

Full Itinerary

ENCHANTING EGYPT NILE CRUISE



TALK TO OUR WELL
TRAVELLED TEAM OF
EXPERTS

0844 3350 197

Monday - Thursday 9:00am -
8:00pm, Friday 9:00am - 5:30pm
(London time)



JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 2

DESTINATION:

Enchanting Egypt Nile Cruise

DURATION:

12 days / 11 nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Please arrange your flights into Cairo Airport [CAI] to arrive on Day 1 and to depart from there on Day 12

PICKUP LOCATION:

Cairo Airport [CAI]

OVERVIEW

13 - 24 Nov, 2024 LAST CABIN

30 Oct - 10 Nov, 2024 - SOLD OUT!

Pyramids, the Sphinx, Pharaohs, temples, bazaars and much more. Discover fascinating Egypt as we discover Cairo and sail the mighty River Nile on a traditional Dahabieh boat

Egypt evokes many tales of past - from the iconic pyramids, to the fishermen of the mighty River Nile, this vast and historic country is full of culture, history and treasures to discover.

Our journey through Egypt starts in Cairo, discovering the city's melting pot of histories and cultures, exploring pyramids at Giza before flying down to Luxor, from where we board our traditional Dahabieh boat to cruise to Aswan. Along the way we will discover ancient ruins and temples which tell of the country's past, as well as lands untouched by time. With a final stop to visit the famous Abu Simbel temples, we make our way back to Cairo.

Join us as we explore the unique country of Egypt.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY 1 - Welcome to Egypt

DAY 2 - The Pyramids & Sphinx

DAY 3 - Coptic Cairo & the Egyptian National Museum

DAY 4 - Travel to Luxor & Temples of Karnak

DAY 5 - Thebes & boarding our Nile Cruise

DAY 6 - Exploring El Hegz & El Kaab

DAY 7 - Ancient Nile Fishing Villages & the Speos of Horemheb

DAY 8 - Kom Ombo & the Souk of Daraw

DAY 9 - Amazing Aswan

DAY 10 - Disembarkation, Abu Simel & Return to Cairo

DAY 11 - The Mosques & Bazaars of Cairo

DAY 12 - Farewell to Egypt

FULL ITINERARY

DAY 1 - WELCOME TO EGYPT

Upon arrival at Cairo Airport, you will be transferred to your hotel.

Cairo is a vibrant, exhilarating, exotic, fascinating and welcoming city. Home to the best Pharaonic, Coptic and Islamic sights in Egypt, this city is where you never know what incredible, half-forgotten monument you might stumble across while wandering around.

The rest of the day is at leisure to relax before we meet together for a welcome dinner.

Included meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Four Seasons First Residence, Cairo (or similar)

DAY 2 - THE PYRAMIDS & SPHINX

Today we head out to visit probably the most famous sights in Egypt, the famous pyramids at Sakkara and the Sphinx.

Sakkara is the former necropolis (cemetery) for the ancient Egyptian city of Memphis and the place where the very first pyramids were built as tombs for kings. Instead of the smooth sides featured on other pyramids, the pyramids here feature six steps on the outside, representing the pharaoh's stepladder to heaven. Discover the famous Step Pyramid of King Zoser, the first pyramid ever built and the world's oldest freestanding stone structure. You could also admire the beautiful tomb art at Sakkara, which gives great insight into the lives of the ancient Egyptians.

The Great Pyramids of Giza are the only present-day survivors of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, built over 4,500 years ago as giant tombs for the mummies of the pharaohs Khufu, Khafre and Menkaure, who were father, son and grandson respectively. The pyramids are truly monumental in scale, with the largest - Khufu's - constructed from over two million blocks. Contrary to popular beliefs, the pyramids were not built by slaves but by Egyptian peasants, whose labor in building the pyramids paid their taxes to the Pharaoh, who also fed, clothed and housed them.

Nearby sits the enigmatic Sphinx, with the body of a lion and the face of a man wearing a royal head cloth, which workers may have based on King Khafre to guard his enormous funerary monument. About a thousand years after the Sphinx was built it was covered in sand until a young prince had a dream in which the Sphinx told him that if he cleared the sand away, he would become Pharaoh. This story is told on the 'Dream Stela' that was placed between the Sphinx's paws by King Tuthmose IV.

We'll enjoy lunch together with views of the pyramids and return to the hotel for an evening at leisure.

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

Accommodation: Four Seasons First Residence, Cairo (or similar)

DAY 3 - COPTIC CAIRO & THE EGYPTIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

A day to delve into Cairo's history, as we first enjoy a tour of Coptic Cairo. The city has been a hub for many different civilizations over the years and our guide will reveal some of the Coptic history as we go.

Visit the beautiful and newly refurbished Coptic Museum, first completed in 1908 using property belonging to the Coptic Church in Egypt. It displays a wonderful collection of sculptures dating from Pre-Christian times up until the 5thC AD, as well as bone carvings, frescoes, icons, relics, colorful textiles and more. Proceed to the Hanging Church, named so because it sits "suspended" on top of the Fortress of Babylon that the Romans built when they came to Egypt. Thought to originate in the seventh century, this church in basilica style was once the seat of the Coptic Patriarchate.

Tradition has it that the church of St. Sergius was built over a location in which Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus rested on their journey in Egypt. Located inside the Roman fortress in Old Cairo, it is believed to have been built by Roman soldiers in the third or fourth centuries and later turned into a Coptic church by the Egyptians. Dedicated to two soldier-saints, Sergius and Bacchus, the church has been rebuilt and restored since medieval times, but it is still considered to be a model of early Coptic churches

Later, we will head to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, a treasure trove of artefacts and finds from the many burial sites and

historic locations around the country. Located on the archaeological site of El-Fustat in Old Cairo overlooking the Ain El-Seera Lake. The museum showcases Egyptian civilization from prehistoric times to the present day, highlighting the country's comprehensive heritage.

We enjoy lunch together before returning to the hotel for an afternoon and evening at leisure.

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

Accommodation: Four Seasons First Residence, Cairo (or similar)

DAY 4 - TRAVEL TO LUXOR & TEMPLES OF KARNAK

This morning, we check out of our hotel in Cairo and make our way to the airport for our flight to Luxor.

Once an Ancient Egyptian capital, is known today as the world's "greatest open-air museum." From the tomb of Tutankhamen in the Valley of the Kings and the magnificent sunset views at the majestic temple complexes of Karnak and Luxor to the exciting and fun Nile cruises, Luxor is the perfect choice for culture vultures. Luxor is divided by the Nile into two areas commonly called the East Bank and West Bank which were considered in Ancient Egyptian times as symbolizing respectively Life and Death.

Upon arrival in Luxor, we will be met by our local guide. Built over a period of two millennia by generations of Pharaohs, our first visit is the 62-acre Temple of Karnak, dedicated to the God Amun. There is plenty to explore here as the numerous pylons, obelisks and smaller temples within could take days to completely explore. The great "Hypostyle Hall" alone is an imposing forest of giant pillars rising 23 meters (75 feet) toward the sky. At the height of its glory, Karnak Temple collected annual tribute from over 65 cities and towns in the region!

Then make headway to the Temple of Luxor, once connected to Karnak via the Avenue of Human-headed Sphinxes. This temple has been the site of many celebrations, the most important being the Festival of Opet which grew over the years to last 27 days. Within the grounds of Luxor Temple is also the Mosque of Abu'l Haggag, built in memory of a 13th century local 'saint' who is still venerated by Luxorians to this day.

We check in to our hotel and enjoy dinner together.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Sonesta Luxor (or similar)

DAY 5 - THEBES & BOARDING OUR NILE CRUISE

The ancient Egyptians stopped building pyramids as royal tombs after thieves stole all the treasures inside and instead started burying their royalty in secret tombs at Thebes, today's West Bank of Luxor. Here, you can explore the Valley of the Kings, where New Kingdom pharaohs were buried in hidden tombs, maintaining their richly painted hues and treasures for their use in the afterlife. Afterwards, proceed to the Valley of the Queens where the pharaohs' wives and children were buried.

Rising out of the desert plain in a series of brilliant white terraces, the mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut merges with the sheer limestone cliffs that surround it. Forming a natural rock amphitheater, the temple was an important religious and funerary site. (N.B. The tomb of Nefertari has been closed by local authorities for restoration from 2nd Mar 2024 until further notice)

Next, enjoy a brief stop at the famed Colossi of Memnon and behold the two immense statues of Amenhotep III which, in Pharaonic times, guarded the entrance to his once great temple. During the Roman period, the site became a resort spot where many prominent travelers left their own graffiti carved into the sandstone.

Afterwards, we transfer to Esna where we board our Dahabiehs, our elegant authentic boat.

We enjoy our first lunch on board, while cruising to El-Hegz and later dinner and overnight on board.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Dahabieh

DAY 6 - EXPLORING EL HEGZ & EL KAAB

After breakfast, we sail to El-Kaab to visit the tombs of the governors of the ancient city, the ruins of the temple where gods Hathor and Horus used to meet.

We rejoin our boat and enjoy lunch on board during the cruise to Edfu, where we visit Edfu Temple, dedicated to the falcon god Horus.

The temple of Horus at Edfu is the most completely preserved Egyptian temple. One of the last great Egyptian attempts at monument building on a grand scale, the temple dominates the west-bank town, although Edfu's more modest structures crowd in on its enclosure wall. Modern Edfu, a centre for sugar and pottery is a very friendly place.

This evening, we dine on a fireside barbecue on Fawaza Island and overnight on board.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Dahabieh

DAY 7 - ANCIENT NILE FISHING VILLAGES & THE SPEOS OF HOREMHEB

We breakfast as we sail to the small village of Bassaw, an old fishing village on the Nile, deserted by tourism.

Places like Baassaw allow a direct contact to the past and we may even get the possibility to try the authentic way of fishing, like the ancient Egyptians used.

Lunch is taken while sailing to Djebel Silsila. Here, on the west bank of the river is the Speos of Horemheb, a rock-hen chapel dedicated to pharaoh Horemheb (1323-1295BC) and seven deities, including the local god Sobek.

We visit the temple of the Horemheb era and the ancient quarry where the temple stones were extracted before returning for dinner and overnight on board

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Dahabieh

DAY 8 - KOM OMBO & THE SOUK OF DARAW

This morning, we set sail for Kom Ombo, whose Temple is dedicated to both Sobek the crocodile god and Haroeris the hawk. Standing on a promontory at a bend in the Nile, in ancient times sacred crocodiles basked in the sun on the river bank. The sandstone temple dates from Ptolemaic times.

We depart Kom Ombo for Daraw Village, visit the local souk market.

Back on board, we lunch while sailing to Herdiab Village, one of the oldest villages on the Nile, maintaining the authentic ways of farming.

This evening, we dine on Herdiab Island and overnight on board.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Dahabieh

DAY 9 - AMAZING ASWAN

A relaxing morning awaits as we enjoy breakfast on Herdiab beach, where you can swim if you like before sailing to Aswan over lunch.

This afternoon in Aswan we will visit the temple of Philae temple, a centre for the cult of the Egyptian goddess Isis. Between 1972-1980, the temple was actually moved by UNESCO to save it from the Nile waters. The romantic and majestic aura surrounding the temple complex on the island of Philae has been luring pilgrims for thousands of years. The ruins are one of Egypt's most legendary tourist attractions.

This evening, we will enjoy tea during sunset, on an island in front of the temple and experience a sound and light show on the temple.

We return back to the Dahabieh, for the final dinner and overnight on board.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Dahabieh

DAY 10 - DISEMBARKATION, ABU SIMEL & RETURN TO CAIRO

This morning, it is sadly time to disembark our Dahabieh after breakfast as we make our way to the amazing temples at Abu Simel.

We transfer to Aswan Airport for a short flight to Abu Simbel to visit the huge 13th-century BC monument to Ramses II.

The two temples of Ramses II are each fronted by colossal statues up to 20 meters (66 feet) high, and are famed as the most impressive monuments remaining of Ancient Egypt. Recently, the temples were threatened by the waters of Lake Nasser, and with the help of a UNESCO campaign they were cut into blocks, raised piece by piece and reassembled in a new position higher up the hillside.

After the visit, we will fly back to Cairo and enjoy dinner.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Four Seasons First Residence, Cairo (or similar)

DAY 11 - THE MOSQUES & BAZAARS OF CAIRO

We enjoy a final full day of sightseeing in Cairo today as we first visit Sultan Hassan & Ibn Tulun Mosques.

The Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hasan is a monumental mosque and madrasa in the historic district of Cairo. Built in the 1300s, the mosque was considered remarkable for its massive size and innovative architectural components, and is still considered one of the most impressive historic monuments in Cairo today!

The Mosque of Ibn Tulun is one of the oldest mosques in Egypt as well as the whole of Africa surviving in its full original form, and is the largest mosque in Cairo. Built around an open square courtyard which allows natural light to travel through, the Ibn Tulun Mosque features ancient Egyptian architecture styles of Egypt, with carved stucco and wood.

Afterwards, we will visit the Khan EL Khalili Bazar, where we can pick up some final trinkets and souvenirs. Reputed to be the largest bazaar in the Middle East, it was originally founded as a watering stop for caravans in the 14th century and the bazaar has now grown to vast proportions. As one wanders through the labyrinth of narrow streets you will find workshops and stalls selling all manner of things from woodwork, glassware and leather goods to perfumes, fabrics and Pharaonic curiosities

This evening we will have a farewell dinner to round off tour time in Egypt.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Four Seasons First Residence, Cairo (or similar)

DAY 12 - FAREWELL TO EGYPT

It is time to bid a fond farewell to Egypt. This morning, check out of your hotel and you will be transferred to Cairo Airport for your onward flight home.

Included meals: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Meet & Greet at Cairo Airport [CAI] on arrival
- Return domestic economy flights: Cairo [CAI] - Luxor [LXR]; Luxor [LXR] - Aswan [ASW]
- Transport as detailed in the itinerary
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary (or similar standard)
- Meals as detailed in the itinerary
- English speaking tour guide throughout
- All activities, visits and excursions as detailed in the itinerary.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- ATOL Protection
- Flights to/from Cairo Airport [CAI] - please ask us for a flight quotation
Departures from regional airports available on request at a supplement
- Drinks
- All entrance fees to non-stipulated attractions.
- Visas, travel insurance.
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned under included in price above.
- Any meals not mentioned in itinerary.
- Any optional activities offered.
- Gratuities
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Please note, flights to/from Egypt are not included in this package. The Big Journey Company would be happy to provide a quotation for your flights - please contact us for further details
- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant journey.
- Check in is after 2-3pm and check out is before 10am unless otherwise specified in the itinerary.
- Cancellation 90 - 0 days prior to departure cancellation fee is 100%. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct travel insurance in place to protect you against the need to cancel your holiday. Deposits are non-refundable.
- A non-refundable deposit is due at the time of booking. Full balance will be due 14 weeks prior to departure.
- Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking. The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation request. This does not affect your statutory rights. This offer is subject to availability and space is limited.
- Please consult your doctor letting them know your travel plans so that they can advise you about any vaccinations/medications you may need to take.
- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant tour
- Prices are based on two people sharing and do not include increases in government taxes, fuel surcharges.
- The boat may moor side-to-side with others in port and it may be necessary to cross other boats to get to the shore. Some daily excursions land directly on the beach or on small jetties. Walking on some of the daily excursions will include moderate activity and on uneven terrain. Therefore, this cruise is not recommended for passengers in wheelchairs or with limited mobility.
- In some events, for example due to adverse weather conditions, the captain can choose to alter the itinerary for the comfort and safety of the passengers.

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