

Ras Al Tin

The Summer Residence of Muhammad Ali Dynasty at Alexandria

Dr. Rania Aly Maher

Professor in Tourism Guidance Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels Management, Helwan University.

Dr. Shima Abdel Tawab Sayed

Assistant Professor in Tourism Guidance Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels Management, Helwan University.

Toqa Mohymen El Kordy.

Bachelor Degree, Tourism Guidance Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels Management, Helwan University.

Abstract

Muhammad Ali dynasty had several ruling residences in Cairo as Citadel of Salah Al-Din (Al Gawhara Palace), Abdeen Palace within the reign of Khedive Ismail until 1952, and Al Qubba palace that was often used by king Fuad and King Farouk.

Alexandria was considered the summer Capital of Egypt, Muhammad Ali dynasty used to rule from Ras Al Tin Palace and sometimes Al Montazah Palace during the summer season. Muhammad Ali Founded Ras Al Tin Palace in 1834 and it was the summer ruling residence until 1952.

Ras Al Tin Palace is the only royal palace that witnessed the glory of Muhammad Ali Dynasty and its fall after more than 150 Regnal years in 1952-

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1953. The Palace witnessed major historical events that took place within modern and contemporary history.

On the 5th of September 2015, Ras Al Tin Palace was registered in the Islamic and Coptic monuments Archive by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

Introduction

Alexandria is the second largest city in Egypt. It is one of the most important cities in the ancient and the modern world. It was named after its founder Alexander the great who entered Egypt by 332 B.C. The strategic position of the land encouraged him to establish a city to be capital for the Hellenistic civilization, a fortress for the whole region and a port to be an international trade center.

Alexandria became the capital of Egypt and one of the greatest capitals. It exceeded all the old world cities during the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine Era. It flourished in all the life aspects. It was considered the naval base and the first defending point for Egypt. Alexandria was the source and center of spreading civilization, science and culture for the world. It was considered the largest center for industry and trade in the whole world.

Somehow Alexandria lost its glory after the Islamic conquest as the capital moved to al Fustat. The deterioration reached its peak within the Ottoman rule as Alexandria was following directly the sublime Porte until 1807. The founder of modern Egypt Muhammad Ali brought the glory of Alexandria back. He restored the fortifications of Alexandria and increased its number. He launched several projects as al Mahmoudia canal and gave great attention to the infrastructure of the city. He erected several sarayat as Al Ibrahimya, Al

Mahmoudia and Ras Al tin that was the summer residence for the royal family and a ruling head quarter within the summer season.

Key words: Alexandria, Royal Family, Ras Al Tin Palace, Muhammad Ali, Summer Residence.

Ras Al Tin Palace

Ras Al tin is one of the oldest palaces built during Muhammad Ali dynasty Era. It is the only royal palace that witnessed the glory and the fall of the dynasty. The founder of modern Egypt Muhammad Ali decided to build a new palace at the second capital.

Ras Al Tin became the official summer residence as the king and his government used to move to Alexandria from June to September and some sources mentioned from May to October. By that, Alexandria became the summer capital of Egypt.¹ (Plate1).

The location of the palace was near to Alexandria's Arsenal, the naval school and the naval hospital He chose the western side from the end of Pharos Island to erect the palace. The palace lies directly on the Mediterranean Sea at the west of Alexandria in Al Gomrok district at Ras Al Tin Street. The street and the palace were known as Ras Al tin, Promontory of figs or cape of figs as the palace was built on lands has plenty of fig trees.²

The Foundation of the palace

Muhammad Ali hired number of foreign engineers to build and design the palace among them Cerisy Bek (yezi), sir Mozel, Sir Romeo and sir le-veroige.

¹qtby, M.,(2019), **TarykMsr 'br Al-'swrMwjzMswr**, Cairo,p.236. ; Qmrh, 'byr,(2018) **Al-mrah w Al-Mdynh Al-Kwzmwbwlytanyh**, Cairo,p.46.

² Al-qtry, S., 1-2010. **Al-Astbdal w DwrhFy Al-Ttwr Al-'mranyLmdynh Al-Askndryh**, P.77-78.

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The construction of the palace started in 1834 and it was completed in 1845 however it was opened in 1847 due to the undergoing alterations.¹

The palace took the shape of a Roman fortress and there is no plan for its interior design. It was mentioned that the fortress comprises 3 saray among them Hareem saray and its furniture were brought from Europe. Also, it was mentioned that the gardens plants were brought from the garden of Muhammad Ali palace at shubra. ²

The Reconstruction of the palace

The successors of Muhammad Ali kept the luxurious palace and paid great attention to it. They used to restore and add alterations to the palace.

During the reign of King Fuad I, he ordered Ernesto Verruci to reconstruct the palace to be a smaller replica of Abdeen palace. The reconstruction and restoration process cost 400,000 L.E. the palace followed the Italian Baroque architectural style. Interior décor is a blend and mix of various styles as Byzantine, Renaissance, French and Modern. Francois linke designed and made more than 1000 pieces of furniture for Ras Al Tin palace most of them are Louis XV and Louis XVI style.³

The palace buildings and gardens stretch over 16 feddans. It has four entrances; the main and most important one is the eastern gate. This gate is the only

¹ Al jwhry, M., (1954). **Qswr w ThfmmMhmd ʿli AlyFarwq**, Cairo, p.77.

² ʿbd al-wahab, H., 1941. **QsrRas Al-Tyn Al-ʿamr**, mjlh ʿmarhalʿdd al-ḥalḥ w al-rabʿ, p.43-44.

³Awad,M., (2014). **Montazah The Royal Palaces and Gardens**, Alexandria, p.40.; Farj, F.,(1941). **Al-Askndryhfy ʿsrMhmd ʿly 1805/ 1848**, Mjllh ʿmarh Al ʿdd al-ḥalḥ w al-rabʿ, Cairo, p.79. ;, (24 November 1952). **The Treasures Farouk Left Behind**, life Magazine, volume 33- Number 21, NewYork. P.89-91.;, (20 July 2018) **The Genius of francoislinke**, <https://www.westlandlondon.com>.

remnant part of Muhammad Ali's palace and was intermingled with the new version of the palace. The eastern gate is in its original state. It has six granite columns, the lintel is adorned with seven circular copper medallions has Quranic verses and maxims about justice. On the top of the gate, 2 marble lions are flanking a marble block which is decorated with birds, plant motifs, shields and 2 eagles facing each other between them the name of Muhammad Ali and date 1261 A.H.¹(Plate2).

The eastern gate leads to the main entrance of the palace. The palace has 3 floors main floor, ground floor and basement. It descends gradually to a level near to the sea level of the western port.²

The main entrance has a ceremonial marble staircase with raw brass handrails leads to the main floor which is the third floor. After surmounting the staircase it leads directly to the main lobby.³(Plate3)

The main lobby ceiling is ornamented with rare colored glass which was made especially for the palace by the most skilled artisans. It is adorned with roman style columns and gilded embellishments. Also, is decorated with bronze lamp holders bearing the emblem of the Egyptian kingdom and one of the walls has an oil painting depicts lion hunt.⁴

The main floor of the palace has many halls, salons, rooms and suites. Among the compartments of the main floor are the throne hall, the Gothic hall,

¹bdalrhm, M.,(2005).*Al Qswr Al-MilkyhfyMsr*, Cairo, p.73.

² Al-jzayrly, Y.,(2011), *Mwsw'h Al-JayrlyLL'sma'Swra' Al-Askndryh* , part 3. Alexandria,p.342.

³bdalrhm, M.,(2013),*M'alm w TarykMsr AL-Hdyh w AL-M'asr*, Cairo, p.66.

⁴**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020. ;**QsrRas Al-tyr**, maspero gate, bwabhmaspyrw, qnah al-nyl al-Hqafyh, 31 Jan 2014, you tube app

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reception salons, Marble Hall, Round hall, Main Dining hall, Personal Study, king's wing, queen's wing, Dining Hall and Musical Hall.¹

The Throne Hall and The Gothic hall

The throne hall was also known as the Firman Hall. It was designed during the reign of King Fuad I and it was smaller than that in Abdeen Palace.²

The hall was used to host the king enthronement, issuing royal decrees, swearing officials and signing agreements. (Plate4).

The hall is unique for its Arab Islamic style. The walls and columns are gilded and adorned with Quranic verses, Maxims and poetry lines. The windows are from stucco inlaid with colored glass. The ceiling is lavishly decorated and gilded. It has a dazzling Mamluk Islamic style bronze chandelier.³

The hall's floor has intermingling artwork and is made out of various kinds of wood like oak, mahogany, rosewood and inlaid with ebony. The doors are decorated from both sides, the side of the throne hall is decorated with Islamic motifs and side facing the gothic hall is following the Christian style to suit the style of the gothic hall.⁴

The Gothic Hall design is inspired from the medieval European churches, the gothic style is clearly depicted in the ornaments of the stucco colored and

¹bdalrhmn, M.,(2005).**Al Qswr Al-MlkyhfyMsr**, Cairo, p.74.

²Asmayl, ntr& Al-bady, A.,.....,**Dlyl Mwyz LaHar Mdynt AL-Askndryh**, Alexandria. p.26. ;**Qa'h al-rŠ**,....., Al-mswr, Al-Žwaj al-mlky, cddmmtaz (Al-mlkFarwq w Al-mlkhNaryman), Cairo, P.41-43.

³ Al-jzayrly, Y.,(2011), **Mwsw'h Al-JzayrlyL'sma' W Šwra' Al-Askndryh , part 3. Alexandria**,p.342.

⁴**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

gilded ceiling and upper parts of the walls, the arches, fan vaults and lead windows inlaid with colored glass. (Plate5).

Annexed to the hall 2 salons were used as a reception and guest salons. Both the salons are connected by a door and terrace.

The halls are furnished with several salons for the guests. The ceiling and the walls are adorned with gilded embellishments. The walls are decorated with several oil paintings among them one for Mary Magdalene and another oil painting depict the roman persecution of Christians. Also, the hall has goblin portraits and bronze statues depicting Greek mythology.¹

The marble hall

It was built during the reign of King Fuad I. it reflects the ancient Roman style. The floor and the columns are made out of the finest marble. The walls are adorned with gilded embellishments and murals inspired by Greco- Roman mythology. The hall has 26 Corinthian capital columns hanged on most of them bronze lamp holders. The hall has a number of fer-forge or iron doors bear the king Fuad I initial F gilded.²(Plate6)

The Royal study – The personal study

It is the office of the king from where he runs the country affairs and meets VIP, statesmen and high officials.

The room has an ormolu bureau, several salons, many antiques and a marble fireplace topped by a bronze clock topped by a statue of the Greek God

¹Ras El tin, palace, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

²ShrAbrahym, trf 'la QsrRas Al-TynMqr AL-Mobah'hat al-msryh Al-amartyh, Al-bwabhNywz, <https://:albawabhnews.com>. , 27 March 2019, 5:22 P.M

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Poseidon in a sitting position. The walls are decorated with gilded embellishments and one of the walls has a mural for Poseidon at the sea.¹

The main dining room and the dining hall

The room was founded during the reign of Fuad I to held banquets for his guests as kings, ambassadors and high officials.

It has a royal dining table with 24 chairs adorned with the Egyptian crown. The hall is decorated with oil paintings of food, fruits, flowers and most of the oil paintings bear the coat of arm of the Egyptian kingdom. The walls and the ceiling have gilded embellishments and the ceiling corners bear the Initial of King Fuad I.²

The dining hall is unique for its oval ceiling that is adorned with gilded embellishments. It has 8 columns on which hanged on bronze lamp holders. The hall has a dining table with 12 chairs. The queen used this hall to held banquets for her guests.³

The Round Hall

The hall was used for grand receptions, parties, balls and Royal weddings. The inner dome of the hall is lavishly decorated with gilded embellishments, adorned with king Fuad I initials and the coat of the arm of the Egyptian kingdom.

¹**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

²**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

³ShrAbrahym, **trf 'la QsrRas Al-TynMqr AL-Mobah'at al-msryh Al-amartyh**, Al-bwabhNywz, <https://albawabhnews.com>. , 27 March 2019, 5:22 P.M

The ceiling has several oil paintings recount the achievements of Muhammad Ali Pasha the founder of Modern Egypt as the Formation of the first regular army, the building of the Navy, the Agricultural and Irrigational boom and the scientific renaissance achieved by sending the Egyptian students on scholarships to Europe.¹

The hall has a massive brass metalwork chandelier embellished by fascinating crystals and it weighs about 2,500 K.G. The walls are decorated also with a collection of lamp holders as for the floor it has an outstanding shell inlaid parquet floor.

The king and queen wings

The king's suite or wing includes a Study, bedroom and bathroom. The study has a salon, bureau and a chair bearing the royal monogram. Also, the study has antiques among them the white marble fireplace. The ceiling corners of the study have four small domes and are adorned with light fixtures.²(Plate7)

Then the king's suite has a bedroom and a bathroom which is a replica of that in Abdeen palace. The bathroom is overlooking the sea. It is made out of rare marble and alabaster. It has a magnificent mosaic in vivid colors that adorns one of the walls and a pure silver closet to keep the cloth warm and disinfectant.³

As for the queen's wing, it comprises a sitting room, bedroom, bathroom and a dressing room.

¹**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

²**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

³Al jwhry, M., (1954). **Qswr w ThfmmMhmd 'li Aly L Farwq**, Cairo, p.80.

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The sitting room has a unique rare marble fireplace topped with a bronze clock and the whole room is decorated with a collection of lamp holders. The walls are embellished with murals depicting scenes from the European countryside. The bedroom has an antique Louis XV salon comprises of 2 chairs and a sofa with ostrich feather cushions. ¹(Plate8).

As for the bathroom, it has a dressing room known as the Chinese dressing room all its compartments and furniture follow the Chinese style as for the Bathroom it has a sunken bath and the walls have paintings and a mosaic of ebony for girls and some stories from Greek literature.²

The Flag sitting hall

The hall ceiling is adorned with an oil painting that depicts a scene from Greek Mythology. The walls are decorated with representations of musical instruments. Concerts were held in this hall for the king and his guests to enjoy oriental and international performances.

The hall is known as the flag hall as one of the walls is adorned by a large mural that depicts the Egyptian flag and the greatness of the Egyptian woman who gives birth and sacrifices her child to keep the revival and endurance of the Egyptian kingdom.³(Plate9).

¹**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

²**QsrRas Al-tyn**, maspero gate, bwabhmaspyrw, qnah al-nyl al-Ḥqafyh, 31 Jan 2014, you tube app.

³**Ras El tin, palace**, the official website of the Egyptian presidency, www.presidency.eg/EN, YouTube app, video12:20 mins., June, 29, 2020.

The palace ground floor includes Haramlek wing, princesses' school, servants and companion quarter and a Round hall where king Farouk signed his abdication in 1952.¹

As for the basement, it has a hall with stairs leads to the dock and anchorage of Yacht Al Mahroussa and royal yachts and the gardens.²

Annexed to the palace, the princesses building which is attached to the palace by the means of the glass corridor. The princess building was built during the reign of King Farouk and it comprises a ground floor and 2 upper floors.

Also, the palace has separate buildings as Royal barracks, a Train station with a waiting Hall that was constructed by khedive Ismail and renovated later by king Fuad I, Barqi mosque and mausoleum.³

Regarding the gardens of the palace, it covers about 12 feddans. It has rare flowers and blooms brought from Netherlands especially to the palace. The gardens are adorned with fountains with bronze statues spouting the water from its mouth and have lotus and rare fish spices. Also, the gardens have tennis courts and birds kiosks.⁴

The palace used to have an indoor swimming pool with a glass-covered courtyard, King Farouk built instead of it a marine pool. The marine pool was built on the sea wave barrier and connected to the palace by the means of a long rough causeway accessed only with a jeep. He added a rest house consists

¹ Ahmd, c ntr& Al-ebady, A.,, **DlylMwjzLa ĦarMdynt AL-Askndryh**, Alexandria. p.26.

² ebdalrhmn, M.,(2013), **M'alm w TarykMsr AL-HdyĦ w AL-M'asr**, Cairo, p.66.

³ Al jwhry, M., (1954). **Qswr w Thf mn MĦmd 'li Aly Farwq**, Cairo, p.81-82.

⁴ Al-jzayrly, Y.,(2011), **Mwsw'ĥ Al-JZayrly L'sma'Swra'c AL-Askndryh , part 3. Alexandria**,p.342.

- ebdalrhmn, M.,(2005), **Al Qswr Al-MlkyĥfyMsr**, Cairo, p.74.

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of bedrooms, rooms for fishing tools and gears and a kitchen for preparing food.¹

The palace witnessed several events as

-In 1849, the death of Muhammad Ali pasha who was buried at Muhammad Ali mosque in Salah Al Din citadel.²

-in 1854, Muhammad sa'id pasha was coroneted as the wali of Egypt in the Palace.³

-In 1863, the death of Muhammad Sa'id Pasha who was buried at Al Nabi Daniel mosque. Later the corpse was removed to the Khedivial Cemetery in Cairo due to the removal of the Mausoleums and all the tombs in the mosque.⁴

-In 1879, khedive Ismail sailed to his exile in Italy after his segregation on the board of Al Mahroussa and he was succeeded by his son Khedive Muhammad Tawfik.⁵

-In 1882, Within the British occupation khedive Tawfik met the commander of the British Fleet Seymour.

-In 1921, the palace witnessed the birth of princess Fawzia the daughter of King Fuad I.⁶

-In 1926, the palace witnessed the birth of princess Fayqa the daughter of King Fuad I.⁷

¹Al jwhry, M., (1954). **Qswr w ThfmmMhmd 'li AlyFarwq**, Cairo, p.78-79.

²Masrot, A.,(1984), **Egypt in The Reign Of Muhammad Ali**, New York, p.255.

³alraf'y, '.,(1987), **Fy 'sr Asma'yl** part 1.Cairo,p.25.

⁴Njm,Z.,(2009), **Msr fy 'hdy 'bas w S'yd**, Dar al-Šrwq, Cairo, p.43.

⁵Serag El Din, I.,&Ezzat,M.,&Said,K.,(2015). **Yacht Mahroussa- A Journey in the Royal Yacht**. Alexandria, p.16.

⁶hafž, A.,&Mhdy, al-ħsyny,(2010), **SwrThkyTarykn: Hyah Al-MlkFarwq**, cairo. P.32.

⁷hafž, A.,&Mhdy, al-ħsyny,(2010), **SwrThkyTarykn: Hyah Al-MlkFarwq**, cairo. P.36.

-In 1936, the palace witnessed the arrival of prince Farouk from overseas after the death of King Fuad I.¹

-Within the Second World War, the British forces quartered at the palace and it became a seat and a hospital for the Naval Forces.²

-In 1952, the palace witnessed the Fall of Muhammad Ali Dynasty as king Farouk signed abdication and left the throne to his son Ahmed Fuad. King Farouk and his family sailed to Italy on the board of the royal yacht Al Mahroussa.³

Conclusion

Ras Al Tin Palace was considered the official residence and the seat of the Egyptian Government within the summer during the epoch of Muhammad Ali Dynasty. Alexandria became the Capital of Egypt as the ruler and the government used to run the country affairs from there.

The palace of Ras Al Tin is the only palace at Alexandria that includes a Throne hall. The throne hall was used for king's enthronements and coronation, Issuing royal decrees, swearing officials and signing agreements.

Ras Al tin is the only palace and sole witness of the rise of Muhammad Ali Dynasty that ruled Egypt for more than 150 years and its fall after the abdication of King Farouk in 1952.

¹Kaml, 'bd al-mjyd, (1936), **Jlalh Al-MlkFarwq Al-Awl Qrh 'yn Al-Msryyn w Qdwh Al-Mlwk Al-Salhyn**, Cairo. P.47.

²bdalrhmn, M.,(2005). **Al Qswr Al-Mlkyh fy Msr**, Cairo, p.75.

³Salem,L., (1996),**Farwq w Sqwt Al-MlkyhfyMsr 1936-1952**, Cairo .P.1018-1019;Ahmed Fuad age was less than one year when king Farouk abdicated the throne to him after the military coup of 1952. Due to the young age of King Ahmed Fuad, there was a regency council headed by Prince Muhammad Abd Al Moneim to run the country affairs. The new king was exiled with his father, mother, and his sister from queen Farida to Italy. Ahmed Fuad was nominally the king of Egypt and Sudan until 18 June 1953 as Egypt was declared a republic.

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www.presidency.eg/EN



plate 2 The Eastern Gate
<https://www.hippocard.com>.



plate 3 Ceremonial Staircase
www.presidency.eg/EN



Plate 4 The Throne Hall..., (24 November 1952). The Treasures Farouk Left Behind, life Magazine, volume 33-Number 21, NewYork



plate 5 The Gothic Hall
www.presidency.eg/EN



Plate 6 The Marble Hall
www.faroukmisr.net



Plate 7 The King's Bedroom
www.faroukmisr.net



Plate 8 The Queen's Bedroom
www.faroukmisr.net



Plate 9 The Flag Sitting Hall (www.faroukmisr.net)

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رأس التين المقرالصيفي لأسره محمدعلي بالاسكندريه

لقد كان لاسره محمد على العديد من القصور التي تعتبر مقرات حكم في القاهرة مثل قصر الجوهرة بقلعة صلاح الدين، قصر عابدين منذ عهد الخديوى اسماعيل حتى عام 1952 و احيانا استخدم قصر القبه من قبل الملك فؤاد و الملك فاروق كمقر للحكم .

اعتبرت الاسكندرية العاصمهالصيفيه لمصر. لقد ادارت اسرة محمد على البلاد من الاسكندريه من خلال قصر رأس التين و احيانا من قصر المنتزة في فصل الصيف. قد شيد محمد على قصر رأس التين عام 1834، و قد كان مقر الحكم الصيفي حتى عام 1952.

يعد قصر رأس التين هو القصر الملكي الوحيد الشاهد علي قيام و سقوط اسرة محمد على التي حكمت اكثر من 150 عام حتى عام 1952-1953. وقد كان القصر شاهد على احداث تاريخية هامه في تاريخ مصر الحديث و المعاصر.

وقد ضم المجلس الاعلى للاثار قصر رأس التين الى ارشيف الاثار الاسلاميه و القبطيه في 5 سبتمبر 2015.