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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

AAT-1133

TREKKING IN MAQDELA ALONG GENERAL NAPIER'S ROUTE & LALIBELA

Duration: 17 Days / 16 Nights



Tour Highlights:

- Get off the beaten track and walk through the beautiful but seldom visited countryside passing Lake Hashengie and hilly mountains and gorges
- Camp on the edge of the escarpment of Mount Maqdela watching the beautiful sunset
- Enjoy indigenous flora and fauna as well as millet, barley and wheat fields
- Shop the stalls of Mercato, the largest open-air market in Africa
- Traditional Ethiopian farewell dinner with “coffee ceremony” and traditional dances of different ethnic groups

Travel date:

Every day departure with a minimum of two participants.

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Day 1: Arrival in Addis Ababa

WELCOME TO ETHIOPIA. On arrival in Addis Ababa our representative will meet you at Bole International Airport. After transfer to your hotel an overview of the program will be given. The rest of the day visit historical sites in Addis Ababa including the National Archaeological Museum, where the 3,6 million year old skeletal remains of "Lucy" rest, which were discovered in 1974. Proceed to the Ethnological Museum at Addis Ababa University, the Mercato market, the Holy Trinity Cathedral and Mount Entoto, which rises up to an altitude of 3200 meters and offers a panoramic view of the metropolis. Overnight in 4-star hotel.

Day 2: Fly to Mekele, Drive to Lake Hashengie

After breakfast transfer to the airport and flight to Mekele, where you meet the vehicles and drive to Lake Hashengie. Here you meet the trekking stuff and packing animals for the camping gear. Camping near the beautiful Lake Hashengie. The following days we follow the footsteps of the Napier expedition of 1868. Emperor Tewodros II had ambitious plans to bring technical improvements to Ethiopia and asked the British Queen Victoria for help. Unfortunately her



answer came with great delay so Tewodros II imprisoned all British people in the country. As communication failed an expedition was planned to free the captives kept in Maqdela. General Napier led this expedition accompanied by infantry, artillery, cavalry - together about 400 men - and over 35,000 pack animals, including camels and elephants. The 390 mile long expedition began in Kumayli, at the Red Sea, crossing Eritrea, along Lake Hashengie and ended finally in Maqdela. Tewodros II committed suicide when he was defeated by the English troops.



Day 3: Trek to Lat

After breakfast start the first day trekking to Lat through fields of millet, barley and wheat experiencing the everyday activities of the local people: oxen driven farming, harvesting and winnowing. Camping in Lat

Day 4: Trek to Marrawah

The trekking day begins with an uphill walk. You will enjoy watching different, colorful birds around the farmlands. As you go down the weather gets hotter and the wind dies down. This area is a good spot to watch camel caravans. Finally you arrive in Marrawah where we will camp.

Day 5: Trek to Dildey

Trek the whole day through the undulating countryside. Later on we cross the Tsirari River where we stop to cool off, wash off the dust and do some laundry. After an hour uphill walk you reach the camp at Dildey.



Day 6: Trek to Muja

Start early for the long and strenuous ascent to Muja via Wondatch. After covering about 1000 m of height we reach the turnoff to Muja, which lies about 17 km away from Dildey. We arrive late in the afternoon. Camping at Muja

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Day 7: Drive to Lalibela

Short brake from trekking. Drive 70 km on a gravel road from Muja to Lalibela. The town of Lalibela, lies among the Lasta Mountains at 2630 m above sea level and remains until today a place of pilgrim and devotion for Ethiopian Christians.

The construction of the eleven rock-hewn churches is attributed to king Lalibela of the Zagwe Dynasty. Some of the 12th century churches are monolithic, carved from a sloping mass of red volcanic scoria underlaid by dark grey basalt and interconnected by a maze of tunnels



and passages with openings to hermit caves and catacombs. Some are of the basilica type, having archaic features and imitating architectural elements from earlier periods, yet they differ in design and style. The Lalibela churches are included in the World Heritage List since 1978.

Afternoon visit of the first group of six churches which lie in rock cradles one behind the other: Bet Golgotha, Bet Mika'el, Bet Maryam, Bet Meskel, Bet Danaghel and Bet Medhane Alem. Bet Medhane Alem, the largest one, is built like a Greek temple and its stone floor is so polished by the countless numbers of visitors that it reflects shafts of light from apertures in the walls high above. In a corner are three empty graves symbolically dug for biblical patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.



Day 8: In Lalibela, Drive to Muja

In the morning visit the other groups of rock churches in Lalibela. Bet Giyorgis, the most elegant church, lies somewhat isolated in the southwest part of the village on a sloping rock terrace. It can only be reached through a tunnel. The group of four, south of the Jordan River, comprise of Bet Emanuel, Bet Mercurios, Bet Abba Libanos and Bet Gabriel-Rufa'el. In the afternoon drive back to Muja. Camping outside the town.



Day 9: Trek to Santerra Plain

Resting days are over, back on with the walking boots and back on the trek. Pass the Muja village and walk down to cross the Tekezze River. After the river the path ascends gently up to the Santerra plain. At the top enjoy a picnic






lunch and the fantastic views. From here it is less than an hour to the campsite. Camping near Turk Village

Day 10: Trek to Talet Mariam Village

Full day trekking along the Napier expedition route of 1868 and through the hilly landscape. Camping near the village

Day 11: Trek to Betehor (also called Kon)

The scenery is nice to experience on this seldom visited trek. An other day of trekking along the Napier route. Camping in Kon

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<p>Day 12: In Betehor (Kon) Enjoy a day of rest with possibility for washing some clothes. Camp on the edge of a wonderful escarpment offering great views.</p>		
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<p>Day 13: Trek to Delanta Plain Descend for about four hours down the gorge, while the air is getting hotter and drier. At the bottom of the gorge cool off in the Jita River before starting your long and steep ascent. Here is a good place to spot Gelada Baboons blustering through the bush. Walk to the top onto the Delanta plain to the campsite near the village of Ketcho. This is a good spot for a wonderful sun set.</p>		
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<p>Day 14: Trek through the Beshlo Gorge After about an hour we reach the other side of the Delanta plain, which offers a great look across the Beshlo gorge. From here it is a long way down, sometimes across quite steep slopes. As you descend, the temperature rises. We cross a river where we stop for lunch, swimming or resting. From here it is about 2 hours to the campsite.</p>	<p>Day 15: Trek to Maqdela Today we start the trek walking uphill to Mount Maqdela. Maqdela is a mountain with three plateaued high points. It was used as a fortress by Emperor Tewodros II and was the scene of his final battle. On top you will see an old church and a 20 tonne cannon, which Tewodros II wanted to use in the battle against the English. Unfortunately the casing split on the first firing. Tewodros II committed suicide after being defeated by General Napier. Walk around the tabletop plateaus and enjoy the stunning view across the escarpment. You will see Gelada Baboons, bats and different species of birds. Camping on one of the other tops, where Emperor Tewodros II had his palace viewing the Sebastopol Canyon.</p>	
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<p>Day 16: Trek to Tenta, Drive to Dessie On the last trekking day there is still a four-hour walk across another mercilessly deep gorge to the town of Tenta where you find cold beer and our waiting vehicles. Then drive to the town of Dessie.</p>		
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<p>Day 17: Drive to Addis Ababa, After breakfast drive back to Addis Ababa. En route you will cross some misty highlands. In the evening have a fare well dinner party in a traditional Ethiopian restaurant with dances from different ethnic groups. Afterwards transfer to the airport for departure.</p>		
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<p><u>PRICE</u></p> <p>Price per person (on the basis of 2 travellers) = US \$ 3,776</p> <p>Price per person (on the basis of 3 travellers) = US \$ 3,220</p> <p>Single room supplement = US \$ 160</p> <p>Plus domestic flights ca. US \$ 180</p>		
<p>Price includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special qualified guide as well as mandatory local guide and scout fees in parks and villages - 4-star hotel in Addis Ababa and the best available hotels outside of Addis Ababa - All accommodation based on twin room occupancy - All camping gear, trekking staff and packing animals - Meals in Addis, on bed and breakfast basis - Meals out of Addis, on full board basis - Farewell dinner in Addis to enjoy traditional Ethiopian food and music - All entrance fees at parks and villages - All transfers according to the itinerary - All ground transportation including insurance, fuel and all costs of the driver - A traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony at a convenient time in the program - Government taxes <p>Price doesn't include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International flights - Lunch and Dinner in Addis Ababa - Any kind of drinks, alcoholic or non-alcoholic - Video filming and photographing fees - Incidental meals, snacks and drinks - Tips and items of personal nature like laundry, souvenirs, etc. - All what is not included in the list above 		