

## 14 Day Small Group Egyptian Explorer Tour

Cairo - Luxor - Aswan - Edfu - Alexandria

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From **\$7,499** ✈ pp twin share

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**Includes Return International Flights!\***

**Enjoy a small-group tour with a max of 20 people**

**Uncover the secrets of the Valley of the Kings**

**Go sightseeing on a Nile River Cruise, tuck into a guided food tour in Cairo and so much more!**

## Description



Few countries can rival Egypt's wealth of magnificent archeological sites, with the pyramids and Great Sphinx of Giza ranking as two of the most recognisable in the world. It is a place like no other and on this two-week itinerary we explore its treasures across the length of the country.

In the north you will find the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria and El Alamein, the site of the famous Second World War battle. Cairo's attractions are world famous but we also experience the bazaars and culinary delights on a food tour. Journeying south by sleeper train we reach the Nubian city of Aswan where we board our Nile cruise boat and discover the monuments and temples all the way to Luxor.

Always wanted to tick Egypt off your bucket list? Look no further! Limited spaces available - get in touch with us today.



## Itinerary

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### Day 1

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#### Australia ✈ Cairo

Welcome to Cairo, the capital of Egypt and our starting point for this culture-rich exploration.

Please make your own way to the hotel. A welcome briefing will either take place this evening or tomorrow morning.

**Accommodation:** Cairo Pyramids Hotel (or similar)

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### Day 2

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#### Cairo - Full day tour

After breakfast we enjoy a full-day tour of Cairo. We begin with a visit to the Egyptian Museum – home to the largest collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts in the world, including the golden riches discovered in Tutankhamun's tomb. We also explore Al Azhar mosque, which dates to 970 CE and is the oldest mosque in Cairo. It's still frequently visited by local worshippers and we need to cover up (long sleeves and trousers) to enter – as when entering all mosques. Women will also need to cover their hair with a scarf.

**Accommodation:** Cairo Pyramids Hotel (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

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### Day 3

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#### Cairo - Pyramids

We begin our day with a visit to Giza, home to the Great Pyramids of Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus and the mysterious Great Sphinx. Only the throng of sightseers milling around their huge foundations keep you in the 21st century. The afternoon is free to relax at our hotel, explore Cairo or join an optional excursion to Saqqara, Memphis, and Dahshur.

**Accommodation:** Cairo Pyramids Hotel (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast



## Day 4

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### **Cairo - Food Tour**

Today we embark on a tour of the best food spots in Cairo and discover some of the fantastic local cuisine available across the city – highlights are mulukhiyah (soup), ful medames (beans) and kushari (rice and macaroni). The tour also includes the bazaars of Khan el-Khalili in the historic centre of Islamic Cairo. We'll experience modern Cairo with a visit to Al Azhar park and a walk along the bustling El Moaz Street. We also aim to visit the House of Arts and Culture – a music school (opening hours are quite limited). Donations of musical instruments such as violins, saxophones, drums or spare parts such as violin bows are welcomed.

**Accommodation:** Cairo Pyramids Hotel (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch

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## Day 5

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### **Visit El Anba Bishoy Monastery and El Alamein; continue to Alexandria**

Today we start with a 90-minute drive to Wadi El Natrun, a depression that lies below sea level. The ancient Egyptians extracted salt here to use for mummification. The area was important for early Christians, too, and we will visit Ek Anba Bishoy Monastery. We continue to El Alamein (a two-hour drive away), the site of the allied victory during World War II, where we will visit the War Cemetery and Military Museum. More than 80,000 soldiers were killed or wounded in the two battles. It was a decisive win for the Allies with Winston Churchill saying, "Before Alamein we never had a victory. After Alamein we never had a defeat". After visiting El Alamein, we'll continue to Alexandria, a two-hour drive away.

**Accommodation:** Metropole Paradise Inn (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Dinner

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## Day 6

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### **Alexandria tour; transfer to sleeper train**

Today we have a tour of Alexandria. Founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, the city was home to the Lighthouse of Alexandria, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and it's Great Library was the largest library of its time. Unfortunately, they no longer survive, but there is still much to see in this Mediterranean port city. Our tour begins with a visit to the city catacombs followed by the impressive Qaitbay Fortress and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina – Alexandria's revival of the Great Library. In the afternoon, we return to Cairo (three to four hours) to board our sleeper train to Aswan (which takes approximately 12 hours).

**Accommodation:** Sleeper train

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Dinner

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## Day 7

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### **Arrive Aswan; Nubian tour and Felucca ride.**

Arriving in Aswan during the morning, we spend the rest of the day exploring the Nubian way of life. We begin with a visit to the Nubian Museum, which chronologically charts the history and culture of the people, before enjoying a Nubian lunch on board a felucca while we explore the Nile. In the afternoon we have a tour to the Monastery of St Simeon by camel\* and Animalia Nubian House (please see the Responsible Travel section). We finish our day with a barbeque on the shores of an island in the Nile.

\*To reach the monastery, we'll ride camels for about 15 minutes. If you prefer not to ride a camel it is possible to walk the 2.5mi (4km) over sandy and stony ground. This part of the trip takes place in the middle of the day when the sun is at its highest.

**Accommodation:** Basma Hotel (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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## Day 8

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### **Optional visit to Abu Simbel; board cruise boat.**

This morning we transfer to our cruise boat and relax before enjoying lunch on board. For the rest of the day there is the option to explore the Aswan market or attend the Sound and Light Show at Philae Temple.

For those who want to do the optional visit to Abu Simbel, the tour starts at approximately 3.30am when we get picked up from the hotel. A breakfast box is provided. Around 8am we will arrive at the destination, where we are given around three hours to visit the temples. Built by Ramses II, the temples of Abu Simbel rank among the most impressive in the country, and are well worth the journey south across the Nubian Desert. We will be back in Aswan around 3pm.

For our Sun Festival departures, the visit to Abu Simbel is included. The festival is a bi-annual event that has been taking place for more than 3,200 years. During the celebrations, the sun perfectly aligns with the usually dark interior and lights up the seated statues of Ramses II; Ra, the sun god; and Amun, the king of the gods. Only the statue of Ptah, the god of darkness, remains in the shadows. There are traditional Nubian dances being performed, street food everywhere (save space for fresh koshari) and live music outside the temple.

**Accommodation:** M/S Nile Style, M/S Esmeralda or similar

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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## Day 9

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### **Visit Philae Temple and Aswan High Dam; sail to Edfu.**

We begin today with a visit to the Philae Temple and Aswan High Dam. In the 1970s, the temple was relocated by Unesco to Aglika Island after it became evident the original site of Philae would submerge on completion of the dam. This morning represents a magnificent and enduring testament to both ancient and modern engineering. After lunch we sail to Kom Ombo and visit the temple there before continuing our journey to Edfu, which is where we will spend the night.

**Accommodation:** M/S Nile Style, M/S Esmeralda or similar

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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## Day 10

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### **Tour Edfu; sail to Luxor.**

Waking in Edfu, we start our day exploring the city and its temples before sailing further north along the Nile. After crossing the Esna lock we reach our destination, Luxor, where we will have our final dinner on board and hopefully witness a stunning sunset over the river. and live music outside the temple.

**Accommodation:** M/S Nile Style, M/S Esmeralda or similar

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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## Day 11

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### **Disembark in Luxor; explore the Valley of the Kings.**

After breakfast on board we disembark in Luxor and explore the Valley of the Kings. For nearly 500 years this was the site of royal burials and it contains the tombs of more than 62 pharaohs, including Tutankhamun, Seti I, Ramses III and IV. One ticket allows us to see three tombs. The ticket usually allows entry into what are regarded as the most impressive tombs, but (if you have time) a visit to the tomb of Ramses VI is also highly recommended. Visits to tombs are now strictly controlled to halt further deterioration of wall paintings – each tomb is periodically closed for a number of weeks. Entry to Tutankhamun's tomb costs approximately US\$12, payable locally. In terms of size and decoration, it is not as impressive as many of the other tombs, but is of course historically very interesting. After, we visit the massive stone statues of the Colossi of Memnon before transferring to our hotel. The rest of the day is free to relax or wander around the streets of Luxor.

**Accommodation:** Iberotel Luxor (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

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## Day 12

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### **Luxor tour including Karnak and Luxor temples.**

For our penultimate day we have a half-day tour of Luxor's east bank. Luxor is commonly called the greatest open-air museum in the world and this morning we visit the extraordinary Karnak and Luxor temples, which stand within the modern city. There should also be an opportunity to visit the A.C.E animal hospital to learn about the efforts taken to improve animal welfare in Egypt. After a leisurely afternoon we enjoy our final dinner together at one of this historic city's restaurants. The rest of the night is yours to relax.

**Accommodation:** Iberotel Luxor (or similar)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

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## Day 13

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### **End Luxor.**

You've seen many marvels in Egypt, but now it's time for one last breakfast before beginning your journey home. Please make your own way to the airport for your onward flight. If you've still a little adventure in you, speak us about joining our post-trip excursion to the Red Sea.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

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## Day 14

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### **Australia**

Today you will arrive home back in Australia. We hope you enjoyed your journey!

## Inclusions & Exclusions

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### Inclusions

- Return economy class airfare from Melbourne, or Sydney
- Eight nights in four-star hotels (local grading), three nights on a cruise boat and one night sleeper train
- Travel by mini bus
- All breakfasts, five lunches and six dinners
- All transport and listed activities where mentioned in itinerary as included

### Accommodation

We use comfortable hotels on a twin-share basis. The Basma Hotel in Aswan is located on the East Bank on Aswan's highest hill, directly opposite the Nubian museum. All the rooms have balconies with views of the Nile or the desert. The facilities in the rooms and in the hotel itself are excellent, including a choice of bars and restaurants and a huge swimming pool, all set amid well-maintained gardens. In Cairo, we typically use the Cairo Pyramids Hotel, which is located close to the Great Pyramids at Giza. The hotel has a pool, choice of dining options, and a fitness area.

**Cruise boat:** sail the Nile on the M/S Nile Style or a similar cruise boat. Facilities include a swimming pool, sundeck, gift shop, restaurant and lounge bar

**Sleeper Train:** first-class cabins with shared bathroom facilities.

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### Exclusions

- Transfers to/from airport on arrival and departure day
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended)
- Meals & drinks not mentioned
- Any additional requests
- Transfers to/from airport on arrival and departure day.

## Important Information

### Single Supplement

This price of a single supplement is available to add on at checkout.

### Flights

Flights included are departing Sydney or Melbourne.

For departures from other cities please contact us for a quote, there may be a small surcharge applicable but we will do our best to get you a great fare.

### Visas

Currently, travellers on Australian passports can purchase a Visa on arrival into Egypt. However, the situation can change quickly, so always [check the requirements at smartraveller.gov.au](https://smartraveller.gov.au) to find out what conditions need to be met for your trip. For those travelling on non-Australian passports, contact your relevant authority to find out more.





## Travel Insurance

We recommend Covermore travel insurance. To quote and book, please click [HERE](#).