



**The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) leads exclusive tours to Egypt for its members, typically in March and November every year. A pre-set itinerary has been curated featuring the best of Egypt's historic sites, ARCE projects, and direct access to top researchers in the fields of Egyptology, Archaeology, and cultural heritage.**

**This tour will be led by Professor Melinda Hartwig**



Melinda Hartwig is the curator of ancient Egyptian, Nubian and Near Eastern art at the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University. Previously, she taught at Georgia State University as a professor of ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern art and archaeology. Besides curating a number of exhibitions, she has authored four books and a wide array of articles.

Melinda has worked in Egypt since 1983, directing Theban tomb documentation and conservation projects, as a recipient of NEH and USAID grants, among others. She hosted a 24-episode course for The Great Courses, titled “The Great Tours: A Guided Tour of Ancient Egypt” that delves into the civilization of the ancient Egyptians in compelling and unforgettable depth. To learn more, [click here](#).

Melinda received her Ph.D. in Near Eastern art and archaeology from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University. To learn more about Melinda Hartwig, please visit [melindahartwigphd.com](http://melindahartwigphd.com).

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**TOUR PARTICIPANTS MUST BE ARCE MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING**

Please contact ARCE's Membership & Chapter Manager, Rebekah Atol, at (703) 721-3470 or [ratol@arce.org](mailto:ratol@arce.org) for any inquiries.



Dear Traveler,

Welcome to Egypt! We are honored to have you join us on our special tour: “Untapped Treasures: An inside look at Egypt’s most beautiful sites off the beaten path”. This special journey led by world-renowned Egyptologist, Dr. Melinda Hartwig will explore the diverse cultural heritage of this ancient land.

This 75th Anniversary tour has been carefully curated to include beloved, iconic sights of Egypt, such as the Pyramids of Giza and the Valley of the Kings, lesser-known gems like Wadi Hammamat and the Meidum Pyramid, and of course ARCE conservation projects.

We will be visiting the Monastery of St. Anthony, which was conserved by ARCE from 1996-2014 located at the foot of Khelsm Mountain overlooking the Red Sea, and believed to be the site where St. Anthony once lived in a cave. And, we will have an exhilarating day touring two ancient mines including Mons Porphyrites to see where the purple stone that so entranced Roman emperors was mined.

We will also be visiting the remote site of Wadi El-Hitan, or Valley of the Whales, an open-air museum displaying the rare fossils of ancient whales (*Basilosaurus isis*) illustrating how the arid landscape we see today was once submerged in the waters of the Tethys Sea.

ARCE has maintained a constant presence in Egypt since our inception in 1948, and our deep-rooted partnership with our Egyptian friends and colleagues will allow you to see Egypt like never before. You will have the opportunity to see the sites with the experts who oversee their research and excavation.

While visiting both current and past ARCE projects, I look forward to introducing you to the scholars, archaeologists, and Egyptologists who have dedicated their careers to uncovering Egypt’s past and are helping to preserve these places for future generations.

It is our sincere honor to have you with us in Egypt to see the sights and experience the culture of this beautiful and magnificent country. Please know our ARCE staff is here to guide and assist you every step of the way.

Dr. Louise Bertini  
Executive Director, ARCE



Louise Bertini has served as ARCE’s Executive Director since April 2019 and previously as Director for Egypt since 2018. She is an Egyptologist and specialist in faunal analysis who has worked on more than 25 archaeological projects in Egypt since 2003. She obtained a M.A. in Egyptology from the University of Liverpool, and a Ph.D. in Archaeology from Durham University. Her research interests include zooarchaeology, bioarchaeology, paleoecology, paleopathology, domestication, subsistence reconstruction, and animal mummification as well as other areas of Egyptology. She was previously a lecturer in Egyptology at the American University in Cairo from 2009-2017.



## Site Highlights

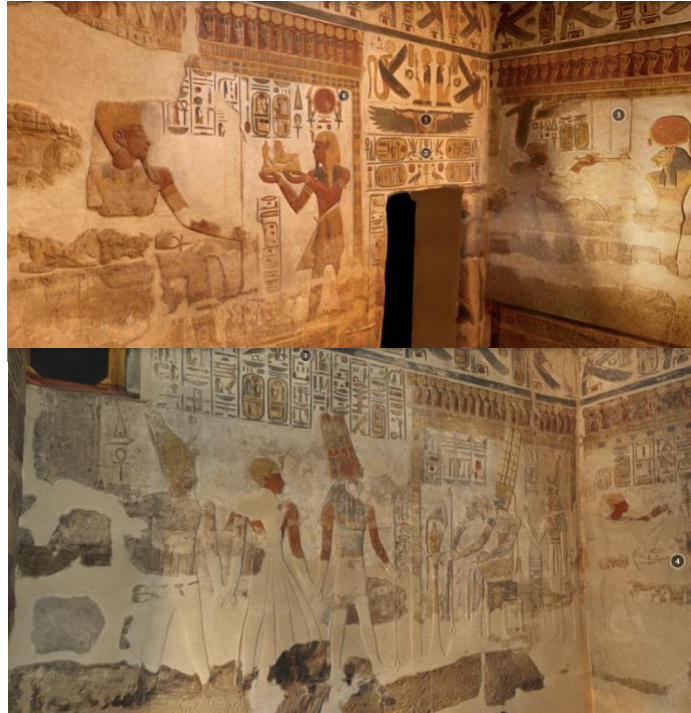
### Khonsu Temple

Situated within the southwest area of the Karnak Temple Complex on Luxor's East Bank, Khonsu Temple is regarded as an excellent example of a small but complete New Kingdom temple.

Its construction began under Ramses III, however the monument was finished by a number of later rulers, including Libyan generals who were kings of Upper Egypt. The temple was named after Khonsu, the son of Amun and Mut.

It consists of a peristyle court, bordered by a portico of twenty-eight columns that lead to a hypostyle hall connected to a barque sanctuary. Some of the most well-preserved and vivid relief carvings at Karnak were long-hidden within Khonsu Temple under centuries of smoke and grime.

The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), with funding from the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID), oversaw and carried out conservation and documentation work in the temple. In later stages, this was accomplished via a field training school for conservators from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. In addition to cleaning and conserving six chapels inside the temple, the project included structural repairs to stabilize the monument, a photographic documentation training school for the Luxor inspectorate, and the introduction of visitor information and signage. The conservation interventions led by ARCE took place at the temple in phases beginning in 2006 and lasted until 2018.





## Abydos

Located in southern Egypt along the western banks of the Nile, the site of Abydos was the final resting place for ancient Egypt's earliest kings. It was a necropolis for Egypt's earliest kings and later became a pilgrimage center for the worship of the god Osiris.

The oldest graves at the site date as far back as 4000 BCE, 850 years before Abydos would be established as a significant site for burial and religious worship in the predynastic and early dynastic periods. The kings who dominated this early period in ancient Egyptian history were responsible for unifying Egypt into a single state, creating the geopolitical foundations that would allow expansive development in later dynasties.

The desert landscape of Abydos is dominated by a massive rectangular mudbrick enclosure measuring 133.5 by 77.7 meters (or 438 by 255 feet). Today, this monument is called Shunet el-Zebib, which means "storehouse of raisins" for reasons unknown. However, in antiquity, it served as a royal monument for the last king of the Second Dynasty (2890 – c. 2686 BCE), Khasekhemwy, whose reign ended in around

2686 BCE. His tomb was also constructed at the royal cemetery in Abydos at the site now called Umm el-Qaab ("mother of pots"). He had an earlier, smaller enclosure built at Hierakonpolis, another important and sacred site that was dedicated to the god Horus. At Abydos, other enclosures dedicated to kings of the First Dynasty (3100 BCE) and to Peribsen of the Second Dynasty (2890 – c. 2686 BCE) had also been built in the area surrounding Khasekhemwy's enclosure.

Enclosures dating to earlier than the Predynastic Period have not yet been found. Amongst the enclosures of the First Dynasty (approximately 3100 BCE) and Peribsen, only the foundations remain. As revealed by archaeology, the enclosures were dismantled by subsequent royalty, who then had theirs built. Khasekhemwy's enclosure survived this phenomenon because the site was abandoned by the kings of the Third Dynasty (c. 2686 BCE–c. 2613 BCE) who chose to focus on monumental construction at Saqqara in northern Egypt. Therefore, subsequent kings did not need to dismantle it. Today, his enclosure stands sentry as a reminder of over 3000 years of rich activity at the sacred site of Abydos.





## Ikhwat Yusuf

The Mausoleum of Ikhwat Yusuf is a Fatimid monument with later Ottoman additions located in Cairo's Southern Cemetery at the foot of the Mokattam outcrop. The mausoleum is one of very few surviving Fatimid period (AD 969-1171) monuments in Egypt and contains an elaborately carved stucco mihrab (prayer niche), a brick dome, stone arches, vaults, and secondary domes.

In 2022, ARCE began a conservation and restoration project at the monument that includes a digital restoration, in collaboration with the Factum Foundation, followed by the conservation of the mihrab.





## Tour Itinerary

### Untapped Treasures An Inside Look at Egypt's Most Beautiful Sites Off the Beaten Path October 23 – November 10, 2023

#### Monday, October 23 | Arrive in Cairo

##### **Meals Included: Dinner**

Meet and greet at Cairo Airport. To ensure your journey is seamless from the start, our representative will meet you before passport control to assist with acquiring your visa stamps, moving through passport control, and collecting your luggage. Later you will be transferred to **Cairo Marriott Hotel** for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Cairo

#### Tuesday, October 24 | Dahshur / Saqqara

##### **Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

**07:00** Buffet breakfast at hotel.

**08:00** Meet your guide at the lobby to begin the day by visiting **Dahshur**, South of Saqqara and an extension of the necropolis to discover the first true Pyramids in the history of Egypt, built during the reign of Sneferu, who was the father of Cheops, in honor of whom the Great Pyramid of Giza was built. Both pyramids date from the 4th dynasty. You will learn more about the development as you explore the imposing Red Pyramid, with its tint of reddish limestone blocks and the Bent Pyramid, this pyramid is probably the best example of the transition from step to straight pyramid.

##### **Lunch at Saqqara Palm Club**

Then to **Saqqara**, the ancient burial site. On the site, which is considered by many archaeologists to be one of the world's most important excavations, is the Step Pyramid, which was constructed by Imhotep in the 27th century BC. The pyramid is part of the tomb complex of Zoser, who was the first pharaoh of the Old Kingdom. The pyramid began as a simple mastaba, or long, flat tomb building.

Return to hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Cairo

#### Wednesday, October 25 | Pyramids of Giza / Sphinx / Grand Egyptian Museum

##### **Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

**07:00** Buffet breakfast at hotel.

**08:00** Meet your guide at the lobby to begin the day with a visit to **Giza Plateau** with the famous **Great Pyramid** and **Sphinx**. Dominating the plateau and running in a



southwest diagonal through the site are the three pyramids of the pharaohs Khufu, Khafra, and Menkaura. The northernmost, and the largest, one belongs to Khufu.

### **Entry to the Great Pyramid of Khufu**

**The Sphinx** is the largest monolith statue in the world and it is the oldest known monumental sculpture. Commonly held to have been built by ancient Egyptians of the Old Kingdom during the reign of the Pharaoh Khafra there are some who believe it is much, much older.

### **Lunch at Andrea restaurant**

Continue to the famous **Grand Egyptian Museum**; the GEM is built on a slope and straddles the 162 foot difference in levels between the Nile valley, where you enter, and the Giza plateau, where the main galleries are situated. There are sculpture gardens in the museum park, while a massive statue of Ramses II greets you upon entry into the main atrium. From here, the Grand Staircase, which leads from valley level to plateau, will be lined with 87 statues of kings and gods.

The main galleries lead left from the staircase and are divided into four eras: pre-dynastic (up to 3100 B.C.) and Old Kingdom (the pyramid builders), Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom (Tutankhamun, Ramses, etc.) and Greco-Roman. These chronological galleries are then organized according to themes, unlike in the old museum: Beliefs and Eternity (religion), Kingship and Power (rulers), and Society (the rest of us). At the end, visitors are led right back to tall glass windows, which look out toward the pyramids and drive home the magnificence of Ancient Egypt—the grand finale of a chronological show celebrating one of the world's greatest civilizations.

Return to hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Cairo

### **Thursday, October 26 | Old Cairo / NMEC / Basatin**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner.**

**07:00** Buffet breakfast at hotel.

**08:00** We begin our visit to **Coptic Cairo**, the center of Christianity in Cairo. On the site of a Roman-Byzantine fortress town, Coptic Cairo (or Old Cairo) is a fascinating place to visit. Once we descend the short stairway into the quarter, we will feel removed from the hustle-and-bustle of Cairo. Along the quaint, modest alleyways are small, modest homes.

We will walk the cobblestone streets and stop at a few of the churches here., were you will visit **Hanging Church**, dating to the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> Century, this basilica was named "Al-Mu'allaqah" because it was built on top of the south gate of the Fortress of Babylon.



Continue to **Church of St. Sergius**, dating back to the beginning of the 5th Century, this basilica is built on the cave in which the Holy Family stayed and is regarded by visitors as a source of blessing. As we stroll along, we will come to the recently restored Synagogue of **Ben Ezra**-- the oldest Jewish synagogue in Egypt. Despite the 45 Jewish families that remain in Cairo, the synagogue is no longer operational.

#### **Lunch at a local restaurant**

Then to the **National Museum of Egyptian Civilization**, which located in Fustat is one of the most important projects of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, carried out in cooperation with UNESCO, to become one of the largest museum in Egypt and the Middle East, to present a new vision of the ancient Egyptian heritage.

The most important artifacts exhibited in the museum include the birth plate from the New Kingdom era, statues of King Amenemhat III in the form of the Sphinx and Thutmose III sitting, a statue of the deity Nilus from the Greco-Roman period, about fifty niches from the Islamic era, in addition to a variety of small statues and amulets made of blue vines and a statue of the ancient Egyptian writer made of red granite.

You will have the opportunity to visit the **Royal Mummies**, which have been moved recently from the Egyptian Museum.

Continue to the **Jewish cemetery of Basatin** is believed to be the second oldest Jewish cemetery in the world, with an original foundation deed dating to the 9th century. At the time, the land provided for the cemetery consisted of 147 acres and was located beyond the boundaries of the Tulunid capital of Egypt. In modern times, the cemetery became fragmented into disconnected plots of land amounting to about 27 acres. The cemetery was previously divided into designated areas for the Rabbanite and Karaite Jews. However, the only remaining part of the Karaite graveyard is a small private plot belonging to the Leishaa and Menasha families.

Cocktail reception at the American Research Center in Egypt.

Dinner at Tabula restaurant

Overnight in Cairo

#### **Friday, October 27 | Historic Cairo / Khan El- Khalili / El- Muiz Street / Ikhwat Yusuf**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

**08:00**

After breakfast, meet your guide and head to **the Bab Zuwayla**.

Start the day with visiting the **Zawiya-Sabil Farag Ibn Barquq**, then begin our walk from Bab Zuwayla, the southern entrance to the original Fatimid settlement of Cairo that was founded in 969 A.D. It was later reconstructed in stone in the late 11th century A.D. by Badr al-Gamali, then-ruler of Egypt. Bab Zuwayla remained famous into the 19th century as a setting for the public execution of criminals. At



times the severed heads of the criminals would be displayed along the tops of the walls, the most famous of which were the Mamluks killed in the Citadel massacre of 1811.

Continue to **Sabil Mohammed Ali**. This elegant Sabil (public fountain) built in 1820 was the first in Cairo to have gilded window grilles and calligraphic panels in Ottoman Turkish. It has been meticulously restored by ARCE, with interesting displays about Muhammed Ali, who built the Sabil to honor his son Tusun after his passing. It is also possible to visit the cistern below the Sabil and school rooms in the kuttab (Quranic School) upstairs, which welcomed students until 1992.

Ending with **Al Azhar mosques, El Moez Street**, and spending the remainder of the day at **Khan El Khalili Market**.

Head to **El Moaz Street**, which is one of the most amazing streets in Islamic Cairo; it dates back to the Fatimid era and has almost all types of Islamic architecture decorated with Arabic calligraphy. El Moaz Street is considered an open-air Museum.

#### **Lunch at Naguib Mahfouz Restaurant**

Exploring the fascinating **Khan El-Khalili Bazaar** – reputed to be the largest bazaar in the Middle East. Originally founded as a watering stop for caravanserai in the 14th century, the bazaar has now grown to vast proportions.

Finally visit **the Mausoleum of Ikhwat Yusuf**

Return to hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner at Kababgy Restaurant

Overnight in Cairo

#### **Saturday, October 28 | St. Anthony Monastery / St. Paul Monastery**

##### **Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box / Dinner**

Buffet breakfast at the hotel or breakfast box.

Checkout after breakfast.

**07:00**

Meet your guide at the lobby and drive to **Soma Bay**, visit **St. Anthony & St. Paul Monasteries** enroute.

Believed to have been originally constructed in the 4th century A.D., the **Monastery of St. Anthony** is located at the foot of Khelsm Mountain overlooking the Red Sea. It is almost 12 km south of Zafarana City. It is thought to be the site where St. Anthony once lived in a cave and is situated next to a well. St. Anthony was the first monk to move to this wilderness and the first to create a monastic community in Coptic Egypt.



During the 9th century A.D., additional land was added to the monastery, increasing its area to almost three acres. High walls and watchtowers were built around it to protect from the Bedouins, giving it the appearance of a fortress. Today these walls are 12 meters high and two meters wide.

**Lunch box is included.**

Dating to the 4th century, the **Monastery of St Paul** began as a grouping of hermitages in the cliffs around the site where Paul had his cell. The complex's heart is the Church of St Paul, which was built in and around the cave where Paul lived. It's cluttered with altars, candles, ostrich eggs (the symbol of the Resurrection) and murals representing saints and biblical stories. The fortress above the church was where the monks retreated during Bedouin raids.

St Paul's monastery is quieter and much more low-key than nearby St Anthony's, and is often bypassed in favor of its larger neighbor. However, a visit is well worthwhile and gives a glimpse into the life of silence, prayer and asceticism that has flowered here in the Eastern Desert for almost two millennia. Visitors are welcome and can wander freely around the monastery but taking a guided tour with an English-speaking monk will allow you to access many of the locked areas.

Later you will be transferred to **Sheraton Soma Bay Hotel** for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Soma Bay

**Sunday, October 29 | Mons Claudianus / Mons Porphyrites**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box/ Dinner**

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

**06:00** Meet your guide at the lobby and head to **Mons Claudianus**, and **Mons Porphyrites** by 4x4

On 21st of July AD 18, a Roman geologist discovered porphyry. Porphyry is a magic stone, dark purple in color, and the emperors immediately fell in love with it and demanded to have it in huge quantities. There was only one problem: it is only found in one of the most inhospitable places on earth, high up in the eastern deserts of Egypt, five days from the Nile. A huge quarrying operation was set up at two sites- Mons Porphyrites itself and nearby at Mons Claudianus, which produced a superb black marble. The columns were quarried high-up on the mountain side – the picture shows a column that broke and was left in position. They were then dragged down the mountain side, 70 miles across the desert to the Nile, then shipped down the Nile, and across the Med to Rome.

The recent excavations have not only revealed the well-preserved quarries and the dwelling places of the quarry men, but have also revealed thousands of ostraca, that is potsherds with inscribed messages, that provide fascinating details of how the quarrying took place, and of how the quarrymen ordered their food – some for



themselves, some for their wives on the Nile, and there were no slaves. Everyone assumed that such mines were worked by slaves, but when all food has to be imported, slaves are too inefficient, and the work was done by highly paid, skilled workers. The story of Roman slavery will have to be re-written.

**Lunch box is included.**

Return to hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Soma Bay

### **Monday, October 30 | Drive to Luxor / Wadi Hammamat**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box / Dinner**

Buffet breakfast at the hotel or breakfast box.

**Checkout after breakfast.**

Drive to Luxor, Visit **Wadi Hammamat** enroute; The main route between the Nile and Red Sea for thousands of years, Wadi Hammamat runs from Qift, just north of Luxor, to Al Quseir. Inscriptions, remains of old wells and other evidence of the area's long history can be seen along the way. Part of the route is marked on what might be the world's earliest map, drawn up for Ramses IV's quarrymen in 1160 BC, found in Luxor in the 1820s and now in Turin's Museo Egizio.

A collection of rock inscriptions lies along the high, smooth walls of Wadi Hammamat, about halfway along the road between Al Quseir and Qift. This remarkable graffiti dates from Pharaonic times down to Egypt's 20th-century King Farouk. In Graeco-Roman times, watchtowers were built along the trail at short enough intervals for signals to be visible, and many of them are still intact on the barren hilltops on either side of the road.

**Lunch box is included.**

Later you will be transferred to **Hilton Luxor Resort & Spa** for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Luxor

### **Tuesday, October 31 | West Bank of Luxor**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch**

**06:00** Buffet breakfast at Hotel.

**08:00** Meet your guide at the lobby for your tour to the West Bank of Luxor; Head to **Valley of the Kings**. Here you will visit the tombs of Egypt's New Kingdom pharaohs. Cut deep into the rocky mountainside are the magnificent tombs of spellbinding construction and decoration. **Entry to the tombs of kings Tutankhamun and Ramses VI.**



Continue to the **Tomb of Menna (TT69), Tombs of the Nobles**; these are the private tombs of dignitaries and priests during the New Kingdom and are remarkable for their colorful scenes of everyday life.

Then to the **Colossi of Memnon**, the magnificent colossi, each cut from a single block of stone and weighing 1000 tons, sat at the eastern entrance to the funerary temple of Amenophis III, the largest on the west bank. Egyptologists are currently excavating the temple and their discoveries can be seen behind the colossi.

Pass by **Carter House**

**Lunch at New Memnon Restaurant**

Return to the hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner on your own

Overnight in Luxor

### Wednesday, November 01| West Bank of Luxor / East Bank of Luxor

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

**06:00** Buffet breakfast at hotel.

**08:00** Meet your guide in the lobby for your private tour to the West Bank: Begin with **Habu Temple**, the site that is dominated by the Mortuary Temple of Ramses III (1194 – 1163 B.C.), the largest on the west bank and one of the best preserved. Many fine paintings and reliefs bearing the usual scenes of the King's military exploits, including a unique portrayal of a sea battle.

Then to **Deir El Madinah**, here lived the workers and sculptors who built the tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Written evidence shows the skill of these artisans – and the scarcity of metal tools: Scribes recorded the date of issue and return of every bronze chisel.

Continue to the **Valley of the Queens**, a gorge in the hills along the western bank of the Nile River in Upper Egypt. It served as the burial site of the queens and some royal children of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties (1292–1075 BC). The queens' necropolis is located about 2.5 km west of the mortuary temple of Ramses III.

Entry to the **tomb of Queen Nefertari**

**Lunch at Al Marsam restaurant**

Back to hotel

Before sunset visit **Luxor Temple**, which was once joined to the Temples of Karnak by a two-kilometer-long Avenue of Sphinx, a portion of which marks the entrance to the temple. Dominated by statues of the great warrior pharaoh Ramses



II, Luxor Temple has survived Nile floods, foreign invasion and thousands of years exposed to the elements.

Return to the hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner at Sofitel Old Winter Palace Garden

Overnight in Luxor

#### **Thursday, November 02| East Bank of Luxor**

##### **Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch**

**07:00** Buffet breakfast at hotel.

**08:00** Visit **Karnak Temple**. Walk along the Avenue of Sphinx to enter the complex as your guide explains how the massive facade was constructed. On entering the Temples of Karnak, you will see each legacy left by the various pharaohs as the complex grew even larger. The deeper you go into the complex, the further back in time you will travel, with the oldest ruins dating back over 3,000 years.

Continue to **Luxor Museum**. Although small in size, this museum is one of the most beautiful in Egypt, and your visit will give you a good idea of how Luxor grew from a small village into the great and mighty city it was under the New Kingdom Pharaohs. The museum also contains important frescoes and statues that have been impossible to restore or to maintain at their original sites, as well as an interesting collection of the workshop, household and farming tools used in ancient Egyptian times.

##### **Lunch at hotel**

Return to the hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner on your own

Overnight in Luxor

#### **Friday, November 03| Dendera / Abydos**

##### **Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box / Dinner**

**06:00** Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

**Checkout after breakfast.**

**08:00** Meet your guide at the lobby and drive to **Dendera**, then **Abydos**

Visit to **Dendera**, the city of Dendera is located on the west bank of the Nile, about 60 km (miles) to the north of Luxor, in the 6<sup>th</sup> Nome of Upper Egypt. The Dendera Temple Complex is situated around 2.5 km (miles) to the southeast of this city.

Dendera is said to mark an old holy place, even by the standards of the ancient Egyptians. It has been pointed out that there is evidence for religious structures built at the site during the reign of the Old Kingdom Pharaoh Pepi I (towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC). There are also remnants of a temple that was built during the New Kingdom, specifically the 18th Dynasty. The current complex, including



the Temple of Hathor, however, dates to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, with (at least) one building dating to the Late Period.

### **Lunch box is included**

Considered one of the most important archaeological sites of Ancient Egypt, the sacred city of Abydos was the site of many ancient temples, including Umm el-Qa'ab, a royal necropolis where early pharaohs were entombed. These tombs began to be seen as extremely significant burials and in later times it became desirable to be buried in the area, leading to the growth of the town's importance as a cult site.

Today, **Abydos** is notable for the memorial temple of Seti I, which contains an inscription from the nineteenth dynasty known to the modern world as the Abydos King List. It is a chronological list showing cartouches of most dynastic pharaohs of Egypt from Menes until Ramesses I, Seti's father. The Great Temple and most of the ancient town are buried under the modern buildings to the north of the Seti temple. Many of the original structures and the artifacts within them are considered irretrievable and lost; many may have been destroyed by the new construction.

Abydos was occupied by the rulers of the Predynastic period, whose town, temple and tombs have been found there. The temple and town continued to be rebuilt at intervals down to the times of the thirtieth dynasty, and the cemetery was used continuously.

Later you will be transferred to **House of Life Hotel** for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Abydos

### **Saturday, November 04| Red Monastery / White Monastery / Atribis**

#### **Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

**06:00** Buffet breakfast at the hotel  
Checkout after breakfast.

**08:00** Meet your guide at the hotel and head to Minya, visit **White Monastery, Red Monastery, and Atribis.**

Short drive west of Sohag, the **White Monastery** (Deir al-Abyad) dates from the early 5th century AD. Named for the color of its masonry, the monastery was built by the Coptic saint Shenouda using chunks of white limestone taken from local Pharaonic temples.

The monastery was once home to 2,000 monks. Today little remains within its high fortress walls apart from a church dedicated to its founder.

Four kilometers (2.5 miles) north of the **White Monastery** lies the **Red Monastery** (Deir al-Ahmar). Built in the 6th century AD by Shenouda's disciple Bishoy – a



repentant robber who became a saint -the monastery has two churches within its grounds.

The main church contains several interesting, though faded, 10th-century wall paintings. The monastery is hidden within a sprawling village so it may be necessary to ask for directions.

The town is known for its hand-woven hangings and carpets. The town's main attraction, an 11-m (36-ft) high statue of Queen Merit Amun - the daughter of Ramses II – was discovered here in 1982.

### **Lunch at the Red Monastery**

**Atribis;** The city is the site of a temple built for the goddess Repyt (Triphis) by Ptolemy XV Caesarian and subsequent Roman Emperors. South of this temple was an earlier temple of Ptolemy IX Soter II. One of the tombs nearby, belonging to the brothers Ibpmeny "the younger" and Pemehyt of the late 2nd century BC, has two zodiacs on its ceiling.

Later you will be transferred to your hotel for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Minya

### **Sunday, November 05 | Tel el Amarna / Tuna El Gebel**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box/ Dinner**

**07:00** Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

**08:00** Meet your guide and head to **Tel el Amarna**; where you can see the northern tombs among which are the tomb of Ahmose & Huya. Represents the remains of the capital city newly established (1346 BC) and built by the Pharaoh Akhenaten of the late Eighteenth Dynasty and abandoned shortly after his death (1332 BC). The name for the city employed by the ancient Egyptians is written as Akhetaten which means "Horizon of the Aten". The area is located on the east bank of the Nile River in the modern Egyptian province of Minya, some 58 km (36 mi) south of the city of al-Minya, 312 km (194 mi) south of the Egyptian capital Cairo and 402 km (250 mi) north of Luxor.

### **Lunch box is included**

Proceed to **Tuna El Gabal** where you can see the tomb of Petosiris, Ibis catacombs & Isadora tomb. This tomb goes back to the 2nd century AD and belongs to Isadora the renown for her beauty in the city of Hermopolis.

Return to hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Minya



### **Monday, November 06 | Drive to Fayoum**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box / Dinner**

**06:00**

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

Checkout after breakfast.

Meet your guide at the lobby, Drive to Fayoum; visit **Meidum Pyramid**.

About 30km northeast of Medinat Al Fayoum is the ruin of the first true pyramid attempted by the ancient Egyptians. It began as an eight-stepped structure, with the steps later filled in and an outer casing added to form the first pyramid shell. There were design flaws and, sometime after completion (possibly as late as the last few centuries BC), the pyramid's own weight caused the sides to collapse. Today, only the core stands, though it is still an impressive sight.

Then to **El-Lahun pyramid**, which is the southernmost pyramid structure in Egypt. Its builders reduced the amount of work necessary to build it by ingeniously using an already existing 12-meter-high limestone hill as its foundation and core. The pyramid core is composed of cross walls of limestone over rock and the bricks are joined together with small amounts of mortar and a filling of sand.

The pyramid of Senusret II in Lahun was built on a 13-meter-high hill out of mud bricks, the same as the Pyramid of Amenemhat III in Hawara. Senusret II's pyramid is 48 meters high, and the length of its base is 106 meters. The pyramid, like many pyramids in the area, was coated with limestone.

#### **Lunch box is included**

At the western end of Lake Qarun, just east of the village of Qasr Qarun, are the ruins of ancient Dionysius, once the starting point for caravans to the Western Desert oasis of Bahariya. All that remains of the ancient settlement is a Ptolemaic temple, known as Qasr Qarun, built in 4 BC and dedicated to Sobek, the crocodile-headed god of Al Fayoum.

The temple is built of blocks of yellow limestone, but unusually for Egypt there are no inscriptions, except over the entrance, where there is a winged sun, and on the roof, a headless relief of Sobek on the left and a king on the right. The internal structure has been reinforced; if you are feeling adventurous explore the amazing maze of chambers, tunnels, and stairways. Take a torch or candles.

Later you will be transferred to your hotel for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Fayoum

### **Tuesday, November 07 | Wadi El- Hitan / Dimeh**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch box / Dinner**

**06:00**

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

Checkout after breakfast.



Meet your guide at the lobby and drive to Alexandria; visit **Wadi El- Hitan**, and **Dimeh** enroute.

Head to the **Valley of Whales**, where you will discover a yet more impressive meaning of 'Ancient' Egypt. The remote valley of Wadi El-Hitan (Valley of the Whales) is more of an open-air museum displaying rare gigantic fossils of ancient whales and sharks proving that some 40 to 50 million years ago, the area was submerged in the waters of what is known as the Tethys Sea.

After lying trapped in the sands of the Western Desert, the fossil skeletons have been revealed by winds and erosion, and thanks to human intervention through a number of ongoing archaeological excavations sponsored by the National Geographic Society and by the University of Michigan. The landscapes surrounding the valley are just as impressive and amazing as the discoveries: gigantic sand rocks and mountains, dunes and hills. Try to visit the valley around sunset for a magical experience; the views and the colors are just amazing at that time of the day.

The Valley of the Whales is part of the WRPA (Wadi El-Rayan Protected Area) and it has also been added in 2005 to the UNESCO's World Heritage List for its unique natural beauty and scientific significance.

### **Lunch box is included**

Continue to **Dimeh Al- Siba** on the northern side of Birkat Qarun is one of the most interesting in the Fayoum, rewarding and memorable as much for the desert and lake scenery as for the historical interest of the sites themselves. Even those without the slightest interest in antiquities will enjoy this trip and cannot fail to be impressed by the magnificent, lonely ruins of Dimeh. However, beware that it is an isolated spot, and is best made with a knowledgeable guide and proper transport. Also note that permission from the SCA is required.

Dimeh al-Siba, Dimeh of the Lions, was a Ptolemaic city believed to be founded by Ptolemy II in the third century BC, on a site that shows evidence of habitation from the Neolithic period. Today, it is more isolated, but during Ptolemaic times, it was at the shore of the much larger lake, situated at the edge of Moeris Bay and the beginning of the caravan routes into the Western Desert.

Later, you will be transferred to **Steigenberger Cecil Hotel** for check-in.

Dinner at hotel

Overnight in Alexandria

**Wednesday, November 08| Kom El- Shuqqafa / Serapeum / Roman Amphitheatre / National Museum**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

**07:00**

Buffet breakfast at hotel.



Meet your guide at the lobby, and head to **Catacombs of Kom Shuqqafa**, which are the largest known Roman burial site in Egypt; they consist of three tiers of burial tombs, chambers and hallways.

**Kom Al Dikka** was a well-off residential area in Graeco-Roman times, with lovely villas, bathhouses and a theatre. The area was known at the time as the Park of Pan, a pleasure garden where citizens of Alexandria could indulge in various lazy pursuits. Although the ruins aren't terribly impressive in scale, they remain a superbly preserved ode to the days of the centurion and include the 13 white-marble terraces of the only Roman amphitheater found in Egypt.

The **Serapeum of Alexandria**; The Serapeum was the sanctuary dedicated to Serapis, the head of the Alexandrian divine triad during the Graeco – Roman period (306 BCE – 325 CE ). In later periods, the Serapeum became known as Amoud el – Sawary and also as Pompey's Pillar, due to a mistaken identification of Diocletian's Column, which dominated the site. Serapis was a syncretic deity created by the Ptolemies, with traits of the Egyptian gods Osiris and Apis, and a physical appearance similar to the Greek gods. Appealing to both Egyptians and Greeks, Serapis become one of the most important Alexandrian cults. Such a popular cult needed a central temple to welcome pilgrims. The sanctuary was situated on a hill in Rhakotis, the oldest and largest neighborhood of the city, which was populated by Egyptians.

### **Lunch at the Greek Club**

Continue to the **New National Museum (If Open)**, which contains statues, bas reliefs, pottery, jewelry, marble pieces and other artifacts, all of which give you a picture of the grandeur of Alexandria in its Greek and Roman days, also contains some of the Pharaonic statues.

Then to the **Jewish Cemetery**, When Egyptian citizens, residing in the towering apartment complexes of the neighborhood of Mazarita, overlook the wall that encloses this Jewish cemetery of Alexandria, they likely see nothing but an example of extreme neglect, and a decrepit, fading past. Within the wall, tightly packed, above-ground graves that consume the entirety of this city block, are being overpowered by unkempt foliage. A mess of green tangle shadows the discolored wood, uneven bricks, and crumbling, antique stone that construct these resting sites.

Return to the hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.

Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant

Overnight in Alexandria

**Thursday, November 09 | Drive to Rosetta / Rashid Museum / Citadel of Qaitbay / Drive to Cairo**

**Meals Included: Breakfast / Lunch**

**07:00** Buffet breakfast at hotel.  
Checkout after breakfast.



Meet your guide at the lobby and drive to Cairo; visit **Rosetta** enroute.

Head to **Rosetta**; this is to enjoy an untraditional trip to an exciting place which connects the end of the River Nile to the Mediterranean Sea. Rosetta is known for the Rosetta stone, which was found by French soldiers, it also contains many Islamic monuments and sightseeing.

Over day trip to Rosetta is simply an incredible trip to the countryside of Egypt and also a chance to see houses and building from the 18th century. Rosetta is the famous site where the Rosetta stone was found by French soldiers in 1799. Rosetta lies 65 km Northeast of Alexandria. Over day trip to Rosetta allows you to see this town, which has been an extremely important military site since early times. The town has witnessed many important events in ancient as well as modern times.

The great number of Islamic monuments found here does not exist in any other city, except for Cairo. Unfortunately, most of these unique monuments are neglected, modern buildings surround them, and the unplanned urbanization also affects them badly, causing much damage. Therefore, it is necessary for a great national effort to be made to save them, in order to revive the historical character of the city.

**House of Amasyali**; One of the most impressive of all Rosetta's fine buildings, with beautiful lantern lights on the facade and vast expanses of windows with mashrabiyya (lattice), which circulate cool breezes around the house. The main reception room upstairs is overlooked by a screened wooden gallery, behind which the women would sit, obscured from view. The gorgeous ceilings are painted in red and blue. It's next door to the House of Abu Shaheen, entry to which is included on the same ticket.

To get here from the central Souq, take the second left-hand turn down Sharia Port Said and walk four blocks.

**Fort of Quitbay**; About 5km north of Rosetta along the Nile, this fort was built in 1479 to guard the mouth of the Nile 6km further on. It was on this spot that the famous Rosetta Stone was found; we'll wager that this is now the site of the latest historical exhibit in the world, especially in relation to the importance of the discovery that was made here.

The views over the Nile are wonderful, and the fact that this is where this impressive river meets its end into the Mediterranean, makes it a perfect spot for romantics.

## Noon

### **Lunch on boat while sailing**

**Rashid Museum**; In 1952, President Gamal Abd El-Nasser, ordered the conversion of Arab Killy House into National Museum of Rashid, in celebration of its National Day. The museum houses ancient Egyptian artifacts as well as remarkable Islamic artifacts with magnificent Kufic Arabic writing.



Although recently restored, the Rashid Museum just off the main square is a dusty provincial museum in a very beautiful example of the town's Ottoman houses. The ground floor has a copy of the famous Rosetta Stone and local finds, while the 1st floor illustrates life in these houses. The 2nd floor was the private part of the house with the bedrooms, kitchen and living area.

One room celebrates the brave resistance of the people of Rosetta against the British occupation.

Upon arrival in Cairo, you will be transferred to **InterContinental City stars Hotel** for your check-in.

Dinner on your own

Overnight in Cairo

**Friday, November 10| Final Departure**

**Meals Included: Breakfast**

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

Check out after breakfast.

Our representative will help you with all the departure procedures and formalities.

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**End of our services, wish you a nice trip!**



### Payment Information

City	Hotel	Dates	Nights	Category
Cairo	Marriott Omar Khayyam	October 23 – October 28	5	Nile view rooms
Somabay	Sheraton	October 28 – October 30	2	Sea view rooms
Luxor	Hilton	October 30 – November 03	4	Nile view room
Abydos	House of Life	November 03 – November 04	1	Standard rooms
Minya	To be confirmed	November 04 – November 06	2	Nile view rooms
Fayoum	To be Confirmed	November 06 – November 07	1	Standard rooms
Alexandria	Cecil	November 07 – November 09	2	Sea view room
Cairo	Intercontinental City Stars	November 09 – November 10	1	Standard room

#### **Rates:**

	20 participants
Per person in double	US \$9500
Single Supplement	US \$1,350

**In case you booked an early flight on March 02, arriving in Cairo before the check in time, you are requested to book an extra night at the Marriott Omar Khayyam so you can check in upon arrival (check in time at hotel 02:00PM):**

#### **Extra night at Marriott Omar Khayyam from October 22 - 23**

<b><u>Nile view room</u></b>	US \$140	Per person per night in double
	US \$255	Per person per night in single

#### **Rate includes:**

- All accommodation based on double occupancy per itinerary with daily breakfast
- All meals as shown in itinerary (B, L, D)
- Vehicle for group arrival and departure transfers on the first and last days of the program
- Land transportation per program by private coach
- All sightseeing and excursions, including entrance fees per program
- Private English-speaking guide throughout program
- Services of a professional Egitalloyd Tour Manager throughout the land tour program
- Water provided in bus during all visits transfers and all included meals
- Baggage handling at all hotels and airports, where available
- Contribution to ARCE
- Tipping for Guide, Egitalloyd Tour Manager, hotels, restaurants and drivers

#### **Rate excludes:**

- International airfare between to Egypt
- Individual arrival and departure airport transfers



- Pre- or post-tour services
- Egypt entry visa fees
- Medical and trip interruption insurance; evacuation costs.
- Food or beverages not included in group meals.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, alcohol, telephone expenses, excess package fees, photo/video expenses inside sightseeing or museums (where allowed)
- Other items not expressly listed as included
- Travel insurance for medical and political reasons

### **Important Notes:**

- Prices are based on a minimum group size of **twenty paying passengers** and are subject to increases if the number of paying passengers is less than twenty

### **Payment Schedule & Cancellation Policy**

#### **Payment Schedule**

- \$750 Deposit                      Per person      Due on Confirmation
- Final Payment                      Per person      Due 16 weeks before departure

#### **Cancellation Policy**

- 0% Cancellation fees      From 16 weeks to 12 weeks before departure
  - **(Less \$300.00 Per person handling fee)**
- 35%      Cancellation fees      From 12 weeks to 8 weeks before departure
- 55%      Cancellation fees      From 8 weeks to 6 weeks before departure
- 75%      Cancellation fees      From 6 weeks to 3 weeks before departure
- 100%      Cancellation fees      Any cancelation from 21 days before departure

#### **A full refund will apply in case of “Force Majeure”**

Force Majeure is identified as acts of God, war and revolution, acts of terrorism preventing travel to Egypt, natural disasters happening within Egypt and not outside the country.

#### **Payment through bank wire transfer for DEPOSITS & FINAL PAYMENTS**

Please find below Egitalloyd bank details and contact information:

Account name:                      Egitalloyd Travel  
Bank name:                      Export Development Bank of Egypt  
Address:                      71 Mesadak street, Dokki  
   Giza – Egypt - Post code: 12311  
Account Number:                      16258  
Swift:                      EXDEEGCXXXX  
IBAN #                      EG540061008502020001625801021  
Phone:                      +202-33-386-810



**Payment by Credit card for DEPOSITS & FINAL PAYMENTS (Visa & Mastercard ONLY)**

- 3% to be added per person (Credit card fees)
- Needed:
  - Credit Card holder name
  - Cell phone number
  - Email address

For inquiries and to reserve your place on this tour, please call (703) 721-3470 or email Rebekah Atol at [ratol@arce.org](mailto:ratol@arce.org), Mary Sadek at [msadek@arce.org](mailto:msadek@arce.org), Hisham El-Sebai at [hisham@egitalloyd.com](mailto:hisham@egitalloyd.com)

To participate, individuals must be members of ARCE in good standing.



## Packing Tips & Travel Info

### Country Code

+20

### Time difference

UTC+02:00

### Visas & Passports

U.S. passport holders require a visa to enter Egypt. For visits of up to 30 days, a Visa can be purchased on arrival at Cairo, Hurghada, or Luxor Airports. The fee is \$25.00 (USD, EUR, GBP currency accepted). Cash only.

Visitors to Egypt must hold passports valid for at least six months beyond their date of entry. There must be at least two free pages left in your passport.

It is useful to carry photo ID with you at all times. It is recommended to get several good quality photocopies of your passport (which can be carried on your person in lieu of your physical passport and makes replacing a lost passport easier).

### Arrival information

Upon exiting the aircraft at Cairo International Airport, look for an Egitalloyd representative. The representative will assist you with your luggage, visas, and hotel transportation. **Visas require \$25.00 USD per traveler in cash.** You will need to complete the Egypt Arrivals documentation which is usually handed out on the flight (please ask your cabin crew).

### Currency & Tipping

The local currency is the Egyptian pound (called a ginay in Arabic, and written £E or LE), divided into 100 piastres. Egyptian banknotes come in denominations of 25pt, 50pt, £E1, £E5, £E10, £E20, £E50, £E100 and £E200. There are coins for 5pt, 10pt, 20pt, 25pt, 50pt and £E1.

It can sometimes be difficult to get change for large bills, so it is always advisable to have smaller notes/change on hand for taxis and tips. There are a large number of banks and exchange offices that can exchange cash. Many tourist shops, restaurants, and bars will accept dollars or Euros at rates that are relatively close to the local ones. Credit cards (Visa, Mastercard, and American Express) are widely used in Egypt in hotels, most shops, restaurants, and cafes.

We recommend that you withdraw \$100-\$200 worth of Egyptian pounds per person from an ATM at the beginning of your trip, rather than carry large amounts of cash. Note that you **cannot** exchange pounds back into other currency at the end of the trip.



Travelers' cheques are not easily cashed, and most banks, including international banks, will not accept them. They have been replaced by credit/debit cards.

Most tips are included in your tour price. You may wish to tip hotel staff and drivers you encounter apart from the tour. During dinners apart from the group, you should tip wait staff at restaurants. You may see a "service charge" on your bill. This service charge goes to the restaurant, not the server, it is good etiquette to tip your server about 10% in addition. Tipping is a part of the Egyptian culture, and excellent service should certainly be rewarded.

### **Electricity**

The current in Egypt is 220V, 50Hz. North American travellers with appliances designed for 110V should bring a converter. Most sockets are for two-pin round-pronged plugs (as in Continental Europe).

### **Clothing/Packing**

- Earplugs help muffle noise.
- Mosquito spray.
- Torch/flashlight for exploring dark tombs.
- Handheld fan.
- Light scarf or bandana to protect the back of your neck.

Sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunscreen are must-haves. Comfortable walking shoes, such as sneakers, would serve you best. We recommend avoiding sneakers with mesh fabric as they will collect sand at the sites.

Men will need a jacket for dinner at the Winter Palace in Luxor or the dining room at the Old Cataract. Women may want to pack something suitable for a night at a nice restaurant. In Cairo, shorts are generally not worn in cities; trousers and slacks are the norm. It would not be good form to wear anything that rests above the knees. Shirts should not be sleeveless or contain slogans. A shawl or a scarf will work for the unpredictable shifts in temperature.

At night, temperatures can dip, and evenings on the Nile may get cool, so a sweater and light jacket or wind breaker are recommended.

Egypt is predominantly Muslim, although there is a sizeable Christian population. With this in mind, women should avoid wearing tight clothing, keep their shoulders and knees covered, and avoid very revealing necklines. When visiting a mosque, women will be asked to cover their hair and perhaps their arms and legs, although this is not mandatory. Both men and women will be asked to remove their shoes before entering a mosque. Dressing with relative modesty is a way of respecting the local culture; the Egyptians are going to feel more relaxed around you and are thus more likely to talk to you and involve you in their lives and culture.



It is best to take light-colored and natural rather than synthetic fabric clothes, as these are excellent for coping with potential heat, although all hotels, cars, and shops will be air conditioned. Shorts and t-shirts are widely accepted for sightseeing in Upper Egypt (Luxor and Aswan).

Some of our hotels will feature impressive swimming pools.

### **Climate/Weather**

Cairo: Temperatures in November fluctuate between 59 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit with an average of 8 hours of sun.

Luxor/Aswan: Temperatures in November fluctuate between 54 and 84 degrees Fahrenheit with an average of 10 hours of sun each day.

### **Health and Safety**

We strongly recommend that you and your traveling companions are aware of the health requirements of the region, most specifically vaccinations or boosters that you may need. Check with your doctor for any necessary inoculations.

COVID vaccines are highly recommended. Vaccinations are not checked upon entry and one can return to the US without a recent covid test.

Neither ARCE, nor Egitalloyd travel is responsible for any accommodations due to quarantine should you require it. It is highly recommended that you purchase refundable international flights or a travel insurance plan that can assist with quarantining or tour cancellation, should the need arise.

It is recommended that you take along your preferred digestive and respiratory cold medication.

### **Communications**

Wifi is widely available though is a bit spotty in Middle Egypt. You may want to contact your cellular provider to inquire about temporary overseas use. SIM cards are available in Egypt for a modest fee at mobile phone shops. To obtain a SIM card, you will need to present your passport.

### **Tap Water and Food Preparation**

It is generally safe to eat freshly-prepared cooked food in hotels, on Nile cruise boats, and in mainstream restaurants. When selecting a restaurant, choose a clean and reputable place, eat only freshly prepared, cooked foods, and avoid all uncooked food including raw fruits and vegetables. It might be best to stay away from street food in general. Tap water in many locations is not



potable. Drink bottled water only. It is also recommended to use bottled water to brush your teeth. Well-known brands of bottled beverages are generally considered to be safe if the seal is intact, and can be purchased at most restaurants and tourist locations. We will have an abundance of bottled water for you on the bus each day.

Brief stomach discomfort is quite common for first-time travelers to Egypt; it is best to bring along any medications that work for you, as it may be hard to purchase the over-the-counter items you have grown accustomed to.

## **Security**

Security is a matter of common sense, and the same precautions should be taken in Egypt as in other countries. Do not carry large sums of money, keep a close watch on your handbags and wallets etc. when walking in crowded areas, and avoid walking alone at night. Valuables and money should be locked in a safe in your room or in reception and you should not let porters who are not introduced by a representative of the company take your baggage.

You will notice a large amount of armed security in virtually every town. This is common and is not cause for concern. We will have armed security (concealed) on the bus with us, and when we travel on certain roads, we will have armed police escorts. All of this is standard operations in Egypt and does not indicate that there are any issues.

You will notice persistent sales and tipping (*"baksheesh"*) requests when you visit most of the sites. If you walk around the pyramids alone you will get inundated. While the sales techniques do get relentless, impinging on personal space, there is no need for concern. Respond politely; intoning *la shukran* (no thanks) with your hand on your heart, while briskly moving on, will dissuade most street peddlers. If necessary, escalate to a gruff *khalas* ("Enough!").

There is very little pickpocketing in Egypt. At most sites, people will follow you right up to the bus. If you are not interested in the objects they are selling do not make eye contact.

The buses will be locked at all destinations.

## **Insurance**

It is always advisable to obtain good travel insurance to cover the worst possible scenario.

## **Alcohol**

There are duty free shops in the airports in Cairo and Luxor should you wish to purchase alcohol upon arrival. Tourists are permitted to purchase up to 2 bottles of alcohol per person on arrival, although there is a new excise tax (\$13.50) per bottle that makes it hardly "duty free." Beer, wine, and spirits are sold in most upscale restaurants and also in most of the hotels. Imports are very expensive.



## Photography

Photography is permitted in most of the historical sites and museums in Egypt with your cell phone camera. You may have to buy an inexpensive permit to use a regular (non-cell phone) camera. Your guide will advise you.

Egyptians are well known all over the world for their tolerance and hospitality. However, it is always polite to ask permission before taking a photograph of people (especially women), stores, or products. Photography of, or near, military official installations, army bases, airports, dams, bridges and train stations is not permitted. If you are ever in doubt, please ask your guide, although in most places where photography is prohibited there will be signs to notify you.

## Traffic and Taxis

White local taxis in Cairo are highly unpredictable and not recommended. If you would like to arrange a taxi, your hotel will be able to arrange a reliable car. **It is recommended to use Uber, which operates in English and is commonly used.** The traffic in Cairo is notoriously bad, and at rush hours, short journeys can often take hours. Plenty of time will always be allowed for transfers, and, in particular, to the airport.

## Laundry

Most hotels will provide laundry services, although dry cleaning will only be available in the big-city hotels. The service is inexpensive and efficient for all basic garments, although we advise hand-washing delicate fabrics.

## Embassy Information

5 Tawfik Diab Street  
Garden City, Cairo  
Egypt

Telephone: (20-2) 2797 3300

Fax: (20-2) 2797 3200

<https://eg.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/cairo/how-to-contact-us/>

## Contact Information

### ARCE/Egitalloyd

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AMERICAN RESEARCH  
CENTER IN EGYPT  
مركز البحوث الأمريكي بمصر

### **WhatsApp Group**

ARCE will create a WhatsApp group that tour participants are welcome to join. If you wish to join, please send your phone number to Rebekah Atol at [ratol@arce.org](mailto:ratol@arce.org). You can download WhatsApp here: <https://www.whatsapp.com/>