



AFRICAN CONNECTIONS

"Your Gateway to Africa"

ETHIOPIA

Meskel (Finding the True Cross) **FESTIVAL TOUR**

September 21st - 29th 2028
(8 Nights / 9 Days)



Travel to Ethiopia

with

African Connections

A leader in Africa travel for over 20 years

PREPARE TO BE AMAZED!!!!



Only \$4,799 per person
(Without airfare and with double room occupancy)

Space is limited

Pay \$250 to reserve your spot!

ITINERARY

DAY	DATE	HIGHLIGHTS	HOTEL/MEAL
Day 1	THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER	Upon arrival at Bole International Airport, a representative will welcome and transfer you to your hotel. Given varying flight times, today's program is light and flexible.	Hotel: Haile Grand Hotel (or similar) Meals: None
Day 2	FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER	After breakfast, we will visit Unity Park, exploring Ethiopia's history and culture. In the afternoon, experience the bustling atmosphere of Merkato, Africa's largest open-air market. In the evening, we will have dinner with traditional music and dance.	Hotel: Haile Grand Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast and Dinner
Day 3	SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER	We will visit the National Museum of Ethiopia (see "Lucy"), then Holy Trinity Cathedral (Haile Selassie's resting place). After the tour, you will have time for more shopping, or to take a dip in the pool, or otherwise enjoy the hotel amenities.	Hotel: Haile Grand Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast and Lunch
Day 4	SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER	After breakfast, we head to the airport to fly to Lalibela, the site of UNESCO World Heritage rock-hewn churches (12th century), including Bet Medhane Alem (world's largest monolithic church) and Bet Maryam (notable frescoes).	Hotel: Maribela Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast
Day 5	MONDAY 25 SEPTEMBER	After breakfast, we travel to Yimrhane-Kirstos and Eve. Enjoy a scenic drive through the Ethiopian highlands to Yemrehana Krestos Church, an ancient cave church.	Hotel: Maribela Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast
Day 6	TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER	After breakfast, we fly back to Addis Ababa to experience the vibrant Meskel Festival, one of Ethiopia's most celebrated religious events, honoring the discovery of the True Cross by Queen Helena in the 4th century.	Hotel: Haile Grand Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast
Day 7	WEDNESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER	After breakfast, we will join the continued amazing Meskel Festival celebrations.	Hotel: Haile Grand Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast
Day 8	THURSDAY 28 SEPTEMBER	Shop at Shiro Meda for handwoven garments or visit local artisan galleries. We end the day with a farewell dinner with Ethiopian cuisine and cultural music, and dance.	Hotel: Haile Grand Hotel (or similar) Meals: Breakfast and Dinner
Day 9	FRIDAY 29 SEPTEMBER	Depending on the time of your departure, you might have time for some last-minute shopping/leisure before heading to Bole International Airport for departure.	Meals: Breakfast

DAY 1: Arrival in Addis Ababa (Light Activities)

Upon arrival at Bole International Airport, our representative will welcome you and assist with the transfer to your hotel. Since international flights arrive at different times, the program for today will remain light and flexible.

In the morning or afternoon, depending on your arrival time, you will enjoy a short orientation drive through the city.

DAY 2: Addis Ababa City Tour & Shopping

After breakfast, we will begin the day with a visit to Unity Park, exploring Ethiopia's history and culture within the Grand Palace Museum.



In the afternoon, experience the bustling atmosphere of Merkato, Africa's largest open-air market, where thousands of traders sell everything from spices and coffee to woven baskets and traditional crafts.



Enjoy Ethiopian dinner with traditional music and dance performances.



DAY 3: Addis Ababa Tour Continues

Visit the National Museum of Ethiopia, home to the 3.2-million-year-old fossil "Lucy" and other remarkable archaeological treasures. Afterwards, continue to the Holy Trinity Cathedral, the final resting place of Emperor Haile Selassie and Empress Menen Asfaw, renowned for its stained-glass windows and beautiful artwork.



After the tour, you will have time for more shopping, or to take a dip in the pool, or otherwise enjoy the hotel amenities.

DAYS 4-5: The Ancient Churches of Lalibela

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight to Lalibela. On arrival, begin your exploration of this UNESCO World Heritage Site with a visit to the first group of rock-hewn churches, masterpieces of medieval architecture carved from volcanic rock in the 12th century.

Highlights include Biete Medhane Alem, believed to be the largest monolithic church in the world, and Bet Maryam, with its remarkable frescoes and a visit to Yemrehana Krestos Church. This ancient cave church, built from wood and stone, predates the famous Lalibela rock-hewn churches by nearly 80 years and greatly influenced their design.



DAYS 6-7: Fly to Addis Ababa to Experience the Meskel Festival

After breakfast, we will fly back to Addis Ababa. When we get to Addis Ababa, we will check you into your hotel and have a free afternoon to rest.

In the evening, we will join the vibrant Meskel Festival, also known as the Finding of the True Cross, is one of Ethiopia's most celebrated religious festivals, observed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church every September. The festival commemorates the discovery of the True Cross by Queen Helena in the 4th century and attracts thousands of worshippers dressed in traditional white garments.

A major highlight of the celebration is the "Demera" fire ceremony, where a massive bonfire is lit amidst prayers, chanting, drumming, and dancing. According to tradition, the direction of the smoke from the fire guided Queen Helena to the location of the True Cross, making the event a powerful symbol of faith, unity, and spiritual heritage in Ethiopia.





DAY 8: Shopping & Cultural Night

You will have a free morning to relax and enjoy the hotel's amenities.

In the afternoon, we will shop at Shiro Meda, known for its handwoven cotton garments, or explore local artisan galleries for unique souvenirs.



In the evening, celebrate the conclusion of your journey with a farewell cultural dinner, featuring Ethiopia's most beloved dishes and a lively performance of music and dance.



DAY 9: Departure to US

You might have time for some last-minute shopping or leisure before your departure for the Airport for your international flight.

Examples of Hotels We Use:

- Haile Grand Hotel (or similar), Addis Ababa



- Maribela Hotel (or similar), Lalibela



**Don't miss the Excitement!
For the time of your life, experience Ethiopia!**

Our Tour Package Includes:



2 Domestic flights



**Double/Twin Accommodation
in Deluxe Hotels**



Breakfast Daily



3 other meals (lunch/dinner)



Experience the Amazing Meskel Festival



**Admissions and fees for all sites visited
and all activities described in the itinerary**



Airport Transfers



**Transportation throughout on a
comfortable air-condition vehicle**



**Experienced Licensed English-Speaking
Driver**



**Knowledgeable English-Speaking Tour
Guide**



**Visa Assistance, help with
pre-departure preparations; expert tour
management, and destination support
throughout your journey**

**SINGLE
ROOM
UPGRADE**

\$1,200

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