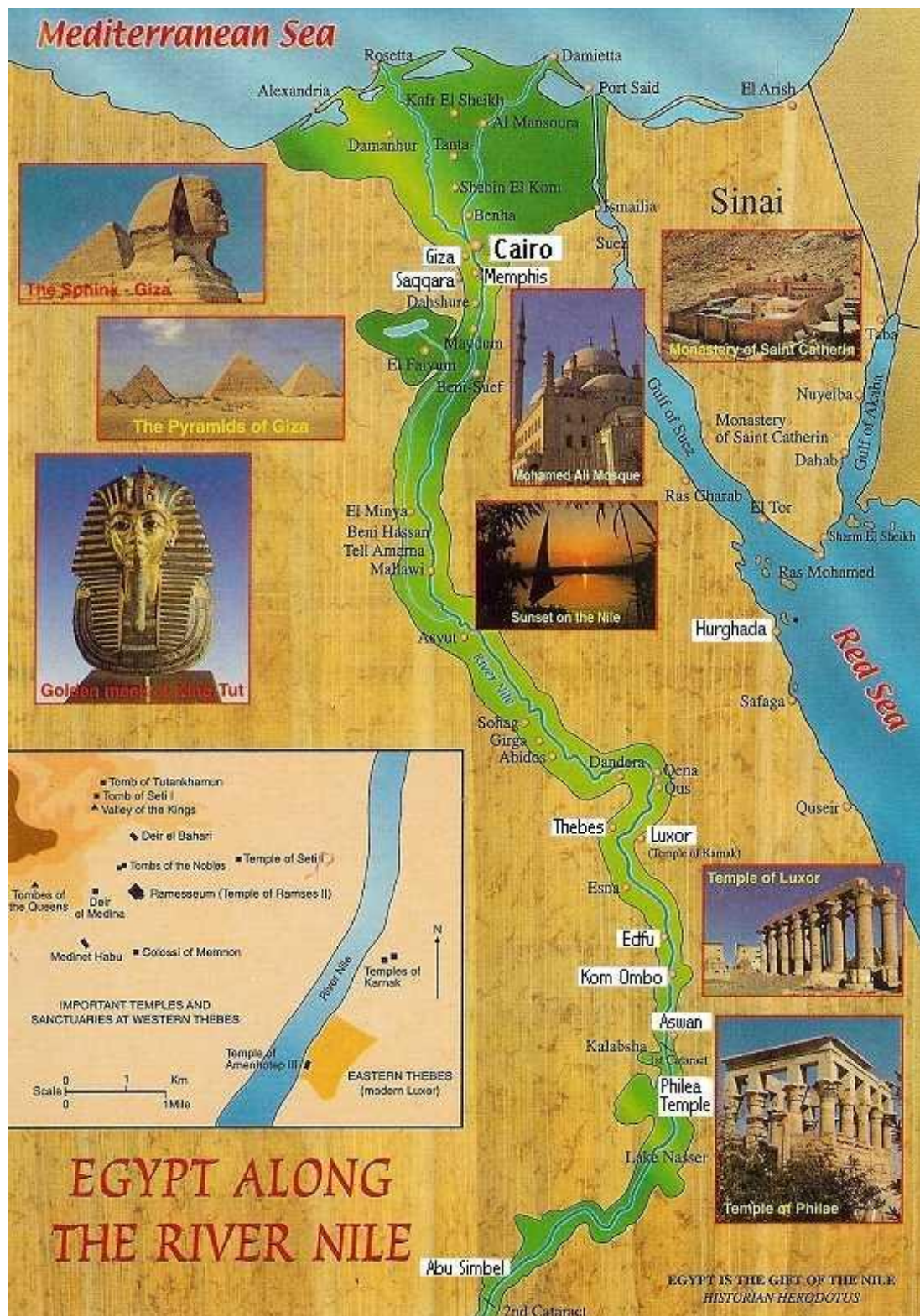


THAYER TOURS presents
EGYPT ALONG THE RIVER NILE
April 13 – 23, 2011



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS & ITINERARY

- See the Great Pyramids and ride a camel across the sands to the Sphinx
- Visit the valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens in Luxor
- Tour the Egyptian Museum containing the treasures of King Tutankhamun
- Explore all the sites with expert Egyptologists
- Stay in 5-star resorts in Giza, Elephantine Island, and Cairo
- Sail on a 5-day luxurious Nile cruise from Luxor to Aswan
- Ride in modern, air conditioned vans
- Enjoy daily breakfasts and special lunches and dinners
- Dine with a gracious and hospitable Egyptian family in their home in Cairo
- Travel with an experienced tour director and a small, friendly group!

Day 1 ~ Welcome to Cairo ~ Mena House Hotel

You will be met on arrival where you will be assisted with clearing customs and airport procedures. Private transfer in a modern, air-conditioned vehicle to the Mena House Hotel, considered one of the greatest colonial era hotels, situated next to the Pyramids and now a 5-star resort with amazing views of the Pyramids from all areas of the hotel.

Day 2 ~ Giza, Khufu ~ Mena House Hotel (B, D)

Meet your local Egyptologist and begin your day with an unforgettable tour of the Great Pyramids of Giza. The only present-day survivors of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, they are among the greatest attractions in the world. Included in your visit will be a stop to see the Solar Boat Museum located beside the Great Pyramid of Cheops, considered to be the single most important archeological find in Egypt since the Tomb of Tutankhamen. No trip to Egypt would be complete without a ride on a “ship of the desert”, and so today you have the opportunity to mount your individual camel for a short ride across the sands of Giza to the Sphinx. Return to the Mena House where you will be joined by your Egyptologist for a special welcome dinner.

Day 3 ~ Memphis, Sakkara, and Dahshour ~ Mena House Hotel (B, L)

This morning your Egyptologist will escort you to one of the most important Pyramids in Egypt, the Dahshour Pyramids. Several pyramids can be found here, including the famed Bent Pyramid and Red Pyramid. Continue on to Sakkara where you will see the famous Step Pyramid, the first freestanding stone structure in the world. Visit tombs that show the beauty and excellence of Ancient Egyptian art on their walls and give insight into the daily life of Ancient Egypt. After lunch at one of the restaurants at the Sakkara site, continue to Memphis where you will see the ancient capital that once stood as a flourishing metropolis during the time of the Pharaohs. The site of the old city is thickly surrounded by lush palm groves and bushes, isolating it from modern civilization.

Day 4 ~ Valley of the Kings, Luxor ~ Rhiana Dahabiya (B, L, D)

Take a short, early morning flight to Luxor, site of ancient Thebes, and board the Rhiana Dahabiya, a luxurious Egyptian sailing ship, for your 4-night cruise along the Nile. After lunch on board, meet your Egyptologist who will accompany you on your exploration of the Valley of the Kings, a vast City of the Dead where magnificent tombs were carved into the desert rocks, richly decorated, and filled with treasures for the afterlife by generations of Pharaohs. Also visit the Valley of the Queens with the Temple of Hatshepsut, Ancient Egypt's only female Pharaoh and the magnificent Medinet Habu, a complex of temples supported by a series of great columns. Return to your dahabiya for dinner and an evening of leisure.

Day 5 ~ Luxor, and a day on the Nile ~ Rhiana Dahabiya (B, L, D)

Breakfast on board before you embark on a tour of the East Bank of Luxor, starting with the strikingly graceful Temple of Luxor dedicated to the god Amun. Proceed to the Temple of Karnak, built over more than a thousand years by generations of Pharaohs. Lunch on board and sail to Esna, enjoying tea on the Sun Deck and evening dining while sailing the Nile.

Day 6 ~ Cruising to Edfu ~ Rhiana Dahabiya (B, L, D)

Continue your Egypt tour with another day on the amazing River Nile. After a leisurely morning aboard ship, you'll travel to Edfu for visits to the remarkably well-preserved Temple of Horus and the ancient stone quarries nearby. Enjoy dinner on board and a leisurely evening beside Al Ramady Village.

Day 7 ~ Kom Ombo, El Sheikh Fadl Island ~ Rhiana Dahabiya (B, L, D)

Discoveries await on the last day of your unforgettable Nile cruise, as your Egypt tour takes you to see the unusual double temples of Kom Ombo. Continue your cruise on to el Sheikh Fadl Island where you will dine and spend the evening on the island.

Day 8 ~ Aswan ~ Moevenpick Elephantine Island Resort (B)

Early morning arrival into Aswan with breakfast on board before disembarking and visiting the Philae Temple and the High Dam. On this day, you have the option of taking a short flight across a corner of the Sahara Desert for Abu Simbel, in what was once the ancient kingdom of Nubia. Marvel at the Great Temple honoring Rameses II, carved out of a cliff with four 67-foot high seated statues of the pharaoh at the entrance. (The price for this optional excursion is \$349.) Or, if you choose, you will be transported to your resort on Elephantine Island. The afternoon can be spent at leisure strolling the gardens of the resort or swimming in the pool. The hotel also has a free launch which can take you to downtown Aswan for a shopping excursion. Enjoy lunch and dinner at your leisure at the resort.

Day 9 ~ Cairo ~ Marriott Cairo Hotel & Omar Khayyan Casino (B, D)

After a buffet breakfast at the hotel, take a short flight to Cairo. At the airport in Cairo, you will be met and transferred to the Marriott Cairo Hotel, Cairo's premier hotel and world class casino. Relax and enjoy magnificent views of the Nile and six acres of palace gardens. In the evening, enjoy a very special dining experience with an Egyptian family who has been carefully selected to graciously host our group in their home. This highlight of the tour is meant to be a social gathering between different cultures.

Day 10 ~ Cairo ~ Marriott Cairo Hotel & Omar Khayyan Casino (B)

Join your Egyptologist on a tour of 7,000 years of Egyptian history with a visit to the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, which includes the world-famous golden treasures from King Tutankhamen's tomb. You will have the opportunity to go inside the fabulous "Mummies Room", where the mummies of the royal kings, queens, and Pharaohs are kept in state. This afternoon, you will visit the fascinating Khan El-Khalili Bazaar, founded as a watering stop for caravans in the 14th century, and now one of the largest bazaars in the Middle East. As you wander in the labyrinth of narrow streets, you will find workshops and stalls selling all manner of things from woodwork, glasswork and leather goods to perfumes, fabrics, and Egyptian curiosities.

Day 11 ~ Bound for Home (B)

Tour ends at Cairo. A transfer is included from your hotel to Cairo International Airport.

\$4268 pp/double occupancy

\$ single supplement

Includes:

all accommodations and meals as specified in the itinerary,
services of professional local guides,
experienced tour director throughout the tour,
sightseeing admissions as specified in the itinerary,
conservation fees, all government and hotel taxes,
arrival and departure transfers, internal flights as shown,
baggage handling and portage at hotels and airports

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TRAVEL INFORMATION

Air Conditioning

All hotels, vans, and the dahabiya sailing ship provide air conditioning.

Airport

Arrive at the airport at least 2 hours ahead of your scheduled departure time. The name on your passport must match **exactly** the name on your airline ticket. All carry-on liquids must be 3 oz. or less and placed in a quart-sized plastic bag. Upon arrival in Cairo International Airport, you will be met by a representative from the tour company who will provide assistance at the airport and transfer to the hotel.

ATM and Credit Cards

ATM's are easily accessible and credit cards are widely accepted in Egypt. It is recommended that you contact your bank in advance of departing for this tour to determine whether or not you will be able to use your ATM and credit cards while traveling. When contacting your bank, notify them of your travel dates so that they will anticipate charges being made outside of the country. Also, you should make a photocopy of the front and back sides of your ATM and credit cards to leave behind with someone at home who will assist you in the event your cards are misplaced or stolen.

Cell Phones

Contact your cell phone carrier to determine if your service extends to Egypt. Most cell phone companies provide a temporary international calling fee that lowers long distance calls. Text messages are \$0.50 per text.

Clothing and Packing

Select a wardrobe that allows for layering. We suggest you wear loose, light cottons and linens in layers that can be taken off during the heat of the day and put back on for cool evenings. For special dinners, many guests like to dress up, but by all means, be comfortable. It is inadvisable for women to wear anything short or sleeveless unless on the beach or by the pool so as not to offend local custom. When visiting churches and mosques, women are not allowed to enter with bare shoulders or short pants or short skirts. Men should also dress appropriately for a holy sanctuary. Shorts are discouraged. Women and men will be required to remove their shoes in mosques.

Following is a list of recommended items to pack:

- Comfortable walking shoes, well broken-in
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses and extra prescription eyeglasses (contact lenses not recommended)
- Eye drops for the dust when visiting Pyramids and temples
- Camera, extra batteries and/or battery charger, memory cards
- Antiseptic hand cleanser
- Bathing suit
- Binoculars
- Light jacket for cool nights on the river
- Travel alarm clock
- Prescription medicine and over-the-counter medications (i.e. Tylenol, Imodium AD, etc.)

Currency and Exchange Rates

The currency in Egypt is the Egyptian Pound (EGP). The currency exchange is set on a national level so all exchange places offer the same rate. Currently, the exchange rate is about 5 EGP to 1 USD. Most hotels have a bank in the hotel. There are also ATM's in many locations. Few establishments accept traveler's checks. To obtain the up-to-date currency exchange rate, you can check the internet site www.oanda.com.

Customs and Tax-Free Shopping

High value articles that a traveler brings to Egypt (i.e. computers, camcorders, cameras) must be declared upon entry, be listed on the traveler's passport, and be taken home with the traveler. Current regulations permit bringing back \$800 worth of items duty-free, as long as you physically have the items with you.

Electrical Current

The electrical current in Egypt and onboard the cruise ship is 220v, 50Hz, and sockets take the standard continental European dual round-pronged plug. Guests whose appliances do not meet this standard will need to bring the appropriate converters and adapters.

Health

All travelers to Egypt should be in reasonably good health. There is a significant amount of walking on this tour and archaeological sites and temple floors are far from even. The sailing ship does not have an elevator, and you will need to navigate one flight of stairs to access guest cabins and public areas.

Tap water in hotels, restaurants, and aboard the ship is not potable. Use caution when eating salad items that may have been washed in the tap water. Always drink bottled water with an unbroken seal. It is advisable to clean your teeth with bottled water. Avoid having ice in drinks. Eating uncooked vegetables should be avoided. Eat only fruit that you can peel. Most meals on this tour are in hotel restaurants where cleanliness is good and they are used to catering to westerners.

No vaccinations are required to enter Egypt, but suggested vaccinations are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and typhoid, as well as updating all standard vaccinations such as tetanus, polio, measles, etc. A strong insect repellent is necessary for traveling along the Nile.

Luggage

Due to space limitations aboard the cruise ship, on-tour flights and vans, luggage is limited to one average-size piece of checked luggage per person, weighing up to 44 pounds, and one small soft-sided carry-on bag per person, weighing no more than 15 pounds. For your day-to-day travel while on tour, we recommend that you limit your hand luggage to a small, soft-sided carry-on piece (i.e. backpack or shoulder bag), containing only those items you need handy during the day such as camera, medications, etc. For your international flight, we recommend you check in the larger piece of luggage and keep the carry-on piece with you containing all vital personal items and an extra change of clothing in case your checked-in luggage is delayed.

Safety

Egypt is generally very safe from petty crime, street crime, and random violence. The threat to personal safety from political instability is also low. There is a potential for problems with home-grown terrorist attacks, but it has been a number of years since there's been an incident in Cairo or Upper Egypt. Use common sense and stay away from demonstrations and avoid badly lit, deserted places after dark. Most tourist areas are fine at all times day or night.

Time Zones

Egypt is 10 hours ahead of California time in April.

Travel Documents

It is required that your name, as it appears on your domestic or international airline ticket, **precisely** match your name as it appears on your passport. Your passport must have at least two blank visa pages and an expiration date of at least **six** months beyond the completion of the tour. Make at least two copies of the photo page of your passport, leaving one copy at home and carrying one with you and a traveling companion. A renewable 30-day tourist visa is required for travel to Egypt. It can be obtained before traveling to Egypt using ZVS visa service (zvs.com), or upon arrival at Cairo International Airport for a cost of \$15, payable in U.S. dollars.

Weather

Egypt has one of the hottest and sunniest climates in the world. The heat is often relieved by a northerly breeze with temperatures dropping during the night. During the months of March – May, a brief sandstorm can occur. Rainy days are few and far between in Cairo, and nearly unknown in Upper (southern) Egypt. April temperatures in Cairo average a high of 82 degrees and a low of 59 degrees. In Luxor, temperatures average a high of 93 degrees and a low of 65 degrees.

CITIES AND HOTELS

CAIRO

Cairo – Al Qahira (The Victorious) – was built around 969 A.D. as a royal enclosure for the leaders of the new Fatimid occupation who needed a safe place to live. About a hundred years later, Cairo became the center for administrative functions of the country under threat of invasion by European Crusader forces. Since then, Cairo has spread out and crossed the Nile to fill the valley all the way up to the once isolated Giza plateau where the three famous pyramids tower over their surroundings. These monuments lie right on the line between the green farmland of the Nile Valley and the dry desert that reaches westward thousands of miles. In the last 20 years, Cairo has begun overcoming this obstacle to its expansion by building new suburbs in the desert, offering escape from the overcrowded conditions in the city. From 5,000-year-old pyramids and temples to British colonial architecture, Cairo is a fascinating place to visit. And though it may seem noisy and intimidating at first, Cairo is one of the warmest and most welcoming places in the world.

Mena House Hotel, Giza ~ www.oberoimenahouse.com

This 5-star palatial hotel in the shadow of the Great Pyramids has enchanted guests since 1869. Located in forty acres of jasmine scented gardens, Mena House has played host to kings and emperors, Heads of State, and celebrities. Its royal history is reflected in luxurious interiors that are embellished with exquisite antiques, handcrafted furniture, and rich textiles. A variety of international as well as Egyptian cuisine is on offer at the excellent restaurants, and the hotel has one of the nicest outdoors pools in the city.

Marriott Cairo Hotel & Omar Khayyam Casino ~ www.marriott.com

This former palace was especially built on an island in the Nile for France's Empress Eugenie, who came to Egypt for the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Now Cairo's premier hotel and world-class casino, it has magnificent views of the Nile and six acres of palace gardens. The main building has retained much of its 19th century charm, and the hotel now offers 15 restaurants and the largest pool in the city.

LUXOR

Known in ancient Egypt as Thebes, Luxor takes its name from the Arabic al-Uqsar (the palaces). Today, this modern city contains many of the largest and most famous of the ancient monuments, including the Luxor and Karnak Temples on the East Bank of the Nile and the Valleys of the Kings and Queens on the West Bank of the Nile. In ancient Egypt, settlements were built on the East Bank of the Nile while tombs were located on the West Bank. This is because the sun rises, or is "born", in the east and gives life, while the sun sets in the west, signaling an end to the sun's energy. Sunsets in Luxor are especially beautiful, setting the western landscape ablaze.

Rhianna Dahabiyya

As opposed to a large cruise ship, the dahabiyya is more like a floating villa, a sailing ship with modern conveniences to match the stately comfort of traditional wind-driven travel. The dahabiyya offers a more intimate approach to cruising with no motor noise and the ability to dock at more isolated and quieter ports. The Rhianna Dahabiyya (about half the length and width of a football field) offers 8 fully furnished deluxe cabins with private bath, individually controlled air conditioning, panoramic sound-proof windows, mini bar, safe, telephone, television, and music system. Ship facilities include a reading lounge, dining room, bar, sun deck, Jacuzzi, gym, massage, 24-hour room service, and wireless internet.

ASWAN

Located at the first cataract (rapid) on the Nile, Aswan has long been a vital military and trade center. Its name comes from the ancient Egyptian word *swenet* ("making business"). To the south lies Nubia and then Sudan, the place where Egypt ends and Africa begins. This is one of the most beautiful spots in Egypt; the people of Aswan are extraordinarily laid-back and life is slower and quieter. This is a desert city, very clean, and full of trees and gardens. Aswan is the last stop in getting to the famous temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel on the shore of Lake Nasser south of the town.

Moevenpick Resort, Elephantine Island ~ www.moevenpick-aswan.com

The resort is set on an island in the middle of the River Nile in one of the most enchanting natural locations in Egypt. It is a perfect place to relax in the beautiful natural surroundings of the river and the gardens. In addition to the fine restaurants and swimming pool, the resort offers a free ferry launch to downtown Aswan for exploring the ancient city and shopping at the bazaar.

IMAGES OF EGYPT

