



# Egypt & Nile River Cruise

12 days | 16 days with Jordan extension

Descend into a world of ancient wonders to discover the land behind the legends. Walk past towering stone icons, through avenues of sphinxes, and into royal valleys tucked amid desert sands. Then, cruise down the Nile and anchor at remote islands under the watchful gaze of the Theban Hills. End your adventure in Cairo, where the prayer calls of historic houses of worship echo amidst the modern bustle. Extend your trip across the Sinai Peninsula, to Jordan, to explore the umber-colored remains of Petra and take a dip in the Dead Sea.



## Your tour package includes

- 6 nights in handpicked hotels
- 4 nights aboard a Nile River cruise ship
- 10 breakfasts
- 5 lunches
- 9 dinners with beer or wine
- 11 sightseeing tours
- Egyptologist, who's also your Tour Director
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 2 on-tour flights

## Included highlights

- Pyramids of Giza
- Great Sphinx
- Grand Egyptian Museum
- Temples of Karnak and Luxor
- Valley of the Kings
- Tomb of Tutankhamun
- Aswan
- Felucca sailboat ride

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2.5 hours daily across uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets and paved roads, with some hills and stairs.

## Group size

15-35

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Cairo today.

## Giza → 3 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Cairo & transfer to Giza

*Included meals: dinner*

Welcome to Egypt, where tales etched in stone await your discovery—and where your own Egyptian story will unfold.

Transfer from Cairo to your hotel in Giza and get settled in. This evening, enjoy dinner at your leisure in the hotel.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Cairo

*Included meals: breakfast, welcome dinner*

Set off on a guided tour of Cairo, where its strategic location in the Nile Valley drew the area's first settlements 2,000 years ago. You'll explore labyrinthine alleys and ornate mosques as you learn more about the region's history from your Egyptologist—who is also your Tour Director.

- Visit the Cairo Citadel. Built in the 12th century by the mighty Saladin and originally used as a fortress, it remained the seat of the Egyptian government until the 19th century.
- Stop at the Muhammad Ali Mosque, built in the Ottoman style and known as the Alabaster Mosque for its extensive marble paneling. Its twin minarets make it one of the most striking structures in Cairo's cityscape.

Gather with your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner with beer or wine at a local restaurant this evening.

*Please note: Travelers are required to remove their shoes when entering the Alabaster Mosque, and to dress modestly. Women should cover their heads and shoulders, and men should wear long pants.*

### Day 4: Sightseeing tour of Giza & the Grand Egyptian Museum

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch*

Meet up with your Tour Director and set off on a guided tour of Giza, Egypt's third-largest city and home to some of the world's most enduring ancient monuments.

- Stand in the shadow of the Pyramids of Giza,

the only Wonder of the Ancient World to have survived into the modern era. Standing as tall as 480 feet when it was built, the Great Pyramid of Giza continues to amaze with its size and the precision with which it was constructed.

- Visit the enigmatic, 4,500-year-old Great Sphinx, the largest monolithic statue in the world. (It was carved from a single limestone bedrock!)
- Enter the Grand Egyptian Museum, said to be the world's largest museum, and explore its vast collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts alongside your Tour Director.
- Enjoy an included lunch at a local restaurant.

*Please note: If the Grand Egyptian Museum is not yet open to the public, travelers will visit the Egyptian Antiquities Museum instead.*

Dine like an Egyptian by adding an optional home-hosted dinner in Cairo, during which you'll sample Egypt's complex flavors, like dukkah and fenugreek.

+ Cairo Home-Hosted Dinner

## Nile River Cruise → 4 nights

### Day 5: Flight to Luxor & cruise embarkation

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

*Please note: Some cruise departures will follow days 5-9 in reverse.*

Fly to Luxor, where you'll board your cruise ship this afternoon. Enjoy an included lunch before seeing the painstakingly excavated Temple of Karnak and Luxor.

It's said that 30 pharaohs presided over the building of the temple—a sprawling and vast ancient site. You'll feel a palpable connection to the ancient world as you walk in the footsteps of priests and worshippers who came here for thousands of years.

- Venture through the Karnak temple complex with your guide to see the Precinct of Amun-Re, whose mudbrick walls stretch over 1.5 miles around. Gaze over extensive hieroglyphic inscriptions marking moments in history, and end at the Temple of Khonsu—a smaller, more intimate temple dedicated to the god of time and the moon.
- Take an early evening walking tour through

Luxor Temple, located on the banks of the Nile River. As you approach, an avenue of human-headed sphinxes creates a dramatic and awe-inspiring entrance. The temple unfolds with a series of striking architectural elements that include massive columns, colossal statues, and hieroglyphs.

- Continue your exploration of the complex at the Abu Haggag Mosque. Although the structure itself "only" dates to the 13th century, its site has been used as a place of worship for more than 3,500 years—and is still in use today.

This evening, sit down for an included dinner aboard the ship, served with beer or wine.

### Day 6: Sightseeing tour of the Nile's West Bank

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Spend the morning relaxing and catching up on sleep, or greet the day with an early start for an optional, but certainly once-in-a-lifetime, hot-air balloon ride over the Valley of the Kings and the Nile.

Later, tour the Nile's West Bank with your Tour Director.

- Explore the Valley of the Kings, a series of tombs nestled between rugged limestone outcroppings and mountains in the Theban Hills. The barren, rocky terrain contrasts with the lush greenery of the Nile's eastern bank.
- Enter King Tut's tomb, famous for containing the treasures a pharaoh would need in the afterlife, such as clothing, food, chariots, games, and ceremonial items. Although these precious artifacts have since been relocated, you'll observe the tomb resting amidst richly adorned walls.

This afternoon, enjoy an included lunch before sailing toward Edfu. Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

+ Nile River Hot Air Balloon Ride

### Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Temple of Kom Ombo

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Spend a free morning while docked in Edfu or add an exploration of one of the best-preserved temples in Egypt—the Temple of Horus. This

classic example of Ptolemaic architecture, with massive stone walls and towering pylons, is also one of the few temples in Egypt where inscriptions on its walls describe how it was built and used in ancient times.

Later, continue uncovering the wonders of Egypt after an included lunch aboard your ship. You'll visit the Temple of Kom Ombo. Dedicated to the deities Sobek and Horus, it was constructed as two symmetrical temples aligned in parallel. Although they were initially built during the Ptolemaic period, they were expanded after the Roman conquest of Egypt, resulting in a blend of both local and Greco-Roman architectural styles.

Your day ends when you dock in the busy market city of Aswan, where you'll sit down for an included dinner, served with beer or wine, aboard your vessel.

+ Edfu & the Temple of Horus

**Day 8: Felucca sailboat ride**

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Enjoy a free morning aboard your ship or add an optional trek to Abu Simbel. You'll visit the temples of Ramses II and his wife, Nefertari, originally carved into the mountainside and painstakingly relocated to save them from being submerged by the damming of the Nile.

*Please note: Depending on flight schedules, the Abu Simbel excursion may be offered on day 9 instead of day 8.*

Later, enjoy an included lunch before climbing aboard a felucca, a traditional Egyptian sailboat, to ride past Elephantine. Sited across from the hubbub of central Aswan, the island is home to two serene Nubian villages and once played an integral role in the ivory trade.

- Cruise past partially excavated ruins scattered across the island, including the remains of the Temple of Khnum's granite step pyramid. You may also spot a nilometer carved directly into the river's rocky shores and marked with Arabic, Roman, and Egyptian numerals. In ancient times, nilometers were used to indicate the Nile's water levels to predict the harvest and calculate taxes for the coming year.
- Take in panoramic views of the dusty pink granite stones of the Mausoleum of Aga Khan. The historic site is the final resting place of Aga Khan III, one of Islam's most important imams, and a testament to enduring love. Khan's widow left a red rose on his tomb every day until her passing, a tradition still carried on today in the tomb that she commissioned.

Sit down for an included dinner, served with beer or wine, aboard the ship this evening.

+ Abu Simbel

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**Aswan → 1 night**

**Day 9: Disembarkation & sightseeing tour of Aswan**

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Disembark your cruise in Aswan and set off on a sightseeing tour of the city led by your Tour Director. Known as the gateway to Nubia, Aswan is surrounded by a unique natural setting where the Nile, dotted with lush islands, meets an arid desert landscape.

- Board a boat to visit the temples at Philae, an island in the Nile River. Watch in awe as enormous columns and imposing facades rise from the water, emblazoned with hieroglyphics.
- Walk through the colorful local market where you'll find perfumes, spices, traditional talismans, and souvenirs.

Spend a free afternoon in Aswan perusing one of the local markets. Or, add an immersive visit to a Nubian village and experience the hospitality of this distinct group that's indigenous to southern Egypt.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening, served with beer or wine.

+ Nubian Village Visit

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**Cairo → 2 nights**

**Day 10: Flight to Cairo**

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Transfer to the airport and fly back to Cairo today.

After sitting down for an included dinner, served with beer or wine, enjoy a free evening in Cairo. Ask your Tour Director for a recommendation or find a cozy cafe on your own. Be sure to order mint tea and kunafa, a spun pastry soaked in sweet syrup and sprinkled with pistachios.

**Day 11: Sightseeing tour of Cairo**

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Spend today in the oldest part of Cairo, exploring labyrinthian alleys, entering ancient houses of worship, and learning more about Egypt's prismatic history.

- Enter the Hanging Church. Officially known as Saint Virgin Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church, this third-century sanctuary is

adorned with expertly turned wood carvings, colorful frescoes, and ornate marble columns. Its moniker stems from its position atop the gatehouse of Babylon Fortress, giving the impression that it's suspended in the air.

- Step inside the Turkish-style Ben Ezra Synagogue, a place of pilgrimage for North African Jews. It's believed to have been built on the site where, according to biblical accounts, the baby Moses was found in the Nile River.

Then, transfer to the Gayer-Anderson Museum, a former home that now showcases Egyptian art, furniture, and curios.

Celebrate your trip with your fellow travelers during tonight's farewell dinner, served with beer or wine, and raise a glass to an unforgettable trip and new friendships.

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**Flight Home**

**Day 12: Departure**

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your trip to Jordan, where you can keep satisfying your wanderlust at two of our travelers' favorite bucket list destinations: Petra and the Dead Sea.

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**+ Jordan extension**

Visiting Jordan—a country known for its welcoming embrace of visitors—is like visiting long-lost family. Between a pilgrimage to Mount Nebo, a jaw-dropping visit to the rose-red sandstone architecture of Petra, and a dip in the briny deep of the Dead Sea, it's the perfect bookend to a magical voyage.

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**Petra → 2 nights**

**Day 12: Flight to Amman**

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Fly to Amman, Jordan, this morning and transfer to Petra. Then, sit down for an included dinner before settling in for a good night's sleep. In just a few hours, you'll be walking the wonders of Petra's ancient legacy.

**Day 13: Sightseeing tour of Petra**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Head to the city of Petra, which was carved into the soft, red rocks of Mount Hor in the third century BC by members of an Arab tribe known as the Nabataeans. Explore the sandstone city alongside your new Tour Director.

- Learn about Petra's unique architecture—one of the reasons it was named one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.
- Walk through the UNESCO World Heritage Site to the iconic Al-Khazneh, or Treasury, which served as a tomb and features one of the most famous facades in the world—immortalized in photographs, films, and, now, your very own camera roll.
- Take in the intricately carved pillars and columns of the Palace Tomb, whose facade towers five stories above the ground.
- Stroll through the winding, high-walled gorge known as the Siq and learn how tectonic forces formed the giant crack in the rock.

*Please note: In order to enter Petra, travelers should be able to walk two miles round-trip in hot weather over uneven terrain. Other modes of transportation may be available for you to book upon your arrival at an additional cost.*

So much of Jordanian hospitality revolves around sharing a meal with visitors and guests. Experience it yourself by adding a Levantine cooking class and dinner to your itinerary and round out your day with the authentic flavors of the eastern Mediterranean. You can also continue your evening with free time to explore Petra on your own.

+ Levantine Cooking Class & Dinner

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## Amman → 1 night

### Day 14: Amman via Madaba & Mount Nebo

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Today, delve deeper into the history and culture of Jordan on a pair of guided sightseeing tours before continuing to Amman, the capital city.

- Tour Madaba, a market town known for its collection of Byzantine-era mosaics.
- Visit St. George's Church and view the Madaba Map. Discovered by builders in the 1880s, this sixth-century Byzantine treasure is the oldest surviving mosaic map of Palestine and is said to have originally comprised more than two million pieces.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening, served with beer or wine.

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 15: Sightseeing tour of Amman, the Dead Sea & departure

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch*

Spend your last day in Jordan getting to know the city of Amman and relaxing in the therapeutic waters of the Dead Sea.

- Stroll through bustling local markets as you make your way to the ruins of the Citadel—a Bronze Age complex sitting on the city's highest hill and the second-century Roman theater, the city's most famous archaeological attraction.
- Travel to the Dead Sea for a float in its famously salty water, located at the lowest land-based point on Earth, then share a farewell lunch with your fellow travelers.

Later, return to Amman to board your late-night flight home.

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## Arrive Home

### Day 16: Travel day

Arrive home after your overnight flight.



# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.ca/ENE](https://goaheadtours.ca/ENE) | 1-800-754-5066

## Day 4: Cairo Home-Hosted Dinner

\$165CAD (3 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included )

Join a local at their home in Cairo to enjoy traditional dishes and dine like a true Egyptian. During this dinner, you'll receive an authentic understanding of your host's day-to-day life while learning about Egyptian culture and traditions from a new perspective. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 6: Nile River Hot Air Balloon Ride

\$235CAD/\$245CAD\* (2 hours, departs in the early morning)

This morning, rise with the sun and float above ancient temples, the Nile, and the Valley of Kings. Begin with crossing the Nile by ferry to the West Bank where you'll then transfer by bus before taking to the skies aboard your balloon. After watching the balloon inflation, you'll gently soar into the air and get a truly impressive view of Egypt's archaeological history. Please note: This activity is weather-dependent. We recommend wearing layers for the cooler morning weather.

## Day 7: Edfu & the Temple of Horus

\$105CAD/\$115CAD\* (3 hours, departure time varies)

Preserved by layers of sand for millennia, the Temple of Horus in Edfu is striking thanks to its size and completeness. Dedicated to the falcon god Horus, this grand temple complex was a center of religious life before non-Christian worship was banned in the Roman Empire. Disembark your cruise this morning in Edfu and spend time exploring the temple alongside your Tour Director. Visit the court of offerings, the inner and outer hypostyle halls, the offering chamber, and the sanctuary of Horus, all of which date back to between 237 and 57 BC.

## Day 8: Abu Simbel

\$529CAD (6 hours, departs in the morning)

Fly from Aswan to Abu Simbel, where you'll visit the temples of Ramses II and his wife Nefertari, relocated block by block to the shores of Lake Nasser after the construction of the Aswan High Dam. The temples' statues now stand 680 feet from their original site but their grandeur endures. Please note: This excursion involves extensive walking on rugged terrain, so sturdy footwear is advised. Headwear and extra sunscreen are also recommended. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 70 days prior to departure.

## Day 9: Nubian Village Visit

\$89CAD/\$99CAD\* (3 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Travel through the countryside en route to the Nubian village taking in the beautiful views along the way. Upon arrival, you'll meet up with your Nubian guide at the Animalia Nubian Museum, his family home turned museum. Here you'll learn about Nubian history and

traditions while surrounded by local flora and fauna.

After touring the museum, head up to the roof and enjoy tea while you soak in the panoramic views of the surrounding area.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 13: Levantine Cooking Class & Dinner

\$105CAD/\$115CAD\* (3.5 hours, departs in the evening with dinner)

Tonight, join a local chef for a cooking class where you'll learn to make several Levantine mezzes and a soup.

Levantine cuisine features food from the Levant, a large geographical area encompassing countries in the eastern Mediterranean region. The culinary traditions in Jordan, Syria, Israel, Lebanon, and more meshed together to create modern Levantine cuisine. Mezzes are the most popular type of Levantine food. These small, shareable dishes are perfect to enjoy with friends. Some local favorites include baba ghanoush (an eggplant-based dip), sfiha (an open-faced minced meat sandwich), and ka'ak (a donut-shaped biscuit). You'll use fresh, local ingredients to craft your mezzes. Then, sit down to enjoy the food you prepared for dinner.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.ca/terms](https://goaheadtours.ca/terms)