



JOURNEY THROUGH THE LAND OF THE PHARAOS AND THE DESERT FATHERS OCTOBER (27) 29 – NOVEMBER 9 (13), 2025

Day 1 of prequel. Monday, October 27, 2025

Arrival to **Cairo International Airport (CAI)**. Transfer to the hotel. Dinner, orientation, and overnight in **Cairo**.

Day 2 of prequel. Tuesday, October 28, 2025

Early in the morning we will leave the capital of Egypt and will head north to explore the city of **Alexandria**—one of the capitals of the Ancient World. You'll find this modernized city huge and bustling. At first glance it seems that there is nothing left from its ancient glory. However, the observant traveler will notice the signs of its venerable antiquity. On this day, we will visit the **Catacombs of Kom el-Shoqafa**, a true wonder from the Ptolemaic Period in Egyptian history that truly represents a melding of the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman cultural and artistic traditions. **The Odeon at Kom el-Dikka** is a smallish Roman theater that provided archeologists with a myriad of fascinating finds. Adjacent to the theater, there are remains of





ancient houses and a bath complex. We also will see the **Pompeii Pillar** and the **Qaitbey's Fort**, built on the site of the famed Pharos, the ancient lighthouse of Alexandria. We will finish our day with a visit to the **Alexandria National Museum**. Though smaller than its recently renovated counterpart, the World-Famous Greco-Roman Museum, it is a fascinating location with a great number of unique artifacts on display. For dinner and overnight we will return to our hotel in **Alexandria**.

Day 3 of prequel/Day 1 of the main land tour. Wednesday, October 29, 2025

In the morning, we will visit **St. Mark's Coptic Cathedral**. Just as the Byzantine Orthodox

counterparts, the Coptic church sees its beginning in the apostolic mission of St. Apostle and Evangelist Mark in Alexandria. The recently reopened **Greco-Roman Museum** was closed to visitors for nearly two decades. Although the exhibitions here deal with the final chapter in the history of the "classical Egypt", we will be introduced to some fascinating articles of the past, right from the time period of the coming of Christianity to Egypt. In the absence of many monuments from the period, these tiny glimpses of history will help increase our appreciation of the history of the land and our ancestors in Faith.

After the visit to the museum we will travel to **St. Mina's monastery**. St. Mina is one of the most famous warrior martyr saints from the earliest period of Church history. His shrine was once one of the most important pilgrim destinations in the entire Mediterranean. Nearly all of the significant collections of Christian Antiquities contain flasks or bottles that once held oil or water sanctified on the tomb of the saint. The image often seen on the containers is a depiction of a saint praying in orant position amidst two camels. We will see the archaeological remains of the ancient holy site as well as a modern monastery nearby. For an overnight we will arrive to the guest house of **St. Macarius monastery** in a former region of Wadi Natrun.



The main tour formally starts today. Those of you who are not able to participate in our prequel should arrive to Cairo International Airport (CAI) today. Tomorrow your guide is going to pick you up at the hotel lobby and will accompany you to Wadi Natrun for a visit to the Monasteries of the Western Desert.



Day 2 of the main land tour. Thursday, October 30, 2025

Main group joins the "prequel" group at the Monastery of St. Makarios at 9:30am.

The names of the monastic colonies of **Sketis, Kellia and Nitria** are familiar to anyone who have read the Sayings of the Desert Fathers, Lausiac History by Palladius, or other writings from the earliest monks of Egypt. The remains of monastic hermitages at Kellia and Scetis, of which there were once hundreds if not thousands, have been largely consumed by modern agricultural development. However, in

Nitria monastic presence can still be seen. Unlike in the days of old, modern monks live in large communities, but keep the traditions of their ancient ascetic predecessors. We are planning to visit several monasteries in Nitria, most notably Monastery of the Syrians (Aby Suriani) and St. Makarios. These monasteries not only continue centuries-old monasticism, but also preserve the memory of some of the most illustrious holy men of the past. They also serve as repositories of great artistic treasures, in the form of Sacred Art – **frescoes**, in some instances preserved to this day from the time of Antiquity. Overnight: **Cairo**



Day 3. Friday, October 31, 2025

During our first day in Cairo, we will continue our exploration of the Egyptian Capital. In the morning we will visit **the Museum of the Egyptian Civilization**, a small, but incredibly valuable collection of artifacts that cover the entire history of Ancient Egypt from its origins through the recent times. It certainly pales in comparison to the Grand Museum in Giza, but it provides a good overview, bringing together our entire experience during the trip, in addition to having some incredibly unique and never-before-seen artifacts. Those of you who would like to meet the pharaohs and their queens face-to-face will be able to do so, as it is here that the remains of the ancient rulers were moved



and placed in a special mummies' room. In the afternoon, we will explore **Medieval Cairo** with its incredible **architecture** and exotic **bazaar** where you will be given some time at leisure. In the evening, we will have a farewell dinner and some reflections on our experiences in the Land of the Pharaohs and Desert Fathers. Overnight: **Cairo**

Day 4. Saturday, November 1, 2025

After breakfast, we will visit the most famous site in all of Egypt, the **Giza plateau** with the iconic **Pyramids** and **the Sphinx**. It seems that from early childhood, the images of the pyramids are deeply ingrained into our

imagination, but there are no words to describe the feeling when you stand in front of these incredible structures built by the people of old. Right after the Pyramids, we [plan to] visit the New (and equally mammoth) **Museum** that houses the best examples of 3,000-year-old ancient Egyptian Civilization, including the most splendid valuables from the **Tutankhamun burial chamber**. Currently, it is considered to be the **largest museum in the world**, even though it is dedicated solely to the history of Ancient Egypt. If such a visit will be impossible, we will visit the 'original' Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Overnight: **Cairo**



Day 5. Sunday, November 2, 2025

This morning, we will leave very early, as our road **towards the Red Sea** will take some



time. Today, we will visit the birthplace of Christian Monasticism. **St. Anthony the Great** is known as the Father of Monasticism, but he is not the first monk. During his lifetime, he visited another monastic elder, his older brother in monastic profession, **Paul of Thebes**, who spent many decades in a cave close to the Red Sea. A new road from Cairo leads right to **Deir Anba Bola** also known as the **Monastery of St. Paul the Hermit**. After our visit to the monastery and lunch at a guest house close to the monastery, we will transfer to the **Monastery of St. Anthony the Great**, which remains as one of the largest and most important monasteries in the Coptic church. When St. Anthony started living as an anchorite in a cave high in the mountain, he had no disciples. However, toward the

end of his life, other monks joined in the surrounding area. The community grew, and to this day, churches and vestiges of the earlier structures from different periods can be seen on the territory of the vast complex. The actual **cave of St. Anthony** is also available to those who are physically fit as you'll need to climb some **2000 stairs** in order to reach the cave. Late in the evening, we will return to Cairo for the night. Overnight: **Cairo**

Day 6. Monday, November 3, 2025

Today we will explore the **Old City of Cairo**. Included in the visits we will make today, there will be stops at several ancient Coptic churches in Old Cairo, among them **The Hanging Church, Sts. Sergius and Bacchus Church, St. George Greek Orthodox Church** and the **Ben Ezra synagogue**. The Synagogue is a former church that Coptic Christians needed to sell to pay taxes to the Islamic overlords. Another stop in the Old City will be the **Coptic Museum**. The Coptic Museum has an amazing collection of the Ancient Christian Artifacts. We do need to say that in comparison to the studies of Ancient Egypt, the history of early Christian communities in the land was greatly overlooked and remains somewhat obscure and relatively less known to the general public. Nevertheless, they have their own unique history, and the collection of the Coptic Museum located in a splendid Eastern mansion—which deserves a tour on its own—offers an incredible insight into this unique subject. In the afternoon, we will visit new St. Mark's Cathedral and the Martyrs' memorial located in Coptic patriarchal compound. Overnight: **Cairo**



Day 7. Tuesday, November 4, 2025

Early in the morning, we will begin our journey south. First, we will “dive” into Egyptian Antiquities by exploring two vast Egyptian **necropolises at Saqqara**. Most people are familiar with the Egyptian pyramids on the Giza plateau in the suburbs of Cairo. But prior to Giza, dozens of pyramids were built, each one of them surrounded by vast complexes of residences, and subsequently tombs, of the workers. Contrary to long-held beliefs, the building of the pyramids involved a lot of skilled craftsmanship and not slave labor. At Saqqara, we will visit the step Pyramid, the **Tombs of the Nobles** and the mysterious **Serapeum**. After lunch, we will transfer some distance south to visit a very recent shrine in the **Village of al-Our** dedicated to **New Martyrs**, most of whom were from that village, and who perished in Libya at the hands of extremists. The video of their gruesome



execution at the reomte beach in Libya was shown on nearly all major TV channels across the world. Some years later, their remains have been uncovered, identified and brought back with great honor. Overnight: **Samalut**

Day 8. Wednesday, November 5, 2025

This morning, we will visit an important Christian Holy Sites - right next to our hotel, a tiny and humble church and holy site, made from the **cave**, believed to be a **refuge for the Holy Family** during their sojourn through Egypt. From Samalut we will drive on, cross the Nile and will reach **Beni Hasan**, the site of an **ancient Egyptian cemetery** with splendidly decorated carved stone tombs. Due to the distance from the river, the tombs were cut into the rocks on the eastern side of the Nile. The tombs belong mainly to the members of the provincial ruling elite. Among the varied scenes depicted on the walls of the tombs, there are numerous portrayals of both daily life and warfare. The scenes of the



Eastern nomads seeking refuge in Egypt and crude graffiti of the **Early Christian monks** are of particular interest to our **Biblical and Early Christian focus** of the tour. Our last stop of the day will be **Tel Amarna**. Tel Amarna, or Tell al-Amarna, is the site of the ruins and tombs of the **city of Akhenaten**, the “heretic” ruler of Ancient Egypt. During his life he attempted to abandon Egypt's traditional polytheism and to introduce the worship of the Aten, a disc of sun. Akhenaten and his new capital built specifically for this new religion were lost in history until the excavations in the late 19th century that brought the ruins of his great capital back to light. Interest in him as a patron of art is great, even though he is overshadowed in the popular mind by the famed beauty of his queen **Nefertiti** and the treasures from the tomb of his son **Tutankhamun**. Overnight: **Al Minya**

Day 9. Thursday, November 6, 2025

In the morning, we will continue our journey south. Near **Sohag**, we will explore two ancient Coptic monasteries, known as the **Red or White Monasteries**. These are some of the oldest in existence and still partially preserved in their original form as ancient monastic sites. From the beginning, both communities were established after the **Pachomian** order as places of

communal living. The walls of two great basilicas that witnessed once greatly populated communities still stand, and what once used to be altar areas are now used as a monastery chapel. A unique architectural chapel in the Red Monastery still contains a great deal of sacred art that dates to Late Antiquity. **Frescoes** in the church were completed sometime between the sixth and eighth centuries AD. For dinner and overnight we will arrive at Abydos. Just outside our hotel, there is the **Great Temple of Abydos**, one of the most important historical sites in this area that once was the capital of the Egyptian kingdom. The **temple of Seti I**, known as the **Great Temple**, strikes us with its eerily modern appearance, despite the fact that it was built over 3000 years ago. This magnificent monument is known for the “**Abydos graffiti**,” a very rare example of an inscription in Aramaic, and also for the “**Abydos King List**” – a long list of the pharaohs of the principal dynasties. Their names are carved on a wall of the Temple Gallery. Overnight: **Abydos (Sohag)**





Day 10. Friday, November 7, 2025

After breakfast we will start driving South toward the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes or modern-day Luxor. In about an hour's drive time, we will come to **Dendera Temple complex**, one of the best-preserved temple complexes in Egypt. The original complex was of gargantuan size and covers an area of approximately 40,000 square meters. The temples were of great importance and were used actively throughout their history. The complex has remains of the building activities of the Roman emperors Trajan and Domitian. Hence, here we could see not only pharaonic, but also **Ptolemaic art**. In one of the temples, a spectacular ceiling painting was exposed after

the restoration, presenting some of the most vibrant and colorful paintings from antiquity. Our next stop will be at the **monastery of St. Pachomius**, the father of the Cenobitic monasticism and the younger contemporary of St. Anthony. According to tradition, St. Pachomius was born in Thebes, and one of his foundations is still a functioning monastery where his memory is greatly commemorated by the local Christians. Our last stop of the day will be at the **Karnak Temple**. Karnak temple is a general name for a large area with several large temples dedicated to funerary practices. The site was a holy place for many generations. Along with sacred Egyptian vestiges, we will see inscriptions that bring to memory some **Biblical narratives**, and in one of the edifices we will see remains of the **Early Christian frescoes**. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. Overnight: **Luxor**



Day 11. Saturday, November 8, 2025

Luxor (Thebes of Antiquity) without a doubt is one of the most important, if not the most important place for all interested in the Pharaonic Egypt. Sheer volume, size, splendor, and importance of the Temples and funerary monuments in that area

is impossible to overestimate. Today will be dedicated to the exploration of the **West Bank**. We will visit the world-famous **Valley of the Kings** with many fascinating tombs of mighty Egyptian rulers. It is here that in November of 1922, Howard Carter found the **tomb of Tutankhamun** which would be considered one of the greatest archaeological discoveries ever. A short distance from the Valley of the Kings, there is the **Temple of Hatshepsut**.



It is of great historical importance as it is considered the closest Egypt came to classical architecture. It is hard to enumerate all the fantastic sites in the West Bank, besides the valley with the countless tombs and dozens of temples. Perhaps the **Colossi of Memnon**, and the funerary complex at Medinet Habu (**The Temple of Ramesses III**) are of the greatest interest. In the evening, we will transfer to the airport for our flight to Cairo. Overnight: **Cairo**

Day 12. Sunday, November 9, 2025

Transfer to the airport. Departure back home

OPTIONAL EXTENSION:

For those who would like to, we are happy to offer a four-day extension aboard a Nile Cruise to complete your journey from the North Egypt all the way to the southernmost part, near the border with Sudan. During a relaxing voyage along the mighty Nile, you'll be given a chance to see some awe-inspiring monuments. Complexes at Edfu, Kom Ombo, Abu Simbel, and Aswan itself, are incredibly repositories of history and human devotion to the Divine.



Day 11. Saturday, November 8, 2025

For dinner and overnight board our cruise ship in Luxor. Overnight: **Nile-cruise ship, Luxor**

Day 12. Sunday, November 9, 2025

Today, we will visit another Egyptian sacred area - **the Luxor Temple**. The Luxor Temple that stands some distance away from the Karnak temple area is believed to be the only temple that is dedicated to the rejuvenation of kingship. It is suggested that some of the pharaohs may have been crowned there in a real or mystical way. Exploration of the sites will take most of the morning. From here we will proceed to visit the **Luxor Museum of Pharaonic Art and**

Sculpture. A fascinating collection of ancient artifacts at the Luxor Museum is second-best only to the collection in Cairo. Cruise departure in the afternoon. Overnight: **Nile-cruise ship, Luxor**

Those who would like to will be given a chance to take a hot air balloon ride. Ballon rides are offered very early in the morning with the intent to meet the rising sun in the air.

Day 13. Monday, November 10, 2025

This morning, we will start sailing South toward **Aswan**. Along our way we will have two stops. The first will be in **Edfu**, to visit a **grand temple** dedicated to the falcon-headed god, **Horus**—one of the most important deities in the pantheon of Ancient Egyptians. Besides being of enormous size, the temple is one of the best-preserved ancient shrines in Egypt. Our second stop along the way will be at **Kom Ombo**. The **temple** here is not as well preserved as other monuments, but its features are very inspiring nonetheless. Next to the temple, a “**crocodile museum**” was





recently opened. Time permitting, we will explore its eerie but fascinating collection that consists of statues, inscriptions, coffins, and the crocodile mummies themselves. Overnight: **Nile-cruise ship, Aswan**

Day 14. Tuesday, November 11, 2025

From the boat we will depart for our last “long ride” during this trip. Our coach will bring us almost to the Southern Border of Egypt to **Abu Simbel**. Here at Abu Simbel there are two iconic temples that are as well-known via cultural reference as the Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx. **The Temple of Hathor and Nefertari**, and nearby the mammoth **Great Temple of Ramesses II**, are carved from the rock. Four Colossal sitting statues greet visitors on their entry to the Great Temple. The temple serves as a living legacy of the Pharaoh Ramesses II. Inside the temple there are many

hieroglyphic inscriptions commemorating his great deeds and achievements. Among them there is a description of the battle of Kadesh. In the 20th century, after the High Aswan dam was built, important monuments were threatened with flooding from the artificial lake. Thus, in the late 1960s, the monuments were carefully cut into pieces and relocated to higher ground. That story itself is worth further exploration! The complex is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site is known as the “**Nubian Monuments.**” For dinner and overnight we will return to our boat moored in Aswan. Overnight: **Nile-cruise ship, Aswan**



Day 15. Wednesday, 11.12, 2025

In the morning, we will visit the **Nubian Museum**, which houses an important collection of Antiquities that help us understand the history and development of the region. High on our list is a visit to **Agilkia Island** to see the very impressive and historically important **Philae Temple** that was moved here in 1970 as part of



International Airport (CAI)

the UNESCO Nubia Campaign project. This was done in order to save it from permanent flooding caused by the construction of the high Aswan dam. Temple features are a great testimony to the Ptolemaic reign in Egypt and subsequent gradual Christianization of the area. Walls of the temple contain many signs of the historical and religious changes in the area. Later in the evening, we will take a flight back to Cairo. Overnight: **Cairo**

Day 16. Thursday, November 13, 2025

Transfer to the airport.

Departure back home from **the Cairo**



PRICING AND INCLUSIONS:

Price includes:

- Accommodations in "****/*****" hotels along the way
- All breakfasts, all dinners, few lunches (at least two meals daily)
- Private bus transportation along the way
- Group transfers from the airport and from the hotel to the hotel in Cairo
- Domestic flight from Luxor or Aswan to Cairo
- All admissions, according to the schedule
- Individual audio system aka "Whisper set"
- English speaking guide/escort during the entire tour
- Water on the bus
- No hidden fees, taxes or surcharges

Price does not include:

- Personal health/accident insurance
- International air tickets
- Transportation to and from the airport if traveling separately from the group
- Private activities: transfers, optional tours, tickets to shows or additional museums.
- Some newly introduced fees that may occur in certain places
- Drinks with meals (soft or alcohol drinks)
- Tips: \$10 per traveler/per day (Your generosity will be always greatly appreciated). Tips will be collected by the volunteer from all group members at the beginning of the trip.

- Anything that is not specifically mentioned in "Price includes"

Financial arrangements:

Tour and two extensions	Price per person/sharing	Single Supplement
Main tour	3200	800
Nile Cruise	1000	725
Alexandria	400	150

Prices indicated are in USD, per person in double/twin occupancy in a group of 26 (for extensions in a group of 15 people or more) participants; Single supplement is indicated in a third column. Please factor that the final price may fluctuate due to the actual number of participants or due to significant difference in exchange rate of local currency vs US dollar at the time of the final payment. In case of need for financial adjustment you'll be informed right away.

All payments should be made by check to: "Palomnik, LLC", and mailed to P.O. Box 1618, Cranberry Township, PA 16066. Any returned checks are subject to a \$25 fee. If you'd like to register online and to pay via credit card, you can do so via this link: <https://tri.ps/IUuIG>. Please beware of the extra credit card fees that are charged by the banking institutions. If you'd like to

pay by Zelle, please use ortours@gmail.com e-mail address. If you'd like to make a bank deposit or need info for a banking wire, please contact us directly.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: The deadline for signing up for the trip is July 1, 2025. The entire amount is due 91 days prior to departure, July 26, 2025. Failure to pay in full by July 26, 2025 without written notice of explanation may lead to the cancellation of your participation, with no refund of any previously committed funds. If you would like to join us after the deadline, please check with the coordinator regarding availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: If you need to cancel after you signed up, penalty is:

- 25% of the tour cost, 91 to 61 days prior to the departure
- 50% of the tour cost, 61 to 31 days prior to the departure
- 100% of the tour cost 31 or fewer days prior to the departure

All cancellations must be done in writing as well and sent directly to agent/coordinator - Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky and must be received for reimbursement by the dates shown in the cancellation schedule. We also have to add that should cancellation or alteration of the program occur due to COVID and associated emergencies, civil disturbances, acts of terrorism, war, natural disaster, and other events of force majeure or acts of God (including threat or fear of same), refunds will be made only to the extent that they are recoverable, and that such cancellation or alteration may result in the total loss of funds paid by participants. It is assumed each participant has reviewed the same with respect to their own comfort level of risk and personal safety. A decision to withdraw from the trip for these reasons or any others will be bound by the same terms of cancellation.

ALTERATIONS TO ITINERARY:

Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky reserves the right to alter, modify or withdraw the itinerary if air schedules and/or events beyond his control deem it necessary. In the event it becomes necessary for the comfort or well-being of the travelers to alter or modify the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty to the tour operator and are not grounds for cancellation with refund. Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky assumes no responsibility over any consequences as a result of any participant deviating from the group tour. Because of the difference in language and customs, it is expected that the traveler will follow the directions of the Tour

Director at all times. Tour Director reserves the right to restrict a person's participation in the group's activities, including exclusion from the group, when, in the opinion of the Director, such action is necessary.

REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

A passport with validity for at least six months beyond end of stay
Egyptian visa to be obtained on arrival to Egypt, at the airport. Meet and assist will be arranged to help you with this process (included in the price).

IT IS STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT YOU:

- Obtain insurance covering medical needs and coverage of personal property
- Be aware that financial coverage for all emergency medical and other emergency needs will be your sole responsibility. We will provide all possible logistical and personal assistance, but the financial aspect is your responsibility.
- Act in a manner consistent with the surrounding environment
- Make arrangements to have access to sufficient funds to cover personal needs and unexpected events
- Be aware that the places that we will be visiting may not have the same amenities that you are accustomed to. Medical facilities in some areas may be limited. The financial coverage for all emergency medical and other emergency needs (including those related to COVID hospitalization, treatment, or quarantine) will be your sole responsibility. We will provide all possible logistical and personal assistance, but the financial aspect is your responsibility.

This agreement becomes effective upon acceptance into the tour by Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky

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REGISTRATION FORM:
Journey through the land of the Pharaohs and the Desert Fathers
OCTOBER (27) 29 – NOVEMBER 9 (13), 2025

*To register: please complete this registration form and return it along with
your deposit check (USD1000.00) made to PALOMNIK, LLC to the following address:
Palomnik, LLC, P.O. Box 1618, Cranberry Township, PA 16066.
Please write "EGYPT 2025" on the memo line.*

Full Name (exactly as in your passport):

Date of Birth (day/month/year):

Nationality, Passport # :

Issue and expirations date (day/month/year):

Address:

City, State, Zip/Postal Code

Home phone:

Alt. phone and Email:

Emergency Contact Information (Name, Phone, Relation):

Medical restrictions:

Dietary restrictions:

Please indicate if you'd like to participate (*please put an "X" mark if you'd like to participate*):

Main part of the tour [] Alexandria prequel [] Nile cruise []

Would you prefer single accommodations at additional costs specified in the itinerary?

Please let us know if there is anything else that we should know in order to make your travel experience more comfortable and pleasant:

Your signature below confirms that you have read the itinerary and agree to abide by Terms and Conditions that accompany the itinerary.

NAME/SIGNATURE:

DATE: