

## = Valley of the Kings =

The Valley of the Kings ( Arabic : الوادي الملوك Wādī al Mulūk ) , the Valley of the Gates of the Kings ( Arabic : الوادي الملوك Wādī Abwāb al Mulūk ) , is a valley in Egypt where , for a period of nearly 500 years from the 16th to 11th century BC , tombs were constructed for the Pharaohs and powerful nobles of the New Kingdom ( the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Dynasties of Ancient Egypt ) . The valley stands on the west bank of the Nile , opposite Thebes ( modern Luxor ) , within the heart of the Theban Necropolis . The wadi consists of two valleys , East Valley ( where the majority of the royal tombs are situated ) and West Valley . With the 2005 discovery of a new chamber ( KV63 ) , and the 2008 discovery of two further tomb entrances , the valley is known to contain 63 tombs and chambers ( ranging in size from KV54 , a simple pit , to KV5 , a complex tomb with over 120 chambers ) . It was the principal burial place of the major royal figures of the Egyptian New Kingdom , as well as a number of privileged nobles . The royal tombs are decorated with scenes from Egyptian mythology and give clues to the beliefs and funerary rituals of the period . Almost all of the tombs seem to have been opened and robbed in antiquity , but they still give an idea of the opulence and power of the Pharaohs . This area has been a focus of archaeological and egyptological exploration since the end of the eighteenth century , and its tombs and burials continue to stimulate research and interest . In modern times the valley has become famous for the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun ( with its rumours of the Curse of the Pharaohs ) , and is one of the most famous archaeological sites in the world . In 1979 , it became a World Heritage Site , along with the rest of the Theban Necropolis . Exploration , excavation and conservation continues in the valley , and a new tourist centre has recently been opened .

## = = Geology = =

The types of soil where the Valley of the Kings is located are an alternating sandwich of dense limestone and other sedimentary rock ( which form the cliffs in the valley and the nearby Deir el Bahri ) and soft layers of marl . The sedimentary rock was originally deposited between 35 ? 56 million years ago during a time when the precursor to the Mediterranean Sea covered an area that extended much further inland than today . During the Pleistocene the valley was carved out of the plateau by steady rains . There is currently little year @-@ round rain in this part of Egypt , but there are occasional flash floods that hit the valley , dumping tons of debris into the open tombs .

The quality of the rock in the Valley is inconsistent , ranging from finely grained to coarse stone , the latter with the potential to be structurally unsound . The occasional layer of shale also caused construction and conservation difficulties , as this rock expands in the presence of water , forcing apart the stone surrounding it . It is thought that some tombs were altered in shape and size depending on the types of rock the builders encountered .

Builders took advantage of available geological features when constructing the tombs . Some tombs were quarried out of existing limestone clefts , others behind slopes of scree , or were at the edge of rock spurs created by ancient flood channels .

The problems of tomb construction can be seen with tombs of Ramesses III and his father Setnakhte . Setnakhte started to excavate KV11 but broke into the tomb of Amenmesse , so construction was abandoned and he instead usurped the tomb of Twosret , KV14 . When looking for a tomb , Ramesses III extended the part @-@ excavated tomb started by his father . The tomb of Ramesses II returned to an early style , with a bent axis , probably due to the quality of the rock being excavated ( following the Esna shale ) .

Between 1998 and 2002 the Amarna Royal Tombs Project investigated the valley floor using ground @-@ penetrating radar and found that , below the modern surface , the Valley 's cliffs descend beneath the scree in a series of abrupt , natural " shelves " , arranged one below the other , descending several metres down to the bedrock in the valley floor .

## = = = Hydrology = = =

The area of the Theban hills is subject to infrequent violent thunder storms , causing flash floods in the valley . Recent studies have shown that there are at least 7 active flood stream beds , leading down into the central area of the valley . This central area appears to have been flooded at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty and buried several tombs under metres of debris . The tombs KV63 , KV62 and KV55 are dug into the actual wadi bedrock rather than the debris , showing that the then level of the valley was 5 m below its present level . After this event later dynasties leveled the floor of the valley , making the floods deposit their load further down the valley , and the buried tombs were forgotten and only discovered in the early 20th century . This was the area that was the subject of the Amarna Royal Tombs Project ground scanning radar investigation , which showed several anomalies , one of which was proved to be KV63 .

= = History = =

The Theban Hills are dominated by the peak of al @-@ Qurn , known to the Ancient Egyptians as ta dehent , or ' The Peak ' . It has a pyramid shaped appearance , and it is probable that this echoed the pyramids of the Old Kingdom , more than a thousand years prior to the first royal burials carved here . Its isolated position also resulted in reduced access , and special tomb police ( the Medjay ) were able to guard the necropolis .

While the iconic pyramid complexes of the Giza plateau have come to symbolize ancient Egypt , the majority of tombs were cut into rock . Most pyramids and mastabas contain sections which are cut into ground level , and there are full rock @-@ cut tombs in Egypt that date back to the Old Kingdom .

After the defeat of the Hyksos and the reunification of Egypt under Ahmose I , the Theban rulers began to construct elaborate tombs that would reflect their newfound power . The tombs of Ahmose and his son Amenhotep I ( their exact location remains unknown ) were probably in the Seventeenth Dynasty necropolis of Dra ' Abu el @-@ Naga ' . The first royal tombs in the valley were those of Amenhotep I ( although this identification is also disputed ) , and Thutmose I , whose advisor Ineni notes in his tomb that he advised his king to place his tomb in the desolate valley ( the identity of this actual tomb is unclear , but it is probably KV20 or KV38 ) .

The Valley was used for primary burials from approximately 1539 BC to 1075 BC , and contains at least 63 tombs , beginning with Thutmose I ( or possibly earlier , during the reign of Amenhotep I ) , and ending with Ramesses X or XI , although non @-@ Royal burials continued in usurped tombs .

Despite the name , the Valley of the Kings also contains the tombs of favorite nobles as well as the wives and children of both nobles and pharaohs , meaning that only about 20 of the tombs actually contain the burials of kings ; the burials of nobles and the royal family , together with unmarked pits and embalming caches make up the rest . Around the time of Ramesses I ( ca . 1301 BC ) construction commenced in the separate Valley of the Queens .

= = = Royal Necropolis = = =

The official name for the site in ancient times was The Great and Majestic Necropolis of the Millions of Years of the Pharaoh , Life , Strength , Health in The West of Thebes ( see below for the hieroglyphic spelling ) , or more usually , Ta @-@ sekhet @-@ ma 'at ( the Great Field ) .

At the start of the Eighteenth Dynasty , only the kings were buried within the valley in large tombs ; when a non @-@ royal was buried , it was in a small rock cut chamber , close to the tomb of their master . Amenhotep III 's tomb was constructed in the Western Valley , and while his son Akhenaten moved his tomb 's construction to Amarna , it is thought that the unfinished WV25 may have originally been intended for him . With the return to religious orthodoxy at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty , Tutankhamun , Ay and then Horemheb returned to the royal necropolis .

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties saw an increase in the number of burials ( both here and in the Valley of the Queens ) , with Ramesses II and later Ramesses III constructing a massive tomb that was used for the burial of his sons ( KV5 and KV3 respectively ) . There are some kings that are not buried within the valley or whose tomb has not been located : Thutmose II may have been

buried in Dra ' Abu el @-@ Naga ' ( although his mummy was in the Deir el @-@ Bahri tomb cache ) , Smenkhkare 's burial has never been located , and Ramesses VIII seems to have been buried elsewhere .

In the Pyramid Age the tomb of the king was associated with a mortuary temple located close to the pyramid . As the tomb of the king was hidden , this mortuary temple was located away from the burial , closer to the cultivation facing towards Thebes . These mortuary temples became places visited during the various festivals held in the Theban necropolis , most notably the Beautiful festival of the valley , where the sacred barques of Amun @-@ Re , his consort Mut and son Khonsu left the temple at Karnak in order to visit the funerary temples of deceased kings on the West Bank and their shrines in the Theban Necropolis .

The tombs were constructed and decorated by the workers of the village of Deir el @-@ Medina , located in a small wadi between this valley and the Valley of the Queens , facing Thebes . The workers journeyed to the tombs via routes over the Theban hills . The daily lives of these workers are quite well known , recorded in tombs and official documents . Amongst the events document is perhaps the first recorded worker 's strike , detailed in the Turin strike papyrus .

= = Exploration of the valley = =

The area has been a major area of modern Egyptological exploration for the last two centuries . Before this the area was a site for tourism in antiquity ( especially during Roman times ) . This area illustrates the changes in the study of ancient Egypt , starting as antiquity hunting , and ending as scientific excavation of the whole Theban Necropolis . Despite the exploration and investigation noted below , only eleven of the tombs have actually been completely recorded .

Many of the tombs have graffiti written by these ancient tourists . Jules Baillet located over 2100 Greek and Latin graffiti , along with a smaller number in Phoenician , Cypriot , Lycian , Coptic , and other languages . The majority of the ancient graffiti are found in KV9 , which contains just under a thousand of them . The earliest positively dated graffiti dates to 278 B.C.

In 1799 , members of Napoleon 's expedition to Egypt ( especially Dominique Vivant ) drew maps and plans of the known tombs , and for the first time noted the Western Valley ( where Prosper Jollois and Édouard de Villiers du Terrage located the tomb of Amenhotep III , WV22 ) . The Description de l 'Égypte contains two volumes ( out a total of 24 ) on the area around Thebes .

European exploration continued in the area around Thebes during the nineteenth century , boosted by Champollion 's translation of hieroglyphs early in the century . Early in the century , the area was visited by Belzoni , working for Henry Salt , who discovered several tombs , including those of Ay in the West Valley ( WV23 ) in 1816 and Seti I ( KV17 ) the next year . At the end of his visits , Belzoni declared that all of the tombs had been found and nothing of note remained to be found . Working at the same time ( and a great rival of Belzoni and Salt ) was Bernardino Drovetti , the French Consul @-@ General .

When Gaston Maspero was reappointed to head the Egyptian Antiquities Service , the nature of the exploration of the valley changed again . Maspero appointed English archaeologist Howard Carter as the Chief Inspector of Upper Egypt and the young man discovered several new tombs and explored several others , clearing KV42 and KV20 .

Around the start of the 20th century , the American Theodore M. Davis had the excavation permit in the valley , and his team ( led mostly by Edward R. Ayrton ) discovered several royal and non @-@ royal tombs ( including KV43 , KV46 and KV57 ) . In 1907 they discovered the possible Amarna Period cache in KV55 . After finding what they thought was all that remained of the burial of Tutankhamun ( items recovered from KV54 and KV58 ) , it was announced that the valley was completely explored and no further burials were to be found , in Davis 's 1912 publication , The Tombs of Harmhabi and Touatânkhamanou ; the book closes with the comment , " I fear that the Valley of Kings is now exhausted . "

After Davis 's death early in 1915 Lord Carnarvon acquired the concession to excavate the valley and he employed Carter to explore it . After a systematic search they discovered the actual tomb of Tutankhamun ( KV62 ) in November 1922 .

Various expeditions have continued to explore the valley , adding greatly to the knowledge of the area . In 2001 the Theban Mapping Project designed new signs for the tombs , providing information and plans of the open tombs .

= = Tomb development = =

#### Location

The earliest tombs were located in cliffs at the top of scree slopes , under storm @-@ fed waterfalls ( for example KV34 and KV43 ) . As these locations were soon used , burials then descended to the valley floor , gradually moving back up the slopes as the valley bottom filled up with debris . This explains the location of the tombs KV62 and KV63 buried in the valley floor .

#### Architecture

The usual tomb plan consisted of a long inclined rock @-@ cut corridor , descending through one or more halls ( possibly mirroring the descending path of the sun @-@ god into the underworld ) , to the burial chamber . In the earlier tombs the corridors turn through 90 degrees at least once ( such as KV43 , the tomb of Thutmose IV ) , and the earliest had cartouche @-@ shaped burial chambers ( for example , KV43 , the tomb of Thutmose IV ) . This layout is known as ' Bent Axis ' , and after the burial the upper corridors were meant to be filled with rubble , and the entrance to the tomb hidden . After the Amarna Period , the layout gradually straightened , with an intermediate ' Jogged Axis ' ( the tomb of Horemheb , KV57 is typical of this , and is one of the tombs that is sometimes open to the public ) , to the generally ' Straight Axis ' of the late Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasty tombs ( Ramesses III 's and Ramesses IX 's tombs , KV11 and KV6 respectively ) . As the tomb 's axes straightened , the slope also lessened , and almost disappeared in the late Twentieth Dynasty . Another feature that is common to most tombs is the ' well ' , which may have originated as an actual barrier intended to stop flood waters entering the lower parts of the tombs . It later seems to have developed a ' magical ' purpose as a symbolic shaft . In the later Twentieth Dynasty , the well itself was sometimes not excavated , but the well room was still present .

#### Decoration

The majority of the royal tombs were decorated with religious texts and images . The early tombs were decorated with scenes from Amduat ( ' That Which is in the Underworld ' ) , which describes the journey of the sun @-@ god through the twelve hours of the night . From the time of Horemheb , tombs were decorated with the Book of Gates , which shows the sun @-@ god passing through the twelve gates that divide the night time , and ensure the tomb owner 's own safe passage through the night . These earliest tombs were generally sparsely decorated , and those of a non @-@ royal nature were totally undecorated .

Late in the Nineteenth Dynasty the Book of Caverns , which divided the underworld into massive caverns containing deities and the deceased waiting for the sun to pass through and restore them to life , was placed in the upper parts of tombs ; a complete version appears in the tomb of Ramesses VI . The burial of Ramesses III saw the Book of the Earth , where the underworld is divided into 4 sections , climaxing in the sun disc being pulled from the earth by Naunet .

The ceilings of the burial chambers were decorated ( from the burial of Seti I onwards ) with what become formalised as the Book of the Heavens , which again describes the sun 's journey through the twelve hours of night . Again from Seti I 's time , the Litany of Re , a lengthy hymn to the sun god began to appear .

#### Tomb equipment

Each burial was provided with equipment that would enable a continued existence in the afterlife in comfort . Also present in the tombs were ritual magical items , such as Shabtis and divine figurines . Some equipment was that which the king may have used in their lifetime ( Tutankhamun 's sandals for example ) , and some was specially constructed for the burial .

= = Tomb numbering = =

The modern abbreviation " KV " stands for " Kings ' Valley " , and the tombs are numbered in the

order of ' discovery ' from Ramesses VII ( KV1 ) to KV63 ( which was discovered in 2005 ) , although many of the tombs have been open since antiquity , and KV5 was only rediscovered in the 1990s ( after being dismissed as unimportant by previous investigators ) . The West Valley tombs often have the " WV " prefix but follow the same numbering system . A number of the tombs are unoccupied , the owners of others remain unknown , and others are merely pits used for storage . Most of the open tombs in the Valley of the Kings are located in the East Valley , and this is where most tourists and facilities can be found .

= = = Eighteenth Dynasty = = =

The Eighteenth Dynasty tombs within the valley vary a good deal in decoration , style and location . At first there seems to have been no fixed plan ; indeed the tomb of Hatshepsut is of a unique shape , twisting and turning down over 200 metres from the entrance so that the burial chamber is 97 metres below the surface . The tombs gradually became more regular and formalised , and the tombs of Thutmose III and Thutmose IV , KV34 and KV43 are good examples of Eighteenth Dynasty tombs , both with their bent axis , and simple decoration .

Perhaps the most imposing tomb of this period is that of Amenhotep III , WV22 located in the West Valley . It has been re @-@ investigated in the 1990s ( by a team from Waseda University , Japan ) but is not open to the public .

At the same time , powerful and influential nobles started to be buried with the royal family ; the most famous of these tombs is the joint tomb of Yuya and Tjuyu , KV46 . They were possibly the parents of Queen Tiy , and until the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun , this was the best preserved tomb to be found in the Valley .

= = = Amarna Period = = =

The return of royal burials to Thebes after the end of Amarna period marks a change to the layout of royal burials , with the intermediate ' jogged axis ' gradually giving way to the ' straight axis ' of later dynasties . In the Western valley , there is a tomb commencement that is thought to have been started for Akhenaten , but it is no more than a gateway and a series of steps . Close by to this tomb is the tomb of Ay , Tutankhamun 's successor . It is likely that this tomb was started for Tutankhamun ( its decoration is of a similar style ) but later usurped for Ay 's burial . This would mean that KV62 may have been Ay 's original tomb , which would explain the smaller size and unusual layout for a royal tomb .

The other Amarna period tombs are located in a smaller , central area in the centre of the East Valley , with a possible mummy cache ( KV55 ) that may contain the burials of several Amarna Period royals ? Tiy and Smenkhkare or Akhenaten .

Close to this is the burial of Tutankhamun , which is perhaps the most famous discovery of modern Western archaeology and was made here by Howard Carter on November 4 , 1922 , with clearance and conservation work continuing until 1932 . This was the first royal tomb to be discovered that was still largely intact ( although tomb robbers had entered it ) , and was , until the excavation of KV63 on 10 March 2005 , considered the last major discovery in the valley . The opulence of his grave goods notwithstanding , Tutankhamun was a rather minor king and other burials probably had more numerous treasures .

In the same central area as KV62 and KV63 , is ' KV64 ' , a radar anomaly believed to be a tomb or chamber announced on 28 July 2006 . It is not an official designation , and indeed the actual existence of a tomb at all is dismissed by the Supreme Council of Antiquities .

The nearby tomb of Horemheb , ( KV57 ) is rarely open for visitors , but it has many unique features , and is extensively decorated . The decoration shows a transition from the pre @-@ Amarna tombs to those of the 19th dynasty tombs that followed .

= = = Nineteenth Dynasty = = =

The Nineteenth Dynasty saw a further standardisation of tomb layout and decoration . The tomb of the first king of the dynasty Ramesses I was hurriedly finished due to the death of the king and is little more than a truncated descending corridor and a burial chamber ; however , KV16 has vibrant decoration , and still contains the sarcophagus of the king . Its central location means that it is one of the frequently visited tombs . It shows the development of the tomb entrance and passage and of decoration .

His son and successor , Seti I 's tomb , KV17 ( also known as Belzoni 's tomb , the tomb of Apis , or the tomb of Psammis , son of Necho ) is usually thought to be the finest tomb in the valley , with extensive relief work and paintings . When it was rediscovered by Belzoni in 1817 , he referred to it as " .. a fortunate day .. "

The son of Seti , Ramesses the Great constructed a massive tomb , KV7 , but it is in a ruinous state , and it is currently undergoing excavation and conservation by a Franco @-@ Egyptian team led by Christian Leblanc . It is a vast size , being about the same length , and a larger area , of the tomb of his father .

At the same time , and just opposite his own tomb , Ramesses enlarged the earlier small tomb of an unknown Eighteenth Dynasty noble ( KV5 ) for his numerous sons . With 120 known rooms and excavation work still underway , it is probably the largest tomb in the valley . Originally opened ( and robbed ) in antiquity , it is a low @-@ lying structure that has been particularly prone to the flash floods that sometimes hit the area , which washed in tonnes of debris and material over the centuries , ultimately concealing its vast size . It is not currently open to the public .

Ramesses II 's son and eventual successor , Merenptah 's tomb has been open since antiquity ; it extends 160 metres , ending in a burial chamber that once contained a set of four nested sarcophagi . Well decorated , it is typically open to the public most years .

The last kings of the dynasty also constructed tombs in the valley , all of which follow the same general pattern of layout and decoration , notable amongst these is the tomb of Siptah , which is well decorated , especially the ceiling decoration .

= = = Twentieth Dynasty = = =

The first ruler of the dynasty , Setnakhte , actually had two tombs constructed for himself ; he started to excavate the eventual tomb of his son , Ramesses III , but broke into another tomb and abandoned it in order to usurp and complete the tomb of the Nineteenth Dynasty female pharaoh Twosret . This tomb therefore has two burial chambers , the later extensions making the tomb one of the largest of the Royal tombs , at over 150 metres .

The tomb of Ramesses III ( known Bruce 's Tomb or The Harper 's Tomb due to its decoration ) is one of the largest tombs in the valley and is open to the public ; it is located close to the central ' rest ? area ' and its location and superb decoration usually makes this one of the tombs visited by tourists .

The successors and offspring of Ramesses III constructed tombs that had straight axes and were decorated in much the same manner as each other ; notable amongst these is KV2 , the tomb of Ramesses IV , which has been open since antiquity , containing a large amount of hieratic graffiti . The tomb is mostly intact and is decorated with scenes from several religious texts . The joint tomb of Ramesses V and Ramesses VI , KV9 ( also known as the Tomb of Memnon or La Tombe de la Métempsychose ) , is decorated with many sunk @-@ relief carvings , depicting illustrated scenes from religious texts . Open since antiquity , it contains over a thousand graffiti in ancient Greek , Latin and Coptic . The spoil from the excavation and later clearance of this tomb , together with later construction of workers huts , covered the earlier burial of KV62 and seems to have been what protected that tomb from earlier discovery and looting .

The tomb of Ramesses IX , KV6 , has been open since antiquity , as can be seen by the graffiti left on its walls by Roman and Coptic visitors . Located in the central part of the valley , it stands between and slightly above KV5 and KV55 . The tomb extends a total distance of 105 metres into the hillside , including extensive side chambers that were neither decorated nor finished . The hasty and incomplete nature of the rock @-@ cutting and decorations ( it is only decorated for a little over

half its length ) within the tomb indicate that the tomb was not completed by the time of Ramesses ' death , with the completed hall of pillars serving as the burial chamber .

Another notable tomb from this dynasty is KV19 , the tomb of Mentuherkhepshef ( son of Ramesses IX ) . The tomb is small and is simply a converted , unfinished corridor , but the decoration is extensive and the tomb has been newly restored and open for visitors .

= = = Twenty @-@ first Dynasty and the decline of the necropolis = = =

By the end of the New Kingdom , Egypt had entered a long period of political and economic decline . The priests at Thebes grew in power and effectively administered Upper Egypt , while kings ruling from Tanis controlled Lower Egypt . Some attempt at using the open tombs was made at the start of the Twenty @-@ first Dynasty , with the High Priest of Amun , Pinedjem I , adding his cartouche to KV4 . The Valley began to be heavily plundered , so during the Twenty @-@ first Dynasty the priests of Amun opened most of the tombs and moved the mummies into three tombs in order to better protect them , even removing most of their treasure in order to further protect the bodies from robbers . Most of these were later moved to a single cache near Deir el @-@ Bari ( known as TT320 ) ; located in the cliffs overlooking Hatshepsut 's famous temple , this mass reburial contained a large number of royal mummies . They were found in a great state of disorder , many placed in other 's coffins , and several are still unidentified . Other mummies were moved to the tomb of Amenhotep II , where over a dozen mummies , many of them royal , were later relocated .

During the later Third Intermediate Period and later periods , intrusive burials were introduced into many of the open tombs . In Coptic times , some of the tombs were used as churches , stables and even houses .

= = = Minor tombs in the Valley of the Kings = = =

The majority of the 65 numbered tombs in the Valley of the Kings can be considered as being minor tombs , either because at present they have yielded little information or because the results of their investigation was only poorly recorded by their explorers , while some have received very little attention or were only cursorily noted . Most of these tombs are small , often only consisting of a single burial chamber accessed by means of a shaft or a staircase with a corridor or a series of corridors leading to the chamber , but some are larger , multiple chambered tombs . These minor tombs served various purposes : some were intended for burials of lesser royalty or for private burials , some contained animal burials and others apparently never received a primary burial . In many cases these tombs also served secondary functions and later intrusive material has been found related to these secondary activities . While some of these tombs have been open since antiquity , the majority were discovered in the 19th and early 20th centuries during the height of exploration in the valley .

= = = Tomb robbers = = =

Almost all of the tombs have been ransacked . Several papyri have been found that describe the trials of tomb robbers ; these date mostly from the late Twentieth Dynasty . One of these ( Papyrus Mayer B ) describes the robbery of the tomb of Ramesses VI and was probably written in Year 9 of Ramesses IX :

The foreigner Nesamun took us up and showed us the tomb of King Ramesses VI ... And I spent four days breaking into it , we being present all five . We opened the tomb and entered it . ... We found a cauldron of bronze , three wash bowls of bronze ...

The valley also seems to have suffered an official plundering during the virtual civil war , which started in the reign of Ramesses XI . The tombs were opened , all the valuables removed , and the mummies collected into two large caches . One in the tomb of Amenhotep II , contained sixteen , and others were hidden within Amenhotep I 's tomb . A few years later most of them were moved to the Deir el @-@ Bahri cache , contained no less than forty royal mummies and their coffins . Only

those tombs whose locations were lost ( KV62 , KV63 and KV46 , although both KV62 and KV46 were robbed soon after their actual closure ) were undisturbed in this period .

= = Tourism = =

Most of the tombs are not open to the public ( 18 of the tombs can be opened , but they are rarely open at the same time ) , and officials occasionally close those that are open for restoration work . The number of visitors to KV62 has led to a separate charge for entry into the tomb . The West Valley has only one open tomb ? that of Ay ? and a separate ticket is needed to visit this tomb . The tour guides are no longer allowed to lecture inside the tombs and visitors are expected to proceed quietly and in single file through the tombs . This is to minimize time in the tombs and prevent the crowds from damaging the surfaces of the decoration . Photography is no longer allowed in the tombs .

In 1997 , 58 tourists and four Egyptians were massacred at nearby Deir el @-@ Bahri by Islamist militants from Al @-@ Gama 'a al @-@ Islamiyya . This led to an overall drop in tourism in the area .

On most days of the week an average of four to five thousand tourists visit the main valley . On the days that the Nile Cruises arrive , the number can rise to over nine thousand . These levels are expected to rise to 25 @,@ 000 by 2015 . The West Valley is much less visited , as there is only one tomb that is open to the public .