

Pyramids and Temples Alive – with Abu Simbel!

Nov 22 - Dec 5, 2021 & Feb 14 - 27, 2022

An inspiring 14-day Egyptologist-led experience of the wonders of Egypt



Trace the footsteps of the great explorers, kings and conquerors of the past as you discover Egypt's wonders, ancient and modern. With the inspiring insight of Laura, your Canadian Egyptologist guide – and Ramy or Hossam, your local Egyptologist guide – the storied past of the Pharaohs will come alive.

Climb into pyramids, immerse yourself in the colourful souks and village life, sail the Nile like Cleopatra, ride a camel – and be transformed in this exciting and exotic two-week, small group cultural adventure featuring all the highlights (and hidden treasures) of Egypt – including the majestic Abu Simbel Temple!

***Nov 22 - Dec 5, 2021 and Feb 14 - 27, 2022 \$4,595 PP USD
BOOK BY DEC 30, 2020 AND SAVE \$200USD PER PERSON***

Be awestruck at the Giza Pyramids: See the Sphinx, Solar boat, Old Kingdom tomb(s) and enter inside one of the Great Pyramids to connect viscerally to thousands of years of history

- ◆ **Go in-depth at the sites** – designed for travellers with an interest in Egyptian history
- ◆ **See Egypt's highlights (Giza Pyramid, Sakkara, Valley of the Kings, Cairo Museum, Karnak) plus hidden-treasure tombs, temples and pyramids** including: Step, Bent and Red pyramids.
- ◆ **Experience the greatest temple of Egypt – Abu Simbel – and a Ptolemaic masterpiece, the temple of Hathor at Dendera in Middle Egypt**
- ◆ **Sail like Cleopatra on a deluxe all-inclusive Nile cruise – visiting temples and sites along the way**
- ◆ **Travel with a collegial and cultured small group (no more than 20 people)**
- ◆ **Deluxe hotels, all inclusive Nile cruise ship, site admissions, all guides, all breakfasts, 7 dinners and 10 lunches included.**

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Day 1 Welcome to Cairo

You will be greeted at the airport and transferred to your hotel – the central Ramses Hilton in the heart of Cairo. In the evening, meet your fellow travellers at a welcome dinner and short opening presentation by Laura. Those arriving early (and raring to go) will have the opportunity to take an optional afternoon excursion.

Overnight Cairo, Ramses Hilton or similar D

Day 2 Islamic Cairo & Coptic Cairo

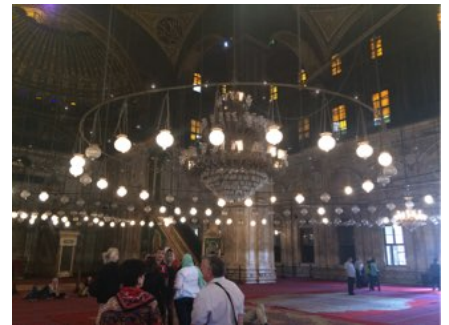
Today we explore the great worship centres and historic edifices of the main religious groups of Cairo: the Muslims, the Coptic Christians and the Jews. Both have a long and storied past in the city with many great works of art and architecture spanning a millennia. Your previous night's lecture will help it all come alive.

Coptic Cairo - Your day begins with a half-day immersion into the fascinating world of Cairo. We begin with some of the earliest churches and an important synagogue. This main entrance to the Coptic area is through perhaps one of the two oldest structures in Cairo, the rounded towers of the western gate from the Roman fortress of Babylon, built in 98 AD by Emperor Trajan. This is really where modern Cairo began. First, we'll experience the hanging church of the Virgin Mary from the 4th century -- built into the very walls of the ancient fortress.

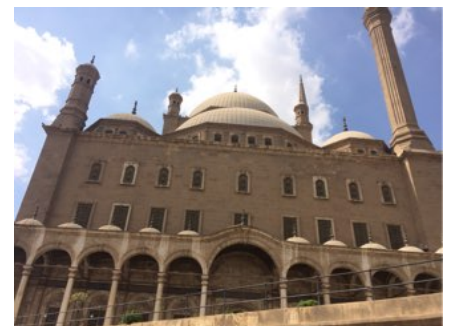
From there, a medieval path will lead us to the Church of St. Sergius, which, legend has it, is built atop one of the sites where the Holy Family rested on their flight from Herod. Continuing along this path, we will finally visit the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Egypt's oldest, dating to the 9th Century AD,.

Lunch at AL AZAR Park

Islamic Cairo: This afternoon we will explore some of the oldest mosques in the world. We start with a gorgeous panoramic view of the city from way up in the medieval Citadel of Saleh el din, a marvel of medieval warfare, built (in places) with limestone from the Great Pyramid. There, we'll also tour a 14th century open air mosque and the beautiful 19th century mosque of Mohammed Ali. Next, we'll proceed to the greatest Islamic building in Egypt: The Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan. This magical place is one of the largest mosques in the world and certainly the finest piece of early-Mamluk architecture dating to 1363 BCE. We will venture in to feel the centuries of devotion still residing here – and perhaps even hear the stunning voice of the Muezzin (the one appointed to sing call to prayer).



We will also visit El Raffai, another ornate 19th century mosque which is the resting place of many early Egyptian rulers, including King Farouk. From there we will explore Khan el Khalili market – the colourful and chaotic medieval souk. We will experience El Moezz street dating to the Fatimid era, home to the greatest concentration of medieval architectural treasures in the Islamic world. Finally we will have a rare experience of the Tentmakers bazaar “Kheemiyya” – the last-remaining medieval covered market where you can see traditional craftsman still plying their textile crafts as they have for almost a millennia. In the evening, we will return to our hotel for dinner on your own.



Overnight Cairo, Ramses Hilton or similar B, L

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Day 3 Museum and Music

Today we will visit the Egyptian Museum, home to many of the greatest treasures of ancient history. It is even likely that we may be one of the first to experience the long-awaited opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza. Whichever museum is still home to the treasures, we will tour the highlights, including Tutankhamen's golden mask, magnificent colossi, furniture and granite sarcophagi/statues of the Old Kingdom. Beyond the well-known masterpieces you will also find rooms of opulent jewelry, ornate coffins, animal mummies – and strange and ancient curiosities. A microcosm of thousands of years of Egyptian art and history.

Lunch on your own.

In the evening Laura will give a lecture on the pyramids before we head out to see a colourful and authentic sufi show and dinner (whirling dervishes) at the 1100 year-old Wekalet El Ghouri Arts Center .

Overnight Cairo, Ramses Hilton or similar B, D

Day 4 Pyramids Alive!

Today we will be up early for pyramids day! First, we visit drive to the area of "Dashur" – south west of Cairo to visit two of the earliest pyramids in Egypt: the Bent, and the impressive and intact Red, both built by King Senefru c. 2500 BCE. The Bent retains most of its casing stones. Climbing inside the Red will be optional - and for the fit and adventurous minded only as it is an athletic climb. This Dashur region presents a wonderful opportunity for pyramid exploration ...far from the crowds of Giza.

Lunch at the historic Mena House (one of the finest hotels in Cairo)– overlooking the pyramids of Giza!

The last surviving of the Seven Wonders of the world, the Great Pyramid of Giza is perhaps the most famous tourist site in the world. The Giza plateau itself, with its three major pyramids plus Queen's pyramids, ancient mastabas, Sphinx and the ubiquitous and colourful camel drivers is a much-anticipated highlight of any trip. For our visit, we will also climb inside the pyramid of Kephren. If, however, Kephren entrance is not available, we will tour inside Menkaure, the third pyramid at Giza. While on the plateau, we will also visit the solar boat museum and the extraordinary Sphinx.

Overnight Cairo, Ramses Hilton or similar B, L

Day 5 The wonders of Sakkara and the Step Pyramid

We will enjoy an intensive full day exploring this rich archaeological site – which is most notably the location of Djoser's Step Pyramid, the oldest in Egypt. Our day begins at the modern Imhotep museum, where we'll view some rare old kingdom relics, such as cobra reliefs, ancient harps, surgical instruments and the Old Kingdom mummy of King Merenre. We will then proceed to see Old Kingdom tombs, such as the breathtaking Mereruke, the mastaba of Ty, the tomb of Khnumhotep and Niankhknum (The gay Manicurists), the tomb of Ptahotep (tombs opening and closures change, we will see tombs that are currently open at the time)

We will also have the exciting opportunity to enter the recently-re-opened **Pyramid of King Unas**, the last ruler of the 5th Dynasty. Although small, Unas' pyramid is one of Egypt's most important as the very first to feature pyramid texts carved on its walls, some still retaining traces of ancient colour.

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Next, we will tour the Sakkara complex, including the Step pyramid itself, Djoser's court and the causeway. We hope also to tour the fascinating and splendid Serapeum hope of the Apis bull - seldom included on a mainstream tourist visit.

Lunch in the garden of the beautiful Sakkara Palms.

Overnight Ramses Hilton B,L

Day 6 The Beauty of Aswan and Upper Egypt - Abu Simbel

This morning we wake up early and fly to gorgeous and pastoral Aswan – our base for the next few days. Upon arrival we board our air-conditioned coach and begin an exciting road trip south to experience the grandeur of what is arguably Egypt's greatest temples of all: **Abu Simbel**. These huge rock-cut temples marked the southern boundary of the Egyptian Empire with Nubia at the peak of its power during the New Kingdom. They were meant to convey the power of Egypt's rulers to anyone who laid eyes upon them. The great statues of Ramses and his wife Nefertari that adorn their facades are awe-inspiring -- and the four statues guarding the doorway to the larger of these temples are the largest sculptures that survive from the Pharaonic era.



Bagged lunch or local restaurant

Enroute back to Aswan, we stop at a marvel of modern engineering: the Aswan High Dam. We'll also see the ancient rock quarries where the Egyptians got their finest limestone – and climb up to view the great unfinished obelisk of Queen Hatshepsut. After arrival and check in at the hotel, we will end the eventful day with refreshing felucca (sailboat) ride to the botanical gardens to immerse ourselves in nature. Here we will walk through the verdant and flowering grounds enjoying many exotic varieties of trees and flora from around the world. In evening why not visit the famous spice market,

Overnight Aswan, Tolip hotel or similar B, L

Day 7 Philae Temple

Leisurely start to the day, mid morning we will depart via bus and motorboat to visit the great temple of Isis on Philae island, the last operational temple in Egypt in which Egyptians worshipped for centuries until the Roman Emperor Justinian closed its doors in the 6th Century CE. The entire temple – with its beautiful statuary and reliefs was moved onto this island in the 1970s to preserve it from submersion after the creation of the new Aswan dam.

In the late afternoon we will visit the fascinating Nubian museum and then enjoy a traditional Nubian dinner – a short boat ride away – at a local restaurant.

Overnight Aswan, Tolip hotel or similar B, D



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Day 8 Camels, Tombs – and Climb aboard our Nile Riverboat

Early risers: why not join us for a pre-breakfast camel ride (optional) to a medieval Christian monastery – a very sacred place, perched atop a sandy hill. Later that morning we will also take a felucca to visit Elephantine island. You will have the option of walking or taking camels to visit the rock-cut tombs of Qubbet el Hawa, cut into the high cliffs across the river from the modern city of Aswan. This is the site of an elite Old and Middle Kingdom cemetery. You'll enjoy breathtaking vistas as you explore the seldom-visited tombs of the high officials – a real off-the-beaten track experience. "Autobiographies" carved into their facades provide fascinating details of the lives of these men, several of whom led trading and military expeditions south into Nubia. After course of life along the Nile. Next we will board our beautiful new 5-star cruise ship The Livingstone Nile Cruise, which will be our home on the river during our 4-day journey to Luxor. Enjoy a sumptuous lunch on board. Optional sound & light show at Philae temple

Overnight Amwaj Livingstone Nile Cruise B, L, D

Day 9 Kom Ombo and cruising

After breakfast, we will visit the unusual double temple of Kom Ombo dating from Ptolemaic times, around 100 BCE. The southern half of the temple was dedicated to the crocodile god Sobek, god of fertility and creator of the world with Hathor and Khonsu. Meanwhile, the northern part of the temple was dedicated to the falcon god Haroeris, also known as Horus the Elder. We can also visit the crocodile mummy museum.

Lunch on board.

We sail downstream (north) to Edfu, where we will visit Edfu Temple in the afternoon. This temple is the most complete in Egypt - and devoted to the hawk god Horus.

We will have a relaxing afternoon onboard watching the changing shorelines as we cruise north past Edfu and Esna enroute to Luxor. There will be a talk on temples and the great Denderah by Laura in the early or late afternoon. Sail to Luxor Overnight Luxor

Overnight Amwaj Livingstone Nile Cruise B, L, D

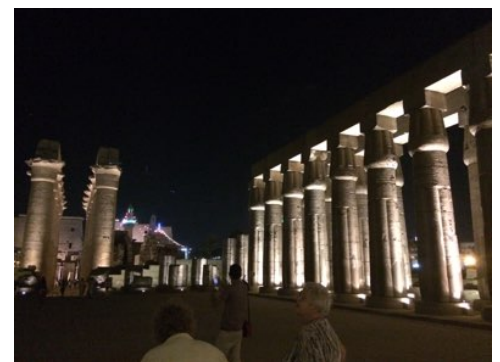
Day 10 Karnak and Luxor Temple

Today you will wake up in Luxor: Thebes, city of a hundred gates, to the ancients. There will be a highly recommended but optional early morning balloon ride. Come sail above city and watch the sun rise over the Nile! (approx cost \$200USD)

Come back for breakfast then visit Visit magnificent Karnak Temple. The largest religious structure in the world, Karnak was built over a period of 3000 years by almost every Pharaoh of Egypt from the Middle Kingdom onwards. Marvel at the great Avenue of the Sphinxes, Hatshepsut's obelisk – and the great Hypostyle Hall of Ramses the Great and his father Seti I. We'll also visit the sacred lake and zoological gardens (engraved in stone) of Thuthmosis III. We will return to the ship for late lunch and relaxing onboard.

In the late afternoon, we will make a visit to the Luxor Museum – a beautiful modern museum, home to the greatest art in Upper Egypt. As the sun slowly dips, we will then make our way to the very romantic Luxor Temple, with its massive colossi and beautiful temple reliefs. See the great obelisks, colossi and fall under the spell of Ramses, Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III.

Overnight Amwaj Livingstone Nile Cruise B, L, D



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Day 11 Stunning Denderah and West Bank Nobles Tombs

Disembark and climb aboard our coach for a road trip to one of Egypt's most breathtaking temples – The three-level temple of Hathor at Denderah, It was built during Ptolemaic and Roman times – and is the most complete of Egypt's ancient temples and one of the best restored. This is where Cleopatra possibly honeymooned with Julius Caesar – and you can see her image at the back. The ceiling of vibrant blue and greens shows sky goddess Nut (pronounced: Noot) swallowing the sun and giving birth to the new day. This is also a very rare two story temple where the New Years Day Festival was celebrated – with Hathor's union with Horus as the new day sun. Venture deep into the crypt to see strange reliefs. Go up on the roof to see the site of the fascinating zodiac ceiling – the oldest in the world.

Enroute you will experience the vibrant countryside of Egypt – rural towns and villages untouched by time, sailing past the coach window. We will drive back to Luxor via the West bank where we will have a traditional Egyptian lunch in the relaxing and shady gardens of the Marsam, the oldest hotel on the west bank, adjacent to the excavations at the Amenhotep III temples. Originally built in the 1920s as a house for archaeologists from the University of Chicago, it was later turned into a hotel by Sheikh Ali of the local Abd El Rasoul family. After lunch we will visit the Colossi of Memnon – gateway to Amenhotep III's immense temple. Finally we will visit two jewels of the west bank: Tombs of the Nobles high in the hills. Sennefer and Rekhmire or equivalent. Back to the east bank to check into our hotel and enjoy an evening at leisure on your own. Why not try drinks at the library bar of the famous Winter Palace Hotel?

Overnight Luxor, Steigenberger Nile Palace or similar B, L

Day 12 Valley of the Kings and Deir el Medina

This morning we will visit the famous and breathtaking Valley of the Kings, with their vibrant colours and wonderful stories. Here you will have a chance to enter into three of the King's tombs, based on what is open. You will also have an opportunity to enter into special tombs like Seti I, Ramses V, VI or Tutankhamun (extra cost for these). Afterwards we will visit the enchanting Valley of the Workers, home to a complete ancient village and stunning tombs of the craftsmen who built the King's final resting place.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Return to hotel for an afternoon at leisure

In the evening join us for a pleasant walk to the Luxor Souk and Aboudi bookstore.

Overnight Luxor, Steigenberger Nile Palace or similar B, L

Day 13 Marvel of Queen Hatshepsut– and Medinet Habu – last great temple of Egypt

After breakfast we will leave depart by boat to visit the world-famous Queen Hatshepsut temple - nestled into the pink mountains – Meret Seger - meaning “she who loves silence.” This was the great temple of the woman who would be king - one of Egypt's greatest builders in the New Kingdom. Next we will witness Medinet Habu, the last great temple of Pharaonic Egypt, a massive enclosure with deeply-etched reliefs and dynamic and graphic scenes of King Ramses III's battles with the Sea Peoples

We will return to the hotel – and at 7pm get together for our farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight Luxor, Steigenberger Nile Palace or similar B,L,D

Day 14 Tour ends

Check out of hotel for your transfer to the airport for your departure home – or continue your travels on one of our Jordan extensions. **B**

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Nov 22 - Dec 5, 2021 and Feb 14 - 27, 2022 \$4595USD based on twin share
Single supplement \$1075USD

Book by Dec 30 2020 and save \$200USD per person

Package includes:

- 05 nights accommodation in Cairo at Ramses Hilton or similar on BB Basis.
- 02 nights accommodation in Aswan at Helnan or similar on BB Basis.
- 03 nights accommodation on board of M/S Amwaj Nile cruise or similar on FB Basis.
- 03 nights accommodation in Luxor at Steigenberger Luxor hotel or similar on BB Basis.
- All transfers throughout with air conditioned private bus
- Entrance fees with entry as mentioned
- Laura Ranieri - Canadian Egyptologist - with min 8 people
- Top rated English speaking Egyptologist guide throughout
- 13 breakfast, 10 lunches, 7 dinners
- 1 bottle of mineral water everyday
- Service charge and taxes
- includes Cairo Aswan flight

Packages excludes:

- Entry visa
- International flight ticket
- Insurance - medical or cancellation - both recommended

\$500USD non refundable deposit to confirm Final due 60 days prior to departure.

Cancellation conditions:

- 60 days or more deposit is non refundable
- 59 - 31 days prior to departure 50% is non-refundable
- 30 days or less prior to departure 100% non-refundable



Laura Ranieri is an Egyptologist, writer and co-founder of Ancient Egypt Alive.. She has written and lectured in Canada and the US on ancient Egypt. Together with Your Journey, she developed the 2012 Archaeology Alive Tour & the 2016 Undiscovered Egypt tours. Laura has also produced short documentaries on the country and has excavated in Bulgaria at a classical Greek site and in Egypt at Amarna (Akenaten's kingdom) and South Asasif (west bank of Luxor). She began her career as an actress and travel TV show host, and is passionate about bringing the history of Ancient Egypt Alive to the general public.



www.ancientegyptalive.com



Your Journey Travel 72 Highfield Rd Toronto, ON M4L 2V1
647.347.9150 1.800.978.0544 TICO # 50019902

WWW.YOURJOURNEY.COM 1 800 978 0544 EMAIL:ANNA@YOURJOURNEY.COM