

Honouring the Gods: Egypt's Ancient Temples

Sacred sites of worship, learning, healing and love in the Land of the Pharaohs

浩瀚蒼宇中神的囑託

——走訪宏偉的古埃及神廟

「望先帝之舊墟，慨長思而懷古」——埃及古老的神廟蘊藏了豐富的古文明及歷史，充滿了神秘和難解之謎。巨大偉岸的神廟令人望之興歎點綴在蒼茫的沙漠中，更添增了幾許思古幽情。

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埃及最古老的獅身人面像和吉薩金字塔，
位列世界古代七大奇蹟之一。

The Great Sphinx and Great Pyramid of
Giza — the oldest, lone surviving Seven
Wonders of the Ancient World.



流金般的黃沙吹過眼簾，眨了一下眼睛，彷彿看到了新沐後的埃及艷后，芙蓉般款款地從神廟外那座石池走上來。她抬起頭來，望向神廟——彷彿與她深邃的眼神對視，心裏一動，回神，眼前仍舊是黃沙漫漫——石池已空，只留下池壁滿滿的棕櫚樹和吹過二千多年的風沙聲。走到宏偉的哈索爾神廟外，埃及艷后和她兒子——末代法老王「小愷撒」——巨大的浮雕赫然出現在高大的石牆上，不禁想起張衡《東京賦》：「望先帝之舊墟，慨長思而懷古。」經過了二千多年的歲月更迭，人事已非，神廟依舊——宏偉、莊嚴。

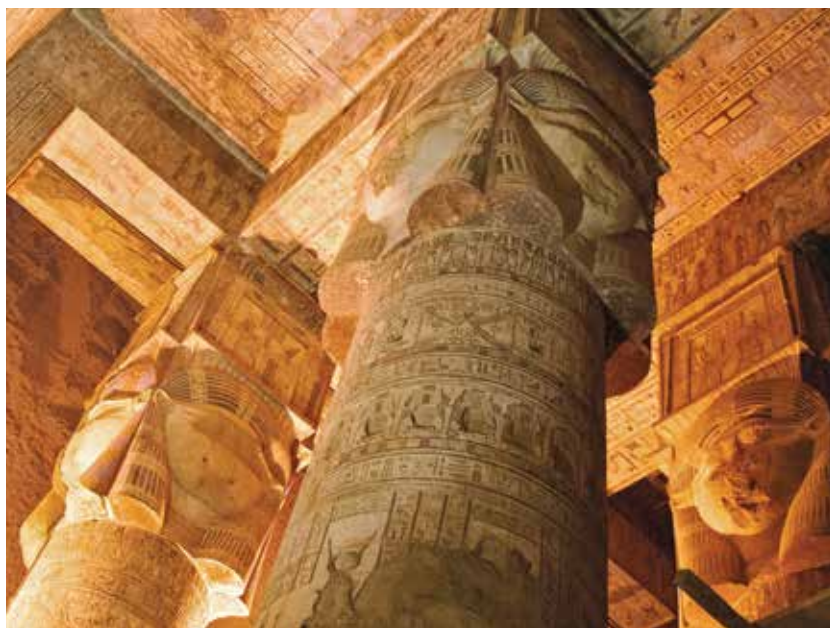
這座歷經二千多年風霜仍舊屹立不搖的神廟，祭祀著哈索爾——一位古埃及女神，代表著愛、幸福、母愛、療癒及富裕。走進神廟，沿著幽暗的長廊，看著兩側牆上的壁畫，猶如一部圖畫史書。看著看著，這些雕刻在牆壁上的人好像走了出來，帶我們回到了二千多年前，訴說著古埃及文明的點點滴滴。抬頭看，神廟的天花板定格住了古埃及神話的天空——夢幻般的天藍色和金色的圖像，告訴我們日夜的興衰與輪迴：哈索爾的母親天空女神，每天傍晚，必會吞噬

Did Cleopatra look out from this spot in Dendera's Temple of Hathor at the sacred lake below? Perhaps. Our Egyptian guide tells us she loved bathing in the rectangular stone pool, now empty but for palm trees growing within its walls. Carved on an outside temple wall, there's a large *bas* relief of Egypt's last Pharaoh and her son, Caesarian, fathered by Julius Caesar — one of the few surviving depictions of Cleopatra.

Built between 125 B.C. and 60 A.D., the temple was dedicated to Hathor, the cow-headed goddess of love, happiness, motherhood and healing. The ceiling is intricately painted with fantastic azure-and-gold images of the sky goddess Nut (Hathor's mother) swallowing the sun, a winged disc, each evening and giving birth to it again each dawn. A crypt, which we enter by

上圖：丹達臘·哈索爾神廟的入口，這裏曾是埃及艷后的沐浴之地。右圖：神廟內供奉著古埃及女神哈索爾，象徵著溫柔、母愛、音樂、舞蹈等美好的事物。

Above: Entrance of Dendera Hathor Temple where Cleopatra bathed. **Right:** Inside the Temple of Hathor, an ancient Egyptian goddess who personifies femininity, motherhood, music, dance and more.





卡納克神廟內，頂天立地的巨大石柱，上面有精細的雕刻。這座古埃及最大的神廟距今約有3,500年的歷史。

Temple of Karnak, featuring gigantic floor-to-ceiling columns with intricate carvings. It is the largest temple complex in the world, dating back to 3,500 years ago.

張開雙翅的太陽金輪，隔天黎明，又再度從懷中誕生太陽。看過了屬於神永恆的輪迴轉生，再來看到的是屬於人的生老病死：我們來到了療養院的泥磚遺蹟，上面還擺放著病人等待祭司治病的長椅。古代的埃及人把病癒的希望寄託於神和神的代言人——祭司。很多人甚至留在神廟過夜，只為了求得女神賜與治癒頑疾的一夢。

沿著尼羅河從亞斯文坐遊輪到底比斯，沿岸可以看到一座座古老神廟靜靜地矗立在蒼茫的沙漠中，散發著令人震撼的神秘之美。

我們來到了底比斯古城，眼前是威嚴肅穆的卡納克神廟。這座祭祀太陽神阿蒙·拉的神廟，在沙漠中屹立了3,500多年，見證了30位法老王的更迭興衰。卡納克神廟是全世界佔地最廣的聖地（超過60英畝），裏面到處是獅身人面像、方尖碑、神社和法老王的巨大雕像。特別引人注目是哈特謝普蘇特女王的方尖碑，29米高的方尖碑由一塊重量超過320噸，完整的粉色花崗岩雕刻而成。這塊近十層樓高的花崗岩，來自數百英里外亞斯文露天礦場，更增添了一抹不可思議的神秘色彩。走進大柱廳，眼前赫然出現了高大無比的擎天巨柱。每根巨柱有七層樓高，直徑3.57米，可容納100人站立在上面。放眼望去，134根巨柱密集而森嚴的立在大廳中，直是震人心魄。

接下來參觀了醫療之廟——康孟波雙神殿。我們順著導遊指的方向看過去，令人訝異的是，牆上的浮雕竟刻著手術剪、解剖刀、牙鉗等，旁邊還刻畫了兩個女人坐在分娩椅上的場景。最後來到了學習之廟——埃德富神廟。看著廟內牆壁刻的銘文，還有學習建築和工程的學生，不禁讚歎要留下這數千年的文明，是怎樣浩大的工程——究竟在這漠漠黃沙中，堅持屹立的幾千年的文明，這久遠而神秘古老的文明，要告訴我們的是甚麼？

「一去紫臺連朔漠，獨留青塚向黃昏」——走過了歷史，走過了眾多神廟。好像，冥冥之中一切自有天意。點綴在蒼茫沙漠中的古老神廟，像是神指尖彈起的幾粒黃沙。人的歷史在黃沙中湮沒，神的囑託永恆地屹立在亙古之中。



幾個世紀以來，旅行者和學者前往埃及探索古老神秘的象形文字，希望能瞭解當年在法老們的統治下，這片土地上人們的生活。

For centuries, travellers and scholars have flocked to Egypt to see mysterious ancient hieroglyphs like these first hand and to try to imagine what life was like during the reign of the pharaohs.

crawling through a narrow corridor on our hands and knees, stored amphoras of perfumed oil for religious ceremonies. We also visit the mudbrick ruins of a sanatorium within the temple grounds — furnished with benches for the sick waiting for cures by the priests. Supplicants would stay overnight hoping to have a healing dream of the goddess.

Egypt's best-known attraction may well be the Great Pyramid of Giza — the lone sur-

viving member of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. But cruise the Nile River between Luxor and Aswan, and you see many ancient temples rising up in the baking desert, just as astonishing for their mystery and beauty.

Karnak Temple in the city of Luxor is truly awe-inspiring. One of the world's largest sacred sites, covering more than 60 acres, it's filled with sphinxes, obelisks, shrines and gigantic statues of pharaohs. Dedicated to the sun god Amun-Ra, it was first built more than 3,500 years ago and added onto by 30 successive pharaohs. We're struck by the dizzying jungle of 134 colossal papyrus-shaped columns in the Hypostyle Hall. Queen Hatshepsut's 29-metre tall obelisk, sculpted from a single piece of pink granite and weighing over 320 tons, traveled hundreds of miles from the distant quarries at Aswan. Our guide suggests it may have been floated down the Nile during an annual flood.

Then there's Komombo Temple, the temple of healing, where our guide points out a wall relief showing surgical scissors, a scalpel, dental pliers and two women sitting on birthing chairs. And Edfu Temple, the temple of learning, with etchings of the scribes and students who studied architecture and engineering here.

Still, our favourite is the temple where roosting birds now sing and the promise of each new day is chronicled – Cleopatra's temple of love.



~ TRAVEL TIPS ~

旅遊行程

除了開羅附近的金字塔，古埃及頂級考古遺址大多集中在南埃及，尼羅河岸盧克索（底比斯）到阿斯旺（亞斯文）兩城之間。要參觀這些神廟和陵墓，最好的行程是搭乘尼羅河遊船。我們搭乘的是豪華尼羅河遊輪——歐貝羅伊的扎赫拉遊輪（The Oberoi Zahra）。遊輪的27間套房都是原木地板，設有大理石浴室和落地窗。上船後，埃及古物學者導遊會帶你參觀旅遊景點。不同於其它遊船三、四天的行程，扎赫拉遊輪提供悠閒的尼羅河七日遊。它也是少數幾個設有參觀哈索爾神廟行程的遊輪。

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當地天氣

埃及全年天晴炎熱，少有避蔭處。十一月到二月是最溫和的月份。旅遊要避開天氣酷熱的六月至八月。

安全狀況

埃及政局騷動集中在開羅，南埃及近幾年來尚都太平無事。但建議遊覽埃及前，還是要查一下加拿大政府發佈的旅遊諮詢訊息。

上圖：乘坐遊船沿古老的尼羅河緩緩航行，沿途可以造訪眾多的古埃及神廟和法老、皇后們的陵墓。

Above: Cruise up the majestic Nile to visit more of Egypt's ancient temples, tombs of queens and sarcophagi of pharaohs.

HOW TO VISIT

Except for the pyramids near Cairo, most of Egypt's top archaeological sites are found along the banks of the Nile River between Aswan and Luxor (Upper Egypt). The best way to see these temples and tombs is on a cruise. We sailed on the Oberoi *Zahra*, built to be the Nile's most luxurious river boat. Its 27 suites feature timber floors scattered with horsehair rugs and marble bathrooms with picture windows. Upon docking, an air-conditioned Mercedes van whisked us and our Egyptologist guide to touring sites. The *Zahra* offers leisurely 7-day river sojourns (unlike 3- and 4-night cruises by most other boats). It's also one of the few boats that cruises to Dendera to see the Temple of Hathor (on a private twilight visit).

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WEATHER

It's hot and sunny all year in Upper Egypt, with little shade. November to February are the mildest months. Avoid June through August, when the heat is intense.

SAFETY

While Cairo has seen unrest, Upper Egypt has been trouble-free for years. But check Canadian government travel advisories before you go.