

Published based on [The Nile Yesterday and Today](#)

# **The Nile Yesterday and Today**

If you are looking for a travel destination featuring famous historical sites, majestic monuments, and plenty of things to do, no country fits the bill more than Egypt. Who hasn't heard of the ancient Pharaohs, the famous pyramids, King Tutankhamen (King Tut), Cairo, the Sphinx, and ancient Egyptian mummies? With endless ancient and modern attractions to suit people of all ages and all backgrounds, it's not surprising that Egypt is included on almost all Middle Eastern trip itineraries and tours.

But perhaps Egypt's biggest and oldest claim to fame is the Nile River. The Nile River of today, said to be the longest river in the world, is the same Nile River of yesteryears mentioned in the Bible. Moreover, the Egyptian people and the land have been dependant on the Nile for food in water for millenniums. In ancient times, if the banks of the Nile River did not overflow each year, there would be no water to irrigate the land, crops would not grow, and a famine would ensue. Later on, when waterways began to be used as thoroughfares for trade, the Nile served Egypt well economically and politically, placing it good standings with neighboring countries. Still today, over 90% of Egypt's major cities and attractions are lined up along the banks of the Nile River, which is why [Nile cruises](#) are so popular and considered one of the best ways to learn about the history of Egypt.

If you are already familiar with the history of the Nile, here are some less-known but equally interesting facts about the world's most famous river :

- The name Nile comes from the Greek word "Neilos," which means valley
- The Nile begins near the equator, flows north along the Saharan Desert, and ultimately empties into the Eastern Mediterranean Sea
- The river is said to be 4,184 miles (6695 km) in length
- The river flows through nine countries but is most strongly associated with Egypt and Uganda
- The remaining countries through which the Nile travels are: Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zaire, Tanzania, Sudan, and Burundi

What else can you expect to be included in [Egypt travel packages](#)? The list is long, but here are some of the highlights.

**Pyramids of Giza:** Nothing is more mysterious than trying to understand exactly how these perfectly shaped massive pyramidal structures were built so many years ago, long before the advent of modern machinery and construction equipment. In fact, the Pyramids of Giza, the tallest of which stands at an astounding 481 feet in height, are one of original Seven Wonders of the World.

**The Sphinx:** If you were mesmerized by the Great Pyramids, you will be equally baffled by the Sphinx, another towering Egyptian pyramid. No wonder archeologists still today are trying to solve "the Riddle of the Sphinx".

**Abu Simbel:** Built by Pharaoh Ramesses II in commemoration of himself and his wife, these two temples are breathtaking in their beauty and much effort has gone into their preservation.

**Cairo:** Of course, no visit to Egypt is complete without visiting its capital city, Cairo. As the center of culture and national pride, the city is home to many fine eateries featuring traditional Middle Eastern dishes, as well as hotels and hostels to accommodate its many visitors. Be sure to spend a morning or afternoon in the Egypt Museum, where archeologists have put together an unprecedented collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts. And if shopping is your passion, you won't want to miss Cairo's bustling bazaars where you pick up some knick knacks and enjoy bargaining with the local merchants.

**Valley of the Kings:** If you don't find the concept too creepy, take a trip to the Valley of the Kings, where Egypt's most famous Pharaohs are buried. The place is crawling with ancient mummies, undiscovered treasures, and is the site of the famed King Tutankhamen's tomb.

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