

AMAZING EGYPT & TURKEY 2011

Hosted by
Angelika Nemeth & Fahtiem

June 25 - July 12, 2011

In Egypt the tour includes the AHLAN WA SAHLAN dance festival

(B) Breakfast **(L)** Lunch **(D)** Dinner

SAT/SUN 25/26-JUN / Day 1 & 2

Arrive at 3pm at LAX airport in Los Angeles for our 5:55pm departure on Turkish Airlines. We'll check in as a group for our non-stop flight to Istanbul where we connect to our flight to Cairo.

MON 27-JUN / Day 3

B + Opening Gala Dinner & Show

Arrival in Cairo at 2am. An *Ahlan Wa Sahlan* (AWS) representative will meet and assist us with passport control, obtaining our Egyptian visa (\$20) and changing money. We'll collect our bags at baggage claim, go through customs and board our bus to the luxurious 5-star Mena House Oberoi Hotel in Giza. The hotel is set in 40 acres of gardens with unparalleled views of the Great Pyramids. We'll have a few hours to sleep before the festivities begin with our daily buffet breakfast. Afterwards we'll meet to finalize class selection for the AWS festival. Fahtiem and I will register you. In the afternoon we'll visit the Khan El Khalili Bazaar a major *souk* in the Islamic district of Cairo. One "must stop" is Mahmoud's "Al Wikalah", a 4-storey building filled with everything from complete costumes to scarves, swords and canes. You'll also have some time to wander through the bazaar. In addition to shops, there are several coffeehouses, restaurants, and street food vendors distributed throughout the market. The coffee shops are generally small and quite traditional, serving Arabic coffee and usually offering shisha. The al-Hussein Mosque is also in Khan el-Khalili and Al-Azhar University and its mosque are not far away. At an assigned time and place we'll meet our driver to return to the hotel. The star-studded AWS Opening Gala Dinner and Show (included in your price) begins at 8:30pm.

TUE 28 JUN / Day 4 to SUN 03 JUL / Day 9

B Daily + Finale Gala Dinner & Show

Buffet Breakfast daily. AWS classes and lectures start. There will be many vendors at the festival for more shopping opportunities. Lunches and dinners except for the Finale Gala are on your own. The hotel and the nearby area have lots of good restaurants. During the Festival we offer optional tours to local sites and events. Every evening during the Festival there is a dance show. July 3rd is the last evening of AWS with the Finale Gala Dinner and Show at 8:30pm (included in your price) featuring an array of renowned dancers & musicians.

MON 04-JUL / Day 10

B + Cairo Nile Dinner Cruise & Show

Buffet breakfast. We have the day to relax or to go back to the bazaar for more shopping. An evening tour is included in your price: Cairo Dinner Cruise and Show on the Nile at 10:30pm featuring a prominent oriental dance star.

TUE 05-JUL / Day 11

B, L Full Day Tour

Buffet breakfast. At 9am we board our private air-conditioned bus for a full-day tour with lunch. We will visit the Giza Pyramids, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and the only one to remain largely intact. We'll also view the lion-bodied Sphinx and the ancient royal necropolis of Saqqara which has the world's oldest pyramid, the step pyramid of Pharaoh Zoser. We'll end our tour by visiting papyrus and perfume shops. Evening at leisure. There are Oriental dance shows in the hotel's night club, Abu Nawas, or we can arrange an optional evening tour.

WED 06 JUL / Day 12

B, L Full Day Tour

Buffet Breakfast. At 9am we board our private air-conditioned bus for a full-day tour with lunch. We will visit the renowned Egyptian Museum in downtown Cairo, the Salaheddin Citadel and the Mohamed Ali Mosque, also known as the Alabaster Mosque because of the extensive use of this material. From its arcaded courtyard, there is a magnificent view across the city to the pyramids in Giza. Evening to relax and prepare for our next day's departure.

THU 07-JUL / Day 13

B

Buffet Breakfast. Hotel check-out. Morning pick-up for our transfer to the Cairo Airport and our flight to Istanbul, Turkey, where we'll go through passport control, get our Turkish Visa (\$20), change money and collect our baggage. We'll be met by our Troy Tour representative who will transfer us to our 4-star Prince Hotel in the historical Sultanahmet section of Istanbul. This area also has a large concentration of carpet and souvenir shops, hotels and guesthouses, cafes, bars and restaurants. The rest of the afternoon & evening at leisure.

Note: We have allowed enough leisure time for you to experience the many fascinating adventures that Istanbul offers: Enjoy a traditional Turkish Bath (aka Hammam); Shop at the Grand Bazaar and/or at the many shops along the streets; Attend a Whirling Dervish show; Have a private meeting with a prominent costume designer; Take a group or private dance class in the Romany (Gypsy) style; Go to local nightclubs to see Oryantal & Folkloric shows; Go to the Blue Mosque Sound & Light show; Take optional tours to sites in Istanbul or take a day trip outside of the city, e.g., Ephesus, Cappadocia, The Black Sea for swimming & beaches, etc. There are numerous possibilities.

FRI 08-JUL / Day 14

B, L Full Day Tour

Buffet Breakfast. Our full day tour with lunch includes the Blue Mosque (aka Sultan Ahmet Mosque). It is Istanbul's only mosque with six minarets. The interior is stunning, from the vast central dome, to the more than 250 windows, the 20,000 blue Iznik tiles, and to the *mihrab* (prayer niche) containing a piece of sacred black stone from Mecca. Our next stop is the Topkapi Palace, the crown jewel of the Ottoman Empire with its treasury and exotic buildings. It was originally built as a summer residence and the seat of government in the 16th century. Sultans abandoned it for the Dolmabahçe Palace in 1855, but many of the sumptuous jewels of the original treasury, silk ceremonial robes, Chinese ceramics and the collection of manuscripts all convey the old Ottoman opulence. We'll also visit the Grand Bazaar, a labyrinthine covered market which dates back to Byzantine days, where you can find calligraphy, carpets, gold and silver jewelry, flower-bedecked ceramics, belly-dancing outfits and much more. The complex also contains two mosques, money change offices, a police station, cafes and an information point. Bargaining is essential. (Open Mon-Sat 9am-7pm) Evening at leisure (see Note above) Perhaps a relaxing *hammam* and dinner at a local restaurant.

SAT 09-JUL / Day 15

B, L Full Day Tour

Buffet Breakfast. Our full day tour with lunch includes a cruise along the Bosphorus and a visit to the Dolmabahçe Palace, a symbol of the magnificence and decadence of the 19th-century Ottoman Empire. Our tour will also stop at the Egyptian or Spice Bazaar. This market, facing the Golden Horn, was built in the 17th century. Originally famed for its exotic spices and oils from the Orient, these days it also sells dried fruits, caviar and Turkish delight, as well as a variety of souvenirs. Its surrounding streets are a hub of commercial activity, with local craftspeople, traders and a great selection of cheeses and olives. We will also visit the The Hagia Sophia known as *Aya Sofya* and translated as "Church of Divine Wisdom". It was built in the 6th century and is considered an exquisite example of Byzantine architecture. After the Ottoman conquest, it was converted to a mosque and today is one of the most magnificent museums in the world (closed on Monday). Evening at leisure

SUN 10 JUL / Day 16

B

Buffet Breakfast. Day & evening at leisure for an optional day trip outside of Istanbul or perhaps a local tour or more shopping!

MON 11-JUL / Day 17

B, D

Buffet breakfast. Morning and afternoon at leisure.

Farewell dinner at the Galata Tower night club with an exciting Oryantal dance show (included in your price).

TUE 12-JUL / Day 18

B

Buffet breakfast. Morning transfer to airport for our non-stop Turkish Airlines flight to Los Angeles

If necessary, we reserve the right to change the itinerary as needed. Thank you - Angelika & Fahtiem