

CAIRO SIGHTSEEING



Cairo is Egypt's capital and hub of cultural, social, intellectual, economic & political activity, standing where east meets west and combining the mystery of the one with the sophistication of the other. It is a city of contrasts; a place where donkey carts jockey with Mercedes along the crowded streets, and where a thousand minarets adorn the skyline alongside a sea of skyscrapers. It is the largest city in the African continent and the heart of the Arab world with a population of 16,000,000. With its "thousand minarets", picturesque oriental bazaars, plush Nile-side hotels, apartment blocks, and gracious residential areas, it is a fascinating combination of

modern and ancient civilizations, which together give Cairo a unique atmosphere...



Giza Pyramids & The sphinx: The Giza necropolis, situated in the immediate vicinity of the southwestern suburbs of modern Cairo is probably one of the most famous ancient sites in the world. Main attractions at Giza plateau are the Great Pyramids & Sphinx. King Khufu – known by Greek name Cheops (2589-2566 BC) was the builder of the Great Pyramid at Giza. In ancient times, His father Sneferu, had in fact built the first ever true pyramid, the "north" or Red Pyramid at Dahshur, near Saqqara. Like all pyramids, Khufu's was part of a complex, of which the three small pyramids known as "pyramids of the queens" are the most obvious part. There is a ruined temple on the

east side, and the causeway leading out to the valley temple has been lost beneath the modern settlement of Nazlet el-Simman. Several boat pits surround the pyramid, and boats have been found in two of these (now exhibited at the Solar Boat Museum near the Great Pyramid) Originally the pyramid would have been covered by a layer of smooth white limestone and possibly crowned by gold sheet at the apex. This covering was stripped away in medieval times, Khafre (2558-2532 BC) was the builder of the next great pyramid at Giza. The site of this pyramid is on a slight eminence and retains some of its limestone casing at the apex, and it therefore actually appears larger than that of Khufu, and is often mistaken as the Great Pyramid. The Great Sphinx is carved from an outcrop of rock in a quarry beside the causeway to Khafre's pyramid, and this famous sculpture is usually assigned to Khafre's reign. Menkaure (2532-2503 BC) has the smallest of the three pyramid complexes at Giza.

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Sakkara: Sakkara is one section of the great necropolis of Memphis, the Old Kingdom capital and the kings of the 1st Dynasty as well as that of the 2nd Dynasty. are mostly buried in this section of the Memphis necropolis. It has been of constant interest to Egyptologists. Sakkara is best known for the Step Pyramid, the oldest known of Egypt's 97 pyramids. It was built for King Djoser of the 3rd Dynasty by the architect and genius Imhotep, who designed it and its surrounding complex to be as grand as it was unique and revolutionary. Imhotep was the first to build stone tombs in honor of the king's majesty. Sakkara is also famous for its private Old Kingdom tombs), which

contain beautiful and revealing scenes: men force- feeding geese, cattle crossing a canal, men dragging a statue on a sled to the tomb.



Memphis: Memphis, founded around 3,100 BC, is the legendary city of Menes, the King who united Upper and Lower Egypt. Early on, Memphis was more likely a fortress from which Menes controlled the land and water routes between Upper Egypt and the Delta. Having probably originated in Upper Egypt, from Memphis he could control the conquered people of Lower Egypt. However, by the Third Dynasty, the building at Saqqara suggests that Memphis had become a sizable city. Today, nothing much remind from ancient Memphis, except some monuments from the new kingdom period and later period. In Memphis, the open- air museum exhibits a limestone colossus of king

Ramsis II (1305-1237 BC) and L giant alabaster sphinx weighting more than 80 tons of weight, that once stood outside the massive temple of god Petah.



Dahshour: Dahshour was a main breeding ground for the pyramid age. Here we find several pyramids, including two Old Kingdom pyramids both unique, and both a distinct phase in the evolution of pyramid building and the pyramid complex. King Sneferu (about 2600-2450) father of Khufu, was the curious builder of these pyramids, The Bent Pyramid earned its name from its distinct change in angle. The pyramid was began at an angle of 52 degrees and midway through its construction this angle was suddenly and still inexplicably changes to the safer angle of 43 degrees. this change in angle in the Bent pyramid would come for a different reason. Whatever the reason is, King

Sneferu began a second pyramid at Dahshour, north of this first pyramid. This second pyramid, now called the Northern or Red Pyramid, was completely built at the angle of 43 degrees, as with the top portion of the Bent Pyramid.

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The Egyptian Museum: One of the world's greatest Museums, it allows the visitor to become acquainted with the Antiquities of Egypt's Pharaonic period. Artifacts and Monuments on display date back some 50 Centuries before our time. The Egyptian Museum was built during the reign of Khedive Abbass Helmi II in 1897, and opened its doors on November 15, 1902. Today, the museum contains the most important collection of Egyptian antiquities in the world. Exhibited are over 120,000 objects from the Pharaonic and Greco-Roman periods, including the celebrated mummies of ancient Egyptian kings and the treasures of King Tut Ankh Amun. A special 'Hidden Treasures' exhibit

in the museum's re-designed basement features more than 150 artifacts on display for the first time.



The Citadel of Saladin: One of Cairo's most popular tourist attractions is the Citadel, located on a spur of limestone that had been detached from its parent Mogattam Hills by quarrying. The Citadel is one of the world's greatest monuments to medieval warfare, as well as a highly visible landmark on Cairo's eastern skyline. Between 1176 and 1183, Salah ad-Din (Saladin to Westerners 1171-1193 AD), an Abbasid Ruler, fortified the area to protect it against attacks by the Crusaders, and since then, it has never been without a military garrison. Originally it served as both a fortress and a royal city. Salah ad-Din used the most modern fortress building techniques of that time to construct the

original Citadel. Great, round towers were build protruding from the walls so that defenders could direct flanking fire on those who might scale the walls. The walls themselves were ten meters (30 ft) high and three meters (10 ft) thick.



Khan El Khalili: One of the most interesting bazaars not only in Egypt but in the Middle East, It was named after Prince Jaharkas Al Khalili, who was one of the powerful Mamluke princes in the 14th century. It is famous for its unusual, typical oriental souvenirs and handmade crafts. The Medieval atmospheres of this traditional market together with the labyrinth layout of the streets, gives visitors great pleasure and glimpse into what medieval markets were like.. Cafes, restaurants, shops and large number of vendors and buyers constitute a dynamic panorama of the place. Drinking Hibiscus (Karakare), Helba, or any of the various typical Egyptian beverages is a nice experience for visitors and guests to

get a real experience, each visitor can take the opportunity to enjoy safely the walk through the narrow streets of Khan Fl Khalili.

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