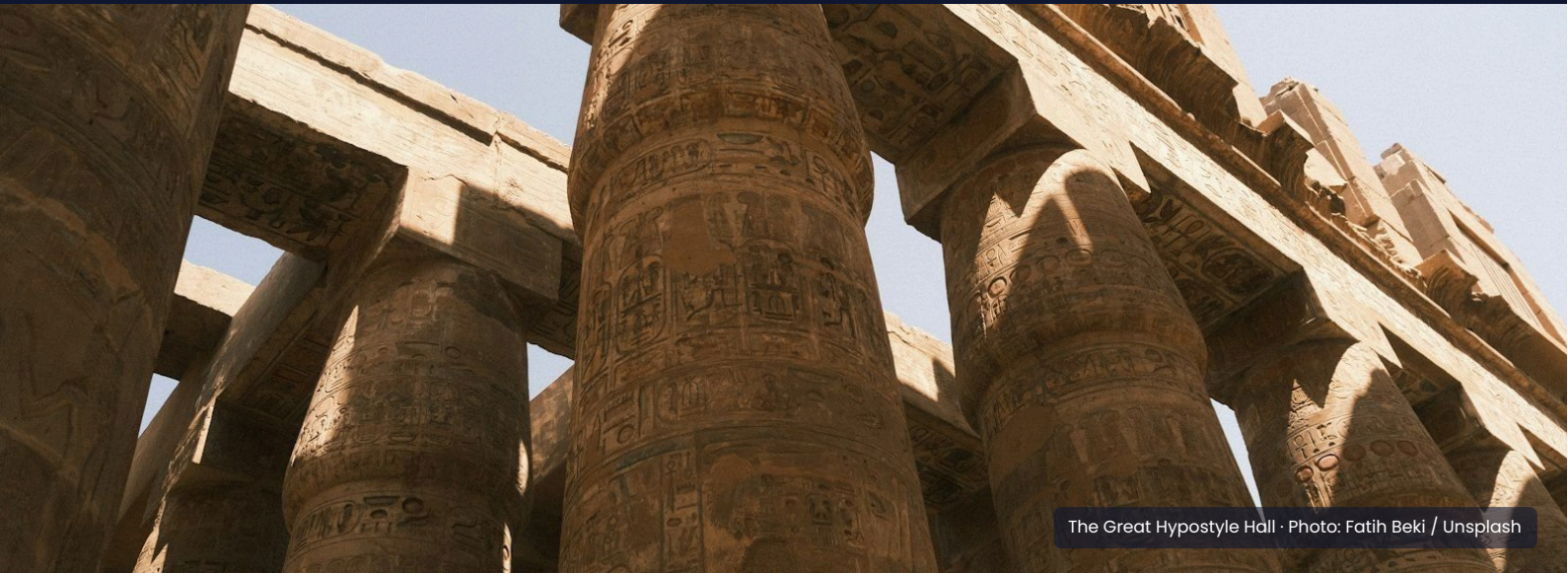




The Great Hypostyle Hall · Photo: Fatih Beki / Unsplash

NEW KINGDOM · DEDICATED TO AMUN-RA

# Karnak Temple

The largest religious complex of the ancient world

## Why it matters

Karnak was never built in one go. For more than a thousand years, pharaoh after pharaoh added a gate, a hall or an obelisk, so his name would be carved here forever. The greatest growth came under Thutmose III, Seti I and Ramesses II.

For over two thousand years this was the religious — and political — heart of ancient Thebes. At their peak, the priests of Amun held wealth and influence that rivalled the pharaoh himself.

Once a year, during the Opet Festival, Amun's statue left Karnak on a sacred boat and travelled the Avenue of Sphinxes to Luxor Temple, followed by thousands of people.

**134**

columns in the Great Hypostyle Hall

**20 m+**

height of its 12 central columns

**≈30 m**

Hatshepsut's obelisk, one of Egypt's tallest

**2,000+**

years as a place of worship

## Plan your visit

|                  |                                                                  |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Hours</b>     | Daily 06:00 – 17:00<br>(last entry about 16:00)                  |
| <b>Ticket</b>    | Foreign adult EGP 600<br>Student EGP 300 (valid ID)              |
| <b>Extra</b>     | Mut precinct is separate;<br>Sound & Light show EGP 900          |
| <b>Photos</b>    | Phone photography free                                           |
| <b>Time</b>      | 2–3 hours, unhurried                                             |
| <b>Best time</b> | At opening, before the heat and the groups — or the evening show |
| <b>Where</b>     | East Bank, about 3 km north of Luxor Temple                      |

Prices and hours checked October 2026. Always confirm at the ticket office. Card payment only at most ticket offices.

## Explore it with a local guide

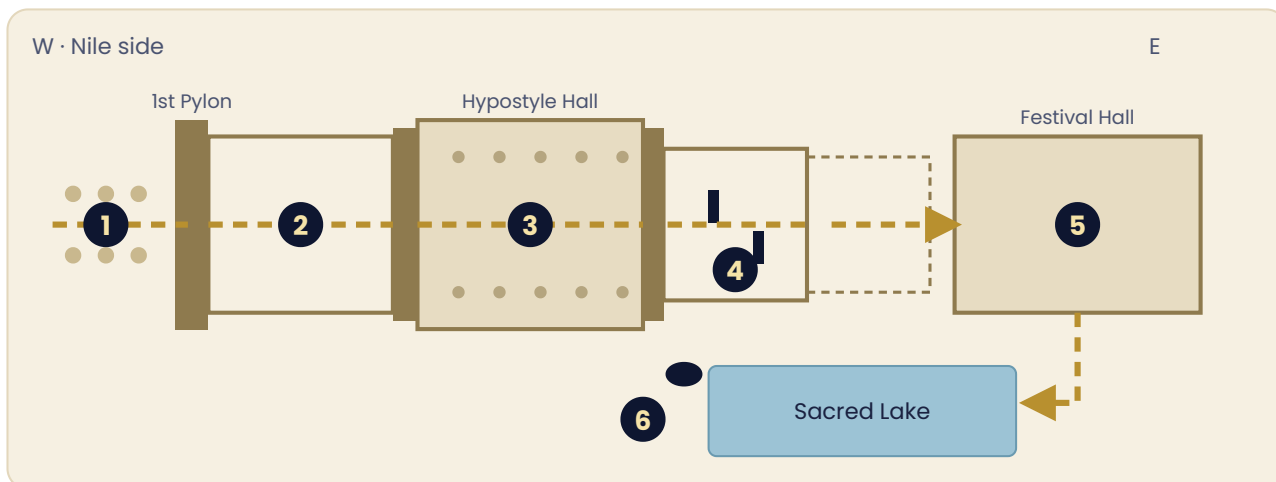
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## WALK IT IN THIS ORDER

## Your route through Karnak



Schematic, not to scale · Precinct of Amun-Ra

**1 Avenue of Rams & First Pylon**

Ram-headed sphinxes — the ram was a sacred animal of Amun — guard the way to the huge first gateway, the largest at Karnak and never finished.

**3 Great Hypostyle Hall**

134 giant columns, begun by Seti I and finished by Ramesses II. Once roofed, it was kept dim on purpose to feel sacred and mysterious.

**5 Festival Hall of Thutmose III**

At the far east end, Thutmose III's hall — its tent-pole-shaped columns and carved plants and animals are a quiet contrast to the crowds.

**2 The Great Court**

An open court where later kings added their own monuments. Look for the colossal standing statue of a pharaoh with a small queen at his feet.

**4 The Obelisks**

Two granite needles stand here: one of Thutmose I, and Hatshepsut's, nearly 30 m tall — among the tallest still standing in Egypt.

**6 Sacred Lake & Giant Scarab**

Priests purified themselves here before their rituals. Beside it sits a large stone scarab, a symbol of rebirth and the rising sun.

## Good to know

- Bring water and a hat — the open courts have little shade; the Hypostyle Hall is the coolest spot.
- Wear comfortable shoes: the route above is roughly 1–1.5 km of uneven ground.
- The Avenue of Sphinxes outside links Karnak to Luxor Temple — about 2.7 km, beautiful at sunset.
- Come back after dark for the Sound & Light show (separate ticket).

**Hear the full story**

Scan for the Luxor Guide audio tour — 11 languages, works offline

**Sources:** Luxor Guide narration script (Karnak); Egyptian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities ticket listings; UNESCO World Heritage List — Ancient Thebes with its Necropolis (1979). **Photo:** Fatih Beki (@mfbeki), Unsplash License. **Map:** Luxor Guide.