

VISITING EGYPT IS NOT FOR THE FAINT HEARTED



The city of Cairo used to be one of the most popular vacation spots for anyone visiting Egypt, but nowadays tourists are scarce. Sharm El Sheikh, another immensely popular destination, now resembles a ghost town, abandoned thanks to the fear of terror.

Thousands of holidaymakers used to vacate beach chairs in Sharm El Sheikh, relax on air mattresses inside the crystal clear pool and stroll along the large restaurant promenade every evening. **The emptiness now reigns where vacationers used to fight for the best position in the sunlight.** Bars and restaurants are deserted, pools run dry.

Only 1 Million People Visiting Egypt

In November and December of 2015, roughly one million tourists visited Egypt. In the previous year, the numbers were 41 percent higher. And only five years ago, 15 million tourists came to explore Egypt and brought a revenue of 12.5 billion dollars in 2010. Today tourists are scared – terror and political unrest make people avoid Egypt and find alternative destinations.

For more than a year, terror attacks have been threatening many potential visitors away. Last summer, the Italian consulate in Cairo and the Carnac-Temple in Luxor were bombed, in October 2015, a Russian airplane exploded above the peninsula of Sinai and all 224 passengers died. On January 8th, unknown perpetrators attacked tourists with knives in Hurghada, while several people were killed by bombs in the region around the Giza pyramids. In North Sinai, terror attacks are reported on a daily basis.

Egyptian authorities apply numerous measures to ensure the safety of holidaymakers. Soldiers and officers are on patrol; helicopters circle the beaches. After all, the country's number one revenue source is in need of protection. But still, the numbers of people visiting Egypt are not increasing.

Governments Warn Their Tourists

Several countries, mainly in Europe, advise their citizens against traveling to Egypt.

“In spite of heightened security measures, the terror risk still remains valid throughout the entire country, including beach resorts,” wrote the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its travel alert for people visiting Egypt.

The ministry advises vacationers to stay far from usual tourist spots. “Be careful, especially at open public places such as bus stations, tram stations and markets as well as government buildings, police stations, military installations and museums or other tourism sights.”

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