




ሰራን/ አስገብኝና የመኪና ኪራይ
Serene Tour
& Car Rent

Serene Tours and Car Rent

Tel: +251 911 239371, +251 930 012709, +251 911 411600

P.O.Box: 2709 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

E-mail: info@serenetourethiopia.com

www.serenetourethiopia.com



Serene Tours and car rental

Serene Tours and car rental was founded in 2005. Our major objective is to provide highly-qualified service for our honored clients from around the world and make their stay in Ethiopia the most inspirational, agreeable and unforgettable experience.

Serene Tours and car rental is a competent and passionate Ethiopian car rent and Tour Company, established by experienced that works in tourism era for 12 years in different top tourism companies in Ethiopia.

The company has 12 full time working and 15 freelances' staffs. On the car rental sector, so far, there are 20 different vehicles which give services for both rental as well as tourism purposes. Our vehicles are suitable for Ethiopian climate and road condition.

ETHIOPIA

The oldest designation of the present day territory of the country was Punt (meaning a blessed land and realm of the gods) given by the ancient Egyptians. Ethiopia's ancient name Abyssinia, some say, referred to people who used to inhabit part of the land known as the Habeshat ('land of the abyss'). Others claim that the name was given by the Greeks in view of its deep gorges and precipitous features.

The name Ethiopia (sun burnt), which is mentioned in the Bible more than forty times, was also originated from the Greeks.

In antiquity Ethiopia figures in primacy and taken as crucible in the development of human civilization on the planet; a fact confirmed, among others, by a leading American Egyptologist, Professor Henry Breasted: "Ethiopia gave to the world first idea of right or wrong and laid the basis of and all true culture and civilization". In one documentary, BBC tells us how the present binary (0 and 1) computer works according to the approach used by ancient Ethiopia which didn't involve zero.

Indeed, Ethiopia's archeological legacy has earned the accolade cradle of mankind. For instance, it has as many as eight archeological, natural and historical UNESCO world heritage sites.

Physically, Ethiopia is geographical anomaly in predominantly flat Africa: It accounts for 80% of the continent's high mountain ranges being in the tropics. This has endowed it with such unique Afro-Alpine ecosystems like the Bale Moorland and Simien Mountain. Deeping as low as 125 meters (one of, if not the lowest on earth) below sea level, the Danakil Depression and its dazzling volcanic makes it simply other worldly.

About 4,460 meters, Ras Dashen is the highest peak in Ethiopia (the fourth in Africa) and here Dallol is the lowest at 125 meters below sea level. Ethiopia is one of the world's six Pavlov centers for biodiversity. It is the source of such important crops like barely, coffee and wheat, according to some, even agriculture itself and domestic animals. The country hosts 845 bird and 260 wildlife species with 7 endemic mammals and 27 endemic birds.

Most of the country is featured by an elevated tableland with an average altitude of 2,200 meters divided by the Great Rift Valley into the Central and Eastern Highlands. The tableland is cut and crossed by deep gorges and valleys with lowlands all round its borders. Ethiopia is referred to as the water tower of Africa for its 10 big river systems, 38 lakes and annual torrential monsoon rains (June-August) and the little rains (March-April).

Located at the crossroads of north-south and east-west movement of ideas and peoples, and what is more, serving as a bridge between Africans, Ethiopia's racial makeup and cultural content is eclectic.





Ethnically Ethiopia's 80 tribal groups belong mainly to three language families: Semitic (Amharas, Tigreans, Gurages being the major ones); Cushitic or Hametic (such as Oromos, Sidamas, Afars and Agews); and, Nilotic-Omoti (the peoples of southwest or Omo river valley and in the west along the Sudan border).

According to a recent census, the Oromo constitutes 40%, Amhara 27%, Somali 6.2%, Tigre 6.1%, Sidama 4%, Gurage 2.5%, Wolaita 2.3%, Afar 1.7% and all the other minority groups make the rest.

Ethiopia's recent discoveries have given us the oldest human tools (5.5 million years) and fossil (4.4 million years), which have led to the view that all the remaining question of paleoanthropologist may be answered in its Great Rift Valley.

Of the 5 to 10 thousand languages under eight classification estimated to exist in the world, 116 of them are officially recognized. As a whole, Africa claims

some 2,000 of them under six main language families, out of which eight are spoken in Ethiopia. Among the four mother languages found in the continent Africa, two of them (Afro-Asian and Nilo-Saharan) are represented in the 80 ethnic dialects spoken all over the country. Ethiopia is the only country in Africa and one of the thirteen in the world that has an alphabet along with its own national calendar with 12 months having 30 days each, and the 13th month with five days (six in a leap year).

In addition to other traditional belief systems, the three religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam have existed in Ethiopia as their original manifestation. Having been recognized by the state of Israel in 1974 as genuine Jews, Ethiopia's Felashas (Black Jews) community has almost all migrated to Israel.

According to the recent statistics, (2011), of the country's 90 million people, 43.5% belonged to Ethiopian Tewahido Orthodox Church, 33.9% to Islam, 18.6% to Protestant, 2.6% to traditional, 0.7 to Catholic and the rest to other faiths.

Ethiopia claims possessing two highly valued and precious Judaean-Christian heritage: the Ark of the Covenant (given to Moses by God), and the fragment of the True Cross, one of the arms of the cross on which Jesus was crucified.

Ethiopia is in the tropic between the equator and Tropic of Cancer, having three different climate zones, two rainy periods, and four seasons.

The three climatic zones are:

Tropical (Kolla): below 1,830 meters, 19 elevations with an average annual temperature of about 27°C and an average annual rainfall of 510 millimeters. The Danakil Depression at about 125 meters below sea level is the hottest in Ethiopia with temperatures climbing up to 50°C.

Subtropical (Woina Dega): climate represents the highlands featuring 1830-





2440 meters in elevation, an average annual temperature of 22°C and average annual rainfall between 510 and 1530 millimeters.

The cool or Montare (Dega), is above 2,440 meters and with an average annual temperature of 16, and rainfall being between 1,270 and 1,280 millimeters.

The months of June, July and August are featured by heavy and torrential daily monsoon rains, while March-April by light as well as monsoon rains. The four seasons are Winter (June, July and August), Spring (September, October and November), Summer (December, January and February) and Autumn (March, April and May). The latter is the hottest month in Ethiopia.

Traditional agriculture is still in the mainstay of Ethiopia's national economy. The country has one of the earth's most fertile soil and no less than 16 different crops at different times of the year. However, of the 120 million hectare of the land, only 14% is being exploited.

The country's main exports are coffee, leather and leather products, textiles, pulses, oilseeds, livestock and the mild psychotropic plant, chat, among others.

Ethiopia's natural resources include small reserves of gold, platinum, copper, potash, natural gas, and hydro power.

Until 1974, Ethiopia had the longest monarchical dynasty in the world. This was supplanted by military-led Marxist-Leninist socialist state following the revolution that deposed the last Emperor, Haile Selassie.

Today Ethiopia is under federal system, with nine regional states and two autonomous municipalities-Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa.

The most prominent historical bearers, present dynamics, living realities and vital facts that interplay to inform, intrigue and infuse your movement in

Ethiopia. What is more, with meaning and understand the specific attractions, tour destinations, the relics and treasures there in serve as convenient venues and natural focuses for your discovery of Ethiopia in depth with Ramidus Ethiopia Tour and Travel.

Place of interest

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa (literally new flower), named by Empress Taitu in the 1880s is undergoing comprehensive transformation as the nation's capital.

The fact of being the nation's political, commercial and cultural hub and Africa's political and developmental activities and deliberations, contemporary demands that are deriving its rapid and extensive development is highly visible throughout the city.

The architecture of Addis Ababa reflects four different periods: The Menilik period from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Haile Selassie's reign of pre and post occupation, the Italian period 1936-1941; the Dergue (the military socialist regime) and what is and has been happening since 1990.

At 2,200 meters above sea level, Addis Ababa is the third highest after La Paz and Lima in the world. In terms of diplomatic centers and hosting large number of embassies and international missions, Addis Ababa ranks third in the world, following New York and Geneva. It is also the third largest in hosting larger population, after Cairo and Lagos in Africa with estimated population of 3.5 to 5 million.

Arat kilo's commemoration statue was erected for Ethiopian patriots who resisted the Italian invasion and of course ensured its independence.



For Ethiopians, a lion has significant place in their history. It is the symbol of heroism and endurance. During the imperial eras, it was also the epithet of the Solomonic Dynasty, the conquering Lion of Judah. Following that, there are two lions sculptures, the first located near the National Theatre and the other situated in front of the Ethio-Djibouti Railway Station.

The graceful National Museum at 'sidist kilo', in addition to displaying a replica of Lucy (an early hominid 3.2 million old), samples the country's historical, cultural and archeological heritages.

The octagonal St George Cathedral situated at Arada (the old center of the city) houses a small museum. The church's interior is decorated with murals painted by Ethiopia's Honorable World Laureate Artist Afework Tekle.

Institute of Ethiopia studies (IES) which is located in Addis Ababa University (earlier, Emperor Haile Selassie's palace), is an ethnographic museum and thus houses the best collections and other processional artifacts.

Merkato: with its amazingly busy hustle and bustle is the commercial center of the national economy and Ethiopia's vital link to the global market. Nevertheless the current nation wide redevelopment dynamics has and is completely transforming Merkato's description as one of the largest open market in Africa.

The world no longer applies to even though driving through it is interesting enough and well worth the time it takes.

The holy Trinity is one of the largest and most decorated modern Ethiopian Orthodox Cathedral; it is also the burial place of prominent figures of the country, including the last Emperor, Haile Selassie, his wife Empress Menen and other highly honored patriots.



Lalibela (A.A to Lalibela -701km)

It is unfortunate that the rock hewn churches of Lalibela, which were carved from single blocks of stones, have not been taken as the architectural wonders of the world. There are some other Rock Hewn Churches in many parts of Ethiopia. But so many in one place and with such architectural finesse are to be nowhere. They are indeed incredible and breathe taking specially when considered their location.

The legend has more than history, has it that the eleven (some make them 12, other 13) churches were all built by the famous Zagwe priest King, Lalibela. It's said the rock hewn churches were built in 22 years with mortals walking during the day and angels at night.

The Lalibela churches are of three types: Monolithic (Churches of Medhanialem, Bete Mariam, Bete Giorgis and Bete Emanuel). These are free standing connected to the standing rock only at their base.

Semi-monolithic (Churches of Abba Libanos and Bete Rufael-Gebrael) mostly free standing connected with the surrounding rock.

The third types are cave churches which are curved inside the rock.

The Castle of Gondar (A.A to Gondar -738km)

The Castles of Gondar are today the most visible expression of the relatively near past history of Ethiopia. Gondar is located about 748 km from Addis Ababa. The castles of king Fasil's legacy dated back to the 16th century. AD. There exists no instance of the kind in Africa. Around the castle are found churches of the 16th Century, the most spectacular being Debre Birhan Selassie. The magnificent paintings of angels, facing the ceilings of the church are still incredibly graceful; may be miraculously spared Gondar's destruction through different time, the latest being the bombardment of the royal air force to dislodge the Italians who used the castles compound as their headquarter during World War II. Gondar represents a rare care of Ethiopian history to which the nation had cherished for some 200 years. The era was featured by prosperity and leisure that facilitated a renaissance and yet conscious development of culture expressed by art, architecture, music, learning, scholarly study and literature with their own design-a mode known as Gonderien style.

The Bale Mountain (A.A to Bale Mountain -455km)

With altitude ranging from 1,500m to 4,377m, with the second highest peak Tullu Dermtu at 4,377m Bale Mountains constitute the largest Afro-Alpine moorlands of Africa. Water wise, they are crucial in what happen in the horn of Africa. Most of the Bale Mountains are incorporated into the Bale National Park, which is the largest Afro- Alpine ecosystem in the whole continent.

Over 60 mammals and 260 bird species have been recorded in the park. Of



these, three of the animals (the mountain Nyala, The Red Fox and Minelike's Bushbuck) including no less than 14 of the 23 endemic birds are housed in the park.



Semen Mountain National Park (A.A to Semen M -841km)

The Semen highlands constitute one of the major mountain massifs in Africa and are said to be among the most spectacular sceneries in the world.

They are one or two of Ethiopia's unique Afro-Alpine ecosystem with distinct and endemic wild life, birds and plant species; the Garado or bleeding heart baboon and the Semen Red Fox are the most well known.

Most of the summits are about 4,000 meter with Ethiopia's highest peak Ras Dashin towering at 4,543 (14,904 ft) in the "Roof of Africa."

The semen Mountains were the first to be recognized as Ethiopia's natural UNESCO world heritage site.

National Park

The major national parks of Ethiopia are: Bale mountains, Semen Mountains, Nechsar , Mago, Omo and Awash . The oldest and most developed of theses is Awash National park, embracing the Fantalle Volcano, numerous mineral hot springs and extraordinary volcanic formations. It lies to the south of Awash River and 225km east from the capital, Addis Ababa. Omo National Park on the west side of the Omo River is the largest, most remote and densely crowded by wildlife.

Ethiopia is most endowed with animal varieties (270 species) and birds (835 species), than none of the flocks of their counter parts in East Africa. The magnetic appeal Ethiopia parks are the distinct fauna and flora. The Nechsar, Mago and /Omo are in what is labeled as Africa's last remaining wildlife zone.

What is more, 45 of the country's 80 ethnic groups, perhaps the continents



most traditional tribal peoples, great for nature camping and photo safari, are found within and outside the parks.

Afar: Lucy, Erta-alle and Dallol

Afar in the Rift valley is the archeological site , 'gold mine' as it isn the origin of the oldest (5.5 million) stone tools and gave birth to the oldest most complete hominid fossils Ardi Ramidus (4.4million) and Lucy (3.2million) years old . Afar Region also houses Ert-alle, a lake fire molten lava that has been glowing and spiting fire since millennia. At 125 meters below sea level, therefore, the area-Dallol is perhaps the lowest place on earth.

Timket

On the 18th of January, all 'Tabots' of the different churches are taken to a customary space with a water with the priests chanting and the next morning and alter the holy mass, the water is blessed and everybody is sprinkled by the high priest. The follows the procession back to the church, in great pageantry, singing and dancing by all the people. The best places for attending Timket are taken to Addis Ababa and Gondar.

Epiphany locally known as Timket is one of the most colorful holidays of Ethiopia. Timket is celebrated to honor of the day of Christ's Baptism by St. Johns. On the 18th of January all Tabots (the replica of the Ark of Covenant) are taken to pre arranged open areas where they would pass the night there. On the morrow, the same Tabots, would return back to their original destination. The entire two way journey is incredibly graceful and colorful. Throughout, the respective Tabots are accompanied by tens of thousands of merry followers singing religious songs, hymens and ululations; splendid and unique ceremony

of Ethiopians. The unadulterated biblical atmosphere and vivid local color of the Timket celebrations provided an ideal opportunity to observe the sacred ceremony of Ethiopians who magnificently interested the New Testament with the old whose root goes back to man's very early years.

Meskel-The finding of the True Cross

Ethiopia celebrates the feast of Mesqel (cross) commemorating the founding of the True Cross on which Jesus was crucified. The Cross was identified and dug out by Queen Helen (mother of the first Roman Christian Emperor Constantine) from where it had been buried as garbage dump outside Jerusalem. Later, the then power full Ethiopia claimed part of the Cross (locally called gimade-mesqel), transported it from Egypt and finally buried it safely in one of its sacred places, the Church of Gishen Mariam, Wollo. Since then, Mesqel has been an official, historical and religious holy day for Ethiopian Orthodox Christians.



The practice of the Demera (bonfire) was imitated from Queen Helena who had been advised to light up a bonfire and follow the direction of the smoke to identify the location where the Cross was buried. This is what the colorful Demera (bonfire) of the Meskel celebration represents. Meskel is celebrated on the 26th and 27th of September, through out Ethiopia, most prominently at Gishen Mariam attended by millions of Orthodox Christians drawn from all corners of the country, including many tourists across the world.

Lake Tana, Nile and the Nile Falls, Tis-Isat

Lake Tana is Ethiopia's largest fresh water, the source of the Blue Nile locally known as Abay (Falls of Rivers). Lake Tana is dotted with some 37 islands, housing mainly churches and monasteries, what is more hiding treasures of medieval art, religious parchment books, icons and records of great historical interest and value. Among the most known and easily accessible ones island churches within Tan Lake are: Kibran Gabriel, Ura Kidanemihret, Narga Selassie, Daga Estifanos, Azwa Mariam and Bete Mariam.

Blue Nile is longest river in the world. Before it joins the White Nile which flows from Lake Victoria at Khartoum, it runs for 8, 00 km within the territory of Ethiopia through one of the world's deepest and most dramatic gorges. The graceful journey of Blue Nile is culminated in the far north where it empties itself to water the land of the Pharaohs, Egypt.

The Nile Fall: the English man, James Bruce, who discovered the source of the Blue Nile, described the The Nile Fall (locally called Tis-Isat, meaning smoking water) as "one of the most stupendous sights of the creation"

Historical Sites Yeha

Beginning with Ethiopia's recorded history, the itinerary of the historic rout takes you to Yeha. Here you may see the towering ruins of Yeha's Temple of the Moon, an imposing rectangular edifice built more than 2,500 years ago. The temple speaks eloquently, specially the stone an early high civilization of Ethiopia although little is actually known about the people who built this great edifice. Yeha's Temple, is the oldest standing structure in Ethiopia.

Axum (A.A to Axum -1024km)

Axum is the post Yeha center of the Ethiopian nation and its 3000 years old civilization. It is frequently referred to as "the scared city of the Ethiopians". The description idols evoke its significance to the legacy and symbolic meaning to the countries as depository of the original Ark of Covenant. In the Ethiopia tradition it was the capital from which the legendary queen of Sheba in the 10th Century BC organized her expedition to the court of Solomon in Jerusalem. At the height of its glory, the Axumite Empire was one of the four powers of the world along Egypt and Persia ruling both sides of the Red Sea and controlling





the East and West trade routes. The mysterious monolithic obelisks still stand today as testimony for Axum's great and sophisticated civilization.

Axum's mysterious monolithic stele, hewn from single granite stone pieces are carved to resemble multi-story building. To the amazement of visitors, several of them weigh more than 500 tones and stand twenty meters high.

The Walled City of Harar (A.A to Harar -526km)

Harar recently celebrated the 1000th anniversary of its establishment. In tourism terms, Harar is taken as indispensable part of the historic route offering Axum, Lalibela, Bahir Dar and Gonder.



The city has a long history as an important center of Islamic learning and trading gateway into the winter lands of Africa. It is an independent sultanate-with its currency among other thing-until its incorporation into Ethiopia in the 19th Century. It had been occupied by the Egyptians for the Ottoman Turks. Harar is the fourth sacred city after Medina and Jerusalem and a center of pilgrimage for Ethiopian and some East African Muslims. Harar has over 90 mosques, saints' mausoleums and shrines. It is kaleidoscope of colors and a pot of peoples and their culture bringing together. The Harari are its predominant ancient natives and the only urbanized ethnic group from their beginning. At an elevation of 1856 meters, Harar has one of the most pleasant and constant climates in Ethiopia.

The old harar (Feres Megala) has six gates and a maze of 368 alleyways through traditional Harare houses some of which 700-800 years old.

Harar is also famous for its basketwork, pedigree silver Jeweller, longberry coffee and the mild stimulant, chat.

The Tabot-The Holy Ark of the Covenant

Axum is renowned for its cathedral of St. Mary of Zion, where the original Tabot (Ark of the Covenant) is housed. The Ark of the Covenant contains the Tables of the Ten Commandments given to Moses at Sinai by God himself. How such an important and sacred relief of the Judeo- Christian here it came is mystery to Ethiopia historians and believes alike. For orthodox Ethiopian's however neither its coming to Ethiopia nor its existence in the country are no mystery. The original Tabot was brought by king Minilik I (the son of King Solomon of Jerusalem and Queen of Sheba of Ethiopia) and has been safely kept in the church of Mary of Zion, Axum.



The Monastery of Debre Damo

Coming to another mystery of Ethiopia, we find the monastery of Debre Damo, which one can access only by a rope lowered and pulled by monks and deacons dwelling at the tableland atop the mountain. Built in 6th century, the monastery is possibly the oldest in Ethiopia and it possess some of the most ancient illuminated parchment manuscripts and sacred icons along with very intriguing wood carving on the original church ceiling.

Ahmed Al-Negash

The town and mosques of Ahmed Al negash are those curious and interesting phenomena of Ethiopia located in the area of Tigray in Northern part of the country. The mosque is one of the sacred sites for Muslims. On top of Al-negash mosque has remained as reminiscence for the arrival of the first group of Muslims in Ethiopia. It was Prophet Mohammed who ordered his followers to stay in Ethiopia where they would be safe until the then Muslim persecution subside.

Sheik Hussein (A.A to Sheik Hussen -702km)

By its dramatic remote venue, the Biblical quaint antics of pilgrims, the religious, quasis-religious and magico-religious performances that takes place for seven or eight day festival. Sheik Hussein has been one of the most revered public manifestations in Ethiopia, particularly among the Muslims. The shrine and celebrations are dedicated to the Muslim Holy man Sheik Hussein (coming from Harar) who had led a hermit's life at the present festival site. Pilgrims to Sheik Hussein drawn from all over Ethiopia including the neighboring countries of Djibouti, Kenya and the Sudan, walk for months since using transport is 'haram' for all pilgrim. Sheik Hussein Dire, the town, where the shrine is located and where the celebrations takes place, is some 140 km from the city of Bale

Goba and some kilometers from the caves of Sof-Omar (another Muslim shrine) and a spiritus loci for pilgrimage. Note that it is difficult to know exactly, when the festival happens every year as the time of Islamic holidays do not fall on pre-determined regular dates. The two annual celebrations of Sheik Hussien lie at the end of August or early September, and in March-April.

Note that it is difficult to know exactly, when the festival happens every year as the time of Islamic holidays do not fall on pre-determined regular dates. The two celebrations Sheik Hussein come at the end of August or early September and in March-April.

Sof Omar

Sof Omar, a tiny Muslim village in Bale, is the site of an amazing complex of natural caves, cut by the Wab River as it found its way from the nearby mountains. The settlement, as well as the religious site, is named after a local Sheikh.

Armed with torches and official map, visitors to Sof Omar make their way underground, far into the bowels of the earth, beside a subterranean stream. It is where that one can witness an extraordinary number of arched portals, high eroded ceilings and deep echoing chambers.

Of the most spectacular and extensive underground caverns in the world, the Sof Omar cave system, an extraordinary natural phenomenon of breathtaking beauty, is to be found at 120 kilometers (74 miles) eastward from Gobba, in Bale, in a low valley filled with thorn trees and weird funnels of termite hills.

Kulebi Gabriel (A.A to kulebi -464km)

The ceremony of Kulebi, representing Angle Gabriel, is a recent phenomenon, but it tops the most ancient and sacred shrines for millions of Ethiopian Orthodox Christian who are travelling to the site from all corners of the country. There are as many who go there for religious reasons (for supplication answered) and pilgrimage as much as for fun and socializing. In a matter of a week, what is usually just a roadside rural parish church, the entire surroundings transform into a several hundred thousand urban conglomerate, from sweet shops to night clubs when the celebration takes place, twice a year (December and July).

The most interesting aspects of the Kulebi phenomena is the incredible strength-be it struggling- of the urbanite shaft and weakling-trudging, the 68 kilometers from the nearby big town Dire Dawa to Kulebi Church and the stream of the night to bumpes traffic of the same road and distance. Although the kulebi festival is an orthodox Christian ones, devotes and pilgrims to Kulebi consists of other religious and faiths.



Culture

Ethiopia is known for its harmony in diversity: in terms of ethnic groups, of language, of religion and culture. There are more than 80 ethnic groups and about 200 dialects that are spoken throughout the country. Making cultural tours to Southern Ethiopia, one witnesses the splendid culture of the Bena, Hamar, Mursi, Karo, Geleb, Arbore & Borenas; in lower Omo vally the Mursi, the Hamar and/or Surma Tribes, and in Western Ethiopia the Surma, the Gambella. Since long years, tourists have been flocked to witness the beauty of the South and their respective unadulterated life style and traditional ceremonies; and indeed it should never be missed.





Serene Tours and Car Rent

Tel: +251 911 239371, +251 930 012709, +251 911 411600

P.O.Box: 2709 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

E-mail: info@serenetourethiopia.com

www.serenetourethiopia.com

