

## Trip Dossier for Egypt – Nile Cruise (Red Sea Extension)

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This is a brilliant introduction to Egypt – both it's ancient wonders and it's modern buzz. You'll see the pyramids (and even go inside one!), be dazzled by the treasures of Tutankhamun, wander through colourful bazaars, discover ancient Karnak, visit the Valley of the Kings, relax in delightful Aswan, sleep on an overnight train... And, the highlight for most, spend three days on a Nile cruise, seeing temples and villages along the way. Why not extend your stay and go to the coast where you can snorkel in the Red Sea?

### Day 1 Fly to Cairo

Depart from London to fly to Cairo, arriving in the evening. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the bustling capital city. **Hotel 1 night, with swimming pool**

### Day 2 Visit Egyptian Museum, Pyramids & Sphinx; then board overnight train

Africa's largest city is the hub of the Arabic world - a vast and teeming metropolis endowed with the treasures of three great civilisations: ancient Egyptian, Islamic, and Coptic. Today you'll visit the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World that still remains intact: the Pyramids at Giza, with their enigmatic companion the Sphinx. No matter how much you've seen or read in advance, nothing quite prepares you for your first view of the Pyramids rising from the desert at the edge of Cairo's encroaching suburbs - it's a truly memorable sight! Your guide will help to unravel over 4500 years of history - from their construction until the present day - although much of this is still shrouded with mystery and conjecture. We also include a visit to the world-renowned Egyptian Museum in downtown Tahrir Square. The priceless collection of antiquities includes the famed Tutankhamen collection, with the gold death mask inlaid with semi-precious lapis lazuli, cornelian, obsidian and turquoise, and the gold coffin of the boy-king who died in 1352 BC at the age of eighteen after ruling the country for nine years. You'll also see various mummies and learn all about the intricate procedure of how they were made, and why the practice of preserving dead bodies was so important to the ancient Egyptians. After your visit we'll try to ensure that you get back to the hotel with enough time to freshen up, or even rest a while. In the early evening you'll transfer to Giza Station for the overnight train to Aswan. **Overnight train with sleeper cabin (breakfast and dinner)**

### Day 3 Aswan – board Nile Cruise boat

This morning you'll wake to scenes of the Nile flashing by as the train makes the long haul (almost 900 kilometres) southward along the Nile Valley, reaching Aswan in mid-morning. Please note that the train service runs on "Egyptian time" and take any delays in your stride, it's all part of the experience! On arrival at Aswan's station you'll be whisked off to your cruise boat moored along the Corniche and check in to your home for the next three days. The M/S *Nile Style* (or similar) is fully air conditioned with all facilities that you might expect in a comfortable mid-range hotel, complete with pool and shop. In days gone by, the only way to see the temples located along this stretch of the Nile was by boat.

*Please note that the precise itinerary of the Nile Cruise may vary according to the vessel which you are on, below is an indication of the usual program.*

After Cairo's frenetic bustle, the change in pace here is noticeable and we leave the rest of the morning free so you can relax and settle in. Aswan lies just north of the Tropic of Cancer, so although it is hot, the absence of humidity means it's rarely uncomfortable. You may wish to visit the Philae Temple (optional) which was nearly lost when the Dam was built, but fortunately rescued by a joint action between the government and UNESCO. You could also consider a Camel Trek (optional) where you cross the Nile by felucca sailboat and head out for a ride on the ship of the desert. Later there's a gentle walking excursion to explore Aswan's prosperous bazaars; trade has always been important here as the city straddles the main route south to Nubia and the Sudan, and was once the point where camel caravans arrived bearing goods from far-off lands. In Roman times this was the furthest extremity of the empire. This point where Arabia meets Africa still has a fascination all of its own. Generally your boat will remain in Aswan today and set sail tomorrow morning. This evening you will have dinner on board your boat. **Nile cruise boat 3 nights, with swimming pool (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 4 Nile Cruise - Kom Ombo and Edfu

What better way to experience some of the antiquities and magic of rural Egypt than by cruising down river while watching 5,000 years of culture slowly drift by? People here still live in much the same way as they did thousands of years ago, in mud brick homes, tending their fields with their faithful donkeys. The Nile has always been the lifeblood of Egypt and its rise and fall was carefully measured by the 'Nilometer' located at Elephantine Island in Aswan. If the water did not reach a certain level then everyone knew the harvests would be poor. Today you stop and visit your first temple at Kom Ombo, which stands on a promontory surrounded by sugar cane and corn fields overlooking the river, just a few kilometres from the settlement of Kom Ombo. This magnificent temple is

dedicated to the two gods Sobek, the crocodile god, and Horus the Elder, the falcon god – both of whose figures you'll see adorning the stonework. Edfu, your next stop, was once a flourishing city and today the most important monument in the city is the Temple of Horus, which is one of the most beautifully preserved temples in Egypt. Look for the festivals, battles and weddings depicted in the wall carvings. There is also a Nilometer here. The temple's Pylon is one of the highest still surviving. **(breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

#### **Day 5 Nile Cruise – Explore Karnak and Luxor**

The ancient city known to the Greeks as Thebes stood on the site of present-day Luxor. It rose to prominence around 1500 BC, when it became the capital of a unified empire that extended from Palestine to Nubia. At its peak it had a population of around one million, and now boasts the largest and greatest concentration of ancient monuments in the world. Although the capital later shifted elsewhere, it retained its importance as the centre for the worship to the god Amun. After your arrival in Luxor, you'll climb aboard a horse-drawn calesh for the visit to the great temples of Karnak. There is nothing that can quite compare with Karnak. The temple was originally constructed in honour of the god Amun-Ra and it was one of the most important religious sites in antiquity, eventually covering an area of 100 hectares with three main temples, some smaller enclosed temples, and several outer temples. Over 1300 years it was enlarged by successive pharaohs, with later generations adding their own embellishments to celebrate their gods and illustrate their conquests.

**(breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

#### **Day 6 Luxor and The Valley of the Kings**

You may wish to take an optional balloon ride today. Rising early you will witness sunrise over the river and fly over ancient temples, a breathtaking experience. This morning you catch the ferry across to the West Bank of the Nile to the Valley of the Kings. Rejoining the main group you then take a donkey ride through small villages, riding along lanes and tracks you will see the villagers going about their daily life, many will pass by on donkeys themselves watch how graceful they are and improve your technique. You'll then continue then by bus to reach the Valley of the Kings. You'll see the area where burial chambers for the pharaohs, their queens and people of noble birth were cut from the soft limestone hills to protect them from looters. We recommend that you wear long-sleeved tops and trousers today and bring plenty of water as you will be very exposed to the sun around the Valley of the Kings and especially at Hatshepsut's temple. After visiting some of the pharaohs' tombs you'll continue to Deir el-Bahri, the magnificent Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, who was the only woman pharaoh to reign over ancient Egypt. During the course of the morning your local guide will explain the beliefs and customs of the early civilisations, and maybe even teach you to read some hieroglyphics. On your return to Luxor you will check into your hotel. This afternoon is free to relax or explore - Luxor Temple and the Mummy museum are nearby, or you may wish to take a sunset sail on a traditional wooden felucca and enjoy the river close up.

You can also visit the Sunshine Orphanage (by taxi at your own expense) which provides a home for life for abandoned children who come here mostly as babies. You can read more about this deserving project on their website, <http://www.sunshine-international.org.uk/> - if you are interested in helping them they have posted here a wish list of items that they would be very grateful to receive. **Hotel 1 night, with swimming pool (breakfast)**

#### **Day 7 Free day in Luxor; train to Cairo**

Today is free for you to explore Luxor. Your hotel is right in the centre overlooking the Nile with pretty gardens. Perhaps it's time to relax by the pool – or see another temple! There really is a wealth of choice in this attractive city. This evening you will be transferred to the station to catch your sleeper train back to Cairo. **Overnight train with sleeper cabin (breakfast and dinner)**

#### **Day 8 Arrive in Cairo; rest of the day free**

On arriving back in the capital, you'll be taken to your hotel but the rest of the day is left entirely free so you can explore as you wish, perhaps do some last minute shopping. You could visit the Khan Al Khalili bazaar in Islamic Cairo, where you can buy everything from spices, to gold and silver jewellery, to stuffed toy camels. Bargain hard here, these merchants are well practised in the art of smooth-talking. **Hotel 1 night, with swimming pool (breakfast)**

#### **Day 9 Fly to London**

This morning you will be driven to Cairo airport in time for the mid-morning departure of the return international flight to London.

## Extension to the Red Sea

### Day 7 Drive to Hurghada

Today you will set off the drive to Hurghada on the Red Sea coast, (280 km, approx 4½ hours). You stop mid-way in a service station for refreshments and then continue to the coast. Hurghada a former fishing village has expanded over the last few decades to become Egypt's premier beach resort. On arrival you will be met by our local representative and checked in at the resort. **Hotel 2 nights, with swimming pool (breakfast)**

### Day 8 At Hurghada; boat trip on the Red Sea and snorkelling

This morning you will be met at the hotel and transferred to the harbour to board your boat for a leisurely cruise around the Red Sea. Snorkelling equipment is provided on board for you to dive in and explore the rich marine life on the reef. The rest of the day is at leisure to enjoy the various water sports and activities on offer.

### Day 9 Arrive in Cairo – rest of day free

Early morning breakfast and transfer to the airport at Hurghada for the flight to Cairo. On arriving back in the capital, you'll be taken to your hotel but the rest of the day is left entirely free so you can explore as you wish, perhaps do some last minute shopping. You could visit the Khan Al Khalili bazaar in Islamic Cairo, where you can buy everything from spices, to gold and silver jewellery, to stuffed toy camels. Bargain hard here, these merchants are well practised in the art of smooth-talking. **Hotel 1 night, with swimming pool (breakfast)**

### Day 10 Fly to London

This morning you'll be driven to Cairo airport in time for your return international flight to London.

*This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start or end of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets.*

*Each itinerary is planned many months in advance and although it is our intention to operate the itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed here, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors which are beyond our control. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined but we will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes. Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary.*

**Is this right for your family?** Accommodation is in hotels, an overnight train and on a comfortable cruise boat. There's no strenuous activity, so the trip is open to almost any age. There are optional excursions (like camel trekking) which can be taken for those interested.

### Lone Parents

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries, including the UK, require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the relevant country embassy for further information on exactly what may be required. These details can be found on the Foreign & Commonwealth Website under the appropriate country [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel)

**Climate** The best time of year to visit Egypt is between autumn and spring (Oct-Apr), when the days are normally warm to hot and the nights mild or occasionally cool. Humidity is very low and there is little or no rain. During the winter months (Dec-Feb), it can get cool on the Nile - particularly in the early mornings and evenings, so warm clothes are essential. During the summer (Jun-Aug) it is hot, but the lack of humidity makes the heat easier to bear.

Average monthly temperatures in Cairo.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>Max °C</b>	18	21	24	28	33	35	36	35	32	30	26	20
<b>Min °C</b>	8	9	11	14	17	20	21	22	20	18	14	10
<b>Rainfall (mm)</b>	5	5	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	5



# FAMILIES

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## Optional Extras

These excursions, if available, can be arranged through your tour leader (per person cost shown below)

Aswan - Calesh hire per hour	£3.00
Aswan – Philae Temple and High Dam	£20.00
Aswan – Camel trek	£16.00
Luxor – Sunset Felucca (1 hour)	£4.00
Luxor – Karnak Sound and Light	£15.00
Luxor – Hot Air Balloon Ride	£65.00
Citadel and Old Cairo	£16.00
Cairo – The Pharaonic Village	£15.00
Cairo - Islamic Cairo walking tour	£10.00

*These prices are a guideline only and are subject to change. Prices given may also be subject to a minimum number of participants.*

**Accommodation** The hotels used throughout the trip are of 3 or 4 star standard, and are booked on twin share basis. All are modern, clean and comfortable, and offer friendly service and rooms with private facilities; most are air-conditioned and have a swimming pool. On the sleeper train every two berth cabin is equipped with a basin, razor plugs, cabin temperature control, a private reading lamp, a cabin light and a call button for the steward. Each cabin has a connecting door with the next cabin to be used if needed, particularly for families in mind. If your family are an “odd” number, on the train you may share with another family, but will not have to share with complete strangers. For the Cruise we use five star boats which have double or twin, fully air-conditioned rooms with en suite bath, TV and mini fridge. An additional bed can be added to make a triple cabin. The mention of a swimming pool at a hotel should not be taken as a guarantee but rather an indication. You should also be aware that swimming pools at the hotels are often unheated and so can be cold in the winter months or even closed.

**Food and Drink** Included meals are indicated in the itinerary. Meals on board the cruise ship are included and a vegetarian option is always available. For meals not included in the itinerary you should allow £5-8 per person day to cover lunch and dinner. It is possible to eat cheaply in Egypt, but if you choose to eat in expensive restaurants you should allow a little more. Typical dishes are kebabs, mezze (dips and salads), fatta (a mix of rice, bread and garlic), meloukhia (a thick soup of spinach-like greens) and fasioekh (salted dried fish). Fuul (fava beans) are the staple diet of Egyptians. Desserts are sweet and milky and of course there is baklava (filo stuffed with nuts and honey). Your local tour leader will be on hand to make personal recommendations. We recommend you drink plenty of bottled water.

## Local Costs

Prices vary greatly in Egypt depending where you buy from, drinks are quoted below based on hotel/restaurant prices. You should expect to pay much less in a shop and much more at temple sites.

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml) in a hotel	£0.50
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre) in a hotel	£1.00
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£0.60
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£0.60
A bottle of beer	£3.00
Tea or coffee	£1.00
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£4.00
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£8.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£12.00

*\*Based on a mid range tourist restaurant.*

**Currency** The unit of currency is the Egyptian pound (EGP or LE). At the time of writing (Feb 2010) UK £1 = EGP 8.50. ATMs are relatively widespread in the main towns, and in many hotels, and offer a convenient means of withdrawing cash in local currency. Credit cards are readily accepted in banks, larger hotels, on the cruise boat and some souvenir shops, but not in small shops or bazaars.

**Tipping** is a recognised part of life in Egypt and, although it is always at your discretion, you will be expected to reward service everywhere you go. We recognise that tipping can be both confusing and irritating, so your tour leader will happily take this burden from you and run a tips kitty on your behalf. For this tour expect to contribute £20 per person for the entire tour, this will be collected in your welcome meeting. If you prefer to tip directly yourself you may of course do so.

Please also remember that your tour leader works hard and for long hours to make your holiday run smoothly, a suitable reward for good service would be £1.50-£2.50 from each person, per day. It is usual to collect this between yourselves as a group and present it to the leader on completion of the tour.

#### **RAMADAN 2010**

11<sup>th</sup> August – 8<sup>th</sup> September (dates not fixed but dependent on the lunar calendar): Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-Muslims throughout the day in most countries. Please be aware of the local sensitivities during the day and bear in mind that the evening breaking of the fast is usually an exciting and celebratory period!

(1<sup>st</sup> August to 29<sup>th</sup> August 2011)

**Security** Whilst the vast majority of travellers never experience anything untoward it is worth taking precautions particularly in urban areas. You should take sensible precautions in crowded areas such as street markets and airports, where pick-pocketing is common, and keep clear of any street disturbances. Don't wear jewellery, never leave your bags unattended, keep large amounts of money, cameras and cell phones out of sight when walking in town centres, and avoid walking in city centres after dark. Keep copies of important documents, including passports, in a separate place to the documents themselves, together with details of credit cards. Leave copies at home with a friend too. Safeguard valuables, important documents and cash and deposit them in hotel safes, where practicable.

**Language** Arabic, although English is widely spoken in tourist areas.

#### **Glossary**

Good morning	Sabah el Khair	Please	Laosmahat
Good evening	Masaa el Khair	What is your name?	Esmak Eh?
Good	Helw	My name....	Esmey....
No	Laa	How are you?	Exaiak
Yes	Naam	Fine	Kwais
Hello	Ahlan	How much	Bekam
Thank you	Shockrun	Goodbye	Ma' el Salama

**Time** Egypt is GMT +2 hours (daylight saving time is observed late March - 30 September)

**Visas** British visitors need a visa. These can be obtained on arrival, at the banks or exchange counters just before immigration, for stays of up to a month, by payment in Sterling (currently £10) USD or Egyptian Pounds change will be given in local currency according to the exchange rate on the day. Other nationalities should check with their Embassy or contact Travcour.

**Passport validity** Your passport should be valid for at least six months from the date of your return.

**Health** Vaccinations are recommended against Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio and Diphtheria. Please consult your doctor or a travel medical centre for further advice. We recommend you pack some rehydration salts and remember to drink LOTS of water every day. To avoid stomach upsets do not eat anything uncooked and wash your hands regularly, some antibacterial hand wash gel is very useful.



## Clothing & Equipment List for Egypt – Nile Cruise & Red Sea

Although Western clothing is generally acceptable, outside beach resorts Egyptians generally dress conservatively. Out of respect for local culture we recommend that - particularly if in rural areas – you dress accordingly i.e. no tight-fitting clothing, low-cut or sleeveless tops etc. Shorts are accepted in main tourist areas, but they (and skirts) should reach at least to the knee. Women should cover their heads, arms and legs when entering religious buildings. At night in the desert or on the river (especially Dec-Feb) it can get surprisingly cold, so pack warm and windproof clothing.

The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive and experienced travellers may well take a good deal less luggage than we recommend.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
<b>Walking shoes, trainers or strong sandals</b>	1 pair – all purpose wear		<b>Soft-sided bag</b> – 50-80 litres	
<b>Socks</b>	2 thick + 2 thin		<b>Lightweight daypack</b> – 25 litres	
<b>Waterproof jacket</b>	Lightweight			
<b>Waterproof trousers</b>	Optional in winter		<b>A variety of large plastic bags</b>	
<b>Underwear</b>	3+		<b>Sunglasses</b>	
<b>Thermal underwear</b>	Optional – but useful in winter		<b>Personal First Aid Kit</b>	
<b>T-Shirts</b>	3+		<b>Camera, memory cards and accessories</b>	
<b>Long trousers or skirt</b>	2+		<b>Reading material</b>	
<b>Short trousers</b>	2		<b>Washing kit</b> – inc “dry” hand-wash & wet wipes	
<b>Long sleeve shirt</b>	2+		<b>Loo kit</b> (in small bag) loo paper – remember this for the train journey.	
<b>Thick Fleece</b>	Optional in winter			
<b>Warm hat &amp; gloves</b>	Recommended for cooler evenings in winter			
<b>Thin fleece or sweatshirt</b>	1			
<b>Sunhat / baseball cap</b>	Essential (styled to shade face, ears & neck)			
<b>Swimwear &amp; sarong</b>				

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
<b>Passport/ Visa</b>		<b>Earplugs</b>	
<b>Air Tickets</b>		<b>Universal travelling adapter</b>	
<b>Money/Travellers Cheques</b>		<b>Guide book &amp; map</b>	
<b>Cash Cards/Visa</b>		<b>Sunscreen</b> – lots of it	
<b>Insurance Documents</b>		<b>Insect repellent and sting cream</b> (with high DEET content)	
<b>Trip Information &amp; Itinerary</b>			
<b>Money security belt/pouch</b>			

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions**, please visit [www.baa.com](http://www.baa.com) for details or click [here](#)