

## Cairo Sightseeing

### 1. The Egyptian Museum

The Egyptian Museum was first built in Boulak. In 1891, it was moved to Giza Palace of "Ismail Pasha" which housed the antiquities that were later moved to the present building. The Egyptian Museum is situated at Tahrir square in Cairo. It was built during the reign of Khedive Abbass Helmi II in 1897, and opened on November 15, 1902. It has 107 halls. At the ground floor there are the huge statues. The upper floor houses small statues, jewels, Tutankhamon treasures and the mummies.

The Museum also comprises a photography section and a large library The Egyptian museum comprises many sections arranged in chronological order

1. The first section houses Tutankhamon's treasures.
2. The second section houses the pre-dynasty and the Old Kingdom monuments.
3. The third section houses the first intermediate period and the Middle Kingdom monuments.
4. The fourth section houses the monuments of the Modern Kingdom.
5. The fifth section houses the monuments of the late period and the Greek and Roman periods.
6. The sixth section houses coins and papyrus.
7. The seventh section houses sarcophagi and scrabs.

A hall for the royal mummies was opened at the museum, housing eleven kings and queens.

More than a million and half tourists visit the museum annually, in addition to half a million Egyptians.



## 2- Cairo Tower

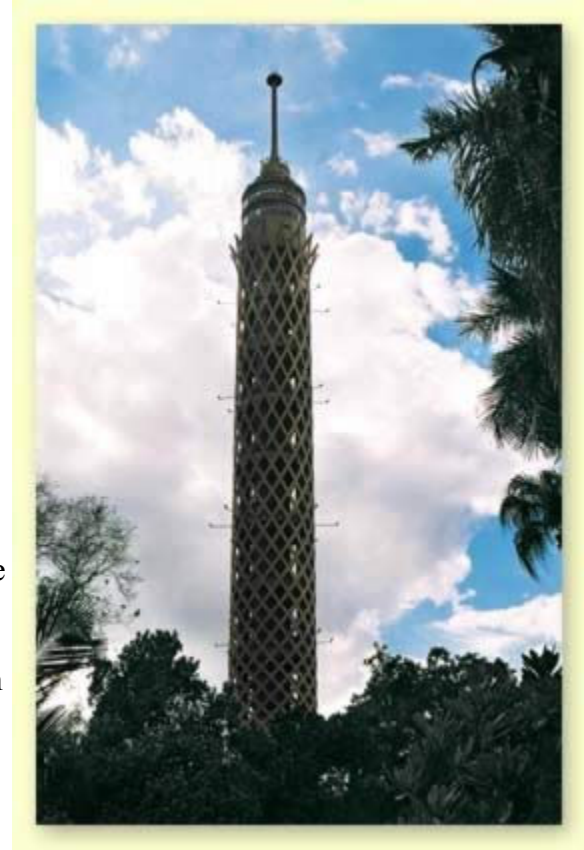
One of the best views is from the Cairo Tower, located on Gezira Island Zamalek just north of the Museum of Modern Art (which is also very much worth a visit), which provides a panoramic vision of Cairo. This 187 meter tall tower, in the form of a latticework tube that fans out slightly at the top, is said to imitate a lotus plant, and ranks only fourth among the worlds highest towers. It is made of granite; the same material often used by the ancient Egyptians, and is about 45 meters taller than the Great Pyramid at Giza.

To the late President Gamal Abdul Nasser, the Cairo Tower was the best place to dine out. He used to go together with his family to dine in the tower's restaurant, where there is also a cafeteria. Today, the restaurant rotates at an almost unnoticeable speed. Signatures of all the presidents and various other prominent figures who visited the tower are here in the honoring book and even engraved in the tower's walls keeping unforgettable memories. But such politicians were not the only ones who loved the tower. In fact, one of its first visitors was Hollywood movie star, Katherine Hepburn, even though the tower had somewhat of a rocky footing back then in Egyptian-American politics. It was actually financed with American funds, but was not exactly what the Americans expected Nasser to do with the money.

Completed in 1961 under the direction of Naum Chebib, some say that the tower is, after the Great Pyramid, Cairo's most famous landmark. Certainly this tallest of Cairo's buildings is a highlight of the modern city

The best time to visit the tower, also known as Borj al-Qahira, is at sunset, when millions of twinkling lights come to life. From here, one can make out on a clear day the easternmost extent of Cairo, where the dark gray buildings run up against the cliff face of the Muqattam Hills. Looking west, the pyramids mark the limits of the city and the start of the desert. Below, the Nile River flows serenely north to the Mediterranean, seeming to slice Cairo in two. To better facilitate the view, there are also telescopes.

The Cairo Tower opens every day from 9:00 in the morning until 1:00 the next morning. The whole of Cairo awaits you at the top of the tower. This is not a sight one should miss. Note that one must pay to take photos from the tower, and video camera tickets are somewhat expensive.



### 3- Museum of Islamic Ceramic Art

The first of its kind in the Middle East, it houses a rare collection of ceramics acquired from different Islamic countries that represent various techniques of decoration applied in the Islamic world from Morocco in the west to Iran in the east. The collection comprises 315 pieces, of which 116 are from Egypt representing popular styles from the different Islamic eras, Umayyad, Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk, 118 pieces in Turkish style ( Iznik and Kutahia ), 25 pieces in Syrian style (Al-Raqqqa), 48 pieces in Iranian style, 2 pieces in Andalusian style, 2 pieces in Iraqi style and one piece in Moroccan style. The ceramics include vessels, jars, tiles, mugs, jugs, bowls, plates, pitchers, vases, lanterns, cups, the oldest dating back to second century Hijra and the most recent dating back to twelfth century Hijra.



The pieces, carefully selected from the acquisitions of the Gezira Museum (150 pieces) Islamic Art Museum (159 pieces) and 6 pieces from the very palace that houses the Museum of Islamic Ceramics, are displayed on two floors in a total area of 420 square meters.