

Exploring Ethiopia: Ancient Kingdoms and Hidden Treasures

March 16-29, 2009

Join us on a special journey to Ethiopia to celebrate our exhibit, *Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia*. This unique trip offers the extraordinary opportunity to explore Lucy's ancestral home and experience Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage first-hand. On our journey we will visit many of the sites featured in *Lucy's Legacy*.

Ethiopia captivates the imagination and defies expectations. Its geography includes the volcanically formed Abyssinian Highlands, east Africa's most extensive indigenous rainforest, the source of the Blue Nile, verdant central highlands, and the Great Rift Valley. This ancient land of the Old Testament and the alleged home of the Ark of the Covenant is home to many diverse cultures. Together, we will trace this country's history through the ages, from the beginning of mankind to contemporary life.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Join Dr. Berhane Asfaw for an informative dinner. Dr. Asfaw led a group of paleontologists who have made a discovery that could lead to a new early hominid species.
- Explore Axum, one of the most important and technologically advanced civilizations from the 1st-7th century AD.
- Explore the unique 12th- and 13th-century Christian churches carved out of rock at Lalibela, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Discover the diverse tribal cultures at the Ethnographic Museum of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and the unique Ethiopian religious art in the museum's Art Gallery.
- Experience an Ethiopian coffee ceremony where your host roasts the beans over a charcoal stove before grinding them with a pestle and mortar and finally brewing the fine coffee.
- Experience a close-up view of some of the most dramatic landscapes in the world in the Simien Mountains National Park.
- Our group will be led by a full-time guide from Academic Travel Abroad and host from Pacific Science Center.

TRIP DETAILS

- 14 Days / 13 Nights
- \$5,995 per person, land-only based on double occupancy
- \$875 single supplement, waived if you are willing to share

ITINERARY

March 16: Seattle/Washington, D.C./Addis Ababa

Depart Seattle for Washington, D.C. and connect to your flight to Addis Ababa.

March 17: Addis Ababa

Land this evening and transfer to the hotel. Check in and have the evening to rest.

Hilton Hotel

March 18: Addis Ababa

Gather for a morning orientation session after breakfast. Begin exploring Addis Ababa. Situated at over 7,000 feet where the Great Rift Valley crosses Ethiopia's mountain range, Addis Ababa is a large sprawling city of over five million people. Visit Entoto Mountain, the site from which Addis Ababa's founder, Menelik, descended down to the plains. Visit the two churches he built and his palace, which displays 19th-century royal attire, weaponry, furniture, and intricately designed crosses made with precious metals. Also enjoy expansive views of the city and the Entoto Mountain Range. This evening enjoy a welcome reception before dinner. (B,L,R,D)

March 19: Addis Ababa

Take a city tour of Addis Ababa, visiting the National Museum. It is home to the skeleton of Selam, who like Lucy, is an *Australopithecus afarensis*. Often nicknamed Lucy's baby, Selam actually lived nearly 150,000 years before Lucy. Continue on to the Ethnographic Museum of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, located in a palace of former Emperor Haile Selassie. See precious pieces of Ethiopian Christian art. Also, have a brief tour of craft shops along Churchill Road before returning to the hotel. This evening, Dr. Berhane Asfaw joins us for dinner and gives a lecture about current paleontological discoveries in Ethiopia. (B,L,D)

March 20: Historic Circuit of the North: Lake Tana Monasteries and Weyto village

Fly to Bahir Dar on Lake Tana. Lake Tana is the source of the Blue Nile and is famous for its many monasteries, including the Ura Kidane Meret monastery with its renowned painted maqdas. Travel across the lake to the monastery islands. Due to strict genders regulations governing access to monasteries, the ladies will visit Entos and the men will visit Kibran

Gebreael. Continue on to Weyto village, known for the skillful production of traditional papyrus reed boats. Spend the night at a hotel located on the shores of Lake Tana.

Tana Hotel (B,L,D)

March 21: Historic Circuit of the North: Gondar and Awra Amba

Depart by motorcoach for Gondar, capital of Ethiopia for two hundred years. Gondar was a center of great commerce that traded with wealthy lands south of the Blue Nile, west to the Sudan, and north-east to the port of Massawa along the Red Sea. The city is known for its medieval castles and finely adorned churches. En route, stop at the village of Awra Amba, a unique cooperative founded in 1985 by 20 people who created a community that does not discriminate by gender and is dedicated to hard work as a way of escaping poverty. The cooperation now consists of 100 families. Meet with the community members and witness the success of their community. Upon arrival in Gondar, visit the Royal Enclosure, the Bath of King Fasilides, and the Debre Birhan Selassie Church, with its extensive murals of angels' faces. Check into the Goha Hotel situated on a hill above the town center.

Goha Hotel (B,L,D)

March 22: Simien Mountains National Park

Rising to over 15,000 feet, the Simien Mountain Range is a striking contrast to other regions in Ethiopia. This UNESCO World Heritage Site offers some of Africa's most dramatic scenery: alpine peaks flanked by glaciers such as Mount Ras Dashen; steep escarpments rising above remote valley settlements; and an abundance of wildlife including the ibex, the endemic bleeding heart baboons, the Simien Wolf, and innumerable species of birds. A full day excursion travels deep into the park. En route back to Gondar, visit the former Falasha village of Waleka to see some examples of their traditional pottery still made by the few Jewish people remaining after the exodus to Israel in 1991.

(B,L,D)

March 23-24: Historic Circuit of the North: Lalibela

This morning, fly to Lalibela – undoubtedly Ethiopia’s most famous place. Its rock-hewn Christian churches are rightfully a UNESCO World Heritage site. Here, starting in the 12th and 13th century, early Christian churches were carved out of the rock. These churches have been in continual use since their construction! Visit some of these unique churches cradled among the rocks – Bet Medhane Alem, Bet Maryam, Bet Mokaël, Bet Danaghel, and Bet Golgotha (men only). Also explore the most elegant of Lalibela’s churches, Bet Giyorgis, located in an isolated part of the village on a sloping rock terrace. This is said to be one of the most finely executed and best preserved churches.

Roha Hotel (B,L,D)

March 25: Historic Circuit of the North: Axum

Fly to Axum, one of Ethiopia’s most intriguing sites. The Axumite Kingdom grew to be a great trading power in the first century A.D. and thrived for over one thousand years. The area is rich in important archeological sites. Walk among the huge monoliths in the Northern Stelae Park. Visit the St. Mary of Zion Churches, the oldest of which is said to contain the Ark of the Covenant (not open to view), and Dongar, a preserved Axumite building once thought to be the Queen of Sheba’s Palace. Also visit the Axumite Tombs and the new Archaeological Museum which features finds from current archaeological excavations in and around the city.

Remhai Hotel (B,L,D)

March 26: Yeha

Take an excursion through dramatic highland landscape to Yeha, passing unique sandstone homesteads along the way. This city was founded at least 2,800 years ago and served as the capital of a pre-Axumite empire. The well-preserved stone temple was built 2,500 years ago. It also served as a center of a monastic Christian community in the early 6th century. A modern church built next to the temple ruins contains some of the ancient temple stones and its treasury contains illuminated manuscripts and crowns. Return to Axum for a last stroll through the old town and among the stelae and overnight.

Remhai Hotel (B,L,D)

March 27: Axum/Addis Ababa

Return by air to Addis Ababa. There will be time to re-visit the shops and galleries of the city and to try one of its many good restaurants. Gather for a festive farewell dinner and meet with Dr. Asfaw to discuss your Ethiopian journey. (B, D)

March 28: Addis Ababa

Have the day at leisure before flying back to Washington D.C. late this evening. (B)

March 29: Addis Ababa/Washington, D.C.

Arrive in Washington, D.C. and connect to your flight to Seattle.

Traveling in Ethiopia

A spirit of adventure and flexibility are essential to ensure enjoyment of your experience in Ethiopia. The country's tourism infrastructure is still developing and life moves at a slower pace than in the United States. With exception of the hotel in Addis Ababa, hotels offer very basic accommodations. Electricity and water supply in some cities and towns can be sporadic and hot water isn't guaranteed at the hotels. Restroom facilities outside of the hotels are basic and may not be available along some routes driven during the program. The motorcoaches do not have bathrooms. The motorcoaches and many hotels used throughout the program do not have air-conditioning. However, with the cooler temperatures in the high altitudes, air-conditioning is not necessary. Efforts are being made to pave more roads in Ethiopia, but some roads used on this trip are unpaved and can be bumpy.

It is important to note that the places visited on this tour are at high altitudes, ranging from 6,000 to nearly 11,000 feet. Also, some religious structures only allow one gender to enter. When this occurs, arrangements will be made to take men and women to different sites.

Ethiopia is generally a very safe country, with casual theft and pick-pocketing being common in some cities, especially in markets and near centrally-located government hotels.

Accommodations

The Hilton Hotel in **Addis Ababa** lies within 15 acres of landscaped grounds close to the UN headquarters. Rooms feature original art, a safe, air-conditioning, min-bar, and cable TV. The hotel amenities include 24-hour room service, outdoor heated pool, sauna, business center, and a variety of restaurants. A good bookshop and high-quality crafts and gold shop are featured.

The government owned **Tana Hotel in Bahir Dar** is situated among tropical gardens outside of town along the wooded lakeshore, which is home to giant kingfisher, herons, and white-cheeked turaco. Hot water is available only in the morning and evening.

Goha Hotel, a government hotel in Gondar, is perched on a hill above the town center. It is one of the best hotels in northern Ethiopia.

The Roha Hotel in **Lalibela** is currently the best property available and is located about two kilometers from the town center.

Remhai Hotel in **Axum** is located on the eastern end of town and offers the best facilities and services in the city. Rooms feature television, refrigerator, and telephone. Facilities include an internet café and swimming pool.

Included in the Tour Cost

- First-class accommodations in Addis Ababa and best available in other locations based on double occupancy
- Meals as noted in the itinerary
- All transportation, special visits, excursions, and sightseeing with expert guides as set forth in the itinerary
- Assistance of a full-time English-speaking guide, ATA tour manager, and Pacific Science Center host
- Portage for one bag plus one carry-on bag (not to exceed 44 lbs.) per person; pre-trip notes and guidelines; service charges, taxes and basic gratuities
- Pre- and post-tour informational gatherings
- PLUS – a portion of the proceeds returns to benefit Pacific Science Center!

Not Included in Tour Cost

Transportation to and from the departure city; transfers to and from airports for persons not using or meeting group flights; passport photos and fees; visa fees; personal items such as wines, liquors, a-la-carte orders, room service, video fees, and valet/laundry charges; expenses incurred by ATA in making individual travel arrangements before or after the program; and other items not expressly included.

Single/Shared Rooms

A limited number of single rooms are available at extra cost on a first-come, first-served basis, but availability cannot be guaranteed. ATA will assist persons requesting a roommate. However, neither a single room nor a share can be guaranteed. Participants will be notified if we are unsuccessful in finding a suitable roommate. In this case, the single supplement will be charged.

Health Recommendations

To enjoy your travels to the fullest you should be in good physical and mental health. Ethiopia's medical care services are basic in Addis Ababa and outside of the capital, medical care may not be available. Any physical condition requiring special attention, diets, or treatment must be reported in writing when the reservation is made. We reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a tour member should such a person's health, mental condition, physical infirmity, or attitude jeopardize the operation of the tour or the enjoyment of other participants.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Payment Schedule

\$500 deposit upon application. Balance due upon receipt of invoice, 90 days before departure. Credit cards may be used for airfare. If payment is not received by 30 days prior to departure, your space is subject to cancellation.

Note About Itinerary and Cost

While every effort will be made to carry out the program as planned, the itinerary as described is subject to modification and change by Pacific Science Center (PSC) and Academic Travel Abroad, Inc. (ATA) The program cost is based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values in effect August 2008, and assumes that a minimum of 14 participants will join the program.

While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed price, it is subject to change. If it is necessary to levy a surcharge, notification will be given before time of invoicing (approximately 60 days prior to departure). In the event of cancellation due to a surcharge, all monies are fully refundable except for processing fee.

Note About Airfare

We have reserved group space on Ethiopian Airlines from Seattle to Addis Ababa. The airfare is \$2,029 plus taxes and fuel surcharges and includes all four domestic flights within Ethiopia. If you choose to purchase your international airfare from your own travel agent or another airline, please note that, in order to ensure you remain with the group throughout the program, you must still buy the internal Ethiopian air tickets from ATA at a cost of \$490 per person. The rates do not include taxes and fuel surcharges applicable at the time of ticketing. Airfares are subject to change without notice until tickets are issued.

Cancellations and Refunds

After confirmation on the tour, a nonrefundable processing fee of \$150 per person will be charged upon written cancellation. Written cancellation between 90-61 days of departure: full refund, minus your deposit (including nonrefundable processing fee). Written cancellation between 60 and 30 days prior to departure: 50% refund of the tour price. Written cancellation within 30 days prior to departure: no refund. Airfare is fully refundable up to time of ticket issuance, generally three to four weeks before departure. Thereafter tickets are nonrefundable and no changes are allowed. Cancellation on day of departure or after tour departs: no refund. No refund for unused portions of tour, including, but not limited to, missed meals, hotel nights and sightseeing. Cancellation of program by PSC and ATA: full refund. Cancellation of the program after departure by PSC or ATA: full refund of all land fees, less the cost of service up to the time of the group's return. NOTE: Neither PSC nor ATA accepts liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable domestic ticket to the tour departure city and return.

Insurance

A package of trip cancellation, baggage and medical insurance is available through ATA for coverage of nonrefundable expenses incurred in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. \$150,000 of flight insurance is automatically provided with each ticket written by ATA.

Responsibility

Academic Travel Abroad, Inc. and Pacific Science Center act only as agents for the passenger with respect to all transportation, hotels, and all matters of reservations and tour operation. We and our agents accept no responsibility for loss, damage, injury, accident, delay or irregularity, expense or liability caused by the defect of any vehicle or negligence or default of any independent contractors, their employees, agents, or representatives. Nor do we accept responsibility for losses or delays arising from sickness, pilferage, acts of terrorism, weather conditions or acts of God. All such losses or expenses shall be borne by the tour participant. We reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. We likewise reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any tour participant at any time without being under any obligation to assign any reason therefor. In the event of the exercise of this right, we shall be under no liability to such person(s) except to refund such amount as our absolute discretion deems reasonable to attribute to the uncompleted portion of the tour. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that air, ship or train tickets when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and carrier concerned. The airlines and all other transportation companies involved in this tour are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time the passengers are not on board their plane or conveyances. All services are subject to the laws of the country in which they are rendered. The tour participant agrees on behalf of himself, his dependents, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns to abide by the above conditions and to release and hold harmless ATA, PSC, and any of their representatives from any and all liability for any delays, damage, loss, injury or death occurring in relation to this tour.

California Seller of Travel Program

CST #2059002-40

ATA is a participant in the California Seller of Travel program. California law requires that certain sellers of travel have a trust account or bond. ATA has a trust account. ATA is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Corporation.

