

photo training overseas

NEWSLETTER No. 1 - EGYPT

Welcome

Welcome to our first newsletter, containing important information regarding next year's course in Egypt which in fact will be PTO's twenty fourth annual overseas event. Egypt is of course steeped in history and culture, it enjoys a year round exceptional climate with average daily temperatures in January on the Red Sea coast area around 28°C. Our location is Hurghada a lively cosmopolitan town which has grown considerably over the years. It started out as a small fishing and diving village about fifteen years ago and has progressed with the advent of tourism in the area the hotel is only 15 km away from the lively town and a mere 20 minutes transfer from the airport. The Sunrise Mamlouk Palace Hotel has its own exclusive private beach and there really is something for everyone at this luxurious hotel. There is fine food in three restaurants, a fitness centre with pampering facilities a 24 hour lobby bar—its own Victoria Pub, Pool Bar and Beach Bar. Great daytime and evening entertainment with the emphasis on water sports. It has two large outdoor swimming pools with extensive gardens. There is an internet café and 24 hour reception.

Speaker line-up

Once again we are delighted with the quality of our line-up for January 2011 and whilst some delegates may well have seen some of our speakers in the past—we are assured they will be offering different techniques, ideas and programmes to previous seminars. However, we are also sure that you will not have seen or heard some of our speakers who are new to the lecture circuit with their own particular brand of teaching. One thing we are convinced of is that you will not have seen or heard our new evening programme of 'Ten Minute Tantalizers'

Visas

After luggage reclaim you will need to obtain a visa at the Visa desk in Hurghada airport we understand these are currently priced at £15 per person. Visas are stamped in your passport.

Digital Photo comp

In Egypt PTO will again be holding a digitally submitted photo competition. Basically all entries will again be by submission on disc sent to PTO at 159 Dialstone Lane Stockport SK2 6AU with as many entries as you wish. The closing date will be 30 November 2010 and the categories again will be Portrait—Wedding and Open—which takes in any other image not a wedding or a portrait. The idea is that the images whilst all receiving a critique in Egypt will be pre-judged with a short-list selected which will be printed by PTO sponsor *One Vision Imaging*. Prints will be taken out and displayed during the week - all images printed will either be category winners, runners-up or merits and entrants will not be charged for the prints but allowed to take them home together with the trophy or merit they have won. Two free entries are allowed with a charge of £5 or 5 Euros per additional image. Delegates must clearly identify the CD/DVD with their name and indicate the categories for their images. All images must be 16" on the longest side to 300dpi.

Sponsors

PTO are delighted to announce the retention of most of their loyal sponsors—joining **FUJI** are **SWPP**—now known as **THE SOCIETIES - BIPP, TOWERGATE CAMERASURE , ONE VISION IMAGING, PRO-SELECT** and **EPSON**.

Flight Times

We realise the importance of knowing the proposed flight times as soon as possible. From Gatwick current departure time advised is 0915hrs on Friday 28 January 2011; return landing on Friday 4 February for 7 nights or Friday 11 February for 14 nights is 2145hrs. Manchester departure 0900hrs; return landing 2215hrs. Birmingham departure 0905hrs; return landing 2200hrs. Don't forget you will need to check-in at least two hours prior to departure to comply with strict security measures. Should there be any changes we will notify you as soon as possible.

Tour Operator

For the Egypt booking PTO will again be using the tried, trusted and long established *Thomas Cook* as the favoured tour operator. We encountered a number of problems in the past with other tour operators not least with their representatives in resort, however, as the second largest UK tour operator we are sure *Thos Cook* will try that little bit harder to retain our business—or at least we hope so although with a lack of competition in this industry it is becoming very difficult to find a company who will meet all our requirements! In-flight meals and transfers are included in the price. On board drinks should be purchased separately. The flight time to Hurghada is just over five hours. Currently Egypt is two hours ahead of the UK.

Excess Baggage

To combat the ever increasing fuel charges all airlines are making increased charges for excess baggage there does not appear to be a consistent figure available, we understand *Thos Cook* normally allow 15 kgs per passenger, with an option to purchase an additional 5kgs however, for our group this has been increased to 20kgs without any supplement. Hand baggage allowed per person is 5kgs. Excess will be charged at least £8 per kilo, we therefore suggest you ensure you do not exceed your 20kgs allowance. Check the weight of your case before packing some weigh over 5kgs and you could be better off using a strong holdall. *Thos Cook* will allow you to combine your suitcase weights for example if three of you are travelling you would have an allowance of 60kgs this can be across all cases providing no single case weighs over 30kgs which is the maximum handled for health and safety reasons.

Insurance

As you are aware all passengers need to have medical and travel insurance, many good deals are available on-line but you must ensure you have arranged this prior to travel.

Insurance cont...

Because of the ever increasing problems and new conditions introduced for holiday insurance PTO has ceased offering this facility, instead attendees are advised to arrange their own travel/holiday insurance to suit their own individual needs. You should cover yourself for such things as medical, cancellation, curtailment, personal accident, loss of or damage to luggage, theft of money, passport etc, personal liability, delayed or missed departure and personal items. A number of passengers will have pre-existing medical conditions you must ensure these are disclosed to your selected insurer, failure to do so will invalidate any subsequent claim. Travel insurance is readily available on the web and often at attractive rates so please ensure that you make arrangements for yourselves before you travel. One medical item which will not apply in Egypt is the European Health Insurance Card formerly E1-11 which makes it even more important to ensure you have adequate cover.

First Timers

If this is your first PTO, you will not be alone for long. We have many newcomers each year; in fact it is usually 60% new delegates against regulars. PTO hold a get-together almost as soon as you settle into the hotel to meet the organising team and of course each other so you can establish early contacts. One of the great aspects of PTO is the camaraderie and openness of all who attend. This is achieved by putting time aside at the beginning of the course to allow everyone to meet and chat before the main event.

PTO 2011 sponsors:

BIPP

TOWERGATE CAMERASURE

SWPP — THE SOCIETIES

FUJI FILM UK

ONE VISION IMAGING

PRO -SELECT

EPSON

What Equipment ?

A question most asked is: "What equipment should I take with me to PTO"? Well, that to a certain extent is up to you. Bearing in mind the tutors will be demonstrating and shooting 'live', then showing delegates what they have shot, you may record any of the set-up situations for your own reference purposes. Therefore a compact digital camera would be best. We have been asked by tutors to discourage camcorder recording of their demos. If you wish to take tripods etc, then bear in mind you will have to send them to the airline hold and be responsible for any excess baggage charges incurred.

Passport

Yes, you will most certainly need one so make sure yours is up to date and does not expire before you return to the UK in 2011. Currently the time scale required to obtain a new passport is between 3-4 weeks - if you use the 'check and send' facility available at main Post Offices. You must have at least six months left after your return to the UK for entry into Egypt.

Climate

What will it be like in Egypt in January? Well, it is almost impossible to predict these days with the changing situation surrounding the 'ozone', but one thing is certain it will be considerably better than in the UK. We understand it is likely to be between 26—34 degrees centigrade quite hot in fact during the hours of 8.00am—4.00pm. However, be warned: strolling out at night will require something warm to wear as it can become quite chilly.

Car Hire, Taxis & Trips

The best rates for car hire are normally obtained through the tour operator; therefore you may prefer to make your booking at the welcome meeting once we are in resort. Taxis are pretty inexpensive and are in plentiful supply, however, they are only permitted to carry a maximum of four passengers at any one time, and they do not operate a fixed pricing system. Our advice is to only book onto the trips organised by the Tour Operator this will ensure you are insured!

The Hotel

The Mamlouk Sunrise Palace Hotel received rave notices from many guests during 2009 and 2010 seasons on "Trip Advisor" which is a good source of information on the internet for checking the quality of hotels. If you want to check it out go to www.sunrisehotels-egypt.com It is rated five star locally which in our experience relates to four star by European standards, but it looks very nice with superb general facilities and a good range of bars and restaurants. The board arrangements are "all-inclusive" which means breakfast, lunch and dinner plus all local wines and spirits, tea, coffee and soft drinks. In addition ice cream and midnight snacks are also included. By going onto the PTO website at www.pto-uk.com click onto The Venue for 2011 and you will see a comprehensive guide which includes many images of the hotel. We are sure you will agree this one is most certainly up to our usual high expectations. In addition to which it is nicely located for seeing many of the cultural aspects in this part of Egypt.

Dress Code

We are often asked what is the preferred dress code on PTO. Daytime, please yourself, in the evening most guests choose to dress smart casual for dinner, as a matter of courtesy and good manners. At the Gala Awards Banquet a high percentage of ladies wear cocktail dresses and men black ties and dinner suits, however the choice is yours,

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Course dates: Friday, 28 January—4 February 2011

Venue: Sunrise Mamlouk Palace Hotel, Hurghada, Egypt.

To book call PTO or book on line at www.pto-uk.com