

Abu Simbel Sun Festival Feb 2020

11 Days | Starts/Ends: Cairo



Witness the extraordinary Sun Festival at Abu Simbel, visit the vast Valley of the Kings, the iconic Sphinx and legendary Pyramids of Giza, on this 11 day tour offering the best of ancient Egypt.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Abu Simbel - visit this awe-inspiring temple at sunrise to witness the incredible phenomenon of the Abu Simbel Sun Festival
- Cairo - marvel at the legendary Pyramids of Giza, explore the Necropolis of Saqqara and see King Tut's treasures at the Egyptian Museum
- Luxor West Bank - discover exquisite tombs in the Valley of the Kings, the towering Colossi of Memnon and the beautiful Temple of Queen Hatshepsut
- Luxor - roam around the colossal Temple of Karnak and take an optional tour of the beautifully illuminated Luxor Temple at night
- Aswan - take leisurely boat trip to Agilika Island to explore the romantic Philae Temple and wander around the colourful souqs
- Nile felucca cruising - sail the River Nile on board a traditional felucca and spend

two nights sleeping under a blanket of stars (or upgrade to a 5 star Nile Cruise)

- Kom Ombo - visit the Nile side Temple of Kom Ombo

What's Included

- Guided visit to Abu Simbel at sunrise for the Sun Festival of King Ramses II including Abu Simbel and Sun Festival entrance fee, Airport arrival and departure transfers on day 1 and day 11
- Breakfast daily, 2 lunches and 2 dinners
- 5 nights 4 - 5 star hotels, 2 nights aboard felucca (open deck). If booking our Nile Cruiser Upgrade, 4 nights 4 - 5 star hotels and 3 nights Nile Cruiser (en suite cabin)
- 1/2 night 4-5 star Aswan hotel prior to overnight bus journey (3.5 hrs) to Abu Simbel
- 2 overnight trains: Cairo - Aswan and Luxor - Cairo (Private 2 berth sleeper cabin)
- Airport arrival and departure transfers on day 1 and day 11
- Touring of Cairo, Giza, Saqqara, Aswan, Abu Simbel, Kom Ombo and Luxor
- Egyptian tour guide degree qualified in Egyptology
- All relevant transfer and transportation in private modern air-conditioned vehicles

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$50-70pp, paid in local currency
- Entrance Fees: USD\$80-100pp, paid in local currency
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$5 - 7 per day, per traveller. Tipping your tour guide is an entirely personal gesture
- International flights and visa

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Cairo

Tuesday 18 February 2020. Welcome to Egypt and the start of your holiday! Arrive Cairo, included transfer to hotel. The rest of the day is free to relax or those arriving early, you can opt to pre book our optional Backstreets of Cairo tour which departs the hotel at 10am today.

For those who wish to extend their stay, we also offer a pre or post tour Alexandria Day Trip. **Overnight - Cairo**

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This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.

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Day 2 : Pyramids & Saqqara



Cairo. Today we visit the stunning pyramids and the iconic Sphinx at Giza Plateau. Sole survivors from the ancient Greek-listed Seven Wonders of the World, the pyramids are the planet's oldest tourist attraction. Leaving the pyramids behind, we visit a government supervised papyrus emporium where you can buy genuine papyrus at quite reasonable prices.

Continuing to the necropolis of Saqqara, we can explore the myriad tombs and temples at this site and see Zoser's step pyramid - constructed by Imhotep, the pharaoh's chief architect in 2700 BC. **Overnight - Cairo (B)**

Day 3 : Treasures of the Egyptian Museum

Cairo - Aswan. This morning is free for you to further explore Cairo. After check out we depart for our guided tour of the Egyptian Museum. See the famous Tutankhamen Gallery and opt to see the Royal Mummies. Later there is a chance to relax, freshen up and have dinner before boarding the overnight sleeper train to Aswan. **Overnight - Sleeper Train (B)**

Day 4 : Philae Temple

Aswan - Abu Simbel. Arrive Aswan. Today we enjoy a short boat trip to Agilika Island where we visit the picturesque Philae Temple, dedicated to the goddess Isis. Upon returning to Aswan we visit a perfume oil emporium.

Back at the hotel there will be time to rest and recuperate before departing in the early hours of the morning on our coach journey toward the Temples of Abu Simbel. Here we will await the first rays of sunlight to touch the temple gate signifying the start of the

Sun Festival of the mighty King Ramses II. **Overnight - Overnight – hotel/coach journey to Abu Simbel (B)**

Day 5 : Sun Festival at Abu Simbel



22 February. Abu Simbel - Aswan - Nile Felucca Sailing. Possibly the most awe-inspiring temple in all ancient Egypt, the great Sun Temple of King Ramses II at Abu Simbel was constructed between 1290 and 1224 BC to revere the mighty pharaonic ruler himself. Ramses the Bold, Ramses the Great, Ramses the Narcissist are perhaps all apt titles for one of ancient Egypt's most powerful rulers.

Built by Ramses II to demonstrate his political clout and divine backing to the ancient Nubians, Abu Simbel is an incredible self-tribute. Guarding the entrance to the temple, hewn into the side of a mountain, are four colossal statues of the pharaoh himself. Over the centuries, the desert sands imperceptibly shifted until the temple was all but lost to humanity. It was rediscovered by chance in 1813 by a Swiss explorer called John Lewis Burckhardt. Only one of the heads of the pharaohs was showing and a small part of the rest of the temple peeked above the desert sands. It wasn't until the British happened upon the temple and started excavating that the full glory of Abu Simbel was revealed to the modern world. The other rock cut temple at Abu Simbel is the Temple of Hathor, which is fronted by six massive standing statues. Four of them represent King Ramses II, whilst the other two are of his beloved wife, Queen Nefertari.

In a fit of precision and architectural egotism, Ramses II had the Great Temple carefully angled and oriented in order that the sun's

rays would align twice a year on the date of his ascension to the throne (21 February) and on his birthday (21 October) to illuminate the inner sanctum of the temple. This incredible phenomenon provides for a most spectacular sight, which has come to be referred to as the Sun Festival of King Ramses II. Crowds assemble in to the temple before sunrise and watch the shafts of light slowly creep through the inner Hypostyle Hall and through to the Sanctuary. Significantly, the sun illuminates statues of Amun-Re, Re-Herakhte and Ramses the god, whilst the statue of Ptah - the god of darkness, remains in the shadows.

Famously, the temple was re-located in a multi-million dollar operation in 1972, further up from the shoreline of Lake Nasser, which had threatened to erode the foundations of this monolithic temple complex. For this reason, the sun now strikes a day later than Ramses had originally planned, though the event this morning itself is no less stunning.

After watching this incredible event unfold we return to Aswan, and this afternoon we board our wind-powered Nile felucca for a 2-night voyage on the River Nile downstream to Kom Ombo. Felucca's are simple sailboats based on a unique design and have plied the mighty Nile since ancient times.

If sailing by felucca is not your style, consider upgrading to a 5 star luxury Nile Cruise, please see the tab above for prices. For more information about Nile Cruising please click here. **Overnight - Felucca (B, L, D)**

Day 6 : Felucca Sailing & Kom Ombo Temple



Nile Felucca Sailing - Kom Ombo. Relax, go for a swim or just chill out in the sun on deck. Let your troubles melt away, as the felucca plies

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its route. In the afternoon we dock near Kom Ombo and take a motorboat to visit the temple before returning to the felucca for the night.

Overnight - Felucca (B, L, D)

Day 7 : Luxor



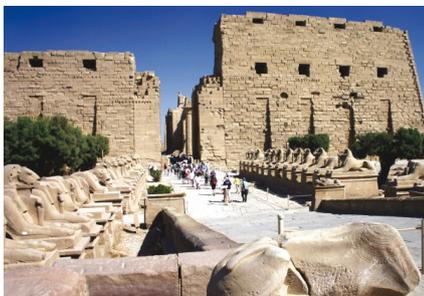
Kom Ombo - Luxor. This morning we disembark and drive to Luxor. Home of the legendary Valley of the Kings and Temple of Karnak, 4000 year-old Luxor is ancient Egypt at its best. Enjoy some rest and relaxation. Tonight, an optional visit to the Temple of Luxor is available, alternatively enjoy the facilities of our hotel. **Overnight - Luxor (B, D)**

Day 8 : Valley of the Kings

Luxor. This morning we set out to explore the West Bank of the Nile and the legendary Valley of the Kings. Marvel at Colossi of Memnon, the massive stone remains of the temple of Amenophis III, and explore the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut and surrounding tombs.

After lunch we visit the Temple of Karnak, a spectacular religious complex built on a gigantic scale, where you get lost wandering around the stone papyrus columns. **Overnight - Luxor (B)**

Day 9 : Luxor



Luxor - Cairo. Today is at your leisure to independently explore, head to the

colourful local souq (market) for a little bargain hunting. The lively night market offers comic entertainment as the sellers go about the business of hocking their wares. The market also offers an extensive array of cotton products, spices, wooden and copper ornaments, alabaster statues and beaded jewellery. Or simply relax by the pool. Tonight, we return by overnight train to Cairo.

Overnight - Sleeper Train (B)

Day 10 : Day at leisure in Cairo

Cairo. Arrival Cairo and transfer through to our hotel for breakfast. The rest of the day is free to relax by the hotel pool, shop or explore. Today there is an optional excursion to Khan el Khalili Market and a perfumed oil emporium (if not already visited in Aswan). Khan el Khalili is great for last minute souvenir shopping and at the perfumery there's a million and one exquisite glass bottles filled with perfumed oils that make for a truly authentic Egyptian gift. Bookable locally. **Overnight - Cairo (B)**

Day 11 : Cairo

Friday 28 Feb 2020. Hotel check out and included onward departure transfer to airport. (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Holiday Inn Cairo Maadi

Overlooking the Nile and offering distant views of the Great Pyramids of Giza, this Holiday Inn provides the perfect location for your stay in Cairo. Each guestroom features a balcony and is well-equipped with modern amenities including free WiFi. Evenings can be spent enjoying international or Egyptian cuisine and unwinding with a cocktail at one of the hotel's bars. Thanks to the friendly hotel staff, you'll soon feel at home. And with panoramic views of the city from the rooftop lounge and pool, there's no better place to

base yourself for exploring Egypt's ancient wonders.



Mercure Cairo Le Sphinx

In a great location for the Pyramids, the Mercure Cairo Le Sphinx is a contemporary hotel with excellent amenities. Guest rooms are well furnished with modern interiors and en suite facilities. Wi-fi is available in the lobby and there is a beautiful outdoor pool, which is perfect for relaxing by. Why not head to the restaurant on the roof for a delicious meal and impressive views of the Pyramids.



Steigenberger Hotel el Tahrir

Ideally located in the heart of downtown Cairo, the Steigenberger Hotel El Tahrir is right by the lively Tahrir Square. Guestrooms offer peace and quiet away from the high-energy of the city, with contemporary decor and sound-proofed windows overlooking views of Cairo. The wellness facilities are state-of-the-art, including a fitness centre, outdoor pool and sauna and massage rooms. Be sure to take advantage of the poolside bar and delicious hotel restaurant, or enjoy the option of 24-hour in-room dining.



Felucca Sailboat

Feluccas are simple, traditional Egyptian sailboats that have plied the Nile since

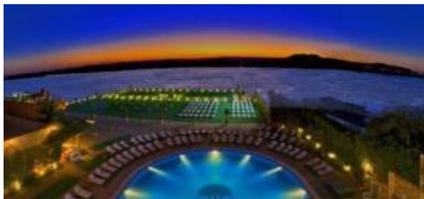
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ancient times. Feluccas carry between 10 - 12 passengers comfortably. The boat's deck is draped with soft colourful cushions that serve as your lounging area during the day and as your sleeping area at night. A support boat travels alongside your felucca and is on hand if you need to use the toilet. The support boat is also where your meals are prepared and eaten. You'll need to bring a sleeping bag/sheet (or hire for a nominal cost) and a towel with you. The crew, as well as being experienced sailors, are responsible for the preparation of the included meals.



Sonesta St. George Hotel

An elegant and luxurious classical hotel, the Sonesta's sophistication will ensure you a comfortable stay. The hotel has a sweeping terrace with fantastic views of the Nile, a grand entrance of polished marble and handsomely appointed furnishings with exquisite detail and a beautiful health spa. All its rooms offer views of the city or the river, complemented by a wide range of restaurants and cafes. Just minutes away you will find the temples at Luxor and Karnak, home to two of ancient Egypt's most famed sanctuaries.



Steigenberger Nile Palace

The Steigenberger Nile Palace is a grand hotel and stylishly furnished, with many rooms overlooking the Nile River. The hotel has a health club with massage rooms, sauna, steam room and fitness room, and a tennis court on the roof, not to mention a riverside pool. Its four restaurants offer a

choice between Nubian, Lebanese, Italian, and Thai cuisine.



PRICES / DATES INFO

Departure dates noted with a 'G' are guaranteed to operate. All other departure dates are guaranteed with a minimum of 2 persons. Prices shown are per person when there are 2 persons sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' applies for single travellers who require their own room and needs to be added to the per person price. If you are happy to be paired up with another single traveller of the same gender, this can be arranged, thus avoiding the single person supplement.

PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
18 Feb	USD 1,645	USD 2,185