



ANTIQUITIES OF EGYPT & JORDAN

BY PRIVATE PLANE
JANUARY 7 TO 20, 2009





Dear Colonial Williamsburg Travelers:

No one can fail to be moved by Egypt's pyramids or Jordan's rose-red city of Petra, carved into sandstone canyons and hills. We cordially invite you to travel with us on a luxurious winter journey which features a four-night cruise along the Nile River, complemented by private flights between exciting destinations.

Our journey will be further enriched by the insights and knowledge of distinguished scholar John McDonald, whose previous tours to Egypt have received rave reviews.

We begin with four nights in the intriguing city of Cairo, where history will be brought to vivid life at the remarkable Step Pyramid of King Zoser, dating from the 27th century B.C.E.; the Great Pyramid complex at Giza; and the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, containing fabulous relics from Tutankhamun's tomb.

A privately chartered plane takes us south to Luxor – gateway to the magnificent temple of Karnak, the vast necropolis of ancient Thebes and the Valley of the Kings, where the tombs of pharaohs were cut deep into the mountainside. In Luxor, we will embark the five-star *Sonesta St. George* for a four-night river cruise. As we sail along the Nile, we will stop to see the remarkable temples of Edfu and Kom Ombo. Our river journey ends in Aswan, where we view Philae Temple, sail across the Nile in a traditional *felucca* and visit the acclaimed Nubian Museum. Then a



private plane takes us to Abu Simbel, site of the unforgettable colossal statues and rock temples of Ramses II.

Continue by plane to Jordan to explore ancient Petra, once the thriving southern capital of the Nabataeans, where we will stay for two nights. See Mount Nebo, where Moses viewed the Promised Land, as well as Jerash, one of the best-preserved cities of ancient Rome. During a visit to the Dead Sea, we will have an opportunity to experience its buoyant waters.

Congenial company, fine accommodations and magnificent antiquities will combine to capture the essence of Egypt and Jordan, both ancient and modern. We hope that you are able to join us.

Sincerely,

A red ink signature of Forrest Williamson.

Forrest Williamson

Director

Colonial Williamsburg Cultural Expeditions

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Photo by Michael Sheridan Photography, www.farflungfotos.com

The Sphinx, Giza.

U.S. DEPARTURE

Wednesday, January 7 Depart Washington, D.C. for New York and connect to the overnight flight to Cairo.

CAIRO, EGYPT

Thursday, January 8 Arrive in Cairo in the late morning and transfer to the elegant Grand Hyatt Hotel, centrally located on the banks of the Nile River. Gather in the evening for introductory remarks by our lecturer John McDonald, followed by a welcome dinner.

CAIRO

Friday, January 9 A morning lecture will provide an introduction to ancient Egypt. Then drive to nearby Giza for a guided tour of the Great Pyramids – one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Continue to the Sphinx, the Valley Temple of Chephren and the Solar Boat Museum, housing the exceptionally preserved cedar boat found near the pyramid of Khufu. Lunch is at the historic Mena House Hotel. Return to the Grand Hyatt for time at leisure prior to dinner at Abu El Seed, one of Cairo's finest restaurants.

CAIRO

Saturday, January 10 Our morning focuses on Cairo's Coptic and Islamic heritage as we stroll the narrow streets of the Old City. Visit the recently reopened Coptic Museum as well as Ibn Tulun Mosque. Dating from 879 C.E., it is one of the oldest mosques in Egypt. Continue to the nearby Gayer Anderson House. This restored Ottoman residence contains the private collection of Major Gayer-Anderson, including furniture, crystal, carpets and embroidered Arab costumes. Following lunch at Al Azhar Park, explore medieval Cairo, visiting an 18th-century merchant's home. Conclude at the colorful Khan el Khalili Bazaar, where you may browse among the many shops. Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure.

CAIRO

Sunday, January 11 Drive to Memphis, once the glorious capital of the Old Kingdom, and walk through the open-air museum. See the necropolis of Sakkara, site of the remarkable Step Pyramid of King Zoser. Dating from the 27th century B.C.E., it inspired subsequent pyramid designs throughout Egypt. After lunch, return to Cairo to visit the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, including the treasures from the tomb of Tutankhamun. Dinner is at leisure.

CAIRO 1 LUXOR, EGYPT

Monday, January 12 Fly by privately-chartered plane this morning to Luxor, the religious capital of ancient Egypt. Upon arrival, visit Karnak Temple, remarkable for its sheer grandeur and exceptional state of preservation. Embark the *Sonesta St. George* in time for lunch. In the afternoon, cross over to the West Bank of the Nile to tour the Tombs of the Nobles. View the collections at the outstanding Luxor Museum before a twilight visit to Luxor Temple. Dinner will be on board the ship.

LUXOR 1 ESNA, EGYPT

Tuesday, January 13 The morning is devoted to the West Bank of Luxor, site of the vast burial grounds of ancient Thebes. In the Valley of the Kings the tombs of the pharaohs were cut deep into the mountainside. We will also see the Colossi of Memnon, the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut and Medinet Habu, a temple complex built by Ramses III and second only to Karnak Temple in size. Drive to Esna where we reboard the ship in time for lunch. Attend a lecture during a relaxed afternoon cruise.

EDFU 1 KOM OMBO, EGYPT

Wednesday, January 14 Step ashore at Edfu for a morning visit to the Temple of Horus. The temple is virtually complete and its important reliefs retain much of their original color. Return to the *Sonesta St. George* for lunch. In the late afternoon discover Kom Ombo, a picturesque temple from the Ptolemaic era that offers splendid views of the Nile.

ASWAN, EGYPT

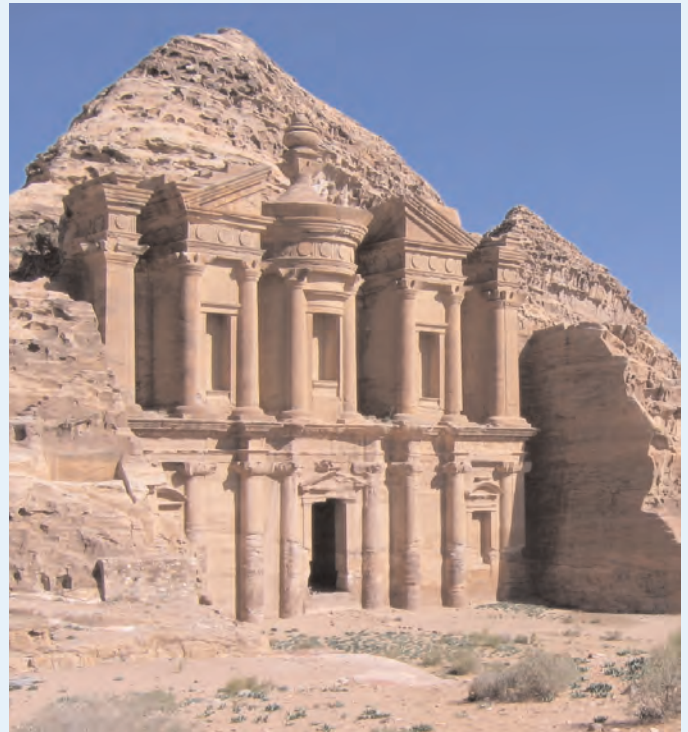
Thursday, January 15 Arrive in Aswan in the late morning. Following lunch, visits include the Temple of Philae and the granite quarries, which provided stone for the obelisks and for many of Egypt's monumental buildings. Then sail around Kitchener's Island on a *felucca* (traditional sailboat) before concluding with a visit to the award-winning Nubian Museum. Dinner is on board.

ASWAN 1 ABU SIMBEL, EGYPT 1 PETRA, JORDAN

Friday, January 16 Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for the private flight to Abu Simbel. Completed before 1235 B.C.E., the monumental temples of Ramses II and his favorite wife, Queen Nefertari, are architectural treasures and one of the greatest feats of historic preservation. Continue by plane to Aqaba, Jordan's port on the Red Sea, then drive to Petra and the Mövenpick Resort for dinner and a two-night stay.

PETRA

Saturday, January 17 Once the pre-Roman capital of the Nabataeans, Petra is astounding for its sheer size and grandeur. Early this morning we enter the majestic *sîq*, a narrow winding gorge accessible only on foot. Visits in Petra include the



The monastery in Petra.

Treasury and Royal Tombs. Following lunch, you may wish to see local artifacts at the Nabataean Museum, or climb to the Monastery or High Place of Sacrifice for panoramic views. Dinner is at the hotel.

PETRA 1 DEAD SEA, JORDAN

Sunday, January 18 Drive along the Desert Highway to Madaba and view the exquisite 3rd- to 7th-century mosaics, including a fragment depicting an ancient map of Palestine. After lunch see Mount Nebo, where Moses viewed the Promised Land. Arrive at the Dead Sea and the Mövenpick Resort. There will be time to experience the mineral-rich waters of the Dead Sea before our farewell dinner at the hotel.

JERASH 1 AMMAN, JORDAN

Monday, January 19 Our morning visit to Jerash will introduce one of the best-preserved cities of ancient Rome, complete with temples, churches, theaters, a forum and baths. Return to the hotel for lunch and an afternoon at leisure. Following an early dinner, transfer to the Amman airport for the overnight flights home via Paris.

AMMAN 1 WASHINGTON, D.C.

Tuesday, January 20 Connect in Paris for the flight to Washington, D.C. ■