



St Matthew's Children's Fund 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. It is a land of wonder and enchantment, a country with one of the richest histories on the African continent, a land of contrasts and surprises, remote wild places and home to cultured and friendly people descended from some of the world's oldest civilisations.

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.



ITINERARY 12 November – 27 November 2010

= up to 1 hour walking



= up to 2 hours walking



= uneven surfaces

Friday**12 November Flight from London Heathrow to Addis Ababa Bole Airport**

ET701 departing at 2100 and arriving into Addis Ababa at 0650 (the next day).

Depart from London Heathrow Terminal 3

Flight time: 7 hours 50 minutes

Saturday**13 November Arrive Addis Ababa**

On arrival into Addis Ababa, after collecting your luggage and clearing customs, a representative from Silk Steps will meet you. He/she will be holding a sign with your name on and will take you to the Ghion Hotel.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Located in the heart of the country at an altitude of 2,300 metres, Addis Ababa is one of the world's highest capital cities. The city is a century old and is clothed in an endless sea of Eucalyptus, which flourishes in the rains, which fall between June and September.

Addis Ababa has a very laid back feel to it, with the many Italian coffee shops a reminder of its colonial past.

**Sunday****14 November In Addis**

Visits in Addis Ababa, and an introduction to the work of churches and development organisations. Visits to include St Matthews Anglican Chaplaincy at Arat Kilo; Holy Trinity Cathedral and Theological College and the Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organisation (JeCCDO) head office.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**Monday****15 November Addis Ababa to Bahar Dar by air**

Finish off your visits in Addis Ababa before transferring to the airport to connect with your flight to Bahar Dar.

ET140 departing at 2030 and arriving into Bahar Dar at 2115.

On arrival, transfer to the Tana Hotel for two nights.

**Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Located on the shores of Lake Tana and where Haile Selassie's one time residence is located. Approximately 20 miles south of Bahar Dar is Ethiopia's greatest natural wonder - the Tississat Falls, also known as the Blue Nile Falls. Although the drop is not so great, the three cataracts stretch across half a mile. You can also travel by boat on Lake Tana, visiting the Zegie Peninsula and some of its churches, containing valuable manuscripts and religious treasures.

Tuesday

16 November In Bahar Dar

Full day tour of Bahar Dar which includes a visit to the Blue Nile Falls and a boat trip on Lake Tana to visit the monasteries. Visit the JeCCDO projects.

The walk to the Blue Nile Falls, not far from the source of the mighty Blue Nile River, is a moderately strenuous one. The vehicle stops about forty-five minutes from the actual falls and from here you will walk down a small ravine, across the Portuguese Bridge and up to the Blue Nile Falls - fairly strenuous but not unbearable.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Wednesday**17 November Bahar Dar to Gondar by road – journey time between 3 and 4 hours**

Drive to Gondar and check in to hotel for two nights – the Goha.

Afternoon tour of Gondar to include the church of Debra Birhan Selassie and the castles.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Gondar was once the capital of Ethiopia and was a city of great importance as witnessed by its many historic remains. Gondar sits in a broad valley at 2175m altitude and today is a lively town that makes for a fascinating place to stroll around, taking in the markets and sights. As with other places in Ethiopia the people are extremely friendly here and you receive a lot of attention as you walk through the town. Located on the high plateau just north of Lake Tana, the town of Gondar was the imperial capital of Ethiopia for 200 years. You will be able to see its most famous monument, the well-preserved 17th century castle of King Fasilidas and his remarkable baths, which is a mile outside of the town and known as the ‘pavilion of delight’. They were built with the assistance of Portuguese engineers but are influenced by the palaces of Arabia.

**Thursday****18 November In Gondar**

Sightseeing tour of Gondar. Also a possible visit to meet the clergy and theological students at the church of Fit Abo (Gebre Manfus Qiddus) and be introduced to some of the church traditions.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Friday**19 November Gondar to Lalibela by air**

ET122 departing at 0910 and arriving into Lalibela at 0940.

On arrival, transfer to the Jerusalem Guest House for two nights. Afternoon sightseeing tour of Lalibela to visit the churches.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Lalibela, the 'New Jerusalem', is thought to have been constructed some 800 years ago by King Lalibela as his capital. Today it is a small village, virtually cut off from the outside world. The 11 rock-hewn churches stand in two main groups on either side of a stream, known as 'Jordan' by the local villagers. There are several more isolated churches in the mountains around Lalibela that are reached by steep paths. It takes 2 hours by mule to reach one of these churches, Acheton Mariam, and from here you have stunning views of Lalibela.

**Saturday****20 November In Lalibela**

Continue sightseeing of the churches and then go on a mountain hike to the rock-hewn church of Acheton Mariam. The walk up to the church is quite strenuous and would require a good level of fitness.

Yemrehanna Kristos is an alternative to Asheton Marian and is easily accessible by vehicle with a short walk to the church.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

**Sunday****21 November Lalibela to Axum by air.**

ET122 departing at 1000 and arriving into Axum at 1040. On arrival, transfer to the Yeha Hotel for 2 nights.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Axum featured in The Periplus in AD 109, a Greek guide to the Red Sea kingdoms (was this the first tourist guide book?). Axum lies close to the Eritrean border and it is here that the Queen of Sheba made her capital. It is said that in the church of St Mary of Zion the Ark of the Covenant resides.

All over the city are relics of a glorious past; the Queen of Sheba's bath, royal palaces and the amazing monolithic stelae. Now lying broken on the ground is the largest, some 500 tonnes, which once stood 33 metres high. The city of Axum was destroyed in a rebellion by Queen Yodit during which she curtailed the Solomonic line by slaughtering all the royal princes.

Monday**22 November In Axum**

Excursion to Yeha – road journey takes approximately 2 hours.

By way of a beautiful panoramic road, we drive to Yeha, where we visit the Temple of the Moon (dating from pre-Christian times). A little further along the road we find the monastery of Debre Damo, the oldest church in Ethiopia (dating from the Axumite epoch). Only men are allowed to visit the church and it is necessary to climb up to it with the aid of a rope. Later we will return to Axum.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Tuesday**23 November Flight to Addis Ababa**

ET129 departing at 0840 and arriving into Addis Ababa at 0955.

On arrival travel from Addis Ababa to Hawassa, the journey takes approximately 4 hours (156kms). On arrival, check into the Pinna Hotel for one night.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

The town of Hawasa is an interesting attraction in its own right, with a bustling and attractive market, which provides more than a glimpse into the flavour of the life and commerce of the region. The Sidama people who inhabit this region play a major role in Ethiopia's coffee export trade, but they are especially known for their beautiful beehive-shaped, woven houses, which are constructed out of bamboo, which serves as the framework and is then covered with grass and enset (false banana) leaves as the rainy season approaches.

Wednesday**24 November Hawassa to Wondo Genet for two nights**

Visit the JeCCDO projects in Hawassa before driving onwards to Wondo Genet.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Located in the forested hills near Wosha, this hot springs resort is renowned for its natural beauty and attraction for hikers. The hills behind the resort itself are covered in Juniper and are home to a wide variety of colourful birds as well as guereza monkeys, anubis baboons and bushbuck. The hot springs themselves are said to have curative properties and the former Emperor Haile Selassie was so impressed by the area, he built a private lodge here.

Thursday**25 November In Wondo Genet**

Day at leisure to explore this beautiful area.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Friday**26 November Wondo Genet to Addis Ababa by road**

Return to Addis Ababa by road with the rest of the day at leisure for shopping in the numerous stalls of the Mercato, the largest market in Africa.

Farewell dinner in Addis before transferring to the airport for the London flight.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Saturday**27 November Addis Ababa to London Heathrow by air**

ET710 departing at 0005 and arriving into London Heathrow at 0655 (the same day).

Cost per person £2184.00

Single room supplement £230.00

Accommodation

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Ghion Hotel | Addis Ababa |
| Tana Hotel | Bahar Dar |
| Goha Hotel | Gondar |
| Jerusalem Guesthouse | Lalibela |
| Yeha Hotel | Axum |
| Pinna Hotel | Hawassa |
| Wabishebele Resort Hotel | Wondo Genet |

What's included:-

* Economy class flights to and from Ethiopia using the scheduled services of Ethiopian Airlines. Once issued, flight tickets are restricted for use only on the dates specified in the itinerary and are non-refundable.

Please note that airlines are required by new laws introduced in the US and other countries to give border control agencies access to passenger data. Accordingly any information we hold about you and your travel arrangements may be disclosed to the customs and immigration authorities of any country in your itinerary.

* Hotel accommodation as detailed on a twin share basis

* All meals

* All transfers and city tours, including boat trip on Lake Tana

* Ground transportation

* Services of local English-speaking guides

* All entrance fees

Extras:-

* Travel Insurance. A good travel insurance that covers lost luggage, money and valuables, personal liability, medical and cancellation expenses is essential. You can obtain our recommended travel insurance through our website www.silksteps.co.uk and follow the link through to Holiday Extras.

* Cost of visas.

Please note visitors to Ethiopia will need a valid visa. On booking the tour Silk Steps will supply relevant visa application forms to procure the Ethiopian Visa. Current cost £18 for a visa valid for 3 months.

* Any expenses of a personal nature, such as drinks, telephone calls, laundry, camera/video camera fees, gratuities, meals (other than specified) etc.

NOTES

This is a busy trip and requires a certain level of fitness and agility, especially due to the heat and altitude. There are a few walks that are not difficult, such as the Tississat Falls. The harder walk and mule ride in Lalibela is optional. When visiting the rock-hewn churches in Lalibela, clients have to walk on uneven ground and climb steps that can be slippery.

You should never forget that you are travelling in one of the world's poorest countries. Water and electricity can be erratic and hotels usually have set times when hot water is available.

Clients with heart problems and respiratory problems should consult their doctor. Please leave behind your western comforts and bring with you a sense of adventure, humour and flexibility for a trip of a lifetime!

