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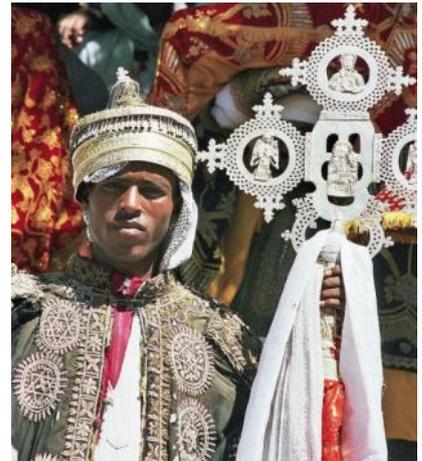
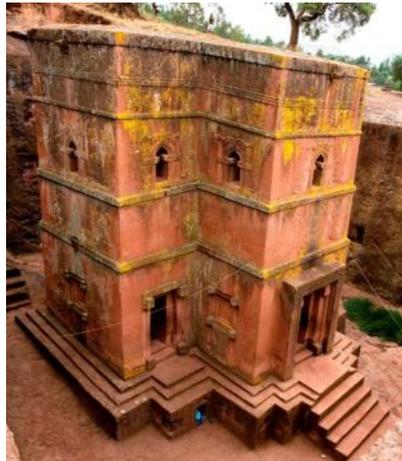
PO Box 59314

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

AAT-1116

HIGHLIGHTS OF ETHIOPIA, HISTORY, NATURE, CULTURE

Duration: 18 Days / 17 Nights



Tour Highlights:

- Visit the amazing rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Visit the two Famous parks in Ethiopia of Simien Mountains and Bale Mountains National Parks
- Boat trip on Lake Tana to visit the ancient island monasteries Ura Kidane Mihret and Azwa Maryam
- Explore the dramatic nature of the Blue Nile & Tiss Isat Falls
- Visit the Castles of Gondar, which are known as Africa's Camelot
- Visit the splendid vestiges of the fabled Queen Sheba in Axum
- Explore the Colorful tribes of the south who still adhere to ancient animistic rituals
- Traditional Ethiopian farewell dinner with "coffee ceremony"

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 Holy Trinity Cathedral and Mount Entoto, which rises up to an altitude of 3200 meters and offers a panoramic view of the metropolis. Overnight Jupiter International hotel

Day 2: Fly Bahir Dar, Blue Nile Falls

After breakfast fly to Bahir Dar, a small town on the southern shore of Lake Tana. The lake is the source of the Blue Nile and the largest lake in Ethiopia. Thirty of its thirty-seven islands host churches and monasteries of considerable historical and cultural interest. After refreshment, take a boat trip on Lake Tana to visit two of the most accessible and representative monasteries, Ura Kidane Mehret and Azwa Maryam, which still serve their original function. In the afternoon, visit the impressive Blue Nile Falls, locally known as Tiss Isat or 'Smoke of Fire'. The Fall is in the small town of Tiss Abay, 30 Kms from Bahir Dar and then walk about 20-30 minutes to reach the best viewpoint of the falls.



Day 3: Drive to Gondar

On the 180 km long drive to Gondar you experience a typical Ethiopian- landscape - wide grazing land, hilly mountains and numerous farmlands. Visit the castles and churches built by emperor Fassiledes and his descendants Later proceed to the fascinating Debre Birhan Selassie Church - one of the World’s heritage sights. Its walls and ceilings are decorated with scenes of biblical lore and medieval history.



Day 4: Drive to Simien Mountains

After early breakfast we drive to Debarq, the head quarter of the Simien Mountain National Park. We proceed to Sankaber, where we walk around through breath-taking scenery enjoying endemic Gelada Baboons and the bone breaker giant bird Lammergeyer. Overnight Simien Loge

Day 5: Drive back to Gondar

After breakfast relax in Simien Mountainns National Park enjoying the scenery, colourful birds and animals. Late afternoon drive back to Gondar for an overnight stay in Goha Hotel.

Day 6: Fly Axum

After breakfast fly to Axum. After transfer to the hotel and refreshment, visit the historical and archaeological sites of Axum. The ancient city marks the location of the heart of ancient Ethiopia, when the kingdom of Axum was the most powerful state between the eastern Roman empire and Persia. The archaeological and historical attractions in Axum include: the archaeological museum, the magnificent monolithic steles and obelisks, the tombs



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<p>of king Kaleb and king Gebre Meskal, the legendary bath of Queen Sheba, and the ruins of her palace. The 16th century cathedral St. Mary of Zion, the holiest church in Ethiopia is said to host the original Ark of the Covenant. The churches and monasteries of Axum are richly endowed with icons and historical crowns of ancient emperors. Overnight Hotel.</p>		
<p>Day 7: Fly Lalibela After breakfast transfer to the airport and flight 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 under laid 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. Two are decorated with interesting wall paintings and carved figures. 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. Overnight hotel</p>		
		
<p>Day 8: In Lalibela After breakfast take a mule ride to the 13th century rock hewn monastery of Asheten Mariam. The church is situated on the top of a mountain at an altitude of 3150 metres. The roundtrip takes about 4 hours. We return to Lalibela for lunch. In the afternoon, visit the other groups of rock churches. 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. Overnight hotel</p>		
<p>Day 9: Fly to Addis Ababa then Drive to Lake Langano After breakfast you check in to the airport for your flight to Addis Ababa. Meet vehicle and drive heading south for Lake Langano and to Bishangari. Your first stop is at the Crater Lakes of Debrezait town. Here you will find some birds and then continue driving south, stopping off at Koka Dam and the Awash and then at Lake Zeway the common birds to be seen include African pygmy Geese, Yellow billed storks, Collared Pratincoles, Lesser and greater Jacanas, African Jacanas, White Pelicans, Fish Eagles, crowned and common cranes are some of the species to be seen here in impressive numbers. We leave Zway mid-afternoon, continuing to Lake Langano. Overnight Savanna Lodge.</p>		
<p>Day 10: Drive to Arba Minch visiting Dorze Village en route (300 kms, about 5 - 6 hours drive) Drive to Arba Minch via Wolayta Sodo En route visit the Dorze village, high in the mountains north of Arba Minch. The Dorze are well known as master weavers and live in interesting igloo-shaped houses. Overnight Paradise Lodge</p>		

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**HIGHLIGHTS OF ETHIOPIA:
HISTORY, NATURE AND CULTURE**

**18 Days / 17 Nights
Flight / Surface**

Day 11: After breakfast boat trip on Lake Chamo then drive to Jinka (275 kms, about 5 - 6 hours drive) After breakfast take a boat trip on Lake Chamo, and spot hippos and spectacular concentrations of giant crocodiles. The water birds are great and the scenery is unforgettable. Locals fish here in traditional boats for Nile Perch. Then after drive to Jinka along impressive land terracing to the village of the Woito people, near the Woito river. Overnight Jinka resort.



Day 12: Jinka – Mursi – Jinka- Turmi

After breakfast leave Jinka and drive to the Mursi village to visit and appreciate the very attractive culture of the Mursi tribe. They are renowned for the strange custom followed by their women who, on reaching maturity, have their lower lips slit and circular clay discs inserted. Then after drive back to Jinka and continue to Turmi via Dimeka . Turmi is a small town, which is the base to visit the Hamer village. Hamers have remarkable hairstyles made from ochre, water and binding resin. They rub the mixture into their hair then twist the strands repeatedly to create coppery-colored locks. This is a sign of wealth and welfare. Hamers are considered to be masters of body decoration. The remaining of the day visit the Monday Turmi Market of the Hamer people. Overnight Buska Lodge

Day 13: In Turmi

After breakfast drive to Karo viilage and visit the Karo people in the afternoon visit the hammer vil-lage. Hamers have remarkable hairstyles made from ochre, water and binding resin. They rub the mixture into their hair then twist the strands repeatedly to create coppery-colored locks. This is a sign of wealth and welfare. Hamers are considered to be masters of body decoration.

Day 14: Drive to Arba Mich (260 kms, about 5 - 6 hours drive) After breakfast drive back to Arba Minch visiting the Airbore people and their Village en route. Overnight Paradise Lodge

Day 15: Drive to Lake Awassa.

After breakfast drive to Awassa and the rest of the day enjoy around Lake Awassa, which is surrounded by mountains and populated by countless species of birds. Awasa is one of the largest cities in southern Ethiopia but manages to retain an easy-going feel, making it a pleasant place to spend some time. There is a bustling central market as well as a separate fish market. Overnight Haile Resort Hotel



Day 16: Bale Mountain National Park

After breakfast we visit the fish Market by the side of Lake Awassa where the local people buy fish from the fisher men. Then drive to the Bale Mt. National Park, this drive is towards southeast, where fertile land is cultivated by the Oromo people. You arrive at Dinsho (Park HQ) in the afternoon; here you will see two endemic mammals: Menelik's Bushbuck and Mountain Nyala . You will also have a chance to see Warthog, Bohor Reedbuck and Grey Duiker. The Park Head Quarter, is surrounded by juniper trees and numerous species of wildlife. The Dinsho area is covered by grassy riverine plains which are bordered by bands of bushes such as sage bush and St. John's wourt. Wild flowers, such as lobelia, geraniums, red-hot pokers and Alchemilla form a colorful carpet during the spring season. After your visit, late afternoon drive to Goba for an overnight at Wabi Shebele Hotel.

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<p>Day 17: Goba – Sanetti Plateau In the morning, after breakfast, drive to the Afro-alpine setting of the Sanetti Plateau to see the endemic Ethiopian Wolf and the Gaint Mole rat. Here you will also visit the indigenous plants like the giant Lobilia and giant heath. You will also visit endemic birds then after drive back to Goba. Overnight at Wabi Shebele Hotel</p> <p>Day 18: Drive to Addis Ababa evening departure After breakfast drive to Addis Ababa through the Great Rift Valley lakes. In the Evening a fare well diner party in one of the Traditional Ethiopian restaurant with dances from the different ethnic Groups. Then transfer out to the airport for departure back to home.</p>		
<p>PRICE Price per person (on the basis of 2 travellers) = US \$ 3.650 Price per person (on the basis of 3 travellers) = US \$ 3.270 Single room supplement = US \$ 486 Plus domestic flights ca. US \$ 300</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 - 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 sites, churches, parks and villages - All transfers and visits according to the itinerary - All ground transportation including insurance, fuel and all costs of the driver - Boat trip - 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 		

