



WORLD DISCOVERY

HISTORY CULTURE WILDLIFE

Oberoi Zahra Cruise



The Oberoi Zahra at Luxor

DAY 1 – Arrival in Cairo.

On arrival in Cairo you will be met by our representative who will organise your Egyptian visa and assist you through immigration and customs. You will then be taken by private car direct to your hotel.

GUARANTEED PYRAMIDS VIEW AT THE MENA HOUSE OBEROI

Your rooms are in the newer Garden Wing of the hotel. You may request a guaranteed Pyramid View Room for a special supplement of £48 per person for the 3 night stay. These rooms are in high demand so early booking is essential. Upgrades are also possible for a supplement to the historic Palace Wing of the hotel - details on request.

DAY 2 – Pyramids, Sphinx and Solar Boat Museum.

Your hotel is located right next to the Pyramids of Giza. After a leisurely breakfast, you will meet your World Discovery guide and spend the morning visiting this last surviving wonder of the ancient world. View the three monumental pyramids of Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus, and also the nearby Sphinx, dating from 2,500 BC, whose familiar outline is known to everyone yet whose purpose and meaning still remain a mystery. An added bonus this morning is the included entrance to the Solar Boat Museum. Located at the foot of the Great Pyramid of Cheops, this purpose-built building houses the unique 140-foot ancient Egyptian boat which was discovered in pieces on this spot as recently as 1954 and carefully reconstructed over a period of 14 years. The afternoon is free, with the option of visiting the site of ancient Memphis, first capital of the unified Upper and Lower Egypt (3,200 BC), and the funerary complex of Zoser at Saqqara, including the superb Step Pyramid, described by one historian as the "beginning of architecture". This evening there is the option of attending the spectacular Sound and Light performance at the Pyramids.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 3 – The Egyptian Museum.

Drive into Central Cairo for your visit to the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities. Whilst perhaps lacking the clarity of presentation of more modern establishments, this grand old building is unmissable, and contains the finest collection in the world of ancient Egyptian artefacts, including the astonishing array of treasures from the tomb of Tutankhamun. For an additional fee you may choose to visit the Royal Mummy Room containing the bodies of such legendary pharaohs as Tuthmosis II, Seti I and Ramses II. Return to your hotel in Giza for lunch, or you may choose to stay on in the city and enjoy an optional excursion to Old Cairo; we have a choice of 3 itineraries: (a) The Citadel of Saladin, Mosque of Mohamed Ali and the famous Khan al-Khalili bazaar, (b) Islamic Cairo, including the glorious Ibn Tulun Mosque and (c) The Coptic Museum and Gayer-Anderson House.

Meals included: Full breakfast.

DAY 4 – Fly to Luxor to join your Nile Cruise. Karnak Temple.

After breakfast, transfer to Cairo Airport for the short flight to Luxor. On arrival you will be met and transferred direct to the Oberoi Zahra at its mooring on the eastern banks of the Nile. This new luxury cruise ship will be your home for the next 7 nights. In the afternoon visit the astonishing Temple of Karnak. Built on a massive scale to house the gods, this vast temple complex covers more than 100 acres. At its heart lies the enormous Temple of Amun with its colossal Hypostyle Hall of 137 columns and its sacred lake; this structure alone is large enough to accommodate ten great cathedrals. You will visit to the Luxor Museum, which has an excellent collection of statues and funerary goods from ancient Thebes. Overnight in Luxor.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

DAY 5 – First visit to Western Thebes. Denderah.

In the early morning cross the Nile for your first visit to the magnificent archaeological remains of Western Thebes. Today you will visit the world-famous Valley of the Kings, where you will enter three tombs of the pharaohs, including that of the boy-king Tutankhamun, sensationally discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter. During your morning on the Western bank of the Nile you will also visit the monumental mortuary temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu and the Colossi of Memnon. Return to the Oberoi Zahra and set sail for Qena, where in the late afternoon you will enjoy a private visit to the magnificent Temple of Hathor at Denderah, not usually included in cruise itineraries due to time constraints. This beautiful Graeco-Roman temple was almost completely buried in sand until its rediscovery in the 19th century and as a result is one of the best-preserved in Upper Egypt. One of its highlights is the astronomical ceiling in the Hypostyle Hall, with its symbolic representation of the heavenly bodies.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

DAY 6 – Western Thebes (second visit). Luxor Temple.

Sail back to Luxor and make a second visit to Western Thebes. This morning you will explore the fascinating Tombs of the Nobles, markedly different from the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings. These smaller, less elaborate, tombs were not sealed but left open for descendants to make funerary offerings; the scenes depicted on the walls are more likely to illustrate daily life on earth rather than the afterlife. You will also visit the village of Deir el-Medina, the site of a very special workman's village whose ancestors were the craftsmen who built and decorated the tombs of the Pharaohs, and the famous monumental Temple of Queen Hapshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. In the afternoon visit the XVIIIth Dynasty Temple of Luxor, located close to the Nile in the centre of town, which is approached through an avenue of sphinxes. The temple contains some excellent reliefs and its Colonnade of Amenophis III is renowned for the elegance of its giant papyrus columns. This evening before dinner there will be cocktails with live music in the Club Lounge. Overnight in Luxor.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

DAY 7 – Sail to Edfu. Temple of Edfu.

A leisurely day spent sailing south on the Nile. In the late afternoon step ashore to visit the Temple of Horus at Edfu, the largest and best-preserved Ptolemaic temple in Egypt. The entrance to this awesome complex is guarded by two elegant black granite statues of the falcon-god Horus, son of Osiris. Overnight at Edfu.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

DAY 8 – Sail to Aswan. Aswan sightseeing.

Sail to Aswan, gateway to Nubia, situated downriver from the First Cataract on the Nile. It was here that the British built a dam between 1898 and 1902, but this was superseded by the Aswan High Dam, constructed by President Nasser in the 1960s, resulting in the creation of Lake Nasser, the largest artificial lake in the world. In the afternoon you will visit the High Dam, the Northern Quarries, famed for the Unfinished Obelisk, and also the superb Temple of Philae, rescued from the rising waters of the lake by UNESCO and painstakingly reconstructed on its own new island. Philae was the centre of the cult of Isis, and the magnificent Temple of Isis dominates the site. Overnight in Aswan.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

Return to the Oberoi Zahra and

DAY 9 – Kom Ombo. Felucca ride. Sound and Light show at the Temple of Philae.

Sail to Kom Ombo, whose unusual, totally symmetrical, temple is dedicated to two gods – the falcon-god Haroeris (Horus the Elder) and Sobek, the crocodile god. The temple is in a beautiful setting overlooking the Nile. Return to Aswan where in the afternoon you will enjoy a felucca ride on the Nile. In the evening return to Philae to enjoy the Sound and Light performance at the temple. Overnight in Aswan.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

DAY 10 – Aswan.

The day is at leisure in Aswan. An optional excursion by air may be taken to visit the incredible temples at **Abu Simbel** on the shores of Lake Nasser. Tonight before dinner there will be cocktails and entertainment on Mango Island to celebrate the end of an unforgettable cruise through 5,000 years of history.

Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner.

DAY 11 – Fly back to Cairo to connect with homeward flight.

Morning free. In the early afternoon fly back to Cairo to connect with your homeward flight.

Meals included: Full breakfast.