Friday/Saturday, January 3/4: Arrive in Cairo, Egypt
Depart home on overnight flights to Cairo. On arrival, transfer to the historic Mena House Hotel. From its early days as a royal hunting lodge and later transformation to a deluxe hotel, Mena House has hosted dignitaries and world leaders visiting the Egyptian capital. Spend the afternoon at leisure, then gather for a welcome orientation meeting and reception. Afterward, stroll the grounds and admire the pyramids lit in the evening shadows.
MENA HOUSE HOTEL (R, Jan 4)

Sunday, January 5: Cairo
Marvel at the last standing monument of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Great Pyramids on the Giza Plateau, then enjoy specially arranged access to the “paws” of the 4,500-year-old half-man, half-lion known as the Great Sphinx. Gather this evening for a festive welcome dinner.
MENA HOUSE HOTEL (B,L,D)

Monday, January 6: Cairo/Luxor
Fly to Luxor and explore the fabulous Karnak Temple complex, the largest ancient religious site in the world. Wander among the enormous 134 stone columns, and marvel at the myriad of well-preserved obelisks telling stories of the ancients. Embark the Sun Boat III for an afternoon at leisure on board.
SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)

Tuesday, January 7: Dendera
Leisurely cruising this morning allows for a glimpse of daily life in villages along the Nile riverbanks. Arrive in Qena for a visit to the temple complex of Dendera, dedicated to Hathor, the goddess of love, music, wine, and procreation.
SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)

Wednesday, January 8: Luxor/Valley of the Kings
Enjoy special access to the evocative tombs in the Valley of the Kings, hidden for thousands of years—including the young pharaoh Tutankhamun. In the Valley of the Queens, visit the grandiose mortuary temple dedicated to Hatshepsut, Egypt’s iconic female pharaoh. Continue to the Colossi of Memnon, two massive stone statues of Pharaoh Amenhotep III that have stood in the Theban necropolis since 1350 B.C.E. This evening visit Luxor Temple, brilliantly lit against the darkening Egyptian sky.
SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)
Thursday, January 9: Valley of the Nobles
Cross the Nile to Thebes, ancient capital of Egypt. Early this morning visit the unique tombs of two ancient nobles: Rekhmire, who served as vizier during the reigns of Thutmosis III and Amenhotep II, and Sennufer, the mayor of Thebes and overseer of the gardens of Amun during the reign of Amenophis III. Then marvel at the size, architecture, and artwork of the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, an important New Kingdom structure acclaimed for its inscribed reliefs depicting the rise and fall of the Sea Peoples. This evening enjoy a festive galabeyya (traditional Egyptian garment) party featuring lively music and dancing aboard ship.

SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)

Friday, January 10: Kom Ombo
Cruise to Kom Ombo to explore its unusual double temple, half of which is dedicated to the crocodile god, Sobek, the other half to the falcon god, Horus. Continue cruising to Aswan to visit the island of Agilkia, where the Temple of Isis, once on Philae Island, was relocated when the Aswan Dam project got underway in the 1960s. Now a UNESCO World Heritage site, the island has numerous ruins including the Kiosk of Trajan.

SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)

Saturday, January 11: Aswan/Abu Simbel
Take a short flight to see the astounding monuments at Abu Simbel, located in former Nubian lands. At the twin temples built by Pharaoh Ramesses II, huge statues depict him and his favorite wife, Nefertari. Between 1964 and 1966, during construction of the Aswan High Dam, both temples were dismantled and reconstructed 65 meters higher than their original site to protect them from the rising waters of Lake Nasser. Return to Aswan to view the “unfinished obelisk”—the largest known ancient obelisk—at a nearby quarry. Weather permitting, board a traditional felucca sailboat and sail past Nile River islands Kitchener and Elephantine.

SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)

Sunday, January 12: Edfu
Enjoy the educational program en route to Edfu. Upon arrival, visit the best-preserved ancient temple in Egypt, dedicated to Horus, the ubiquitous falcon-headed god of the Egyptians. The main building includes a great Hypostyle Hall and, just outside, an entrance colonnade that still has original, colored reliefs. This evening enjoy a festive farewell dinner on board.

SUN BOAT III (B,L,D)

Monday, January 13: Luxor/Cairo
Disembark after breakfast and fly to Cairo. After lunch, browse the rich collections of the Antiquities Museum, home of the world's largest collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts. After checking into the Four Seasons, enjoy an evening at leisure and dinner on your own.

FOUR SEASONS FIRST RESIDENCE (B,L)

Tuesday, January 14: Cairo
Today's activities will focus on Islamic Cairo’s significant monuments, including the Ibn Tulun Mosque, the oldest surviving Muslim place of worship; the Mamluk-era Sultan Hassan Mosque and Madrassa; and tour of Coptic Cairo including the Hanging Church. This evening, enjoy a special farewell dinner.

FOUR SEASONS FIRST RESIDENCE (B,L,D)

Wednesday, January 15: Cairo/Home
After breakfast, transfer to the airport for flights home.

(B)

OPTIONAL EXTENSION
JORDAN, JANUARY 15-19
Extend your visit to this remarkable region with a five-night pre-tour extension to enjoy Jordan's archaeology, history, desert culture, and rich cuisine. View the magnificent “rose-red” city of Petra; Embark on a 4-wheel-drive adventure through Wadi Rum; And walk among soaring columns and arches on a guided tour of the ancient city of Jerash.