

Silk Steps

EXPLORE AND EXPERIENCE



Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a country four and half times larger than Great Britain that is barely touched by modern life. It not only supports an amazing diversity of flora and fauna, but is also the birthplace of mankind.

Human history began in Ethiopia when Lucy, an Australopithecine female whose remains were discovered here, stood up and walked in the grass-lands of the Danakil some 3.4 million years ago. Ethiopia does not merely offer a journey through some of the world's most breathtaking scenery, but also one through the pages of human history and time.

WEATHER

Because of its high altitude, Ethiopia has a temperate climate despite its proximity to the equator. The average daytime temperature is 16°C and at night it can drop to 10°C. The rainy season runs from June to September and the best time to visit is from October to April.



WHEN IN ETHIOPIA WHY NOT...?

Experience **Timkat**, the most colourful festival of the year. Book very early to join the Epiphany Festival of Timkat as flights and accommodation are booked up many months in advance. Celebrated all over the country, but it is most spectacular in Lalibela with processions, ceremonies and dancing.

Visit the **Omo**, the last wilderness of Ethiopia. A truly extraordinary region of Ethiopia is just taking its first tentative steps into the world of tourism. The Omo Valley in the south of the country is home to a myriad of ethnic tribes who still wear traditional costumes and follow a way of life that hasn't changed for centuries.

Go **bird watching**; Ethiopia is home to 850 different species of birds. Birdwatchers will think they are in paradise in Ethiopia as it is one of the best places for good sightings. Even Addis Ababa has a bewildering range of birds soaring above the city. And then there are the Rift Valley Lakes, Bale Mountains National Park and the Omo Valley, all home to endemic species.

Relax at an **eco lodge** on the shores of Lake Langano. Spend a couple of nights relaxing at lovely Lake Langano, a Rift Valley lake, and stay in the Bishangari Lodge. Go swimming or just relax and watch for the monkeys in the forest.



Suggested Itineraries

Nights stay at:	
1	Addis Ababa
2	Bahar Dar
3	
4	Gonder
5	
6	Debark
7	
8	Axum
9	
10	Lalibela
11	
12	Addis Ababa
13	
14	Langano

HISTORICAL ROUTE & LAKE LANGANO

A fifteen-day itinerary, commencing in Addis Ababa, where you will have the opportunity to visit Mercato, Africa's largest market and climb the Entoto Hills for a panoramic view of Addis. A true journey through time discovering ancient and modern Ethiopia.

Whatever time of year you visit Addis Ababa you will enjoy a spring-like climate. Even though it is near the equator this is offset by being the world's third highest capital. Modern Addis intermingles with the old and traditional - high rise buildings dominate imperial structures that, in turn, dwarf small thatched huts. Escape the bustling city and head for the lovely town of Bahar Dar on the shores of Lake Tana with its island monasteries and breathtaking Tissisat Falls. From here carry on to Gonder, north of the lake, which is bursting with castles and churches including Emperor Fasilidas' remarkable, ornate bathing pool in his castle.

Continue via Debark, the gateway to the Simien Mountains, to ancient Axum, the home of the 'Ark of the Covenant' a site of annual pilgrimage for Ethiopians. Nothing can prepare you for the wondrous rock-hewn churches at Lalibela, one of the most important religious sites in the Christian world. Finally spend two nights contemplating all you have seen by serene Lake Langano, one of the Rift Valley Lakes, surrounded by acacia woodland.

Cost per person

(based on two people travelling in a twin/double room)

FROM £1,536



Nights stay at:	
1	Addis Ababa
2	Bahar Dar
3	
4	Gonder
5	Sankaber (camp)
6	Geech (camp)
7	
8	Chenek (camp)
9	
10	Axum
11	
12	Lalibela
13	
14	Addis Ababa

HISTORICAL ROUTE & THE SIMIEN MOUNTAINS

A journey through Ethiopia taking in the best of its culture and history and the most unspoilt region of the country, the Simien Mountains. Leave behind Addis Ababa with its eclectic mix of modern high rises and imperial remains and fly to the delightful town of Bahar Dar from where you will explore Lake Tana and the nearby Tissisat Falls. Spend some time in Gonder, once an important trading town and home to a myriad of castles and churches, before entering another world - the Simien Mountains National Park.

You will be amazed at the raw beauty of the Simien Mountains, an area rich in wildlife and home to endemic mammals, such as the Simien fox and ibex. Drive to Debark, a small market town at an altitude of 2700 metres and the gateway to the mountains. Here your scout will join you before you continue onwards over the Lama River and climb the plateau to reach the Sankaber camp. Continue through stunning scenery, passing Amhara villages and across huge escarpments, from where there are amazing views over the endless plains, to Geech where you will have the opportunity to climb to the summit of Mietgogo. Walk along the edge of the escarpment, looking out for Gelada baboons, to Chenek camp.

Your disappointment at leaving the beautiful Simiens will soon be forgotten when you reach Axum with its palaces and churches, home to the Ark of the Covenant and the Queen of Sheba's bath. We leave Ethiopia's amazing rock-hewn churches to last when you arrive at Lalibela, a centre of pilgrimage for Ethiopians. Every day singing can be heard from the churches and when you enter them the air is heavy with incense. Return to Addis Ababa to visit 'Lucy' in the National Museum.

Cost per person

(based on two people travelling in a twin/double room)

FROM £1,379



Nights stay at:	
1	Addis Ababa
2	Awasa
3	Arba Minch
4	
5	Jinka
6	Mago Nat. Park
7	
8	Turmi
9	Yabello
10	
11	Wondo Genet

THE OMO & THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY

Discover an area of Ethiopia that is home to the great volcanic Rift Valley, a geographical feature that slashes Africa from the Red Sea to Mozambique. There are seven chains of lakes created by it that are habitats for a wide range of birds, indigenous animals, flowers and vegetation. Here you will also find the Omo Valley, an area which is unique as it is home to a melting pot of people, each with their own way of life.

It would be a fitting start to pay a visit to ‘Lucy’ in the National Museum, the 3-million-year old humanoid discovered in Ethiopia in 1974. Travel south into the Rift Valley, true Africa, and relax at Lake Awassa before continuing to Arba Minch, located in the foothills of the valley overlooking lakes Chamo and Abaya, in Bale Mountains National Park. From here visit one of the most beautiful game reserves, Nechisar National Park.

You are now entering a region only recently opened to visitors, the Omo Valley. Jinka is the starting point, with its spectacular Saturday and Wednesday markets, before journeying into a region where women still wear animal skins for clothing and have huge lip plates. Overnight in Mago National Park, an area of dense acacia woodland and open savannah and keep a look out for lions and baboons. Move on to Turmi, home to the Hamar people where the men have to jump cows in a traditional ceremony before they can come of age. The women wear intricate hairstyles of ochre-coloured plaits and are particularly fond of beads and bracelets. Your final destination in the Omo is Yabello, home to a semi-nomadic people. Nearby is the El Sod Crater Lake, a very deep lake famous for its black salt which is still extracted and carried out by donkey. Reluctantly leave this unique region of Ethiopia and return to Addis Ababa, spending a well deserved night in the hot springs resort of Wondo Genet.



Cost per person
(based on two people travelling in a twin/double room)

FROM £1,459

Hotel Selection

Ecoprojects

ANKOBER LODGE

Located at the top of Ankober Palace hill the lodge has spectacular scenery overlooking the Great Rift Valley that stretches from the red seas westwards and affords an admirable view of the Afar plains to the East.

BISHANGARI LODGE

The Bishangari Lodge is less than 250 km south of Addis Ababa, situated on the shores of Lake Langano. The lodge has been designed on sound environmental principles using solar power and biogas for energy. It has been constructed using natural materials and traditional techniques, without compromising on the quality and luxury of the accommodation. Bishangari is a natural retreat of outstanding beauty that combines five ecological zones:- wetlands, beach and lake, the forest, the dry pumice rocks and the acacia shrub.

A Silk Steps inclusive holiday price includes:

- Private return transfers between airports and hotels (unless otherwise specified)
- The services of English speaking guides and representatives at each stage of the tour. Between most places you will travel unescorted
- Accommodation in a standard room (shared twin) with private facilities (unless otherwise specified) with breakfast
- Government taxes and compulsory service charges
- All tours and sightseeing as specified, inclusive of entrance fees
- Economy class air travel within all countries on the scheduled services of the national or domestic carrier as specified in each tour
- The services of our local representative

Extras:

- International flights - please contact us for up-to-date prices
- Travel insurance
- Meals - unless otherwise stated
- Optional sightseeing other than specified
- International airport departure tax payable overseas
- Visa fees
- Single supplement (on request)



There is some choice of hotels in Ethiopia and those detailed below are recommendations only. We can book most hotels throughout Ethiopia, so please contact us if you would like alternative hotels.

ADDIS ABABA

Positioned in the mountainous countryside, 2,400 metres above sea level, the **Sheraton Addis** represents African elegance. The hotel stands opposite the National Palace, the hotel is renowned for impeccable service and luxurious surroundings.

The **Ghion hotel** is a first class hotel that is conveniently located within walking distance from the main attractive sights and city museums.

AXUM

The **Remhai hotel** is a modern hotel located on the outskirts of the town with its own restaurant. All rooms have private facilities with hot & cold running water.

The **Yeha hotel** is centrally located and has impressive views overlooking the stelae and the Queen of Sheba's bath.

LALIBELA

Located in Lalibela, the once populous capital city of the medieval dynasty, **Yemereha Hotel** is a perfect base for visits to the famous monolithic rock-hewn churches found in this region. This hotel boasts modern, unique and comfortable accommodation facilities and offers spectacular views of the 11 rock-hewn churches and the breathtaking scenery that surrounds it.

GONDER

The **Goha hotel's** most outstanding feature is its location. Situated at the summit of the Tigre Mechohia mountain with stunning views of Gonder with its many churches and castles. All 64 rooms are well appointed and comfortable. The hotel has a good restaurant and a pleasant terrace where drinks and meals can sometimes be taken.

BAHAR DAR

The **Tana hotel** is well located on the shores of Lake Tana with a very pleasant terrace and thickly wooded grounds, home to a rich variety of birds such as kingfisher and heron. The hotel is decorated in a traditional style and all rooms have a private bathroom.

THE OMO

Located on the bank of one of Ethiopia's greatest rivers, the **Murulle Omo Explorer's Lodge** offers an oasis of peace and calm in the wilderness of Ethiopia's deep south west. Operating year-round, the lodge can accommodate 16 guests. There are 8 bungalows, each with a private bathroom and shower.