

# Enchanting and exciting Egypt

Ros at AMA Travel Queensland is happy to tell you that Egypt is her favourite travel memory! For centuries, the iconic sights of Egypt have held visitors under their magic. From the pyramids of Giza to the pharaoh's tombs, Egypt is a veritable melting pot of ancient history, with a cultural history so different to our own. Exploring the country, the rich history and beautiful monuments are sure to amaze you.



## LUXOR

You can tour many of the tombs in the Valley of Kings and Valley of Queens, with walls and ceilings covered in paintings and hieroglyphics, and see the Colossi of Memnon. The Colossi are two somewhat worse-for-wear seated statues, sitting 18 metres high. They are all that remain of the funerary temple of Amenhotep III, constructed on the Nile's flood plain. The temple of Queen Hatshepsut is in much better condition, since it's further away from the river. Carved into the mountain that borders the Valley of the Kings, many of her statues and pillars still stand intact. The Luxor Temple is a strikingly graceful monument in the heart of a modern town.

## ASWAN

Aswan is one of Egypt's most tranquil and attractive towns and is about 200km south of Luxor. Aswan snakes through large granite outcrops in and around the Nile. These protrusions made navigation on the river difficult, but also made Aswan a strategic gateway to the trading routes of the south. Moreover, they made the city a fortress against invasion from the south. Backed by orange-hued dunes, this is the perfect place to stop and unwind for a few days.

## THE MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES

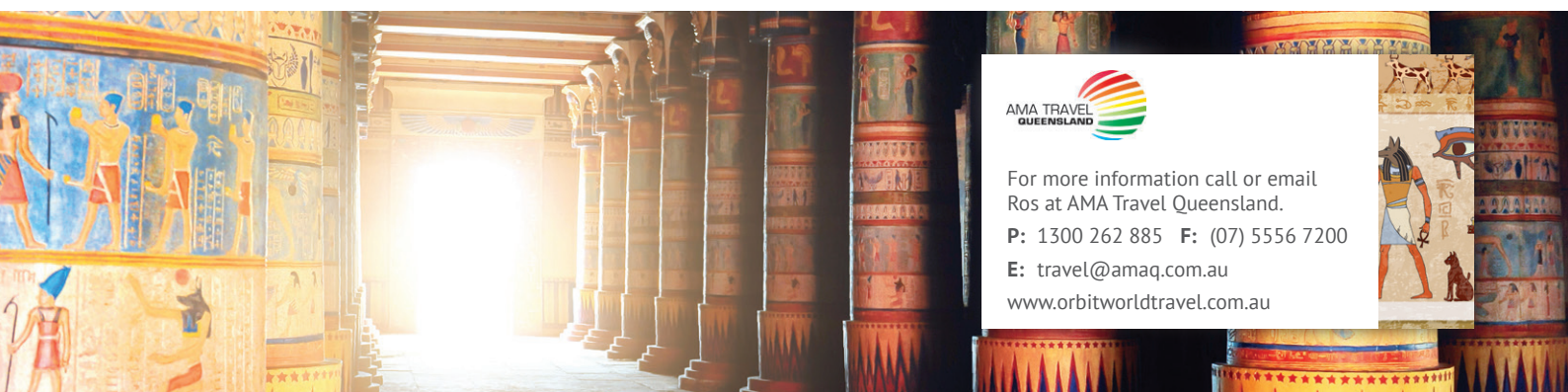
Built before Egypt became independent, the museum is home to many magnificent treasures from the days of the pharaohs. Additionally, there are artefacts from the period after Alexander the Great brought Egypt into his empire. This move started a lineage of Ptolemaic kings and queens, including Egyptian Queen Cleopatra VII. However, the ornate death mask of Tutankhamun is certainly the most famous relic in the museum.

## MEMPHIS

Memphis is south of the Nile River Delta, on the west bank and about 24km south of modern Cairo. Home of the Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, Memphis covers many other ancient ruins as well. The Sphinx and the three great pyramids are without a doubt the most well recognised Egyptian attractions. The ancient ruins of the Memphis area were collectively designated as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage site in 1979.

## THE TEMPLES OF RAMSES AND HATHOR

The Temple of Ramses II and the Temple of Hathor stand next to each other in Abu Simbel. Cut into the rocks lining this part of the Nile, they are 40km north of the border with Sudan. Inside you'll find large statues and rooms covered in stone carvings showing Ramses defeating and imprisoning his enemies. Ramses built these temples as a reminder to those living further south of Egypt's power. The building of the Aswan high dam and the subsequent filling of Lake Nasser threatened to submerge the temples. Therefore, starting in 1964, they were moved 65m higher and 200m back from where the river had been. The cut marks from the stone saws are still evident, but it was certainly a remarkable achievement.



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