

## **EGYPT CUSTOMS**

### **Greetings:**

Greetings are based on both class and the religion of the person.

Handshakes are the customary greeting among individuals of the same sex.

Handshakes are somewhat limp and prolonged, although they are always given with a hearty smile and direct eye contact.

In any greeting between men and women, the woman must extend her hand first. If she does not, a man should bow his head in greeting.

### **Gestures:**

Egyptians believe direct eye contact is a sign of honesty and sincerity, so be prepared for disconcertingly intense stares.

Egyptians are emotive and use hand gestures when they are excited.

### **Egyptian Society & Culture:**

Islam is practised by the majority of Egyptians and governs their personal, political, economic and legal lives. Islam emanated from what is today Saudi Arabia.

Among certain obligations for Muslims are to pray five times a day - at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening. The exact time is listed in the local newspaper each day. Friday is the Muslim holy day.

During the holy month of Ramadan all Muslims must fast from dawn to dusk and are only permitted to work six hours per day.

Each night at sunset, families and friends gather together to celebrate the breaking of the fast (iftar).

### **Food/ Diet:**

Fasting includes no eating, drinking, cigarette smoking, or gum chewing.

Expatriates are not required to fast; however, they must not eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum in public.