

# Ethiopia National Day

## Diverse geography, long history offer something for all

With abundant historical and natural resources, Ethiopia has drawn tourists from all over the world. The following are excerpts from the Ethiopian Tourism Organization website to introduce some of the attractions the country in the Horn of Africa offers. For further information, see <https://www.ethiopia.travel>.

Ethiopia is a vast country with a daunting variety of attractions to dazzle first time visitors. The best way to explore it is along one or two of the established routes.

Centered on the capital, the Addis Ababa Route — embracing everything from rock-hewn churches and lush montane forests to informative museums and cultural restaurants showcasing Ethiopia's unique cuisine and music — is well suited to those seeking cosmopolitan urban attractions or who have limited time to explore.

The craggy escarpments and ancient towns of the Historic North and the Simien Mountains Route are studded with atmospheric ruins and shrines — among them four UNESCO World Heritage sites — that pay rich testament to a unique cultural heritage.

The East — Danakil, Harar and Bale Mountains Route — is wonderfully varied, embracing the misty peaks of the wildlife-

rich Bale Mountains, the spectacular Erta Ale volcano, and the world's fourth-holiest Islamic city in the form of the ancient walled citadel of Harar.

Ideal for those seeking an off-the-beaten-track experience, the West — the Lush Nature and Coffee Route passes through enchanting highland forests, their canopies alive with birds and monkeys and underbrush dense with Arabica coffee, before descending to the swampy lowlands of Gambella National Park, site of Africa's second-largest antelope migration.

The Rift Valley and the Cultural Mosaic of the South Route, passing through highlands incised by the gaping floor of the Great Rift Valley and string of pretty lakes, is a byword for scenic splendor, superb birdwatching and a thrilling cultural mosaic epitomized by the ethnic diversity of remote South Omo.

### National parks

Inscribed as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site in 1979, Simien Mountains National Park is Ethiopia's premier hiking destination, renowned for its jagged peaks, jaw-dropping precipice, and wealth of endemic animals including walia ibex and gelada baboons.

Bale Mountains National Park is a

byword for biodiversity, thanks to its rich mosaic of high-altitude habitats, wealth of endemic wildlife, including the charismatic Ethiopian wolf, and its ranking as one of Africa's top-five birding hotspots.

Set below the spectacular crater of Fantelle volcano, Awash National Park protects a semiarid tract of Rift Valley floor inhabited by dry-country antelope such as the handsome beisa oryx and the magnificent spiral-horned greater kudu, along with almost 500 bird species.

Still being developed for tourism, the underrated Chebera-Churchura National Park in the western highlands is the most reliable place in Ethiopia to see elephants, which can be tracked on foot through the swampy Maka Forest with the help of experienced guides.

Gambella National Park, Ethiopia's largest, is at its most alluring between March and June, when Africa's second-largest antelope migration, comprising an estimated 1.2 million white-tailed kob, crosses there from South Sudan.

The diverse landscapes of Nech Sar National Park include the twin lakes Chamo and Abaya, and the wide-open Nech Sar (white grass) plains, home to the

Nechisar nightjar, which many regard to be the world's rarest bird.

### World Heritage sites

Ethiopia's immense cultural, paleontological and natural wealth is reflected in its tally of nine UNESCO World Heritage sites, the most of any country in Africa, according to UNESCO's list. Eight of these nine sites are cultural and one — the Simien Mountains National Park — is natural.

The medieval complex of rock-hewn churches at Lalibela is sub-Saharan Africa's most breathtaking historical site, comprising as it does 11 churches and two chapels excavated in the 12th century.

Founded more than 3,000 years ago, the ancient capital of Aksum — surrounded by towering obelisks and ruined palaces dating back to its heyday — was once home to the Queen of Sheba and is now reputedly the last resting place of the Biblical Ark of the Covenant.

The Fasil Ghebbi at Gondar — dubbed the Camelot of Africa — is renowned for its fairytale castles and intricately decorated churches built during imperial Ethiopia's 17th century prime.

The walled citadel of Harar Jugol is the



Gondar: Camelot of Africa EMBASSY OF ETHIOPIA

fourth-holiest city in the Islamic world, after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, and its 48 hectares are crammed with an incredible 82 mosques and 438 other shrines.

The most striking feature of the Konso Cultural Landscape is its warren-like terraced hilltop villages and anthropomorphic wooden grave-markers known as waka.

Ethiopia's only Natural World Heritage site, Simien Mountains National Park is renowned for its spectacular scenery and the presence of endemic animals such as walia ibex and gelada baboons.

A short drive south of the capital Addis Ababa, Tiya is an archeological site com-

prising 36 engraved megaliths erected in medieval times as to mark a mysterious burial complex of unknown cultural affiliations.

Though not geared toward tourism, the Lower Valley of the Awash River is one of Africa's most important paleontological sites, having yielded numerous important hominid fossils including the 3.2-million-year-old Australopithecus afarensis female nicknamed Lucy.

The Lower Valley of the Omo River is another important but difficult-to-explore paleontological region, having yielded Australopithecus and Homo fossils dating back 2.4 million years.



Simien Mountains National Park EMBASSY OF ETHIOPIA

**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Federal Democratic  
Republic of Ethiopia  
on the 26th Anniversary of  
Their National Day

We support the Ethiopian coffee industry  
through BROOK'S coffee concern.

**BROOK'S**

Importer, Roaster and Seller of Ethiopian coffee  
**BROOK'S CO., LTD.**

4-54-6 Utsukushigaoka, Aoba-ku, Yokohama 225-8539

**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Federal Democratic  
Republic of Ethiopia  
on the 26th Anniversary  
of Their National Day

**Mitsubishi Corporation**

**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Federal Democratic  
Republic of Ethiopia  
on the 26th Anniversary  
of Their National Day

**TOYOTA TSUSHO**  
Metals/ Global Production Parts & Logistics/ Automotive/ Machinery, Energy & Project/  
Chemicals & Electronics/Food & Agribusiness/ Consumer Products & Services

Head Office : 4-9-8, Meieki, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya 81-52-584-5000  
Tokyo Head Office : 2-3-13, Konan, Minato-ku, Tokyo 81-3-4306-5000

[www.toyota-tsusho.com](http://www.toyota-tsusho.com)

**THE MOTOR & ENGINEERING COMPANY  
OF ETHIOPIA (MOENCO)**

(Official Authorized Toyota Distributor in Ethiopia)  
P.O. Box 5727, Bole Sub-City Kebele 03, House No. 2441, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
TEL: 251-11-6613688 FAX: 251-11-6611766  
Web site: <http://www.moencoethiopia.com/>

Congratulations  
to the People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
on the 26th Anniversary of Their National Day



**Eagle Shipping Japan, Ltd.**

General Agents for

**Ethiopian Shipping & Logistics Service Enterprise**

Neotec Suitengu Bldg. 6F, 1-29-9, Kakigara-cho, Nihonbashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103-0014  
Tel: 03-5643-1717 Fax: 03-5643-1718 E-mail: [zebra.1210@eagleshipjapan.com](mailto:zebra.1210@eagleshipjapan.com)