



A Journey to Visit the Astonishing Ethiopian Religious Centers

Day 1 Arrive Addis Ababa, met and transferred to Hilton or Sheraton Hotel



Day 2 Early morning transfer to the airport for your Ethiopian Airlines flight to Bahr Dar, on the shores of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile. Here, scattered on the many tiny islands are ancient monasteries, untouched by time.

Boat trip on Lake Tana to visit the remote island monasteries, passing the local residents paddling their fragile balsa craft piled high with timber for the insatiable wood markets, or their meager catches of fish.

Dinner and overnight at the Tana Hotel.



Day 3 Morning drive to visit the Blue Nile Falls and some local markets, keeping the afternoon free for a city tour and shopping. Dinner and overnight at the Tana Hotel.

Day 4 Depart Bahr Dar on your flight to Axum, the city known as the starting point of civilization in Ethiopia. Your guide will meet you with a car and transfer to the Yeha hotel (3*).



After lunch, take an afternoon tour of Axum. Visit the Steles, the archeological museum, the St Mary of TSION churches. Found here in the sanctuary allegedly is the Ark of the Covenant which contained Moses' Ten commandments, brought here 2,000 years ago by King Menelik I, son of the Queen of Sheba of Axum and King Solomon of Israel.

Visit also the palace and tomb of King Kaleb and his son King Gebre Meskel, and the bath and the palace of the Queen of Sheba. You will see the inscription of King Ezana, the tomb of King Bazen and other sites as time permits.

Dinner and O/N Yeha Hotel. (the best in Axum).

Day 5 and 6 Drive through the fantastic Simien mountains known as the roof of Africa. It is one of Unesco's World's Heritage Sites. You will experience unique views, vegetation and also some of the endemic mammals and birds such as the Simien Red fox, the Walya Ibex and Gelada Baboons. This spectacular drive will take about 9 hours, stopping to view sites and markets along the way. For those who don't mind a bit of camping, it is a good idea to break it into two days, and camp along the way.

Arrive in Gondar late in the afternoon, dinner and O/N Goha hotel (3* : the best in Gondar)





Day 7 Full day tour of Gondar : the imperial castles compound, with castles and reception houses of different Emperors, starting from Emperor Fasiladas of the XII century; the Debre Birhan Selassie church (light of Trinity), with its very interesting paintings and murals; the old Qusquam monastery and Empress Mentewab's second palace, on a hill with view over the town. Visit too the old Ethiopian-Jew village from where many of the Falasha Jews have left for Israel. Dinner and O/N Goha hotel.

Day 8 Fly, or drive on through very interesting views and vegetation, admiring the endemic Gelada Baboons, to Lalibela. This fascinating drive is about 6-7 hours plus the time you will want to stop often to photograph a world left behind by time. Dinner and O/N Roha or Lal hotel (3*)

Day 9 Full day visit of the beautiful 11 rock hewn churches in Lalibela, defined by Unesco as the 8th wonder of the world.



Learn from experienced guides about the world's oldest Christian religion – the Ethiopian Coptic Church.

Physically prised from the rock in which they stand, these towering edifices seem to be of superhuman creation, scale, workmanship and concept. Some lie almost completely hidden in deep trenches, while others stand in open quarried caves. A complex and bewildering labyrinth of tunnels and narrow passageways with offset crypts, grottos, and galleries connect them all. Lunch,



dinner and O/N Roha or Lal hotel.

Day 10 Fly back to Addis Ababa. P.m. visit of the Merkato, the biggest African open air market, and tour of souvenir shops. Stay again in Addis Ababa or depart to your next destination.

For those interested in the culture and history, I strongly recommend a few more days in the Lalibela area, as there many other remote cave churches, some of which can only be reached by hiking or mule.



In addition, the South of the country, along the banks of the Omo river will take you to the "other " Ethiopia, where tribes still remain unchanged, as they have been for hundreds of years



