

TOUR CODE: WIE/ET121

SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - HISTORICAL, NATURAL AND MOUNTAIN TREKKING ON THE HIGHEST TIP OF ETHIOPIA RAS DASHEN**
- **DESTINATION: - BAHIRDAR /GONDAR/ SEMIN MOUNTAION NATIONAL PARK /LALIBELLA/ AXUM**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - FLIGHT AND DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 7 DAYS AND 6 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 STAR HOTELS**

DAY 1: DEPARTURE FROM ADDIS ABABA TO BAHIRDAR

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 13th 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 2: 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 and start the tour.

You will start from the Royal Castles of Gonder 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 3: SIMIEN MOUNTAINS TO SANKABER

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 4: 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 5: GONDAR TO LALIBELLA

Early in the morning you will drive back to Gondar, and then you will fly to Lalibella. Upon arrival 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. Lalibela is well known for its eleven Rock-hewn Monolithic (carved from a single rock) Churches, with their magnificent architecture and paintings inside.

Historic tour in Lalibela is one of Ethiopia's exciting tours, and is holy town in Ethiopia second to Axum. It is a center of pilgrimage for much of the country. The layout and names of the major buildings in Lalibela are widely accepted, especially by the local clergy, to be a symbolic representation of Jerusalem.

This has led some experts to date the current form of its famous churches to the years following the capture of Jerusalem in 1187 by the Muslim soldier.

During the reign of Saint Gebre Mesqel Lalibela (a member of the Zagwe Dynasty, who ruled Ethiopia in the late 12th century and early 13th century) the current town of Lalibela was known as Roha. The saintly king was given this name due to a swarm of bees said to have surrounded him at his birth, which his mother took as a sign of his future reign as Emperor of Ethiopia. The names of several places in the modern town and the general layout of the monolithic churches themselves are said to mimic names and patterns observed by Lalibela during the time he spent in Jerusalem and the Holy Land as a youth. Lalibela is said to have seen Jerusalem and then attempted to build a New Jerusalem as his capital in response to the capture of old Jerusalem by Muslims in 1187. As such, many features have Biblical names - even the town's river is known as the River Jordan. It remained the capital of Ethiopia from the late 12th century and into the 13th century.

DAY 6: LALIBELLA TO AXUM

After breakfast, 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 7: LALIBELLA TO ADDIS ABABA

Fly back to Addis Ababa and end of tour.

TOUR CODE: WIE/ET122

SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - HISTORICAL, NATURAL AND RELIGIOUS**
- **DESTINATION: - BAHIRDAR /GONDAR/LALIBELLA/AXUM**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - ON SURFACE & FLIGHT**
- **DURATION: 5 DAYS AND 4 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 STAR HOTELS**

DAY 1: FLY FROM ADDIS ABABA TO 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 13th 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.

DAY 2: DRIVE FROM BAHIRDAR TO GONDAR

On this day, we will have some experience typically in an Ethiopian African landscape as we drive from Bahir Dar to Gondar- 180 kms over wide grazing land, hilly mountains with numerous farm lands. In the rest of the day, we will visit major attractions in Gondar. The attractions that we will

visit in Gondar includes: Castles of Gondar (built in the 17th century), the royal Fasilede's Bath and the Church of Debre Berhan Selassie with its unique murals.

DAY 3: FLY FROM GONADR TO LALIBELA

On this day, you 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 4: FLY FROM LALIBELLA TO 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 5: AXUM TO ADDIS ABABA

After breakfast, you will check in to the Airport for your flight to Addis Ababa and it will be the end of the tour.

TOUR CODE: WIE/ET 171

SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - NATURAL, HISTORICAL**
- **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 fourth century and was therefore not spread by European settlers. The program includes a visit to the monastery of Ura Kidane Mehret.

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 1st 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 10th and 13th century under the name Roha the capital of the Zagwe dynasty. In the beginning of the 13th 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 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 176

SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - NATURAL, HISTORICAL AND MOUNTAIN TREKKING**
- **DESTINATION: - BAHIRDAR/ SIMEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK/ LALIBELLA**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - FLIGHT AND DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 11 DAYS AND 10 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 OR 4 STAR HOTELS AND LODGES**

DAY 1: FLY FROM ADDIS ABABA TO BAHIR DAR AND VISIT BLUE NILE WATERFALLS BOAT TRIP TANA

In the morning we visit the Tis Isat Falls, where the Blue Nile is an impressive cliff plunges down. In the afternoon we take a boat trip on Lake Tana, the highest lake of Ethiopia. Of the 37 islands that lie in the lake. The lake has about 29 a monastery or church full of beautiful religious paintings and ancient Bibles. We visit the Ura Kidane Mirhet church on the peninsula Zeghe.

DAY 2: DRIVE FROM BAHIRDAR TO GONDAR

In Gondar, we find a unique collection of castles, churches and art work that recall the heyday of the Ethiopian kings in the seventeenth century. We also visit the king of bath Fasiledes and Debre Birhan Selassie church, built by an emperor and protected by an archangel. The Church of the Trinity as well as the Mountain of Light, is one of the most important in the country. He is known for the beautifully painted ceiling.

DAY 3: TREKKING SIMIEN - SANKEBAR - GEECH (3600M)

Early in the morning you will drive to Sankaber. After the luggage is loaded on the mules, we leave Sankeber and we descend into the gorge formed by the action of the Jinbar uitsnijdende River. This we stab over. Then "climb" we back out of the valley and finally we reach the village Geech, where we camp. The village lies on a plateau with the typical afro-alpine flora and stunning views. Day hike of 6 to 7 hours.

DAY 3: TREKKING SIMIEN - IMET GOGO (3926M) - CHENEK (3600M)

In the morning we walk on grass steppes to Imetgogo (3926m). We have a panorama of ridges, gorges and lower villages. Then we continue our trek to Chenek (3600m). This is one of the best

places for spotting indigenous walia-ibex and Ethiopian wolf. We camp at Chenek. Day hike: 7 hours.

DAY 4: TREKKING SIMIEN - VIA BWAHIT PASS (4200M) TO AMBIKO

Today we walk to the Bwahit Pass (4200m) with a beautiful view of Ras Dashen, the highest peak of the Simien Mountains. The trek continues to Ambiko, where we will camp two nights.

DAY 5: TREKKING SIMIEN SONA - MEKAREBIA (2100M- TOP RAS DASHEN (4620M) -AMBIKO

Today we climb to the summit of the highest mountain in Ethiopia, Ras Dashen. With its 4620m is one of the highest mountains on the continent. It's an uphill climb (5-6 hours), but you will be rewarded with spectacular views. After this fall a 2 to 3 hours to off Ambiko for an overnight stay in the tent.

DAY 6: TREKKING SIMIEN - ARKWASIYE (3600M) - SONA (3600M)

In the morning we walk into the northwest (10 to 11 hours) to Sona. Arriving in Sona you on the edge of a canyon to enjoy a beautiful sunset over the Ethiopian highlands.

DAY 7: TREKKING HAWASA (2100M)

A brisk walking day ahead, 10 to 11am. **Overnight stay in Camping.**

DAY 8: TREKKING HAWASA - ADI ARKAI - GONDAR

On the last day of trekking we walk in about three to four hours to Adi Arkai, from where we continue by car to Gondar.

DAY 9: FLIGHT TO LALIBELA - ROCK CHURCHES

After breakfast, transfer to the airport of Gondar, domestic flight to Lalibela.

The most imaginative speaking, the **rock churches in the highlands**. In Lalibela ordered the eponymous king eleven churches from the rocks down, each with its own character and with **strong influences from Greek, Moorish and even Indian architecture**. If morning early commencement Mass is the **magic** of this place is almost tangible.

Each church has its own character, design and has its own church treasures. These are shown to us by the priests. Near the complex there are the round houses with two floors that are typical for

this area. Many are inhabited by priests, monks and nuns, we are indeed one of the holiest sites of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

DAY 10: LALIBELA ASHETON MARIAM - YEMRAHANE KRISTOS

In the morning, we make an excursion by mule to Asheton Mariam, the monastery situated at 3150 m above Lalibela (Lalibela is 2630 m). Once upstairs we enjoy breathtaking views.

After lunch you will drive to Yemrahane Kristos, about 40km from Lalibela.

DAY 11: FLIGHTS TO ADDIS ABABA

After breakfast, domestic flight to Addis Ababa and End of the Tour.

TOUR CODE: WIE/ET174

SUMMARY OF KEY DETAILS

- **TYPE OF TOUR : - NATURAL, HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND MOUNTAIN TREKKING**
- **DESTINATION: - GONDAR, SANKABER, GEECH, CHENEK, RAS DASHEN, SONA, MULIT, AXUM, LALIBELLA**
- **MODE OF TRANSPORT: - FLIGHT AND DRIVE**
- **DURATION: - 14 DAYS AND 13 NIGHTS**
- **ACCOMMODATION: - SUPERIOR 3 OR 4 STAR HOTELS**

DAY 1 ADDIS ABABA - GONDAR

In the morning we fly from Addis 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. We stay in a hotel, whose rooms are based on African huts.

DAY 2 GONDAR - SANKABER (3235 M)

Maybe in the morning some sightseeing in Gondar when we come short time yesterday.

Then by bus to Debarq. After a short stop we drive into the mountains to Sankaber where we set up our tents. From here begins our 8 day trek in the Simien Mountains. If we had the road not too much delay, we will cover the last few kilometers to the camp on foot to determine what to enjoy the wonderful views.

DAY 3 SANKABER - GEECH (3619 M) START TREKKING SIMIEN MOUNTAINS

Slowly we rise on a kind of platform with all kinds of beautiful flowers and trees hung with long beard moss. At some point we are at such a 3300 meters altitude on the edge of the break in the countryside. You can see tens of kilometers along this bizarrely shaped rock towers and precipices. The rest of the day we keep the edge of this break in sight and sometimes we walk along there. The terrain is sometimes a bit more covered with forest and there is a good chance that you encounter a group of gelada baboons. These are endemic animals with glittering golden mane and a beautiful "red heart". In the afternoon it really perseveres before you reach the beautiful camp site of Geech. You have reached a plateau with the typical afro-alpine vegetation and a beautiful view. It is here one cold night with temperatures below zero.

DAY 4 FROM GEECH TO CHENEK (3622 M)

Today we will need a good condition, because we need a heavier piece of land, along the edge of the cliffs to a height of 4120 meters. You can easily get to hang over the edge and see 1500 to 2000 meters looking down, with the view of the somewhat lower stockade is breathtaking. Then

on to the next camp. There is hardly a path and you can find that you have to get used to the altitude. An easier path may lead, among other things along to the next camp. This is also a wonderful place with unreal views at an altitude of over 3600 meters.

DAY 5 FROM CHENNEK TO AMBIKWA (3123 M)

Slowly we rise to around 4200 meters altitude. From here you have a view of the high ridge in front of us in which the Ras Dashen is. But first we have to the valley from 1400 meters down. The slopes are predominantly used for agriculture and the last part of the descent is rocky with a multitude of flowers and cacti. After having crossed the river, it is a small one and a half hour again rise to the camp in the hut village Ambikwa at almost 3200 meters.

DAY 6 AMBIKWA- RASH DASHEN (4550 M) - AMBIKWA

Today, the choice can be made between a rest day with a short walk around Ambikwa or a tough trip up and down the Rash Dashen at +/- 4550m. About 1500 meters up over a distance of 10 km and again down. From the camp site at 3200 meters you `s 9 to 11 hours on the road. Initially, many rising and again much later down. We really need the whole day and leave when it gets light. The first part is still occupied and we are already seeing early people who go to their lands to work. Higher up we get back into the zone with the reuzenlobelia`s and above 4300 meters it is really bare. After a false flat across a large rock area there remains a small piece of scrambling to the summit, the highest point in Ethiopia at 4550 meters. Then we go down the same route back down to our campsite in Ambikwa, where we fulfilled this feat, are warmly welcomed by our remaining counselors and companions.

DAY 7 AMBIKWA TO SONA

First we go down in an hour back down to the river. Then a long steady climb to over 3600m. Then many contours through regions with large agricultural activity where harvested end of December and will be threshed. Everywhere people to work in their fields. It goes up and down a few times before we arrive in Arkwasiye. A fairly large village whose houses have roofs of corrugated iron as opposed to the cabins we've seen before and also spreads here are among the fields. Then back up a moment and then slowly descend to our campsite. A beautiful place, on the edge of a precipice where are no other structures, but with a magnificent view over the valley in which we go down tomorrow. This is again a fairly long a hot day.

DAY 8 SONA TO MEKARABIA

We spent five days at or above 3,000 meters. Today we descend down to +/- 1800 meter final, where the lowland (to Ethiopian standards) begins. Immediately from the camp a steep descent to the river that flows through the valley. The transition is incredible. The relatively barren sparsely vegetated slopes you come abruptly in a tropical jungle. Big giant trees and chirping of cicadas and crickets. Towards the evening we arrive at our campsite, where the views are stunning and the temperatures are comfortable throughout the evening.

DAY 9 MEKAREBIA TO MULIT

We have now arrived in the lower and so hot part of the journey. So to get up early in relation to the heat. We need a number of times through or along the river and crosses fields with sorghum and other crops. We often see homemade racks where children with slingshot chase monkeys so they cannot infest the crop. Along the way we take the time for a swim in a lake at a few waterfalls. Though in time we come this day to the camp where we can enjoy a great view of the palisades. In the evening we say goodbye to the guides who accompanied us on this trip.

DAY 10 MULIT- ADI ARKAY- AXUM

This day we almost only downhill. In about 2 hours we arrive at Adi Arkay. We settle down at a local café, while the luggage is loaded on the bus that took us into ± 5 hours to Axum brenge. Vooral will be in the first part of the ride, the Haweza Mountains, is still busy working on the road. We go down to the bridge over the river Tekeze (850 m) and then the road climbs gradually to over 2,000 meters and we cross the Tigray area to Axum.

DAY 11 AXUM

Axum is a small town in Tigray. There is a lot of fighting in the area and maybe we see here and there some being burned army vehicles stopped along the road or in the field. The roots of contemporary Ethiopia are in Axum. Axum was a major trading center in the 1st to the 6th century. There are huge sites that actually for the average tourist does not even deserve the respect. Best known are the so-called. Stelae, dozens of meters high granite pillars, which we see today. The best thing is probably to Axum that still comes at a very different atmosphere. Especially evenings in various bars there socializing and dancing typical Tigrays on z `where the women make provocative moves to the men who are supposed enthusiasm than from bank notes to stick on the forehead or breasts of the women concerned.

DAY 12 AXUM- LALIBELA

In the course of the morning flight departs. During the flight you get a good picture of the landscape strange shapes of the central highlands. Lalibela is located in a very mountainous area. It is a village that became serious in the past suffered from war and famine. Currently, there are a number of development projects going on in which people are, for example, for the construction of the road paid in food. Although the rock churches are world famous, there is still only a lack of tourism infrastructure. From the airport it is an hour's drive to Lalibela. Here we take a room in a good hotel. In the afternoon we visit the first cluster rock churches and the St. George Church Rock. Indeed, it is a wonder that people think these big churches have freely made by hand from the hard rocks. There is a certain serenity and wandering through the corridors and caves here and there facing blind and leprous beggars you find yourself in the middle ages. Lalibela is the leading center for the Christian Ethiopians to profess their faith. During the Christmas shop here tens of thousands of pilgrims in large meetings.

DAY 13 LALIBELA

Today we visit the second cluster rock churches. After lunch there is time for a bit of personal interpretation. Wander about the town, buy some souvenirs in one of the many shops or if it is very hot, the shade of the canopy of the outdoor restaurant at the hotel complex.

DAY 14 LALIBELA- ADDIS ABABA

In the morning we fly from Lalibela to Addis and End of the tour.