

Tour Itinerary *for*

THE ULTIMATE TANAKH TOUR

Egypt and Jordan – 31 October to 12 November 2023



TOUR LEADERS: ROSS K. NICHOLS & JONO VANDOR

**Itinerary is subject to change.*

Visit <https://www.tanakhtours.com> to secure your place on this tour!

EGYPT – JORDAN (31 OCTOBER 2023 – 12 NOVEMBER 2023)

DAY ONE – TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2023

Welcome to Cairo, the vibrant and bustling capital of Egypt! Your adventure begins at Cairo International Airport. After going through customs and collecting your bags, you will make your way to the luxurious Barceló Cairo Pyramids Hotel.

As you settle into your hotel, take a moment to marvel at the city's unique blend of ancient history and modern flair. The Barceló Cairo Pyramids Hotel is a perfect starting point for exploring iconic landmarks. Cairo is home to some of the world's most impressive monuments, including the legendary pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, built over 4,500 years ago by the pharaohs of ancient Egypt. On day three, we will explore these magnificent structures up close and marvel at their sheer size and scale. The Giza pyramids, the last remaining wonder of the ancient world, are a must-see for any visitor to Egypt. We will also visit the Sphinx, an impressive statue with a lion's body and a human's head, which is shrouded in mystery and legend.

In addition to its rich history, Cairo is a bustling metropolis full of vibrant markets, delicious food, and lively cultural traditions. Stroll through the city's vibrant streets and immerse yourself in this dynamic destination's sights, sounds, and smells. With so much to see and do in Cairo, you will surely have an unforgettable start to your biblical tour of Egypt, Jordan, and for some, Israel too!

Barceló Cairo Pyramids Hotel

Website: <https://www.barcelo.com/en-us/barcelo-cairo-pyramids/>

DAY TWO – WEDNESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2023

We start our day in the bustling capital city with a tour of the world-renowned Egyptian Museum, home to an incredible collection of artifacts from ancient Egypt. Marvel at the treasures discovered in the Tut-Ankh-Amun burial site, including the iconic golden mask that has become synonymous with the pharaoh's legacy.

We continue our journey to the Citadel of Saladin, a majestic fortress that offers a breathtaking panoramic view of Cairo. Here, we will also visit the stunning Alabaster Mosque, a masterpiece of Islamic architecture that adds a unique and picturesque element to Cairo's skyline.

Next, we will explore the labyrinth of cobbled alleyways at the famous Khan-el-Khalili bazaar, where you can immerse yourself in the sights, sounds, and smells of Cairo's vibrant markets. This vast bazaar is a treasure trove of spices, perfumes, and glittering gold, silver, and brass.

We also hope to visit the historic Ben Ezra Synagogue, which dates back to the 9th century and has a fascinating history. *(Please note that the synagogue is undergoing restoration and may not be open to visitors during our tour.)*

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After a full day of exploring the treasures of Cairo, return to your luxurious accommodations at the Barceló Pyramids Cairo, where you can relax and recharge for the next day of our Egyptian tour.

DAY THREE – THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2023

Prepare to journey back in time and explore the ancient wonders of Egypt on this exciting day of our tour. Our first stop will be Memphis, the former capital of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, and home to a magnificent statue of Ramesses II and an impressive Alabaster Sphinx. Memphis was once a grand city, founded over 5,000 years ago and considered ancient Egypt's cultural and religious center.

Next, we travel to the nearby "Cemetery City" of Sakkara, where you will marvel at the oldest pyramid in the world: the Step Pyramid of King Zoser. This architectural masterpiece was built in the 27th century BCE and was the first of its kind, serving as the inspiration for all later pyramids.

In the afternoon, we will visit the legendary Great Pyramids of Giza, the last surviving wonder of the ancient world. The pyramids were built over 4,500 years ago and were once considered the tallest structures in the world. You will stand in awe of these incredible structures and ponder the mysteries surrounding their construction.

Located nearby, the Sphinx, a mystical statue with a human's head and a lion's body, keeps watch over the plains of Giza. The Sphinx is believed to have been built over 4,500 years ago by Chephren as a guardian of the pyramids.

After a day of exploration and adventure, return to your hotel in Cairo to rest and reflect on the incredible sights and experiences of the day.

DAY 4 – FRIDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2023

After breakfast, we will be transferred to Cairo Airport for our flight to Aswan. (*Note: The flight is approximately one hour and fifteen minutes.*) As you arrive, you will immediately notice the contrast between the bustling city of Cairo and the more tranquil Aswan, which sits on the banks of the Nile River.

Our first stop will be the impressive Aswan High Dam, an engineering marvel that controls the Nile's flooding and generates hydroelectric power for much of Egypt. Built in the 1960s, this massive structure is an important symbol of modern Egypt.

Next, you will visit the beautiful Philae Temple, located on an island in the Nile. Dedicated to the goddess Isis, this temple was nearly lost forever due to the construction of the High Dam, which threatened to submerge it. Luckily, the temple was relocated to higher ground and remains one of the most well-preserved ancient Egyptian temples.

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In the afternoon, we will embark on our Champollion Nile cruise ship. This luxurious ship will be our home for the next few nights as we travel along the Nile, taking in the stunning scenery and ancient sites.

Before setting off, you will enjoy a peaceful Felucca ride on the Nile. A felucca is a traditional wooden sailboat that has been used on the Nile for centuries. As you glide along the river, you will feel transported back in time to the days of the pharaohs.

Finally, we will explore the beautiful Aswan Botanical Garden, located on Kitchener's Island. This tranquil oasis is home to a variety of exotic plants and trees from all over the world.

After a full day of sightseeing, you will retire to your comfortable cabin on board the Champollion Nile cruiser for a peaceful night's sleep on the Nile.

Champollion Cruises – The Champollion Nile Cruiser is a luxurious and comfortable vessel that offers stunning views of the Nile River from its spacious cabins and public areas. On board, you will enjoy delicious meals, a range of amenities, and nightly entertainment, all while experiencing the beauty and tranquility of the Nile River.

Champollion Nile Cruises

Website: <https://champollionnilecruises.com>

DAY 5 – SATURDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2023

After breakfast on the Nile cruiser, we will set off on a mid-day cruise to Kom Ombo, a town on the Nile River's east bank. Here, you will visit the fascinating Temple of Sobek and Haroeris, dedicated to two gods - the crocodile god Sobek and the falcon-headed god Haroeris. The temple boasts stunning views of the Nile River and is known for its unique architecture, which features a double design due to its dedication to two gods.

After we visit the temple, we will return to the cruiser and continue our journey along the Nile toward Edfu. As you sail along the river, take in the stunning views of the surrounding landscape, dotted with palm trees, small villages, and ancient ruins.

In the evening, we will arrive in Edfu, a city on the Nile River's west bank. Here, you will have the opportunity to explore the city on your own or simply relax on board the cruiser and take in the peaceful ambiance of the Nile River.

DAY 6 – SUNDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2023

After breakfast, we will transfer through Edfu to visit the famous and best-preserved ancient Greek-built Horus temple. The temple is dedicated to the Falcon God and was built on a rise to escape the annual flooding of the Nile. It is considered one of the most important and well-preserved temples in Egypt, with impressive reliefs and carvings that depict the ancient myths and rituals of the time.

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After the visit, you will return to your Nile Cruiser and enjoy the changing scenery as you cruise to Esna, where we will cross through the Esna Lock, a fascinating engineering marvel that allows boats to pass through the Nile's changing water levels.

As we continue cruising to Luxor, you can relax on board and enjoy the stunning views of the Nile and the surrounding landscape. Upon arrival in Luxor, we will visit the Luxor Temple, which was discovered beneath the shifting desert sands and originally joined to the Karnak Temple by an avenue of Sphinxes. The temple is a magnificent example of ancient Egyptian architecture, with towering columns, intricate carvings, and stunning statues of pharaohs and gods.

DAY 7 – MONDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2023

In the morning, we travel to the west bank of Luxor to visit Thebes Necropolis and the Valley of Kings. The Valley of Kings is a vast City of the Dead for generations of Pharaohs, where magnificent tombs were carved into the desert rock, richly decorated, and filled with treasures for the afterlife. Explore the beautifully decorated tombs of famous pharaohs like Tutankhamun, Ramses II, and Seti I.

Next, we visit the Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, one of the few female pharaohs who ruled ancient Egypt. This stunning temple, set against the backdrop of the rocky cliffs, is a remarkable example of ancient Egyptian architecture.

Afterward, we visit the Colossi of Memnon, which are all that remains of the Temple of Amenophis, destroyed by the annual flooding of the Nile.

In the afternoon, we visit the Karnak Temple, one of Egypt's largest and most impressive temple complexes. This vast site was built and expanded over a period of 1500 years, and its magnificent temples, chapels, and obelisks are a testament to the grandeur of ancient Egyptian civilization.

Next, we will transfer to Luxor Airport for a flight to Cairo and then to Sharm el Sheikh, where we will stay overnight at the Double Tree by Hilton Sharks Bay Sharm el Sheikh Hotel. (*Note: The flight from Luxor to Cairo is approximately 1 hour, and the flight from Cairo to Sharm el Sheikh is approximately 1.5 hours.*)

Doubletree by Hilton, Shark's Bay, Sharm el Sheikh Hotel

Address: Sharks Bay, Sharm El Sheikh, South Sinai, Egypt

Phone: +20 69 3603333

Website: <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/sshsbdi-doubletree-sharm-el-sheikh-sharks-bay-resort/>

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DAY 8 – TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2023

Begin your morning with a departure from Sharm el Sheikh, traveling through the mountainous Sinai Desert to St. Catherine's. The town is situated at the base of Mount Sinai and is named after the famous Monastery of St. Catherine, one of the oldest Christian monasteries in the world.

Upon arrival in St. Catherine's, you can climb Mount Sinai, also known as Jebel Musa, which some propose is the Biblical Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. The ascent can take around 3-4 hours, but donkeys or camels can be hired for those who prefer not to walk. Once you reach the summit, you will witness unforgettable and breathtaking views of the surrounding desert.

After descending from the mountain, we will stay overnight in St Catherine's at the Catherine Plaza Hotel St. Catherine's, a comfortable hotel that provides a relaxing atmosphere after a long day of hiking. The hotel is located in the heart of St Catherine's and offers easy access to the Monastery of St Catherine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We won't miss exploring the Monastery and learning about its fascinating history.

Catherine Plaza Hotel at St. Catherine's:

Website: <https://catherineplaza.southsinaihotels.com/en/>

DAY NINE – WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

In the morning, we will depart from St. Catherine's and head towards the Gulf of Aqaba, the eastern arm of the Red Sea. In biblical times, this body of water was one of three called Yam Suf. *(Note: Depending on logistics, we may cross the Gulf of Aqaba at Nuweiba by ferry, which some believe to be the site of the biblical crossing of the Sea/Yam Suf, or we may cross at the Taba Border crossing.)*

Once in Jordan, our first stop is the Hasan Zawaideh Bedouin Camp. Here, you will enjoy authentic Bedouin cuisine and have the option of a desert jeep tour, exploring the stunning landscape of the Wadi Rum. In the evening, you will have the opportunity to experience some of the best star gazing in the world.

We will stay overnight at the Hasan Zawaideh Bedouin Camp, where you will enjoy an authentic desert experience.

Hasan Zawaideh Bedouin Camp

Website: <https://www.hasanzawaidehcamp.com/>

DAY 10 – THURSDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2023

After breakfast at the Hasan Zawaideh Bedouin Camp, we will have some free time to enjoy the stunning desert landscapes and the peaceful surroundings.

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Later, we will make our way to the Petra Icon Hotel in Petra. Located in the heart of the city, the hotel is the perfect base for exploring the ancient city of Petra, which was carved into the red sandstone cliffs by the Nabateans over 2000 years ago.

In the evening, you will have the option to experience Petra at night, where the city is illuminated by thousands of candles, creating a magical atmosphere that is not to be missed.

Petra was the capital city of the Nabatean kingdom and is one of the world's most famous archaeological sites. The town was once a major trading hub renowned for its impressive architecture, including the iconic Treasury, Monastery, and Amphitheatre. You will have a full day to explore this ancient wonder on Day 11, so get ready for an unforgettable experience. We will stay overnight at the Petra Icon Hotel in Petra.

Petra Icon Hotel

Website: <https://www.petraiconhotel.com/>

DAY ELEVEN – FRIDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2023

After breakfast at the Petra Icon Hotel, we will embark on a full-day tour of the ancient city of Petra. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the world's most famous and impressive archaeological sites. You will begin by walking through the narrow Siq, a winding canyon flanked by towering sandstone cliffs that eventually opens up to reveal the iconic Treasury carved into the rock face.

From there, we will continue our exploration of the site, marveling at the intricate facades of the Royal Tombs, the towering Monastery, and the impressive amphitheater. Along the way, our expert guide will provide insight into the fascinating history and culture of Petra's Nabatean civilization.

After a full day of exploration, we will return to the Petra Icon Hotel for a relaxing evening and a good night's rest before continuing on our tour of Jordan.

DAY TWELVE – SATURDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2023

After leaving Petra, we will make our way to Wadi Mujib, known in the Bible as the River Arnon. One of the trip's highlights is visiting this stunning Wadi, a breathtaking canyon rich in natural beauty and biblical history. Ross K. Nichols will guide us through this remarkable landscape, sharing his insights into the biblical significance of the area and its relevance to the stories of the Hebrew Bible.

In particular, Nichols' expertise on the Shapira story is of great value during this visit to the Wadi Mujib. As told in Nichols' book, *The Moses Scroll*, the Shapira story involves a controversial set of biblical manuscripts discovered in the late 19th century and initially dismissed as forgeries. However, some scholars, including Nichols, now believe these manuscripts may have been authentic and could represent the oldest known biblical texts. Nichols' unique perspective on this fascinating topic will surely enhance your understanding and appreciation of the Wadi Mujib and its biblical significance.

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From there, we will visit Tel Dhiban, where the famous Moabite Stone, aka Mesha Stele, was discovered in 1868. This important artifact contains an inscription describing the military achievements of King Mesha of Moab and his successful rebellion against the Kingdom of Israel.

Next, we will visit Mount Nebo, where according to the Bible, Moses viewed the Promised Land before his death. According to tradition, this is also where the prophet was buried in an undisclosed grave location.

After Mount Nebo, we will stop at Madaba to see the world's oldest map of the Holy Land in the Church of St. George. This impressive mosaic map dates back to the 6th century of the common era and provides a unique insight into the geography and religious significance of the area.

We will spend the night at the Gerasa Hotel Amman, and if we have time, we will visit the Jordan Museum, which houses an impressive collection of artifacts from Jordan's rich history. *(Note: This day is quite full, and we may not have time to visit the Jordan Museum on this day, depending on how long we spend at each location.)*

Gerasa Hotel Amman:

Website: <https://www.gerasahotel.com>

DAY TWELVE – SUNDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2023

Today marks the end of our tour for some. We begin the day by visiting the ancient city of Jerash, one of the best-preserved Greco-Roman cities in the world. We will explore the well-preserved ruins, including the impressive colonnaded street, temples, and theaters. *(Note: If time permits, and we didn't visit the Jordan Museum on Day Eleven, we plan to visit the Jordan Museum on this day.)*

After we visit Jerash, we will make our way to the border for passage into Israel. Those not continuing on the Tanakh Tour of Israel will be dropped off at the international airport in Amman. Those continuing on the tour will cross the border into Israel and meet with participants who have just arrived. From there, the Israel tour will begin.

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PRICES & AVAILABLE DISCOUNTS

Egypt/Jordan

Adult – \$2,995 (USD) twin share (LAND ONLY).

A single Supplement is an additional \$795.

Child – \$1,995 (USD) (12 years and under, shared with parent/guardian, LAND ONLY)

Price Includes:

- 13 Days / 12 Nights
- Entrance fees to all tour sites
- Quality accommodation and transportation
- Egyptian & Jordanian tour guide
- Breakfasts and dinners
- Tips to driver and guide

Available discounts:

- \$100 loyalty discount for previous Tanakh Tour participants.
- \$100 discount for participants who select Egypt/Jordan AND Israel Tanakh Tours.

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