

# CHINESE TOURISTS FLOOD THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS



After years of crisis, more Chinese tourists are traveling to Egypt.

German, Spanish, Russian and more and more Chinese visitors come to the land of Pharaohs to spend their holiday. **Especially in Luxor, the number of Chinese tourists increased.**

The first Chinese restaurants have already been opened on the Corniche along the Nile. "The menu will be mixed, Chinese and local cuisine," says an employee, who explained that one must adapt. Next thing to come is the sound and light show in the Karnak Temple to be offered in Chinese.

Local travel agencies have suffered the lack of visitors for a long time. Many people working in tourism related business lost their jobs and had to go to the factories or find some job in agriculture. However, the travel business is now picking up again at the beginning of the high season compared to the two previous years. The stakeholders remain cautious though as there have been constant ups and downs in recent years due to the political turmoil.

First Germans have returned to Luxor. Then the Spanish visitors and the French. About 50 of the approximately 300 Nile ships are back in service and regularly travel the route between Luxor and Aswan.

The fact that more and more Chinese tourists are coming to Luxor is, of course, pleasing for travel agencies. Should flight connection be resumed with Russia (suspended since November 2015), more Russian tourists would also return to the land of the Pharaohs.

Despite the first signs of an upturn, the tourist offer is still much greater than the demand, which increases the price pressure. For 25 pounds one can sail in a Felucca on the Nile for an hour. In the peak tourism times, guests had to lay out three or four times more.

Statistics show the upward trend. In the first nine months of 2017, the number of tourists rose by 55%, while the revenues doubled. Tourists spend \$88 a day. By the end of the year, around eight million visitors are expected.

The industry again accounts for about nine percent of Egypt's economic output. Egypt is one of the world's fastest growing markets this year. The record value of 14.7 million from 2010 is thus far from being reached. At that time, 3.5 million people were pouring through the Karnak temple, while at the lowest point of the crisis in 2015 it was only 250,000. The Ministry of Tourism advertises the land of the Pharaohs worldwide.

**The best advertisement for Luxor, 200 years after the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun, are news of spectacular archaeological discoveries.** Especially an intact burial garden in Dra Abu el-Naga from the 18th dynasty, and one over 2.5 meter-tall statue of Amenhotep

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