

Abercrombie & Kent: Egypt & the Nile

Day 1: Arrive Cairo, Egypt

Arrive in Cairo where you are met by your A&K representative and transferred to your historic hotel with fantastic views of the pyramids.

Day 2: Giza | The Pyramids & Sphinx

This morning, tour the Giza Plateau, site of the pyramids of Mycerinus and Chefren as well as the Great Pyramid. Built in the Fourth Dynasty (approximately 2690 BC), it is the only survivor of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Explore the interior of one of these legendary pyramids and Ride Like a Local on camel back. Visit the Solar Boat Museum — site of Cheops' funerary boat — and the Great Sphinx. After lunch at a local restaurant, enjoy your afternoon at leisure. Tonight, gather for a welcome dinner hosted by Abercrombie & Kent.

Day 3: Luxor | Karnak and the Valley of the Kings

Fly to Luxor, site of the ancient city of Thebes. Begin your full day of exploring here with a journey to the Temple of Karnak, where generations of pharaohs wished to record their names. Walk through the Great Hypostyle Hall; its expertly aligned columns, the largest of which is 80 feet high with a 33-foot circumference, are a sight to behold. Then, step aboard Sanctuary 'Sun Boat IV,' where you enjoy lunch. Afterward, disembark to explore the west bank of the Nile and the Necropolis of Thebes, and continue to the Valley of the Kings, burial ground of the pharaohs and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. For a period of 500 years beginning in the 16th century BC, tombs were built along this valley for pharaohs and nobles, including that of "the boy king," Tutankhamun. Found in 1922 by British archaeologist and Egyptologist Howard Carter, the tomb of Tutankhamun is yours to discover, as you set foot inside its 35-century-old walls. Later, stop at the lovely Temple of Hatshepsut, ancient Egypt's first female pharaoh and regarded today as one of its most successful. Also, enjoy a photo stop at the Colossi of Memnon.

Day 4: Cruising the Nile | Temple of Hathor at Denderah

Today, cruise north on a scenic route — far from other ships and crowds — to the Temple of Hathor at Denderah, which is among the best-preserved temples in Egypt. View its massive stone roof, dark chambers, underground passages and columns inscribed with hieroglyphs. Return to your deluxe Nile cruiser and sail back to Luxor. Later this afternoon, journey once more to the east bank of the Nile, this time visiting the city of Thebes and the striking Temple of Luxor. Behold the three large statues of Ramses II along the front of the temple pylons; the Courtyard of Ramses II behind the East Tower; and the Colonnade of Amenhotep III, with its 14 papyrus-headed columns, some fully 50 feet in height.

Day 5: Cruising the Nile | Edfu to Kom Ombo

Cruise to Edfu to view the Temple of Horus, falcon-headed god of the sky. Built in 230 BC by Ptolemy III and once buried in sand and debris, this stunningly well-preserved and colorful structure reveals what temple worship in ancient Egypt was like. Join your chef back on board for a local cooking lesson. Later, disembark at Kom Ombo (hill of gold) to visit the Greco-Roman temple dedicated to Haroeris (the sun god) and Sobek (the crocodile god), who was considered by some ancient Egyptians to be the creator of the world. While there, view the mummified remains of several crocodiles that once basked along the ancient Nile shore, just as their descendants do today.

Day 6: Aswan | Majestic Philae

Cruise to Aswan and ride a motorized boat to Philae Temple on the island of Agilika. This sacred complex was dedicated to the Goddess Isis and reflects a fusion of three great civilizations — Egyptian, Greek and Roman. The temple was dismantled, and then painstakingly reassembled when the Aswan High Dam was constructed. Built in the 1960s, the dam spans the Nile River, more than two miles across and incorporating 16 times the amount of material that went into the Great Pyramid at Giza. It provides irrigation and hydro-electric power to much of Egypt, and the reservoir that formed behind it, Lake Nasser, is 340 miles long. Proceed to the impressive granite quarries and site of the Unfinished Obelisk. Illustrating the skills of Egypt's stonemasons, this monolith is one-third taller than any other ancient Egyptian obelisk. Later, Ride Like a Local around the Aswan islands in a *felucca*, weather permitting.

Day 7: Abu Simbel | Temples of Ramses II & Nefertari

Today, bid farewell to Sanctuary 'Sun Boat IV,' disembarking to fly to Abu Simbel. There, discover the commanding twin temples of Ramses II and his wife, Queen Nefertari. The former's façade is dominated by four statues of the pharaoh, each nearly 70 feet tall. Perhaps even more impressive, this entire site was disassembled and moved here to save it from the floodwaters caused by the Aswan High Dam. Return to Cairo for an afternoon at leisure.

Day 8: Cairo | Legendary Pharaohs & Bustling Souk

Visit the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, home to the largest collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts, including treasures from Tutankhamun and items dating to 4000 BC. View its famed Mummy Room, featuring the remains of Egypt's pharaohs, including Ramses II. After lunch at a local restaurant, explore the Mosque and Madrasa of Sultan Hassan, built in AD 1356 and among the finest examples of early Mamluk architecture. Next, walk from the twin-towered Bab el-Foutouh, a fortified gate in Cairo's Old City walls, to Khan el-Khalili Bazaar, one of the city's major *souks* (open-air marketplaces). Browse the tightly packed stalls displaying everything from spices and leather goods to jewelry and vegetables, all on a street that has hardly changed for centuries. Bargaining is expected, so prepare to negotiate. Then, return to your hotel for an evening at leisure.

Day 9: Cairo | Ancient Treasures

Drive to Memphis, capital of the ancient kingdom and now home to an open-air museum and a giant statue of Ramses II. Continue to Sakkara, site of hundreds of tombs and 14 pyramids, including the Step Pyramid of Djoser. This evening, gather with your fellow guests to reflect on your journey through Egypt and along the Nile at a farewell dinner hosted by Abercrombie & Kent.

Day 10: Depart Cairo

After breakfast, transfer to the airport and depart.