

PREPARING FOR YOUR ADVENTURE TO EGYPT & THE MIDDLE EAST

It's not long now until you'll be on your way to the Middle East! The information provided below is to help you prepare for travel to this incredible part of the world and to ensure you have the best possible holiday.

SOME INFORMATION ON OUR GUIDES

Each country we visit in the Middle East has their own unique culture and intriguing history, making each one an incredibly interesting and fascinating destination in its own right. With this in mind, we prefer to use specialised guides in each country. While all our guides and Egyptologists are well-trained and fully qualified, it's their love and passion for their country that makes the history and special culture come alive, in turn, making your touring experience unforgettable for all the right reasons!

Egypt - Most Egyptologists have an area of expertise so at times you may have separate Egyptologist guides for Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt but generally there will be one who covers both.

Jordan - Usually, the same expert guide will travel with you throughout Jordan. For smaller groups (max 4 people), an English-speaking driver and local guides will be used.

Israel - Regardless of the group size, the same professional guide will travel with you throughout Israel.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS

Your guide is not there simply to move you around from place to place... in fact, they are a wealth of knowledge about the area you are visiting! Many have grown up in the region and have studied hard to become a tour guide and are beyond proud to share their local area with you.

FITNESS

Let's talk fitness... a Bunnik Tour is for independently minded travellers with good levels of mobility. We want to ensure that all our guests enjoy their trip, not struggle through it. Our Middle East tours are designed to soak in as much of the local atmosphere as possible, which will usually involve a walking tour of several hours, often over uneven streets, up and down stairs, inclines, narrow walkways and rugged terrain. Your ability to walk unaided for this length of time, and also to be able to carry your own luggage is imperative. Our firm fitness guidelines are for your safety, as well as the safety of your fellow travellers. Further details can be found on our website www.bunniktours.com.au under the 'Info' banner.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES & EXPECTATIONS

Every country we visit will have its own unique cultural differences that make travel such a wonderful, mind broadening experience. In the Middle East, the cultural differences can be dramatic (even between countries), and we find that they can cause quite a bit of culture shock, so it helps to be prepared for the unexpected! Here, it also pays to be more careful with water cleanliness and food hygiene.

CROSSING THE BORDER BETWEEN ISRAEL & JORDAN

When we cross between Israel and Jordan, it is necessary to complete a land border crossing. This process involves passing through check points and completing procedures for both countries and travelling by coach between each border post. In some circumstances, this process can take some time, depending on the number of people crossing the border at any given time. Please note at land border crossings that taking any photographs or videos is considered illegal and if caught doing so, you can find yourself in very hot water with the local border officials.

A border tax will be payable and it is important to have the correct denominations of notes readily available. Your guide will advise you of the details.

INTERNAL FLIGHTS IN EGYPT & THE MIDDLE EAST

When flying internally in Egypt, depending on the schedule, Bunnik Tours uses either Egypt Air or Nile Air. Like any airline, schedules and timings are always subject to change, however these particular airlines are notorious for making last minute changes. We book and secure flights to ensure the best possibility of reaching our next destination in plenty of time and with minimal impact to our itinerary, just in case there is a change to our flight time. Please understand that any unforeseen airline changes or cancellations are out of our hands.

NILE CRUISES

It's important to understand that cruising on the Nile is not like river cruising in Europe for several reasons. Due to the relatively short distance between the cities of Luxor and Aswan, extended stops to visit temples and sights along the way are incorporated into the itinerary, reducing the actual cruising time. You might also find that at each destination, there are many ships that park alongside each other. This means it may be necessary to walk through other vessels when disembarking and embarking, which is always a fun experience! Lastly, Nile cruise ships are rated according to local Egyptian standard.

DOLLARS & SENSE

Here at Bunnik Tours, we like to be prepared, so we recommend departing with at least a small amount of cash in the local currencies of the destinations you are visiting. USD is another good option to take with you. Alternatively, you can exchange some money at the arrival airport, however, the exchange rates may not be as competitive. If you need to exchange more money later in the trip, your tour director will be able to advise you on the best places to change money.

We also recommend getting small denominations in case you have to pay to use a public toilet, or to buy yourself a drink or a snack from a local vendor.

ALCOHOL

It is common in Jordan, particularly at the camp in Wadi Rum, for alcohol not to be served. However, should you wish to enjoy some alcoholic beverages at these destinations, please ask your guide if it would be possible to stop at a local bottle shop to purchase supplies (at your own expense).

WATER & SOFT DRINKS IN EGYPT & THE MIDDLE EAST

Unfortunately, unless you want a sore tummy, tap water is not safe to drink in the Middle East. Bottled water and other beverages are sold almost everywhere. Generally speaking, you will be provided with a bottle of water upon arrival from your flight and sometimes one is provided per person in your hotel room. Water and soft drinks on board the Nile Cruise are available for purchase and will be added to your account to be finalised upon disembarkation.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

We suggest informing your Travel Specialist of any dietary restrictions you may have prior to departure. It is also helpful to translate your dietary requirements into the local language of your destination (Google Translate is a handy tool for this). Keeping a printed or photographed copy of the translation can aid in communicating your needs to waiting staff. It's important to keep in mind that local restaurants may have difficulty catering to specific dietary needs, especially gluten-free, celiac or vegan preferences. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that all meals served will be free from allergens.

TEA & COFFEE MAKING FACILITIES

Many hotels in the Middle East do not provide tea and coffee making facilities in your room. If you would like to enjoy a tea or coffee in your room, we suggest packing a travel kettle or portable heat immersion element along with your favourite teabags and coffee.

OPTIONAL TOURS

The optional tours offered in the Middle East are a collection of what can be enjoyed during your free time in various destinations, but this is time permitting and they are not guaranteed. Should something especially interest you, we recommend booking an additional night or two either before or after your tour, to guarantee you have the time available. All prices listed are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

WI-FI

In most hotels there will be Wi-Fi available free of charge. On board the Nile cruise ships, Wi-Fi is available, however the quality of connection is not guaranteed and the rate can be a hefty \$20 US per day.

WHISPERS

Depending on the destination or attraction we are visiting, your tour director may use the Whisper technology system. Each person is provided with a small device and earphones, allowing the tour director to speak into a small microphone that you can adjust to your preferred volume. This ensures that everyone can hear the information, regardless of where you are standing in relation to the guide, and also prevents disturbing other visitors.

ISSUES ON TOUR

Should you encounter any issues whilst on tour, we encourage you to discuss it with your tour director or contact Bunnik Tours as soon as possible. Any problems are best discussed and rectified at the time they occur to ensure you and everyone else can enjoy their time on tour.

CAMERA & VIDEO FEES

We have found that sometimes fees can apply for taking photos or videos (using cameras and mobile phones) at certain tourist sites. The fees are dependent on the location and can be paid in the local currency. Your guide can assist you with this.

SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT IN JORDAN

In recent years, authorities have enforced restrictions on visitors taking surveillance equipment into Jordan, specifically binoculars. For security reasons, binoculars will be subject to inspection by Jordan Border Protection and may be confiscated by officials if deemed to be particularly high powered.

TOUR FACTS & TIPS

For each country we visit, we've put together some handy facts and tips on things like local etiquette, what to wear, currency and dining. Head to our [Tour Facts & Tips page](#) to find out more.

KEEP AN OPEN MIND!

To get the best out of your holiday, keep an open mind. The best memories come your way when you take everything in your stride and enjoy the unique experience of travelling through some of the most interesting places in the world.

We wish you a truly wonderful journey in this fascinating part of the world!



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