

ETHIOPIA, LAND OF THE ARK

DAY 01: NORTH AMERICA / ADDIS ABABA Depart North America via Ethiopian Airlines to Addis Ababa. Meals will be served on board.

DAY 02: ADDIS ABABA Upon your arrival in Addis Ababa, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 03: ADDIS ABABA Morning sightseeing of modern Addis Ababa including Empress Menen Handicraft School, Africa Hall, Parliament, Trinity Cathedral, Liberty Monument, Martyrs' Square, Lions' Cage, Haile Selassie I University, and the Ethnological Museum. In the afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing tour of historic Addis Ababa, including the Market Place, City Hall, Menelik II Square, St. George's Cathedral, Mt. Entoto with its panoramic view, the Archaeological Museum and Menelik Mausoleum. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 04: ADDIS ABABA/BAHR DAR Early morning transfer to the airport for your flight to Bahr Dar on the southern shore of Lake Tana. The Blue Nile originates in Lake Tana, just as the White Nile originates in Lake Victoria in Zimbabwe. The two rivers merge together to form the Nile River in Khartoum, Sudan. Visit the majestic Tis Isat Falls (Smoke of Fire) where the waters of the Blue Nile thunder some 200 feet into a chasm. Proceed to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 05: BAHR DAR/GONDAR Morning at leisure. Transfer to the airport for your flight to Gondar, former capital of the Empire of Ethiopia. Upon your arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 06: GONDAR This morning, tour Gondar's 17th century castles and ancient monasteries, and visit a village of the Falashas, a distinct ethnic group who have resisted Christianity over many centuries and practice an archaic form of Judaism. Return to your hotel in Gondar for dinner and overnight.

DAY 07: GONDAR/LALIBELA Fly eastward to Lalibela, named after the king who, in the 12th century, initiated construction of the eleven rock hewn churches which have been hailed a wonder of the world. Tour these fascinating monolith buildings in the afternoon, followed by dinner and overnight at your hotel.

DAY 08: LALIBELA Full day at leisure in Lalibela for your personal exploration, dinner and overnight at your hotel.

DAY 09: LALIBELA/AXUM Fly to Axum, once the fabled capital of the Queen of Sheba. Among the notable sights are the astounding array of towering granite obelisks or stelae; the stone Throne of the Judges; tombs of the kings; and the Church of St. Mary of Zion, containing crowns of past Emperors of Ethiopia. It is in Axum that the Ark of the Covenant is allegedly kept. The well guarded sanctuary chapel of the Ark of the Covenant stands in town, the visitor may approach, but never hope to enter. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 10: AXUM Full day at leisure to explore Axum on your own, dinner and overnight at your hotel.

DAY 11: AXUM/ADDIS ABABA Transfer to the airport for your flight to Addis Ababa. Upon your arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel. The balance of the day is at leisure.

DAY 12: ADDIS ABABA/NORTH AMERICA Full day at leisure for your last minute shopping and packing. Transfer to the airport for your return flight to North America.

DAY 13: NORTH AMERICA Arrival in the morning local time.