



Title: Combined Historic North and Omo Valley Ethiopia

Transportation: Drive

Duration: 17 Days/16 Nights

Highlights: History, Churches, National Park, Cultures, People, Lakes, and more

TOUR OVERVIEW

Nature, History, Religion, Culture and so much more are included in the historic route of the package whereas authentic cultural attributions are seen in the Omo Valley version of this tour. The tour begins at the capital where you will visit most important museums, open air market, beautifully designed cathedrals etc. On the second day, there'll be a drive to Bahir Dar, a destination attractive for its island monasteries found on Lake Tana and the Blue Nile Falls. Gondar is the next city on your historical trip to North Ethiopia. The Royal enclosure and Debre Berhan Selassie church will be visited on the same day during your drive from Bahir Dar. Hundred and half kilometers from Gondar is Simien Mountains National Park. You will have a highlighted visit to this Park. Drive back to Debarq for overnight. Drive to Axum on day 6, and the city tour will be one the next day. The city has attractions like St. Mary Zion Church, the last residence of the ark of the Covenant, North Stelae Field and ruins of ancient palaces. Proceed to Mekele on the same day. Final Destination of the north circuit is Lalibela, the home of the rock hewn churches. It commonly takes 2 days to drive back to Addis Ababa from Lalibela. You will have en route overnight in Dessie. On Day 11, you will have a return drive to Addis Ababa. Day 12 is going to be the longest drive(nearly 550 km from the capital). On this day, you will have en route stops at Alaba Village. The next day is arranged for a boat trip in the morning and drive to Jinka in the afternoon. The morning is spent for a boat trip on Lake Chamo. The lake is good for encountering Crocodiles and hippos. You may also attend a market at key afer(Thursdays) on the way. A day excursion to Mago National Park enables you to visit

the Mursi tribe whose women are famous for their lip plates. On the same day afternoon, you will travel to Turmi so as to visit the Bena tribes. Just like most of the indigenous tribes in the lower Omo Valley, the Bena practice ritual dancing and singing. The men often have their hair dressed up with a colorful clay cap that is decorated with feathers. Both the men and women wear long garments and paint their bodies with white chalk. Today, you will cross the Omo River and visit dassanech tribes. During a ceremony, the Dassanech men dance with large sticks and the women hold wooden batons. A dassanech man blesses his daughter's fertility and future marriage by celebrating the Dimi. During the Dimi 10 to 30 cattle are slaughtered. Both men and women wear fur capes while they feast and dance. Your arrival in Addis Ababa will be late in the evening. You will proceed to the airport for departure after the farewell dinner.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrivals at Addis Ababa airport, Met by our staff transfer to Hotel

After breakfast, drive to visit the National Museum, where you see the famous fossil Lucy, who is 3.2 million years old; visit the Ethnographic Museum, visit Entoto St. Mary Museum, St. Trinity Cathedral church, and Merkato market, the largest open-air market in Africa.

SIGHTSEEING

- **The National Museum of Ethiopia**
- **Holy Trinity Cathedral**
- **Ethnographic Museum of Ethiopia**
- **Merkato Open Air Market**

Overnight Stay at Swiss Inn Nexus Hotel or Similar, Addis Ababa.

Day 2: Drive to Bahir Dar

Early in the morning, drive to Bahir Dar, en-route visit Blue-Nile Gorge and Debre Libanos monastery. If you think the Grand Canyon is impressive, compare it to its African cousin – the Blue Nile Gorge. Situated 210 km north of Addis Ababa and being about one mile wide and deep, the Blue Nile Gorge is one of the most spectacular gorges in the world. After 100 km drive on the way lays the renowned monastery of Debre Libanos, founded in the 13th

century in a magnificent 700m-deep canyon.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Blue Nile Gorge**
- **Debre Libanos Monastery**

Overnight Stay at Jacaranda Hotel or Similar, Bahir Dar.

Day 3: Bahir Dar boat trip and drive to Blue Nile Falls

Have a boat trip on Lake Tana. On Lake Tana, there are 37 islands and 32 of them having churches and monasteries of considerable historical and cultural interest. We visit the monastery church of Ura Kidane Mihret, which is the best known of the monasteries and has an important collection of religious icons from the 16th to 18th centuries A.D.

In the afternoon drive to the Blue Nile Falls, this is known locally as Tissisat (smoking waterfall): 100 m (328 ft) wide, the water plunges for 45m, giving rise to steam clouds and rainbows. Early in the afternoon drive back to Bahir Dar and finish the day with a lovely sunset over Lake Tana.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Lake Tana and its island monasteries**
- **Blue Nile Gorge**

Overnight Stay at Jacaranda Hotel or Similar, Bahir Dar.

Day 4: Drive to Gondar

After lunch we will visit Gondar, the first capital city with the reign of Fasilides. In Gondar, there are a dozen castles built by various emperors over the course of 236 years. The city seems more of European than African origin. In the afternoon, we visit Fasiladas' Palace, probably the most impressive of all the castles found in the area and the oldest one! We continue going to the Church of Debre Berhan Selassie (Light of the Trinity). The interior is decorated with beautiful frescos, cherubs and paintings. Debre Berhan Selassie is rumored to once having been the proposed final resting-place of the Ark of the Covenant of the Ethiopian Empire, which began in 1632 .

SIGHTSEEING

- **Royal Enclosure of Gondar**
- **Debre Birhan Selassie Church**

Overnight stay at Goha Hotel or similar, Gondar

Day 5: In the morning Drive to Simien Mountains and late afternoon drive back to Debarik

After breakfast drive to Simien Mountain National Park. Debarik is a small market town at an altitude of 2700 meters close to the boundary of the Simien Mountains National Park. Corrugated-iron-roofed buildings surround the colourful and busy market area. Before entering the park, you have to register at the park headquarters just outside town. Here, armed scout – one of the park regulations, joins you. Then drive to Sankaber for the best view. En route, pass through pretty country, the foothills of the Semen Mountains, with carefully tended field, open pasture with grazing horses, stands of trees and distant rocky peaks. At the high point of the road, there are superb views across the weirdly eroded foothills of the range and you may also be lucky enough to spot your first Lammergeiers and Gelada Baboons of the trip.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Stunning Landscapes**
- **Wildlife and Local Lifestyle**

Overnight stay at Ras Dashen Hotel or similar, Debarik. **Extra USD 237(Single) and USD 115.00(Shared) per person to upgrade to Simien Lodge.**

Day 6: Drive to Axum

Here you will enjoy driving across Simien Mountain National Park and the fascinating river basin of Tekeze, one of the biggest rivers in Ethiopia.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Lima Lima zig zag Road**
- **Tekeze River**
- **Axum Stelae Field**

Overnight stay at Sabeen International Hotel or similar, Axum

Day 7: Axum and Debre Damo Monastery and Proceed driving to Mekele

After breakfast in Axum, you will have a city tour in the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Legends narrate in the Kebra Nagast (Book of Kings) how the city of Axum as early as the 10th century B.C. was already the city where the Queen of Sheba resided. It is told that the son of Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, Menelik, brought the Ark of the Covenant from Jerusalem to Axum and it remained there to this day, preserved in a sanctuary. Famous

long before the time of Christ, Axum was the capital of the long Axumite reign, one of the oldest African empires and represented a crucial trade connecting-point between Africa and Asia for almost a thousand years. Visit the Granite stone Stele of Axum, the Tombs of King Kaleb and his son King G/Meskel, the Ezana's stone inscriptions, Queen of Sheba's palace and Swimming pool, and the Church of Zion, the final resting place of the True Ark of the Covenant. Proceed driving to Mekele for an overnight.

SIGHTSEEING

- **St. Mary Zion Church**
- **Wukro Cherkos**

Overnight stay at Planet International Hotel or similar, Mekele

Day 8: Drive to Lalibela

A long but beautiful drive takes us to the highlight of your visit to Ethiopia. If the day goes smoothly we might have time to visit Yemrehanna Kristos church en route.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Yimrhane Kirstos Church**
- **Some small towns on the way**

Overnight at Panoramic View Hotel or Similar, Lalibela

Day 9: Exploring Lalibela

The Rock-Hewn Ethiopian orthodox Christian churches of Lalibela, are one of the eighth wonder of the world. It's a collection of churches, some connected by fascinating internal channels, with hermit holes where people lived and died. The connecting walls are full of religious symbols.

The city contains 11 monolithic churches that were built in the 12th century. Some are beautifully painted inside. Visit the first and the third group of churches, they include seven rock churches. After lunch visit the second group of four rock churches.

After dinner, you will visit cultural houses and be entertained with Ethiopian traditional music and you can taste Ethiopian honey vine.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Bet Medhane Alem(House of the world savior)-The largest monolithic church on the earth**
- **Bet Giyorgis(House of St. George)-Known for its unique architecture.**
- **Nine More rock hewn churches**

Overnight at Panoramic View Hotel or Similar, Lalibela

Day 10: Drive to Dessie

After a relaxed breakfast, you will drive to Dessie. On the way, you will see small towns of South Wollo and Lake Hike and its island monastery.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Small Towns on the way**
- **Lake Hyke and its island monastery**

Overnight stay at Sky Gate Hotel or similar, Dessie

Day 11: Drive to Addis Ababa

Today return drive to the capital city departs in the morning after breakfast. On the way, you will visit towns known for fruit production. You will be arriving late afternoon in Addis Ababa.

SIGHTSEEING

- **Towns of North Shewa**
- **Fruit Production farms**

Overnight stay at Swiss Inn Nexus Hotel or similar, Addis Ababa

Day 12: Drive to Arba Minch, on the way visit Alaba village

On the way, you will have the chance to visit some Rift Valley lakes and Alaba Village.

THINGS TO DO

- **Rift Valley Lakes**

Overnight stay at Haile resort or similar, Arba Minch

Day 13: Excursion to Lake Chamo and drive to Jinka

In the morning; Make a boat trip on Lake Chamo to see crocodiles, hippos and water birds.

On the way visit the Konso small town, where the people wear colorful costumes, and use their steep land through impressive terracing; through annual wooden grave marks, they express their status. Their three-story community house called Mora is impressive; all the young boys above 12 years old stay there every night inside till they marry. - Have lunch in Weyto and continue driving to the town of Jinka.

THINGS TO DO

- Lake Chamo
- Konso

Overnight stay at Eco Omo Lodge or similar, Jinka.

Day 14: Excursion to Mago Park to visit the Mursi Tribe

Drive to Mago National Park to visit the Mursi people in their village. The Mursi are well known for the large clay discs their women wear inserted in their lower split lip. The Mursi women start cutting their lips between the age of 12 and 16 and thereafter, they put small wooden plugs into the hole and change it every night with the bigger one to stretch the lips till it can hold a 6 inch (15cm) round clay disc. The Mursi men wear very little, although a cotton wrap is becoming more common now. Then, drive to Turmi for overnight.

THINGS TO DO

- Mago National Park
- Mursi Tribe

Overnight stay at Paradise Lodge or similar, Turmi.

Day 15: Exploring the Dassanech and Hammer Tribes

First time, in the Omo Valley, travelers witness Ethiopia's many ethnicities and cultural traditions. The Southern Cultural Route takes travelers to the heart of the most remote tribes, whose animist beliefs strike a chord with the true African experience.

In the afternoon drive to Hammer people who have a bull jumping ceremony; This ceremony is a transformation for young boys from young to adulthood; During the ceremony, you see the real Hamar traditional dance called Evangadi, and also the women from the jumper's family are being beaten by his friends to show their love to the jumper and that he is ready for adulthood.

THINGS TO DO

- Dassanech tribes

- **Hamar tribes**

Overnight stay at Buska Lodge or similar, Turmi

Day 16: Drive back to Arba Minch

After a hearty breakfast at your lodge, you will drive back to Arba Minch. You may also have the chance to see local markets en route.

Overnight stay at Haile Resort or similar, Arba Minch

Day 17: Drive back to Addis and Departure

Depending on your interest and time availability visit the local gift and traditional cloth shops. The tour ends with a transfer to Bole International Airport.

END OF TOUR!

QUOTATION DISPLAY

NET RATE PER PERSON IN USD									
GROUP SIZE	1 PAX	2-3 PAX	4-5 PAX	6-7 PAX	8-9 PAX	10-11 PAX	12-13 PAX	14-15 PAX	16-17 PAX
Bed and Breakfast Basis	5862	3421	2523	2117	2009	1932	1828	1795	1734
Full Board Basis	6423	3982	3084	2678	2570	2493	2389	2356	2295

INCLUDED:

- 16 Nights Hotel Accommodation on a Shared Room Extra **USD 285.00 per person** for Single Room Supplement);
- 10 Breakfasts at your hotels;
- From and To Airport Transfers;
- Private Land Transport by an air-conditioned Minivan(1-7 Pax) and Bus(8-18 pax);
- 2 Liters of Water/day;
- All meals from lunch day 1 to dinner day 17 (**optional**);
- Private English Speaking guide throughout the trip;
- Applicable Local Guides;
- Boat Transfers on Lake Tana;
- Porter Fees;
- All Tour Fees;
- Service Charge;
- Tax Inclusive.



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NOT INCLUDED:

- Day Use on the last day in Addis Ababa;
- FOC Leader;
- International Airfare;
- All lunches and dinners;
- Alcoholic Expenses;
- Any Photography and Video fees;
- Tips for Service Providers;
- And what is NOT included on the "Included" List .

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