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AFRICAN ADVENTURE TOURS

Phone: +251 - 114 - 42 43 43
+251 - 911 - 98 27 18
Fax: +251 - 114 - 42 42 47
info@african-adventure-tours.com
www.african-adventure-tours.com
P.O. Box: 59314, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

AAT-1136

BOTANICAL TOUR TO BAHIR DAR, GONDAR & SIMIEN MOUNTAINS

Duration: 8 Days / 7 Nights



Tour Highlights:

- Enjoy dramatic landscapes, wide valleys and the endemic flora and fauna accompanied by an experienced botanical guide
- See the amazing landscapes of the Simien Mountains, known as 'The roof of Africa', as well as Gelada Baboons on the mountainsides
- Take a botanical tour by boat on Lake Tana to see some of the vegetation on its shore
- Explore the dramatic nature of the Blue Nile & Tiss Isat Falls
- Shop the stalls of Mercato, the largest open-air market in Africa
- Traditional Ethiopian farewell dinner with "coffee ceremony" and dances of different ethnic groups

Travel date:

Every day departure with a minimum of two participants.

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Day 1: Arrival in Addis Ababa

WELCOME TO ETHIOPIA. On arrival in Addis Ababa our representative will meet you at the airport. After transfer to your hotel an overview of the program will be given. The rest of the day visit historical sites in Addis Ababa including the National Archaeological Museum, where the 3,6 million year old skeletal remains of “Lucy” rest, which were discovered in 1974. Proceed to the Ethnological Museum, the colorful Mercato market, the Holy Trinity Cathedral and Mount Entoto, which rises up to an altitude of 3200 meters and offers a panoramic view of the metropolis. Overnight in 4-star hotel.

Day 2: Fly Bahir Dar

After breakfast fly to Bahir Dar, a small town on the southern shore of Lake Tana. The lake is the source of the Blue Nile and the largest lake in Ethiopia. You will stay at Tana Hotel which has an extensive garden. Drive to Bezawit to see blue flowering Jacaranda trees. The place is also a good viewing point of Lake Tana, the Blue Nile River and the town. Spend the rest of the day around the extensive garden of the hotel, looking for different plants.



Day 3: In Bahir Dar

After breakfast take a botanical excursion by boat on Lake Tana to the Zege peninsula. We continue to the other side of the peninsula to see different plants and flowers as well as the lush shore vegetation. In the afternoon, drive to the small town of Tiss Abay and walk the short way to the best viewing point of the Blue Nile Falls, locally known as Tiss Isat or 'Smoke of Fire'.

Day 4: Drive to Gondar, Simien Mountains

On the 180 km long drive to Gondar you experience a typical Ethiopian-African landscape - wide grazing land, hilly mountains and numerous farmlands. We stop in Gondar for lunch and the visit of the Castles, known as Africa's Camelot, before proceeding to Debarq, the head quarter of the Simien Mountains National Park. We continue driving to Sankaber, the first campsite of the park. En route we stop to see different flowers including the endemic Rosa Abyssinica, Red Hot Pokers and Creepers Clematis Simensis and Galium Spurius. Overnight in Simien Lodge



Day 5: In the Simien Mountains



Full day botanical excursion in the Simien Mountains National Park. The national park has three general botanical regions. The lower slopes have been cultivated and grazed, while the alpine



regions (up to 3600 m) are forested. On the higher lands you can see trees like Erica Arborea, Giant Lobelias (Lobelia rhynchopetalum), Solanum species, Yellow Primrose (Primula verticillata), everlasting Helichrysum, Lady's Mantle Alchemilla, Thymus, Urtica and mosses (Grimmiaceae).

Day 6: In Simien Mountains

Full day botanical excursion in the Simien Mountains. The ridge tops and gorge sides of the mountains support coarse

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<p>grassland with herbs (Thymus, Trifolium, Geranium arabicum), thickets of Rumex Nervosus, scattered Otostegia Minucci and creepers Clematis Simensis and Galium Spurium. Forests of St. John's Wart (Hypericum) once flourished at 3,000 - 3,800 m, but few still remain. There are high, but unquantified, levels of endemism. In the Simien Mountains, it is usual to walk among troops of Gelada Baboons, to see Wyala Ibexes on the rocky cliff edges and to see or hear many colourful birds. If fortunate you might also see the endangered Ethiopian Wolf. Other mammals living in the park include Klipspringer, bushbucks and bush pigs. Over 50 species of birds have been reported in the Simien Mountains, such as Lammergeyer, Augur Buzzard, Verreaux's Eagle, Kestrel, Falcon and more.</p>		
	<p>Day 7: Drive to Gondar After breakfast drive back to Gondar with stops at some picturesque points. Rest of the day at free use.</p> <p>Day 8: Fly to Addis Ababa, departure After breakfast fly to Addis Ababa. Last souvenir shopping and in the evening fare well dinner party, with dances from different ethnic groups, in a traditional Ethiopian restaurant. Afterwards transfer to the airport for flight home.</p>	
<p><u>PRICE</u> Price per person (on the basis of 2 travellers) = US \$ 1.725 Price per person (on the basis of 3 travellers) = US \$ 1.460 Price per person (on the basis of 4 travellers) = US \$ 1.340 Single room supplement = US \$ 350 Plus domestic flights ca. US \$ 220 (only if the roundtrip international flight is with Ethiopian Airlines) otherwise ca. US \$ 330</p>		
<p>Price includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special qualified botanical guide as well as mandatory local guide and scout fees in parks and villages - 4-star hotel in Addis Ababa and the best available accommodation outside of Addis Ababa - All accommodation based on twin room occupancy - Meals in Addis, on bed and breakfast basis - Meals out of Addis, on full board basis - Farewell dinner in Addis to enjoy traditional Ethiopian food and music - All entrance fees at parks and villages - All transfers and visits in Addis Ababa using mini-bus according to the itinerary - All ground transportation including insurance, fuel and all costs of the driver - Traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony at a convenient time in the program - Government taxes <p>Price doesn't include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International flights - Lunch and dinner in Addis Ababa - Any kind of drinks, alcoholic or non-alcoholic, incidental meals and snacks - Video filming and photographing fees - Tips and items of personal nature like laundry, souvenirs, etc . - All what is not included in the list above 		