

Flights – typical programme

Flight	Date	From	To	Depart	Arrive	Airline
ET711		Heathrow	Addis Ababa	2100	0815+1	Ethiopian Airlines
ET128		Addis Ababa	Axum	0630	0830	Ethiopian Airlines
ET123		Axum	Lalibella	1100	1140	Ethiopian Airlines
ET123		Lalibela	Gondar	1200	1230	Ethiopian Airlines
ET121		Bahar Dar	Addis Ababa	0850	0950	Ethiopian Airlines
ET135		Addis Ababa	Arba Minch	0830	1010	Ethiopian Airlines
ET700		Addis Ababa	Heathrow	1215	2000	Ethiopian Airlines

Day 1 Fly to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Normally this flight will be from London Heathrow overnight.

Day 2 1 Night, Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa, Standard Twin Room, with dinner.



On arrival in Addis Ababa, you will be met and transferred to the Ghion hotel in Addis, where you will stay for the night. Enjoy the rest of the morning at your own leisure. The Ghion hotel has a splendid thermal swimming pool and a well-kept garden.

This afternoon you are met by your guide who will take you for the first part of your Addis city tour, the second part being on 15 November.

The name of the city, in Amharic, means “new flower”. Founded in 1886 by Menelik II, it is located at 2,500 metres above sea level in one of the highest parts of the Entoto mountain chain (3,000 m above sea level). It enjoys an excellent climate all year round, with an average temperature of 25°C. Addis Ababa is a pleasant city with wide avenues of jacaranda trees, interesting museums and one of the largest open air markets in Africa, known as the “Mercato”.



Day 3 1 night, Yeha Hotel, Axum, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

This morning you are transferred to Addis Ababa Airport in time for your flight to Axum. On arrival at Axum airport you are met by your guide who will take you to check in at the Yeha Hotel. Then your tour of the historic sites of Axum will commence.

The legends narrated in the Kebra Nagast "Book of Kings" recount how the city of Axum as early as the 10th century B.C was already the city in which the Queen of Sheba resided. It is recounted that the son of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant to Axum and it remains there to this day, preserved in a sanctuary. Famous long before the time of Christ, Axum was the capital of the long Axumite reign, one of the oldest African empires, and represented a crucial connecting-point between Africa and Asia for almost a thousand years. A visit is organized to the stelae: granite monoliths dating from pre-Christian times and decorated with symbolic engravings. There is also a visit to the church of Saint Mary of Zion, which contains the crowns of Ethiopian kings and other.

Days 4 & 5 2 nights, Roha Hotel, Lalibela, Standard Twin Room, Full Board



Early this morning you are transferred to Axum airport in time for your flight to Lalibela.

On arrival at Lalibela airport you are met by your guide and transferred to Lalibela, where you stay the following 2 nights at the Roha Hotel.

After lunch you visit the first group of churches.

The following day you can visit Asheton Mariam Monastery in the morning. You go on foot or riding on mules to visit the famous rock-churches located outside the city (about a 3-hour walk).

Then in the afternoon you visit the second group of churches.

Day 6 1 night, Goha Hotel, Gondar, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

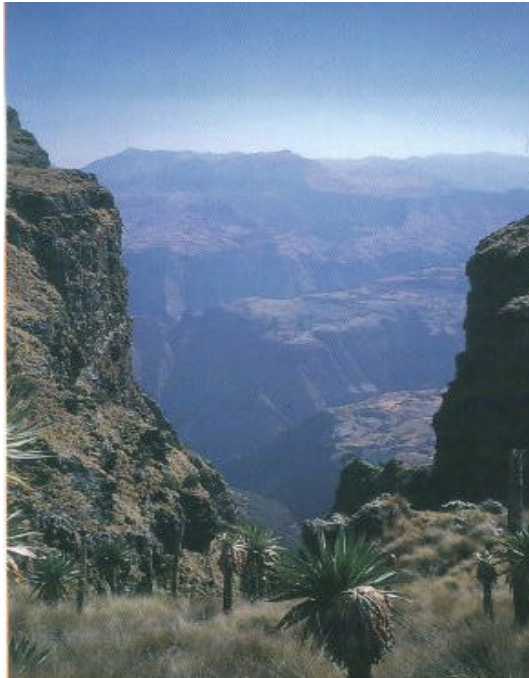
After a morning at leisure you are transferred to Lalibela airport in time for your flight to Gondar. On arrival at Gondar airport you are met and transferred to the Goha Hotel in where you will stay for the following 2 nights.

Gondar was the first capital city of the Ethiopian empire, which began in 1632 with the reign of Fasilidas. In Gondar, there are a dozen castles built by various emperors over the course of 236 years. The city seems more European than African and also has Islamic influences.



Today you will visit the palaces, residences, and baths of Fasilidas; and afterwards, you can visit the church of Debre Berham Selassie (Light of the Trinity), which is located at the summit of a hill and surrounded by fortified walls. The interior is decorated with beautiful frescos.

Day 7 1 night, Simiens Mountain Lodge, Standard Twin Room, Full Board



Today we will make an excursion to the Simien Mountains. The road passes over mountainous areas of wild beauty, drawing close to the national park of the Simien massif, in Amharic “Simien” means “north”

In the park, many of the mountain peaks exceed 4,000m; the highest is Ras Dejen, at 4,543 metres above sea level. These mountains consist of volcanic masses that have been eroded away by centuries of rain. Today they have amethyst-coloured peaks and deep gullies, which have been further deepened by rivers. The crevices play host to the Walya, the ibex of the Simien Mountains.

The drive from Gondar to Debarke retrace an ancient trading route that once connected Gondar to Axum, and Axum to the Nile empires.

Days 8 & 9 2 nights, Tana Hotel, Bahir Dar, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

After breakfast, you will be transferred by road to Bahir Dar where you arrive at the Tana Hotel, where you will stay for the night in time for lunch. In the afternoon you visit the Blue Nile Falls or an Island Monastery.

Bahir Dar is a pleasant city located at 1,800 metres above sea level on the shores of Lake Tana, the largest lake in Ethiopia. There are 37 islands on Lake Tana and 30 of them have churches and monasteries of considerable historical and cultural interest. Today we will have a boat trip on the Lake to discover the islands.



Day 10 1 night, Ghion Hotel, Addis, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

After breakfast you are transferred to Axum airport in time for your 0850hrs flight to Addis Ababa. On arrival at the Addis Ababa airport you are met and transferred to the Ghion Hotel where you stay the night.

Today you will have the second part of the city tour of Addis Ababa. This will include a tour of Haile Selassie’s former palace which is now the home of the Ethnological Museum. Exhibits here represent the best of the arts and crafts of the country and gives an in-depth insight into the various peoples of Ethiopia.



Next is a visit to the National Museum, known to be the best museum in Africa, where cultural and archaeological relics, including a plaster cast of "Lucy," the 3.2 million-year-old Hominid, are displayed.

At the end, and time permitting, we will see “Mercato” eastern Africa’s largest market.

Overnight Ghion Hotel or similar.

Day 11 1 night, Tourist Hotel, Arba Minch, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

After breakfast you are transferred to Addis airport for the 0830hrs flight to Arba Minch. Arrive at 1010hrs and meet your driver for the transfer to the Tourist Hotel. Today you have the opportunity for a boat ride on Lake Charmo.

The name “ArbaMinch” means forty springs. ArbaMinch is located to the south of Addis Ababa, in the rift valley situated between Lake Abaya and Chamo. The mountain known as “yegzer deldey” meaning God’s Bridge separates the two lakes. A long section of the road offers magnificent views of Lake Abaya; The Lake has volcanic origins and is almost pink in color. ArbaMinch is the place where you will start the Omo valley voyage. This is the region inhabited by the people of the Guragie. ArbaMinch is known for its delicious fish, fresh from Lake Chamo and its wild life in the Nechi Sar National park.

Day 12 1 night, Jinka Resort, Jinka, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

The road crosses soft rolling hills with dark red soil and plentiful crops and woods. The Dorze people, famous for their textiles, inhabit most of the territory. Their bamboo houses are each surrounded by a small garden. Moving on, we meet the Konso people who are excellent farmers. These are pagan people, who erect totem poles on the tombs of their dead. To the southeast of the Konso village are the Borena, who are semi-nomadic shepherds. Overnight stay and dinner in Jinka, a large town on the edge of the southern savannah.



Day 13 1 night, Murulle Lodge, Standard Twin Room, Full Board



Today we descend to the Omo valley. This valley is very special because nowhere else in the world are there so many ethnic groups inhabiting such a small area. During the next couple of days you'll see different tribes all of whom have their own languages and, for the most part, have few interactions between each other.

The Mursi: are perhaps the best known of the tribal peoples due to many documentaries having been done about them.

They are a nomadic people, moving with the season.

The women wear lip plates and the men are known for the fierce stick fighting they engage in among themselves.

O/n at Murulle Lodge.

Day 14 1 night, Evangadi Camp Site, Tent, Full Board

Continue towards The Karo: One of the most endangered of the tribes, they raise cattle and crops. These peoples are masters at body decorating during festival time. They use chalk to imitate the spotted plumage of the guinea fowl. They also make unique jewellery from almost anything they find! You'll also see villages of the Dus, Korcho and Geleb peoples. Overnight at Evangadi camp site.



Day 15 1 night, Evangadi Camp Site, Tent, Full Board

Today you visit the colorful Dimeka market, a market for Bena and Hammar people. Here you also visit the Hamar tribe, one of the largest groups in the Valley. The Hamar cultivate millet, vegetables, tobacco and cotton, plus raise cattle and goats. They are known for the fine pottery they produce as well as their remarkable hairstyling.



Most dramatic of all are the clay hair buns with ostrich feathers that the men don when they've killed a fierce animal. These buns remain on for 3-6 months at a time!! The women wear beaded necklaces and iron coils around their arms plus the skin is decorated with cowry shells. These decorations indicate the wealth and prestige of a woman's husband.



Day 16 1 night, Tourist Hotel, Arba Minch, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

Drive back to Arba Minch and stay at the Tourist Hotel.

Day 17 1 night, Sabanna Beach Resort, Langano, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

The drive north to Lake Langano takes you across fertile land planted with bananas, cereals and tobacco. Langano is a holiday resort with a splendid beach dotted with acacia trees, pinkish volcanic water - ideal for swimming. Overnight at Sabanna beach Resort.

Day 18 1 night, Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa, Standard Twin Room, Full Board

Set off for Addis with an early start so as to find time to visit the twin lakes in Lake Abiata-Shalla National Park, famous for flocks of flamingos and great white pelicans. Though the park has been intruded upon by settlers with their domestic animals and plantations, it is still worth a visit. Lake Abiata is shallow and brackish and is home to colonies of flamingos. Lake Shala, a crater lake with a depth of about 820 feet, is surrounded by a sulphur spring. Continue to Addis and the Ghion Hotel.

Day 19 Return flight home.

This morning you are transferred to Addis Ababa airport in time for your flight home, normally arriving London the same day.

