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**2023**

**ANCIENT**

**WONDERS**

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# ANCIENT WONDERS

**Tour Length:** 29 Days

**Tour Departs:** 23 April 2023

**Tour Ends:** 20 May 2023

## OVERVIEW:

We are very excited to be coming back to Egypt. Combined with Jordan and Israel this tour will have us exploring some of the remarkable Ancient Wonders of the world.

Egypt - the birthplace of modern history is welcoming, diverse, and astonishingly beautiful.

Jordan - is truly a paradise that has captivated travellers and explorers for many centuries and continues to do so today.

Israel - is a real melting pot of cultures and people. It is ancient and yet modern, with its history of course being significant to biblical times.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The tour is full of daily highlights but some of the more prominent highlights include:

- The Great Pyramids
- The Nile
- New Grand Egyptian Museum
- Aswan
- Mount Zion
- The Dead Sea
- Petra
- Amman
- Israel





## TOUR COSTS PER PERSON

Share Twin or Double Room

NZD \$19,200

Supplement for Single Room

NZD \$ 4,950



## TOUR COSTS INCLUDE:

- Economy Class Air Travel ex Auckland (upgrade to Business Class available at additional cost)
- Prepaid government, airport, security, port taxes and charges (as at 01/09/2022)
- First Class hotel accommodation
- Accommodation in river-view staterooms with large window on Nile Cruise
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary
- English speaking local hosts and guides as appropriate
- Baggage handling of 1 suitcase per person
- Tips to local guides, coach drivers, cruise staff
- Escorted by Maher Tours Leader

## TOUR COSTS EXCLUDE:

- Any meals and sightseeing not specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Passport and Visa Fees
- Travel insurance – advice and assistance offered
- Items of a personal nature such telephone charges, laundry, drinks etc.

**BOOKING CONDITIONS:** Deposit of NZD\$1,000.00 per person is due upon confirmation of the booking.

Final Payment Date : Monday 27 February 2023.

To register for this tour please contact us on  
0800 500 518 or [tours@mahertours.co.nz](mailto:tours@mahertours.co.nz)



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Sunday 23 April

Home– Dubai

We commence the tour with an overnight flight to Dubai.

### Monday 24 April

Dubai (D)

We arrive in Dubai early this morning and after clearing Customs and Immigration formalities, we are met and transferred to our hotel for a two-night stay. There is time to rest up after the flight until mid-afternoon when we visit the Palm Jumeirah - one of the world's most daring developments. Jutting out into the Arabian Gulf, this man-made archipelago was built in the shape of a palm tree, with a 3-mile-long trunk and a fan of fronds lined with luxury villas and five-star hotels. From water parks and wildlife encounters to beach clubs and restaurants, there is an array of different activities on offer. One of the first things that strike you when visiting the Palm Jumeirah is its size. This



giant archipelago is visible from space and the outer crescent is more than 10 miles long.

Afterward, we visit the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world at 160 stories high. We travel to the observation deck which will provide you with a breath-taking unobstructed 360-degree view of the city, desert and ocean. We return to the hotel where we have dinner this evening.

### Tuesday 25 April

Dubai (B,D)

This morning we take a sightseeing tour of the city - a fascinating historical excursion which takes you to the magnificent Jumeirah mosque and past modern palaces sprawled along the coast. In Bastakiya, see the old wind-towered houses built by wealthy merchants and the 150-year old Al Fahidi Fort. We continue our journey by coach to the gold and spice souks, where we see bustling alleys with the aromas of the numerous spices and dazzling jewellery. Next up, we visit the area of La Mer – a new area nestled between Pearl Jumeira and the upcoming Jumeira

Bay. There is time to explore this artsy community and to get some lunch at one of the trendy cafes before we return to the hotel to relax & freshen up prior to our evening activity - a four-wheel drive excursion over rolling dunes deep into the heart of the desert. Watch the sun cast its orange glow over the shimmering sand and enjoy dinner and entertainment

under the stars in Bedu tents.

*NB: For those who may have been to Dubai previously, there is the opportunity to join a tour to Abu Dhabi today, in place of the arrangements above. Price is available on request.*

#### **Wednesday 26 April**

Dubai - Cairo (B,D)

A leisurely breakfast this morning before we transfer to the airport for our afternoon flight to Cairo. Welcome to Egypt. After disembarking our flight, we will be met and assisted with our Egypt visa upon arrival. We are transferred to our Cairo hotel for 3 nights, the Marriott Mena House Hotel set in palm-fringed gardens with spectacular views of the pyramids. After settling in we enjoy a welcome drink and dinner.

#### **Thursday 27 April**

Cairo (B,L,D)

Today experience the antiquity of Egypt with an unforgettable tour. Visit 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 to be built in ancient Egypt - preceding those at Giza by many centuries. This afternoon

we visit the New Grand Egyptian Museum, located near to our hotel. Constructed to be the world's largest museum exhibiting only one civilization, the Grand Egyptian Museum will display incredible artefacts of "the ancient Egyptian civilisation" from prehistoric times through until the Greco-Roman period. A special focus are many artefacts from Pharaoh Boy King Tutankhamun's tomb which will be on display for the first time in the same location with many of these treasures hidden for thousands of years. Currently intensive restoration work is taking place including stone statues, woodwork, papyrus, jewellery and other ornaments. Learn how meticulous restoration took place with the aid of Japanese technology and Egyptian artists working closely together to create an international first.

#### **Friday 28 April**

Cairo (B,L,D)

We visit the most iconic of Egyptian sites this morning - the Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza. Here you will see the great pyramid built by Cheops, containing more than 2.3 million cubic metres of stone. Our guide will help navigate the Giza Plateau complex and enrich your discovery. The afternoon is free to relax and appreciate the spectacular pyramids view from your hotel. This evening visit the spectacular Sound and Light Show at the Pyramids and view these impressive monuments by night.



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Saturday 29 April

Cairo – Luxor (B,D)

A relaxing morning before we join our early afternoon flight to Luxor. The Sonesta St George Hotel overlooks the Nile in Luxor and offers wonderful views from the hotel swimming pool and bar.

### Sunday 30 April

Luxor (B,D)

A relaxing start to the day to rest from the late flight. The hotel is centrally located you may wish to explore some of the local markets in Luxor. In the afternoon we visit the Mummification Museum which contains everything you would ever wish to know about mummification. The ancient Egyptians believed that in order for a person to reach the afterlife, it was essential that both their body and their name remained, so their Soul would be transported from one life to the next.

### Monday 01 May

Luxor - Join Nile River Cruise (B,L,D)

Later this morning we board our cruise ship to begin our 4 night First Class Nile Goddess cruise on the life-giving waters of the Nile. Each cabin has a Nile view. Cabins include TV, Telephone, Satellite channels, Safety deposit box, and hairdryer. The upper deck includes a swimming pool, spa and deck chairs to relax and watch the life along the Nile slip by. This afternoon visit the Luxor and Karnak Temples. These two incredible "open air museums" are linked by the 2.7km long Avenue of Sphinxes, originally lined with over 1,000 sphinx statues.





#### Tuesday 02 May

Luxor – Edfu (B,L,D)

Today cross to the West Bank of the Nile to the Valley of the Kings. Part of the ancient city of Thebes, this area was the burial site of almost all the pharaohs of the 18th, 19th, and 20th dynasties (1539–1075 BCE). Later, continue to the Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut and haunting Colossi of Memnon, which is known to make an eerie wailing sound. Today your tour will also include entrance into the Boy King Tutankhamen Tomb. (no photos permitted). Later, visit the fascinating Howard Carter's house. Neglected for a long time, the house has now been restored to its former state by the famous Egyptologist and Archaeologist Dr Zahi Hawass and now offers a fascinating insight into the life of Howard Carter against an amazing 1920's backdrop.

#### Wednesday 03 May

Edfu – Aswan (B,L,D)

Another unforgettable day beckons as we take a horse drawn carriage ride to and from the Edfu Temple. This temple, the best preserved in all of Egypt, was completed during the reign of Cleopatra and has provided much knowledge of ancient Egypt.

Afternoon visit to the Kom Ombo Temple known for its murals, bas relief, fine Nile views and fascinating mummified crocodiles! Later sail to Aswan.

#### Thursday 04 May

Aswan (B,L,D)

After breakfast on our boat, we visit the Aswan Dams at the end of Lake Nasser, the re-sited Temple of Philae dedicated to the Goddess Isis and the granite quarries. Delight in the serenity of an afternoon sail on a traditional Felucca around Kitchener Island. Also known as Nabatat or Botanical Island, this charming island paradise was irrigated and planted with a vast collection of tropical trees, many from as far away as India.

#### Friday 05 May

Aswan – Abu Simbel – Aswan (B,L,D)

Sadly we disembark this morning after breakfast, however we join a tour to Abu Simbel. Abu Simbel, the site of one of the greatest engineering feats by UNESCO to save Egyptian monuments from the waters of Lake Nasser, the artificial lake created behind the Aswan High Dam that wiped out the Kingdom of Nubia. On this tour which includes return flights, we will see the great temple of Ramses II, with its four massive seated figures of the youthful Ramses, carved into the side of the cliff, to resemble a temple pylon and rising to 32m. Now they are supported on an artificial domed structure, which we will be able to enter. Later today we transfer for an overnight stay at the historic Old Cataract Hotel, where Dame Agatha Christie penned Death on the Nile.



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Saturday 06 May

Aswan – Cairo (B,D)

We depart to Cairo early afternoon where we will stay overnight at a hotel in the Heliopolis area close to the airport.

### Sunday 07 May

Cairo-Tel Aviv (B,D)

Transfer to the airport for our flight to Tel Aviv. On arrival we will be met inside immigration and assisted with visa formalities. Transfer to the Herods Hotel Herzliya (or similar) in Tel Aviv for an overnight stay.

### Monday 08 May

Tel Aviv – Beersheba & Masada (B,L,D)

An interesting day today as we drive south to the new ANZAC Museum in Beersheba. The new museum is dedicated to the history of the battle of Beersheba and built by the Beersheba municipality in cooperation with the Australian government, and the Pratt foundation. Continue on to the Beersheba Commonwealth Cemetery. The cemetery contains 1,241 Commonwealth burials of the Great War, 67 of them unidentified. We then visit the mighty fortress of Masada - the last stronghold of the Jewish Zealots in their war against the Romans. Then drive north to Jerusalem where we are based for three nights at the Knights Palace Hotel or similar.

### Tuesday 09 May

Jerusalem Old City (B,L,D)

Start the day with a magnificent view of the city from the Mount of Olives for a panoramic view of the city. Continue on for a visit to the Garden of Gethsemane and then to Mount Zion to see King David's Tomb and the Room of Last Supper. Explore the Old City - walk the Cardo, the ancient Roman main thoroughfare. Place a note in the Western Wall. We enjoy a walk of the Stations of the Cross along the Via Dolorosa, finishing at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Explore the colourful Oriental Bazaars. Today will conclude with a visit to the Garden Tomb.

### Wednesday 10 May

Jerusalem New City & Bethlehem (B,L,D)

Experience a moving visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. This afternoon drive to Ein Karem where John the Baptist was born, in the heart of a neighbourhood in downtown Jerusalem. Then continue to the city of Bethlehem, birthplace of Jesus. Walk through Manger Square to visit the Church of Nativity, the oldest Church in the Holyland. See the ancient limestone columns and remains of mosaic floors. Descend to the Grotto of Nativity, where a Silver Star in the floor marks the spot where Christ is believed to have been born. Next, visit Shepherds'



Field. Stop at a local store famous for its carvings and return to Jerusalem.

#### Thursday 11 May

Jerusalem - Coastal plain – Galilee (B,L,D)

Drive along the coastal plain to Caesarea, capital of Judea under the Romans. Visit the excavations of this ancient city, including the Roman theatre and aqueduct. Visit Muhraqa on Mount Carmel. Here, a 17th-century monastery marks where, according to the Bible, the prophet Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. Continue to Haifa to visit the Persian Gardens at the Bahai Temple. Continue to the Galilee region where we stay for two nights at the Kibbutz Nof Ginosar or similar, near the Sea of Galilee. Kibbutz style hotels are simpler in their furnishings and facilities, reflecting their origins.

#### Friday 12 May

Galilee (B,L,D)

We start the day with a tour of Tiberius. Enjoy a boat ride in a traditional wooden sailing vessel before we visit the ancient boat museum to see the restored first century wooden fishing boat and hear the fascinating story of its discovery. Explore the centre of Jesus' ministry at Capernaum and see the remains of the synagogue where he preached. Onto the site of the miracle of the Fishes and Loaves at Tabgha and visit the Church of the Multiplication



with its 4th century mosaic floor. Sample a Saint Peter's fish lunch. Later ascend the Mount of Beatitudes overlooking the Sea of Galilee, where the Sermon on the Mount took place. Drive to Caesarea of Phillipi at Banias Springs and then tour the Golan Heights to better understand the geopolitical issues affecting the region.

#### Saturday 13 May

Israel - Jordan (B,L,D)

This morning we transfer to the northern Sheikh Hussein border. Pass through border security measures. After meeting our local guide, we will travel south to the ancient Greco-Roman city of Jerash an amazing example of Roman civilization, and part of the original Decapolis (the ten big Roman cities of the East). The ancient city features theatres, churches, temples (Zeus and Artemis), a Nymphaeum and colonnaded streets. Later drive south to Amman where we stay for two nights at Le Grand Hotel. This evening dinner is included at our hotel in the rooftop restaurant.



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Sunday 14 May

Amman (B,L,D)

Today we explore Amman, the capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, known in ancient times as Rabbath – Ammon and Philadelphia. Visit the famed Royal Automobile museum a famous collection created by King Hussein. Continue to the ancient Citadel, and Roman Theatre. Walk through downtown and old markets, and sample Habibah popular local sweets. Meet a local family in Amman for tea/coffee and discover more about life in Jordan. This evening we attend a local cooking class and dinner at Beit Sitti, and discover some of the delicious secrets of Jordanian cooking in a historic home.

### Monday 15 May

Amman – Petra (B,L,D)

Drive south along the Kings' Way to Petra. We'll follow along a very ancient and strategic trading route which connected Egypt with Mesopotamia, Syria and Anatolia. As with the Edomite's and Moabites, trade along this route gave the Ammonites considerable revenue. Our first stop today is Madaba famous for its ancient mosaic map of Jerusalem in the St George Church floor. Continue to Mt. Nebo and the alleged burial site of Moses overlooking the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley; then drive through the magnificent scenery of Wadi Mujib to Kerak to visit the Crusader Castle.

### Tuesday 16 May

Petra (B,L,D)

The Nabataean Kingdom of Petra, became a client state for the Roman Empire in the first century BC, it was only in 106 AD that the city lost its independence when it was captured by the Romans who renamed Nabataea to Arabia Petraea. Petra's importance declined as sea trade routes emerged and after an AD 363 earthquake which destroyed many structures. It was gradually lost to civilization until rediscovered by the Swiss explorer, Burkhart. Today is one of the tour highlights as we explore this city that is carved into the rose-red Sharah Mountains. Continue into Petra to the Roman Theatre, the Courts, Qasr al-Bint Pharaoun, Temple of the Winged Lion and other monuments. Break for lunch at the Nabatean 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.



### **Wednesday 17 May**

Petra - Dead Sea (B,L,D)

We visit Little Petra before we drive north to the Dead Sea. This afternoon is at leisure, perhaps experience a unique "float" in the Dead Sea. This amazing site which is 306 metres below sea level is renowned for its therapeutic qualities.

Airport, and join our flight to Dubai. We overnight in the airport transit hotel.

Friday morning, we will rejoin our flight home to Auckland.

### **Saturday 20 May**

Home

Arrive Auckland mid-morning.

### **Thursday 18 May**

Dead Sea – Amman - Dubai - (B)

Rest up this morning before early afternoon when we head to the Amman International





## 2023 ANCIENT WONDERS TOUR



### NEW ZEALAND

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