

# Abu Simbel Sun Festival Oct 2020

11 days | Starts/Ends: Cairo



*Add an extra special element to your Egyptian holiday by combining it with the magical Abu Simbel Sun Festival. The legendary Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, felucca sailing on the Nile, the tomb laden Valley of the Kings and energetic Cairo all in 11 unforgettable days!*

## 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 at the Valley of the Kings, see the towering Colossi of Memnon and explore 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 a leisurely boat trip to Agilkia Island to explore 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

- Breakfast daily, 2 lunches and 2 dinners
- 6 nights 4-5 star hotels, 2 nights aboard felucca (open deck). If booking our Nile Cruise Upgrade, 4 nights 4-5 star hotels and 3 nights Nile Cruiser (en suite cabin)
- 1 overnight night bus (3.5 hrs) with 4 star hotel before hand to freshen up and rest prior to the festival event
- 2 overnight trains from Cairo to Aswan and Luxor and Cairo (Private 2 berth sleeper cabin)
- Airport arrival and departure transfers on day 1 and day 11
- Touring - Cairo, Giza, Saqqara, Aswan and Luxor
- Guided visit to Abu Simbel at sunrise for the Sun Festival of King Ramses II including Abu Simbel and Sun Festival entrance fee
- Escorted by an 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
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$5-7 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 : Cairo

Sunday 18 Oct 2020. Welcome to Egypt! Arrive Cairo, included transfer to hotel. Spend the rest of the day at leisure or those arriving early can opt to join our optional Backstreets of Cairo tour which departs the hotel at 10am. Tonight your Welcome Meeting will be held at 7pm. **Overnight - Cairo**

### Day 2 : Pyramids & Saqqara



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Today visit to the stunning pyramids and the 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. Gaze in awe at Cheops (Khufu) - the largest of the three great pyramids. Constructed from over 2.5 million limestone blocks it is thought to have taken more than 20 years to construct. Continuing to 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 : Grand Egyptian Museum

Cairo - Aswan. Today we embark on a guided tour of the new Grand Egyptian Museum, acclaimed for its treasures of King Tutankhamun and his famous solid gold funerary mask. There is a mind-boggling array of relics and antiquities from almost every period of ancient Egyptian history housed in the museum, making it one of the foremost in the world. There is also the option to see the Royal Mummies for an additional fee, if you wish. Later, there will be a chance to have dinner before the overnight sleeper train to Aswan. **Overnight - Sleeper Train (B)**

## Day 4 : Philae Temple



Aswan - Abu Simbel. After arrival at Aswan and hotel check-in, we visit the Temples of Philae, dedicated to the goddess Isis. Upon returning to Aswan we visit a perfume oil emporium. Spend the rest of the day at leisure; shop in the colourful souqs or simply kick back and relax.

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 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 - Hotel/Coach Journey to Abu Simbel (B)**

## Day 5 : ABU SIMBEL SUN FESTIVAL



22 October. Abu Simbel - Aswan - Nile Felucca Cruise. Possibly the most awe-inspiring temple of all ancient Egypt, with its gargantuan rock-cut façade, the great Sun Temple of King Ramses II at Abu Simbel was created to rever the mighty pharaonic ruler King Ramses II. Ramses the Bold, Ramses the Great, Ramses the Narcissist are perhaps all apt titles for one of ancient Egypt's most powerful rulers. Celebrating a life that spanned nearly a century, Ramses had plenty of time for his more than 200 wives and concubines who produced him some 96 sons and 60 daughters.

Built by Ramses II to demonstrate his political clout and divine backing to the ancient Nubians, Abu Simbel is an awesome self-tribute. Guarding the entrance to the temple (built between 1290 and 1224 BC) hewn into the side of a mountain are four famous colossal statues of the pharaoh himself, which sit majestically staring out across the desert. 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 only a small part of the rest of the colossal temple peeked above the desert sands. It wasn't until the British happened upon Abu Simbel and starting excavating, that the full glory of the temple of Abu Simbel was revealed to the modern world.

The temple was dedicated to the deified Pharaoh, King Ramses II, known also as the great builder and the gods Amun-Re, Re-Herakhte and Ptah. In a fit of precision and architectural egotism, Ramses II had the entire temple precisely positioned in order for the sun's rays to align just 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 natural phenomenon provides for a most spectacular sight, which has come to be referred to as the Sun Festival of King Ramses II. Crowds pack into the temple before sunrise and watch the shafts of light slowly creeping through the rock hewn inner Hypostyle Hall (replete with further statues of the King) and through to the Sanctuary. As we are lead through the temple there will be time to pause for a moment to watch the sun illuminating the statues of Amun-Re, Re-Herakhte and Ramses the god, whilst the statute 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 the event, there will also be plenty of time to explore the Sun Temple of King Ramses II, the Temple of Hathor and take plenty of pictures.

Upon returning to Aswan around noon we board our Nile felucca for a 2 night voyage downstream on the River Nile.

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

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## Day 6 : Felucca Sailing & Kom Ombo



Nile Felucca Sailing. Relax, go for a swim or just chill out in the sun on deck. Let your troubles melt away, as the felucca plies its route and Egyptian life carries on all around you. 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 Cruise (B, L, D)**

## Day 7 : Luxor

We disembark this morning and drive a few hours north 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 beautifully illuminated at night, alternatively enjoy the facilities of our hotel. **Overnight - Luxor (B)**

## Days 8-9 : Valley of the Kings



Luxor - Cairo. On day 8, we 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.

Day 9 is a free day for you to explore the wonders of Luxor independently or take advantage of the facilities at the hotel that include a relaxing pool with swim up bar and health and fitness facilities. Tonight, we return by overnight train to Cairo. **Overnight - Luxor (1) & Sleeper Train (1) (B:2)**

## Day 10 : Day at leisure in Cairo

This morning we arrive back into Cairo and transfer to our hotel. Today is at your leisure to independently explore Cairo, or you could book locally our optional visit to the exotic Khan el Khalili Bazaar where you can pick up a few souvenirs. **Overnight - Cairo (B)**

## Day 11 : Cairo



Wednesday 28 Oct 2020. Our Egyptian adventure comes to an end today. Included departure transfer to the airport later today in time for your international flight. **Overnight - Cairo (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 (not Nile View as standard) 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.



### Sleeper Train

When travelling on an overnight train in Egypt, sleeper carriages offer the highest level of comfort. Cabins are equipped with two beds (one above the other), a basin, electric points and air conditioning. Freshly laundered bedding is provided and in the early evening an attendant will come round and make up your bed for you. The carriages have toilets at each end and there is a club car which serves snacks and beverages. In the morning a very basic breakfast is provided.



### 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.

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## Basma Hotel

Situated on Aswan's highest hill, the Basma Hotel offers a commanding view over the river Nile and offers comfortable rooms, a lively Nubian bar and an excellent restaurant.



## Tolip Hotel

Set in manicured gardens, the Helnan Aswan is an elegant hotel with impressive views of the Nile. Guest rooms are spacious with modern interiors and located next to the beautiful pool. Wi-fi is available in the lobby and by the pool. There are also two restaurants and bars, a bowling alley, a swimming pool and a cinema. Why not relax by the pool before exploring the rest of Aswan.



## Felucca Sailboat

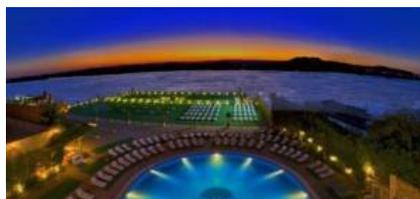
Feluccas are simple, traditional Egyptian sailboats that have plied the Nile since ancient times. Feluccas carry between 10 - 12 passengers comfortably. The boat's deck is draped with soft colourful cushions that serve as your lounging area during the day and as your sleeping area at night. A support 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.



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 Oct	USD 1,545	USD 2,045

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Date	Twin Share	Single
18 Oct	USD 1,545	USD 2,045

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