



Ramses II statues
at Abu Simbel



Mosque Alazhar
in Cairo

Guide Interview: Magdy Zayed,



Egypt is one of the world's oldest destinations, attracting visitors since the time of the ancient Greeks. Dates and facts are interesting but it's the insight into life, both ancient and modern, that bring Egypt alive. With this in mind, we handpick all our guides and they come no better than Magdy Zayed, Audley local guide and Egyptologist. Here he tell us about his life, his interests, his views on how Cairo has changed and what the future holds for the Middle East's most populous city.

Q Why did you decide to become a guide?

A "Being a guide was always a dream for me. I went to a Greek school here in Cairo, so from day one I was interested in Greek mythology. As I grew older I started to become fascinated by Ancient Egyptian culture as well. When I left high school I decided to study Tourism Management, specialising in Egyptian history – which enabled me to learn not just about Pharonic history, but also the Greek and Roman periods, as well as Coptic and Islamic Egypt."

Q Why do you think people should visit Egypt?

A "There are many reasons to come here. First of all, Egypt is a very holy place. As well as the religion of Ancient Egypt, people don't realise that it has also been a centre of Christian, as well as Islamic beliefs. There are lots of fascinating sights to be explored connected to these periods – it's not all about the pyramids! Secondly, the ancient Egyptians were pioneers of today's civilisation. Here they learnt to make buildings from stone, working with blocks that weighed two or three tonnes, and remember this was in 2600 BC while Europeans were still learning to live in mud huts. It is mind blowing when you think of this, and very impressive to see with your own eyes."



The Nile at Aswan

