

Ancient Egypt & Red Sea Diving July 2-17, 2007

FANTASTIC ENDEAVORS EGYPT-RED SEA TOUR ITINERARY AND TRIP PACKAGE INFORMATION



Day 1 – Monday – July 2 - Departure

Depart New York this evening for Egypt.

Day 2 – Tuesday – July 3 - Cairo

Welcome to Egypt, Land of the Pharaohs! On arrival at Cairo International Airport, your tour representative greets you, collects your passport so he can obtain your Egypt Visa, and assists you with Custom formalities. After sometime to freshen up and relax, meet with Affi and discuss the exciting days ahead. A welcome dinner at Al Saraya floating restaurant will introduce you to Egyptian cuisine.

ACCOMMODATIONS: MARRIOTT HOTEL (D)

Day 3 – Wednesday – July 4 - Cairo

After breakfast, you will experience one of the world's most awe-inspiring sites; the Giza Plateau. Here stands three Pyramids, the greatest being that of Cheops. It is generally believed the Great Pyramid was built as the tomb of Fourth dynasty Egyptian pharaoh Khufu (Cheops), after whom it is sometimes called Khufu's Pyramid or the Pyramid of Khufu. It took 100,000 workers more than 20 years to construct. A few hundred meters south-west of the Great Pyramid lies the slightly smaller Pyramid of Khafre, one of Khufu's successors who is believed to have built the Great Sphinx, and a few hundred meters further south-west is the Pyramid of Menkaure, Khafre's successor, which is about half as tall. In modern day, the pyramid of Khafre is the tallest of the three pyramids since the Great Pyramid has lost about 30 feet of material from its tip. Entrance into one of the pyramids will be included. Southeast of the Great Pyramids is the Sphinx, carved out of solid natural rock in about 2650BC, a magnificent monument with the head of the Pharaoh and the body of a lion. After lunch, you will make a stop at a carpet school and factory where you will see how some of the world's most beautiful carpets are made. Then you will visit the Saqqara Complex where you will see the first Pyramid ever built, the Step Pyramid of Zoser. When Memphis was capital of Egypt, during the Old Kingdom period, Saqqara was its necropolis. Spread over seven kilometers of desert, Saqqara is one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. Built for King Zoser of the third Dynasty by the architect and genius Imhotep, who designed Saqqara 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. His many titles included 'Treasurer of the King of Lower Egypt', 'Administrator of the Great Palace', and 'Imhotep the Builder, the Sculptor, the Maker of Stone Vessels'. Before returning to the hotel a stop will be made at the remains in Memphis, the first capital of united Upper and Lower Egypt.

ACCOMMODATIONS: MARRIOTT PALACE HOTEL (B,L,D)

Day 4 – Thursday – July 5 - Cairo/Abu Simbel/Aswan

Early morning transfer to the airport for your flight to Abu Simbel an archaeological site comprising two massive rock temples in southern Egypt on the western bank of Lake Nasser about 290 km southwest of Aswan. It is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site known as the "Nubian Monuments. The twin temples were carved out of the mountainside during the reign of Pharaoh Ramesses II in the 13th century BC, as a lasting monument to himself and his queen Nefertari, to commemorate his alleged victory at the Battle of Kadesh, and to intimidate his Nubian

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neighbors. The complex was relocated in its entirety in the 1960s to avoid being submerged during the creation of Lake Nasser, the massive artificial water reservoir formed after the building of the Aswan dam on the river Nile. After your visit fly to Aswan where you will embark on your Nile cruise. Lunch and then a short ride will bring you to Aswan's High Dam, Granite Quarries, and Unfinished Obelisk, and then continue by felucca to visit Kitchener's Island with its beautiful gardens and to view the mausoleum of the Agha Khan.

ACCOMMODATIONS NILE VISION CRUISE SHIP (B,L,D)

Day 5 – Friday – July 6 – Aswan/Kom Ombo/Edfu

After breakfast, sail in a small boat to the Philae Temple situated on the island of Agilika. Like Abu Simbel, the temple was relocated in order to protect it from the rising water of the High Dam, built in 1960. The main sanctuary on the island is dedicated to the Goddess Isis and her son Horus. Ancient Egyptians believed that Isis was the Goddess of Magic, and when she wept, the Nile flooded. This afternoon set sail for the city of Kom Ombo. Known as "Ombos" in ancient times, the city became prosperous when the temple was built in the Ptolemaic era. The temple is divided into two symmetrical halves. The left side is dedicated to the falcon-headed god, "Haroeris," and the right side to the crocodile god, "Sobek". Reliefs of Ptolemaic Pharaohs are found in the porch area. The remainder of the temple consists of a crypt, chapels, Roman wells where sacred crocodiles may have been kept, and the remains of a birth house. On the walls of the temple, you will see the first recorded representation of medical instruments. Sail onto Edfu, midway between Aswan and Luxor.

ACCOMMODATIONS NILE VISION CRUISE SHIP (B,L,D)

Day 6 – Saturday – July 7 - Edfu/Luxor

Begin the day by visiting the magnificently preserved temple of Edfu. The sandstone temple of Horus, the Sun God, was built under the Ptolemies and completed by the mid first century, BC. In the colonnaded court, you will see the surviving statue of a pair of falcons representing Horus. A series of smaller chambers leads to the Sanctuary of the God, which is lit by three openings in the ceiling. Ceremonies, celebrations, and war scenes are shown on the walls of the temple. Later today, we sail to Esna, pass the lock, and arrive in Luxor, ancient Thebes. This afternoon explore the East Bank of the Nile including the Temple of Luxor. Here, the Avenue of Sphinxes, famous for its artistic degree of uniformity, leads to the entrance of the temple where a seated colossus of Ramses II and a towering Obelisk sit. Continue to the Karnak Temple, one of the most impressive monuments of ancient art and architecture in the world. The carvings, which adorn all of the walls, depict the history and conquests of many of Egypt's Pharaohs.

ACCOMMODATIONS NILE VISION CRUISE SHIP (B,L,D)

Day 7 – Sunday – July 8 – Luxor/Hurghada

This morning cross the West Bank to explore the Valley of the Kings. The Valley of the Kings houses 63 tombs belonging to the Pharaohs of the New Kingdom, including the famous tomb of King Tutankhamen, and tomb KV 63 recently discovered in 2005. KV 63 is the first tomb discovered in the Valley of the Kings since King Tut's KV 62 tomb was found completely intact in 1922. Many of the tombs, carved out of the bedrock, still retain their original bright colors and fine reliefs and scenes, thought to guarantee the safe passage of the Ka to the after life. Next, it is on to Deir El Bahri to visit the mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, considered being one of the finest buildings in Egypt. You leave Luxor this morning for Hurghada, a beautiful resort city on the Red Sea. When you arrive in Hurghada, you will have some time to relax on the beach or snorkel and have your first look at the magnificent underwater life of the Red Sea.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HILTON HOTEL (B,L,D)

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Day 8 – Monday – July 9 – Hurghada/Sharm El Sheikh

Early morning transfer to the port where you will embark the Fast Ferry for Sharm El Sheikh. Arrive in the “Land of Turquoise” where rock meets coral reefs and the desert stops at the sea. For the next week, you will be exploring the crystal blue waters rich with unique sea life and experiencing spectacular sunrises and sunsets. Sharm El Sheikh is a rich and elegant seaside resort, often called the “Egyptian Riviera.” Our resort in Sharm, the Hyatt Regency has all the amenities of a luxury seaside hotel and spectacular shore diving. In the afternoon, you will have an opportunity to do a shore dive from the hotels magnificent blue waters. The Far Gardens Bay, right above which the resort is situated, is one of the more secluded dive sites at the South Sinai coast, making it a perfect introductory dive. There is a sloping wall with a few coral outcrops with Anthias aggregate around coral formations and sea fans. Keep your eyes out for napoleons, big parrots, and grouper. There are also interesting caves between 10 and 20 feet.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HYATT REGENCY HOTEL (B,L,D)

Day 9 – Tuesday – July 10 – Sharm El Sheikh – Ras Mohammed Diving

Today you will have an opportunity to have three dives beginning at the most spectacular sites in all of the undersea, and the “masterpiece” of wall dives Ras Mohammed. It has been said that if there were just one dive place in the world to dive that would be Ras Mohammed. The Ras Mohammed Wall extends from the eel garden in the north to the Shark Observatory in the south. Above the surface is a sheer limestone cliff with a fringing reef below. Its southern end is a large rock formation called the Shark Observatory. Drifting southward with the gentle current, every ledge, and crevice has something different to catch your eye. Colorful soft corals grow from overhangs, surrounded by Anthias, which flutter around the wall like butterflies. Giant gorgonian fans, up to 15 feet across, spread horizontally on some of the ledges. A few areas, especially in deep crevices, are dark and devoid of life, while others are brilliantly colorful and alive with activity. Caves provide refuge for soldier fish, hatchet fish, and silver sweepers. If you look upward, you will notice schools of jacks or tunas or a shark or eagle ray. The feeling of diving in this area is one of awe! Three dives are included today.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HYATT REGENCY HOTEL (B,L,D)

Day 10 – Wednesday – July 11 – Sharm El Sheikh – Straits of Tiran Diving

Today you will dive one of the Sinai’s most spectacular areas the Straits of Tiran. Starting from the north the first reef is Jackson Reef. On its northern edge lies the wreck of a freighter and the southeastern end, where the currents are weaker, is the perfect mooring place for all the different diving vessels. If you start your dive here and go northwards, you will come across a forest of awesome Gorgonian fan corals dancing in the current at about 20 to 30 meters as well as many different kinds of reef fish. The long, narrow Woodhouse Reef, which you dive as a drift dive from north to south, is home to reef sharks and eagle rays. At 40 meters you can find a small "Satellite Reef" 18 meters in length; with its numerous caves and outstanding underwater landscape this is the most interesting section of the dive. Thomas Reef is the smallest of the 4 reefs but be aware! This location is for experienced divers only and it is always recommended to make a "test dive" to check out the direction of the extremely strong currents! Drift dive with the current and you will find some of the most colorful soft coral gardens anywhere in the gulf. Gordon Reef with its Lighthouse is the most eastern point of the Straits; another freighter wreck sits here on the reef table, almost parallel to the one on Jackson Reef. A huge variety of reef fish and big schools of groupers can be seen here and on the sandy bottom at 4 to 5 meters, many Garden Eels are sticking out of the seabed moving gently in the currents. It is also a popular habitat for eagle rays and reef sharks who mainly cruise at greater depths but are often spotted popping up for lunch and a look at the divers. On the way to and from Tiran always watch out for dolphins - they love to swim along with the boats. Three day dives are included today and perhaps a night dive.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HYATT REGENCY HOTEL (B,L,D)

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Day 11 – Thursday – July 12 – Sharm El Sheikh - Thistlegorm

There is no dive area in the world comparable to the site that you will dive today. Imagine diving in an open-air World War II museum, a war grave, a unique piece of military history and an opportunity to step into the past during a period when the free world was under threat from one of the most tyrannous regimes of modern times. This is what you will find as you explore the SS Thistlegorm. Sunk by German bomber planes in World War II, SS Thistlegorm has lain at the bottom of the sea for over sixty years. Located in the Straits of Gubal, Northern Red Sea this famous vessel has been the subject of much activity and drama during its two lives as both a seagoing merchant ship and as an excellent diving site. In June 1941, the British sent the Thistlegorm out to sea to deliver supplies for the eighth Army and the relief of Tobruk. Though described on the manifest as "MT" (Motor Transport), this - probably deliberate, non-description hid a wide array of Land Mines, Shells, Ammunition, Weapons, Bedford Trucks, Armored Cars, Bren-Carriers, BSA Motorcycles, Trailers, Vehicle spares, Aircraft and Aircraft parts, Radios, Rubber thigh-boots - and a great deal more besides. To save cargo space, the Motorcycles were placed onto the back of the Bedford trucks - three at a time before loading. Also on board were two sets of rolling stock to Egyptian Railways - each comprising a 0-6-0 Railway Engine, one Tender, and one Water Carrier - all six items being carried as deck cargo. After two months of sailing, the Thistlegorm landed in Egypt and was assigned "Safe Anchorage "F", and to stay and wait for orders to proceed to Alexandria. The Germans based in Crete, Greece were alerted to the anchorage of a large vessel and released two bombs right over her bridge. Both bombs penetrated No 5 hold - aft of the bridge, detonating a great deal of ammunition. The resultant explosion sent the two locomotives spiraling into the air as the ship was ripped open like a huge tin can. Even to this day, the rear decks are peeled back towards the Bridge leaving many a Diver wondering what exactly he is looking at. Some accounts have even described this as "Armour Plating!" The vessel began to sink and the crew quickly abandoned ship - with hardly any time to launch the lifeboats, most of them leapt straight into the sea. Caught unaware, the Thistlegorm had been given no time to defend herself and she quickly sunk. It was timed at 0130 hrs 6 October 1941. In 1956, Jacques Cousteau found the Thistlegorm and kept it a secret until the early 1990's when a group of divers happened upon her. Despite extensive damage aft of the Bridge, the main section is upright and on an even keel. In the past years, many of the smaller treasures have been taken but you will be able to see many other sunken wonders. You will never forget this site! Three dives today.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HYATT REGENCY HOTEL (B,L,D)

Day 12 – Friday – July 13 – Sharm El Sheikh

Today you return to the magnificent Ras Mohammed National Park for another day of diving. There are over 1,000 species of fish found in the Ras Mohamed area. The coral reefs here are not just shelter and food for the different reef and pelagic fish they are in fact living creatures, which breathe, eat, and reproduce. They also come in many different forms, shapes, and colors. From the largest colonies of hard corals to the tiniest swaying soft ones. About 205 hard coral species and about 120 soft coral species have been recorded here, with the western side facing the entrance to Suez Canal having about 45 coral species, including some endemic ones. The reefs are those that are made up of the fossilized bodies of ancient corals which have long gone but whose bodies have fossilized together for more coral to attach to. These fossil reefs can also be seen on land as the water level had dropped from previous periods. Overall, these reefs range in age between 15,000 to 2 million years and descendants of these ancient species are still alive today among the abundant living coral colonies. Three dives today perhaps a night dive.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HYATT REGENCY HOTEL (B,L,D)

Day 13 – Saturday – July 14 - Sharm El Sheikh – Ras Mohammed

Your final day of diving in the Red Sea takes you back to Ras Mohammed. Enjoy the morning diving and getting those last minute pictures of mother natures most unique creatures. The day ends with a reef "Treasure Hunt." Three dives today. This evening as the sunsets, you will take a camel ride out into the desert for tea and pastry at a Bedouin camp. Then you will return to the hotel for dinner.

ACCOMMODATIONS: HYATT REGENCY HOTEL (B,L,D)

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Day 14 – Sunday – July 15 – Sharm El Sheikh/Cairo

After breakfast, you will be escorted to the airport for your return flight to Cairo. The afternoon will be spent exploring the masterpieces of ancient art in the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, including the Mummies Room. The museum is home to the vast findings of King Tutankahmun's tomb and other important pieces of Egypt's history.

ACCOMMODATIONS: MARRIOTT PALACE HOTEL (B,L,D)

Day 15 – Monday – July 16 – Cairo

This morning you will visit Old Cairo including the Ben Ezra Synagogue, St. Serguis Church, the citadel of Salah El Din built by the famous Arab Sultan, Salah El Din (Saladin), in the 12th century and the Mohammed Ali Mosque situated inside the citadel known for its alabaster wall. Lunch will be in the Khan El Khalili Bazaar at the famous Naguib Mahfouz Restaurant. Then you will have time on your own shop in the bazaar for Egyptian handicrafts, silver and gold jewelry, cottons, copperware, and perfumes. This evening enjoy a farewell dinner on the Nile Pharaoh.

ACCOMMODATIONS: MARRIOTT PALACE HOTEL (B, L,D)

Day 16 – Tuesday – July 17 - Departure

Your exploration of Egypt and the Red Sea ends today as you are escorted to the airport for your return flight to New York. **(B)**

Please Note: This itinerary sequence is subject to change due to hotel availability, weather conditions, and government restrictions.

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TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- International Air New York/Cairo/New York
- Egypt Domestic Air: Cairo/Abu Simbel/Aswan/Sharm El Shiekh/Cairo
- 4 nights accommodation in Cairo at the Marriott Palace Hotel
- 4 days/3 nights Nile Cruise on board the Nile Vision Cruise Ship
- 1 night accommodation in Hurghada at the Hilton Hotel
- 6 nights accommodation in Sharm El Sheikh at the Hyatt Regency Hotel
- 5 full days of diving (3 dives daily) on a chartered boat and 1 hotel dive (possible night dives)
- Full day sightseeing in Cairo : Pyramids/Sphinx-Memphis/Sakkara
- Half day sightseeing in Cairo: Egyptian Museum
- Full day sightseeing in Cairo: Citadel/Mosque/Bazaar
- Abu Simbel Excursion
- All transfers: Cairo/Luxor/Hurghada/Sharm El Sheikh
- Egyptologist-guide throughout Egypt
- All shore excursions & entrance fees throughout Egypt
- Transport of dive equipment from Cairo to Sharm El Sheikh
- 14 breakfasts, 13 lunches, 14 dinners including 1 glass/can of soda at lunch, 1 glass of wine or 1 bottle of beer at dinners and mineral water with meals 1 large bottle per day of mineral water, mineral water & soda on daily dives
- All dive excursions, National Park entrance fees & Nitrox
- All transportation by deluxe air-conditioned motor coach or mini-van
- Egypt Visa
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- Porterage

NOT INCLUDED

- U.S. Departure Taxes & Airport Security
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, travel insurance, internet services, dive gear, dive services not included, additional beverages above what tour includes, passport fees, tips to drivers, guides, transfer people, dive boat staff, etc...

ANCIENT EGYPT-RED SEA DIVING TRIP RATES - PER PERSON:

Double	\$5495.00
Single Supplement	\$ 810.00

Payment Schedule:

- Deposit of \$1000.00 per person to reserve a space on the Egypt trip.
- Progress payment of \$1500 is due by March 15, 2007
- Balance and full payment is due by April 15, 2007
- No refunds for any reason for cancellations after May 1, 2007
- Travel Insurance is not included but highly recommended
- Dive Accident Insurance is required. DAN Preferred Plan is highly recommended.
- Any payment made to Fantastic Endeavors indicates acceptance of the terms and conditions

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Passenger Information:

Full Name (as it appears on Passport): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Passport# _____ Exp. Date: _____ Issue Date: _____

SCUBA Cert. Card# _____ Agency: _____ Level: _____

In case of emergency, notify _____ Relationship _____ Tel # _____

Mailing Address 2 weeks prior to departure _____

I wish to share accommodations with: _____

Please try to arrange a roommate for me. If a roommate cannot be found I agree to pay the single cost.

I desire a single room supplement for an additional \$810.00

I am a smoker I am a vegetarian I will eat chicken I will eat fish

I require a special diet. (Please include your dietary needs on a separate sheet)

I do not have any physical limitations that require special attention. Most situations can be accommodated but, we must know beforehand in order to make arrangements.

Deposit of \$1000.00 per person enclosed.

Please fill out this form and fax to 305-513-5758 and send the original with your trip deposit to:

Fantastic Endeavors

PO Box 372531

Key Largo, FL 33037

For inquiries please call Tour Coordinator David Hartman 305-453-9208 or email to egypt@fantasticendeavors.com

I have carefully read the above Egypt trip itinerary and agree to its terms/conditions. I have also been advised to arrange/obtain my own travel insurance. I am aware that I am not entitled to any refunds after the indicated deadlines, for any reason:

Signature Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian if under age 18 Date