



Ancient Egypt & the Nile River 2023

16-Day Small Ship Adventure

EXTEND YOUR TRIP

PRE-TRIP

Israel & Jordan: Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman

POST-TRIP

Alexandria: History & Romance

Your Day-to-Day Itinerary

OVERSEAS ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Overseas Adventure Travel, founded in 1978, is America's leading adventure travel company. *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Travel + Leisure*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *US News & World Report*, and others have recommended O.A.T. trips. But our most impressive reviews come from our customers: Thousands of travelers have joined our trips, and 95% of them say they'd gladly travel with us again, and recommend us to their friends.

A WORD ABOUT ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Overseas Adventure Travel offers American travelers a 4-star experience at a 3-star price aboard our privately owned and chartered fleet. On this Small Ship Adventure, you'll enjoy off-the-beaten-path discoveries in a group of 20-25 (with an average of 22), a convivial experience onboard the 75-passenger *Nefertiti*, and more travel choices. Plus, we are the only small ship company with expert, local Trip Experience Leaders who accompany you throughout your journey, enhancing your exploration with the kind of insight and passion that only a local can provide.

As with any type of travel experience, it's important to remember that sometimes, due to weather, water conditions, or local circumstances, ports of call, activities, and accommodations could differ from what is described in our trip itinerary. The order of the included features in this itinerary may also change. Your Trip Experience Leader will advise you of any changes that may occur while on tour. As some of these changes are just part of the nature of traveling, it's good to remember that a certain degree of flexibility can ultimately enrich your travel experience.

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges, unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- » Accommodations for 7 nights in Cairo and 7 nights aboard O.A.T.'s privately chartered river ship, the *Nefertiti*
- » 36 meals: 14 breakfasts, 12 lunches, and 10 dinners—includes 2 Home-Hosted Meals
- » 23 included tours (with personal headsets) and cultural experiences
- » **Services of our local Trip Experience Leader with your group of 20-25 travelers (average of 22) throughout your adventure**
- » Gratuities for local motorcoach drivers
- » Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- » Visa fees for entrance to Egypt (if you have an airport transfer with us in Cairo)
- » All port charges
- » Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- » 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next vacation—an average of \$273
- » Airport transfers are only available for travelers arriving and departing to/from the same airport and on the same arrival/departure dates as the main trip

WHAT THIS TRIP IS LIKE

GROUP SIZE

- » This adventure has a group size of 20-25 travelers (average of 22) with a local Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T.

PACING

- » 15 days, with 7 nights aboard the privately chartered 75-passenger *Nefertiti*, one four-night hotel stay, and one three-night hotel stay

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- » Walk 1-3 miles unassisted and participate in 2-3 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs
- » Not accessible for travelers using wheelchairs or scooters

- » Travelers using walkers, crutches, or other mobility aids must travel with a companion who can assist them
- » We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- » Travel over city streets, rugged paths, cobble streets, sand, and unpaved roads in some places
- » Travel by 75-passenger river ship and by coach
- » Changes in tides and water-level depths may require adjustments to your itinerary

CLIMATE

- » The climate in Egypt varies from cold to extremely hot
- » During the dry summer months of May through October, temperatures can range from 90°-100°F
- » From June to September, temperatures can easily reach 90°-100°F and even up to 110°F (in the shade) in Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan
- » Winter temperatures between November and April usually range from the 50s (in the mornings) to 80°F and can drop dramatically after sunset, as far as the high 40s

FLIGHT INFORMATION

- » Travel time will be 17-20 hours and will most likely have one connection of 3-4 hours

Ancient Egypt & the Nile River

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

8 nights in *Israel & Jordan: Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Jerusalem, Israel

Day 3 Jerusalem • Israel Museum •
Machne Yehuda Market

Day 4 Jerusalem • Mount of Olives
• Old City

Day 5 Masada • The Dead Sea

Day 6 Jerusalem • Transfer to Petra,
Jordan via the King's Highway

Day 7 Explore Petra

Day 8 Petra • Amman

Day 9 Amman • Jerash • Ajloun

Day 10 Amman • Cairo, Egypt • Join
main adventure

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart today on your flight to Cairo, Egypt. Please refer to your individual air itinerary for exact departure and arrival times.

Day 2 Arrive in Cairo, Egypt

- Destination: Cairo
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Afternoon/Evening: You'll arrive in Cairo based on your specific flight arrangements; most flights arrive between 2:30pm and 11:30pm. If you've purchased your airfare through O.A.T. or purchased a transfer with us, an O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel via motorcoach—a transfer of about 45 minutes, depending on traffic. Here, we'll be joined by our Trip

Experience Leader and travelers who took our *Israel & Jordan: Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman* pre-trip extension.

Upon arrival, you will check in and receive your room assignments. We stay for four nights in this centrally-located hotel in the heart of Cairo. Depending on which hotel you stay at, your hotel may feature a restaurant, bar, and fitness center. Typical rooms include a balcony with a view of the Nile River, air conditioning, satellite TV and radio, mini-bar, phone, and complimentary wireless Internet. After settling in, we'll take part in a brief orientation tour of the hotel facilities with our Trip Experience Leader.

The rest of the day is on your own, with dinner on your own as well—you are free to rest in your room after your long flight to prepare for tomorrow's discoveries, eat dinner at one of the

restaurants in the hotel, or reach out to your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations on things to do in the area.

If you choose to venture out on your own, you may opt to take a 15-minute taxi ride downtown to admire the Art-Deco architecture and window shop alongside Cairo's natives. This is also an ideal area for seeking out dinner on your own. Stuffed pigeon is a local delicacy, while koshari (a mix of rice, pasta, lentils, and tomato sauce) is an everyday favorite; both can be found downtown, and are ideal first meals to enjoy in Egypt.

Freedom To Explore: Make the most of your explorations in Cairo on these off-the-beaten path activities. These recommendations are designed by our team of local experts with women travelers in mind.

- **Walking with your Trip Experience Leader,** gaze out at the city atop **Cairo Tower:** Resembling a lotus plant, this 613-foot-high tower that was built in 1961 is the city's most famous landmark after the Pyramids. Take an elevator to the top and enjoy the 360-degree views across the city and try to spot the mighty Pyramids off in the distance.
 - **How to get there:** An approximate 20-minute walk with your Trip Experience Leader, or a 10- to 15-minute taxi ride, about \$4 USD one way.
 - **Hours:** 10am-1am, daily.
 - **Cost:** About \$4 USD.
- Explore the bustle of **Downtown Cairo:** Begin in Talaat Harb, a square in the heart of Cairo noted for its historic streets laid out in the late 19th century and magnificent Art-Deco buildings; then go bargain-hunting with

the locals during a stroll along El-Shawarby Street, the one-time shopping hub of colonial Cairo.

- **How to get there:** A 10- to 15-minute taxi ride, about \$4 USD one way.
 - **Hours:** 11am-2am, daily.
 - **Cost:** Free.
- Explore **Khayamiya Market:** Peruse the colorful textiles on display along one of Cairo's most famous shopping streets. While it's not especially well-known among foreigners, Egyptians flock to this 400-year-old market to purchase high-quality, handmade textiles, including sheets, tablecloths, pillowcases, wall tapestries, and more. Admire the authentic Arab, Persian, and Turkish designs firsthand as you mingle with locals seeking out beautiful wares.
 - **How to get there:** About a 25-minute taxi ride.
 - **Hours:** 9am-6pm, Monday-Saturday.
 - **Cost:** Free.

Day 3 Cairo • Ancient Egypt conversation • Egyptian Museum • Welcome Dinner

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Activity Note: Based on travel restrictions around Cairo regarding tour groups, we will only be able to travel in our small group of 20-25 travelers during planned itinerary activities. We will not be able to explore the city in our group during free time, however the city is safe and you are able to explore on your own or in smaller groups with no issues.

Our tour at the Egyptian Museum will span two floors. Elevators are not available, so we will need to climb approximately 20 stairs to reach the exhibits.

Breakfast: Served buffet-style at the hotel from 6am-9:30am, with Egyptian and American options available.

Morning: We'll meet with our Trip Experience Leader for a Welcome Briefing around 10am in the hotel. During this 45-minute briefing, we will introduce ourselves and review our itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur). Our Trip Experience Leader will also discuss logistics, safety and emergency procedures, and answer questions we may have—come prepared; this is your chance to get them answered firsthand, whether you have questions about a particular optional tour, how much free time you'll have during your first stay in Cairo, or specific activities or places you are hoping to see.

After our briefing, we will participate in a 45-minute conversation with our Trip Experience Leader about Ancient Egypt. We'll discuss how the earliest civilization took root on the banks of the Nile, trace the division of dynasties during the Pharaonic era, and learn more about the country's best-known kings and queens. These insights will help prepare us for our first museum visit today.

Lunch: On your own around noon. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend some of their favorite options in or near the hotel.

Afternoon: We will depart around 1pm via motorcoach for our visit to the world-renowned Egyptian Museum, a drive of about 15 minutes, depending on traffic. The museum's collections are arranged chronologically, so you'll feel as though you are walking through time. During our 1.25-hour tour together, our Trip Experience Leader will be our guide to the highlights of each historical period, including the spoils of Tutankhamun's father, King Akhenaten, and his wife Nefertiti. Among them is a 13-foot tall statue that originally stood at Karnak Temple.

After exploring several historical periods, you will have approximately 1 hour of free time to explore the museum independently.

We will depart the museum around 3:45pm and arrive back at our hotel around 4:15pm. You will have some free time on your own this afternoon before we gather for dinner.

Dinner: At about 6:15pm, we'll enjoy a cocktail followed by a Welcome Dinner at a restaurant in our hotel. You'll savor dinner while getting to know your traveling companions over the course of this 1.5-hour meal.

Evening: You are free to retire to your room or gather at one of the hotel's bars for a cocktail to go over the discoveries of the day.

Day 4 Cairo • Controversial Topic: Women's rights in Egyptian society • Explore Sakkara & Memphis

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Exclusive O.A.T. Activity: Today's discoveries feature the **Controversial Topic** of women's rights in Egyptian society. This conversation will help our small group gain a deeper understanding of gender inequality in the Arab world and what it's like for women living in such a culture. For a more intimate experience, we'll split into groups of 3-5, each with its own speaker. Read more about this informative conversation below.

Activity Note: Today's walk through Sakkara will last approximately 2 hours over sandy terrain, while the walk through Memphis will last about 30-minutes over a paved surface. If you prefer to use walking sticks, you are encouraged to bring them. Both sites are very popular with travelers, so we may encounter large crowds during our visit. Whenever

possible, our Trip Experience Leader will seek out quieter areas to stop and explain what we are witnessing.

Breakfast: Served buffet-style at the hotel from 7am-8:30am, with Egyptian and American options available.

Morning: We'll depart the hotel this morning around 8:30am for our one-hour drive to Sakkara, a sprawling complex of temples, pyramids, and funerary monuments that was not explored by archaeologists until the mid-19th century, long after the Pyramids at Giza had been extensively cataloged. Though its monuments span every period of Egyptian history, it is best known as the primary necropolis for the pharaohs and their families during the time of the Old Kingdom. The largest of these monuments is the Step Pyramid of King Zoser, built in the 27th century BC, possibly the first pyramid constructed in Egypt. More than 200 feet tall, it is the oldest stone structure of its size in the world. The tombs at this site house murals that provide insights into everyday life in ancient Egypt. Be sure to peer into the *serdab*, a stone structure in front of the pyramid with two eye-holes that invites you to look deeper inside. When you do, you will discover a remarkably life-like painted limestone statue of Zoser looking back at you. We'll depart Sakkara around 11:45pm by bus.

Lunch: At a local restaurant around noon.

Afternoon: We'll leave the restaurant around 1pm for our 15-minute drive to Memphis. Here we'll visit the Statue of Ramses II, an eleven-meter-high likeness of the third Pharaoh that was created 3,200 years ago. We'll board our motorcoach around 2:15pm to return to our hotel, about an hour drive, depending on traffic. Shortly after returning, we'll split into two groups of 35 and join one of two female speakers to discuss the **Controversial Topic** of women's rights in Egyptian society.

From ancient times to modern day, the role of women in Egyptian society has gradually evolved, and our conversation today will explore the extent of this evolution. To contextualize this complex issue, we'll glean insight from the personal experiences of either a working wife and mother or a single, working woman. Both speakers grew up in Cairo, but their parents hail from rural villages—often leading to a cultural rift between the generations. As such, these women offer wide-ranging perspectives which are sure to cast a personal light on the delicate subject matter.

Egypt is divided on the push for gender equality—the northern part of the country being progressive and the southern part less so. This contrast is, of course, most stark between rural and urban areas. However, in recent years, advocates and Egypt-based organizations like the Egyptian Feminist Union have helped to increase awareness surrounding women's issues, such as lack of educational opportunities and equal representation in the workplace. And it seems that these efforts are having an impact: the number of women in the Egyptian parliament increased from 2% in 2005 to 25% in the following election alone, the literacy rate for women above 15 years old increased from 58% in 2006 to 65% in 2017, and the percentage of college graduated women (at the undergraduate level) increased from 8% in 2006 to 11% in 2017. Perhaps the biggest stride, though, was the passing of new legislation granting women the right to divorce their husbands, a law which only passed in 2000. We'll talk more in-depth specifically about this groundbreaking decision later in our adventure.

Our speaker will share her story and address both sides of the issue for about 20 minutes before opening the conversation up to a 40-minute Q&A. Take this opportunity to ask any questions you may have—perhaps you'd

like to know about gender-based discrimination in the workplace, or maybe you're curious if her conservative family has warmed up to the idea of expanding women's rights. Our conversation concludes around 4:45pm, and the remainder of the afternoon is yours.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend some of their favorite restaurants for local specialties, like *falafel* or *mahshi*, a vegetable (zucchini, eggplants, bell peppers, tomatoes, cabbage leaves, or grapevine leaves) stuffed with rice.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries—you may want to venture out to explore the city by night, or enjoy a nightcap at one of the hotel's bars.

Day 5 Cairo • Explore Fatimid Cairo • Sultan Hassan and Al-Rifa'i Mosques • Moez Street • Khan el-Khalili • Home-Hosted Dinner

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Exclusive O.A.T. Activity: This evening we'll join a local family for a **Home-Hosted Dinner**. As you dine on traditional, homemade dishes, you'll have the opportunity to ask your hosts about Egyptian customs, culture, and lifestyles. To facilitate more intimate conversation, you'll be broken into smaller groups of 10 to 12 travelers for this experience. Read more about this activity below.

Activity Note: Cairo is home to more than one-fifth of Egypt's population, and because of this, heavy traffic congestion is a daily occurrence. As we navigate the streets of Cairo via motorcoach, we may find ourselves among this traffic, which will cause slight changes to

our planned itinerary. We ask that you approach each day with curiosity, an adventurous spirit, and a healthy sense of humor.

Today's activities will last approximately six hours. The majority of the 1.5-hour walking tour will take place over paved surfaces; however, some surfaces may be slippery or uneven.

Breakfast: Served buffet-style at the hotel from 7am–9am, with Egyptian and American options available.

Morning: In our small group of 20–25 travelers, we'll depart our hotel around 9am this morning for about a half-hour motorcoach ride to discover Fatimid Cairo, or Medieval Cairo. With our Trip Experience Leader as our guide, we'll first explore the Sultan Hassan Mosque. This mosque looms large—a grand structure that is widely held to be one of the best examples of early Mamluk architecture in Cairo. Constructed between 1356 and 1363 by Sultan Hassan, the site features a courtyard surrounded by four *iwans* (vaulted halls) and soaring minarets.

Directly facing the Sultan Hassan Mosque is massive Al-Rifa'i—one of Cairo's largest mosques. It houses the tombs of many members of the Egyptian Royal Family, including Egypt's last monarch, King Farouk—whose sister Fawzia was briefly married to the Sha of Iran, reigning as Queen of Iran from 1941 to 1948. We'll spend about an hour exploring these two mosques before we depart via bus around 10:45am for a 15-minute drive to Moez Street—one of the oldest streets in Egypt. Here, we'll stroll past the ancient minarets, domes, and bazaars of this densely-packed neighborhood, which is always bustling with a mix of locals and visitors from around the world. Whenever possible, our Trip Experience Leader will facilitate meaningful interactions with the Egyptians you encounter. This morning's tour concludes at the fabled

Khan el-Khalili bazaar, a maze of narrow alleys teeming with shops of glittering gold, colorful silks, and exotic spices.

Lunch: Around 12pm at a local restaurant near Khan el-Khalili bazaar, featuring Egyptian cuisine.

Afternoon: After lunch around 1pm, we have the opportunity to wander through Khan el-Khalili bazaar. Perhaps you'll practice your bargaining skills as you explore the colorful market stalls selling everything from fragrant roasted nuts, copper tea sets, and vibrant *galabaya* (traditional Egyptian tunic-style clothing), to costume jewelry and leather luggage sets. We'll pause for a moment of quiet here at a café frequented by locals, where you can sample mint tea and even try smoking *shisha* from a water pipe, a favorite pastime of everyday Egyptians.

Dinner: Around 6pm, we'll board a motorcoach to begin making our way to a local family's home for our **Home-Hosted Dinner**. To ensure an intimate experience, you'll be broken into even smaller groups of 10 to 12 travelers for this special meal. All of the families we'll visit live in Cairo's upper-middle class and middle class suburbs. Your host family will offer unique insights into life in urban Egypt, from how local customs have changed in modern times, to the contemporary issues that plague Cairo (like the traffic we've encountered during our visit).

As you swap stories with your hosts and learn about their lives and culture, you'll also indulge in a hearty homemade meal consisting of traditional dishes. You might have a chance to try *mahshi* (squash or eggplant stuffed with rice) or Egyptian meat goulash. Be sure to save room for a pastry: *konafa* (a crispy cake filled with cheese) and *atayef* (dumplings filled with cheese or nuts) are both popular options. Keep

your experience this evening in mind, as you may wish to compare it to your farm house visit in the coming days.

Evening: We'll return to our hotel around 8:30pm, and you'll have the remainder of the evening free to do as you'd like.

Day 6 Cairo • Embark ship • Aswan High Dam • Spice market excursion

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Activity Note: Our flight to Aswan today will take approximately 1.5 hours. Keep in mind that your carry-on luggage is subject to standard security regulations, so it is advisable to pack liquid items in your checked bags.

Breakfast: We'll have an early 5:30am breakfast at the hotel before our morning flight.

Morning: At 6:45am, we'll depart for the airport and take our privately chartered flight to Aswan, which is scheduled to depart at 9am. Upon arrival around 11am, we'll collect our things and board a motorcoach bound for our ship. After driving approximately 15 minutes, we'll pay a visit to the Aswan High Dam. Built in 1960, the dam forever changed the agricultural rhythms of Egypt. Once subject to devastating Nile floods, Egyptian farmers looked to the Aswan High Dam as a way of improving their ability to control their crops. However the large reservoir it created displaced nearly 10,000 of the indigenous Nubian people who lived in the region and created Egypt's own lost city of Atlantis, as the waters swallowed up both homes and priceless archaeological ruins.

We'll stop to take photos for approximately 15 minutes, and we'll also cross the Old Dam, built by the British in the early 20th century. We'll

depart the dam around 12pm and arrive at the dock where our privately chartered small ship awaits us approximately 30 minutes later.

For the next seven nights, the 75-passenger *Nefertiti* will carry us from one iconic site to the next and give us an intimate look of life along the Nile River. Travel this storied waterway as many have over the centuries—from Cleopatra to Agatha Christie—and trace the routes of legendary pharaohs who built their empires along the Nile. As we sail, relax on your private balcony—a feature not often found on other Nile River ships—and keep an eye out for traditional *felucca* boats gliding in the water alongside us, while simple stone homes cozy up to the riverbanks. While sailing, you'll get a glimpse of how locals live, work, and play along the Nile.

Lunch: At 1pm, you and your fellow travelers will be invited to the dining room for lunch. As with all the meals during your cruise, the atmosphere is relaxed, the dress code is smart casual, and you are free to sit at whichever table you please. You'll be offered a selection of buffet-style regional and international options. (Half-portions are available upon request.)

Afternoon: We'll have the remainder of the afternoon to get better acquainted with our surroundings onboard. Our warm and accommodating crew are not only on-hand to ensure your comfort, but to provide a family-like atmosphere during your time onboard. You can also make connections with your fellow travelers in our welcoming common spaces.

Around 6:30pm, gather with your fellow travelers in the lounge for the first of a series of nightly Port Talks. During these talks, we will learn about each place we'll visit prior to arrival, so you can make the best use of your free time while there.

Dinner: Around 7pm, gather for a Welcome Dinner in the dining room. In addition to the standard dinner options, we'll enjoy a few more special offerings at this celebratory meal. We'll also meet the *Rayes* (chief) of our ship. As a native of Upper Egypt, the *Rayes* will likely be wearing a traditional *galabeya* (floor-length tunic) throughout our voyage. While there's no need to match his formal style onboard, some travelers do choose to wear a day dress or slacks to the Welcome Dinner.

Evening: Our experience of local life along the Nile deepens as we disembark to visit a spice market around 8pm and learn about the seasonings that give Egyptian cuisine its zest. Then, we'll stop into a local café, perhaps sampling Aswan's famous hibiscus tea, and interact with the café's regular customers.

Freedom To Explore: Make the most of your explorations in Aswan on these off-the-beaten path activities. These recommendations are designed by our team of local experts with women travelers in mind.

- **Walking with your Trip Experience Leader,** discover the treasures of the **Nubian Museum:** Nestled into a hillside in Aswan and just a short walk from your hotel, this award-winning museum celebrates the culture and civilization of the Nubian region of Egypt from prehistoric times to the present. Some noteworthy exhibits include three mummies from the Late Period; a documentary focused on Old Nubia; 6,000-year-old painted pottery bowls; and horse armor discovered in tombs from the Ballana period—and each piece offers a clearly-written

explanation of its history. Larger than the Luxor Museum, a complete walkthrough of its three floors will take about 1.5 hours.

- **How to get there:** About a 20-minute walk with your Trip Experience Leader.
- **Hours:** 9am–4pm, daily.
- **Cost:** About \$5 USD.

- **Go bird watching along the Nile:** Visit Aswan’s small islands along the Nile and discover why bird enthusiasts have been flocking here for ages. If you choose to reserve a private tour, your expert, English-speaking bird spotter will guide a *felucca* boat tour along the Nile, pointing out local species such as egrets, kingfishers, herons, and parakeets. Your guide will provide you with binoculars for optimal bird-spotting, and it is suggested that you leave a tip at the end of your tour. Or, you can opt to go birding on your own. If you choose to do so, we recommend bringing your own binoculars, visiting earlier in the day to avoid the heat, and setting aside roughly 1.5 hours for the experience.

- **How to get there:** About a 20-minute *felucca* ride from your ship.
- **Hours:** 9am–12pm, daily.
- **Cost:** About \$50 USD.

- **Ply the Nile on a traditional *felucca* boat ride to Aswan’s Botanical Island:** Disembark to enjoy the peace and tranquility of this 17-acre island oasis of palm trees and exotic plants. There are no restaurants or designated hikes on the island, so it is rarely very crowded, but local families often visit for a leisurely stroll. Some of the flora you’ll witness on this unique island are papaya and jackfruit trees ripe with fruit; ebony and mahogany trees; miswak and carob, known for their teeth-cleaning twigs and edible pods,

respectively; flowering hibiscus and ginger; fragrant jasmine plants and tulips; and plenty of coconut and date palm trees.

- **How to get there:** About a 20-minute *felucca* ride from your ship.
- **Hours:** 9am–4pm, and 6pm–10pm, daily.
- **Cost:** About \$6 USD.

Day 7 Aswan • Explore Abu Simbel

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Activity Note: Today features a long drive and a very early wake-up. We will wake up around 5am for breakfast, leave for our visit to Abu Simbel around 6am, and will return around 5:30pm. Our drive by motorcoach to these temples will take about 4 hours along some bumpy roads. After spending 4 hours exploring Abu Simbel and enjoying lunch, we will return to Aswan, a journey of another 4 hours.

If you would like a more relaxed day, you may choose to remain in Aswan and explore on your own. Perhaps you’ll opt for a *felucca* ride around the botanical island, or delve into Nubian culture at the Nubian Museum.

Breakfast: All breakfasts onboard are served buffet style in the ship’s dining room. You may choose from an assortment of familiar options—including hot and cold cereals, eggs, sausage, bacon, fresh fruit, and toast. Breakfast service is from 5am–6am today, and you are welcome to dine at your convenience.

Morning: Today, we’ll take part in a full-day excursion to Abu Simbel. We’ll depart around 6am and spend the morning traveling four hours south by motorcoach to Egypt’s Nubia region. During our transfer, our Trip Experience Leader will shed light on Egypt’s Nubian people. An indigenous group of African descent, Nubians have long maintained a

language and culture distinct from those of their Arab neighbors. With the construction of the Aswan High and Low Dams, thousands of Nubian people and monuments—including Abu Simbel—were displaced by flooding. We'll stop 1.5 hours into our drive to stretch our legs, before continuing on the rest of the way to our final destination. About one hour prior to arrival, our Trip Experience Leader will share details about the construction of Abu Simbel, as well as efforts to save it from the rising Nile.

Upon arrival around 10am, we'll explore the two temples built by Egypt's great Pharaoh Ramses II (Egypt's longest-ruling king) as a tribute to the deities and his favorite wife Nefertari. Originally carved into a mountainside, the temples feature richly detailed stone monuments—including four 65-foot tall statues that flank the entrance to the Great Temple. Unlike other Egyptian temples, which typically feature a linear structure, Abu Simbel's design includes myriad side chambers. The whole interior is packed with bas-reliefs depicting battle scenes, as well as pillars and monuments to the gods.

In an epic feat of modern engineering, the massive temples of Abu Simbel were moved to their present location when construction of the Aswan High Dam in 1960 created Lake Nasser and flooded their original location. This extraordinary operation to save one of the world's greatest treasures took years, and the efforts of an international team of engineers and archaeologists. The temple is now backed by an artificial mountain built to resemble its original setting.

We'll have approximately 2.75 hours to explore the site, both with our Trip Experience Leader and on our own, before boarding our motorcoach for a 10-minute drive to lunch.

Lunch: Around 1pm, savor lunch at an Abu Simbel restaurant.

Afternoon: Around 2pm, we'll begin our four-hour return trip to Aswan. As we drive, our Trip Experience Leader will facilitate a conversation about our discoveries, and answer any questions you may have. As sands swirl around us, we'll also discuss the Toshka Canal Project, which is aimed at creating arable land in the desert by re-routing water from Lake Nasser. After approximately 1.25 hours on the road, we'll stop to stretch our legs before continuing on to our ship.

Upon arrival around 5:30pm, we'll have approximately one hour to relax prior to our Port Talk around 6:45pm.

Dinner: In the ship's dining room around 7pm.

Evening: Enjoy a live Nubian show around 8:45pm, which will acquaint us with the traditions of this indigenous group. The highlight is the *tanura* dancer, whose brightly colored, multi-tiered skirts rise higher and higher as she spins to the increasingly intense beat of drums.

Day 8 Aswan • Explore Philae Temple • Explore Kom Ombo

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Breakfast: Onboard in the ship's dining room from 6:30am to 8:30am.

Morning: At around 8:30am, we'll set off to visit Philae Temple, which is dedicated to Isis, an enchantress known as the giver of life, the protector of kings, and the mother of god.

Originally located along the Upper Nile, Philae Temple was relocated downstream to Agilika Island in 1970 to protect it from the flooding caused by the construction of the Aswan Low Dam. We'll take a 15-minute motorcoach ride to the marina, followed by a 10-minute

motorboat ride to the island. The temple complex dates from the 26th Dynasty, with additions through the Roman period. It was one of the last temples built in the classical Egyptian style, as well as one of the last tributes to a goddess. Pilgrims would come from all over the Mediterranean to worship Isis here. This temple's towering silhouette has left a lasting impression on visitors for centuries, and its unique architecture makes for a fascinating journey through its jigsaw-like halls. Your Trip Experience Leader will help you navigate the maze-like complex as you explore together for about an hour. We'll return to the ship around noon.

Lunch: Onboard in the ship's dining room around 1pm.

Afternoon: At around 1:30pm, we'll begin sailing for Kom Ombo. Settle in for a leisurely afternoon of cruising, with high tea served around 4:30pm. Around 5:30pm, we'll disembark to visit the Temple of Kom Ombo. As we walk approximately 10 minutes, we'll pass local cafés, shops, and the hum of daily life.

Set on a hill overlooking a bend in the river, the Greco-Roman style temple of Kom Ombo (actually two temples) is unique, as it is Egypt's only double temple—dedicated to both Sobek, the crocodile god, and Haroeris, the great, winged solar disk. Everything here is doubled and perfectly symmetrical along a central axis—twin entrances, twin courts, and twin colonnades.

Dinner: Onboard in the ship's dining room around 7:30pm.

Evening: After dinner, take part in a *galabeya* party featuring traditional Egyptian wear.

Day 9 Explore Edfu • Esna • Luxor

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Activity Note: The Esna locks, in tandem with the Aswan Dam, keep the Nile's tide in check. Note that regulations on moving vessels through the locks could affect the order in which you visit sites during your cruise.

Breakfast: Onboard in the ship's dining room from 7am to 9am.

Morning: Arrive in Edfu early this morning. At around 9am, disembark for a visit to Edfu's Temple of Horus, Egypt's best-preserved temple, by horse and carriage. During our 10- to 15-minute ride, you may engage in conversation with our local driver.

We'll arrive at the temple around 9:15am. Dedicated to Horus, the god of the sun and planets, the falcon (Horus's symbol) is prominent in the vivid hieroglyphs and bas-reliefs of the temple. Thirty-eight columns surround the court, and a fine statue of Horus stands guard over the entry. Every available surface is carved with hieroglyphs describing offerings to the god. The large, sunny courtyard is a Chapel of the New Year. Paintings on the ceiling depict a solar barque sailing through the twelve hours of the day. Each year during the Festival of the New Year, the statue of Horus would be carried from here to the terrace on the roof to be recharged by the sun.

We'll head back to our ship via horse and carriage at approximately 12:15am and arrive around 1pm, just in time to sail to our next destination—Luxor.

Lunch: Onboard in the ship's dining room at around 1pm.

Afternoon: As we sail this afternoon, you may choose to relax on your private balcony, or participate in onboard activities with your fellow travelers. Our vessel will pass through the locks of Esna between 5pm and 8pm, and we'll take part in a Port Talk with our Trip Experience Leader.

Dinner: Onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: After dinner, relax or retire to your cabin. We'll arrive in Luxor later this evening.

Freedom To Explore: Make the most of your explorations in Luxor on these off-the-beaten path activities. These recommendations are designed by our team of local experts with women travelers in mind.

- **Walking with your Trip Experience Leader,** visit the **Luxor Museum:** Overlooking the west bank of the Nile, this two-story museum offers visitors a wonderfully-curated collection of archaeological finds dating back as far as Egypt's Old Kingdom. Some of its masterpieces include a well-preserved limestone relief of Tuthmosis III, a master plan of Ramses the IX's tomb, the royal mummies of two pharaohs (Ramses I and Ahmose I), and a selection of treasures from Tutankhamun's tomb. Browsing the entire collection takes approximately one hour and after your visit, you can stroll along the Nile.

- **How to get there:** About a 15-minute walk from your ship with your Trip Experience Leader.

- **Hours:** 9am-2pm, and 5pm-9pm, daily.

- **Cost:** \$10 USD.

- Hone your bargaining skills at **Luxor Market:** Mingle with the locals while shopping for Egyptian keepsakes at the colorful Luxor Market. The majority of the shop owners speak English and are excited to barter with customers. This area is typically very busy, but your Trip Experience Leader will offer

plenty of tips on maneuvering your way through and bargaining. Since the market sells mostly spices, you'll be surrounded by rich aromas wafting from each shop, and the smell of incense also fills the air as a means of protection against evil spirits. Whether you just want to soak in the atmosphere or sit down for tea with a merchant before purchasing a cotton *galabeya*, this is always a fun and authentic Egyptian experience.

- **How to get there:** About a 10- to 15-minute walk from your hotel.

- **Hours:** 8am-12am, daily.

- **Cost:** Free.

- Visit the **National Council of Women:** The Egyptian constitution guarantees equal rights to women and men across all spheres: civilian, economic, political, social, and cultural. The National Council of Women was founded in 2000 to ensure those constitutional protections are upheld. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to arrange a meeting with one of the members so that you can learn more about the history of the council and about the steps it is taking to fight gender discrimination in southern Egypt.

- **How to get there:** A 30-minute taxi ride from the ship; about \$7 USD.

- **Hours:** Visits must be arranged in advance.

- **Cost:** Free; donations are accepted.

Day 10 Luxor • Optional Luxor Hot-Air Balloon Ride • *A Day in the Life* of an Egyptian farm house

- Destination: Qena

- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Exclusive O.A.T. Activity: Today's activities will include *A Day in the Life* of an Egyptian farm house. We'll meet with a farming family, help them tend to their fields or assist with other daily chores, and enjoy a homemade

lunch together. To facilitate a more intimate experience, each group of 20–25 travelers will visit a different farm house. One group will remain with community leader and guide Ahmed al Azab, and the other two will meet the leader of their farming family upon arrival. While it's not possible to predict exactly what each group will experience, we will all enjoy activities that are memorable and authentic. Read more about this activity below.

Activity Note: As it did for the ancient Egyptians, high water makes for a smoother sail. As such, from mid–November to mid–February when tides are low, your ship will stay in Luxor for the evening. Water levels may also affect transportation to the Temple of Dendera on Day 11.

Travelers who opt to take our hot–air balloon excursion should be prepared to awake very early in the morning.

Early Morning: As the sun rises over Luxor, so can you—aboard an optional hot–air balloon ride (weather permitting) around 5am. The sights, sounds, and sheer spectacle of seeing these antiquities from the sky will surely make for a memorable morning.

Breakfast: Service is from 7:15am–8am today, and you are welcome to dine at your convenience.

Morning: All groups will gather in the lounge around 9am to prepare for our **NEW A Day in the Life** experience with a local farming family on the west bank of the Nile River. The east bank, where our ship is currently docked, is Luxor like you've always imagined: home to bustling markets, the elegant Old Winter Palace Hotel, and the grand Luxor Temple. The other side of the Nile, however, seems like a different world entirely. Rural, reedy, and less developed, the west bank is home to subsistence farmers who are far removed from the Hollywood–ready

attractions just across the water. Most of the houses here are modest, made from mud bricks or concrete and surrounded by date–palm, henna, and fruit trees.

We'll be joined around 9:15am by Ahmed al Azab, a farmer and local leader whose family has lived on the west bank since the 1960s. After spending about 15 minutes learning about the community from Ahmed, each group will board a motorboat bound for the west bank, arriving around 9:45am. Those who remain with Ahmed will follow him to his farm; the two other groups will be escorted to nearby farms by their Trip Experience Leaders. Upon arrival at our respective farms, we'll sit down with members of the family and spend about an hour discussing their lives, struggles, taboos, and traditions. If your host is female, you might want to ask her about women's role in a typical Egyptian family, comparing her experience with what we learned about women's rights earlier in our adventure. If children are home, perhaps you'll ask them what school is like. Arranged marriage is common in Egypt; if a married couple is present, you might ask their opinions of the practice.

At approximately 10:45am, we'll venture into the field for a hands–on farming activity. The weather and soil here are favorable for a large variety of crops, from potatoes and eggplants to mangoes and tomatoes; depending on the season, we may have the opportunity to harvest some of the produce or seed the land. We might also help feed the animals or use the old millstone to grind wheat into flour. Sun bread (flatbread similar to pita) is a staple of the local diet, and every family in the community either has a stone oven of their own, or has access to a shared oven. We'll help prepare a batch of this whole wheat treat, which will accompany our lunch.

Lunch: We'll gather around the table around noon to enjoy a meal with the family. In addition to the bread, we'll enjoy an assortment of seasonal, homemade dishes typical of this region. Our lunch concludes—as most Egyptian meals do—with a cup of either mint or hibiscus tea. While it may seem counter-intuitive to drink a warm beverage in a hot climate, Egyptians know that it actually tricks the body into cooling off.

Afternoon: We'll bid farewell to the family around 1pm and walk to the Nile's bank, where we'll encounter a local icon: a *felucca*. These traditional wooden-hulled boats with *lateen* (triangular) sails ply the water in profusion here. They're the ideal vessel to take us back to our ship on the east bank. Our leisurely crossing will take approximately 45 minutes, plenty of time to take in the views of both sides of the Nile and reflect on the power of this ancient, life-giving river.

We'll re-board our river ship around 1:45pm and begin sailing towards Qena—a docking destination few other travel companies offer. Situated north of Luxor, Qena sits at a bend in the Nile, and is ideally positioned at the intersection of two main roads. Both a market town and a provincial city, Qena is also the perfect base for visiting the nearby Temple of Dendera.

The remainder of the afternoon is yours to relax onboard. Just before dinner around 5:30pm, join your Trip Experience Leader for a discussion about their perspective of *Life on the Nile* followed by a Port Talk.

Dinner: Onboard in the ship's dining room around 6:30pm.

Evening: At leisure as we sail to Qena.

Day 11 Qena • Explore Dendera Temple • Luxor

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Activity Note: During low-water season, from mid-November to mid-February, you will travel from Luxor to the Dendera Temple complex via bus.

Breakfast: Onboard in the ship's dining room from 7am-7:45am.

Morning: Once we disembark around 8am, we'll take a 30-minute motorcoach ride to visit the colorful Temple of Dendera, built by Romans and Greeks and dedicated to Hathor—goddess of maternal and family love. This well-preserved temple complex contains birth houses, a Coptic church, the Hathor Temple, and Hypostyle Hall. One of the celebrated features of the temple is an astronomical ceiling intricately decorated with vultures, winged disks, and the union between Hathor and Horus. Paintings on the ceiling—which are some of the most well-preserved in the ancient world—also represent the two halves of the sky with its northern and southern constellations, the hours of day and night, the sun and moon, and the symbols of the zodiac.

Our Trip Experience Leader will guide us on a one-hour tour of the temple, and you'll enjoy an additional hour of free time to stroll through its nine acres of towering columns and marvel at its detailed stone reliefs.

We'll depart Dendera around 10:30am and return to the ship by 11am.

Lunch: Onboard in the ship's dining room at around 11:30am.

Afternoon: Following lunch around 12:30pm, the *Nefertiti* will begin cruising back to Luxor. Enjoy some time at leisure as we continue making our way to Luxor this afternoon. Sit out on your private balcony and drink in the passing vistas of everyday life along the banks of the Nile River. Perhaps you will witness a farmer leading his cattle to graze in the fields, or local women bringing their brightly-colored laundry to the banks for washing.

Dinner: Onboard in the ship's dining room around 6pm.

Evening: A belly dancer will come aboard around 7:15pm to perform. While practiced throughout the Middle East today, this art form was actually created by Egyptian *ghawazee* (traveling dancers) in the 18th century. Its flowy costumes, clinking castanets, and deliberate movements proved very popular, and it quickly attracted fans from around the world. Our ship remains docked in Luxor tonight.

Day 12 Explore Nile's West Bank • Valley of the Kings • King Tutankhamun's tomb • Luxor Temple

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

Activity Note: Our walk through Luxor Temple will last approximately 1.25 hours over paved terrain. If you prefer to use walking sticks, you are encouraged to bring them. The temple is very popular with travelers, so we may encounter large crowds during our visit. Whenever possible, our Trip Experience Leader will seek out quieter, shaded areas to stop and explain what we are witnessing.

Breakfast: Onboard in the ship's dining room from 6am-6:45am.

Morning: At around 7am, we'll depart our ship for a half-hour motorcoach ride to the west bank of the Nile, the hilly area that was once the Necropolis of Thebes. It's here that we'll visit the Valley of the Kings, with its many tombs chiseled deep into the cliff sides. Several great leaders, as well as many less important rulers are buried here, and more tombs are being discovered even today. This is where Howard Carter discovered the treasures of Tutankhamun in 1922, which we will have the opportunity to discover for ourselves. Each tomb is long and narrow, has the king's formal name and title inscribed in it, and each is decorated with his images and statues. Because these tombs were long sealed from the elements, their walls have retained the vibrant colors and deeply chiseled details that were added by the original builders thousands of years ago.

We'll explore a few of these tombs together with our Trip Experience Leader, and also have time to visit others independently before traveling approximately 10 minutes by motorcoach to visit the nearby Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, the monument of one of Egypt's greatest rulers, and one of its only female pharaohs.

As we leave the fabled valley around 10am, we'll stop at the pair of massive statues of Amenophis, known as the Colossi of Memnon. These statues are the only remnant of a temple dedicated to Amenhotep III—later, the Greeks determined that the statues represented their hero, Memnon.

Around 11:30am, we'll return to our ship via motorboat, arriving back around 12pm.

Afternoon: Enjoy a couple of hours at leisure. Sit out on your private balcony and drink in the passing vistas of everyday life along the banks of the Nile River. Perhaps you will witness a

farmer leading his cattle to graze in the fields, or local women bringing their brightly-colored laundry to the banks for washing.

Around 3:15pm, disembark and make our way to Luxor Temple. Rising from the east bank of the Nile, this sprawling ancient complex was a center of power for Egypt's mighty pharaohs over a nearly 1,500-year period. The temple complex was largely built by Amenhotep III and Ramses II, the most celebrated pharaoh of the New Kingdom (his reign lasted some 66 years, up until his death at age 91). Many other pharaohs and rulers added to the temple over the centuries. Tutankhamen even contributed—the only mark left by the boy king. We will spend just over an hour here, walking in the footsteps of ancient kings.

Dinner: Join your fellow travelers in the dining room around 6pm for a Farewell Cocktail and Dinner as you reminisce about your time together onboard.

Evening: Your final night on the *Nefertiti* is at leisure. Perhaps enjoy a final night cap at the bar.

Day 13 Luxor • Disembark ship • Karnak Temple • Fly to Cairo

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Activity Note: We'll travel by charter flight to Cairo shortly after noon. Keep in mind that your carry-on luggage is subject to standard security regulations, so it is advisable to pack liquid items in your checked bags.

Breakfast: Onboard in the ship's dining room from 7am to 8:30am.

Morning: Around 9am, we'll disembark the ship and board a motorcoach bound for Karnak Temple. Upon arrival around 9:15am, we'll set off to explore the huge complex of shrines, built and enlarged over a period of 1,300 years. The ancient Egyptians called the enormous temple complex of Karnak "the most perfect of places," and today it is one of the most important sites in Egypt as it encompasses a wealth of ancient Egyptian history, primarily between the Twelfth and Twentieth Dynasties. Construction began under Senusret I in the 19th century BC, and subsequent rulers continued to expand the complex with their own shrines, rooms, and monuments.

Your Trip Experience Leader will point out some of the temple's most noteworthy features as you explore together. Its centerpiece is the huge Hypostyle Hall, with its outer walls decorated with battle scenes. Walk through the soaring Hall of Pillars, and imagine how difficult it must have been to construct the 134 columns here without the use of modern machinery. You'll also see the tallest obelisk in Egypt—97 feet tall and weighing approximately 320 tons—which was raised by Queen Hatshepsut in honor of the god Amun. You'll also have the opportunity to seek out your own discoveries. Be sure to take a close look at the walls—most are covered in hieroglyphics that seem as deep and pronounced today as they might've been when they were first carved 3,000 years ago.

Our visit concludes around 11:45am, at which time we'll board our motorcoach and begin our 45-minute transfer to the airport.

Lunch: We'll enjoy a boxed lunch aboard the bus as we make our way to the airport in Luxor.

Afternoon: We'll arrive at the airport around 12:30pm; our privately chartered flight departs approximately an hour later. We'll arrive in Cairo around 2:30pm and transfer to our hotel. The drive typically takes around one hour

(depending on traffic) and we should arrive at our hotel around 4pm. The remainder of the afternoon is yours.

Dinner: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 14 Cairo • Explore Pyramids & Sphinx

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Activity Note: Our transfer from our hotel to the Pyramids could take anywhere from 45 minutes to 1.5 hours depending on traffic. If the crowd levels at Giza are especially high, we may switch today's activities with Day 15 in order to ensure the best possible visit to this iconic site. Please bear in mind that it is impossible to avoid crowds entirely.

Today's tour includes walking over sandy, uneven terrain, and very little shade is available within the pyramid complex.

Breakfast: From 6am–9am, enjoy a buffet-style breakfast at your hotel, with American and Egyptian options available.

Morning: Around 9am we'll travel approximately 45 minutes via motorcoach to the Giza Plateau, home of Egypt's signature attractions: the Pyramids of Giza. The largest of these three structures is the Great Pyramid of Khufu, probably built more than 2,600 years before the time of Christ. Standing 480 feet tall, this pyramid is the last of the Seven Wonders of

the Ancient World that still stands. Of course, we'll also see the inscrutable and mysterious Sphinx, carved almost entirely from one piece of limestone. When Napoleon first set eyes on the monument, it was still covered in sand up to its neck. Today it has been excavated, revealing the paws of a resting lion and chambers at its base. Take some time to revel in the history embedded in every block of stone and in the incomprehensible size of each structure standing tall in the desert sand.

Our Trip Experience Leader will guide us around this iconic site, and we'll also have ample time to explore on our own. Be sure to have your camera ready—there's no better way to convey the scale of these structures than by snapping a photo of yourself right up next to them.

Lunch: At around 12:45pm, we'll board our motorcoach to travel to the legendary Mena House Hotel for lunch. Set in the shadow of the Pyramids, the hotel has played host to guests like Winston Churchill, Charlton Heston, and Agatha Christie. Savor local fare here as you gaze out across the lush gardens toward the Pyramids.

Afternoon: We'll return to our hotel around 3:15pm, and the rest of the day is at your leisure. You may choose to relax at our hotel or walk around Cairo. Perhaps you'll opt for a 20-minute stroll along the Kasr el Nil Bridge to Gezira Island. The bridge offers fine views of the Nile, and is a popular local hangout as the day winds down.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. You may want to sample some of Cairo's famous street food. *Ful* is one of the country's most popular dishes and, while traditionally served at breakfast, can be found nearly everywhere. Comprised of slow-cooked fava beans with oil and salt, it is quintessential Egyptian comfort food.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll choose to ascend to the top of Cairo Tower for a glimpse of the Pyramids as the sun sets.

Day 15 Cairo • Explore Old Cairo • National Museum of Egyptian Civilization

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

Breakfast: From 6am–8:30am, enjoy a buffet-style breakfast at your hotel, with American and Egyptian options available.

Morning: At approximately 8:30am, we'll depart our hotel to visit Old Cairo (also referred to as "Historic Cairo" and "Islamic Cairo"), the section of the city characterized by its far-reaching history. No matter which direction you glance in, you'll be met by preserved remnants of cities long gone including Fustat, al-Askar, and al-Qatta'i. Observe the bustling locals, winding roads, and shops and houses mixed together creating a colorful scene.

Around 9am, we'll arrive at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization. Your Trip Experience leader will guide you through the halls of cultural artifacts, ancient treasures, and even through the Mummies Hall, where Egyptian kings and queens of old can be viewed, preserved for all time in elaborate rituals. You can see artifacts here from the predynastic age, more than 5,000 years ago, to the Ottoman rule of Egypt into the 19th century, showing you the true scope of Egypt's past.

At around 10:45am, we'll depart for Coptic Old Cairo, which served as the Christian bastion of Egypt prior to Islamic rule. Here we'll discover some of the oldest Christian churches in Egypt. We'll visit the Hanging Church and the Church of St. Sergius where, according to the Holy

Bible, Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus stayed after their escape to Egypt from King Herod's wrath. These buildings date back to the third and fourth centuries.

Lunch: At a local restaurant around 12:30pm.

Afternoon: We'll return to our hotel at around 2pm. You'll then have the chance to fit in any last-minute discoveries in the city.

Dinner: Tonight, we'll reconvene with our group and enjoy a Farewell Dinner at our hotel at around 6pm.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 16 Cairo • Depart for U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to the airport for your flight back to the U.S. Or begin your optional *Alexandria: History & Romance* post-trip extension.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

4 nights in *Alexandria: History & Romance*

Day 1 Cairo, Egypt • Explore Alexandria

Day 2 Alexandria • Explore Catacombs of Kom el Shuqafa • National Museum

Day 3 Alexandria • Explore Library of Alexandria • Royal Jewelry Museum

Day 4 Alexandria • Cairo

Day 5 Cairo • Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2-3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2-3 months following your return.

Please note: *Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.*

Luxor Hot-Air Balloon Ride

(Day 10 \$115 per person)

As the sun rises over Luxor, so can you, riding aboard an optional hot-air balloon. The sights, sounds, and sheer spectacle of seeing these antiquities from the sky will surely make for a memorable morning.

PRE-TRIP

Israel & Jordan: Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » Accommodations for 4 nights in Jerusalem at the Dan Boutique hotel or similar, 2 nights in Petra at the Petra Guest House or similar, and 2 nights in Amman at the Grand Millennium Hotel Amman or similar
- » 14 meals: 8 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 2 dinners
- » 7 guided tours with personal headsets: Israel Museum • Old City • Masada • Petra • Amman • Jerash • Ajloun Castle
- » Dedicated services of a local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Within Israel's complex society, you'll find the world's three great religions threaded into the fabric of life. From deeply sacred landmarks to completely isolated ancient sites located in the middle of the Judean Desert, there isn't a part of Israel that isn't touched by history and religion. Cross the Israeli border and continue your exploration of world religions and legendary monuments in Jordan. Witness relics of an ancient civilization as you hike through the awe-inspiring city of Petra, carved into rose-colored cliff sides. Then find yourself in Amman, the capital and cultural hub of Jordan. A fusion of past and present, Amman features both citadaels and coffee shops, mosques and shopping centers, creating the perfect snapshot of Jordanian life.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart today on your flight to Israel.

Day 2 Jerusalem, Israel

- Destination: Jerusalem
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Dan Boutique Hotel or similar

Morning/Afternoon: You'll arrive in Israel today based on your specific flight arrangements; most flights arrive between 10am and 2pm. An O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your

hotel via motorcoach—a transfer of about an hour, depending on traffic. Here, you'll meet your Trip Experience Leader, who will lead you and your fellow travelers on an orientation walk around your hotel.

We stay for four nights in our centrally-located hotel. Depending on which hotel you stay at, your hotel may feature an outdoor swimming pool, onsite dining options, and a spa. Typical rooms include a minibar, air conditioning, wireless Internet, and a private en suite bathroom.

Dinner: Tonight, you'll toast to the discoveries ahead with a Welcome Drink around 6:30pm before enjoying dinner at the hotel.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Freedom To Explore: Make the most of your explorations in Jerusalem on these off-the-beaten path activities. These recommendations are designed by our team of local experts with women travelers in mind.

- Make tracks to the **Hershele Gallery:** Judaica art gets an update at this atmospheric gallery located at The First Station, a renovated Ottoman-era train station that has become one of Jerusalem's cultural hubs. The gallery's historic setting nicely contrasts the colorful and contemporary designs of its carefully curated exhibits, which include paintings, Judaica, sculptures, and jewelry created by about 65 Israeli artists.

- **How to get there:** About a 5-minute walk from the hotel.

- **Hours:** 10am–10pm, Sunday–Thursday; 10am–3pm Friday; 9pm–12am Saturday.

- **Cost:** Free.

- The modern meets the ancient along **Mamilla Boulevard:** Located just steps away from the Jaffa Gate and the Western Wall, Mamilla Boulevard is an upscale shopping and entertainment avenue of renovated 19th-century buildings lined by trendy bars, designer boutiques, restaurants, and street theatre performances. While you walk along streets paved with Jerusalem stones, you can also check out plaques telling the stories of the area's historical structures.

- **How to get there:** About a 20-minute walk from the hotel.

- **Hours:** 9:30am–11pm, Sunday–Thursday; 9am–3pm Friday; 9pm–11pm Saturday.

- **Cost:** Free.

- Admire the beauty of the **Hurva Synagogue:** Of the 58 synagogues that stood in Jerusalem's Old City before 1948, the Hurva Synagogue was the grandest of them all. The name Hurva (meaning the “ruin”) came about due to the repeated destruction of this Jewish house of prayer over the centuries. Now restored to its former glory, you can visit and admire the beauty of its interior, which features one of the world's tallest Torah Arks, and enjoy breathtaking views over the Old City from a veranda that surrounds the synagogue's dome.

- **How to get there:** A 15- to 20-minute taxi ride, about \$20 USD one way.

- **Hours:** 9am–6pm, Sunday–Thursday; 9am–1pm, Friday; closed Saturday.

- **Cost:** About \$6 USD.

Day 3 Jerusalem • Israel Museum • Machne Yehuda Market

- Destination: Jerusalem
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Dan Boutique Hotel or similar

Breakfast: An Israeli-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 8:30am. Some typical options may include shakshouka, eggs poached in a tomato sauce, or bourekas—a flaky, savory pastry.

Morning: Around 9am, we'll gather for a more formal Welcome Briefing in the hotel, where we can review our itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur). Our Trip Experience Leader will also discuss logistics, safety and emergency procedures, and answer any questions we may have.

Then around 10:15am, we'll take a 10-minute ride to the Israel Museum to get a glimpse of the world's oldest biblical documents—the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Israel Museum covers the country's vast history and complex culture

with its large collection of artifacts and art pieces—the museum is the largest of its kind in Israel and is one of the top archaeology and art museums in the world.

We'll continue to Machane Yehuda Market around 1pm, about a 10-minute drive. Located in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Jerusalem, this popular market sells everything from baked goods to textiles. You'll have the opportunity to witness locals bustling between stalls as they do their daily shopping, and vendors proudly displaying their wares.

Lunch: On your own at around 1:30pm. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Many of the restaurants in Machane Yehuda Market use fresh ingredients straight from the market, or shuk, itself.

Afternoon: After lunch, the rest of the afternoon is at leisure to further immerse yourself in the traditions and history of the city. This may be a good time to visit the Museum for Islamic Art and view its various exhibits. We'll reconvene to return to our hotel by bus around 3:30pm.

Dinner: Join your fellow travelers this evening around 6:30pm for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant, just a 5-minute walk from our hotel.

Evening: We'll return to the hotel around 8pm. You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll choose to visit the Jerusalem Chords Bridge; illuminated at night with an ever-changing pattern of colorful lights.

Day 4 Jerusalem • Mount of Olives

• Old City

- Destination: Jerusalem
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Dan Boutique Hotel or similar

Breakfast: An Israeli-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 8am.

Morning: We'll board a motorcoach around 9:30am to start the day with a panoramic view of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The mountain itself is so named for the olive trees that once sprinkled its surface. According to the Bible, it is also the location of Christ's betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane. Now, it is a widely popular spot from which to witness the adjacent Old City of Jerusalem and its historic buildings. After a 15-minute drive, we'll disembark to continue to explore the Old City on foot with our Trip Experience Leader; you'll see ancient sites like the Western Wall, one of the holiest sites in the world for Jewish people. Also known as the "Wailing Wall," the Western Wall is a sacred place of Jewish prayer and pilgrimage, as it is the only remains of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. We'll also witness the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, theorized to be the site of Christ's burial and resurrection. Our explorations will wrap up around noon.

Lunch: On your own around 12:30pm—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Jerusalem is famous for its many varieties of breads—from traditional pita and challah breads to *beigeleh*, similar to an over-sized bagel, and *lepeshka*, a round bread with a crispy crust and fluffy interior.

Afternoon: After lunch, enjoy some free time to explore on your own. Then around 3pm, we'll reconvene to take a tour of the Tower of David Museum at Jaffa Gate. The medieval tower

offers spectacular views of Jerusalem for those who climb to the top, and the museum captures thousands of years of Jerusalem's history. We'll depart for our hotel via motorcoach around 4:30pm.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Perhaps you will sample *harmin*, a classic Jewish stew of beef, vegetables, beans, potatoes, and barley.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. You may choose to enjoy a nightcap at the hotel bar or take in the dazzling Sound and Light show at the Tower of David.

Day 5 Masada • The Dead Sea

- Destination: Masada
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Dan Panorama Jerusalem or similar

Breakfast: An Israeli-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 8am.

Morning: Around 8:30am we'll board a motorcoach and drive to Masada, arriving around 9:45am. We'll then ascend to the mighty hilltop fortress of Masada, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, via cable car. Standing high above the Judean Desert, this isolated 20-acre fortification was the site of a siege during the Jewish revolt against the Romans in the eighth century. Today, we'll trace the turbulent history of Masada and explore these ancient ruins with our Trip Experience Leader. Then around 12:30pm, we'll drive around 30 minutes to our next stop—lunch.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Masada around 1pm.

Afternoon: You have about an hour free in Masada to make your own discoveries. You can experience what it's like to take a dip in the Dead Sea—as a result of the water's high salt concentration, you'll float effortlessly in the mineral-rich waters of what is considered to be the lowest place on Earth, located 1,300 feet below sea level. If you'd prefer to stay on dry land, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee at a nearby restaurant. We'll depart for our hotel around 3:30pm, arriving at 4:30pm, after which you can enjoy some time at leisure.

Dinner: On your own. Perhaps you will try *musakhan*—a popular dish of roasted chicken, onion, and pine nuts served on top of traditional flatbread.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. If you're interested in hearing live music, you may want to visit Kikar Safra, Jerusalem's City Hall, which often hosts cultural events and performers playing the plaza's open-air concrete piano.

Day 6 Jerusalem • Transfer to Petra, Jordan via the King's Highway

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Petra Guest House or similar

Activity Note: For security reasons, it may take anywhere from 45 minutes to two hours to complete your Allenby Bridge border crossing today, so flexibility and patience are key. Your Israeli Trip Experience Leader will not accompany you across; you'll be met by your Jordanian Trip Experience Leader on the other side.

Breakfast: An Israeli-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 8am.

Morning: Around 8am, bid Israel farewell and set off for Jordan via motorcoach. Along the way, participate in an informative conversation with our Israeli Trip Experience Leader on Jordan and the experiences that await us. Once we reach Allenby Bridge, we say our goodbyes to our Israeli Trip Leader. Around 10:30am, after we've crossed the bridge into Jordan, we'll switch buses and meet our new Jordanian Trip Experience Leader who will guide our discoveries here.

First, we'll drive to Petra along the King's Highway, which has been an international trade route for the last 5,000 years. The route is scenic, and dotted with little villages and historic sites mentioned in the Bible. After a drive of about 45 minutes, we'll arrive at Mount Nebo around 11:15am, the place where Moses is purported to have gazed upon the Holy Land that he was not meant to reach. It is said that his tomb lies here. From here, we'll enjoy views across the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea. We'll also see some preserved mosaics uncovered from archaeological digs that date back to the sixth century. After about an hour of discoveries, we'll depart Mount Nebo and head to lunch via motorcoach.

Lunch: At a local restaurant at around 12:15pm. We'll savor local specialties such as hummus and *makluba*, a lamb dish.

Afternoon: After lunch, around 1:15pm, we'll depart for Madaba, arriving around 1:30pm. We'll then take a short walk to St. George's Church. This 19th-century Greek Orthodox Church is home to a treasure trove of artifacts from early Christianity, including the earliest surviving mosaic map of the Holy Land. The map, which once contained some two million mosaic pieces, dates to about the sixth century. Then around 2:30pm, we'll continue our transfer to Petra, approximately a three-hour drive, taking our time to witness the scenic

views of the Mujib Valley along the way. We'll also stop for a panoramic view over Wadi Mujib before arriving at our hotel for check-in around 5:15pm.

We stay for two nights in a centrally-located hotel. Depending on which hotel you stay at, your hotel may feature onsite dining options, and a fitness center. Typical rooms include a air conditioning, wireless Internet, and a private en suite bathroom.

Dinner: On your own. You might try typical Jordanian cuisine such as *mansaf*, a large platter of meat layered with flatbread and rice.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. You may want to find a local *shisha* bar and sip after-dinner coffee with the locals.

Freedom To Explore: During your two days in Petra, you have the freedom to explore the area on your own during your free time. Below is a recommended option for independent exploration:

- Take a culinary adventure at the **Petra Kitchen:** This highly regarded venue near Petra's main gate features nightly cooking classes that give you the opportunity to work alongside local chefs to prepare dishes found on a typical Jordanian family's menu using fresh, local ingredients.
 - **How to get there:** A 5- to 10-minute walk.
 - **Hours:** Cooking courses take place every day beginning at 6:30pm (Mar-Oct) and at 6pm (Nov-Feb).
 - **Cost:** About \$50 USD.

Day 7 Explore Petra

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Petra Guest House or similar

Activity Note: Today's walking tour will last approximately 3.5 hours. You must be able to walk over unpaved, rocky terrain, and up and down hill to enter and exit the "Lost City." Horse or camel rides may be available for an additional fee, but good agility and balance are required.

Breakfast: A Jordanian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 9am. Traditional Jordanian breakfasts include a wealth of options, such as hummus, falafel, pita, olives, dates, and cheeses.

Morning: Around 9am, we'll set off for a full-day walking excursion with our Trip Experience Leader through one of the most famous of all ancient ruins—the fabled red city of Petra. Reached through a towering narrow canyon, the city is carved into the solid red sandstone cliffs, and features soaring temples, a 3,000-seat amphitheater, houses, banquet halls, churches, and tombs. It is said that Petra's massive Treasury, with its portico and pillars, was the storeroom for the Queen of Sheba's gifts to Solomon.

For more than 2,000 years, the name Petra was just a mysterious sound, a name in dusty documents. Only the local Bedouin people knew of its existence, because they lived in its caves. Converted to Islam and disguised as an Arab, Swiss traveler Johann Ludwig Burckhardt found the lost city in 1812. You'll recognize several views of Petra from the film *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Lunch: Around 1pm, we'll stop for lunch at a local restaurant inside the archaeological site of Petra.

Afternoon: After lunch, you may choose to continue exploring Petra's vast ruins for up to four hours, or take the motorcoach back to the hotel to rest. A later motorcoach will be available to take travelers who opted to stay longer at Petra back to our hotel.

Dinner: On your own. Some popular spots include Al-Wadi Restaurant and Petra Butcher Shop & Restaurant, both serving traditional Jordanian food and frequented by locals.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 8 Petra • Amman

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Grand Millenium Hotel Amman or similar

Activity Note: Our transfer to Amman today will take approximately 3.5 hours by motorcoach.

Breakfast: A Jordanian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 8am.

Morning: Around 8:30am, we'll embark on our 3.5 hour transfer to Amman via motorcoach, arriving around noon.

Lunch: After we arrive, enjoy lunch on your own around 12:15pm. Your Trip Experience Leader can offer local restaurant recommendations. You may want to try falafel, a combination of ground chickpeas and spices, deep fried. It's one of the most common street food snacks in Jordan.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll reconvene at a meeting spot prearranged by our Trip Experience Leader, and set off together on an included walking tour of Amman around 1:30pm. We'll witness some of Jordan's most iconic sites as we discover the capital city,

known as Jordan's political and cultural hub. Atop Amman's highest hill is its Citadel, dating back to the Neolithic period. This historic site is comprised of several significant ruins, including the Temple of Hercules, the 7th-century Umayyad Palace, and a wall over 5500 feet long dating back to the Bronze Age. The Archaeological Museum is also located at the Citadel. We'll visit here to gain a perspective on Jordan's history from prehistoric times through the 15th century.

Next, we'll stop at the King Abdullah mosque, built in 1989 by the late King Hussein in honor of his father. The only mosque in Amman that openly welcomes non-Muslims, this massive place of worship can hold 7000 men inside, with room for 3000 more in its courtyard. There is a women's area as well, plus a small royal enclosure. Capped with a dome painted in various blues, it is one of Amman's modern landmarks.

Afterwards, we'll check into our hotel around 5pm. We'll stay for two nights in a centrally-located hotel. Depending on which hotel you stay at, your hotel may feature a swimming pool, onsite dining options, fitness center, and a spa. Typical rooms include a minibar, air conditioning, wireless Internet, and a private en suite bathroom.

Dinner: On your own. Maybe you will try rice and minced meat rolled in cabbage leaves—a very distinctive Jordanian dish.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll head to a local cafe for an after-dinner treat—*knafeh*, a sweet, cheese-filled pastry, is a popular option.

Freedom To Explore: During your two nights in Amman, you have the freedom to explore the city on your own during your free time. Below is a recommended option for independent exploration:

- Learn about life in rural Jordan at the **Iraq Al-Amir Women Cooperative Society**: Meet the friendly local women of this small rural Jordanian village and see how they have transformed their lives through training in different handicraft skills. The women offer cooking classes, traditional lunches, and a variety of traditional craft workshops. Visitors have an opportunity to gain unique insights into village life while providing the women with a sustainable source of income.
 - **How to get there:** A 20- to 25-minute taxi ride, about \$20-\$25 USD one way.
 - **Hours:** 9:30am-5pm, Monday-Friday.
 - **Cost:** Free.

Day 9 Amman • Jerash • Ajloun

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Grand Millenium Hotel Amman or similar

Breakfast: A Jordanian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel from 6:30am to 8am.

Morning: Discover the ruined city of Jerash after breakfast today—departing the hotel by bus around 8am and arriving around 10am. Spanning over 6,000 years of Jordanian history, Jerash's popularity as an attraction is second only to Petra in terms of the ever-growing fascination with the ancient Romans' presence in Jordan. Draped in mystery, some of the original cobbled roads still remain in Jerash on which charioteers once rode.

Explore Jerash on your own for the rest of the morning. Perhaps you'll pop into the museum next door to the site, full of artifacts

collected from the vast ruins. Or, embrace the atmosphere of antiquity at a gladiator show and chariot race.

Lunch: Gather for lunch at a local restaurant around noon, located within walking distance of Jerash.

Afternoon: Depart for Ajloun by bus around 1:15pm—arriving around 2:30pm—to visit a remarkably preserved castle standing tall overlooking a mountain range. Ajloun Castle, built in the late 1100's as a defense against the Crusaders, has been destroyed over the course of several centuries due to both the ebb and flow of wartime in Jordan and natural disasters. But each time it is rebuilt stronger than it was before, and it continues to be gradually restored to its former glory. The views from the castle's great heights are a highlight for visitors from around the world. Around 3:15pm, we'll return to Amman, arriving at the hotel around 4:45pm.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Maybe you'll sample *maqluba*, a slowly-simmered chicken, vegetable, potato, and rice dish that is served upside down, so a dome of steaming rice hides its savory contents inside.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll opt to sip herbal tea in one of Amman's local cafes—which are usually open late.

Day 10 Amman • Cairo, Egypt • Join main adventure

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: A Jordanian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel starting at 6:30am.

Morning: Depart for the airport for your flight to Cairo this morning, and join your main adventure today.

POST-TRIP

Alexandria: History & Romance

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » Accommodations for 3 nights in Alexandria at the Helnan Palestine Hotel or similar, and 1 night in Cairo at the Le Meridien Airport Hotel or similar
- » 11 meals: 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 4 guided tours with personal headsets: Kom el Shuqafa catacombs • National Museum • Royal Jewelry Museum • Library of Alexandria
- » Dedicated services of a local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Extend your explorations in Egypt with three nights in Alexandria and an additional night in Cairo. Most of Egypt has a storied past, but the stories from Alexandria are perhaps the most notable. Named for Alexander the Great, this city is where the Rosetta Stone was found and consequently why we understand as much as we do about ancient cultures. It's also the second largest city in Egypt and was once home to the Pharos lighthouse, the world's original lighthouse and one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. As a Mediterranean port, Alexandria has always served as an access point to the Hellenic region and still does to this day. This extension will give you deeper insights into the long history of Egypt.

Day 1 Cairo, Egypt • Explore Alexandria

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Helnan Palestine Hotel or similar

Morning: Around 7:30am, we'll bid farewell to those travelers not continuing on this trip extension and board a bus bound for Alexandria, a 2,300-year old city founded by Alexander the Great after his armies drove the Persian occupiers from Egypt. The Hellenic conqueror intended his new city to be the link between his Macedonian homelands and the fertile Nile Valley. While Alexander's empire

quickly splintered after his death, Alexandria has long fulfilled its role as Egypt's window to the Mediterranean.

When we arrive in Alexandria around 11am, our group will begin an orientation tour of the city. Our Trip Experience Leader will point out pertinent contemporary and historical landmarks.

Lunch: After our explorations, we'll drive to a local restaurant, arriving for lunch around 12:15pm.

Afternoon: Depart around 1:30pm and check into our hotel around 2:15pm. Your room offers a view of the sea from a private balcony, and includes complimentary wireless Internet and a private bathroom. The rest of the afternoon is for you to enjoy at your leisure and make your own discoveries in Alexandria. Perhaps you will do as the locals do and take a stroll through Montaza Gardens, located right by your hotel, and take in the sunset.

Dinner: Around 7pm at our hotel.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Freedom To Explore: Make the most of your explorations in Alexandria on these off-the-beaten path activities. These recommendations are designed by our team of local experts with women travelers in mind.

- Explore the streets of the **Women’s District:** Discover a section of Alexandria’s Old Town (Zane’t El Setat) where shops feature crafts and other products tailored primarily for women.
 - **How to get there:** A 20-minute taxi ride, about \$5 USD one way.
 - **Hours:** 9am–12am, daily.
 - **Cost:** Free.
- Go for a drink at **Sheik Ali’s:** Officially called Cap d’Or, this neighborhood bar has been a local favorite for more than a century—even with the longstanding Muslim ban on alcohol. In the early years, Sheik Ali’s was a gathering spot for intellectuals, artists, and actors.
 - **How to get there:** A 30-minute taxi ride, about \$5 USD one way.
 - **Hours:** 7pm–1am, daily.
 - **Cost:** Varies by drink and/or food order.
- Journey back in time at the **Roman Amphitheater:** Modest in size (it only had room for about 800 people on its marble

seats), this remarkably preserved theater is an excellent representation of the Roman presence in Egypt—and was only discovered in 1964.

- **How to get there:** A 40-minute taxi ride, about \$10 USD one way.
- **Hours:** 9am–5pm, daily.
- **Cost:** About \$6 USD.

Day 2 Alexandria • Explore Catacombs of Kom el Shuqafa • National Museum

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Helnan Palestine Hotel or similar

Breakfast: An Egyptian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel at 8am. A typical Egyptian breakfast can include falafel served with with ful, eggs, cheese, and pita bread.

Morning: Around 9am, we’ll travel approximately an hour by motorcoach to the Catacombs of Kom el Shuqafa, an archaeological site housing a series of tombs that’s considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Middle Ages. We’ll explore the catacombs for about an hour, then around 11am we’ll drive a half-hour to the National Museum, a repository of nearly 2,000 ancient artifacts that combine to tell the story of Alexandria and ancient Egypt. We’ll witness pieces from not only the ancient world, but the Muslim and Coptic worlds as well. Note how the pieces in these three collections differ, and learn how religion influenced Egyptian art through the ages.

Lunch: Included at a local restaurant around 1:15pm; about a fifteen minute drive from the museum.

Afternoon: We’ll depart for our hotel around 2:15pm. Upon arrival, you’re free to rest or spend the remainder of the afternoon however

you wish. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to offer suggestions for unique discovery or to point you in the direction of any local attractions you don't want to miss.

Dinner: Take about a 20-minute motorcoach ride to a local restaurant for dinner around 7pm.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll browse the literary selections of Alexandria's Old Town, which has the largest concentration of bookshops and booksellers in the Arab world.

Day 3 Alexandria • Explore Library of Alexandria • Royal Jewelry Museum

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Helnan Palestine Hotel or similar

Breakfast: An Egyptian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel at 8am.

Morning: Around 8am, we'll take about a 30-minute motorcoach ride to pay a visit to a site that recalls the glory of this once-mighty city. The Library of Alexandria was the most famous in the ancient world, home to an unsurpassed collection of manuscripts, codices, and many thousands of papyrus scrolls. The Library's destruction is a matter of historical debate—the Roman historian Plutarch blames an out-of-control fire set by Julius Caesar in 48 BC, while other Roman sources place the blame on the emperor Theodosius's order to destroy all non-Christian temples. Still other sources find fault with the Arab caliph Umar the Great's conquest of the city in 642 AD. In the 1970s, plans were made to build the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, an enormous complex of libraries, museums, theaters, art galleries, and even a planetarium. The new Bibliotheca recalls the majesty of the ancient library, one of the

original Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and pays homage to Alexandria's legacy as a center of scholarship.

Then around 10:30am, we'll depart to the Royal Jewelry Museum—about a 45-minute drive—the former palace of Princess Fatima Al-Zahraa Haida, who lavishly decorated it during her lifetime with gilded ceilings, oil paintings, and other classic works of art. Today it also houses approximately 1,000 pieces of jewelry from the royal family's collection. We'll depart around 12:15pm.

Lunch: At a local restaurant around 1pm.

Afternoon: We'll drive back to our hotel around 1:30pm, arriving around 2pm. You're free to explore Alexandria at your own pace this afternoon.

Dinner: On your own around 7pm. Alexandria's cuisine is a mix of Egyptian and Greek flavors. A popular option is just a 15-minute walk from the hotel at Zanilli's Coffee & More, where you'll enjoy both local dishes and sea views.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll sit at a harbor-side café to enjoy tea as boats moored for the night bob in the waves.

Day 4 Alexandria • Cairo

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Le Meridien Airport Hotel or similar

Activity Note: Our transfer to Cairo today will take approximately 6.5 hours, with several stops along the way, including lunch.

Breakfast: An Egyptian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel at 8am.

Morning: Around 8:30am, we'll depart for Cairo via motorcoach for our 6.5 transfer, with several stops along the way.

Lunch: Enjoy lunch en route at a local restaurant, around 12:30pm.

Afternoon: Once we arrive in Cairo around 3pm and check into our hotel, our Trip Experience Leader will be happy to suggest activities to fill the rest of our final day in the city, which is yours to use freely. Each room of your hotel includes complimentary WiFi, a private bathroom with shower, flat-screen TV, and tea-making facilities.

Dinner: At our hotel tonight around 7pm.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 5 Cairo • Return to U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: An Egyptian-style buffet breakfast is served at the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, you'll be assisted to the airport for your flight home. Your hotel is conveniently located with direct access to Terminal 3, so if your flight departs from there, you can walk out of the hotel and into the airport.