

Eastern & Central Ethiopia – Ethiopia's Natural Heart

Tour Code ETC

Departing 28 October 2010

The tour concentrates on the discovering the lesser visited Eastern and Central region of Ethiopia where there is a fascinating religious and cultural mix of peoples, some richly endowed National Parks and which is regarded as the origins of coffee growing. We start the tour in the Eastern highlands and include time in Harar, the ancient walled Muslim centre of Ethiopia and the Awash National Park before heading south to the Great Rift Valley lakes area and visiting some of the indigenous peoples that live there. We also visit the best coffee growing areas, namely the Kaffa, Sidamo and Harar regions, to learn about its origins, production and value to Ethiopia's economy.



Coffee picker, Yirga Alem
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ITINERARY

Day 1 Fly to Addis Ababa – Thursday 28 October

Evening flight from Heathrow Terminal 3 with Ethiopian Airlines direct to Addis Ababa

Day 2 In Addis Ababa – Friday 29 October

Morning arrival and transfer to the Ghion hotel for a night. This afternoon we visit the National Museum that houses the famous remains of 'Lucy' and the magnificent Trinity Cathedral, resting place of Haile Selassie. Welcome dinner in a smart Addis Ababa restaurant overlooking the city (L,D)

Day 3 Drive to Awash National Park – Saturday 30 October

This morning we drive east from the capital and head for the Awash National Park. We visit the Parks' main waterfall where gazelle, oryx, and teeming birdlife can be seen. Overnight at the Genet hotel (B,L,D)

Day 4 Drive to Harar – Sunday 31 October

We continue the scenic drive to Harar with stops at some colourful Oromo markets along the road. This evening we are able to witness the ancient and bizarre ritual of feeding the town's resident hyenas by mouth! Overnight at the Heritage Plaza hotel (B,L,D)

Day 5 Visit to Eastern Hararge highlands. Visit Coffee Plantation – Monday 1 November

Today we enjoy the scenic beauty of the Eastern Hararge highlands renowned to possess the best coffee growing area in the world. We visit a local coffee farmers house to learn the importance of coffee to the Ethiopian economy. Two nights at the Dire Dawa Selam hotel (B,L,D)

Day 6 Visit old Islamic Harar – Tuesday 2 November

We have a walking tour within the old walled 15th century Islamic city of Harar and enjoy its architectural treasures, historic houses and colourful bustling markets filled with the smell of herbs, spices and coffee for which the area is famous. (B,L,D)

Day 7 In Dire Dawa. Fly to Addis – Wednesday 3 November

We visit the daily market in Dire Dawa town and the Ethio - Djibouti railway Transport Company which is the only railway line in Ethiopia, established in 1902 and still uses the old diesel locomotives today. We fly to Addis Ababa and this afternoon we visit the excellent Ethnographic museum housed in Addis Ababa University. Overnight at the Ghion hotel (B,L,D)

Patrick Syder Travel

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Day 8 Drive to Awassa – Thursday 4 November

Our destination is the Rift Valley lakes area and we arrive at Lake Awasa, set in a volcanic caldera. With abundant bird life we also hope to see hippo and civet monkey. Overnight at Wabishebelle hotel (B,L,D)

Day 9 Visit Awasa fish market. Drive to Yirga Alem – Friday 5 November

This morning we visit the photogenic Awasa fish market located at the lake side before continuing to Yirga Alem, situated in the finest coffee growing regions of the country and home to the Sidamo tribe. We spend two nights at the Aregash Eco-Lodge, in a perfect rustic highland location teeming with abundant bird life (B,L,D)

Day 10 In Sidamo. Visit coffee farms – Saturday 6 November

Today we visit the heart and soul of Ethiopian coffee growing – the cottage farmers. We walk to the surrounding coffee farms and include a visit to one the local farmers house. There will be a chance to experience the traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony at the Lodge, the heart of Ethiopian hospitality (B,L,D)

Day 11 Drive to Arba Minch – Sunday 7 November

On our drive to Arba Minch we visit the Wolayta tribes village who are mixed farmers; they grow coffee and false banana. The false banana or inset is a plant which grows in the same manner as the true banana but it never grows the fruit, it is known to be the staple food for most of the population in the southern part of the country and is indigenous to Ethiopia. Two nights at the Swaynes hotel (B,L,D)

Day 12 Visit Dorze people and Lake Chamo, Nechisar National Park – Monday 8 November

This morning we drive to Chench, home of the Dorze people, set high up in the Gughe Mountains where we see the traditional Dorze beehive shaped bamboo huts. This afternoon we take a boat trip on Lake Chamo to see hippos and some of the largest crocodiles in Africa (B,L,D)

Day 13 Drive to Jimma through Sodo – Tuesday 9 November

Jimma is the heart of the Kaffa region, derivative of the word 'coffee' and said to be where the original wild coffee plants were found and today is the commercial centre for the coffee produced in the region. On the way we visit one of the local coffee farms and a local farmers house. Two nights at the Central Jimma hotel (B,L,D)

Day 14 Visit Kaffa region. Visit Kaficho tribal village – Wednesday 10 November

We visit the Kaffa Forest Reserve, the last remaining sub-tropical moist forests to be found in Ethiopia, and renowned for its abundance of coffee, cardamon, and honey as well as being home to a rich selection of birdlife and natural hot springs and waterfalls. The people of Kaffa speak their own Kaficho language and we will visit a typical village (B,L,D)

Day 15 Drive to Addis – Thursday 11 November

We return to Addis this morning, where there will be the option to visit some of the Churchill Road souvenir shops and an historic coffee house. A farewell traditional dinner with cultural show has been arranged before our late evening transfer to the airport (B,L,D)

Day 16 Fly to London – Friday 12 November

Early hours direct overnight flight with Ethiopian Airways to London Heathrow T3, arriving in the early morning marks the end to a tour of discovery to a fascinating region of Ethiopia.

Cost £1895.00 per person in a twin room (excluding international flights) Single supplement £200



Dorze Beehive Hut, Chench
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Price includes:

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder
- ▶ Led by specialist Ethiopian guide, Samson Tilahun
- ▶ Domestic flight from Dire Dawa to Addis Ababa
- ▶ All transportation in private minibus exclusive to the group
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Best available hotels on twin share basis
- ▶ All meals on a full board basis
- ▶ Traditional Addis Ababa restaurant dinners
- ▶ All airport transfers
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities
- ▶ Bottled water daily

Not included – visa fee, travel insurance, alcoholic drinks, guide and driver gratuities, Ethiopian Airlines international flights (cost from £520.00)

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