



Egypt Explored: Across the Ages, from Alexandria to Abu Simbel 2019

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Code: 21951

Tour Leaders **Lucia Gahlin**

Physical Ratings 

Join Egyptologist Lucia Gahlin on an epic journey through Egypt: from fabled Alexandria, through a land of Pharaohs, Christian monks, Islamic kings, up the Nile to Abu Simbel.

Overview

Featuring a 4-day cruise up the Nile in old-fashioned grandeur on a traditional Egyptian sailing boat (*dahabiya*) from Esna to Aswan.

- Egyptologist [Lucia Gahlin](#) introduces the distinctive history and cultural landscapes of Egypt.
- Comprehensive visits to most of the major Pharaonic monuments of Egypt.
- Study of the great Islamic city of Cairo and a visit to its newly reopened Museum of Islamic Art.
- Exploration of the Graeco-Roman city of Alexandria.
- 4-day cruise up the Nile on a traditional Egyptian sailing boat (*dahabiya*) from Esna to Aswan, visiting sites such as Esna Temple, El- Kab and Gebel el-Silsila, not accessible on larger cruise boats.
- Tour all the temples saved by UNESCO from drowning in Lake Nasser including the stunning site of Abu Simbel.
- Visit archaeological sites only recently opened to visitors for the first time, including tombs at Saqqara and the Temple of Mut in Luxor.
- Visit the new Grand Egyptian Museum (official opening date permitting).
- Exclusive, private visit to the gloriously painted tomb of Seti I, the largest in the Valley of the Kings, impressive tombs with restricted public access.
- Relax in the beautiful gardens of our hotels, notably the iconic Winter Palace in Luxor, and on the shores of Lake Nasser.
- Local dining in traditional Egyptian restaurants, and opportunities to explore spice-scented souks.

24-day Cultural Tour of Egypt

Overnight Giza (5 nights) • Alexandria (2 nights) • Luxor (7 nights) • Luxor-Aswan Nile cruise on board a *dahabiya* (4 nights) • Aswan (2 night) • Abu Simbel (2 nights) • Cairo (1 night)

Overview

From prehistory, Egypt has been a cradle of civilisation, given life by the annual flooding of the Nile. This golden land exercised enormous power and influence in the ancient world. Its successive dynasties of Pharaohs built vast monuments that have enthralled the world ever since. Egypt was, however, also a prize for ambitious conquerors, including the Levantine Hyksos, the Libyans, Nubians, Persians, Assyrians, and finally Alexander the Great, whose general Ptolemy established the Graeco-Egyptian Ptolemaic dynasty. Cleopatra, consort of Julius Caesar and later Mark Antony, was the last Ptolemy, defeated by Octavian at the Battle of Actium (31 BC). Egypt henceforth became the bread basket of the Roman Empire.

In 642 AD Byzantine Egypt was captured by Muslim armies who founded Fustat, a settlement next to which the Tunisian Shi'a Fatimid Dynasty (909 – 1171 AD) later established Cairo. Egypt became the centre of the Fatimid Empire, stretching from the Maghreb to Syria. Succeeding Ayyubid and Mamluk dynasties also made Egypt their capital. Egyptian control of the profitable Red Sea spice trade embellished Muslim Cairo. In 1517 Egypt was absorbed into the Ottoman Empire. Occupied by Napoleon (1798-1801), and by British forces from 1882, Egypt remained nominally Ottoman until World War I, only gaining full independence in 1956.

This tour explores the greatest eras of Egyptian history: three millennia of Pharaonic history illustrated by magnificent temples and tombs lining the Nile from Alexandria to Aswan, and Coptic and Islamic Egypt, of which the greatest expression is the bustling city of Cairo with its churches, mosques, and museums. We commence our Pharaonic exploration with the pyramids of Giza and Saqqara, and the extraordinary collections of the Egyptian Museum. We explore Alexandria on the Mediterranean Coast, before heading

south to Luxor, the site of ancient Thebes. Here we visit the temples of Karnak and Luxor on the east bank of the Nile and, on the west bank, the Valley of the Kings, and the Temple of Hatshepsut. From Luxor, we spend four days sailing on traditional *dahabiyas* up the Nile to Aswan, visiting temples including Edfu and Kom Ombo. From Aswan, we travel around Lake Nasser visiting Abu Simbel and little known sites including the Temple of Amada. We finish our tour with a final day exploring Coptic Cairo.

Leaders



Lucia Gahlin

A graduate of University College London, Egyptologist Lucia Gahlin is an Honorary Research Associate of UCL's Institute of Archaeology. Lucia has worked at Tell el-Amarna, Egypt, and at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London. A freelance lecturer at universities and other academic institutions and societies, Lucia has led tours to Egypt for 25 years.

Lucia Gahlin is an Egyptologist who has always been fascinated by the history and culture of Egypt and her neighbours. Over the last 25 years she has lectured at a number of different British universities, has worked at the archaeological site of Tell el-Amarna as the Small Finds Registrar, and has worked at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology in London as Amarna Archaeological Research Data Administrator. She has been a consultant or contributor to a number of documentaries for the BBC and independent production companies (Discovery Channel, Channel 5, the History Channel US and Living TV). Her undergraduate teaching has been for the Universities of London, Bristol and Warwick, and her continuing education teaching has been for the Universities of Exeter, Bristol, Reading, Surrey, and London.

Lucia has been successfully leading tours to Egypt for the last 25 years, for educational touring companies. Lucia is passionate about exploring and explaining the Pharaonic, Graeco-Roman, Coptic and Islamic sites of Egypt. Her lecturing style is considered enthusiastic and inspiring, as she brings the history and culture of Ancient Egypt to life. Lucia is author of popular books on Ancient Egyptian religion, such as *Egypt: gods, myths and religion*; and more academic chapters in books such as *The Egyptian World* edited by Toby Wilkinson. She has served as a Trustee of the UK's Egypt Exploration Society and is currently Chair of the Friends of the Petrie Museum and Co-Director of Bloomsbury Summer School at University College London, a provider of short courses on the Ancient World. She lives in England, but travels widely to lecture, including 3 lecture tours in Australia.

Lucia joins ASA in 2019 for the tour Egypt Explored: Across the Ages, from Alexandria to Abu Simbel.



Itinerary

The detailed itinerary provides an outline of the proposed daily program. Participants should note that the daily activities described in this itinerary may be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate changes in opening hours, road conditions, flight schedules etc. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents. Meals included in the tour price are indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B =breakfast, L=light lunch and D=dinner. Bottled water will also be provided daily during site excursions.

Giza, Cairo - 5 nights

Day 1: Tuesday 26 November, Arrive Cairo

- Morning at leisure
- The Citadel
- Muhammad Ali Mosque

Participants taking ASA group flights will arrive in Cairo with Emirates Airline on flight EK927 at 10.25am. You will be met at the airport and transfer by private coach to your hotel in Giza. Participants not taking group flights should make their own way to our Giza hotel. After check-in there will be some time at leisure to rest after your flight.

This afternoon we commence our tour of Cairo with a visit to the citadel, which stands on a rocky promontory overlooking the city. The fortress-complex predominately dates from the medieval Ayyubid (1174 – 1250) and Mamluk (1250–1517) periods, while the Mohammad Ali mosque was built in the early 19th century amidst the defensive core of Islamic Cairo. The panoramic views from the citadel make this the ideal place to appreciate the topography of the city and analyse its urban development.

The Ayyubids were of Syrian Kurdish descent and their most important scion was Salah el-Din (Saladin) of Crusader fame. The Sunni Ayyubids replaced the Shia Fatamids as rulers of Egypt. It had been under Fatimid rule that Cairo was first established as the capital in the 10th century, from where the dynasty

controlled its empire until the mid-12th century. Ayyubid rulers lived in the citadel which Salah el-Din had built on a spur of the Mokhattam Hills. The Ayyubids imported numerous Turkish slave soldiers, known as Mamluks, who eventually usurped power in the mid-13th century. The Mamluks held power until Ottoman (Turkish) conquest in 1517. Khedive Ali Pasha was keen to emphasise his new dynasty's connections with – and independence from – Egypt's former masters, the Ottomans.

Within the citadel, we visit the Mohammad Ali Mosque which dominates the Cairo skyline. Begun by Mohammad Ali Pasha in 1830 and completed by Said Pasha in 1857, the mosque was built in a distinctly Ottoman architectural style to commemorate Ali Pasha's eldest son, who died in 1816. Ali Pasha demolished a complex of Ayyubid and Fatamid buildings to establish his own dynastic architectural presence on this summit of the Islamic centre of the city.

In the evening we dine together at our hotel. (Overnight Cairo) D

Day 2: Wednesday 27 November, Giza – Saqqara – Memphis – Giza

- Imhotep Museum
- Pyramid Complex of Djoser
- Pyramid of Unas (recently reopened)
- New Kingdom tombs of Horemheb, Maya (Tutankhamun's Treasurer) & Tia (all recently opened)
- 'Tomb of the Two Brothers': Niankhkhnum & Khnumhotep
- New Kingdom tombs: Maia (Tutankhamun's wet nurse) & Nemtyemes (both recently opened)
- Memphis
- Welcome Evening Dinner

We begin a morning of exploration at Saqqara with a visit to the Imhotep Museum, named after the architect of the site's best-known monument, the first (stepped) pyramid, indeed the first monumental stone building in Egypt, the Step Pyramid of Djoser. The museum is also dedicated to the memory of the French archaeologist Jean-Philippe Lauer (1902 – 2001) who devoted his life to excavating, reconstructing and better understanding the site of Saqqara. Saqqara was the main cemetery for Egypt's ancient capital, nearby Memphis, and one of Egypt's most significant dynastic sites. Saqqara was already the site of a necropolis during the Early Dynastic Period. We visit Egypt's first great stone funerary complex, the aforementioned Step Pyramid Complex of the Third Dynasty pharaoh, Djoser (c. 2667–2648 BC). The complex consists of a large rectangular enclosure with a stone stepped pyramid as its focus. It marked a transition from the early royal 'mastaba' tomb to the pyramid form, and from use of mud brick to stone, prompted by the desire to create more durable and therefore eternal, emblems of Egypt's rulers. The Old Kingdom nobility were buried nearby, in large *mastaba*-tombs – rectangular flat-topped tombs with slightly sloping sides, which look like giant benches – hence their name *mastaba*, (Arabic: 'bench').

Old Kingdom pharaonic funerary architecture developed because Egyptian concepts of the afterlife became ever more complex and the pharaohs promoted the belief that they were divine rulers, whose continuing existence after death demanded the construction of funerary complexes as resplendent as those they resided in during life. After Djoser's funerary complex we proceed to one of the later pyramids that contains the first inscriptions within a royal tomb. This is the pyramid of Unas (c. 2375-2345 BC), the last ruler of the 5th Dynasty. The inscriptions on its interior walls, known as the 'Pyramid Texts', are the earliest theological writings to survive from Ancient Egypt. The Pyramid of Unas has recently reopened after nearly 30 years of being closed to visitors.

Our investigation of some of the most important non-royal tombs at Saqqara includes the Old Kingdom joint tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, renowned for the unusually intimate manner in which the two

men are represented. Might they have been lovers? We also explore the New Kingdom tombs of Tutankhamun's general (who went on to rule Egypt), Horemheb (r. c. 1323 – 1295 BC), Tutankhamun's Treasurer, Maya, and Ramesses II's sister and her husband, Tia and Tia. These have been excavated since the 1970s by a joint Dutch-British team, and have only been open to visitors for a few years. We also visit a couple of the New Kingdom tombs recently excavated by the French, and only just opened to visitors – the tomb of Tutankhamun's wetnurse Maia, and the royal court official Nemtyemes.

We stop for lunch 5 minutes from the site at the Saqqara Palm Club, a restaurant nestled among the palm trees beneath the Saqqara desert plateau.

After lunch we visit the accessible part of ancient Memphis – an open-air museum with its colossal statue of Rameses II (c. 1279–1213 BC). Memphis, south of modern Cairo, was the capital of the first unified kingdom of Egypt, and was the main administrative centre of the pharaonic state until the founding of Alexandria.

This evening we enjoy our special Welcome Dinner. (Overnight Giza) BLD

Day 3: Thursday 28 November, Giza – Saqqara – Dahshur – Giza

- Pyramid of Teti
- Tomb of Mereruka
- Tomb of Kagemni
- Tomb of Ankhmahor (recently opened)
- Tomb of Ptahhotep
- Tomb of Ti
- Serapeum (recently re-opened)
- Dahshur: Sneferu's Red and Bent Pyramids

This morning we return to Saqqara, a site so large and important it demands a second visit to do it justice. We visit the 6th-Dynasty pyramid of Teti (c. 2345–2323 BC) to explore the development of the Pyramid Texts through the Old Kingdom period, and some of the *mastaba* tombs of Teti's high officials, clustered in nearby rows, comprising a true 'city of the dead'. Mereruka and Kagemni each married a daughter of the king and climbed high on the social ladder of the Old Kingdom, both men becoming Vizier (Prime Minister). We see scenes of daily life in the superstructures of these *mastaba* tombs (the burial chambers are cut into the bedrock beneath these chapels and tend to be inaccessible). These scenes of hunting, fishing, animal husbandry, agriculture and food production are rich in detail, using art and inscription to magically provision the deceased for eternity. The tomb of Ankhmahor has only recently opened to visitors; it is perhaps best known for a relief that appears to represent a circumcision procedure. Both Ptahhotep and Ti were Overseers of 5th Dynasty royal solar temples, pyramids, and pyramid towns; their tombs are located closer to the Serapeum, the majestic burial place of the bulls believed to be the earthly manifestation of the god Apis worshiped in Memphis. These catacombs have fairly recently been re-opened after some 30 years of closure.

We stop once again for lunch at the most conveniently located restaurant – the Saqqara Palm Club.

After lunch we drive to the next royal cemetery south of Saqqara, to visit the pyramids of Khufu's father Sneferu (c. 2613 – 2589 BC), the first pharaoh of the 4th Dynasty. His architects and builders experimented with pyramid construction techniques until they achieved a transition from stepped to smooth-sided monuments. We see the culmination of this process at Dahshur in the form of the Red Pyramid, but we also witness problems encountered along the way, in the form of the so-called 'Bent Pyramid'. The smooth-sided pyramid brought with it a shift in the layout of Egyptian funerary complexes, from a North-South to

West-East axis, reflecting an increasing solar influence in the religion. (Overnight Giza) BL

Day 4: Friday 29 November, Giza

- Pyramids of Giza
- The Sphinx
- Solar Boat Museum
- New Grand Egyptian Museum (if opened) or further exploration of Giza complex

We spend most of the day visiting the 4th Dynasty pyramids of Giza and the funerary complexes of which they are part. These monumental structures, that have fascinated myriad visitors to Egypt most notably Alexander and Napoleon, were constructed for Khufu (Cheops: c. 2589–2566 BC), Khafra (Chephren: c. 2558 –2532 BC) and Menkaura (Mycerinus: c. 2532 – 2503). The Great Pyramid (of Khufu) is the only one of the seven wonders of the ancient world that still survives. The pyramids do not stand alone, but are surrounded by extensive funerary complexes, each with subsidiary pyramids for royal women, *mastaba* tombs for members of the royal family and nobility, a causeway with a temple at either end (one against the east face of the pyramid, the other on the edge of the cultivation). The Sphinx, alongside Khafra's Valley Temple, is the most compelling symbol of the transformation of a pharaoh from man to god. Our program also includes a visit to the Solar Boat Museum, which houses the funerary boat of Khufu, reconstructed in the 1950s from 1,224 pieces buried in a rectangular pit alongside the south face of the pyramid.

We break during our exploration of Giza to take lunch at Abu Shaqra restaurant, close to the Sphinx. If the spectacular, new Grand Egyptian Museum has opened by the advertised date, we will spend this afternoon exploring the purpose-built museum, containing an incredible array of artefacts brought here from the Egyptian National Museum on Tahir Square and other state collections across the country. If the opening date has been pushed back (not uncommon in Egypt) we will spend more time exploring the phenomenal array of buildings and monuments on the Giza plateau in greater detail. (Overnight Giza) BL

Day 5: Saturday 30 November, Giza – Cairo – Giza

- Egyptian Museum (including the Royal Mummies)
- Museum of Islamic Art (MIA)

We begin our day in downtown Cairo with a visit to the Egyptian National Museum, located at the centre of modern Cairo in Tahrir Square (made famous by the 2011 revolution). This museum houses the most extensive and stunning collections of Pharaonic artefacts in the world. The lower floor of the museum contains monumental statuary from all over Egypt, with superb examples from every period, whilst the upper floors are dedicated to smaller items, including a magnificent collection of jewellery. Our visit includes a close scrutiny of royal mummies.

Following lunch at a traditional Egyptian restaurant, we explore the newly reopened Museum of Islamic Art, which holds one of the finest collections of Islamic artefacts anywhere in the world. The museum includes exceptional examples of rare woodwork and plaster artefacts, as well as metal, glass and porcelain utensils, jewellery, weapons, wood and ivory objects, textiles and carpets. (Overnight Giza) BL

Alexandria - 2 nights

Day 6: Sunday 1 December, Cairo – Alexandria

- Lunch: Alexandria Fish Market
- The National Museum of Alexandria
- New Library & Museum (Bibliotheca Alexandrina)

This morning we drive north to the great Graeco-Roman city of Alexandria. We will arrive in Alexandria by lunchtime and begin our site visit program in the afternoon.

Alexandria was one of the greatest cities of the Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean. In antiquity it was famed for its temples, theatres, library and museum, the great Pharos lighthouse – another of the seven wonders of the ancient world – its stadium, extensive palaces and villas, underground water supply and fountains, as well as its extensive economic and residential quarter. Today, however, it is above all a city of the 19th century, a symbol of Egypt's integration into the European-dominated world economy after the opening of the Suez Canal under the British protectorate (1869).

The city was founded by Alexander the Great and became the capital of the country for 1000 years; it was also the cultural capital of the eastern Mediterranean. It was the centre of Egyptian (Coptic) Christianity and remains the seat of the Coptic patriarch. Little is exposed of the ancient city, which is buried beneath Islamic and European-style developments, and drowned beneath the sea. It is now Egypt's second largest city and a favourite summer resort for rich Cairenes. Nevertheless, throughout its history Alexandria has had a certain glamour that is still visible in the series of monuments we shall see.

Our program will commence this afternoon with a visit to the National Museum of Alexandria, which opened in 2003, with its rich collection of artefacts from the Delta region, and the New Library (the Bibliotheca Alexandrina), opened in 2000, with its small museum.

In the evening we dine together at our hotel. (Overnight Alexandria) BLD

Day 7: Monday 2 December, Alexandria

- Roman Amphitheatre (Kom el Dikka)
- Villa of the Birds
- Pompey's Pillar
- Kom el-Shawqafa
- Lunch: Grill House
- Anfushi Tombs
- Qaytbay Fortress
- The Port of Alexandria

Today we visit the amphitheatre in the area known as Kom el Dikka. The 'amphitheatre' is actually an *odeon*, dating to the 4th century AD with a seating capacity of 600. This site is also where we find the 'Villa of the Birds', a rich Alexandrian townhouse with the remains of a mosaic floor featuring birds, occupied from the beginning of the 2nd to the end of the 4th century AD. We next visit the site known as Pompey's Pillar. This red granite pillar marks the location of the Ptolemaic and Roman Temple of the Alexandrian deity Serapis. The pillar was actually erected by the Emperor Diocletian at the end of the 3rd century AD and probably supported a statue of the emperor. Another site we shall visit in this area is Kom el-Shawqafa, a subterranean system of catacombs which exhibit Egyptian, Greek and Roman elements in their decorative schema. The Anfushi tombs date to the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. These tombs are cut into the limestone and the largest consists of a subterranean hall with subsidiary tomb chambers. The stairway is decorated with wall paintings of Isis, Osiris, Horus and Anubis. On the peninsula between the east and west harbours stands the Mamluk fortress of Qaytbay, on the site once occupied by the renowned

Pharos of Alexandria. (Overnight Alexandria) BL

Luxor - 7 nights

Day 8: Tuesday 3 December, Alexandria – Cairo – Luxor

- Coptic Monastery (in Wadi Natrun)
- Late Afternoon Flight Cairo – Luxor

This morning we set out early on our long drive from Alexandria to Cairo, stopping at a Coptic Monastery in Wadi Natrun. Wadi Natrun lies to the west of the Delta and is named after the local natron, a naturally occurring salt used by the ancient Egyptians in mummification and purification.

The Coptic Church is the Orthodox Christian Church in Egypt, based on the teachings of St Mark who brought Christianity to Egypt during the reign of the Emperor Nero in the 1st century AD. The word 'Copt' derives from the Greek word, *Aigyptos*, which in turn derived from one of the ancient Egyptian names for Memphis (*Hwt-ka-ptah*). Our word 'Egypt' derives from *Aigyptos*. Monasticism is said to have first developed in Egypt. It began there at the end of the 3rd century AD and flourished in the 4th century. By the end of the 4th century, there were hundreds of monasteries, and thousands of monks' cells and caves scattered throughout the Egyptian desert hills.

We will eat a packed lunch on the coach as we head to Cairo Airport in the Cairene district known as Heliopolis, today an upper class suburb, but in antiquity home to the extremely important temple of the sun god Ra.

We take our afternoon flight south to Luxor, a vibrant town nestled on the east bank of the Nile, a town so rich in archaeology it serves as an open air museum, often referred to by its ancient Greek name Thebes. (Overnight Luxor) BL

Day 9: Wednesday 4 December, Luxor

- Mummification Museum
- Luxor Museum
- Lunch: Sofra
- Luxor Temple

We begin the day with a visit to the small but fascinating Mummification Museum located close to our hotel on the corniche. Its collection illustrates the funerary process central to ancient Egyptian religion. On to the Luxor Museum, one of the finest museums in Egypt with its artistic display of objects from the Theban region. Here we see the famous statue of Thutmose III (1481 – 1425 BC) discovered under a courtyard in Karnak Temple in 1904, and other works, including the perfect quartzite statue of Amenhotep III (r. c.1386 – 1349 BC), found in 1989 under the solar court at Luxor Temple.

Lunch is at Sofra close to Luxor Temple. *Sofra* is Arabic for 'dining table', but also for 'generosity' and 'hospitality'. This restaurant occupies a 1930s Egyptian townhouse that retains its traditional character.

Luxor Temple lies parallel to the river on the east bank of the Nile. It was regarded as the southern residence of the god Amun, who by the New Kingdom (c. 1550 – 1069 BC) had been merged with the more ancient and important sun god of Heliopolis, Ra, to become Amun-Ra. Luxor was home to local rulers during Egypt's politically fragmented Second Intermediate Period (c. 1650 – 1550 BC). They drove out the

foreign rulers (the Hyksos) from the Delta, and went on to rule a united Egypt as the Eighteenth Dynasty, a particularly splendid period of Egyptian history, when pharaohs were buried for the first time in the Valley of the Kings, and Egypt controlled an empire that took in Nubia, and Syria-Palestine. The wealth flooding into Egypt through trade, conquest, and efficient exploitation of resources, resulted in much temple building, and particularly at Luxor which became the country's religious centre, focused on the cult of Amun-Ra. Most of what we see today at Luxor Temple was built by Amenhotep III with some additions by Ramesses II. Here we see reliefs of the great Opet Festival of Amun dating to the reign of Amenhotep III's grandson Tutankhamen (c. 1336–1327 BC), and the 'Chamber of the Divine King' converted into a chapel of the Imperial cult during the Roman Period. A Christian basilica was built in this temple, on top of which a mosque was later built. This mosque of the Muslim saint Abu el-Haggag continues in use to this day. So the expanse of time over which this site has been a place of worship is vast.

A must-visit bookshop for anyone interested in Egypt, ancient or modern, and the souk with its array of spices, jewellery and all manner of gifts, are both located within easy walking distance of our hotel.

We dine together this evening. (Overnight Luxor) BLD

Day 10: Thursday 5 December, Luxor's West Bank

- Tombs of the Nobles: Ramose, Userhet, Khaemhet, Rekhmire, Sennefer.
- Lunch: Africa
- Temple of Medinet Habu

We cross the Nile to Luxor's west bank by boat, like the ancient Egyptians who followed processional routes between the temples on the east bank and the tombs and temples on the west bank. On Luxor's west bank we first visit a group of New Kingdom rock-cut Tombs of the Nobles. These private tombs vividly illustrate aspects of daily life in Egypt, and provide us with evidence for the ancient Egyptian beliefs concerning an afterlife. Rekhmire was a Vizier under 'the Napoleon of Egypt', Thutmose III (c.1479 – 1425 BC). A lengthy inscription in his tomb outlines all the duties expected of the Vizier – an Ancient Egyptian job description for the Prime Minister. Ramose was Vizier under Amenhotep III and IV. Of particular interest is the scene of Amenhotep IV (who went on to become Akhenaten) (c. 1352 – 1336 BC) represented in the conventional style of his father Amenhotep III, opposite another representation of him in the unusual style we associate with the Amarna Period. So within the one tomb we can trace the transition from one style of art to the other. When we enter the rock-cut decorated chambers of the tombs of Rekhmire, Ramose, Userhet and Khaemhet, we are actually visiting the funerary chapels of the tombs, just as we visited the funerary chapels in the superstructures of the Old Kingdom *mastabas* in the North. In the case of Sennefer, we actually visit his burial chamber, and unusually it is elaborately decorated, with a noteworthy ceiling painted with vines laden with bunches of grapes.

We take lunch on the roof terrace at Africa, a local Egyptian restaurant with views overlooking the Nile, towards Luxor Temple on the other side of the river, and then visit Medinet Habu, the best preserved of the great temples erected on the west bank by the New Kingdom rulers, in which they were venerated as manifestations of the god Amun on earth, and in which offerings were made to ensure their eternal life. This was the temple built by the Twentieth Dynasty pharaoh Rameses III (c.1184 – 1153 BC), whose palace remains we will also visit within the massive mudbrick outer enclosure wall of the temple. Among the many scenes carved in relief on the walls of this temple is the only recorded pharaonic sea battle – against the so-called 'Sea Peoples'. (Overnight Luxor) BL

Day 11: Friday 6 December, Luxor

- Temple Precinct of Amun, Karnak (including the Open Air Museum)
- Lunch: Al Hussein
- Temple of Mut, Karnak (recently opened)

Today we visit the main temple precinct of Amun at Karnak, nearly 3km to the north of Luxor Temple. Recent excavations have revealed almost the entire length of the sphinx-lined processional way between the two temples. We have already seen the Opet Festival reliefs at Luxor Temple, in which the cult statues of the gods Amun and Mut were shown being processed in boat-shaped shrines, from their sanctuaries at Karnak to their 'Southern Residence' at Luxor Temple. The temple precinct at Karnak is the largest religious enclosure in the world. Most of the buildings we visit there today were erected during the New Kingdom, but later rulers added to this temple complex. The monumental approach to this temple is lined with fantastic ram-headed sphinxes. This avenue connected the precinct to the quay from which the god's barge was launched to transfer him either to Luxor Temple or to the west bank of the Nile. Amun's consort Mut and their child Khonsu were also worshipped at Karnak and the enclosures and temples within the precinct served as a stage for the rituals and festivals centred on this 'Theban Triad' of gods. Our morning also includes a visit to the Open Air Museum alongside the temple, which houses the reconstructed 'Red Chapel' of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut (1507 – 1458 BC), demolished towards the end of her stepson/nephew Thutmose III's reign (r. 1479 – 1425 BC), and used as infill in the construction of Amenhotep III's pylon or monumental gateway.

After lunch in a restaurant close to Karnak Temple, we return to the sacred heart of New Kingdom Egypt in order to explore the recently-opened Temple of Mut, consort of Amun, whose name, written with a vulture hieroglyph, is the same as the word 'mother' in ancient Egyptian. This ruined temple has an extraordinary number of statues of the lion goddess Sekhmet, and an unusual crescent-shaped sacred lake. (Overnight Luxor) BL

Day 12: Saturday 7 December, Luxor – Dendera – Luxor

- Temple of Hathor, Dendera

This morning we travel north from Luxor to visit the magnificent Temple of Hathor at Dendera. Its newly cleaned tombs have revealed fabulous blue ceilings with intricately astronomical details. The main temple dates from the Ptolemaic (305 – 30 BC) and Roman (30 BC – c. 300 AD) periods, and is distinguished by its Hathor-head column capital, being a woman's face with heavy wig and cow's ears. We will ascend to the roof of the temple for fine views, and to visit the rooftop chapels, one of which contains a cast of the famous Dender Zodiac; the original once located here is in the Louvre Museum in Paris. On the walls of the temple are a number of cartouches, the name rings in which the royal name were written, but they have been left blank, a reflection perhaps of the uncertain political times of the 1st century BC. Evidence of this tumultuous period of Egyptian history is spectacularly depicted on the rear wall of the temple where we see a depiction of Cleopatra VII (r. 51 – 30 BC) and Caesarian (47 – 30 BC), her son by Julius Caesar, later to be murdered by Octavian's supporters after the conquest of Egypt by Rome. This is the only surviving representation of Cleopatra VII identified on the wall of an Egyptian temple. As with all Egyptian temples, the temple does not stand alone within the outer mud brick enclosure wall. We will also be able to view a smaller temple dedicated to Isis, a *mammisi* (divine/symbolic birth house), a sacred lake, a *sanatorium* (where people would go to receive divine inspiration and healing dreams), and a later Christian basilica.

Our day will include a picnic lunch at this atmospheric temple dedicated to the cow-goddess of fertility Hathor. In the evening we dine together. (Overnight Luxor) BLD

Day 13: Sunday 8 December, Luxor's West Bank

- Colossi of Memnon
- Valley of the Kings (with special opening of Seti I's Tomb)
- Lunch: Nur el-Qurna
- Temple of Hatshepsut, Deir el-Bahri

After breakfast we depart our hotel and cross the Nile by boat to visit sites on the west bank of the river where the Pharaonic necropolis was located during the New Kingdom. As we travel from the Nile to the Valley of the Kings we will pass the Colossi of Memnon, two huge seated figures, which once flanked the entrance to the memorial temple of Amenhotep III (c. 1390 – 1352 BC). When it was built, this would have been the largest of the New Kingdom temples on the west bank, but within about 150 years it had been destroyed. We will gaze up at the colossal seated statues of Amenhotep III, which were left standing in front of what is now an active archaeological site. The Greeks identified these colossal statues with Memnon, son of Aurora.

From the Colossi we continue to the Valley of the Kings, the necropolis of the pharaohs and some other important individuals of the New Kingdom. We enter a selection of the decorated underground burial complexes, which present us with a completely different style of funerary structure to the Old Kingdom pyramids we visited in the North of Egypt. Most of these New Kingdom royal tombs cut into the limestone bedrock are decorated with murals, which chart the progress of a pharaoh into the afterlife, the gods he would meet and the ceremonies he would undergo. The largest of these tombs is the one quarried out of the bedrock and decorated for the Nineteenth Dynasty pharaoh Seti I. Nine of its eleven rooms are beautifully decorated; of particular note is the painted astronomical ceiling in the burial chamber. Visitor numbers to this tomb are restricted, but our group has special access to this most impressive of tombs in the Valley of the Kings.

After a local lunch in the garden of a restaurant nestled under trees at the western end of Amenhotep III's ruined temple, we visit the memorial temple of the pharaoh Hatshepsut (c. 1473 – 1458 BC), a three-tiered architectural masterpiece built into the cliff overlooking the flat valley stretching back to the Nile, and located on a direct axis with Karnak Temple on the other side of the river. Deir el-Bahri has been majorly reconstructed by Polish archaeologists working there since the 1960s, but the reliefs are original, and they provide us with evidence for the great achievements of this female pharaoh, particularly in trading expeditions and the transportation of obelisks from the granite quarries in Aswan. This temple is also significant for its scenes of the divine birth of Hatshepsut. (Overnight Luxor) BL

Day 14: Monday 9 December, Luxor's West Bank

- Valley of the Queens (with a special opening of Nefertari's tomb)
- Deir el-Medina
- Lunch: Africa
- Ramesseum

Our last day in Luxor sees us crossing over to the west bank by boat to visit still more of the sites responsible for this town's designation as 'the world's greatest open-air museum'. We begin the day by visiting the counterpart to the Valley of the Kings, the Valley of the Queens, where we visit the decorated rock cut tomb of a queen, and of two princes, all dating to the time of Ramesses III (c. 1184–1153 BC) whose temple we will be visiting at Medinet Habu. The colours in the painted scenes on the walls of these tombs are particularly vivid, but not nearly as vivid as those in the most breathtaking of all ancient tombs, the tomb of Queen Nefertari, wife of Ramesses II whose temple, now known as the Ramesseum, we will be visiting this afternoon. Since the Getty Conservation Institute restored the walls of this tomb (1986-1992),

visitor numbers have been restricted, but we have a special permission for an exclusive visit.

At Deir el-Medina we find the remains of a town inhabited by the artists and craftsmen responsible for quarrying out and decorating the tombs in the Valley of the Kings, Valley of the Queens and Tombs of the Nobles. These men lived here with their families during the New Kingdom and left behind all manner of archaeological evidence and written records, particularly on flakes of limestone (*ostraca*) informing us of their daily life, both at home, and working in the tombs. They also created small but brightly decorated tombs for themselves and their families, a couple of which we will be able to climb down inside, to enjoy the vibrant painted scenes on the walls of the rock-cut burial chambers. The people of Deir el-Medina lived not only alongside their burial ground, but alongside shrines to local gods, such as the deified pharaoh Amenhotep I (c.1525 – 1504 BC), and other deities of particular relevance to this community, such as Ptah, patron of craftsmen. Much later, during the reign of Ptolemy IV (221 – 205 BC), a small stone temple surrounded by a large mud brick wall was built in the area of the New Kingdom shrines just to the north of the ancient town. This temple is dedicated to Hathor, goddess of love and fertility. We take time to explore this temple, including the 'Weighing of the Heart' scene carved in one of the chambers.

We take lunch once again on the roof terrace overlooking the Nile at the local restaurant, Africa. After this we head to the romantic ruins of Ramesses II's memorial temple (13th c. BC), known today as the *Ramesseum*. Here we see the fallen colossus of this mighty pharaoh, and scenes carved in relief of the Battle of Qadesh (c. 1274 BC) that the Egyptians fought against the Hittites in year 5 of Ramesses II's reign. Ramesses claimed this battle as a great victory, but the truth seems to have been somewhat different! (Overnight Luxor) BL

Dahabiya Cruise - 4 nights

Day 15: Tuesday 10 December, Luxor – Esna – El Hegz

- Esna Temple
- Board our *dahabiya* and set sail.

This morning we drive south to Esna. We visit the temple in the heart of this busy modern town. In order to reach the ancient floor-level of the temple, we must descend a long staircase from modern street-level, showing that the modern town sits on the many strata of a settlement mound (*tell*). The temple is dedicated to the ram-headed creator god of the south, Khnum, whom we shall meet again in Aswan. During the Graeco-Roman Period this place was called in Greek, *Latopolis*, after the *Lates* fish which were held sacred there and were buried in a cemetery west of the town. The Ptolemaic inner part of this temple is mostly lost, and what we are able to visit dates mostly to the Roman Period. The hypostyle hall (its roof supported by rows of columns with composite floral capitals characteristic of the period) is in fact the last major temple built in Egypt, and is decorated with reliefs from the 1st to 3rd centuries AD.

We board our *dahabiya* for lunch and an afternoon of gentle sailing. And so we begin our river voyage south, mooring over night close to the village of El Hegz, where we dine onboard. (Overnight aboard a *dahabiya*) BLD

Day 16: Wednesday 11 December, El Hegz – El Kab – Edfu – Gebel el-Silsila

- Tombs & Temples of El Kab
- Temple of Horus, Edfu

We continue sailing today on our peaceful *dahabiya* cruise, with two sites to visit before we moor for the

night at Gebel el-Silsila. El Kab is a large, multi-period site, occupied from the Predynastic Period (ended 3100 BC), with the vulture goddess Nekhbet, a protective goddess of kingship, as its patron deity. We walk past the great mud brick enclosure wall of the ancient town to visit a row of rock-cut tombs just within the desert on the eastern side of the river. These tombs are from the period of the New Kingdom and are decorated in painted raised relief. Perhaps the most famous of these is the tomb of Ahmose, Son of Abana, who was a Chief of Sailors in the late Seventeenth-early Eighteenth Dynasties. There is an extremely important inscription on one wall of his tomb which gives us considerable detail of the Theban military expeditions north to overcome the Hyksos in their Delta capital at Avaris during the Second Intermediate Period (c. 1650 — 1550 BC), and to expel them from Egypt, thereby reuniting Egypt under one pharaoh (Ahmose) at the beginning of the New Kingdom.

The Temple of Horus at Edfu was constructed in the 3rd century BC during the Ptolemaic Period. It is a huge and remarkably complete temple, elaborately decorated throughout, preserving valuable information on the foundation of Egyptian temples, the rituals that took place daily in the temples, and the regular festivals, such as the Festival of the Beautiful Meeting, when the cult statue of Hathor of Dendera was transported by boat to visit Horus of Edfu. The ambulatory around the temple is decorated with scenes expressing the mythology of kingship – the triumph of Horus over his uncle Seth (represented mostly as a tiny hippopotamus!).

We dine this evening onboard our *dahabiya*. (Overnight on *dahabiya*) BLD

Day 17: Thursday 12 December, Gebel el-Silsila – Kom Ombo – el Gerdiab

- Ancient quarry and shrines, Gebel el-Silsila
- Temple of Sobek and Horus the Elder, Kom Ombo

Continuing our leisurely cruise south, we moor to visit further sites. Silsila Gorge is one of the narrowest points in the Nile Valley. A little to the north of here, the geology of the Nile Valley has changed – northern limestone of the Nile Valley has given way to sandstone, which then extends south far into Sudan. This site was used as a sandstone quarry from at least the Eighteenth Dynasty through to Graeco-Roman times. The blocks for important sandstone temples we have already visited – such as Karnak, Luxor Temple, Medinet Habu, and the Ramesseum – were quarried here on both sides of the river. We visit the quarries on the west bank, coming across various rock-cut shrines, the largest and best preserved of which is the rock-cut chapel (or *speos*) of Horemheb (c. 1323 – 1295 BC), now thought to have originally been built by Hatshepsut, dedicated to a number of deities including Amun-Ra; the crocodile god Sobek; the triad of Elephantine, Khnum, Satet, and Anuket; the god of the Nile flood Hapi; and the hippopotamus goddess Taweret.

Later we moor at Kom Ombo to visit the picturesque Graeco-Roman Period riverside temple of the crocodile god Sobek and Haroeris, or Horus the Elder. The temple plan is unusual – its dedication to two gods necessitated the division of the interior into eastern and western halves that mirror each other. We find evidence for oracular consultation here, and a wall relief that has been interpreted by some as an illustration of medical implements. A small site museum has recently opened here displaying embalmed crocodiles and other ancient evidence for the local cult of the crocodile god.

We moor for the night close to the village of El Gerdiab, and dine onboard our *dahabiya*. (Overnight on *dahabiya*) BLD

Day 18: Friday 13 December, El Gerdiab – Aswan

Today we enjoy a tranquil day on the last leg of our cruise to Aswan. The granite cataract at Aswan turned

the pre-dam river into non-navigable rapids, and created Egypt's natural southern frontier. It was also the gateway to trade routes south into sub-Saharan Africa. As such it was a land of garrisons and passing merchants where the cultures of Egypt and Nubia blended and overlapped.

We dine onboard this evening. (Overnight on dahabiya in Aswan) BLD

Aswan - 2 nights

Day 19: Saturday 14 December, Aswan

- Unfinished Obelisk and Quarries
- Temple of Isis, Philae
- High Dam
- Kalabsha Temple
- Qertassi Kiosk
- Beit al-Wali Temple

Today we spend a full day exploring the Aswan area, with a picnic lunch, and boat trips to sites located on islands. Aswan is where the ancient Egyptians quarried the pink and grey granite they favoured for obelisks, statuary, sarcophagi etc. This morning we get a sense of the cataract, and visit a quarry where we look for evidence of ancient quarrying techniques and marvel at the size of the New Kingdom 'Unfinished Obelisk', some 42m long and weighing over 1000 tons, that remains in situ, semi-quarried from the bedrock. The small souk at this site presents another good shopping opportunity.

We drive on to the southern side of the early 20th-century British Dam in order to board a boat to take the short journey across the reservoir formed between the British Dam and the 1960s High Dam to the temple complex that was once located on the flooded Philae Island, and was dismantled and relocated to the higher Agilka Island. To 19th century travellers, the Philae temple was 'the pearl of the Nile' and despite its relocation, it is still today the archetypal romantic ruined temple thanks to its idyllic location. It is a Ptolemaic and early Roman Period temple dedicated to the goddess Isis, with a small temple to Hathor alongside, a *mammisi* (divine birth house) unusually situated within the temple and, most celebrated by early travellers, the Kiosk of Trajan. Because of its remote location Philae seems to have served as a centre for pagan worship well into the Christian era. It is also the site of the latest known hieroglyphic inscription (394 AD) and the latest demotic inscription, a *graffito* (452 AD). The site was finally abandoned during the reign of Justinian the Great (c.535 AD).

In order better to understand the significance of the region, and the UNESCO campaign to save the monuments of Nubia in the 1960s, we visit the High Dam and discuss the affects it has had on modern Egypt and its ancient monuments.

On the northern shore of Lake Nasser we next board another boat to take us the short distance to New Kalabsha Island, one of the islands in Lake Nasser, the vast man-made lake created south of the High Dam. A number of different monuments saved from the rising water of Lake Nasser have been relocated to this island, so today it serves as an Open Air Museum. Monuments here include Kalabsha Temple, a Roman kiosk from Qertassi, and the Beit el-Wali Temple. The Kalabsha Temple is the largest free-standing Nubian temple. This sandstone temple was built for the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus (r. 27 BC – 14 AD). It was dedicated to the divine triad, Osiris, Isis and Horus-Mandulis (the Egyptian deity Horus syncretised with the Nubian sun deity Mandulis; in fact, this is the Greek name derived from the Nubian name Merul). The temple was later reused as a Coptic church.

The Qertassi Kiosk, with its Hathor-headed columns, originally stood at the entrance to an ancient sandstone quarry, on high ground overlooking the Nile, and was a landmark seen from miles around, probably dating to the Ptolemaic Period.

Beit el-Wali is a small rock-cut (*speos*) temple. It is the earliest of the Nubian temples built by the 19th dynasty pharaoh Rameses II (r. 1279 – 1213 BC), and was dedicated to the great Theban deity Amun-Ra, as well as local gods of the Aswan area (Khnum, Satet and Anuket), and Nubian deities.

We dine together this evening in a restaurant at the top of the Movenpick Tower on Elephantine Island with spectacular views over Aswan which is lit up at night. (Overnight Aswan) BLD

Day 20: Sunday 15 December, Aswan

- Tombs of the Nobles, Qubbet el-Hawa (including those of Harkhuf, Sarenput I & II)
- Elephantine Island: temples of Khnum and Satet
- Lunch: Makka
- Nubian Museum

We continue to visit sites by boat today – on the west bank, and on an island. In the morning we cross the Nile to the West, the 'Land of the Dead', to visit several rock cut tombs set high in the desert hillside. We visit tombs of governors of this area dating to the Old and Middle Kingdoms. The tomb of Harkhuf, Overseer of Foreign Troops during the Sixth dynasty reign of Pepi II (c. 2278 -2184 BC), is of particular interest as it is inscribed with a copy of a letter sent by Pepi II as a boy-king to Harkhuf asking him to bring a pygmy back from his trading expedition to Sudan to dance for him in the palace.

We shall then visit Elephantine Island, site of the ancient town of Abu (meaning 'elephant' and 'ivory' in Ancient Egyptian), Aswan's predecessor, where we see the remains of this trading entrepot and garrison town, and its temples, including the remains of the Temple of Khnum, the ram-headed creator god associated with the Nile and the cataract, and the temples of his consort Satet, reconstructed by the German Archaeological Institute. Here we visit the best preserved example of a Nileometer used to measure the annual flood levels. We will note the mud brick tombs of the mummified rams associated with the cult of Khnum, as we shall go on to see at least one of these rams on display in the Nubian Museum this afternoon. We will also come across a Middle Kingdom cult shrine of Heqa-ib, a deified Old Kingdom governor of Elephantine, whose tomb we will have noted earlier this morning at Qubbet el-Hawa.

Today's program concludes with a visit to the Nubian Museum, an archaeological and ethnographic museum tracing the history and culture of ancient and modern Nubia. (Overnight Aswan) BL

Abu Simbel - 2 nights

Day 21: Monday 16 December, Aswan – Abu Simbel

- Wadi el-Sebua Temple of Amun-Ra and Ra-Harakhty
- Dakka Temple of Thoth
- Maharraka Temple of Serapis and Isis
- Amada Temple of Amun-Ra and Ra-Harakhty
- Derr Temple of Ra-Harakhty
- Tomb of Pennut

Today we drive a full day to visit Nubian temples and a tomb on the western shore of Lake Nasser. We will

take lunch boxes with us. All the sites we visit today (clustered in two locations) would have been drowned under Lake Nasser had they not been saved by UNESCO when they were dismantled, moved and rebuilt in the 1960s. The Wadi el-Sebua Temple dedicated to Amun-Ra and Ra-Harakhty was built by Ramesses II as part of a program of temple construction throughout Nubia, which was occupied at this time by Egypt in order to control its trade routes and gold mines and harness its manpower. This temple has been moved 2 km from its original site. Nearby we shall also visit the Graeco-Roman Temple dedicated to Thoth, moved from Dakka, and the Temple of Serapis and Isis, moved from Maharraka. This temple was constructed during the Roman Period when Egyptian cults were evolving into the mystery religions of late Antiquity which prefigured the rise of Christianity.

We continue on to our second stop on the western shore of Lake Nasser, to visit the Amada Temple of Amun-Ra and Ra-Harakhty, located only a few kilometres from its original site. This temple was built by the warrior pharaoh Thutmose III (c. 1479–1425 BC), and the decoration was continued by his son Amenhotep II (c. 1427–1400 BC). We will also explore the nearby Derr Temple. This is another rock-cut, or *speos* temple dating to the reign of Rameses II (c. 1279 – 1213 BC), and dedicated to Ra-Horakhty. Finally, we explore the tomb of Pennut, Viceroy of Nubia during the reign of Rameses VI (c. 1143–1136 BC). This is the only tomb relocated on the shore of Lake Nasser.

We dine together this evening at our hotel in Abu Simbel on the shore of Lake Nasser. (Overnight Abu Simbel) BLD

Day 22: Tuesday 17 December, Abu Simbel

- Temple of Ramesses II, Abu Simbel
- Temple of Nefertari, Abu Simbel
- Sound and Light Show, Abu Simbel (Optional)

Abu Simbel has become one of Egypt's most famous sites, which probably has as much to do with the drama of its dismantling and re-construction in advance of the rising waters of Lake Nasser, as with its remote and stunning location. Here we visit two temples constructed by Ramesses II, which were moved to this site in 1966-1968. The relocation, which preserved the alignment of the temples and re-inserted them into the artificial hills at their new location, was a major engineering feat, as remarkable as the original construction of the temples themselves. The larger temple is in fact very carefully aligned in its new location so that twice each year (February 21st and October 21st) the rising sun illuminates the sanctuary at its rear, shining upon the seated gods. The larger of the two temples is dedicated to Amun-Ra, Ra-Horakhty, Ptah, and the deified Rameses II (c. 1279 – 1213 BC), whose four great *colossi* spring out from the cliff face, dominating the temple façade. The smaller temple is dedicated to the goddess Hathor and Ramesses's wife, Nefertari (d. c. 1250 BC).

This evening we remain at our hotel overlooking the lake at Abu Simbel. We dine together, and there will be the opportunity to attend the sound and light show seated before the looming and mysterious façades of Ramesses's temples. (Overnight Abu Simbel) BLD

Cairo - 1 night

Day 23: Wednesday 18 December, Abu Simbel – Cairo

- Morning at leisure
- Midday flight Abu Simbel to Cairo
- Farewell Evening Dinner

This morning is free to enjoy the peace of southern Egypt before we return to the buzz of hectic Cairo. You may wish to revisit the Abu Simbel temples at sunrise, or later in the morning at your leisure. Alternatively, you might like to relax or take a leisurely stroll in the lakeside grounds of our hotel.

Our lunchtime flight from Abu Simbel to Cairo will touch down in Aswan. This evening we enjoy a Farewell Dinner in our hotel in downtown Cairo. (Overnight Cairo) BLD

Day 24: Thursday 19 December, Depart Cairo

- The Mu'allaha Church (the 'Hanging Church')
- Coptic Museum
- Light lunch at the hotel
- Group transfer for participants travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight

Our tour concludes with a visit to the heart of Coptic Cairo. The 'Hanging (*Mu'allaha* in Arabic) Church' takes its name from its location on top of the southern tower gate of the Roman Babylon fortress with its nave suspended above the passage below. It is one of the oldest Coptic churches in Egypt, and is dedicated to St Mary. It was probably built in the Seventh Century AD, but an earlier church on this site is thought to date back to the Third Century AD. The Coptic Museum next door to the Hanging Church is a treasure trove of objects relating to Coptic history and culture going back to the 2nd century, including icons, manuscripts, sculptures, textiles and frescoes.

We return to our hotel for lunch and to freshen up before commencing our journey home. Participants returning to Australia on the group flights will be transferred to Cairo Airport after lunch. You are scheduled to depart on Emirates flight EK924 at 1905hrs. BL

Accommodation

24-day Cultural Tour of Egypt

All hotels are rated 4-5-star locally and are comfortable and conveniently situated. All rooms have en suite bathroom. Several hotels have swimming pools. Single rooms may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Single Supplement. Further information on hotels will be provided in the 'Tour Hotel List' given to tour members prior to their departure.

- Giza, Cairo (5 nights): 5-star Marriott Mena House Hotel – overlooking the Great Pyramid of Giza, surrounded by 40 acres of landscaped gardens. www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/caimn-marriott-mena-house-cairo
- Alexandria (2 nights): 5-star Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano – a resort hotel with a private sandy beach, overlooking the Mediterranean. www.fourseasons.com/alexandria
- Luxor (7 nights): 5-star Winter Palace Garden Pavillon Luxor – 5-star hotel overlooking tropical gardens and located 100m from the Luxor Temple. www.sofitel.com
- Luxor-Aswan Nile Cruise by dahabiyas (4 nights): on board the Africa and Africa Queen. *Dahabiyas* are wind-blown vessels so you can experience the beauty of the Nile at a leisurely pace as those adventurous explorers did during the early 19th century. We will only use tug boats when there is insufficient wind for sail. The ships also have onboard generators to provide you with all your electrical needs. nilesailing.com
- Aswan (2 night): 5-star Mövenpick Resort Aswan – located on Elephantine Island in the middle of the Nile River. www.movenpick.com
- Abu Simbel (2 nights): 4-star Seti Abu Simbel Lake Resort – located only a 10-minute walk from the Grand Temple of Ramesses II, with views of Lake Nasser. www.setifirst.com
- Cairo (1 night): 5-star Kempinski Nile Hotel Garden City – situated in Cairo's affluent Garden City district, offering luxurious rooms on the shores of the Nile River. www.kempinski.com

Note: *Hotels are subject to change. In this instance a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

Single Supplement

Option A

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double/twin room for single occupancy throughout the tour. There are a limited number of cabins available for single use on the *dahabiyas*. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Option B

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double/twin room for single occupancy at all the hotels. However, accommodation will be in twin-share cabins on the *dahabiyas*. People wishing to take this supplement are advised to book well in advance.

Dahabiya, Egypt Nile Cruise

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$13,380.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 30 September 2018

AUD \$13,580.00 Land Content Only

AUD \$2380.00 Single Supplement Option A: Single accommodation throughout the tour

AUD \$1990.00 Single Supplement Option B: Single accommodation at all hotels; twin-share cabin on the Dahabiya

For competitive Economy, Business or First Class airfares and/or group airfares please contact ASA for further information.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 4-5-star hotels; 4-night on board *dahabiyas* sailing from Esna to Aswan
- All meals indicated in the tour itinerary, where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=evening meal
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals include mineral water & tea/coffee
- 2 x 500ml bottle mineral water per person per day for excursions
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Porterage at hotels and airports
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour Handbook
- Entrance fees to museums and monuments
- National guide in Egypt
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Cairo, Cairo-Luxor, Abu Simbel-Cairo, Cairo-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance
- Egyptian Visa (purchased on arrival at Cairo airport)



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 24-day Cultural Tour of Egypt involves:

- Extensive walking on rough ground at archaeological sites and some walking through narrow streets and busy markets.
- Travelling long distances by coach.
- Regular early morning starts (8:00 or 8.30am).
- 4- to 5-star hotels with six accommodation changes; 4 nights on a *dahabiyas* cruise.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portorage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.
- Risk of gastric ailments (you should consult your doctor about medication before departure).

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their

suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the Booking Conditions on the last page of this tour itinerary.

Practical Information

Prior to departure tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Booking Conditions

Make a Reservation

ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD \$500.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

Passport Details

All participants must provide no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the program a photocopy of the front page of their current passport.

Single Supplement

Option A

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double/twin room for single occupancy throughout the tour. There are a limited number of cabins available for single use on the *dahabiyas*. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Option B

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double/twin room for single occupancy at all the hotels. However, accommodation will be in twin-share cabins on the *dahabiyas*. People wishing to take this supplement are advised to book well in advance.



Reservation Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ GENDER Male Female

Passport Number _____ Expiry date ____ / ____ / ____ Nationality _____

Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed I'm renewing my passport ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

Travel Plans

I wish ASA to book my airfare, please contact me to discuss my options. Business Class Economy Class

I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date ____ / ____ / ____

I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

Frequent Flyer _____ Name of Airline _____ Airline Seat preference _____
Membership # _____ (please note request only)

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: a twin-bedded room a double-bedded room a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: on my own with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish poultry red meat dairy products

eggs pork nuts

Other _____

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence Postal Mail Email Address _____

Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person **MUST** be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name _____ Relationship to Traveller _____

Address _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at www.asatours.com.au
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. www.traveldoctor.com.au tel: 1300 658 444; www.travelvax.com.au tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

- | | YES | NO |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Do you have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program? YES NO

If yes, please specify

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances? YES NO

If yes, please specify

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything?
If yes, please specify

Do you carry an epipen?

3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs?
If yes, please specify

Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour? YES NO

If yes, please specify

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine?

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

Diabetics: You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic?

Are you insulin dependent?

4. Do you suffer from travel sickness?
Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.

Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept that there are inherent dangers and risks that may occur during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services provided for the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of travelling to, on and from any tour.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release and Indemnity applies with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
 - a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
 - b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
 - c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally.
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of my continued participation on a tour for whatever reason (refund conditions in ASA's Booking Conditions excepted).

Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products or services. If a service provider does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (eg. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any such service provider however caused (contingencies). You must take out adequate travel insurance against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour will be limited to the refund of amounts received from you less all non-refundable costs and charges and the costs of any substituted event or alternate services provided. The terms and conditions of the relevant service provider from time to time comprise the sole agreement between you and that service provider.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

Booking Conditions

DEPOSITS

A deposit of \$500.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

CANCELLATION FEES

If you decide to cancel your booking the following charges apply:

More than 75 days before departure: \$500*
75-46 days prior 25% of total amount due
45-31 days prior 50% of total amount due
30-15 days prior 75% of total amount due
14-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

This amount may be **credited to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.*

We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.

UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. If an ASA tour is forced to cancel you will get a full refund of all tour monies paid. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to daily itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

I accept the conditions on this booking form I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 _____

Name of Traveller 2 _____

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ _____ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- Intention to Travel Tour Deposit
 Balance of Payment Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
 Travel Insurance Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) _____

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code ANZBAU3M
BSB 013-423
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. _____

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred _____

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard & Visa 2%
 American Express 2%

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____ Security Code (CVC) _____

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) _____

Cardholders Name _____

Cardholders Billing Address _____

Postcode _____

State _____ Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Cardholders Signature _____

AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD

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