

A single entry tourist visa for Egypt is required by all nationalities. For British passport holders with British citizenship, Egyptian visas can be obtained conveniently and inexpensively on arrival at the airport. Alternatively, visas can be obtained through your travel agent or through Explore's visa service. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

### Vaccinations & Protection

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Though malaria does exist in Egypt it is not normally found in the areas in which we travel. For the most up to date advice please consult your travel clinic.

**Special Note:** Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

### Electric Supply and Plugs

For comprehensive information regarding voltages and plug types in use in the countries visited, follow the relevant link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Traveladvice/>

### Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all bookings. You must take your policy document with you on tour, as your tour leader will ask to see this at the start of the trip. Your documentation must state in writing that you are the named policyholder and that the cover is valid for your period of travel. Your policy document must also indicate that you have medical expenses and emergency repatriation cover and a 24-hour contact telephone number for your Insurance Company must be shown on your documentation in case of emergency. **If you are unable to provide all this information at the start of the trip you will not be allowed to join the trip.** If you have purchased Explore Insurance you should

carry the Master Certificate leaflet with you, which outlines the conditions of the policy together with a copy of your Confirmation Invoice, which is your proof of purchase of insurance. Explore Worldwide are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority.

### Know Before You Go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination including safety and security, local laws and customs, entry requirements and health. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Traveladvice/>

## PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

A complete list of clothing and personal gear is contained in Explore's 'General Information Booklet', available after a booking has been accepted. Here we make a few specific recommendations with regard to your tour.

**Luggage:** One main piece of luggage and a daysac. Total allowance: **20kgs/44lbs**.

**Clothing:** Pack as for 'Hot Conditions' between Apr-Oct. From Nov-Mar pack as for 'All Tours', as night temperatures can drop dramatically. Warm and windproof clothing will be needed at this time. You should also wear loose fitting trousers on the donkey trek and for ladies a sports bra may be useful.

**Please note:** Egypt is a Muslim country and it is important to dress with respect for local customs. Brief shorts/skirts should be avoided in towns and you should cover your head when entering a mosque. In more traditional towns and market areas we advise women and girls to wear long loose fitting trousers or skirts and shoulder covering to avoid unwanted attention. Men should also be aware that shorts are not generally worn by Egyptians.

**Footwear:** Comfortable shoes or trainers for sightseeing and donkey/camel rides; plus sandals.

**Equipment:** Bring a water bottle, insect repellent and a small torch for examining wall carvings. Sunhat, high factor sunscreen and sunglasses are essential. Snorkelling equipment can be supplied but you may prefer to bring your own although childrens masks and snorkels can be purchased locally. Please note that on the donkey trek and the camel trek we cannot supply hard hats – if head protection is felt to be necessary please bring your own with you to Egypt, as hard hats are not available to buy locally.

### Need help on clothing or equipment?

Then we suggest you contact Nomad Travel, our equipment partner, who specialise in kitting people out for adventurous travel. You receive a special 10% discount in-store or online. Visit one of their stores, phone 0845 260 0044, or visit their website [www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore) for further information.

### RAMADAN 2010

**11th August – 9th September**

**Please note** that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-Muslims throughout the day in most countries.

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