



Grand Hotels of Egypt: In the Golden Age of Travel

Andrew Humphreys

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From the earliest resthouses serving travelers on the Overland Route between Britain and Bombay to the grand Edwardian palaces on the Nile that made Egypt the exotic alternative to wintering on the Riviera, the hotels of Alexandria, Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan were always about far more than just bed and board. As bridgeheads for African exploration, neutral territories for conducting diplomacy, headquarters for armies, providers of home comforts for writers, painters, scholars, and archaeologists in the field, and social hubs for an international elite, more of importance happened in Egypt's hotels than in any other setting. It was through the hotels that visitors from the west—the earliest adventurers, then the travelers and, finally, the tourists—experienced the Orient. This book tells the stories of Egypt's historic hotels (including the Cecil, Shepherd's, the Mena House, Gezira Palace, Semiramis, Winter Palace, and Cataract) and some of the people who stayed in them, from Amelia Edwards, Lucie Duff Gordon and Florence Nightingale to Agatha Christie, Conan Doyle, Winston Churchill, and TE Lawrence.

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