



FRIENDS OF ST.CATHERINE

DAY1: Arrival at Cairo airport, meet and assist through formalities transfer to the hotel for short overnight

DAY2: After breakfast drive to Sakkara the vast necropolis of ancient Memphis. Visit the Step Pyramid of Zoser (3rd dynasty, 2668 BC – 2649 BC). Continue our tour, drive to the Pyramids of Giza. Transfer back to your hotel for refreshment, then transfer to get our dinner on board of 5 stars floating restaurant, late drive back to our hotel for over night

Zoser



Pharaoh Zoser was the first king of the Third Dynasty. The serdab, on the northern face of the pyramid, contained his statue; this was the place of his "ka," which could see the offerings made to him. The original statue, now in the Cairo Museum, is thought to have recorded his exact features. This pyramid and the buildings comprising the funerary complex were designed by Imhotep, the first architect whose name is recorded. They were also the first major constructions in stone. Prior to this, sun-dried brick had been the usual building material. It is also the first tomb of monumental size. It was begun as a large mastaba, oriented to the points of the compass, but was enlarged twice to a final height of about 200 feet

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Pyramids and sphinx



There are no more famous ancient sites within Egypt, or for that matter elsewhere in the world, than the Great Pyramids at Giza. They are, without question, the icon most associated with the Egypt. They have been both the main destination for tourists and a source of imaginative thought to the world for over three thousand years.

DAYS: Breakfast, visiting **the Egyptian Museum**, famous for its antiquities from Egypt's Pharaonic period, dates back some 50 centuries, and includes the fabulous treasures of King Tut Ankh-Amon. In the afternoon excursion to Old Cairo, the old Coptic churches; and the oldest **Jewish Synagogue of Ben Ezra**. Transfer to the rail station to get the sleeping train to Luxor dinner on board.

Egyptian Museum



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The Egyptian Museum owes its existence to the Egyptian Antiquities Service, established by the Egyptian government in 1835 to limit the looting of Egypt's priceless artifacts. The museum opened in 1858 with a collection assembled by Auguste Mariette, the French archaeologist retained by Ismail Pasha. It was originally housed in an

Annex of the palace of Ismail Pasha in Giza, the museum moved to its present location in 1900.

Synagogue of Ben Ezra



The Synagogue of Ben Ezra was originally named El-Shamieen Church, and is situated behind the "hanging church". The Synagogue once had an old copy of the Old Testament, and it was said that Ezra the Prophet (Al-Azir) had written it.

It is believed that the site of the Synagogue was where the box of Baby Moses was found. ". In the Encyclopaedia Britannica, a Synagogue is described as "A *prayer place for the Jews*". In old Greek it means: "*The usual place where the Jews assemble to receive religious teachings and to worship*" Some of these Temples were built close to a source of water, as much as for protection from any attack, not just for ablution

DAY4: Arrival to Luxor, breakfast on board of sleeping train, then transfers to our Nile Cruise, Embarkation on ship. Visit the stunning



monuments of Luxor and Karnak, the greatest cities of Ancient Egypt. (Optional tour to Sound & light show in Karnak temple)
Overnight on the ship. All meals include.

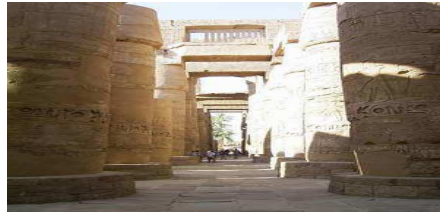
Luxor Temple



Luxor Temple, or the Temple of Luxor, is among the most beautiful Temples in Egypt. It was known in the New Kingdom period as Ipt-Rsyt, which means the southern shrine. This was to differentiate between this Temple and Karnak Temple, which was the northern house of Amon Ra. Amenhotep III built Luxor Temple. The architect and overseer of the works of construction was the genius Amenhotep, son of Habu. The Temple runs close and parallel to the river Nile from north to south. It was constructed on the site of a small Temple of Amon, built by kings of the 12th dynasty. At the time of Amenhotep III the Temple was only 190m in length and 55m in width. Basically, Luxor Temple was consecrated to Amon Ra in his fertility aspect

Karnak Temple

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The Temple of Karnak is the largest Temple in the World! The complex contains a group of Temples such as the Great Temple of Amon Ra, the Temple of Khonso, the Ipt Temple, the Temple of Ptah, the Temple of Montho and the Temple of the God Osiris. A 20m high, mud brick enclosure wall, surrounded all of these buildings.

DAY5: Focus on west bank of the Nile to visit the Valley of the Kings and Deir El-Bahari, Queen Hatshepsut's monumental rock-cut temple. Stop for pictures at the two Colossi of Memnon guarding the valley. Drive back to the ship .Sailing to Edfu .Overnight on the ship. All meals include.

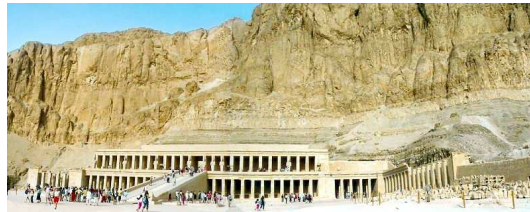
Valley of the Kings



The Valley of the Kings was the royal cemetery for 62 Pharaohs, and is located on the west bank at Luxor. The only entrance to this place was a long narrow winding path. This was a secret place, where sentries were placed at the entrance of the Valley, as well as along the top of the hills, in the hopes of discouraging tomb robbers, who had in the past plundered all royal tombs, including the



treasures of the Pyramids! Some thefts were probably carefully planned, but others were spur of the moment, as when an earlier tomb was accidentally discovered while cutting a new one and workmen took advantage of the opportunity.



Hatshepsut was one of the most interesting female figures and most capable Pharaohs of Egyptian history (1490-1468 BC), so our visit to her 3,500 year old mortuary temple in the Valley of Kings (Thebes West) was in many respects a quite special experience.

DAY6: Board horse-drawn carriages for a drive through Edfu to the temple of Horus with its menacing black stone statue of the Falcon god. Later, re-board your boat and sail to Kom Ombo to visit Sobek temple, then proceed sailing to Aswan. Overnight on the ship all meals included.

Kom Ombo

Hours Temple



DAY7: After breakfast, enjoy an excursion to the Old Dam and the gigantic Aswan High Dam completed in 1970. Board a motor launch to the island of Phiale to visit the temple of Isis. Also stop at the ancient granite quarries to see the famous Unfinished Obelisk. Overnight on the ship. All meals included.

High Dam



The High Dam of Aswan is a great project. In fact it was one of the most important achievements in the last century in Egypt, even for many years it was a



symbol of the New Era of the Revolution of 1952. It provided Egypt with water and electricity and secured the country of the risk of the destructive inundation.

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Philae Temple



Philae Island was a rocky island in the middle of the River Nile, south of Aswan. It was called in Hieroglyphic “Apo” which means Ivory. It was also known by the Greek “Elephantine”, most probably because it was an important centre of trade, especially for ivory.

Un-finished Obelisk

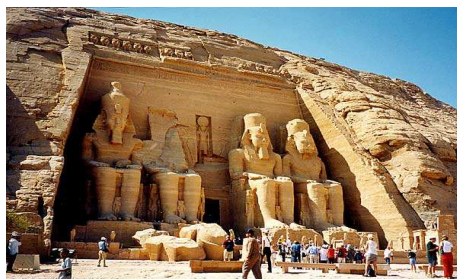




The Unfinished Obelisk lies, in its original location, in a granite quarry in Aswan. It is 42m in length and was most probably abandoned when some cracks appeared in the rock, during its construction. Had this obelisk been completed, it would have been the heaviest obelisk ever cut in Ancient Egypt, weighing nearly 1100 tons! It is believed that it was constructed and abandoned during the reign of Queen Hatshepsut (18th Dynasty).

During the earliest ages, the Ancient Egyptians knew the so-called “Pn-pn”, which was a pyramidal stone with a pointed top and according to their beliefs the “Pn-pn” symbolized the primeval hill from which the world first appeared. Then, in the course of time, this Pn-pn evolved to be an obelisk usually made of granite with a pyramidal shape on top.

DAY 8: Disembarkation.(Optional Excursion to AbuSimbel by flight or by bus), back to Aswan, transfer to Aswan rail station to get the sleeping train to Cairo.



The Temples of Abu Simbel are amongst the most interesting Pharaonic Temples. Located close to the southern border with the Sudan, it is 280 km south of Aswan and consists of two, rock-cut Temples, which both date back to the reign of King



Ramses II (1290-1223 BC). Unfortunately these unique Temples suffered from the raising water of Lake Nasser while the High Dam was being built. Other countries, with the help of UNESCO, assisted Egypt to help save them

The two Temples were cut in to many pieces, and they were reconstructed again on a site 65m high than the original location, and 200m back inland, to escape the rising water level. This great rescue operation began in June 1964 and finished in September.

DAY 9: Breakfast on board Arrive at Giza rail-way station at 07:00, then transfer to St. Catherine along the Gulf of Suez visiting the Canal of Suez en route , then proceed to the lush **green Oasis of Wadi Faran** (Biblical Raphidim) arrive in the afternoon to St. Catherine area, dinner and over night.

DAY 10: St. Catherine celebration (7th & 8th of Dec.).

DAY 11: Early morning, walk up to Mount Sinai 2285 above sea level, attain the summit named after Moses where God delivered the Ten Commandments, time on top to take in and photograph the imposing & spectacular view of the sun coming up over the hills of Sinai. Descent through the stairway carved into the mountain by St. Catherine monks. Breakfast at the hotel, and then visit to the famed 6th century Monastery named after St. Catherine, the martyr of Alexandria. Drive back to Cairo Arrival at Cairo, dinner and overnight.

Monastery

Mount Sinai

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DAY 12: Staying in the hotel till noon time, then departure to visit the Citadel of Salah El-Din; and Mohamed Ali alabaster Mosque. Time for shopping. (Optional excursion to Sound and light show).

Mohamed Ali alabaster Mosque

Citadel of Salah El-Din



The citadel was constructed by Salah El Din on the Moqattam hills in 1183 AD overlooking the whole city to be his defensive point against the attacks of the Crusaders. Salah El Din appointed to be the governor of Egypt after the death of the Sultan of Damascus, Noor-el-Din.



The mosque is situated in the Citadel of Cairo in Egypt and commissioned by Muhammad Ali Pasha between 1830 and 1848.

Situated on the summit of the citadel, this Ottoman mosque, the largest to be built in the first half of the 19th century, is, with its animated silhouette and twin minarets, the most visible mosque in Cairo. The mosque was built in memory of Tusun Pasha, Muhammad Ali's oldest son, who died in 1816.

DAY 13: transfer to Cairo airport for final departure