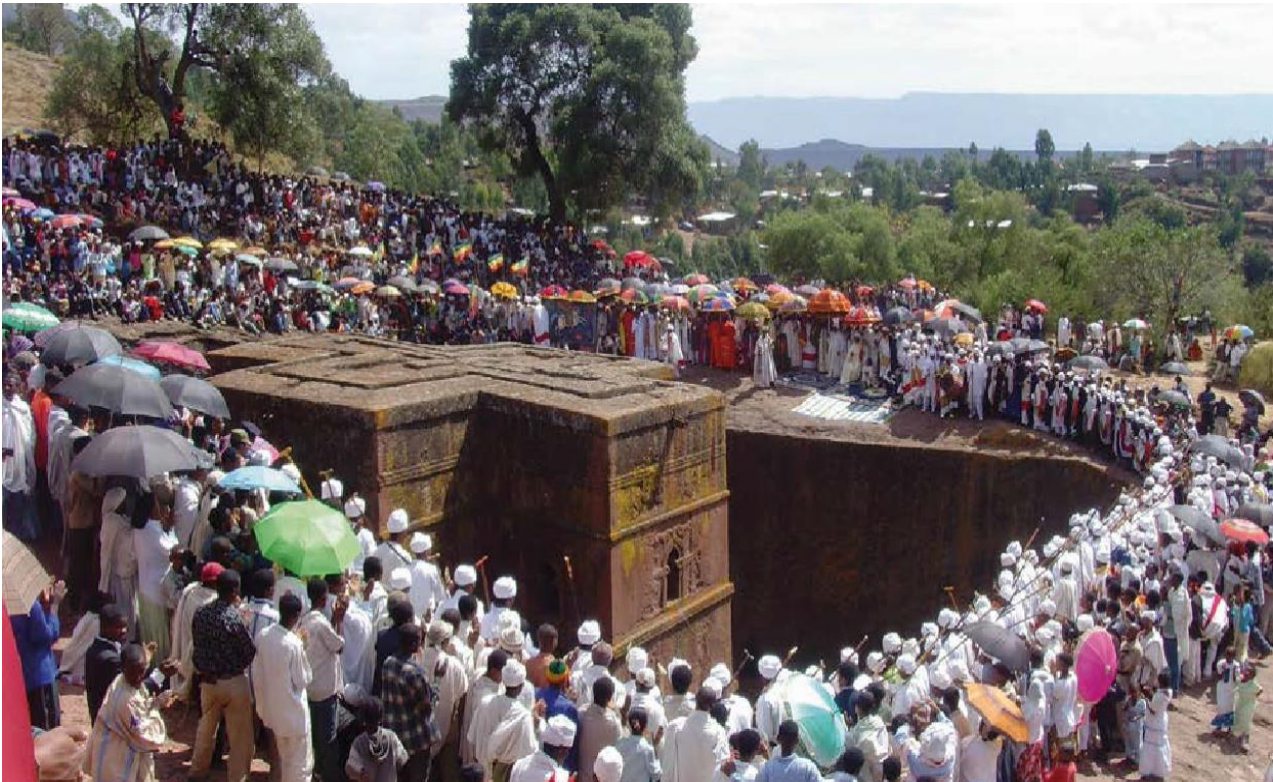


TOUR PACKAGE	Highlight of Northern Ethiopia Tour
PACKAGE CODE	ET-AD -001-01
MODE OF	Flight and Surface
DESCRIPTION	Nature ,History & Cultural Tour
DURATION	08 Days / 07 Nights

africa
DISCOVERY
UNIQUE SAFARI & ADVENTURE TOURS



Highlights of Northern

ETHIOPIA

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia is truly a land of contrasts and extremes. It is a land of remote and wild places. Some of the highest and most stunning places on the African continent are found here, such as the jaggedly carved Simien Mountains, one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites - and some of the lowest, such as the hot but fascinating Danakil Depression, with its sulphur fumaroles and lunar-like landscape.



Ethiopia is old beyond all imagination. As Abyssinia, its culture and traditions date back over 3,000 years. And far earlier than that lived "*Lucy*" or *Dinkenesh*, meaning 'thou art wonderful', as she is known to the Ethiopians, whose hominid remains were found in a corner of this country of mystery and contrasts. Many people visit Ethiopia - or hope to do so one day - because of the remarkable manner in which ancient historical traditions have been preserved. And, indeed, the ceremonies and rituals of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church open a window on the authentic world of the Old Testament. In no other country is it possible to find you so dramatically transported back in time or to participate with such freedom in the sacred rituals of an archaic faith. In this Nine Days Tour you will explore Island of Lake Tana in Bahir dar, ancient Castles of Gonder, Simien Mountains and Rock Hewn Churches of Lalibela.

BAHIR DAR AND LAKE TANA

With its palm-lined boulevards, warm climate and lakeside views, a stay in Bahir Dar really does feel like you're at the seaside, and indeed Bahir Dar means "by the sea" in Amharic. The large, bustling town is located on the southern shores of the beautiful Lake Tana, great to use as a starting point for exploring the lake. It is the regional capital of the Amhara National Regional State and can be easily reached by road or by direct flight from Addis Ababa.



Its origins date back to the sixteenth century at least, when, during the reign of Emperor Susneyos, a Portuguese Jesuit priest, Pero Paez, built several buildings along the shore of Lake Tana. One of these, a two-storey stone tower, can still be seen today in the compound of **Saint George's Church**.

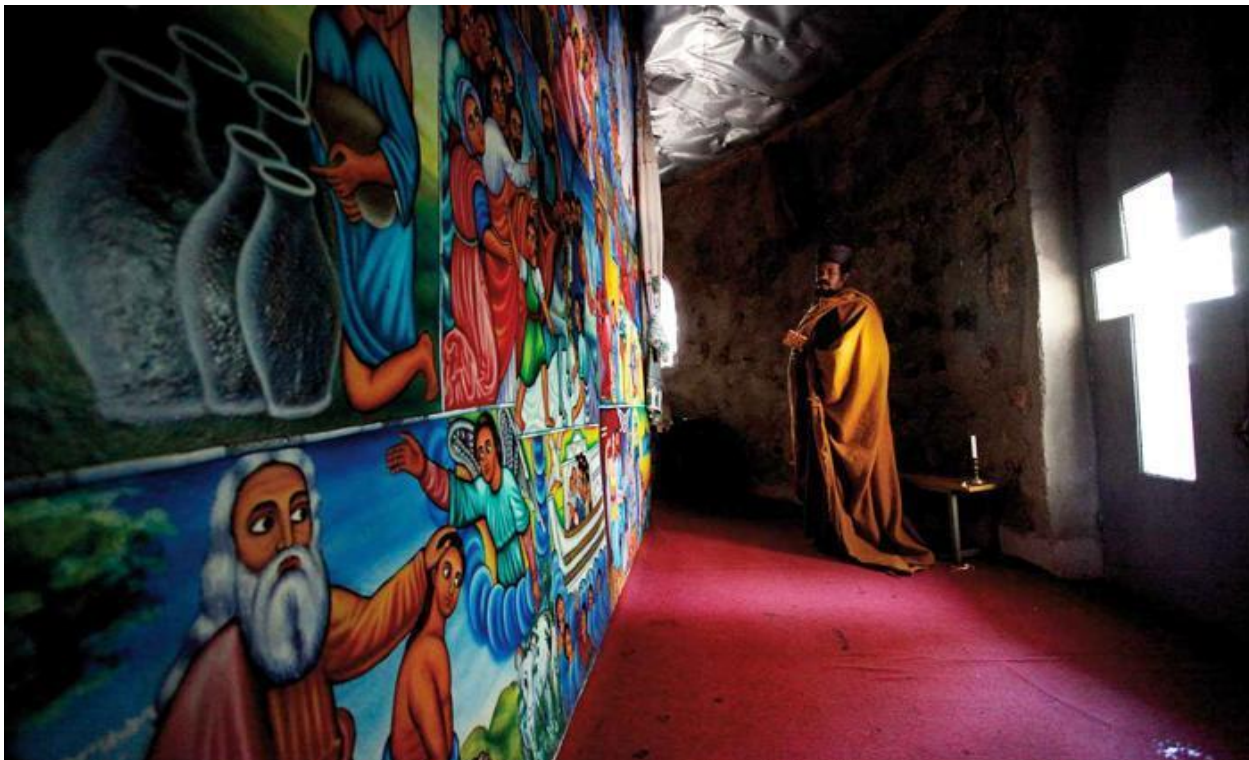
Exploring the lively **market** in the southwest part of town is a fun way to spend a morning or afternoon. The market is not just a place for bartering, selling and buying goods; it is also a place for exchanging news and catching up with old friends. Said to be one of the best in Ethiopia, this is a great place to pick up souvenirs and presents for loved ones back home.

Traditional clay coffee pots, large metal plates for injera, spices like tasty and hot berbere, exquisite hand-woven clothes: there's something here for everyone

Bezawit Hill is the site of the former summer palace of Emperor Haile Selassie I and is located about 5km south of the city down a road lined with fragrant Jaracanda plants and flamboyant Flame trees. The palace, constructed in the 1950s, is not currently open to visitors, but has two magnificent viewpoints from the 1,890m-high hill, both in front and behind the palace, which offer amazing panoramic views over Lake Tana, the Blue Nile and Bahir Dar.

HIDDEN MONASTERIES ON LAKE TANA

A visit to the peaceful waters of Lake Tana is truly a memorable experience for visitors from near and far. The first view will take your breath away: a vast expanse of water stretching as far as the horizon to form Ethiopia's largest lake. Described by a Greek traveller in the 5th century as "the jewel of Ethiopia", Lake Tana links the ancient world with modern-day, human civilization with natural phenomena.



Monasteries on Lake Tana

Lush forested islands are scattered on the lake, sheltering mystical, ancient monasteries and treasures. Hippopotamus bathes in the shallow waters and flocks of white pelicans dance on the water's surface alongside the "tankwa", traditional papyrus boats that are still used by fishermen today. Just close your eyes and let the centuries and millennia roll away until you are indeed in another place and time.

Lake Tana is more than just a beautiful place to discover rare wildlife and visit the rich cultural heritage on the islands. It is also the lifeblood of Ethiopia, supplying 50% of the country's freshwater.

Lake Tana is one of the world's longest riverways and the source of the Blue Nile River, which, after flowing over 1,500 kilometres and joining with the White Nile River in Khartoum, flows through Sudan

and Egypt before emerging into the Mediterranean Sea. It also feeds the local population and is an essential reserve for important plants.

SIMIEN Mountain National Park

The Simien Mountains National Park (SMNP) offers Ethiopians unique opportunities to experience and understand the wonderful country. It is a place of learning, recreation and fun where Ethiopians can connect with our past and appreciate the natural, cultural and social forces that shaped Ethiopia.





The Simien Mountains are a stunning mountain range in the Northern part of Ethiopia; UNESCO has classified the SMNP as a "World Heritage Site" since 1978. It is home to several endemic flora and fauna, including the Gelada monkeys which live in large troupes of up to 200 individuals and can very often be closely observed; the Walia ibex, a large mountain goat and the rare Ethiopian wolf, a highly endangered species.

Gelada (*Theropithecus gelada*)

The Gelada baboon, also called '*The Bleeding Heart Baboon*', a result of the distinctive, bright red, heart-shaped patch on its chest. The Gelada is endemic to Ethiopia, found on most of the highland plateaus of the Simien Mountains, inside and outside the Park, and their total number has been estimated at more than 3000 animals. The gelada social system consists of a hierarchy of Social groupings. A basic group is a reproductive unit of the breeding male of 1 to 44) and female of 1 to 10 and their depending young.



Gelada in Simien Mountains

Due to the absence of natural enemies, the population is still on the increase. The baboons live in herds of 100 to 200 animals, and their occurrence has been reported from most highland areas above 3000 m asl, the Gelada feed predominantly on the fresh shoots of grass and to a lesser extent on a grassroots and seeds. As the Gelada baboons are not too shy, the animals can easily be approached. The main diet of the Gelada baboon consists of grasses and roots. This has led to conflicts with peasants, who fear extensive destruction of their crops.

The combination of altitudinal variation and isolation of the Simien Mountains National Park offers a habitat to a wide range of animals and plants and a place of rare and endemic species. The following is a compilation of data on some prominent endemic species found in the Park.



Close look of Gelada monkeys at Simien Mountains

Walya Ibex (Capra ibex wake)

The Walya ibex has become a national symbol, it is endemic to the Simien Mountains, and is one of the most endangered mammal species in the world. Walya ibex live on the steep slopes and grassy ledges of the escarpment towards the eastern parts of the Park and beyond.



Walia ibexin Simien Mountains

Ethiopian wolf (Canissimensis simensis)

The second large mammal found in the Park is the Ethiopia Wolf. This species is endemic to Ethiopia. It was already rare in the Simien Mountains



Ethiopia Wolf.

LALIBELA, ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia is home to one of the oldest Christian churches in the world, dating back to the early 4th century. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church used to be a part of Egypt's Coptic Church but established its own patriarch in 1959. Today, nearly two-thirds of the East African country's population is Christian, with most belonging to the Orthodox Church.

Nowhere does the spirituality of the church's followers echo louder than in Lalibela. The town is brimming with devotion; throughout the churches' compound, you'll find worshipers leaning against the structures, kissing the age-old rock walls, praying quietly or reading a religious text.



To view of the church of *Biete Ghiorgis* (*House of St. George*),

A Brief overview Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela

In a mountainous region in the heart of Ethiopia, some 645 km from Addis Ababa, eleven medieval monolithic churches were carved out of rock. Their building is attributed to King Lalibela who set out to construct in the 12th century a 'New Jerusalem' after Muslim conquests halted Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Lalibela flourished after the decline of the Aksum Empire.

In Lalibela there are two main groups of churches – to the north of the river Jordan: Biete Medhani Alem (House of the Saviour of the World), Biete Mariam (House of Mary), Biete Maskal (House of the Cross), Biete Denagel (House of Virgins), Biete Golgotha Mikael (House of Golgotha Mikael); and

to the south of the river, Biete Amanuel (House of Emmanuel), Biete Qeddus Mercoreus (House of St. Mercoreos), Biete Abba Libanos (House of Abbot Libanos), Biete Gabriel Raphael (House of Gabriel Raphael), and Biete Lehem (House of Holy Bread). The eleventh church, Biete Ghiorgis (House of St. George), is isolated from the others but connected by a system of trenches.

The churches were not constructed in a traditional way but rather were hewn from the living rock of monolithic blocks. These blocks were further chiselled out, forming doors, windows, columns, various floors, roofs etc. This gigantic work was further completed with an extensive system of drainage ditches, trenches and ceremonial passages, some with openings to hermit caves and catacombs.



Spiritual Service at the church of Biete Ghiorgis (House of St. George)

Highlight of the trip for
Highlands of Northern Ethiopia Tour

DAY	PLACE	ROUTES/ACTIVITIES	HOTEL/LODGE
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1	ADDIS ABABA	Arrive at Addis Ababa & transfer to a hotel for Check-in, then will have a city tour in the afternoon including the Holy Trinity Cathedral & National Museum and a visit of Emperor Haile Selassie's former palace.	Golden Tulip Addis Ababa Hotel https://addis-ababa.goldentulip.com/en-us/
2	BAHIR DAR	Morning flight to Bahir dar and embarks on a private boat trip to ancient Monasteries hidden on the shores and islands of Lake Tana in the late afternoon visit the colorful Bahir dar local Market drive to Bezawit Hill top to look over the top of the Blue Nile River flowing out of the lake and watch the great view of sunset with Lake Tana.	Kuriftu Resort & Spa Bahirdar https://kurifturesorts.com/bahir-dar/
3	SIMIEN MOUNTAINS	Drive to the UNESCO world heritage site of Simien Mountains National Park and take a short walk in the mountains to see Geladas Monkeys.	Simien Lodge https://simiens.com/
4	SIMIEN MOUNTAINS	Full-Day Park inside visit of Simien mountains to enjoy spectacular landscape & indigenous Wildlife, such as Gelada monkeys, Walia ibex and Ethiopia Wolf.	Simien Lodge https://simiens.com/
5	GONDER	Drive back to Gonder to visit the UNESCO world heritage of the ancient Gonder Castles and churches in the Gonder town.	Goha Hotel www.gohahotel.com
6	LALIBELA	Fly to the world heritage sites of Lalibela. The /site features 11 rock-hewn churches. Afternoon visits the north-west cluster of churches. Including the church of St. George.	Mezena Lodge www.mezenalodge.com
7	LALIBELA	In the morning a short excursion to the church Ashton Mariam or the cave church of Nakutolab. Afternoon visits the south-west cluster of the Church.	Mezena Lodge www.mezenalodge.com
8	ADDIS ABABA	Fly to Addis Ababa and Check-in for day use Hotel and latter will have dinner at traditional Ethiopian food and enjoy Folklore music and dance before transfer to International Airport for flight.	Golden Tulip Addis Ababa Hotel https://addis-ababa.goldentulip.com/en-us/

Detail Itinerary for Northern Highlands of Ethiopia

DAY 01: ADDIS ABABA

Arrive at Bole International Airport terminal 02 in Addis Ababa and you will be greeted and met by an Ethiopian Adventure tour representative and transferred to your hotel for Check-in. After some rest and lunch in your hotel, you will have a city tour around the fourth highest capital in the world, Addis Ababa. The tour includes the visit of the National Museum of Ethiopia, one of the most important collections in sub-Saharan museums in Africa, where the 3.2 million years old fossil called *Lucy* is found and a visit to Emperor Haile Selassie's former palace – a must-see sight while you are in Ethiopia.



Old Building of Ethio -Djibouti railway in Addis Ababa

Stay over Golden Tulip Addis Ababa

(<https://addis-ababa.goldentulip.com/en-us/>)

Room Type: Double / Twin Room Hotel

Meal Board Type : Full board

DAY 02: ADDIS ABABA- BAHIRDAR

Early morning, transfer to the airport for your domestic flight to Bahir Dar.

Bahir Dar is the resort town located in the north western part of Ethiopia 578 Km from the capital

city and at an elevation of 1,840 meters possesses tropical ambience weather and position along the southern shore of Lake Tana, the biggest Lake in Ethiopia and the source of Blue Nile River. It is the first popular stopover for the Northern highland historical circuit tour of Ethiopia.

On your arrival at Bahir Dar airport, you will meet our tour representative and you will transfer to your hotel for check in to refresh and then you will transfer to Lake Tana and embark on a private boat trip for a day of visit to some of the many ancient monasteries hidden on the shores and islands of Lake Tana.



Traditional Fishing on Lake Tana ,Bahir dar

A boat trip will take you to the beautifully decorated *Ura Kidane Mihret* Monastery, whose painted wall serves as a visual encyclopedia of Ethiopia and you will also visit Azewa Mariam and Intos Eyesus Monastery. Many of the churches have incredible treasures with contents that range from medieval books, crosses and crowns.

Then you will also visit the source of the Blue Nile River, where it departs Lake Tana for its long journey to the Mediterranean Sea. There are hippos that can be seen in the shallow waters. In the late afternoon while back from your visit you may have the chance to see hippos on the lake. When you go back to the city, check in to your hotel and out for a city tour if time permits.



Painting inside the monasteries in the island of Lake Tana

In the late afternoon you will visit the colourful *Bahir dar* local Market where the traditional life, ethnographic values, customs as well as the bargaining style of the local economic activities can be easily observed. It's an area worth visiting to buy the local craft products of the peasants and the inhabitants of the city. The market is known for its specialization for basket work articles mostly "agelgel" , round-lunch box baskets covered with goatskin of natural colours and you can see cushions made with goatskin.



Girls in traditional Attire in Amhara Region

Then you will drive to Bezawit Hilltop. It is one of the most popular sightseeing places in Bahir Dar. On the very top of the hills, the magnificent palace of the late Emperor Haile Selassie can be found. After driving to Bezawit hilltop, you will look over the Blue Nile River flowing out of the lake, watching birds and the great view of the sunset with Lake Tana, then drive back to your resort.

Stay over at Kuriftu Resort & Spa Bahir dar

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

Room Type: Double / Twin Room

Hotel Meal Board Type: Full board

DAY03: BAHIR DAR - SIMIEN MOUNTAINS

In the early morning, we will drive to the Simien Mountains. The drive is around 290 km through the ancient historic city of Gondar and Debarke where we will stay overnight at Simien Lodge, the highest hotel in Africa.

Simien Mountains National Park is Ethiopia's most popular hiking destination; its highest peak is

Ras Dashen 4543 m (4,900feet) above sea level, making it the fourth highest mountain in Africa. The Simien Mountains were recognised by UNESCO as a world heritage site and famous for being home to 22 large, 13 small mammals and the three of which, the Walia Ibex, the Gelada monkeys and Ethiopia Wolves are some indigenous mammals in the mountains.



Gelada Monkey in Simien Mountains

If you arrive in Simien Mountains in good time, you will drive to the *Chekwanit area* to enjoy the spectacular scenery of the mountains in selected viewpoints and return to the lodge. In the evening, you will see documentary movies about the mountains in the lodge's bar while enjoying the fire in the bar.

Stay over at Simien Lodge, Simien Mountains (<http://www.simiens.com/>)

Room Type: Double /Twin

Room Hotel Board Type: B, L& D

DAY04: SIMIEN MOUNTAINS

Your picnic lunch will be packed and the car will drop you around *Checkwanit* and you will start trekking to Sankaber campsite. This is the first campsite which takes around 2 hours. During the walk you will enjoy the views over the escarpments and you are likely to spot large groups of Gelada monkeys. You can get very close to the Gelada and take pictures like a professional

whilst and enjoying the Lammergeyer vultures gilding over the escarpment.



The Landscape and the Gelada monkeys

The Sankaber area is covered with Afro-montane forest dominated by Juniper, Hagenia Abyssinica, St John's wort, Giant heather and the like. After passing Sankaber you will walk to the spectacular Jinbar Waterfalls for nearly 1 hour. Around the waterfall area, you will have a picnic lunch and one hour break while enjoying the views then drive further inside the park to the Chennek area (3,620m). Around Chennek there are again excellent views of the mountains and you will see more Gelada monkeys, Walia ibex and if you are lucky the Ethiopian wolf.

Around Chennek area you will do some 1- 2 hours walk to enjoy the most spectacular scenery of the mountains and drive to Bwhait pass after enjoying the scenery at Bwhait and see the Walia Ibex then drive back to the lodge.



Walia Ibex in Simien Mountains



Stay over at Simien Lodge, Simien Mountains (<http://www.simiens.com/>)

Room Type: Double /Twin

Room Hotel Board Type: B, L& D

Optional Trek Route (6 hours trek)

(For those clients who want a full day trek with less driving and who are ready for a little more strenuous activity, we have a very special option where clients can take a 5 or 6-hour hike.)

In the morning the car will drop you at the place called *Aynameday* located a mid-way between Sanakberand and Chennek you will trek from *Aynameday* to Chennek (3620m) via ImetGogo. At ImetGogo there are excellent views of the Simien escarpment and on the Gitch plateau, you will see the endemic plant Giant Lobelia in abundance. This is a great day for seeing the magnificent Lammergeyer vultures. It is an ideal spot to trek for 3-4 hour to Imet Gogo summit, one of the known viewpoints in the park. The first hour will take you through the pleasant undulating Afroalpine meadow, the next hours takes you on a more uphill climb until you reach the summit at 3,926m from and then will trek to Chennek where again excellent views and you should see more Gelada monkeys, Walia ibex and lastly the car will pick you to drive back to the lodge.



DAY05: SIMIEN MOUNTAINS - GONDER

In the morning after breakfast, you will drive to the ancient town of Gonder and transfer to your hotel for check-in and have some relaxed time followed by lunch at the Four Sisters Restaurant. The ancient city of Gonder, dubbed the '*African Camelot*,' is famous for its many medieval castles. The City of Gonder was the residence of the emperors of Ethiopia from the 12th to 19th century. It was the first capital of the Abyssinian Empire founded by Emperor Fasilades.

Gonder was the capital of Ethiopia from the rise of Fasilades to the fall of Tewodros (1855-68) which is reflected in the many castles and palaces in the city



King

Fasil Bath, Gonder Castles

The *History of Gonder City* begins in 1636, Emperor Fasilides ended the tradition by decreeing Gonder to be the Ethiopian capital and started building a walled enclosure. It became the palace compound for half a dozen different palaces, 3 churches and support buildings built over two centuries by his successors.

In the afternoon, explore the UNESCO world heritage sites which travel back in time by visiting the royal enclosure famous for its rare castles. The other place of interest is Fasilides pool, in which pilgrims still take a plunge during the Timket (Epiphany) Celebrations in January. During the day you will have remarkable sights. You can visit the church of Deber Birhan Sillasie near the centre of the city, known for its unique church design ceiling murals.

Stay over at Gonder Hills Resort \ <http://gondarhillsresort.com/>

Room Type: Double / Twin Room

Hotel Board Type: B,L&D

Optional activities in Gonder

Cooking Class (\$25 extra price per person)



We offer a unique cooking class for those who would like to learn a little about Ethiopian food.

Before visiting the Gondar castles, we will visit the market where you will meet the lady who will conduct the cooking classes later in the afternoon. Here you will select the food that you will cook later in the day.

At 4pm, and after visiting the castles, you will go to her home where together you will learn how to cook Ethiopian dishes.

DAY 06: GONDER- LALIBELA

Transfer to the airport for your domestic flights to Lalibela. When you arrive at Lalibela Airport you will be met by our representative at Lalibela and transferred to your hotel. After check-in, have lunch at your and then you will begin to explore the first group of magnificent rock-hewn church Lalibela that are carved out of a living volcanic tuff with super architectural skill. UNESCO registered these

churches as world heritage in 1978.

Among churches of this group, *Bete Medahine Alem* (house of the redeemer) is the largest with 5 aisles, 72 pillars, a vaulted dome and moulding decoration. *Bete Mariam* (house of st. Marry) is the most decorated among the rock-hewn churches. After the visit of the first group of churches you drive back to the hotel to stay over.



Church Service at Lalibela (House of St. George)



Stay over at Mezena Lodge, Lalibela <https://mezenalodge.com>

Room Type: Double /Twin Room

Hotel Board Type: B, L&D

DAY 07: LALIBELA

After breakfast, you will have an excursion for a short hike to Ashton Mariam monastery, located 10km from the centre of the town. This journey takes you through the lovely countryside of Lalibela, at the top of hills, you will have a commanding view in all directions. At an altitude of nearly 4,000m. Ashton Mariam Monastery is an ancient monastery carved out of stone. The monastery's construction is believed to span Lalibela's and Na'akuto La'ab's reigns, although local tradition claims it as King Lalibela's first attempt at church construction. The monastery harbours a few impressive crosses, illuminated manuscripts and other treasures.

On the way up; you'll pass through farming fields that the villagers use for growing plants and vegetables. When you get there, the priest will welcome you and show you the sacred items held in the monastery, including an illustrated Bible. After a visit to the church on the way back, you will have local community house's visits and you will be back to the centre of the town for lunch at *Ben Abeba* restaurant with a spectacular panoramic view of the surrounding region.



The rural landscape of Lalibela

After having lunch and a short break, you will continue to visit the second group of the rock-hewn churches; Bete Emanuel (house of Emanuel) is architecturally the finest. Bete Giorgis (the house of George) is the finest of all the churches in Lalibela for which reason art historians conclude that this church is carved at the end of the cluster after the masons have developed their skill to carve the church in such extraordinary perfection.

Stay over at Mezena Lodge, Lalibela (<https://mezenalodge.com>)

Room Double/Twin Room

Hotel Board Type: B, L&D

DAY 08: LALIBELA–ADDIS ABABA

In the morning, after a relaxed breakfast transfer to Lalibela airport for a flight to Addis Ababa and you will transfer to your hotel for day use.



Live Folklore Dance

In the late afternoon, *you may go shopping* for souvenirs. Finally, you will be taken to a farewell dinner tradition Ethiopian food and enjoy Folklore music and dance; you will be transferred out to Bole International Airport for the return flight back home.

Accommodation in Addis Ababa: TBA

---End of the tour ---

PACKAGE PRICE–

For Highlight Of Northern Ethiopia Cultural & Historical Tour for 08 Days /07 Nights

The price for the above Package tour PER PERSON

VEHICLES TYPE: <i>New Toyota Safari vehicles (Land Cruiser 4WD)</i>			
<i>No of Pax</i>	<i>Type of Cars</i>	<i>Price in USD</i>	<i>SRS in USD</i>
01 Pax	ONE Safari Cars (4 WD)	\$ 4,160	
02 Pax	ONE Safari Cars (4 WD)	\$ 2,460	\$ 470
04 Pax	ONE Safari Cars (4 WD)	\$ 1,830	\$ 470
06 Pax	TWO Safari Cars (4 WD)	\$ 1,770	\$ 470

THE ABOVE ENTIRE PRICE INCLUDES:

- *Full board Hotel accommodation at best available Hotels on Twin/ /Double room basis*
- *All transfer in and transfer out services from Airports*
- *All ground transportation with New Toyota Safari vehicles (Land Cruiser 4WD) and New Brand Minibus for Lalibela & Addis Ababa.*
- *Experienced English Speaking Escort Guides for the entire tour*
- *Domestic flight ticket for Escort Guide(Addis to Bahir Dar , Gonder to Lalibela and Lalibela to Addis Ababa)*
- *A private Small Boat trip on Lake Tana, Bahir dar*
- *Experienced driver & driver allowance.*
- *All fuel expenses and lubricants expense*
- *Local guide's fee and Scout fee where needed.*
- *Community & village Visit fee*
- *All entrance fees.*
- *15 % Government taxes*

ALL PRICE EXCLUDES:

- *International, Domestic flights and Visa fee*
- *Any alcoholic drinks*
- *Any video*
- *Laundry service Tips and any expense of Personal items like, internet, fax, telephone*

What to Bring

During the month of Oct to May it will be warm and sunny during the day hence a hat, sunscreen, lip salve are essential to avoid sunburn. In the evening a temperature can drop dramatically, so warm clothes are essential. In addition to regular packing, here is a Checklist for Simien Mountain Trekking:

- *Good walking boots and socks*
- *Comfortable shoes*
- *Trekking pants*



Our New Brand Safari vehicles

