



"Djoser... Organized Adventures for Independent Minded Travelers"



Ethiopia Tour, 24 days





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Itinerary

- Day 1 Addis Abeba
- Day 2 Addis Abeba - Chench, visit Dorsestam - Arba Minch
- Day 3 Arba Minch, optional boat trip Lake Chamo
- Day 4 Arba Minch, visit Arborestam - Turmi, visit Harmar weekly market
- Day 5 Turmi, optional visit to Omo Rate
- Day 6 Turmi, visit Karostam - Dimeka - Jinka
- Day 7 Jinka, visit Mago N. P. and Mursistam
- Day 8 Jinka, visit Ari - Key Afar - Konso
- Day 9 Konso - Boranaput - Yabello
- Day 10 Yabello - Yirga Alem
- Day 11 Yirga Alem - Awassa - Addis Abeba
- Day 12 Addis Abeba - Debre Libanos - Debre Markos
- Day 13 Debre Markos - Bahir Dar, boat trip Lake Tana
- Day 14 Bahir Dar, visit Blue Nile Falls - Gondar
- Day 15 Gondar - Simien Mountans
- Day 16 Walking/Hiking tour Simien Mountains
- Day 17 Debark - Limalimopas - Axum
- Day 18 Axum, visit Steles and guided visit to archaeological sites
- Day 19 Axum, flight to Lalibela
- Day 20 Lalibela
- Day 21 Lalibela, flight to Addis Abeba



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Day by day

GROUP TRIPS - INTERNATIONAL GROUPS

This trip begins in Brussels, Belgium. Flights from Brussels to Ethiopia and vice versa are included as well as internal flights in Ethiopia

UNIVERSITY-(FACULTY-LED PROGRAMS)

Custom group university programs will be arranged with flights originating from the United States. This program will be modified to suit your time frame.

- Day 1 – Flight from Brussels, Belgium
- Day 2 arrival Addis Ababa
- Day 3 Addis Ababa - Awassa
- Day 4 Awassa - visit Dorze village - Arba Minch
- Day 5 Arba Minch, optional boat trip Lake Chamo

This trip begins in Brussels, Belgium as internal flights are bundled with the international flights. All participants (most from Holland and Belgium) will be traveling on this flight. However, you will not come together as a group until you meet at international arrivals in Addis Abeba where your guide will be waiting. You will receive your Brussel to Ethiopia flight ticket in advance. Depending on the departure date, there are different flights. Please verify flights with us when you book.

You will be transferred to the hotel in Addis Ababa where the guide will conduct a Welcome Meeting. In the afternoon you have time to explore Addis Ababa. You can visit the National Museum and the Archaeological Museum, which is located in the former palace of Haile Selassie. In addition to the unique ethnographic collection, you can walk around in the old bedroom of the emperor. Not far away are the hills of Entoto. With clear weather you have a beautiful view of the city from the colorfully painted Virgin Mary church.

We have a long day of travel ahead of Arba Minch. Depending on the conditions (condition of the road) we will visit a Dorze village on the road to Chencha. Otherwise we visit this village the next day. The Dorze, live on the green slopes of the Gughne Mountains. They are known for their refined weaving and make beautiful blankets and rugs. We can take a look inside their tall huts, which resemble beehives, made of wood and bamboo. At the end of the day we reach Arba Minch where we will stay for the next two nights.

The next day we have a day off in Arba Minch. Those who want to take it easy today can discover



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Arba Minch on their own in the morning. If we have not visited the Dorze the day before, we will go here in the morning. In the afternoon an optional boat trip on Lake Chamo is possible. This lake lies within the boundaries of Nechitsar National Park. During the boat trip you can see many animals up close, such as huge crocodiles, hippos and various bird species.

Turmi

Day 6 Arba Minch - Arbore - Turmi
Day 7 Turmi, optional visit Omo Rate

From Arba Minch we continue to our final destination today, Turmi. On the way we stop at a small settlement of the Arbore. In Turmi you can see on the market day that the nomadic people of Hamar are very fond of their appearance. For example, the women smear their bodies with oil and reddish-brown clay. They wear pewter bracelets around their arms, neck and legs and often decorate a wide leather belt with shells on their waist. Both men and women spend a lot of time on their hair. Men who have defeated an enemy or killed a wild animal smear clay in their hair. When dried, this is a cap that is painted or decorated with an ostrich feather. For women, braids are an age-old custom passed on from mother to daughter. During your visit to the market, there is a good chance that you will become the center of attention and will be observed with exuberance! At the market, goats, tobacco and utensils are sold and the latest news is discussed.

From Turmi we can visit Omo Rate. The local populations, such as the Dessanch, hardly realize that they are part of Ethiopia. Our hectic western life is unknown here and seems almost absurd. Meter-high termite hills and acacias on the horizon give the area a desolate appearance. The bright pink flowers of the desert rose create a stark contrast here. Along the road we sometimes see surprised Hamar, who are herding their cattle. At the Omo River we meet the Danesch, with whom you row in a wooden canoe to the other side.

Jinka, Mago National Park and visit Mursistam

Day 8 Turmi - visit Karo - Dimeka - Jinka
Day 9 Jinka, visit Mago National Park and Mursistam

We use off-road vehicles to cross the rough terrain of the nomadic Karo. On the way we stop at one of their small villages to get acquainted with the Karo. Some Karo villages are beautifully situated with a view of the Omo River. The residents, with their faces spectacularly painted with white chalk, approach us with curiosity. At the colorful market of Dimeka, you will meet various tribes and you can buy beautiful souvenirs for the home. The lively town of Jinka is the economic heart of this region and has a small airstrip.

From Jinka we make an excursion to the Mago National Park and the Mursi population group. Prepare



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for a tough ride because the "roads" can be very rugged here. The park is known for its scenic diversity. Mountains and savannah are interspersed with rolling hills. On the savannah game drive you can observe dik-diks, baboons, different antelope species and, with some luck, elephants. Crocodiles and hippos live in the Neri River.

After our game drive we cross a valley that is flanked by the Mursi Mountains. In this rugged landscape we look for the still isolated Mursi tribe. It is one of the most fascinating ethnic groups in Ethiopia. The women are known for the lip dishes, which fulfill an aesthetic function. The larger the disc the better the woman is and the greater the dowry. The men decorate their bodies with notches which symbolizes the heroic deeds done. After our visit we return to Jinka.

Jinka and Konso

Day 10 Jinka - visit Ari - Key Afar -Konso

Day 11 Konso - Yirga Alem

From Jinka we continue to the north. On the market of Key Afer, various population groups, including the semi-nomadic Banna, Ari and Tsemay, trade their wares on the market. A colorful spectacle. In the afternoon we reach Konso. From the road you have a good view of their villages and terraces that are laid out here against the mountains. Their villages are surrounded by high walls. The villages themselves are a true labyrinth of houses, stone walls and wooden fences. A heavy stone is located centrally in the village. In order to get married, boys have to prove that they can lift this stone over their head. The Konso are known for their graves with striking carved totems in honor of the deceased. The totems are particularly popular with art dealers and, unfortunately, are increasingly disappearing from the landscape.

The unpaved road to Yirga Alem leads through a low plain with a swampy area on either side of the road. Sometimes you see marabou, scavenging storks, and white herons sitting in the trees. Children offer bananas and mangos in small villages. In Yirga Alem we spend the night in charming traditional tukuls (round houses) on a coffee plantation.

Bale Mountains

Day 12 Yirga Alem - Awassa - Bale Mountains (Dinsh)

Day 13 Bale Mountains - Tulu Dimtu - Addis Ababa

Day 14 Addis Ababa - Debre Libanos - Wusha Valley - Debre Markos

We continue to Awassa. On the shores of the lake, fishermen trade their daily catches, which are immediately cleaned on the spot. The fish waste always attracts pelicans and marabou storks. After our stop we drive to Dinsh, our base for the Bale Mountains. We take a walk here at the Seneti plateau. The hills are covered here with Juniper and Erica bushes. Hanging moss gives a fairytale effect. We look forward to endemic species such as the mountain nyala and Menelik forest antelope.



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There are also beautiful colobus monkeys in this area. Bale is also the habitat of the Ethiopian wolf, an endangered animal species.

The next day we drive back to Addis Ababa. We leave the capital in the early morning the next day for the second part of our trip. We exchanged our off-road vehicles for a bus. Heavily packed donkeys, goats and cows share the busy roads with rickety buses, old Fiat trucks and blue minibuses. We now start on the historic route. In the afternoon we reach the monastery Debre Libanos founded in the 13th century, which lies in a 700 meter high canyon. The famous monastery is dedicated to the holy Tekle Haimanot. A narrow road leads to a church with the grave of this saint, which is a busy pilgrimage site. There is a small museum next to it.

After our visit we head north to the impressive gorge of the Blue Nile. A road with many sharp hairpin bends brings us to a guarded bridge over the Nile of which the water is more brown than blue! The road continues via Dejem and Debre Markos, where we spend the night.

Debre Libanos, Debre Markos, Bahir Dar & waterfalls of the Blue Nile

Day 15 Debre Markos - Bahir Dar, boat trip Lake Tana

Day 16 Bahir Dar Waterfalls of the Blue Nile - Gondar

The next day we drive to the medium-sized city of Bahir Dar. We make a boat trip on the Tana lake. This largest lake in Ethiopia is almost entirely bordered by dense papyrus reeds. From this papyrus the local fishermen make their boats, called tanqwa's. In the lake there are twelve islands with monasteries and churches.

During our boat trip we visit one or two monasteries, which are located on a peninsula. In the simple churches, mostly made of clay and wood, you will find richly painted walls with scenes from the Bible. In addition, the churches contain beautiful illustrated manuscripts and precious religious objects.

The next morning we travel on a rough road to the waterfalls of the Blue Nile, which are locally known as Tissisat. To get here you have to pass the old stone bridge of Tisohe Dildil, under which the Nile flows into a narrow and deep gorge. A small climb brings you to the waterfalls, which plunge down over a width of about 400 m. In the morning you will always be treated to a spectacular rainbow. Due to the water vapor, the environment is permanently moist which not only generates lush vegetation, but also slippery paths.

We then travel on to Gondar, which has castles and palaces from the 16th to the 19th century, when it was the capital of the Ethiopian empire.

From the castle of Fasilades you have a good view of the surroundings. Here is also the lion's cage where the Abyssinian royal lions were kept until 1992. Nowadays the overgrown cage offers shelter to goats at night.

The ruins of Empress Mentwab's palace are impressive. Wander through the large rooms where you



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will find beautiful wooden and stone ceilings. The baths situated in a rectangular complex provided the rulers of Gondar with the necessary relaxation. On the outskirts of the city lies the beautiful walled church of Debre Birhan Selassie, which was built in the 17th century during the reign of Yohannis I. It contains a beautiful ceiling painted with 80 angels faces and some beautiful wall paintings.

Gondar and the Simien mountains

Day 17 Gondar - Simien mountains

Day 18 Walk Simien mountains

The journey to the Simien Mountains offers beautiful views of the surrounding mountains and in September there are many wild flowers in bloom. In the town of Debark, where we will spend the night, the headquarters of the Simien National Park is located.

The Simien Mountains are one of the largest mountain massifs in Africa with unique flora and fauna. In the Simien Mountains is the Ras Dashan (4550 m), the highest mountain top of the Ethiopian Highlands, and the sixth highest mountain in Africa. We make a beautiful day walk here. You can enjoy the beautiful views along the way and with some luck you catch a glimpse of the endemic Gelada baboons, lammer vultures or the Simien fox.

Axum

Day 19 Debark - Limalimopas - Axum

Day 20 Axum - city walk guided by local guide

Day 21 Axum - flight to Lalibela

We continue our journey through the province of Tigray. Our final goal - the city of Axum - is for Ethiopians an important religious place and the alleged abode of the famous Ark of the Covenant. The city was for centuries the center of a large Ethiopian empire. Impressive tombstones, probably erected in memory of kings, testify to the prosperity of this Aksumite empire. The giant stelae are decorated on the front and side with images that resemble the windows and doors of a house.

Around Axum you will find ruins including the palace of the Queen of Sheba and various underground tombs of various kings. Also the ancient Bibles that are kept in the Maryam Zion Church are special. Priests can also show you the collection of crowns of the former emperors here. There is a small archaeological museum next to it. We take a walk here accompanied by a local guide.

Lalibela

Day 22 Lalibela

Day 23 Lalibela - flight Addis Ababa – Depart

Day 24. Arrive Brussels



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The next day we fly from Axum to Lalibela. Lalibela, located on a plateau, is a large village with densely placed cabins. Time seems to have stood still. Here you have the opportunity to visit the rock churches of Lalibela and make any short trips in the area.

Legend has it that in a period of twenty days, with the help of angels, King Lalibela raised about twelve churches from the rocks. To what extent this is true is doubtful. Undoubtedly, however, these churches form the most impressive monuments in Ethiopia. The churches are divided into two groups and connected by tunnels. In some churches, beautiful wall paintings have been made that give a ghostly effect in the illuminated candlelight.

In the morning when the believers arrive to attend a prayer service, the atmosphere is intense. Monotone singing, the smell of incense and dull sounds of large drums certainly leave an unforgettable impression with you. In dark rooms priests with a Bible in hand can their bibles by windows by candlelight. They will show you the big holy crosses. Also walk around the churches.

In small niches in the rock wall you will find hermits here who keep alive with donations from believers. In the surroundings of Lalibela you can make nice trips on foot or by mule to a number of beautiful churches and monasteries. For example, you can visit the church Naäkuto Laäb. The ride takes you through a fantastic landscape with picturesque villages where children invariably call you 'faranjii' (stranger). From Lalibela we fly back to the capital Addis Ababa where you can take a look around before the trip comes to an end.

On the road with Djoser

There is no rigidly planned itinerary for our trips. The travel days are of course fixed, but on the spot the program is entered in consultation between the group and the tour guide. For most days the tour guide offers a scheduled program with a number of excursions, but you are certainly not obliged to participate. When you prefer, you have freedom to explore on your own so at times, you are free to get acquainted with the area on your own terms. On average, the groups consist of 16 participants. The maximum group size is 19 people.



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Practical information

Accommodations & Meals

Tourism is in its infancy in Ethiopia. The larger hotels are in the hands of the state. During this trip we spend the night in Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Arba Minch, Axum, Konso, Lalibela and in Turmi in comfortable tourist class hotels. Other hotels in the south and in the Simien Mountains are simple with a rudimentary design. In Yirga Alem we spend the night in traditional comfortable tukuls, here you share the bathroom with your travel companions. Keep in mind that power and water outages are recurring problems in Ethiopia so be mentally prepared!

These are our typical accommodations (subject to change)

Addis Ababa Ghion Hotel

Turmi Evangadi Lodge

Konso Kanta Lodge

Yirgalem Aregash Lodge

Gonder Mintewab Lodge

Debark Sona Hotel

Lalibela Lal Hotel

Single room

Individual travelers are, in good consultation, classified with other single travelers of the same sex. If you want to book your own room, you can do so at the applicable surcharge. See prices & dates pages.

Hotel extension

Extension with accommodation can be booked in Addis Ababa. In Addis Ababa you will stay in a centrally located tourist class hotel afterwards. The mentioned prices are without change costs of the flight and the transfer from / to the airport.

Meals

The trip is offered on a bed and breakfast basis. The other meals, lunch and dinner, are at your own expense. This means that you are free to decide where you are going, where to eat. So you can really explore the local cuisine out of the confines of the hotel. Your guide can make recommendations. The national dish in Ethiopia is injera that is eaten in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening.



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Injera is a large flat sponge-like, slightly sour pancake with meat, chicken, fish and vegetables. Invariably this dish, which is served on a large scale, is seasoned with 'what', a (sometimes very) spicy sauce.

In Addis Ababa, Arba Minch, Bahir Dar, Axum and Lalibela, western food is also served in the larger restaurants. As a remnant of Italian domination you will always find spaghetti on the menu here.

Coca Cola, Mirinda (Fanta) and Sprite are the only soft drinks that you can get in the countryside. Mineral water, called Ambo, is available everywhere as well as beer. If you love coffee, Ethiopia is the country for you. Drinking coffee is important in Ethiopian culture and is accompanied by an extensive ceremony.

Flights & Transportation

This trip begins in Brussels, Belgium. Flights vary depending on departure dates so check with us before booking your flight to Brussels. Flights are reserved with Ethiopian Airlines. Most will depart Brussels about 7 PM, and arrive in Brussels early in the A.M.

Flight surcharges (included)

Airlines also charge fuel and safety surcharges in addition to airport taxes. A total amount for these surcharges has been included in the published travel sum. These amounts are frequently subject to changes due to new taxes / surcharges and changes in fuel costs. If applicable, Djoser will calculate an increase as yet. For this trip, a total amount of airport taxes / surcharges of around \$315 is included in the fare.

Land arrangement

Because the domestic flights are bundled with the international flights from Brussels, it is not possible to book a land only program.

Transport

In the south we travel with our own off-road vehicles of the type Toyota Land Cruiser or Nissan Patrol. In the north of Ethiopia (day 12 to 18) we use our own bus. This allows us to stop where we want on the way. The main roads in Ethiopia are largely unpaved, which means that in the dry period the roads can be dusty and turn into mud in the rainy season.

Travel times are flexible depending on the condition of the roads, but some rough travel days in this large country are inevitable. We bridge the enormous distances from Axum - Lalibela - Addis Ababa with comfortable domestic flights.



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Money Matters

In Ethiopia there is paid with the Ethiopian birr. Look for the current rate on oanda.com .

ATMs: limited in Addis Abeba, Bahir Dar and Arba Minch. ATMs are often out of order

Cash: both euro and US dollars can be exchanged in banks (bring small, newer bills, small denominations)

Credit cards: accepted at some places in Addis Ababa, but are susceptible to fraud

As a guideline for estimating your out of pocket expenses, that are not included in the fare, such as meals, entrance fees, optional excursions and personal expenses, count on a minimum of \$250 per person per week applies.

It is customary in Ethiopia to give tips for services rendered. In order to avoid having to dispose of tipping, a tip jar is set up at the beginning of the trip, from which the (joint) tips are paid to the drivers, local guides, hotel staff, etc. The guideline for the tip jar for this trip is \$45. This does not include a tip for your escorting guide.

Included with the trip

- Flight from Brussels to Ethiopia and back
- All flight surcharges
- Two domestic flights
- Dutch travel guidance- Speaks Dutch and English
- Hotel stays with breakfast
- Transport by bus and off-road vehicles
- Visit different weekly markets
- Visit populations in the Omo Valley
- Boat trip Lake Tana
- Visit waterfalls of the Blue Nile
- City walk with guide in Axum
- Excursions according to program

Excursions

At Djoser you decide which sights you find worthwhile to visit. One participant may choose to browse the market in search of nice Ethiopian souvenirs, while another may want to look around in the towns on the way or settle in on a terrace. In most cases you can go out on foot or with local transport yourself or with fellow travelers, with or without help from our tour guide. Admission fees are therefore not included in the fare, so you have all the freedom to create your own plan.

Certain sights should not be missed, are difficult to reach, or are 'en route' to our next overnight stay. Such excursions or transport are part of the program at Djoser. However, any entrance fees are out of



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pocket.

During this trip through Ethiopia, the following excursions are included in the itinerary:

- Visit Dorze's population group near Chencha
- Visit Arbore Village
- Visit Karo Village
- Visit Mago national park and Mursi villages
- Visit Konso Village
- Boat trip on Lake Tana and visit monastery islands
- Visit waterfalls of the Blue Nile
- City walk with guide in Gondar
- City walk with guide in Axum

Travel documents

- E-ticket. You will receive more information about 2 weeks before departure.
- A passport that is valid for at least six months after departure.
- Visa required

The easiest way to obtain a visa is to purchase an e-visa via the internet. The payment of USD.52, - will be made by credit card.

We will provide you with the information to fill out your visa form after you book.

The visa can also be obtained for USD.50 on arrival at Addis Ababa airport.

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Health

For this trip is recommended:

- Vaccinations against DTP, hepatitis A, yellow fever and sometimes cholera statement
- Malaria tablets

It is wise to pay close attention to what you eat. We also advise you to take a small medical kit with an aspirin and medicines for intestinal disorders. A salt solution (as ORS) against dehydration certainly comes in handy. The tour guide is also in possession of a medical kit containing sterile medical equipment.

In the Simien Mountains, walks are possible above 9,800 feet. You have to take altitude sickness into account. It is important to drink a lot of water, making the oxygen easier to absorb.

Insurance

It is important to obtain travel insurance. For instance, it is important that you are covered for



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emergency evacuation in the event of an accident or illness.

Climate and geography

Since Ethiopia is close to the equator, you would expect a tropical climate with a constant temperature. This certainly applies to the lowland. Throughout the year the average temperature here is around 77 °F. In the higher areas, such as the Simien Mountains, the average temperature is much lower and the mercury can drop to 41 °F at night.

Warm clothing is therefore necessary. Ethiopia has two rainy seasons, a short one from February to March and a longer one from July to September. In those periods, brief heavy showers fall at the end of the day. After the rainy season, nature is at its best. Jacaranda trees are in beautiful purple blossom and on the land you see waving tef, the cereal with which injera is made.

Travel guidance and guides

This trip is accompanied by an experienced Dutch tour guide who has been traveling for years. The guide speaks Dutch and English. Our travel guides are responsible for the organizational and technical aspects of the trip. They are not lecturers.. Their travel experience and expertise add value to the Djoser travels. A thorough and extensive training lays the foundation for this. We will have the assistance of local, English speaking guides in some areas.

International Groups

You will be traveling with an international group, with most participants coming from the Netherlands and Belgian, and possibly other parts of Europe. Just another element to a cultural adventure! Most everyone can speak fluent English, however some may need a day or two to get comfortable using rusty English skills. The group tends to warm up to one another in a couple of days. In invite for a coffee or beer is a great way to break the ice. While you will hear more Dutch than English, your guide will make sure that you are getting all the important information. While our typical travelers blend in well, this can be daunting for some folks. Please call us if you have concerns.

CO2 compensation

Traveling is enriching, but the transport needed to discover new destinations leaves its mark in the form of greenhouse gases, including CO2. By offsetting the CO2 emissions of the trip, the same amount of CO2 can be prevented somewhere else in the world. Together with the ANVR in Europe, Djoser has opted for a collaboration with the South Pole Group, the world market leader in the implementation of CO2 reduction projects. Djoser a project in Thailand that consists of installing solar panels to eliminate the need to burn coal to generate electricity. If you wish to contribute \$5 to this fund, please indicate on your booking form. We compensate the fun for all trips of any Djoser staff.

Out of Pocket expenses – \$250 per week

Single Room \$450

Tip pot (does not include accompanying guide) \$45



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