



Current as of: March 7, 2019 - 16:27

Valid for departures: From January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021



The Simien Mountains Trek Trip Notes

Ways to Travel: Guided Group, Tailormade Adventures
Destinations: Ethiopia
Programmes: Walking & Trekking

Trip Code:
TYE



15 Days Flight Inclusive
13 Days Land only
Min age: 16

Trip Overview

The dramatic skyline of peaks and jagged volcanic plugs which tower over the highland plateaux of the Simien Mountains compete with rugged gorges and deep gullies to form what is, arguably, the most awe-inspiring landscape in Africa. As we trek through this distant mountain range we pass small hamlets where villagers eke out an existence from the limited arable land. We may come across large troops of Gelada baboons foraging on the escarpment; and, with luck, spot Walia ibex and Ethiopian wolves. In January we have a special Timkat Festival departure (TYES) which is one day longer, please see the trip notes for more details.

At a Glance

- 9 nights wild camping, 3 nights standard hotels with en suite facilities
- 10 days point-to-point walking with full portage
- Good fitness required
- Altitude maximum 4543m, average 3300m
- Harar and Lalibela extensions available
- Special Timkat Festival Departure in January (one day longer)

Trip Highlights

- Castles of Gondar
- Trekking through dramatic scenery
- Endemic flora & fauna
- Remote mountain communities
- Led by an experienced Ethiopian guide and a UK trekking leader

Is This Trip for You?

This is a strenuous trek with several days spent close to or above 4,000 metres. There are a number of long days including the optional ascent of Ras Dashaen (at 4,543m it is the highest mountain in Ethiopia and this involves 1,300m of ascent and descent in one day). There is a lot of ascent and descent on many of the days and some fairly exposed rough trails. We do not suggest that you attempt this trek unless you are confident of your ability. The total cumulative amount of ascent is 6,500m, and the descent is 7,650m. There are 10 days walking with full portage, and the trip is graded 5 (this is at the tougher end of the grade 5 scale though). Good health and fitness are important and you should take regular exercise before travelling on this trip. On the October departures there is the possibility of some river crossings. The trails in the Simien Mountains are generally well marked and the landmarks are distinctive. We will be walking for about 6-7 hours a day (although on 4 days as much as 10-12 hours) and the terrain can be quite tough in places. Much of the trek is in remote areas. If you suffer from vertigo, you may want to carefully consider this trip before booking. There are steep drops in the Simien Mountains, which is what makes the scenery so spectacular. There is never an occasion when you need walk close to the edge of the cliffs so if you are happy to stand back you should not be discomforted in any way.

You may find our Fitness Training Guide a useful reference:

http://www.exodus.co.uk/assets/pdf/Exodus_WT_Fitness_Training_Guide.pdf (http://www.exodus.co.uk/assets/pdf/Exodus_WT_Fitness_Training_Guide.pdf?__hstc=173457148.f2ba21d2ccabb491f5924f600f1a2876.1547513532465.1549242882401.1552542740574.5&__hssc=173457148.3.1552542740574&__hsfp=2902202)

Following a review of all our trips we have categorised this trip as generally not suitable for persons of reduced mobility. However if you are a regular traveller on such trips, please contact customer services to discuss the trip and your personal condition.

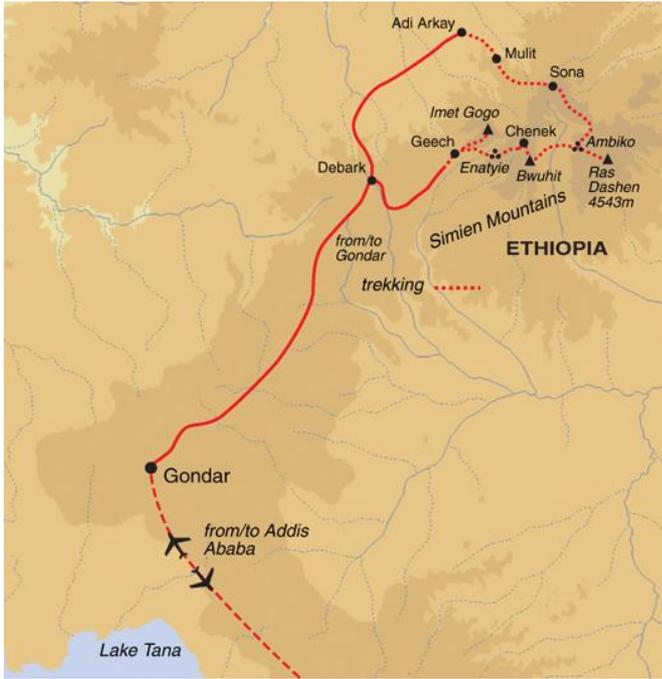
Group

On trek each group is accompanied by a local mountain guide and a UK trekking leader, cook and camp staff plus a park scout. While trekking our baggage is carried by mules and muleteers will accompany us.

Adult min age: 16

Min group size: 5
Max group size: 16

Itinerary



Land Only Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive Addis Ababa; half-day city tour.

The group flight arrives in the morning. Please note that if you are being picked up at the airport (either on the group transfer or private transfer) you will have to exit the terminal to find our representative with the Exodus board. You may see people with signs inside the terminal but they are generally people with special permission such as the UN, Government or hotels with desks inside the terminal. In the afternoon we go on a sightseeing tour that takes us to the Ethnographic Museum and the Church of the Trinity where Haile Selassies' remains now lie.

Ghion Hotel or similar

Day 2

Fly to Gondar; tour castles and Debre Birhan Selassie church.

We have a spectacular flight to Gondar. From the air we see the extraordinary nature of the Ethiopian plateau, cut again and again by immensely deep gorges. Gondar was once the capital of Ethiopia and in the afternoon we visit the castles, which were built in the 17th and 18th centuries by several generations of Ethiopia's kings. Nearby is the Debre Birhan Selassie church with its sensational angelic ceiling, and the bathhouse of Fasil at which thousands of Ethiopians celebrate Timkat festival every January. Our hotel is up on a cliff top with wonderful views overlooking the town. Depending on time we will also visit the centre of The Kindu Trust, a local charity which Exodus supports.

(On the Timkat Festival departure in January we spend a full extra day in Gondar to experience the festival. We join the Ethiopian crowds at Fasilides' Baths whose water has been blessed by priests. Young men dive into the water to symbolise the baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan. The festival has been described as one of the greatest shows on Earth.)

Goha Hotel or similar

Day 3

Drive to Debarq; start trekking to Sankaber Camp.

We travel by road the 105 kilometres to the small town of Debarq, the nearest town to the Simien National Park. There is a little time to explore the area while the guides prepare the equipment and mules for the trek.

From Debarq the landscape suddenly opens onto a picturesque valley dotted with mud huts, horses and livestock. We start our walk at Buyit Ras, entrance to the park, and head towards Sankaber where we have our first night's camp. There are spectacular views across the range from here. 3 hours walking, 9kms.

Sankaber Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 9 km / 5 miles

Day 4

Trek to Geech via Jinbar Waterfall.

Walking near small settlements and villages we have fine views across the lowlands and the Simien plateau as we continue our trek heading towards Geech (3,600m). En route we see a stunning waterfall; cascading through a hole in the rock, it falls 500 metres to the bottom of the gorge and is particularly impressive after the rainy season (by Christmas the waterfall may not be visible). The last 2 hours of the day involve a steep climb up to our campsite, where we stay for two nights. 7 hours walking, 12 kms.

Geech Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 12 km / 7 miles

Day 5**Day walk to Imetgogo.**

A spectacular day - in the morning we walk to Imetgogo (3,926m). Situated at the end of a long ridge, which disappears on either side to the lowlands below, there are outstanding views of the gorge and mountain range and it is easy to understand why the striking formations have been described as 'the chess pieces of the Gods'. We should get our first glimpse of Ras Dashen from here and we can see clearly our route for the coming days. If we haven't already encountered them, there is a good chance of seeing the indigenous Gelada, also known as the 'bleeding heart' baboon or Lion monkey. The Gelada is in fact neither baboon nor monkey but the last remaining species of a branch of high altitude, grass eating primates that have all but vanished. We return to the same camp and enjoy an afternoon at rest. 4 hours walking, 10kms, ascent 325m, descent 325m.

Geech Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 10 km / 6 miles

Day 6**Trek to Chennek via Enatyie Escarpment.**

Another wonderful walk - heading in the same direction as yesterday we soon branch off to reach the edge of the escarpment which we follow to the top, Inatyie (4070m). The dramatic views continue all the way down to our camp at Chennek. 7 hours walking, 13kms, ascent 650m, descent 570m.

Chenneck camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 13 km / 8 miles

Day 7**Trek to Ambiko; ascend Bwuhit.**

A memorable but hard day's trekking of ascents and descents as we make our way from Chennek to Ambiko. We should see birds like the Ground Scraper Thrush, Siskins, Falcons and Kestrel. Today is also our best chance of seeing the rare and endangered Walia Ibex, a species that can only be found in the Simien National Park. From Chennek we climb to a pass at 4,200m and from here the fit and energetic may like to continue on a further hour up to the summit of Bwuhit at 4,430m. Otherwise from the pass we have a big drop down to the Meshah River at 2850m, via the village of Chiro Leba, where we may be able to visit the school and small clinic (if open). From the river we ascend 350m to our camp, where we spend 2 nights at Ambiko. 10 hours walking, 17km, ascent 1105m, descent 1570m.

Ambiko Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 17 km / 10 miles

Day 8**Ascent of Ras Dashen, highest point in Ethiopia.**

We ascend Ras Dashen before returning to Ambiko. This day is the longest day of the trek. It may take up to twelve hours climbing 1350m to the summit. Ras Dashen has 3 peaks and we climb to the middle highest peak - the roof of Ethiopia. Our efforts are rewarded with incredible views from the summit. 12 hours walking, 21km, ascent 1345m, descent 1345m.

Ambiko Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 21 km / 13 miles

Day 9**Trek to Sona via Arkwasiye.**

Another challenging day, although not as difficult as the previous one! From Ambiko we trek to the superbly positioned camp at Sona. After plenty of ups and downs we might be able to stop for some local coffee in the small village of Arquaziye before continuing for another hour and half to our camping site at Sona. 10 hours walking, 21kms, ascent 965m, descent 1055.

Sona Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 21 km / 13 miles

Day 10**Descend to Ansiya Wenz River and on to Lamo Camp.**

A much easier day! We descend into the lowlands. Our day begins with a 1,100m descent into the Ansiya valley, where we have a relaxed lunch break. We then move onto our camp, near the village of Mekarebya. This is an excellent day for seeing birds and there are very good views up to the Simien Mountains. We can look back with pride upon the areas we have recently trekked. 5 hours walking time, 10kms, ascent 65m, descent 1120m.

Mekarebya Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 10 km / 6 miles

Day 11**Continue to Mulit Camp.**

From our camp we drop 350m, to where we have another long idyllic lunch spot. The final 2 hours of the day involve a hot 400m of ascent, to our final campsite at Mulit. Here we are completely surrounded by fantastic views all around us. 5 hours walking, 17kms, ascent 515m, descent 425m.

Mulit Camp or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Distance covered: 17 km / 10 miles

Day 12**Short walk to Adi Arkay where the trek finishes; drive to Gondar.**

Our final day's walking takes us to Adi Arkay from where we drive, via Debarq to Gondar (approx 6 hours driving), for a much deserved wash and rest! 2.5 hours walking, 7kms, ascent 50m, descent 440m.

Goha Hotel or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 7 km / 4 miles

Day 13**Fly to Addis Ababa; evening depart.**

Depending on flight times there may be time to relax and explore Gondar before we fly back to Addis. On our return to Addis day rooms will be provided for clients on the late flight, departing after midnight on day 14 (day 15 ex London). The trip ends in the evening in Addis

(please note the January Timkat Festival departure is one day longer as we spend 2 nights in Gondar before the trek).

Meals included: Breakfast

All ascents, descents and distances listed above have been measured by our local partners or tour leaders. Please note that different GPS measuring devices can give differing results dependent on the barometric pressures at the time. Measurements stated throughout these trips notes are given to help you understand the types of terrain and distances you will encounter.

Post-trip Extensions**Harar**

Standing on the eastern wall of the Great Rift Valley, Harar's location gives wonderful views of the surrounding country, with the vast Danakil desert to the north, the fertile Harar Mountains to the west, and the cattle-rich Ogaden Plains to the south. Here we discover a uniquely different Ethiopia in this sacred Muslim city of mosques, minarets and markets. It is a centre of Muslim learning, a city which once struck its own local currency and a place that still has its own unique language; long regarded by the outside world as a city of mystery and romance.

Please ask for prices.

Extension Day 1 - Overnight in Addis Ababa.

Main tour ends in Addis Ababa. Free time to relax.

Meals included: Breakfast

Extension Day 2 - Fly from Addis Ababa to Dire Dawa and transfer to Harar.

Founded in the early 12th century, the great walls surrounding Harar were built in the 1600s to keep out powerful neighbouring hostile groups. Harar remained an important centre of Muslim learning and trade throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Once an important centre of Islamic scholarship, the city was for many years closed to Christians and early explorers were forced to enter in disguise and at their own peril. We start our exploration with a guided tour of Harar to see the mosques and interesting old architecture of the town, including the old city wall and the house of the French poet Rimbaud. Harar is home to one of the stranger sights that you're likely to see in your journey through Ethiopia. Every night, a local man goes to the outskirts of the city and calls the hyenas from the surrounding area. This practice apparently dates from the 1950s, but was based on an older tradition was first started to discourage the hyenas from stealing local livestock. As the hyenas approach, the hyena man holds out pieces of meat to them, either in his hands or sometimes between his teeth, which the hyenas then take from him. This is a practice that is handed down from generation to generation and only one person fills the role at any one time. This evening you may wish to go and witness this bizarre ritual. Please note that these hyena are wild so you should keep a safe distance.

Meals included: Breakfast

Extension Day 3 - Harar.

A full day in Harar to explore the city to see the mosques and interesting old architecture of the town, including the old city wall and the house of the French poet Rimbaud, Harari Museums, Shrines & Tombs, New & Old Markets and traditional Adare houses. Our guide will be with you and ask him to take you where you want to see or visit.

Meals included: Breakfast

Extension Day 4 - Return to Addis.

Transfer back to Dire Dawa for the flight to Addis Ababa, you will have access to a day-use room in Addis Ababa before returning to the airport for your flight home.

Meals included: Breakfast

Please note that if you are flying with Ethiopian Airlines you will probably have to spend an extra night in Addis Ababa and catch a day-flight (on Extension Day 5) due the flight schedules.

This extension can also be done pre-tour.

Lalibela**Extension Day 1 - Fly from Gondar to Lalibela.**

Leaving the group in Gondar you fly to Lalibela and visit the first cluster of rock-hewn churches in the afternoon. These churches are Ethiopia's top attraction. The churches are mostly cut from solid rock, and therefore have the appearance of being underground. The most famous church is Bete Giorgis (St George, patron saint of Ethiopia), carved in the form of a Greek cross. It is exceptionally well preserved and visually almost flawless. The churches are quite dark inside, with little artificial light, and in some cases limited natural light. In each one there is a resident priest, who is usually happy to put on richly embroidered vestments and pose for a photo with his crosses, ancient bibles and sunglasses (due to constant camera flashes!).

Meals included: Breakfast

Extension Day 2 - Lalibela.

In the morning we enjoy an adventurous mule journey to visit Asetan Maryam (St Mary), built on a ridge with excellent views over the surrounding countryside. The trip takes approximately 5 hours (round trip) and will start early to avoid the heat. We will ride the mules up the mountain for approximately an hour and then hike the rest of the way up the mountain to the church. After visiting the church we then walk back down to the village on slippery mountain paths. This is a tough walk and is optional. If you choose not to do the walk there is plenty to do in Lalibela: There is the opportunity to walk into the town and visit some of the many shops or relax in a Tej café and sample the local fermented honey drink. In the afternoon we visit another cluster of churches that include the churches of Bete Gabriel and Rafael, Merkorous, Emanuel and Abba Libanos. Bete Emanuel is the best in this group and exceptionally carved with unique Axumite building features, such as the indentations on the walls, symbols of the multi-storey building taken from the stelae of Axum, monkey heads and false windows. The rest of the day is spent absorbing the atmosphere of this extraordinary town with its Tukul or round houses. Made as two storey buildings, they are unusual in Africa.

Meals included: Breakfast

Extension Day 3 - Return to Addis.

Fly back to Addis Ababa where you will have access to a day-use room before returning to the airport for your flight home.

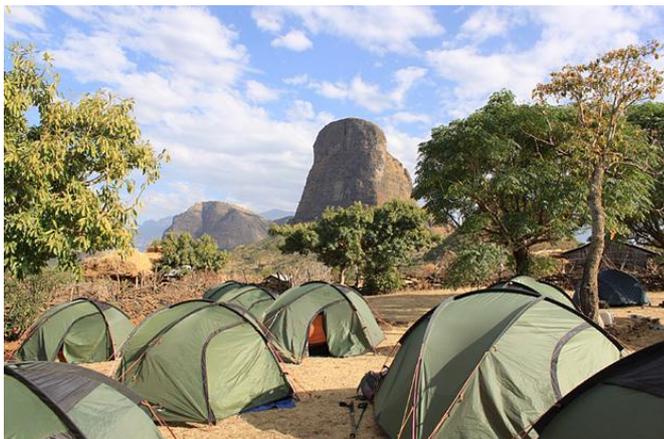
Meals included: Breakfast

Please note that if you are flying with Ethiopian Airlines you will probably have to spend an extra night in Addis Ababa and catch a day-flight (on Extension Day 4) due the flight schedules.

This extension can also be done pre-tour.

Accommodation

Wild Camping & Hotels



You will spend 9 nights wild camping and 3 nights in standard hotels. Tents will be erected by local staff members, who will also cook and wash up. Limited single accommodation is available and we can arrange extra accommodation before or after the trip.

Single accommodation (available on request).

Where a single supplement is available, paying for a single only guarantees a room for single use. It does not always mean a twin or double room will be provided for sole occupancy.

Single supplement from \$502.25 AUD

Food & Transport

Eating & Drinking

All breakfasts, 9 lunches, 9 dinners.

Hotel meals are generally good although they can lack variety. Local dishes tend to be very good if you like hot, spicy food although milder versions can be requested. Local food is traditionally eaten with the hands. The sour bread known as injera is used as a scoop for the casserole dishes known as wat. All food on trek is cooked for you and, although local produce can be a bit limited in the mountains, it is usually of a high standard. Vegetarians can be catered for, though you may find the diet somewhat limited. Clients who have specialist dietary requirements must contact us to discuss if they can be accommodated. Ethiopia is a poor country and they are not familiar with gluten or lactose free diets.

Please note that you should not drink the tap water in Ethiopia. In urban areas we suggest drinking bottled water. During the trek the water is taken from wells and streams and boiled/purified before drinking.

We also suggest that you bring snack food as this can be difficult to obtain outside of Addis Ababa.

Transportation

We will be using either Land Cruisers, minibuses or coaster buses depending on the condition of the road and the size of the group.

Weather & Seasonality

When to go

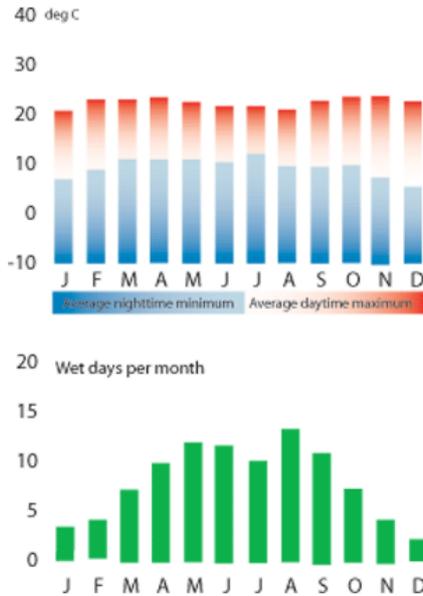
It can be very hot in the lowlands in December, January and February. The main rains come between June and late September, and while November is one of the coolest months of the year it is also generally one of the clearest. January and February will be hotter and much drier. The landscape is likely to be more arid than in October and November, which can still be quite lush after the rains. Please note that there is a possibility of rain on all departures (especially October).

Weather Information

It is likely to be sunny most of the time on all departures. Most of Ethiopia is high, so although the sun is powerful, the temperature is usually very pleasant. There is, however, the risk of sunburn at high altitude, so it is essential you ensure you are adequately protected. Nights are generally cool to cold, depending on altitude and frosts are possible overnight in the mountains, when the night temperature could drop to 0°C and exceptionally to -5°C. Daytime temperatures seldom rise above 25°C except at lower altitudes.

Weather Charts

Adidis Ababa



Joining Instructions

Travelling flight inclusive from London: 15 days

The group flight from London is an overnight flight departing the day before Day 1 of the itinerary.

Flights from London

We normally use the scheduled services of Ethiopian Airlines (depending on availability). As flight timings and schedules change regularly we recommend you call one of our specialist sales staff or your agent to confirm up-to-date timings. Please note timings may change at a later date and cannot be confirmed until approximately two weeks before departure.

Internal flights during the trip are normally with Ethiopian Airlines.

The internal flights are all fairly low level and give excellent views. We take two internal flights: Addis - Gondar and Gondar - Addis. Internal flights are subject to frequent changes of schedule and delays. These flights are included for Land Only clients and Package Clients.

Travelling land only: 13 days starting and ending in Addis Ababa

Your trip normally starts at our accommodation in Addis Ababa in the morning of Day 1 of the itinerary. Details of how to reach the start point are provided in the Final Joining Instructions - sent approximately two weeks before departure.

Regional Flights

The Flight Inclusive price is based on a London departure, but we are happy to tailor this to your local or regional airport. **Please ask about flights from local or regional airports. (/au/regionaldepartures)**

If booking regional flights other than with Exodus, you must allow a minimum connecting time (in addition to the international check-in time) of 1 hour at Gatwick, and 1.5 hours at Heathrow; this is longer than the official minimum, but baggage handling is known to be subject to delays.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers will be sent to you as part of our Final Joining Instructions. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

Transfers Details

Airport transfers are included for those on the group flights. Please note that transfers are not included for clients arriving on any other flight, even if Exodus has booked it.

If you require airport transfers, you may (by prior arrangement only) be able to join the group transfer. Transfers are arranged to coincide with the arrival time of the group flight - please check the group flight details 2 weeks before departure. If you do not take this transfer, or miss it, you must make your own way to the joining point at your own expense.

If you would like us to organise a private arrival transfer, the cost is £40 (subject to change) and is payable before departure.

Our hotel in Addis Ababa offers private departure transfers to the airport at no additional cost. We do not offer this service on arrival because collection from the airport is less reliable than collection from the hotel.

Please ensure that you provide us with all relevant information at least 2 weeks before departure.

Location start: Addis Ababa

Location end: Addis Ababa

What to Take

Essential Equipment

4 season sleeping bag
 Thermarest/sleeping mat
 3/4 season jacket
 Waterproofs (top and bottom)
 Good walking boots
 Thermal underwear
 2 x 1 litre water bottle
 Water purification tablets (Chlorine Dioxide tablets tend to be the best, as they work quickly/easily)
 Sunhat
 Sun cream
 Head torch
 Spare batteries
 Towel
 Hand gel
 River-crossing sandals (October departures) and for use in the lowlands
 We strongly recommend you bring a good supply of high-energy snacks for the longer walking days as these are not readily available locally.

We believe in reducing our negative environmental impacts wherever possible, this goes for when you need to spend a penny in the great outdoors! If no facilities are available there may come a time when you need to go to the loo behind a tree/bush/rock. To avoid leaving toilet paper behind we recommend taking biodegradable dog poo/sandwich bags with you. Once you have done your business you can pop the used toilet roll in here and take it off the mountain or trail at the end of the day and dispose of it when there are appropriate facilities available.

Internal flights in the destination country are subject to a weight limit of 20kg.

Optional Equipment

You may want to bring some old clothes/shoes to be left for local staff at the end of the trek.

Wet wipes

Walking poles

Ear plugs

If you book this trip, we provide an Exodus kitbag to pack your luggage in whilst on trek (unless on booking you stated a preference not to receive one). If you book via an agent, it is at the agent's discretion and you should speak directly to them to arrange delivery. Please note that if you book less than three weeks before the departure date we cannot guarantee that your kitbag will arrive before your trip starts, so if this is the case please contact us on datateam@exodus.co.uk (<mailto:datateam@exodus.co.uk>) to let us know. For full T&Cs see www.exodus.co.uk/kitbags ([/au/about-exodus/our-kitbags](http://www.exodus.co.uk/kitbags)).



Practical Information

Passport

Ethiopia

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for UK passport holders, and other nationalities should check with their travel agent or the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa

Ethiopia

All nationalities require a visa for Ethiopia which can be obtained before departure (at a cost of GBP26) or on arrival (at a cost of USD50 - be prepared to queue for a while). Please note that the Ethiopian government may change their visa on arrival policy at very short notice so make sure to check the latest advice. A certificate of Yellow Fever vaccination maybe required in order to obtain your visa, for instance if you're travelling from a country at risk of Yellow Fever transmission - please check with the embassy for the latest advice.

Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

For assistance with obtaining visas please call Travcour on 020 8543 1846 or visit their website: <http://www.travcour.com/page/tour-packs/exodus.php> (<http://www.travcour.com/page/tour-packs/exodus.php>)

Vaccination

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for this trip. Recommended vaccinations for this trip are: Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Yellow Fever.

Malaria prophylaxis is essential on this trip, and we suggest that you seek advice from your GP or travel health clinic about which malaria tablets to take.

Malaria exists in all areas of Ethiopia below 1800m and although we shall be spending a very short time at low altitudes, it is recommended that you take the appropriate prophylactic throughout the trip.

Bilharzia is known to occur in some of the lakes or rivers visited on this itinerary, we therefore advise all to take advice from your guide or leader locally before venturing for a swim.

Dengue fever and/or Chikungunya are known risks in places visited on this trip. Both are tropical viral diseases spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for either, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

Bilharzia is known to occur in some of the lakes or rivers visited on this itinerary, we therefore advise all to take advice from your guide or leader locally before venturing for a swim.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information. Please note: vaccinations that are routinely recommended to residents of the UK, North America or Australasia are not considered to form part of the travel health advice, and you should ensure these are kept up to date where necessary.

For additional information please visit: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries> (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>)

Altitude warning

This trip includes one or more nights over 3500m above sea level, where there is a genuine risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS). If left untreated AMS can be life-threatening. We expect most clients to experience some mild symptoms of altitude sickness, such as headaches and shortness of breath while walking or sleeplessness. Our leaders are trained to identify symptoms of severe AMS and if a client requires extra care, arrangements such as rapid descent will be made immediately.

On some days this trip climbs faster than commonly published ascent rate recommendations. Based upon an assessment by our external safety and medical advisors and our risk assessment process, we consider the ascent rate is acceptable due to the additional safety measures that are in place for our customers. All our trips operating at high altitude meet our internal altitude safety standards that minimise the risk of serious incidents occurring whilst travelling at altitude.

A number of medical conditions or medications can reduce your body's ability to acclimatise. This may affect your performance and make you more susceptible to AMS. If you are worried about any pre-existing conditions, such as heart conditions, or your overall physical ability, you must seek medical advice prior to booking. The drug Diamox (also known as acetazolamide and normally only available on prescription) has been shown to aid acclimatisation in some individuals, and therefore may reduce the risk of AMS. Clients considering using Diamox should speak to their doctor about the drug, its side-effects and a prescription. Please note that while we endeavour to assist all our clients in achieving their goals, there may be times when your leader decides to delay or stop your ascent based on your overall condition, or the onset of AMS.

Please note: that while we endeavour to assist all our clients in achieving their goals, there may be times when your leader decides to delay or stop your ascent based on your overall condition, or the onset of AMS.

Insurance - are you adequately covered?

It is a condition of joining any of our holidays that you must be fully insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs and air ambulance or helicopter rescue services where appropriate). On arrival in destination for your trip, you will be asked to present details to your leader or local representative of your policy.

If you are resident in the UK we strongly recommend the **Exodus travel insurance policy (/au/insurance)**, this is specifically designed to cover all activities on your trip. If arranging your own policy please ensure that you are covered for all activities that are part of the trip, optional activities that you intend to take part in and/or on high altitude itineraries, that you are covered up to the maximum altitude of the trip.

Local Time

Electricity

Ethiopia's Electricity: 220 Volts. Plug types C, E, F & L; establishments often take two round pin plugs.

Money

Ethiopia's Currency

The national currency of Ethiopia is the Ethiopian Birr (ETB), with an exchange rate at the time of publication (June 2017) of approximately 29 to the GBP, 23 to the USD, 17.5 to the CAD, 26 to the EUR, 17.6 to the AUD and 16.7 to the NZD.

ATM Availability

Travellers cheques, issued either by Thomas Cook or American Express can also be changed at the airport though this is time consuming and they can be difficult to cash anywhere else, we do not recommend using them. Please note that outside of Addis Ababa, credit cards are not accepted in most establishments. Ethiopia has a small network of ATMs and at the time of writing foreign cards were only accepted at some of the ATM's in Addis Ababa and in a few other major cities.

Birr may not be imported or exported. Ethiopia has strict currency regulations: infringement of these regulations could lead to serious consequences. We advise you to bring most of your funds in US\$ cash or Euros. Your US dollars must be dated after the year 2001 and be clean notes that are not ripped or marked. Sterling is exchanged at the airport but not widely changed in every town or hotel.

The airport bank is generally quite good and issues local currency in good condition. Other banks in Ethiopia can be very slow, especially at Christmas (and there is not a lot of time in the itinerary to visit them) and hotels do not generally offer such a good rate of exchange.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

Bring extra spending money if you wish to buy some local crafts such as jewellery, Ethiopian dresses, scarves, carved wooden crosses, basketwork, frankincense and Ethiopian coffee.

Tipping

Tipping of local staff is customary but of course is optional and dependent on the service received. Should you want to do so an average of about USD \$70 per client should suffice for the whole trip. Tipping the Western Leader is at your own discretion but USD \$30 is the recommended amount.



Responsible Tourism

At Exodus we believe in the power of Responsible Travel.

Every time we travel, we are part of a global movement that creates jobs, builds more sustainable societies, encourages cultural understanding and safeguards common natural and cultural heritage. To learn more about what Responsible Travel means to Exodus [click here \(https://new.exodus.co.uk/responsible-travel?__hstc=173457148.f2ba21d2ccabb491f5924f600f1a2876.1547513532465.1549242882401.1552542740574.5&__hssc=173457148.3.1552542740574&__hsfp=2902202](https://new.exodus.co.uk/responsible-travel?__hstc=173457148.f2ba21d2ccabb491f5924f600f1a2876.1547513532465.1549242882401.1552542740574.5&__hssc=173457148.3.1552542740574&__hsfp=2902202)

...

Exodus Community

Join the Exodus online community

Don't forget to visit the Community area on our website. You can view the range of Exodus videos and podcasts, read trip write-ups which have featured in the national media and take advantage of some special deals on travel gear and equipment.

In the Community Travel Forum you'll find the Departure Lounge where you can discuss your trip with fellow travellers before you depart. When you get back from your holiday remember to upload your images to the relevant trip page on our website. This helps other people see what our holidays are really like and you'll be entered automatically into our monthly photo competition.

To make full use of the **Community (/au/community)** you'll need to join My Exodus. It's free, registration is simple and easy, so what are you waiting for?

Important Information

On all guided trips

Although our leaders are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorise them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

Although rarely enforced, by booking this trip you agree to section 16 of our Booking Conditions which clearly states that our leaders have the authority to do this. In these circumstances we will ensure anyone sitting out is safely provided for and offered alternative options where possible. Refunds will not be provided for activities missed and customers may be liable for additional costs incurred.

On all trips

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call the Exodus office and ask to speak to one of the experts on this itinerary.

In an emergency, please contact our 24 hour out of hours service on +44 (0) 844 326 7041.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read the warnings in the **essential information (/au/about-exodus/essential-information)** in the brochure.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure or website, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure and website. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

As fuel prices, airport taxes and exchange rates fluctuate, and airlines manage their rates to match demand, it is proving harder than ever to guarantee our Flight Inclusive prices. Although we endeavour to keep our website as accurate as possible, daily fluctuations mean that our Flight Inclusive price may be out of date. For accurate prices we recommend that you contact one of our Travel Experts, or your Travel Agent.

TRAVEL AWARE -STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the NHS have up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/> (<https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>)

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/> (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>)

Advice can change so check regularly for updates.

For all latest travel information about your holiday, please visit our **Travel Safety Advice (/au/travel-safety-advice)** page.



How to Book

1. Check availability

Go online to check availability, or contact us by phone or email.

2. Secure your place

You can provisionally hold a place on this trip, usually for between three and seven days.

3. Complete your booking and payment

When you're ready to book, go to [www.exodus.co.uk \(/au/homepage\)](http://www.exodus.co.uk/au/homepage) for online booking, book over the phone or you can complete a booking form (available online or on request by calling us). We accept all major credit and debit cards, or you can pay by cheque. Book with confidence: Exodus is fully licensed and bonded as a tour operator. We hold Air Traffic Organisers Licence (ATOL) number 2582 issued and bonded with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). We are also bonded to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and we are members of the Federation of Tour Operators (FTO) and ABTA - The Travel Association. This means you can book your Exodus holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid from the "Current as" date on page one. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure; if there are any updates that significantly impact the inclusions or itinerary bookers will be written to separately. All customers will also receive a link to the most up-to-date version of the Trip Notes with their Final Joining Instructions pre-travel.

Version 1