EGYPT & JORDAN

Tuesday 16 March – Saturday 3 April 2027 | 17 nights

TOUR OVERVIEW

Travel across the sands of time through Egypt and Jordan, where myth, religion and wonder come together in an unforgettable odyssey. This journey's appeal lies in the quality of the places you visit – not just their fame, but the depth of experience they offer when explored with time, context and expert guidance.

You begin in the bustling city of Cairo where ancient engineering and early civilisation sit side-by-side with modern life. You will explore monumental architecture that has shaped global imagination for centuries, accompanied by a specialist guide. You also spend time in one of the world's newest and most significant archaeological museums, where entire eras of human history are presented in a contemporary way.

From there you move to the Nile – the river that sustained one of history's greatest civilisations. Travelling by comfortable cruise ship allows you to absorb the scenery at a gentle pace before stepping ashore to explore temples, tombs and ancient ceremonial sites that reveal how people lived, ruled and remembered their dead.

In Jordan, the focus shifts to dramatic landscapes and cities shaped by empires, traders and desert cultures. You explore one of the world's most remarkable ancient settlements, carved directly into cliffs – Petra. You also travel through a desert that feels almost otherworldly, its vast open spaces and rock formations offering a striking contrast to the river valleys and fertile plains you've seen earlier.

At the Dead Sea, mineral-rich waters and quiet surroundings provide a gentle close to your epic adventure. It's a chance to unwind, reflect, and enjoy the comfort of a well-paced itinerary before heading home.

On this immersive journey, you will explore all the iconic highlights that Egypt packs in, including the legendary pyramids of Giza, the Valley of the Kings, Luxor and Aswan. There is an optional visit to the mighty Abu Simbel. You will see the highlights of Jordan, including Jerash and Lawrence of Arabia's haunts at Wadi Rum.

You'll also go off the beaten track to smaller communities where daily life is shaped by tradition, craft and local heritage – for a shared meal, a visit to a family home or a chance to see how artisans preserve skills passed down through generations.

This journey is built for travellers who appreciate substance delivered with ease – a chance to explore ancient worlds, striking landscapes and living cultures on a fully escorted, expertly guided, comfortable tour.

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TOUR INCLUSIONS

- The services of an experienced New Zealand-based Calder & Lawson tour manager
- Flights within Egypt (Cairo/Luxor and Aswan/Cairo) and between Egypt and Jordan
- 13 nights land accommodation
- 4 nights on a 5-star river ship
- Meals as specified in the itinerary
- A professional Egyptologist travelling with you throughout Egypt
- Local guides
- All group transfers
- Admissions as detailed in the itinerary
- All tips for local guides and drivers
- Pre-tour material

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

- International flights to/from Egypt/Jordan
- Personal expenses
- Travel insurance
- Porterage
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Beverages during included meals, unless specified
- Credit card fees

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Learn the secrets of the Grand Egyptian Museum, the crown jewel of Cairo and one of the largest museums in the world
- Gaze at the Great Pyramids of Giza and the mighty Sphinx in Cairo
- Visit the tomb of Ramses VI, the tomb of Tutankhamun and the temple of Nefertari
- Explore the Coptic neighbourhood of Cairo
- Pay your respects to New Zealand service personnel at the Cairo War Memorial Cemetery
- Luxuriate on a first-class river ship as you glide past river life on the Nile
- Visit the incredible Luxor temple complex and the Valley of the Kings
- The unforgettable first glimpse of the Treasury building through the gorge in the red rock city of Petra in Jordan
- Experience the warm hospitality of the Bedouin people of Wadi Rum
- Swim in the Dead Sea

TOUR MANAGER

Your tour manager is Andrew Matheson, who over the past
12 years has taken international tours for us across the globe. His previous careers as a diplomat and an international development consultant saw him travelling widely and working in remote places around the world, including the Middle East and Africa.

Participants on Andrew's tours value the way he brings the group together, and applies his strong organisational skills to make sure the trip is a seamless experience and memorable adventure for everyone. He is looking forward to sharing these special destinations and experiences with you.

TOUR PRICE

Twin share per person $14,490
Single supplement $4,290

These prices are in NZ dollars and do not include your international airfare to Egypt/Jordan

Please contact us if you are interested in single occupancy so we can confirm single rooms are available before you book.

If you are a single traveller looking to share a room, please let us know and we may be able to find a suitable person willing to share.

GROUP SIZE Minimum 10, maximum 18

VARIATIONS IN TRAVEL We can make arrangements for any travel you would like to do before or after this tour, or book business class flights. Please contact us to discuss your requirements.

FLIGHTS

The tour price does not include international airfares from Auckland to Cairo and from Amman back to Auckland. We will make a flight recommendation once the tour is a confirmed departure. Once the tour is confirmed, we will offer a group departure from Auckland with your tour manager, or you may wish to book your own flights.

The two likely options are:

Option 1
Fly Emirates via a short transit in Dubai

Option 2

Fly Air New Zealand to Hong Kong and then Turkish Airlines to Cairo (via Istanbul). For this option, you may wish to have a stopover in Hong Kong or Istanbul to break up the journey.

IS THIS TOUR FOR ME?

Our tours are designed for curious, engaged travellers who enjoy exploring new places. While we take care of the logistics, you'll need a good level of fitness, mobility and stamina to get the most out of the experience. This is important not just for your enjoyment of the tour, but so that you can keep up with the group.

This tour involves walking on uneven surfaces, climbing steps and clambering around archaeological sites, so you will need to be reasonably fit and confident with walking. Some of the sites, such as Luxor Temple, Petra and the Grand Egyptian Museum, are large and require a significant amount of walking. Although we will be there in March before temperatures start to climb, you will need to be prepared for strong sun and dry conditions. All hotels and the Nile River ship are air-conditioned. As the itinerary covers remote regions, it is unsuitable for passengers with serious medical conditions.

CLICK HERE TO BOOK ONLINE

DAILY ITINERARY

Tuesday 16 March, 2027
Auckland – Cairo, Egypt
Meals: In flight
Overnight: In flight

Depart Auckland for a flight to Egypt. Flight options will be available once the tour is a confirmed departure.

Wednesday 17 March
Cairo
Meals: D
Overnight: Cairo

On arrival in Cairo, your tour manager will assist you with immigration formalities. Transfer to your hotel located right on the Nile where you will spend the rest of the day relaxing until your welcome dinner this evening.

Thursday 18 March
Cairo
Meals: B
Overnight: Cairo

Explore the most illustrious sites of ancient Egypt with the group's personal Egyptologist guide. The Great Pyramid of Giza (also known as the Pyramid of Khufu or the Pyramid of Cheops) is the oldest and largest of the three pyramids in the Giza pyramid complex. It is the oldest of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and the only one to remain largely intact. Egyptologists believe that the pyramid was built as a tomb over a 10 to 20-year period, concluding around 2560 BC. At 146.5 metres high, the Great Pyramid was the tallest man-made structure in the world for more than 3,800 years.

This afternoon visit Memphis and Sakkara. Your tour begins with a visit to Memphis, which served as the capital of Upper and Lower Egypt some 5,000 years ago during the First Dynasty. Continue to Sakkara, one of the most exciting historical and archaeological areas in all of Egypt. Dominated by the famous Step Pyramid of King Zoser, this was the first pyramid built in ancient Egypt and predates those at Giza by many centuries.

Friday 19 March
Cairo
Meals: B
Overnight: Cairo

Today is a full day dedicated to the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), the world's largest archaeological museum dedicated to one civilisation, near the Great Pyramids of Giza. Containing material that spans seven millennia, this brand-new museum showcases over 100,000 artefacts of Egypt's rich heritage. Enter to see the colossal statue of Ramses II in the grand atrium then ascend the Grand Staircase, curated to reflect distinct eras of history.

From the top there are panoramic views of the pyramids. You can explore the Tutankhamun Gallery, featuring over 5,000 treasures from the Boy King's tomb. Continue through galleries revealing Egypt's prehistoric roots, pharaohs, gods and daily life along the Nile. Conclude with time to browse the museum's shopping arcade or relax in its cafes.

DAILY ITINERARY

Saturday 20 March
Cairo
Meals: B/L
Overnight: Cairo

Today you'll delve into the story of two minority religions in Egypt and learn something of New Zealand military involvement in Egypt. Your day starts with a visit to Coptic Cairo and the famous Coptic Museum, built on the site of the Roman fortress of Babylon that was constructed about 30 BC. Inside the fortress are several Coptic churches and the richest collection of Coptic art in the world.

You will also visit Ben Ezra Synagogue, which stands in a pleasant shady garden in the centre of Cairo. It contains a number of artefacts including the manuscript known as the 'Atlas of Moses'.

Continue to Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, which includes the graves of 156 men who served with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force during the First World War. Later you'll visit Tawasol, an inspiring community development initiative in the heart of Old Cairo that empowers local families through education, vocational training, arts and social enterprise.

Sunday 21 March
Cairo – Luxor
Meals: B
Overnight: Luxor

Transfer to Cairo Airport for your domestic flight to Luxor.

At the Mummification Museum, learn about this central part of Egyptian death rituals. Ancient Egyptians believed that for a person to reach the afterlife both their body and their name had to remain. To achieve this, the mummification rituals were developed.

You will visit the former home of the British archaeologist and Egyptologist Howard Carter. Neglected for a long time, the house has been restored to its former state and now offers a fascinating insight into the life of Howard Carter in an amazing 1920s atmosphere.

DAILY ITINERARY

Monday 22 March
Nile cruise – Luxor Temple
Meals: B/L/D
Overnight: Nile cruise

Transfer to your Nile cruise ship, which will be your floating hotel for the next four nights.

After lunch on board you will head out to explore one of the world's most remarkable open-air museums – Thebes. At the magnificent Luxor Temple, you can follow the Avenue of the Sphinx to the temple complex of Karnak. The site comprises a vast mass of temples, chapels, pylons, shrines and intricately carved columns. It is a gigantic and imposing monument that showcases precious relics of ancient Egyptian dynasties.

Tuesday 23 March
Luxor – Esna
Meals: B/L/D
Overnight: Nile cruise

Cross the Nile to the west bank. Today is full of highlights, including the Necropolis of Thebes and the Valley of the Kings. You will visit the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut and see the Colossi of Memnon, famed for the unearthly noise it is said to have made at sunrise in ancient times, bestowing luck on those who heard it! Your visit will also include the Ramses VI tomb, the tomb of Tutankhamun and the Temple of Nefertari.

Return to your cruise ship for lunch and set sail for Esna. This evening attend the Captain's welcome cocktail party before dinner.

Wednesday 24 March
Esna – Edfu – Kom Ombo
Meals: B/L/D
Overnight: Nile cruise

In the early hours of the morning your cruise ship will cross the Esna locks and sail for Edfu. Following breakfast on board you will set out to view remains dating back to the Old Kingdom, as well as the revered Temple of Horus – one of the holiest of the Egyptian pantheon of gods.

Return to the ship mid-morning and continue sailing to Kom Ombo. You can spend the afternoon relaxing on the ship before a late afternoon visit to the Kom Ombo Temple. This remarkable temple was jointly shared by the two gods: Sobek, depicted with the head of a crocodile, and Horus, represented with the head of a falcon. It was constructed during the Ptolemaic period, spanning from 237 to 57 BC, and its beautifully-preserved murals and intricate bas-relief are adorned with inscriptions that offer valuable insights into language, mythology and religion during Egypt's Greco-Roman era.

There will be a themed cultural (galabeya) party on board this evening.

DAILY ITINERARY

Thursday 25 March
Kom Ombo – Aswan
Meals: B/L/D
Overnight: Nile cruise

Your ship sets sail early this morning for Aswan, and after breakfast you will visit the High Dam, the granite quarries and the beautifully restored Temple of Philae, dedicated to the goddess Isis (the mother of Horus). This remarkable temple was rescued from the rising waters of Lake Nasser at the time of the High Dam's construction.

Return for a leisurely lunch on board ship before setting sail in a traditional felucca around Kitchener's Island, with a view of the Agha Khan Mausoleum. In the evening there is a Nubian folklore show on board.

Friday 26 March
Aswan
Optional trip to Abu Simbel
Meals: B/D
Overnight: Aswan

Disembark your cruise ship this morning and take one of two options.

Option one (recommended): Transfer to Aswan Airport for a flight to Abu Simbel, from where a short drive takes you to the entrance of the Abu Simbel temples for a walking tour of approximately 1.5 hours. Abu Simbel is one of Egypt's most impressive archaeological sites and contains some of its most impressive temples. Ramses II, one of Egypt's greatest pharaohs, was the master builder. The larger temple celebrates the pharaoh himself, while the smaller one honours his wife Queen Nefertari.

Abu Simbel is also famous for the great engineering feat of moving these temples in the 1960s to their present location to avoid flooding by the new Lake Nasser. This option costs an additional NZ$900 and can be booked once the tour departure is confirmed. You will return to your hotel at Aswan in the afternoon.

Option two: Transfer to your hotel to relax. You may wish to explore Aswan, perhaps visiting the local markets.

Saturday 27 March
Aswan free day
Meals: B
Overnight: Aswan

Today is a full free day to give you a breather part way through a busy itinerary. Aswan has a relaxed character and is situated on a narrow stretch of the Nile with granite islands and palm trees. Today is a great opportunity to take a leisurely felucca ride, have a long lunch or just enjoy the riverside resort. You could even go enjoy a cocktail or high tea at the historic Old Cataract Hotel, where Agatha Christie wrote 'Death on the Nile'. Your tour manager will be available today.

Sunday 28 March
Aswan – Cairo – Amman, Jordan
Meals: B/D
Flights: 1.5 and 1.5 hours
Overnight: Amman, Jordan

In the morning transfer to Aswan airport for your flight to Amman, capital of Jordan, via Cairo. You will be assisted with immigration formalities before transferring to your hotel for the next two nights.

Time permitting, you will have a short orientation tour of Amman before joining the group for dinner.

DAILY ITINERARY

Monday 29 March
Jerash – Gadara – Pella
Meals: B/D
Overnight: Amman

Travel north to Jerash, one of the world's best-preserved examples of Greek and Roman civilisation. It has been called the Pompeii of the East because it is so well preserved. The city features theatres, churches, temples (Zeus and Artemis), a nymphaeum and colonnaded streets.

Continue to Umm Qais, the location of the ancient city of Gadara. This site commands a magnificent view over the northern Jordan Valley and Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberias) in Israel, the Yarmouk River gorge and the Golan Heights.

The last stop today is Pella, another large Roman city in the Jordan Valley. Most visible structures date from the Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods (2nd to 14th centuries AD), and ample evidence shows earlier human occupation. Travel back to Amman.

This evening you will be taking part in an evening cooking class in a local house, Beit Sitti, in one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods. Three sisters established Beit Sitti in 2010 to keep their grandmother's culinary legacy alive. You will learn how to prepare a traditional Arabic meal, then gather in the rooftop dining area to savour the food you helped prepare.

Tuesday 30 March
Amman – Petra
Meals: B/D
Overnight: Petra

When you travel south from Amman along the Kings' Way to Petra, you will follow an ancient and strategic trading route that connected Egypt with Mesopotamia, Syria and Anatolia.

Your first stop is Madaba, famous for its ancient mosaic map of Jerusalem on the floor of St George's church. Continue to Mt Nebo and the alleged burial site of Moses that overlooks the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley. You'll drive through the magnificent scenery of Wadi Mujib to Kerak to visit the Crusader castle.

Your hotel tonight is well located, being within walking distance of the 'Red Rose' city of Petra.

DAILY ITINERARY

Wednesday 31 March
Petra
Meals: B/L/D
Overnight: Petra

Today is one of your tour highlights as you explore this city that is carved into the rose-red Sharah Mountains. You can walk or ride a horse to the beginning of the Siq, the narrow and atmospheric gorge that is the entrance to the fabled city of Petra. You can then either walk or take a cart through the narrow and winding fissure between the cliffs, before rounding the final corner for a spectacular view of The Treasury. Continue into Petra to the Roman Theatre, the Courts, the palace of the Pharaoh's daughter, the Temple of the Winged Lion and other monuments.

Enroute stop by at the local small shop of Rami, son of New Zealander Marguerite van Geldermalsen and her Bedouin husband Mohammed. Marguerite later wrote the book "Married to a Bedouin" summarising their interesting cross-cultural and happy marriage. This store sells jewellery made by women from a local Bedouin collective. Break for lunch at the Al Anbat Tent Restaurant, a local restaurant run by the Bedouin of Petra. After lunch you may wish to climb up to the monastery high above the base of Petra or continue to explore other sites in Petra.

After dinner this evening you return to Petra for an unforgettable and magical candle-lit experience as you walk a 2 km path through the gorge, illuminated by paper lanterns and candles, to the iconic Treasury.

Thursday 1 April
Little Petra – Wadi Rum – Dead Sea
Meals: B
Overnight: Dead Sea

First a visit to Little Petra, another important site in Wadi Musa that is located only a few kilometres from Petra. Then travel to the magical desert of Wadi Rum, home of 'Lawrence of Arabia', for a two-hour 4WD jeep tour into the moonlike landscape desert. Continue to the Dead Sea to overnight at a spa resort

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Friday 2 April
Dead Sea – Amman
Meals: B/D
Overnight: Dead Sea (day room with late checkout)

Relax with a free morning. At the shore of the Dead Sea you are 430 metres below sea level, the lowest point on dry land anywhere on earth. You might want to float in the water – with 10 times the salt concentration of seawater you will be very buoyant. The mud from the Dead Sea is renowned for its therapeutic qualities, and is used in local spas which you might like to visit.

After a farewell dinner, transfer to Amman airport for your flight home.

Saturday 3 April
Amman – Auckland
Meals: in flight

Depart Amman for home. Flight options will be available once the tour is a confirmed departure.

MAPS

SYRIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Amman
ISRAEL
JORDAN
Cairo
Giza
Suez
SINAI
SAUDI ARABIA
Red Sea
NILE RIVER
EGYPT
Luxor
Edfu
Aswan
Lake Nasser
Abu Simbel
SUDAN

SYRIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Amman
ISRAEL
JORDAN
Cairo
Giza
Suez
SINAI
SAUDI ARABIA
Red Sea
NILE RIVER
EGYPT
Luxor
Edfu
Aswan
Lake Nasser
Abu Simbel
SUDAN

HOW TO SECURE YOUR PLACE ON THIS TOUR

A deposit of $1,000 is required to secure your place on the tour. This deposit becomes non-refundable once the tour has reached minimum numbers and is confirmed to depart.

Click below to complete the online registration form, pay the $1,000 deposit, and your place on this tour is secured. Or you can complete a paper registration form. You can download one from our website www.calderandlawsontours.co.nz/forms, or give us a call and we will email or post one to you.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Can be found on our website www.calderandlawsontours.co.nz/forms, on the back of the paper registration form, or on the summary page when you complete an online registration. There is a 1.5% surcharge if you pay by Visa or MasterCard or 3% for American Express.

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