

## ASWAN SIGHTSEEING



Aswan, Egypt's sunniest southern city and ancient frontier town located about 890 km south of Cairo, it has a distinctively African atmosphere. It is the starting and ending point of Nile cruises today. In ancient times, Aswan was known as Syene, the southern border of Pharaonic Egypt. Syene was the center of trade between Egypt, adjoining Nubia and the rest of southern Africa. During these times, the city supplied granite for several of the temples of Egypt, there days can be spent strolling up and down the broad corniche watching the sailboats

*etch the sky with their tall masts or sitting in floating restaurants listening to Nubian music and eating freshly caught fish...*

**The High Dam:** Located near Aswan, the world famous High Dam was an engineering miracle when it was built in the 1960s. It contains 18 times the material used in the Great Pyramid of Cheops. The Dam is 11,811 feet long, 3215 feet thick at the base and 364 feet tall. Today it provides irrigation and electricity for the whole of Egypt and, together with the old Aswan Dam built by the British between 1898 and 1902, 6km down river, wonderful views for visitors. From the top of the two Mile long High Dam you can gaze across Lake Nassar, the huge reservoir created when it was built, to Kalabsha temple in the south and the huge power station to the north.



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## PHILAE TEMPLE

Once renowned as the (The Pearl of Egypt) by virtue of its rich Vegetation & its magnificent assemblage of temples The island of Philae now lies beneath the waters of Lake Nasser; but fortunately thanks to a spectacular rescue operation, it was possible to save at least the most important monuments & re-erect them on the higher neighbor island of Agilka, Although antiquities on the island date between the 26th Dynasty and the Roman Period, most of the work is from that of the

Roman. This was a time of immense popularity of the Goddess Isis, and this was her island, where pilgrims would come from all over the Mediterranean. Construction on the island took place over an 800 year span, and it was one of the last strongholds of Ancient Egyptian Religion which continued to flourish here into the 6th Century. When the Temples were finally closed by Justinian in A.D 550, it ended 4,000 years of worship of the pagan gods.

## Aswan Dam

The British began construction of the first dam across the Nile in 1898. Construction lasted until 1902, and the dam was opened on 10 December 1902. The project was designed by Sir William Willcocks and involved several eminent engineers, including Sir Benjamin Baker and Sir John Aird, whose firm, John Aird & Co., was the main contractor.



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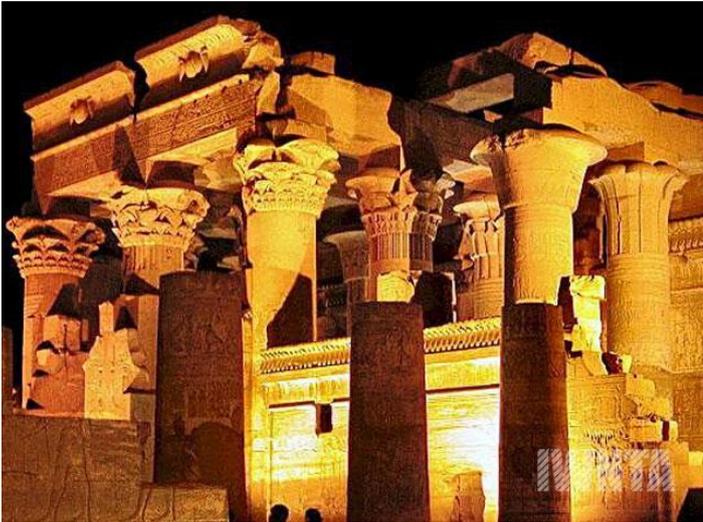


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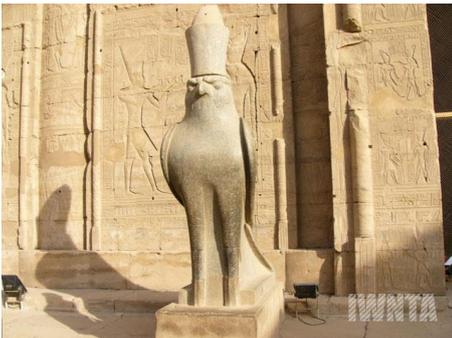


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**Temple of Kom Ombo:** This temple is actually two temples consisting of a Temple to Sobek and a Temple of Haroeris. In ancient times, sacred crocodiles basked in the sun on the riverbank near here. The Temple has scant remains, due first to the changing Nile, then the Copts who once used it as a church, and finally by builders who used the stones for new buildings the actual temple was started by Ptolemy VI Philometor in the early second century BC. Ptolemy XIII built the outer and inner hypostyle halls. The outer enclosure wall and part of the court were built by Augustus sometime after 30 BC, and are mostly gone. There are also tombs from the Old Kingdom in the vicinity of Kom-Ombo village.



**Temple of Edfu:** The major Ptolemaic temple of Edfu is the best preserved major temple in Egypt. It is dedicated to the falcon god Horus and was built over a 180-year period from 237 BC to 57 BC, the temple was excavated last century by Auguste Mariette. Its courtyard and surrounds were buried beneath sand and also houses built by local villagers. Deep within the temple is the sanctuary where a statue of Horus would have been cared for by priests.

## El Nabatat Island

El Nabatat Island is one of two major islands on the Nile in vicinity of Aswan, the other one being Elephantine. Elephantine is the larger one, and is located between El Nabatat Island and the city of Aswan (east bank). Therefore, it can hard to see the smaller El Nabatat Island from the city.



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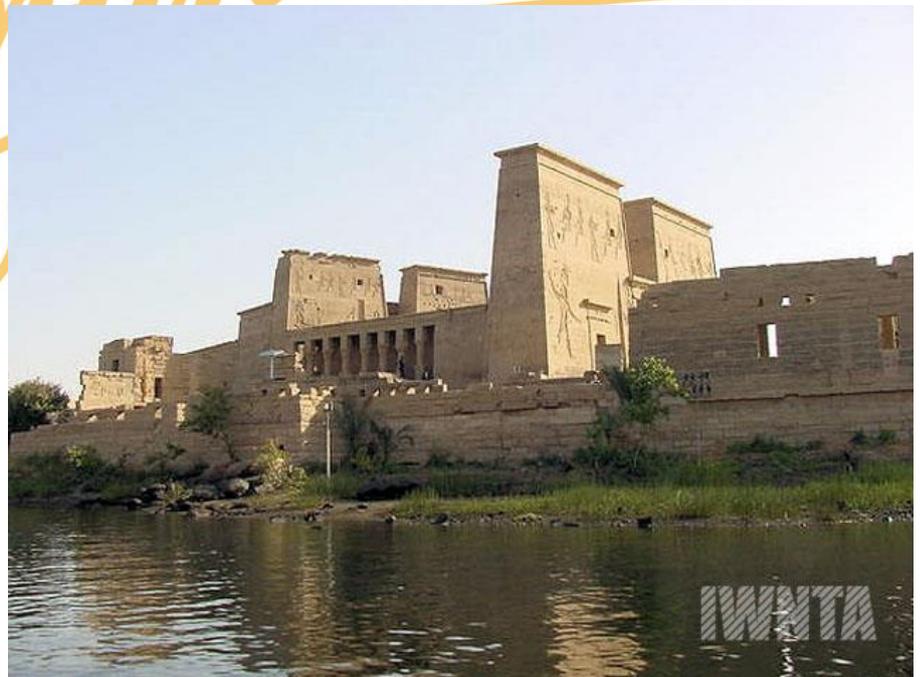


**Elephantine Island:** Elephantine Island is the largest of the Aswan area islands, and is one of the most ancient sites in Egypt, with artifacts dating to Predynastic periods. Elephantine is Greek for elephant. It is believed that the island received its name because it was a major ivory trading center, though in fact, it was a major trading post of many commodities. One of its main attractions is its Nilometer, which is one of only three on the Nile, which was used to measure the water level of the Nile as late as the nineteenth century. Elephantine Museum, another major attraction is the ruins of the Temple of Khnum, Elephantine Island was considered to be home of this important Egyptian

god, and while this structure dates back to the Queen Hatshepsut of the 18th Dynasty, there are references to a Temple of Khnum on the island as Elephantine Island is a beautiful place to visit, with wonderful gardens and some truly significant artifacts. It is also a good place to spend some leisure time, wondering among the Nubian villages where the people are friendly and the houses are often very colorful.

## Philae Island

Philae /'faɪli / (Greek: Φαλαί, Arabic Egyptian Arabic, Egyptian  $\rho \square \text{ iw } q$ ) is currently an island in the reservoir of the Aswan Low Dam downstream of the Aswan Dam and Lake Nasser, Egypt. Philae was originally located near the expansive First Cataract of the Nile in Upper Egypt and was the site of an Egyptian temple complex. These rapids and the surrounding Ara have been variously flooded since the initial construction of the Aswan Low Dam in 1902. The temple complex was later dismantled and relocated to nearby Agilkia Island as part of the UNESCO Nubia Campaign project, *protecting*



*this and other complexes before the 1970 completion of the Aswan High Dam.* The End ☺

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