

ELENA KOZODAEVA

Journey to the East

NOTES TRAVELER, PART 2



Elena Kozodaeva
Journey to the East

«Издательские решения»

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This is the second book in the series «Journey to the East». The book contains essays on my many trips to the Sinai (Sharm, Dahab, the monastery of St. Catherine, the oases of Sinai, Blue Hole, Colored and White canyons, waterfall Ashok, travel to Taba, Nuweiba, El-Tour, RAS Mohammed, etc.). A separate Chapter is devoted to the traditions and lifestyle of the Bedouin of Sinai. Here are stories about Jordan (Petra, Aqaba), Tunisia.

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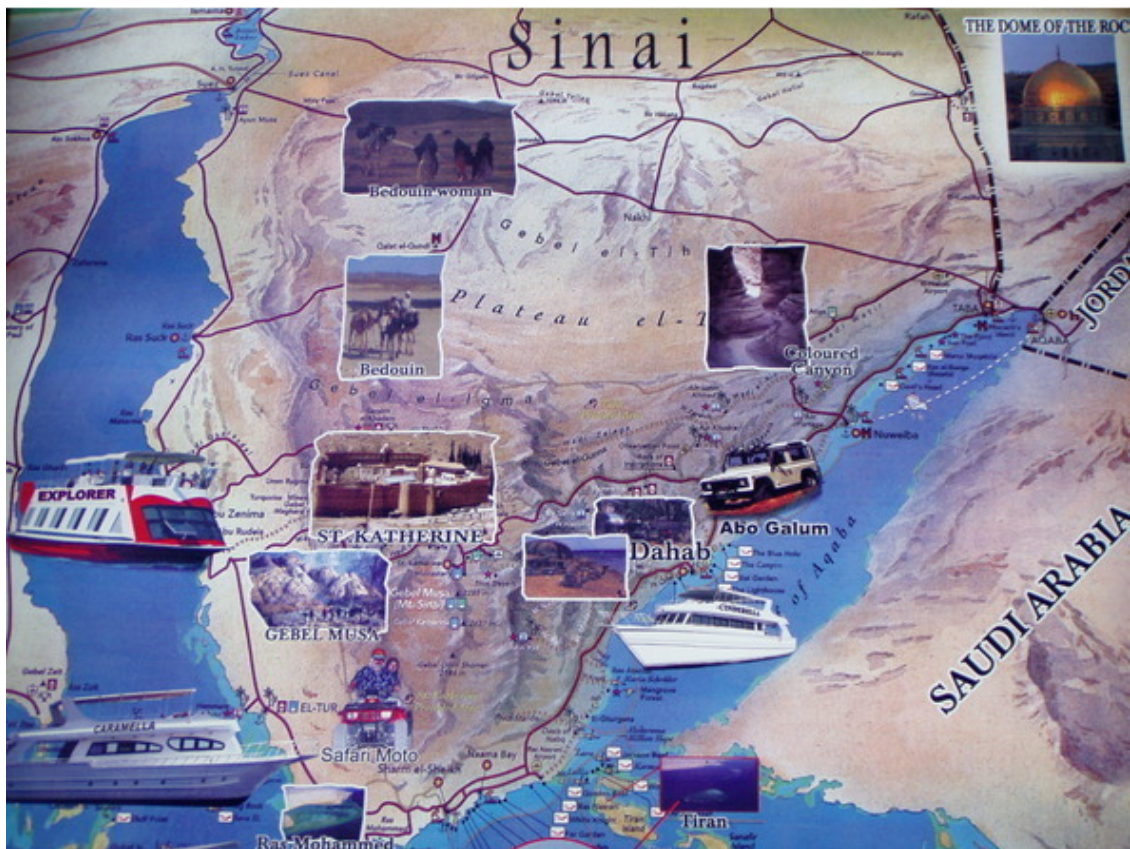
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Sinai roads

I discovered this wonderful place quite by accident. Came somehow in the midst of our gray and slushy winter in a travel Agency and asked them to find me a ticket to the sea and the sun. Certain wishes I did not, just suddenly wanted blue sky, sea and warmth! And it so happened that fate brought me to Sinai! In Egypt I was only in Hurghada and Cairo, saw Memnon the colossi, the pyramids of Giza and Karnak temple. But my first trip to Sinai in 2004 was a turning point in my life. I can't imagine yourself without this edge, he truly became my second Homeland. In this book, I gathered their impressions of his numerous trips to the Sinai. I hope that my experience and knowledge will help tourists in a new way to discover Egypt.



The map of Sinai.

Sharm El Sheikh

My acquaintance with the Sinai began with the Sharm. By a twist of fate in the winter I went to rest in Egypt and saw the Sinai. I continue to go here for twelve years, for a long time already know all the sights and sharing the experience with those who are going there for the first time.



How beautiful Sharm early in the morning!

Inside Sharm there are not many places to visit – Old Market, Naama Bay, “1001 nights”, the Dolphin show, perhaps, and all. The old town has a small fish restaurant, where the food is tasty and inexpensive. I recommend everyone to visit it. In Naama Bay there is a sense to go shopping and take a walk along the promenade. Tourists come to Sharm for a beach vacation, well and shopping. And all the interesting places are outside the city.



“1001 nights” in Sharm



Inside the complex “1001 nights”



Couldn't stop myself and made some photos in the Eastern interior.



Buying spices can be difficult. Especially when such a choice!



How do you like that dried crocodile? Actually he wood.



Partake of the local customs and try on the galabya.



Buying a Shisha in Naama Bay.

The bedouins of Sinai

The main wealth of this region is the Red sea, the sun and, of course, people. Locals (Egyptians, Bedouins and Copts) greeted visitors with a smile, because well aware that the main source of income for them – the tourists. I often had to communicate during their trips with many people, some of whom I know many years. This essay I dedicate to the Bedouin of Sinai. Bedouins and Copts constitute a minority in relation to General population of Egypt, they constitute no more than 10% of the total population, but nobody knows the exact figures. Their religion is Islam with all the ensuing consequences.



Women with children work part time that offer tourists tea and jewelry.

The Sinai Peninsula is home to 5 major clans (families) of the Bedouins. Almost everywhere the Bedouin will find a distant relative or acquaintance. Distinguishes these people of extraordinary hospitality, they are always ready to help, to share the latest piece of bread and be sure to buy traveler's tea. Probably, these customs produced for thousands of years, because life in the desert very difficult and dangerous. If you don't help today the traveler, it may simply die, and tomorrow you can be in his place. The Bedouin cherish their families, parents touching care of children, and the children honor and respect their parents. In the family usually between 6 and 10 children, the older look after the younger, but without the quarrels and fights, too, is not bypassed, as in any family. Parents, as a rule, not yelling at kids, trying to explain to them calmly, but if that's persuasion do not work, you can give a few slaps. Again, all families are different. However, if one of the members of the family some difficulties, the whole family (and sometimes several families) comes to his aid. The birth of a child, wedding, and other celebrations are also marked with the whole family.

The main source of income for the Bedouin is the camels (in the desert), the tourist business, sometimes to flag a private car (taxi) and the sea. Many of them are engaged in fishing, diving. Almost all men-the Bedouin – born swimmers, easy dive with mask at 5—10 meters. Women beduini almost can't swim because they have to swim in clothes and not float away. But they are skilled in making simple dishes on the fire, the manufacture of all kinds of jewelry from beads and shells, hand embroidery. Many times I observed how the Bedouins bake bread. Knead unleavened dough, rolled out flat bread and baked it on the coals (ash), or is rolled on a metal circle and also baked on the fire. This bread is delicious with tea, can long shelf life and is an important part of any meal. The tea is a special ritual, which seems also not changed for centuries. In a metal kettle is boiled the water, poured in her tea and placed the sugar, then the tea infuse. Special odor and taste of tea “marmaria” – the grass collected in the desert. This tea is very fragrant, good thirst quencher in the heat and warm in the cold winter days. By the way, winter in Sinai is very harsh, especially in the mountains. The temperature at night can drop below zero, and the day to rise above 20 degrees. Such extreme temperatures and strong winds require warm clothing, rescue blankets made of camel wool is very warm and light.



Beduinka bake bread on the fire.

In recent decades, many customs have undergone changes. Let's just say society has become more open. For example, now a woman can quietly enter into the room where men sit, closing only with this person. But still the house unofficially divided into “female” and “male” half. If the house guests came, men and women can sit together for some time, however, after men drink tea separately, discussing their problems, and women whispering about her on the female half. The man is still the head of the family, the main breadwinner and support. Women from the Bedouin are officially unemployed, but because families with many children, I try to earn some money how can sell beaded jewelry to tourists, offer them tea, etc. Many families trying to give their children at least primary

education. Schooling is free, but a lot of kids and not always have money for clothes and books. Younger often wears their older (like us). Actually, the more I learn about the Bedouins, the more I see similarities between us (that's the paradox!). Some boys and girls from affluent families receive a higher education in Cairo.

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