

# EGYPT AND PETRA

## 17 DAYS



**E**gypt - land of pharaohs and pyramids, the Nile, the Sphinx, the "Arabian Nights". Your journey begins in Cairo, where you go to the 14<sup>th</sup> century Mosque of the Sultan Hasan and the 12<sup>th</sup> century Citadel. Stroll through bazaars and bargain for jewelry and antiques. Ride on camels up to the pyramids of Giza.

Cruise down the Nile on board the deluxe **Oberoi Philae** Nile cruiser and sit back on your balcony as the colorful scenery glides past you. Visit the Valley of the Kings, see Tutankhamun's Tomb; walk along the Avenue of the Sphinxes at Amun-Ra at Karnak. Stay at a resort on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula on the Red Sea, famous for its coral reefs and pristine beaches.

Then cross the border into Jordan, a fascinating country with a rich history. Travel to the incredible 2,000- year old city of Petra. Go to Amman and see the Dead Sea Scrolls and evidence of earlier settlements dating back to 8,000 BC.

- Each departure limited to 16 guests
- Luxury hotels or best in each location
- Nile cruise on M/S Oberoi Philae
- Three a la carte meals a day (table d'hote, if unavailable), including beverages of your choice
- Professionally escorted
- All sightseeing, including entrance fees and special events as indicated in the itinerary
- Arrival and departure transfer by private car
- All gratuities included (also your tour manager's)

### Day 1 (Monday)

**USA – CAIRO**

Depart on your overnight flight to Cairo.

### Day 2 (Tuesday)

**CAIRO**

Upon your arrival in Cairo - "the Mother of the World" - you are met at the airport and go by private car to your hotel. The new **Four Seasons Hotel** is located on the scenic west bank of the Nile River, with impressive views over the canopy of Cairo's ancient botanical gardens. This tranquil oasis introduces a superb new standard of gracious hospitality among the city's ancient pyramids and modern skyscrapers.

The afternoon is free for you to relax and settle in. This evening, join your tour manager and travel companions for cocktails and à la carte dining in the hotel's Mediterranean restaurant overlooking Cairo and the Nile, with cuisine

influenced by North Africa, Lebanon, Morocco, and Italy. (D)

### Day 3 (Wednesday)

**CAIRO**

A passage in the "Arabian Nights" reads "He who hath not seen Cairo, hath not seen the world". Your journey begins with a tour of the city - you visit the Egyptian Museum which holds the world's greatest collection of Egyptian artifacts;

the treasures from the tombs of Tutankhamun and Hetepheres are just some of the masterpieces on display.

You go to the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Mosque of the Sultan Hasan; 27 varieties of marble were imported for the impressive flooring here. Across the street is the Rifa'I Mosque, which was not built until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, yet its architecture complements its neighbor perfectly in scale and



Oberoi Philae Nile

style. And nearby, you visit the 12<sup>th</sup> century Citadel, the seat of the governments of many of Egypt's rulers. You also explore the winding lanes of the Khan al-Khalili, Cairo's most famous bazaar, where jewelry, antiques, and souvenirs are sold.

Returning to your hotel, luxuriate in the beautifully landscaped pool with whirlpool or browse through the three levels of internationally recognized shops adjacent to the Four Seasons. (B,L,D)

**Day 4 (Thursday)**

**CAIRO – MEMPHIS – SAKKARA – CAIRO**

This morning, you drive to the city of Memphis, an important predecessor to Cairo. It was founded around 3100 BC by Menes, who is believed to have been the first king of the First Dynasty. The famed Alabaster Sphinx is here, as well as a statue of Ramses II.

Down the road a bit, overlooking the greenery of Memphis, is the extensive cemetery of Saqqarah – an impressive pyramid field. Dominating the whole complex is the Step Pyramid of Zoser – the earliest of all the pyramids and the first great monument to be constructed of hewn stone.

Of the Seven Wonders of the World, only the striking royal pyramids of Giza still survive. Their size is astonishing as you stand before them; the Pyramid of Khufu was originally almost 500 feet high. Unlike the pyramids at Luxor, these were

not built by slaves, but rather by skilled laborers. You enter the Great Pyramid and see a grand chamber, with its remarkable corbelled roof. You also see the pyramid of Khafre and its surrounding complex, which includes the famous Sphinx. (B,L,D)

**Day 5 (Friday)**

**CAIRO – ABU SIMBEL – ASWAN**

You fly this morning to Abu Simbel to visit the renowned Temple of Ramses II – the largest and most majestic monument in Nubia - and the smaller Temple of Queen Nefertari.

These temples had to be relocated to protect them when the Aswan High Dam was built in the mid-1960s. The Temple of Ramses was cut into more than one thousand pieces before it could be moved 200 feet above its old site to protect it from the rising water of the Nile River.

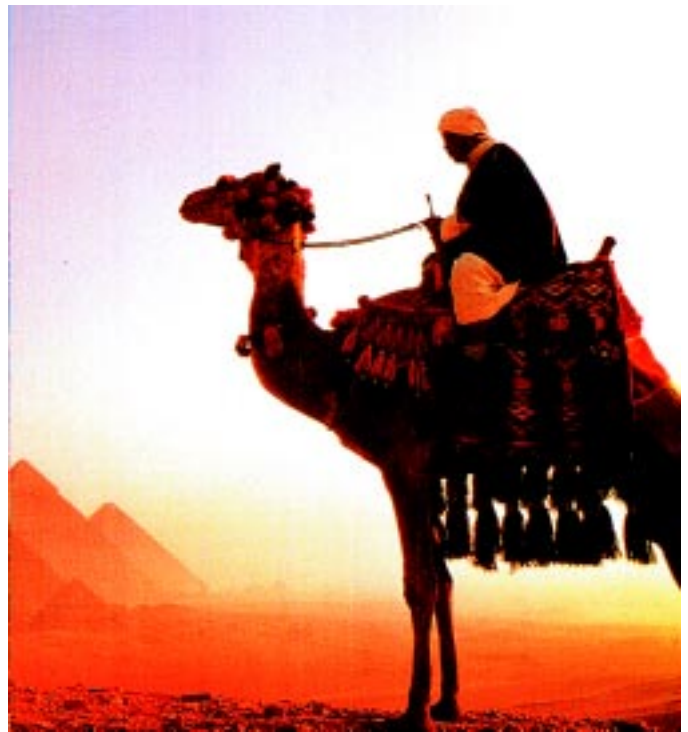
Later in the day, you fly on to Aswan and check into your hotel – the **Old Cataract Hotel**. From the rim of the Aswan High Dam to Alexandria, there is no better spot in Egypt to stay. Nestled atop an outcropping of enormous granite boulders with spectacular views of the Nile and Elephantine Island's ancient Temple of Khnum, this secluded garden retreat has attracted such travelers as Percy Bysshe Shelley, Agatha Christie, and Georges Clemenceau.

Take time to enjoy the jacarandas, bright red bougainvilleas, and exotic cacti in the garden or take a dip in the pool before your a la carte dinner. (B,L,D)

**Day 6 (Saturday)**

**ASWAN**

You board the five-star **Oberoi Philae** Nile cruiser to begin your journey down



Pyramids

the Nile. This new super-deluxe cruiser is driven by a paddle wheel and appointed with luxurious turn-of-the-century interiors. Up to 116 passengers are pampered with such facilities as a lounge, gourmet restaurant, beauty salon, barber shop, gift shop, swimming pool and sun deck. Your luxurious stateroom has a private balcony from which you can watch the intriguing landscape of the Nile between Aswan and Luxor.

After lunch on board, you travel by *felucca* (an indigenous boat with a graceful sailing rig) for a visit to the botanical garden on Kitchener Island, where you see exotic plants from all over the world. Later, relax on your balcony before attending the cocktail reception and dinner onboard. (B,L,D)

**Day 7 (Sunday)**

**ASWAN – KOM OMBO – EDFU**

This morning, after a buffet breakfast, you visit the first ("Old") Aswan Dam built in 1902. It created a 140-mile long reservoir and, at the time, it was considered a great engineering feat. Ten years in the making, the new High Dam created a barrier 2 ½ miles by 300 feet. When it was completed in 1972, Egypt at last had reliable water supply.

You go to the granite quarries to see where skilled Egyptians created obelisks that were ultimately sent to Rome, Istanbul, London, and Paris. The Unfinished Obelisk is still attached to the bedrock; had it not developed a crack



Luxor



Dining room on Nile ship "Oberoi Philae"

while work was being done, it would have weighed 1,100 tons.

You enjoy lunch onboard as you sail on to Kom Ombo. You visit the ruins of a temple with two sanctuaries, dedicated jointly to Horus, the sparrow-hawk god and to Sobek, the crocodile god. Crocodiles used to sun themselves on the broad bend of the river here.

You continue down the Nile this evening as a special Oriental dinner is prepared for you in the gourmet dining room onboard. (B,L,D)

### Day 8 (Monday)

#### EDFU – ESNA

On your visit to the Temple of Horus at Edfu, you see exterior walls, courts, halls and a sanctuary all in place. Pictures of various legends and festivals are depicted on the walls.

You stop to go to the town of Esna, which is built over the ruins of the Temple of Khnum. The hypostyle hall has been excavated 27 feet below the street. There are very significant reliefs and inscriptions here; French archaeologists have been able to decipher numerous details of rituals in the worship of Khnum.

You sit back on your private balcony or beside the pool as the Philae cruises

## ACCOMMODATIONS

### Cairo – Four Seasons Hotel (3 nights)

Located in the new First Residence complex in the center of Cairo, this brand new hotel has magical views of the Nile River and the Pyramids. The amenities of the complex include three levels of upscale shops and services, a casino, and luxurious residences.

### Aswan – Old Cataract (1)

Set amidst the relaxing atmosphere of the Cataract Gardens, this modern, deluxe high-rise style hotel offers comfortable accommodations for a relaxing holiday.

### Cruise – "Oberoi Philae Nile" (4) "Best 5 star-deluxe boat on the Nile" (Egyptian Tourist Authority)

Built on the paddle wheeler concept, this deluxe Nile cruises has 58 cabins including four suites, a lounge, a sophisticated bar and a first-class restaurant. Each cabin has either two twin or a king-size bed, mini bar. Remote control television, telephone, air-conditioning and a private balcony, where guests can experience the exotic landscape of the banks of the Nile.

### Luxor – St. George (1)

Luxurious, sophisticated and above all, elegant. Located on the banks of the Nile River, guest rooms offer breathtaking views and accommodations to comfort even the most seasoned traveler.

### Sharm El Sheikh – Conrad International (2)

The Hotel is situated on 37 acres of landscaped gardens fronting a stretch of over 600 feet of pristine beaches. Before you is the Red Sea - home to some of the richest coral reefs on the planet.

### Petra – Petra Movenpick (2)

The hotel lies directly at the entrance to the city of Petra and is unquestionably among the most luxurious hotels in Jordan. *Al Iwan*, the best restaurant here, puts most sultans' palaces to shame.

### Amman – Inter-Continental (2)

is the oldest, biggest, and best of Jordan's international-grade hotels.

down the Nile to Luxor this afternoon. (B,L,D)

### Day 9 (Tuesday)

#### LUXOR – THEBES - LUXOR

After your buffet breakfast, you visit the Valley of the Queens, where royal wives were buried. (Until the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, the queens were buried with their husbands in the Valley of the Kings.)



Obelisk

Only a few are open to the public; the Tomb of Nefertari was discovered in 1904, but it was only restored in 1995.

After the pharaohs were embalmed and mummified, their bodies were brought to the Valley of the Kings, hidden in the Theban hills. The Tomb of Tutankhamun is here. Although care was taken to prevent robbers from entering the tombs, such activity was prevalent. Many treasures were taken, but priests reburied the mummies for protection in the surrounding mountains. Some of these secret caches have only recently been discovered, and it is thought more will undoubtedly be found.

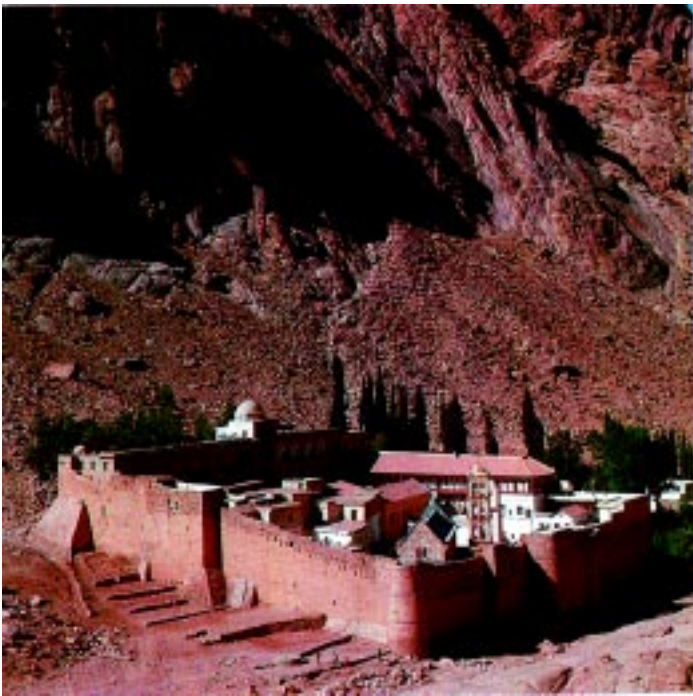
Returning to the ship, relax with afternoon tea. Your gourmet dinner is followed by an evening of dancing. (B,L,D)

### Day 10 (Wednesday)

#### LUXOR

Today you go to the vast temple complex of Amun-Ra at Karnak. Walk along the ceremonial Avenue of the Sphinxes as you enter one of the most significant religious centers in the ancient world. Construction on this site continued for more than 13 centuries. The Great Hypostyle Hall has 137 huge columns carved with reliefs; the upper capitals were painted in bright shades of red, green, yellow and blue.

At the other end of the Avenue of the Sphinxes, you visit Luxor Temple. Of a different form, and having a different function, this temple was the residence of



St. Catherine's Monastery, Sinai

Amun-Ra's consort, Mut and her son. Here also, substantial additions were made over a considerable period of time.

This afternoon, you check into your hotel overlooking the Nile - the **St. George**, the newest and most luxurious property here. There are regional, ancient, and Continental accents in the lobby and public rooms. The emerald green and cream-colored marble lobby, with its efficient staff, creates a warm welcome. The hallway leading to most of the common rooms is lined with smart shops. The elaborate pool area provides an inviting and relaxing haven. Guestrooms are elegant and spacious with ornate molding, burnished paneling, sitting room areas and balconies. Dinner this evening is in one of the hotel restaurants; each offers a superb menu. (B,L,D)

**Day 11 (Thursday)**

**LUXOR – SHARM EL SHEIKH**

This morning, your journey continues by air to the Sinai Peninsula. You arrive in Sharm El Sheikh, a small town at the south of the peninsula on the Red Sea. A sun-dappled resort, it is renowned for its coral reefs, pristine beaches, and underwater life.

You drive inland, toward the mountains of the Sinai range. The dry landscape gives way briefly to an oasis with date palms. A short distance beyond is the medieval Church and Monastery of St. Catherine. You visit the Chapel of the Burning Bush where God spoke to Moses disguised as a flaming shrub. A well-worn

path behind the monastery leads to the summit of Gabal Musa, the location generally accepted as where Moses received the Ten Commandments.

Returning to the coast, you relax at your hotel, the **Conrad International**, before dinner. (B,L,D)

**Day 12 (Friday)**  
**SHARM EL SHEIKH**

Today you have a restful day at your hotel; enjoy the setting overlooking a wonderfully secluded stretch of the Red Sea. This new,

elegant resort has superb accommodations; the spacious guestrooms are decorated with contemporary Arabic motifs and have adjoining terraces or balconies. Whether you sit back by the pool, or sun on the beach, you may also feel like looking at the bevy of shops along the long, glossy marble corridor adjacent to the lobby.

You take a cruise on a glass-bottomed boat this afternoon and have a closer look at the colorful world beneath the surface of the sea. (B,L,D)

**Day 13 (Saturday)**

**SHARM EL SHEIKH – AQABA – PETRA**

After breakfast this morning, you drive up the coast of the Gulf of Aqaba to the town of Nuwayba. There you board a hydrofoil for the two-hour trip to Aqaba, Jordan's only seaport.

From here, you drive northward to one of the great natural landscapes of the world - Wadi Rum. The area takes its name from the largest of a whole network of *wadis* (valleys) which provided a route for trading caravans and the nomadic Bedouins going to, or from, the Arabian peninsula. The word *rum* is thought to come from the ancient Semitic word *irum* (high); reference was probably made to the enormous crags in the area.

Immortalized as the desert of Lawrence of Arabia, Wadi Rum is without doubt one of the most spectacularly beautiful stretches of desert in the world. Dozens of bird species live here as well as the

elegant and rare ibex (a wild goat) and the dainty Arabian sand cat. Numerous plants and herbs grow here which the Bedouins use in their medicines.

Driving further north through the desert, you come to Petra - not only Jordan's most spectacular tourist site, but equal to anything else in the Middle East.

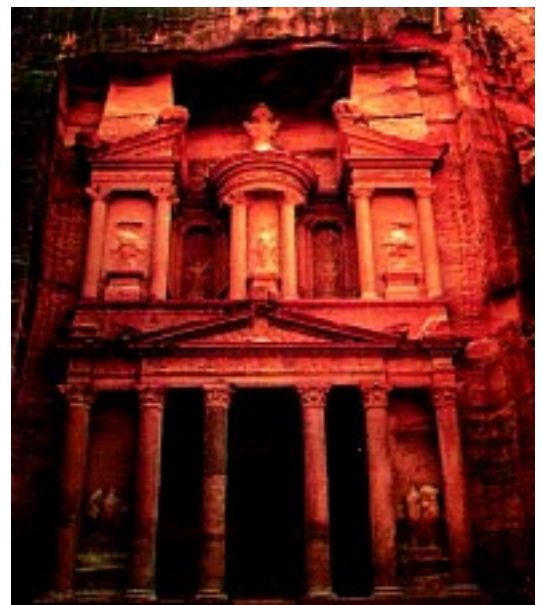
Your hotel tonight is the **Petra Movenpick**, just a two-minute walk from the entrance gate to Petra, which offers a clever combination of regional flair and fine service. The marble and stone lobby leads to a grand atrium where varied sitting areas cluster under a domed skylight and grand chandelier. Your private guestrooms are as elegant as the public rooms. Your dinner this evening is served in the **Al Iwan** restaurant at the hotel, which puts most sultans' palaces to shame. (B,L,D)

**Day 14 (Sunday)**

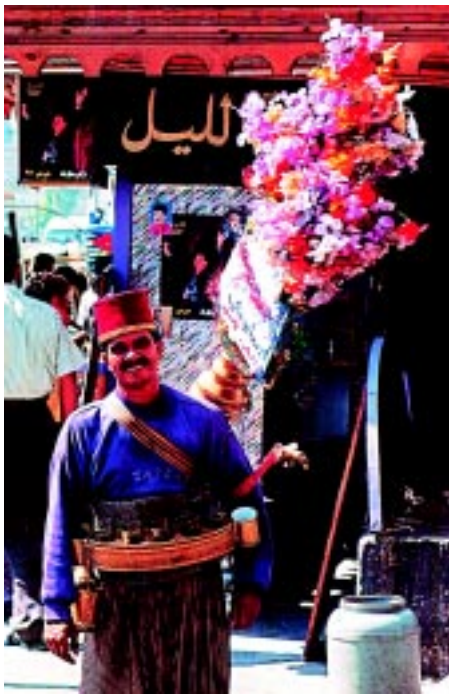
**PETRA**

Today, you see the striking combination of Nabataean antiquities and stunning natural scenery. Unlike the other sites you have visited on this journey, most of these buildings have not been erected, they have been carved out of the soft sandstone. At the peak of its existence in the 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC and AD, Petra was famous for its sophisticated framework of justice, humane monarchy, and technological and commercial expertise. The Petra basin covers nearly 38 square miles of windswept limestone mounds and high sandstone formations interwoven with narrow valleys and broad plains. There are Nabataean tombs, temples, theaters, water works, and other monuments.

The city is hidden in a canyon with



Petra



Water seller, Amman

only one entrance. You walk on foot or go by horse carriage up to the Bab as-siq (a *siq* is a natural fissure in a mountain); as you walk down the narrow corridor of the *siq*, this dramatic entrance opens up on Petra's most recognized monument – the al-Khazneh (“the Treasury”). The façade reveals both classical and Nabataean architecture; there are statues of gods, animals, and mythological figures. Famous as the setting for the final scene of the movie, “Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade”, this is not the only fascinating sight in the “Rose Red City”. From here, you walk past the 7,000-seat Theater and the Royal Tombs toward the city center. You see the remains of the ancient colonnaded street, built about AD 106, which was lined with buildings – probably shops. This street leads you to the arched gate that was the formal entrance to the temple district. Nearby are wall lines and mounds that indicate the existence of many unexcavated structures – very possibly public buildings of the city center. There are thousands of caves in the canyon rocks that provided housing to the city's inhabitants.

At the end of your sightseeing today, relax at your hotel in the top-floor tearoom or on the rooftop terrace. Dine this evening by candlelight, beside the fountains, on delicious Mediterranean specialties. (B,L,D)

**Day 15 (Monday)**

**PETRA – AMMAN**

This morning, you leave Petra, heading northward, to Jordan's capital city of Amman. Starting out on the King's Highway, the road winds through valleys to Shawbak. You stop to see the ruins of Shawbak Castle; the first sight of it is on its isolated hill. The majority of the visible defenses date to post-Crusader times; it was the first outpost of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, constructed in 1115. There is evidence the building was enlarged at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The original entrance to the castle was through a triple gate; the Crusader church, just above the entrance, has a bird's-eye view of the old village.

Afterward, you cross over to the Desert Highway – called *Tariq al-Bint* in Arabic, or “Maiden's Way”; it was laid out by the Ottomans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. (It has been said the name of the road refers to an Ottoman Princess's preference for this route over the parallel King's Highway (possibly because the travel time is shorter). Muslim pilgrims have used this route from Damascus enroute to Medina, and then later to Mecca.

Arriving in Amman, you check into the **Inter-Continental**, which is just minutes from the city center. At one end of the spacious marble lobby a staff member in a crimson *fez* (traditional hat) tends a brazier upon which a pot of delicious Arabic coffee is kept warm for you upon arrival. Join your companions tonight for an à la carte dinner featuring regional fare. (B,L,D)

**Day 16 (Tuesday)**

**AMMAN**

After breakfast, you begin your tour of the city that is a crossroads of civilizations; this is reflected in the diversity of art, music, dance, cuisine, and dress. Mule carts share the city's smooth, broad streets with shiny new Mercedes sedans. Contemporary European and American outfits are worn with the traditional *hejab* (head scarf); and although many books are still censored by the government, the unrestricted Internet is rapidly gaining an audience.

Archaeologists have found evidence that the Amman area has been settled for almost 9,000 years. One of the largest Neolithic (about 6500 BC) communities in the Middle East was on the outskirts of the city. When the Roman Empire extended as far as Petra, the city flourished as a trade center; and impressive monu-

ments were constructed. But by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, travelers in the area recorded it was a very ancient uninhabited town with great ruins; some of the ancient buildings were being used for storage by local farmers. It was the completion of the Hejaz railway (linking Damascus with Medina) that altered the agricultural character of the town; once more Amman became a center on the route from Damascus to the Holy City.

You visit the Citadel; from the summit of the hill, you have an excellent view of the city. Archaeologists continue to uncover remains of earlier settlements; there are interesting excavated Roman, Byzantine and Islamic sites here. During your tour of the Archaeological Museum, you see the statue of “Amman Daedalus” – Daedalus was the mythical figure who build the Minoan Labyrinth in Crete and subsequently made wax wings for himself and his son Icarus to escape from the island. You also see ancient sarcophagi, rare examples of burials practiced between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. The Dead Sea Scrolls and Neolithic wax-like figures dating from 8000-6000 BC are also on display.

Later today, you visit the restored Roman Amphitheater on the hillside; this impressive enclosure has a seating capacity for 6,000 and is still used for performances today. You also see the Ashrafia mosque.

Tonight attend a festive farewell dinner with your travel companions.

**Day 17 (Wednesday)**

**AMMAN -USA**

Your journey at an end, you are escorted to the airport to board your flight back to the States. (B)

**D A T E S**

<b>Depart - MON</b> (from USA)	<b>Return - WED</b>
Mar 17, 2003	Apr 02
Oct 27, 2003	Nov 12

or

‘TAILOR-MADE’ departures from  
January - April and October - December

**C O S T P E R P E R S O N**

Land Portion (Double occupancy)	\$ 6,785
Single supplement	\$ 1,210
Domestic Airfare-Egypt	\$ 540
International Airfare (New York)	\$ 1,320

All airfares are subject to availability and to change by the airlines. Cancellation penalties and surcharges may apply. Fares from other U.S. cities, as well as First and Business Class rates, are also available.

**FOR RESERVATIONS, PLEASE TELEPHONE TOLL FREE: 1-888-377-8023**