

An Egyptian Adventure

December 29, 2022 - January 12, 2023

Thank you for your interest in this exotic adventure next spring. Below is an informal trip description and a few images from our trip over New Years' 2022/2023.

What an experience to be in Cairo to welcome in 2023.

Here is the link to the quote for the escorted/hosted Egypt/Nile Cruise/Tour March 2-13, 2024. The Tosca River ship by UNIWORLD is an all-suite vessel (bottom) and voted the top Nile Cruise vessel by the Egyptian government.

See: <https://castawaystravel.com/group-trip/egypt-nile-river-cruise-and-cairo-tour/>

To select your cabin, contact Jennifer in the Castaways office at: Jennifer@castawaystravel.com

View the deck plan in the link for availability. ALERT: Due to the ship contract, every installment and final payment are NON-refundable. Optional travel insurance is HIGHLY recommended.

Jennifer, her husband Chris, Champagne (Donna) and James will all be on the ship with you and at the Cairo Ritz-Carlton hotel. Cruise is not nude. Adult misbehavior in public is prohibited although folks who join the tour/cruise have fun at Hedonism and Desire. So you may recognize some other guests when you sail with us.

We visited Egypt previously, so this was a "tune up trip" to get ready for our charter in 2024.

Jim Bailey & Donna Daniels





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Donna Daniels & Jim Bailey Fox Travel Site inspection: 11 days in Egypt

- 2 nights Cairo Ritz Carlton Pre-Cruise
- 7 night Nile Cruise on UNIWORLD - River Tosca ship
- 2 nights Cairo Ritz Carlton Post-Cruise

December 29-31, 2022 (Day 1 – Arrival at Cairo hotel)

We began our trip December 29, 2022 departing Houston Intercontinental Airport on United Airlines non-stop to Frankfurt (9 hours), changed planes to fly Lufthansa non-stop to Cairo (4 hours). We were delayed overnight due to severe weather in Houston and departed the next day, December 30.

Arrival was New Year's eve where we were met in Cairo Airport's immigration/customs hall by Mr. Ahmed Ehab and driver with UNIWORLD's Spring Tours who claimed our luggage for transfers to the Cairo Ritz Carlton, about 45 minute drive.

We checked in to the Ritz Carlton Just in time to join UNIWORLD's gala dinner to meet our group and enjoy a spectacular light and fireworks show right in front of our hotel overlooking the Nile River.

Our group included a diverse mix of clients from New Zealand, Australia, USA, Canada, Switzerland, Ireland, Europe and included several Texas folks.

January 1, 2023 – Sunday (Day 2 Cairo)

We met our guide and Egyptologist, Mr. Assem Omar, no doubt one of the best we've enjoyed in over 40 years of travel worldwide. Assem is set to join us on our March 2024 trip.

He alone is one of the best reasons to join this adventure.

At the early morning reception, we signed up for the optional half day tour and flight from Aswan to see the monstrous statues of Abu Simbel, arguably the largest in Egypt. Thankfully the temple and statues of Ramses II and wife were moved piece by piece about a quarter mile away 50+ years ago to preserve them just before the Aswan dam was built, flooding the lowlands to form Aswan Lake over 300 miles long nearly to Sudan. The lake also flooded Nubia whose citizens were relocated by the Egyptians.

Later that morning the day's first trip passed through Cairo to tour the Old Citadel and Alabaster Mosque of the original Muhammad Ali. We ended the tour with the highlight of the day, a visit to the original Cairo Museum located literally across the courtyard from our hotel. One can spend a week in the museum and not see it all.

The main attraction of course: King TutenKa Aman who died as a teenager. His death mask is on display and you walk right up to it. Later on our tour of the Valley of the King's in Luxor, we visited his tomb where his mummy is now displayed.

When we first visited Egypt years ago, his tomb was closed to the public and his mummy was not resident in the tomb. Our guide said his mummy had been removed from his tomb to be preserved elsewhere in Cairo but had started to degrade there. The mummy was quickly restored to its original tomb in Luxor under controlled climate conditions where it stabilized.

A bonus for next year's trip: The new Cairo Museum should be completed and open by year end 2023 so we have that to look forward to.

January 2, 2023 – Monday (Day 3 Cairo to Luxor)

After checking out of our hotel, a short 1 hour flight to Luxor delivered us to our ship the "River Tosca" for a week on the Nile. The vessel is all suites and offers plenty of space and storage including exceptional river views of the Nile from every suite. Once we claimed our cabin and dined on our first lunch on our ship, we departed for the afternoon tour of the famous Temple of Karnak, one of the oldest and largest antiquities

in Egypt. You've also seen it as a setting for many Hollywood movies so plan to strike a pose while you're there. This huge site is one of the most famous for movie settings.

After completing the tour, we re-boarded our ship and set sail on the famous Nile River, exceptionally clean and clear, thanks to the Aswan dam downstream.

January 3, 2023 – Tuesday (Day 4 Luxor/River Tosca)

For the day it included a bus tour to the Temple of Hathor followed by lunch on the ship while sailing on the Nile. Next a visit for a tour at end of the day to Luxor Temple offered a spectacular transition from afternoon to dusk. Dinner onboard was followed by an entertaining Egyptian folkloric show, one of several when we got to experience the “real thing.”

January 4, 2023 – Wednesday (Day 5 Luxor/Kom Ombo)

This day started with an optional hot air balloon ride. Our wake-up call was 4 AM. Our balloon was joined by almost 30 others to drift from the Valley of the Kings on the western side of the Nile to farmland on the eastern side of the Nile for a nice, soft landing. We were greeted by a thunderous crowd of children from the local village nearby.

A full day was in store for us to visit a marble shop followed by sites the world has heard about for years. These may be words on paper but they're ultimately impressive once you experience them in person. We had seen King Tut's golden mask in the original Egyptian Museum several years ago but this time, we saw the actual mummy in his original tomb under a sealed, climate controlled case. Our stops for the day included:

- Valley of the Kings
- King Tut Ankh Amun tomb and mummy plus many other famous kings
- Hatshepsut Temple
- Colossi of Memnon

Evening onboard was a delicious Egyptian dinner followed a traditional Galabeya party and entertainment. Overnight on the ship in Kom Ombo.

January 5, 2023 – Thursday (Day 6 Kom Ombo)

Visit Kom Ombo Temple and cruise toward Aswan in the afternoon for a traditional felucca ride. An highlight at dusk: A visit for High Tea at the restored Old Cataract Hotel, site of movies and television shows, lovingly restored and managed by Sofitel. The place looks like a movie set, except for the modern high rise version of the hotel next door upscale but without panache the original version exudes. If you get a chance to visit longer, try to get accommodations in the original property....you'll feel like a movie star. We overnighed in Aswan on the ship.

Evening dining onboard was followed by a Nubian show with a hilarious leader who had us laughing all night especially with our cruise guests participating.

Overnight in Aswan city on the Nile.

January 6, 2023 – Friday (Day 7 Aswan)

Optional excursion: A once-in-a-lifetime chance to visit the temples of Abu Simbel via a 30-minute flight from Aswan. Incredible sites of virtually the largest statues in southern Egypt. Return to Aswan for lunch and a boat tour and ride on the Nile in Aswan. Dinner on the ship.

January 7, 2023 – Saturday (Day 8 Aswan/Edfu)

Visit Aswan High Dam, cross the old British dam, visit unfinished Obelisk in town followed by Philae Temple by boat from the Aswan area. Cruise to Edfu via Kom Ombo to overnight on the ship in Edfu. Evening on board highlighted by a great farewell dinner.

January 8, 2023 – Sunday (Day 9 Sailing for Esna)

Visit Temple at Esna, cruise from Aswan to overnight onboard the ship in Luxor. Our last dinner on board was that evening.

January 9, 2023 – Monday (Day 10 Depart ship)

Depart ship after breakfast in Luxor for the airport to fly to Cairo and check in to Ritz Carlton with a great dinner at the hotel and visit to the modern National Museum of Egyptian Civilization where one could spend a week and not see it all. The museum includes relics and interpretations of all Egyptian history whereas the Cairo Museum and others focus on primarily ancient history.

January 10 – Tuesday (Day 11 Cairo)

Today was perhaps the highlight of the visit to Egypt to visit the Great Sphinx and Pyramids of Giza. We climbed down the passageway to visit the inner tomb and marvel at the workmanship of the pyramids, sphinx and other structures. They will humble visitors with the impressive construction and secrets ancient Egyptians used to build these structures. Our guide, Mr. Assem Omar claimed hundreds of pyramids dot the desert and only about 30% of the sites have been discovered. We visited the giant Memphis statue and Sakkara. Overnight Cairo.

January 11 – Wednesday (Day 12)

We departed Ritz-Carlton about 10 PM for the Cairo airport for a 2 AM flight to Frankfurt for our United Airlines connection to Houston.