



ADVENTURE ASSOCIATES

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ETHIOPIA: EARLY CHRISTIANITY, SIMIEN MOUNTAINS, AND BLUE NILE FALLS

Trip Dates: Nov 29 – Dec 6, 2008

Land Costs: Tier-priced \$1695 - \$1899

Plan on arriving in Addis Ababa on Nov 28 if you are not participating in the Coffee Harvest Tour.

DAY 1 (Nov 29)

Completion of Coffee Harvest Tour. Fly from Addis Ababa north to Axum. Axum was the seat of an Empire which extended across the Red Sea to Arabia, traded with India and China, minted its own coinage, had its own alphabet and notational system, constructed great engineering works and dams and was reckoned by the 4th century Persian philosopher Mani to be "one of the four great powers of the ancient world," along with China, Persia and Rome. Enjoy a brief city tour ascending a hill to see the castle of King Kalab, passing Mai Shum (or the bath of the Queen of Sheba) on the way to your hotel. Dinner and overnight in Axum hotel. (BLD)

DAY 2 (Nov 30) *Annual Pilgrimage and Festival of Mariamtsion*

Today you will have the opportunity to participate in the annual pilgrimage to Mariamtsion Church, built on the site of Ethiopia's first church. A chapel within the church compound is believed by Ethiopian Orthodox Christians to house the Ark of the Covenant or the original tablets of Moses, and each year on this day, many travelers arrive after fasting and traveling to be in the company of high priests and pilgrims. Visit the *stelae* (the largest single pieces of stone erected anywhere in the world), the tombs and castles of kings, and the Axum Museum. Overnight hotel. (BLD)

Continued...

DAY 3 (Dec 1)

Today we'll tour the surrounding areas and finish off any sites we may have missed on Day 1. Just east of Axum ascend a hill for a dramatic mountain backdrop of the "teeth of Adua" – the striking scenery around the area where in 1896 King Menelik II defeated the invading Italian forces. At Yeha, Ethiopia's first city, explore the pre-Axumite ruins of temples and churches that date back to 800 BC and the 7th century monastery at Debre Damo. Enjoy a picnic lunch in Yeha, returning to Axum in the late afternoon light. Dinner and overnight at hotel. (BLD)

DAY 4 (Dec 2)

An early start today with a short flight southwest to Gondar and transfer to our comfortable lodge inside Simien Mountains National Park. The Simien Mountains arguably present the most dramatic mountain scenery in Africa - great volcanic plugs, formed some 40 million years and eroded over the aeons into fantastic crags, pinnacles and flat topped mountains, "the chess pieces of the Gods" as one writer described them, tower over precipitous gorges, river valleys and plains stretching all the way to Eritrea. There are many peaks over 4,000 meters, and Ras Dashen at 4,620 meters is the highest in the country (the fourth highest in Africa). Enjoy dinner at the lodge and a wonderful sunset. (BLD)

DAY 5 (Dec 3)

A full day exploring the National Park with a picnic lunch en route. Keep your eyes peeled for wildlife such as the endemic Gelada or bleeding heart baboon, the Walia Ibex, Simien Wolf and rock hyrax, a wide range of birdlife such as the Thick-billed Raven, Black-headed Siskin, White-collared Pigeon, Wattled Ibis, White-billed Starling, Spot-breasted Plover and White-backed Black Tit. Especially intriguing is the cruising Lammergeyer with their 12-foot wingspan! Scenery abounds through alpine meadows carpeted with flowers and punctuated by the tall spiky *kniphofia* or "red hot poker". Dinner and overnight at the lodge. (BLD)

DAY 6 (Dec 4)

After breakfast and a last glimpse at the mountains in the morning light, transfer back to Gondar. Gondar was the capital of the Ethiopian Empire from the 17th to mid-19th centuries and is distinguished by its imperial castles and churches, particularly Debre Berhan Selassie, the walls and ceiling of which are completely covered in murals. About 2 km from the town centre is the bath of King Fasilides, where a nearby river is diverted to fill an area the size of a small swimming pool. Worshippers plunge into the cold water in a re-enactment of the baptism of Christ in the River Jordan. Gondar is also a wonderful place for experiencing the Ethiopian tradition of *azmari* music, where a couple of wandering minstrels, a girl with a strident voice clapping in time to the music accompanied by a man playing a single stringed violin or *masinqo*, entertain their listeners with songs about life, the world and their audience. Overnight hotel (BLD)

DAY 7 (Dec 5)

This morning we will drive south along Lake Tana to Bahir Dar. This attractive town is well laid out with tree lined avenues and with the blue of the lake in every sight. Check into our lodge located on the shore of the lake, and enjoy lunch. Lake Tana (68 km wide and 73 km long) is Ethiopia's largest lake and is dotted with islands, on many of which are found churches and monasteries. After lunch

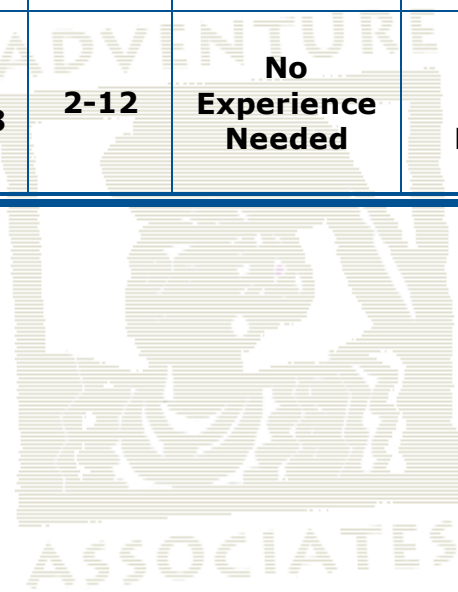
enjoy a boatribe to the Zeghie Peninsula which is known for its 14th century round, grass-roofed churches and their magnificent wall murals. Walk through dense forest with lots of birding opportunities while visiting the churches, before returning to town. Bahir Dar has several clubs and bars where visitors can see traditional and modern Ethiopian music and dancing, and is also quite safe for wandering around at night. Overnight hotel. (BLD)

DAY 8 (Dec 6)

Our last day in Ethiopia brings us to a spectacular place. Enjoy an early morning excursion to Blue Nile Falls, the source of the Nile. A short drive and a 20-minute walk bring us to the falls themselves, which are at their most spectacular during and after the rainy season (from about June to January). Here the Blue Nile, which contributes 85% of the main Nile flow, starts its long journey to the Mediterranean. We return to Bahir Dar for lunch and a short flight back to Addis Ababa. Transfer on for your flight home or optional day room use in local hotel before transferring back to the airport for a late night flight. (B)
End of AA services.

Land Costs	Deposit	Single Supplement	Trip Dates	Group Size	Difficulty	Activities
Tier-priced See Below	\$500	\$220	Nov 29 – Dec 6, 2008	2-12	No Experience Needed	Festival, Wildlife, Cultural Exchange, Lodges

Tier Pricing per person:
2 Guests: \$1899
3 - 6 Guests: \$1695
Single Supplement: \$220



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A FEW IMPORTANT DETAILS ABOUT YOUR TRIP...Read carefully

Included in your Trip Fee: Seven (7) nights accommodation based on double occupancy; all meals as indicated on itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner); in-country flights and all airport transfers; ground transportation (4 passengers per vehicle); tours and excursions; boat trip on Lake Tana; local guide fees; all entrance fees and local taxes.

Not Included in your Trip Fee: International Airfare; Visas; passport; airport departure tax; single supplement hotel fee (\$220) if unable to share a room based on double occupancy; medical evacuation and trip cancellation insurance; meals not specified itinerary, all alcoholic beverages; cost of delays due to weather, transportation problems, illness, political disputes or other contingencies for which reasonable provision cannot be made; tips to your guides as seems appropriate; optional activities; optional day room in Addis Ababa on Day 8.

Do I need a Visa to travel to Ethiopia: Yes. A tourist visa costs US\$20 and can be acquired upon arrival at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. If you are not a US Citizen, you will need to apply and obtain a tourist visa prior to your departure. Call for details.

Transportation/Flight Arrangements: Upon your registration, Adventure Associates will work closely with you on your individual flight plans. Certain programmed activities are dependant on flight schedule - you should verify your flight itinerary with Adventure Associates **before** purchase.

Travel & Trip Insurance: We strongly recommend that travel insurance be purchased immediately following your registration. The insurance protects you and your money from late cancellations, accidents or illness in remote areas, emergency evacuation, loss of baggage, airline flight changes and other unexpected delays. The particular program we recommend (Access America) will cover "preexisting" conditions if you purchase full coverage within fourteen (14) days following your registration or flight purchase. Information available upon request.

How to Register: If you do not have an application form, please contact our office for a complete registration packet. Complete the application form and return it to our office along with the appropriate deposit. Upon receipt of your application, we will send you a confirmation and final details about your pre-trip preparation. For immediate confirmation, you may charge your deposit to Visa, Master Card or American Express by phone or fax.

Payment Schedule: We accept checks, Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

Note: Due to the fluctuating nature of the American dollar, the trip price is based upon the dollar value at the time of printing (March 2008) and is subject to change.

\$500 Deposit due upon registration

Full Payment due 4 months prior to departure

Cancellation & Refund Policy

If you must cancel prior to departure, the following fee will be assessed based upon our receipt of your written cancellation request:

Days Prior to Departure (trip destination)

90 or more \$200

60 to 89 \$300

45 to 59 50% fee

1 to 44 100% fee

Itineraries are subject to change.

No partial refunds are possible for any unused portion of your trip.

Penalties on airline tickets are subject to the individual air carrier's rules and regulations. Departure is defined as the date of the first flight, or the trip departure date as indicated on our Trip Schedule, whichever comes first.

Once a trip has been confirmed medical circumstances will not be considered as exceptions to our cancellation policy. However, if you have purchased a comprehensive Travel Insurance plan that covers cancellation, you may be able to retrieve some of the funds.

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