University of Illinois Alumni Association



Duration
11 days

Activity Level
Active Travel

Journey Type
Land
River

Legends of the Nile

April 4-15, 2027

Featuring Cairo, Luxor, a Nile Cruise & Abu Simbel | Starting from $8,145/pp

Revel in Egypt's ancient splendors, from Giza's spectacular pyramids and the enigmatic Sphinx to the colossal Great Temple of Ramses II carved out of a mountain in Abu Simbel. Guided by an expert, licensed Egyptologist who accompanies you on all excursions, take in incomparable treasures in the antiquities-filled Grand Egyptian Museum and delve into Cairo's venerable mosques and Coptic churches. Explore atmospheric royal tombs in the Valleys of the Kings and Queens and glorious temples in Luxor and Karnak. You'll also cruise along the scenic Nile River aboard a deluxe ship past fertile valleys and the desert beyond!





Day-by-Day Itinerary

Legends of the Nile

Featuring Cairo, Luxor, A Nile Cruise & Abu Simbel

Air Program: 12 days/11 nights (includes 1 air night)

Land/Cruise Program: 11 days/10 nights

Breakfasts: 10 | Lunches: 8 | Receptions: 1 | Dinners: 5

B | L | R | D denotes included breakfasts, lunches, receptions and dinners.

A special note about air: If you have purchased only the Land/Cruise Program, please book flights that arrive on Day 2, the first day of the Land/Cruise Program. The date is listed at the top of your Reservation Confirmation.

This itinerary is subject to change due to operational conditions.

This ACTIVE program is designed for people who are in good health and can comfortably participate in a demanding daily schedule of physical activities. The itinerary may feature full days of ongoing activities. Excursions on this program require:

- walking on unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats
- climbing in and out of excursion boats
- tolerating varying climatic conditions

Depending on the excursion, more leisurely alternatives may be available.

Day 1 | Depart gateway city

AHI FlexAir passengers depart for Cairo, Egypt. Please check your luggage from your gateway city to your arrival city. Your claim checks should have the following airport code: CAI.

Day 2 | Cairo, Egypt

Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza

Arrive at Cairo International Airport. Proceed through immigration to the baggage claim area and retrieve your luggage. After completing customs, AHI FlexAir passengers traveling on flights that qualify for the group arrival transfer and Land/Cruise Program passengers who have purchased seats on the group transfer should exit the baggage claim area and proceed to the designated meeting spot, where an AHI Travel representative will meet you. The meeting location will be provided with your final documents.

Transfer to the Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza. Please note that if you arrive before check-in time, your room may not be immediately available.

Day 3 | Cairo

Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza

B | R

Each morning, savor a sumptuous breakfast. Look forward to exciting discoveries as your Egyptologist brings ancient Egypt to life during your excursions!

Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM). Today, tour this fascinating new museum — the largest dedicated to one civilization — that showcases extraordinary relics spanning ancient Egyptian history, including pre-history; the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms; and the Late and Roman period. This vast, modern complex provides a safe and protected environment for a dazzling collection of 100,000 artifacts, including

20,000 never exhibited. After passing through the soaring stone façade that pays homage to the neighboring pyramids of Giza, visitors enter the Grand Hall, a dramatic space dominated by a 36-foot-tall, 83-ton statue of Ramses II, and can ascend the Grand Staircase Gallery featuring 60 spectacular statues and artifacts. The twelve main galleries, arranged by time periods and themes, delve into the daily life, traditions, spiritual beliefs and burial customs of ancient Egypt. Two halls are devoted to King Tutankhamen's burial treasures, an incomparable trove of 5,000 objects which are displayed together for the first time since his tomb was discovered in 1922.

Tonight, in the hotel, get better acquainted with your fellow travelers at a Welcome Reception.

Day 4 | Saqqara | Giza

Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza

B | L

Saqqara. Journey to Saqqara, an immense burial site that served as the necropolis for the ancient capital of Memphis and visit the Mastaba of Mereruka and the Pyramid Tomb of King Teti. Saqqara is also home to the Step Pyramid of Djoser, considered the first pyramid. Before Djoser's reign, tombs had been rectangular, flat-roofed structures made of dried clay bricks, known as mastabas, the Arabic word for bench. Over King Djoser's 20-year reign, his architect Imhotep adopted a new plan of adding six stepped layers of stone above a square-based mastaba. When it was completed more than 4,600 years ago, it was the tallest structure of its time.

Enjoy lunch at a nearby restaurant.

The Pyramids of Giza. Stand before the awe-inspiring Great Pyramid of Giza, the sole surviving and oldest monument of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and a masterpiece of ingenious engineering. The largest of the three Old Kingdom pyramids in the complex, it was built for the pharaoh Khufu out of approximately 2.3 million massive blocks of stone. Standing guard nearby is the enigmatic Sphinx, a mythological creature with the head of a human atop a reclining lion's body. Visit this imposing limestone statue, which stretches 240 feet in length and towers 66 feet overhead.

During today's visit, you may have an optional opportunity to go inside the Great Pyramid. At the time of publication, the entrance fee, typically paid in Egyptian pounds, is EGP 1,500 (approximately USD 30). Price and exchange rate is subject to change by the time of travel.

Day 5 | Cairo

Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza

B | L

Al-Muizz Street & Islamic Cairo. Walk with your guide along lively Al-Muizz, one of Cairo's oldest streets, and take in its impressive collection of grand medieval mosques and Islamic landmarks. Tour the 13th-century Qalawun complex, which includes a madrassa, a historic hospital and a breathtaking mausoleum. Later, go inside the 17th-century Bayt Al-Suhaymi, a beautiful example of Ottoman architecture, to see the home's decorative details such as the intricately latticed, wooden window grills known as mashrabiyas.

Free Time: Afterward, venture into the colorful Khan el Khalili bazaar on your own for a unique shopping experience.

Then, enjoy Egyptian specialties for lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Coptic Cairo. This area of Old Cairo, the historic center of Christianity in Egypt, predates the city's founding by the Fatimid dynasty in A.D. 969. Visit one of the oldest Coptic Orthodox churches in Egypt, the Hanging Church, so named because of its location on top of the gates of a Roman fortress. Step inside to view the lovely interior adorned with icons. Continue afterward to the splendid Church of St. Sergius and Bacchus, believed to be built over a cave where Mary, Joseph and Jesus once rested after fleeing to Egypt. Your final stop takes you to the historic Ben Ezra Synagogue, the oldest synagogue in Egypt. After a period as a Coptic Christian church, it was extensively renovated and reopened as a cultural site. Admire its beautiful architectural details with your guide.

Day 6 | Cairo | Luxor

Sonesta St. George Hotel Luxor

B | L | D

Very early this morning, check out of the hotel and transfer to Cairo's airport for your flight to Luxor.

Luxor Museum. Through the museum's informative and elegantly displayed exhibits, experience the glory of ancient Thebes as you admire artifacts collected from its temples and necropolis.

Afterward, travel to the Sonesta St. George Hotel Luxor, where you'll enjoy lunch before checking in.

The Temple of Luxor. Aboard a felucca boat, sail along the Nile River and arrive at Luxor Temple. The complex's construction began during the reign of Amenhotep III, and subsequent rulers, including Tutankhamen, Horemheb, Ramses II and Alexander the Great, added to it until 323 B.C. During the Opet Festival, one of ancient Egypt's most significant religious festivals, statues of several revered deities were transported to this temple in processions from the Temple of Karnak.

Day 7 | Luxor | Embark ship

Sanctuary Nile Adventurer

B | L | D

Luxor's West Bank: The Valleys of the Kings & Queens. Visit the remarkable Valleys of the Kings and Queens, where New Kingdom pharaohs and their families awaited immortality. These once-hidden tombs were designed to resemble the passage to the underworld. Amazingly, the hieroglyphics that adorn the walls still spring to life with vibrant color. Explore Tutankhamen's tomb and the Tomb of Seti I, among others. Then, below dramatic limestone cliffs, walk up the ramp that leads into the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, designed with sweeping, colonnaded terraces. Afterward, stop at an alabaster workshop. Continue to the tomb of Amun-her-Khepeshef featuring superbly preserved murals and then snap some photos at the majestic Colossi of Memnon.

Travel to the pier to begin your Nile River cruise. Embark the Sanctuary Nile Adventurer and savor a delicious lunch.

The Epigraphic Survey, The Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures of the University of Chicago (Chicago House). Enjoy an exclusive visit to the Chicago House in Luxor. Here, the Survey preserves Egypt's ancient cultural heritage through documentation, conservation and restoration. Founded in 1924, it has completed epigraphic surveys of important archaeological sites in and around Luxor and has produced numerous publications on ancient Egyptian monuments. These publications often represent the only reliable scientific documentation of endangered and deteriorating monuments. Learn more about their important work and see their unique documentation methods firsthand.

Day 8 | Karnak | Cruising the Nile

Sanctuary Nile Adventurer

B | L | D

The Temple of Karnak. This morning, visit the Karnak Temple, an enormous complex spread across 60 acres. Within this important ancient religious center are numerous pylons, halls, smaller temples and chapels. In the Temple of Amun-Ra, gaze up in awe at the veritable forest of 134 gigantic sandstone columns as you wander through its great hypostyle hall.

After lunch on the ship, enjoy the ship's amenities during your leisure time this afternoon. Later, watch from the rail as the ship passes through the Esna Lock.

Relish a satisfying dinner on board, followed by a movie night.

Day 9 | Cruising the Nile | Edfu | Kom Ombo

Sanctuary Nile Adventurer

B | L | D

Pursue your own interests this morning as the ship cruises to Edfu. Perhaps you'll admire the tranquil Nile scenery from your spot on the sun deck.

The Temple of Horus at Edfu. Go ashore to visit one of Egypt's best-preserved shrines, built circa 237 B.C. and completed almost 200 years later. Its outstanding decorative reliefs have provided historians with invaluable details about ancient religious rituals and political life.

This afternoon, the ship sails to Kom Ombo. After lunch, gain insights during an engaging discussion with an Egyptologist.

Temple of Sobek & Haroeris. Arrive at Kom Ombo to explore the unusual, double temple complex of Sobek and Haroeris. The building's symmetrical ground plan unifies two adjacent temples, one dedicated to the crocodile-headed Sobek, god of fertility, and the other to the falcon-headed Haroeris, god of the sky.

Tonight, enjoy an "Egyptian Night" party on the ship, featuring a wonderful buffet of Egyptian specialties and the opportunity to dress in traditional galabeyas.

Day 10 | Cruising the Nile | Aswan | Philae | Nubian Village

Sanctuary Nile Adventurer

B | L | D

This morning, the ship arrives in Aswan, where it docks for the day.

Philae Temple Complex. Board a felucca and sail to the island temple complex of Philae, dedicated to the goddess Isis, for a guided tour. When the rising waters of Aswan's High Dam threatened the complex's beautiful structures in the 1970s, they were dismantled and reassembled on higher ground about 500 meters from their original site. Following your tour, learn about the ancient process of handcrafting papyrus at the Papyrus Institute.

Return to the ship for lunch.

Nubian Village. Take a guided stroll through a village lined with brightly painted homes, learn about local customs and be welcomed by a family for tea.

Tonight, at a festive Farewell Party on the ship, gather for a final celebration of your Egyptian adventure. After dinner, enjoy a Dervish show and belly dancer performance.

Day 11 | Disembark ship | Abu Simbel | Cairo

InterContinental Citystars Cairo

B | L

After breakfast, disembark the ship in Aswan and transfer to the airport for your flight to Abu Simbel.

Abu Simbel. Visit the colossal Great Temple of Ramses II, a monument that commemorates triumphs over the Nubians, Hittites and Syrians. Marvel not only at the structure's gargantuan size but also at the mammoth feat of engineering that was required to reconstruct it on this higher ground, overlooking the Nile waters amassed by the Aswan Dam. Equally captivating is the smaller, neighboring temple dedicated to the goddess Hathor.

Depart for the Abu Simbel airport and fly to Cairo via Aswan. Upon arrival, refresh and relax in your evening room at the InterContinental Citystars Cairo prior to an early morning departure for your connecting flights home.

Day 12 | Depart for gateway city

B

Very early this morning, AHI FlexAir passengers traveling on flights that qualify for a group transfer and Land/Cruise Program passengers who have purchased seats on the group transfer depart for Cairo International Airport for your return flights home. Your Travel Director will provide the details.





What's Included

Program Overview

- Small group: Sized just right at 28 guests.
- 4 nights in Cairo, Egypt, at the deluxe Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza.
- 1 night in Luxor at the first-class Sonesta St. George Hotel Luxor.
- 4 nights aboard the deluxe Sanctuary Nile Adventurer.
- 1 night in Cairo at the first-class InterContinental CityStars Cairo.
- AHI Sustainability Promise: We strive to make a positive, purposeful impact in the communities we visit.
- Complimentary travel mementos.

Meal Program

- 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches and 5 dinners.
- Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner to mingle with fellow travelers.
- Wine with dinner.

On-site Features

- All transfers in the Land | Cruise Program: flights and deluxe motor coaches.
- Engaging excursions showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- An extremely knowledgeable, licensed Egyptologist travels with you on all excursions.
- Tipping of drivers and personnel at itinerary stops.
- Free time to pursue your individual interests.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.





FlexAir Travel Program

Need assistance booking your travel arrangements? Our experts are here to help. Our air program offers the following benefits.

Trip Transportation

- Assistance in the event of schedule changes or delays
- Arrival and departure transfers on group dates

Price Guarantee

- Price guarantee to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase

Travel and Hotel Accommodations

Sonesta St. George Hotel Luxor

This sophisticated hotel on the Nile's east bank is close to the iconic temples of Luxor and Karnak and an excellent base for exploring the royal tombs in the Valleys of the Kings and Queens. Spend time relaxing in Nobles Lounge or on the Nile Pontoon with its floating deck. Wi-Fi is complimentary.



Tripadvisor

InterContinental Citystars Cairo

Located next to Stars Centre Mall and convenient to the airport, the stylish InterContinental Citystars Cairo embraces Egypt's heritage through its remarkable service and grand design. Choose from a variety of distinctive restaurants that serve Egyptian and international specialties, and take advantage of the fitness center and pool for relaxation. Wi-Fi is complimentary.



Tripadvisor

Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza

This luxurious and elegant hotel, located along the mighty Nile River, occupies 30 floors of the bustling Nile Plaza and is conveniently near many of Cairo's historic highlights. Adorned with natural wood finishes and contemporary furnishings, the comfortable rooms boast views of the Nile or the Zamalek district. Indulge in a Turkish bath or a relaxing massage at its award-winning spa, or unwind at the pools, steam room or sauna. Wi-Fi is complimentary.



Tripadvisor

Sanctuary Nile Adventurer

Take in the timeless grandeur of the one of the world's most alluring waterways in remarkable comfort and style aboard the Sanctuary Nile Adventurer. Outfitted with 30 cabins that afford breathtaking views of the Nile, this sophisticated, intimate ship serves as your tranquil floating oasis while exploring Egypt's ancient tombs, temples and treasures. Savor the refined ambience of social spaces and staterooms elegantly appointed with chic, upscale furnishings in warm, serene tones. Exceptional gourmet cuisine and impeccable service from the attentive staff add to your cruising enjoyment for an incomparable Nile River journey.

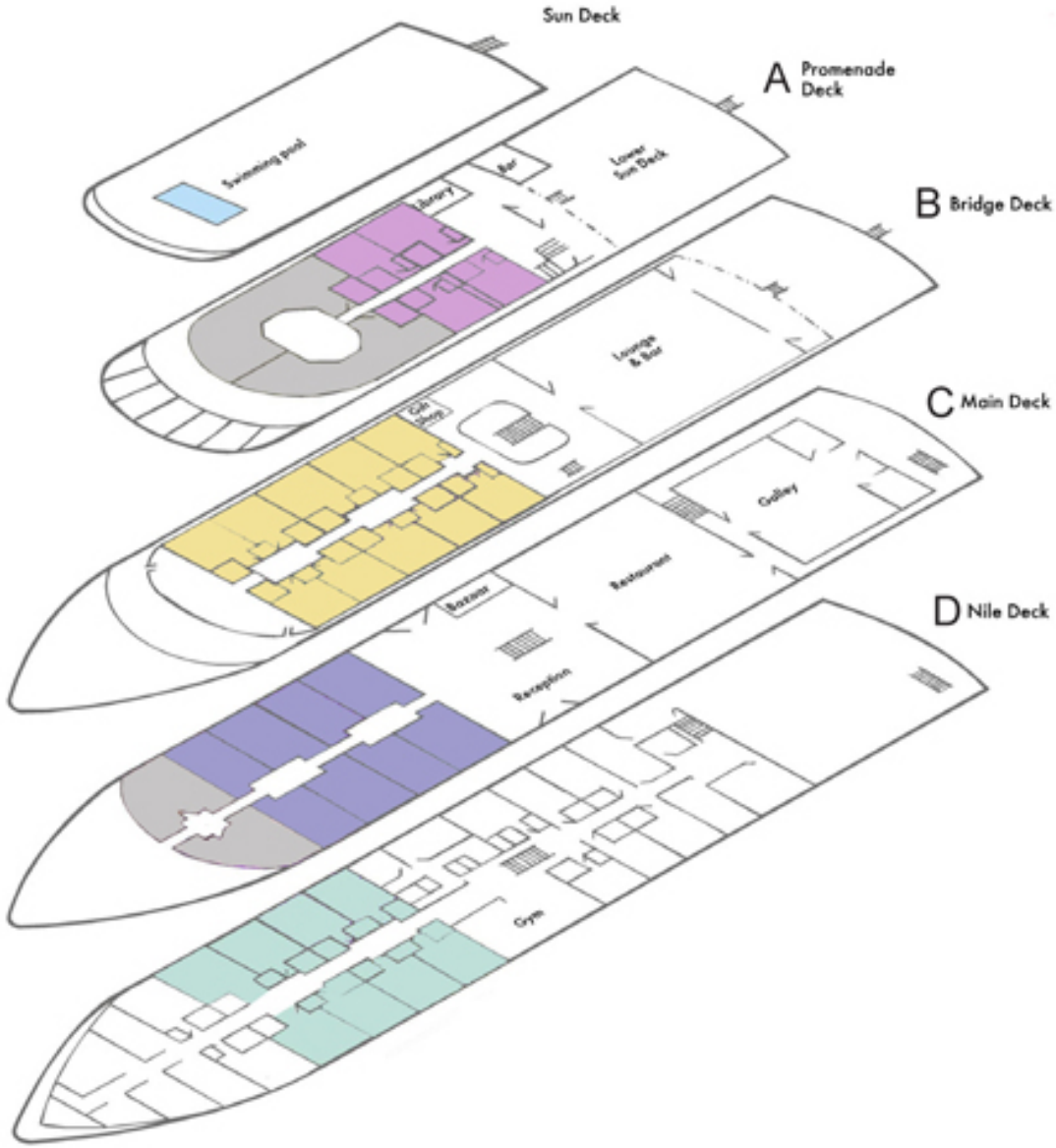


Pricing

Category/Deck	Base Price / You Pay
A-Promenade (WAIT LIST)	$9,745
B-Bridge (WAIT LIST)	$9,245
C-Main (WAIT LIST)	$8,745
D-Nile (WAIT LIST)	$8,145

Package rates are per person based on Double occupancy from Land Only. Prices include all service charges; port charges when applicable; US government taxes and fees. The minimum deposit is $1000.00 per person. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies. To view Program Terms and Conditions, close this window and scroll to the bottom of the page.

** Full Payment Discounts are only available at the time of booking with initial payment 120+ days prior to departure. This offer only applies to full payment at the time of reservation. Details on how to qualify for this savings will be included when your reservation request is confirmed.


Sun Deck
A Promenade Deck
Swimming pool
Bar
Lower Sun Deck
Library
B Bridge Deck
Lounge & Bar
Gift shop
C Main Deck
Galley
Restaurant
Bazaar
Reception
D Nile Deck
Gym


Mediterranean Sea
Jerash
Amman
Mt. Nebo
Madaba
JORDAN
Petra
Giza
Cairo
Saqqara
Red Sea
Karnak
Luxor
Nile River
Edfu
Kom Ombo
Aswan
EGYPT
Abu Simbel
Elective



