

# Overseas Adventure Travel<sup>®</sup>

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide<sup>®</sup>



Egypt & the Eternal Nile by Private,  
Classic River-Yacht

2025

# Overseas Adventure Travel<sup>®</sup>

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis  
Chair  
Overseas Adventure Travel

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Nile River, Aswan

## Egypt & the Eternal Nile by Private, Classic River-Yacht Small Group Adventure

**Egypt:** Cairo, Luxor, 5-night Nile River-Yacht cruise, Abu Simbel, Aswan

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

**16 days starting from \$6,295**

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit [www.oattravel.com/ego2025pricing](http://www.oattravel.com/ego2025pricing)

Discover the legacy of ancient Egypt—from the treasures of Tutankhamen to the tranquil enchantment of Aswan. Along with nine nights in historic hotels such as the iconic Winter Palace in Luxor that let you experience some of the romance and glamour of an earlier era, you'll spend 5 nights aboard a privately chartered, **16-passenger dahabeya—the Asiya, Aida, Amunet, or Aton**—and slowly drift along the Nile on a journey back in time to the days of the Pharaohs on this adventure of a lifetime.

### IT'S INCLUDED

- 14 nights accommodation, including 5 nights aboard a privately chartered, 16-passenger *dahabeya*
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 39 meals: 14 breakfasts, 13 lunches, and 12 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner)
- 21 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader who is also an accredited Egyptologist
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- All port charges
- Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next O.A.T. trip

*Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.*

Egypt & the Eternal Nile by Private, Classic River-Yacht



## ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-4	Cairo, Egypt
5-6	Fly to Luxor
7-11	Esna • Embark ship • Nile cruise
12	Disembark yacht • Abu Simbel
13-14	Aswan
15	Fly to Cairo
16	Return to U.S.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Easy

**Pacing:** 6 locations in 15 days with two 1-night stays, including 5 nights aboard a classic private river-yacht; and two internal flights.

**Physical requirements:** You must be able to walk 2-3 miles unassisted and participate in 3-5 hours of physical activities on most days; you will need to access vehicles by ladder without aid; agility is required to board and disembark the yacht.

**Flight time:** Travel time will be 17-20 hours and will most likely have one connection

View all physical requirements at [www.oattravel.com/ego](http://www.oattravel.com/ego)

## EGYPT: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

**Unbeatable Value:** Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

**People-to-People Experiences:** Learn about the age-old methods a local farmer utilizes on the banks of the Nile during our **A Day in the Life** of Besaw Island, and then share a traditional lunch with him and his family. Plus, enjoy a **Home-Hosted Dinner** in Luxor, and take part in the culinary traditions and customs of daily life.

**O.A.T. Exclusives:** Spend 5 nights aboard a **16-passenger dahabeya**, a classic river-yacht. Plus, you'll engage in the **Controversial Topic** of women's rights in Cairo.

## PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

### OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

**Jordan: The King's Highway** from Amman to Petra

**PRE-TRIP:** 5 nights from **\$2,195**

**Alexandria's Glorious Past**

**POST-TRIP:** 5 nights from **\$1,395**

### ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Amman** before your Jordan pre-trip extension from **\$200** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Cairo** before your main adventure from **\$280** per room, per night

# Egypt & the Eternal Nile by Private, Classic River-Yacht

## YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

### BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

#### 5 nights in *Jordan: The King's Highway from Amman to Petra*

**Day 1** Fly to Amman, Jordan

**Day 2** Arrive Amman, Jordan

**Day 3** Amman • Visit the Citadel and Roman Theater

**Day 4** Discover Jerash •  
**Home-Hosted Dinner**

**Day 5** Transfer to Petra via the King's Highway

**Day 6** Explore Petra

**Day 7** Fly to Cairo • Begin main trip

#### **Day 1** Depart U.S.

You depart today on your overnight flight from the U.S. to Cairo, Egypt.

#### **Day 2** Arrive Cairo, Egypt

- Destination: Cairo
- Accommodations: Cairo Marriott Hotel or similar

**Afternoon/Evening:** Upon arrival in Cairo, an O.A.T. representative will meet you and escort you to your hotel.

After settling in, we'll regroup in the lobby and your Trip Experience Leader will lead you and your fellow travelers, including those who just arrived from our *Jordan: The King's Highway from Amman to Petra* pre-trip extension and those who arrived early in Cairo before the main adventure, on an orientation walk around the hotel grounds and surrounding area.

**Dinner:** On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can offer suggestions on where to dine, or you may choose to eat at the hotel's restaurant.

**Evening:** After dinner, you're free to explore on your own or retire to your room to rest up from your flight and prepare for tomorrow's discoveries.

#### **Day 3** Visit Grand Egyptian Museum

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Cairo Marriott Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We'll gather in the hotel with our Trip Experience Leader, who will set the stage for our discoveries in Egypt with a more formal Welcome Briefing. This briefing gives



us the chance to introduce ourselves and get to know the other members of our small group. Perhaps you'll also touch on the history of your accommodations. The Cairo Marriott Hotel is a former royal palace built by Khedive Ismail to accommodate Empress Eugénie of France (wife of Napoleon III) and other dignitaries traveling to Egypt to attend the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. You can still see much of the original artwork and furnishings of the lavish palace in the hotel's reception area and lounges.

Then, we'll journey outside Cairo to the Giza Plateau to visit the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), home to the greatest Pharaonic treasures in the world. The world's largest archaeological museum covering a single civilization, the museum's vast exhibits will lend context to our later discoveries as we trace the history of Egypt from Cheops to Cleopatra. After our guided tour, we'll enjoy lunch at the museum.

**Lunch:** At a restaurant inside the Grand Egyptian Museum.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, enjoy free time to further explore the Grand Egyptian Museum on your own before returning to our hotel in Cairo. You'll have a little time to relax before our Welcome Dinner this evening.

**Dinner:** Tonight, we'll enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

**Evening:** You are free to retire to your room or perhaps purchase some cocktails at the bar with your fellow travelers and talk about the day's discoveries.

#### **Day 4 Visit the Pyramids of Giza •** **Controversial Topic: Women's rights in Egyptian society: the law versus traditions**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Cairo Marriott Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Drive to Giza to behold the Great Pyramids, including the greatest of them all—the 4,500-year-old Great Pyramid of Khufu. The only survivor of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Great Pyramid was built for the Egyptian Pharaoh Khufu (Cheops in Greek) and was the world's tallest man-made structure for more than 4,000 years. We can ponder another mystery for the ages at the Sphinx, enigmatic guardian of the Giza Plateau.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Return to our hotel for the remainder of the afternoon free to relax or do some further exploring independently. Then, we'll join a local woman to discuss the **Controversial Topic** of laws protecting women's rights in Egypt versus the reality of traditional women's roles. Egypt has made progress toward gender equality in recent years. But while many laws have been put in place to protect and strengthen women's rights at home and in the workplace, the reality is more complex. In many local communities, these laws are doing little to change longstanding traditional roles for women in Egyptian society. We will meet a local Egyptian woman who give us an overview of new laws the Egyptian government has put in place to enforce women's rights and how these laws are having little impact in many local communities. She'll share her personal story and tell us

about the obstacles many women still face in communities that are resisting women's independence.

**Dinner:** On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for suggestions.

**Evening:** The remainder of your evening is free for you to take advantage of the hotel's amenities, relax with your travel companions in the lounge, or retire to your room and prepare for tomorrow's flight to Luxor.

## **Day 5 Fly to Luxor • Explore Karnak Temple • Home-Hosted Dinner**

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Winter Palace Hotel or similar

**Activity Note:** Today's activities require an early wakeup call.

**Breakfast:** A breakfast box will be available for travelers at the hotel early this morning.

**Morning:** Early this morning, we'll head to the airport for our flight to Luxor—which will be like a journey back in time from Egypt's current capital, Cairo, to its ancient capital of Thebes. While flying high above the Nile, one gains an appreciation of how the mighty river enabled such a magnificent civilization to develop along its fertile banks—something noted by the ancient Greek historian Herodotus, who called Egypt the "Gift of the Nile."

Modern-day Luxor grew out of the ruins of ancient Thebes. And we'll begin to grasp the scope and grandeur of the monuments and temples along both banks of the Nile at this special locale—Luxor Temple and the Temple of Karnak on the East bank, and the remote Valley of the Kings on the West bank. Upon our arrival in Luxor this morning, we'll explore the Temple of Karnak. With its massive gate

built by Ptolemy III, Karnak is one of the most important ancient sites in all of Egypt. Ancient Egyptians, who believed that their chief deity Amun-Ra first created himself and then everything else, called Karnak *Ipet-Isut*, "the most perfect of places." And perfection was eventually attained at Karnak, which was built over the course of 1,300 years by successive kings and queens, who each added their own tributes to Amun-Ra, replacing or expanding existing monuments in ever more grand styles.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** We'll check in to our historic hotel, situated along the Nile River amid luxuriant tropical gardens and ancient temples. Another of Egypt's most famous hotels, the Winter Palace was constructed by British explorers in the late 19th century to accommodate visiting English nobility. Its guests included Lord Carnarvon and his colleague Howard Carter, who uncovered Tutankhamen's Tomb in 1922—and would inform the world of the remarkable discovery from the steps of the Winter Palace. Other famous guests have included Winston Churchill and Agatha Christie, who wrote *Death on the Nile* here in the late 1930s.

Once settled in, we'll regroup in the lobby of our hotel for one of the highlights of our Egypt adventure: a **Home-Hosted Dinner** with a local family. We'll break up into smaller groups and depart for the home or apartment of our host family, which will be located in the suburb of Awamiya. This is a unique opportunity to learn more about life in the region—so come hungry for your home-cooked meal, and bring plenty of questions for your welcoming hosts.

**Dinner:** Dine in the home of a local family, and learn about life in the legendary city of Luxor from these residents while we watch as they prepare an authentic dinner. Each family has a different background—some of them may



be teachers, bank tellers, or shop owners, for example. Our meal this evening will consist of typical regional dishes—like *mahshi* (eggplant and zucchini), *moussaka* (an eggplant, meat, and potato-based dish), and *tahini* salad (made from toasted, ground sesame)—and the family will sit down with us to savor it. We'll finish off our meal with a traditional dessert like *basbousa*, cake sweetened with a simple syrup, or *knafah*, filo pastry filled with cheese.

**Evening:** The rest of your evening is free to relax at the hotel, or perhaps to head over to the Luxor market, which is about half a mile from our hotel.

## Day 6 Valley of the Kings • Explore Luxor Temple

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Winter Palace Hotel or similar

**Activity Note:** The visit to the Valley of the Kings includes walking over uneven terrain and, depending on which tombs we are allowed to visit, may require navigating up and down some difficult wooden steps inside of the tombs.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We'll depart the hotel in the morning, crossing over to the west bank of the Nile by motorboat, and then traveling by coach to the Valley of the Kings. The Valley of the Kings, situated in a secluded locale in the Theban Hills, is where the great pharaohs were buried in rock-cut tombs and surrounded by all the treasures they would need in the afterlife. Almost all of the sacred burial chambers were plundered over the millennia—with the exception of an obscure young ruler whose reign lasted a mere decade. On the afternoon of November 26, 1922, British archaeologist

Howard Carter made a small hole in a sealed doorway, inserted a candle, and peered inside. Completely untouched, Tutankhamen's burial chambers contained thousands of priceless objects inside, along with a gold coffin containing the mummy of the teenage king.

Upon arrival in the Valley of the Kings, we'll set off on a walking tour, which includes a visit to the tomb of this young pharaoh, followed by a visit to the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, built for Egypt's first known female monarch. Ruling for 20 years in the 15th century B.C., Hatshepsut is also considered one of Egypt's most successful pharaohs.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Return to our hotel, where you'll have the balance of the afternoon free—an ideal opportunity to explore our historic hotel's many links to Carter's great discovery.

Later, we'll explore Luxor Temple, a center of power for Egypt's mighty pharaohs over a nearly 1,500-year period. The temple complex was largely built by Amenhotep III and Ramses II, the greatest and most celebrated pharaoh of the New Kingdom. Many other pharaohs and rulers added to the temple over the centuries. Tutankhamen even contributed some—the only mark left by the boy king who is far more famous for being dead than alive. After exploring the series of statues, halls, columns, and pillars of Luxor Temple, we can turn our gaze to the incredible avenue of sphinxes that begin here and stretch for more than a mile into the distance, all the way to Karnak.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** Your final night in Luxor is free to explore on your own or begin packing for tomorrow's journey to Esna.

## Day 7 Optional hot air balloon ride • Esna & Temple of Khnum • Begin Nile cruise

- Destination: Nile cruise
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Asiya* river-yacht, *Aida* or *Amunet* river-yacht, *Aton* river-yacht

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** You may elect to rise early for an optional balloon ride over the west bank to witness a glorious Egyptian sunrise over the Nile. Then, we'll drive south to Esna, a town on the Nile's western bank. An important stop on the camel-caravan route for centuries, Esna is also home to the grand Temple of Khnum, which we'll visit upon our arrival. Then, we'll board our private river-yacht to begin our Nile River cruise.

**Lunch:** Aboard our yacht.

**Afternoon:** While we're enjoying lunch, our private, classic Nile river-yacht will have already set sail as we begin one of the highlights of our Egypt adventure. To set your expectation for the days ahead, a word about our private 16-passenger *dahabeya*—your accommodations for the next five nights: This is not your typical large river ship, packed with travelers, chugging up and down the Nile (we're content to let those big boats pass us by). Instead, you'll experience a gentler, more gracious era in travel. In fact, the history of the *dahabeya* goes back to the Pharaonic times, and inscriptions of these vessels have been found in the tombs of ancient Egyptian Kings. They take their name from the Arabic word for gold (*dahab*), since the earliest form of this boat was golden colored. As we glide quietly across the Nile's timeless waters, guided by the gentle winds and whims of the currents, our small motorized tender is there to nudge us along when we require assistance. The intimate size of our vessel also allows us to visit ancient

temples at quiet times, and gives us access to the smaller islands and riverside villages that travelers on the big river ships can only dream about. And at night, we'll be far away from the bright lights and lines of the noisy tourist steamers. Quietly moored in secluded locales, we can spend peaceful evenings relaxing on deck, gazing out at the Nile to imagine a time when Cleopatra and Julius Caesar drifted past these very same waters aboard the Egyptian queen's gilded barge.

With a crew of 15 along to provide attentive, personal service to our small group of just 16 travelers, you may feel a bit like a queen or a pharaoh yourself as we begin our romantic journey along the Nile this afternoon. Our first cruise will last approximately four hours, plenty of time to appreciate just how relaxing this form of Nile travel can be while taking in the vistas to either side of the river where life plays out along its banks unchanged for centuries. We'll arrive in Higz, a small village along the Nile's east bank, and take a village walk before watching the sun set over the Nile before returning to our yacht.

**Dinner:** Aboard our yacht.

**Evening:** You are free to relax on deck to admire the night sky or settle into your cabin for the night.

## Day 8 Cruise to Edfu • Discover Edfu Temple

- Destination: Nile cruise
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Asiya* river-yacht, *Aida* or *Amunet* river-yacht, *Aton* river-yacht

**Breakfast:** Aboard our yacht.

**Morning:** After breakfast, we set our course for Edfu. During our scenic 5-hour cruise, perhaps you'll join our Trip Experience Leader for a

discussion on pharaonic life, or maybe try your hand at *senet*, an ancient Egyptian board game that was a favorite pastime of Tutankhamen.

**Lunch:** Aboard our yacht.

**Afternoon:** Arrive at Edfu, a town on the west bank of the Nile that is home to the best-preserved cult temple in Egypt. Here, we'll visit the Temple of Horus, dedicated to the falcon-headed god. After exploring the remarkable hieroglyphs and bas-reliefs of Egypt's second largest temple, we'll cruise well beyond the lights and noise of Edfu to moor for the night at Fauaza, a quiet little village further down the Nile.

**Dinner:** Aboard our yacht.

**Evening:** Free to mingle with your fellow travelers over a drink at the bar, or retire to your cabin for the night.

## **Day 9 Gebel Silsila Temple and Quarries**

### **• A Day in the Life of Besaw Island**

### **• Education for girls in rural Egypt discussion**

- Destination: Nile cruise
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Asiya* river-yacht, *Aida* or *Amunet* river-yacht, *Aton* river-yacht

**Breakfast:** Aboard our yacht.

**Morning:** When we rise this morning, our yacht will have already set sail. So, during our breakfast, we can admire the palm trees, farmland, donkeys, and tranquil scenes of traditional Egyptian life as we slowly cruise farther south along the Nile. We'll then arrive at Besaw Island to begin our **NEW A Day in the Life** discoveries with a local farmer and his family. The ancestors of these local farmers moved to this island after the building of the Aswan High Dam. As irrigation became more regulated and agrarian reform took effect,

Besaw transformed into a viable, agricultural haven, and land previously owned by the wealthy was redistributed among agricultural workers. This 500-strong island community primarily cultivates mangoes, bananas, dates and feed for their livestock. They are noticeably isolated from surrounding areas, as there are no bridges, no modern developments, and electricity only came to the island around 2010. Besaw is seemingly frozen in time, where the pace of life is much like the gentle breeze and long-established traditions are the beating heart of local culture.

Upon arrival at the farmer's property, we'll be welcomed into their home. There, we'll begin with a conversation about education for girls living on the island. As we learned earlier on our journey, Egypt is quite split on the subject of women's rights and the resistance to such progress is significantly greater in rural areas like Besaw. Many residents believe that learning to read and write is sufficient education for girls and that they should begin thinking about marriage in their teenage years. Furthermore, education can be a burden on families because children must travel to the mainland to attend school—meaning parents and elders lose out on the extra domestic help. However, as we get to know our host, we'll come to find out that not all people here have such old-world views on the subject. We'll also have the opportunity to ask any questions we might have about the issue—perhaps you'd like to know how forward-thinking residents are working to change the minds of conservative neighbors, or you might wish to ask about local school curriculums.

Then, we'll stretch our legs with a walk through the village crop fields. In summertime, we'll stroll through dense rows of lush mango plants and banana palm trees—two of the most lucrative commodities grown here—and if we happen to visit in winter, we'll see zucchini,

tomatoes, lettuce, okra, parsley, and other types of produce. We'll also have the chance to observe some of the livestock, such as water buffaloes, cows, sheep, and various poultry. All of this life is sustained, of course, by strategic irrigation methods, which we'll learn about and even have a chance to try our hand at throughout our walk. Depending on the time of year, we may also have the opportunity to seed the land or harvest some of the crops.

**Lunch:** In the farmer's home, featuring traditional dishes like orzo chicken soup, sun-baked bread, fried chicken, or beef stew, followed by a semolina-based dessert.

**Afternoon:** We'll head back to our river-yacht and resume sailing. Then, we'll reach the narrowest stretch of the Nile, an area the ancient Egyptians called *Khenu*, or "the place of rowing." Our destination is Gebel Si lsila, a rocky gorge where high sandstone cliffs descend down to the water's edge. Our small river-yacht will drift alongside the ancient quarries that provided the stones to build almost all of Egypt's great monuments and temples, including Karnak, Luxor, Kom Ombo, and many others. You can be among the few to explore this historic site, and learn about a recent archaeological discovery made here—a massive sacred temple used for four epochs of ancient Egyptian history. Our Trip Experience Leader will shed light on this historical finding, during which we can ask any questions we might have.

**Dinner:** We'll venture ashore for a traditional Egyptian dinner on Gebel Silsila (weather permitting).

**Evening:** We'll then head back to our river-yacht and enjoy the remainder of the night free for our own discoveries.

## **Day 10 Island village visit • Cruise to Kom Ombo**

- Destination: Nile cruise
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Asiya* river-yacht, *Aida* or *Amunet* river-yacht, *Aton* river-yacht

**Breakfast:** Aboard our yacht.

**Morning:** Venture off the yacht to explore Fares Island, visiting the traditional Egyptian village before a stop to see a local craftsman. Then, we'll go back onboard our yacht to begin our cruise to Kom Ombo.

**Lunch:** Aboard our yacht.

**Afternoon:** Arrive at Kom Ombo, a riverside town surrounded by sugar cane fields that is home to Egypt's only double temple. Dramatically situated along a bend on the Nile, the beautiful Graeco-Roman Kom Ombo Temple features one side dedicated to the local crocodile god, Sobek, and the other side dedicated the falcon god, Haroeris. A unique feature of Kom Ombo is a series of engravings thought to be among the world's first representations of medical and surgical instruments. After exploring Kom Ombo, we'll return to our river-yacht and cruise to the nearby town of Daraw.

**Dinner:** Aboard our yacht.

**Evening:** Free to relax with your travel companions on the yacht while we moor for the night in Daraw.

## **Day 11 Visit Daraw livestock market • Cruise to Aswan**

- Destination: Nile cruise
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Asiya* river-yacht, *Aida* or *Amunet* river-yacht, *Aton* river-yacht

**Breakfast:** Aboard our yacht.



**Morning:** Discover what really draws the locals to Daraw—the livestock market. Throughout the year, cows, goats, camels, and other livestock are traded in a bustling weekly market here. Because we are traveling in such a small group, we'll hop aboard pick-up trucks, a more modern form of local transport, and head over to the market or the livestock barns. With herders urging their camels and goats along, and men hawking their produce as they squeeze through the crowds in their *tuk-tuks*, the scene can be dusty, colorful, chaotic—and fun. Then, we'll set off on a cruise to Aswan, our final port-of-call.

**Lunch:** Aboard our yacht.

**Afternoon:** You'll want to be on deck as we drift along this enchanting stretch of the Nile where the desert closes in on the river, tropical islands abound, and lateen-sailed *feluccas* are seen gliding past the ancient ruins.

**Dinner:** Aboard our yacht.

**Evening:** We'll arrive in Aswan and moor for the night at the city's edge, relatively secluded from Aswan's main bustle. You can relax on deck this evening and take in the views of the Nile and Aswan for the final night of our cruise.

## **Day 12 Aswan • Disembark yacht • Travel to Abu Simbel**

- Destination: Abu Simbel
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Seti Abu Simbel Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** Aboard our yacht.

**Morning:** Bid farewell to our captain and crew and travel overland to Abu Simbel for an overnight stay. Upon arrival, we'll explore the ancient relics and structures for which the area is known. We'll see this ancient wonder fully intact, with its huge guardian statues and

elaborate depictions of famous battles on the inner walls of Ramses' Temple. It has been said that this famed king was something of a narcissist—we'll see ample evidence of that here in the sheer number of objects depicting him, including a mammoth statue in which his head appears to support the weight of the entire temple. The massive colossi of Ramses II were an expression of Egypt's might and its dominance over the Nubian kingdom.

When Lake Nasser was created as a result of the construction of the Aswan High Dam, some 100,000 Nubians were displaced. Not only did the High Dam's construction upend the lives of Nubians, but it appeared that the massive temples of Abu Simbel—hewn out of the solid cliff in the 13th century B.C.—were doomed to vanish beneath the rising waters of Lake Nasser. But the entire complex was cut into 1,036 blocks (weighing eleven tons each), and thanks to the labor of 25,000 workers over three years, was moved 200 feet up the cliffs and safely re-established above the new water level.

After exploring the area, we'll check in to our centrally located hotel.

**Lunch:** At our hotel.

**Afternoon:** Following lunch, you'll have free time to relax or venture out on your own. Perhaps after the drive this morning you'd prefer to settle into the hotel and enjoy some tea—or you may wish to consult with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas. Then, we'll continue our discoveries with a short drive back to Abu Simbel, where we'll gain an entirely new perspective of the site during an enchanting sound and light show. The illuminated temples and relics provide a dramatic lens through to which to experience the rich history and heritage before us.

**Dinner:** At our hotel.

**Evening:** Free to relax and enjoy the amenities of our hotel or return to our rooms to begin packing for tomorrow's transfer back to Aswan.

### **Day 13 Transfer to Aswan • Visit High Dam • Explore Aswan's Spice Market**

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Old Cataract Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At our hotel.

**Morning:** Depart Abu Simbel and drive back to Aswan for our two-night stay. Set along an enchanting stretch of the Nile, Aswan is an ancient frontier town where life glides by as gently as the canvas-sailed feluccas that drift past the tropical islands dotting the river's sapphire waters. Along the way, we'll make a stop at the Aswan High Dam, whose 1971 construction created the massive Lake Nasser.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** We'll arrive in Aswan, and check into our hotel.

After some free time to settle in, we'll gather together for a discovery walk through Aswan's bustling spice market. We'll hunt for bargains at a colorful bazaar of aromatic spices, Nubian crafts, embroidered *galabayas* (traditional Egyptian garments), and more, before heading over to a local restaurant for dinner.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** Free to relax, enjoy a drink at the hotel, or perhaps just soak in the history of this legendary city.

### **Day 14 Explore Temples of Philae**

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Old Cataract Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Depart our hotel by bus, and then take a boat to the island temple of Philae, center of the cult of the goddess Isis. Similar to the plight of Abu Simbel, this temple complex was moved in order to save it from the rising waters of Lake Nasser. Our discoveries include the Temple of Isis, with its courtyards flanked by granite lions and walls covered in ancient gods and goddesses; and Trajan's Kiosk, with its 14 majestic stone pillars.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** We'll return to our hotel for a few hours of free time to relax or to explore on your own.

**Dinner:** Enjoy a festive Farewell Dinner tonight. This is a great time to celebrate our Egypt discoveries with the entire group while dining on the traditional Egyptian fare that we've come to know during our adventure.

**Evening:** Free to enjoy time at the hotel, witness life along the Nile, or to begin packing for tomorrow's flight to Cairo.

### **Day 15 Fly to Cairo • Explore the Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan and Al Rifa'i Mosque**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Cairo Marriott Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to the airport for our flight north to Cairo.

**Lunch:** Enjoy a boxed lunch on our bus while we drive into the city to explore two of Cairo's most famous mosques.

**Afternoon:** Visit the Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan and its historic counterpart, the Al Rifa'i Mosque. Standing side by side, the Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan was constructed during the mid-14th century and is one of the largest mosques in the world. The massive Al Rifa'i Mosque, completed in 1912, was built to showcase the modernization of Egypt's capital while embracing the glory years of its Islamic history and features many Mamluk architectural influences. As the burial place of a number of Egyptian royal family members, the Al Rifa'i Mosque is also known as the Royal Mosque.

After, we'll check in to our Cairo hotel, and then have some free time for our last day in Egypt—perhaps to witness the panoramic views of the city from atop Cairo Tower or to do some last-minute shopping before returning home.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** Free to relax at the hotel to compare Egypt memories with your fellow travelers or begin packing for tomorrow's return flights home.

### **Day 16 Return to U.S. or begin trip extension**

• Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to the Cairo airport for your return flight back to the U.S., or begin your post-trip extension to *Alexandria's Glorious Past*.

## **END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION**

### **5 nights in *Alexandria's Glorious Past***

**Day 1** Transfer to Alexandria

**Day 2** Visit Library of Alexandria • Royal Jewelry Museum

**Day 3** Excursion to Rosetta (Rashid)

**Day 4** Catacombs of Kom ash-Shuqqafa • National Museum

**Day 5** Transfer to Cairo

**Day 6** Return to U.S.

## OPTIONAL TOURS

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During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

**Please note:** *Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.*

### Hot Air Balloon Ride

(Day 7 \$150 per person)

Rise early for a hot air balloon ride and view the splendor of the Nile's West Bank and Valley of the Kings with a new sense of wonder. See ancient Luxor from a unique angle as you drift over temples, ancient sites, and sacred ruins (depending on wind direction)—and also over vast sugar cane fields and villages waking up in the early morning sun. **Please note:** *This optional tour is weather permitting.*



## PRE-TRIP

### *Jordan: The King's Highway from Amman to Petra*

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- |  |   |
|--|---|
| » 5 nights accommodation   | » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader         |
| » 14 meals—5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 5 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner) | » All transfers   |
| » 9 small group activities   | » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters |

#### PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Experience another facet of the Middle East's centuries-old culture in Jordan. You'll explore Roman ruins in Amman, stroll ancient city streets in Jerash, and discover the Nabataean "Lost City" of Petra, described in poetry as a "rose-red city half as old as time."*

##### **Day 1 Fly to Amman, Jordan**

You depart today on your overnight flight from the U.S. to Amman, Jordan.

##### **Day 2 Arrive Amman, Jordan**

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Crowne Plaza Amman or similar

**Afternoon:** Upon arrival in Jordan, an O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel in Amman. Then, you will meet your Trip Experience Leader, check in, and receive your room assignment.

After settling in, we'll regroup in the lobby and your Trip Experience Leader will lead you and your fellow travelers, including those who arrived early in Amman before their pre-trip extension, on an orientation walk around your hotel. Then, we'll enjoy a Welcome Drink and dinner at our hotel.

**Dinner:** At a restaurant in our hotel, featuring local cuisine.

**Evening:** After dinner, you're free to linger at the bar, or head to your room to relax after your flight and prepare for tomorrow's discoveries.

##### **Day 3 Amman • Visit the Citadel and Roman Theater**

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Crowne Plaza Amman or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Set off to explore this ancient city by bus and on foot. Amman was once besieged and captured by King David and the Egyptian King Ptolemy, and occupied by the Byzantine Empire and Christian Crusaders. Today, it is a thriving modern metropolis that has taken great care to preserve its historical heritage. We visit Amman's citadel, with its blend of

ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic ruins. After enjoying the views of the Old City, with its 5,000-seat Roman amphitheater and lovely Abu Darwish Mosque, we continue to the older section of downtown Amman. We'll have many opportunities to mingle with the locals as we stroll through places like the "gold souk," named for its concentration of gold jewelry shops selling unique local items.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** We'll continue our discoveries of Amman with a walk in Jabal Amman, a neighborhood near the downtown area that is known for its distinctive historic architecture, followed by a visit to the city's newer sections. We'll return to our hotel after, and you'll have time to relax for a bit or freshen up before dinner.

**Dinner:** Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

**Evening:** After returning from dinner, the rest of your evening is free for your own discoveries.

#### **Day 4 Discover Jerash • Home-Hosted Dinner**

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Crowne Plaza Amman or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We'll drive to Jerash, considered the world's best-preserved and most complete Greco-Roman city, first established as a town in AD 70. Today, it's a sprawling open-air museum of monumental temples, baths, theaters, and lovely Byzantine churches. We'll be greeted by the triple-arched gateway built to honor the arrival of the Emperor Hadrian in AD 129. Next to Hadrian's Arch stands the massive hippodrome, partially reconstructed.

We'll wander through this amazing site and marvel at the Zeus Temple, Oval Plaza, and splendid avenues and plazas lined with graceful colonnades. After our tour, we'll have free time to explore Jerash on our own, a time when you can visit the site's museum, or perhaps attend the gladiator show and chariot race that takes place here (when available).

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Drive back to our hotel in Amman where you can relax or continue exploring on your before we regroup later for our **Home-Hosted Dinner**.

**Dinner:** In the home of a local Jordanian family in Amman. Our dinner will feature traditional Jordanian cuisine.

**Evening:** After our Home-Hosted Dinner, we may linger for a while with our hosts to ask questions and get a personal glimpse of Jordanian life. Once we return from dinner, the remainder of your evening is free. You may wish to retire early to pack and prepare for tomorrow's departure to Petra.

#### **Day 5 Transfer to Petra via the King's Highway**

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Petra Boutique Hotel or similar

**Activity Note:** Today's transfer to Petra on the King's Highway will take a total of 9 and a half hours, with many stops along the way.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, we'll depart Amman and set off for Petra along the King's Highway, which has been an international trade route for the last 5,000 years. The route is scenic, and dotted with picturesque villages and

historic sites mentioned in the Bible. We'll arrive at Mount Nebo, the place where Moses is purported to have gazed upon the Holy Land that he was not meant to reach. It is said that his tomb lies here. From here, we'll enjoy spectacular views across the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea. We'll also see some preserved mosaics uncovered from archaeological digs that date back to the sixth century. Then, we'll depart Mount Nebo and visit a nearby mosaic workshop and showroom to gain insight into this ancient craft before our next stop in Madaba. We'll arrive in Madaba, where we'll take a short walk to St. George's Church. This 19th-century Greek Orthodox Church is home to a treasure trove of early Christianity, including the earliest surviving mosaic map of the Holy Land. The map, which once contained some two million mosaic pieces, dates to about the sixth century.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Continue our transfer to Petra, taking our time to witness the scenic views of the Mujib Valley along the way. We'll also stop for a panoramic view over Wadi Mujib before arriving at our hotel in Petra.

**Dinner:** At our hotel.

**Evening:** You are free to explore on your own, take advantage of the hotel amenities, linger at the bar, or retire to your room to prepare for tomorrow's exploration of Petra.

## **Day 6 Explore Petra**

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Petra Boutique Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Set off for a full-day walking excursion through one of the most beautiful of all ancient ruins—the fabled city of Petra. Reached through a towering narrow canyon, the city is carved into the solid red sandstone cliffs, and features soaring temples, a 3,000-seat amphitheater, houses, banquet halls, churches, and tombs. It is said that Petra's massive Treasury, with its portico and pillars, was the storeroom for the Queen of Sheba's gifts to Solomon.

For more than 2,000 years, the name Petra was just a mysterious sound, a name in dusty documents. Only the local Bedouin people knew of its existence, because they lived in its caves. Converted to Islam and disguised as an Arab, Swiss traveler Johann Ludwig Burckhardt found the lost city in 1812. You'll recognize several views of Petra from the film *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Continue our walking tour of Petra, and spend more time exploring the remarkable ruins with our Trip Experience Leader.

**Dinner:** At our hotel in Petra.

**Evening:** You can explore on your own, relax at the bar, or retire to your room to prepare for tomorrow's flight to Cairo.

## **Day 7 Fly to Cairo • Begin main trip**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We check out of our hotel early this morning fly to Cairo to begin the next leg of our adventure on Day 2 of *Egypt & the Eternal Nile by Private, Classic River-Yacht*.

## POST-TRIP

### Alexandria's Glorious Past

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| » 5 nights accommodation                          | » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader         |
| » 14 meals—5 breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 4 dinners | » All transfers   |
| » 5 small group activities                        | » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters |

#### POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Founded near a Mediterranean fishing village by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, Alexandria rose to fame during Cleopatra's reign, when visitors from across the ancient world came to view the splendor of the grand port city that grew to rival Rome. Witness the spacious boulevards, towering sphinxes, and lavish temples of Egypt's legendary city of Alexandria.*

##### **Day 1 Transfer to Alexandria**

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Helnan Royal Hotel or similar

**Morning:** Transfer from Cairo to Alexandria, with a stop for lunch along the way. Our journey will take us mainly through desert landscapes and past rural farms and plantations.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant en route to Alexandria.

**Afternoon:** We'll arrive in Alexandria and check in to our hotel. You can relax and enjoy some free time before dinner.

**Dinner:** At our hotel's restaurant.

**Evening:** Free to explore the bustling harbor-side area of Alexandria on your own, take advantage of the hotel amenities, or retire to your room to prepare for tomorrow's discoveries.

##### **Day 2 Visit Library of Alexandria • Royal Jewelry Museum**

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Helnan Royal Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Drive to the modern Library of Alexandria, which sits some 400 yards away from the original Bibliotheca Alexandrina. During Cleopatra's time, the library held some 700,000 scrolls (the modern version can accommodate 8 million volumes). Then, we'll drive to the Royal Jewelry Museum. Housed in a palace built in 1805, the museum features



a glittering collection of priceless jewels that belonged to the royal family of the Muhammad Ali dynasty. Among the royal artifacts are precious stones and diamonds, a golden chess set, clocks, watches, ornamental boxes, and diamond-encrusted garden tools.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After returning to our hotel, you'll have some free time to relax or explore on your own.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** After dinner, you're free to explore the city on your own, enjoy a cocktail in the hotel's lounge, or retire to your room.

### **Day 3 Excursion to Rosetta (Rashid)**

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Helnan Royal Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Drive to the fishing village and former port city of Rosetta (now known as Rashid). This is the site where the Rosetta stone—a stele that provided the key to deciphering hieroglyphics and unlocking Egypt's ancient history to the world—was found. Remnants of Rosetta's glory days remain in the many Ottoman-era homes and mosques, but its real fame came in 1799, when French soldiers discovered the famous stone stele that now resides in the British Museum. We'll visit the citadel where the Rosetta stone was found, see where the Nile River meets the Mediterranean, and admire the Islamic architecture along Rosetta's cobblestone street.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll drive back to our hotel. The remainder of the day is free to explore independently, perhaps to take advantage of one of our recommended activities.

**Dinner:** On your own in Alexandria. You can ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations of local restaurants, or dine at the hotel. This might be a good time to try out Alexandria's take on fondue, a secret 7-cheese mixture that is a local favorite.

**Evening:** Free to explore the city on your own, relax at the lounge, or retire to your room to prepare for tomorrow's discoveries.

### **Day 4 Catacombs of Kom ash-Shuqqafa • National Museum**

- Destination: Alexandria
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Helnan Royal Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Drive out to the Catacombs of Kom ash-Shuqqafa, the largest Graeco-Roman necropolis in Egypt. More than 100 feet deep, the three levels of tombs and chambers cut into the bedrock at this site date from the second century BC. Then, our tour continues with a visit to the National Museum, home to some of the many treasures that have been excavated in and around the ancient city.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Drive back to our hotel, where you'll have some time for your own independent explorations.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** Free to explore on your own—perhaps to take in the scene at the Corniche, the busy waterfront area that is central to Alexandrian nightlife. Or, you may wish to begin packing for tomorrow's transfer to Cairo.

## **Day 5 Transfer to Cairo**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Cairo Marriott Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We'll check out of our hotel and begin our transfer to Cairo.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Free in Cairo, perhaps to take one last stroll through the historic city. With plenty of time on your hands, you might wish to check out one of the invigorating local spas, visit the nearby Museum of Islamic Ceramics, or just relax in your room before we regroup later for dinner.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** Free to gather with your fellow travelers for a farewell cocktail in the lounge, or begin packing for your return flight home tomorrow morning.

## **Day 6 Return to U.S.**

- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After breakfast, transfer to the Cairo airport for your return flight home.

## YOUR NILE RIVER-YACHT

### Cruise the Nile aboard a privately-chartered, 16-passenger Egyptian *dahabeya*

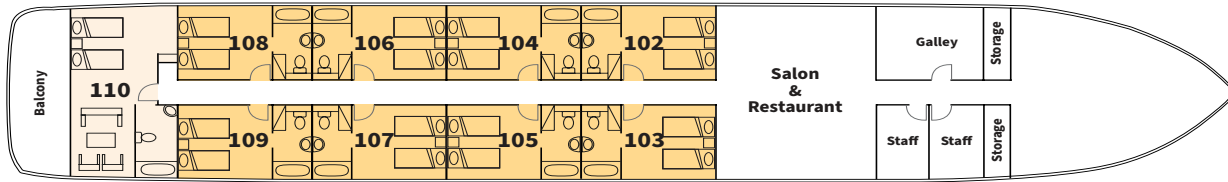
Cruise the timeless waters of the Nile for five nights aboard a *dahabeya*, a classic river-yacht that glides between Luxor and Aswan, exclusive to our group of no more than 16 travelers. The *Asiya*, the *Aida* and her sister ship, the *Amunet*, are among Egypt's first eco-friendly *dahabeyas*. Intimately sized, they are able to access many of the ancient monuments, small islands, and riverside villages that the large, motor-driven river ships can only pass by. Elegant and informal, they pay homage to the 200-year-heritage of *dahabeya* design with a pleasing blend of wooden decks and traditional Egyptian touches with a host of modern amenities.



## SHIPBOARD FEATURES

- **Dining areas:** Most meals are served in the Upper Deck around a large banquet table. Meals may also be served in the salon/bar area. Wine and beer are included with meals, and complimentary tea, coffee, and mineral water are available at any time of the day while onboard.
- **Indoor common areas:** The salon/bar, an air-conditioned area at the bow of the Lower Deck, can be used as a place to meet or relax with a cold or hot beverage, or as an alternative dining area. There is also a small library with board games and satellite TV.
- **Outdoor common areas:** The Upper Deck features a partially shaded Sun Deck area with sun loungers and sofas, two pergolas (one with bar service), and a traditional Arabic seating area with plush cushions.
- **Wireless Internet access:** Connect online in cabins and common areas. **Please note:** *Wireless Internet access may be limited at certain points throughout your cruise.*

## ASIYA RIVER-YACHT



### Cabin Categories

- A Suite** with two twin-size beds and private balcony
- B Standard cabin** with two twin-size beds

O.A.T. uses three different dahabeyas in Egypt, the Asiya, Aida, and Amunet, depending on the trip departure date. This deck plan is typical but ships may vary slightly in size, cabin configurations, and facilities.

**Length:** 156 feet

**Beam:** 24.6 feet

**Registry:** Egypt

**Built:** 2008

**Cabins:** 8 at 150 sq. ft.,  
1 at 245 sq. ft.

**Passenger capacity:** 16

**Crew/Nationality:** 15 crew/  
International

**Group Size:** 16 travelers maximum,  
with 1 Trip Experience Leader

**Stairs, no elevator**

## CABIN FEATURES

- 8 cabins of approximately 150 sq. ft., 1 cabin (suite) at 245 sq. ft.
- Outside-facing cabins with windows, suite cabin with small private balcony
- Two single beds (or one double) with Egyptian cotton bedding
- In-cabin amenities: Individually-controlled air-conditioning, wardrobe, telephone
- In-bathroom amenities: Private bath with shower, wash basin, hair dryer



Cabin with two single beds



# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

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## Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

## Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

## Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking only the main trip, you will need 2 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Jordan:** You will need an additional page for a total of 3.
- **Post-trip extension to Alexandria:** No additional pages are needed for this extension.
- **Both the pre- and the post-trip extension:** If you are taking a pre-trip extension with the Alexandria post-trip, you will need a total of 3 blank passport pages.
- **Stopover in Amsterdam, Munich, Rome, or Nairobi:** You will need to add 2 additional pages to the applicable total listed above.
- **Stopover in Istanbul, London, Madrid, Paris, Addis Ababa, or Dubai:** You will need to add an additional page to the applicable total listed above.

## Visas Required

**We’ll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure.** In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. *This information is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.*

- **Egypt: Visa required.** U.S. citizens will require a visa to enter Egypt; detailed instructions and information will be included in your Visa Packet, as noted above.
- **Jordan (optional pre-trip extension): Visa required.** We recommend that you wait and get your visa in Jordan because you may qualify for a free visa. (And if you don't, you can buy one on arrival.) To do this, we will need information from you no later than 30 days prior to your departure. Please refer to the "Advance Information for Jordan" section of this chapter.
- In order to qualify for the free visa, you must have an arrival transfer with O.A.T., which you receive if you book air with O.A.T. Travelers who booked their own flights will not be eligible for the free visa and will have to buy one on arrival. The fee for U.S. citizens is 40 Jordanian dinars (approximately U.S. \$57) and it must be paid in local currency. There are 24-hour currency exchange services in the airport before you reach the visa counters.
- Keep in mind that all visas are subject to change by the government of Jordan without prior notice. So even if you qualify for the free visa, you should still come prepared to buy one as a Plan B.
- **Turkey (optional stopover only): No visa required.** A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays of up to 90 days.
- **Ethiopia (optional stopover only): Visa required.** U.S. citizens will require a visa for Ethiopia; detailed instructions will be included in your Visa Packet, as noted above.
- **Kenya (optional stopover only): Visa required.** It is important that you get this visa in advance.
- **United Kingdom (optional stopover only):** The United Kingdom requires an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) for entry. This includes entry to England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. You will need an ETA if the UK is your final destination or if you are transiting through a UK airport. The ETA will be valid for 2 years.
- **South Africa (optional stopovers only): No visas required.** A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays of up to 90 days.
- **Europe Stopovers (The Netherlands, Spain, Germany, France, Italy):** Starting in 2025, U.S. citizens will be required to fill out an online European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa-waiver to enter countries in the European Union. There is no confirmed start date for the ETIAS at the time of printing. The ETIAS will be valid for 3 years.

If you are staying longer in any of these countries, you should check with their embassy or consulate for the applicable regulations. If you are not a U.S. citizen, your visa requirements may differ; we recommend contacting the nearest embassy/consulate or calling our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at 1-800-556-9990 to check.

**We'll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure.** In the meantime, we're providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. *This information is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.*

- **Egypt (main trip and post-trip extension): Visa required.** U.S. citizens will require a visa to enter Egypt. For this cruise, the cost of this visa will be included for U.S. citizens **if you have an airport transfer with us in Cairo.** *Airport transfers are included with our international flights provided you arrive in Cairo on the standard date for your tour. If you've made your own flight arrangements, you can purchase an airport transfer from us provided you arrive at the Cairo airport on the standard arrival date. If you arrive in Cairo early—even with flights arranged through us—than you will need to get your own visa, which U.S. citizens can easily do at the Cairo airport for about \$25 per person.*
- **Jordan (pre-trip extension): Visa required.** U.S. citizens will qualify for a free group visa in Jordan. To arrange this, we will need information from you no later than 30 days prior to your departure. Please refer to the “Advance Information for Jordan” section of this chapter. *Please note that if you choose to travel in Jordan on your own before or after your trip with us, you will need to get your own visa—even if we arrange the flights for you.*
- **Turkey (optional stopover): No visa required.** A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays of up to 90 days.
- **Ethiopia (optional stopover only): Visa required.** U.S. citizens will require a visa for Ethiopia; detailed instructions will be included in your Visa Packet, as noted above.
- **Kenya (optional stopover only): Visa required.** It is important that you get this visa in advance.
- **United Arab Emirates (optional stopover only): Visa required.** Currently, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) allows U.S. citizens to get a tourist visa free of charge on arrival in Dubai.
- **United Kingdom (optional stopover only):** The United Kingdom requires an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) for entry. This includes entry to England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. You will need an ETA if the UK is your final destination or if you are transiting through a UK airport. The ETA will be valid for 2 years.
- **South Africa (optional stopovers only): No visas required.** A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays of up to 90 days.
- **Europe Stopovers (The Netherlands, Spain, Germany, France, Italy):** Starting in 2025, U.S. citizens will be required to fill out an online European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa-waiver to enter countries in the European Union. There is no confirmed start date for the ETIAS at the time of printing. The ETIAS will be valid for 3 years.

If you are staying longer in any of these countries, you should check with their embassy or consulate for the applicable regulations. If you are not a U.S. citizen, your visa requirements may differ; we recommend contacting the nearest embassy/consulate or calling our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at 1-800-556-9990 to check.

## Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **[www.pvsinternational.org](http://www.pvsinternational.org)**.

## Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

## Advance Information for Jordan

In order for our local office to prepare for your entry into Jordan they will need the following information *at least three weeks prior to your departure*:

- Full name
- Nationality
- Passport number
- Date of expiration of passport
- Date and place of birth.

If you have not already provided this information to us, you may do so by mail, online via your My Planner, or by calling Traveler Support. If you have already provided this information, then you need not call. Even if you have already provided this information, you may receive an automated mailing requesting a confirmation.

## Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

## **Overseas Taxes & Fees**

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.



## RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

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### Is This Adventure Right for You?

**Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure.** We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

#### PACING

- 6 locations in 15 days with two 1-night stays, including 5 nights aboard a classic private river-yacht; two internal flights of 1-2 hours each; two drives of 4-5 hours

#### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk 2-3 miles unassisted and participate in 3-5 hours of physical activities on most days
- Visit to the Valley of the Kings includes walking over uneven terrain and navigating up and down difficult wooden steps inside some of the tombs
- You will need to access vehicles by ladder without aid; agility is required to board and disembark the yacht as we will dock in areas without any piers; at various sites, you will need to climb up and down steep inclines, with stooping and kneeling to enter and exit some areas
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

#### CLIMATE

- The climate in Egypt varies from cold to extremely hot. During the dry summer months of May/June through September/October, temperatures can easily get into the 90°s and 100°F in Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan. Temperatures between October and May usually range from the 50°s (in the mornings) to the 80°F. Like all desert climates, winter temperatures in Luxor and Aswan can drop dramatically after sunset, so you may wish to bring extra layers for nights, when temperatures can drop as far as the high 40s (°F).

#### TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel over city streets, rugged paths, cobbled streets and unpaved roads in some places

- We travel via air-conditioned motorcoach (no toilet onboard), 16 passenger twin-sailed *dahabeya* (which may require the assistance of our small, motorized tug boat when sailing upstream), motorboat, pick-up truck (with bench seats)

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

- Travel time will be 17–20 hours and will most likely have one connection of 3–4 hours

## ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- We spend 5 nights aboard a privately chartered river-yacht (with small, motorized yacht tender); cabins are air-conditioned and include private bath
- Water levels may require changes in our moorings and the location of our riverside barbeque
- Hotels feature a variety of Western-style amenities and personal services; all hotels include private baths

## Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

## Vaccines Required

### Yellow Fever Vaccine: Documentation Required

**Most travelers on this adventure will NOT need a yellow fever vaccination.** However, travelers on the stopover to Nairobi, Kenya or Addis Ababa, Ethiopia will need to bring EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver.

While the CDC offers a wide range of vaccination and medication suggestions, there is one in particular that we'd like to draw your attention to—the yellow fever vaccine. For some countries, the yellow fever vaccination is a legal entry requirement, like a passport. For other countries, it is a health recommendation to protect you from getting sick. On this adventure, this vaccination is a legal entry requirement for entry for the stopover in Kenya or Ethiopia—but fortunately, authorities will accept a doctor's waiver in place of getting the actual shot. Therefore EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver is a requirement for this trip.

You should discuss the vaccine with your doctor to see if he or she recommends it and if your health allows for it. (He or she can offer a suggestion tailored to your personal medical history.) If you and your doctor decide the vaccination is right for you, then he or she will issue you a Yellow Fever Card, also called an International Certificate of Vaccination. This is your proof of vaccination; you should bring it with you on the trip.

If you and your doctor decide the vaccination isn't right for you, then have your doctor issue an official vaccination waiver. An official waiver is a letter that meets these requirements:

- It must be on business letterhead paper.
- It must be signed by a doctor.
- It must be stamped using the same stamp that the doctor uses on a Yellow Fever Card.
- It must give the medical reason why you cannot get the vaccine, say how high the risk is, and cite an authority. (For example: Mr. Smith cannot receive the yellow fever vaccine due to a high risk of side effects as outlined in the Center for Disease Control's guidelines for people over the age of 65.)

Whether you receive a Yellow Fever Card or an official vaccination waiver, keep it on your person (in your carry-on) so it is easy to find when you arrive or when you cross the border. You may not show anything at all when you cross the border—it all depends on the local official. But if you are asked, you must be able to produce your Yellow Fever Card OR your waiver.

## Other Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no additional required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

## Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- A pain medication. You might need this in the unlikely event of an injury in a location where medical attention would be delayed.
- Motion sickness medicine, if you are susceptible

## Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

## Staying Healthy on Your Trip

### Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

### Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

### Safe Water

Tap water in Egypt and Jordan is not safe to drink. (The only exception is the tap water onboard your ship, which is filtered and safe to drink.)

In countries where the tap water isn’t safe, you should use bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth at any hotel. Bottled water is readily available for purchase throughout Egypt. Inspect each bottle before you buy it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. Carry a bottle in your backpack at all times. Bottled drinks and juices, and hot drinks that have been boiled, are safe to drink. Avoid drinks with ice in them.

## **Food Safety**

We've carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Our local staff can suggest restaurants for the meals you take on your own. To prevent upset stomach, pay attention to food preparation in Egypt, where the tap water is unsafe. Avoid salads and fruit that may have been washed in local water. (Salads and fruit served on board your ship are the exception; as is fruit that you peel yourself, which is usually safe.)

## **Preventing Schistosomiasis**

Schistosomiasis is a disease contracted by swimming or wading in fresh water that is contaminated with tiny organisms called flukes (there is no risk in salt water). These flukes can penetrate unbroken skin, and they are common in untreated river and stream water in Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa. The disease can produce a variety of acute symptoms ranging from fever to joint pain, nausea, and cough. Chronic infections—which can occur even when there have been no acute symptoms—can cause lung, liver, intestinal, or bladder disease.

Although the disease is treatable, it is obviously wisest to avoid it by refraining from swimming, wading, or bathing in any water whose purity is not known. You do not have to worry about becoming infected by minor splashes while boating, but you should restrict your swimming to places known to be uncontaminated, such as hotel or shipboard pools.

## **Don't Push Too Hard**

One of the most important parts of staying healthy on an active trip is to not push yourself too hard if you feel tired. Respect your own limits. Your trip schedule offers some degree of flexibility. If your energy level is low on a certain day, you can sit out a walking tour or a road excursion. Our local staff can tell you about the distance, time, and terrain of our walking excursions in advance, and can usually suggest rewarding alternative activities.

## **Drink Plenty of Liquids**

When you travel, especially in the dry desert climate of Egypt, you can easily become dehydrated without knowing it. If your fluid balance is low, you are more susceptible to fatigue and illness. Air travel will dry you out, so drink liquids and avoid alcohol on your flights. During the trip, don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink. Instead, drink by the clock: drink one to two quarts of water or juice each day, in addition to drinks at meals. If you find yourself tired or unwell, and don't know why, it may be that you simply need to drink more. Note that tea, coffee, and alcoholic beverages are diuretics and do not help maintain hydration.

## **Sun and Heat Exposure**

It can be very hot at mid-day. Be sure to wear your hat and use plenty of sunscreen. Be aware of the signs of heat exposure. Be especially concerned if you feel hot, but are not perspiring.



# MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

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## Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as U.S. dollars, local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They are hard to exchange and not accepted as payment.
- **Bring a number of \$1 and \$5 bills.** In many places in Egypt, you'll be able to pay or tip in U.S. dollars, but you'll need small bills to make exact change.

## Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like [www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter), your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

**Egypt:** Egyptian Pound (LE). U.S. dollars (\$) are also widely accepted in Egypt.

**Jordan:** Jordanian Dinar (JD)

## How to Exchange Money

Since you can pay with U.S. dollars in Egypt, and credit cards are commonly used in Jordan, exchanging money isn't as important on this trip as it would be in other parts of the world. However, if you want to exchange money before your trip, you *might* be able to do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Note that we say "might" because the currencies on this trip can be hard to find due to banking restrictions. You may need to call a few places or do some checking online.

If you would rather exchange money on your trip, the easiest way is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You can also exchange cash at some banks and at exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2004) are best.

All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

## ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

**Egypt:** ATMs are common in cities and towns, but may be hard to find in rural villages or at archeological sites like the Pyramids.

## Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

**Egypt:** Credit cards are widely accepted *except* at open-air stalls (like bazaars), cafes, or taxis—expect these to be cash only.

## Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

## Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader

is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*

- **Shipboard Crew:** We recommend a flat tip of \$10 U.S. per traveler, per day. You'll give this tip once—at the end of your cruise—and it will be pooled among the entire crew. *Please note crew tips can only be in the form of cash.*
- **Housekeeping Staff at Hotels:** We recommend \$1 per room, per night. (This is for hotels only; on the ship Housekeeping are part of crew, so you don't need to tip them separately.)
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides and motorcoach drivers on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours, as well as tips for waitstaff during any included off-ship meals.

Keep in mind that the giving of tips (*baksheesh* in Arabic) is customary in Egypt for many services. In return, you will find many Egyptians eager to provide service, often with genuine friendliness. If you don't want to tip, be sure to politely but firmly decline the service offered. We recommend carrying a supply of Egyptian one-pound notes for small tips.

## AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

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### Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

#### Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner) under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

### Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45–30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

If you are booking your own flights, please keep in mind that it can take **up to 2 hours** to get from the airport to your first hotel in Cairo on the main trip due to heavy traffic. For flights arriving after 8pm on Day 2, this will mean a late arrival to your hotel followed by a full day of discoveries on Day 3. You may want to consider arriving 1 day early to acclimate and relax after a long travel day. For more information, please contact our Traveler Support team at **1-800-221-0814**.

### **Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased**

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com)

### **Optional Tours**

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

### **What You Need to Know**

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.



- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner)).

## **Communicating with Home from Abroad**

### **Cell Phones**

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone is "unlocked", meaning it can accept a local SIM card. If your cell is unlocked, then you will be able to purchase a local SIM for it and then buy minutes with "Pay as You Go" cards, so that you have a local contact number for your friends and family.

### **Calling Apps**

We recommend you use WhatsApp while abroad to communicate home and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

### **Calling Cards & 1-800 Numbers**

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.). One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

## Receiving Calls from Home

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one is to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

## How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

**Egypt:** +20

**Jordan:** +962

## PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

### Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person
Weight restrictions	<b>Varies by international airline.</b> The current industry standard is 50 lbs for checked luggage and 15 lbs for carry-ons.
Size Restrictions	<b>Standard airline size:</b> Checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+ width + depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches
Luggage Type	A sturdy suitcase with wheels and lockable zippers.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
The extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
<b>Luggage rules:</b> Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.	

#### Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

## Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** One duffel bag or suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

## Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

- **Most of your clothing should be for warm, dry climates**—lightweight, loose fitting, and made of 100% cotton. But you'll still want to bring a warmer layer due to temperatures dropping at night in the desert climate (and you may want it during the day on the air-conditioned bus). While most of the accommodations we use are modern and offer heating/air-conditioning, you will experience a traditional Nubian house and a classic *dahabiya* as you sail on the Nile, neither of which are heated.
- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip and walking over some rough, slippery, and sometimes sandy/muddy surfaces. We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or similar supportive sports shoes, particularly for our daytime shore excursions from the *dahabiya*. Aboard ship, you'll be asked to leave your shoes on deck, so please plan to have a secondary pair of "boat shoes" with good traction to wear on board.
- **December and January can be cold and rainy.** Parts of Jordan get snow in winter; other areas get heavy rains. If you are traveling in December or January, keep this in mind.
- **You can buy clothing designed especially for travel.** Look for clothes that offer adequate sun protection. **If you like to hand-wash your clothes,** bring socks and underwear made of material that will dry out overnight.
- **When traveling with a companion,** we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack two outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.

## Dress Codes: Shorts, Headscarves, and other FAQ

Dress on our trip is functional and casual; there are no formal wear evenings. For most travelers a casual dress code in a hot and sunny place means shorts and/or sleeveless tops. But are these culturally acceptable? In Egypt (and Jordan on the optional extension), the answer is yes, but a qualified one.

Generally dress in Egypt and Jordan tends to be conservative and modest. “Modest” means locals of both genders will cover legs and arms, wear higher necklines, and local women may cover their hair with a scarf. Therefore shorts and sleeveless tops are more for tourists. It is OK for you to wear them, as long as you don’t mind that everyone knows you’re a visitor. Also, there are a few subtle guidelines to keep in mind when wearing shorts.

For example, the longer the shorts are, the better (to the knee is best). Sleeveless tops are acceptable, but on women the necklines should still be modest. Lastly, the more religious or more traditional a place is, the less acceptable shorts or sleeveless tops become. So the outfit that is fine for exploring ancient temples may not be considered polite at a mosque, synagogue, or at a Home-Hosted visit. Generally in places of worship or in someone’s home it is better to cover up your shoulders and legs. In fact, when visiting a mosque or synagogue you may be handed a wrap and asked to drape it over you so that you are properly covered; this is common throughout the Middle East. Christian churches also require modest dress, meaning covered shoulders (no sleeveless tops) and shorts/skirts that fall below the knee.

In countries we visit, most Muslim women and Christians choose to cover their hair; some will also cover their face as well. As a visitor, you will not be expected to cover your hair, except perhaps in a mosque, where it may be required for entry. If a mosque requires something specific, there will be a private “women only” entrance where you can rent the appropriate dress, so it is not necessary to bring a scarf. Male travelers may be asked to cover their head in synagogues; if so, there are usually yamakas that you can borrow. Depending on the synagogue, female travelers may also be asked to cover their hair, which you can do with a scarf or a hat. (But this is not usually a requirement.)

Of course, the application of these guidelines varies. You’ll see younger people and city dwellers dressed in a more casual style than their parents or in the small villages. And, naturally, many foreign tourists are not sensitive to the issue of dress at all. But travelers who are thoughtful about the issue will get more respect and a warmer welcome.

## **Suggested Packing Lists**

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

**And don’t forget a reusable water bottle**—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

## **Recommended Clothing**

- ☐ **Shirts:** A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts in a breathable fabric, like cotton or cotton-blend. Polo shirts are more versatile than T-shirts.
- ☐ **Trousers and/or jeans:** Comfortable and loose fitting is best.



- ☐ Walking shorts: Cut long for modesty. See the “Clothing Suggestions” section in this chapter for details.
- ☐ Shoes and socks: We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or supportive sports shoes. Aboard ship, you will be asked to leave your shoes on deck – please plan to bring a secondary pair of “boat shoes” with good traction.
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- ☐ Light sweater, sweatshirt, or jacket (air conditioning can be cold in museums, motor coaches, etc).
- ☐ Underwear and sleepwear
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Scarf: Due to dusty conditions in the desert, previous travelers recommend bringing a scarf to cover your face on dusty paths, especially for travelers with existing respiratory issues.

### Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

For November – March departures, add these items to your list

- ☐ A pair of heavier pair of trousers or light long underwear for evenings on deck
- ☐ Warm sweater or jacket
- ☐ Hat and gloves
- ☐ Warm sleepwear for your stay on the dahabiya

### Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- ☐ Sunglasses and a neck strap
- ☐ Sunscreen, SPF 45 or stronger (essential for the desert)
- ☐ Insect repellent with DEET
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues and/or toilet paper for restrooms

- ☐ Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial “waterless” hand cleanser
- ☐ Cough drops to help with dust
- ☐ Flashlight (useful inside the Pyramids/temples)
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards (your Trip Experience Leader may request a photocopy of your passport to ease the check-in process at hotels)
- ☐ Camera, spare batteries, and memory cards
- ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapters: see “Electricity” for details

### Medicines

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Electrolytes, in case of dehydration
- ☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- ☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- ☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- ☐ Antihistamine: Benadryl
- ☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- ☐ Band-Aids
- ☐ Moleskin foot pads
- ☐ Antibiotic: Neosporin/Bacitracin
- ☐ Optional: An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- ☐ Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- ☐ Optional: Motion sickness medicine if you are susceptible

## Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

### Voltage

Electricity at hotels in Egypt and Jordan is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220/240. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Aboard the ship, cabins are equipped with 110-volt outlets. In your bathroom you will find a dual 110/220-volt outlet; this outlet is only for low-voltage appliances, like electric shavers. (Your bathroom also comes equipped with a hair dryer).

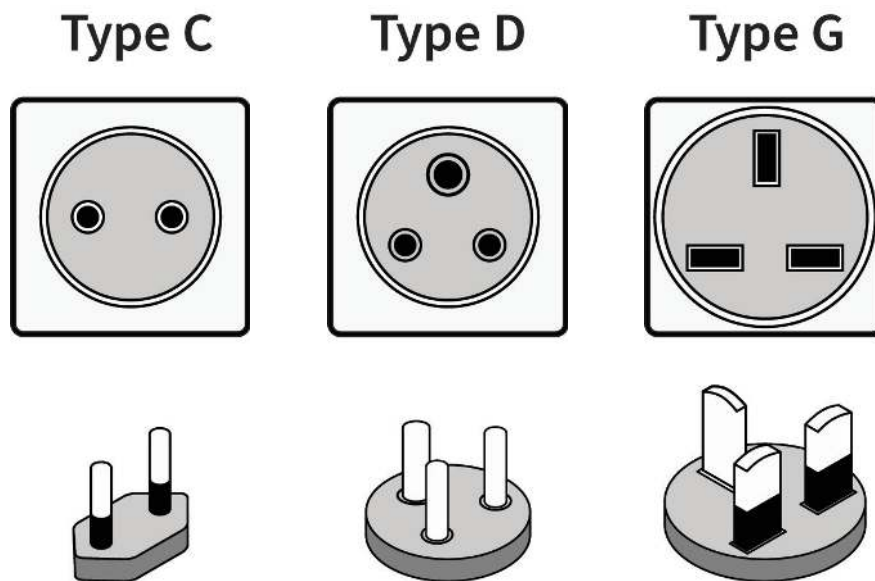
### Plugs

Aboard ship, the plugs are standard American plugs.

In hotels, the shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet—Type A, Type B, and so on. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

**Egypt:** C is the most common plug type.

**Jordan:** C, D, F, and G



#### Availability

**A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays.** Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) should consider a different adventure.

## CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

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**Egypt:** Egypt's climate can be summed up in three words: hot, sunny, and dry. Most of the country is desert; the only cultivated fields are on the banks of the Nile and in the Nile Delta. Temperatures are generally hot, but not always. During the winter it can be chilly in the north (Cairo and Alexandria), or on a foggy morning on the Red Sea. Please pack some warm clothing if you are traveling during these months. Sandstorms, which can occur from March to May, can cause inconveniences with regard to sightseeing.

**Alexandria, Egypt:** Alexandria is located in the lush, warm Nile Delta, an area quite different from the dry, hot southern parts of Egypt. In the summer months, temperatures are rarely extreme, although humidity increases. Winter brings occasional mild storms but severe weather conditions are rare.

**Jordan:** About 90 % of the country is desert with an annual rainfall below 8 inches and falling as low as 1–2 inches in places. Although Jordan is thought of as having a hot climate, the country's climate is as diverse as its scenery. It has four well-defined seasons. In early fall and spring, the weather is ideal, with plenty of warm sun and comfortably cool evenings. During winter, it can be quite chilly with some rain in Amman and the surrounding area. On occasion, nights can dip below the freezing point. Dry, bitter winds often accompany the colder temperatures. Snow is not unheard of, so if you are traveling in winter, keep that in mind.

**NOTE:** If you are taking one of our optional stopovers before or after your OAT adventure, please be aware the climate and temperatures might be different from what you experienced during your tour. To prepare for weather differences and pack appropriate clothing, we recommend the following world weather sites:

- [www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)
- [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)
- [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

### Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

## Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	CAIRO, EGYPT			LUXOR, EGYPT		
	Avg Temp (high-low)	% Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Avg Temp (high-low)	% Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	65 to 49	74 to 50	5	70 to 45	73 to 45	1
FEB	68 to 50	71 to 42	3	74 to 49	64 to 34	--
MAR	73 to 54	72 to 37	2	83 to 58	55 to 26	--
APR	82 to 59	68 to 30	1	93 to 65	45 to 19	--
MAY	89 to 64	71 to 26	1	100 to 71	41 to 17	--
JUN	100 to 68	76 to 27	--	115 to 75	40 to 17	--
JUL	105 to 75	83 to 35	--	104 to 78	42 to 20	--
AUG	92 to 72	85 to 38	--	102 to 77	45 to 23	--
SEP	90 to 69	83 to 38	--	99 to 74	50 to 27	--
OCT	85 to 65	81 to 40	1	93 to 68	56 to 34	1
NOV	75 to 58	77 to 48	1	81 to 56	66 to 45	--
DEC	67 to 51	75 to 53	3	73 to 48	73 to 51	--

MONTH	ASWAN, EGYPT			ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	70 to 52	57 to 29	--	64 to 50	78 to 62	2.0
FEB	74 to 55	45 to 22	--	65 to 50	78 to 59	1.6
MAR	82 to 61	38 to 15	0.1	68 to 53	79 to 59	0.8
APR	92 to 72	30 to 13	0.4	75 to 58	78 to 57	0.4
MAY	99 to 77	26 to 12	0.3	79 to 63	80 to 58	0.4
JUN	115 to 81	26 to 11	--	83 to 69	82 to 60	0.4
JUL	103 to 83	27 to 12	--	84 to 73	82 to 64	0.4
AUG	102 to 82	31 to 14	--	86 to 74	81 to 64	0.4
SEP	99 to 79	34 to 14	--	84 to 72	78 to 61	0.4
OCT	93 to 74	40 to 18	0.2	81 to 66	81 to 62	0.4
NOV	80 to 63	51 to 26	--	74 to 59	79 to 62	1.2
DEC	72 to 55	57 to 32	0.1	67 to 52	79 to 63	2.0



MONTH	AMMAN, JORDAN		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	52 to 39	84 to 64	2.5
FEB	55 to 40	82 to 58	2.5
MAR	61 to 44	79 to 52	1.7
APR	71 to 51	68 to 40	0.7
MAY	80 to 57	60 to 34	0.1
JUN	85 to 63	58 to 34	--
JUL	88 to 67	59 to 36	--
AUG	88 to 67	66 to 38	--
SEP	85 to 64	71 to 39	--
OCT	79 to 58	72 to 41	0.2
NOV	66 to 49	76 to 50	1.1
DEC	56 to 42	85 to 65	1.9



## ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

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### O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

**Please Note:** To ensure you get as much exposure to local culture as possible, you'll enjoy the services of a Trip Experience Leader in Egypt who is a certified Egyptologist. You will also have a different Trip Experience Leader on the Jordan extensions.

### Egyptian Culture

Modern Egypt is so much more than just its ancient heritage. The streets of Cairo, Alexandria, and Luxor are filled with influences from the Greeks, to the Arabs of North Africa, to the Nubians from Sudan. The country has always been a crossroads of trade and culture, allowing it to adapt and become a major player in the Middle East.

These comings and goings of different people were made possible in part by the value Egyptians place on hospitality. This is a keystone in their culture, where being friendly, open, helpful is considered a virtue. (Although a devout Muslim may keep some distance with a person of the opposite gender.) As a visitor this can be to your advantage—people will want to answer questions, give directions, and tell you about their country. They will also ask you about your home and family, sparking a real connection.

But the friendliness can be a bit overwhelming at times, especially as Egyptians tend to stand closer, talk louder, and use more hand gestures than Americans. Egyptians also favor the hard sell, so be prepared to say a firm “no, thank you” on repeat to persistent salesclerks. (Or even ignore them outright by not making eye contact; a pair of dark sunglasses can be helpful.) Bargaining is encouraged, even for things you would expect to have a clear price like taxi fare or a cup of coffee. Initially, these differences may make you feel a bit uncomfortable, but keep in mind that discomfort is not the intent—the locals are just treating you like one of them.

Another major cultural value in Egypt is a person's social connections. Like the old adage says, “it's not what you know, but who you know”. Leveraging their network and extended family is how many Egyptians find the services they need such as a mechanic, doctor, dentist, etc. And it's the same when navigating complex bureaucracy; you start by reaching out to a cousin who is in government or a friend of a friend. This is why social class in Egypt is not just defined by how much wealth you have, but also who your family is and how connected you are.

Fortunately, you'll have the advantage of an instant connection in Egypt: Your Trip Experience Leader, who will be on hand to guide you through all the nuances of Egyptian culture during your adventure.

## **Language**

Egyptian Arabic is considered the standard Arabic dialect, meaning it is widely understood in other Arabic-speaking countries. As a result, Egypt's media—movies, music, and news—has come to dominate the MENA (Middle East and North Africa). The Egyptian accent is so popular on Middle Eastern TV that news anchors in other Arabic-speaking countries will often use it instead of their own local accent.

Of course, this all applies to spoken Arabic. Written Arabic (or literary Arabic) is standard across all nations as it is based on the classical Arabic found in Quran.

## **Religion**

Religion plays an important part of daily life in Egypt and Jordan, so an understanding of the two most prominent religions (Islam and Christianity) will assist you in your discoveries.

### **Islam**

Although you could date the founding of Islam to the 5th century, its roots can be traced back further. Indeed, many believers see Islam's founder, Muhammad, as a continuation of a line of prophets that goes back to Moses and Abraham. Like other regions, the Islamic tradition has both a holy book (the Koran) and a collection of teachings and judgments passed down by scholars over the years (Sharia and Fiqh).

There are two main branches, the Sunni and the Shia, although all Muslims are expected to follow the same basic principles, known as the Five Pillars: to testify to God's greatness, to practice charity, to fast during specific times (such as Ramadan), to make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once, and to pray daily.

Of these five tenets, the one you may notice the most while in Egypt and Jordan is the daily prayers. Practicing Muslims are expected to pray five times daily: at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening. The exact time is listed in the local newspaper each day. The call to prayer, called the adhan, is sung or broadcast from minaret towers to remind the faithful that it's time to come to the mosque.

Friday is the Muslim holy day, so businesses are usually closed. Many companies also close on Saturday, making the weekend Friday and Saturday. Local businesses may also close for religious holidays or festivals. (Again, we suggest checking an online holiday calendar for exact dates.) During Ramadan, many locals will be fasting, limiting the number of restaurants that are open to the public. Technically, Islam also forbids alcohol at all times of year, although this rule is not universally followed and usually does not apply to foreign visitors. However, it may mean that some establishments are "dry" and will not serve it.

## Modest Dress

- **When visiting a synagogue:** Male travelers should cover their head to show respect. (Usually the synagogue will have yamakas—a type of skullcap—on hand for you to borrow.) Depending on the synagogue, female travelers may also be asked to cover their hair, which you can do with a scarf or a hat. Generally speaking, an Orthodox synagogue will have the strictest dress codes: shorts may not be allowed; skirts should be to the knee or longer; shoulders should be covered; and necklines should be modest. As in any place of worship, it is best to turn off your cell phone or put it on silent.
- **When visiting a mosque:** It is polite to be modestly dressed (no bare shoulders, no skirts or shorts above the knee). You may be asked to remove your shoes. In some mosques, female visitors are *not* required to cover their hair, in others you may be asked to do so. Typically a mosque that requires special dress for female visitors will have pieces to lend or rent.
- **When visiting a church:** Many churches in this region require modest dress, meaning covered shoulders and skirts or shorts that fall below the knee.

## Toilets

Although all our accommodations feature Western-style toilets, “Turkish-style” toilets (i.e. squat toilets) are common in public restrooms. For women travelers who are novices at using a squat toilet, a skirt is usually easier to maneuver than pants. We strongly recommend that you bring pocket-size tissues and/or toilet paper as it is not available in public restrooms (unless you tip the bathroom attendant, who will then give you some). Public restrooms at popular tourist sites have been known to charge approximately 10 EGP for use.

## Dining Aboard Your Private, Classic River-Yacht

A selection of wine, beer, and other beverages will be available for purchase onboard your river-yacht. In Egypt, keep in mind there is a special tax on alcohol which can be significant. This means that you will likely experience higher prices than what you would typically find at home. A bottle of wine may start at \$30-40 in Egypt, depending on the vintage.

Travelers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately \$10 per bottle, charged to your cabin account.

Please note that if you bring your own alcohol aboard, it can only be consumed in the dining room, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas.

## Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

## Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

## Egyptian Cuisine

Egyptian food may not be fancy, but it has a simple, fresh, and hearty appeal. Dining out is often a social occasion and may involve many courses, a shared platter of *mezze* (starters/small plates), or an after-dinner coffee or *shisha* water pipe. While in Egypt look for Middle Eastern specialties such as:

- **Mezze:** Small plates that may be served as starters, snacks, or a light meal. These are often served with flat bread, which is used to scoop up the dips and toppings. Common kinds include humus, *tahini* (sesame spread), *tabbouleh* (a mix of bulgur wheat, parsley, garlic, and tomato), *baba ghanoug* (eggplant dip), salads, and *fuul* (slow-cooked fava beans with garlic).
- **Taamia**, also spelled *ta'amiyya*: The Egyptian version of falafel, fried balls of ground beans or chickpeas, served warm wrapped in bread with veggies and toppings.
- **Kofta and kababs:** *Kofta* are spiced lamb meatballs, while *kababs* are skewered chunks of meat (beef or lamb); both are grilled on a fire.



- **Firekh:** Rotisserie-style chicken, usually served by the half. And if you want to try a more unusual poultry dish, look for anything with *hamam* (pigeon) which most people compare in taste to dark meat chicken.
- **Omm ali:** A type of bread pudding topped with cream, nuts, and raisins before being baked in the oven.
- **Drinks:** Strong Turkish-style coffee and sweet mint tea are commonly served. Most Egyptian Muslims refrain from alcohol, but will serve it to visitors or people of other religions. Beer has a long history in Egypt—there is evidence that it was drunk in Pharaonic times—and you can still find locally made brands like Stella Meister, Stella Premium, or Saqqara. For a refreshing non-alcoholic drink, look for stalls with hanging nets filled with fruit. Here you can buy fresh-squeezed juices in a variety of flavors (just don't get ice).

## Jordanian Cuisine

Despite the fact that the country is landlocked, you'll find a lot of Mediterranean flavors here, with herbs, garlic, onion, tomato sauce and lemon all being common. But you'll also see traditional Middle Eastern ingredients like za'atar spice and mint. Plus Jordan is one of the largest producers of olives in the world, and as result both olives and olive oil are ubiquitous in Jordanian cooking. Dishes to try include:

- **Mansaf:** Tender lamb cooked served on a platter with flatbreads and rice. You'll find variations of this dish throughout the region, but Jordan's version is unique because they use a type of dried yogurt (*jameed*) to make a sauce for the meat.
- **Maqluba:** Slow-cooked rice, chicken, potatoes, and vegetables served with a dramatic flair—the pot is flipped upside down over your plate or bowl.
- **Zaarb:** This combination of marinated meat (usually lamb or goat) and veggies cooked over hot coals in the sand comes from the nomadic Bedouin people.
- **Jordanian hummus** (fattet hummus): Like regular hummus but with torn-up pita bread and pine nuts mixed in and then topped with olive oil.
- **Snacks:** Roasted nuts coated in spices, sugar, or salt are popular, as are Middle Eastern staples like roasted chickpeas and falafel (ground chickpeas shaped into balls or patties and deep fried).
- **Kunafa:** This dessert is made of syrup-soaked pastry on top of cheese or cream.
- **Drinks:** Sweet mint tea, thick Turkish-style coffee, and fresh juices (pomegranate, sugar cane, or lemonade) are on offer.

## Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

### Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

### Crafts & Souvenirs

#### Egypt

Traditional souvenirs include gold and silver jewelry, papyrus artwork, cotton goods, tapestries, carpets, leather goods, copperware, brassware, basketry, fine inlaid woodwork, and spices. In many bazaars, you can observe artisans working in the traditional methods, and this is part of the fun of shopping.

Bargaining is extremely commonplace in Egypt, and may someday replace soccer as the national sport. If this is your first experience with it, don't worry—you'll quickly find your own style. On smaller items, start by bidding half the asking price, or even less. The only rule is: If you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Often if you start to walk away, you'll hear a lower price. And remember, whatever price you pay is OK, as long as the item is worth that price to you.

When looking at large items, like carpets or artwork, you'll often be invited to sit down and drink a cup of tea with the merchant and make small talk for awhile. If you are on a group excursion, please remain aware of what other group members are doing. If you are the only one trying to buy something at that time, you might want to return later.

#### Jordan

Common buys in Jordan include Byzantine-style mosaics (still hand-made in Madaba) and bright, multi-colored weavings. Bottled sand art—where colored sand is layered inside a bottle to create a picture—is also popular, especially in Petra.

### U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov) has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

## DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

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### Egypt

#### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 384,345 square miles
- **Capital:** Cairo
- **Languages:** Arabic is the official language; English and French are common second languages.
- **Ethnicity:** Egyptian 99.6%, other 0.4%
- **Location:** Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Libya and the Gaza Strip, and the Red Sea north of Sudan, and includes the Asian Sinai Peninsula
- **Geography:** Egypt is almost entirely desert. Only about 2% of the land is arable. As a result, 99% of the population lives on only 3.5% of the land, mostly along the Nile River Valley and fertile delta.
- **Population:** 106,445,318 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Muslim (predominantly Sunni) 90%, Christian (majority Coptic Orthodox) 10%
- **Time Zone:** Egypt is seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it is noon in D.C., it is 7:00 pm in Egypt.

#### National Holidays: Egypt

Egypt celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Ramadan and Moulid El Nabi. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

1/25 Revolution Day

4/25 Sinai Liberation Day

5/1 Labour Day

7/23 National Day

10/6 Armed Forces Day

#### Egypt: A Brief History

Archaeological records show highly developed civilizations in both Upper and Lower Egypt a far back as 4000 BCE, making this remarkable country 6,000 years old. No other country boasts such a long and uninterrupted history.

In 3200 BCE, King Menes unified Upper and Lower Egypt into a single kingdom, starting a 3,000-year stretch of rule by royal dynasties. Historians further divide these 3,000 years into four main time periods: the Early Dynastic Period (the time of Menes); Old Kingdom (c. 2613–2181 BCE); Middle Kingdom (c. 2055–1786 BCE); and New Kingdom (c. 1567–1085 BCE). The gaps between the kingdoms are called the “intermediate periods”.

The Early Dynastic Period is when ancient Egypt as we know it began to take form. It is during this time that the king, or pharaoh, became identified with the sun god (Ra) and ruled from a capital at Memphis (about 12 miles south of modern Cairo). This is also when the Egyptians began to intentionally mummify their dead, a ritual that was to last thousands of years.

Then in about 2360 BCE, the pharaoh Djoser asked his chief architect and priest Imhotep to design a funerary monument for him; the result was the first of its kind—the Step Pyramid at Saqqara. The age of the pyramids had begun, and with it, the Old Kingdom.

This was a time of prosperity, peace, and above all, pyramids. But the ambitious building programs depleted the royal coffers, as did a 50-year drought that started about 2200 BCE. The pharaoh’s power waned, and the Old Kingdom split apart into warring states ruled by independent nobles. This first intermediate period lasted for about 150 years, during which buildings, roads, and irrigation systems—as well as Egyptian society itself—began to deteriorate.

After a long struggle between the smaller states, the rulers of Thebes (a religious city close to modern Luxor) re-unified Egypt in about 2055 BCE. This was the Middle Kingdom, and for the next two centuries, Egypt once again enjoyed a period of great peace and prosperity.

One of the greatest achievements of the Middle Kingdom was the construction of an enormous irrigation system. Another notable aspect was the introduction of trade and commerce via ships. The pharaohs sent ships up the Nile River to Nubia and across the Mediterranean. They used gold and copper from mines in Sinai to build the colossal Temple of Amen at Karnak.

In 1800 B.C., the Hyksos, a foreign people from the north, laid siege to Egypt. The Egyptians fought on foot, as they had for centuries. The invaders used horses, chariots, and superior bows. It was no match; the Hyksos easily won, ending the Middle Kingdom and ushering in the second intermediate period. For the next several decades, northern Egypt was an occupied land. However, the Egyptians in the south quickly adopted the Hyksos’ new means of warfare and began a successful war of liberation, ushering in the age of the New Kingdom.

Armed with their newly learned techniques of warfare, the rulers of the New Kingdom set out to build an empire through foreign conquest. They were highly successful, conquering lands throughout Asia, North Africa, and the Mediterranean. The New Kingdom is also notable for its cast of characters. All the most famous kings and queens—the female pharaoh Hatshepsut, the heretic king Akhenaton, the beauty Nefertiti, Ramses the Great, and the boy-king Tut—were from this time period. These great rulers were buried in rock-cut tombs in the Valley of the Kings. (Pyramids had gone out of fashion.)

Eventually the New Kingdom declined, leaving Egypt vulnerable to outside forces. In the south the Nubian rulers from Kush (present-day Sudan) took over and ruled for some 100–200 years. In art, the Nubian rulers styled themselves as black pharaohs and created hybrid culture that was part Egyptian and part African. (Even today, many in southern towns like Aswan will call themselves “Nubian”.) The northern parts of Egypt were seized by the Persians (in 525 BCE) and the Greeks under Alexander the Great (in 332 BCE). The famed Queen Cleopatra was a descendant of one of Alexander’s generals, and her death is often cited as the end of ancient Egypt.

For the next 2,000 years, Egypt was conquered and occupied by the Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Turks, and British. The most influential of these occupations came when the Arabs conquered Egypt between 639–641 CE. The Arabs ruled Egypt for several centuries as part of the larger Islamic empire. During this time, the majority of Egyptians converted to Islam, a cultural change that had a lasting impact.

In 1517, Egypt was once again conquered, this time by the Turks. The country became part of the Ottoman Empire, though Turkish sultans granted relative autonomy to local Egyptian rulers. However, by the beginning of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire had fallen into decline, and colonial European powers seized the opportunity to exert their influence in Egypt.

By the time the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, Egypt owed millions of dollars in debt to Britain. In order to erase the debt, Egypt ceded control of its share of the canal to the British. The Egyptian people were strongly critical of this action, and a coup against the monarchy seemed almost inevitable. Meanwhile, the British were concerned that Germany would attempt to capture the canal by force.

To guard against civil unrest and protect its interest in the canal, Britain declared Egypt a British protectorate and sent occupational forces in 1883. For all practical purposes, Egypt became a British colony. The British finally granted independence to Egypt in 1922 but retained control of the canal until 1936.

Throughout the middle part of the last century, Egypt fought a series of brief wars with Israel over the Sinai and the Gaza Strip, including 1967’s Six Day War. In 1979, the two countries signed a monumental peace agreement. Initially the treaty was controversial—so much so that President Anwar Sadat was assassinated—but his successor, Hosni Mubarak found a way to balance diplomatic relations between the Arab League, Israel, and the U.S. This “middle ground” position has allowed Egypt to take a larger role in the Middle East as ally and moderator. In 1991, Egypt was one of the allies that fought against Iraq in the Gulf War; in subsequent years Egypt has acted as a moderator between Israel and the Palestinians.

Sadly, Mubarak’s domestic politics were not nearly as successful as his foreign policy. Charges of political and police corruption, censorship, and suppression of other political parties became more and more common. Perhaps most controversial of all was his use of the “state of emergency” law, which was first enacted in 1967 after the Six-Day War. Citing the assignment of his predecessor and concerns of terrorism, Mubarak brought back the law in 1981—and kept it in place even during his final days in office in 2011.



Fed up with the stringent emergency laws, and angry over corruption and high unemployment, tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 as part of the Arab Spring. Mubarak stepped down after 18 days, new elections were held, and after a period of some uncertainty a new constitution went into effect in 2014.

### **Events That Shaped the 20th Century: The Egyptian Arab Spring**

The Arab Spring refers to a series of pro-democracy protests that began in Tunisia on December 18, 2010, which quickly spread to various Arab nations within the Middle East and Northern Africa. For Egypt, Arab Spring begins first with the death of a young man by the name of Khaled Said. In mid- 2010, Said was dragged out of a cybercafé in Alexandria and beaten to death by two police officers. As with many cases involving police brutality in Egypt, attempts were made by the government to cover up and suppress the incident.

Although it was the death of Muhamad Bouazizi that started the Arab Spring in Tunisia, the death of Khaled Said proved to be a great catalyst for revolution in Egypt. Following his death, a Facebook group known as “We Are All Khaled Said” was created and garnered hundreds of thousands of memberships. Members of the Khaled Facebook page organized its young followers to protest against Said’s death and the unbridled police brutality under President Hosni Mubarak’s regime on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011; a national holiday meant to honor the work of the police force

The protest on January 25<sup>th</sup> brought together various opposing groups within Egyptian society including Islamists, feminists, anti-capitalists, and many others. However, protesters were swiftly met with violence from the police force. After several days of protesting, the first civilian was killed. Arab Spring in Egypt would continue for the next 18 days until on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, when President Hosni Mubarak stepped down, having been in office for nearly 30 years. Thousands of Egyptians took to the streets to rejoice, and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces took power with a pledge to draft a new constitution and establish a new government within 6 months.

Protests and strikes would continue to ensue until free and fair elections in Egypt were finally implemented in June of 2012, when Mohamed Morsi was elected president. His term however, was short lived as his policies were too reminiscent of the Mubarak regime. In 2013, Morsi was pushed out of office by a military coup d’état led by Abdel el-Sisi. New laws and policies were introduced to further cement his regime, revitalizing the wave of oppression felt in the country. To this day, Abdel el-Sisi remains as the current President of Egypt. Although the issues that sparked the Arab Spring still persist in Egypt, there is hope that change inspired by the Arab Spring is still underway.

## **Jordan**

### **Facts, Figures & National Holidays**

- **Area:** 34,495 square miles

- **Capital:** Amman
- **Languages:** Arabic is the official language of Jordan; English is also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Arab 98%, Circassian 1%, Armenian 1%
- **Location:** Jordan bordered by Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria.
- **Geography:** To the east, Jordan is arid desert plateau; to the west, highlands. The Jordan River flows through the Great Rift Valley and separates Jordan and Israel. The highest elevation is Jabal Ram (5,689 feet) and the lowest is the Dead Sea (-1,594 feet).
- **Population:** 8,117,564
- **Religion:** Muslim 97.2% (predominantly Sunni), Christian 2.2% (majority Greek Orthodox, but some Greek and Roman Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Protestant denominations), Buddhist 0.4%, Hindu 0.1%, other 0.1%
- **Time Zone:** Jordan is on Eastern European Time, seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Amman.

## National Holidays: Jordan

In addition to the national holidays listed below, Jordan celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Eid al-Adha and Eid-al-Fitr. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 Labor Day

05/25 Independence Day

12/25 Christmas Day

## Jordan: A Brief History

Today's Jordan was part of Palestine—most of which is now the state of Israel—until the early 20th century. So the country's history as a separate nation didn't really begin until World War I, when the Turks (who ruled the region) allied themselves with the Germans. As a countermeasure the British send T.E. Lawrence (aka Lawrence of Arabia) to join the Great Arab Revolt against the Turks. This movement was led by Sharif Hussein of Mecca, and his sons Abdullah, Faisal and Ali; together with Lawrence they developed brilliant guerrilla warfare tactics that defeated the large Turkish armies with a much smaller force of only a few thousand Arabs.

But in the end Lawrence had made a promise to the Arabs that he couldn't keep—independence once the war was over. With the Allied victory came bitter disappointment when Arab hopes for independence were betrayed, and Britain took Palestine. They renamed it Transjordan and confirmed Sharif's eldest son, Abdullah, as its ruler.

In 1948 Israeli Arabs and Jews went to war, and became far too preoccupied to notice when Transjordan claimed the West Bank and part of Jerusalem as its own, and renamed itself Jordan. In 1953 King Hussein took the throne and Jordan's economy soared, thanks to tourism and generous aid from the U.S. Israel retook the West Bank and Jerusalem during The Six Day War of

1967—Jordan’s tourist trade and much of its agriculture disappeared. Palestinian refugees poured in from the Occupied Territories. Before long, the PLO was threatening King Hussein’s power. An especially violent war ended only when many of the radicals moved to Lebanon.

The 1994 peace treaty between Jordan and Israel dropped economic barriers and increased cooperation on security and water. But Palestinians worried that the treaty did not account for their presence in the region and many felt threatened. Jordan increased ties with Yasser Arafat’s Palestine National Authority and worked toward agreements with them. As King Hussein moved his country toward democracy, he also mended relations—cut during the 1991 Gulf War—with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Hussein’s death in February 1999 left the future uncertain. He had named his eldest son, King Abdullah II, to succeed him just weeks before he died, but the move was controversial because the Constitution requires that both the king’s parents be Arab and Muslim by birth (Abdullah’s mother was a British citizen).

Despite the controversy over his succession, King Abdullah II enjoys support from the international community and most Jordanians, including the influential Palestinian community. Part of the credit for his “approval ratings” goes to his widely popular consort, Queen Rania, whose parents were Palestinian refugees in Kuwait. In the years since his succession, the King has moved his country towards closer relations with Israel, called for democratic changes in the wake of the Arab Spring, and dealt with the war in neighboring Syria by taking in refugees and strengthening the border.

### **Events that Shaped Jordan in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Arab Spring**

In the early 2010s, Arab countries were rocked by a series of anti-government protests that rebelled against corruption and economic stagnation. The phenomenon was started by the Tunisian Revolution in 2011, which led to Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the President of Tunisia for 24 years, being ousted from his position and fleeing to Saudi Arabia, and democracy being established in Tunisia. As the spark of change swept through Arab countries, it became known as the Arab Spring.

In Jordan, the anti-government protests began in January 2011, calling out unemployment, inflation, and governmental corruption. Following the positive aftermath of the Tunisian Revolution and the Egyptian Revolution, the citizens of Jordan hoped to promote political change.

The protests in Jordan began on January 14<sup>th</sup>, the same day Tunisia successfully ousted Ben Ali. The Jordanian protesters came together, demanding the resignation of Samir Rifai, the Prime Minister of Jordan, due to his economic policies. Under Rifai’s policies, Jordan suffered under a 5% increase in inflation over the course of one month, a 12% unemployment rate, a 25% poverty rate, and tax codes that had the poor pay a higher percentage in taxes than the average citizen.

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, protesters went to the streets en masse in the capital city, Amman, and in six other cities. Among the protesters were the Muslim Brotherhood (a transnational Sunni Islamic organization viewed as a terrorist organization by Egypt, Russia, and Saudi Arabia), trade unions, leftist organizations, communist organizations, retired army generals, and the Bedouin tribes (tribes in rural Jordan considered to be the backbone of the Jordanian monarchy). The protesters

demanding King Abdullah II remove Rifai and allow the people to vote in the new Prime Minister. King Abdullah II complied with the first demand, removing Rifai and instating Marouf Suleiman al-Bakhit as Prime Minister.

Within a month, the protests became violent as the reforms promised by Bakhit failed to improve life and government supporters began to clash with the protesters. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2000 protesters faced against pro-government counter-protesters, leading to 62 injured civilians and 58 injured police officers. The protests continued to escalate, culminating in police officers in Amman beating journalists and protesters alike on July 15<sup>th</sup>. Compensation was promised to the injured journalists and the protesters were blamed as having instigated the violence.

Following the violence of July 15<sup>th</sup>, Muslim Brotherhood activists swore to continue their peaceful protests until political reform was established in Jordan.

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, after protesters were confronted by counter-protesters throwing rocks and shooting guns into the air, lawmakers presented a memorandum to the royal palace, calling for Bakhit's resignation. King Abdullah II complied, removing Bakhit and instating Awn Al-Khasawneh, a former judge, as Prime Minister. Al-Khasawneh later resigned, unable to comply to the demands of the protesters.

The protests turned to riots in multiple cities in November, following the death of 21-year-old Najem Azaizeh in police custody. As the trials for protesters arrested in April began, more riots raged across the country, most notably in Amman, Mafraq, and Qatraneh.

The protests came to a sudden halt at the beginning of 2012 when Syria, another country impacted by the Arab Spring, escalated into a civil war, leading to the death of tens of thousands, including civilians and fighters alike.

But the protests returned in September after the new Prime Minister, Fayez Tarawneh instituted a 10% fuel price increase, a devastating hit for a country still recovering from inflation, unemployment, and poverty. Protesters took to the streets and were met by anti-riot forces, who retaliated with tear gas and live rounds. Many protesters, including local activist Mohammed Al Amaara, were arrested, allegedly for criticizing the royal family and inciting a riot. When thousands of Jordanian citizens came out to protest in nine of Jordan's twelve provinces, King Abdullah II responded by dissolving parliament and instating Abdullah Ensour as Prime Minister.

A month later, protests began again, as Prime Minister Ensour announced an increase in fuel price. The people, enraged, responded with violence, blaming King Abdullah II as they burned tires, smashed streetlights, threw rocks at police officers, and, in Mazar, burned down the main court building. The people called for strikes and demanded Ensour's resignation. The violence escalated once more, as in Irbid, demonstrators arrived at a police station. 27-year-old Qais al-Omari was killed in the clash, with a dozen officers and four protesters also injured.

The protests continued into 2013, when a new House of Representatives was elected, though most of the cabinet were notable pro-government political figures. It wasn't until the 2016 elections that a system of proportional representation was implemented, distributing representation to minority parties equal to their electoral support, instead of giving all the representation to the majority party.

## RESOURCES

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### Suggested Reading

#### Egypt

***The Buried: An Archaeology of the Egyptian Revolution*** by Peter Hessler (2019, Travel Narrative/Memoir) When American ex-pat Peter Hessler moved from China to Egypt in 2011, his colleagues at the *New Yorker* joked that it would be a much quieter place...and then the Arab Spring happened. Hessler recounts his experiences through the friendships he made with local people, giving a great insight into modern Egypt.

***The Woman Who Would Be King: Hatshepsut's Rise to Power in Ancient Egypt*** by Kara Cooney (2014, Biography) The engaging story of Hatshepsut, a woman who ruled Egypt's New Kingdom not as queen, but as pharaoh. The author takes great care to parse out what we know as fact and what we can make educated guesses about.

***Temples, Tombs and Hieroglyphs*** by Barbara Mertz (2008, History). An updated classic history of ancient Egypt by the author of the Amelia Peabody mysteries (her pen name is Elizabeth Peters). Mertz's great enthusiasm and scholarship brings ancient Egypt to life for the general reader.

***The Memoirs of Cleopatra*** by Margaret George (1998, Historical Fiction) This epic historical novel answers the question "What would Cleopatra's story look like from her point of view?". Or if you prefer non-fiction, then look for ***Cleopatra: A Life*** (2010) by biographer Stacy Schiff, which works to sort the woman from the myth.

***Justine, Balthazar, Mountolive*** and ***Clea*** by Lawrence Durrell (1957-1960, Fiction). Known collectively as *The Alexandria Quartet*, the author uses WWII Alexandria as a grand backdrop for the grand stories of a group of Europeans living in Egypt. If four books seem too much to start with, try the first of the series, *Justine*.

#### Jordan

***The Cry of the Dove*** by Fadia Faqir (2007, Fiction) Salma has committed the ultimate sin against her Bedouin tribe—she had a child outside of wedlock. Forced to flee to England and leave her child behind, she forges a new life, but soon the longing to see her daughter overwhelms her and she risks it all to go back.

***Married to a Bedouin*** by Marguerite Van Geldermalsen (2006, Memoir) The true story of how a New Zealand-born nurse became the wife of a Bedouin souvenir-seller of the Manaja tribe, and lived with him and their children in a community of 100 families in the ancient caves of Petra in Jordan.

***Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life*** by Queen Noor (2005, Biography) The absorbing, personal story of Jordan's American-born Queen Noor touches upon her husband's efforts at peacemaking, his death, and contemporary Arab-Israeli relations



***The Language of Baklava*** by Diana Abu-Jaber (2005, Food) A foodie memoir about growing up as a Jordanian immigrant in upstate New York, and all the delicious shish kabobs, goat stew, and yes – baklava that the author’s father cooked for the family.

***Seven Pillars of Wisdom*** by T. E. Lawrence (1922, Memoir) Written by the real-life lead character in the movie *Lawrence of Arabia*, these are his vivid descriptions of the battles fought and the territory explored during the Arab Revolt of 1916–18.

## Suggested Films & Videos

### Egypt

***Syriana*** (2006, Drama). An interesting political thriller that tries to portray how oil and politics intersect through multiple story lines, some of which are set in an unnamed country in the Middle East.

***The English Patient*** (1996, Romance) Set during WWII, the film follows the recovery of a man known only as “the English Patient” as he recuperates from severe burns after crashing in the Sahara. Binoche plays Hana, the French-Canadian nurse who tends to Fiennes while he recovers. The patient’s captivating past is eventually uncovered through a series of dramatic flashbacks that occur as he gradually regains his memory after the crash.

***Justine*** (1969, Drama) The year is 1938. The setting is Alexandria. Darley, a young British schoolmaster and poet, makes friends with Justine, the mysterious wife of a Coptic banker. Through their friendship, Darley learns of a plot against the British that aims to arm the Jewish underground in Palestine.

***Caesar and Cleopatra*** (1945, Classic) What happens when the leaders of two of history’s most powerful civilizations come together? Find out in this witty and layered film that investigates the romance that developed between Caesar, emperor of the Rome, and Cleopatra, the last Egyptian pharaoh. For a different take on the life of this famous female pharaoh, watch ***Cleopatra*** (1963) starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton.

***Five Graves to Cairo*** (1943, Classic) British Army Corporal John J. Bramble is retreating from Rommel’s Afrika Korps when he stumbles upon an out-of-the-way hotel Sidi Halfaya, Egypt. In order to avoid capture by the Germans, Bramble assumes the identity of a deceased waiter.

### Jordan

***Jordan: The Royal Tour*** (2002, Documentary) King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein hosts this well-produced tour of Jordan.

***Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*** (1989, Adventure) The third film in the Indiana Jones series as archeologist/adventurer Indy looking for his kidnapped father, the Holy Grail, and a way to outsmart the Nazis on his trail. Not a serious movie in any way, but a lot of fun, and key scenes were filmed at Petra in Jordan.

**Lawrence of Arabia** (1962, Adventure) A sweeping epic about the famous, yet enigmatic, T. E. Lawrence—a British soldier who fought with the Arabs against the Turks in WWI. The score and beautiful cinematography earned this movie a spot on the AFI's (American Film Institute) Top 100 Films list.

## Useful Websites

### Overseas Adventure Travel

[www.oattravel.com](http://www.oattravel.com)

### Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

[www.oattravel.com/faq](http://www.oattravel.com/faq)

### International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

[www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

### Electricity & Plugs

[www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets)

### Foreign Exchange Rates

[www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter)  
[www.oanda.com/converter/classic](http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic)

### ATM Locators

[www.mastercard.com/atm](http://www.mastercard.com/atm)  
[www.visa.com/atmlocator](http://www.visa.com/atmlocator)

### World Weather

[www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)  
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)  
[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

### Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

[www.travlang.com/languages](http://www.travlang.com/languages)

### Packing Tips

[www.travelite.org](http://www.travelite.org)

### U.S. Customs & Border Protection

[www.cbp.gov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/travel)

### Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)

### National Passport Information Center

[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

### Holidays Worldwide

[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)

### History & Culture

[en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

## Useful Apps

### **Flight Stats**

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

### **LoungeBuddy**

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

### **Timeshifter**

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

### **GoogleMaps**

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

### **Triposo**

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

### **Rome2rio**

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

### **Flush or Sit or Squat**

Find a clean toilet anywhere

### **Uber**

Ride sharing around the world

### **Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus**

#### **ATM locations**

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

### **TunnelBear**

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

### **What's App, Skype, or Signal**

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

### **Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel**

Learn dozens of foreign languages

### **Google Translate**

Fast and simple translations

### **XE**

Currency conversions

### **SizeGuide**

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

### **Best Units Converter**

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

### **Tourlina**

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

### **Happy Cow**

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

### **Eatwith**

Dine with locals all over the world

### **Meetup**

Connects you with locals who share your interests

### **Skyview**

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

### **Travello**

Find travel friends on the road

### **ALIX for One**

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

### **TripWhistle**

Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

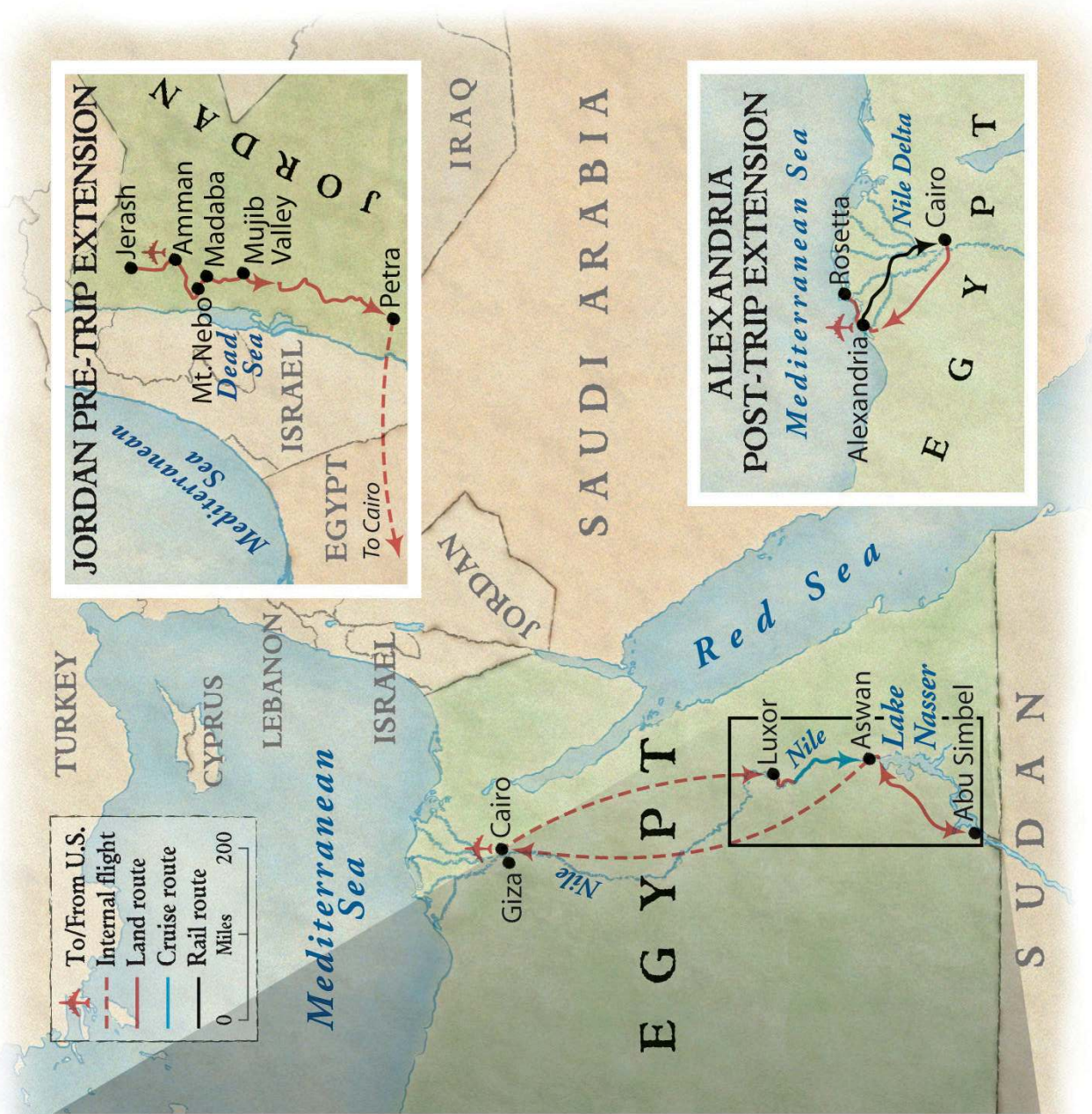
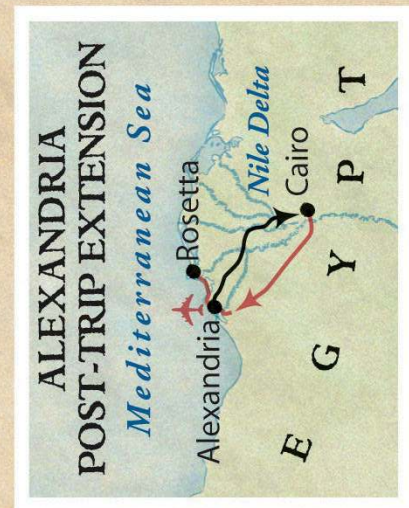
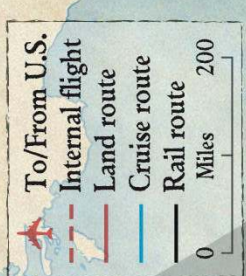
### **GeoSure**

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### **Chirpey**

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8-time travelers from Stevensville, MI



Submitted by Julia Schneider,  
5-time traveler from Pinellas Park, FL



Submitted by Martin Schwartzman,  
30-time traveler from Woodbury, NY



Submitted by Paul Stark, 17-time traveler  
from Edina, MN



Submitted by David Fong, 16-time traveler  
from Foster City, CA



Submitted by Steven dos Remedios,  
23-time traveler from Oakland, CA



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