

Addis Ababa

Written by Administrator

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The name of this sprawling capital city means "New Flower." Founded by Emperor Menelik in 1887 and with a population of about 4 million, Addis Ababa is Africa's diplomatic capital with the headquarters for the Organization of African Unity located here. Impressive monuments of colonial architecture are scattered among stretches of sun-bleached shacks. Drive through "Mercato" the largest open market on the continent. Make interesting stops that include the National Museum, the Ethnological Museum



m and the Ba'ata Church known as Menelik Mausoleum. Enjoy souvenir shopping and visits to special art galleries. Ethiopian Rift Valley Safaris patronizes certain local charities and would provide guests with opportunities to make purchases supporting these. Hotel accommodation ranges from tourist class to luxury collection and varieties of restaurants serve delectable dishes from around the world.

Day trips from Addis

Adadi Mariam Rock-Hewn Church & Tiya

A pleasant drive south of Addis 38 kms is Adadi Mariam, a 13th century rock-hewn church that is Ethiopia's southernmost church of its type. Not far away is the historical site of Tiya with its enigmatic field of stelae adorned by unusual engravings. Tiya has been named one of

Ethiopia's seven UNESCO "World Heritage Sites."

Debre Libanos Church & Portuguese Bridge

Drive 110 kms north from Addis over the Entoto Mountains passing through the Sululta Plains to the Monastery of Debre Libanos founded in the 13th century by Abune Tekle Haymanot. Overlooking Jema River Gorge, a tributary of the Blue Nile, the Monastery owns ecclesiastical, cultural and historical relics, and boasts a rare grove of trees that have disappeared from elsewhere in the region. Drive to a 16th Century Bridge still in use today and said to have been built by Portuguese.

Menagesha Forest & Addis Alem Mariam Church

Menagesha Forest is a jewel to have near the city where mammal species such as the duiker, colobus monkey and endemic Menelik bushbuck can be seen. Bird life is abundant in this densely wooded area where Rougets' rail, blue-winged goose and black-headed siskin are among Ethiopian endemics to be noted while taking a leisurely walk. This is followed by a drive to visit the Addis Alem Mariam Church, originally built as Menelik's palace and known for its murals. The church owns many important relics and artifacts bequeathed to it by the Emperor which are on display in the Church museum.

Addis Alem Mariam Church & Wonchi Crater Lake

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Drive 35 kms west of Addis to visit the Addis Alem Mariam Church. Proceed driving to Ambo and then to the village of Wonchi where you will enjoy a trek down to the shore of the Crater Lake. By boat, reach an interesting church found on the island.

Debre Berhan & Ankober

130 kms northeast of Addis lies one of the oldest towns in the country, Debre Berhan. After visiting Debre Berhan Selassie Church where many interesting historical relics are kept, drive to the nearby town Ankober, birthplace of Emperor Menelik II. Ankober is situated on the edge of the escarpment and offers an extraordinary view of the region.

Mount Zuqualla Monastery & Debre Zeit

Drive south from Addis to Mount Zuqualla to visit the Zuqualla Monastery. Situated at the top of the mountain, the Crater Lake is surrounded by beautiful woods and considered to be holy. Take in the birds, plant life and scenery as you make a drive around the Debre Zeit Crater Lake region.

Awash National Park

Leave early to drive 225 kms southeast of Addis to Awash National Park, home to large mammals which include beisa oryx, greater and lesser kudu, defassa waterbuck, Swayne's

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hartebeest, hamadrias and anubis baboon and 5 endemic birds. The mighty Awash River creates a southern boundary to the Park and forms powerful waterfalls in a stunning canyon adjacent to the Headquarters. Drive to visit the pools of hot springs that make an especially enjoyable stop for bird watching.