

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

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

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



Ancient Egypt & the Nile River

2025

# Overseas Adventure Travel®

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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Aswan

## Ancient Egypt & the Nile River

### Small Group Adventure

**Egypt:** Cairo, 7-night Nile cruise, Luxor, Qena, Edfu, Kom Ombo, Aswan, Abu Simbel

Small groups of no more than 25 travelers, guaranteed

**16 days starting from \$5,295**

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit [www.oattravel.com/egy2025pricing](http://www.oattravel.com/egy2025pricing)

From Giza and the necropolis of Sakkara to Karnak Temple and grand monuments immortalizing Queen Hatshepsut, journey to Egypt and experience a land of superlatives. At the heart of this adventure is a seven-night cruise along the mighty Nile. Aboard the privately chartered **75-passenger Nefertiti**, you'll witness Egypt's wonders, millennia of history, and vibrant culture.

### IT'S INCLUDED

- 14 nights accommodation, including 7 nights aboard the privately chartered, 75-passenger *Nefertiti* small ship
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges, unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 35 meals: 14 daily breakfasts, 11 lunches, and 10 dinners—includes 1 Home-Hosted Meal
- 23 guided tours and cultural experiences
- Gratuities for local motorcoach drivers
- All port charges
- Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- Visa fees for entrance to Egypt (if you have an airport transfer with us in Cairo)
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next trip

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



## ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-5	Cairo, Egypt
6	Fly to Luxor • Embark ship
7-9	Luxor • Qena
10	Edfu
11-12	Aswan • Abu Simbel
13	Disembark ship • Fly to Cairo
14-15	Cairo
16	Return to U.S.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Easy

**Pacing:** 15 days, with 7 nights aboard the privately-chartered 75-passenger *Nefertiti*, one four-night hotel stay, and one three-night hotel stay

**Physical requirements:** Walk 1-3 miles unassisted and participate in 2-3 hours of physical activities each day. Expect to travel over city streets, rugged paths, cobble streets, sand, and unpaved roads in some places. Changes in the Nile's tides and water-level depths may require adjustments to your itinerary. The climate in Egypt varies from cold evenings in the winter to extremely hot days and nights during the summer

**Flight time:** Travel time will be 17-20 hours and will most likely have two connections

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

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

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

**People-to-People Experiences:** Enjoy diverse opportunities to share meals with locals, like a **Home-Hosted Dinner** with an upper- or middle-class family in Cairo, where you'll learn about life in the city. Your **A Day in the Life** experience on a riverside farm will serve as an interesting contrast: You'll meet a family of subsistence farmers and help them tend to their fields before returning to your ship via a traditional *felucca* boat.

**O.A.T. Exclusives:** Uncover the authentic side of Egypt during a conversation with a local woman in Cairo about the **Controversial Topic** of the Hijab dilemma for Egyptian women. Plus, visit the Temple of Dendera to explore its ancient Greek and Roman origins.

## PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

### OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

**Jordan:** Amman, Petra & the Dead Sea

**PRE-TRIP:** 7 nights from **\$2,395**

**Israel & Jordan:** Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman

**PRE-TRIP:** 8 nights from **\$2,995**

**Alexandria: History & Romance**

**POST-TRIP:** 4 nights from **\$1,295**

### 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 **Jerusalem** before your Jordan pre-trip extension from **\$300** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Cairo** before your main adventure from **\$500** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Amman** before your

# Ancient Egypt & the Nile River

## YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

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

#### **7 nights in *Jordan: Amman, Petra & the Dead Sea***

**Day 1** Depart U.S.

**Day 2** Amman, Jordan

**Day 3** Explore Amman • Citadel • Archaeology Museum • Roman Theater • Welcome Dinner

**Day 4** Amman • Jerash Archaeological Site

**Day 5** Overland to Petra • Mount Nebo • St. George's Church • Home-Hosted Lunch

**Day 6** Explore Petra

**Day 7** Overland to the Dead Sea

**Day 8** The Dead Sea • Bethany Beyond the Jordan

**Day 9** The Dead Sea • Cairo, Egypt • Join main adventure

OR

#### **8 nights in *Israel & Jordan: Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman***

**Day 1** Depart U.S.

**Day 2** Jerusalem, Israel

**Day 3** Jerusalem • Israel Museum • Machne Yehuda Market

**Day 4** Jerusalem • Mount of Olives • Old City

**Day 5** Masada • The Dead Sea

**Day 6** Jerusalem • Transfer to Petra, Jordan via the King's Highway

**Day 7** Explore Petra

**Day 8** Petra • Amman

**Day 9** Amman • Jerash • Ajloun

**Day 10** Amman • Cairo, Egypt • Join main adventure

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

Depart today on your overnight flight to Cairo, Egypt.



## Day 2 Arrive in Cairo, Egypt

- Destination: Cairo
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Afternoon:** You'll arrive in Cairo this afternoon or evening. Meet your fellow travelers at the hotel, including those who took our *Jordan: Amman, Petra & the Dead Sea* pre-trip extension and those who arrived early in Cairo before the main adventure.

**Dinner:** On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend local dining options. Or you can venture to downtown Cairo on your own, perhaps to try a local favorite like *koshari* (a mix of rice, pasta, lentils, and tomato sauce).

**Evening:** Your evening is on your own.

## Day 3 Explore Cairo • Ancient Egypt conversation • Grand Egyptian Museum

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After a Welcome Briefing by your Trip Experience Leader, we'll drive outside Cairo to the Giza Plateau for a visit to the Grand Egyptian Museum. The museum's collections are arranged chronologically, so you'll feel as though you are walking through time. As we begin our tour together, our Trip Experience Leader will enhance our discoveries during a conversation about Ancient Egypt, describing how the earliest civilization took root on the banks of the Nile, tracing the division of dynasties during the Pharaonic era, and providing insights into the country's best-known kings and queens. Our tour will

feature highlights of each historical period, including the spoils of Tutankhamun's father, King Akhenaten, and his wife Nefertiti.

**Lunch:** On your own at a restaurant in the Grand Egyptian Museum.

**Afternoon:** You'll have some time to explore the museum independently before we return to the hotel by mid-afternoon.

**Dinner:** This evening, we'll enjoy a cocktail followed by a Welcome Dinner at a restaurant in our hotel.

**Evening:** You are free to retire to your room or gather at one of the hotel's bars for a cocktail to go over the discoveries of the day.

## Day 4 Cairo • Explore Memphis & Sakkara • Home-Hosted Dinner

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning we'll drive to Memphis and visit the Statue of Ramses II, an eleven-meter-high likeness of the third Pharaoh that was created 3,200 years ago. Then, we'll drive to Sakkara, a sprawling complex of temples, pyramids, and funerary monuments that was not explored by archaeologists until the mid-19th century, long after the Pyramids at Giza had been extensively cataloged.

Though its monuments span every period of Egyptian history, it is best known as the primary necropolis for the pharaohs and their families during the time of the Old Kingdom. The largest of these monuments is the Step Pyramid of King Zoser, built in the 27th century BC, possibly the first pyramid constructed in

Egypt. More than 200 feet tall, it is the oldest stone structure of its size in the world. The tombs at this site house murals that provide insights into everyday life in ancient Egypt. Be sure to peer into the serdab, a stone structure in front of the pyramid with two eye-holes that invites you to look deeper inside. When you do, you will discover a remarkably life-like painted limestone statue of Zoser looking back at you.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll return to our hotel and you'll have some free time to relax or pursue independent discoveries.

**Dinner:** This evening, we'll make our way to a local family's home for our **Home-Hosted Dinner**. All of the families we'll visit live in Cairo's upper-middle class and middle class suburbs. Your host family will offer unique insights into life in urban Egypt, from how local customs have changed in modern times, to the contemporary issues that plague Cairo (like the traffic we've encountered during our visit).

As you swap stories with your hosts and learn about their lives and culture, you'll also indulge in a hearty homemade meal consisting of traditional dishes. You might have a chance to try *mahshi* (squash or eggplant stuffed with rice) or Egyptian meat goulash. Be sure to save room for a pastry: *konafa* (a crispy cake filled with cheese) and *atayef* (dumplings filled with cheese or nuts) are both popular options. Keep your experience this evening in mind, as you may wish to compare it to your farm house visit in the coming days.

**Evening:** The remainder of the evening is free to do as you'd like.

**Day 5 Cairo • Explore Fatimid Cairo • Sultan Hassan and Al-Rifa'i Mosques • Moez Street • Khan el-Khalili • Controversial Topic: The dilemma of hijab for Egyptian women**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning we'll discover Fatimid Cairo, or Medieval Cairo, beginning with the Sultan Hassan Mosque. This mosque looms large—a grand structure that is widely held to be one of the best examples of early Mamluk architecture in Cairo. Constructed between 1356 and 1363 by Sultan Hassan, the site features a courtyard surrounded by four *iwans* (vaulted halls) and soaring minarets.

Directly facing the Sultan Hassan Mosque is massive Al-Rifa'i—one of Cairo's largest mosques. It houses the tombs of many members of the Egyptian Royal Family, including Egypt's last monarch, King Farouk—whose sister Fawzia was briefly married to the Shah of Iran, reigning as Queen of Iran from 1941 to 1948. We'll spend about an hour exploring the two mosques before heading over to Moez Street—one of the oldest streets in Egypt. Here, we'll stroll past the ancient minarets, domes, and bazaars of this densely-packed neighborhood, which is always bustling with a mix of locals and visitors from around the world. This morning's tour concludes at the fabled Khan el-Khalili bazaar, a maze of narrow alleys teeming with shops of glittering gold, colorful silks, and exotic spices.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant near Khan el-Khalili bazaar.



**Afternoon:** After lunch, we have the opportunity to wander through Khan el-Khalili bazaar. Perhaps you'll practice your bargaining skills as you explore the colorful market stalls selling everything from fragrant roasted nuts, copper tea sets, and vibrant *galabaya* (traditional Egyptian tunic-style clothing), to costume jewelry and leather luggage sets. We'll pause for a moment of quiet here at a café frequented by locals, where you can sample mint tea and even try smoking shisha from a water pipe, a favorite pastime of everyday Egyptians.

Later, we'll gather together and split into two groups of 35 and join one of two female speakers to discuss the **Controversial Topic** of the dilemma of wearing a hijab for Egyptian women. From ancient times to modern day, the role of women in Egyptian society has gradually evolved, and our conversation today will explore the extent of this evolution. We'll glean insight from the personal experiences of either a working wife and mother or a single, working woman. The speakers grew up in Cairo, but their parents hail from rural villages—often leading to a cultural rift between the generations. As such, these women offer wide-ranging perspectives which are sure to cast a personal light on the delicate subject matter.

Egypt is divided on the push for this topic—the northern part of the country being progressive and the southern part less so. This contrast is, of course, most stark between rural and urban areas. There are different reasons why women choose to either put the hijab on or take it off, some of it are family, some are working conditions, some because of where you live and some for other reasons. We'll talk more in-depth specifically about this groundbreaking decision later in our adventure.

**Dinner:** On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend any number of local dining options.

**Evening:** The remainder of the evening free to do as you'd like.

## **Day 6 Cairo • Fly to Luxor • Explore Karnak Temple • Embark ship**

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Fly to Luxor this morning.

**Lunch:** Upon arrival in Luxor, a boxed lunch will be provided as we make our way to Karnak Temple.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll set off to explore Karnak Temple, the huge complex of shrines, built and enlarged over a period of 1,300 years. The ancient Egyptians called the enormous temple complex of Karnak “the most perfect of places,” and today it is one of the most important sites in Egypt as it encompasses a wealth of ancient Egyptian history, primarily between the Twelfth and Twentieth Dynasties. Construction began under Senusret I in the 19th century BC, and subsequent rulers continued to expand the complex with their own shrines, rooms, and monuments.

Your Trip Experience Leader will point out some of the temple's most noteworthy features as you explore together. Its centerpiece is the huge Hypostyle Hall, with its outer walls decorated with battle scenes. Walk through the soaring Hall of Pillars, and imagine how difficult it must have been to construct the 134 columns here without the use of modern machinery. You'll also see the tallest obelisk in Egypt—97 feet tall and weighing approximately 320 tons—which was raised by Queen Hatshepsut

in honor of the god Amun. You'll also have the opportunity to seek out your own discoveries. Be sure to take a close look at the walls—most are covered in hieroglyphics that seem as deep and pronounced today as they might've been when they were first carved 3,000 years ago.

After our visit, we'll transfer to the dock where our privately chartered small ship awaits us. For the next seven nights, the 75-passenger *Nefertiti* will carry us from one iconic site to the next and give us an intimate look at life along the Nile River. Travel this storied waterway as many have over the centuries—from Cleopatra to Agatha Christie—and trace the routes of legendary pharaohs who built their empires along the Nile. As we sail, relax on your private balcony—a feature not often found on other Nile River ships—and keep an eye out for traditional *felucca* boats gliding in the water alongside us, while simple stone homes cozy up to the riverbanks.

Later, gather with your fellow travelers in the lounge for a Welcome Briefing and the first of a series of nightly Port Talks. These informative conversations, led by your Trip Experience Leader, will give you an overview of the following day's itinerary and prepare you for the destination ahead. Shortly afterwards, enjoy a Welcome Cocktail and meet the crew before dinner.

**Dinner:** Gather for a Welcome Dinner onboard in the ship's dining room. In addition to the standard dinner options (appetizer, soup, entrée, and dessert), we'll enjoy a few more special offerings at this celebratory meal. We'll also meet the *Rayes* (chief) of our ship. As a native of Upper Egypt, the *Rayes* will likely be wearing a traditional *galabeya* (floor-length tunic) throughout our voyage. But there's no need for you to match his formal style: The

dress code for dinners onboard is smart casual. However, some travelers choose to wear a day dress or slacks to the Welcome Dinner.

**Evening:** We are docked in Luxor for the evening; you have the freedom to explore the city as you wish.

### **Day 7 Luxor • Optional Luxor Hot-Air Balloon Ride • *A Day in the Life of an Egyptian farm house***

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Activity Note:** As it did for the ancient Egyptians, high water makes for a smoother sail. As such, from mid-November to mid-February, when tides are low, your ship will stay in Luxor for the evening. Travelers who opt to take our hot-air balloon excursion should be prepared to awake very early in the morning. Also, please be aware that limitations on how many ships per hour can pass through the Esna locks could affect the order in which you visit sites during your cruise.

**Early Morning:** As the sun rises over Luxor, so can you—aboard an optional hot-air balloon ride (weather permitting). The sights, sounds, and sheer spectacle of seeing these antiquities from the sky will surely make for a memorable morning.

**Breakfast:** Aboard our ship.

**Morning:** Enjoy our ***NEW A Day in the Life*** experience with a local farming family on the west bank of the Nile River. The east bank, where our ship is currently docked, is Luxor like you've always imagined: home to bustling markets, the elegant Old Winter Palace Hotel, and the grand Luxor Temple. The other side of the Nile, however, seems like a different world entirely. Rural, reedy, and less developed, the west bank is home to subsistence farmers who

are far removed from the Hollywood-ready attractions just across the water. Most of the houses here are modest, made from mud bricks or concrete and surrounded by date-palm, henna, and fruit trees.

After learning about the community from a farmer and local leader whose family has lived on the west bank since the 1960s, we'll board a motorboat bound for one of two farms on the west bank. Upon arrival at our respective farms, we'll sit down with members of the family and spend some time discussing their lives, struggles, taboos, and traditions. If your host is female, you might want to ask her about women's role in a typical Egyptian family, comparing her experience with what we learned about women's rights earlier in our adventure. If children are home, perhaps you'll ask them what school is like. Arranged marriage is common in Egypt; if a married couple is present, you might ask their opinions of the practice.

Then, we'll venture into the field for a hands-on farming activity. The weather and soil here are favorable for a large variety of crops, from potatoes and eggplants to mangoes and tomatoes; depending on the season, we may have the opportunity to harvest some of the produce or seed the land. We might also help feed the animals or use the old millstone to grind wheat into flour. Sun bread (flatbread similar to pita) is a staple of the local diet, and every family in the community either has a stone oven of their own, or has access to a shared oven. We'll help prepare a batch of this whole wheat treat, which will accompany our lunch.

**Lunch:** We'll gather around the table to enjoy a meal with the family. In addition to the bread, we'll enjoy an assortment of seasonal, homemade dishes typical of this region. Our lunch concludes—as most Egyptian meals

do—with a cup of either mint or hibiscus tea. While it may seem counter-intuitive to drink a warm beverage in a hot climate, Egyptians know that it actually tricks the body into cooling off.

**Afternoon:** We'll bid farewell to the family and walk to the Nile's bank, where we'll encounter a local icon: a *felucca*. These traditional wooden-hulled boats with *lateen* (triangular) sails ply the water in profusion here. They're the ideal vessel to take us back to our ship on the east bank. Our leisurely crossing will allow us to take in the views of both sides of the Nile and reflect on the power of this ancient, life-giving river.

We'll re-board our river ship and set sail to Qena. Following a safety briefing aboard ship, our groups will engage in an enlightening conversation on hieroglyphics with your Trip Experience Leader before dinner.

**Dinner:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll enjoy a nightcap at the bar or relax in the lounge.

## **Day 8 Qena • Explore Dendera Temple • Luxor • Explore Luxor Temple**

- Destination: Luxor
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Activity Note:** During low-water season, from mid-November to mid-February, you will travel from Luxor to the Dendera Temple complex via bus.

**Breakfast:** Onboard our ship.

**Morning:** Early this morning, we will awake in Qena—a docking destination few other travel companies offer. Situated north of Luxor,

Qena sits at a bend in the Nile, and is ideally positioned at the intersection of two main roads. Both a market town and a provincial city, Qena is also the perfect base for visiting the nearby Temple of Dendera.

We'll disembark to visit the colorful Temple of Dendera, built by Romans and Greeks and dedicated to Hathor—goddess of maternal and family love. This well-preserved temple complex contains birth houses, a Coptic church, the Hathor Temple, and Hypostyle Hall. One of the celebrated features of the temple is an astronomical ceiling intricately decorated with vultures, winged disks, and the union between Hathor and Horus. Paintings on the ceiling—which are some of the most well-preserved in the ancient world—also represent the two halves of the sky with its northern and southern constellations, the hours of day and night, the sun and moon, and the symbols of the zodiac.

After returning to our ship, the *Nefertiti* will begin cruising back to Luxor.

**Lunch:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy some time at leisure as we continue making our way to Luxor this afternoon. Sit out on your private balcony and drink in the passing vistas of everyday life along the banks of the Nile River. Perhaps you will witness a farmer leading his cattle to graze in the fields, or local women bringing their brightly-colored laundry to the banks for washing. Later, you may also choose to take part in an onboard cooking lesson with our ship's chef to learn how to prepare a local specialty.

Upon arrival in Luxor, we'll disembark and make our way to Luxor Temple. Rising from the east bank of the Nile, this sprawling ancient complex was 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 most celebrated pharaoh of the New Kingdom (his reign lasted some 66 years, up until his death at age 91). Many other pharaohs and rulers added to the temple over the centuries. Tutankhamen even contributed—the only mark left by the boy king.

**Dinner:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Evening:** A belly dancer will come aboard this evening to perform. While practiced throughout the Middle East today, this art form was actually created by Egyptian *ghawazee* (traveling dancers) in the 18th century. Its flowy costumes, clinking castanets, and deliberate movements proved very popular, and it quickly attracted fans from around the world.

## **Day 9 Explore Nile's West Bank • Valley of the Kings • King Tutankhamun's tomb • Esna**

- Destination: Esna
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Breakfast:** Onboard our ship.

**Morning:** This morning, we'll visit the west bank of the Nile, the hilly area that was once the Necropolis of Thebes. It's here that we'll visit the Valley of the Kings, with its many tombs chiseled deep into the cliff sides. Several great leaders, as well as many less important rulers, are buried here, and more tombs are being discovered even today. This is where Howard Carter discovered the treasures of Tutankhamun in 1922, which we will have the opportunity to discover for ourselves. Each tomb is long and narrow, has the king's formal name and title inscribed in it, and each is decorated with his images and statues. Because these tombs were long sealed from the



elements, their walls have retained the vibrant colors and deeply chiseled details that were added by the original builders thousands of years ago.

We'll explore a few of these tombs together with our Trip Experience Leader, and also have time to visit others independently before heading over to the nearby Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, the monument of one of Egypt's greatest rulers, and one of its only female pharaohs. As we leave the fabled valley, we'll stop at the pair of massive statues of Amenophis, known as the Colossi of Memnon. These statues are the only remnant of a temple dedicated to Amenhotep III—later, the Greeks determined that the statues represented their hero, Memnon. We'll return to our ship by motor boat.

**Lunch:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, the afternoon is at your leisure. Our vessel will pass south through the locks of Esna early this evening.

**Dinner:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Evening:** Enjoy onboard entertainment tonight before you settle in for the evening.

## Day 10 Explore Edfu • Explore Kom Ombo

- Destination: Edfu
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Breakfast:** Onboard our ship.

**Morning:** We set sail for Edfu early this morning, arriving shortly after breakfast. Then, we'll disembark and drive to Edfu's Temple of Horus. Dedicated to Horus, the god of the sun and planets, the falcon (Horus's symbol) is prominent in the vivid hieroglyphs and bas-reliefs of the temple. Thirty-eight columns surround the court, and a fine statue of Horus

stands guard over the entry. Every available surface is carved with hieroglyphs describing offerings to the god.

We'll head back to our ship and then sail to our next destination—Kom Ombo.

**Lunch:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Afternoon:** This afternoon, we'll visit the Temple of Kom Ombo. Set on a hill overlooking a bend in the river, the Greco-Roman style temple of Kom Ombo (actually two temples) is unique, as it is Egypt's only double temple dedicated to two deities instead of one—Sobek, the crocodile god, and Horus, the great, winged falcon god. Everything here is doubled and perfectly symmetrical along a central axis—twin entrances, twin courts, and twin colonnades.

**Dinner:** Enjoy an Egyptian dinner buffet onboard ship featuring traditional Egyptian fare—perhaps including *koshari*, a lentil, rice, and pasta dish; *shawarma*, thinly sliced meat roasted on a spit; or *umm ali*, bread pudding with pistachios.

**Evening:** After dinner, take part in a *galabeya* dress party, where you'll have the opportunity to try on one of the traditional embellished robes.

## Day 11 Explore Aswan • Philae Temple

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Breakfast:** Onboard our ship.

**Morning:** Upon arrival in Aswan, we'll set off to visit Philae Temple, which is dedicated to Isis, an enchantress known as the giver of life, the protector of kings, and the mother of god.

Originally located along the Upper Nile, Philae Temple was relocated downstream to Agilika Island in 1970 to protect it from the flooding caused by the construction of the Aswan Low Dam. The temple complex dates from the 26th Dynasty, with additions through the Roman period. It was one of the last temples built in the classical Egyptian style, as well as one of the last tributes to a goddess. Pilgrims would come from all over the Mediterranean to worship Isis here. This temple's towering silhouette has left a lasting impression on visitors for centuries, and its unique architecture makes for a fascinating journey through its jigsaw-like halls.

**Lunch:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Afternoon:** The remainder of the afternoon is yours to relax onboard.

**Dinner:** Onboard in the ship's dining room.

**Evening:** Enjoy the evening as you wish.

## Day 12 Aswan • Explore Abu Simbel

- Destination: Aswan
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *Nefertiti* Small Ship

**Activity Note:** Today features a long drive and a very early wake-up. Our drive to these temples will take about 4 hours along some bumpy roads. After spending 4 hours exploring Abu Simbel and enjoying lunch, we will return to Aswan, a journey of another 4 hours.

If you would like a more relaxed day, you may choose to remain in Aswan and explore on your own. Perhaps you'll opt for a *felucca* ride around the botanical island, or delve into Nubian culture at the Nubian Museum.

**Breakfast:** Onboard our ship.

**Morning:** Enjoy a full-day excursion to Abu Simbel. Along the way, our Trip Experience Leader will shed light on Egypt's Nubian people. An indigenous group of African descent, Nubians have long maintained a language and culture distinct from those of their Arab neighbors. With the construction of the Aswan High and Low Dams, thousands of Nubian people and monuments—including Abu Simbel—were displaced by flooding. Upon arrival, we'll explore the two temples built by Egypt's great Pharaoh Ramses II (Egypt's longest-ruling king) as a tribute to the deities and his favorite wife Nefertari. Originally carved into a mountainside, the temples feature richly detailed stone monuments—including four 65-foot tall statues that flank the entrance to the Great Temple. Unlike other Egyptian temples, which typically feature a linear structure, Abu Simbel's design includes myriad side chambers. The whole interior is packed with bas-reliefs depicting battle scenes, as well as pillars and monuments to the gods.

In an epic feat of modern engineering, the massive temples of Abu Simbel were moved to their present location when construction of the Aswan High Dam in 1960 created Lake Nasser and flooded their original location. This extraordinary operation to save one of the world's greatest treasures took years, and the efforts of an international team of engineers and archaeologists. The temple is now backed by an artificial mountain built to resemble its original setting.

**Lunch:** At a restaurant in Abu Simbel.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll return to Aswan, where you'll have time to refresh before dinner.

**Dinner:** Join your fellow travelers for a Farewell Cocktail followed by a Farewell Dinner as we prepare to say goodbye to our ship and crew.

**Evening:** Enjoy a live Nubian show, which will acquaint us with the traditions of this indigenous group. The highlight is the *tanura* dancer, whose brightly colored, multi-tiered skirts rise higher and higher as she spins to the increasingly intense beat of drums.

### **Day 13 Aswan • Disembark ship • Aswan High Dam • Fly to Cairo**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Breakfast:** Onboard our ship.

**Morning:** Disembark the ship this morning and fly to Cairo. On our way to the airport, we'll stop at the Aswan High Dam, which was built in 1960. The dam forever changed the agricultural rhythms of Egypt. Once subject to devastating Nile floods, Egyptian farmers looked to the Aswan High Dam as a way of improving their ability to control their crops. However the large reservoir it created displaced nearly 10,000 of the indigenous Nubian people who lived in the region and created Egypt's own lost city of Atlantis, as the waters swallowed up both homes and priceless archaeological ruins.

**Lunch:** On your own shortly after arriving at our Cairo hotel—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

**Afternoon:** The balance of the afternoon is yours to delve even deeper into the city's treasures. Perhaps after exploring the various ancient sites from your Nile cruise, you'll feel inspired to return to the Egyptian Museum for a fresh perspective of the artifacts you've seen and discover ones you may have missed the first time.

**Dinner:** On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

### **Day 14 Cairo • Explore Pyramids & Sphinx**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Activity Note:** If the crowd levels at Giza are especially high, we may switch today's activities with Day 15 in order to ensure the best possible visit to this iconic site. Please bear in mind that it is impossible to avoid crowds entirely.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Today features the Giza Plateau, home of Egypt's signature attractions: the Pyramids of Giza. The largest of these three structures is the Great Pyramid of Khufu, probably built more than 2,600 years before the time of Christ. Standing 480 feet tall, this pyramid is the last of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World that still stands. Of course, we'll also see the inscrutable and mysterious Sphinx, carved almost entirely from one piece of limestone. When Napoleon first set eyes on the monument, it was still covered in sand up to its neck. Today it has been excavated, revealing the paws of a resting lion and chambers at its base. Take some time to revel in the history embedded in every block of stone and in the incomprehensible size of each structure standing tall in the desert sand.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** The rest of the day is at your leisure. You may choose to relax at our hotel or walk around Cairo. Perhaps you'll opt for a stroll along the Kasr el Nil Bridge to Gezira Island. The bridge offers fine views of the Nile, and is a popular local hangout as the day winds down.

**Dinner:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. You may want to sample some of Cairo’s famous street food. *Ful* is one of the country’s most popular dishes and, while traditionally served at breakfast, can be found nearly everywhere. Comprised of slow-cooked fava beans with oil and salt, it is quintessential Egyptian comfort food.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you’ll choose to ascend to the top of Cairo Tower for a glimpse of the Pyramids as the sun sets.

### **Day 15 Cairo • Explore Old Cairo • National Museum of Egyptian Civilization**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Cairo Semiramis or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Today’s discoveries feature Old Cairo (also referred to as “Historic Cairo” and “Islamic Cairo”). Officially founded in AD 969, this section of the city characterized by its far-reaching history; no matter which direction you glance in, you’ll be met by preserved remnants of cities long gone including Fustat, al-Askar, and al-Qatta’i. Observe the bustling locals, winding roads, and shops and houses mixed together creating a colorful scene.

We’ll start off at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization. Your Trip Experience leader will guide you through the halls of cultural artifacts, ancient treasures, and even though the Mummies Hall, where Egyptian kings and queens of old can be viewed, preserved for all time in elaborate rituals. You can see artifacts here from the predynastic age,

more than 5,000 years ago, to the Ottoman rule of Egypt into the 19th century, showing you the true scope of Egypt’s past.

Then, we’ll visit Coptic Old Cairo, which served as the Christian bastion of Egypt prior to Islamic rule. Here we’ll discover some of the oldest Christian churches in Egypt, including the Hanging Church, so named because it was built above a Roman fortress, and its nave is suspended over a passageway. We’ll also explore the Church of St. Sergius where, according to the Holy Bible, Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus stayed after their escape to Egypt from King Herod’s wrath. These buildings date back to the third and fourth centuries.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Your afternoon is free to do last-minute shopping or pursue individual interests.

**Dinner:** We’ll reconvene with our group and enjoy a Farewell Dinner at our hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

### **Day 16 Cairo • Return to U.S.**

- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to the airport for your flight back to the U.S. Or begin your optional *Alexandria: History & Romance* post-trip extension.



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

### **4 nights in *Alexandria: History & Romance***

**Day 1** Cairo, Egypt • Explore Alexandria

**Day 2** Alexandria • Explore Catacombs of  
Kom el Shuqafa • National Museum

**Day 3** Alexandria • Explore Library of  
Alexandria • Royal Jewelry Museum

**Day 4** Alexandria • Cairo

**Day 5** Cairo • 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.

### **Luxor Hot-Air Balloon Ride**

(Day 7 \$150 per person)

As the sun rises over Luxor, so can you, riding aboard an optional hot-air balloon. The sights, sounds, and sheer spectacle of seeing these antiquities from the sky will surely make for a memorable morning.

## PRE-TRIP

### Jordan: Amman, Petra & the Dead Sea

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- » 7 nights accommodation
- » 16 meals: 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 3 guided tours with personal headsets: Amman • Jerash • Petra
- » Dedicated services of a local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

#### PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Within Israel's complex society, you'll find the world's three great religions threaded into the fabric of life. From deeply sacred landmarks to completely isolated ancient sites located in the middle of the Judean Desert, there isn't a part of Israel that isn't touched by history and religion. Cross the Israeli boarder and continue your exploration of world religions and legendary monuments in Jordan. Witness relics of an ancient civilization as you hike through the awe-inspiring city of Petra, carved into rose-colored cliff sides. Then find yourself in Amman, the capital and cultural hub of Jordan. A fusion of past and present, Amman features both citadels and coffee shops, mosques and shopping centers, creating the perfect snapshot of Jordanian life.*

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

Depart today on your flight to Jordan.

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

- Destination: Amman
- Accommodations: Grand Hyatt Amman or similar

**Morning/Afternoon:** You'll arrive in Jordan today based on your specific flight arrangements. An O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel. Here, you'll meet your Trip Experience Leader, who will lead you and your fellow travelers on an orientation walk around your hotel, where we'll stay for the next three nights.

**Dinner:** Tonight, you'll have dinner on your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

##### **Day 3 Explore Amman • Citadel • Archaeology Museum • Roman Theater • Welcome Dinner**

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Grand Hyatt Amman or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After a Welcome Briefing with our Trip Experience Leader, set off for a tour of Amman. We'll witness some of Jordan's

most iconic sites as we discover the capital city, known as Jordan's political and cultural hub. Atop Amman's highest hill is its Citadel, dating back to the Neolithic period. This historic site is comprised of several significant ruins, including the Temple of Hercules, the seventh-century Umayyad Palace, and a wall over 5,500 feet long dating back to the Bronze Age. The Archaeological Museum is also located at the Citadel. We'll visit here to gain a perspective on Jordan's history from prehistoric times through the 15th century.

You'll then head to the Roman Theater, built in the second century and now used for award ceremonies, musical performances, and more. After visiting the theater, you'll continue on a walking tour of Amman's downtown and market areas, where you'll encounter daily life in this bustling Jordanian city.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll continue on the walking tour of Amman, before gathering together to head back to the hotel. You'll have some free time before dinner to do what you wish.

**Dinner:** Head to a local restaurant where you'll sit down with your fellow travelers for a Welcome Dinner.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll head to a local café for an after-dinner treat—*knafeh*, a sweet, cheese-filled pastry, is a popular option.

#### **Day 4 Amman • Jerash Archaeological Site**

- Destination: Amman
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Grand Hyatt Amman or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Discover the ruined city of Jerash after breakfast today. Spanning over 6,000 years of Jordanian history, Jerash's popularity as an attraction is second only to Petra in terms of the ever-growing fascination with the ancient Romans' presence in Jordan. Draped in mystery, some of the original cobbled roads still remain in Jerash on which charioteers once rode.

Explore Jerash on your own for the rest of the morning. Perhaps you'll pop into the museum next door to the site, full of artifacts collected from the vast ruins. Or, embrace the atmosphere of antiquity at a gladiator show and chariot race.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy some free time this afternoon.

**Dinner:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Maybe you'll sample *maqluba*, a slowly-simmered chicken, vegetable, potato, and rice dish that is served upside down, so a dome of steaming rice hides its savory contents inside.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll opt to sip herbal tea in one of Amman's local cafés—which are usually open late.

#### **Day 5 Overland to Petra • Mount Nebo • St. George's Church • Home-Hosted Lunch**

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Petra Guest House or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.



**Morning:** We'll bid Amman farewell and set off for Petra via motorcoach. Along the way, we'll stop 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 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. After about an hour of discoveries, we'll depart Mount Nebo and head Madaba and St. George's Church.

St. George's Church, a 19th-century Greek Orthodox Church, is home to a treasure trove of artifacts from 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:** We'll sit down for a **Home-Hosted Lunch** with a Jordanian family in Madaba, where we'll have an opportunity for true cultural exchange while enjoying traditional regional cuisine.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you'll have time to chat with the family about life in Jordan. Then, we'll continue our transfer to Petra, approximately a three-hour drive, 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 late this afternoon.

**Dinner:** On your own. You might try typical Jordanian cuisine such as *mansaf*, a large platter of meat layered with flatbread and rice.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. You may want to find a local *shisha* bar and sip after-dinner coffee with the locals.

## Day 6 Explore Petra

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Petra Guest House or similar

**Activity Note:** Today's walking tour will last approximately 3.5 hours. You must be able to walk over unpaved, rocky terrain, and up and down hill to enter and exit the "Lost City." Horse or camel rides may be available for an additional fee, but good agility and balance are required.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We'll set off for a full-day walking excursion with our Trip Experience Leader through one of the most famous of all ancient ruins—the fabled red 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 inside the archaeological site of Petra.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you may choose to continue exploring Petra's vast ruins for up to four hours, or take the motorcoach back to

the hotel to rest. A later motorcoach will be available to take travelers who opted to stay longer at Petra back to our hotel.

**Dinner:** On your own. Some popular spots include Al-Wadi Restaurant and Petra Butcher Shop & Restaurant, both serving traditional Jordanian food and frequented by locals.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

### Day 7 Overland to the Dead Sea

- Destination: Dead Sea
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Mövenpick Resort & Spa Dead Sea or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, we'll set off for the Dead Sea and our hotel there. The Dead Sea is a natural marvel, almost ten times saltier than the ocean, which means floating in the warm waters are a relaxing experience.

**Lunch:** Around noon, we'll arrive at our hotel, where we'll enjoy lunch.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you can experience what it's like to take a dip in the Dead Sea—as a result of the water's high salt concentration, you'll float effortlessly in the mineral-rich waters of what is considered to be the lowest place on Earth, located 1,300 feet below sea level. If you'd prefer to stay on dry land, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee at a nearby restaurant.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

### Day 8 The Dead Sea • Bethany Beyond the Jordan

- Destination: Dead Sea
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Mövenpick Resort & Spa Dead Sea or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, we'll set out for Bethany Beyond the Jordan. Located just off the banks of the Jordan River, this recently-discovered archaeological site is home to an array of ancient churches and prayer halls. But its most famous highlight is a small pool believed to be site where John the Baptist baptized Jesus of Nazareth. Though the pool itself is inaccessible to visitors, you may be able to dip a finger in the nearby Jordan River.

**Lunch:** At the hotel.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you'll have more free time to enjoy the hotel's amenities, or to take another dip in the waters of the Dead Sea.

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

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

### Day 9 The Dead Sea • Cairo, Egypt • Join main adventure

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Depart for the airport for your flight to Cairo this morning, and join your main adventure today.

## PRE-TRIP

### Israel & Jordan: Jerusalem, Masada & the Dead Sea, Petra & Amman

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

---

- » 8 nights accommodation
- » 14 meals: 8 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 2 dinners
- » 7 guided tours with personal headsets:  
Israel Museum • Old City • Masada • Petra • Amman • Jerash • Ajloun Castle
- » Dedicated services of a local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

#### PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Within Israel's complex society, you'll find the world's three great religions threaded into the fabric of life. From deeply sacred landmarks to completely isolated ancient sites located in the middle of the Judean Desert, there isn't a part of Israel that isn't touched by history and religion. Cross the Israeli boarder and continue your exploration of world religions and legendary monuments in Jordan. Witness relics of an ancient civilization as you hike through the awe-inspiring city of Petra, carved into rose-colored cliff sides. Then find yourself in Amman, the capital and cultural hub of Jordan. A fusion of past and present, Amman features both citadels and coffee shops, mosques and shopping centers, creating the perfect snapshot of Jordanian life.*

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

Depart today on your flight to Israel.

##### **Day 2 Jerusalem, Israel**

- Destination: Jerusalem
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Dan Panorama Jerusalem or similar

**Morning/Afternoon:** Depending on your specific flight arrangements, you'll arrive in Israel either this morning or afternoon.

**Dinner:** Toast to the discoveries ahead with a Welcome Drink before enjoying dinner at the hotel. This is also when you'll join travelers who arrived early in Jerusalem before their pre-trip extension.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

### Day 3 Jerusalem • Israel Museum • Machne Yehuda Market

- Destination: Jerusalem
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Dan Panorama Jerusalem or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After a Welcome Briefing with our Trip Experience Leader, we'll head to the Israel Museum to get a glimpse of the world's oldest biblical documents—the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Israel Museum covers the country's vast history and complex culture with its large collection of artifacts and art pieces—the museum is the largest of its kind in Israel and is one of the top archaeology and art museums in the world. Then, we'll visit Machane Yehuda Market. Located in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Jerusalem, this popular market sells everything from baked goods to textiles. You'll have the opportunity to witness locals bustling between stalls as they do their daily shopping, and vendors proudly displaying their wares.

**Lunch:** On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Many of the restaurants in Machane Yehuda Market use fresh ingredients straight from the market, or *shuk*, itself.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, the rest of the afternoon is at leisure to further immerse yourself in the traditions and history of the city. This may be a good time to visit the Museum for Islamic Art and view its various exhibits.

**Dinner:** Join your fellow travelers this evening for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll choose to visit the Jerusalem Chords Bridge; illuminated at night with an ever-changing pattern of colorful lights.

### Day 4 Jerusalem • Mount of Olives • Old City

- Destination: Jerusalem
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Dan Panorama Jerusalem or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Begin the day with a panoramic view of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The mountain itself is so named for the olive trees that once sprinkled its surface. According to the Bible, it is also the location of Christ's betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane. Now, it is a widely popular spot from which to witness the adjacent Old City of Jerusalem and its historic buildings. Then, explore the Old City on foot with our Trip Experience Leader; you'll see ancient sites like the Western Wall, one of the holiest sites in the world for Jewish people. Also known as the "Wailing Wall," the Western Wall is a sacred place of Jewish prayer and pilgrimage, as it is the only remains of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. We'll also witness the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, theorized to be the site of Christ's burial and resurrection.

**Lunch:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Jerusalem is famous for its many varieties of breads—from traditional pita and challah breads to *beigeleh*, similar to an over-sized bagel, and *lepeska*, a round bread with a crispy crust and fluffy interior.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, enjoy some free time to explore on your own. Later, take a tour of the Tower of David Museum at Jaffa Gate. The medieval tower offers spectacular views of Jerusalem for those who climb to the top, and the museum captures thousands of years of Jerusalem's history.



**Dinner:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Perhaps you will sample *harmin*, a classic Jewish stew of beef, vegetables, beans, potatoes, and barley.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. You may choose to enjoy a nightcap at the hotel bar or take in the dazzling Sound and Light show at the Tower of David.

### Day 5 Masada • The Dead Sea

- Destination: Masada
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Dan Panorama Jerusalem or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Today, we'll ascend to the mighty hilltop fortress of Masada, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, via cable car. Standing high above the Judean Desert, this isolated 20-acre fortification was the site of a siege during the Jewish revolt against the Romans in the eighth century.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant in Masada.

**Afternoon:** After some time in Masada to make your own discoveries, you can experience what it's like to take a dip in the Dead Sea. As a result of the water's high salt concentration, you'll float effortlessly in the mineral-rich waters of what is considered to be the lowest place on Earth, located 1,300 feet below sea level. If you'd prefer to stay on dry land, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee at a nearby restaurant.

**Dinner:** On your own. Perhaps you will try *musakhan*—a popular dish of roasted chicken, onion, and pine nuts served on top of traditional flatbread.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. If you're interested in hearing live music, you may want to visit Kikar Safra, Jerusalem's City Hall, which often hosts cultural events and performers playing the plaza's open-air concrete piano.

### Day 6 Jerusalem • Transfer to Petra, Jordan via the King's Highway

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Petra Guest House or similar

**Activity Note:** For security reasons, it may take anywhere from 45 minutes to two hours to complete your Allenby Bridge border crossing today, so flexibility and patience are key. Your Israeli Trip Experience Leader will not accompany you across; you'll be met by your Jordanian Trip Experience Leader on the other side.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Bid Israel farewell and set off for Jordan this morning. Along the way, participate in an informative conversation with our Israeli Trip Experience Leader on Jordan and the experiences that await us. Once we reach Allenby Bridge, we say our goodbyes to our Israeli Trip Leader. After crossing the bridge into Jordan, we'll switch buses and meet our new Jordanian Trip Experience Leader who will guide our discoveries here.

First, we'll drive to 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 little villages and historic sites mentioned in the Bible. We'll arrive first 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 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.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll depart for Madaba for a visit to St. George's Church. This 19th-century Greek Orthodox Church is home to a treasure trove of artifacts from 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. Then we'll continue 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.

**Dinner:** On your own. You might try typical Jordanian cuisine such as *mansaf*, a large platter of meat layered with flatbread and rice.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. You may want to find a local *shisha* bar and sip after-dinner coffee with the locals.

## Day 7 Explore Petra

- Destination: Petra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Petra Guest House or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Set off for a full-day walking excursion with our Trip Experience Leader through one of the most famous of all ancient ruins—the fabled rose-red 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 inside the archaeological site of Petra.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you may choose to continue exploring Petra's vast ruins or return to the hotel to rest.

**Dinner:** On your own. Some popular spots include Al-Wadi Restaurant and Petra Butcher Shop & Restaurant, both serving traditional Jordanian food and frequented by locals.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

## Day 8 Petra • Amman

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

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to Amman this morning.

**Lunch:** On your own in Amman. Your Trip Experience Leader can offer local restaurant recommendations. You may want to try *falafel*, a combination of ground chickpeas and spices, deep fried. It's one of the most common street food snacks in Jordan.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll reconvene for a walking tour of Amman. We'll witness some of Jordan's most iconic sites as we discover the capital city, known as Jordan's political and cultural hub. Atop Amman's highest hill is its Citadel, dating back to the Neolithic period. This historic site is comprised of several significant ruins, including the Temple of Hercules, the 7th-century Umayyad Palace, and a wall over 5500 feet long dating back to the Bronze Age. The Archaeological Museum is also located at the Citadel. We'll visit here to gain a perspective on Jordan's history from prehistoric times through the 15th century.

Next, we'll stop at the King Abdullah mosque, built in 1989 by the late King Hussein in honor of his father. The only mosque in Amman that openly welcomes non-Muslims, this massive place of worship can hold 7000 men inside, with room for 3000 more in its courtyard. There is a women's area as well, plus a small royal enclosure. Capped with a dome painted in various blues, it is one of Amman's modern landmarks.

**Dinner:** On your own. Maybe you will try rice and minced meat rolled in cabbage leaves—a very distinctive Jordanian dish.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll head to a local cafe for an after-dinner treat—*knafeh*, a sweet, cheese-filled pastry, is a popular option.

### **Day 9 Amman • Jerash • Ajloun**

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

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Discover the ruined city of Jerash today. Spanning over 6,000 years of Jordanian history, Jerash's popularity as an attraction is second only to Petra in terms of the ever-growing fascination with the ancient Romans' presence in Jordan. Draped in mystery, some of the original cobbled roads still remain in Jerash on which charioteers once rode.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant near Jerash.

**Afternoon:** Depart for Ajloun to visit a remarkably preserved castle standing tall overlooking a mountain range. Ajloun Castle, built in the late 1100's as a defense against the Crusaders, has been destroyed over the course of several centuries due to both the ebb and flow of wartime in Jordan and natural disasters. But each time it is rebuilt stronger than it was before, and it continues to be gradually restored to its former glory. The views from the castle's great heights are a highlight for visitors from around the world.

**Dinner:** On your own in Amman—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Maybe you'll sample *maqluba*, a slowly-simmered chicken, vegetable, potato, and rice dish that is served upside down, so a dome of steaming rice hides its savory contents inside.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll opt to sip herbal tea in one of Amman's local cafés—which are usually open late.

### **Day 10 Amman • Cairo, Egypt • Join main adventure**

- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Depart for the airport for your flight to Cairo this morning, and join your *Ancient Egypt & the Nile River* adventure today.

## POST-TRIP

### Alexandria: History & Romance

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- » 4 nights accommodation
- » 11 meals: 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 4 guided tours with personal headsets: Kom el Shuqafa catacombs • National Museum • Royal Jewelry Museum • Library of Alexandria
- » Dedicated services of a local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

#### POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Extend your explorations in Egypt with three nights in Alexandria and an additional night in Cairo. Most of Egypt has a storied past, but the stories from Alexandria are perhaps the most notable. Named for Alexander the Great, this city is where the Rosetta Stone was found and consequently why we understand as much as we do about ancient cultures. It's also the second largest city in Egypt and was once home to the Pharos lighthouse, the world's original lighthouse and one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. As a Mediterranean port, Alexandria has always served as an access point to the Hellenic region and still does to this day. This extension will give you deeper insights into the long history of Egypt.*

##### **Day 1 Cairo, Egypt • Explore Alexandria**

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

**Morning:** Bid farewell to those travelers not continuing on this trip extension and transfer to Alexandria, a 2,300-year old city founded by Alexander the Great after his armies drove the Persian occupiers from Egypt. The Hellenic conqueror intended his new city to be the link between his Macedonian homelands and the fertile Nile Valley. While Alexander's empire quickly splintered after his death, Alexandria has long fulfilled its role as Egypt's window to the Mediterranean.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant in Alexandria.

**Afternoon:** Free to make your own discoveries in Alexandria.

**Dinner:** At our hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.



## Day 2 Alexandria • Explore Catacombs of Kom el Shuqafa • National Museum

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

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, visit the Catacombs of Kom el Shuqafa, an archaeological site housing a series of tombs that's considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Middle Ages. Then, we head to the National Museum, a repository of nearly 2,000 ancient artifacts that combine to tell the story of Alexandria and ancient Egypt. We'll witness pieces from not only the ancient world, but the Muslim and Coptic worlds as well. Note how the pieces in these three collections differ, and learn how religion influenced Egyptian art through the ages.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After returning to the hotel, you're free to rest or spend the remainder of the afternoon however you wish. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to offer suggestions for unique discovery or to point you in the direction of any local attractions you don't want to miss.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant in Alexandria.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll browse the literary selections of Alexandria's Old Town, which has the largest concentration of bookshops and booksellers in the Arab world.

## Day 3 Alexandria • Explore Library of Alexandria • Royal Jewelry Museum

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

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Begin today at a site that recalls the glory of this once-mighty city. The Library of Alexandria was the most famous in the ancient world, home to an unsurpassed collection of manuscripts, codices, and many thousands of papyrus scrolls. The Library's destruction is a matter of historical debate—the Roman historian Plutarch blames an out-of-control fire set by Julius Caesar in 48 BC, while other Roman sources place the blame on the emperor Theodosius's order to destroy all non-Christian temples. Still other sources find fault with the Arab caliph Umar the Great's conquest of the city in 642 AD. In the 1970s, plans were made to build the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, an enormous complex of libraries, museums, theaters, art galleries, and even a planetarium. The new Bibliotheca recalls the majesty of the ancient library, one of the original Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and pays homage to Alexandria's legacy as a center of scholarship.

Then, visit the Royal Jewelry Museum, the former palace of Princess Fatima Al-Zahraa Haida, who lavishly decorated it during her lifetime with gilded ceilings, oil paintings, and other classic works of art. Today it also houses approximately 1,000 pieces of jewelry from the royal family's collection.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** You're free to explore Alexandria at your own pace this afternoon.

**Dinner:** On your own. Alexandria's cuisine is a mix of Egyptian and Greek flavors. A popular option near the hotel is at Zanilli's Coffee & More, where you'll enjoy both local dishes and sea views.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll sit at a harbor-side café to enjoy tea as boats moored for the night bob in the waves.

#### **Day 4 Alexandria • Cairo**

- Destination: Cairo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Le Meridien Airport Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Depart for Cairo, with several stops along the way to break up the drive.

**Lunch:** Enjoy lunch en route at a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Once we arrive in Cairo and check into our hotel, our Trip Experience Leader will be happy to suggest activities to fill the rest of our final day in the city, which is yours to use freely

**Dinner:** At our hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

#### **Day 5 Cairo • Return to U.S.**

- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Fly back to the U.S. this morning.

## YOUR NEFERTITI SMALL SHIP

### Explore aboard a privately chartered 75-passenger small ship

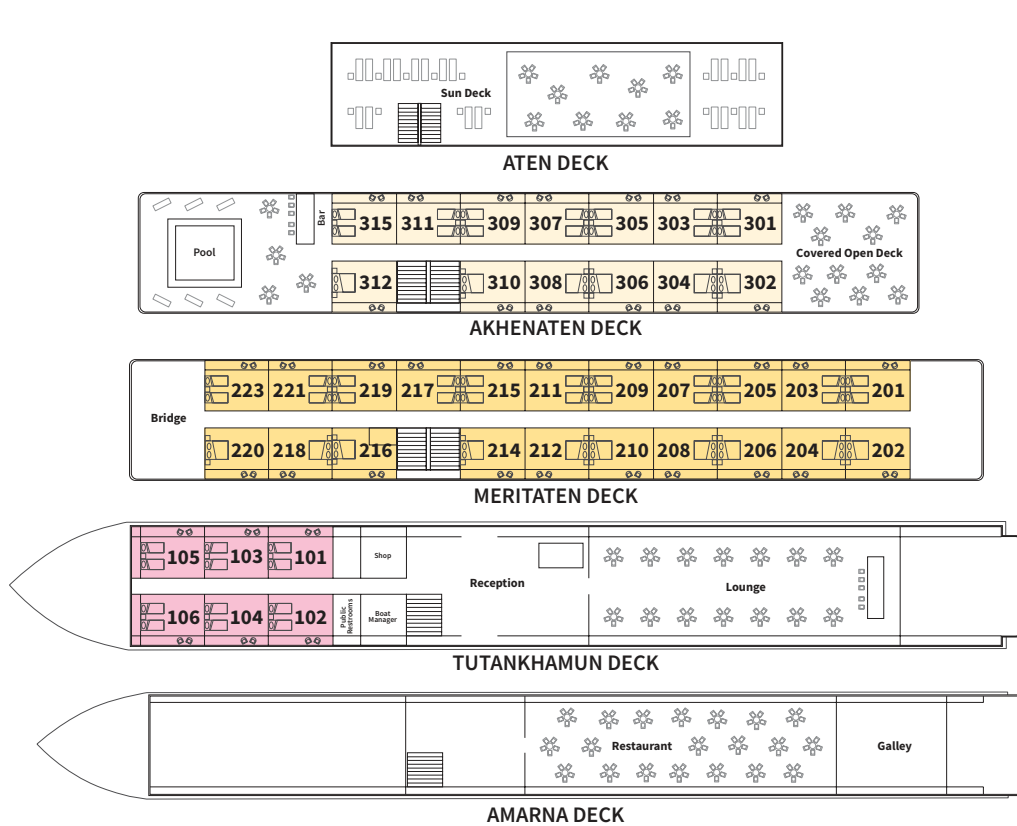
The *Nefertiti* provides an intimate cruising experience with **all outside-facing cabins complete with private balconies**—a unique feature not found on most other Nile River ships. Connect with your fellow travelers in the comfortable common areas, and enjoy striking panoramic vistas of legendary Egypt from the Sun Deck. All the while, our gracious, English-speaking ship staff will ensure that you enjoy a welcoming onboard experience. When you disembark, you'll explore in a group of 20–25 (average 22) with a local Trip Experience Leader.



## SHIPBOARD FEATURES

- **Cruise in three groups of 25 passengers:** With one Trip Experience Leader per group who is also an expert Egyptologist, you'll be immersed in your local guide's expertise with experiences inaccessible to larger groups. Because of your small group size, you'll get to know your fellow travelers on a deeper level, creating a family-like atmosphere and sense of camaraderie both on and off the ship.
- **Dining room with single, open seating:** Enjoy fine cuisine in your ship's dining room. The dining room opens every morning at 6:30am for breakfast; lunch and dinner times are subject to daily activities.
- **Bar & lounge:** Relax with friends old and new.
- **Complimentary beverages:** Enjoy tea, coffee, and soft drinks at any time of day while onboard.
- **Complimentary wireless Internet access:** Connect online in cabins and common areas. *Please note: Connectivity may be limited at certain points throughout your cruise.*
- **Sun Deck:** Enjoy the view as your ship glides along the Nile from your seat in the covered seating area with chairs and coffee tables, or an uncovered seating area with sun chairs.
- **A dipping pool:** Relax and cool off onboard.
- **English-speaking crew:** Our staff is dedicated to your comfort, and all shipboard announcements are made in English. *Please note: As there is no PA system onboard, all ship-wide messages are delivered directly from the ship manager or your Trip Experience Leader.*
- **Shipboard security:** Shipboard radar ensures safe navigation at night and in low visibility; secure docking space; onboard security staff; up-to-date fire safety system; and secured entryway doors.

## NEFERTITI SMALL SHIP



**History:** Built in 2000, completely refurbished in 2018

**Size:** 233x43 ft

**Passenger capacity:** 75

**International crew:** 40

**Decks:** 3

**Number of cabins:** 40

**Elevator:** No

## CABIN FEATURES

- **Every cabin includes a private balcony** with seating for two (a feature not found on most Nile River ships)
- Main Deck cabins feature two twin beds, upper-deck views, and closer proximity to the ship's lounge and bar. **Please note:** This ship features either two twin beds or one double bed per cabin. Twin beds cannot be pushed together.
- Average cabin size is 74-78 sq. ft.
- Private shower, hair dryer, shampoo, and soap
- In-room mini-refrigerator
- In-room safe
- All non-smoking cabins



Cabin with private balcony on the Meritaten deck

# 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 1 additional page, for a total of 3.
- **Post-trip extension to Alexandria:** No additional pages are needed.
- **Both the pre-trip extension and the post-trip extension:** You will need 4 blank passport pages in total.
- **Stopover in Amsterdam, Munich, Rome, Nairobi, or Johannesburg:** 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 (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 30 days 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.

#### GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has 3 groups with a maximum group size of 25 travelers with a local Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T.

#### PACING

- 15 days, with 7 nights aboard the privately chartered 75-passenger *Nefertiti*, one four-night hotel stay, and one three-night hotel stay

#### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Walk 1–3 miles unassisted and participate in 2–3 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs
- Not accessible for travelers using wheelchairs or scooters
- Travelers using walkers, crutches, or other mobility aids must travel with a companion who can assist them
- 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

#### TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel over city streets, rugged paths, cobble streets, sand, and unpaved roads in some places
- Travel by 75-passenger small ship and by coach
- Changes in tides and water-level depths may require adjustments to your itinerary

#### CLIMATE

- The climate in Egypt varies from cold to extremely hot

- During the dry summer months of May through October, temperatures can range from 90°–100°F
- From June to September, temperatures can easily reach 90°–100°F and even up to 110°F (in the shade) in Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan
- Winter temperatures between November and April usually range from the 50s (in the mornings) to 80°F and can drop dramatically after sunset, as far as the high 40s

## **FLIGHT INFORMATION**

- Travel time will be 17–20 hours and will most likely have one connection of 3–4 hours (depending on airline)

## **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)

## **No Vaccines Required**

### **Recommended Vaccines**

At the time of writing there were no 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.

In Egypt and Jordan, you should use bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth at any hotel. During your Nile cruise, the tap water onboard your ship is filtered, but we still recommend you stick to bottled water. 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 daypack 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.) In Israel these precautions do not apply as the water there is safe to drink.

## **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. Amex cards are not widely accepted in Egypt and cannot be used to purchase optional tours, so a Visa or MasterCard will be more useful.
- **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 Israel and 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.!

### Shipboard Account

This bill is for any on board purchases (drinks, souvenirs, etc.) and is calculated in U.S. dollars. This bill is payable at the front desk by cash or credit/debit card only. For cash, we accept U.S. dollars. For credit/debit cards, we accept MasterCard and Visa. Other forms of payment, such as checks, Discover, and American Express, are not accepted.

**Payments made by credit card may take up to three months to process.** We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, the charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as “OPT Boston” (depending on your credit card company).

**Please note:** Like our European cruises, your bill for any optional tours taken during the trip will be paid with your Trip Experience Leader, who will have you fill out a form onsite with your credit card information. (You can only pay for optional tours by credit/debit card.) For more information on optional tours—including which cards we accept for payment—see the “Preparing for Your Trip” chapter.

## Exchange Services

You will have opportunities to change money or use an ATM before boarding the ship. But in case of emergencies, we offer a one-time money exchange onboard of up to \$100 per person, per cruise.

## 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–\$12 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. *Due to international banking laws, we are not able to process crew tips on a credit card; crew tips can only be in the form of cash.*
- **Housekeeping at hotels:** We recommend \$1 per traveler, per day. (This is for hotels only; on the ship Housekeeping are part of crew, so you don’t need to tip them separately.)
- **Taxis:** You should agree on a price with the driver before you take the taxi, so tipping is not necessary unless you receive “above and beyond” service.
- **Restaurants and cafes:** 10% of the bill is considered polite. Most restaurants in Egypt charge a service fee, but this doesn’t go to your waiter—it is more a cover charge than a tip.
- **Restrooms:** If there is an attendant on duty, it is customary to give them a small tip of about 5–10LE (about \$0.30–\$0.60 US) for paper and/or soap.
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides and motorcoach drivers on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.



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.

### Arriving in Cairo on Flights You Arranged

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 due to heavy traffic. For flights arriving after 6pm 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 one day early to acclimate and relax after a long travel day. **However, if you do arrive early, you will not qualify for an airport transfer and will need to get your own visa for Egypt.** 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

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype or FaceTime. These services are usually less expensive than making a traditional call, but you'll need a Wi-Fi connection 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	Luggage is limited to 44 lbs for checked luggage and 11 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.
- **In Case of Delays:** While luggage delays are rare, you should know that if your luggage is delayed in Egypt, customs officers will need to unlock it before releasing it from the airport. This will require your presence at the airport with your passport.

## 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 sweater or other layer for when the air conditioning is on high. (Also, the desert it can be cold at night.)
- **But December and January can be cold and rainy.** Parts Israel and Jordan get snow in winter; other areas get heavy rains. If you are traveling in December or January, keep this in mind, especially on the pre-trip extension.
- **If you like to hand-wash your clothes,** bring socks and underwear made of material that will dry out overnight.
- **You can buy clothing designed especially for travel.** Look for clothes that offer adequate sun protection.
- **Pack a few pieces of clothing and any medications in your carry-on,** in case your luggage is delayed. If traveling with a companion, consider “cross-packing,” i.e., pack two outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa.
- **You'll be on your feet a lot** during the trip and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or similar supportive sports shoes for our daytime shore excursions. Aboard ship, the soles of your shoes should offer good traction

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

Dress on our trip is functional and casual; there are no formalwear 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 pre-trip 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 many Jewish women (plus some Christians) chose 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 “Dress Codes” section in this chapter for details.
- ☐ Shoes and socks: We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or supportive sports shoes for excursions. Aboard ship, the soles of your shoes should offer 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

### 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 and hat

### 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
- ☐ Washcloth (not always supplied)
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues and/or toilet paper for restrooms
- ☐ Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial hand cleaner
- ☐ Flashlight (useful inside the Pyramids/temples)
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- ☐ Travel money purse, worn under your shirt or jacket; money belt

- ☐ 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

## Optional Gear

- ☐ Eye drops for dry, dusty conditions
- ☐ Light folding umbrella, to be used to block the sun
- ☐ Hand-wash laundry soap, and maybe clothespins/travel clothesline/stopper
- ☐ Travel journal/note pad/reading material
- ☐ Home address book



- ☐ Photos, small gifts like pens
- ☐ Phrase book
- ☐ Pocket calculator for exchange rates
- ☐ Folding walking stick or trekking pole (sold in most camping stores)
- ☐ Portable fan
- ☐ Compact binoculars. *If your hotel in Cairo is close to an embassy, you may be asked to store the binoculars at the front desk, but you can take them with you during the day.*

## Electricity Abroad

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

### Voltage

Electricity in Egypt, Israel, 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 220 volt outlets only.**

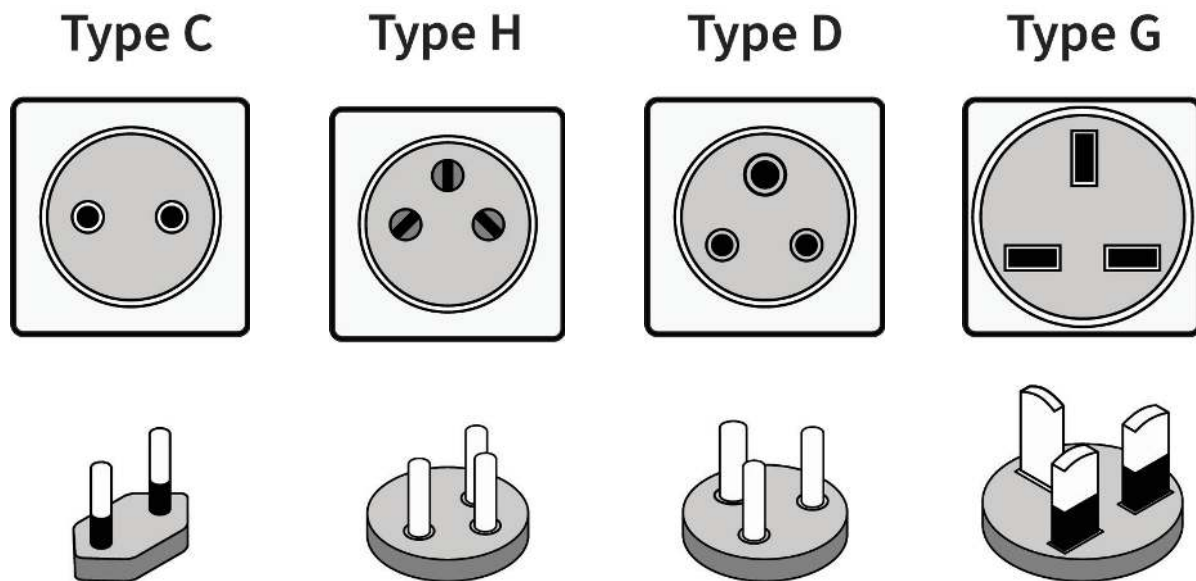
### Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you’ll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because you may need multiple adapters on this trip, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. 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 bring a backup power source or 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.

**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.

### Low Water Levels in Winter

The water levels on the Nile raise and fall with the seasons, and the lowest levels are usually from mid-November to mid-February. This isn't an issue for most of our ports of call, but it can prevent us from sailing to Qena (Dendera Temple). If you are traveling in December or January, your ship may dock in Luxor instead. **If so, you'll still visit Dendera Temple.** The only difference is that you'll travel by coach from Luxor instead of from Qena.

**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** 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			AMMAN, JORDAN		
	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	--	52 to 39	84 to 64	2.5
FEB	74 to 55	45 to 22	--	55 to 40	82 to 58	2.5
MAR	82 to 61	38 to 15	0.1	61 to 44	79 to 52	1.7
APR	92 to 72	30 to 13	0.4	71 to 51	68 to 40	0.7
MAY	99 to 77	26 to 12	0.3	80 to 57	60 to 34	0.1
JUN	115 to 81	26 to 11	--	85 to 63	58 to 34	--
JUL	103 to 83	27 to 12	--	88 to 67	59 to 36	--
AUG	102 to 82	31 to 14	--	88 to 67	66 to 38	--
SEP	99 to 79	34 to 14	--	85 to 64	71 to 39	--
OCT	93 to 74	40 to 18	0.2	79 to 58	72 to 41	0.2
NOV	80 to 63	51 to 26	--	66 to 49	76 to 50	1.1
DEC	72 to 55	57 to 32	0.1	56 to 42	85 to 65	1.9

## ABOARD YOUR SHIP: CABIN FEATURES, DINING & SERVICES ON BOARD

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### *Nefertiti*

The *Nefertiti* offers a host of amenities to make you feel right at home. Designed to carry no more than 75 passengers, the ship's size ensures an intimacy and a unique opportunity to enjoy its many facilities. Amenities include a restaurant with open seating, sun deck with lounge chairs, a library, bar, lounge, dance floor, and small souvenir shop. Main Deck cabins feature two twin beds, upper-deck views, and closer proximity to the ship's lounge and bar.

#### **Included features of all Nefertiti cabins:**

- All outside cabins, each with a private balcony with seating for two
- Cabin sizes of approximately 215 sq. ft.
- Individual air conditioning
- Either two twin beds OR one double European bed
- Sufficient closet and dresser space
- Color TV (note that reception will only be available when docked in port)
- Hair dryer
- Desk
- Private shower, hair dryer, shampoo, and soap
- In-room safe
- All non-smoking cabins

**Please note:** *This ship features either two twin beds or one double bed per cabin. Twin beds cannot be pushed together.*

**An important word:** While our fleet features larger-than-usual riverboat cabins, please keep in mind that these ships are river vessels, not large ocean cruise ships. Riverboat cabins, in comparison, are relatively small, and ship amenities, in general, are comfortable but not lavish.

### **Cabin Assignments**

You will receive confirmation of your deck and/or cabin category upfront in writing; it will be on your invoice and online in My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner). However, your cabin number may not be assigned until you arrive onboard the ship. (This is normal procedure for many river ships.) If there's no cabin number on your invoice or online, you can presume it will be assigned later and communicated to you when you board.



## Dining

You'll enjoy fine cuisine and excellent views in your ship's dining room, featuring rich carpeting with white-linen and china table settings. Your ship's daily service includes a breakfast buffet, lunch, and a more formal dinner. Our professional chefs will create unique menus for you that feature regional specialties. Two glasses per person of complimentary house wine, house beer, or a selection of soft drinks are included at both lunch and dinner. In addition, a selection of other fine wines and beer is available for purchase, starting at approximately \$35-40 per bottle (prices vary according to vintage). Travelers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table, for 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 as described above, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas. We also offer complimentary coffee and tea throughout the day.

**Open-table, single-seating for all meals:** Each meal is open seating—reservations of any kind are not accepted. Dinner has only one designated time for its open seating, announced each day aboard ship.

**Dining times:** Dining times for all meals may vary depending on the day's sightseeing and sailing schedule, but in general, meal times are as follows:

- Early riser breakfast: 6:30-7:30 am
- Breakfast: 7:30-9:00 am
- Lunch: 1:00-2:30 pm
- Dinner: 7:00-9:00 pm

**Special diets & celebrations:** Special diets, such as low-cholesterol, gluten-free, or vegetarian, can be accommodated, as well as the recognition of an anniversary or birthday. Please call us to submit your request no later than 45 days prior to departure. Religious dietary regimens, such as kosher or halal meals, cannot be prepared aboard ship.

**Dress code:** The dining-room dress code is casual, though most travelers dress nicely for the Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner.

**Non-smoking policy:** The entire dining room is non-smoking at all times.

## Embarkation/Disembarkation

On the day of disembarkation, your cabin will no longer be available after breakfast. You may sit in the ship's lounge or on the Sun Deck until disembarkation.

## **Dock and Landing Etiquette**

River waterways are simply not big enough to support large landing docks such as those built on ocean shorelines. It is common for river ships to tie up alongside each other at some piers—particularly in ports where docking area is restricted. While we try to arrange the most convenient mooring available in each port of call, outboard boats may occasionally obstruct views, and you may have to step across other ships when you want to go ashore.

## **Headsets**

During your trip, complimentary headsets, or Whispers receivers, are provided on our guided tours through the places we visit. These receivers and headsets allow you to hear your Trip Experience Leader and our local guides better. If use a hearing aid or have strong preferences for headphones, we highly encourage you to bring your own headsets/ear buds with you. The plug size is usually the same as that used by smartphones, computer jacks, etc.

## **Wireless Internet Access**

Limited wireless Internet service (WiFi) is available for free in the cabins and common areas on board. If you want to use the WiFi connection you'll need to bring your own device—the ship does not rent or loan electronic devices. To use the WiFi, please visit Reception after you board for access information. Shipboard access is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume will affect connectivity and speed. The ship's Internet connection demands a strong connection to the local cell phone network, which is unavailable in many of the areas we visit. You can expect disruptions of both long and short duration.

## **TV Reception**

Because the ship does not have a satellite dish onboard, you should expect that TV reception will only be available when we are docked in port.

## **Laundry & Linen Service**

Laundry service is available for a fee (currently is costs about \$2.00 per shirt). Please note that neither self-service laundry facilities nor dry cleaning services are available. There will be one change of bed linens during your cruise. Towels will be changed on your request using the international water conservation code—a towel left on the floor will be replaced; a towel left hanging up will not.

## **Medical Care**

Should you need medical assistance, please contact the ship's 24 hour reception deck. They will arrange for a doctor to come onboard or for transport to the nearest medical facility against charge.

## Onboard Activities

During your cruise you'll enjoy exclusive Discovery Series events, including group activities that relate to the region, theme dinners, organized discussions, and talks on upcoming ports of call.

## Recreational Facilities

These include the sun desk, a small dipping pool, library, and lounge with a bar and dance floor. A word about the lounge and bar: Afternoon tea with cake and cookies will be provided daily. Filter coffee, standard breakfast tea, mineral water, soft drinks, and juice will be complimentary throughout the day. Other tea and coffee drinks (i.e. cappuccinos, lattes, etc.) will be available for purchase. Two glasses of local beer or wine per person will be included at both lunch and dinner; during the rest of the day a selection of alcoholic cocktails, bottled beers, and wines is available for purchase at the bar. Prices are in U.S. dollars.

## Telephone Services

To make telephone calls from the ship, you will be charged on your shipboard account on the last day of the cruise. Phone calls from the ship are placed via Reception. We advise you to use them only for an emergency, as this is a very expensive service (for example, a call to New York City would cost about \$3.75 per minute). Calling Cards cannot be used over the ship's phone system.

## Smoking/Non-Smoking Policy

All cabins are non-smoking. Smoking is permitted only outside on the sun deck. Smoking is not allowed anywhere else on the ship.

## Elevator/Chairlift

The ship does **not** have an elevator or chairlift onboard.

## Shore Excursions

Included during your cruise are many sightseeing tours. Other optional tours are available for purchase. Your Trip Experience Leader will provide information on these optional excursions on your arrival. Please note that optional tours can only be purchased with a credit card.

## Lost & Found

Any lost or forgotten items found on board the ship will be held for 90 days from disembarkation. After 90 days, all unclaimed items will be discarded or donated.

## Ship Specifications

- **History:** Built in 2000, completely refurbished in 2018
- **Size:** 233x43 ft
- **Capacity:** 75 passengers, 40 crew members

- **Layout:** 40 cabins, 3 decks
- **Elevator:** No

## 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.

### 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, Jordan, and Israel, so an understanding of the two most prominent religions (Islam and Judaism) will assist you in your discoveries.

### Islam & Ramadan

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. The biggest religious holiday is Ramadan, a month-long celebration that is meant to teach the values of restraint and charity. To participate, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk. The fast is strict and includes no eating, drinking alcohol, cigarette-smoking, or gum-chewing during daylight hours. But as the sun starts to set, everyone rushes home so they can celebrate *iftar*—the joyous breaking of the fast. Suddenly the evening comes alive with music, eating, and shopping. The festivities often continue well into the night. The mosques and some streets are decorated with lanterns, special meals are prepared, and nighttime social events and festivals are planned.



If you'll be visiting Egypt during Ramadan, what does this mean for you? Visitors are not required to fast, but out of respect you shouldn't eat, drink, or smoke openly. (It is OK to eat indoors, but you wouldn't sit outside with food.) Expect that some restaurants will be closed and others may not serve alcohol, but your Trip Experience Leader will be on hand to advise you of places to eat. Also, it is important to keep in mind that many of the people you meet will be participating in the fast, so they might not be their usual selves. It helps to have a bit of patience.

Ramadan follows a lunar calendar, so its dates change significantly from year to year. If you're interested in checking what holidays might fall during your trip, an online holiday calendar like [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays) is a great resource.

## Judaism & the High Holy Days

Considered the oldest of the monotheistic religions, Judaism has its roots in ancient times, with more than 3,000 years of history. Although there are three main branches (Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform) the fundamentals remain the same. A practicing Jew is expected to follow the holy commandments as revealed to Moses, follow Jewish law, attend synagogue, fast during specific holidays, and keep *Shabbat* (Sabbath) from sundown Friday to sundown on Saturday. Many also adhere to kosher dietary laws, so you may not find pork or shellfish on the menu at local establishments.

While in Israel, you'll find that many shops and restaurants are closed on Saturday in observance of the Sabbath. In some places public transport runs on a reduced schedule—or even stops completely—but taxis are generally still available. And during Jewish holidays, many sites will be closed or operating on reduced hours—but on the plus side, there may be special services or festivities you can join! Again, we suggest checking an online holiday calendar for exact dates.

The biggest holidays in terms of importance are probably the 10-day stretch from Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) to Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). Known collectively as the “High Holy Days”, this is a period of reflection and family time, so most businesses will close or be on reduced hours due to low staff. Yom Kippur in particular is very solemn, and it is no exaggeration to say the entire country shuts down.

Lastly, a few words about the Western Wall in Jerusalem: As the last remains of the Second Temple, many see this as one of the most sacred places in Judaism, and as a result, its popularity cannot be underestimated. Be prepared for crowds and please follow whatever guidelines your Trip Experience Leader outlines.

## Modest Dress

- **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 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 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).

## Laundry Service

Laundry service and dry cleaning are available through your hotel for an additional fee.

## Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most the countries on your itinerary 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 an older woman. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject, 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 or military compounds, because this may result in the confiscation of your camera. Photos may not be allowed in religious buildings; ask first.

**Important Note:** In museums or at archaeological sites throughout the Middle East, there may be restrictions on using your flash or photos may not be permitted in certain areas (for example, photography is not allowed in King Tut’s Tomb at the Valley of the Kings). 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.

## Photography Fees

Some sites and museums will charge a fee (up to \$20 per device) for the privilege of taking photos. We recommend bringing some additional cash (approximately US\$50–60 per person) to exchange for local currency for these occasions.

## Safety & Security

- **Common Sense and Awareness:** 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. Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful. Con artists sometimes target travelers.
- **Money belts/Neck wallets:** Carry a one-day supply of cash in your pocket and the rest of your money in a neck wallet or money belt under your shirt. Replenish your pocket supply when you are in a safe and quiet place. 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 (set your own personal number). Please utilize them.
- **Woman Travelers:** Foreign women may experience some hassling by local men in Egypt. It is usually inconsequential, and it is greatly reduced if you dress in a modest style. Exercise the same caution you would with strangers at home. We encourage women to stay with a group after dark or if exploring out-of-the-way places.

One last note—traffic is horrific throughout the Middle East, especially Egypt. Exercise extreme caution when attempting to cross any street. Consider hiring a taxi (at a nominal fee) for short distance transport.

## 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**

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

### **Chirpey**

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more







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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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