



Rastafari Roots & Culture Tour

25 February - 11 March 2017

Rastafari Roots

Ethiopia is a very important place for the Rastafari Movement and the international Reggae music scene. It is the birthplace of His Majesty Haile Selassie I and the country He has ruled over for decades. Up to today Ethiopia carries His spiritual and cultural legacy. Although both Reggae music and the Rastafari faith have originated in Jamaica, Ethiopia is considered to be its spiritual heartland.

Ethiopia and His Majesty are probably the most central themes in the whole international Reggae music scene. Yet, although international Reggae artists sing about Ethiopia all the time, and Reggae lovers cheer to the symbols and wear the colors, only very few people actually travel there and explore the cultural and spiritual meaning of the subject that they praise. We want to change that, and invite you to be part of this.



Rastafari Tour

In cooperation with the Rastafari community of Ethiopia we organize tours to explore the spiritual and cultural heritage of the Rastafari faith. Local Rastafari guides will lead travellers along different places that are meaningful for the Rastafari movement and offer explanations from historical and contemporary context. Furthermore they will introduce the guests to the local Rastafari community, a small but dedicated and highly spiritual group of people that have come from all corners of the world to settle in what they call a 'Holy Land'. The guests can engage with them in conversation and for example join in meditation sessions and moments of prayer. Cultural excursions and personal encounters are combined with visits to sites of natural beauty and of cultural-historic significance. The tours offers the guests a meaningful and authentic introduction with Ethiopia from the context of the Rastafari movement and Reggae music.

For who?

Anyone who is interested in the Rastafari movement in Ethiopia. The tours are fit for people who already have profound connections with the Rastafari faith and are looking for spiritual deepening and elaboration of their knowledge, but also people who are only remotely familiar with the concepts of Rastafari (through Reggae music for example) and are curious about it. Our guides will adapt to the level of understanding and personal interests of each individual guest.



Travel information

- Start date: 25 February 2017
 Duration: 11 - 16 days, extensions are possible
 Travel guidance: English speaking professional tour leaders from the Rastafari Community in Ethiopia
- Places:
- Addis Ababa
 - Shashamene
 - Wondo Genet and Awassa
 - Chenchä
 - Arba Minch
 - Harar
- Price:
- 11 days: € 1099 per person*
 - 16 days: € 1599 per person

* based on two people sharing, look at the last page for more detailed information



Program:

- 25-2: Arrival Addis Ababa
- 26-2: Addis Ababa
- 27-2: Addis Ababa
- 28-2: Addis Ababa - Shashamene
- 1-3: Shashamene
- 2-3: Shashamene
- 3-3 Shashamene - Chenchä
- 4-3: Chenchä - Arba Minch
- 5-3 Arba Minch
- 6-3: Arba Minch - Addis Ababa

Extension

- 7-3: Addis - Awash NP
- 8-2: Awash NP - Harar
- 9-3: Harar
- 10-3: Ejersa Goro
- 11-3: Dire Dawa - Addis Ababa

The Ethiopia Xperience (TEX)

The tour is organized by The Ethiopia Xperience (TEX), a company specialized in community based tourism and development projects in Ethiopia. Next to organizing tours TEX guides several local development projects, mainly aimed at people who have disabilities. Directly and indirectly TEX employs almost 50 people, and reaches more than 1300 people with their projects, most of which have a disability. A part of the revenues of this tour will benefit the development of these activities. If you are interested, we can show you our projects when you are in Ethiopia.





Day to day program

25 February

You arrive in Addis Ababa. We will pick you up from the airport and take you to the Orange Lion Guesthouse, our comfortable base in Addis Ababa.

Accommodation: Orange Lion Guesthouse

Meals: -



26 February

We start our day with a breakfast and a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony. Our team of Rastafari guides and other staff members will introduce themselves and you can get acquainted with the rest of the group. Then we go explore the city in 'the footsteps of His Majesty'. We visit several sites that are of meaning for the Rastafari community, like old imperial palaces, statues, museums, etc. On the way our guides will teach us some Rastafari vocabulary and introduce us with the basic principles of their faith. A lunch is provided.

Accommodation: Orange Lion Guesthouse

Meal: Breakfast + Lunch



27 February

Today is the second day of the City Tour in 'the footsteps of His Majesty' in Addis Ababa, we will explore more sites and meet local people and communities. If possible we will visit a recording studio where local Reggae musicians and other artists record their music, and we can stroll on the largest market of Africa. We end the day with a walk on Entoto mountain, from where we can enjoy a spectacular view over the city and visit and old Palace of Menelik II, the predecessor of His Majesty Haile Selassie I. A lunch is provided. In the evening we will can explore the nightlife of Addis Ababa, if possible we can go to a live performance of a local Reggae band.

Accommodation: Orange Lion Guesthouse

Meals: Breakfast + Lunch



28 February

Today we leave Addis Ababa and travel south towards the town of Shashamene. In this town His Majesty Haile Selassie I gave refuge to Rastafarians from all over the world, and until today it holds the largest Rastafari community in Ethiopia. About 800 Rastafarians live there, it's a strong community highly dedicated to their values and faith.



We travel along the King's highway, a road that was built in the time of the Emperor, and we pass several sites of interest. We enjoy beautiful aerial views and we can take a plunge in a lake. At the end of the day we arrive in Shashamene. We will stay in a Rastafari owned hotel and in the evening we organize an music session with local musicians.

Accommodation: Lilly of the Valley hotel
Meal: Breakfast + Lunch

1 March

We spend the whole day in and around Shashamene. We will visit the Nyabingi House, one of the Rastafari mansions that are present in Shashamane. We will talk to the community leaders about their faith, traditions, their reasons to settle in Ethiopia, and much more. We will also visit a local school and a Rastafari art gallery. We will enjoy an 'Ital' caribbean lunch and at the end of the day we go to hotspots of Wondo Genet, where we can fresh up.

Accommodation: Lilly of the Valley hotel
Meal: Breakfast + Lunch





2 March

Today we continue our explore Shashamane and the surroundings, and we further engage with the local community. Today we will also visit lake Hawassa, one of the most beautiful lakes of Ethiopia. We will make a boat ride and look out for hippos and tropical birds.

Accommodation: Lilly of the valley hotel
Meal: Breakfast



3 March

We leave Shashamane and drive further south to the mountain village of Chencha, where the Dorze people live (one of the indigenous tribes of Ethiopia). We will explore the area and spend the night in a lodge with stunning views over the valley.

Accommodation: Dorze Lodge
Meal: Breakfast and dinner



4 March

In the morning we explore the Dorze villages in the area. The Dorze are one of the tribal people of Ethiopia and they are famous for their typical huts and weaving crafts. In the afternoon we descent to the city of Arba Minch on the foot of the mountains. Arba Minch is know for its lush tropical environment. We stay in a beautiful lodge overlooking a national park.

Accommodation: Paradise Lodge
Meal: Breakfast



5 March

We have no activities planned today. You can explore Nechisar National Park located just outside the city, or you just relax at the lodge (the lodge has a swimming pool).

Accommodation: Paradise Lodge
Meal: Breakfast

6 March

Today we return back To Addis Ababa. You can drive back with the car (about 8 hours), or fly with a domestic flight (1 hour). You can end your trip here and fly back home, or continue the tour further East towards the cities of Dire Dawa and Harar.

Accommodation: Orange Lion Guesthouse
Meal: Breakfast



7 March



We drive from Addis to Awash National Park, it is a protected natural environment around the Awash River, one of the great rivers of Ethiopia. We look for animals like the Walia Ibex, Crocodiles, and Hyenas. We spend the night in a lodge in the park with a beautiful view over a waterfall.

Accommodation: Awash National Park lodge
Meal: Breakfast

8 March

we continue our journey east to Harar where we arrive in the late afternoon. Harar is one of the oldest cities of Ethiopia. The historic city center and the city wall surrounding the city is a UNESCO world heritage site. We stay in a comfortable guesthouse and at nightfall we can be witness of a special phenomenon; every night wild Hyenas enter the city to scavenge on dead animals. It is the only place in the world where wild Hyenas and people don't consider each other as enemies. Locals even feed them out of their hands, it is a tradition and you can do it!

Accommodation: Ras Hotel
Meals: Breakfast



9 November 2016

Harar is a historical place for many reasons. It is one of the oldest Muslim cities outside the Middle – East, historically the main trade hub for commodities like coffee (it is said the best coffee of the world comes from Harar), and especially the thousand year old city wall and the little streets and alleys of the old city appeals to the imagination. But for us, the main historical significance of Harar is that it is the birthplace of His Majesty Haile Selassie I, or Ras Tafari as He was known at that time. His father was governor of Harar and we explore

the early days of His Holiness. We visit places where He lived and we get a good idea of the history and contemporary life of this part of Ethiopia. A lunch is provided.

Accommodation:

Ras Hotel

Meals:

Breakfast and lunch



10 March

Today we visit the countryside around Harar. We travel to Ejersa Goro, a small village in the hills, far away from the developed world. Ejersa Goro is the actual birthplace of His Majesty. There is a church build on his exact birthplace, local Ethiopian Orthodox priest honor His name alongside Rastafarians, a very unique thing! We visit the church and organize a village tour. A lunch is provided. At the end of the afternoon we arrive to the city of Dire Dawa where we spend the night.

Accommodation:

Ras Hotel

Meals:

Breakfast and lunch



11 March

Today we return back to Addis Ababa. If you go by car it will take a full day, but you can also decide to go by airplane. A domestic flight will bring you back to Addis in about an hour. In Addis we will bring you to the international airport where you can check in for your flight back home. Or you can decide to stay longer in Ethiopia to see more of the country.



Extension: Lalibela

You can extend your stay in Ethiopia with a visit to Lalibela. Lalibela is truly a wonder of the world. The little town of Lalibela holds a collection of eleven churches that were carved out of solid rock about 1000 years ago. Nobody knows how they did it, scientists cannot explain how it is done. According to the Ethiopians the churches were built by angels and are a living proof of the existence of God. Lalibela is one of the holiest places in Ethiopia and a center of worship for people from all kinds of religious denominations.



You can travel to Lalibela from Addis by domestic flight. Traveling with public transport over land is possible but takes two days. Contact us for more information about Lalibela and possibilities to travel there after the Rastafari Roots & culture program.



If you are interested to visit other parts of Ethiopia, don't hesitate to contact us. We are a fully equipped travel company and are capable to organize tours to every part of the country, and even to other countries in East-Africa. We also offer programs of voluntary work and are involved in development work projects. If you are interested in that please let us know, we can look for an assignment for you.

Tour leaders

The tour will be lead by Ras Ibi and Ras Fitsum, two rastafarians from Ethiopia. Ras Ibi is originally from Sweden, but lives in Ethiopia for about 20 years. He moved from Sweden to Ethiopia guided by the inspiration of His Majesty Haile Selassie I. Ras Fitsum is one of the few Rastafarians from Ethiopian origin. He is a licenced tour guide and has a profound understanding of the Rastafari faith in the Ethiopian context.



Extension: Danakil Depression

You can also visit the Danakil Depression in the remote province of Afar. It is probably one of the most isolated places in the world. Danakil consists of a variety of beautiful, unique, and in some cases bizarre types of landscapes. From vast deserted salt deserts, to colorful geographic phenomena, bizarre rock formations, and even an active volcano! In four days you explore different parts of Danakil, including a hike to Era Ale, an active volcano! It will be an intense, spectacular, and unforgettable experience! Contact us for more information.



Contact information

Are you interested in this tour? Please contact us for more information.

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Price & information

11 day trip (Addis Ababa - Shashamane - Chenchai/ArbaMinch): €1099 per person
16 day trip (+ extension to Harar): €1599 per person

Included:

- complete organized travel program from the perspective of the Rastafari movement in Ethiopia
- private rooms (2 people sharing) in decent accommodations with breakfast
- most lunches included
- professional guidance by experienced tour leaders
- All transport according to program
- activities and excursions according to program
 - * *City tour in Addis Ababa (2 days)*
 - * *Meet and greet Rastafari community in Shashamane*
 - * *Wondo Genet (forest reserve and hot springs)*
 - * *Boat trip Lake Awassa*
 - * *Dorze community tour*
 - * *City tour Harar*
 - * *Daytrip to Injersa Goro*
- All local taxes and surcharges

Not included:

- International plane ticket from your home country to Ethiopia
Available for under €500 from Amsterdam
- Meals not mentioned in program
- Drinks
- Vaccinations
- Tourist visa
- Personal expenditures like laundry and souvenir shopping
- Tips and gratuities