

Detailed Itinerary: The Wonders of Egypt - Second Offering for 2011

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April 26, 2011 to May 11, 2011

This Journey is for Everyone

Cost: \$4595.00 (Double Occupancy) \$6295 (Single Occupancy)

A private visit to the King's Chamber inside the Great Pyramid...

A private visit to the Sphinx to stand between its paws, to place your hands upon it...

A private visit to the Isle of Philae and the Temple of Isis at sunrise...

Seven nights/eight days sailing the Nile on our own private dahabiya (a luxury sailing yacht)...

Five nights/six days at the world famous Mena House Hotel at the foot of the Pyramids...

Two nights at the Movenpick Hotel on Elephantine Island in the middle of the Nile...

A small, intimate group of fellow journeyers (a maximum of 16)...

**This is a very special Spirit Journey indeed,
one that can truly be called "a journey of a lifetime."**

Experience Egypt as few people ever will as we make special arrangements to be allowed inside the Great Pyramid and to get up close and personal with the Sphinx (access inside the Great Pyramid and to the Sphinx are off limits to the general public and have been for many years). These are just two of the many opportunities that wait for you on this fantastic travel adventure.

We spend 8 days/7 nights sailing the Nile on a private dahabiya. This is a very relaxing way to experience Egypt. You get to settle in and only need unpack your bags once for seven days. A dahabiya is river-going sailboat, much like what we would call a sailing yacht these days. They were common in Egypt in the days of the monarchy (1920s-40s) when aristocrats and sophisticated travelers loved to cruise the Nile in style. With no motor (and the associated noise and diesel fumes), our dahabiya provides a leisurely pace, with time to drink in the landscapes and peruse the monuments and villages on the riverbanks. There are only 10 cabins onboard (typical Nile river boats have 50 cabins or more), so this is a wonderfully intimate approach to sailing the Nile. Also, because a dahabiya is so much smaller than the usual large river boats that cruise the Nile, we can sail much closer to the banks of the Nile, bringing Egypt right to our finger tips as we lazily drift by. We can also stop at many places too small for river boats to dock.

While in Giza, we stay at the historic Mena House Oberoi Hotel. This palatial hotel, in the shadow of the Pyramids, has enchanted guests since 1869. Located on forty acres of jasmine scented gardens, the Mena House Oberoi has played host to kings and emperors, Heads of State and celebrities.

This journey is not removed from the "real" Egypt. We journey into the wonders, mysteries and the people of Egypt by going behind the scenes. Our time in Egypt will be filled with expeditions to temples and sacred sites beginning at the Giza Plateau, then traveling the Nile from Luxor to Aswan and culminating back at the Giza Plateau.

Conscious travel through the ancient land of Egypt and her wondrous archeological sights provides maximum opportunity for disconnecting from daily life and concentrating exclusively on the spiritual aspect of life. This pilgrimage is designed to provide a backdrop for continuing spiritual advancement with like-minded people in a supportive nurturing environment. To support this end we perform simple rituals at various locations to bring deeper understanding into the core of our beings. As a group we will periodically join in meditations and ceremonies to access the hidden mysteries of these powerful sacred sites. Included. There is no place like Egypt, and no doorway into her mysteries like a Spirit Journey.

"It was the best vacation I have had to this day. The Pyramids were fabulous and powerful! Cruising the Nile is the only way to go." - J.A., Seattle WA

This adventure holds the possibility for you to rediscover your own mystical roots and experience all the flavors and fun of modern Egypt at the same time. There will be opportunities to tap into the wisdom embodied in this sacred and ancient culture, ride an Arabian stallion if you want to and spend time with some of the most wonderful people on this earth. Egypt is your feast, your sensual delight and maybe the next step toward your own self-discovery. A truly memorable experience, and Egypt herself, await you!

"I think the pilgrimage really had an uplifting effect on my life. The energy and benefits of the trip seem to still be unfolding and my soul is grateful." - M.M., Santa Barbara CA

YOUR GUIDES

Howie Holben is owner and caretaker of Spirit Journeys. Since early childhood, he has been drawn to indigenous peoples and their spiritual teachings, traditions and practices. This attraction has taken him on many adventures, exploring the countless ways of "being in the world". His personal journey through addiction and recovery has spawned in him a genuine interest in assisting others on their own spiritual path and he takes great pleasure in introducing people to practices, sacred ways and cultures to help them "step outside their box". A Reiki/Karuna Ki Master and Quantum Touch Practitioner, his desire is to help others uncover their potential and set their hearts and minds free.

Emil Shaker is our in-country Egyptologist. Emil was born in Luxor and graduated from the College of Antiquities at Cairo University. He is an encyclopedia of Egyptology, both archeological and mystical. He has guided many spiritual and metaphysical groups in the past 20 years, including several Spirit Journeys pilgrimages to Egypt. Emil has had the honor of working with Graham Hancock, Robert Bauval, John West, Marian Williamson, Carolyn Myss, Greg Braden, Kevin Ryerson, Mark Lehner, Kent Weeks and Zahi Hawass.

DAILY ITINERARY

Tuesday, April 26

Depart from home for Cairo. Please plan your flights to arrive in Cairo by early afternoon on April 9.

Wednesday, April 27 – CAIRO

Arrive Cairo and transfer to the wonderful Mena House Oberoi Hotel in Giza. The afternoon is free to relax and rest. Tonight we have our welcome dinner followed by our opening circle. Throughout the journey we gather periodically to allow each participant the opportunity to express any feelings or experiences to the rest of the group. We find these circles important as they provide a collective pooling of insights and help link us, one to another. Overnight Mena House. (D)

Thursday, April 28 - GIZA PYRAMIDS, THE SPHINX & SAKKARA

We begin our pilgrimage with an exclusive sunrise visit to the Sphinx, a time when we will be the only people there. Listen closely as you awaken and dress, you will hear the incredible sounds of the entire city being called to prayer. Open your windows and listen, feel the energy of the spirits. We are off to discover some of the most awesome Wonders of the World - the Great Sphinx and the Pyramids of the Giza Plateau - to touch them and to be touched by them. Today we will pay particular attention to the Sphinx and ask for permission and protection as we begin our journey. We then take a camel ride from the Sphinx for our first encounter with the pyramids. After our invigorating sunrise, we are back to our hotel for an incredible buffet breakfast. Remainder of the morning is free.

Late morning, we'll drive to Saqqara to view the dozens of Old Kingdom pyramids on the west bank near ancient Memphis. About 2630 B.C. Imhotep, architect to King Djoser (Dynasty III), masterminded the Step Pyramid at Saqqara. The world's oldest freestanding stone structure, this pyramid consists of six tiers atop a mastaba, or low, oblong tomb, faced with cut stone. We have a typical Egyptian lunch at a restaurant in the countryside and then return to the Mena House. Remainder of the afternoon is free. Dinner at a seafood restaurant overlooking the Pyramids. Overnight Mena House. (B,L,D)

"Thanks for creating Spirit Journeys. It's a wonderful thing that like minded individuals can meet in exotic & powerful places around the world and have as much fun as we did. Travel is difficult at best and you make the trip almost effortless." - R.P., Palm Springs CA

Friday, April 29 - THE CAIRO EGYPTIAN MUSEUM & KHAN EL KHALILI BAZAAR

Breakfast followed by visit to the famous Egyptian Museum, with a collection of relics dating back to 4,000 BC. There we will experience first hand the different periods of ancient Egypt and the individual artistic and architectural styles of each period. Then we drive to Khan El Khalili Bazaar for lunch and some shopping. Overnight Mena House. (B,L)

Saturday, April 30 - LUXOR, LUXOR TEMPLE & THE NILE

After breakfast, we transfer to Cairo Airport for a short flight to Luxor. There we board our deluxe private dahabiya, The Afandina, to begin our seven nights/eight days of sailing on the Nile.

In the evening we visit the Temple of Luxor, magnificently floodlit at night. It was Luxor Temple that R.A Schwaller de Lubcz developed his "symbolist" interpretation of ancient Egypt, and called it the "Temple of Man". Overnight on The Afandina. (B,L,D)

Sunday, May 1 - LUXOR, DENDERAH & ABYDOS

After breakfast, we drive through the Egyptian countryside on our way to Denderah. At Denderah, we invoke Hathor, goddess of love, music and joy. The almost intact main Temple of Hathor is complete with a massive stone roof, dark chambers, underground passages and towering columns inscribed with hieroglyphs. We then proceed overland to Abydos, one of the most spellbinding spots of Egypt. Abydos is dedicated to Osiris and is associated with the resurrection of consciousness. Here are images of the flower of life, healing waters, and excerpts from the Book of the Dead. No journey to Egypt is complete without visiting Abydos. Evening free in Luxor. Overnight Afandina. (B,L,D)

Monday, May 2 - THEBES & THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

Today we visit The Necropolis of Thebes that is along the West Bank of the Nile. We tour the Valley of the Kings, Queen Hatshepsut's Temple at El-Deir El-Bahari, Madinet Habu and Colossi of Memnon. Lunch will be served today at the famous Africa restaurant. Evening sail to Esna. Overnight on The Afandina. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, May 3 - LUXOR & KARNAK TEMPLE

In order to avoid the crowds, we have a very early visit to the Temple of Karnak. Karnak is more than a temple; it is a spectacular complex of sanctuaries, kiosks, pylons and obelisks. Once connected to Luxor Temple, two miles away by a long avenue of Sphinxes (still partially in tact), Karnak is dedicated to the powers of creation. Karnak is the theater in which humanity (Luxor) plays out its destiny. It is an incredible collage of Kings, Queens, Princes, Priests and their collective symbolism. We have a special audience in a private chamber with the statues of the great lion-headed goddess, Sekhmet, her husband Ptah, and their son Nefertum, called the Triad of Memphis. Overnight on The Afandina. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, May 4 – ESNA

Rest and relax as we sail all day enjoying the countryside of Egypt on our way to Esna. Cross the lock of Esna & overnight. Overnight on The Afandina. (B,L,D)

Thursday, May 5 - ESNA & EDFU

Early morning sail to Edfu. The Temple of Horus at Edfu is one of the finest examples of Ptolemaic art in Egypt. Edfu is dedicated to Horus, god of the sky, supreme protector and vanquisher of evil. The Temple of Horus is also considered the most completely preserved pharaonic temple in Egypt. We then continue our sailing and overnight at an island near Kom Ombo. Overnight on The Afandina. (B,L,D)

Friday, May 6 - KOM OMBO

Early morning sail to Kom Ombo. We stop at Kom Ombo, a famous healing temple in ancient days and now a gloriously picturesque edifice and energy-filled ruin overlooking a bend in the Nile. We continue sailing through the countryside of Egypt to an island near to Aswan. Today will be mostly a day to rest and integrate all that we have encountered thus far on our journey. Overnight on The Afandina. (B,L,D)

Saturday, May 7 - KOM OMOO & ASWAN

Morning final sail to Aswan, arrive Aswan and the check into the Movenpick Hotel on Elephantine Island. The rest of the day is free at leisure for you to explore on your own. Dinner is served at the hotel. Overnight Movenpick Hotel. (B,D)

Sunday, May 8 - ASWAN & ISLE OF PHILAE

Today we have a sunrise private visit to the Temple of Isis on the Island of Philae. We have will about two hours alone at this spectacular temple. Here we ask for the blessings of Isis and invoke her protection and ask her for her wisdom on our individual quests.

The delicate, elegant, quintessential feminine temple of Isis at sunrise, a place where we will share with you this graceful antiquity that was meticulously moved stone by stone from its ancient site (now submerged) to its new higher island home in the middle of the lake. Today it gives us, modern men & women of modern machines great insight into what the ancient peoples of the world could do with only simple technology and a will to create. Then it's back to The Afandina for breakfast and the remainder of the day is free time. Overnight Movenpick Hotel. (B,D)

Monday, May 9 - ASWAN, ABU SIMBEL & CAIRO

After breakfast, we depart The Afandina and transfer to the Aswan airport for a short flight to fabulous Abu Simbel. After the Pyramids of Giza, Abu Simbel is perhaps the most recognized monument of ancient Egypt. Abu Simbel is unique to most Egyptian temples, it was carved out from a mountain, not constructed. It is actually a set of two temples and was constructed for the pharaoh Ramesses II. The Great Temple is dedicated to Ramesses II and the Small Temple is dedicated to Ramesses' favorite wife, Nefertari. Almost as impressive as the temples themselves, is the story of their restoration in the 1960's. As the waters of Lake Nasser began to rise following completion of the Aswan High Dam, the temples had to be dismantled and physically moved 60 meters up a cliff where they were reassembled in the exact same relation to each other and the sun. After a few hours at Abu Simbel, we fly back to Aswan and then fly on to Cairo and check back into the Mena House. Overnight the Mena House. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, May 10 - PRIVATE VISIT INSIDE THE GREAT PYRAMID & THE KING'S CHAMBER RITUAL

Today we have an early morning private visit to the King's Chamber inside the Great Pyramid. The time spent in the King's Chamber is an experience of a lifetime and one that VERY few people will ever get to experience!! We also will engage in a ritual of rebirth and renewal as we each get a chance to lay in the Pharo's sarcophagus for an individual time of meditation. The remainder of the day is free... explore the Giza Plateau, re-visit the Khan El Khalili bazaar, ride an Arabian stallion near the pyramids or laze by the hotel pool. Tonight we have our farewell dinner and our closing circle. Overnight the Mena House. (B,D)

Wednesday, May 11 - Depart for Home

Early breakfast, then hotel checkout and transfer to Cairo international airport for our flights home. (B)

COST:

\$4595.00 Double Occupancy, \$6295 Single Occupancy. INCLUDED: Fully escorted tour; English speaking Egyptologist escort; 5 nights at the historic Mena House Hotel; deluxe 7 nights Nile cruise on private dahabiya; 2 nights at the Movenpick Hotel in Aswan; three in-country flights (Cairo-Luxor, Aswan-Abu Simbel, Abu Simbel-Cairo), all sightseeing and entrance fees per itinerary; private access to the Great Pyramid, private access to the Sphinx and private access to Isle of Philae; initiations, meditations, and ceremonies; camel ride in desert; all transfers; luggage handling; meals as mentioned. NOT INCLUDED: International airfare to/from Egypt, visa fees, gratuities (about \$250), meals not mentioned in itinerary, alcoholic beverages and items of a personal nature.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

A deposit of \$500.00 is required to reserve space for this journey. To register, use the "Register for this Journey" button at the top or bottom of this page. Payment in full is requested by February 25, 2011. Registrations are gladly accepted after February 25, 2011 based on availability.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS:

Cancellations made prior to February 25, 2011 (60 days) are subject to \$100 cancellation fee. Reservations cancelled between February 26, 2011 and March 26, 2011 (31-59 days) are subject to a cancellation fee in the amount of 50% of the journey cost. Reservations cancelled on or after March 27, 2011 (30 days) are non-refundable. You may want to consider purchasing a commercial travel insurance policy that would include trip cancellation protection. Please contact Spirit Journeys for additional information about trip insurance or go to our Travel Insurance page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INCLUDED: Fully escorted tour; English speaking Egyptologist escort; 6 nights at the historic Mena House Hotel; deluxe 7 nights Nile cruise on private dahabiya; three in-country flights, all sightseeing and entrance fees per itinerary; private access to the Great Pyramid, private access to the Sphinx and private access to Isle of Philae; initiations, meditations, and ceremonies; camel ride in desert; all transfers; luggage handling; meals as mentioned.

NOT INCLUDED: International airfare to/from Egypt, visa fees (\$25), gratuities (about \$250), meals not mentioned in itinerary and items of a personal nature.

PASSPORT AND VISA: All participants are required to have a valid passport, to be carried on your person at all times. It is a good idea to photocopy the picture page to carry in a separate place in case of loss. A visa is required for entry into Egypt. If you are a US, Canadian or British citizen, you can obtain the necessary visa upon arrival at Cairo Airport for a fee of \$25 (no picture is required), or you can obtain one on your own from the Egyptian embassy nearest to you.

PREPARATIONS / PRECAUTIONS: There are no inoculation requirements for persons originating in the US or Europe. However, it is advisable to consult your physician regarding your personal needs. Remember to keep medications handy in carry-on, not packed away in luggage. We strongly stress only drinking bottled mineral water. This can be purchased readily along the way, and at hotels.

CLIMATE/CLOTHING: The climate in Egypt is dry year round. Early May is a great time to be there for the weather. Daytime temperatures can vary a lot by location, 85F in Alexandria, 89F in Cairo and 93F in Aswan and Luxor. The evenings can get cool, especially on the river. Keeping this in mind, comfortable, loose fitting clothing are recommended for daytime. A light jacket or sweater for early morning and evening might be needed. COMFORTABLE walking shoes — sneakers or sandals with a supporting back strap and cotton socks. We will be doing a lot of walking.

Pants are definitely recommended for the camel or horseback riding. In the evenings, as everyone will be dining in very pleasant surroundings at our hotels, local restaurants, or on-board the cruise, somewhat nicer attire would be appropriate. We certainly have opportunities here to be festive, and we will have a chance to shop where wonderful, fun clothing can be purchased.

MONEY AND CURRENCY EXCHANGE: You will have no difficulty exchanging American dollars and travelers checks into Egyptian pounds as the banks in Egyptian hotels are open around the clock. Traveler's checks are easily exchanged at most hotels; however, some shops will not accept them. Hotels and some larger shops will take VISA (not as many take Master Card). ATM's are not always convenient, although they can be found. It is recommended that you carry your travelers checks and cash in \$20 denominations, although some larger denominations can be convenient. A money belt or other safe, secure means of carrying money and documents is advisable. Once currency is exchanged, it helps to carry many one pound notes for gifting and tipping.