



Cairo To Khartoum or v.v (ZCK)

Khartoum to Cairo 27 days, departing 10 Apr 2012

Comfort Zone: Basic Luxury

Physical Challenge: Easy Hard

Trip Style: Overlanding

Route: Khartoum to Cairo

Length: 27 days

Transport: Overland expedition vehicle, ferries

Accommodation: Many wildcamps, some campsites and hotels. (50% camping, 50% hotels)



Ratings for this trip

Comfort Zone: Basic / Adventurous

Basic comfort levels. Expect to rough it every now and again. On OVERLAND TRIPS be prepared to have some nights wild camping, campsites with basic facilities as well as some basic hotels, often on a multi-share basis. Some of the roads we travel along may be poor. On our ADVENTURE HOLIDAYS you will stay in simple, budget (1-2 star) accommodation with some shared facilities. Some accommodation may be on a multi-share basis and transport will be mainly local.

Physical Challenge: Strenuous in parts

STRENUOUS IN PARTS: These are physical tours; we may well be travelling at high altitudes, across deserts or through hot and steamy tropical countries. Physically it can be quite tough, but not necessarily all the time and there will be plenty of rest days and time to relax as well. The fitter you are the more you will enjoy the trip.

Countries Visited

Egypt

Egypt is a country full of international celebrated sites including the Pyramids and the River Nile. One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Pyramids are one of the most visited sites in the world. If you travel to Egypt, a trip to these is a must. The River Nile is another must see spot, as it travels through 5 countries including Egypt. Weaving through the Sahara Desert, it covers an incredible distance of over 4000 miles.

The capital is Cairo, and it is the largest city in Africa. It has many interesting places to visit, such as the Cairo Tower and Egyptian museums. The city might be large, but so is the opportunity to get involved to experience the Egyptian culture.



Ancient Egypt spans back an incredible 6000 years and throughout the history music has been central to it's culture. The God Thoth was credited with the invention of music by the Ancient Egyptians. Today typical folk music is alive in the rural parts of the country and is a classic tradition. As the piano and violin were introduced into Egypt, the music became more classical at the beginning of the 20th century. Like the music, the cuisine too is beautiful. "Ful Medames" is flowing with vegetables and is one of the national dishes of Egypt.

Egypt has an amazing history, and with so much to be discovered, there is an adventure waiting to be found.

Sudan

Sudan is one of the least visited places in Africa, yet it has so much to offer. The friendliness of the Sudanese people is legendary in traveller circles. For a country that has experienced such bad political problems and such a long and drawn out civil war it is amazing that the local people are so welcoming. People are genuinely warm and always willing to help. This is the country where you want to brush up on your smattering of Arabic. Just a few words can open doors into chai houses, into living rooms and into the world of Sudanese hospitality. People are genuinely curious and pleased to see outsiders.



Khartoum is the capital city and it is full of life. With museums and shopping, there is always activities to partake in. The river Nile cuts north through the city creating a scenic view throughout the capital. There's a place to relax in the Botanical Gardens.

Sudan is famous for its fantastically well preserved temples and pyramids. Much less known that the ones in north neighbour Egypt but no less interesting. Perhaps the most splendid of all the Kushite temples and pyramids are those at Meroe, Naqa and Musawwarat. The pyramids at Meroe are the most impressive in Nubia and the site is very well preserved and restored.

When a guest arrives at a house, they are offered a drink of Abre or Tabrihana, which is a non alcoholic fruity drink. They will be seated at a low table with cushions on the floor and will be offered a towel to wipe their hands. A large cloth is given to cover the knees. An important ritual in Sudan is serving water from an Ebrig, which is a copper pitcher and the water is caught in a beautiful copper basin. As for the food itself there are many beautiful dishes - soup, salad, spices. One dish is called Machi. This is a dish of tomatoes stuffed with beef. This dish is popular across Sudan. The red hot spice of Shatna is used in many dishes and is the real taste of the country. Dessert is often prepared and served on a side table before the main meal. A traditional dish is creme caramela and is normally decorated and served to a guest with a spoon after the main meal has been consumed.

Cherish memories of a forgotten country. Meet some of the friendliest people in the world. Become involved in the traditions and you'll never forget the magic of Sudan.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1 to 2: Khartoum

Tue 10 Apr to Wed 11 Apr 2012

Border Information: If Joining in Khartoum, enter Sudan at Khartoum Airport.

There are no activities planned today until the important group meeting at 18.00hrs. This is where you will meet your Dragoman crew and our local facilitator who will accompany us on the truck for the duration that we are in Sudan.

You have free time to explore Khartoum including the bustling Omdurman market.

In Khartoum we stay at a comfortable hotel

Hotel for the night: Hotel Plaza
Hotel Plaza
Sayed Abd al Rahman Street
Khartoum
Sudan

Activity	Approximate Cost
Witness the confluence of the Blue and White Nile at Khartoum	Included in tour
Mardis tomb & Khalifa Museum Entrance, Khartoum	USD 1
Explore Omdurman market in Khartoum	

Khartoum

Khartoum is a place to explore. The city is really two cities: the colonial city of the British and General Gordon on one side of the river, and the sprawling settlements of Omdurman on the other. Here you find one of Africa's most interesting markets where for the souvenir hunters you can get some excellent Beja Ben Amer tribal swords. These tribal people are easy to spot. Very tall and distinguished-looking, with the telltale hair and traditional swords slung over the shoulder. Their ancestors played a major role in the Dervish uprisings in the 19th Century at the battle of Omdurman. The best place to find out more about this period of Sudanese history is in the Khalifa Museum in Omdurman, near the Mahdi's tomb.

Day 3 to 4: Meroe, Merowe Wildcamp

Thu 12 Apr to Fri 13 Apr 2012

For the next couple of days we head out to visit some of the fantastic Meroe sites. We drive about 13 hours in total over the two days (300 km) visiting Kushite temples and pyramids at Meroe, Naga and Musawwarat es-Sufra.

We spend these nights bushcamping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided visit to the Naqa and Musawwarat Temples	Included in tour
Guided visit of Meroe Pyramids	Included in tour

Meroe

Meroe is at the heart of the ancient Kingdom of Nubia. Early signs of culture in Nubia (northern Sudan and southern Egypt) first appear around 3500 B.C., when Egypt was in the throes of the Old Kingdom. Over time, the Nubian Kushite kingdom became increasingly powerful and consequently the Egyptians began to feel threatened, which prompted an invasion where they attempted to subdue their close neighbours. Having given in to occupation, Kush effectively became a province of Egypt between 1500 B.C. and 1100 B.C. During this time the Egyptians controlled all the trade and the mineral wealth, in particular the gold mines. This is what made Egypt the richest nation in the world between about 1500 and 1100 B.C. The two cultures were assimilated and in reality became one.

The Egyptians eventually withdrew from Nubia around 1100 B.C. and in the ensuing vacuum a group of powerful kings arose. The Pharaohs of the Kush had aspirations far beyond their frontiers. One of them, Pharaoh Kashta, was invited by the powerful priests of Amun in Thebes to intercede on their behalf in the internal conflict between the reigning Egyptian Pharaohs. Consequently he and his successor Piankhy received the blessings of the priests, proceeded north, conquered and reunified the warring states and thus began the rule of the "Black Pharaohs". From 760 B.C. through to 660 B.C. the Black Pharaohs did more than rule; they reinvented Egypt with a cultural renaissance. Some of the finest treasures, temples and artwork date from the period of Nubian Rule. The Nubian period in Egypt is known as the 25th Dynasty. However their reign in Egypt was shortlived, as at the zenith of their glory the Assyrians invaded Egypt and the Nubian Pharaohs fled south with their armies and court to the Kingdom of Kush, from where they continued to harass the new Pharaohs of Egypt from afar.

In around 593 B.C. the Egyptian Pharaoh Psamtik II had had enough of the Kush kings claiming his throne and he invaded Nubia with Egyptian troops, Greek mercenaries and a fleet of ships. During the invasion temples and towns were destroyed and the Nubians butchered but the Kingdom of Kush was by no means finished. Ironically, while Egypt was to endure successive invasions from Persia, Macedonia and finally by Rome, the Kingdom of Kush continued to flourish under an unbroken line of kings until the 4th Century A.D.

Perhaps the most splendid of all the Kushite temples and pyramids are those at Meroe, Naqa and Musawwarat. The pyramids at Meroe are the most impressive in Nubia and the site is very well preserved and restored. By the 4th Century B.C., the Kushite kings had moved south down the Nile and set up the royal city in and around Meroe. The southern culture gradually prevailed over Egyptian culture and the area became a powerful centre of trade between the north and the south. The site of Meroe was home to a large population supported by advanced irrigation and a centralised political system. This was high culture, and the area was in its zenith. Roman baths, royal palaces, pyramids and temples all tell the tale of an advanced Egyptian-style civilisation. Today the site is virtually unvisited. Scattered across the sands of the desert are numerous steep pyramids with entrance pylons. The guardian of this Nubian site has been there since 1977 and has probably seen every visitor who has passed through since then. While the mainstream tourists flock to the Egyptian ruins to our north, you will have this remarkable site to yourself. Only a few travellers and one or two tour groups a year come here.

Day 5 to 8: Jebel Barkul, Temple of Sulb

Sat 14 Apr to Tue 17 Apr 2012

The next three days we journey across the Nubian Desert. We drive between 5 and 8.5 hours each day, covering a total distance of 1000 km.

To travel in northern Sudan is to journey across deserts, not on tarmac routes, but off piste, finding your way through the dunes or along the plains. We may be lucky enough to pass some camels, making their way along the infamous '40 Day Camel Route'. These magnificent animals travel in herds of up to 1000 with just two or three herders. They come from either the western province of Darfur or nowadays increasingly from Omdurman and Khartoum, bound for the great camel market in Cairo, as Sudanese camels are highly valued in Egypt. We camp out in the desert vastness and it is a strange sight to see and hear these caravans passing as we sit around our camp fire in the middle of this wilderness. Occasionally a nomad will stop and join us for a meal, and the code of desert hospitality means we have a duty to feed and water anyone that asks. Our desert crossing will take approximately four days.

From Karima in the South to Aswan in the north, there are a succession of ruined temples along the River Nile. As you would imagine with such a long history of civilisation, these date back to many different periods of Kushite and Egyptian history. Many are in a poor state of repair, but some are classics. They are often quite inaccessible and we will not guarantee visiting any particular temple. However, we will try to visit one or more of the following: the Temple of Sulb, the Temple of Kawa near Dongola and the pyramids and temple complex on top of Jebel Barkal near the town of Merowe (as opposed to Meroe which is near Atbara). This portion of the trip is rugged. We will be travelling through the desert sands, following the Nile as it cuts through vast fields of sand dunes. Along the Nile small villages and towns cling to a narrow belt of cultivation. Trade routes

through the area date back to ancient times, but the roads are mere sandy tracks, often difficult to find and always a struggle to get through. You will be expected to help sand mat the vehicles and to be part of this expedition. There are no passengers here, only people who are prepared to get stuck in to achieve their goal - the exploration of the relics of the Kushite kingdom and the Nile Valley of northern Sudan.

We spend these nights bushcamping in the desert.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the Temple of Sulb	Included in tour
Visit to the Kushite temples and pyramids at Jebel Barkal	Included in tour

Jebel Barkul

On the road between Dongola and Merowe we explore ruins at of the Temple of Amun at Jebel (Mount) Barkal. On the hill top of Jebel Barkul the Temple of Jebel Bakul was one of the earliest capitals and spiritual centres of Kush.

The all-powerful Pharaoh Ramses II constructed a temple to the Theban god Amun here in the 13th Century B.C. 600 years later the great Nubian Pharaoh King Taharqa had the mountain's peak covered in gold during his reign in the 7th Century B.C. A monument remains to him with his name inscribed on it. The area has numerous sites, including some great tombs and pyramids at El Kurru, just south of Jebel Bakul. These contain the tombs of the famous Kashta and his son Piye (Piankhi) (the conquerors of Egypt), five earlier generations, together with Piye's successors Shabako, Shabatko and Tanutamun, and 14 pyramids of the queens. The pyramids at nearby Nuri contained 21 kings, together with 52 queens and princes. Taharqa, the penultimate king of the 25th Dynasty, was the first king to build his tomb at Nuri, and it is the biggest pyramid ever built at the site. These pyramids are on the opposite bank of the river from Jebel Barkal and are much larger than the earlier pyramids at El Kurru, reaching heights of 20-30m. However they are in pretty poor condition and probably only warrant a short stop. There are some excellent views of the pyramids if you have the energy to climb to the top of Jebel Bakul.

Temple of Sulb

The road between Abri and Dongola heads along the River Nile. Oases punctuate the beauty of the desert. Date palms line the shoreline and the traditional plain white houses are all dotted with coloured Nubian doorways. Our route takes us from village to village through deep-sanded tracks. Across the river opposite the small village of Wawa lies the remains of the Temple of Sulb. The temple is spectacular and very much in the Egyptian style. We take a half hour boat trip by small boat along the Nile through stunning scenery. It is the positioning and the remoteness of these sites along the Nile that makes them interesting. We usually stay with a local family in the village of Wawa for the night.

Day 9 to 10: Wadi Halfa to/from Abri, Wadi Halfa, Nubian Desert

Wed 18 Apr to Thu 19 Apr 2012

Driving a further 10 hours (100 km) today we reach Wadi Halfa. The road between Wadi Halfa and Abri heads inland from the Nile along a rough piste through rocky terrain. We are well away from civilisation here and you will see few other travellers on this section of the journey.

The port of Wadi Halfa, our entry point to Egypt, is situated on the southernmost tip of Lake Nasser in the Sudanese Sahara and is the most northerly place in Sudan. Day 10 is free to explore Wadi Halfa.

In Wadi Halfa we stay at a rustic guesthouse.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the Temple of Darfufa	USD

Nubian Desert

To travel in northern Sudan is to journey across deserts, not on tarmac routes, but off piste, finding your way through the dunes or along the plains. We may be lucky enough to pass some camels, making their way along the infamous '40 Day Camel Route'. These magnificent animals travel in herds of up to 1000 with just two or three herders. They come from either the western province of Darfur or nowadays increasingly from Omdurman and Khartoum, bound for the great camel market in Cairo, as Sudanese camels are highly valued in Egypt.

Day 11 to 15: Wadi Halfa, Aswan

Fri 20 Apr to Tue 24 Apr 2012

Border Information: Exit Sudan at Wadi Halfa, enter Egypt at Aswan.

From Wadi Halfa we board a ferry to cross Lake Nasser. How many days we spend here and when we board the ferry is dependent on ferry schedules.

The crossing of Lake Nasser is certainly an experience. Don't expect a Nile cruise boat or you may be disappointed! An old passenger ferry plies the waters between Aswan and Wadi Halfa and it has limited comforts. However, to make up for this you will be travelling through the spectacular scenery of a harsh and craggy desert landscape. The journey usually lasts 17 hours, but it is notoriously unpredictable. Depending on sailing routes and conditions we should pass the beautiful temple of Abu Simbel en route.

Accommodation on the ferry is basic. Upon disembarking the ferry we have a short drive of 20 km (approx. 30 minutes) to Aswan in Egypt where we have three nights to enjoy wealth of history and culture that Aswan has to offer.

In Aswan we stay in a simple hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Ferry crossing over Lake Nasser	Included in tour
3 night stay in Aswan to explore the surrounding area	Included in tour
Entrance to Abu Simbel, Aswan	USD 15
Felucca day trip, Aswan	USD 15
Excursion to Abu Simbel	USD 120
Transport to and from Abu Simbel, Philae and Dam, Aswan	USD 15
Philae Temple Sound & Light, Aswan	USD 5
High Dam trip, Aswan	USD 2
Elephantine/Kitchener Island Boat Trip, Aswan	USD 10
Tombs of the Nobles, Aswan	USD 5
Visit to the remains of the ancient settlement of Edfu	Included in tour

Aswan

Aswan is a beautiful town, situated on one of the most picturesque parts of the Nile with stunning vistas, a great and vibrant souq, and the whole town is characterised by the Nubian people. It is an ideal place to relax, perhaps by taking an afternoon boat trip, finishing with drinks on the terrace of the Old Cataract Hotel. Later in the evening take a wander into the souq. The atmosphere of the Aswan souq is second to none and some excellent bargains can be had.

At Aswan you can visit the Philae temples, a quarry with an unfinished obelisk, and the high dam, built to control the flow of the Nile thus creating Lake Nasser, the largest artificial lake in the world. There is also an opportunity to trek into the desert by camel to a deserted 6th century monastery. You may take an option to fly or drive down to Abu Simbel to visit the two magnificent temples. They were moved uphill from the rising floodwaters of Lake Nasser by a Unesco project in the 1960s. Perhaps finish off your days with a visit to the stunning new Aswan Museum, before dinner on one of the many floating river front restaurants.

There are so many other activities around Aswan, but you should not miss the opportunity to take at least a short ride in a felucca, the local sailing boat - a great way to experience the ultimate Nile sunset.

Day 16: Edfu, Luxor

Wed 25 Apr 2012

This morning we head to Luxor, a drive of around 220 km taking around 3.5 hours.

On the way we make a visit to The Temple of Horus in Edfu (also known as the Temple of Edfu) is considered the best-preserved cult temple in Egypt.

In Luxor we take a donkey ride on the west bank before visiting the tombs in the Valley of the King's. This is one of the highlights of any trip to Egypt. The amazingly well preserved paintings in the tombs of the Pharaohs are brought to life on this guided adventure. We will also go and see the biggest of all Egyptian temples, the mighty Karnak with a local Egyptologist.

There is also plenty of free time for you to explore. Perhaps hire a bicycle to ride through sugarcane fields and nearby villages to see a different side of Luxor. It is worth visiting the smaller Luxor temple located smack in the middle of town and the small but beautiful Luxor Museum filled with priceless treasures from this amazing area.

In Luxor we stay in a hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of the Karnak Temple & Valley of the Kings at Luxor	Included in tour
Visit to the remains of the ancient settlement of Edfu	Included in tour

Edfu

The Temple of Horus in Edfu (also known as the Temple of Edfu) is considered the best-preserved cult temple in Egypt. This partly because it was built later than most: in the Ptolemaic era from 237 to 57 BC. Edfu is also the second largest temple in Egypt after Karnak Temple.

Despite its later date the temple exactly reflects the traditional pharaonic architecture providing an excellent idea of how all the temples once must have looked.

Luxor

Situated on the banks of the Nile, Luxor was once the ancient Egyptian capital of Thebes. From the spectacular temple complex of Karnak to the unbelievable paintings and hieroglyphs in the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, this open-air museum is full of wonderfully preserved reminders of the Pharaohs.

Day 20: El Kharga Oasis

Sun 29 Apr 2012

Driving about 8.5 hours today (280 km) we reach the El Kharga Oasis.

Desert travel is uniquely romantic. No matter what desert you are crossing, being in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by solitude and wilderness, is a fantastic experience. It is even better when you can camp out in the desert and visit true oases. The Egyptian Western Desert has five thriving oases and on our route through the desert we will be able to visit four of these: Bahariya,

Farafra, Dakhla and Kharga. The added bonus of travelling through this desert is that most of these oases have a long and interesting history stretching back to Pharaonic times.

We will visit El Kharga Oasis and its surrounding area. Here there are numerous other sites of antiquities. You will have the opportunity to visit a number of these including the Bagawaat Necropolis, Hibis Temple and Kharga Museum.

Tonight will be camping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Kharga Museum, El Kharga Oasis	USD 5
Bogawaat Necropolis, El Kharga Oasis	USD 5
Hibis temple, El Kharga Oasis	USD 5

El Kharga Oasis

El Kharga Oasis is definitely a place to go for exploration. There are many monumental sites here, including the Temple of Hibis. You can go for a camel ride around the oasis, and this could be an adventure in itself. The palm tree lined city is the spot to find beautiful handcrafts and unspoilt springs. It is a beauty of Egypt and will certainly create life long memories.

Day 21: Dakhla Oasis

Mon 30 Apr 2012

Today we drive about 280 km to reach the Dakhla Oasis.

We can also take the optional opportunity to trek out into the desert here for the day or even overnight on camels. The overnight trip is a favourite, heading off into the desert and camping out by hot springs for the night.

Tonight will be camping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight Camel Safari into the Western Desert	USD 35

Dakhla Oasis

Verdant cultivated areas and a great wall of rose-hued rock across the northern horizon make a feast for the eyes in Dakhla Oasis. Dakhla has Pharaonic, Roman and Coptic antiquities, dunes, palm groves and hot springs to explore.

Day 22: White Desert Wildcamp

Tue 01 May 2012

The following morning we have a free morning in Dakhla or some may be returning from the overnight camel safari. This afternoon we drive about 5 hours (250 km) to reach our bush camp in the White Desert.

Tonight will be camping.

Day 23: Bahariya Oasis

Wed 02 May 2012

Today we drive about 6 hours (250 km) through the White Desert to reach Bahariya Oasis.

We will visit the museum that houses the golden mummies. Just south of the oasis lie the White and the Black Deserts. We will spend a day exploring these as well as visiting Crystal Mountain.

Tonight will be camping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overland journey into the Western Desert Oasis Route	Included in tour
Visit to the Valley of the Golden Mummies, Crystal Mountain and Black Desert	Included in tour

Bahariya Oasis

Situated in Egypt's Great Western Desert, Bahariya is the smallest of the four oases in this area. It used to serve as an artery between Libya and Egypt, but these days people come here to enjoy the hot springs and palm groves, and to get a feel for the Western Desert. There are numerous sites of antiquities including the Temple of Alexander and various Ptolemaic tombs, as well as a museum that houses the golden mummies found here. Just south of the oasis lie the White and Black Deserts, easily visited from the town.

Day 24 to 26: Cairo

Thu 03 May to Sat 05 May 2012

Border Information: If finishing in Cairo, exit Egypt at Cairo Airport.

We set off this morning to cover the 335 km (approx. 7hrs) which will take us from Bahariya to Cairo.

We stay in Cairo for three nights at a comfortable hotel located in the district of Dokki, Giza. The hotel is a short drive from the Egyptian museum and downtown Cairo.

In Cairo we will have a guided tour to visit the Pyramids at Giza and Saqqara, and the Egyptian Museum.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of the Cairo Egyptian Museum	Included in tour
Sound & Light show at the Pyramids & Sphinx, Cairo	USD 10
Entrance to Cairo Tower	USD 6
Entrance to Red Pyramid & Bent Pyramid, Cairo	USD 5
Entrance Pyramid of Cheops, Cairo	USD 15

Christian sector - with its narrow cobbled streets and ancient churches, it's a haven of peace and quiet.

The Egyptian Museum, which holds the fabulous Tutankhamun collection, mosques dating back to the time of Mohammed and the famous Khan-el-Khalili bazaar are just a few of the sites that Cairo has to offer. You can spend time visiting the Pyramids and the Sphinx at Giza, and at night you can witness the famous sound and light show. Nearby is the Necropolis of Saqqara, which you can visit by horse or camel through the desert.

Day 27: Cairo

Sun 06 May 2012

Today is the end of this section of the trip. However if you are continuing on to Casablanca and Morocco then your leader will assist you with getting to the airport for your included flight. You will overnight tonight in a comfortable hotel in either Cairo or Casablanca, (depending on the flight times and availability).

Cairo

Situated on the banks of the River Nile, Cairo is the largest city in Africa. There are plenty of things to see and do with free time in Cairo. Take a walk along the Corniche or travel along the river by felucca. If the crowds and the noise of the city are too much, catch the metro into the oldest part of the city, the Coptic

Visa Information:

Important Notes

The routes, activities and places visited described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

We intend following the planned route but exact night stops cannot be guaranteed. It sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our basic planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. By their very nature overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, often in areas without western infrastructure. You should expect that some these areas do not adhere to western safety standards.

Specific Sudan notes

Rough roads, remote deserts and few western amenities, a true expedition. This itinerary will be flexible and is likely to vary from that published. There is little or no tourist infrastructure in Sudan.

Physical Preparation

Physical preparation for the North, East & South Africa and Middle East Itineraries

Travelling in North, East & South Africa or Middle East can be demanding - long, rough travel days, dusty conditions and basic campsites all provide a challenge. The conditions in the North can be more challenging than in the East or South, where public camp sites and bathroom facilities can be very basic and may be non-existent in the case of bush camps. You will need to be fit enough to help every day with the camp chores (cooking, washing up, general camp set up) as well as putting up and taking down your own tent. There are some long driving days and some early morning starts. The step up into the overland vehicle, while not overly high can become tiring and you need to judge yourself to be physically fit enough to haul yourself up and down the step at least 8-10 times a day. There are some long days driving on rough roads on all itineraries.

Visa Information

Most countries we visit on our travels will require visas. Some are best obtained before you leave home and others can be obtained en-route. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for obtaining visas is yours, we will endeavour to assist you wherever possible.

The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. The information provided is given in good faith and we do try to keep the visa information as up to date as possible. Please be aware though that rules do change, often without prior warning, which is why it is important that you check for yourself.

For visas that are needed in advance you can choose to submit the applications directly to the relevant embassy /consulate. However our recommendation is that you use a visa agent to assist you with your applications. While this does increase the cost it will make the process much easier for you. Dragoman have teamed up with 'The Visa Machine' to create a safe, secure, hassle-free way of obtaining visas and visa advice. Our unique link within their website is designed to make the visa process as straightforward as possible. Simply go to <https://dragoman.thevisamachine.com> and click on your region of travel followed by your trip route and 'The Visa Machine' will advise you about not only the required visas but also the dates by which you should apply. 'The Visa Machine' can then assist you in the actual visa application thus taking all the worry and hassle out of the process. This should apply for ALL nationalities and countries of residence.

As you will need to submit your passport together with your applications, we recommend that you avoid making any travel plans in the weeks leading up to your departure. However if you do need to travel in this period please let us know as soon as possible so that we can help you work out the options for your visa application process.

Egypt

We recommend that all nationalities check with their respective embassies.

Visas are easily attainable on arrival at Cairo airport or ferry ports for most nationalities for US\$15 to be paid in cash, but please check with your embassy before departure. On arrival to Cairo airport you buy your visa at any of the banks before proceeding to immigration. You will be given a stamp that you then need to put into your passport yourself. A single entry visa is valid for three months from date of issue and entitles the bearer to one month in Egypt. Multiple entry visas are not available at the airport or any border crossings.

Southbound Egypt & Sudan trip

Most nationalities can obtain an Egyptian visa upon arrival (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA). Some nationalities must obtain a visa in advance.

Northbound Sudan & Egypt trip

Most nationalities can obtain an Egyptian visa upon arrival at the port in Aswan (see above). Some nationalities must obtain a visa in advance.

Sudan visa note

If you plan to obtain a Sudan visa en route in Nairobi or Addis Ababa on a Northbound trip you will need to obtain an Egyptian visa in advance. Please refer to Sudan Northbound visa information for further information.

Sudan Northbound

The process of obtaining a visa for Sudan can be a complicated one so it is vital that you read the following information thoroughly.

All nationalities require a visa to enter Sudan and it is recommended that you obtain this visa **in advance** of your trip.

All nationalities must check with their respective embassies.

The whole process of obtaining a Sudan visa before travel can take up to 8 weeks and there are a few ways in which you can apply for your Sudan.

In advance

1. Direct with the embassy

If you choose this option please check with the Embassy as some embassies will organise the authorisation for you as part of the visa application service. If the Embassy does not provide this authorization then you will have to obtain this through waleed.travel@gmail.com at Lendi Travel who can help you obtain this for a fee.

For UK citizens please visit the Embassy of Sudan in London for details on how to apply for the tourist visa <http://www.sudan-embassy.co.uk>

For US citizens please visit the Embassy of Sudan in Washington on details of how to apply for the tourist visa www.sudanembassy.org

For Australian citizens please visit the following website for details of your closest Sudan Mission <http://protocol.dfat.gov.au/Mission/list.rails>

2. through a visa agent - The Visa Machine

If you decide to obtain your visa through The Visa Machine please contact them directly for all the information.

En route (on trip) / before your trips starts

1. Embassy of Sudan in Nairobi, Kenya

If you have obtained both your Ethiopian visa and Egyptian visa in advance OR if you are flying out of Khartoum and have proof of exit such as your flight ticket. You can apply for a Sudan visa in Nairobi without an authorisation letter. You will however, be required to submit a letter of Introduction from your own Embassy confirming your nationality and stating there is no reason you cannot travel. Some Embassies charge a fee for this letter.

The visa cost can vary significantly, between \$50 - \$180 USD and takes 1-2 days. You will need approximately 6 passport photos for the visa.

US citizens who are unable to obtain the tourist visa before travel can obtain this in Nairobi, however you must first apply for your authorisation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Sudan. We recommend that you contact Waleed Arafat at Lendi Travel in Sudan - waleed.travel@gmail.com who can apply for your authorization number on your behalf for a fee (approx. \$165 USD)

2. Embassy of Sudan in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

If you are travelling on a longer combination trip, you can obtain your visa en route in Addis Ababa but the process can take 3 working days. In order to apply for a Sudanese visa in Addis Ababa you must first apply for an authorisation letter in advance. We recommend that you contact Waleed Arafat at Lendi Travel in Sudan - waleed.travel@gmail.com who can apply for your authorization on your behalf for a fee (approx \$165 USD).

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the process of authorisation being controlled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sudan Dragoman will not become involved in any way in the authorisation process.

We do try and keep these notes as up to date as possible however the process of obtaining visas can suddenly change at any time. For this reason we advise you to always check with the Embassy.

Registration in Sudan

Everyone is required to register with the Aliens Department in Sudan. 2 passport size photos are will be required for this and a fee charged per person (payable in Sudanese Pounds and equivalent of around £35). Once registered, you are not required to obtain an exit visa to leave the country. You are required to pay US\$20 per person airport tax.

Sudan Southbound

14 day tourist visas for Sudan are obtained with the group on the trip in Aswan, they cost approx \$180USD and take 1-2 days. You **MUST** send a scanned copy of your passport to Dragoman or your agent at the time of booking, or we won't be able to help out obtaining the visa. You must have already obtained your **Ethiopian visa** beforehand. If you are flying out of Khartoum then you must have proof of exit such as your flight ticket. You will also need to obtain a letter of approval from your Embassy in Cairo to vouch for your identity (your trip leaders will assist with this). There may be a charge for this letter. You will also need to make sure you have around 6 passport photos.

PLEASE NOTE: US citizens **MUST** obtain visas beforehand. For all the information on how to do this you can visit the website of the Embassy of Sudan in Washington DC www.sudanembassy.org Obtaining the visa in advance can take approx 4-6 weeks.

Everyone is required to register with the Aliens Department within three days of your arrival in the country (2 passport size photos are needed and the fee is the Sudanese Pound equivalent of around £35). Once registered, you are not required to obtain an exit visa to leave the country. You are required to pay US\$20 per person airport tax.

Personal Spending

Based on the range that previous travellers have spent on this trip, we recommend you allow between a minimum of US\$10 and a maximum of US\$20 per day.

This will cover individual expenses such as drinks, meals whilst out and also when staying in hotels, souvenirs, tips and personal permits.

What else you need to know

Currencies & Cash

It is not really worth trying to buy local currencies before you travel. Do also bear in mind that many countries have strict regulations about the amount of their own local currency you are allowed to import - if you are found with amounts in excess of the allowed amounts, it may well be confiscated!

For obvious security reasons we hesitate to recommend you bring lots of cash with you, a sensible mix of cash, travellers cheques, cash passports such as TravelEx cards and ATM cards is best. However, most of our past passengers have said they wished they had been told to bring more cash. Apart from the convenience of being able to change money in many more places, you will sometimes get a much better exchange rate for cash.

You should take a mixture of denomination notes. Banks and moneychangers in most countries will now only accept bills with a metallic strip running top to bottom of the bill and which are dated from **2003** or later. You should not take worn or damaged notes, or any that have been written on.

Cash machines are readily available in most of East and Southern Africa but are not always reliable therefore we recommend that you do not rely on them as your only source of cash. Please note that there are no cash machines in Sudan.

Credit cards such as Visa and American Express are the most commonly accepted, but be prepared for very high commission charges. Please do not rely on cards for daily use, as they are not always accepted outside of larger towns and cities. Please bring a mixture of small and large denominations as in more remote areas it can be hard to change amounts over \$50.

Pre and post trip accommodation and connecting flights

At Dragoman we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of your joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay. Dragoman can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on.

While Dragoman is happy to assist with booking your pre and post trip accommodation, it is important that you understand you may be able to book your own room at a cheaper rate directly through the hotel or on the internet. Our additional accommodation prices are based on the hotel's rate plus an administration fee. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival, however we do have pre paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer as not all hotels offer this service.

Accommodation on tour

Dragoman overland trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether camping or staying in hotels and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers will share with people of the same sex for the duration of the trip, in accommodation ranging from twin to multi-share. The type and variety of accommodation is determined by conditions on each of our routes. The campsites will range from rather basic to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars. In some cases it may also be possible to upgrade locally to bungalows, lodges or even tree-houses. One of the highlights of overlanding is that in more remote areas we will wild camp. This allows us to get far away from the tourist crowds to some beautiful, secluded spots. We will also arrange as many village or

local homestays as possible, allowing us to get close to indigenous populations and ensures our money stays within local communities.

Group size?

The maximum group size we take on our overland journeys ranges from 19 to 22 depending on the geographical location, however the average number of passengers is more likely to be around 16.

Please note that there is an overlap of 2 trips in Zanzibar. This means a group starting a trip in Nairobi for example will visit Zanzibar at the same time as groups starting their trips in Dar es Salaam. In practical terms this means there could be up to 44 group members in Zanzibar at the same time.

Who travels with Dragoman?

Our passengers come from around the world and are always an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split, males to females and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that overlanding should be open to as many people as possible and so although we have a minimum age limit of 18, as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you, whatever your age is. One of the beauties of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way and as well as the variety of people that you will meet.

Our Community

At any time before or after you book you can join our community - Dragoland. This is a great place to ask questions before you travel and catch up with your fellow travellers once your trip has finished. You can share photos, videos and stories You can also download a selection of free travel apps. See the home page to sign in, it's free and easy.

We also have a Facebook page where travellers regularly swap info with each other - you can [join here](#)

Our crew and guides

Our crew are passionate about travel and always up for adventure. It takes someone special to become a Dragoman leader. Our crew undergo the most intensive training program of all overland companies, spending 10 weeks learning the ropes at our base in Suffolk, UK and then up to six months on the road as a trainee. On all Dragoman overlanding trips two western crew who are responsible for the group and the overall organisation will accompany you. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad knowledge of the places visited and to offer suggestions of things to do and see. In East and Southern Africa we will also have an African camp master/cook who is in charge of running the camp and organising all of the meals. Their knowledge of the local produce makes shopping at the markets great fun and you will learn how to prepare and cook some unusual dishes. In the rest of Africa, South America and the majority of Central Asia and China we use local guides who may stay with us for just a few hours or will actually travel with us for some or all of the journey. In these cases they become a third crew member and are able to offer their local knowledge as well as a real insight into the lives of the local people.

(If travelling in East & Southern Africa, also please see the note about our code-share crew)

Your tour leader has a duty of care to all of their passengers and therefore they have the authority to ask passengers to leave the trip if they require medical assistance, are behaving in an anti-social manner or refuse to comply with local laws and customs. In all matters relating to the trip, the leader's decision will be final and we appreciate your respect of this.

Medical conditions

We ask all of our passengers to declare any pre-existing medical conditions and in some cases you will be asked to complete one of our medical questionnaires. For trips that travel to areas of high altitude we also require all passengers to complete an altitude questionnaire. The ratings for each trip are a good indication of how challenging they are and in some cases passengers should be prepared for some long driving days and possible limited facilities. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns.

Vaccinations

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to region and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest advice on the region(s) you are planning to travel in. It is essential that you check with either your doctor or a travel clinic in good time before you travel.

In the UK we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive, up to date vaccination and health information. Dragoman customers will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at [Nomad Travel clinics](#).

A good source of up to date information is the World Health Organisation - <http://www.who.int/en/>

Malaria

Get expert advice before travelling about types of malaria pills and take them as instructed. Recommended types do change from time to time and from area to area. Consult your vaccination centre for the most up-to-date requirements

The mosquito usually bites between the hours of dusk and dawn and so covering up by wear long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light coloured and buttoned at the wrists can help. Do not sleep without closing windows, tent doors or, if sleeping out, use a mosquito net. Wear repellent applied directly to the skin or soaked into clothing.

Treating clothes and mosquito nets with a Permethrin solution provides significant protection. It should be available at most travel stores. Mosquito coils are useful on still nights, in hotel rooms but cannot be used inside the tents.

Meals and group participation

On an overland journey you are more than just a passenger, you're part of the crew, pitching in to set up camp, shop for food, cook and generally help out. We operate a rota system, dividing the group into smaller units of 5 or 6 people, so that these duties are shared equally amongst the group. These jobs will include things like collecting water and firewood, loading the back locker, supervising the kitty and food stores etc. While camping on overland journeys, all meals will be included in the kitty and this means that you will be working as a group to prepare meals and cook for your group. (On trips south of Nairobi we have a cook on board the truck, however you will still be required to help prepare meals). If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and also remind your crew at your welcome meeting. A typical camp breakfast might be toast with spreads, cereal and something hot such as eggs or pancakes as well as tea and coffee. Lunch is almost always a sandwich heaped high with healthy salad and assorted fillings, with fruit to follow. Dinner might be a BBQ, risotto, pasta dish and there is always the chance to try some local cooking. Generally our passengers find the more they put into a trip, the more they benefit from it.

Responsible tourism & code of conduct

Dragoman is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We are dedicated to making sure that we adopt a responsible attitude to the areas through which we travel and believe that our trips should benefit the local people and their environment. Dragoman recognises that we are guests of local communities and strive to make these communities our partners, so that they benefit directly from our visit.

You can find full details of Dragoman's responsible tourism policy linked from the home page. All passengers are required to obey all laws of the countries through which we pass. This particularly applies to the smuggling of contraband and possession of narcotic drugs, firearms, antiquities and ivory. Any passenger found contravening such laws or customs may be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Overland travel and security

One of the real advantages of overland travel is that the vehicle provides a very real level of security when travelling. There is no doubt that a properly equipped overland vehicle, with safes, fully lockable doors and windows is an obvious advantage when travelling in much of the world. We recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt whilst travelling for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items (although most of these can be locked in the safe whilst you are on the trip) and advise passengers to leave any valuable jewellery, watches etc at home. Generally speaking, you will not be travelling on local public transport and will have the added security of travelling in a group with experienced crew on hand to offer advice.

Please note: Any personal effects that are left on the truck, even if they are stored in the safe, are left at your own risk and Dragoman cannot be held responsible for any damage or theft that may occur.

The safety of our passengers, leaders and operators is a major priority of Dragoman. With this in mind we monitor world events very closely. By the very nature of the adventure travel that we take, there are risks and hazards that are inherent in our itineraries. Dragoman makes operational decisions based on informed advice from a number of sources:

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice

Reports from other travel companies and local suppliers

Leaders reports from off the road

Local contacts we have built up over 29 years of experience

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. You should always make yourself aware of the travel advice before you book and again before you travel. Below are links to some of the websites

Britain. <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country>

Australia. <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand. <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

United States. http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html

Canada. http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp

Dragoman has comprehensive passenger liability protection and tour operator insurance. These policies have total indemnities of £3,000,000 and £10,000,000 respectively. This is in addition to local vehicle insurance and your personal travel insurance.

Emergency contact

We have a dedicated 24 hour telephone number which should only be used once you have left the UK and in the event of a real emergency. Should you need to call the number, we will do what we can to help but please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours.

If your flight is delayed or cancelled, please let us know and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in these trip notes. If you cannot get through leave a message and a contact number as these will be regularly checked and the crew informed if necessary.

Emergency Number: +44 (0) 7985106564.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip.

Whatever policy you choose, you must ensure that it is designed for adventure/overland travel. As such it must cover you for adventure activities such as white water rafting, trekking, horse-riding and that the 24 Hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries - for example they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or if you were trekking in the Andes. Please double check if you have annual travel and/or credit card policies to ensure they have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not able to cope with adventure travel to remote areas. We recommend that any policy has the following minimum levels of cover: Medical (incl. repatriation) £5,000,000 Personal Liability £5,000,000 Cancellation and Curtailment £5,000 Loss of Baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice.

Issues on the trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer_relations@dragoman.co.uk. You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of the trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or "visitor's" passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for your trip. If you change your passport please remember to inform us.

Luggage & Kit List

Although you will not have to carry your main bag long distances you will need to help load and unload them onto the truck. For this reason we recommend that you use a backpack or soft bag rather than a heavy suitcase. During your trip your main luggage will be kept in the back locker so you will also need a small daypack. This can be used to carry your camera, water bottle and other personal effects for daily use.

The size of baggage that can be brought on this tour is limited by the locker space on the truck. Different trucks have different-sized lockers however to be safe we recommend that your bag be no larger than 66cm deep, 30cm wide, and 30cm high. The weight limit for luggage on all trucks is maximum 20kg. Backpacks should not have an external frame unless it can be easily removed and stored separately to avoid damaging other people's luggage.

Your clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in. On overland trips Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats (except on routes between Nairobi and Cape Town where ground mats are provided).

The clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in, which will vary depending on which part of the world you're heading to. On overland trips Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats*, so you'll need to bring those with you. Think about the climate and altitude of the areas you'll be travelling to, there's nothing worse than being cold at night so it's worth investing in a decent sleeping bag if it's likely to get cold. And remember even when it's warm during the day, it can often get cold at night, particularly in desert regions.

**Ground mats are provided on our non "in-depth" overland trips that run in South and East Africa, between Nairobi and Cape Town.*

For a general idea of what you need this list provides a guide:

- Sleeping bag - Check the expected climate en route. Nights in desert and mountain regions can be very cold in winter months
- Mattress or compressed foam
- A day pack is useful for short hikes in the countryside, wandering around cities, etc and also for keeping inside the vehicle for items used during the day
- 2 sets of comfortable travelling clothes (light, easily washable cotton clothes are best)
- 1 set of casual but smart clothes for evenings out. Women should bring a skirt that covers their knees and a scarf for visiting places of worship
- 2 pairs of shorts
- Sun hat or warm hat if trekking
- 1 pair of sunglasses
- Warm sweater/fleeces
- 1 waterproof jacket with hood
- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes/boots (or ankle height canvas jungle boots)
- 1 pair of sandals or flip-flops
- Underwear and socks (thermals are also a good idea if you are travelling to altitude or to the desert as it can get very cold at night)
- Swimwear
- 2 small towels
- Washing kit, including a small mirror
- Clothes washing detergent, small scrubbing brush & washing line (just a length of cord)
- Head torch/flashlight with spare batteries & bulbs (only the 3 standard sizes of round 1.5v batteries are widely available en route)
- Passport photos (average of 2 per country for which visas will be applied for en route)
- Good water bottle at least 1 litre
- A pouch or money belt worn inside your clothing, or unobtrusive pocket sewn into the inside of a pair of loose fitting trousers, is a must.
- Alarm clock
- Pocket calculator (useful when exchanging money)
- Writing materials & notebook/diary
- Multi purpose knife
- Cotton sheet sleeping bag (or sheet folded and sewn up on 2 sides). It will help keep your sleeping bag clean, and can be used on its own on warm nights.
- Mosquito net - The tents supplied by us have mosquito netting and you will only need a net if you think you will sleep out under the stars a lot of the time.
- "Wet Ones" (moistened tissues) and hand gel
- Toilet paper - this can be purchased almost everywhere en-route but one roll is worth packing
- Assorted sized plastic bags - protects clothing and equipment from dust and damp

For a comprehensive kit lists take a look at the Dragoman kit list that Nomad Travel have created. Dragoman customers will receive a 10% discount on all equipment purchased either online or in store. Click to see the kit lists www.nomadtravel.co.uk/kitlist/overlanders-kit-list

Water

The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in bottles, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 liters of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion end up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments.

Please avoid the purchase of bottled water by using the chemically sterilized water stored in the purpose built storage tank or in water jerry cans in your Overland vehicle. You are free to refill your bottle as many times a day as you like. You are helping the environment and your hip pocket!

Personal medical kit

All of our trucks have a fully stocked medical kit onboard for use in emergency situations only. Therefore in addition to this we recommend that you purchase your own personal medical kit. In the UK we have teamed up with Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics to produce the Dragoman Travel Medical Kit. It has been designed in conjunction with the truck kits and contains everything you would need for any minor accidents. For more details please visit their website:

nomadtravel.co.uk/catalog/view/dragoman-medical-kit

Electrical equipment

Your vehicle will be equipped with a 12 volt socket so to charge your iPod, MP3 player, camera, laptop and mobile phone you will need a DC 12 volt adapter - the type that can be used from a cigarette lighter in your car. Please be aware that only one piece of equipment can be charged at a time and it will not be allowed if there is a risk of running the vehicle's batteries low. Batteries may also be recharged from hotel room wall sockets and the majority of the campsites we stay at have electricity points so please bring along your normal charging adapters as well. You will need to ensure that you have the correct country adaptor for your specific charger.

The kitty

The Kitty is a group fund paid separately from the trip price at the start of your trip which covers all things that the whole group does, such as:

- Hotel accommodation and campsite fees
- Meals whilst camping (not in hotels)
- Activities listed as included (e.g. National Park entrances, excursions and local guides).

It is an amount that each passenger puts into a central fund and is monitored by the Dragoman crew. It's payable in full at the start of your trip, and in instalments at the start of each individual trip on combination trips

The kitty system is very unique to over landing as it allows us to have flexibility on the road. You can see exactly how your money is being spent and ensure that you are getting the best value by buying locally.

The kitty advertised in the brochure is an estimate at the time of printing. Local inflation and costs vary throughout the year and so we review kitties on a monthly basis. Once you book your trip it is very important that you check our website on a regular basis and just before departure for any changes to the kitty amount.

Your kitty can be paid in a mixture of US Dollar cash and local currency and most of our travellers choose to bring a cash passport with them for withdrawing local currency (you can visit www.cashpassport.com for further information on these). This is a very secure way of carrying your money whilst travelling. You treat them exactly like an ATM card and draw out local currency from an ATM to give to your leader within each country.

Travellers cheques have become increasingly difficult to change around the world with passengers and our leaders experiencing huge frustration and numerous hours spent trying to find a bank which will change travellers cheques. For this reason we no longer accept them on our trips.

Continuing your trip

Having an amazing trip and met a great group of people? Having too much fun to go home yet? If on your trip you decide you would like to continue, then why not speak to your trip leader who can advise you of the cost and availability of continuing your journey.

Contingency emergency fund

Sometimes, civil or political unrest, or reasons beyond Dragoman's control (e.g. a natural disaster), can mean that an itinerary is disrupted and we have to make a contingency plan. This may involve hiring alternate transport or even the whole group flying over an area. Although Dragoman will help organise travel arrangements, in circumstances outside Dragoman's control you should be prepared to contribute towards the costs and therefore we ask you to bring along a 'Contingency Fund' of USD400. In almost all cases trips run smoothly and this fund is therefore never used. We also recommend that you take along an internationally recognised credit or charge card with a decent limit in case of emergencies, such as medical treatment en route, or even the need to be repatriated; though these occurrences are rare. Remember that travel insurance policies usually only refund you for expenses after you have already paid out.

Tipping

Tipping is entirely voluntary. The Dragoman crew may be travelling with you for many weeks and usually they become good friends with most members of the group. It is sometimes easy to forget that they do work hard to ensure that you do have a great trip. If you feel you would like to tip them, they certainly would appreciate it. On a number of our trips, we also use a local guide as well as our own Dragoman crew. These guides live and travel with you through their home country and it is usual to tip them when they leave. We recommend USD10 to USD15 per person.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey, once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, information and kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these Trip Notes

These trip notes were printed on 22/05/2013