

## Egypt's glorious past serves tourism trade well

By Ian Stalker

The Egyptian Tourist Authority's director for Canada says her homeland stands alone when it comes to its best-known attractions, offering sights that are unique in the world, thanks to the country's Pharaonic past.

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Camel near the pyramids of Ghiza, Cairo, Egypt.



And such storied reminders of Pharaonic greatness as the Sphinx and the Pyramids are only one side to Egypt's tourist trade, adds Nagwa Korashy.

"There are some countries in the world that offer history, some that offer beaches, some that offer nightlife, and so on. But Egypt is unique," says Korashy.

"Egypt's ancient history is unparalleled. Egypt was where

people first practiced monotheism, where Moses received the Ten Commandments, where the Virgin Mary fled with her son, and where Islamic empires were headquartered for centuries."

Korashy notes Egypt also boasts some of the best beaches in the world, including premiere diving spots on the Red Sea, where the color and clarity of the water, the coral reefs, and the hundreds of

Temple of Luxor



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The Pyramids of Gizeh near Cairo in Egypt during a sunset.



species found only there combine to form "one-of-a-kind ecosystem" that was named winner of the "world's leading dive destination" during the 2007 World Travel Awards.

Egypt's pristine deserts and oases provide a glimpse of environments unchanged for centuries, continues Korashy.

"The coalescence of modern and ancient and all in between provide the traveler with a living,

breathing timeline of the world. There are also a booming safari and adventure sector, ecological and wellness tourism, green hotels and resorts, premier golf courses, and more."

Korashy says further archeological discoveries are assured in her homeland, citing the likes of the 30 mummies recently discovered in a 4,600-year-old tomb 20 km south of Cairo. An archaeologist who has

made hundreds of site discoveries in Egypt recently said her original estimate, which stated about 1/100th of one percent of ancient Egyptian sites have been uncovered, now seems to be too high, so many more discoveries are expected. And the possibility of seeing the Egypt of long ago up close and personal is certain to thrill visitors, with Korashy noting visitors to her homeland able to undertake such thrilling adventures as entering the Luxor-area site where

Tutankhamen was entombed.

“Entering the Boy King’s tomb is the most mysterious, magical moment anyone could experience,” she says. “And currently, there are multiple tours in Alexandria that allow the traveler to dive into the harbor of the ancient city, seeing artifacts and an underwater Alexandria previously off limits. The magic of Alexandria and Cleopatra’s sunken palace is on display under the Mediterranean and its sights inspire awe.”

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