

Ethiopia In-Depth



ETHIOPIA IN-DEPTH

ANCIENT, WILD, ALIVE

16 DAYS

STEP INTO THE HEART OF AFRICA

 **DEPARTS FROM:** **ADDIS ABABA**  **MAX GROUP SIZE:** **10 PEOPLE**  **PHYSICAL LEVEL:** **MORE ADVENTUROUS**

A land of ancient civilizations and breathtaking landscapes, this journey spans soaring highlands to the vast Rift Valley alive with wildlife. Encounter vibrant tribal cultures, wander through historic towns and villages steeped in tradition, and immerse yourself in the wild beauty of Ethiopia's mountains, lakes, and plateaus on an unforgettable adventure.



MEET YOUR HOST



Every Byroads tour is supported by an experienced Byroads Escort – a true travel professional with a genuine passion for travel and people. They take care of all the nitty-gritty details to ensure your trip runs smoothly – and you can focus on enjoying the moment.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Addis Ababa National Museum
- Holy Trinity Cathedral
- Mercato Market
- Red Terror Martyrs Museum
- Melka Kunture Archaeological Site
- Adadi Mariam Rock-Hewn Church
- Entoto Hills
- Dire Dawa Khat Market
- Harar Jugol Old Town
- Hyena Feeding Tradition
- Ziway Flower Farms
- Lake Langano
- Abijata-Shala National Park
- Shashemene Rastafarian Centre
- Sanetti Plateau
- Haremma Forest Walk
- Bale Mountains National Park
- Dorze Tribal Villages
- Chamo Lake Boat Trip
- Konso Tribal Village
- Mursi Tribe Visit
- Hamar Tribe Visit
- Key Afer Market Visit
- Ari Tribal Village & Jinka

ITINERARY

DAY 1: FRI 14 MAY 2027 - ADDIS ABABA

Arrive at Addis Ababa International Airport where you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Settle in and meet up with your group in the evening.

Ramada Addis Hotel (or similar)

DAY 2: SAT 15 MAY 2027 - CITY SIGHTSEEING ADDIS ABABA

Begin the day with a visit to the excellent National Museum of Ethiopia, where ancient artefacts and royal treasures tell the story of one of the world's oldest civilizations. Highlights include the famous fossil 'Lucy'—a fascinating link to humanity's earliest ancestors. From here, admire the elegant Holy Trinity Cathedral, with its striking stained glass and imperial tombs, offering a glimpse into Ethiopia's religious and royal heritage. Inside the cathedral is the tomb of Haile Selassie I who was the Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974, known for modernizing the country and promoting African unity. Later, dive into the vibrant chaos of the Mercato, a sprawling marketplace alive with colour, sounds and the hum of daily life—an unfiltered look at contemporary Addis Ababa. The day concludes at the Red Terror Martyrs Memorial Museum, a sobering yet essential stop that adds powerful context to the country's recent past and its journey forward. In the evening join in for a vibrant cultural performance and traditional Ethiopian feast. (BD)

Ramada Addis Hotel (or similar)

DAY 3: SUN 16 MAY 2027 - ADADI MARIAM - MELKAKONRIE - ADDIS ABABA

After breakfast, journey south through the rolling countryside to Melka Kunture, a key prehistoric site overlooking the Awash River Gorge. This significant archaeological location has yielded numerous Stone Age tools and offers a fascinating glimpse into Ethiopia's earliest human history. Continue to the remarkable 12th-century rock-hewn church of Adadi Mariam, believed by tradition to have been built under the orders of King Lalibela himself. Though damaged in the 16th century and later abandoned, it was restored during the reign of Menelik II and remains an active place of worship today. On the return to Addis Ababa, ascend into the forested Entoto Hills for panoramic views across the city. Before the day ends, visit the Hadero Coffee Company to witness the full journey from bean to brew, then savour a tasting of rich, authentic Ethiopian coffee—grown, roasted and brewed at the source. (B)

Ramada Addis Hotel (or similar)

DAY 4: MON 17 MAY 2027 - DIRE DAWA - AWEDAY MARKET - HARAR

This morning, fly east from Addis Ababa to Dire Dawa, gateway to Ethiopia's far eastern highlands. From here, travel overland to Harar, pausing en route to visit one of the region's lively khat markets—where bundles of freshly harvested stimulant leaves are traded with fervent energy. Arrive in Harar in time for lunch, before heading out to explore the narrow alleyways and colourful homes of this ancient walled city, considered the fourth holiest city in Islam and a centre of cultural exchange for centuries. As evening descends, gather to witness one of Ethiopia's most unique and unforgettable traditions: the nightly feeding of the wild hyenas just outside the ancient city walls. (B)

Ferej Hotel Harar (or similar)

DAY 5: TUE 18 MAY 2027 - HARAR - DIRE DAWA - ZIWAY - LAKE LANGANO

After breakfast, travel back to Dire Dawa for your return flight to Addis Ababa. On arrival, rejoin your 4x4 vehicles and begin the journey south through Ethiopia's dramatic Rift Valley. En route, stop near Ziway to visit one of the world's largest flower farms, a vibrant and unexpected oasis of colour in the heart of the region. From here, continue to Lake Langano, a tranquil retreat known for its scenic setting. Arrive in time to relax and enjoy the peaceful lakeside atmosphere before settling in for the night. (B).

Marina Beach Resort Lake Lagano (or similar)

DAY 6: WED 19 MAY 2027 - ABIJATA SHALA N.P. - SHASHEMENE - BALE MOUNTAINS LODGE

Begin the day with a guided walk through Abijata-Shala National Park, where you may encounter ostriches, Grant's gazelles, warthogs and a wide range of birdlife. From here, continue south to Shashemene, a town steeped in Rastafarian culture and spiritual heritage. Visit a local Rasta centre to gain insight into this global movement that found a spiritual home in Ethiopia.

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The journey then climbs across the dramatic Sanetti Plateau—one of Africa's highest road-accessible landscapes—where sweeping views and possible wildlife sightings make for a stunning drive. Arrive at Bale Mountains Lodge, nestled deep in the Harennna Forest, where you'll enjoy a two-night stay immersed in nature. (BD)

Bale Mountain Lodge (or similar)

DAY 7: THU 20 MAY 2027 - SANETTI PLATEAU - HARENNNA FOREST WALK - BALE MOUNTAINS LODGE

Set out for a full day on the extraordinary Sanetti Plateau, a high-altitude Afro-Alpine landscape at over 4,000 metres. With its otherworldly flora—including towering Giant Lobelias and vivid Red Hot Pokers—this is the best place in Ethiopia to spot the endangered Simien wolf, the rarest wild canid on earth. The plateau teems with life, including giant mole rats and a variety of birds of prey. Keep an eye out for the elegant Wattled Crane and the endemic Spot-breasted Plover. Continue to windswept Tullu Dimtu, Ethiopia's second-highest peak at 4,377 metres, before returning to the lush Harennna Forest. Here, enjoy more birding and wildlife opportunities around the lodge, where you may encounter olive baboons, Guereza monkeys, bushbuck, and if lucky, glimpses of elusive creatures like leopards, wild dogs or even lions. (BLD)

Bale Mountain Lodge (or similar)

MAY 8: FRI 21 MAY 2027 - BALE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK - DINSHO - HAWASSA

Leave Bale Mountains Lodge and return across the breathtaking Sanetti Plateau, descending toward the Dinsho area—home to the headquarters of the Bale Mountains National Park. This scenic region, inhabited by the Oromo people, offers some of the best opportunities to spot Ethiopia's rare and endemic wildlife. Keep watch for Menelik's Bushbuck, the elegant Mountain Nyala, and, with luck, the elusive Simien Fox. Bird enthusiasts will delight in sightings of the Blue-winged Goose, Spot-breasted Lapwing, Abyssinian Longclaw, Wattled Ibis, and Rouget's Rail, among many others. The area also supports a healthy population of mammals such as warthogs, bohor reedbuck, and Guereza monkeys. further on is the lakeside city of Hawassa, arriving in time to relax before dinner. (BL)

Haile Resort Hawassa (or similar)

DAY 9: SAT 22 MAY 2027 - AMORA GEDEL MARKET - SODO - ARBA MINCH

After breakfast, visit the serene shores of Lake Awassa, a picturesque freshwater lake framed by lush vegetation and rolling hills. Stop at Amora Gedel, the bustling local fish market, where fishermen unload their daily catch and large flocks of pelicans and storks gather, unbothered by their human companions. Take a leisurely walk through the nearby park where the striking black-and-white colobus monkeys swing through the treetops, and soak in the rich birdlife that makes this region a paradise for nature lovers. Afterward, drive southward, stopping for lunch in Soddo, before continuing on to Arba Minch, where you'll settle in for a two-night stay. (B)

Haile Resort Arba Minch (or similar)

DAY 10: SUN 23 MAY 2027 - LAKE CHAMO - DORZE ETHNIC VILLAGE - ARBA MINCH

After breakfast, set out on a memorable boat trip across Lake Chamo—one of the highlights of Nechisar National Park. Glide across the water as you enjoy close-up sightings of hippos wallowing in the shallows and Nile crocodiles basking along the shoreline, some of the largest in Africa. In the afternoon, travel to the highland village of Chenchu, home of the Dorze people, famed for their intricate cotton weaving and distinctive beehive-shaped houses. These towering structures are crafted from bamboo and enset leaves, and reflect one of Africa's most iconic traditional architectural styles. Spend time browsing the colourful local market, where you can admire (or purchase) beautifully woven garments, including the prized Shama cloth—used for Gabbi robes and brightly patterned Netelas. It's a vibrant, sensory journey into the heart of Ethiopian highland culture. (B)

Haile Resort Arba Minch (or similar)

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DAY 11: MON 24 MAY 2027 - KONSO ETHNIC VILLAGE - KONSO

This morning, travel south to the striking hills of Konso, where a local guide leads you on a walk through one of the region's traditional hillside villages. The Konso people are renowned for their skillfully terraced farmland—now UNESCO World Heritage-listed—and their vibrant culture, which includes the carving of grave totems (known as waka) and the production of fine handwoven textiles. Wander through the winding stone-lined paths of a kanta (fortified village), where communal pavilions known as mora serve as centres for learning and protection. Learn how the young men sleep here at night, maintaining long-standing customs of community life and guardianship. As you explore, you'll encounter the verdant moringa trees, neatly tended fields, and glimpses of Konso daily life, from cotton weaving to cattle herding. This enriching cultural experience concludes with an overnight stay in a lovely lodge offering expansive views over the Southern Rift Valley. (B)

Kanta Lodge Konso (or similar)

DAY 12: TUE 25 MAY 2027 - HAMER ETHNIC VILLAGE - TURMI

Continue the journey south to the remote town of Turmi, close to the Kenyan border and a vibrant centre of Hamer culture. Spend time in a traditional Hamer village, where the people are known for their distinctive appearance and rich traditions. Both men and women take great pride in personal adornment—colouring and styling their hair with ochre and clay, oiling their bodies, and wearing intricate beaded jewellery and metal bracelets. The Hamer are especially famed for their moonlight Evangedi dances and the spectacular bull-jumping ceremony—a dramatic rite of passage where young men leap across a row of bulls to mark their transition into adulthood. (B)

During our two-night stay, we'll enquire locally about the possibility of attending one of these rare and culturally significant events. With luck, we may be in the right place at the right time to witness this unforgettable tradition. (B)

Buskar Lodge Turmi (or similar)

DAY 13: WED 26 MAY 2027 - KORCHO - KARO ETHNIC VILLAGE - TURMI

Following an early breakfast, set off across wide savannah and acacia-dotted landscapes en route to the village of Korcho, dramatically set above the Omo River. This is home to the Karo people, masters of body painting. Using white clay and natural pigments, they transform themselves into living artworks with striking designs applied to their faces, arms, and torsos—purely for aesthetic expression and personal creativity. Their unique hairstyles, often sculpted and adorned with ochre and ostrich feathers, add to their bold visual identity, especially in preparation for dances and festive gatherings. After this immersive cultural encounter, return to Turmi with time to explore the bustling local market—an excellent opportunity to observe daily life, interact with local tribespeople, and browse traditional handicrafts. (B)

Buskar Lodge Turmi (or similar)

DAY 14: THU 27 MAY 2027 - KEY AFER - ARI ETHNIC VILLAGE - JINKA

After breakfast, set off for Jinka with a special stop at the bustling Thursday market in Key Afer—one of the most vibrant and culturally rich markets in the Omo Valley. Here, members of the Hamer, Bena, and Tsemai tribes converge to trade everything from vegetables and honey to jewellery and livestock. Women wear beaded skirts and elaborate hairstyles coated in red clay and butter, while men don feathers and beads in carefully styled plaits. It's a sensory feast of colour, rhythm and tradition. Continuing on to Jinka, you'll arrive in the homeland of the Ari people—considered one of the most culturally and economically prominent groups in the region. With a local Ari guide, explore the villages and learn about their clan-based society, traditional house paintings (known as bartsi), and local crafts. See how they brew a traditional sorghum-based liquor and produce pottery using age-old techniques. Warm and welcoming, the Ari offer visitors an authentic and engaging look into daily life in southern Ethiopia. (B)

Eco Omo Lodge Jinka (or similar)

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DAY 15: FRI 28 MAY 2027 - ADDIS ABABA

This morning, take a mid-morning flight back to Addis Ababa. For those keen to enjoy some final shopping before the journey home, there's time to visit one of the city's most beautiful art galleries—an inspiring space showcasing contemporary Ethiopian creativity. You'll also stop at a large and well-stocked souvenir emporium, the perfect place to pick up locally made crafts, textiles, jewellery, and keepsakes to remember your time in Ethiopia. It's a relaxed and enjoyable way to round off your journey. (B)

Ramada Addis Hotel (or similar)

DAY 16: SAT 29 MAY 2027 - ADDIS ABABA

Your unforgettable Ethiopian adventure comes to a close after breakfast this morning. Airport transfers are available and can be booked through Byroads. (B)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

GUIDES

- ✓ Byroads tour host and national and local guides

TRANSPORT

- ✓ Arrival transfer, domestic flight Addis-Dire Dawa-Addis and Jinka-Addis, private airconditioned Landcruiser, airconditioned mini-coach.

ACCOMMODATION

- ✓ 15 nights (3 to 4-star hotel average)

MEALS

- ✓ Breakfasts throughout, 1 cultural dinner and show in Addis, 2 dinners and 2 boxed lunches

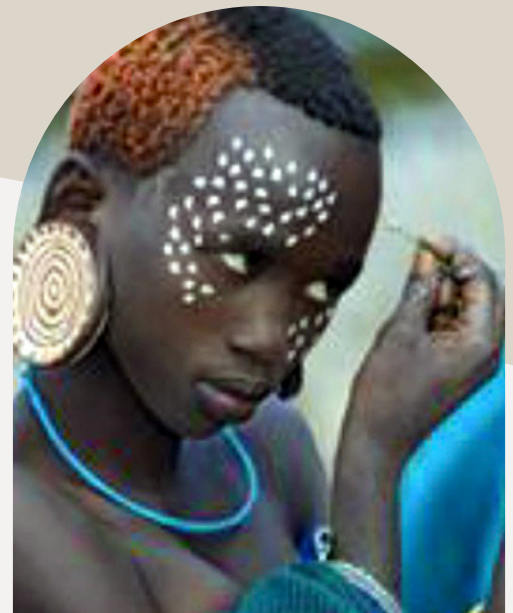
TICKETS

- ✓ Entrance fees to indicated sites

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

We'd love to do it all for you. But there are a few things you'll need to arrange yourself. This includes your:

- Visa
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Departure transfer
- International flights
- Additional meals and drinks
- Cash for tipping kitty
- Optional tours
- Spending of a personal nature
- Laundry



GETTING THERE: FLIGHTS AND TRANSFERS

You can book your flights online or via your travel agent.

Emirates, Qatar, and Etihad Airlines have connections to Addis Ababa through the Gulf. Qantas and Thai Airways have connections with Ethiopian Airlines through Singapore and Bangkok respectively.

Your arrival transfer is included however, your departure transfer is not. We can organise a departure transfer on request.

ACCOMMODATION

Byroads accommodation is a destination unto itself. We choose our hotels carefully to ensure a seamless transition from your day exploring to a night of relaxation. Think traditional architecture blended with modern comforts – and plenty of views.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:



Bale Mountains Lodge

An eco-friendly lodge nestled in the pristine Haremma forest. Offering cottages with private terraces, it provides a comfortable base for exploring the park's diverse ecosystems and unique wildlife.



Haile Resort Arba Minch

This lakeside getaway is perched high overlooking the Rift Valley and Lakes Abaya and Chamo. It offers breathtaking views. The resort features elegant rooms, a spa, outdoor pool and excellent dining.



Kanta Lodge Konso

Kanta offers a tranquil retreat and panoramic views of the region's iconic terraced landscapes. It features traditional round tukuls with en-suite bathrooms and a serene garden setting.

THE FINER DETAILS

DATES AND PRICES

DATE	TWIN SHARE	SINGLE SUPPLEMENT	DOMESTIC FLIGHTS If arriving in Ethiopia with Ethiopian Airlines	DOMESTIC FLIGHTS If arriving in Ethiopia with all other Airlines
14 May 2027	*6375 USD	*370 USD	**350 USD	**500 USD

* Provisional 2027 Price

** Domestic flight prices are approximate and subject to change by the airline.

Due to the volatility of international currencies, trip fees are calculated in US Dollars. However, you will be charged in Australian dollars. Currency conversion is based on Westpac Banking Corporation's buying rate on your balance due date.

Additional expenses

Tipping is customary, so please allow extra funds for the tipping kitty. This will pay your local and national guides, drivers and porters.

MEALS

Breakfast is included daily. An additional 3 dinners and 2 boxed lunches are also included. Elsewhere, you can enjoy a variety of local food on offer. Meals typically cost between 8-10 USD for lunch and 15-20 USD for dinner. Bottled water is provided free in the vehicles.

DOCUMENTATION

Once we've received your final payment, we'll post you a comprehensive field guide. It's a physical document you can keep handy to inform your travels. It also includes all relevant tour and accommodation information you need to book your visa.

VISAS

Visas are currently required for most nationalities, including Australians and New Zealanders. These can be applied for on-line.

Other nationalities should check with Byroads.

READY TO PACK YOUR BAGS?



BOOK ONLINE NOW
(available 24/7)

Or visit: www.byroads.com.au/portfolio_page/byroads-booking-form/



Got questions? Contact us at travel@byroads.com.au