

EGYPT: GROUP TRAVEL PROGRAMS

CLASSICAL ANCIENT EGYPT

13 nights: Arrive Cairo, 4 nights; drive to Alexandria, 2 nights; drive to Cairo and fly to Luxor, 3 nights; drive to Aswan, 2 nights; fly to Abu Simbel, 1 night; fly to Cairo, 1 night; depart Cairo.

Day 1, Sunday: Arrive Cairo

Arrive Cairo airport. Transfer to the Nile Hilton (Nile view room). At leisure.

Day 2, Monday: Cairo

Morning, visit the three impressive great pyramids at Giza, the oldest and one of the only surviving Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Enter a passageway into the second pyramid, visit the solar funerary boat museum, and legendary statue of the sphinx. Also take a delightful calache ride, and watch a demo in making papyrus parchment. Lunch at Le Meridien hotel in Giza. Afternoon, visit the ancient capital of Memphis and step pyramids of Saqqara, the oldest ancient Egyptian cemetery. Also visit a carpet weaving center on return.

B, L

Day 3, Tuesday: Cairo

This morning, experience Coptic (Christian) Cairo. Visit the Hanging Church, built on the remains of a Roman fortress, and Church of St. Sergius, where the Holy Family stayed in exile. Also visit the impressive St. George Greek Orthodox Church, and simple yet significant Ben Ezra Synagogue. Enjoy lunch at Le Pacha 1901 floating restaurant. Then, explore ancient treasures at the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities (including Mummies room).

B, L

Day 4, Wednesday: Cairo

Visit the 12C Citadel of Saladin, and grand alabaster mosque of Mohammed Ali. Also visit the Sultan Hassan and El Refai mosques, masterpieces of Mamluk architecture. Then, enjoy an authentic Egyptian lunch at a city restaurant, with free time to explore colorful wares at Khan El Khaleli bazaar.

B, L

Day 5, Thursday: Cairo - Alexandria

Today, we'll drive to Alexandria, the second largest city, with a Mediterranean flair, and center of knowledge in the ancient world. En route, visit Amba Bishoi and El Syrian monasteries at Wadi Natrun. Arrive Alexandria, and stay at the Metropole hotel, overlooking the Mediterranean. This afternoon, visit the mosque of Mursi Abul Abbas, built in an Andalusian style with four domes and a towering minaret, Fort of Quait Bay at the sea front, and charming Montazah Palace gardens.

B

Day 6, Friday: Alexandria

Visit the Greco-Roman museum, which displays a fascinating record of a civilization in the process of change from 3C BC to 7C AD. Also visit Pompey's pillar, catacombs, and a Roman amphitheater. Lunch at San Giovanni restaurant. Then, visit Bibliotheca Alexandria, a modern marvel library.

B, L

Day 7, Saturday: Alexandria - Cairo - Luxor

This morning, see a splendid display of recently discovered relics and artifacts at the National Alexandria Museum. Late afternoon, drive to Cairo airport, and take an evening flight to Luxor, the world's greatest outdoor museum. Stay at Sonesta St. George hotel, on the banks of the River Nile.

B

Day 8, Sunday: Luxor

Today, appreciate the temples of Karnak, with massive pylons and pillared columns; its history spans through 13 centuries. Also visit the small but interesting and well laid out Luxor Museum. Later, this afternoon, explore the impressive Luxor temple dedicated to god Amon Ra, famous for its huge columns that end in the form of a papyrus plant.

B

Day 9, Monday: Luxor

Today, we'll cross the Nile River to the west bank and discover a maze of antiquity. Walk through history at the Colossi of Memnon, the only remains of Amenhotep III funerary temple, and visit Medinet Habu and the Ramasseum, funerary temples with well preserved religious and military murals. Also visit the Valley of Kings, with tombs carved in rock-faces, and Queen Hatshepsut's temple, a magnificent three-tier temple dedicated to the only woman to rule Egypt in Pharaonic times. Afternoon, at leisure.

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Day 10, Tuesday: Luxor - Aswan

Drive to Aswan with packed lunch, visiting en route three well preserved cult temples with hypostyle halls, reliefs and sanctuaries at Esna, Edfu and Kom Ombo. Stay at Movenpick hotel, situated on an island in the Nile River. Evening, take a leisurely felucca boat ride across the Nile to visit the botanical gardens island.

B, L

Day 11, Wednesday: Aswan

This morning, visit the Aswan High Dam, unfinished obelisk, and Lake Nasser area. Free time. Late afternoon, enjoy a pleasant boat ride to visit the magnificent Temple of Philae, dismantled and rebuilt on Agilika Island; a beautiful setting, with artistic shrines, sanctuaries and pylons.

B

Day 12, Thursday: Aswan - Abu Simbel

Morning at leisure. Take a mid-day flight to Abu Simbel, a quaint Nubian town at the southern tip of Lake Nasser. Stay at Seti First Abu Simbel hotel. Then, visit the impressive Ramses II and Nefatari temples, magnificent monuments removed and reconstructed into massive stone hills.

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Day 13, Friday: Abu Simbel - Cairo

Take a late morning flight to Cairo and transfer to Nile Hilton. There's some free time this afternoon for independent activities. Then, to conclude this program, attend a spectacular and befitting sound and light show at the Giza Pyramids that portrays the glory of the Pharaohs.

B

Day 14, Saturday: Depart Cairo

Morning transfer to Cairo airport for international departure.

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