

## Interview with Dr. Zahi Hawass Former Minister of Antiquities, Egypt



**Name:** Zahi Hawass

**Title:** Former Minister of Antiquities

**Recent project:** Director of excavation at Valley of the Kings, monthly lecture series for American tourists with a tour company, other lectures around the world, writing articles for publications in Egypt, preparing the second part of my autobiography

**First job:** Inspector of Antiquities at Tuna El-Gebel in Middle Egypt

### **Your Business**

**What innovations/initiatives do you foresee in the industry over the next years?**

There is great potential for tourism in Egypt; the country is safe, and all archaeological sites are completely protected. The proof is *Archaeological Paths*, which brought more than 3,000 Americans to Egypt in the last three years. However, Egypt can promote tourism more. We need to send a great exhibit to tour the world and globally advertise new archaeological discoveries. The Minister of Tourism should make a worldwide tour with representatives from tourism companies, hotels and Egyptologists; PR companies from the visited countries could properly promote the tour.

**Best career advice you've received:** The most important thing is to have passion for archaeology. The passion I've had for this field since I was 20 makes every word that comes out of my mouth reach the hearts of people all over the world. The love from my fans and the awards I receive (more than 30) are like advice to me.

**What advice would you give someone starting out in the field?** You must have passion!

### Zahi Hawass as a Traveler

#### **Favorite travel memory or story:**

I give lectures all over the world but seldom get to see the countries. In Peru I had time to visit all the archaeological sites. In the hotel elevator in Lima, an English lady asked, “Are you Zahi Hawass?” I said, “Yes,” and she fainted!

#### **One travel tip you cannot live without:**

Take natural sleeping pills to pass the flight time. I always catch up on things I missed because of my busy schedule and watch them on my iPad. Switch off your phone.



**Best advice for business travelers:** Do not spend all your time on business. Make time for visiting archaeological sites. One cannot come to Egypt and not see the pyramids and the Cairo Museum.

### About Archaeological Paths

#### **What can premium travelers expect from *Archaeological Paths*' Royal Tour to Egypt?**

It is magical. Imagine being alone in the early morning between the paws of the Sphinx, seeing the tombs of the pyramid builders alone in a private tour or walking around the Luxor Temple at night and enjoying the serenity. **It is called the Royal Tour because of these special experiences.**



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### Tell our readers more about your exciting career.

Every discovery takes us one step closer to uncovering the truth about the mysteries of the ancient Egyptians. At the University of Pennsylvania I presented a theory in my doctoral dissertation that the tombs of the pyramid builders lay beyond Heit El-Ghorabt. When I returned to Egypt, I discovered the tombs exactly where I argued they would be.

I worked with my team for three years and found the Valley of the Golden Mummies. We also found the cult pyramid of the Pyramid of Khufu at the southeast corner of the Great Pyramid. It was a room for the king to change into a kilt for the Heb-Sed festival in which he danced to show his athletic powers and prove he was king for eternity. We also revealed secrets about the mummy of Hatshepsut in the Egyptian Mummy Project, solved the murder of Ramses III, determined how Tutankhamun died and discovered his family.