

INTERNATIONAL CITY TOURS

UNIVERSITY CAREER ACTION NETWORK



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Cairo

City Overview

Infohub.com: <http://www.infohub.com/Destinations/Africa-&-Middle-East/Egypt/Cairo/>

TripAdvisor.com: <http://www.tripadvisor.com/Tourism-g294201-Cairo-Vacations.html>

Recognized as the social and commercial “hub” of Egypt, Cairo is the most densely populated city in the Islamic world. Culturally and commercially vibrant, the city retains much of its monumental ancient heritage as one of the cradles of civilization, yet is also awash in a modern and cosmopolitan mix of Arab, European and African influence. Contradictions abound as visitors are faced with the shocking contrasts of urban wealth and squalor; modern, expansive areas and crowded, antiquated neighborhoods. Home to about 16 million people, the city is also a gathering place for thousands of commuters from its rural outskirts.

The city boasts a sharp divide between the ancient and modern influences that comprise it. The core area, developed on the model of Paris in the 19th century, is marked by wide boulevards, public gardens, and open spaces. While this part of Cairo is dominated by government buildings and modern architecture, the three oldest areas constitute thickly populated slums surrounding the Western core, that half belies its own haphazard and gradual growth over the centuries. Comprised of small lanes and crowded squares, this ancient part of the city holds many of the historic sites, landmarks, and ancient mosques that Cairo is known for.

History

The city’s geography serves as an indication of its rich and varied history. Contrary to popular knowledge, Cairo did not actually exist during the time of the pharaohs, but first emerged as a military encampment in 641 AD founded by Muslim conquerors. Cairo is a conglomeration of approximately half a dozen such cities and fortresses, built up and in turn destroyed by successive dynasties over the course of centuries. During the Middle Ages, the city was expanded and transformed to eventually become a center of trade between West and East and one of the hubs of Muslim culture. After falling to the Ottoman Turks in 1517, Cairo was later seized by Napoleon in 1798, and with the rest of Egypt, underwent periods of French and British occupation until a coup in 1952.

Culture

Cairo is awash in culture, ranging from the celebration of its ancient heritage to all the vibrancy a modern and populous city can afford. Possessing of numerous museums and ancient ruins, Cairo is undoubtedly one of the world’s foremost havens for history buffs, with its remnant quarters of a medieval city and its more than 400 historic monuments. Popular attractions include the famous Egyptian Museum (home to over 100,000 antiquities), and the Pyramids of Giza (on the outskirts of the city).

Cairo has a thriving arts community and boasts numerous cultural institutions such as the Cairo Opera House and Symphony Orchestra and serves as a hub for Arabic cinema, contemporary local music and the performing arts. Cairo also possesses numerous bazaars and street markets, abundant international and local cuisine and numerous discos, restaurants and nightclubs.

Weather

TourEgypt.net: <http://www.touregypt.net/climate.htm>

Situated in the northern region of Egypt, Cairo experiences more moderate weather conditions than some of the southern desert regions. Still, it is frequently held that Cairo experiences only two seasons: about eight months of summer and four of winter. The summers tend to be hot and humid in Cairo and the city is known to swelter in August. Winters are mild with some rain and autumn and spring are brief. Between March and April, however, Cairo is occasionally subject to the khamseen, a dry and very dusty wind storm which blows in from the Western Desert. Below is a chart with the range of average temperatures in Cairo year round.

Cairo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
°F												
Average	47/66	48/69	52/75	56/83	63/90	68/95	71/96	71/95	68/89	64/86	54/75	51/69
Min/Max												

Exchange Rates

The currency in Egypt is the Egyptian Pound (£E) which is made up of 100 piastres. Currency notes are in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 Egyptian pounds. Coins are available in 5, 10, 20, 25, and 50 piastres.

According to the [Central Bank of Egypt](#), as of March 22, 2005, 1 U.S. dollar exchanged for 5.78 Egyptian pound and 1 Euro exchanged for 7.63 Egyptian pounds. The Egyptian currency is called Genaeh in Arabic. The exchange rate fluctuates, however; visitors should get updated information by visiting the Central Bank's website or by using the [currency converter](#).

[Worldtravel.Com](#) advises that visitors take travelers checks in US Dollars, Pounds or Euros to avoid additional exchange rate charges. Banks are usually closed on Friday and Saturday, but private exchange bureaux, called Forex, are open daily. Cairo branches of the Egyptian British Bank and Banque Misr now have ATMs available that accept Visa, Mastercard and Cirrus. Banks are unwilling to accept US \$100 notes issued before 1992.

Costs of Living

It is possible to live comfortably on an Egyptian salary, and more so for those who are paid in foreign currencies. For deciphering the complexities of living, working, and enjoying life in one of the world's most exciting and dauntingly complex mega-cities, get a copy of [Cairo: The Practical Guide 2004](#), by Claire E. Francy (The American Univ. in Cairo Press, \$15.95). [Lonely Planet Egypt](#), available at [Amazon.com](#), also offers detailed maps and living guides on Egypt.

Job/Internship Search

Job Boards: General Job Search

Transitions Abroad (an excellent article for foreigners seeking work in Cairo):
http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0503/work_in_egypt.shtml

American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt- Recruitment Center
<http://www.amcham.org.eg/HR/Recruitment/Recruitment.asp>

Egypt Jobs
<http://www.egypt.jobs.com>

Career Mideast
<http://www.careermideast.com/>

IDEALIST: Search for non-profit organizations and jobs in Egypt.
www.idealists.org

International Monster: Select going to Middle East, and then sort results by keyword, Cairo.
(Mostly IT and Engineering jobs) <http://workabroad.monster.com/>

Job Boards: Schools

Cairo American College www.cacegypt.org

British International School Cairo www.bisc.edu.eg

American International School www.esolonline.com

New Cairo British International School www.ncbis.org

Maadi British International School www.mbisegypt.com

The Center for Adult and Continuing Education of the American University in Cairo
CACEstudent.aucegypt.edu

Berlitz School of Languages www.berlitz.com

Amideast www.amideast.org

The British Council, (includes administrative positions) <http://www.britishcouncil.org/egypt>

Job Boards: NGOs

Ford Foundation www.fordfound.org/employment

USAID www.usaid.gov/careers

AmidEast www.amideast.org/employment/staff

UN High Commission for Refugees www.unhcr.org

Refugee Legal Aid www.aucegypt.edu/academic/fmrs/affiliation/affiliationopp.html

Binational Fulbright Commission www.fulbright-egypt.org

American Research Center www.arce.org (posts fellowships)

Internship Boards

Intern Abroad
<http://www.internabroad.com/listingsp3.cfm/listing/7410>

Students visiting from the U.S. often work for the local English language [newspapers](#).

UN High Commission for Refugees
www.unhcr.org

Refugee Legal Aid

www.aucegypt.edu/caademic/fmrs/affiliation/affiliationopp.html

Temp Agencies

Renard Staffing
www.renard-international.com

Employers by Industry

The American University in Cairo has an excellent list of employers:
http://caps.aucegypt.edu/employers/employers_hof.html
Egypt Jobs.com: <http://www.egypt.jobs.com/>

The Cairo Yellow Pages, listing many businesses in Cairo, is available online at
www.egyptyellowpages.com.eg.

[Kompass](#) enables you to do basic research on companies all over the world. You may not find tons of information on any given company, but it's a great tool for getting some of the basic info: names of companies in certain industries in a country or region, numbers of employees, addresses and executive teams. Once you have these bits of data, you may be able to find more by doing a search on [Google](#).

Egypt Business Directory Guide
<http://www.egyptembassy.us/>

American Companies

The American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt has a great list of companies:
http://www.amcham.org.eg/membership/membersdatabase/members_database.asp

CV and Resume Writing

Egyptian resumes or CVs contain personal information that American resumes do not. In addition to the American categories traditionally on a resume, Egyptian resumes include the categories of gender, date of birth, country of nationality, marital status, military status, driving status, and educational grades received. Below is a sample Egyptian CV.

SAMPLE EGYPTIAN CV

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Yaro Mohamed Atiz
Gender: Female
Date of Birth: 7 - July - 1982
Country of Nationality: Egypt
Address: 37 el Etehad St. from road 12 Maadi
Country: Egypt
City: Cairo
District: Maadi
Tel: 023599637
Mobile: 0102556597
E-mail: yatiz@mail.com
Marital Status: Single
Military Status: Not applicable
Car owner: Yes

EDUCATION

University: Cairo University
Faculty: Commerce And Business Administration
Major: Accounting/ English
Degree: BSC
Year: 2005
Grade: Pass

SKILLS

Languages: English, Excellent
French, Excellent
Arabic, Excellent
Computer Skills: Windows 98 XP, MS Office

WORK EXPERIENCE

Total years of experience: 0-1 (new graduate)
Job Title: Customer Service Representative
Employer: Cable Network Egypt (CNE)
From: January - 2004
To: Current
Job Description: Handling customers' calls. Solving their problems (credit card problems, technical problems). Dealing with complaints.
Recruiting new customers for cable channels.
Working Hours: 60 hrs a week.

Job Title: French and English Teacher
Employer: Children First School
From: June - 2002
To: July - 2002
Job Description: Teaching French and English.
Working Hours: 8am till 4pm 6 days a week.

Industry Overview

Cairo is known for its manufacturing industries and the production of cotton textiles and processed agricultural products that include fruits, vegetables, sugarcane and tobacco. Large-scale industrialization took place mid-century, and Cairo's factories now produce iron and steel, chemicals, plastics, and consumer goods. Traditional industries remain, however, and merchants thrive by selling handcrafted art and local goods.

Cairo is also the central Egyptian center for modern business and finance. It contains most of Egypt's important banks, shipping companies, and airlines. In addition, about a third of all recreation industries, cafés, restaurants, and hotels in the country are concentrated in Cairo. There are few jobs for foreigners outside of Cairo. Jobs fall into two categories, those paid in local currency, the Genaeh or Egyptian pound, and those paid in foreign currencies.

The Egyptian job seeker will need to focus his or her efforts on networking, as the job market primarily operates through word of mouth. Classified ads are non-existent, and the website listings for Cairo are few. The exchange of business cards (one side in English, one side in Arabic) is a common social custom. Job seekers should plan to become involved in the local community through churches, volunteer efforts, community groups, and cultural organizations to learn about job opportunities. The Community Services Association (www.livinginegypt.org) offers classes and other opportunities to meet people. A listing of churches, clubs, and cultural organizations can be found in the back of the print edition of Egypt Today, available at Cairo newsstands.

Teaching is also a viable career option in Cairo. Since most adult students want to know enough English to understand business and acquire computer skills, Americans who want to teach in Egypt will do better if they are specialized in one of these two fields rather than in general language skills. Cairo American College is a private K-12 school totally American in its system and therefore in the qualifications of its teachers. It caters to the children of diplomats and of other expatriates living in Egypt for a limited time. The tuition is extremely high, and teachers are generally paid on an American salary scale.

The Center for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) of the American University in Cairo hires a limited number of teachers to teach English as a second language. Interviews are granted to five applicants a month. Only teachers with much experience or an internationally recognized certificate in teaching English to adults are hired. More information about the CACE can be found at their web site CACEstudent.aucegypt.edu or at www.aucegypt.edu.

The internationally famous [Berlitz School of Languages](#) usually hires full-timers, trains them in their methodology, and pays well. [Amideast](#) promotes intercultural understanding between the U.S. and countries of the Middle East. It hires only very qualified teachers. [The British Council](#) favors British English speakers and insists on British certification. The International Language Institute (ILI) offers an instructor training course but no guarantee of a job upon completion of the course.

Numerous nursery schools around Cairo look for native speakers to work with preschool children. A love of children is more important than certification. Maadi Messenger, published by volunteers and available at English-speaking churches and in districts with expatriate communities, such as Maadi, Zamalek, and Heliopolis, is a useful guide to jobs such as babysitting and tutoring of American children. The Middle East Times also occasionally lists jobs.

Student Visas and Work Permits

Visitors normally require both a passport and visa for travel to Egypt. A 30-day visa for tourist purposes only may be obtained for US \$15. The requirements change and visitors should contact the Egyptian consulates before traveling to Egypt. AIDS tests are required for study and work permits. You can get a visa application yourself from any Egyptian consulate. Do not wait until the last minute to apply. Allow several weeks if you are getting the visa by mail. You can also apply for the visa in person, if convenient, and may be able to get it the next day (North American and European applicants). Some offices may issue

the visa while you wait. On the other hand, for citizens of some countries such as Iran and Syria, visa processing usually takes about eight weeks. For specific requirements, consult the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 3521 International Court, NW, Washington, DC 20008 (202/895-5400) or the nearest Consulate General: CA (415/346-9700), IL (312/828-9162), NY (212/759-7120), or TX (713/961-4915).

When a foreigner is employed in Egypt, the employer files for a work permit for him or her through the Ministry of Manpower, then the person is granted a work visa (residency) enabling him or her to work legally in Egypt. For more information contact:

Ministry of Manpower and Emigration
96 Ahmed Orabi St. - Mohandeseen
Embaba - Cairo - Arab Republic of Egypt

E-mail for more information	egyptiansabroad@mome.gov.eg
Fax	(202) 3035332
Minister	(202) 3036431
Sector Manager	(202) 3463496
Operator	(202) 3034438 - 3036436 - 3036437

Housing/Education

Some helpful articles:

Escape Artist.com: http://www.escapeartist.com/efam18/Living_In_Cairo.html

Tour Egypt.net: <http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/flat.htm>

The most famous universities in Cairo include Al Azhar University, an Islamic university known for being one of the oldest functioning centers of higher education in the world, and the American University in Cairo (AUC), which houses a number of study abroad programs and opportunities for students. AUC also has a New York City office to assist American students with the transition into their Cairo programs. For a list of 23 universities in Cairo, with their URL's, e-mail contacts, telephone numbers, fax numbers, and street addresses: <http://www.idsc.gov.eg/English/sources/UniverDic.asp>

Insider Tips

Students who have spent semesters in Cairo speak highly of the hospitality of the people in Cairo and its many accessible attractions. There's always something exciting to do in Cairo and students reported feeling safe and welcomed while enjoying the attractions that Cairo had to offer, both during the day and night. One student summed up his experience by writing:

"I loved Cairo and miss it very much; it definitely has a place in my heart now. Life there is extremely cheap. 6 Egyptian pounds (LE) were the equivalent of \$1. The people were extremely hospitable and friendly, and many did not speak English which helped me practice my Arabic. Cairo is the heartbeat of the Arab world, with many Arabs calling it 'Umm ul-dunya' or 'mother of the world' so you really are absorbed in the contemporary politics of the Middle East. At the same time, Cairo is becoming more and more cosmopolitan and metropolitan, as all walks of life go there, and most countries from throughout the world have their embassies there. You can find almost any type of restaurant: Thai, Indian, Japanese, Mexican, etc. What was also great was that it was very easy to travel outside of Cairo, throughout Egypt, despite the country's enormous size. I often went to Alexandria which is along the Mediterranean, I went to the Sinai and climbed Mount Moses, spent New Year's in Sharm el-Sheikh along the Red Sea, camped out in the White desert and Black desert and the Sina oasis, and took a cruise down the Nile to Southern Egypt seeing the ancient sites in Luxor and Aswan."

The [Info Hub](#) website provides information on operating hours for major post offices in the country. Be sure to take your passport along with you when collecting parcels. Letters sent through normal delivery

take up to 2 weeks to reach Europe and up to 3 weeks to reach the U.S. But express mail can be delivered as quickly as two days. For express mail, letters less than 100 gram in weight cost 43 to 55 Egyptian pounds. It's quicker to buy stamps from hotel shops or cigarette kiosks, which charge about 5 percent above normal rates (£E1.25 for a postcard/letter to anywhere in the world). Parcels can only be sent abroad from the Ramses Square post office, where unsealed packages must be inspected by customs before weighing and sealing. The overseas rate is about £E4 a kilo. Anyone receiving parcels in Egypt should expect additional import duty (for example, £E40 on a pair of contact lenses).

The international access code for calling or faxing Cairo from outside Egypt is 202; The area code for Cairo for direct dialing from another part of the country is 02.

Attractions

InfoHub:

<http://www.infohub.com/Destinations/Africa-&-Middle-East/Egypt/Cairo/65750.htm>

Lonely Planet:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/africa/cairo/attractions.htm>

- Pyramid Complexes- Giza, Saqqara (Stepped), Meidum (Collapsed)
- Khan el-Khalili Bazaar : <http://www.touregypt.net/khan.htm>
- Al Azhar Mosque and Garden
- Museum of Egyptian Antiquities
- Coptic Egypt
- Solar Boat Museum
- Wissa Wassif (Pottery Place)
- Hard Rock Café
- Nile Cruises
- Bazaars
- Coffee Houses
- Horse and Camel Rides into the Desert
- Whirling Dervishes

Transportation

There are three main ways of get around Cairo: taxis, buses, or the metro train system. The buses in Cairo are known for their unreliability and uncomfortable passenger provisions. Travelers to Cairo report that the buses do not always stop at all stops, and that if someone hopes to catch one, he or she may have to run and jump onto a moving bus. These buses are usually overcrowded, and passengers run the risk of being pick-pocketed in the tight conditions on the bus. The metro is similarly crowded during rush hour times, as people head to and from work, but they are more reliable in adhering to routes and schedules. The preferred means of transportation around Cairo appears to be taxis. They are easy to catch, safe and relatively inexpensive (a ten minute ride can cost as little as 1 LE).It is also easy to get to other cities in Egypt, despite its size.

For more information on what visitors should know about getting around Cairo, view the following article:
<http://www.touregypt.net/magazine/mag04012001/magf3.htm>

Inter-City Bus Schedule: <http://touregypt.net/busses.htm>

Inter-City Train Schedules: <http://touregypt.net/trains.htm>

InfoHub Transportation Orientation and Links:

<http://www.infohub.com/Destinations/Africa-&-Middle-East/Egypt/Cairo/60745.htm>

Publications

Newspapers

Al-Ahram Weekly
<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/>

Business Today – Egypt
<http://www.businesstodayegypt.com/>

Egypt Today
<http://www.egypttoday.com/>

Cairo Magazine
<http://www.cairomagazine.com/>

Egypt Daily News
<http://www.egyptdailynews.com/>

Egypt Guide
<http://www.egyptguide.net/>

Middle East Times
<http://www.metimes.com/>

Safety

Students who have traveled to Cairo report feeling safe at all times (day and night) during their stay. They do, however, note that travelers should guard against pick pocketing and should be aware of how to deal with taxi drivers who might try to rip them off. For detailed safety information about travel in Egypt, consult the US government’s consular sheet on Egypt:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1108.html

Health Advisories: Travelers can check the latest health information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at 877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747) and a web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm> give the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries.

Register w/U.S. Authorities: U.S. citizens who are long-term visitors or traveling in dangerous areas are encouraged to [register](#) their travel via the State Department’s travel registration web site at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> or at the Consular section of the U.S. embassy upon arrival in a country by filling out a short form and sending in a copy of their passports. This may help family members contact you in case of an emergency.

For the latest travel information to Egypt, including security, visitors should check the [U.S. Department of State](#) website. The website also contains travel and security information on North Africa and the Middle East, for American citizens planning to visit other countries while in Egypt. [Public announcement](#) from the Warden at the U.S. Embassy provides updated security information for U.S. citizens living in Egypt.

Emergency Numbers: U.S. Citizens may call the Embassy’s American Citizen Services Unit at 02-797-2301 during business hours, Sunday to Thursday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. For emergencies after business hours and on weekends, they can contact the Embassy Duty Officer via the Embassy switchboard at 02-797-3300. The embassy is located at 5 Latin America Street, Garden City, Cairo.

Mailing Address:
American Embassy, Cairo
8 Kamal El Din Salah St.,
Garden City, Cairo, Egypt.
Tel. [20] [2] 797-3300
Fax. [20] [2] 797-3200

Best Websites

InfoHub: <http://www.infohub.com/Destinations/Africa-&-Middle-East/Egypt/Cairo/65750.htm>

Lonely Planet: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/africa/cairo/attractions.htm>

Transitions Abroad: <http://www.transitionsabroad.com/index.shtml>