

# Pyramids and Temples Alive – with Laura Ranieri Roy!

Saturday Nov 9 – Friday November 22, 2024

An inspiring 13 night experience of the wonders of Egypt



*Trace the footsteps of the great explorers, kings and conquerors of the past as you discover Egypt's wonders, ancient and modern. With the inspiring insight of your local Egyptologist guide – the storied legends of the Pharaohs will come alive.*

*Climb into pyramids, immerse yourself in the colourful souks and village life, sail the Nile like Cleopatra, ride a camel – and be transformed in this exciting and exotic two-week, small group cultural adventure featuring all the highlights (and hidden treasures) of Egypt – including the majestic Abu Simbel Temple! **Be awestruck at the Giza Pyramids:** See the Sphinx, Solar boat, Old Kingdom tomb(s) and enter inside one of the Great Pyramids to connect viscerally to thousands of years of history.*

- ✦ **See the Grand Egyptian Museum** – in a grand finale return to Cairo
- ✦ **Go in-depth at the sites** – designed for travellers with an interest in Egyptian history
- ✦ **See Egypt's highlights (Giza Pyramid, Sakkara, Valley of the Kings, Cairo Museum, Karnak) plus hidden-treasure tombs and temples**
- ✦ **Experience the greatest temple of Egypt – Abu Simbel – and a Ptolemaic masterpiece, the temple of Hathor at Dendera in Middle Egypt**
- ✦ **Sail like Cleopatra on a deluxe all-inclusive Nile cruise – visiting temples and sites along the way**
- ✦ **Travel with a collegial and cultured small group (no more than 20 people)**
  
- ✦ **Deluxe hotels, all inclusive Nile cruise ship, site admissions, all guides, all breakfasts, 6 dinners and 8 lunches included.**



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## **Day 1 Welcome to Cairo**

You will be greeted at the airport and transferred to your hotel – the central Conrad Hilton in the heart of Cairo. In the evening, meet your fellow travelers at a welcome dinner and short opening presentation by Laura. Those arriving early (and raring to go) will have the opportunity to take an optional afternoon excursion.

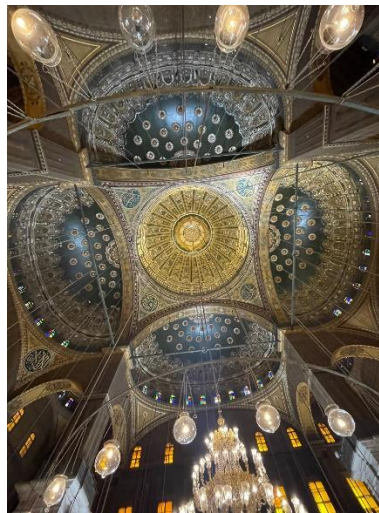
**Overnight Cairo, Conrad Hilton or similar D**

## **Day 2 The Citadel, NMEC & Islamic Cairo**

We start our exciting first full day with a panoramic view of the city from way up in the medieval **Citadel of Saleh el din**, a marvel of medieval warfare, built (in places) with limestone from the Great Pyramid. There, we'll also tour a 14th century open air mosque and the beautiful 19th century mosque of Mohammed Ali.



*Figure 1: Salah al Din's Citadel*



*Figure 2: Inside Mohamed Ali Mosque*

After the Citadel, we head to the new **NMEC - The National Museum of Egyptian Civilization**. We have a tour of the museum, replete with masterpieces of Egyptian arts and crafts through the ages and new home of the Royal Mummies. This will be a special treat as the museum has only fully been open since 2021 and is artfully designed to showcase its wonderful collection of antiquities dating from Pharaonic through Islamic times. The new presentation of the royal mummies in family groups with their burial goods is wonderful to see.



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**Lunch at AL AZAR Park**

**Islamic Cairo:** This afternoon we will explore the greatest Islamic building in Egypt: The Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan. This magical place is one of the largest mosques in the world and certainly the finest piece of early-Mamluk architecture dating to 1363 BCE. We will venture in to feel the centuries of devotion still residing here – and perhaps even hear the stunning voice of the Muezzin (the one appointed to sing call to prayer).

We will also visit El Raffai, another ornate 19th century mosque which is the resting place of many early Egyptian rulers, including King Farouk. From there we will explore Khan el Khalili market – the colourful and chaotic medieval souk. We will experience El Moezz street dating to the Fatimid era, home to the greatest concentration of medieval architectural treasures in the Islamic world. In the evening, we will return to our hotel for dinner on your own.

**Overnight Cairo, Conrad Hilton or similar B, L**



*Figure 3: Mosque of Sultan Hasan*

## **Day 3 Giza and Music**

The last surviving of the Seven Wonders of the world, the **Great Pyramid of Giza** is perhaps the most famous tourist site in the world. The Giza plateau itself, with its three major pyramids plus Queen's pyramids, ancient mastabas, Sphinx and the ubiquitous and colourful camel drivers is a much-anticipated highlight of any trip. For our visit, we will also climb inside the pyramid of Kephren or Khufu (possible upgrade fee) - an exciting experience and a real highlight of the Giza visit. While on the plateau, we will also visit the extraordinary Sphinx and Khafre's valley temple.



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**Lunch at 9 Pyramids view restaurant - with a beautiful panoramic view of the Pyramids**



*Figure 5: Pyramid of Khufu - gleaming like the sun god!*



*Figure 4: Pyramids of Khufu, Khafre and Menkaure*

After lunch we will visit the **Egyptian Museum**, home to many of the greatest treasures of ancient history. This former “warehouse of antiquities in a beautiful Neo-Classical building from 1902 is transforming to a Museum of Masterpieces. Beyond the well-known treasures like Khephren Enthroned, the treasures of Tanis and the golden wonders of Yuya and Thuya - you will also find rooms of opulent jewelry, ornate coffins, animal mummies – and strange and ancient curiosities. A microcosm of thousands of years of Egyptian art and history.



*The Great Sphinx and the Giza Plateau*



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In the evening we head out to see a colourful and authentic sufi show (whirling dervishes) at the 1100 year-old Wekalet El Ghouri Arts Center.



**Dinner on your own, Overnight Cairo, Conrad Hilton or similar B, L**

### **Day 4 The wonders of Sakkara and the Step Pyramid - Fly to Aswan**

We will enjoy an intensive full day exploring this rich archaeological site – which is most notably the location of Djoser's **Step Pyramid**, the oldest in Egypt. We will see Old Kingdom tombs, such as the breathtaking Mereruke, the mastaba of Ty, the tomb of Khnumhotep and Niankhknum (The Royal Manicurists), the tomb of Ptahotep (please note tombs opening and closures change, we will see tombs that are currently open at the time)

We will also have the exciting opportunity to enter either the **Pyramid of King Unas or King Teti**, from the later Old Kingdom. Although small, these are the very first to feature pyramid texts carved on its walls, some still retaining traces of ancient colour.

Next, we will tour the Sakkara complex, including the **Step pyramid** itself, Djoser's court and the causeway. We hope also to tour the fascinating and splendid **Serapeum** home of the Apis bull - seldom included on a mainstream tourist visit.



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Lunch in the garden of the beautiful Sakkara Palms.

After lunch we head to the airport for our evening flight to Aswan.

Overnight Aswan, Tolip Hotel or similar B,L

### Day 5 The Beauty of Aswan and Upper Egypt - Abu Simbel

This morning we board our coach early and begin an exciting road trip south to experience the grandeur of what is arguably Egypt's greatest temples of all: **Abu Simbel**. These huge rock-cut temples marked the southern boundary of the Egyptian Empire with Nubia at the peak of its power during the New Kingdom. They were meant to convey the power of Egypt's rulers to anyone who laid eyes upon them. The great statues of Ramses and his wife Nefertari that adorn their facades are awe-inspiring -- and the four statues guarding the doorway to the larger of these temples are the largest sculptures that survive from the Pharaonic era.



### Lunch at Nubian Ecolodge

Enroute back to Aswan, we stop at a marvel of modern engineering: the **Aswan High Dam**. We'll also see the ancient rock quarries where the Egyptians got their finest limestone – and climb up to view the great **unfinished obelisk** of Queen Hatshepsut. After arrival and check in at the hotel, we will freshen up and end the eventful day with refreshing felucca (sailboat) ride. In evening why not visit the famous spice market.

Overnight Aswan, Tolip hotel or similar B, L



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### Day 6 Philae Temple

Leisurely start to the day, mid morning we will depart via bus and motorboat to visit the great temple of Isis on Philae island, the last operational temple in Egypt in which Egyptians worshipped for centuries until the Roman Emperor Justinian closed its doors in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century CE. The entire temple – with its beautiful statuary and reliefs was moved onto this island in the 1970s to preserve it from submersion after the creation of the new Aswan dam.

In the late afternoon we will visit the fascinating Nubian museum and then enjoy a traditional Nubian dinner – a short boat ride away – at a local restaurant.

**Overnight Aswan, Tolip hotel or similar B, D**



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### Day 7 Camels, Tombs – and Climb aboard our Nile Riverboat

Why not join us for a morning camel ride (optional approx cost \$35USD) to a medieval Christian monastery – a very sacred place, perched atop a sandy hill. Also this morning, we will take a boat ride to enjoy a lovely hike and visit some special tombs on the west bank. You will have the option of walking or taking camels to visit the rock-cut tombs of **Qubbet el Hawa**, cut into the high cliffs across the river from the modern city of Aswan, This is the site of an elite Old and Middle Kingdom cemetery. You'll enjoy breathtaking vistas as you explore the seldom-visited tombs of the high officials – a real off-the-beaten track experience. "Autobiographies" carved into their facades provide fascinating details of the lives of these men, several of whom led trading and military expeditions south into Nubia. Next, we will **board our beautiful 5-star cruise ship** The Acamar Cruise, which will be our home on the river during our 4-day journey to Luxor. Enjoy a sumptuous lunch on board. Optional sound & light show at Philae temple (approx \$50US)



Figure 6: Beautiful view from the rock cut tombs



Camel ride to Sam Simeon Monastery



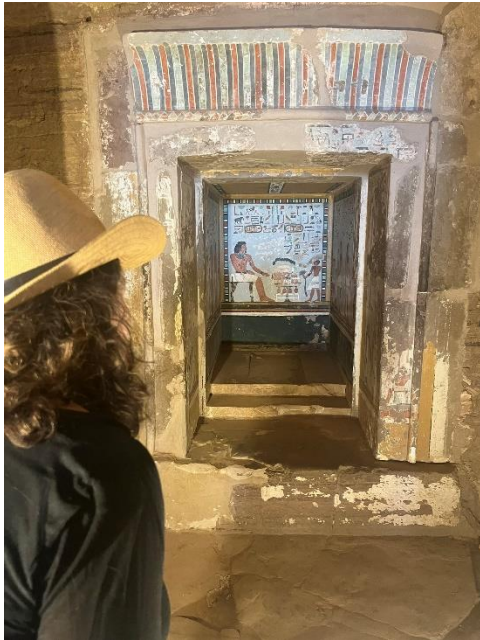
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*Figure 7: viewing the tombs of Qubbet el Hawa, Aswan*

### Overnight MS Mayfair Nile cruise, B, L, D

#### Day 8 Kom Ombo and cruising

After breakfast, we will visit the unusual double temple of **Kom Ombo** dating from Ptolemaic times, around 100 BCE. The southern half of the temple was dedicated to the crocodile god Sobek, god of fertility and creator of the world with Hathor and Khonsu. Meanwhile, the northern part of the temple was dedicated to the falcon god Haroeris, also known as Horus the Elder. We can also visit the crocodile mummy museum.



*Approaching Kom Ombo*



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*Kom Ombo Temple*



### Lunch on board.

We sail downstream (north) to Edfu, where we will visit **Edfu Temple** in the afternoon. This temple is the most complete in Egypt - and devoted to the hawk god Horus.

We will have a relaxing afternoon onboard watching the changing shorelines as we cruise north past Edfu and Esna enroute to Luxor. There will be a talk on temples and the great Denderah by Laura in the early or late afternoon. Sail to Luxor Overnight Luxor

**Overnight** MS Mayfair or similar **B, L, D**

### Day 9 Valley of the Kings, Deir el Medina, Luxor Museum – and Luxor Temple at Night

Today you will wake up in Luxor: city of a hundred gates, to the ancients. THEBES!



*Figure 8: Inside KV 9 Valley of the Kings*



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This morning we will visit the famous and breathtaking **Valley of the Kings**, with their vibrant colours and wonderful stories. Here you will have a chance to enter into three of the King's tombs, based on what is open. You will also have an opportunity to enter into special tombs like Seti I, Ramses V, VI or Tutankhamun (extra cost for these). Afterwards we will visit the enchanting Valley of the Workers, home to a complete ancient village and stunning tombs of the craftsmen who built the King's final resting place.

*Return to the boat for Lunch.*

In the late afternoon, we will make a visit to the **Luxor Museum** – a beautiful modern museum, home to the greatest art in Upper Egypt. As the sun slowly dips, we will then make our way to the very romantic **Luxor Temple**, with its massive colossi and beautiful temple reliefs. See the great obelisks, colossi and fall under the spell of Ramses, Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III.

**Overnight MS Mayfair Nile Cruise B, L, D**



### **Day 10 Stunning Denderah and West Bank Nobles Tombs**

Disembark and climb aboard our coach for a road trip to one of Egypt's most breathtaking temples – The three-level **temple of Hathor at Denderah**. It was built during Ptolemaic and Roman times – and is the most complete of Egypt's ancient temples and one of the best restored. This is where Cleopatra possibly honeymooned with Julius Caesar – and you can see her image at the back. The ceiling of vibrant blue and greens shows sky goddess Nut (pronounced: Noot) swallowing the sun and giving birth to the new day. This is also a very rare two story temple where the New Years Day Festival was celebrated – with Hathor's union with Horus as the new day sun. Venture deep into the crypt to see strange reliefs. Go up on the roof to see the site of the fascinating zodiac ceiling – the oldest in the world.



*Figure 9: Stunning Denderah Temple*



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Enroute you will experience the vibrant countryside of Egypt – rural towns and villages untouched by time, sailing past the coach window.

We will drive back to Luxor via the West bank where we will have a traditional Egyptian lunch in the relaxing and shady gardens of the Marsam, the oldest hotel on the west bank, adjacent to the excavations at the Amenhotep III temples. Originally built in the 1920s as a house for archaeologists from the University of Chicago, it was later turned into a hotel by Sheikh Ali of the local Abd El Rasoul family. After lunch we will visit the Colossi of Memnon – gateway to Amenhotep III's immense temple. Finally, we will visit two jewels of the west bank: **Tombs of the Nobles** high in the hills. Sennefer and Rekhmire or equivalent.



Back to the east bank to check into our hotel and enjoy an evening at leisure on your own. Why not try drinks at the library bar of the famous Winter Palace Hotel?

**Overnight Luxor, Steigenberger Nile Palace or similar B, L**



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### Day 11 Marvel of Queen Hatshepsut & Medinet Habu – the last great temple of Pharaonic

Today, there will be a highly recommended but optional early morning balloon ride. Come sail above city and watch the sun rise over the Nile! (cost \$250USD).

After breakfast we will depart by boat to visit the world-famous **Queen Hatshepsut temple** - nestled into the pink mountains – Meret Seger - meaning “she who loves silence.” This was the great temple of the woman who would be king - one of Egypt’s greatest builders in the New Kingdom.



Figure 10: Temple of Medinet Habu



Next, we will witness **Medinet Habu**, the last great temple of Pharaonic Egypt, a massive enclosure with deeply-etched reliefs and thrilling, graphic scenes of King Ramses III’s battles with the Sea Peoples. You will love this temple – which is possibly also the site of a harem conspiracy and the assassination of the king.



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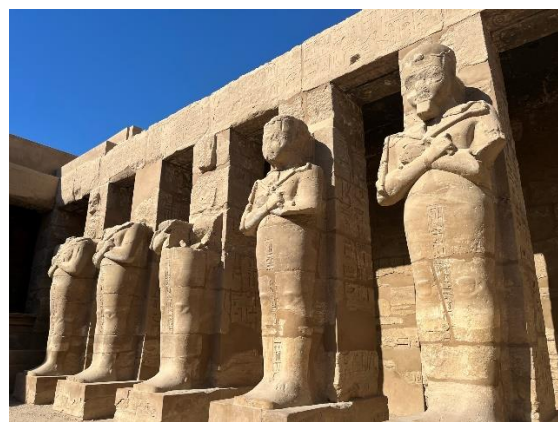
Lunch at a local restaurant. Return to hotel for an afternoon at leisure.

In the evening join us for a pleasant optional walk to the Luxor Souk and Aboudi bookstore.

***Overnight Luxor, Steigenberger Nile Palace or similar B, L***

### ***Day 12 Karnak – the largest temple in the world! And farewell dinner.***

Our final site visit will be to magnificent Karnak Temple. The largest religious structure in the world, Karnak was built over a period of 3000 years by almost every Pharaoh of Egypt from the Middle Kingdom onwards. Marvel at the great Avenue of the Sphinxes, Hatshepsut's obelisk – and the great Hypostyle Hall of Ramses the Great and his father Seti I. This incredible hall has recently had its colours restored. We'll also visit the sacred lake and zoological gardens (engraved in stone) of Thutmosis III.



We will return to the hotel lunch on your own and afternoon free.

This evening we get together for a very special farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

***Overnight Luxor, Steigenberger Nile Palace or similar B, D***

### **Day 13 Return to Cairo – Visit Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM)**

A grand finale to our wonderful tour, we return to Cairo to see the long-anticipated Grand Egyptian Museum, newly opened at the foot of the pyramids.

Laura Ranieri Roy and Francois Roy will be touring the amazing museum along with you and your guide!



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The magnificent **Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM)** – the largest and most spectacular archaeological museum in the world at the foot of the pyramids. Here we will wander through 5000 years of Egyptian history – seeing masterpieces like the great colossus of Ramses and the world's first hanging obelisk to the solar boats of King Khufu and all the dazzling treasures of King Tutankhamun – 5400 pieces -- newly restored and brought together in a stunning exhibit that takes you through the story of the boy king's life. The astounding GEM may be considered yet another wonder of the world that Egypt now can claim.

*Lunch at ZOOBA, beautiful new restaurant at the Grand Egyptian Museum*

Return for final night to your Cairo Hotel, the Hyatt Regency. Dinner on your own. B,L

### Day 14: Check out and Transfer Home

Check out of hotel for your transfer home – or continue your travels on our Jordan extension. **B**

### Tour cost -

Nov 09-Nov 22 2024

\$4,947USD twin

Single supp. \$1,690.00USD

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**or call 416-473-1384**



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## **Package includes:**

- 03 nights' accommodation in Cairo at **Conrad** or similar on BB Basis. (from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> November)
- 03 nights' accommodation in Aswan at **Tolip** or similar on BB Basis. (from 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November)
- 03 nights' accommodation on board of **M/S May Fair** Nile cruise or similar on FB Basis. (from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> November)
- 03 nights' accommodation in Luxor at **Steigenberger** Luxor hotel or similar on BB Basis. (from 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> November)
- 01 night accommodation in Cairo at **Hyatt Regency** or similar on BB Basis. (from 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> November)
- Flight Cairo-Aswan & Luxor-Cairo – with transfers
- All transfers throughout with air-conditioned private bus
- Entrance fees with entry as mentioned
- English speaking Egyptologist guide throughout
- 13 breakfasts at the hotels and Nile cruise, 9 lunches at local restaurants during tours and Nile cruise, 5 dinners at Nile cruise , welcome Dinner at Conrad & Farewell Dinner at local restaurant in Luxor
- mineral water every day on the bus
- Service charge and taxes

## **Packages excludes:**

- Entry visa
- International flight ticket

Insurance - medical or cancellation - both recommended

**\$250USD non-refundable deposit to confirm. Final due 60days prior to departure.**

## **Cancellation conditions:**

60 days or more deposit is non refundable

59 - 31 days prior to departure 50% is non-refundable

30 days or less prior to departure 100% non-refundable



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Tour Designed by Laura Ranieri Roy an Egyptologist, writer and founder-director of *Ancient Egypt Alive* – an organization that seeks to inspire passion about Egypt's past. She creates and leads enriching history content, exciting online events, in-depth ancient history courses -- and curated small-group tours to Egypt. Laura and Francois Roy will join on the final GEM day



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