

# SIWA OASIS

*Siwa Oasis and its surroundings represent one of the most interesting and distinct regions of Egypt. Siwa possesses a unique natural environment with exceptional geological features, a diversity of flora and fauna, and some 230 natural freshwater springs fed by the Nubian aquifer.*

*Famed as the location of the Oracle of Amon, whom Alexander the Great consulted before continuing his Persian conquest, Siwa exists today much as it always has, boasting majestic rock formations, lush groves and brilliant salt lakes throughout the oasis. Pilgrims from all over the classical world travel to Siwa to seek the Oracle's divine counsel, which, in its day, was as venerated as the Oracle at Delphi.*

*Siwa is populated by descendants of the Berbers, or Amazigh, who are distinct in their traditions, dress, tools, and language. While Siwans are able to speak Arabic, they also have maintained their own language - Siwi - in its spoken form. Siwa is considered a traditional society and has long been celebrated for its exquisitely embroidered garments and stunning silver jewelry. Widely prized around the world for its beauty and craftsmanship, many of these adornments have traditionally served important functions as ritual icons, symbols of marital status, keepers of fertility and conveyers of tradition.*

*Dominating the atmosphere of the town of Siwa are the magnificent jagged ruins of Shali Fortress. According to ancient Siwan scriptures, 40 Siwans built the fortress in 1203 A.D. to protect the community against raiding Bedouin tribes. They used kershef, a mixture of mud, sand and sun-dried salt harvested from the Siwa's salt lakes and combined with palm trunks as ceilings. In the early 19th century, encouraged by the security that Egyptian viceroy Mohamed Ali Pasha bestowed on the region, residents of old Shali began moving outside these city walls. Then, in 1926 unusually heavy rains destroyed much of the ancient citadel, forcing out its remaining residents. Today, the fortress stands as a testimony to Siwan ingenuity and offers visitors a spectacular view from the upper levels of the old city.*

*Siwa has several magnificent salt lakes, the largest being the famous lake of Al Zaytun, which extends for more than 25 km from the mountain of Dakrur. Sheyata is another spectacularly tranquil salt lake in the desert, 35 km southwest of Siwa. Gentle sand banks lightly shaded by palm trees make an ideal spot to unwind and enjoy your afternoon.*

**Other Sites to visit in Siwa are:** Temple of the Oracle, Cleopatra's Well, Amun Temple, Tomb of Si-Amon, Gabal Dakrour, Tomb of Misu-lsis, Gabal El Mawta,, Tomb of Niperpathot, Abou Sherouf (a natural spring), and Ein Fatnas (a hot sulfur spring).



# ADRERE AMELLAL

*Sixteen kilometers from the charming town of Siwa, lies Adrère Amellal. An ecolodge overlooking Lake Siwa and nestled at the foot of the mystical 'White Mountain'.*

*Adrère Amellal is host to 40 rooms all built in the traditional Siwan style, walls are made of salt-rock, and palm is used for the roofs. Every room is unique, combining distinction and authenticity. The earthen buildings blend naturally into the landscape, and all furniture and crafts pay tribute to the talented local artisanship. Other special features include ancient olive and palm groves, slow-bubbling Roman springs, and an exquisite cuisine that includes traditional dishes cooked in honey-glazed clay pots. All herbs and vegetables are handpicked daily from our organic garden.*

*With no electricity and no telephone (cell phones are not permitted outside the room), Adrère Amellal is in perfect harmony with its natural surroundings. Torches, beeswax candles and infinite stars illuminate the setting, while old style braziers warm the cool evenings.*

*A plethora of activities are available with the only limitation being the desert's mood: relaxing by the pool which is fed by a natural spring and is free of any chemicals, refreshing oneself by Lake Siwa, discovering the sand dunes of the Great Sand Sea, travelling back in time in Old Shali and its historic fortress, or horse-back riding among palm and olive groves.*

*Adrère Amellal attracts travellers who are looking for unique, high quality, environmentally and socially conscious accommodation. The ecolodge's distinctive guests, which have included Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, are a testament to its success.*

*The uniqueness of the location, the architecture, and the visitor experience continue to attract coverage by reputable publications, bringing international recognition to both the ecolodge, and the Oasis at large.*

