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GIZA



Giza is part of Greater Cairo and is home to the 2 most recognisable man-made constructions in the world - The Pyramids and The Sphinx.

THE PYRAMIDS

Probably the most famous and recognisable manmade structure in the world, The Great Pyramid of Giza does not require any introduction or description. The only surviving Wonder of the Ancient World, has stood in this location that was part of ancient Memphis, for over 4,500 years whilst Cairo has grown and expanded around it.



Contrary to the common belief, it is only the Great Pyramid of Khufu rather than all 3 of the pyramids that are on the list of Wonders. The monument was built by the Egyptian pharaoh Khufu around the year 2560 BC to serve as a tomb when he died. It is impressive, originally standing some 146.59 (481 feet) high and covering about thirteen acres of land. It was ranked as the tallest manmade structure on the planet until the 19th century. It still seems grander than modern buildings which tower above it. For example, the Empire State Building is over 3 times as tall.

The great pyramid is believed to have been built over a 20 year period. It is thought that around two million stone blocks, each weighing more than 2 tons, were used in the construction of the great pyramid. It is said that the blocks could be used to build a 3m high wall around France.

The pyramids have always been treated with curiosity and have been abused throughout time. The outer casing of limestone was gradually removed and used in other constructions, they have been tunnelled through and climbed with attempts being made to set records for scaling the Great Pyramid. Thankfully this is no longer allowed without special permission, which will hopefully go to preserve these fantastic monuments for another 4,000 years.

Much speculation has been made as to how these magnificent structures were made, who built them (was it aliens???), and what their ultimate use was. Why not see them for yourself and draw your own conclusions!



THE SPHINX

In the shadow of the pyramids is the Sphinx. Nothing can quite prepare you for the time that you first view the Sphinx. Another wonder of creation which raises questions. What did it symbolise? Why was it built? Whose is the face of the Sphinx? Situated at the entrance to the causeway leading to the Great Pyramid, the Sphinx is the body of a lion with the head of a King.

Its entire length is 45m (150 feet) with the paws measuring in at 15m (50 feet). The head is 10m (30 feet) long and 4m (14 feet) wide.

Although the head of the Sphinx is badly battered in some places, traces of the original paint can still be seen near one ear. Originally it is believed that the Sphinx was painted and was quite colourful. Since then, the nose and beard have been broken away. It is often thought that the nose was shot off by Napoleon and his men, but 18th century drawings reveal that the nose was missing long before Napoleon's arrival. In reality, the nose was the unfortunate victim of target practice by the Turks in the Turkish period.