



A PORTRAIT OF EGYPT (SAILING LUXOR TO ASWAN)

Embark on an in-depth journey through Egypt exploring the iconic sites of Cairo, the treasures of Tutankhamun and the ancient temples and tombs of the Nile on a stylish river cruise.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries, Small Ship Cruising, Cruises



North Africa & Middle East,
Egypt



14 days from AU\$17,595 pp



Private

Journey Overview

With so much to discover in this alluring destination, Egypt deserves in-depth exploration and that's how we've tailored this journey. You'll be guided to the most iconic museums and ancient monuments around Cairo and along the Nile and be introduced to some unexpected attractions that will take you off the beaten path. Explore the famous mosques, madrasas, hammams and fountains of Islamic Cairo, founded in the 10th century, visit some unexpected tombs at Aswan and key WWII battlegrounds in the Western Desert with time to soak up the Mediterranean vibe in Alexandria.

Journey Highlights

- Marvel at the mighty Pyramids and Sphinx and recently excavated tombs of their builders
- Stay in grand Victorian style at two Nile-side palace hotels
- Cruise for four nights in luxury aboard the Sanctuary Sun Boat IV
- Admire vivid wall paintings in Aswan's tombs of the Nobles
- Discover Roman ruins and the ultra-modern Library in Alexandria
- Learn sobering stories of Australian soldiers at the renowned war site of El Alamein



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Cairo

Receive a warm A&K welcome on your arrival and transfer privately to your luxury hotel on the banks of the River Nile. Cairo, the bustling Egyptian capital is home to colourful markets, authentic Arabic restaurants and an inspiring art scene. Spend time orientating yourself with a leisurely walk around the tree-lined streets of the Garden City neighbourhood, admiring celebrated local artworks in the lobby or simply meandering along the waterfront Corniche.

The St. Regis Cairo

Day 2: Cairo

Journey south of Cairo to the necropolis of Sakkara and the impressive Imhotep Museum located at the foot of the complex. In addition to the famous Step Pyramid of Zoser, (also known as Sakkara Pyramid), and the step tomb built during the reign of the Third Dynasty, Sakkara is home to different monuments and burial sites. There were 16 royal pyramids here and some still remain. The Imhotep Museum houses relics from the Sakkara area including a Ptolemaic mummy discovered during the excavation of the Pharaoh Teti's pyramid complex and a large double statue that was found near the causeway of the Unas complex. The statue depicts the 19th Dynasty High Priest of Mut, Amenemopet, and his wife. Also visit the Mereruka Tomb, one of the most exquisitely decorated tombs of the Old Kingdom.

Continue to the 4,500-year old pyramids of Giza, built for Pharaohs Cheops, the oldest and largest, Chephren and Mycerinus, the smallest. The Great Pyramid of Giza (Pyramid of Cheops) is the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World still in existence. Just to the east lies the legendary Great Sphinx rising from the Giza plateau. Having inspired the imaginations of emperors, poets, artists, scholars and travellers for centuries, it remains a truly enigmatic feature of Cairo.

The St. Regis Cairo | Meals: BL

Day 3: Cairo

Wander through 7,000 years of history accompanied by your private Egyptologist at the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities and uncover the treasures of Tutankhamun. Designed by the French architect Marcel Dourgnon, the Egyptian Museum is home to more than 120,000 ancient artifacts including the funerary mask of Tutankhamun made from 11kg of solid gold, discovered by Howard Carter in 1925. Cairo has so much more to offer: ancient monuments, glittering mosques, imposing citadels, a labyrinthine bazaar and old Coptic churches. This afternoon, choose a walking tour of Islamic Cairo and an adventure in the Khan el-Khalili bazaar; or a visit to old Cairo including the Coptic Museum.

The St. Regis Cairo / Meals: BL

Day 4: Cairo - Luxor

Set off on your morning flight south to Luxor where you are met and transferred to your elegant hotel on the Corniche facing the Nile River. After time to refresh, drive north to Dendera to discover the Ptolemaic temple of the goddess Hathor, who enjoyed great devotion as the deity of maternal and family love, beauty and music, and whom the Greeks associated with Aphrodite. This wonderfully preserved temple complex is almost intact, allowing a special glimpse of its former glory. Hathor is portrayed throughout with a cow head or cow ears. Return to your accommodation where the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Tonight, witness a dazzling Sound and Light show at the Temple of Karnak. Wander through the history of the world's largest-ever temple complex, narrated by the voices of the pharaohs, and watch the shadows play off the enormous columns in the grand Hypostyle Hall.

Sofitel Winter Palace Luxor / Meals: B

Day 5: Luxor

Transfer to the private riverside dock to board Sanctuary Sun Boat IV, your luxurious home afloat the River Nile. This morning, you have an opportunity to visit the strikingly, graceful Temple of Luxor.

After lunch on board, join your Egyptologist along with other guests from the boat* on a tour of the West Bank of Luxor to explore the Valley of the Kings, most famous for the tomb of Tutankhamun, with its legendary treasures, discovered by Howard Carter in 1922. There are 63 tombs here, with different ones open each day. Next, descend into the beautifully decorated tomb of Seti I, the father of Ramses II, one of the best-preserved tombs in the valley. Continue to the Valley of the Queens, enjoying access to Queen Nefertari's tomb, famous for the colourful artwork that adorns its walls. On your way back to the river pass by the famed Colossi of Memnon, the two massive stone statues of the Pharaoh Amenhotep II. This evening on board enjoy drinks, dinner and a cultural performance.

Sanctuary Sun Boat IV | Meals: BLD

Day 6: Luxor - Edfu

After breakfast on board, begin your day with a visit to the Temple of Karnak, the world's largest religious site. Spread over 200 acres, this complex of ruined temples, pylons, sacred lakes and chapels is breathtaking and an insight to the extraordinary achievements of the pharaohs. Lunch is served in the lounge whilst you sail South.

Sanctuary Sun Boat IV | Meals: BLD

Day 7: Edfu - Aswan

Following breakfast, explore the extraordinary Temple of Horus, one of the best-preserved shrines in Egypt.

Back on board, lunch is served as you cruise to Kom Ombo. Venture ashore to the Temple of Kom Ombo, dedicated to the crocodile-god Sobek. The temple stands at a bend in the Nile where, in ancient times, sacred crocodiles basked in the sun on the riverbank. Later, afternoon tea is served in the lounge and you have the chance to take part in an Egyptian cooking lesson as you sail to Aswan, a bustling market town in the south. Tonight, an Egyptian themed event is planned on board with traditional entertainment and local cuisine.

Sanctuary Sun Boat IV | Meals: BLD

Day 8: Aswan

A breakfast buffet is served on board and the morning is at leisure.

After lunch, board a motorboat for the short ride to the Island of Agilika where you visit the majestic Philae Temple, a beautiful shrine dedicated to the goddess Isis, which was rescued from the rising waters of the Aswan Dam in the 1960s and rebuilt stone by stone on higher ground. Next stop is the Granite Quarries, which supplied the ancient Egyptians with most of the hard stone used in their pyramids and temples, here you will also see the Unfinished Obelisk, located in the northern region of the stone quarries.

You will also have a chance later today for a short cruise on a felucca (a typical Egyptian sailboat) around Elephantine Island, Lord Kitchener's Botanical Gardens and the Aga Khan Mausoleum. Tonight, there will be a farewell dinner.

Sanctuary Sun Boat IV | Meals: BLD**Day 9: Aswan**

Disembark this morning and take a short flight to one of Egypt's most awe-inspiring sights – the colossal temples of Ramses II and Queen Nefertari at Abu Simbel. Built by Ramses the Great on the edge of his empire to impress his might and power upon all those entering Egypt through the south, these massive temples were moved stone by stone in 1964 to higher ground to escape the rising waters of Lake Nasser. Following your visit return to Aswan and your hotel.

Sofitel Legend Old Cataract Aswan | Meals: BL**Day 10: Aswan**

Venture to the desert cliffs of Aswan's west bank to seek out the tombs of ancient Egyptian governors and nobles from the 23rd to the 18th century BC. Many of the tombs still have vivid wall paintings showing scenes of everyday life in ancient Egypt and hieroglyphic biographies of the nobles. The 12th dynasty tombs of Sarenput I and Sarenput II are the most elaborate. In the latter, look out for the stone slab used for sacrifices with a drainage spout for the blood. This evening visit the vibrant Aswan Spice Market, featuring an eclectic mix of merchandise from colourful and fragrant spices piled high, to souvenirs produced by local artisans including perfumes, scarves and baskets.

Sofitel Legend Old Cataract Aswan | Meals: B

Day 11: Aswan - Alexandria

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Cairo and journey by road to Alexandria, the "Pearl of the Mediterranean". This seaside city has been a destination for travellers since its foundation by Alexander the Great in 331 BC. After declining into a sleepy fishing village, Alexandria was revived in the 19th century as an important port with immigrants from Europe and the Levant arriving here to settle, bringing a cosmopolitan flair that was so aptly captured in Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet.

On arrival the remainder of the day is at leisure to relax at the hotel – you may choose to enjoy its private stretch of sandy beach or instead amble through the San Stefano neighbourhood, known for its architecture, fine dining and high-end shopping.

Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano | Meals: BL

Day 12: Alexandria

Descend into the Catacombs of Kom El Shugafa, the largest Roman burial site in Egypt and the final resting place for 300 individuals, whose tombs are cut into the bedrock in massive tiers. The artisans who built the tombs in the second century AD combined ancient Egyptian and Graeco-Roman motifs in a fascinating style.

Continue to the Library of Alexandria which was reborn in a daring design in 2002 on the supposed site of the ancient library, an important seat of learning which burned to the ground in the fourth century AD. Afterwards, continue to the Roman Amphitheatre and imagine the crowds cheering at a musical performance or a wrestling match. The amphitheatre is the only one of its kind in Egypt and has room for 800 spectators on white marble seats. The acoustics are such that if you stand on the stage and whisper, a person in the back row should be able to hear you. After lunch take a short drive to view the Abu El-Abbas Mosque and a photo stop at the Qait Bay Fortress.

Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano | Meals: BL

Day 13: Alexandria - Cairo

Departing Alexandria, journey west along the Mediterranean coast to El Alamein, scene of two of the most decisive battles of World War II. Follow the stories of Australian diggers in the Military Museum and Commonwealth War Cemetery, where 7,000 tombstones overlook the desert battlefield. Transfer back to Cairo for your last night.

The St. Regis Cairo | Meals: BL

Day 14: Depart Cairo

Private transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

Meals: B

Journey Details

Note: This journey includes shore excursions conducted in small groups during the cruise portion of this itinerary. Should you prefer to organise a private Egyptologist and private vehicle for the duration of your cruise please contact Abercrombie & Kent and we can organise a quotation for these additional services.

Map



Accommodation

Sofitel Winter Palace Luxor



The Winter Palace was built in 1886, within a tropical garden on the banks of the Nile. The hotel has a central location, just minutes from the Luxor Temple. The age of the building gives it a magical atmosphere, whilst modern decor creates a comfortable feel. The famous English writer, Agatha Christie wrote her famed 1937 novel *Death on the Nile* in this very hotel.

Stay in the historic main buildings, which are packed with colonial charm in the form of fine woods, bright satin fabrics, and sumptuous marble bathrooms. There are 86 rooms and 6 suites which range in size in terms of facilities. Massive picture windows reveal sweeping views of the Nile River, the ancient Valley of the Kings and the bougainvillea-dotted botanical gardens surrounding the property.

The hotel has three restaurants: 1886 fine dining restaurant that serves up classic French cuisine, L'Oasis by the swimming pool and La Corniche, serving international cuisine and breakfast. Afternoon tea is served in the crystal lit Victorian Lounge.

Why we like it

- Luxor landmark with a fantastic location on the banks of the Nile
- Excellent base from which to explore, right next to Luxor Temple with Karnak Temple

not far away

- Large swimming pool nestled amongst beautiful tropical gardens
- Full of character and fading colonial glamour

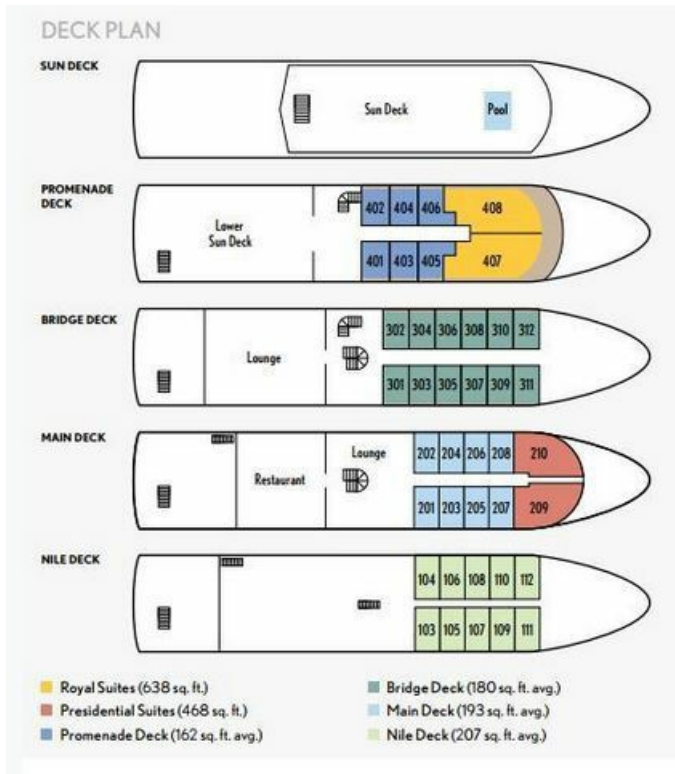
Sanctuary Sun Boat IV



This beautifully appointed and perfectly designed vessel offers a cruise experience like no other. The craft is spacious, intimate and elegant and features on A&K's 'Nile in Style'.

Luxury cabins (15-18m²) are scattered throughout the boat while there are two Royal Suites (55m²) with balcony and two Presidential Suites (38m²). All cabins are fully air-conditioned with panoramic windows and a private bathroom, satellite TV, CD player, phone, safe and mini-bar.

There is ample space on board and the public areas are elegantly furnished. Views throughout are magnificent and an intimate bar and lounge area provide the perfect setting to relax and reflect on the day's activities. Award winning chefs create exquisite meals combining local fare and international choices with in-room dining also available. Recreational facilities include a small gym, heated plunge-pool and two spacious sundecks with plush lounges. Internet access is available as are the services of the fleet physician. A multi-lingual library and games room, laundry service, and a gift shop complete the offering.



Sofitel Legend Old Cataract Aswan



A favourite hotel in Egypt for old world charm with a delightful old world elegance. Positioned on a pink granite outcrop overlooking the Nile opposite Elephantine Island, this hotel with its Oriental interior became a legendary name in hospitality almost as soon as it opened its doors in 1889. Rising from the desert, the Sofitel Old Cataract was built on a granite promontory overlooking the sacred river, providing views of the splendor of the Nile in the heart of luminous Aswan. The Old Cataract hotel takes its name from the meeting of the river with the granite barrier, which creates the first cataract of the Nile. Behind its Victorian facade, the hotel retains its original beauty, receiving visitors in an historic lobby with polished marble floors and high, classic Islamic arches. The 76 rooms and suites in the Old Palace Wing are complimented by 62 rooms and suites in the contemporary Nile Wing.

To relax after a day's exploration retire to the So Spa with its indoor swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, hammam and gymnasium. Enjoy the two outdoor pools, one heated for when the weather is cooler. Experience one of the massages in the So Spa to truly relax before a good nights sleep.

The dreamlike history of the Old Cataract began in 1899. Prestigious guests have honored this place: Sir Winston Churchill, The Aga Khan, King Farouk, and also the former French president, François Mitterrand, who often came here for rest and relaxation.

Why we like it

- Gateway to Nubia the ancient province of Egypt
- Famous location that inspired Agatha Christie's 'Death on the Nile'
- Views over the famed River Nile

- Choose between the Palace wing where heritage is preserved and the Nile wing with its contemporary elegance
- 1902 fine dining restaurant with a 75-ft Qualawun Mausoleum dome

Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano



Four Seasons rekindles the glamour and prestige of San Stefano, Egypt's legendary Mediterranean resort. It's impossible not to be impressed with the sheer opulence of the place. No stone has been left unturned in creating sensational interiors or in delivering outstanding service - this seaside escape blends cool, classic accommodation with a multitude of restaurants, bars and shops.

The first 5-star hotel in Alexandria, it is the perfect base from which to explore the historic city's unique sights, sounds and experiences - from catacombs, forts and palaces to art galleries and, of course, Pharos Lighthouse, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Why we like it

- Located on the Corniche and within the Grand Plaza shopping and residential district, downtown Alexandria is a mere 30-minutes drive
- All rooms and suites have private balconies, we particularly like the Sea View rooms
- Restaurants and bars offer fine cuisine from southern Italy, Greece, Lebanon, the Orient and the Mediterranean
- The European Spa has 14 treatment rooms, including a couple's suit and offers comprehensive wellness treatments
- A Kid's Club for 5-12 year olds is open every day from 10am-7pm

Abercrombie & Kent

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