

## **TOUR CODE: WIE/ET 170**

### **SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS**

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - NATURAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL**
- **DESTINATION: - BAHIR DAR/ GONDAR/ SEMIEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK/ AXUM/ LANGANO/ARBAMINCH/ KONSO/TURMI/ KARO/ JINKA/ MURSI/ DORZE**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - FLIGHT AND DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 16 DAYS AND 15 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 OR 4 STAR HOTELS AND LODGES**

### **DAY 1 ADDIS ABABA**

Arrive in Addis Ababa. Reception and transfer to the hotel, where the rooms are readily available to freshen briefly before starting our journey of discovery. The exploration of the town starts at the Entoto hills from where we have stunning views over the city. We also visit the National Museum where we included can see the skeleton of the famous Lucy. Lucy is one of the oldest hominids on Earth, belonging to the Australopithecus afarensis. Then we visit the Holy Trinity Church where are the mausoleums of Emperor Haile Selassie and his wife.

### **DAY 2 ADDIS ABEBA - BAHIR DAR**

Depart early in the morning from Addis Ababa. A short flight will take you to Bahirdar. Upon arrival, you will be taken to hotel and take a brief break and start the tour. Bahirdar city is located in north-western part of Ethiopia. It is the capital city of the Amhara Region and emerged one of the leading tourist destinations in Ethiopia, with a variety of attractions in the nearby Lake Tana and Blue Nile river.

Your first visit will be to Lake Tana and the monasteries. Lake Tana is the largest lake in Ethiopia and fourth largest in Africa, spanning an area of more than 3500 square Km. This highland lake set at an altitude of 1800 meters above sea level and was formed by a volcanic eruption. The lake is the main source of the Blue Nile and hosts several species of birds and wildlife. The island dotted all over the magnificent waters is places where some of the most captivating and oldest monasteries in Ethiopia can be found.

Some of 21 churches that are mostly spread out on the 39 different islands located on the lake go all the way back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The Churches contain the earliest religious and historical

manuscripts, awe-inspiring incarnations of ecclesiastic art, royal crowns and scepters used by early Christian kings and emperors.

In the afternoon we will drive (some 30 Km) and visit to the Blue Nile Falls the most spectacular water fall. It is known as **Tis Abay** in Amharic, meaning "smoking water". It is situated on the upper course of the river, about 30 km downstream from the town of Bahir Dar and Lake Tana. The falls are considered one of Ethiopia's best known tourist attractions. The falls are estimated to be between 37 and 45 meters high.

### **DAY 3 BAHIRDAR - GONDAR**

In the morning we will drive from Bahirdar to Gondar. After checking into the hotel we visit the 17th century castles of the Gondriaanse kings, also known as the African Camelot. From that time stems the extensive castle ruins of King Fasilades. We visit the only church from the 17th century that has survived the Muslim demolitions, the Debre Birhan Selassie. The ceiling of this church is painted with the faces of 80 angels. The walls have beautiful frescoes with scenes from the Bible. We also pay a visit to Emperor Fasil's pool where still every year dopings ceremony is held.

### **DAY 4 GONDAR - SIMIEN MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK – GONDAR**

Day trip to Semien Mountaion National Park. The trip starts morning at 1:30 Ethiopian local time or (7:30 International Time) after two hours and half drive we will arrive to the Semien Lodge and the car drop you there then we will have one and half hour trekking to Chikuwanit to see the Gelada Baboons. After some break we will drive back to Gondar.

### **DAY 5 GONDAR - LALIBELA**

On this day, we will take a short flight to Lalibela and meet our local guide in the town. We will drive 23kms to the town where all the 11 monolithic Rock Hewn Churches of Lalibela are situated. On the first day, we will visit six churches which are called Bet Golgotha, Bet Mika'el, Bet Maryam, Bet Meskel, Bet Danaghel and Bet Medhane Alem.

### **DAY 6 LALIBELA**

On this day after a brief breakfast you will visit the rest churches and you will continue to **Asheten Mariam monastery**.

**Asheten Mariam monastery:** is built on a ridge in 13th century, excellent views over the surrounding countryside at an altitude of 3150 meters. It is about 8 kms from Lalibela. The road to this monastery is steeply looked like a twisted rope hugged on the wall but very beautiful scenery

and rewarding to experience it. On top, it looks like flying over the town of Lalibela and its surroundings. Inside the monastery you find the 13th hand and processional crosses of King Na'akutola'ab who ruled Ethiopia for 40 years just after king Lalibela.

### **DAY 7 LALIBELA - AXUM**

After breakfast, we fly to Axum. The ancient city of Axum is found close to Ethiopia's northern border. It marks the location of the heart of ancient Ethiopia, when the Kingdom of Aksum was the most powerful state between the Eastern Roman Empire and Persia. After you check in to your hotel, we will start a tour in Axum that includes visit to St. Mary church where the original Arc of the covenant housed in, Archeological Museum, Stelaes, tombs, and palace.

### **DAY 8 AXUM - ADDIS ABEBA - LANGANO**

Early in the morning we will fly back to Addis Ababa and drive to Langano.

### **DAY 9 LANGANO - KARAT-KONSO**

Drive from Langano to Konso.

### **DAY 10 KONSO – TURMI**

Early in the morning we will start to visit Konso. The people known for its religious traditions, waga sculptures, and nearby fossil beds (the latter an archaeological site of early hominids). The Konso live in an isolated region of the basalt hills. The area is made up of hard rocky slopes. A Konso village maybe fortified by a stone wall used as a defensive measure, their village is located on hilltops and is split up into communities, with each community having a main hut. In order to enter a Konso village, you must pass through a gate and a series of alleys. These paths are part of its security system, keeping the village difficult to access.

### **DAY 11 TURMI - KARO - TURMI**

Today we drive to Kolcho and Dus to visit the Karo tribe. **The Karo tribe** is a small, endangered omotic tribe with an estimated population between 1,000 and 3,000. They live along the east banks of the Omo River in southern Ethiopia and practice flood retreat cultivation. The crops that are grown by them are sorghum, maize and beans.

Like many of the tribes in the Omo, they paint their bodies and faces with white chalk to prepare for a ceremony. The chalk is mixed with yellow rock, red iron ore and charcoal to make its color. Face masks are worn at times and they have clay hair buns with feathers in them. Red clay mixed with butter is put into their hair and clothing is made from animal skin. The women scar their chest believing it makes them beautiful. The men's scars represent an enemy or dangerous animal killed. They also wear clay hair buns which symbol a kill. A man in the tribe

can have as many wives as he wants, but must be able to afford them. Most men will only marry two or three.

### **DAY 12 TURMI - DIMEKA – JINKA**

If the day is Tuesday or Saturdays, Dimeka holds one of the most colorful markets in the South Omo. At the evening time if there is a bull jumping which is the traditional wedding ceremony. Then you will drive to Jinka.

### **DAY 13 JINKA - MURSI – JINKA**

Early in the morning, we drive to Mago National Park to visit the Mursi tribes, who are known for their lower lip and earlobe plates.

### **DAY 14 JINKA - ARBA MINCH**

Early in the morning you will drive to Arbaminch in the afternoon you have a boat trip on Lake Chamo (the largest lake in Ethiopian rift valley lakes) to visit hippos and Nile Crocodiles at Azo (Crocodile) market on the lake.

### **DAY 15 ARBA MINCH – DORZE - ARBAMINCH**

On the next day morning drive to Chenchu village to visit the Dorze tribe who lives in the high land areas and surrounded by bamboo forest and well known for their traditional weaving and towering huts.

### **DAY 16 ARBA MINCH - ADDIS ABEBA**

Drive back to Addis Ababa and End of the Tour.

## **TOUR CODE: WIE/ET 172**

### **SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS**

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - NATURAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL**
- **DESTINATION: - BAHIRDAR/GONDAR/ SIMEN MOUNTAIN/ AXUM/MEKELLE/LALIBELLA**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - FLIGHT AND DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 11 DAYS AND 10 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 OR 4 STAR HOTELS AND LODGES**

### **DAY 1 ADDIS ABABA**

Arrive in Addis Ababa. Reception and transfer to the hotel, where the rooms are readily available to freshen briefly before starting our journey of discovery. The exploration of the town starts at the Entoto hills from where we have stunning views over the city. We also visit the National Museum where we included can see the skeleton of the famous Lucy. Lucy is one of the oldest hominids on Earth, belonging to the Australopithecus afarensis. Then we visit the Holy Trinity Church where are the mausoleums of Emperor Haile Selassie and his wife.

### **DAY 2 ADDIS ABABA - BAHIR DAR**

After breakfast, transfer to the airport and flight to Bahir Dar, located on the southern shore of Lake Tana. The rest of the morning is devoted to visit the waterfalls of the Blue Nile, where the water of the river enters after an impressive fall in a narrow ravine. Lunch overlooking the Tana lake and the pelicans and other waterfowl that live there. In the afternoon we take a boat trip on Tana lake, situated at an altitude of 1800 meters and thus the highest lake in Africa. In the lake are about 40 islands of which house some Ethiopian Orthodox monasteries and churches whose history often goes back to the 14th century. Christianity in Ethiopia is already present in the 4th century and was therefore not spread by European settlers. The program includes a visit to the monastery of Ura Kidane Mehret.

In the afternoon we will drive (some 30 Km) and visit to the Blue Nile Falls the most spectacular water fall. It is known as **Tis Abay** in Amharic, meaning "smoking water". It is situated on the upper course of the river, about 30 km downstream from the town of Bahir Dar and Lake Tana. The falls are considered one of Ethiopia's best known tourist attractions. The falls are estimated to be between 37 and 45 meters high.

### **DAY 3 BAHIR DAR - GONDAR**

A journey of about two and a half hours brings us to Gondar. Along the way a halt is held in Awra Amba. Awra Amba is an 'ideal village'. The community is self-supporting. We visit the local school and the home. Gondar was the imperial capital in the 17th and 18th century and home to many beautiful monuments. We bring include a visit to the imperial city district (Fasil Gibi), the Debre Birhan Sellasie Church with its beautiful murals and Bath emperor Fasilidas. The day ends with a visit to the Dashen brewery, where we can taste the refreshing barley beer which is brewed here.

#### **DAY 4 GONDAR - SIMIEN MOUNTAINS**

Just outside Gondar we stop at a Falasha village. The residents are black Jews who live from pottery and weaving. We visit the synagogue. Then we head for the Simien Mountains (about 2½ hours drive) from the viewpoint of Kossoye and the small, historic town of Amba Giorgis. With peaks above 4000 meters, this volcanic mountain also known as the "Roof of Africa". The mountain range is crisscrossed by Wide River between often mists hang that whole a mysterious glow. We make a pretty, little effort demanding walk, where we sort of become one with nature and fully enjoy the beautiful scenery around us. In November the landscape colors are beautiful because of the flowers and greenery. Chances are very high that we encounter baboons during the walk, the only grass-eating baboons in the world to exclusively occur in the Ethiopian highlands. These animals, also called gelada's, live in large groups and are also not afraid of people, so they can be accessed until pretty close.

#### **DAY 5 SIMIEN MOUNTAINS – AXUM**

We leave this beautiful piece of nature and continue our trek to the north, in the direction Axum. A portion of the ride runs through the National Park of the Simien Mountains and we enjoy so regularly beautiful views. The drive continues through the valley of the Tekeze River. It is therefore today made regular time for photo stops and a stop on the frankincense trees that grow in this region is on the program.

#### **DAY 6 AXUM**

The Axum kingdom that flourished between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6 of the century can rightly be called the cradle of Ethiopian civilization. A town of modest dimensions, is all that remains of the once magnificent capital Axum. Here and there are scattered but still a lot of monuments that recall the glory days of yesteryear. An entire day devoted to the visit of Axum, still the holiest city in the country. The day begins with a visit to the famous monolithic stelae or obelisks marking the graves of important people. Then visit the Church of Saint Mary of Zion, where the Ark of the Covenant would be preserved. Tradition tells how Menelik I, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba brought the Ark to Axum and founded the dynasty of Solomoniden. This dynasty ends reportedly only by Haile Selassie. Furthermore, the program includes a visit to the ruins of the palace of the Queen of Sheba, the tomb of King Kaleb and his son King Gebre Meskel and the archaeological museum. Let us immerse briefly in the bustle of the local market.

#### **DAY 7 AXUM - MEKELE**

Drive to Mekele (about 4 hours drive) through the historic Adwa Mountains. It was during the battle of Adwa which Menelik II in 1896 the Italian invaders inflicted a decisive defeat and managed to drive them out as Ethiopia. Visit to Yeha, one of the main pre-Axumite sites. The main attraction of Yeha is the fifth of the century church of Abba Afse, dedicated to one of the "nine saints", the founders of the Ethiopian Church. Inside the church are the remains of a two thousand five hundred year old temple, called the Temple of the Moon. We pass Debre Damo, a monastery atop a mesa. Monks and priests climbing through a rope. That is the only entry and with a little luck you will also goats and supplies in a basket on the same path going up. Women are not allowed. Lunch in Adigrat. In the afternoon visit to the church of Wukro Kirkos in Tigray.

### **DAY 8 MEKELE - LALIBELA**

Ride Mekele to Lalibela. This ride is without doubt one of the most scenic rides that can be done in Ethiopia. This is the region where the famine in the 80s of last century struck. People were subsequently returned and, thanks to new water, they can now live from the proceeds of their country. The typical huts and farms make the landscape an idyllic whole. Here is mainly grown teff, a type of grass which is the basic food for the Ethiopian. We travel in the harvest season. The grain is threshed with oxen and peasants singing harvest songs.

### **DAY 9 LALIBELLA**

Lalibela was among the 10 th and 13 the century under the name Roha the capital of the Zagwe dynasty. In the beginning of the 13 the century the city was renamed by the great eponymous king Lalibela. Lalibela is sometimes called "Black Jerusalem", a name that owes the city has to his 11 world famous rock-hewn churches, which are on the UNESCO World Heritage List. An entire day is devoted to visiting the 11 churches of this unique place: Bete Giorgis, Bete Medahne Alem Bete Meskel, Bete Maryam, Bete Denagel, Bete Golgotha.

### **DAY 10 LALIBELA**

Excursion to Yimrehane Christos, located some 40 kilometers from Lalibela. Here we visit a grotto built in a 11th the century Church who are slightly older than the churches in Lalibela. On arrival we heard from afar the water splashing down. The waterfall forms a curtain for the entrance of the church. First, our eyes have to adjust to the darkness and then we see the beautiful church. The building is constructed from marble and wood on the outside and inside very nicely finished. At the back of the cave we do a macabre discovery. Return to Lalibela where there in the afternoon some free time is. For lovers, there is a visit includes the Church of Neakutolaab, built in a cave in a steep cliff. In the early evening visit to a project of the city of Peer. Disadvantaged young people get a meaningful occupation. In the evening we enjoy a farewell meal, enlivened by local authentic music.

### **DAY 11 LALIBELA - ADDIS ABABA**

Quiet morning and then transfer to airport for flight to Addis Ababa and End of the Tour.

## **TOUR CODE: WIE/ET 173**

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- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - FLIGHT AND DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 15 DAYS AND 14 NIGHTS**
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### **DAY 1 ADDIS ABABA**

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monastery atop a mesa. Monks and priests climbing through a rope. That is the only entry and with a little luck you will also find goats and supplies in a basket on the same path going up. Women are not allowed. Lunch in Adigrat. In the afternoon visit to the church of Wukro Kirkos in Tigray.

## **DAY 8 MEKELE/HAMADELA**

The tour will start at 9am from Mekelle heading to the North eastern part of Ethiopia, Danakil Depression. After we drive 45km asphalt road via Kwiha town we will reach Abala town in the Afar region. Starting from this town we will have 2 Afar police men joiners with us till we leave the region on the 4th day. Continue driving of 68km asphalt under construction we reach Erebiti. After lunch, we precede 16km pista and 104km asphalt road to reach Afdera.

## **DAY 9 LAKE AFRERA/ ERTAALE**

In the morning, we enjoy Lake Afrera and see how to harvest the salt in a modern way. Lake Afrera is a salt lake with around 100 square kilometers; if you like you can swim in there.

Next to the lake is a hot spring with mineral water, which invites you for taking a bath. On the way to the lake and back we take time to watch the wildlife in this area, a lot of ostrich, different kind of big birds, antelopes and other wild animals are living there. After lunch, we proceed to ErtaAle via Kesrawat. In Kesrawat, we will pick other four special forces with us till we drop them back in the next day. In the bottom of the volcano, we will take some time till the sun goes down. After dinner, we start hiking of 9.5km (around 3 hours) to reach on the top of mountain, ErtaAle Volcano.

## **DAY 10 HAMADELLA**

We walk down to the camp at the bottom of the volcano, have breakfast and drive back to Hamadella, where we reach in the afternoon. The meals are served on the way in the shadow of some palms. We do a walk in the Afar town "Hamadella" to show you how the people live and survive in the conditions of the desert. You have time to buy souvenirs, take pictures of the Afar and their village and you'll see plenty of the camel caravans.

## **DAY 11 DALLOL**

After breakfast early in the morning we start our journey, with 45km through Dallol Depression. On our round we visit different places like salt lakes (red and black water), the colorful salt lakes and thermo active springs of Dallol, potash, sulfur and other minerals, the wide white salt desert, a cave pure natural designed rocks, Lake Assale and Local Salt mining. After visitation, we have our lunch in Hamadella then go back to Mekelle.

## **DAY 12 MEKELE - LALIBELA**

Ride Mekele to Lalibela. This ride is without doubt one of the most scenic rides that can be done in Ethiopia. This is the region where the famine in the 80s of last century struck. People were subsequently returned and, thanks to new water, they can now live from the proceeds of their country. The typical huts and farms make the landscape an idyllic whole. Here is mainly grown teff, a type of grass which is the basic food for the Ethiopian. We travel in the harvest season. The grain is threshed with oxen and peasants singing harvest songs.

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## **DAY 14 LALIBELA**

Excursion to Yimrehane Christos, located some 40 kilometers from Lalibela. Here we visit a grotto built in a 11th century Church who are slightly older than the churches in Lalibela. On arrival we heard from afar the water splashing down. The waterfall forms a curtain for the entrance of the church. First, our eyes have to adjust to the darkness and then we see the beautiful church. The building is constructed from marble and wood on the outside and inside very nicely finished. At the back of the cave we do a macabre discovery. Return to Lalibela where there in the afternoon some free time is. For lovers, there is a visit includes the Church of Neakutolaab, built in a cave in a steep cliff. In the early evening visit to a project of the city of Peer. Disadvantaged young people get a meaningful occupation. In the evening we enjoy a farewell meal, enlivened by local authentic music.

## **DAY 15 LALIBELA - ADDIS ABABA**

Quiet morning and then transfer to airport for flight to Addis Ababa and End of the Tour.

## **TOUR CODE: WIE/ET-136**

### **SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS**

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, NATURAL, TREKKING AND SAFARI TOURS**
- **DESTINATION: - BAHIRDAR /GONDAR/ LALIBELLA/ SIMEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK/ DALLOL/ ARBAMINCH/ JINKA/ MURSI/ MAGO/ KONSO/ OMORATE**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 22 DAYS AND 21 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 STAR HOTELS**

### **DAY 1: DRIVE FROM ADDIS ABABA TO BAHIRDAR**

Depart early in the morning you will drive from Addis Ababa to Bahirdar via Debremarkos. Bahirdar city is located in north-western part of Ethiopia. It is the capital city of the Amhara Region and emerged one of the leading tourist destinations in Ethiopia, with a variety of attractions in the nearby Lake Tana and Blue Nile river. After check in to your hotel you will stay the night in Rah Nile Hotel.

### **DAY 2: BAHIRDAR**

On this day after brief breakfast you will start visit Bahirdar. The first visit will be to Lake Tana and the monasteries. Lake Tana is the largest lake in Ethiopia and fourth largest in Africa, spanning an area of more than 3500 square Km. This highland lake set at an altitude of 1800 meters above sea level and was formed by a volcanic eruption. The lake is the main source of the Blue Nile and hosts several species of birds and wildlife. The island dotted all over the magnificent waters is places where some of the most captivating and oldest monasteries in Ethiopia can be found.

Some of 21 churches that are mostly spread out on the 39 different islands located on the lake go all the way back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The Churches contain the earliest religious and historical

manuscripts, awe-inspiring incarnations of ecclesiastic art, royal crowns and scepters used by early Christian kings and emperors.

After lunch, you will drive (some 30 Km) and visit to the Blue Nile Falls the most spectacular water fall. It is known as **Tis Abay** in Amharic, meaning "smoking water". It is situated on the upper course of the river, about 30 km downstream from the town of Bahir Dar and Lake Tana. The falls are considered one of Ethiopia's best known tourist attractions. The falls are estimated to be between 37 and 45 meters high.

### **DAY 3 DRIVES FROM BAHIRDAR TO GONDAR**

On the morning of this day, you will drive 185 km to reach to Gondar. Upon arrival you will check in to your Hotel and take a rest some and start the tour.

You will start from the Royal Castles of Gondar which were built in the 17th Century A.D. It is surrounded by high stone walls containing the 17th century palaces of King Fasiladas, King Iyasu and Queen Mentewab and different other buildings. The next place worth visiting will be Bath of Emperor Fasiledes (the bath is filled with water for the important Timkat (epiphany) ceremony once a year. The ceremony replicates Christ's baptism in the Jordan River, and is seen as an important renewal of faith.). The last historic tour in Gondar will be Debre Birhan Selassie Church (Trinity at the Mount of Light). The Church has stunning ceilings depicting beautiful scenes of winged Angels, biblical events, Saints, martyrs and the life of Christ. Depending on the time availability, you can also visit the Castle of Empress Mintewab, and Kuskwam Complex which is a royal compound built by the Empress Mentewab. There are also other churches in Gonder such as Medhane Alem (the Church of the Savior, built during the reign of Fasiladas); Gemjabet Maryam, Attami Mikael, and Ilfign Giyorgis, all of which have beautiful paintings in their walls.

### **DAY 4: DRIVE FROM GODAR TO SIMEN MOUNTAION NATIONAL PARK**

On the third day, you will drive from Gondar to Sankober. The first place to hike is Buyit Ras it takes 3-4 hour for hiking to Sankober, which passes close to the escarpment edge. Near to

Sankober, there is a beautiful view on both side of the escarpment ridge and where you will likely see the endemic Gelada baboons then you will depart into a valley, through which the Wazla (or Koba) River runs. (This river is often dry). Coming out of the valley you will see the views of the Jinbar River waterfalls falling into the Geech Abyss. Continuing along, you will cross the Jinbar River and ascend into the village of Geech. It takes 4-5 hours for total trekking. You will stay the night camping (depending on the weather condition).

### **DAY 5: IMETGOGO/ CHENEK**

After an early breakfast, you will depart from Geech to the peak of ImetGogo which is 3926m above sea level. Here you will explore spectacular views over the lowlands – one of the highlights of the trip. As you continue to Chenek, you will pass KorbeteMetia, a solid rock wall which opens up exposing beautiful views over the lowlands and the escarpment. This is also a good place for spotting lammergeyers. Overnight camping in Chenek (depending on the weather condition).

### **DAY 6: DRIVE FROM CHENEK TO GONDAR AND LALIBELLA**

On this day you will drive from Chenek to Gondar and Lalibella. When you arrive to Lalibella you will check in to your hotel and have some a rest before you start the tour. The Lalibella tour is the most historic and religious. Lalibella is well known for its eleven Rock-hewn Monolithic (carved from a single rock) Churches, with their magnificent architecture and paintings inside.

The 11 churches at Lalibela, Ethiopia, are regarded as one of the wonders of the world, excavated from solid rock with an immense underground maze of tunnels and passages. There are two main groups of churches, with another church dedicated to Saint George a short distance away.

Ethiopian tradition connects the churches with the most famous King Lalibela of the Zagwe dynasty, and the town, formerly known as Roha, has come to be known by that king's name. The *Life of Lalibela* describes how King Lalibela (who ruled from the late 12th to the early 13th centuries) was carried away to the heavenly Jerusalem. There he was instructed to build the churches. Angels worked beside his men as they cut each one from the rock, and then kept working through the night. However, the style in which the churches were made is remarkably similar to the surviving architecture of ancient Axum, and scholars have become intrigued by the possibility that some of the churches could be much older than the reign of Lalibela. Some of them may also have been constructed as palaces rather than as churches. They do not all follow the conventional alignment of churches to the east.

After the death of Lalibela his tomb and the city itself began to draw thousands of pilgrims. Although his Dynasty was overthrown, Lalibela is still revered as a saint. The churches are seen as a New Jerusalem, with a river named Jordan and sites corresponding to the holy places of the great city.

## **DAY 7: DRIVE FROM LALIBELLA TO MEKELLE**

Early in the morning after breakfast you will drive to Mekelle via Woldya. On the way you will explore Michew Land scape. While you arrive to Mekelle you will check in to your Hotel.

## **DAY 8 MEKELLE /AHMADELLA (DALLOL)**

The adventure tour starts around 10a.m. from Mekelle in the Tigray Region. After drive of 260 km via Berhale we reach Hamadella, which is called "base camp" located in the desert and only 5 km away from Dallol. We have lunch on the way and stop at some places where you can enjoy a very impressive view and you meet the first camel caravans. In Berhale we take the policemen who attempt the group for the tour. We leave the highland and mountains 2000m above sea-level to the stone and salt desert to Hamadella, which is below sea-level (Salt desert up to 120m below sea level).

On arrival in Hamadella, we drive to Lake Asale to see the spectacular view of the sunset reflection. We have our dinner prepared by our professional cook, we are going to spend the 1st night on local afar-beds, open air under the stars or in a wooden cottage in HamadEla.

## **DAY 9 AHMEDALA /CARAVAN CAMEL /ASAHALE SALT /ABALA**

After breakfast early in the morning we start our journey, with 45km through Dallol Depression. On our round we visit different places like salt lakes (red and black water), the colorful salt lakes and thermo active springs of Dallol, potash, sulfur and other minerals, the wide white salt desert, a cave and pure natural designed rocks and the field where the Afar people are harvesting the salt in the traditional way and where the camel caravans start their long trek to towns like Mekelle for the salt business. After half day visitation of Dallol and lunch in Hamadella/Abala we travel to Abala. We spend the night here.

## **DAY 10 ABALA/ERTALE**

Departure is at 9am from Abala, we drive 265km to reach to the bottom of the volcano where the cars can't drive further. In the evening we start 3 up to 4 hours walking to the top of the volcano with joining different partners during the tour. You will visit the volcano after reaching the top and enjoying as much as you had enough and go to sleep in the camp made up of stones.

## **Day 11 ABALA /LAKE AFRERA /MEKELLE**

You will walk to the bottom of the volcano to visit the Lava and walk down to the camp to have breakfast and drive back to Mekelle which we reach in the evening.

## **DAY 12 DRIVE TO AXUM VIA DEBEREDAMO**

You will drive to Axum via Deberedamo and you will visit Debre damo (Females not allowed to enter) and Yeha Temple. **Debre Damo** is the name of a flat-topped mountain, or amba, and a 6th-century monastery in northern Ethiopia. The mountain is a steeply rising plateau of trapezoidal shape, about 1000 by 400 meters in dimension. It is located west of Adigrat, in the Mehakelegnaw Zone of the Tigray Region. The monastery, accessible only by rope up a sheer cliff, 50 ft. high, is known for its collection of manuscripts and for having the earliest existing church building in Ethiopia still in its original style, and can only be visited by men. Tradition claims the monastery was founded in the sixth century by Abuna Aregawi. **Yeha Temple** is a tower built in the Sabaean style, and dated through comparison with ancient structures in South Arabia to around 700 BC. Although no radiocarbon dating testing has been performed on samples from site, this date for the Great Tower is supported by local inscriptions.<sup>[2]</sup> David Phillipson attributes its "excellent preservation" to two factors, "the care with which its original builders ensured a level foundation, firmly placed on the uneven bedrock; and to its rededication perhaps as early as the sixth century AD -- for use as a Christian church. Two other archaeological sites at Yeha include Grati Gebri, a ruined complex distinguished by a portico 10 meters wide and two sets of square pillars, and a graveyard containing several rock-hewn shaft tombs first investigated in the early 1960s. One authority has speculated that one of these tombs contained a royal burial, while another believes the ancient residential area was likely one kilometer to the east of the modern village.

## **DAY 13: AXUM**

After breakfast, you will drive to Axum. The ancient city of Axum is found close to Ethiopia's northern border. It marks the location of the heart of ancient Ethiopia, when the Kingdom of Aksum was the most powerful state between the Eastern Roman Empire and Persia. After you check in to your hotel, we will start a tour in Axum that includes visit to St. Mary church where the original Arc of the covenant housed in, Archeological Museum, Stelaes, tombs, and palace.

## **DAY 14: AXUM/KOMBOLCHA**

Early in the morning after brief breakfast you will start to drive back to Addis Ababa. Your overnight stay will be in Kombolcha Lal Hotel because it is very far to drive to Addis Ababa in one day.

## **DAY 15: KOMBOLCHA/ADDIS**

This day will be your last day of Northern Ethiopia. You will drive from Kombolcha to Addis Ababa in order to continue for the northern Ethiopia Tour.

## **Day 16 ADDIS/ARBAMINCH**

In the morning you will drive to Arbaminch via Butajera. You will visit the Tiya Stanmding stone, we embark on a boat trip on Lake Chamo to visit the hippos and the famous crocodile market. Lake Chamo is 32 kilometers long and 13 meter wide, with a surface area of 317 square kilometers and a maximum depth of 14 meters with a catchment of about 18757 square kilometers in size with an elevation of 1,235 meters with a length of 26 km a widths of 22 km an area of 551 square kilometers a catchment of 2220 square kilometers and a maximum depth of 10 meters. Wildlife include fish like the catfish Bagrus docmac and Nile perch, as well as hippopotamus and Nile crocodiles.

### **Day 17 ARBAMINCH/JINKA**

We proceed driving to Jinka via Weyto and Key Afar. If today is market day, we will stop in Konso and/or Key Afar to visit. The Konso village which constitutes a spectacular example of a living cultural tradition stretching back 21 generations (more than 400 years) adapted to its dry hostile environment.

### **Day 18 JINKA/MURSI/ TURMI**

Early in the morning, we drive to Mago National Park to visit the Mursi tribes, who are known for their lower lip and earlobe plates and proceed driving to Turmi, via Dimeka. On Tuesdays and Saturdays, Dimeka holds one of the most colorful markets in the South Omo. At the evening time if there is a bull jumping which is the traditional wedding ceremony.

### **Day 19 TURMI/OMORATE/TURMI:**

Morning after breakfast drive to Omorate the village of Dassanech tribe living on both side Omo River here we take Canoe to cross the Omo river and visit the Village of Dassanech drive back to Turmi. Afternoon drive to Koricho (the beautifully settled village on the side of Omo River) village of Karo people who are considered the masters of body painting and decorate their bodies with chalk paint often imitating the spotted plumage of a guinea fowl and drive back to Turmi.

### **Day 20 TURMI/KONSO/ARBAMINCH**

Drive from Turmi to **Konso** named after the Konso people known for its religious traditions, waga sculptures, and nearby fossil beds (the latter an archaeological site of early hominids).

The Konso live in an isolated region of the basalt hills. The area is made up of hard rocky slopes. A Konso village maybe fortified by a stone wall used as a defensive measure, their village is located on hilltops and is split up into communities, with each community having a main hut. In order to enter a Konso village, you must pass through a gate and a series of alleys. These paths are part of its security system, keeping the village difficult to access. Then you will continue to drive to Arbaminch.

### **Day 21 ARBAMINCH/HAWASSA**

On this day you will drive from Arbaminch to Hawassa on the way you will visit the Alaba

Kulinto traditional house. While you arrive you will check in to your hotel.

## **Day 22 HAWASSA/ADDIS ABABA**

After breakfast, take a boat trip on Lake Awassa to visit the fish market and admire the amazing birdlife in the area, and maybe some hippos. In the afternoon we will continue our drive to return to Addis Ababa and the tour ends when we arrive.