

# Nile cruises showcase the incredible legacy of the Pharaohs

By: Ian Stalker

**Fadi Thomas is inviting people to opt for a vacation that will enable them to travel the same waterway that Tutankhamen, Ramses II and dozens of other Pharaohs once sailed.**

Thomas is the general manager of Ra Nile Cruises, which has two vessels -- the Ra I and Ra II -- which offer four- and seven-day cruises that link the interior Egyptian cities of Luxor -- a one-time capital of ancient Egypt -- and Aswan, home to both ancient temples and -- on a more modern note -- the Aswan High Dam.

The sailings provide a showcase for Egypt's golden age -- with passengers able to see Pharaonic structures in Luxor -- described by some as "the largest open-air museum in the world," thanks to its incredible collection of temples, monuments and other reminders of the Pharaohs -- and Aswan, as well during stops at the likes of Kom Ombo after their vessel sets sail.

"Here it's relaxing, plus you have all the temples," Thomas says of the cruises.

His company's two vessels -- named after ancient Egypt's sun god and which display other reminders of that storied era -- each carry 146 passengers in cabins that have private bathrooms and televisions, as well as large windows from which to view the passing scenery.

Guests will also find a restaurant, a lounge, smallish bar, gift shop, computer that can be rented and a sun deck with Jacuzzis and a swimming pool, from which they will periodically hear children call "hello" or -- on a more humorous note -- "dive in" from the shores.

An Egyptologist will be on board and nighttime entertainment can

include a belly dancer and a whirling dervish-like performance. "You go on the cruises for more knowledge and good service," says Amin Zeitoun, who has

worked on the Ra I for more than 20 years. Ship employees speak Arabic and different European languages. .Thomas says the waterborne



Luxor



Site near Luxor

vacations are an enjoyable way of seeing some landscapes that in some ways may have changed little since the time of the Pharaohs. “If you want nightlife, you can go to Cairo and Alexandria,” he says. If you want the Red Sea, you can go

to Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada. Aswan and Luxor are more like cultural destinations. This is relaxing, plus you have all the temples. This is very peaceful and relaxing.”