

Mar 15: Depart USA for overnight flight to Cairo. Air details later in AFS Trip Tips emailed to you.

Mar 16: Arrival Cairo - Welcome to land of the Pharaohs (Land portion begins.)

Welcome to the city that never sleeps, Cairo! This city will amaze you with its mixture of ancient and modern. We will be greeted at the airport by our tour manager who will hand out our prepaid out visas. We will be transferred to our hotel, the Cairo Sheraton. Overlooking the Nile, the hotel has both a spa, pool, gourmet restaurants, shops and casino. We'll receive a welcome drink on our arrival followed by a briefing from our excellent Egyptologist guide. The evening is free to explore or rest up and prepare the adventure that lies ahead.

Overnight: Sheraton Cairo

Mar 17: Pyramids and Cairo Sightseeing **B/L**

Following breakfast, we head out for a full day of exploring the marvels of Egypt that most people just read about. Our first stop is the Giza plateau and the only remaining Wonders of the Ancient World - the Pyramids! We will see Cheops, Chefren and Mykerinus, as well as the mysterious Sphinx and Valley temple facing the great statue. At the foot of the Great Pyramid, we can explore the Khufu ship. Known as the Solar boat, this full-sized vessel dates from 2500 B.C. and was found sealed in a pit near Cheops' base. Yes, you can ride a camel for that iconic photo and even enter a pyramid.

After lunch, we make our way to the famed Cairo Museum. This building houses countless artifacts from the times of the pharaohs and before. Most notably, it houses the treasures of the boy king Tutankhamen. Our guide will bring these treasures to life with timeless stories. In late afternoon, we experience mixture of culture and retail therapy as we explore Cairo the historic souk, Khan El Khalili, at its center. We return to the hotel for a free evening. Plenty of suggestions will be provided. Perhaps a sunset ride by traditional felucca followed by belly dancing.

Overnight: Sheraton Cairo

Mar 18: Fly Cairo to Luxor -Movenpick Royal Lilly Cruise **B/L/D**

We'll leave Cairo behind in the morning to fly to Luxor where we will board the uber modern Movenpick Royal Lilly which will be our home for the next 5 days. The Lily is a floating 5 star luxury hotel, complete with pool, spa, lounge and a restaurant that is equipped to serve up a variety of the world's best cuisines. We will have lunch aboard before heading out to explore Luxor. We explore the Karnak Temple, which is dedicated to the god Amon, his wife Mut and their son Khonsu, considered the greatest example of worship in history. We end the day with a tour of the Luxor temple. Still used as a place of worship, this temple was begun by Amenhotep III in 1320 B.C. and expanded by several pharaohs, including Tutankhamen. Captain's Welcome Dinner tonight.

Overnight: Movenpick Royal Lilly

Mar 19: Luxor Nile Cruise Excursions

Set out early in the morning to explore the West Bank of ancient Thebes and the Valley of the Kings. The valley is deceptive. Very barren, but once you enter the tombs, be prepared to be stunned with the intricacy of the paintings which line the walls. There are 65 known tombs here which include the royal tombs of such notables as Tut Ankh Amen (yes, that King Tut), Thutmosos I, Amenhotep I and Ramesses the 6th. (There is a small extra fee to enter King Tut's tomb.)

On our return to the ship, we will stop at the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu and the excavations of the ancient village Dier El Madina where the workers who decorated the tombs of the Valley of the Kings lived. Our final stop on the way back, we'll see the two massive stone statues of Pharaoh Amenhotep III at the Colossi of Memnon (FYI - fascinating). Lunch is on board our ship as we set sail to Esna. Crossing through the locks at Esna is a true experience not to be missed. Gather up top on deck and watch how all the cruise ships line up for their turn to enter the lock and be lowered to the other side. Sailing dhows with local merchants will come along the ship to sell you Egyptian endless cool Egyptian garb and handicrafts. Don't forget to barter! Onboard, lectures and fun activities will be presented. A celebration with a cocktail party on deck will mark the evening. Dinner will follow the crossing.

Overnight: Movenpick Royal Lilly

Mar 20: Edfu and Kom Ombo Temples **B/L/D**

After buffet breakfast, set sail early to Edfu where we will visit the best-preserved temple of the ancient world, the Temple of Edfu. Dedicated to Horus the Falcon God, the temple was hidden for centuries by sand before being unearthed in the mid-1800s. Lunch is aboard the ship while we set sail for Komombo. This twin temple is dedicated to the Crocodile God Sobek, God of Fertility and Creator of the World on one side - while the other side is dedicated to the Falcon God, Haroeris, also known as Horus the Elder. The inscriptions and carvings celebrate both gods. Dinner is aboard the ship and will overnight here in Komombo.

Tonight is an Egyptian custom party-wear you don the garb you bargained for fun group photos.

Overnight: Movenpick Royal Lilly

Mar 21: Aswan Nile Cruise Tours **B/L/D**

Sail on to Aswan where we will visit the High Dam. The dam was built to control the river and halt major flooding. Afterwards, we take a short boat ride on the Aswan Reservoir to what is considered the most beautiful temple in all of Egypt. Philae. Philae means 'the end' and at one point this defined the southernmost limit of Egypt. It was begun by Ptolemy II and completed by the Roman Emperors. This temple was moved to preserve it when the Low Dam first created this reservoir. The temple is dedicated to Isis, goddess of magic and maternity. She is also mother to Horus, the falcon god.

After lunch aboard the Royal Lilly, we travel by another boat through small passages on the Nile to a living museum village of the Nubian people! The color here will astound you. The houses, the people, the cloth they weave and the wares they sell will boggle your senses. You may even get a chance to see a Nile crocodile because the people of this village are dedicated to preserving the creatures and help raise them.

Overnight: Movenpick Royal Lilly

Mar 22: Disembarkation - back to Cairo **B**

Following breakfast, we travel to Aswan Airport for a flight to Cairo. After checking into our hotel, the rest of the day is free to explore. There's so many options: Coptic Cairo, the fab Papyrus Institute, Citadel, Memphis, Sakkara and more. Our guides will help you.

Overnight: Sheraton Cairo

Mar 23: Cairo - Fly Back Home **B**

After breakfast, bid farewell to Cairo and transfer to airport to head home.