

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.