



Ethiopia

POP 85 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Places for Nature

- ➔ Simien Mountains National Park (p583)
- ➔ Nechisar National Park (p119)
- ➔ Abiata-Shala Lakes National Park (p587)
- ➔ Lake Ziway (p587)

Best Places for Culture

- ➔ Lalibela (p585)
- ➔ Rock-hewn churches of Tigray (p585)
- ➔ Lower Omo Valley (p588)
- ➔ Harar (p586)
- ➔ Aksum (p583)

Why Go?

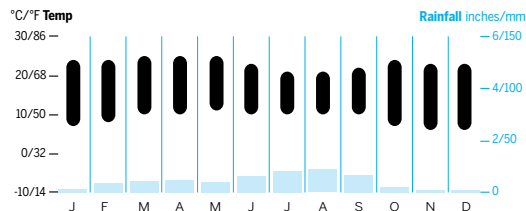
Ethiopia is truly a world apart. Here there are over two millennia worth of ancient treasures scattered about, from the giant obelisks and hidden tombs of the legendary Queen of Sheba, to castles that would make Camelot jealous and the breathtaking rock-carved churches of Lalibela, the New Jerusalem.

Not to be outdone by human craftsmen, Mother Nature also let her creative juices flow here. East Africa's great Rift Valley has left some of its most memorable signatures in Ethiopia; milky brown lakes scar the south and deep canyons and steep peaks wrinkle the land...well, just about everywhere.

Though you can hit the highlights in a couple of weeks, it takes three or four for proper exploration. But no matter how long you stay, you'll probably wish for just a few more days.

When to Go

Addis Ababa



Jan Perfect weather and the festivals of Leddet and Timkat take place.

Mar–Apr Fasika (Orthodox Easter) brings huge crowds of pilgrims to Ethiopian churches.

Sep Everything is green after the rains and the colourful Meskel festival is celebrated.

The international boundaries on this map serve as indications only. The Ethiopia-Eritrea border awaits formal UN demarcation.



Ethiopia Highlights

- 1 Immerse yourself in Christianity's most raw and powerful form at the rock churches of **Lalibela** (p585).
- 2 Search for hidden treasure in the dank gloom

of ancient tombs and ponder the mysteries of the stelae of **Aksum** (p583).

- 3 Lace up your boots to hike through the home of magnificent wildlife and

unparalleled panoramas of Abyssinian abysses in the sublime **Simien Mountains National Park** (p583).