Egypt Adventure

*Valid for departures until December 31.*

# Itinerary

## Days 1-2 Cairo

Salaam Aleikum. Welcome to Egypt!

You can arrive at any time on day 1 as there are no activities planned until the important welcome meeting at 4pm. Look for a note in the hotel lobby as to where this important meeting will take place. If you are going to be late please leave a message with the hotel reception.

At the group meeting we will be collecting your insurance details and next of kin information, so please ensure you have all details on hand to provide to your leader.

After the meeting, there is the option of joining your fellow travellers for dinner.

If your flight is scheduled to arrive late, we recommend that you consider booking a night's accommodation prior to the trip so you can ensure you are able to attend the important group meeting.

Check-in time at our joining point hotel is after 2pm. Early check-in is not guaranteed, however if you arrive early, luggage storage is available. Speak to the hotel reception on arrival.

Our first night is spent in a hotel.

Following the meeting, we head out to Khan al-Khalili to check out the madness and colour of this famous bazaar.

Wonderfully chaotic, crowded, and always colourful, Cairo is a fascinating mixture of modern city and ancient wonders. If you arrive early there are plenty of things to see and do. Take a walk along the Corniche or travel along the river by felucca. If the crowds and the noise of the city are too much, catch the metro into the oldest part of the city, the Coptic Christian sector. With its narrow-cobbled streets and ancient churches, it is a haven of peace and quiet.

On day 2 we travel out to Giza to visit the unsurpassed pyramids and Sphinx. We will aim to get away early to avoid the heat and crowds for the experience. We make a stunning approach to the Pyramids across the surrounding dunes by camel allowing stunning panoramic views of this iconic sight. After our fun with the camels your local guide will take you through the amazing history of the area.

We will have some time to explore the Pyramids up close: Pyramid of Khufu (The Great Pyramid of Cheops), Pyramid of Khafre (Chephren) and the Pyramid of Menkaure (Mycerinus)- the smallest. From a distance Khafre's pyramid looks larger than Khufu's, but this illusion is due to the structure being built on higher ground. When they were built, they were covered in white limestone- they would have been gleaming but now most of the casing stones have been removed but you can still see some on the apex of Khafre's pyramid.

If you wish to enter the inside of a Pyramid, ask your Group Leader to assist. Entrance is not included although there is time to do so. Please note that the inside thoroughfares of the Pyramids are very small and very warm, so those suffering from claustrophobia should not attempt.

The statue of the Great Sphinx still retains the mysteries which have puzzled scholars, tourists and scientists for thousands of years. It is made from an outcrop of stone left behind from the quarrying for the Great Pyramid, it has been buried by desert sands, excavated and repaired many times. The body of the Sphinx is almost 60m long and 20m high. It was known as 'Abu Hol' or Father of Terror to the Arabic people. We don't know who first built the statue- this is one of the mysteries of the colossal monument.

Please note that you will be required to walk around the complex of the Pyramids. It can be very hot in the summer months so be prepared for some hot and sweaty walking with little relief. Don't forget to take some water with you.

After the pyramids there will be a break for lunch and a chance to try some of the local specialities for those who are hungry. We then head back to the city centre to visit the Egyptian Museum. With thousands of exhibits, it's easy to lose yourself in the many corridors - but don't miss the Tutankhamun rooms, where the famous golden death mask of King Tut and his gilded sarcophagi are displayed. The afternoon is free to continue exploring the city.

This evening, we board an overnight sleeper train to Aswan. Please ensure you return to the hotel with plenty of time to spare before departure for our train. Your leader will designate a meeting time and we will travel together to Giza Station in the early evening.

For your comfort we travel aboard a sleeper train with fold out beds (as opposed to a seater train) to Aswan (approx. 13 hrs). This is a very comfortable air conditioned, 2 berth cabin. All bedding is provided on board by the porter. Western style toilets are located in each carriage. In rare circumstances you may be paired with a group member of the opposite sex in your cabin dependant on the group configuration. On other occasions you might have the opportunity to share with a local person of the same sex, again determined on the group configuration. Included dinner and breakfast are served on board. If you are a vegetarian, you may want to purchase something extra beforehand to supplement your meal as only a single type of meal is served for dinner which always includes meat.

## Days 3-5 Aswan/Nile Felucca

The Nile, Elephantine Island and white-sailed feluccas: welcome to Aswan. This Nubian city is Egypt's southern gateway to Africa and an important market town - take time here to check out one of the country's best bazaars.

After settling in we head out to enjoy the spectacular scenery around Aswan where the Sahara meets the Nile. We take a motor boat ride to a nearby beach where you can climb a sand dune for a rewarding view. Later in the afternoon we take a walk around the magical Elephantine Island for our first taste of Nubian life and visit a nearby village where we join a local family for dinner and an unforgettable insight into the life and culture of the local people.

On day 4 you have the option to travel to the temples of Abu Simbel. There are 2 ways to make the journey south to see these remarkable temples.

### Option 1: Flying to Abu Simbel

Some travellers prefer to fly to Abu Simbel from Aswan. The flight time is 40 minutes each way. Flights can be booked on-line through EgyptAir: - http://www.egyptair.com/English/Pages/Default.aspx#

Return flights vary throughout the season, the day of the week booked, and how far in advance you book, but expect to pay between 150-300USD

Due to the southerly location it is recommended to book the early flight and visit Abu Simbel at sunrise to avoid the heat

### Option 2: Private minivan

A less expensive option is to hire a minivan with other group members who are also interested. This can be organised from Aswan. The ride is 3 hours each way with a very early departure from Aswan at approximately 4AM.

Please note that Abu Simbel is an optional activity. Your group leader will not be travelling with you on this visit. The entrance fee is paid on arrival to the site, and if you wish a local guide can be hired on arrival.

For those that don't wish to travel to Abu Simbel a visit to nearby Philae Temple is highly recommended. Dedicated to the goddess Isis, Philae was painstakingly moved and reassembled after the construction of Aswan High Dam flooded its original island location.

Nights 3 & 4 we stay in a hotel and on day 5 we board feluccas to spend the day out on the river and then a night under the stars. Our Nubian sailing crew provides all the meals, which are hearty and delicious.

A felucca is a traditional wooden sail boat with broad canvas sails. The boat has a canopy that offers shade and protection from the elements; however, there is no cabin or enclosed section. Please note that conditions are basic during our felucca trip but if you are prepared to rough it a bit you are sure to have the adventure of a lifetime. We sleep outside, on the deck of the felucca on mattresses. While blankets are provided, a sleeping sheet is recommended. During the colder months (October to March) it can get very cold at night (as low as 5 degrees) so a sleeping bag is recommended for this period. Unfortunately, there is no sleeping bag hire available.

There are no toilets on-board our Nile felucca, but while sailing we will stop at the group's requests on the riverbank for toilet stops with nature. For your convenience at the completion of the days sailing we will assemble a western style toilet and tent close by on the riverbank. Any assistance from the group building the toilet tent is always much appreciated.

Please note that we may need to make slight alterations to our Nile itinerary throughout the year, depending on winds and currents. As the felucca is a sailing craft without any outboard engine, if there is no wind - we will not travel very far.

Nonetheless watching the sun setting across the Nile in the evening is a sight you will remember. This is the absolute highlight of the trip for many of our travellers.

## Days 6-7 Luxor

We say goodbye to our felucca and the crew before transferring by road to Luxor (approx. 3.5 hrs).

Situated on the banks of the Nile, Luxor was once the ancient Egyptian capital of Thebes. From the spectacular temple complex of Karnak to the unbelievable paintings and hieroglyphs in the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, this open-air museum is full of wonderfully preserved reminders of the Pharaohs.

On arrival to Luxor we take some time to freshen up before we head out to our Sojourn Adventure Travel Foundation Project - Animal Care Egypt, to check out the great work they are doing here for the local animals. Next is a late afternoon visit to explore the magnificent Karnak Temple, perhaps the most impressive of the entire ancient Pharaohs' monumental works. It is a jam-packed day, but what a great introduction to this extraordinary city.

We start our West Bank tour early on day 7 transferring to the west bank of the Nile to the Colossi of Memnon - two 17 metres high statues on the West Bank. Carved from granite blocks they represent the Pharaoh Amenhotep III.

We then hop onto donkeys (in the winter months only of October - May) for a ride of a different kind through the nearby local villages and fields such as sugar cane (approx. 30 mins). We dismount our donkeys and continue on to the spectacular royal burial site of the Valley of the Kings to visit 3 of the most interesting tombs. Here your group leader will explain the history and legends of these remarkable people.

Please note that a visit to King Tutankhamen's tomb is not included in our visit, but can be arranged as an option with advance notice. Ask your Group Leader if you are interested in details.

After our fun in the Valley of the Kings we are invited to a local family's home for lunch to try some tasty traditional home cooking.

The rest of the afternoon of Day 7 is free before we catch an overnight sleeper train back to Cairo. Options for this afternoon would be to visit the Luxor Museum, the Luxor Temple or the Mummification Museum. You can hire a bicycle to ride out into the surrounding countryside. For a more upscale option perhaps check out the Winter Palace, a lovely 5-star historical building with wonderful views over the Nile - a great place for a refreshing cocktail.

## Day 8 Cairo

Returning to Cairo early in the morning on our overnight train, there is time for a farewell breakfast and a chance to reflect on the wonders we have seen.

You are free to depart at any time on day 8, but please arrange for departing flights after 3pm in case of any travel delays on the overnight train and bad traffic hindering your taxi or transfer.

# Included Activities

This is a list of included activities on this trip. All other activities are optional and at your own expense. For a list of optional activities and sightseeing available on this trip, see the optional activities section below. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not be refunded.

* Khan al-Khalili bazaar visit
* Pyramids and Sphinx
* Camel ride at the Pyramids
* Egyptian Museum
* Aswan boat tour
* Nubian village visit and meal
* Overnight Felucca sailing trip
* Donkey ride (seasonal - not in Summer)
* Colossi of Memnon
* Valley of the Kings (3 tombs)
* Home cooked traditional meal with local family in Luxor
* Karnak Temple
* Comfortable overnight sleeper train (both directions- Cairo to Aswan & Luxor to Cairo)

# Optional Activities

We list the following optional activities for your information. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide only.

They are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Sojourn Adventure Travel nor included in price of this trip. If you do any of them, you do so at your own risk, and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Sojourn Adventure Travel.

These optional activities listed are suggestions about what is possible to do in each location. It may not be possible to do all activities listed in the time that you have. We recommend you do some planning in advance to decide what you most want to do in each location. Please note that the below prices are the entrance fees only and do not include transport fees to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated.

## Cairo:

* Citadel – EGP50
* Coptic Museum (Cairo) - EGP50
* Islamic Art Museum (Cairo) - EGP40
* Cairo Tower (Cairo) - EGP65
* Antiquities Museum Mummies Hall (Cairo) - EGP100
* Sufi dance performance at Khan al-Khalili (subject to performance scheduling) - free

## Giza Pyramids:

* Entrance to the Great Pyramid of Cheops - EGP100
* Entrance to the 2nd Pyramid of Khafre - EGP30
* Solar Boat Museum - EGP50
* Pyramids Sound and Light Show - EGP75
* Pyramid of Saqqara – 60EGP

## Aswan:

* Abu Simbel Temple Entrance - EGP90
* Abu Simbel transport by bus - EGP120
* Abu Simbel flight - from USD150 (book with www.egyptair.com)
* Philae Temple - EGP50 (+ EGP10 for boat)
* Philae Temple Sound and Light Show - EGP75
* Monastery of St. Simeon - EGP25
* Nubian Museum - EGP50
* Tombs of Nobles - EGP30
* Unfinished Obelisk - EGP30
* Kalabsha Temple - EGP35

## Luxor East Bank sights:

* Karnak Temple Sound and Light Show - EGP100
* Luxor Temple - EGP50
* Luxor Museum – EGP80
* Mummification Museum - EGP50
* Hot Air Balloon - USD110
* Bicycle hire - EGP10

## Luxor West Bank Sights:

* Tomb of Tutankhamun (KV54) (Luxor) - EGP100
* Hatshepsut Temple - EGP30
* Medinat Habu Temple - EGP30
* Ramasseum Temple - EGP30
* Valley of the Queens- EGP35
* Tombs of the Nobles – EGP30

# Important Notes

## Travelling in the Middle East:

The Middle East is a region which may be very different to anything you have experienced before. Heat, pollution, poverty and the crowds can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge. During our time here we have come to love this wonderfully different region but we know that we should always expect to encounter some difficulties along the way. You will come across very different attitudes to time keeping, public cleanliness, privacy and service. If you are able to travel with a lot of patience and a sense of humour, then we know that you - like all of us - will be captivated by the fabulous Middle East.

# Itinerary Disclaimer

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. Please note: occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. Our brochure is usually released in November each year. As such the information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you print and review a final copy of your Trip Notes a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans. For the latest updated trip notes please visit our website: **www.Sojourn Adventure Travel.com**

# Departure Dates 2022

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| --- | --- |
| Start | Price |
| 04 Apr | AUD $1580 |
| 11 Apr | AUD $1580 |
| 18 Apr | AUD $1580 |
| 25 Apr | AUD $1580 |
| 02 May | AUD $1580 |
| 09 May | AUD $1580 |
| 16 May | AUD $1580 |
| 23 May | AUD $1580 |
| 30 May | AUD $1580 |
| 06 Jun | AUD $1580 |
| 13 Jun | AUD $1580 |
| 20 Jun | AUD $1580 |
| 27 Jun | AUD $1580 |
| 04 Jul | AUD $1580 |
| 11 Jul | AUD $1580 |
| 18 Jul | AUD $1580 |
| 25 Jul | AUD $1580 |
| 01 Aug | AUD $1580 |
| 08 Aug | AUD $1580 |
| 15 Aug | AUD $1580 |
| 22 Aug | AUD $1580 |
| 29 Aug | AUD $1580 |
| 05 Sep | AUD $1580 |
| 12 Sep | AUD $1580 |
| 19 Sep | AUD $1580 |
| 26 Sep | AUD $1580 |
| 03 Oct | AUD $1580 |
| 10 Oct | AUD $1580 |
| 17 Oct | AUD $1580 |
| 24 Oct | AUD $1580 |