

12 Days | Splendors of Egypt & The Nile with Uniworld

Cairo - Luxor - The Nile - Dendera - Kom Ombo - Aswan - Edfu - Esna

From **\$9,199** Typically \$10,699 pp twin share



7-night cruise in a Riverview Stateroom with Uniworld Boutique River Cruises

4 nights accommodation in Cairo at the Four Seasons Hotel Cairo

Visit 12 UNESCO World Heritage sites

Come face to face with mummies and all the wonders of Ancient Egypt

Description



Cruise the Nile in a manner once reserved for Queens and Pharaohs with Uniworld Boutique River Cruises!

NOW AVAILABLE departures in 2025!

Not seeing an ideal travel date listed? Speak with our Friendly Customer Service Team who can quote you on other departure dates not listed that may have availability in a higher category stateroom

Embark on a mesmerizing 12-day expedition through the enchanting landscapes of Egypt, where each day unfolds as a chapter in a tale of opulence, exploration, and awe-inspiring discovery along the majestic Nile. Your sojourn commences in the bustling metropolis of Cairo, a city that encapsulates the rich tapestry of Egyptian history, and sets the stage for an unparalleled adventure.

The first leg of your odyssey takes you to the awe-inspiring Temple of Karnak, an ancient marvel that stands as the world's largest religious complex, casting shadows of centuries past. Traverse the hallowed grounds of the Temple of Luxor, an architectural testament to the grandeur of a bygone era. These towering ruins serve as portals to a time when pharaohs and gods walked among mortals, leaving an indelible mark on the sands of time.

Venturing further, immerse yourself in the footsteps of revered scholars and intrepid explorers as you enter the sacred precincts of the Valley of the Kings. Here lies the hushed testament to the final resting place of Egyptian royalty,

where ornate tombs and crypts whisper tales of an ancient civilization's glory and legacy.

Read our latest Blogs about River Cruising at '[Wake Up Here](#)'

Your captivating sojourn circles back to Cairo, bookending your adventure with cultural richness. Explore the renowned Egyptian Museum, a treasure trove of pharaonic artifacts that regale tales of dynasties and rulers long gone. Marvel at the intricacies of millennia-old relics that have withstood the test of time, providing a tangible link to Egypt's illustrious past.

Journey to the iconic Giza Plateau, where the colossal Pyramids and the enigmatic Sphinx stand as eternal guardians of a civilization's triumphs. Gaze upon these architectural marvels, pondering the mysteries that have captivated scholars and mystics for centuries. Each stone and hieroglyph bears witness to the ingenuity and prowess of the ancient Egyptians.

In this meticulously crafted itinerary, every moment is a brushstroke on the canvas of an unforgettable adventure. Delve into the heart of Egypt's historical splendor, where the Nile River weaves tales of antiquity, and the monuments of a bygone era stand as silent sentinels to a timeless legacy. Experience the grandeur of Egypt in style and luxury, where history and modernity converge in a symphony of exploration and indulgence.



Itinerary

Day 1

Australia ✈ Cairo

Arrive at Cairo International Airport. If your cruise/tour package includes a group arrival transfer or if you have purchased a private arrival transfer, a Uniworld representative will be on hand to greet you and escort you to your hotel. Guests are booked on the S.S. Sphinx for this program and will be staying at the opulent Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza.

Meals: None

Accommodation: Four Seasons Hotel Cairo

Day 2

Cairo

The ancient quarter of Cairo is intense—the colors, the sounds, the density of people—and it's likely been this way for thousands of years. Your local expert will show you a 12th-century citadel, the beautiful Alabaster Mosque and an unsurpassed collection of priceless artifacts, including mind-boggling treasures once buried with the boy king Tutankhamen.

Featured Excursion: Citadel of Salah al-Din, Alabaster Mosque and Egyptian Museum. Your tour of this historic city includes a visit to the Citadel of Salah al-Din, a massive compound containing mosques and museums and offering breathtaking views of Cairo. Founded in the seventh century by Arab conquerors, the Fatimid dynasty rulers made Cairo their capital and named it al-Qahira ("the Victorious"). The great sultan Salah al-Din built his citadel in the 12th century as a government center and bulwark against invading armies of Crusaders. Located high above the eastern end of Cairo on El-Moqattam Hill, the citadel was the home of Egypt's rulers for more than 700 years and is one of the oldest attractions in the city.

After the Ottoman ruler Muhammad Ali seized power in the 1800s, he restored the walls of the citadel and built numerous palaces, schools and government buildings inside. His masterpiece was the great Alabaster Mosque, also known as the Mosque of Muhammad Ali, which you'll have an opportunity to visit. Its two slender minarets were Muhammad Ali's declaration of independence from Istanbul, as Ottoman law decreed that only a sultan could build a mosque with two minarets. The mosque's expansive Turkish-style interior is lit by a beautiful array of lamps suspended from the intricately decorated ceiling.

You'll also visit the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, established in 1900 and by far the most impressive collection of Egyptian antiquities and pharaonic treasures in the world. Located in the heart of Cairo, the museum displays an astonishing number of objects. Ancient Egyptian history began with the founding of the Old Kingdom around 3100 BC and lasted 3,000 years, until Alexander the Great conquered the country in 332 BC and ended the rule of the pharaohs. The museum's galleries are laid out in roughly chronological order as you move clockwise along the ground floor.

Photography of any kind is forbidden inside the museum, including digital cameras, cell phones and camcorders.

Note: Dressing modestly is recommended as a show of respect for the culture and customs of the Egyptian people. In particular, women should ensure that shoulders are covered and legs are concealed at least to the knee on all shore excursions throughout this itinerary.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Four Seasons Hotel Cairo

Day 3

Cairo ✈ Luxor 🏛 Dendera

Prepare to be amazed at the legendary Temple of Karnak, a massive and absolutely astounding site, with gigantic columns, broad avenues lined with stone sphinxes and halls of truly epic proportions. This evening, you'll revel in a Welcome Reception and Dinner onboard.

Note: Flights to Luxor depart early in the morning to take advantage of more favorable weather and traffic conditions, and to optimize tour scheduling.

Before dinner onboard this evening, guests will be treated to a folkloric dance performance. A local band of dancers, in traditional costumes representing different Egyptian districts, will perform a Whirling Dervish show.

Featured Excursion: After a short flight to Luxor on the east bank of the Nile, you can stroll through the grand avenues of sphinxes and halls of gigantic columns of the magnificent Temple of Karnak. This vast complex, situated about 2 miles (3.5 kilometers) from the Temple of Luxor, was originally established during the Middle Kingdom (1991-1633 BC), and various dynasties over the next 1,300 years continued to expand it. Karnak is a massive and simply astounding site, reflecting the combined achievements of many generations of ancient builders—as many as 80,000 laborers took part in its creation during the 19th Dynasty alone.

Buried under sand for a thousand years, the UNESCO- designated Karnak complex is composed of three main temples, smaller enclosed temples and several outer temples. The largest of these is dedicated to Amun, a great pharaonic god. Enter the main compound, the Precinct of Amun, through the Great Court, and continue on to the dazzling Great Hypostyle Hall—sometimes called the Hall of Columns—an imposing forest of 134 enormous sandstone columns in the form of papyrus stalks.

Later, you'll board the magnificent S.S. Sphinx and set sail for beautiful Dendera. Enjoy a Gala Reception and dinner onboard this evening.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 4

Dendera - Cruising the River Nile - Luxor

Like its twin shrine, the Temple of Karnak, the Temple of Luxor stands on the site of ancient Thebes, the once flourishing capital of Egypt's New Kingdom. It was built over hundreds of years and even in ruins it is still an extraordinary place. You'll also visit the Temple of Hathor, dedicated to the goddess of love and beauty.

Featured Excursions: The impressive Temple of Hathor at Dendera was dedicated to the goddess of love and beauty. The temple dates to Egypt's Ptolemaic era, when the heirs of Alexander the Great ruled over Egypt and adopted Egyptian culture and religion as their own. Built between 125 BC and AD 65, it is one of the best-preserved temples in all of Egypt and features a rare bas-relief of Cleopatra with Caesarion, the son she bore to Julius Caesar.

Return to Luxor for some free time before visiting the ancient Temple of Luxor.

Enter the temple through the great pylon—a ceremonial gateway—where two enormous statues of Ramses II still stand, along with a pink granite obelisk (its mate stands in the Place de la Concorde in Paris, France). Continue on to an enormous interior courtyard, where the Abu Haggag Mosque once stood atop the ruins of the temple. You can still see a ghostly remnant of the mosque on the east side of the courtyard, high above the columns, its arched doorway opening into thin air.

The temple's chief architects were Amenhotep III (Egypt's "Sun King," also known as Amenophis III) and Ramses II, and it was constructed over hundreds of years, beginning around 1400 BC. It was dedicated to the "father of all life," the god Amun, sometimes referred to as Amon or Amon-Ra. Ancient Egyptians came to the temple to pay tribute to this god during the Opet Festival, celebrated during the annual flooding of the Nile. Once a year, a great feast was held and the statue of Amun was transported via a small sailboat from the Temple of Karnak to the Temple of Luxor. (Stages of the festival are depicted in friezes along the Temple of Karnak's grand processional colonnade, the construction of which was started by Amenhotep III and finished by his grandson, Tutankhamen.)

At the rear of the temple is the Sun Court of Amenhotep III, as well as the Bark Shrine that was rebuilt by Alexander the Great (who is depicted bare-chested on the walls). The Luxor Temple complex is at its most stunning at sunset, when it is illuminated with the golden glow of the setting sun.

Meals: All Meals Onboard

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 5

Luxor - Cruising the River Nile - Kom Ombo

The word “colossal” will take on a whole new meaning after today’s excursion to the gigantic twin statues known as the Colossi of Memnon. And that’s just the beginning—you’ll also visit the temple of one of Egypt’s rare female pharaohs as well as the Valley of the Kings, used as a royal burial place for nearly 500 years and where the mummified remains of Tutankhamen are on display.

After dinner onboard tonight, guests will enjoy a Galabeya Party with music, dancing and singing by crew members. Guests are encouraged to bring their own Galabeya clothing.

Featured Excursion: Get an up-close view of two gigantic statues of Pharaoh Amenhotep III, better known as the Colossi of Memnon. Sixty feet (18 meters) tall and gazing eastward toward the rising sun, the statues depict Amenhotep seated on his throne. Carved next to his legs are his mother and his wife, with side panels depicting the god of the Nile, Hapi. The figures originally sat in front of the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III and are believed to have surpassed even Karnak in size. Unfortunately, the temple itself was slowly dismantled over the centuries to provide building materials for new temples; the twin Colossi continue to stand guard nonetheless, just as they have done for the past 3,400 years.

The Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri is another highlight today. One of Egypt’s rare female pharaohs, Hatshepsut is considered by historians to have been one of the most successful rulers of ancient Egypt. Both the setting and the construction of her temple make it unique among the landmarks of Egypt; built into the face of steep cliffs at the basin, the temple is made of limestone instead of sandstone, unlike any other funerary temples of the New Kingdom period. Hatshepsut’s successor, Thutmose III, attempted to remove her name from the temple, and many images of the queen were damaged or destroyed during his reign.

You’ll also visit one of the most famous archeological sites in the world—the remote and barren Valley of the Kings, used for royal burials for nearly 500 years. Much of our understanding of Egyptian mythology has been garnered from these ancient chambers, located about four miles (seven kilometers) inland on the west bank of the Nile. It was here that the bodies of great pharaohs such as Ramses II and Thutmose III were once laid to rest and where the mummified remains of the boy king Tutankhamen are still on display. The idea for establishing this royal burial ground is thought to have originated with Thutmose I, who opted to conceal his tomb far from his mortuary temple in an effort to deter tomb robbers. Subsequent pharaohs did the same, changing a tradition that had endured for close to 2,000 years.

Within the tombs and along the walls of the Valley of the Kings, inscriptions from the Book of the Dead provided instructions on how the pharaohs could safely journey to the next world and avoid the dangers that lay on the way. For the sake of preservation, only a handful of the most interesting tombs are open to visitors at any given time.

Return to the ship and set sail for Kom Ombo. Tonight, don your galabeya (traditional Egyptian attire, samples of which will be available for purchase onboard if you’d like to participate but didn’t bring your own) for a festive onboard party featuring traditional Egyptian music.

Meals: All Meals Onboard

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 6

Kom Ombo - Cruising the Nile River - Aswan

After visiting a temple dedicated to a crocodile god today (don't miss the display of some of the 300 mummified crocs found in the local area), hop aboard a small boat for a bird-watching excursion along the Nile.

Featured Excursions: The Kom Ombo Temple, unlike most ancient Egyptian temples, is dedicated to two gods—the crocodile god Sobek and the falcon god Horus the Elder. Construction began under the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180-145 BC) and continued under later rulers, most notably Ptolemy XIII (47-44 BC), who built the inner and outer hypostyle halls. Several of the 300 crocodile mummies discovered in the vicinity are displayed inside the temple.

After a scenic cruise to Aswan, take a small boat along the banks of the Nile on a bird-watching excursion. Watch out for colorful native birds, different species of herons, kingfishers, vultures, sunbirds and other wildlife that thrive in the marsh grass along the riverbanks.

Meals: All Meals Onboard

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 7

Aswan

Today is an epic day, filled with wonders from start to finish. You'll visit a marvel of modern engineering—the Aswan High Dam—as well as the Unfinished Obelisk and the beautiful Philae Temple complex, which was moved from one island to another back in the 1970s. But wait, there's more. You'll also take a ride in a felucca—a traditional Egyptian sailboat—and enjoy afternoon tea at a famous hotel depicted in Agatha Christie's novel *Death on the Nile*.

After dinner onboard this evening, you'll be treated to an enchanting Nubian show featuring traditionally attired performers, live music and dancing.

Featured Excursions: The Aswan High Dam, completed in the 1970s, is a marvel of modern engineering that boasts some truly epic dimensions—it is 11,800 feet (3,597 meters) long; 3,215 feet (980 meters) wide at its base; and 304 feet (93 meters) high—with a reservoir capacity nearly five times that of the Hoover Dam. You'll also visit the Unfinished Obelisk, commissioned by Queen Hatshepsut yet never completed due to a flaw discovered in the stone. If completed, it would have been the largest and heaviest obelisk ever attempted, weighing more than two million pounds (907,185 kilograms).

Another highlight today is the beautiful Philae Temple complex, originally situated on the island of Philae. It was painstakingly transferred to the island of Agilika after the construction of the Aswan High Dam to save it from the rising waters of Lake Nasser, a daunting UNESCO-funded endeavor that took 10 years to complete. The three principal monuments on the island all date from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods—the Kiosk of Trajan, the Temple of Hathor and the Temple of Isis.

Note: Guests are welcome to climb around the Unfinished Obelisk, but please note the climb is physically demanding.

Today you will sail serenely down the Nile in a felucca— a small traditional boat with large triangular sails—a wonderful way to experience the river as Egyptians have for a thousand years. Later, relax over afternoon tea at the historic Old Cataract Hotel Aswan, a colonial-era gem that counts Winston Churchill and Princess Diana among its former guests. This famous hotel was depicted in Agatha Christie's acclaimed mystery novel *Death on the Nile*.

Note: Feluccas are wind-powered and thus will operate only if weather conditions permit.

Meals: All Meals Onboard

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 8

Aswan - Cruising the River Nile - Edfu

Spend the day at leisure or join us for an optional excursion to see the magnificent temples of Abu Simbel.

Meals: All Meals Onboard

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 9

Esna - Cruising the River Nile - Luxor

On today's excursion, you'll learn how the Temple of Esna was buried under debris for many centuries and is one of the last great Egyptian temples ever built. Your Egyptologist guide will share all sorts of fascinating insights about this significant cultural site and show you the façade bearing the last known hieroglyphic inscriptions ever recorded in Egypt.

Later, savor the Nile's majestic scenery as the ship cruises to Luxor.

Featured Excursion: The Late Roman Temple of Esna lies on the west bank of the Nile about 34 miles (55 kilometers) south of Luxor. Buried under debris for many centuries, the temple is just a short walk from the ship through the local market. It dates from the Ptolemaic and Roman period (180 BC to AD 251) and is one of the last Egyptian temples ever built. Visitors can see two large inscriptions praising Khnum, the ram-headed god of creation, who fashioned mankind on a potter's wheel from the clay mud of the Nile. There's also a hypostyle hall with 24 pillars and a ceiling depicting Egyptian astronomical figures and Roman zodiac signs. On the temple's western wall, look for images of Horus, the god of victory, and Khnum, dragging a net full of fish. At the foot of this façade are the last known hieroglyphic inscriptions ever recorded in Egypt.

Meals: All Meals Onboard

Accommodation: S.S. Sphinx

Day 10

Luxor ✈️ Cairo

Disembark in Luxor and transfer to the airport for your return flight to Cairo. Then, check in to your luxury hotel where you'll have time to relax before dinner.

Note: Flights to Cairo depart early in the morning to take advantage of more favorable weather and traffic conditions, and to optimize tour scheduling.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Four Seasons Hotel Cairo

Day 11

Cairo

It's a day of Bucket List Moments today as we venture to Ancient Memphis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a number of amazing monuments to see—including the enigmatic Great Sphinx. You'll have a thrilling opportunity to view the pyramids from an up-close perspective, the only way to fully appreciate their remarkable size and grandeur.

Featured Excursion: Venture forth to Ancient Memphis, the capital of Egypt's Old Kingdom and now a vast UNESCO World Heritage Site encompassing a number of extraordinary monuments. You'll see the colossal statue of Ramses II and the Alabaster Sphinx, as well as the Step Pyramid of King Zoser (or Djoser) in nearby Sakkara, the oldest pyramid in the world and the prototype for all subsequent pyramids. The ancient architect and sage Imhotep initially designed the pyramid as a single story, then later added five more levels and covered the structure with a shell of fine limestone. In front of the pyramid, Imhotep built a stone structure containing a wooden box with two peepholes; peer inside and you'll see a life-size painted statue of King Zoser. The peepholes were created to allow the king's ka (life spirit) to communicate with the outside world.

At the Giza Necropolis, the face of ancient Egypt—the Great Sphinx—awaits your visit. With the body of a crouching lion and the head of a man, it is the largest monolith statue in the world. Experts believe that the Sphinx (known to the early Arabs as Abu al-Hol, "Father of Terror") was built in the 26th century BC during Khafre's reign, perhaps as a portrait of the pharaoh himself. Unfortunately, much of this monument has either eroded or been deliberately destroyed over the years. Some of its facial features are no longer intact, such as the beard and the nose—the latter of which was not shot off by Napoleon's soldiers, as widely believed, but chiseled away many centuries earlier. A number of excavations in modern times have removed the sand that built up around the Sphinx over the centuries and kept much of it buried. Despite its timeworn condition, the Sphinx still kneels gracefully as it has for thousands of years, looking toward the east with an enigmatic smile.

Today you'll also visit the only surviving Wonder of the Ancient World, the Pyramids of Giza. Beholding these legendary structures up close lets you appreciate their stone masonry and awe-inspiring architectural precision. Until as recently as the 19th century, the oldest and largest of the three pyramids—Khufu—was the tallest building in the world; when it was completed around the 26th century BC, it stood about 50 stories high.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Four Seasons Hotel Cairo

Day 12

Cairo ✈ Australia

Check out of your hotel and transfer to the Cairo International Airport for your flight home, or extend your trip with a memorable optional extension in Jerusalem.

Meals: Breakfast

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions

ACCOMMODATIONS

- 7-night cruise in a riverview stateroom on the gorgeous S.S. Sphinx or the elegant River Tosca
- Lavishly appointed riverview staterooms and suites
- 4 nights in Cairo at the Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza or at the Nile Ritz-Carlton (or similar)

DINING

- Meals onboard prepared using the finest and freshest ingredients
- 11 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 8 dinners
- Captain's Welcome Reception and Dinner
- Farewell Dinner
- Complimentary house wine, local beer, soft drinks, tea, and coffee will be served during lunch and dinner onboard

EXCURSIONS

- 8 days of excursions, all fully hosted by English-speaking trained Egyptologists

EXPERIENCES

- 1 country: Egypt
- 12 UNESCO World Heritage sites
- Services of an experienced Egyptologist
- Cultural enrichment
- Group Transfers are included on arrival and departure days (please see terms and conditions for transfer guidelines)
- Flights included between Cairo and Luxor
- Gratuities for onboard personnel (ship staff, crew, Cruise/Tour Manager) are included during the cruise/tour

Option to Extend: Ask us about a Jerusalem or Red Sea Pre/Post-Cruise Extension!

Exclusions

- International Flights
- Visas
- Travel Insurance (Highly recommended for this program)
- Tips/Gratuities
- Any meals or drinks not listed
- Any activities not listed

Travelling solo: Contact us for a quote!

Group Size: Uniworld's elegant ships feature an average capacity of 130 guests and one of the highest staff-to-guest ratios in the river cruise industry.

About your cabin: The price is based on the '*French Balcony Stateroom, Dendera Deck*'. Upgrades to other categories are subject to availability and price fluctuations. Please ask us for more details.



Travel Insurance: We recommend Covermore travel insurance. To quote and book, please click [HERE](#).

Fitness: This program is an active one, including plenty of walking and early starts on most days to take advantage of the favorable morning weather.

Flights: Flights between Cairo and Luxor may require wake-up calls at 5:00am or earlier.

**Note: Due to cultural differences and other factors, the beverage policy for our Egypt program differs from our European programs.*

Travelling on your own? Why not join the [Traveldream Solo Travellers Facebook group](#) where you can interact with other travellers.