

## Egypt—Bright Spot in Tourism

- PROMOTION Wednesday, March 04, 2009

---



American tourism to Egypt showed a dramatic increase in 2008 over the previous year, according to an announcement made by the Hon. Zoheir Garranah, Egypt's Minister of Tourism. Egypt had 319,000 thousand visitors from the U.S. last year, representing a 17 percent increase, according to Garranah.

"Egypt is optimistic that despite the challenging economic climate, this growth will continue because we have an excellent, diverse, high-quality tourism product that offers Americans great value for the dollar," says Garranah. He adds, "We are confident that the travel industry will bounce back and we will be ready. We have modernized our airports, ports, roads and we are now working on our railway networks."

Much of this optimism is supported by U.S.-based tour operators. Robert Whitley, president, **USTOA**, says, "In these times when many Americans are cutting back on travel, the real bright spot is Egypt which has enjoyed growth while other destinations have had declines. USTOA is excited about going to Egypt with the hope that more tour operators will include Egypt in their programs.

Mohamed Anwar, president of **Lotus International Tours**, says his company also expects an increase in traffic in 2009 despite the economic climate. Anwar says, "At Lotus there is a demand for lower cost trips and we can offer quality Egyptian programs for limited budgets. In fact, the demand for Egypt is so high for this coming summer, that Lotus is adding one more student package to its Egyptian programs."

Meanwhile, the **Egyptian Tourist Authority** is in the midst of a U.S. road show with the **Africa Travel Association** to promote the *Africa Travel Association 34th International Congress* in May, which has generated great interest among travel agents to participate in this event. "We have had two successful *Destination Egypt* evenings, one in Chicago and one in Atlanta, that attracted more than 200 travel agents," says Edward Bergman, ATA, executive director. "ATA members say that Egypt programs will expand their product."

Phil Otterson, sr. v.p. external affairs, **Tauck World Discovery** and president, the **American Tourism Society (ATS)**, says, "Exotic destinations that offer value for the dollar, such as Egypt, are doing quite well in 2009. We are very pleased that as a result of the ATS conference, some of our members who had never been to Egypt before, were so impressed with the quality of the tourism experience there that they are now including Egypt in their tour programs."

For more information about the ATA Congress, visit [africatravellassociation.org](http://africatravellassociation.org). For more information about Egypt, as well as great travel deals, visit [egypt.travel](http://egypt.travel) and [egyptnow.us.com](http://egyptnow.us.com).

---