

# EXPLORE!

## TRIP NOTES



### Sudan: Highlights of Ancient Nubia (BSU 2017)



TRIPDURATION  
**12**  
DAYS



**Tour Style:** Classic

**Tour Pace:** Full On

**Tour Type:** Small Groups

**Accommodation**

**Grade:** Standard

**Trip Code:** BSU

#### Trip Highlights - Sudan: Highlights of Ancient Nubia

- ✓ Temples & Pyramids - Discover the amazing Pharaonic architecture of northern Sudan - there are more pyramids here than in Egypt.
- ✓ Nubian hospitality - Enjoy a traditional welcome as guests in the village of Soleb.
- ✓ Desert landscapes - Get off the beaten track in this little visited tourist destination.
- ✓ Nile - Take an exhilarating cruise along the world's longest river to discover its hidden treasures.

#### Trip Essentials

**Accommodation:** 3 nights Standard Hotel  
1 night Simple Camping  
2 nights Simple Village House  
3 nights Standard Guesthouse  
2 nights Standard Tented Camp

**Included Meals:** 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 8 dinners

**Start Point:** Join trip: Khartoum

**End Point:** Trip ends: Khartoum

**Transport:** 4WD, Boat

**Countries:** Sudan

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## Sudan: Highlights of Ancient Nubia

Travelling through the scenic Nile Valley and into the desert we discover Sudan, a country with more pyramids than Egypt and some of the friendliest people on the planet. We visit well-preserved sandstone temples, tombs engraved with images of the pharaohs and the many pyramids of the Royal Necropolis of Meroe. We will experience the warm hospitality of the Nubian people and stay in a traditional village house.

### Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

### Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

### Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

### Tour Pace: Full On

These fast paced tours move on quickly from place to place and with lots of early starts and long busy days, they're packed with experiences.

## Your trip itinerary

### Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

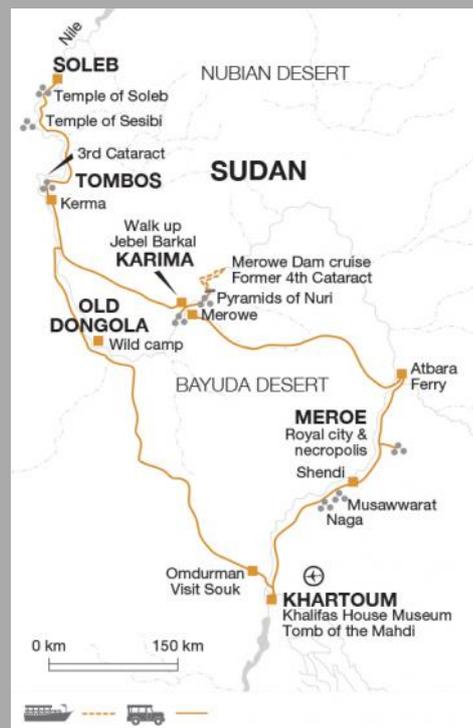
### Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

### DAY 1 Join tour in Khartoum

Our tour begins in Khartoum, Sudan's vibrant capital city which comprises of both a permanent and nomadic population. Khartoum is located at the confluence of the White and Blue Nile and the point where the two rivers converge is called Al-Mogran. It is said that the 2 different colours of the river branches can be seen before they meet to feed the iconic Nile river.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**



 **Included Meals:** None

## DAY 2 Omdurman Souk and lunch on the Nile

Many flights arrive into Khartoum in the early hours of the morning. For those arriving on one of these flights that will be time to freshen up and a short sleep before we begin our exploration of the city. We begin at one of the most iconic spots in the city - Al-Morgan, the confluence of the White and Blue Nile where the importance of the river and the tales of exploration that surround it give this plot of understated farmland a real feeling of history and adventure. It's then a short journey to the tomb and small museum of the Mahdi, Mohammed Ahmed, the Islamic leader of the Sudan who fought in 1885 against General Gordon and English colonisation. There are some wonderful artefacts in the museum. After lunch, where we get our first taste of Sudanese food in a local restaurant that overlooks the Nile, we make the short drive to Omdurman. Former capital city of Sudan, Omdurman is famed for its huge colourful souk. We end today in the Archaeological Museum, with its reconstructed temples, before returning to our hotel on the banks of the Nile. We stay in the Hotel Grand Holiday Villas, a comfortable colonial era hotel.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 3 Visit of Coptic Christian Temples at Old Dongola

After breakfast we prepare to leave Khartoum, meeting the local crew of drivers and a chef who load up our 4WD vehicles. For the remainder of the trip we typically travel in comfortable Toyota Landcruisers with a maximum of 5 people, including the driver per vehicle. 4WDs are the best way to travel through the country, as many of our journeys combine tar and off-road driving. Departing Khartoum we leave behind a city that is free from the international stores and restaurants found in so many destinations around the world. Whilst this has been undoubtedly influenced by UN sanctions it does feel a visit to Khartoum is like stepping back in time. For the vast majority of today the drive is along good quality tarred roads. Once out of the city traffic is light, and it doesn't take long to get our first glimpse of the Nubian Desert. Initially the road takes us through flat desert scrub. Along the way we pass a number of commercial date plantations and small settlements. We will stop for a chai at one of the small cafes that appear intermittently along the road. These serve as a refreshment stop for the buses and trucks which are heading to and from the capital, and serve simple food and drinks. Lunch will be taken in one of these cafes and is prepared by our own chef who travels with us. Typically lunch will consist of a combination of salad, rice, stews, meat or fish complemented perhaps with fowl (a local bean dish) and fresh bread from the local restaurant along with fruit for desert. We continue our journey crossing the Nile then going off road past the occasional large crescent dune before reaching the ruins of ancient Old Dongola. From the 7th to 14th centuries Old Dongola was the ancient capital of the Makuria Christian capital. Whilst little remains of the former glory, the site is dominated by the Throne Hall, which was eventually converted to a mosque and pillars from a 7th century church. Located near the Nile the site is still used as a burial spot today; there are a number of large conical brick tombs which stand alongside more simple graves in this tranquil desert setting. After visiting the site we travel for the first time through small Nubian villages before heading into the desert and look for a campsite amongst the dunes. We camp in 2 man dome tents, which the crew will help assemble, although you may wish just to lay under the stars. Soft mattresses are provided, although you should bring a sleeping bag (unless you have hired one in advance) and a pillow. Our cook will prepare a meal under the desert skies; it truly is a wonderful experience. Food is served at a table; chairs are carried to make the camping experience as comfortable as possible. A typical dinner would be soup, a meat or chicken dish, served with chips, salads or vegetable and fruit.

Overnight: **Simple Camping**  
**Your own tent available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 4 Temple of Soleb and overnight stay in Nubian house

We awake around sunrise, and can really appreciate the beauty of the desert landscape. After a hearty breakfast of crepes or omelette, cake and fruit we pack up camp and continue our exploration of this fabulous region. Heading back towards the Nile we once again drive through small villages and will stop off at one of the Nubian houses. Our groups visit a house owned by a retired teacher, Hossan and his wife, Zakaia. Here we will be served Nubian coffee and meet family members offering an insight into life in rural Sudan. Later on today we drive across the Dongola bridge and drive north on the tar road to reach Soleb. Located on the edge of what is a sleepy village at the Temple of Soleb we spend time at what is considered to be one of, if not the most beautiful Egyptian temple in Sudan. Standing as a testimony of the New Kingdom in Nubia, its many walls are rich in hieroglyphic inscriptions and bas-relief figures. Our base for this evening is only a short walk from the temple as we stay in a traditional house on the edge of the village. Here the population speaks a different language from the Arabs and the Islamic religion is not as 'strict' as in other regions of northern Sudan. The women don't cover their faces and readily speak to foreigners. Until recently many of the houses were painted and decorated with intricate patterns and flowers and although patterns are still painted within the houses, they are now less prevalent on the outside. Enthusiastic hospitality abounds - the local Nubian people will often invite visitors into their homes to share a meal or a cup of spiced tea. We stay in a large Nubian house where one of the buildings has been set up for travellers. The house consists of a number of large rooms which are very simply furnished. Each room contains from one to six beds. Often we use rooms on a twin-share basis, depending upon group size and whether others are using the rest house. For those who prefer sleeping under the stars you are welcome to put your tent up in the courtyard. There is a toilet block with four clean squat toilets and a shower block with two bucket showers. The water is refreshingly cool! There is generator electricity so camera batteries can be charged. Dinner is prepared by our own cook tonight.

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Overnight: **Simple Village House**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 5 Visit the Temple of Sesibi, experience Sudanese hospitality

Those up early can wander back to the Temple of Soleb for photos in the early morning light, before we begin our journey south. Our first stop is a brief one at the remains of the Temple of Sesibi. Linked to Egypt historically, this part of Sudan seems very similar yet paradoxically is very different to southern Egypt. One of the noticeable differences is the density of people is a lot less in Sudan. Many of the villages that we drive through seem quiet, or even abandoned a reflection of the recently migration of families to Khartoum to look for work. We make our first crossing of the Nile by local ferry / pontoon. Although bridges are now being built, primarily with Chinese investments, these ferries remain important in keeping Sudan connected. Once across the Nile we continue on an asphalt road for a short distance. At one point the road cuts through the path of the old railway line constructed by General Kitchener. Now all that remains is an embankment that drifts away in the horizon, but is a poignant reminder of the turbulent history of Sudan. Eventually, heading off road again, we reach the granite boulders of the Third Cataract which used to be the third huge obstacle that the ancient Egyptians had to face when trying to sail on the Nile River. In Sebu, right on the river bank of the Nile it is possible to visit one of the richest sites of rock engraving in Sudan with hundreds of images carved from prehistoric to Egyptian times. Not far from here, among the rocks near the village of Tombos, there are the granite quarries and the remains of a huge statue of the King Taharqa, simply left there in the desert 3000 years ago. We spend this evening in Tombos, in a Nubian house. There are a number of rooms within the house, which usually have two beds. Once again, they are very simply furnished. There are a couple of western-style toilets and cold water showers. At certain times of the year part of the house is occupied by archaeologists who are working on projects in the area who can offer further insights into the region.

Overnight: **Simple Village House**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 6 Exploring the mud temple Deffufas of Kerma

This morning we continue to move south to the ancient city of Kerma, travelling both on and then off-road. Kerma was a city that was first settled in 2400BC. A prosperous city it was at its most powerful almost 4000 years ago when Kerma's rulers took advantage of political problems in Egypt to extend their rule to Aswan. The site is currently being worked upon by a team of archaeologists, who are unearthing more and more of the city. The most prominent remaining buildings are the famous Deffufas, the mud brick temples where ceremonies were performed. There are the east and west Deffufas, both temples very different in size and repair but incredibly fascinating. The Western Deffufa is reputed to be the second largest ancient building in Africa, only behind the Cheops Pyramid in Cairo. There is also a small museum at the site which is home to the 7 statues of the Black Pharaohs. We will then drive east to cross the Nubian Desert and make our way Karima, which is by far the largest settlement since leaving Khartoum. We stay on the very edge of town in the Nubian Resthouse, a comfortable hotel which overlooks Jebel Barkal. The hotel is built in the style of a traditional rest house, around a beautiful garden. Wi-fi is intermittently available. As sun sets there's the opportunity to take a walk and to watch the sun setting over nearby pyramids.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**

**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 7 Petrified forest and sunset trip to Jebel Barkal

Karima lies at the foot of the Jebel Barkal. This landmark in the Nubian Desert, Jebel Barkal can be seen from many kilometres away whilst still in the open desert. At the foot of this wonderful isolated red sandstone mountain, considered holy since the ancient times, there is a large temple dedicated to the Pharaohs of the New Reign. This morning there is the option to take a walk to the summit of the mountain for sunrise. Heading up a sandy path it takes 10-15 minutes to reach the top of the hill. From the top there are fantastic views across the Nile, as well as a fantastic view of the temple below. After lunch we take a short drive to the village of El Kurru where there is the necropolis of the ancient capital, Napata. Here we visit a tomb, which was excavated in the rock under pyramids - partially collapsed - which is totally decorated with images of the Pharaoh, of the gods and multicolour hieroglyphic inscriptions. Before returning to Karima we take a short side trip through the Nubian desert and visit a petrified forest with thousands of fossilised trunks. This evening there is the opportunity to take a sunset walk to Jebel Barkal.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**

**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 8 Nile cruise and afternoon visit of the Pyramids of Nuri

After breakfast, we visit the market in Karima, where we get a real insight into the everyday life of the Sudanese people. The real charm of the market, and indeed Sudan is that as it has been relatively untouched by tourism there is a real authenticity to the experience. One of the specialities of this market is dried dates which make a delicious snack for the remainder of the journey. Following on from time here we once again head through the Nubian Desert with its level evenness, its sand stretches and its soft undulation. It is an almost sterile area where no vegetation survives. Until 2008 this drive would take you to the beautiful granite

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rocky formations of the fourth Cataract where the Nile ran turbulently among rocks forming rapids and a beautiful wild landscape, making navigation of the river very difficult. However in April 2008 the new Dam of Merowee was completed and following flooding an artificial lake was created. We take a cruise on the Nile taking the opportunity to walk on the small islands to explore the sandy beaches along the river edges. In the afternoon we cross the Nile and spend time at the Pyramids of Nuri, located a short drive from Karima. Burial place of Taharqa, recognised as perhaps the most powerful ruler of Sudan the pyramids here are amongst the oldest in Sudan and have their very own evocative charm.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 9 Driving through the Bayuda Desert to Meroe

Today we cross the desert on a journey that takes us to perhaps the most famous pyramids in Sudan at Meroe. We cross the Nile again this morning and journey across the Bayuda desert. There is a combination of driving on asphalt and desert trails. At times we travel through flat desert scenery, punctuated with the occasional truck stop. We take the opportunity to visit a nomadic family, who have now settled in a fixed camp and then continue before hitting the asphalt road for 100kms and then back on to desert trails to reconnect with the Nile. This total journey is likely to take around 7 hours. If we are lucky during one of our desert crossings we may see Hassania nomads in the desert. They still live the true nomadic lifestyle and gather at desert wells to collect water. Coming across such a group is like a surreal, yet humbling step back in time. Men, women and children work with donkeys to extract the water from the deep wells. Water is then loaded onto camels and taken to the desert camps. Once we reach the Nile, a pontoon (local ferry) is used to cross before we reach our fixed camp at Meroe. Tonight's accommodation is in fixed, comfortable tents. The tents are the large African safari style ones with 'proper' beds in them, along with a dressing table and a chair. There is generator produced electricity, so phones and cameras can be charged. There is wi-fi in the main building, which houses a restaurant. The tents are not en-suite, although each tent has its own separate toilet and shower located in blocks which stand behind the tents.

Overnight: **Standard Tented Camp**  
**Your own tent available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 10 Explore the Royal Necropolis and the Royal City of Meroe

The Royal Necropolis of Meroe is located about 3 km from the Nile on hills covered by yellow sand dunes. It is a short drive across the desert from the camp - the adventurous may wish to walk from the camp, as the pyramids are clearly visible. Alternatively it is possible to take a camel for the 2km journey! Several pyramids stand out with their sharp shapes against the clear sky. Nubian pyramids have no mortuary room inside; the real tomb is dug inside the rock below and is connected with the outside with an inclined tunnel with a small temple at its entrance. The walls are fully decorated with bas-reliefs that show the King's life and the gods. There is for everyone the option to take a camel ride between pyramids. In the afternoon we move along the Nile to visit the ruins of the royal city. The excavations confirm that the town of Meroe used to cover a large area and the royal city was located in a central position, surrounded by suburbs and a boundary wall. Most of the area where the city is located, formed by many small hills covered by red clay fragments, has still to be excavated by the archaeologists, and may be out of bounds when visiting.

Overnight: **Standard Tented Camp**  
**Your own tent available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 11 Drive through the desert to temples at Naga, return to Khartoum

This morning we pack up our vehicles for the final time and join the asphalt road to Khartoum. After about an hour we make a detour once again through the desert and head to Musawwarat El Sufra where we'll visit the Elephant and Lion Temples. Seemingly located in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by desert there is a real sense of adventure whilst standing at these temples. We then move on to the ancient site of Naga. Here we see the temple of Apedemak (1st century AD), a beautiful sandstone building with walls engraved with the images of the Meroitic Kings and gods. Nearby is another temple, in Greek-Roman style, called 'Kiosk', and another with the remains of statues of rams which was recently discovered in the sands by a German archaeological mission. This afternoon we return to the capital, Khartoum. It is noticeable that the road, which links the capital with Port Said is much busier, the pretty desert scenery becomes flat and scrub-like and more and more built up. Many flights departing Khartoum do so in the early hours of tomorrow morning, so your transfer to the airport could be around midnight.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 12 Tour ends in Khartoum

Our tour ends today in Khartoum after breakfast.

## Accommodation and Meals

### Food & Drink

Included meals: 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 8 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

## Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

### Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

#### Sudan

**Lunch £:** 5.00

**Dinner £:** 16.00

### Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

#### Sudan

**Water £:** 1.00 Please note alcohol is illegal in Sudan and it is not permitted to bring it in the country or to buy locally.

### Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below 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 these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

### Optional Excursions

Meroe - Camel Riding €10

Khartoum - Nuba Wrestling - entry €1pp. Minivan with maximum 6 seats and non English speaking driver €45.00 per vehicle. Bus with maximum 20 seats and non English speaking driver €100.00 per vehicle. English speaking guide for the group €40.00

There is a fee of \$20USD/€19Euros to use a video camera at all historical sites.

### Tipping - Tour Leader

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

### Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly you should allow US\$ 35 tipping on this tour.

### Foreign Exchange

#### Sudan

**ATM Availability:** Limited to Khartoum and for Sudanese registered cards only.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Limited to Sudanese registered cards only.

**Travellers Cheques:** Not recommended.

**Local Currency:** Sudanese Pounds

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** It is advisable to take your spending money in USD cash.

**Where to Exchange:** Khartoum airport and hotel

## Joining your Trip

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at [www.explore.co.uk](http://www.explore.co.uk), in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Important Information

### Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers [www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore](http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore) who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

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### Travel Aware

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

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We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting [cr@explore.co.uk](mailto:cr@explore.co.uk) or 01252 379438.

## Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

## Visa Information

Sudan: Visas are required by UK citizens and must be obtained prior to departure. Visas are required by New Zealand, Australia, USA and Canada citizens and can be obtained prior to departure from your embassy of residence or can be obtained on arrival at Khartoum International airport. Please contact us for details of the process for visas on arrival. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. Visas for UK citizens may be obtained through the Sudanese Embassy in London.

Your passport must have 6 months validity, 2 consecutive empty pages and must not have an Israeli stamp. An authorisation is necessary to obtain your visa. Passport details for each client are required by Explore 7 weeks prior to the tour start date. Our local partners then proceed to gain authorisation in Khartoum and provide a letter of invitation. Once authorisation has been obtained, passports should be sent to the Sudanese Embassy in London together with the completed visa form and 3 passport size photographs.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

## Vaccinations & Protection

### Sudan

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Tetanus and Typhoid. During winter months there are generally very few mosquitos in northern Sudan and the risk of Malaria is regarded as low. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against Malaria. 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. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

## Preparing for your Trip

### Climate

#### Sudan

Northern Sudan has a hot desert climate with a high variance between day and night. Winter months provide the best time to travel, from October to the end of April. The weather during this period is dry and sunny. October/November and March/April is around 30-35C during the day, dropping to 12-18C at night. December to February is around 25-30C during the day and 5-10C at night.

### Clothing

Take some warm clothes and a fleece for chilly desert nights in the winter, as temperatures drop sharply. Knee length shorts are acceptable for men in northern Sudan, but not for women. Nevertheless, dress sensitively in accordance with Muslim traditions and avoid wearing revealing clothing, particularly in rural areas. Legs should be covered when entering a mosque and women must also cover their heads.

### Equipment

You should bring a 2/3 season sleeping bag, inflatable pillow, water bottle, insect repellent, sunhat, sunglasses, sunscreen and a head torch. Foam sleeping mats are provided. Please note during the nights spent Wild Camping the only washing facilities are a bucket and water for freshening up, there are no showers or proper toilets.

### Footwear

Comfortable shoes/trainers or desert boots and sandals.

### Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage which should be a soft bag or holdall, not a suitcase, plus daypack. As you are expected to carry your own luggage, we recommend that you pack light.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

## General Information

### Country details

#### Sudan

**Population:** 30,894,000

**Size of Country:** 1,886,068 sq km

**Major Language:** Arabic, English

**Religion:** Islam

**Time Difference to GMT:** +3

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## Electric Supply & Plugs

### Sudan

3 Pin Round

## Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

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### Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

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### Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group ([www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

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## Booking Your Holiday

### Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

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### Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-

refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

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### **100% No Surcharge Guarantee**

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

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### **Trip Itinerary Versions**

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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