

# ABSOLUTE ETHIOPIA TOURS

*Building Absolute Vacations!*

**Tour name:** AET 005 - Combined Tours for 11Nights/ 12Days

**Accommodation:** Variable Hotels

**Tour Starts:** Addis Ababa

**Tour Ends:** Addis Ababa

**Transport:** Internal flights & surface transports

**Guide:** Multilingual National guide will be available on request.

## Highlights

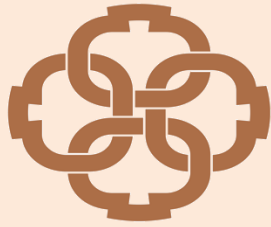
- Visiting Addis Ababa often referred as "the political capital of Africa" for its historical, diplomatic and political significance for the continent including the National Museum, the Trinity Cathedral & Merkato.
- Visit the "lung of Addis Ababa" Entoto Mountain; it was once a palace and the royal court to Emperor Menelik in the 1800s.
- The Magnificent Blue Nile falls, and Lake Tana Monasteries.
- Explore the wild life and landscape of the Simien Mountains & the city of Gondar.
- Touring through the vivid frescoes of Lalibelas rock-hewn churches.
- Visit the local villages down the Omo Valley, meet with elders ...
- Involve with everyday tasks such as farming, weaving, food preparation, hunting, gathering...

This program includes History, culture, religion, different social activities, scenery and wildlife.

Addis Ababa is the largest city of Ethiopia and its capital city at the same time. Addis Ababa, which in Amharic means "a new flower", is located in the center of the country, 2100- 2300m above the sea. It is one of the highest-located capital cities in the world. Here you can do various activities depending on your available time.

Discovering the mysteries of Ethiopia, a land of deep traditions dating back more than 3,000 years, includes the ancient cultural artefacts found in Axum, Lalibela, Gondar & Bahir Dar with the unspoiled nature of the Simien Mountains National Park.

Discover the incredible number of different ethnic groups in and around the Omo Valley. Explore their villages, learn about local customs and wander through bustling markets on a specific day of the week as listed below.



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Monday – Kako Market at Jinka or Turmi Market at Turmi village

Tuesday- Dimeka Market at Turmi village / Dorze market at Chencha

Wednesday-

Thursday – Key Afer Market at Key Afer village

Friday –

Saturday – Dimeka Market at Turmi village / / Dorze market at Chencha

Sunday – Weito Market at Erbore village.

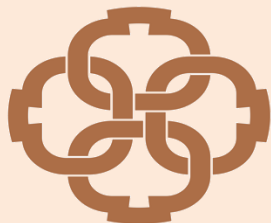
Visitors with an interest in observing pre-materialist cultures or in anthropology will find much to fascinate them in the different ethnic groups situated along the Omo River, with marvelous scenery, wild life and bird life as an added bonus.

Along the Omo River a variety of different ethnic groups are found, such as the Tsemay, Arbore, Hamar, Galeb(Dasenech), Karo, Benna, Ari, and Mursi, Bume(Nyangatom), Bodi, Surma, whose contact with the modern world has come only within the last two to three decades. The Omo, flowing for nearly 1000 km from the highlands south west of Addis Ababa to Lake Turkana in Kenya, provides excellent opportunities for white water rafting.

## **Trip Summary**

If you are interested to explore one of the glorious ancient human being civilizations in the continent of Africa, this tour is completely designed for your best and it defiantly suites your interest. You might be found yourself confused throughout this trip and continuously asking yourself why this great human being civilizations unable to sustain by the past and present Ethiopian generations? Might be there is the super Natural power interventions on all those great ancient civilizations evidences? Why don't you join us with this tour and put your own hypothesis for this argument?

Our life time journey begins with the city tour of Addis Ababa. Then followed by the morning flight to Bahir Dar, where we will explore the interesting medieval periods of Lake Tana monasteries and the marvellous Blue Nile falls and then continuing to Gondar for visiting the famous Royal Enclosures. Our discovery of this fascinating historic route also continues to the lovely landscape of Simein Mountains, where you'll enjoy a half day walking with the troops of Gellad Baboon – Endemic for Ethiopia. After a morning walk through the beautiful scenery of the mountains then



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we will back to Gondar. Then we will proceed to visit the ancient kingdom of Axum with the mysterious steale parks and the queen of Sheba ruined palaces. Our Journey will also touch the splendid Rock churches of Lalibela, considered as one of the eight wonders of the world and you will have enough time to learn more about these rock churches with your guided tour.

Join us on a fascinating tour to the south Omo valley, where a mosaic of indigenous tribes intriguing cultural value, beautiful landscape and diversified tribes with their own unique village settlements for a century. This trip is carefully designed to offer you the best of Omo Valley with the exceptional experience of the local villagers' interaction with visiting one of the tribe's family houses as a guest. All of this is yours in this package will guarantee you a fantastic journey of discovery to the Omo Valley Tribes.

Generally the best time to visit Ethiopia is between October and June, when it is the dry season. Rains tend to stop in early October, meaning afterwards the highlands are lush and green – perfect for trekking amongst pretty wildflowers that have sprung up. Be sure to bring a sweater all year round due to the elevation.

## PROGRAM IN DETAIL

DAY 01  
ADDIS ABABA

- L- D

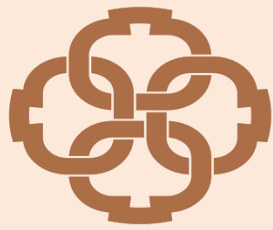
Welcome to Addis Ababa.

Addis Ababa is the largest city of Ethiopia and its capital city at the same time. Addis Ababa, which in Amharic means "a new flower", is located in the center of the country, 2100- 2300m above the sea. It is one of the highest-located capital cities in the world. Addis Ababa is a pleasant city with interesting museums and one of the largest open-air markets in Africa, "Mercato".

Addis Ababa is Africa's diplomatic capital with headquarters for the Organization of African Unity and the United Nation Economic Commissions for Africa.

On your arrival at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport, after clearing immigration and customs welcome by Absolute Ethiopia Tours staff and get transferred to your hotel.

Depending on your arrival time it is possible to arrange sightseeing in Addis Ababa with a national guide and this includes;



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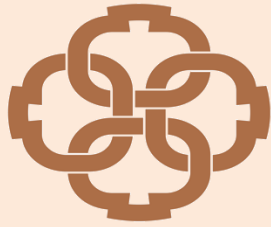
A visit of the National Archaeological Museum; ranks among the most important museums in sub-Saharan Africa. It housed the 3.5 million-year-old bones of Lucy. Lucy is believed to be the ancestor of all Human kind. It has lots of ancient exhibits that reflect the importance of Ethiopia as the 'Cradle of Mankind'. Its historic room features finery worn in the wars, such as crowns, weapons, and pictures of wartime heroes and kings.



The Holy Trinity Cathedral, built in 1945, this cathedral is renowned for its stunning stain-glassed windows which depict scenes from the Old and New Testament of the Holy Bible. The Trinity Cathedral also houses the tombs of the late emperor and his family as well as the tomb of English feminist Sylvia Pankhurst.

And a visit of Merkato; the Largest open Market in Africa; where virtually every possible commodity is on sale, from livestock to computers. It is closed on Sundays & for a visitor good at bargaining, there is a huge selection of Ethiopian arts and crafts.

Meals: Lunch & Dinner are included



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**Accommodation: Best Available Hotel - Sheraton Addis Luxury Collection >5\***

<https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/addlc-sheraton-addis-a-luxury-collection-hotel-addis-ababa/.com> or

**Hyatt Regency Addis Ababa Hotel** [https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/hotel/ethiopia/hyatt-regency-addis-ababa/addra?src=corp\\_lclb\\_gmbseo\\_eame\\_addra](https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/hotel/ethiopia/hyatt-regency-addis-ababa/addra?src=corp_lclb_gmbseo_eame_addra)

**Moderate Hotel - Best Western Plus Addis Ababa Hotel 4\***

[https://www.bestwestern.com/en\\_US/book/hotel-rooms.75550.html?aff=BAF&iata=00171880&ssob=BLBWI0004G&cid=BLBWI0004G:google:gmb:75550](https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.75550.html?aff=BAF&iata=00171880&ssob=BLBWI0004G&cid=BLBWI0004G:google:gmb:75550)

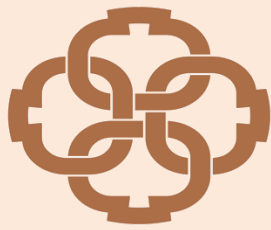
**Budget Hotel- Bonanza Hotel** <https://bonanzaaddishotel.com/>

## Accommodation overviews in Addis Ababa

The Sheraton in Addis a truly luxury hotel in Addis, There are over 10 restaurants and bars and 293 rooms and suites in all, a spa offering massaged, jacuzzi, sauna and pools and a kids club and kids swimming pool. The most basic 'Classic Rooms' feature King size bed, Individually controlled air-conditioning, data connections. All guests receive a complimentary morning coffee or tea served up to 8:30 AM upon request with wake up call. The main reason for staying here is to take advantage of the pleasant heated swimming pool and garden areas. This is the best place in Addis to sit back in peaceful garden and swimming pool surroundings and enjoy a cup of tea.

Hyatt Regency Addis Ababa Hotel, located on Meskel Square, 15 minutes from Bole international airport, an ideal high-end urban base for exploring the Ethiopian capital. Positioned a brief walk away from the United Nations Conference centre and within short distance of the presidential palace, this 188-room hotel (the first Hyatt Hotel in Ethiopia) combines convenience with modern character. Hyatt Regency offers guests two on-site restaurants, four distinct bars, a spa, fitness centre, and outdoor heated infinity pool.

Best Western Plus Addis Ababa Hotel with 160 rooms and suites is ideally located in the heart of the commercial and entertainment district of Addis Ababa. Nearby attractions such as business centers, religious centers, restaurants, bars and Bole International Airport are all within walking distance of the hotel. The fresh and trendy all day dining restaurant is located on the mezzanine floor and offers an incredible selection of cultural and international delicacies. The Modern atmospheric sports bar which offers the guest a 360 degree view of the city locates on the 10th



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floor. The hotel also boasts a state of the art gym with a wide range of equipment and a dedicated professional team.

Bonanza Addis Hotel is situated inside the hub of the city with a close proximity to Bole International Airport and African Union, offering 6 various styles of rooms and suites with complimentary Heat Drier, Bottle water, Balcony, Mini Bar, Microwave & Iron and iron board in each; With rousing interiors, moreover relishing scrumptious dining alternatives in collaboration with the authentic Ethiopian Hospitality. A devoted spa, wellness center, GYM and swimming pools along with a complementary supper buffet or continental breakfast, Valet Parking, Private /VIP donning spaces. And free WI FI services.

DAY 02



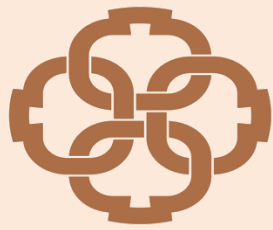
FLIGHT ADDIS ABABA TO BAHIR DAR

B-L-D

In early morning, following your breakfast transfer to Addis Ababa (Bole) int. airport for your flight to Bahir Dar (1hr flight).

Bahir Dar is one of the best well-planned cities in Ethiopia, which means "by the side of the sea". Bahir Dar is the third largest and arguably the most beautiful city in Ethiopia. As the capital for the regional state of Amhara, the city is home for historic monasteries, charming lodges, exotic fish markets, beautiful lakes and of course the famous Blue Nile Falls. There are dozens of islands found on Lake Tana, and many are home to 14th Century monasteries complete with ancient ornaments, frescoes, and fascinating wall paintings.

After check-in to your hotel go for the alluring Blue Nile Falls, "Tiss isat" (smoking fire), the Falls are 328 feet wide and the water cascades down a 150 feet, high drop to produce a dazzling spray of mist and rainbows, shimmering across the gorge, and a small perennial rainforest of lush green vegetation, to the delight of the many monkeys and multi-colored birds that inhabit the area. The Blue Nile Falls is 32kms from the city. On a clear sunny day you can walk for about 30min walk to the base of the falls. Meet with the locals around for a short coffee break. Cotton spinning is the most famous activity in this area.



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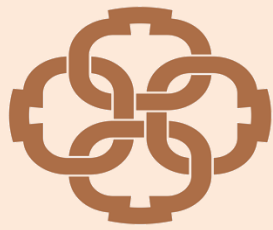
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Following lunch, explore the 12th-14th century treasured Monasteries of Lake Tana by a cruise, round, grass roofed of the Zeghie Peninsula,, witness the Ethiopia's links with the ancient world by the papyrus Tankwa that sail the lake bear a striking resemblance to the boats of Ancient Egypt.

Visit the round, thatched roof of the Azuwa Maryam Monastery along the Zege Peninsular makes this church one of the most aesthetically pleasing. Then move to one of the bigger monasteries in the region, Ura Kidane Mehret is known for its beautifully painted, psychedelic murals that run the perimeter of its circular straw walls. Just 25minute's walk from the boat landing point, Ura Kidane Mehret is one of the more accessible churches in the region and is by far the most popular.

Concealed behind tall shady palm trees and densely planted coffee farms, the monastery houses vibrant frescoes depicting scenes from Ethiopian folklore and Christianity. Both men and women are permitted entry and there is a small museum on-site, called the Zege Satekela Museum. Here you can learn about the hand-crafted tools and musical instruments that helped shape this vibrant land and that are still in use today.



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In late afternoon enjoy a spectacular view of Bezawit hill top, & the open air market of Bahir Dar Agelgil Market to meet up with locals.

In the evening you can enjoy the sunset mood. For dinner, you will visit an Ethiopian family and get to know the traditional cuisine of Ethiopia. Learn about Ethiopian culinary, you'll experience how to make injera, shiro and other vegetarian options & dine. To the people of Ethiopia, Injera is the staple food, eaten with every meal of the day. Injera is a pancake (tasted a bit sour) shaped product mostly made from teff, although other grain products, like maize are sometimes also used. Injera is eaten with hands, by picking up meat or vegetables first and then dipping and soaking it in sauce of gravy. Teff is a gluten free grain, grown in the highlands of Ethiopia.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

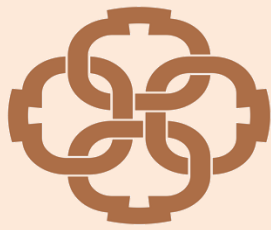
**Accommodation: Best available Hotel – Lake Tana Kuriftu Resorts & Spa  $\geq$ 4\***

<https://kurifturesorts.com/bahir-dar>

**Moderate Hotel- Avanti Blu Nile Resorts 4\*** [www.bluenileresorthotels.com](http://www.bluenileresorthotels.com)

**Budget Hotel – Sky Resort** <https://skyresortbahirdar.com/>





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## **Accommodation overviews in Bahir Dar**

The Kuriftu Resort is set on the shores of Lake Tana, has 14 spacious luxurious traditional stone cottages (28 rooms in total, with one room on the ground floor and another on the first floor) set around a gorgeous pool, with breath-taking views of the lake.

The resort has been sensitively developed (which is more than can be said for its neighbours), the service is excellent and free massage treatments are included in your stay.

The shared areas include a reception, bar/lounge area, swimming pool, restaurant, extensive outdoor seating and spa.

Avanti Blue Nile resort is a luxury hotel & resort with a total of 135 en suite rooms, providing a lovely lake views across Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile. The restaurants serve both international and national dishes, free Wi-Fi service, bar services and many more.

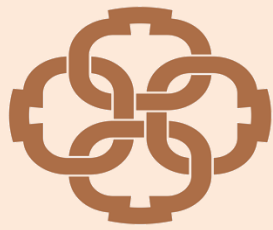
Sky Resort is a 4 stories tall building situated right on the southern banks of Lake Tana directly adjacent to the port, with two circular shaped wings connected by a common public lounge area on each floor and water features at the center of each wing. There is a large restaurant area on the sub-ground floor and an equally spacious outdoor lounge area with great views of the lake and port. The outdoor lounge area is family friendly, featuring a small children play area, an adjacent lawn, and plenty of seating around the perimeter. All of this is situated under a giant fig tree occupied by several bird species. The rooms were large and clean and many of them provide balconies with great views of the lake. They provide both international and local dishes. Try the Tibs with Injera. Enjoy fish dishes from the lake and wines at our gourmet restaurant and breath-taking lake view.

**DAY 03**

**DRIVE BAHIR DAR TO SIMIEN MTS. VIA GONDAR**

**B-L-D**

In early morning leave your hotel and head to the magnificent Simien Mts. National Park via Gondar. *Road/ Surface transfer 295kms/5hrs.*



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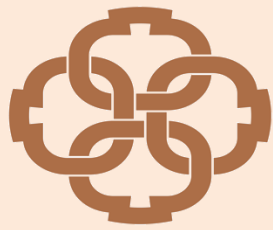
The Simien Mts. dramatic topography resulted from the volcanic activity, Ascribed it as the world natural heritage site, graced by exceptional botanical phenomena and a zoo of wild life Walia Ibex, Red fox, and Chilada/ bleeding heart Baboons are few to site.



En route visit the former Felasha (Ethiopian Jews) village at Wolleka, 5kms. Most of the Felasha or Bete Israel as they prefer to be called was taken to Israel in the 1980s.

You will have a stopover at Kossoye viewpoint, about 40km from Gondar on the way to the Simien Mountains National park. At a height of about 2,300m, this beautiful spot provides magnificent views of the Simien Mountain range and as well as views of the lower ridges and valleys. Queen Elizabeth II once stopped here while traveling to Axum.

Then you pass the villages of Ambagiyorgis, means 'hill of St. George and Davat'. The people from this area grow lentils, fenugreek, wheat, oat, barley, beans and tef (the staple Ethiopian cereal). The scenery is an impressive and vast expanse of distant mountains and escarpments. You pass many eucalyptus trees which are used for building houses and for firewood, and you will see many local traders in traditional, billowing robes going from place to place on foot or horseback – always with their dula (wooden stick).



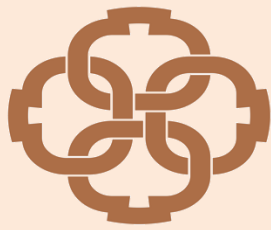
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Visit Sankaber the first camp sight of the Simien Mts. Here you will find one of the most spectacular mountain scenery in Ethiopia. Stop to watch Ghelada Baboons and observe their foraging habits, and take a short walk to a waterfall (the ground here is uneven).



Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included



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**Accommodation: Best Available Hotel – Limalimo Lodge  $\geq 4^*$  at Debarq** <https://limalimolodge.com/>

**Moderate Hotel- Simien Lodge  $\geq 3^*$**  <http://www.simiens.com/>

**Budget Hotel– Simien Park Hotel or similar  $< 3^*$**  <https://simienpark.com/>

*Remarks: Please bring warm clothing and rain wear. Despite its closeness to the equator, the Simien Mountains tend to get quite cold at night*

### **Accommodation overviews in Simien Mts**

Limalimo Lodge offers 14 rooms scattered throughout the site's sprawling 10 hectares, communal bar, restaurant and large terrace – complete with fire-pit – afford truly spectacular views of the surrounding mountains. The décor is a unique and striking blend of the contemporary and the traditional, with thatched roofs, local woods and stylish rammed earth walls that have been integral in keeping the construction local and sustainable. The sleeping rooms are a mixture of twin, double, triple and family. In keeping with the main areas, the feel of all the rooms is elegant and subtle, thoughtfully blending comfort with distinctive local finesse. Each room's location affords seclusion and spectacular views, coming with en-suite facilities. Electricity, hot water and heating are provided by sustainable sources, whilst water for the gardens is recycled. Each room includes a private terrace. Wi-Fi is available, though please be advised a clear connection is not always guaranteed.

Simien Lodge is located near the Simien Mountains National Park on a hilltop with fantastic views of the countryside. The highest hotel in Africa includes 20 bungalows furnished in the style of the country and an on-site restaurant.

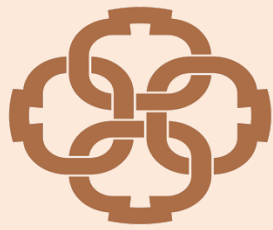
DAY 04

DRIVE SIMIEN MTS. TO GONDAR

B-L-D

Today you will drive to Gondar 185kms/3hrs. Enjoy the scenic view & real country side feeling on your way.

Gondar "the Camelot of Africa," is the medieval royal city, distinguished by its castles and imperial compound and by its churches, particularly Debre Berhan Selassie, the walls and ceiling of which are completely covered in murals - the angels' faces on the ceiling have become a common motif in Ethiopian design.



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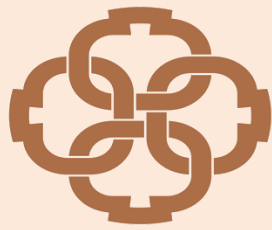
Gondar was founded by Emperor Fasiladas in 1636 as the royal capital of Ethiopia. For several centuries Ethiopia had been ruled from a succession of temporary capitals and Fasiladas recognized that a permanent capital might help provide greater internal stability.



By the time of Fasiladas' death in 1667 Gondar was the largest and most important city in the empire. It retained its position as the capital of Ethiopia for 250 years, though this status was largely nominal from the late 18th century onwards.

Gondar has now become one of Ethiopia's largest and most impressive cities, with its walled Royal Enclosure. Gondar's most famous monuments are its exceptionally well preserved 17th-century castles. The largest and best is that of King Fasilidas. It is a stone-built construction with round turrets and wooden balconies. The king also built a remarkable bath a mile or so outside of town known as the 'Pavilion of Delight'. The Bathhouse of Fasil at which thousands of Ethiopians celebrate Timekat festival every January. This whole complex of buildings is unique in Ethiopia and unlike anything found elsewhere in Africa.

After lunch visit the Royal Enclosure or Fasil Gibbi, encompasses the castles of various Gondarene emperors. The Fasiladas Palace; the Quskuam Church (believed to be the home of famous explorer



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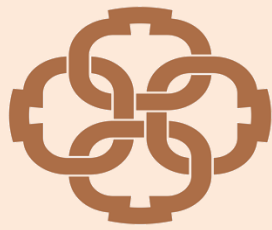
James Bruce during the 1770's). After 2-km drive from the town centre visit the bath of King Fasilides. The pool is now the central stage on which the Timkat or Epiphany festival is celebrated in Gondar.

Debre Berhane Selassie church with its remarkable walls and ceiling completely covered with murals - the angels' faces on the ceiling have become a common motif in Ethiopian design.



On your way to Gondar visit Project Ploughshare Women's Crafts Training Centre - Located 5km from Gondar, this centre is focussed on helping disadvantaged women rekindle local pottery traditions, along with Amhara weaving and basketry. Founded in 1993, the aim of the project is to help single mothers who have lost their husbands as a result of HIV/Aids, war, natural disasters or divorce. With an average of 4 to 5 children to support, the proceeds of the products which are sold to the local community and tourists are a vital source of income.

Ras Gimb Museum - Likely built in the 17th century, this attractive palace, now converted into a museum, once served as: a retreat for Haile Selassie; a residence for Italian generals; and as a torture chamber for the Derg.



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Enjoy one of the localities activities like ploughing of the land by oxen, local (home) crop/grains grinding, crushing crops, grains ...with pestle & mortal .....

*Tonight enjoy the traditional Ethiopian Music at Four sisters- Gondar is famous for the Azmari bet, and enjoy the Ethiopian indigenous traditional songs mainly praising and singing with lots of Funs. Young couples, a man playing Masinko (one string instrument) and a woman performs the singing in the mean while if you like you will have the chance to try the dances.*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

**Accommodation: Best Available Hotel – Gondar Hills Resort ≥4\*** <http://gondarhillsresort.com/>

**Moderate Hotel- Haile Resort Gondar** <http://www.hailehotelsandresorts.com/>

*(owned by the Great Ethiopian Athlete Haile G.Selassie) or equivalent*

**Goha Hotel 3\*** <http://www.gohahotel.com/> or **Maykelo Lodge** <http://maylekolodge.net/>

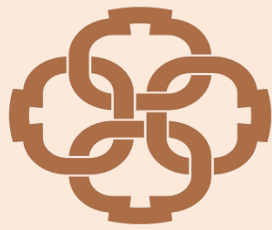
**Budget- Zoble Hotel**

#### **Accommodation overviews in Gondar**

Gondar Hills Resorts is an eco-friendly luxurious development with it's modern stone and glass finish, located in mountainous out-skirt of Gondar town providing a 360 degree view of the surrounding. The mountain-top property is set to feature impressive state-of-the-art of rooms, restaurant, bar, swimming pool, conference and other facilities. One of the resorts most outstanding structures is the amazing traditional stonework combined with the green roofs blending with the surrounding mountains, along with incredible views of the royal enclosure, urban and countryside view.

Haile Resorts: with its 54 room's faces a chain of mountains with Gonder city views. Featuring a terrace, a 3-star hotel has air-conditioned rooms with free WiFi, each with a private bathroom. The accommodation features a hot tub, nightclub and free shuttle service. Each room is fitted with a desk and a flat-screen TV, and certain rooms at the hotel have a balcony. Guest rooms will provide guests with a fridge. A buffet, continental or American breakfast is available daily at the property.

The outdoor pool is a great spot to take a dip, and guests can grab a bite to eat at Haile, which serves local and international cuisine and is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Other highlights at this upscale hotel include a bar/lounge and a garden. Haile Resort-Gondar offers a children's playground.



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The Goha occupies a fantastic hill top position overlooking the City, rooms are reasonably furnished if a little tired and there is a pleasant enough restaurant / bar area. There is a swimming pool & free WIFI service.

Zobel Resort sits on a hilltop with good views over the city and its surrounding mountain scape. It is set a bit outside the centre of town, has rooms ranging from standard single, double, and twin rooms with an en suite bathrooms, Wi-Fi access, flat screen TVs, desks, coffee/tea stations and safes. Many of the rooms have very good views thanks to the hotel's hilltop location. The hotel's restaurant serves both Ethiopian and international cuisine with à la carte and buffet options. There is a spacious terrace with excellent views. Breakfast, which is included in the room price, is served on the terrace. The property is wheelchair accessible.

**DAY 05**  
**FLIGHT GONDAR TO LALIBELA**

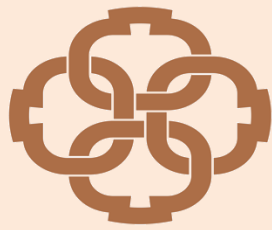
**B-L-D**

Following your breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight to Lalibela

The small town of Lalibela, which is home to one of the world's most astounding sacred sites, comprising eleven medieval rock-hewn churches, each carved entirely out of a single piece of stone.







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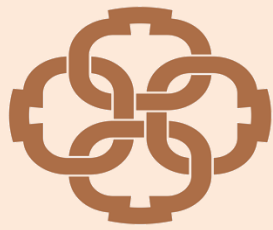
Lalibela, the 'New Jerusalem', was built by King Lalibela 'with the help of angels' in the 12th century, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with its eleven rock-hewn churches. Perched among wild craggy mountains and vast rocky escarpments, there is a stark cathedral-like grandeur to Lalibela. The houses of Lalibela are of a design unlike anywhere else in Ethiopia, two-storey circular stone constructs that huddle in an amorphous mass over the steep slopes on which the town is built.

The rock-hewn churches are large and several are more than ten metres high. Because they are carved below ground level, they are ringed by trenches and courtyards, the sides of which are cut into with stone graves and hermit cells, and connected to each other by a tangled maze of tunnels and passages.



The eleven rock churches, thought to be at least 200 years old, are divided into two groups and are visited by foot. The steps are uneven and walking around can require a little agility.

After the decline of the Axumite Empire, lamenting their lost grandeur, Ethiopia's rulers retreated with their Christian subjects to the lofty escarpment of the central uplands. There, protected by mountain battlements more formidable than anything the hand of man could fashion, they were



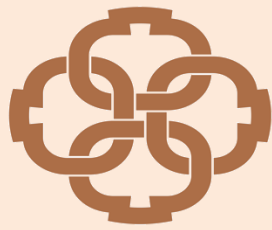
# ABSOLUTE ETHIOPIA TOURS

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able to repel an increasingly expansionist and militant Islamic army by trapping and confusing their enemies in the precipitous maze of valleys that intersects the high plateau. Inevitably, a fortress mentality took root: an intense suspicion of the motives of strangers, a hatred of intrusion and interference, and a protective secrecy. From roughly the seventh to the 16th century AD, the Ethiopians were encompassed by the enemies of their religion, and were described by the British historian Edward Gibbon as having "slept for near a thousand years, forgetful of the world by whom they were forgotten". It is true, moreover, that in holding back those who sought to destroy their faith, the highlanders also effectively cut themselves off the evolving mainstream of Christian culture. However, this is the only sense in which they slept. Their unique, idiosyncratic civilisation was otherwise very much awake, a singular and spirited affirmation of the creative power of the human intellect.

Lalibela, previously known as Roha, was named after the king. The word itself, which translates to mean 'the bees', recognises his sovereignty and the people of the region still recount the legend. Lalibela was born in Roha in the second half of the 12th century, the youngest son of the royal line of the Zagwe dynasty, which then ruled over much of northern Ethiopia. Despite several elder brothers, he was destined for greatness from his earliest days. Not long after his birth, his mother found a swarm of bees around his crib and recalled an old belief that the animal world foretold important futures. She cried out: "The bees know that this child will become king".





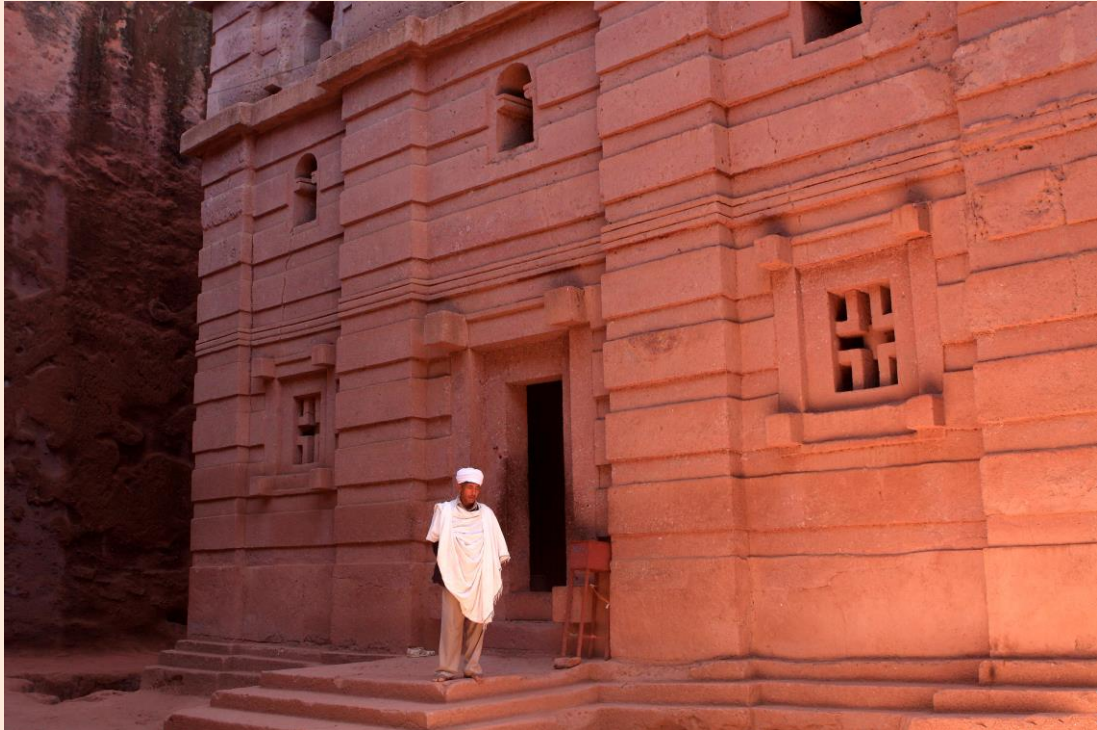
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At the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th century, King Lalibela of the Zagwe dynasty built a series of rock-hewn churches. There are eleven churches in the town named after him, with others in the surrounding countryside. All are still in use today.

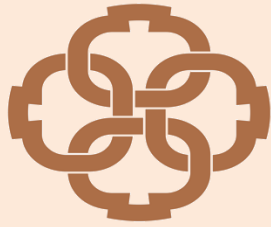
It is estimated that the churches took 25 years to construct. For the kingdom based around Roha to have kept a large work force engaged in economically unproductive labour for such a long period means that it disposed of a large economic surplus and was very wealthy. The area was clearly fertile and agriculturally productive, whereas now deforestation and other forms of ecological degradation have made it barren. This area is particularly prone to drought today.

After lunch leave to visit the north-west cluster of churches consists of Bet Medhane Alem, Bet Maryam, Bet Meskel, Bet Danaghel, Bet Debre Sina, and Bet Golgotha. Also included in this tour is the isolated monolith of Bet Giyorgis (the Church of St George). Bet Medhane Alem is the largest monolithic rock-hewn church



*Take a part in a traditional coffee ceremony.*

Ethiopia's coffee ceremony is an integral part of the social and cultural life. It is an important cultural ritual that's been passed from generation to generation. An invitation to attend a coffee



# ABSOLUTE ETHIOPIA TOURS

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ceremony is considered as a mark of friendship or respect and is an example of Ethiopian hospitality.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

**Accommodation: Best available Hotel – Sora Lodge** <http://soralodgelalibela.com/>

**Mezena lodge** <https://mezenalodge.com/> or **Maribela Hotel** <https://hotelmaribela.com/> 4\*

**Moderate Hotel- Tukul Village Hotel 3\***

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/lalhotels/photos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/lalhotels/photos/?ref=page_internal)

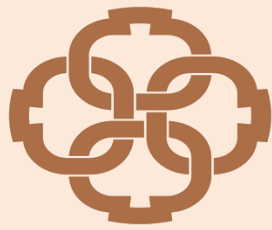
## **Accommodation overviews in Lalibela**

Sora Lodge offers a unique and spectacular view of the Ashoten Mariam Mountain, the valleys and countryside villages around Lalibela. All rooms in our three-storeyed main building have a large private veranda facing east, providing unforgettable views of the sunrise, while the sunset can be watched from the common verandas facing west. They provide 6 tukuls/ traditionally round huts, 12 rock hewn rooms, tree houses & 9 standard rooms equipped with modern amenities and neat, private bathrooms with hot showers. The restaurant offers a stunning view of the valley, the river, the surrounding mountains and the small villages nearby. And their menu includes Ethiopian and Western cuisine.

Mezena Lodge sits among a grove of trees, possesses extraordinary views across the valley towards the town of Lalibela, and consists of 30 bungalows and a main lodge. The main lodge includes two restaurants, a large bar, a coffee ceremony room, gift shop, and a spa – sauna, steam room, massage service, gym and a large terrace with a swimming pool. Wi-Fi is also available throughout the lodge.

The Maribela Hotel is located in the middle of the mountains of Lalibela and offers a magnificent view of the Ethiopian highlands. The tasteful design of the hotel was inspired by the famous rock churches of Lalibela. Your rooms are cozy and attractively furnished and have a private balcony where you can enjoy the view and the sunset. After an eventful day, you can round off the day at the in-house restaurant.

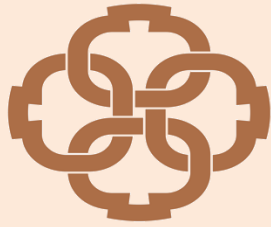
Tukul Village Hotel is a pleasant small lodge in the heart of Lalibela, close walking distance from many of the rock hewn churches that the town is famous for. Set within pleasant gardens, there are 12 Tukuls (traditional African huts) each containing two comfortable en-suite rooms (24 rooms in total). The rooms are large, light and airy with comfortable simple furnishings and decent bathrooms.



Today visit the cave church of Yimrehane Kirstos, 40kms from the city, built by the king of the same name before the reign of King Lalibela. The church is constructed inside a cave, in Axumite style, similar to the church at Debre Damo, with alternating levels of wood and stone. If the day meets, attend the yearly celebration of King & Saint Yimrehane Kirstos which is attended by tens thousands of pilgrims from all over Ethiopia, making it one of the most joyous annual pilgrimages in Lalibela. It is celebrated with greater devotion, the congregation wrapped in white shawls sing with joy along with the priests' one after the other and among the swaying choir the priests chanting, dancing, and singing around the church letting out a deep boom of the drums and female's voice respond in a piercing chorus of ululations. Then return back to the town.



Visit the second group of the rock churches. The south-east cluster of churches is more irregular in design than the north-western cluster. Several of the individual churches in this cluster are thought to have been secular in origin, and some predate the reign of King Lalibela by five centuries. The churches in the south-east cluster include Bet Gabriel-Rafael, Bet Abba Libanos, Bet Lehem, Bet Emanuel, and Bet Mercurios. According to legend, Bet Abba Libanos was built overnight by Lalibela's wife, Meskel Kebre, who was assisted by a group of angels.



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You can also visit the Markets in Lalibela see the colourful and variety of offers. Very intense and enlightening experience or participate in tree planting.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

**Accommodation: Best Available Hotel – Sora Lodge** <http://soralodgelalibela.com/>

**Mezena lodge or Maribela Hotel 4\***

**Moderate Hotel- Tukul Village Hotel 3\***

DAY 07



FLY LALIBELA TO ADDIS ABABA TO JINKA

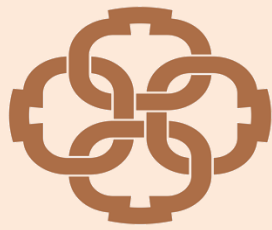
B-L-D

Today, transfer to Lalibela airport for your connection ET flight to Jinka via Addis Ababa.

The Ari people of Ethiopia are said to be one of the most culturally and economically dominant groups in the Omo valley. They currently live in a clan structure, but actually used to live independently until the late 19th century when they were conquered and unified as part of the Ethiopian empire. Their territories are divided into nine independent units, each with its own leader and a traditional spiritual leader known as Babi.

Like most other Omo Valley Tribes, Ari men are allowed to marry as many women as they want as long as they can provide for their families. However, this practice is becoming relegated as the Ari people embrace Christianity and polygamy becomes less common. Today, most Ari men have only one wife.

The people are friendly and will often invite you into the villages where you can witness some of their traditional lifestyle activities. Some Ari villages are quite large and contain several streets. Their buildings range from the typical bamboo and straw huts to more substantial structures made from mud and wattle. Cooking and sleeping are all done inside the house.



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Many of these buildings feature decorative paintings of animals, people, and cultural symbols in natural colors made from ground charcoal, cow dung, red soil, and water. These paintings are done by the women and are known in the local language as bartsi which translates to “giving beauty.” It’s been jokingly remarked that the Ari men just tend to their farms all day which is why they don’t know how to paint.



Visit the South Omo Research Museum & local villages in Jinka and get acquainted to the local life, how they make local liquor made of Sorghum, Garlic and maize and how they make a pot.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

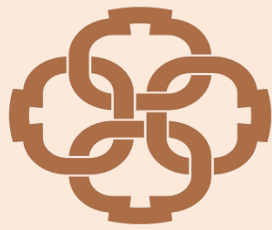
**Accommodation: Best available Hotel – Eco Omo Lodge 3\*** <https://www.eco-omo.com/>

**Budget Hotel- Jinka resort <3\*** <https://jinka-resort.business.site/>

**Budget Hotel– NASA Hotel <3\***

## **Accommodation overviews in Jinka**

Eco Omo is a basic permanent tented lodge located in Jinka, in the heart of the Omo Valley, just outside the town and bordering the Neri River on the way to Mago National Park. The lodge has 20 tent-rooms with en suit bathroom, with either twin or double beds. All beds have large mosquito nets. There is a restaurant and bar on site. Eco Omo is fairly basic, it can be a noisy location and hot water and electricity is not always reliable, but it is still the best option in this area.



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Jinka Resort, very basic hotel with its green grounds a short distance from the town centre. The rooms are simple, consisting of little more than beds (comfy and clean) with mosquito nets. En-suite bathrooms have showers. There are camping sites for those who come bearing tents, with shared bathroom facilities but no kitchen.

**DAY 08**

**DRIVE JINKA – MURSI- TURMI**

**B- L- D**

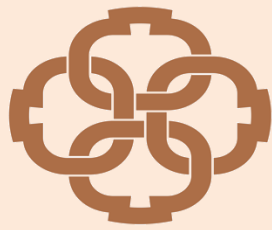
Total driving distance 230kms/6-7hrs.

Mago National Park, one of Africa's vast wildernesses, was founded in the 1960s and it encloses dense acacia forests and open savannah. Drive to visit the Mursi villages; they go in for body scarification and among the women the wearing of lip plates. They are known for fierce warrior disposition and wildly decorative appearance, with large circular clay labrets that the women wear in the lower lip.



Turmi is a place for the Hamar tribes, visit the Hamer village they are a fine looking people, both men and women take great pride in their appearance, shaving and coloring their hair, oiling their





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bodies and decorating themselves with beads and bracelets worn around arms and legs. They are famous for their body decoration, moonlight dance (Evangedi Dance) and bull-jumping. Bull jumping marks the rite of passage from childhood to adulthood. It is not a done every day.

*If Tuesday or Thursday attend the beautiful Omo Valley market on the way to Turmi - the best colourful ones in the Omo Valley Markets.*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

**Accommodation: Best available Hotel – Paradise Lodge Turmi 3\***

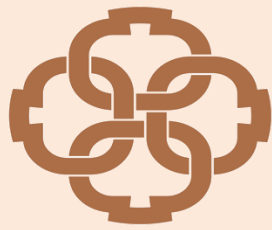
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Lodge/Paradise-Lodges-Hotels-Resorts-Turmi-Omo-Valley-Ethiopia-256919678109530/>

**Moderate Hotel- Buska Lodge <3\*** <http://www.buskalodge.com/>



## **Accommodation overviews in Turmi**

Paradise Lodge opened a new hotel in Turmi, South Omo in December 2018. It is located just outside the town of Turmi, in a village called Kayna, overlooking the banks of the Keske River. 20 cottages feature a rustic tribal style, yet spoil you with luxury, fine art and excellent service, and



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reflect the unique craftsmanship of the people of the rift valley by blending modern architecture with traditional huts of the southern region. All rooms offer twin beds, private bathrooms and hot water. The restaurant offers a variety of European and Ethiopian dishes, including a selection of vegetarian and vegan choices. The Paradise Lodge Turmi features a swimming pool offer a Spa and Massage treatment.

Buska Lodge is a comfortable lodge in the Hammer region of the Omo Valley and an excellent base for visiting the tribes of the area. Accommodation is in traditional Tukul Villages and the hotel is set amidst lovely gardens.

**DAY 09**

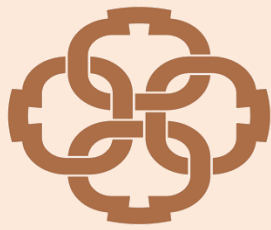
**DRIVE TURMI –BUME- KARO- TURMI**

**B- L- D**

Total driving distance 150kms/3-4hrs.

Following your early breakfast and holding your picnic lunch; today drive and cross the Omo River to visit the Bumi tribe on the Side of the Omo Valley. The Bumis are great warriors. They are also specialized crocodile hunters using harpoons from a dugout canoe. Cross back to the Omo River and drive to the village of Kolcho and visit the Karo tribes. They are considered the masters of body painting, in which they engage when preparing for a dance, feast or celebration. Finally drive back to Turmi.





# ABSOLUTE ETHIOPIA TOURS

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Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

**Accommodation: Best available Hotel – Paradise Lodge Turmi 3\***

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Lodge/Paradise-Lodges-Hotels-Resorts-Turmi-Omo-Valley-Ethiopia-256919678109530/>

**Moderate Hotel- Buska Lodge <3\*** <http://www.buskalodge.com/>

DAY 10

DRIVE TURMI TO ARBA MINCH

B- L- D

Total driving distance 280kms/5-6hrs.

Say hello to the beautiful women of Arbore tribe with their black veils, but are half nude and head shaved, so the contrast is really amazing. Arbore / Erbore, is far more rustic and unaffected than many similarly size towns in south Omo, in common with their linguistically and culturally affiliated Tsemai neighbors, the Arbore migrated to their present homeland from Konso perhaps two centuries ago. Because they have ancestral and cultural links to Konso and the pastoralists of the surrounding lowlands, the Arbore traditionally played an important role as middlemen in trade between the Omo River and the Konso Highlands. The town of Arbore lies in an area where several tribal boundaries coverage.

Continue to Konso and following lunch visit Konso Cultural Community. The rolling hills of Ethiopia's Southern Rift Valley, dotted with bright green moringa trees and quaint thatched huts, are home to the Konso people – traditional farmers who cultivate cereals and cotton and rear cows and goats.

The vast and majestic landscape provides a stunning backdrop for the unique Konso culture. Konso villages, known as kantas, are built into the hillsides and encircled with stone walls for protection. The winding paths that weave through the village all lead to the mora, a large, thatched pavilion which acts as a special meeting place for the people of the surrounding villages. At night the young, unmarried men sleep here to protect the community and learn about life.

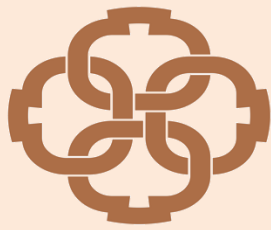
The Konso culture has much to offer visitors. From cultural performances to handcraft demonstrations, visitors can learn about the traditions of the Konso people and the important roles these traditions still play in their lives. And finally drive to Arba Minch.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

**Accommodation: Best available Hotel – Haile Resorts 4\*** <http://www.hailehotelsandresorts.com/>

**Paradise lodge ≥3\*\*** <https://www.paradiselodgeethiopia.com/>

**Moderate Hotel - Emerald Hotel 3\*** <https://www.emeraldresortandlodge.com/>



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DAY 11

B-L-D

 FLY ARBA MINCH TO ADDIS ABABA

Following breakfast detour visit the home of the Dorze people at Chench, 40kms from the city. The Dorze are renowned cotton weavers whose tall beehive-shaped dwellings are among the most distinctive traditional structures to be seen anywhere in Africa. The main occupations of the region are subsistence farming and weaving. The Shama cloth produced around Chench is regarded to be the finest in Ethiopia: Plain white Gabbi robes and brightly colored scarf-like Netalas are sold along the roadside. Explore the local Dorze market decorated with many colours. Then transfer to Arba Minch airport for your flight back to Addis Ababa.

Tonight you will have a wonderful cultural evening at one of Addis Ababa Restaurant; Ethiopia is a mosaic of people with more than 80 languages, different lifestyles, costumes and cultural dances. Take a chance to experience some of these cultural dances and traditional meals with a drink of Tej, a type of wine made from Honey.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner are included

***Accommodation: Best available Hotel - Sheraton Addis Luxury Collection >5\* or***

***Hyatt Regency Addis Ababa Hotel***

***Moderate Hotel- Best Western Plus Addis Ababa Hotel 4\****

***Budget Hotel- Bonanza Hotel***

DAY 12

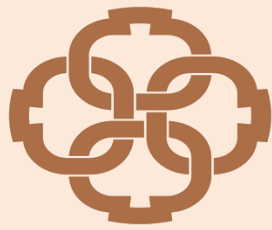
B-L- \_

A DAY IN ADDIS & DEPARTURE

A Day in Addis,

Visit to Entoto Hills – best introduction place to Addis Ababa. Mt. Entoto is the highest peak in Addis Ababa reaching 3,200 meters above sea level, giving the opportunity to catch stunning views over the city and the surrounding area from the summit.

It is the first settlement in Addis Ababa where Emperor Menelik II resided and built his palace in 1887. It is a historical place which offers a unique glimpse into the history of Ethiopia's distinct culture. The compound at the peak hosts the Entoto Mariam church, an Ethiopian artefact museum as well as Menelik II palace.



# ABSOLUTE ETHIOPIA TOURS

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In addition to its historical significance as one drive up the hill there is an appreciable drop in temperature and the air is filled with the scent of the Eucalyptus trees which line the road. On the way up the roadside stalls offers fresh Ethiopian coffee. Also, if you have an interest in Ethiopian traditional clothes stop by at Shero Meda Market. There is a wide variety of beautiful fabrics, shawls, scarves, dresses, tops and jewellery with lots of choice and really good for gift ideas.

## DEPARTURE

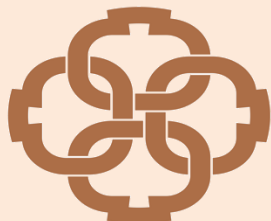
Transfer to the airport for your departure flight. Many thanks & have a safe flight.

### End of Services

**B = Breakfast**      **L = Lunch**      **D = Dinner**

### YOUR ITINERARY INCLUDES

Accommodation:	All accommodation as detailed with private facilities.
Meals/Beverages:	Meals on Full board basis Breakfasts, Lunches & dinners with one soft drink or bottled water per meal per person are included
Transfers/Transport:	Airport welcome, assistance with luggage, and transportation by air-conditioned comfortable spacious vehicles, complete with bottled water.
Sightseeing:	Multilingual National guide will be available on request with a supplement.
Cultural activities	Cultural activities mentioned in day by day are included
Entrance Fees:	All entrance fees as per the program are included



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Local taxes All necessary local Government taxes are included

Porterage fees Porterage fees at the Airport and Hotels.

Other activities Coffee ceremony, and Honey wine drinks (Tej).  
Traditional farewell Dinner in Addis Ababa

## **BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE**

Domestic Flights: A strict luggage restriction of 20kgs per person and hand luggage, applies to all light aircraft flights within Ethiopia. It is important that you carry soft-sided or "barrel" bags, as hard-sided suitcases (Samsonite-style) cannot be fitted into the small holds of light aircraft if you use the charter flights on this program.

Excess Baggage: Excess baggage may be safely stored at hotel in Addis Ababa.

## **YOUR ITINERARY EXCLUDES**

Miscellaneous: Visa for Ethiopia.

Flight International & Domestic airfare.  
Domestic flight fare is quoted separately on the flight section.

Photography fees Photography & video fees

Gratitude Tipping

Tour Leader charge FOC

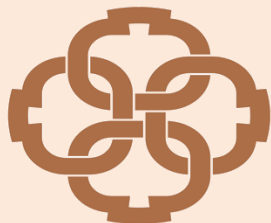
Insurance: Insurance coverage of personal loss, injury, illness or damages incurred during your trip. We strongly recommend travel /cancellation insurance.

Personal expenses: Items of a purely personal nature such as drinks (unless noted), laundry, dry cleaning, internet, fax, or telephone charges and transfers/sightseeing or meals not included in "Your itinerary includes".

Baggage allowance: Excess baggage charge.

**THE PACKAGE COST:** for the above program based on room sharing:

Price per person based on	Best Available Hotels	Moderate Hotels	Budget Hotels
Mini Van 1- 5pax & 4WD with 4pax/car			
2pax	USD\$3787.00pp	USD\$3040.00pp	USD\$2686.00pp



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3pax	USD\$3496.00pp	USD\$2750.00pp	USD\$2396.00pp
4Pax	USD\$3549.00pp	USD\$2802.00pp	USD\$2448.00pp
5pax	USD\$3369.00pp	USD\$2623.00pp	USD\$2268.00pp
Coaster Bus $\geq$ 6pax& 4WD with 4pax/car			
10Pax	USD\$3244.00pp	USD\$2497.00pp	USD\$2143.00pp
15pax	USD\$3169.00pp	USD\$2423.00pp	USD\$2069.00pp
20pax	USD\$3174.00pp	USD\$2428.00pp	USD\$2074.00pp
SRS	USD\$745.00pp	USD\$400.00pp	USD\$130.00pp
English speaking national guide supplement	USD\$50.00/day	USD\$50.00/day	USD\$50.00/day
Holiday supplement Christ Mas, Timket Easter, Hidar Tsion or any other	USD\$150.00pp/Holiday + Bull jumping activity to be advised	USD\$150.00pp/Holiday + Bull jumping activity to be advised	USD\$150.00pp/Holiday + Bull jumping activity to be advised

Domestic flights: Addis Ababa – Bahir Dar, Lalibela – ADDIS ABABA - Jinka, Arba Minch - Addis Ababa-, if you come to Ethiopia with a non ET flights **USD\$460.00pp** if you use Ethiopian air for your international flights **USD\$675.00pp**. To be revised if any fare difference is observed during time of travel.

*NB. Please note that if clients come to Ethiopia with Ethiopian Airlines they will get a reasonable discount on the internal/domestic flight fares.*