

# *Italian Tourism Co. Ltd*

## SUDAN-NUBIA

### Nile Valley and Western Desert

*16 days expedition – Departures 2014-2015*

**GUARANTEED 3 PAX PER CAR**



#### **Day 1 / Khartoum**

Arrival in *Khartoum* expected in the late afternoon/night. Meet and greet with the guide and transfer to the hotel, dinner NOT included and overnight stay.

#### **Day 2 / Khartoum – Tam Tam - Western Desert**

Breakfast at the hotel and then short tour of *Khartoum*. We follow the *Blue Nile* near the Presidential Palace where in 1885 *General Gordon* was beheaded by the *Mahdi's* troops. We visit the **Archaeological Museum** that, besides many beautiful objects, contains two temples rescued by UNESCO and moved from the *Lake Nasser* area, when it was flooded by the water (*the visit to the Museum can be moved to the last day according to opening time*). We then cross the *confluence between the Blue and the White Nile* and we reach **Omdurman**, the old capital of Sudan, where we see the *Mahdi's* tomb from outside and the **Khalifa's house Museum** (closed on Mondays). Late in the morning we begin the journey northward through the **Western Desert**. We travel for about 200 km on asphalt road in a flat desert where the view can span 360° around. We will stop at **Tam Tam** a "*chai house*", literally tea house, a sort of very Spartan "*motorway restaurant*" in

the desert where local truck drivers usually stop for a quick meal and some rest. Late in the afternoon we leave the road and we find a nice place to camp under the incredible African night sky. Overnight in wild camp. (B.L.D.)

### **Day 3 - 4 – 5 / Western Desert – Wadi el Milk – Jebel Peak – Dongola**

We drive westward in the desert and we reach **Wadi El Milk**, where we find many acacia trees and sometimes Bisharin nomads settlements around the few water wells. Then driving north we cross a wide area of small sand dunes where it is easy to get stuck in the sand. The help of passengers to pull out the cars from the sand is well accepted. We reach a mysterious fortress in the middle of the desert: **Gala Abu Hamed** has been discovered by a German archaeological expedition less than 10 years ago and it is dated to the Napatean time (700-400 B.C.). The ruins of the fortress are mainly huge boundary walls of about 100 m, now partially covered by sand. The place was probably used as a trade post for the caravans coming from Central Africa to the Nile. It remains a mystery how the place could have been inhabited since there is no water at all. Driving northwest deep into the Western Desert we reach a curious mountain in the middle of the desert called by our drivers **Jebel Peak**. Here we can see some interesting prehistoric rock engravings. From here, passing by small beautiful oasis rich in palm trees, we reach the town of Dongola on the Nile where we stock up for the following days. Dinners and overnights in wild camp in the Western Desert. (B.L.D.)



### **Day 6 - 7 / Western Desert – Temple of Soleb - Amara West – Dal Cataract**

We enter again into the desert driving north-west and crossing curious areas of rock overlapping granite boulders: it looks like a playground for giants. We then reach the Nile near the **Temple of Soleb**, the most beautiful Egyptian temple of all Sudan, testimony of the New Kingdom in Nubia, with many walls rich in hieroglyphic inscriptions, bas-relief figures and many columns. The first settlement was an Egyptian colonization dated back 1500 b.C. Here we will spend the night in a typical and simple Nubian house. The day after we continue north visiting **Jebel Dosh** where on a rock just on the Nile we can see some Egyptian stelae of Thutmosis III. We continue north along the new asphalt road because surrounded by sand dunes that arrive till the river. We reach again the Nile near the vestiges of **Amara West**, an archaeological site currently excavated by a team from the British Museum, where we visit the rests of an ancient Egyptian town. Following north we can see the rocks on the Nile that create the rapids of the Dal Cataract. In this very nice area

there are some **Nubian villages** and the people are not used to see foreigners. Dinners and overnights in wild camp.



### Day 8 - 9 - 10 / Delgo - 3<sup>rd</sup> Cataract – Tombos – Kerma – Nubian Villages

After breakfast we continue northward and we cross the Nile with a small ferry. These ferries are a hive of colourful activities. We find ourselves sharing space with people, donkeys, camels and goats (*in case the ferry is not running on this day, we return south to cross the Nile near Delgo without any changes to the visits and inclusions*). Now we drive southward along the road that connects Khartoum to Wadi Halfa, the docking port of the ferries from Aswan. We pass the village of **Delgo**, and few kilometers away we reach the granite boulders of the **Third Cataract** which used to be the third huge obstacle that the ancient Egyptians had to face when trying to sail on the Nile River. We then reach the village of **Tombos** where there are the remains of ancient granite quarries and where we can see a statue of the King Taharqa, simply left there in the desert 3000 years ago. On the Nile banks we can see some Egyptian stelae and inscriptions. This was the southern border of the ancient Egyptian kingdom for centuries. We stop in **Kerma** to visit the majestic "Defuffa" and the rest of this ancient civilization together with the little museum founded by Charles Bonnet where we can see the seven beautiful statues of the kings discovered by the Swiss archaeological mission less than ten years ago. Continuing southward along the Nile we get into the central part of the Nubian region. The population speaks a different language from the Arabs, and also the Islamic religion is not as "strict" as in other regions.



The women don't cover their faces and readily speak to foreigners. We visit the beautiful **Nubian villages** with their painted entrance doors with typical patterns and flowers. Enthusiastic hospitality abounds, people will often

invite foreigners to visit their houses and share a meal or a cup of spiced tea. Dinners and overnights in wild camp. (B.L.D.)

#### **Day 11 / Old Dongola - Nubian Desert - Karima – El Kurru**

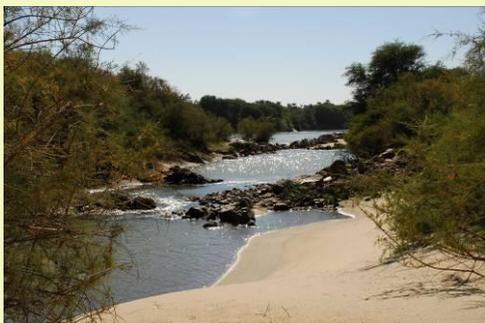
Driving south we reach the archaeological site of **Old Dongola**, where the ruins of a suggestive Christian Coptic temple with marble columns as well as several rest of churches are situated on the banks of the Nile. We reach the small town of **Karima** located at the foot of Jebel Barkal. Landmark in the Nubian Desert, Jebel Barkal can be seen from faraway whilst still in the open desert. At the foot of this wonderful and isolated red sandstone mountain, there is a big temple, dedicated to Amon. Amon's ancient "Pure Mountain" was the religious Nubian heart for more than 1000 years. Besides the ruins of the big temple there are still several sculptured granite rams that were supposed to border a long avenue that probably led to the pier on the Nile. In the mountain wall there is a big room decorated with bas-relief. The **Jebel Barkal** archaeological sites are on the World Heritage list. After the visit we visit the site of **El Kurru** where there is one of the necropolises of the ancient capital Napata. Here we can see two tombs excavated in the rock under the pyramids - partially collapsed. They are totally decorated with amazing images of the Pharaoh, of the gods and multicolour hieroglyphic inscriptions. Not far from here there is an interesting site of petrified wood, an ancient forest with hundreds of huge trunks. Camp in the desert. (B.L.D.) \*\*



#### **Day 12 / Karima – cruise along the Nile - Bayuda Desert – Atrun crater**

We stop in town to stock up. Then we take a suggestive cruise along the river among the remaining rocks of the 4<sup>th</sup> Cataract and exploring, through little walks, the small islands and sandy beaches along the Nile. Arriving on the other shore of the Nile we will meet the cars to reach the site of **Nuri** where several pyramids stand out near the mighty river. Among these we find also the one of the great Taharqa. Little walk among those ancient ruins and then we start the crossing of the **Bayuda Desert**, the area bounded by the loop formed by the Nile between the 4th and the 6th Cataract and characterized by sharp black basalt mountains, most of them volcanic and typically cone-shaped. They alternate with level pebble stretches and large valleys crossed by dry wadis, where little vegetation can be seen. It is very likely to meet isolated groups of Bisharin nomads, who live in familiar groups in small huts made of intertwined branches close to the rare water wells, with their caravans and herds of camels and cattle. Just in the centre of the Bayuda Desert we reach **Atrun Crater**, where nomads gather salt from the edge of a

green colored pool. They collect the salt and load it on camels or donkeys, then move in small caravans to sell it into the markets of the villages along the Nile. An incredible work that remained the same across the centuries. We then look for a nice place to camp. Dinner and overnight in wild camp. (B.L.D.)



### **Day 13 / Bayuda Desert – Meroe**

Today we finish crossing the Bayuda and we cross the Nile on a local ferry-boat. On the other shore we drive on a level ground area and, all of a sudden, we can glance at more than 40 pyramids, located on top of a hill, some of them perfectly preserved that belong to the Royal Necropolis of Meroe. We visit the ruins of the **Royal City**. The excavations confirm that the town of Meroe used to cover a large area and the royal city was located in a central position, surrounded by suburbs and a boundary wall. Most of the area where the city is located, formed by many small hills covered by red clay fragments, has still to be excavated by the archaeologists. Dinner and overnight in wild camp near the pyramids. (B.L.D.) \*\*

### **Day 14 / Meroe – Mussawarat - Naga**

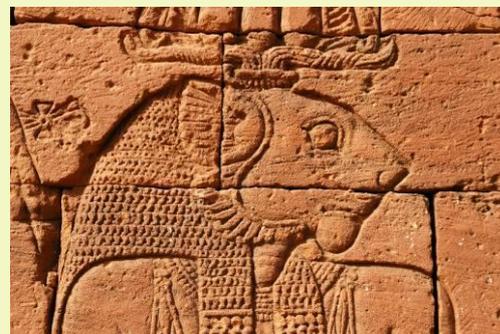
The **Royal necropolis of Meroe** is located at about 3 km away from the Nile on some hills covered by yellow sand dunes. Several pyramids stand out with their sharp shapes against the clear sky. Each one has its own funerary chapel with the walls fully decorated with bas-reliefs that show the King's life and offers to the gods. In the afternoon we reach **Mussawarat El Sufra**. This settlement is located in a beautiful valley crowned by hills. Here the ruins of a very big temple are visible; it once played an exceptional important role. Its main characteristic, the "*Great Enclosure*" is made by many constructions and boundary walls which surround a temple built in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. The large number of elephants represented on these walls makes you think that this animal used to have an important role in this area. Beyond the big *wadi* there is another temple - restored by a German archaeological mission - dedicated to the god *Apedemak*. We then move to the beautiful site of *Naga* for our last camp. Dinner and overnight in wild camp. (B.L.D.)



*The archaeological sites of Meroe, Naga and Mussawarat in June 2011 have been listed in the World Heritage Unesco sites.*

### **Day 15 / Naga – Omdurman - Khartoum**

We begin the day exploring the ancient site of **Naga**, which is located about 30 km to the east of the Nile and it is one of the two centres that developed during the Meroitic period. In Naga, in a typical Saharan environment with rocks and sand, we find a temple dedicated to Apedemak (1st century A.D.): a wonderful building with bas-relief decorations depicting the god with a lion's head, the Pharaoh, noblemen and several ritual images. A few metres away there is a small and odd construction with arches and columns, named "kiosk", in which we can notice Egyptian, Roman and Greek styles, all at the same time. Not far away we reach another temple dedicated to Amon with many statues of rams and beautiful gates decorated with bas-reliefs. Lunch - picnic on the way. In the afternoon we reach and visit **Omdurman souk**. Check in at the hotel in Khartoum where rooms are available in day use until 23.00. Dinner NOT included. Late in the evening transfer to the airport (B.L.)



### **Day 16 / Departure**

Boarding your international flight.

## **THE WILD CAMP:**



*For the overnights in wild camp in the desert we supply the following equipment:*

- *Igloo tents, 2 x 2 m., supplied by the manufacturer for three person but used by two or in single (very easy to set up, 3-4 minutes)*
- *Foam mattresses 5 cm. thick 2 x 0, 60 m.*
- *Folding chairs with arms and folding tables*
- *Gas lights, thermos for water, plates and all the cutlery*
- *A water basin for personal washings*
- *A first aid kit*

*A cook will be in charge of the meals*

**B=Breakfast – L=Lunch – D=Dinner**

## **OUR 4x4 CARS:**



*Toyota Land Cruiser 4,2 lt diesel with 3-4 pax per car*

*Toyota Hilux double cabin 2,7 lt diesel with 3 pax per car*

***The itinerary can be run in opposite direction without any changes for the visits and the excursions.***

## **Land services in Sudan - 16 days:**

### **QUOTATIONS WILL BE SENT ON REQUEST**

#### **The quotation includes:**

- meeting at airport and private transfer to hotel
- 1 O/N at Holiday Villa Hotel (4\*\*\*\*) in Khartoum in BB
- 1 day use rooms available the last day at Holiday Villa Hotel till 21.00
- all the camping equipment for the overnights in camp (igloo tent, rubber foam mattress) and a cook in charge of the meals
- Transport with Toyota Land Cruisers OR Toyota Hilux double cabin (3 pax per car guaranteed)
- TL English speaking
- Sudanese staff
- mineral water outside Khartoum
- meals as per itinerary

#### **The following items are quoted separately and compulsory :**

- National Museum and archaeological sites entry fees
- photo permit
- passport registration

#### **The quotation does not include:**

- meals and drinks in Khartoum
- soft drinks
- sleeping bag, pillow and towel
- video camera permits at the archaeological sites personal expense
- Sudan entry visa and visa authorization
- tips

#### **Prices validity:**

From October 2014 to April 2015

#### **Operational dates:**

<b>1</b>	<b><i>24 Oct 2014</i></b>
<b>2</b>	<b><i>21 Nov 2014</i></b>
<b>3</b>	<b><i>20 Dec 2014</i></b>

<b>4</b>	<b>20 Feb 2015</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>27 Mar 2015</b>

**Cancellation fees:**

- 10% between 30 days and 21 days before departure
- 50% between 20 e 11 days before departure
- 100% from 10 days before departure and no-show

**Milano, 27 February 2014**



Street 31 - Al Amarat, Tel International: 0039 02 34934528 Fax: 0039 02 34934595

E-mail: [international@italtoursudan.com](mailto:international@italtoursudan.com) Web site: [www.italtoursudan.com](http://www.italtoursudan.com)

Skype: [italtoursudansedemilano](https://www.skype.com/name/italtoursudansedemilano)