



EGYPT, JORDAN & ISRAEL EXPLORED

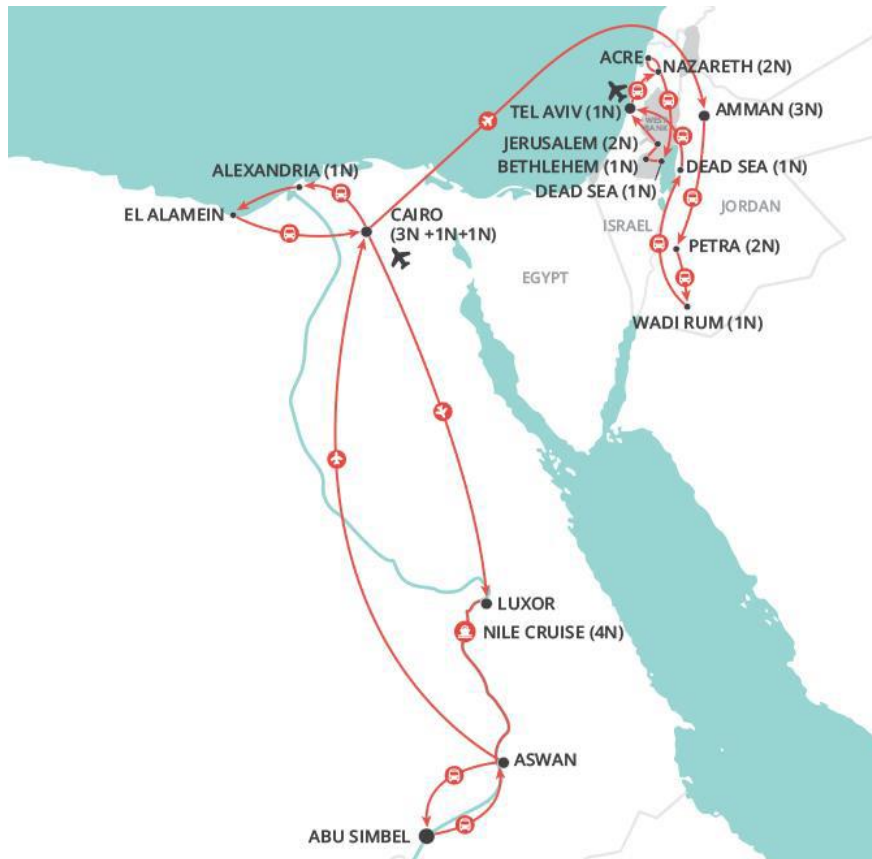
Egypt, Jordan, Israel & the Palestinian Territories

Classic Tour | 27 Days | Physical Level 1

Cairo – Alexandria – Luxor – Aswan – Cairo – Amman – Mount Nebo – Petra – Wadi Rum
– Dead Sea – Tel Aviv – Jaffa – Nazareth – Bethlehem – Mount Zion – Jerusalem

Witness the majestic legacy of Ancient Egypt, visit lost cities and Bedouin camps in Jordan, and immerse yourself in the fascinating history of Israel and Palestine, all on one unforgettable trip. See Egypt from top to toe, follow in the footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia in Jordan and explore the history-soaked sites of the Holy Land on this 25-day adventure. From a four-night Nile cruise to stargazing in Wadi Rum and experiencing sacred Bethlehem and Jerusalem, this is the ultimate introduction to the Middle East.

- Explore the pyramids at Giza and Saqqara
- Marvel at the grandeur of Luxor
- Float in the super-buoyant waters of the Dead Sea
- See Petra by day and by candlelight
- Discover the ruins of the Roman Empire on Israel's Mediterranean coast
- Cruise the Nile for four nights
- Delve into the Valley of the Kings
- Stay in a Bedouin camp in Wadi Rum
- Visit holy sites in Bethlehem and Galilee
- Learn about Jerusalem's complex history

TOUR MAP

EGYPT, JORDAN & ISRAEL EXPLORED TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Visa fees for New Zealand passport holders (please see visa section below for further information)
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

See the classic sights in the company of expert guides so you can really understand the history and culture of the destination. On our classic tours we take care of everything, leaving you to sit back and enjoy the experience to the full. The tours are fully inclusive with all meals and a comprehensive touring programme.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. 'Egypt, Jordan & Israel Explored' is rated 1 (5 being the highest) on the physical scale. A reasonable level of fitness is required, but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around and climbing some steps.

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of our tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 27 days in duration including international flights. Please note, due to flight schedules passengers may depart/arrive on Day 2.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to Reservations so we can arrange your transfers accordingly.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Cairo and end the tour on Day 26 in Jerusalem. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1-2: Arrive Cairo

Meals: D

Upon arrival into Cairo, the 'city of a thousand minarets', you will be met and transferred to your city centre hotel ahead of this evening's welcome dinner and briefing.



Destination Information

Cairo – Egypt's capital, located on the banks of the Nile River, is one of the largest cities in Africa and the Middle East. Chaotically beautiful and brimming with history, it is a true meld of old and new, with modern towers slotting snugly between Fatimid monuments. Though 'Cairo proper' was founded in 969AD, its history runs much deeper. Its roots are in nearby ancient Memphis, founded by Narmer, the southern king who triumphed over the north and to establish a unified Egypt. Cairo's modern status is largely the result of the medieval Islamic Fatimid Caliphate, who founded Fustat (now absorbed into Old Cairo) on the site of the earlier settlements.

Day 3: Pyramids of Giza & The Sphinx

Meals: B, L, D

Visit Egypt's most iconic sites: the Pyramids of Giza and the unblinking Sphinx, guardian of the mortuary complex. The Sphinx was poetically described by the writer John Lawson Stoddard as "grand in its loneliness; veiled in the mystery of unnamed ages."

After lunch, explore the atmospheric Cairo Museum with its collections of statues, mummies, and pharaonic treasures. Later, explore the Khan el Khalili Bazaar, a souk famed for its precious and semiprecious jewellery.



**Please note: Should the new Grand Egyptian Museum be open when you travel, then the Cairo Museum visit will be replaced by a visit to the new Grand Egyptian Museum, to which the artefacts will be moved.*

Destination Information

Pyramids of Giza - The last surviving Wonder of the Ancient World, the Great Pyramid of Giza comprises over two million blocks of stone and stands at a height of 479 feet. It is believed to have been intended as a tomb of Egyptian king Khufu (Cheops), who reigned from 2589-2566 BCE. The neighbouring pyramids are those of his son and grandson – Khafre and Menkaure.

The Sphinx - It is unknown what the original Old Kingdom builders of the Sphinx called the monument. In the New Kingdom, it was described as Hor-em-akhet; the 'Horus of the Horizon'. It was not until at least 2,000 years later that it became known as the Sphinx, after a similar Greek creature.

The modern Egyptian Arabic name is Abū al Hūl, which translates to ‘The Terrifying One’, or literally ‘Father of Dread’.

Day 4: Old Cairo – Coptic Quarter & Ancient Sakkara

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the morning exploring Cairo’s oldest district, the Coptic Quarter. Explore its Coptic churches and the impressive Christian artefact collection at the Coptic Museum.



Later, continue to Sakkara, an ancient necropolis famed for its painted catacombs and the famous Step Pyramid of Djoser. Built for the Pharaoh by his architect, the high priest Imhotep, this 27th BC structure was Egypt’s first ever pyramid. Inside, you’ll see wonderful carvings on the alabaster stone walls.

Visiting the Step Pyramid of Djoser requires some crouching to walk down a short sloping tunnel. The tunnel is both the entrance and exit, and you will be able to turn around if uncomfortable. You can opt to wait for the group outside the pyramid if you prefer.

Day 5: Alexandria

Meals: B, L, D

Take the desert road to Alexandria, on Egypt’s northern coast. This afternoon, discover Alexandria’s breathtaking highlights, from the Roman theatre to the beautifully carved Catacombs of Kom el Shoqafa, a 2nd century construction and one of the Seven Wonders of the Middle Ages. Three tiers of underground tombs are found here, with atmospheric reliefs of gods and serpentine spirits carved into the walls.



Pause to admire the renovated 15th-century Qaitbay Citadel, once one of the most important defensive stronghold of Africa’s Mediterranean coastline.

Destination Information

Catacombs of Kom el Shoqafa – An underground archaeological site, considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Middle Ages and are the largest known Roman burial site in Egypt. They consist of three tiers of tombs and chambers cut 35m into bedrock, with otherworldly wall art creating a sense of mystery and grandeur. Multiple families were buried here, along with one hall dedicated to the horses of the Emperor Caracalla..

Qaitbay Citadel – A 15th Century defensive fortress located at the entrance of the eastern harbor and built upon the ruins of the Lighthouse of Alexandria. It was built for the purpose of defending Alexandria from the advances of the Ottoman Empire. Though damaged by British bombardment in 1882, it has since been restored to its former glory.

Day 6: El Alamein & The Monastery of St Macarius the Great

Meals: B, L, D

Depart Alexandria and visit nearby El Alamein, the site of two key battles during World War II. The Allied Victory in the second battle was instrumental in ending the Axis threat to Egypt. Visit the military museum and Commonwealth war cemeteries.

Head southeast back to Cairo, stopping enroute to visit the historic Monastery of St Macarius the Great, continuously inhabited by Coptic Orthodox monks from the 4th century up to the present day.

**Destination Information**

First Battle of El Alamein – Fought from 1st -27th July 1942, the first battle here ended in a stalemate with heavy losses on both sides but prevented the Axis powers from advancing further into North Africa. The Axis (Panzer Army) was commanded by Erwin Rommel, ‘the Desert Fox’, while the Allies were led by Auchinleck.

Second Battle of El Alamein – (23rd October – 11th November 1942) At the time of the second battle, British general Auchinleck had been relieved of command. Harold Alexander and Bernard Montgomery together led the Allied forces to a decisive success against Erwin Rommel, forcing the Axis line back into Tunisia. Montgomery would later go on to command all Allied ground forces in the Battle of Normandy.

Day 7: Flight to Luxor & Cruise embarkation

Meals: B, L, D

Take a short flight from Cairo to the city of Luxor, boarding your Nile cruise ship before lunch. This afternoon, we visit sites around Luxor’s East Bank, exploring the Temples of Luxor and Karnak. Both are dedicated to the Theban Triad: the sun god Amun the Creator, his consort Mut (mother of the world) and their son Khonsu, god of the moon. Return to the ship for dinner.

**Destination Information**

Temple of Karnak – Known as Thebes in antiquity, Luxor was the political capital of Egypt in the Middle and New Kingdoms (2160-1065 BC). You will be able to marvel in awe at the majestic Hypostyle Hall which covers an area of 50,000 sq ft and is filled with over 100 gigantic stone columns. The hall was built by Seti I, who inscribed the northern wing, and was added to by later pharaohs such as Ramesses II and Ramesses IV.

Temple of Luxor – Begun by Pharaoh Amenhotep III (1390-1352 BC) and developed by others like Tutankhamun and Ramesses II, the Temple of Luxor is a smaller site but well-preserved. It has a smaller Hypostyle Hall than Karnak.

Avenue of the Sphinxes – A two-mile road lined with sphinx-like statues runs between the temples of Karnak and Luxor. In ancient years, the road was a key part of the Festival of Opet, when the ancient Egyptians would ceremoniously parade the statue of the god Amun-Re from Karnak to Luxor, where it was reunited with its Luxor equivalent. The festival was believed to renew the pharaoh's power.

Day 8: Explore Luxor's Western Bank

Meals: B, L, D

Start the day with a visit to Luxor's West Bank, one of the most stunning landscapes in Egypt. Our day begins with a stop at the eerie Colossi of Memnon statues before continuing to the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deirel-Bahari, the mortuary complex of one of Egypt's earliest female pharaohs.



Continue to the Valley of the Kings, the burial site of almost all New Kingdom pharaohs of the 18th, 19th and 20th dynasties. Visit the tomb of Tutankhamun, along with some other tombs of your choice. The Valley's many-chambered tombs are richly decorated with vibrant wall paintings depicting the stories of their rule, their gods, and legends of the afterlife. This evening, the ship cruises toward the farming town of Esna.

Destination Information

Colossi of Memnon – 64-foot twin stone statues of the Pharaoh Amenhotep III, who reigned during the 18th dynasty and founded the Temple of Luxor. The Colossi have survived for 3,400 years; they once flanked the entrance to his lost mortuary temple, which has vanished into the sands.

Temple of Hatshepsut - The mortuary temple of Queen Hatshepsut, located beneath the cliffs of Deirel Bahari. It mirrored her predecessor Mentuhotep II's temple, but on a much grander scale as Hatshepsut needed to establish her authority and legitimacy of her reign in a more obvious way than male predecessors.

Day 9: Kom Ombo

Meals: B, L, D

Continue to Edfu, south of Esna, to visit the Temple of Horus and its wealth of inscriptions. Although it was built under the Ptolemaic dynasty, its style appears much older, and it remains impressively intact. During lunch, sail to the agricultural town of Kom Ombo, famous for its Ptolemaic-era twin temples of the falcon-headed Horus and crocodile-headed Sobek. This evening, sail toward Aswan.



Destination Information

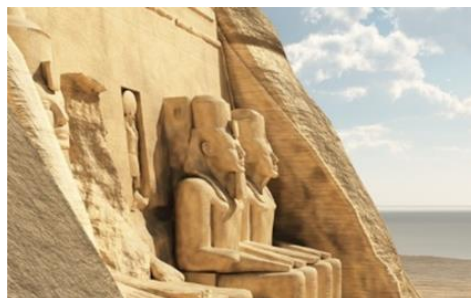
Temple of Edfu – Built from 237 – 257BC and buried under centuries of sand and silt until the nineteenth century, when French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette rediscovered the site. The complex is one of the most well-preserved sites in Egypt today. Its architecture is very much intact, and the building contains a wealth of legible inscriptions on its walls. It is dedicated to the falcon god, Horus.

Kom Ombo Temple – A symmetrical double temple dedicated to two gods: Horus and the local crocodile god, Sobek. Its twin dedication is clearly reflected in its twin entrances; two linked hypostyle halls with carvings of two gods on either side, and twin sanctuaries. Built under the Ptolemaic dynasty in 180-47BC, it shows many Greek and Roman influences. It was also a site of healing; note the fascinating relief on the rear wall, which depicts ancient medical instruments such as scalpels and forceps.

Day 10: Abu Simbel

Meals: B, L, D

Rise early and journey southwest to the iconic temples of Abu Simbel, at Egypt's furthest edge. The Great Temple here is dedicated to Ramesses II, sometimes said to be the greatest pharaoh of the New Kingdom; four 66-foot-high statues of him flank its entrance, and many more enormous statues and halls filled with wall paintings are to be seen inside.



To the right of the Ramesses temple entrance is the Small Temple, dedicated to Nefertari (Ramesses' chief queen) and the sky deity Hathor, the symbolic mother of all pharaohs. Return to the ship in Aswan.

Please note - The drive from Aswan to Abu Simbel takes around three hours but is almost universally considered worth the journey by all who have visited in the two centuries since its discovery. Many consider it the highlight of Egypt.

Destination Information

Abu Simbel – The temples at Abu Simbel sit on the western bank of Lake Nasser, the largest man-made reservoir in the world. Originally carved out of the mountain in the thirteenth century BC, they were later buried by sand, until their rediscovery by Swiss researcher Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1813. In the 1960s, the temples were threatened by the rising water levels caused by the Aswan Dam; UNESCO saved them by moving them 200m from their original location – a phenomenal feat of archaeological engineering.

Day 11: Aswan Highlights, Felucca & Flight to Cairo

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the morning exploring the great monuments around Aswan. You'll visit the 3,600m long High Dam, the Unfinished Obelisk, and the majestic Temple of Philae.

This afternoon, board a traditional felucca boat and enjoy a relaxing cruise around the area before dinner. This evening, fly back to Cairo, where you'll stay in a hotel near the airport ahead of tomorrow's flight to Jordan.

**Destination Information**

Unfinished Obelisk – The largest known ancient obelisk, created on the orders of Hatshepsut. It would have been 42m if completed; one-third larger than any Egyptian obelisk ever erected. It is carved directly out of bedrock, but cracks appeared in the granite and the project was abandoned. Thirty-six centuries later, it remains visible in the quarry, now an open-air museum.

Aswan High Dam – The world’s largest embankment dam, built across the Nile in Aswan in the 1960s. It serves the irrigation needs of both Egypt and Sudan and generates hydroelectric power.

Day 12: Fly Cairo to Amman

Meals: B, L, D

Upon arrival into Amman you will be transferred to your city centre hotel ahead of this evening’s briefing and welcome dinner.

Destination Information

Amman – Jordan’s capital city is also the largest in the Levant, with a population of around 4 million and a history spanning some 12,000 years. Like Rome, it was initially spread over 7 hills (jabals) that number has increased to 17. It is the seat of the royal family. Amman is a blend of both new and old, being not only a prosperous centre of commerce and finance but also home to many ruins, including a magnificent Roman amphitheatre, the Byzantine Basilica and the Temple of Hercules or Great Temple of Amman. Despite Amman’s impressive age, it has the feel of a young and liberal capital with an exciting future ahead.

Day 13: Explore Amman

Meals: B, L, D

Continue to Jerash, an ancient Roman city known as ‘the Pompeii of the East’; it is one of the best-preserved Roman towns outside Italy. Learn about the city’s history and explore its many archaeological remains.



Take a short drive on to the town of Ajloun, a small town overlooked by the Saracen fortress of Qa'lat Al Rabad in the Jordan Valley. Stop by the Biscuit House, a community project providing employment to local women, and try your hand at one of the heritage crafts preserved here. After, head back to Amman and relax before dinner.

Destination Information

Jerash - Widely agreed by scholars to be of the most important Roman cities on the eastern fringes of its empire, Jerash is Jordan's most impressive Roman settlement and one of the best-preserved Roman sites outside of Italy. Ruins here include Emperor Hadrian's Arch, the Hippodrome, the Temple of Artemis and the iconic Forum, bordered by 160 columns.

Ajloun - This small town is well known for its historic castle that sits atop Mount Auf, an important Saracen stronghold in the fight against the Crusaders

Day 14: Amman & the Desert Castles

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy a tour of the old city of Amman this morning, exploring Amman’s Roman amphitheatre and the hilltop Citadel, home to ruins from many periods of Amman’s history.



Later, head out of the city for a visit to some of Jordan's Desert Castles, including the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Qasr Amra, a stunning example of early Islamic art and architecture and boasting impressive, frescoed ceilings. Stop at the mysterious site of Al Kharanah, a many-roomed house or palace about which little is known, before visiting the intriguing Azraq Castle. Built in the 13th century, Azraq also served as Lawrence of Arabia's headquarters in the winter of 1917, during the Great Arab Revolt.

Destination Information

The Citadel - One of Amman's most famous ruins, the Citadel sits on Jebel Al Qala'a hill and overlooks the old city. Approaching the Citadel, you will see sections of the 1700-metre wall that dates to the Bronze Age. Inside you will find the Temple of Hercules, built under Emperor Marcus Aurelius with an original height of 13 metres; the eighth-century Umayyad Palace complex and the sixth-century Byzantine Church.

Amman's Roman Amphitheatre - Dating back to the second century AD, this well-preserved Roman site once housed up to 6000 spectators. The angle at which the amphitheatre was carved into the hillside protected the Roman audience members from the sun as well as creating perfect acoustics for the actors on stage.

Day 15: Mt Nebo, Madaba & Petra

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, you will make your way to Mount Nebo. It is said to be from here that Moses viewed the promised land in Canaan before his death. Explore the ruins of Nebo's 4th and 5th-century churches, whose floors are still covered with marvellous and intricate mosaics. Continue to the town of Madaba to visit the Orthodox Church of St George and the Madaba Mosaic Map, the oldest surviving depiction of the Holy Land.



Your evening ends in the town of Petra, where we'll enjoy an authentic Levantine cooking class, preparing soup, appetisers and a main course under the expert eye of a local chef.

Destination Information

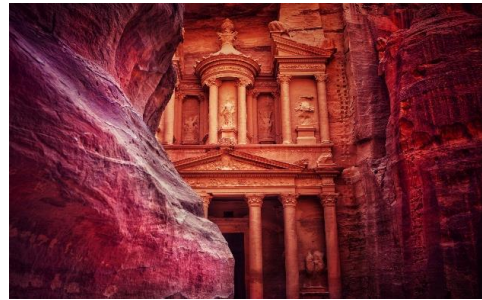
Mount Nebo - One of the most important holy sites in Jordan, the church here was abandoned in 1564 and fell into disrepair before being purchased by the Franciscan Order, who restored the area and built a monastery there. Pope John Paul II visited the monastery in 2000, planting an olive tree beside the chapel.

Madaba - On the East Bank and on the King's Highway sits Madaba, 'The City of Mosaics'. True to its name, many of these excavated mosaics are on display in the town's museum, but it is estimated that almost every house in the town may sit above ancient Byzantine mosaics just waiting to be discovered.

Day 16: Petra by Day & Night

Meals: B, L, D

This morning you will marvel at the beauty of Petra, the 'Lost City of the Nabateans' carved directly into the rugged sandstone cliffs. Surrounded by imposing mountains, the former capital of the Nabatean Empire is approached through a deep cleft in the rocks known as the Siq. Rounding the last corner of the Siq and being confronted with the magnificent façade of the famous Treasury is an emotive experience for many travellers.



Your guide will introduce you to Petra's many secrets before an afternoon at leisure. This evening, we'll return to Petra and experience the unforgettable sight of the Treasury lit by over a thousand candles. Enhanced by the play of light and shadow, 'Petra by Candlelight' is an altogether overwhelming experience.

Please note that today's excursions include a lot of walking, as Petra is a very large site.

Destination Information

Petra - One of UNESCO's most prized World Heritage Sites and voted in 2007 as one of the 'New Seven Wonders of the World', this prehistoric city is nestled within desert canyons and carved deep into the sandstone cliff faces. Capital of the Nabataean Empire between 400 BC - 600 AD, the site gradually grew to prominence and has stood throughout history as one of the world's most unique attractions, with scenes from films such as Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade shot from the outside and within the city.

Day 17: Wadi Rum Camp

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the morning at Little Petra, a nearby Nabatean site on a smaller scale and less well-known to visitors. Look out for the Painted Biclinium room with its remains of Nabatean wall-paintings.

Journey to Wadi Rum; the 'Valley of the Moon'. This adventurer's paradise epitomises the romance of the Arabian desert, with ancient valleys and towering sandstone mountains erupting dramatically from the white and pink sands.



A 4WD will whisk you through the dunes to see 'Lawrence's Road', visiting the most spectacular sights of Wadi Rum. Hear its long history and role in the Great Arab Revolt and the story of Lawrence of Arabia. Drive among sand dunes and canyons with Bedouin petroglyphs, and venture through the dry oasis to see the iconic Seven Pillars of Wisdom. These rough, coarse columns of sandstone and granite were originally called Jabal Al-Mazmar and renamed after Lawrence's autobiography. This evening you will stay in a unique desert camp – a wonderful opportunity for stargazing and a chance to experience diyafah (Bedouin hospitality).

Please note that temperatures in Wadi Rum can drop sharply at night. Make sure to bring a warm jacket with you. You will be camping in a large Bedouin en-suite tent with electricity and all necessary amenities.

Day 18: Dead Sea

Meals: B, L, D

Depart Wadi Rum this morning, heading north along the Jordanian/Israeli border to the Dead Sea – the lowest point on earth. Many travellers come to bathe in these unique waters and the high salt content and mineral-rich mud are said to bring many health benefits.



After lunch, you are free to enjoy the delights of the Dead Sea, bathing in its super-buoyant waters, or perhaps simply relax in your hotel room before dinner.

Destination Information

Dead Sea - This landlocked salt lake is located in the Jordan Rift Valley and sits on the border between Jordan and Israel. At 304 metres deep, rain and surface water flows into the Dead Sea, but apart from evaporation, the water has no escape. The continuous evaporation in combination with the high salt content means that for over 65,000 years, the salinity levels of the Dead Sea have been ever increasing.

Day 19: Jordan - Te Aviv

Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast you will drive to Tel Aviv for your tour of Israel and Palestine. Relax and settle in ahead of the welcome dinner and briefing. This trendy Mediterranean port city is both ancient and cosmopolitan, boasting famous architecture, endless beaches, world-class cuisine and a collection of UNESCO-recognised buildings.

Day 20: Jaffa, Caesarea and Mt Carmel

Meals: B, L, D

Begin your explorations with a walk through the beautiful and historic district of Jaffa, on the edge of Tel Aviv. This historic and charming old town is famed for its various legendary associations and biblical stories.



Drive to Caesarea Maritima to view the fascinating ancient and medieval ruins of this coastal city. Visit the double aqueduct and the restored Roman theatre with its stunning Mediterranean views before continuing to the Crusader fortifications to admire the imposing thirteenth-century defences.

Drive 40 minutes to the slopes of Mount Carmel to meet the Druze ethnoreligious community. The unique Druze faith incorporates aspects of many different religions, including but not limited to Christian, Islamic and Buddhist traditions. Explore a local bazaar and enjoy a local lunch before a short drive to the viewpoint at Mukraqa, a viewpoint atop Mt. Carmel, to see the Carmelite Monastery of St. Elijah.

Finish the day with dinner in Nazareth, the childhood town of Jesus and our base for the next two nights.

Destination Information

Tel Aviv - This trendy Mediterranean port city is both ancient and cosmopolitan, boasting famous architecture, endless beaches, world-class cuisine and a collection of UNESCO-recognised buildings. There are many districts that make up Tel Aviv, including historic Jaffa.

Jaffa - Reputedly founded by Japheth, son of Noah, Jaffa is also recorded as the site where Jonah attempted to escape God's mission and where the apostle Peter raised the widow Dorcas from the dead. Some Greek traditions have it as the site where Perseus rescued the chained Andromeda from the sea monster.

Caesarea – Originally a Phoenician colony, this area was rebuilt under the patronage of the Roman Empire and renamed to Caesarea, after the Emperor Augustus Caesar. This city later became the capital of the Roman province of Judaea and was also an important centre of Christianity. Caesarea is best known however for its harbour, after excavations in the 1970s and 1980s helped it claim international attention as a marvel of the ancient world.

Day 21: Nazareth – Sea of Galilee - Acre

Meals: B, L, D

Head to Kibbutz Degania Bet, an expansion of Israel's very first Kibbutz (Degania Alef). Tour the community and learn about the polarising Kibbutz movement, originally conceptualised as a utopian agrarian community in the early 20th century.

Continue to Tabgha on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee, held to be the site of the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Visit the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, home to some of the finest 5th century mosaics in Israel.



Drive 10 minutes east along the shore to Capernaum to visit the archaeological remains of the 3rd-4th century synagogue, built on the site where Jesus is believed to have performed many miracles, including the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead. Explore the ruins of its white limestone halls and look out for impressive architectural reliefs and decorative Corinthian capitals. Walk 30 metres to the south to visit the excavations of the House of St Peter, visible through the glass floor of the modern church which has been built over them.

From here, a short drive brings you to the Mount of Beatitudes, the site of the Sermon on the Mount, as told in the Gospel according to Matthew. Admire the view over the Galilee region before lunch. Head west to Acre (Hebrew name Akko) to visit the Crusader Fortress here before dinner. Return to Nazareth.

Destination Information

Tabgha – Considered to be the site of the Bible miracle of the 'multiplication of loaves and fishes', now home to a church boasting beautiful 5th-century mosaics of peacocks, flamingos, doves, swans, flowers - and of course the famous loaves and fish.

Acre (Akko) – The Knights Hospitaller held Acre from 1104 until 1187, briefly lost it to Saladin, and reclaimed it in 1191 with the help of Richard the Lionheart.

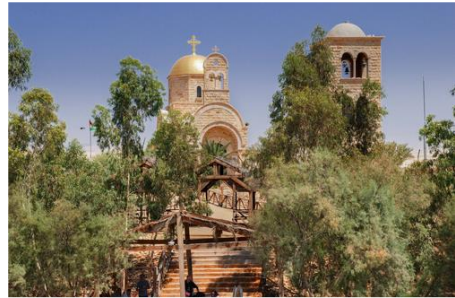
During the First Kingdom, it was a major source of wealth, and after the Knights Templar lost Jerusalem, Acre became the capital of the Second Crusader Kingdom.

Day 22: Christ's Baptism Site – Jericho – Floating in the Dead Sea

Meals: B, L, D

Explore Nazareth's famous Church of the Annunciation, believed to be where Gabriel first appeared to Mary.

Afterwards, enjoy a scenic two-hour drive through the Jordan River Valley to Qasr El Yahud. Believed to be the original site of Christ's baptism by John, this is one of the three most significant Christian pilgrimage sites in the world. The site is located in the West Bank and administered by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism.



Continue to the city of Jericho, administered by the Palestinian Authority, for a cable car journey to the Quarantal Monastery. The monastery clings to the cliff face of the Mount of Temptation, considered to be the site of the Devil's third and final attempt to tempt Jesus during his forty-day fast. The cable car journey across the valley takes seven minutes, pausing halfway for you to enjoy the panoramic view over the region.

Later, continue to the Dead Sea for an unforgettable experience – floating at leisure in its super-buoyant, salt-rich waters.

Day 23: Masada

Meals: B, L, D

Drive one hour to the impregnable mountain of Masada, ascending to the summit by cable car. Visit the archaeological remains of the fortress built by King Herod the Great c. 37 BC. Hear the story of the Siege of Masada in 73-74 AD – the fateful and controversial last stand of the Jews against Rome in the First Jewish-Roman War, as recorded by Josephus.

Continue to Qumran, the site where the ancient religious texts known as the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered by shepherds in the 1940s. From here, drive on to Bethlehem, re-entering Palestinian-administered territory. Enjoy a Palestinian dancing show during dinner this evening (group size permitting) and stay in Bethlehem overnight.



Day 24: Bethlehem & Jerusalem

Meals: B, L, D

This morning visit the UNESCO-listed Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, birthplace of Jesus and one of the most holy and significant Christian sites in the world. Enter via the tiny Door of Humility (made smaller by Crusaders to prevent their enemies riding in on horseback) and descend the stairs to the Grotto of the Nativity – atmospherically lit by lanterns and marked by a 14-pointed silver star.

Continue to Jerusalem to visit the famous Western Wall, an iconic site in the Holy Land. The wall is the last remnant of the original Temple Mount retaining wall, which supported the First and Second Temples of Jerusalem. Head underground to visit Jerusalem's Western Wall Tunnels (also known as the Wailing Wall) to view the original stonework from the period of King Herod the Great. Then, walk along the points of the Stations of the Cross to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Jesus is said to have been crucified and resurrected.

Continue to Temple Mount itself, sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, where you will find the Dome of the Rock and Al Aksa Mosque.

Please note: there is a lot of walking today, though the walking will be at a leisurely pace. Be aware that wearing religious symbols on Temple Mount is forbidden. Be aware that your guide may change the order of touring in Jerusalem to provide you with the best experience, based on how busy certain sites are. No touring will be missed.

Destination Information

Jerusalem - Considered by many to be the world's most holy city, Jerusalem has been an object of desire for Christian, Muslim and Jewish people for centuries. Its sacred old town in East Jerusalem is alive with atmosphere, and the Western Wall and the famous Dome of the Rock are found here. Western Jerusalem is more contemporary in architecture and is home to an array of excellent restaurants and bustling markets offering fresh local produce.

Temple Mount - Known in Hebrew as known in Hebrew as *Har Habayit* and in Arabic as the *Haram al-Sharif* (the Noble Sanctuary), this site is of religious significance in both Judaism and Islam. Administered by a Muslim religious trust, Temple Mount contains both the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aksa Mosque in its interior - two of Jerusalem's most recognised and holy landmarks.

Day 25: Jerusalem

Meals: B, L, D

Head outside the Old City to Mount Zion to visit the Cenacle (the room of the Last Supper), King David's Tomb and the Abbey of the Dormition. After lunch, drive to the Mount of Olives, a site of much significance in both the Old and New Testaments – not least as the site of Christ's Ascension. Visit the Pater Noster Church and the Church of the Ascension and admire the view over Jerusalem before walking down into Josaphat Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane, site of Christ's arrest, to admire its ancient olive trees.



End your tour with an authentic Shabbat dinner experience, hosted and prepared by a local rabbi. This fascinating experience will help you to gain an understanding of Jerusalem's Orthodox Jewish community and gain an insight into their lives.

Please note that there is a lot of walking today, though this will be at a leisurely pace. Please watch your footing whilst walking down the Mount of Olives, and ensure you are wearing sensible footwear.

Destination Information

Mount of Olives – An impressive viewpoint over Jerusalem's Old City, the Mount of Olives rises more than 800 metres above Jerusalem and takes its name from the endless olive groves that once covered the land.

Garden of Gethsemane - At the foothills of the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane (translates to 'olive oil press') has centuries-old olive trees spread throughout the garden.

Day 26-27: Depart Jerusalem

Meals: B

Transfer approximately 50 minutes from Jerusalem to Ben Gurion Airport (Tel Aviv) for your onward flight.

Please note:

Late check-out is not included in our *Egypt, Jordan & Israel Explored* tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Jerusalem, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Transfers - In the event that your flight departs outside of the majority group departure time, you will be transferred to the airport by a shared coach (not with other Wendy Wu Tours passengers).

EGYPT AND JORDAN TRAVEL INFORMATION 2023

VISAS:

Egypt – New Zealand passport holders do require a visa to enter Egypt. Wendy Wu Tours can assist you with the process of obtaining the e-Visa.

Jordan - New Zealand passport holders can currently obtain a visa on arrival in Jordan. Wendy Wu Tours will have a 'meet and greet' representative available to assist you with this on arrival.

Israel – Visas are not required for New Zealand passport holders for entry into Israel.

Your passport needs to be valid for at least six months beyond your intended return date to New Zealand.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa. Your travel consultant will inform you if any changes are applicable prior to your departure.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original

EATING IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND ISRAEL:

Egypt - Egyptian food combines many different elements of Lebanese, Turkish, Syrian, Greek and French dishes. You will find Mediterranean influences in Alexandria, versus spicier Nubian flavours in the south. The choice of restaurants on your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead.

It is not advisable to drink tap water throughout Egypt. Please ensure you have bottled water with you at all times and remember to use the bottled water supplied or your own bottle.

Jordan - Jordanian cuisine is wonderfully rich and flavourful, with the inspiration for much of its cuisine dating back hundreds of years when Jordan was a vital stage on the spice routes from China and India. Hearty dishes such as mansaf (lamb, rice and rehydrated yoghurt) fragrant zarb (succulent chicken, herbs and vegetables cooked in a pot beneath the desert sands in true Bedouin style), baba ghanoush

(grilled aubergines with fresh parsley and pomegranate molasses) fresh hummus, olives and endless varieties of dates all contribute to the wonderful cuisine to be found here. The city of Amman has a particular history of offering sanctuary to various displaced groups from neighbouring countries, and has subsequently developed a distinctly multicultural culinary scene, fusing elements of cuisine from all corners of the Middle East.

Israeli food offers you a wonderful culinary delight. With various food choices like Pita bread, Hummus, Kebabs and Shwarmas, it makes for a difficult choice but guaranteed to leave long lasting taste. Israel has many delicacies, and a traditional meal consists of hummus, small plates of a variety of salads and warm pita bread. Mujaddara is a dish of cooked lentils with rice and sautéed onions.

WATER: Please ensure you have bottled water with you at all times and remember to use the bottled water supplied or your own bottle.

Whilst we always encourage our guests to try the local cuisine, you will have opportunities during your tour to eat Western food. Those with dietary requirements will be very well catered to in Egypt, Jordan and Israel - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from dinner on the day of your groups' arrival until breakfast on your day of departure.

**PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY ALLERGIES AND/OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS
AT TIME OF BOOKING**

ALCOHOL IN JORDAN:

Please note that alcohol is not provided at your hotels and restaurants, however you are permitted to bring alcohol to your rooms. Keep in mind that Jordan is a more conservative country than you may be used to and it is highly frowned upon to show public displays of drunkenness.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers between destinations. Main and inner-city roads in Egypt, Jordan and Israel have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in Egypt, Jordan and Israel have generally been improved over recent years, but please be aware of traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. There may be sections of road where the surface may be comparatively bumpy, but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

4WD: Due to Wadi Rum's remote location and difficult terrain, you will travel in a fleet of 4WDs. Water will be provided and you will experience the thrill of venturing through the desert in an all-terrain vehicle.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. The utmost care will be taken to ensure that your final documents will have the latest information, however your local guide will confirm this in destination. Boarding passes can be collected directly at the airport. The flights booked as part of your itinerary will always reflect the best timings to suit the touring itinerary, with direct flights wherever possible, however due to limited schedules some flights may require an early departure or late arrival.

Cruise ships: On this tour you will take a 4-night cruise down the Nile River. Please note that the cruise ship and all shore excursions arranged by the cruise are on a shared basis.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping in Egypt, Jordan and Israel is a way to show satisfaction with the service of guides and drivers. It is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. Therefore, in order to avoid any inconvenience, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount in US dollars is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort. If you are travelling in a smaller group, we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller, to be fair to the guide(s).

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portorage is not included on our tours in Egypt, Jordan and Israel. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. Hotels used in Egypt, Jordan and Israel are generally rated as local four-star standard. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. You will also stay in a camp in Wadi Rum with electricity and an en-suite bathroom. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and occasionally the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note that double bed requests can be made at time of booking but can't be guaranteed.

DEVELOPMENT IN MIDDLE EAST:

Concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in New Zealand. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in New Zealand; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday, so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCE:

Middle East society and culture are built on intricate social etiquette and customs. As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Israel more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. Very revealing clothing is discouraged, and dressing conservatively around the old part of Amman and outside of the cities advisable for both men and women. Furthermore, women do not need to cover their heads or tie their hair. T-shirts are also fine.

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at a lot of sites of interest involves climbing quite a number of steps. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. You sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside. People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

EXCHANGING CASH:

The unit of currency in Egypt is the Egyptian pound, Jordan is the Jordanian Dinar and in Israel it is the New Israeli Shekel. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Try and keep some small notes and coins on you, as on street stalls and in small shops they may not have the change to break up a high denomination note. ATMs are common across Egypt, Jordan and Israel and we recommend using an ATM inside a bank where possible. Most major credit cards are widely accepted across the continent, though please bear in mind the charges of your provider. Debit cards are also widely accepted but may have a limit to the amount of cash you can withdraw – consult your bank about this before travelling.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available.

Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your Doctor or Health centre for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Safetravel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements.

You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Updated: Jun 2023

