

Bale And Simien Mountains Endemicity And Cultural Tour



SAFARI HIGHLIGHTS

- » Drive through breathtaking views of Mountains and Highlands
- » Amazing endemic wildlife and photographic opportunities
- » Endangered natural habitats of forests and plants
- » World heritage sites
- » Africa's highest national parks
- » Walking through beautiful Afro-Montane
- » Rich cultural experience

Bale Mountains National Park is the ultimate destination for hikers, wildlife watchers, culture and nature enthusiasts, bird watchers and more! Explore one of the highest parks in Africa by horseback, go fishing or experience an authentic community trying local coffee and honey! One of the best sites to spot the rare and endangered Ethiopian Wolf is on the spectacular Sanetti Plateau as the sun rises.

The Simien Mountains National Park in Northern Ethiopia is an exotic setting with unique wildlife and breath-taking views on a landscape shaped by nature and traditional agriculture. The natural beauties of this region have always filled visitors from Ethiopia and abroad with awe. Gentle highland ridges at altitudes above 3600 meters above sea level are covered with grasses, isolated trees and the bizarre Giant Lobelia found on the high plateau that ends abruptly at 1000- to 2000-m deep escarpments.

These two iconic natural phenomenal mountains host some of the endemic wildlife, birdlife and plants and trees only found in these environments. Whether you choose to walk on two feet, on horse / mule back or in a 4x4 vehicle, you will set your soul free as you experience its beauty and positive ions that fills your breathing of the natural wonders. No other place on earth will you experience the endemic wildlife as you explore these two mountains.

This classical tour has been designed to let you experience the best of cultural glamor and thrilling endemic wildlife opportunities of two mountains. Our exclusive journey through the heart of Ethiopia opens up a world of discovery. Explore the alluring magnificence of Bale and Simien on an amazing authentic African safari in style. Visit extraordinary locations in some of the very best endemic wildlife parks Africa has to offer. Embrace local cultures and insights whilst enjoying the rich Ethiopian cultures.

Northern and Southern Ethiopia Mountain Trekking and Tours. Ethiopia boasts a staggering diversity of flora and fauna, much of which is endemic and found in stunning natural landscapes. In the Simien Mountains, large troops of Gelada Baboon forage for roots, Wallia Ibex stroll elegantly across a jaw-dropping backdrop of an endless mountain range almost 1,000m below. If you are lucky, you might also get a glimpse of the rare Ethiopian Wolf. Further, south in the Bale Mountains, forays by 4wd bring you up close to Ethiopian Wolf on the remote Sanetti Plateau and amidst the tropical Haremma Forest; warthogs, Columbus monkeys, giant forest hogs and if you are lucky, you could see the spotted hyena, leopards and lions.

DAY-TO-DAY ITINERARY

DAY 1: FLY ADDIS TO AWASSA AND DRIVE TO BALE MOUNTAINS;

A morning flight from Addis to Awassa, you will be picked up by your team and transferred to Bale Mountain Lodge, briefing for your tour in the Bale Mountain National Park followed by a short rest. After a brief break, we will head out for a short hike for an hour possibly spotting two/ three endemic mammals frequently seen in the area, such as Mountain Nyala, Menelik Bushbuck and endemic forest birds; we will head back to the lodge for meals and overnight. Meals Included: LD

DAY 2: BALE MOUNTAINS -SANETTI PLATEAU

Your guide and vehicle will take you up to the Sanetti Plateau, which is 4000 meters above sea level with an excellent chance of seeing the rare Ethiopian Wolf and spectacular bird life. Here walks can be done between 2-4 hours depending on your capability and stamina, the vehicles are always not far and can be called to pick you if you find the walk challenging, you will have picnic lunch in the park and later drive back to the Lodge for your dinner and overnight.

The Afro-alpine moorlands of the Sanetti Plateau are the largest continuous area of its altitude on the entire continent of Africa. Carpeted in lichen- covered rocks, and punctuated by Giant lobelia rhynchopetalum (Lobelia) that grows to heights of up to 12 meters. The Plateau is also dotted with alpine lakes and streams, providing important resident wildlife resources, as well as wintering and passage stations for rare and regionally endemic birds. Meals Included: BLD

Transport (where relevant): Tour of Sanetti Plateau.

DAY 3: BALE MOUNTAINS -HARENNA FOREST

After breakfast, drive to the Harenna Forest. This is in the southern end of the park and holds a unique variety of vegetation. The Harenna Escarpment towers 2000m above the edge of the forest and provides stunning views, the walks here are very fulfilling as you get to see some native plants and mammals whom are endemic to this region, we will learn more about the flora and fauna as we walk deep into the forests. We will have a picnic lunch somewhere in the forest's canopy listening to the calls of the forest birds and primates. After lunch, we will walk back to the vehicles for our drive back to the lodge for dinner and overnight.

The Harenna Forest is known for its native plants, mammals, amphibians and birds, including many endemic species. One such endemic species is the tree Maytenus harenensis, due to the excessive logging the IUCN classified it as vulnerable due to the threat. Meals Included: BLD

Transport (where relevant): Tour of Harenna Forest.

DAY 4: SOF OMAR CAVES

After an early morning breakfast, we will drive out of the park to the central Rift Valley in search of rare indigenous birds. Later a visit to the Sof Omar Caves the largest limestone caves in Eastern Africa however if you prefer to explore on two feet, the lodge has a number of marked tracks, which guide guests into the forest out to a hot spring or up onto the plateau. On this day, we can walk for 4-5 hours around the Hot Springs and plateau not far from the Lodge or the Sof Omar caves with a picnic lunch then drive to Goba for your dinner and overnight. Meals Included: BLD

DAY 5: GOBA - HAWASSA - ADDIS - GONDAR

After a relaxing morning breakfast, We will set off for a 4- hour transfer to Hawasa Airport for your flight back to Addis with lunch en-route later catch your flight to Gondar arriving late and transferred to your hotel for dinner and overnight in Gondar. Meals Included: BLD

DAY 6: GONDAR - DEBARK - SANKABER CAMP

After breakfast, we will be picked up from the hotel and drive to Debark and Sankaber which is around 2 1/2 hr. drive to Debark and Sankaber in a 4x4. At Debark we will sign in at the park headquarters, pick up a local guide and scout and head up into the mountains (by 4x4). The road continues all the way to the first camp at Sankaber, along the way we will have a leisurely three-hour acclimatization hike. The stunning views of this spectacular mountain will hit you as soon as you get out of the vehicle. There will be time to stop for a picnic lunch and after a short but demanding climb (at this altitude) to Sankaber. Then rest for your dinner and overnight. Meals Included: LD

DAY 7: SANKABER (3,200M) - GEECH CAMP (3,600M)

Walking 5 hrs / 14km The trek starts with a gentle stroll through the Erica heather that hangs on white lichen and mosses, resembling an old man's white beard. Along the route, keep an eye open to spot the elusive and elegant klipspringer. After 2-3 hours, you will reach the viewpoint where you encounter the seasonal and impressive Jinibar waterfall. From there, you climb steeply for an hour to reach the Jinbar valley and head down to the Jinbar River at 3,190m. Have a picnic lunch in these majestic surroundings. On the way, keep an eye open for the rare and graceful lammergeyer, soaring in search of food. After a brief rest at the river, ascend gradually on an undulating trail for 2-3 hours to the village of Gich - dotted by the traditional round thatched huts and home to the Muslim community. After the village, the trail winds its way into the moorland where visitors will experience the highland flora of giant lobelia as you arrive at Gich camp. Meals Included: BLD

DAY 8: GEECH (3,600M) - IMET GOGO (3,926M) INNATYE (4070M) - CHENNEK (3,600M)

Walking 5-6 hrs. / 17km After breakfast, you will trek for 2 hours along the grass plateau past countless bizarre outsized Giant Lobelia plants. The destination is Imet Gogo, an incredible rocky promontory that grants 360-degree views over the Simien Range. At an altitude of 3,926m you can see West back along the ridge towards Sankaber and Geech and Southeast across a deep gully towards tomorrow's ridge walk to Inatye and Cheneck Camp. The views here are arguably the best in the Simien Mountains and the drop is terrifying. From Imet Gogo, you will detour SE towards Inatye. The path drops into a forest of Giant Hazel before following the ridge on open grassland.

The climb to Inatye (4,070m) rewards with stunning views. Inatye roughly translates as “mamma mia” and the terrifying vertical drop here justifies the name! After a picnic lunch, the path follows mostly downhill through open grassland and giant lobelia towards Cheneck with several stunning viewpoints along the way. Cheneck camp is superb for wildlife with both Gelada Baboons and Wallia Ibex common here. (B, L, D)

DAY 9: CHENNEK (3600M) – GONDER (BUAHIT CLIMB OPTIONAL)

Driving 4 hours After breakfast, you will begin the journey back to Gonder by 4wd getting back in the early afternoon. Those feeling brave can opt to tackle Buahit before leaving camp. You will need to be up early for the 3-4 hour round trip to this spectacular summit at 4430m and after having Lunch drive back to Gondar for overnight.

DAY 10: EXPLORE GONDAR'S CASTLES AND CHURCHES & AFTERNOON FLY TO ADDI

After a relaxing morning breakfast, we will take you to explore the fascinating medieval city of Gondar. Your tour will include visiting the Royal Enclosure set in its beautiful gardens, Fasilidas Bath and the fascinating Debre Berhan Selassie Church, renowned for its vivid and striking interior art and arguably one of the finest church interiors in the country. A lovely and warm setting for your lunch at the four sisters, after your lunch you will be transferred to Gondar airport for your late flight to Addis Bole international airport for your flight back home.

INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

- accommodation in the mentioned hotels, lodges, camps or similar
- full board from lunch day 1 till dinner day 12
- all transfers and transportation in 4WD from and to Addis Ababa
- all visits and entries as mentioned in program
- a local English speaking tour escort or trilingual tour leader
- an English-speaking driver and the services of a cook

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

- drinks and personal expenses
- visa for Ethiopia: ca 30 USD
- local tips: 95 USD
- tip for the tour leader
- travel insurances (we can offer you the insurances of the “Assurances Europeanness”, please contact us)
- international flights and their taxes (we can book them for you, please contact us)

Please put your luggage in travel bags and not in suitcases and limit the weight to 15 kg per person max.