Cruise Details

Name:	Jordan & Egypt: Petra to the Pyramids, Small Groups
Reference:	TAUCKEPS202712012027
Operator:	Tauck
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Classic
Ship:	Oberoi Philae
Regions:	Nile
Departs On:	12 Jan 27
Departs From:	Dead Sea
Arrives On:	24 Jan 27
Arrives At:	Cairo
Cruise Nights:	12
Total Vacation Days:	13

Itinerary

Day 1: Dead Sea (Jordan)

Tour begins: 5:30 PM, Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea. A transfer is included from Amman airport to the Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea, a luxurious beachfront resort nestled on the shores of the ancient salt lake at the lowest point on Earth. Join us this evening for a welcome reception and dinner tonight.

Arrives On: 12 Jan 27

Day 2: Dead Sea (Jordan)

Set off on an excursion to Jerash, site of one of the best-preserved ancient Roman cities in the Middle East and a window to its past glory as an important imperial city. Your local guide shares expert insights about the sites you will see, including Roman temples, squares, arches, baths and theatres, often colonnaded and always astounding. See Hadrian's Arch, built in 129 AD, the ruins of the Temple of Zeus, the South Theatre, built to accommodate some 5,000 spectators, and the

meticulously restored North Theatre. After lunch at a restaurant in Khayl, drive through Amman back to your hotel. Join us this evening for a lecture from an expert on ecotourism who offers insights on the social complexities of the region and what life is like for young Jordanians today. Dinner tonight is at your choice of selected restaurants.

Arrives On: 13 Jan 27

Day 3: Petra, Jordan (Jordan)

Thousands of years of biblical history unfold today on a visit to Mt. Nebo where you will see the view Moses saw when he looked out over the Promised Land. Continue to Madaba for a visit to St. George Greek Orthodox Church where the remains of the oldest known map of the Holy Land, painstakingly assembled from more than a million pieces of colored stone, cover the church floor. Enjoy a fabulous lunch at a local, family-run restaurant, then drive to the ancient Nabataean city of Petra, carved out of sandstone cliffs around 6 BC, where your hotel is just steps away from the archaeological site. Dine at your choice of restaurants at the hotel.

Arrives On: 14 Jan 27

Day 4: Petra, Jordan (Jordan)

Imagine riding aboard a camel cart through a hidden desert canyon that opens up to a magnificent red rose city dating back to the 1st century BC. Ancient master builders carved palaces, temples, tombs and more into the stone cliffs you will see here today. Picture yourself standing in awe at the 130-foot-high Khazneh, (The Treasury), intricately decorated with Corinthian capitals, friezes, statues and more, like Indiana Jones did in the movie Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. Discover Royal Tombs, celebrating the achievements of the dead long gone and built high on the mountain side, and marvel at the ancient amphitheatre with seating for more than 8,000 spectators, along with numerous temples sculpted in sandstone. Have lunch at an onsite restaurant before returning to your hotel for an afternoon at leisure. Join us tonight for a private tented dinner in the desert, enjoying a fruit-infused hubbly-bubbly smoke, music and dancing by a local troupe of sword dancers.

Arrives On: 15 Jan 27

Day 5: Aswan (Egypt)

Take a morning excursion to the otherworldly landscapes of Wadi Rum, known as the Valley of the Moon for the lunar-like dunes and towering sandstone cliffs found here. Exploring by 4x4 vehicle* makes your visit unforgettable. Fly from Aqaba to Aswan, then drive to your hotel on the banks of the Nile.

Arrives On: 16 Jan 27

Day 6: Aswan (Egypt)

Fly to the Nubian village of Abu Simbel for a locally guided visit to its massive temples cut into a solid rock cliff during the reign of Ramses II in the 1200s BC. The Great Temple stands 98 feet high with four seated colossi flanking the entrance and smaller statues depicting Ramses' conquered enemies lining up below. The smaller temple, some 40 feet high, is adorned by four colossi depicting Ramses and two of his queen Nefertari at a height of 32 feet. Fly back to Aswan, and pause for a photostop at the Aswan High Dam. End your day with a felucca cruise as the sun sets on the Nile; arrive at your riverboat on the Nile; settle in, and dine aboard ship tonight.

Arrives On: 17 Jan 27

Day 7: Edfu (Egypt)

A full day of Egyptian exploration begins with a boat ride to Westbank. Next, take a motorboat to Agilkia Island to see the sacred Temple of Isis at Philae, one of the last of the ancient temples built in the "classic" Egyptian style; when the Aswan dam was built, the temple complex was disassembled and rebuilt on Agilkia Island to save it from being lost underwater. Cruise to Kom Ombo, where its unusual twin temples are just a short walk from your ship. Temple reliefs here feature a unique engraving thought to depict the first representation of medical and surgical instruments. Return to your ship late afternoon and continue cruising.

Arrives On: 18 Jan 27

Day 8: Luxor (Egypt)

Mid-morning, visit the Temple of Horus at Edfu, one of the most beautiful and best-preserved temples in Egypt, with its roof still intact. It took 180 years for the temple to be built and during your guided visit you'll discover why. Massive statues of Horus as a falcon guard entrances and the reliefs on its interior walls relate the story of the birth of Horus and depict Ptolemaic rulers making offerings to the gods and destroying their enemies. Return to your ship for an afternoon and evening at leisure aboard your cruiser.

Arrives On: 19 Jan 27

Day 9: Luxor (Egypt)

Buried under the sand for more than 1,000 years, Luxor's Temple of Karnak is the largest complex of its time ever built, developed over a thousand years. Explore the site with an expert guide who shares insights about its history and construction, including the 134-columned Great Hypostyle Hall. A locally guided visit to Luxor Temple, connected to Karnak by an avenue of sphinxes, and dating back to the 1300s BC, follows. Return to your Nile cruiser for lunch and an afternoon excursion to the Valley of the Queens with a visit to the worker's village, where the tombs of the craftsmen that worked on the Kings and Queens tombs, are beautifully decorated. Continue to the

Valley of the Kings for an after-hours private visit that includes entry to King Tutankhamun's tomb, renowned for the wealth of valuable antiquities it contained when it was discovered unopened in 1922. Return to your ship for dinner at leisure.

Arrives On: 20 Jan 27

Day 10: Cairo (Egypt)

Fly to Cairo this morning, touching down in the late morning. Following lunch at a local restaurant, visit the Grand Egyptian Museum, home to the world's largest collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts, including many of the treasures from King Tutankhamun's tomb. Marvel at monumental statues, intricate jewelry, and millennia-old relics that bring Egypt's storied past to life. Later, check into your room at the historic Marriott Mena House in Cairo, where the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Arrives On: 21 Jan 27

Day 11: Cairo (Egypt)

Drive to nearby Giza this morning for a guided tour of its storied pyramids, including the Great Pyramid of Giza, the last of the ancient Seven Wonders of the World, that have stood as defining symbols of Egypt for millennia. View the most instantly recognizable statue in the world, crafted in limestone with the body of a lion and the head of a king – the Great Sphinx has been mysteriously reclining atop its Giza plateau for more than 3,000 years, guarding still the unanswered secret of who built it and why. Next, visit the pyramids at Saqqara, site of the necropolis (burial ground) for the ancient Egyptian capital of Memphis. The pyramid you will see here is the Step Pyramid, a magnificent reminder of the early architecture of the pharaohs of the Old Kingdom. Following lunch at a local restaurant, return to your hotel for an afternoon at leisure.

Arrives On: 22 Jan 27

Day 12: Cairo (Egypt)

Located on the right bank of the River Nile, the historic district of Old Coptic Cairo predates its modern-day processor with sites that date back to the 6th century BC, including ones allegedly visited by the holy family of Joseph, Mary and the baby Jesus. A guided tour includes Roman ruins, Ben Ezra Synagogue, ancient Coptic churches including St. Sergius and the Hanging Church, and your choice of the Al Rifai Mosque or the Sultan Hassan Mosque, a short drive away. Enjoy some free time to explore as you please before joining us for a farewell reception and dinner at the hotel this evening.

Arrives On: 23 Jan 27

Day 13: Cairo (Egypt)

Tour ends: Cairo. Fly home anytime; hotel checkout time is noon. A transfer is included from Marriott Mena House to Cairo Airport. Allow three hours for flight check-in at the airport.

Arrives On: 24 Jan 27

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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