

# Overseas Adventure Travel<sup>®</sup>

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide<sup>®</sup>



Ethiopia: Cultural Discoveries in an  
Ancient Land

2025

# Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis  
Chair  
Overseas Adventure Travel

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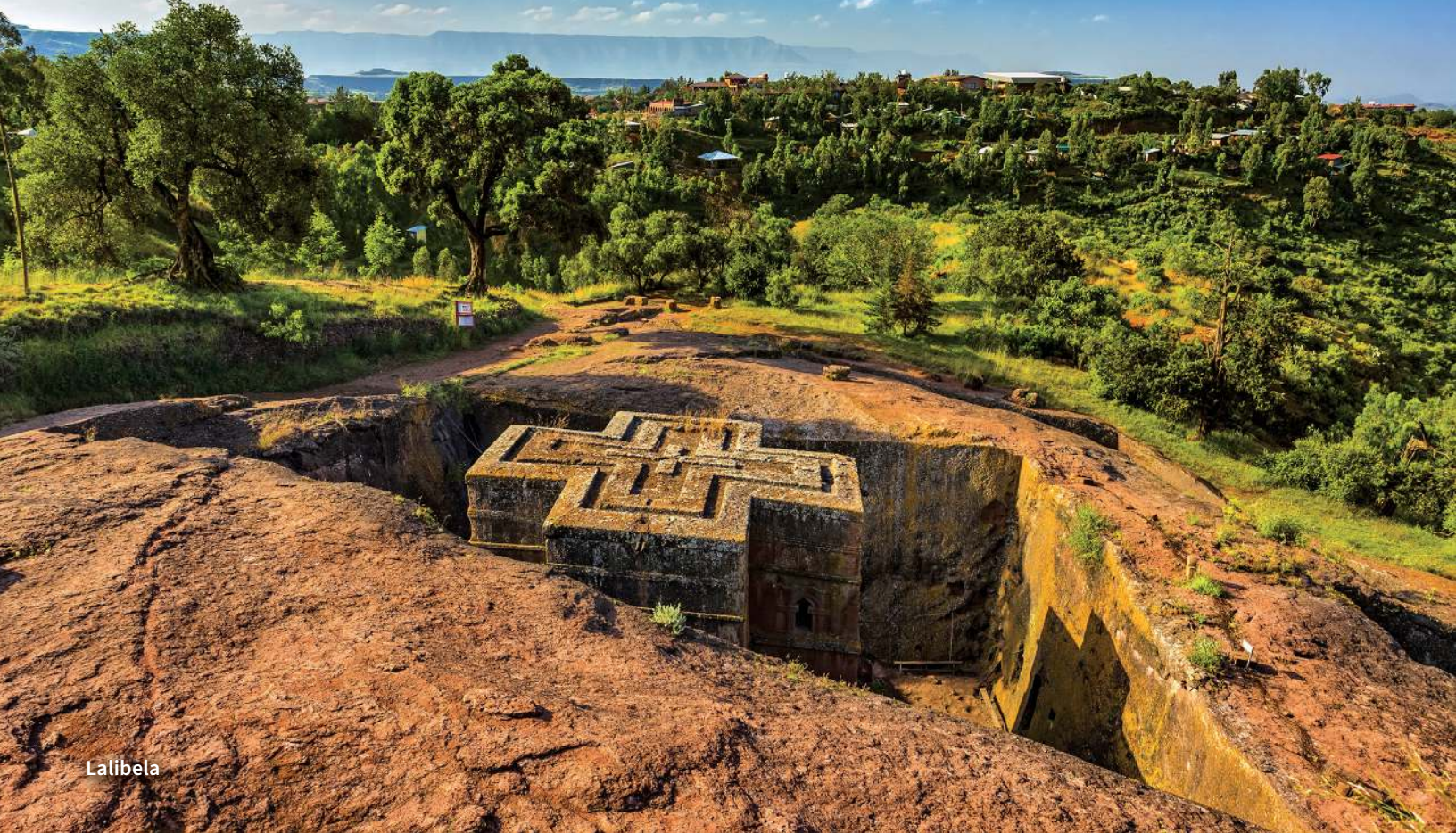
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Lalibela

## New! Ethiopia: Cultural Discoveries in an Ancient Land

### Small Group Adventure

**Ethiopia:** Addis Ababa, Lalibela, Gondar, Simien Mountains National Park, Bahir Dar

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

**17 days starting from \$6,995**

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit [www.oattravel.com/eth2025pricing](http://www.oattravel.com/eth2025pricing)

Journey to the Horn of Africa and discover the enchanting landscapes and timeless ruins of Ethiopia—home to early Christianity and a powerful kingdom that once rivaled ancient Egypt and the Roman Empire. Meet “Lucy,” mankind’s earliest ancestor, in Addis Ababa, witness the living history of Lalibela’s sunken churches, explore the ancient stone castles of Gondar, discover the rare wildlife and breathtaking beauty of Simien Mountains National Park, and more.

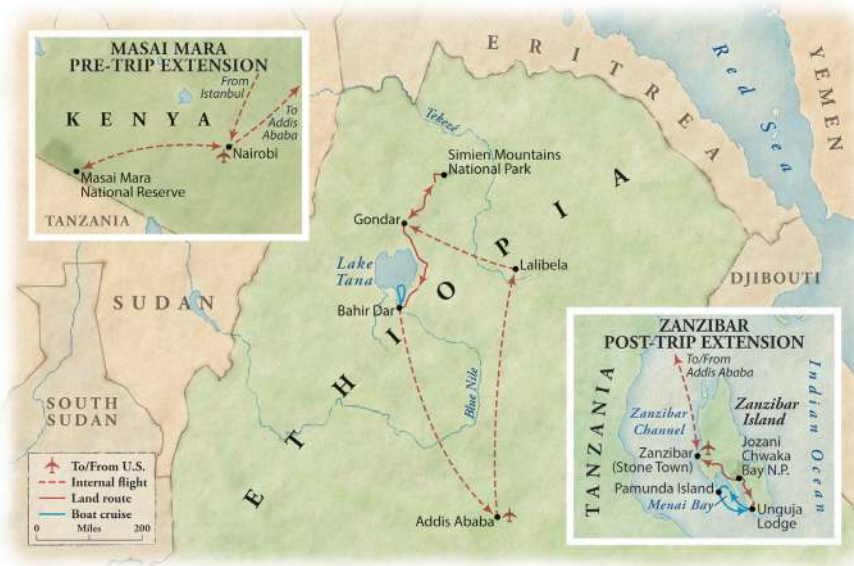
### IT’S INCLUDED

- 15 nights accommodation and 1 day room
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 42 meals—15 breakfasts, 14 lunches, and 13 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner)
- 26 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, lodge and camp staff, and luggage porters
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next adventure

*Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.*

**Ethiopia: Cultural Discoveries in an Ancient Land**





## ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Fly to Istanbul, Turkey
2	Fly to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
3-5	Addis Ababa
6-9	Fly to Lalibela
10-11	Fly to Gondar
12-13	Simien Mountains
14	Gondar
15-16	Bahir Dar
17	Return to U.S. via Addis Ababa

## WHAT TO EXPECT

①②③④⑤ Moderately Strenuous

**Pacing:** 5 locations in 16 days

**Physical requirements:** The entire country of Ethiopia is at a high altitude. You must be able to walk 3 miles unassisted and participate in 3-6 hours of physical activities each day. Day 7 involves an uphill walk at an altitude of about 9,000 feet; Day 8 includes walking at an altitude of 8,500 feet; Day 9 includes an elective 45-minute hike up steep terrain at an altitude of about 9,000 feet.

**Flight time:** Travel time will be 18-28 hours and will most likely have two connections

View all physical requirements at [www.oattravel.com/eth](http://www.oattravel.com/eth)

## ETHIOPIA: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

**Unbeatable Value:** Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

**People-to-People Experiences:** Learn the secrets of making *injera*, Ethiopian flatbread, during a hands-on cooking demonstration before sitting down to a **Home-Hosted Dinner** with a local family in Lalibela.

**O.A.T. Exclusives:** Experience **A Day in the Life** of Asheton Village, where we'll get to know its people and enjoy a conversation about the history and traditions of the Amhara people, the cultural group that lives in this region of Ethiopia. Plus, learn about **Controversial Topic** of the roots of the armed conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region.

## PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

### OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

**Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve**

**PRE-TRIP:** 7 nights from **\$4,095**

**The Spice Island of Zanzibar**

**POST-TRIP:** 7 nights from **\$2,695**

### ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Nairobi** before your Masai Mara pre-trip extension from **\$190** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Addis Ababa** before your main adventure from **\$170** per room, per night

# Ethiopia: Cultural Discoveries in an Ancient Land

## YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

### BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

#### 7 nights in *Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve*

**Day 1** Fly to Istanbul, Turkey

**Day 2** Fly to Nairobi, Kenya

**Day 3** Nairobi, Kenya

**Day 4** Nairobi • Kazuri bead factory • Visit Giraffe Center

**Day 5** Fly to Masai Mara National Reserve  
• Afternoon game-viewing drive

**Day 6** Full day game-viewing drive in Masai Mara National Reserve

**Day 7** Morning and afternoon game-viewing drives • Optional *Sunrise Safari & Hot Air Balloon Ride* tour

**Day 8** Full day game-viewing in Masai Mara

**Day 9** Fly to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia • Join main trip

#### Day 1 Fly to Istanbul, Turkey

Depart today for your overnight flight to Istanbul, Turkey.

#### Day 2 Fly to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel or similar

**Evening:** Upon arrival in Ethiopia very late this evening, an O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel in Addis Ababa.

#### Day 3 Addis Ababa

- Destination: Addis Ababa
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel or similar

**Activity Note:** Addis Ababa is located at 7,700 feet above sea level, and our stay here provides an important opportunity to acclimatize and become accustomed to the level of caution required when walking or hiking before we ascend substantially higher in altitude over the course of our adventure.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** You have the morning free to explore independently or to rest and catch up on your sleep.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** Later this afternoon, we'll gather in the hotel with our Trip Experience Leader for a Welcome Briefing. This briefing gives us the chance to introduce ourselves and get to know the other members of our small group—including travelers who joined our optional *Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve* pre-trip extension.

Then, we'll depart for an orientation walk to gain familiarity with our surroundings. We'll also walk over to a *khat* shop to learn about this local tradition. *Khat* is a bitter leaf chewed by locals, which acts as a powerful stimulant. We'll talk with the shop owner to learn about *khat*'s role in Ethiopian life and its production process—and you'll also have the opportunity to try it for yourself. Then, we'll enjoy a more traditional stimulant at an Ethiopian coffee shop. Many shops in Ethiopia still brew coffee in a traditional clay pot (known as a *jebena*) and roast and grind the beans in small batches throughout the day. We'll talk with the women who run the shop, and have a hands-on opportunity to help them prepare the day's roast.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You are free to retire to your room or gather at the bar for a cocktail to get to know your fellow travelers.

#### **Day 4 Explore Addis Ababa • Visit Signum Vitae rehabilitation center**

- Destination: Addis Ababa
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Founded by Ethiopian Emperor Menelik in 1892, Addis Ababa quickly grew into a sprawling city of about five million people, serving as the bustling capital of a country whose culture, history, and linguistic identity is quite distinct from the rest of Africa. Because Addis Ababa (usually shortened to Addis by the locals) is perched on the Abyssinian plateau at an elevation of almost 8,000 feet, the climate of the world's third highest capital city is usually pleasantly cool.

First, we'll visit Signum Vitae, a non-governmental organization dedicated to rehabilitating and improving the lives of disabled people. Latin for "sign of life," Signum Vitae employs local Addis Ababa residents with a wide range of physical disabilities, training them in the arts of woodworking, eyeglass lens grinding, and other skills to help transform their lives.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll visit one of the finest museums in all of Africa. The Ethnological Museum covers the full sweep of Ethiopia's cultural and social history. Intricately arranged exhibits narrate the story of the country and its peoples, all spanning two floors of the palatial residence of Haile Selassie. The former Ethiopian emperor's rooms are preserved near to their original state and may also be visited.

**Dinner:** This evening, we'll enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant. Typical Ethiopian food is centered on *injera*, a spongy sourdough flatbread topped with *wat*, a thick stew or curry of spicy meats, lentils, and vegetables.

**Evening:** Free to explore the Ethiopian capital on your own.

**Day 5 Visit Sabahar fabric workshop**  
**• Discover “Lucy” fossils at National Museum • Coffee shop visit • Amharic language lesson**

- Destination: Addis Ababa
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Our day begins with a visit to Sabahar fabric workshop, a fair-trade textile workshop founded in 2004 with a vision of preserving Ethiopia’s ancient hand-weaving traditions, and providing job opportunities to the country’s marginalized population. We’ll tour the workshop and see firsthand how the colorful silk and cotton scarves, blankets, and other handspun textiles are made by its skilled artisans. Then, we’ll drive to the National Museum. Along with fascinating items such as the throne of Emperor Haile Selassie and a wealth of Ethiopia’s historical and artistic treasures, the museum houses the remains of early hominids, including “Lucy,” the 3.25-million-year-old hominid skeleton discovered in northeastern Ethiopia in 1974 who changed our understanding of humanity forever.

**Lunch:** At a garden restaurant near the museum.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we’ll visit another coffee shop of Addis—this one more modern. While coffee-obsessed Ethiopia proudly clings to its traditions, it’s not immune from modern influences. Whether it’s from traditional clay pots or modern macchiato machines (introduced after the Italian occupation), Ethiopia is considered to have some of the world’s best coffee—which should come as no surprise since this is coffee’s ancestral homeland.

Later, you can join your Trip Experience Leader for an Amharic language lesson. An ancient language, Amharic was made the official language of Ethiopia by Emperor Haile Selassie.

**Dinner:** On your own.

**Evening:** Free to enjoy the hotel amenities or explore Addis on your own.

**Day 6 Fly to Lalibela • Visit rock-hewn churches**

- Destination: Lalibela
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Mountain View Hotel or similar

**Activity Note:** Lalibela is at an altitude of approximately 8,500 feet, and travelers should exercise caution while walking and hiking.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After our short flight to Lalibela, we’ll arrive at our hotel in the heart of the Lalibela Mountains, overlooking the Ethiopian highlands.

**Lunch:** At the hotel.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we’ll begin our discoveries in Lalibela, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that many consider one of the most important religious sites in the Christian world. Lalibela is home to 11 magnificent Ethiopian Orthodox churches carved from the top down out of a single volcanic rock some 900 years ago. Intertwined and connected by a warren of tunnels, some churches were chiseled into the face of the rock; others stand as isolated blocks, including the iconic church of Saint George (Ethiopia’s patron saint), which resembles a monolithic walk-in Greek cross.

The complex is divided into two groups of churches—with each cluster representing the earthly and heavenly forms of Jerusalem. We’ll



visit the first church grouping this afternoon. While we explore, we may feel as if we are transported far back in time, as Lalibela is a place of pilgrimage and devotion to this very day. Seven times a day, seven days a week, white-robed followers gather at these medieval rock-hewn churches to chant prayers in unison.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You're free to enjoy the hotel amenities or explore Lalibela on your own.

### **Day 7 Explore Lalibela • Visit Yemrehana Krestos Church • Controversial Topic: Ethiopia's Tigray region**

- Destination: Lalibela
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Mountain View Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, we'll drive outside Lalibela to visit Yemrehana Krestos Church, an ancient cave church that is one of the lesser known treasures of the region. The beautifully preserved Yemrehana Krestos, built of stone and wood, predates the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela by almost a century. As we explore the church, you may notice the large pile of bones at the back of the cavern—they are the remains of some 10,000 pilgrims who came here to die over the centuries.

**Lunch:** At the hotel.

**Afternoon:** After some free time, we'll learn about the **Controversial Topic** of the armed conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's federal Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and forces of the the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Tigray is one of 11 administrative regions in Ethiopia that are largely autonomous, but also deeply divided

along entrenched ethnic lines. The TPLF were once the dominant political party in Ethiopia, holding power in the central government for more than three decades before Abiy's rise to power in 2018. Just a year after Abiy received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019 for helping to end Ethiopia's 20-year war with neighboring Eritrea, he launched an assault into the northern Tigray region that would spiral out of control and turn into a brutal two-year civil war. While a truce was signed in November of 2022, Ethiopia has always been plagued by discord among its more than 80 ethnic groups and one wonders if a lasting peace is even achievable.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** Free to enjoy on your own.

### **Day 8 Lalibela • Visit rock-hewn churches • Home-Hosted Dinner**

- Destination: Lalibela
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Mountain View Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Today, we'll explore the second group of churches in Lalibela. While located very near the others, the rock-hewn churches in this second grouping differ greatly in architecture and style—and feature more intricate exteriors along with interconnecting trenches and tunnels.

**Lunch:** At the hotel.

**Afternoon:** You'll have some time to relax or explore independently.

**Dinner:** This evening, we'll be welcomed into the home of a local family in Lalibela to enjoy a cooking lesson before sitting down to a **Home-Hosted Dinner**. Our visit will begin

in the kitchen with a hands-on demonstration that will reveal the secret of making authentic *injera*, the spongy flatbread we've come to know. Then, we'll sit down with the family for conversation while enjoying some traditional Ethiopian dishes.

**Evening:** You're free to enjoy the hotel amenities or explore Lalibela on your own.

### **Day 9 A Day in the Life of Asheton Village • Visit the Church of Saint George**

- Destination: Lalibela
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Mountain View Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Today features *A Day in the Life* experience, an exclusive opportunity offered only by O.A.T. to deeply connect with the villagers who call this region home. Our day begins with a visit to a local market, where we'll shop for produce and ingredients to bring with us to the village we'll be visiting later this morning. Then, we'll trade our bus for a team of sturdy mules, which we'll saddle and ride toward Asheton Village. After meeting our host, a community leader and lifelong resident of the village, we'll spend a couple of hours getting to know its people. Asheton village has a population of around 300, and we'll observe how the people spend their days, tending to the livestock and farming staple crops such as teff, barley, and beans.

After bidding our new friends farewell, we'll return to our hotel in Lalibela.

**Lunch:** At the hotel.

**Afternoon:** After some time to relax, we'll regroup for a visit to Bete Giyorgis—the Church of Saint George. Lauded as the most beautiful church of Lalibela, Saint George's is

instantly recognizable due to its perfect cross shape. In fact, this stand-alone church (not connected to the other ten in the area) looks like a monolithic walk-in Greek cross. Of all the churches at Lalibela, Beta Giyorgis is the best preserved—perhaps due to the protection its 6.5-foot-thick rock ceiling provides. Dated to the late twelfth or early 13th century, it is also one of the latest churches at the site.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** Your final night in Lalibela is free. You may wish to retire to your room early to prepare for tomorrow's flight to Gondar.

### **Day 10 Conversation with a female ex-military officer • Fly to Gondar**

- Destination: Gondar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Gondar Hills Resort or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, we'll depart Lalibela and journey to the royal city of Gondar. On the way to the airport, we'll stop in the humble home of a woman who is an ex-officer in the Ethiopian military. We'll hear her story of how she fought against communists during the Ethiopian Civil War, learn about her life, and ask her what it's like for women who serve in Ethiopia's military.

**Lunch:** We'll have a boxed lunch at the airport.

**Afternoon:** We'll arrive at our lodge in Gondar, perched on a mountaintop overlooking the former royal capital of the Ethiopian Empire, this afternoon.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Free to do as you please.

## **Day 11 Grand Circle Foundation visit: Azezo Primary School • Gondar Castle**

- Destination: Gondar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Gondar Hills Resort or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** We'll begin the day with a visit to Azezo Primary School (when in session), a local government-funded school, supported in part by **Grand Circle Foundation**.

### **Grand Circle Foundation**

#### **Azezo Primary School**

Total donated: **\$600**

Partner since: **2020**

When we arrive at the school, we'll meet the head teacher to learn about the history and student population of the school, the education system of Ethiopia, and the types of subject matter that the children are expected to learn.

We'll have some time to ask questions during our conversation, then head outside to the playground to meet some of the young students for ourselves. Their teacher will introduce the class to us, and we'll have the opportunity to interact with them as we sing songs together, learn about their favorite subjects, help them with their schoolwork, and kick around a soccer ball on the playground.

Our time here also includes a tour of the school library, where we'll talk with a few of the teachers on duty to hear about the difference that your travel dollar is helping to make in their students' lives. Grand Circle Foundation's partnership with the school began in 2020, and has already helped to provide necessary school supplies to the 400 students who come to learn here. Future projects also include the installation of plumbing facilities to provide

the students, staff, and faculty with running water and toilet facilities; and classroom renovations—upgrades that are all made possible because of the generosity of O.A.T. travelers.

**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** This afternoon, we'll explore Gondar, royal capital of the Ethiopian Empire from the 17th to the middle of the 19th century and famous for its 17th-century stone castles and fortresses that evoke the feel of an African Camelot. In 1632, King Fasilidas proclaimed that this previously obscure village would become the site of the Empire's new capital, and over the next 250 years a succession of Ethiopian kings built a series of stone castles and fortresses that still occupy the heart of modern-day Gondar. Known collectively as the Royal Enclosure or "Fasil Ghebbi," the magnificent medieval palaces of Gondar are recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The focus of our visit will be Gondar Castle, the main structure in the Royal Enclosure which was inspired by the castles of medieval Europe.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Free to explore on your own, enjoy the lodge amenities, or retire to your room.

## **Day 12 Simien Mountains National Park • Nature hike**

- Destination: Simien Mountains
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Limalimo Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Travel overland to Simien Mountain National Park, home to some of the most breathtaking scenery in Africa. Known as the "Roof of Africa," the Simien Mountain range has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site both for its scenic splendor and



rare wildlife. Massive erosion over millions of years on the Ethiopian plateau has left behind a beautiful landscape dotted by deep ravines, sharp precipices, and jagged peaks rising up to 15,000 feet.

**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, we'll have a couple of hours to relax. You can also go further afield to enjoy the beauty of the dramatic mountain scenery that surrounds us. Later, we'll gather together and set off on a guided nature walk that will reveal more of the natural beauty of this special locale.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** On your own.

### **Day 13 Simien Mountains National Park • Full-day wildlife trek**

- Destination: Simien Mountains
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Limalimo Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Set off on a full-day wildlife trek in Simien Mountains National Park. Simien teems with a variety of extremely rare animals, including the Simien fox and the Walia ibex, a goat found nowhere else in the world. Sometimes called "monkey mountain," the Simien range is also home to large troops of geladas, a gregarious species of Old World monkey found only in the Ethiopian Highlands.

**Lunch:** Enjoy a picnic lunch amidst the beautiful mountain scenery.

**Afternoon:** Continue our wildlife trek for another couple of hours before returning to our lodge.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Free to explore on your own, enjoy the lodge amenities, or retire to your room.

### **Day 14 Overland to Gondar • Honey wine making demonstration • Debre Birhan Selassie Church**

- Destination: Gondar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Gondar Hills Resort or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** We'll depart the Simien Mountains this morning and make our way back to Gondar.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant owned by four Ethiopian sisters.

**Afternoon:** After our meal, our hosts at the restaurant will show our small group how to make *tej*, a honey wine flavored with an indigenous herb much like hops that is often made in Ethiopian homes.

**Afternoon:** Following our visit, we'll discover the Debre Birhan Selassie Church, considered one of the most beautiful churches in Ethiopia. The interior of Debre Birhan Selassie features a dazzling display of murals, wall paintings, and a ceiling covered with angels. A close look at the church walls reveals that every inch of them are covered in vivid depictions of biblical verses, which were originally painted for worshippers who were unable to read. Above the walls, 135 cherubs gaze down as if they are greeting weary pilgrims.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Free to pursue your own interests.

### **Day 15 Overland to Bahir Dar • Visit *khat* farm • Bahir Dar market**

- Destination: Bahir Dar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Kuriftu Resort & Spa or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Along the way to Bahir Dar, we'll stop at a local *khat* farm, a crop whose income generated per acre surpasses all others, including coffee, Ethiopia's largest export. Bahir Dar (which means "by the sea" in Amharic) is a tropical town set along Lake Tana, source of the Blue Nile. Tana was well known to the ancient Egyptians and Greeks—and even now, the papyrus boats sailing along Ethiopia's largest lake evoke images of ancient Egypt.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After a couple of hours of free time, we'll set off on *bajaj* (three-wheeled vehicles similar to *tuk-tuks*) to mingle with the locals at Bahir Dar's local market. You'll find everything imaginable at this lively open-air market—from grains, spices, and prayer blankets to live chickens and goats.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Free to explore Bahir Dar on your own, enjoy evening views of the lake, or retire to your room.

### **Day 16 Boat ride on Lake Tana • Explore island monastery**

- Destination: Bahir Dar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Kuriftu Resort & Spa or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** We'll board a boat from the dock at our resort and head out onto Lake Tana. The peninsulas and islands of Lake Tana are dotted with ancient monastic churches that were hidden for centuries. Most date from the 16th and 17th centuries and have changed little since their founding. Some believe that the Ark of the Covenant was kept at one of these remote monasteries before being transferred to Aksum where it's kept under guard near the Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion.

We'll visit one of these islands and hike for about a half hour to discover Ura Kidane Mehret, a small monastery decorated with beautiful paintings and filled with treasures.

Then, we'll enjoy a boat ride along the waters of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile. As we cruise, keep your eyes open for hippos, pelicans, and other African wildlife that makes its home here.

**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** The afternoon is free to pursue independent discoveries in Bahir Dar.

**Dinner:** We'll celebrate our Ethiopian discoveries during a festive Farewell Dinner at the lodge.

**Evening:** Free to explore Bahir Dar on your own.

### **Day 17 Return flights to U.S. via Addis Ababa**

- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Fly to Addis Ababa, where we'll enjoy the services of a day room.

**Lunch:** At the hotel.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy some free time for last-minute shopping in Addis or to rest in your day room for this evening's flight.

**Evening:** Depart to the airport for your return flight home, or begin your *The Spice Island of Zanzibar* post-trip extension.

## END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

### **7 nights in *The Spice Island of Zanzibar***

**Day 1** Addis Ababa

**Day 2** Addis Ababa • Fly to Zanzibar

**Day 3** Zanzibar • Explore Stone Town  
• Optional cooking lesson with a local family • Sunset cruise on traditional *dhow* sailboat

**Day 4** Jozani Chwaka Bay National Park • Butterfly farm • Muslim women in Zanzibar conversation • Overland to Unguja

**Day 5** Menai Bay boat cruise

**Day 6** Spice plantation visit

**Day 7** Visit a local Muslim family • Stone Town

**Day 8** Return to U.S.



## PRE-TRIP

### Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- » Roundtrip airfare between Nairobi and Masai Mara
- » 7 nights accommodation
- » 16 meals—6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, and 4 dinners
- » 9 small group activities, including up to 8 game-viewing drives
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader and driver-guides
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

#### PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve is a gem of wild beauty. Rolling grasslands yield to breathtaking views of the distant Great Rift Valley escarpment. Enjoy exclusive game-viewing drives in this 45,000-acre private camp, where legendary wildlife abounds. Rich in wild fauna, Masai Mara celebrates Africa at its most untamed.*

##### **Day 1 Fly to Istanbul, Turkey**

Depart today for your overnight flight to Istanbul, Turkey.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** You will have the day to rest after your flight or begin making local discoveries on your own.

##### **Day 2 Fly to Nairobi, Kenya**

Fly to Nairobi, Kenya, arriving very early on Day 3.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** Yours to do as you wish.

##### **Day 3 Nairobi, Kenya**

- Destination: Nairobi
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Tamarind Tree Hotel or similar

**Dinner:** On your own.

**Evening:** You are free to explore on your own or retire to your room.

**Early Morning:** Arrive in Nairobi, Kenya, early this morning. An O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and assist with your transfer to the hotel.

#### **Day 4 Nairobi • Kazuri bead factory • Visit Giraffe Center**

- Destination: Nairobi
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Tamarind Tree Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Head outside of Nairobi to visit the Kazuri bead factory. More than 300 local women, most single mothers, work together to produce handmade beads, pottery, and jewelry that gets exported to more than 20 countries around the world. Kazuri, Swahili for “small and beautiful,” aptly describes the precise, detailed work undertaken by these skilled artisans.

**Lunch:** Enjoy lunch amidst the peaceful surroundings of the Karen Blixen Coffee Garden, set on the former farm estate of the celebrated author of *Out of Africa*.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you’ll have an opportunity to behold the majesty of the Rothschild giraffe at the Giraffe Center. Distinct to Kenya and Uganda, only about 2,000 of this endangered giraffe subspecies lives in the wild today. The Giraffe Center’s mission is to protect and populate the species, in an effort to save them from distinction. It also provides visitors the unique opportunity to view the giraffes up close.

**Dinner:** On your own.

**Evening:** You are free to remain in the hotel’s bar area for a nightcap, or retire to your room.

#### **Day 5 Fly to Masai Mara National Reserve • Afternoon game-viewing drive**

- Destination: Masai Mara National Reserve
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Sentrim Masai Mara Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Head to the airport for our short flight on a small aircraft to the Masai Mara, where we’ll enjoy a game-viewing drive en route to our lodge.

**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** We’ll enjoy some free time before heading out for an afternoon game-viewing drive. The wildlife in the Mara is varied and wonderful: elephant, rhinoceros, lion, hyena, zebra, wildebeest, Thomson’s and Grant’s gazelle, topi, and Cape buffalo all roam the plains.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** On your own.

#### **Day 6 Full day game-viewing drive in Masai Mara National Reserve**

- Destination: Masai Mara National Reserve
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Sentrim Masai Mara Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Depart for a day of game-viewing in Masai Mara National Reserve.

**Lunch:** Enjoy a picnic lunch in the bush.

**Afternoon:** Continue our game-viewing drive this afternoon. All of the “Big 5” roam here, but there are especially notable populations of lions, leopards, and cheetah year-round. During the annual migration, the wildebeest,

zebra, and Thomson's gazelles number in the tens of thousands. No two game drives are alike, so our discoveries are always a thrill.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** On your own.

### **Day 7 Morning and afternoon game-viewing drives • Optional *Sunrise Safari & Hot Air Balloon Ride* tour**

- Destination: Masai Mara National Reserve
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Sentrim Masai Mara Lodge or similar

**Activity Note:** If you'd like to take the optional balloon ride, you must reserve it at least 45 days prior to departure. Prices are subject to change. This optional tour requires an early wake-up.

**Early Morning:** Perhaps you'll join our optional *Sunrise Safari & Hot Air Balloon Ride* tour early this morning. Rise before dawn and enjoy a game-viewing drive on the way to the hot-air balloon. Then, catch the sweeping vista of the morning light over Masai Mara. We'll celebrate with breakfast and sparkling wine before returning to camp.

**Breakfast:** Those who choose not to join the optional tour will enjoy breakfast at the lodge.

**Morning:** If you choose not to join our optional balloon ride, depart for a day of game-viewing, wrapping up in time for lunch back to camp.

**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** Following lunch, enjoy some down time to rest before regrouping for another game-viewing excursion to seek out more of the wildlife in the Masai Mara.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Following dinner, you have the remainder of the evening free.

### **Day 8 Full day game-viewing in Masai Mara**

- Destination: Addis Ababa
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Sentrim Masai Mara Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Set off on a full-day game-viewing drive in Masai Mara.

**Lunch:** Enjoy a picnic lunch in the African wilderness.

**Afternoon:** Following lunch, our game-viewing continues. After returning to our lodge later this afternoon, we'll have free time to relax or pursue individual interests.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Following dinner, you have the remainder of the evening free to relax in your room or take advantage of the lodge amenities.

### **Day 9 Fly to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia • Join main trip**

- Destination: Addis Ababa
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Head to the airport to catch our flight back to Nairobi, where we'll have lunch before our flight to Addis Ababa.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant in Nairobi.

**Afternoon/Evening:** Arrive at our hotel in Addis Ababa and begin your *New! Ethiopia: Cultural Discoveries in an Ancient Land* adventure.



## OPTIONAL TOUR

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### Masai Mara Hot Air Balloon Ride

(Day 7 \$565 per person)

Rise before dawn in order to catch the sweeping vista of the morning light over Masai Mara.

View the game reserve from a bird's eye perspective as you gently float for an hour over the grassy plains. Celebrate touchdown with a sparkling wine-style picnic breakfast in the bush before returning to camp mid-morning.

**Please note:** *This tour is only available on select departures and must be purchased at least 45 days prior to departure. Optional tour may be sold on-site, if available. Prices are subject to change.*

## POST-TRIP

### *The Spice Island of Zanzibar*

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| » Airfare between Addis Ababa and Zanzibar        | » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader         |
| » 7 nights accommodation                          | » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters |
| » 14 meals—6 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 5 dinners | » All transfers   |
| » 6 small group activities                        |   |

#### POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Once known as the “Spice Islands,” the Zanzibar archipelago sits 25 miles off the Tanzanian coast. We’ll explore its unique heritage in Stone Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and on an excursion to a spice plantation. We’ll also encounter everyday life in this autonomous region of Tanzania, when we take a hands-on lesson from local musicians, and immerse ourselves in the island’s kaleidoscope of cultures and unique wildlife.*

##### **Day 1 Addis Ababa**

- Destination: Addis Ababa
- Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel or similar

**Activity Note:** Because there is only one flight a day from Addis Ababa to Zanzibar, we will spend the first night of our trip extension in Addis Ababa.

**Evening:** After bidding farewell to our fellow travelers from our main adventure, we’ll settle into our hotel for the night. You may wish to visit the bar for a nightcap, or retire to your room to prepare for our flight tomorrow morning.

##### **Day 2 Addis Ababa • Fly to Zanzibar**

- Destination: Stone Town
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Maru Maru Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Depart to the airport for our flight to Zanzibar.

**Lunch:** On your own. You may want to pick something up at the airport to enjoy during our flight.

**Afternoon:** Upon arrival in Zanzibar, we’ll drive to Stone Town. Located in the oldest section of Zanzibar City, Stone Town is a warren of winding alleys and tight turns. After checking in to our hotel, enjoy some time to relax.

**Dinner:** We'll re-convene at the hotel's rooftop, poolside restaurant, which affords panoramic views of Stone Town below. There, we'll enjoy a Welcome Dinner together.

**Evening:** The remainder of the evening is yours.

**Day 3 Zanzibar • Explore Stone Town  
• Optional cooking lesson with a local family • Sunset cruise on traditional dhow sailboat**

- Destination: Stone Town
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Maru Maru Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Set off on a walking tour of Stone Town, one of the most ancient towns in East Africa. Our first stop is Darajani Market, one of the most popular bazaars on the island. Known locally as *Marikiti Kuu* (Main Market), Darajani buzzes with activity every morning as locals vie for the freshest meat, seafood, and produce. As we stroll through the maze of wooden stalls, we'll witness a huge variety of exotic delicacies—from spiny lychee fruit to expensive strands of saffron. From there, we'll continue on to the nearby Gothic cathedral known as Christ Church. Built at the end of the 19th century, it's one of the oldest examples of early Christian architecture in East Africa—and the first Anglican cathedral in the region. Built on the site where Zanzibar's slave market once stood, many elements of the church's design commemorate the men and women whose lives were destroyed by the slave trade.

Then, we'll visit the Arab fort, which was built by Omanis in 1698 after they took control of Zanzibar from the Portuguese. Our tour concludes at the Palace Museum, which was

originally built for Zanzibar's Arab Sultan and now houses historical artifacts and memorabilia from Zanzibar's royal family.

**Lunch:** On your own.

Or, you can join our optional cooking lesson at a local home with an included lunch featuring Zanzibar's creative cuisine.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy a free afternoon to discover more of Stone Town's treasures.

Later, we'll walk to the beach and embark on a sunset cruise on a traditional *dhow* sailboat where you can relax with included drinks and snacks.

**Dinner:** On your own.

**Evening:** You're free to spend the remainder of the evening exploring Stone Town independently.

**Day 4 Jozani Chwaka Bay National Park • Butterfly farm • Muslim women in Zanzibar conversation • Overland to Unguja**

- Destination: Unguja
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Unguja Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** This morning, we head to Jozani Chwaka Bay National Park, Zanzibar's only national park and the only place in the world to spot the red colobus monkey.

Upon arrival, we'll walk along raised boardwalks among mangrove trees and discover various coastal flora, fauna, and wildlife, including the fiddler crab. We'll continue our discoveries with a short walk to the nearby butterfly garden, a netted farm which consists of a tropical garden with

hundreds of butterflies. Here, we'll learn about the life cycle of these beautiful insects, all of which are native to the island of Zanzibar.

Then, we'll ride to our lodge, located on a secluded stretch of the Menai Beach Conservation Area.

**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** After some free time to relax, we'll walk down to the beach, where we'll be joined by a waitress from our lodge who will lead a discussion on employment opportunities for Muslim women in Zanzibar. Approximately 95% of Zanzibaris practice Islam and a large majority adhere to strict religious traditions—including expecting women to dress modestly and avoid contact with men to whom they are not related. These restrictions make it extremely difficult for women to find work in Zanzibar, where beach resorts, spas, and nightclubs are major employers. During our conversation, we'll learn more about the religious norms that permeate the island and how they impact the educated, ambitious women who call Zanzibar home.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** The evening is yours to do as you please.

## Day 5 Menai Bay boat cruise

- Destination: Unguja
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Unguja Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** We'll walk to the Dhow marina to discover Menai Bay by traditional Zanzibari motorboat. Located off the southwestern coast of Zanzibar, Menai Bay is the island's largest

protected marine area and is home to extensive coral reefs, mangrove forests, sea grasses, and tropical fish.

While discovering small islets such as Komunda and Miwi, we may even witness pods of dolphin swimming by. We'll also have a chance to swim and snorkel in the warm cerulean waters.

Then, we'll cruise towards Pamunda Island where we'll have the opportunity to walk along the beach.

**Lunch:** A special barbecue lunch will be set up for us on the island.

**Afternoon:** We will return to our lodge via motorboat, and then you'll have some free time to relax or explore the surrounding area.

**Dinner:** At the lodge.

**Evening:** Tonight you are free to explore at your own pace.

## Day 6 Spice plantation visit

- Destination: Unguja
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Unguja Lodge or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** Visit a local spice plantation where the commodity that gave the Spice Islands their name is still cultivated. Cloves were introduced to Zanzibar in 1818, and the archipelago quickly became the world's leading producer where it remains a major crop today. As we ride out into the gently rolling hills of the countryside, we'll view lush tropical plants, such as cinnamon, vanilla, and fruit trees. During our visit, we'll learn more about the art and history of the cultivation of spices with a local guide—and perhaps see whether you can identify clove, cardamom, nutmeg, peppercorn, and various fruits including jackfruit, pineapple, and coconut.



**Lunch:** At the lodge.

**Afternoon:** The afternoon is free. Later, you're invited to join a sunset cocktail party on the beach.

**Dinner:** Weather permitting, we will have a Farewell Dinner on the beach. If the beach is less than welcoming, we'll enjoy our final meal at the lodge.

**Evening:** The evening is yours to spend as you choose.

## **Day 7 Visit a local Muslim family • Stone Town**

- Destination: Stone Town
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Maru Maru Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the lodge.

**Morning:** We'll walk to a nearby fishing village, where 97% of the population is Muslim. Islam is the second most practiced religion in

Tanzania, followed by Christianity, and during our time with the local family, we'll have the opportunity to learn about their religious culture firsthand, as well as witness daily life in the village. We'll also learn how they make a living and have a chance to ask questions about their vital industry.

Then, we'll depart to Stone Town and check in to our hotel.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** You'll have the afternoon free to relax in the hotel or explore independently.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You may want to get some rest before our very early wake-up call.

## **Day 8 Return to U.S.**

**Early Morning:** Drive to the Zanzibar airport very early this morning for your return flight back to the U.S.

# **OPTIONAL TOUR**

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## **Cooking Lesson**

(Day 3 \$40 per person)

Expand your cooking knowledge with an in-depth lesson on Zanzibar's creative cuisine. We'll visit a home in Stone Town and learn to prepare signature dishes from the region, including *biryani* (an Indian rice casserole), *mseto* (a Swahili mung bean porridge), and *wali* (coconut rice). You'll learn how to incorporate locally-sourced spices into a meal that you prepare with the assistance of our local host. You'll be able to taste your culinary creations, too, savoring the complex flavors unique to the island.

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

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## Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

## Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

## Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking the main trip only, you will need 3 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Kenya:** You will need 2 additional blank pages, for a total of 5.
- **Post-trip extension to Zanzibar:** You will need an additional blank page, for a total of 4.
- **Both the Kenya pre-trip extension and a post-trip extension:** You will need 3 additional pages, for a total of 6.

*Please note: You might not use all of these pages on your adventure (when you return, some may still be blank) but local officials will want to see that you have them.*

## Visas Required

**We’ll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure.** In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This info is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **Ethiopia (main trip): Visa required.** U.S. citizens will require a visa for Ethiopia; detailed instructions will be included in your Visa Packet, as noted above.

- **Kenya (optional pre-trip extension): Visa required.** It is important that you get this visa in advance.
- **Tanzania and Zanzibar (post-trip extensions): Visa required.** Both the U.S. Department of State and the Tanzanian embassy highly recommended that you obtain your visa in advance, which would be issued as an e-visa.
- **Kenya (optional stopover only): Visa required.** It is important that you get this visa in advance.
- **South Africa (optional stopover only): No visa required.** A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays of up to 90 days.

### Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **[www.pvsinternational.org](http://www.pvsinternational.org)**.

### Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

### Travel Protection Required:

For new bookings starting 1/1/25, Overseas Adventure Travel requires all travelers purchase travel protection with Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000, due to the remote nature of your adventure.

### O.A.T. Travel Protection:

If you **purchase your Travel Protection Plan** through O.A.T., no further action will be needed, as the Medical Evacuation coverage and Medical Expense coverage meets these requirements.

### Your Own Travel Protection:

If you purchase your own travel protection, we recommend you review the plan to ensure Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000 is included. Once you confirm your plan meets the requirements, you will need to email the following information to **[TravelCoverage@oattravel.com](mailto:TravelCoverage@oattravel.com)**:

- Traveler Name(s)
- Reservation Number
- Trip Protection Provider

- Policy Number
- Date of Purchase
- Copy of your Policy Documents

You can also contact our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814** to review this policy. You will be required to provide proof of coverage by 60 days prior to departure at the latest.

### **Zanzibar:**

If you are on the post-trip extension, the Zanzibar government is mandating travel insurance for all inbound travelers. This mandatory travel insurance is required to be purchased through the approved Zanzibar Insurance Corporation and will cover travelers for repatriation, evacuation, and other emergency situations. The insurance is valid for up to 92-days in Zanzibar and will cost **\$44 per person**. We recommend waiting to purchase the insurance until you are at least 30 days out from your departure. You can purchase the insurance through the approved Zanzibar Insurance Corporation at [www.visitzanzibar.go.tz](http://www.visitzanzibar.go.tz).

If you already have travel insurance, either through the Travel Protection Plan offered by Overseas Adventure Travel or on your own, you will still need to purchase the additional mandatory insurance to travel to Zanzibar. You will be denied entry at the immigration checkpoints should you arrive in Zanzibar without proof of insurance.

### **Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents**

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

### **Overseas Taxes & Fees**

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.



## RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

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### Is This Adventure Right for You?

**Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure.** We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

#### PACING

- 5 locations in 16 days
- 3 internal flights

#### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk 3 miles unassisted and participate in 3–6 hours of physical activities each day at very high altitudes; some hikes will be challenging, with frequent uneven steps, so travelers are advised to bring walking sticks
- Day 6 activities in Lalibela include walking on uneven grounds, eroded and slippery stairs, and poorly illuminated entryways to churches; expect to walk on some challenging irregular, large steps with no handrails
- Day 7 activities in Lalibela include an uphill walk over steep terrain with multiple stairs at an altitude of about 9,000 feet; expect to walk on some challenging irregular, large steps with no handrails
- Day 13 includes a full-day wildlife trek in Simien Mountains National Park at an altitude of 7,500 feet
- Not appropriate for travelers in need of CPAP machines
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

#### ALTITUDE

- All days are at altitudes between 6,000–11,000 feet
- Altitude medication will not be available for purchase in Addis Ababa; travelers are advised to bring any needed altitude medication from home

## CLIMATE

- The weather varies greatly in Ethiopia and is dependent on elevation. When traveling from one area to another, temperatures can shift from 60°F to 95°F in a matter of hours. Due to its high altitude, temperatures in Addis Ababa and other northern Ethiopian cities are cool throughout the year, even during the hottest months (March–May) when daytime temperatures rarely exceed the mid 70s°F. Temperatures drop quickly once the sun goes down and morning frost is common.

## TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel over very bumpy, dusty terrain during overland transfers
- Travel by 18-passenger coach, donkey, *bajaj* (similar to *tuk-tuks*), and boat

## ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- We spend 15 nights in hotels and lodges, all of which feature private baths

## Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

## Vaccines Required

### Yellow Fever

**Most travelers on this adventure will NOT need a yellow fever vaccination.** Ethiopia does not require a yellow fever vaccination if you are arriving in Ethiopia from the U.S., Canada, or Europe.

**However, travelers on the pre-trip extension to Kenya, or on the post trip extension to Zanzibar will need to bring EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver in order to meet Ethiopia's and Zanzibar's entry requirements.** This is because you'll be entering Ethiopia and/or Zanzibar from an endemic country (i.e. known to have yellow fever outbreaks).

While the CDC offers a wide range of vaccination and medication suggestions, there is one in particular that we'd like to draw your attention to—the yellow fever vaccine. For some countries, the yellow fever vaccination is a legal entry requirement, like a passport. For other countries, it is a health recommendation to protect you from getting sick. On this adventure, this vaccination is a

legal entry requirement for Ethiopia (plus Kenya and Zanzibar)—but fortunately, authorities will accept a doctor’s waiver in place of getting the actual shot. Therefore EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver is a requirement for this trip.

You should discuss the vaccine with your doctor to see if he or she recommends it and if your health allows for it. (He or she can offer a suggestion tailored to your personal medical history.) If you and your doctor decide the vaccination is right for you, then he or she will issue you a Yellow Fever Card, also called an International Certificate of Vaccination. This is your proof of vaccination; you should bring it with you on the trip.

If you and your doctor decide the vaccination isn’t right for you, then have your doctor issue an official vaccination waiver. An official waiver is a letter that meets these requirements:

- It must be on business letterhead paper.
- It must be signed by a doctor.
- It must be stamped using the same stamp that the doctor uses on a Yellow Fever Card.
- It must give the medical reason why you cannot get the vaccine, say how high the risk is, and cite an authority. (For example: Mr. Smith cannot receive the yellow fever vaccine due to a high risk of side effects as outlined in the Center for Disease Control’s guidelines for people over the age of 65.)

Whether you receive a Yellow Fever Card or an official vaccination waiver, keep it on your person (in your carry-on) so it is easy to find when you arrive or when you cross the border. You may not show anything at all when you cross the border—it all depends on the local official. But if you are asked, you must be able to produce your Yellow Fever Card OR your waiver.

## Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location
- Motion sickness medicine, if you are susceptible (the roads are very bumpy).
- Anti-malaria medication for Ethiopia (and Kenya/Zanzibar if you are taking any of the optional extensions). Check with the CDC and your doctor first because these medications can have strong side effects.

## Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

## Staying Healthy on Your Trip

### Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

### Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

### Water

- Tap water is not safe to drink. We recommend you use only filter, treated, or bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth throughout this trip.
- Bottled drinks and juices, and hot drinks that have been boiled, are safe to drink. Avoid drinks with ice in them.
- Before you buy a bottle, inspect it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. Carry a handkerchief to dry the tops of bottled drinks before and after opening.

### Food

- The food served at our lodges is safe, including salads and fruits.
- Exercise caution when eating at small local restaurants or buying food from street vendors. Eat only food that is well done and is still hot.



- Since the tap water is not safe to drink, you should be mindful about eating salads or fruits—they may have been washed in tap water. (Fruit that you peel yourself should be OK.)

*TIP: During this adventure you might be offered food that is strange and new to you. If you are offered food that you do not feel comfortable with, no one will feel offended if you politely decline; this is OK even during a home visit.*

# MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

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## Top Three Tips

- **Bring enough cash to cover your needs for 80% of the trip and only expect to be able to use plastic (credit, debit, or ATM card) 20% of the time.** When budgeting, keep in mind that your biggest expenses will be tips, meals, and souvenirs. As a guideline, an average meal in this region costs between \$15 and \$20 per person including a tip.
- **A mix of small bills (\$1s–\$20s), in good condition, and printed after 2013.** You'll be able to pay in U.S. dollars in most places on this trip.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's more practical to view them as a last resort in the event of a special situation.

## Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like [www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter), your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

**Ethiopia:** Ethiopian Birr (ETB)

**Kenya:** Kenyan Shilling (KSh)

**Zanzibar:** Since Zanzibar is part of Tanzania, the basic unit of currency is the Tanzanian Shilling (TSh)

**Tanzania:** Tanzanian Shilling (TSh)

## How to Exchange Money

On this adventure, U.S. dollars are accepted in most places. But you will want a mix of small bills (\$1, 5, 10, and 20s), in good condition, printed after 2013. Large bills (\$50s and \$100s) will be hard to break, and bills in bad condition (dirty, worn, or torn) or printed before 2013 might be rejected, even by banks.

During the trip, if you choose to get local currency, the easiest way is to use a local ATM (your bank at home will convert and charge you in U.S. dollars). You can also exchange cash at some hotels and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

*TIP: Large bills (\$50s and 100s) will receive a better exchange rate, but when paying with U.S. dollars, a mix of some \$1, 5, 10, and 20s would be better. It makes tipping and bargaining easier when you have exact change.*

## ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

**Ethiopia:** ATMs can usually be found in major cities, such as Addis Ababa, but are harder to find in rural areas.

**Kenya:** International ATM networks are typically available in the larger cities like Nairobi, however when you are on safari in the bush, you will not have access to ATMs. Local ATMs may only accept cards from local banks and usually will not allow cash advances on credit cards; therefore it is best to bring a cash reserve large enough to pay for most expenses.

**Zanzibar:** Stone Town does have a handful of ATMs that accept international cards—your best bet is at arrival points like the airport or ferry terminal. But be forewarned that you may need to try more than one machine. And outside of Stone Town ATMs are hard to find. So it's a good idea to bring some cash with you to cover basic expenses.

**Tanzania:** In larger cities, ATMs are typically available for major international networks. However, outside of large cities, ATMs may only accept cards from local banks and generally do not allow cash advances on credit cards. It is best to bring a cash reserve large enough to pay for most expenses.

## Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

**Ethiopia:** Credit cards are rarely accepted in Ethiopia, even in large cities such as Addis Ababa. We strongly recommend that you bring enough cash to exchange or withdraw local funds from an ATM.

**Kenya:** Credit cards are becoming more common in Kenya, but are not as widely accepted as they are in the U.S. Many camps, lodges, and shops will be cash only. Businesses that do accept cards tend to use a slow approval process that may involve calling your credit card company to get authorization.

**Zanzibar:** Credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard are accepted at large establishments. However, there are security concerns (some travelers report higher-than-average credit card fraud on the island), so you may prefer to stick to cash.

**Tanzania:** Although credit cards are becoming more common, they are not as widely accepted in Tanzania as they are in the U.S. Many camps, lodges, and shops will be cash only and businesses that do accept credit cards may use a slow approval process that sometimes involve calling your credit card company to get authorization.

### Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

## Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$8–\$12 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Housekeeping staff:** \$1–2 per room, per night. *Tipping for housekeepers at tented camps and safari lodges on the Kenya optional extension is included as they are part of the camp/lodge staff.*
- **Waiters:** When dining on your own, you would tip from 5%–10% of the bill in Ethiopia or Kenya—but only if a service charge isn't already on the bill.
- **Taxis:** In East Africa tipping isn't necessary, but if you want to give something you can round up the bill and let the driver keep the change.



- **Your Trip Price Includes:** Gratuities are included for local guides, drivers, lodge and camp staff, driver-guides, and luggage porters on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

*Please note: Tips are quoted in U.S. dollars for budgeting purposes; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (this is usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.*

## AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

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### Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

#### Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner) under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

### Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45–30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

When booking your international flights, please also note that the main trip will end on Day 17 for your overnight flight back to the United States.

### **Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased**

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com)

### **Optional Tours**

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

### **What You Need to Know**

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.

- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner)).

### **Optional Tours: Reserve Before You Go**

We strongly recommend that you reserve the following optional tours in advance. Unless otherwise noted, the deadline to do so is 45 days prior to your departure. Occasionally, space will be available for booking onsite, but this not guaranteed. Optional tours with O.A.T. can only be purchased with a credit card (Visa or MasterCard) or a debit card with credit card functionality. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "OPT Boston" (depending on your credit card company).

#### **Masai Mara Hot Air Balloon Ride**

Rise before dawn in order to catch the sweeping vista of the morning light over Masai Mara. View the game reserve from a bird's eye perspective as you gently float for an hour over the grassy plains. Celebrate touchdown with a sparkling wine-style picnic breakfast in the bush before returning to camp mid-morning. **Please note:** *This tour is only available on select departures and must be purchased at least 45 days prior to departure. Optional tour may be sold on-site, if available. Prices are subject to change.*

This optional tour is offered during the Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve trip extension. The cost is \$565 per person.

## Cooking Lesson

Expand your cooking knowledge with an in-depth lesson on Zanzibar's creative cuisine. We'll visit a home in Stone Town and learn to prepare signature dishes from the region, including *biryani* (an Indian rice casserole), *mseto* (a Swahili mung bean porridge), and *wali* (coconut rice). You'll learn how to incorporate locally-sourced spices into a meal that you prepare with the assistance of our local host. You'll be able to taste your culinary creations, too, savoring the complex flavors unique to the island.

This optional tour is offered during the *The Spice Island of Zanzibar* trip extension. The cost is \$40 per person.

## Communicating with Home from Abroad

### Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone is “unlocked”, meaning it can accept a local SIM card. If your cell is unlocked, then you will be able to purchase a local SIM for it and then buy minutes with “Pay as You Go” cards, so that you have a local contact number for your friends and family.

### Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype or FaceTime. These services are usually less expensive than making a traditional call, but you'll need a Wi-Fi connection and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

### Calling Cards & 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.). One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

### Internet

Internet access on this adventure will be mostly limited to cities and towns. In many cases, it will not be WiFi, but rather public computers in the hotel lobby or business center. The hotels and lodges that do offer WiFi will usually charge for the service.



## Receiving Calls from Home

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one is to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

## How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

**Ethiopia:** +251

**Zanzibar (Tanzania):** +255

**Kenya:** +254

**Tanzania:** +255

## PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

### Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	<p><b>Varies by international airline.</b> The current industry standard is 50 lbs for checked luggage and 15 lbs for carry-ons.</p> <p><b>For domestic flights within Ethiopia,</b> your luggage will be limited to a combined weight of 44 lbs total due to internal flight restrictions, so you can choose to limit your luggage to 44 lbs throughout the entire trip OR you have the option to store excess luggage at the hotel in Addis. If you choose to store excess luggage, please bring a small, additional bag (with a lock) to leave at the hotel in Addis.</p>
Size Restrictions	<p><b>Main trip:</b> Standard airline size: Checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+ width + depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches</p>
Luggage Type	<p><b>Main trip and Zanzibar post-trip extension:</b> A duffel bag or sturdy suitcase with wheels and lockable zippers.</p> <p><b>If you are joining the Kenya pre-trip extension:</b> Must use a duffel bag as your checked luggage throughout your adventure.</p>
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
<p><b>Kenya pre-trip extension:</b> Luggage is limited to a combined weight of <b>33 lbs TOTAL</b> (see note below). Use of a duffel bag as your checked luggage is required on this extension. Your duffel bag must be no larger than 24"x18"x13" and your carry-on luggage is limited to 21"x12"x9" in dimension.</p>	

## REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS

### Important Notes for Kenya pre-trip extension:

- **Use of a duffel bag is a requirement on the Kenya extension.** Your duffel bag must be no larger than 24"x18"x13" and your carry-on luggage is limited to 21"x12"x9" in dimension with a *combined* weight limit of 33 lbs.
- **Luggage storage:** Your luggage will be limited to a combined weight of 33 lbs total on the Kenya pre-trip extension due to internal flight restrictions, so you can choose to limit your luggage to 33 lbs throughout the entire trip OR you have the option to store excess luggage at the hotel in Nairobi (you'll spend 2 nights in Nairobi at the start of your pre-trip extension, fly to the Maasai Mara National reserve, then return to Nairobi for a flight to Addis to start your base trip). If you choose to store excess luggage, please bring a small, additional bag (with a lock) to leave at the hotel in Nairobi.

Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.

### Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

### Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage: For travelers who are *not* joining the Kenya pre-trip extension,** please bring one duffel bag or suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase. Travelers who are taking the extension in Kenya must use a duffel bag.
- *TIP: When traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.*

- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.
- **Luggage Handling on Arrival:** Airport porters are not allowed in the customs hall area. When you land, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and then clear customs. When you exit the airport building, your driver will load your luggage into the coach.

### **Duffel Bag: Required on the Kenya Extension**

- Use of a duffel bag is a requirement on this extension.
- Your duffel bag must be no larger than 24”x18”x13” and your carry-on luggage is limited to 21”x12”x9” due to size limitations set by the airlines and to ensure that your bag will fit on our safari vehicles.

**Important Note:** *Plastic bags are no longer allowed in Kenya (optional extension). They will be confiscated if found and could result in a hefty fine or imprisonment. Consider bringing an empty nylon bag folded into your main suitcase instead for laundry or dirty shoes. For more details, see the packing list section of this Handbook.*

### **Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips**

- **Most of your clothing should be for warm, dry climates**—lightweight, loose fitting, and made of 100% cotton. But you’ll still want to bring a warmer layer due to temperatures dropping at night (and you may want it during the day on the air-conditioned bus).
- **Footwear:** You’ll be on your feet a lot during the trip and walking over some rough, slippery, and sometimes sandy/muddy surfaces. You may be required to remove your shoes when entering a church. We recommend you bring sturdy walking shoes and a pair of slip-on shoes.
- **You can buy clothing designed especially for travel.** Look for clothes that offer adequate sun protection. **If you like to hand-wash your clothes,** bring socks and underwear made of material that will dry out overnight.
- **When traveling with a companion,** we recommend “cross-packing,” i.e., pack two outfits of your clothing in your companion’s luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.
- **Dress on our trip is functional and casual.** There’s no need for formal or dressy clothing. In local communities, and to some extent in the lodges, your dress should be modest and conservative.

## Fashion Dos and Don'ts

- **Do dress modestly:** Ethiopia is a traditional country, and locals tend to dress more modestly, although this is changing in big cities like Addis Ababa. In this context, “modestly dressed” usually means covered from shoulders to below the knees—no shorts, no sleeveless shirts, and no low or revealing necklines; and skirts or dresses below the knee. These rules are especially important in Orthodox churches or Muslim mosques—while you will usually be allowed to enter, you will be frowned upon for showing too much skin. A loose t-shirt and trousers/jeans/long skirt are a better bet.
- **Do know the rules for churches and mosques:** In addition to dressing modestly, you may be asked to remove your shoes in either an Orthodox church or a mosque. Also local women will tend to cover their hair with a scarf in either a church or a mosque; as a visitor you are usually not required or even expected to do the same, but doing so would be a nice way to show respect.
- **For the Kenya extension, do wear muted earth tones** (beige, khaki, etc.) because they don't show dirt easily, coordinate well, and don't distract animals. Don't wear white or very brightly colored clothing. These colors have traditionally been used to keep animals away, and even color-blind animals can spot dark and light shades like black and white, which is why white is a danger signal for some species.

**IMPORTANT:** Plastic bags are no longer allowed in Kenya (optional extension) and travelers will be asked to dispose of any such items when crossing the border. These items include but are not limited to duty-free and general plastic shopping bags, bin liners (which may be used to protect luggage), and dry cleaning bags. If you have plastic bags upon arrival to Kenya, you will be asked to dispose of them. Refusal to dispose of plastic bags may result in a fine. To ensure that you do not have any issues crossing the border, we strongly recommend that you do not bring any plastic bags on this adventure. If you are caught with a plastic bag after you have crossed the border, this could result in a hefty fine or imprisonment.

## Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

**And don't forget a reusable water bottle**—you'll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

## Year-Round Clothing Checklist

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best.
- ☐ Shorts: Cut long for modesty



- ☐ Shoes and socks: Comfortable walking/ running shoes or low-cut hiking shoes, with arch support. There is no heavy hiking during the trip, but hiking boots should offer better support and traction than shoes.
- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- ☐ Underwear: Most hotels and lodges will not include “smalls” (underwear) in their laundry service for cultural reasons. It is usually OK for you wash them yourself in your room.
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Optional: Swimsuit and cover-up

## Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

### For the rainy season (June–September):

- ☐ Rain gear: Waterproof jacket/windbreaker with hood and waterproof pants
- ☐ Hood/lens cap/waterproof bag for camera

## Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses; sunglasses
- ☐ Sunscreen: SPF 15 or stronger
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues
- ☐ Moist towelettes (baby wipes) and/or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser
- ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapters.
- ☐ Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger
- ☐ Foldable walking stick, sold in most camping stores

## Medicines & First Aid Gear

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, or antibiotic cream.
- ☐ An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- ☐ Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- ☐ Optional: Motion sickness medicine if you are susceptible (the roads are very bumpy).
- ☐ Optional: Anti-malarial medication—discuss with your doctor first

## Do Not Bring Single-Use Plastic Bags to Kenya

Single-use plastic bags are banned in Kenya. If you like to bring a bag for shoes or laundry, we recommend a lightweight nylon bag, packing cube, or reusable cloth tote instead. We also suggest using a reusable toiletry bag in your checked luggage. Violations of the ban could result in fines or even imprisonment, so please double-check your luggage *before* you depart.

## Do Not Bring Binoculars to Ethiopia

Monocular and binoculars are banned in Ethiopia. Violations of the ban will result in the item being confiscated, and possible detainment. Travelers taking the optional pre-trip extension to Kenya should leave these items at home to avoid complications when arriving in Ethiopia.

## Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

### Voltage

Electricity in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Zanzibar is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

### Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different

types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

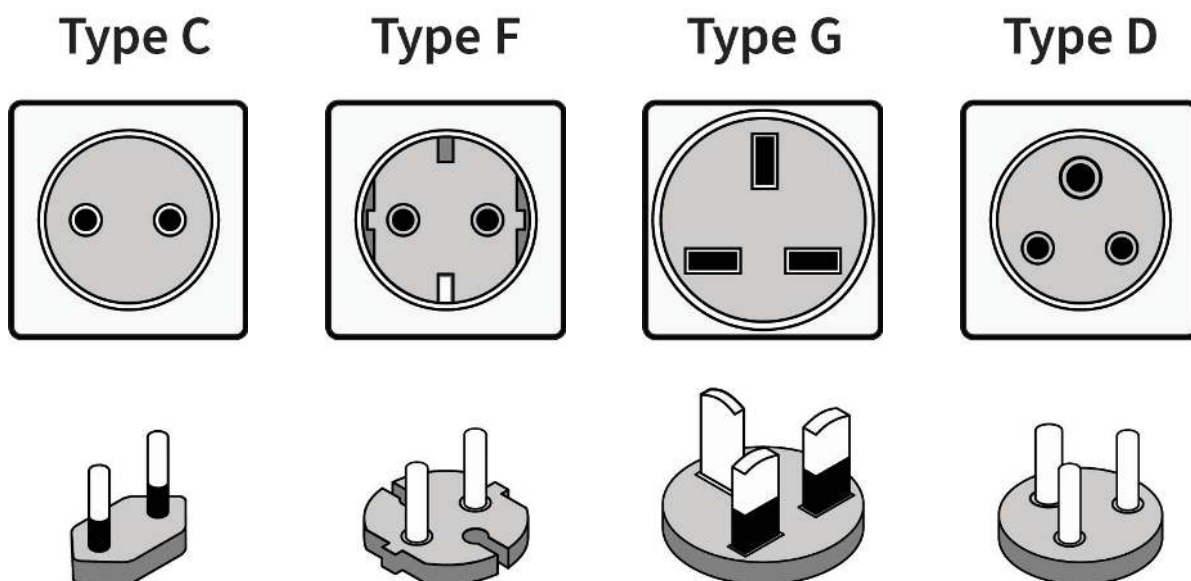
Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

**Ethiopia:** C and F

**Kenya:** G

**Zanzibar:** C or G

**Tanzania:** D or G



## CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

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**Ethiopia:** Ethiopia lies to the north of the equator and experiences three climate zones. The plateau regions in central Ethiopia, including Addis Ababa, experience cool, mild weather with average lows in the 40s and 50s and average highs getting up into the high 70s. The plateau sees heavy rains from June to September (monsoon season) and a relatively dry climate from November through February. The lowlands, which surround the plateau to the northwest and south, experience an arid climate with heavy rains typically only in July and August and a dry heat from October to mid-May. Temperatures in this region usually range from the low 70s to high 90s. Along the border of Eritrea, Ethiopia sees desert climates with intense heat averaging from the mid 80s to low 100s and very little rainfall throughout the year.

**Kenya:** The climate in Kenya varies with the terrain—the coast is tropical, the interior temperate, and the north is arid. The Masai Mara Reserve, which is in the southwest, is at a moderate-to-high elevation (4,900–7,100 feet above sea level). This makes the climate wetter and more temperate than other parts of the country, with temperatures usually falling in the range of 85–65 degrees. The rainy seasons are April–May and November; the dry season is from July to October.

**NOTE:** If you are taking one of our optional stopovers before or after your OAT adventure, please be aware the climate and temperatures might be different from what you experienced during your tour. To prepare for weather differences and pack appropriate clothing, we recommend the following world weather sites:

- [www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)
- [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)
- [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

### Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

## Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA			LALIBELA, ETHIOPIA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. (High-Low)	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Avg. # of Days with Rain
JAN	69 to 53	81 to 37	5.0	70 to 52	--	7
FEB	70 to 55	80 to 41	6.6	68 to 57	--	16
MAR	72 to 56	79 to 42	9.8	68 to 57	--	31
APR	71 to 57	82 to 47	12.4	70 to 57	--	29
MAY	72 to 58	81 to 45	11.9	73 to 58	--	17
JUN	69 to 56	85 to 54	22.7	76 to 61	--	16
JUL	65 to 55	92 to 68	18.7	74 to 59	--	30
AUG	65 to 55	92 to 68	18.7	70 to 56	--	30
SEP	66 to 55	91 to 65	22.4	68 to 55	--	30
OCT	69 to 54	81 to 47	10.7	66 to 53	--	21
NOV	69 to 51	79 to 38	3.8	66 to 52	--	14
DEC	69 to 51	81 to 38	6.3	67 to 52	--	15

MONTH	SIMIEN MOUNTAINS (DEBARK),			BAHIR DAR, ETHIOPIA		
	Temp. (Avg)	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Avg. # of Days with Rain	Temp. (High-Low)	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Avg. # of Days with Rain
JAN	60	--	3	82 to 59	--	1
FEB	62	--	3	84 to 63	--	3
MAR	65	--	4	85 to 67	--	4
APR	66	--	6	87 to 69	--	5
MAY	66	--	9	83 to 69	--	23
JUN	64	--	11	77 to 62	--	30
JUL	60	--	12	72 to 59	--	31
AUG	60	--	14	70 to 57	--	31
SEP	61	--	10	72 to 57	--	30
OCT	61	--	6	74 to 57	--	31
NOV	60	--	3	75 to 59	--	28
DEC	59	--	2	76 to 59	--	14



MONTH	NAIROBI, KENYA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	77 to 58	93 to 41	1.8
FEB	80 to 58	89 to 35	1.7
MAR	80 to 60	92 to 38	2.9
APR	76 to 61	96 to 52	6.3
MAY	74 to 59	96 to 56	4.7
JUN	73 to 56	94 to 53	1.2
JUL	71 to 54	93 to 52	0.5
AUG	72 to 54	92 to 49	0.5
SEP	76 to 55	92 to 41	1.0
OCT	78 to 58	93 to 40	1.7
NOV	75 to 60	96 to 51	4.7
DEC	75 to 59	96 to 49	3.0

## ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

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### O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

### Ethiopian Culture

Today Ethiopia's flag features an emblem of a golden star in the middle, symbolizing the unity of the people. But for generations, the flag prominently displayed the Lion of Judah—a crowned lion that is often associated with Jewish heritage—a reminder of the long oral tradition that claims Ethiopia was once the biblical land of Sheba, whose beautiful queen seduced King Solomon, bore him a son, and brought the Ark of the Covenant back to her country. And while this claim may never be proven by historical record, it is a fact that Ethiopia has had a Jewish community for well over 1,500 years. (Although in recent decades their numbers have dwindled to less than 5% of the population due to immigration to Israel, which has caused some controversy in both countries.)

Ethiopia was also the first African nation to convert to Christianity in 333 BCE—before Northern Europe—a fact that many Ethiopians are keen to point out as it is the only African nation not introduced to Christianity by European colonists. Today nearly two-thirds of the population is part of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (*Tewahedo*); the remaining third is largely Muslim. Given this long history, it is no surprise that religion plays a key part in Ethiopian culture, but the different faiths largely get along despite some tensions and social segregation.

The other mainstay of Ethiopian culture is the extended family unit. Tradition dictates that when a daughter marries, she leaves the family home. But when a son marries, he and his bride live with his parents, so three-generation households are very common, especially in the countryside. These households will consist of the parents; their grown sons, sons' spouses, and any unmarried daughters; and the children of all the sons (most couples have four or more children).

In a city setting there may not be room for everyone to live in one apartment, but they will often live near each other, visit frequently, and be very close-knit. What they will not share is a surname—Ethiopians use their father's first name for this purpose, and women do not change their name when married.

Marriage tends to be very traditional with clearly defined gender roles. Men are expected to provide and do any tasks requiring strength (like farming) while women are judged by their housework, cooking, and childcare. In urban areas women will also work outside of the home, but often in support roles or only if they have the means to hire household help. Men are considered

the head of the household, yet polygamy is far less common here than in other East African nations (less than 5% of the population). Same-sex marriage is illegal and there is a high level of discrimination against LGBT persons.

On a bigger scale than the family are the shared cultural standards that date back generations. Because Ethiopia was not colonized by Europe (it was briefly occupied by Italy during World War II, but never a colony) there's a shared sense of how things should be done, with a correct way serving coffee, greeting people (the elders first), or even cutting up a chicken. This stability in their cultural background acts as a uniting factor within the country and is a way that Ethiopians distinguish themselves from the rest of Africa.

## Religion in Daily Life

In Ethiopia, the two biggest religions are Ethiopian Orthodox Christian and Muslim. Although the two religions differ, they both play an important role in daily life. For example, it is common for museums, governmental offices, and some businesses to close for significant religious holidays such as Easter or the end of Ramadan. Also the dress code is similar in both churches and mosques, where modest dress is considered polite; you may be asked to remove your shoes; and local women tend to cover their hair with a scarf. (Female travelers are not required to cover their hair, but doing so would be a nice way to show respect.)

*TIP: Don't forget that the dates of religious festivals in Ethiopia may not be the same as in the U.S. In addition, Islamic religious festivals follow a lunar calendar, and therefore can vary from year to year. For more details see the "National Holidays" listings in this Handbook.*

## Keep an Open Mind

- This is Africa—weather, the political situation, migration of game, fuel availability, road conditions, and flight schedule changes may all impact your trip.
- In some cases, they may change the sequence of places visited, or we may not follow the trip itinerary exactly as published.
- Poverty is prevalent, so be prepared to witness a lower standard of living during our visits to local villages and schools.

## Accommodations

- Our hotels and lodges are comfortable, but not luxurious.
- There can be occasional problems with electricity, hot water, and air conditioning (where it exists).
- The roads can be dusty and very bumpy, especially during game drives on the optional extension to Kenya.
- Near the towns, some roads may be littered with trash.

## Pickpockets

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful. Con artists sometimes target travelers.

Be careful when taking photos from the vehicle in towns or city centers. It is not unheard of for thieves to reach inside the open window while you are distracted and grab cameras or purses. If you're taking photos out of an open window in a crowded area, have someone else in the group watch over your valuables.

## Language Barrier

You can have some great “conversations” with local people who do not speak English, even if you don't speak a word of the local language. Indeed, this non-verbal communication can be a highly rewarding part of travel. To break the ice, bring along some family photographs, or a few postcards of your hometown. Your Trip Experience Leader can help get the ball rolling.

Your attire is a key part of your non-verbal presentation. Your clothing should show a respect for local tradition. In small towns or near villages, you should dress in a relatively modest style—avoid revealing or tight-fitting outfits. The application of this guideline varies. You will see people in cities and large towns dressed in a modern style. And, of course, many foreign tourists are not sensitive to this at all. But you should dress modestly if you want to earn the respect of the local people.

## Responsible Safari Travel (Kenya Extension)

We do our best to have a minimum negative impact on local cultures and the natural environment in every country we operate trips. Here's how you can assist in this effort.

### Respecting Wildlife

- Observe the animals silently and with a minimum of disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on a game drive can frighten the animals away.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Don't imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, pound on the vehicle, or throw objects. Failure to obey this rule could result in your removal from a National Park by one of the Park Rangers on patrol.
- Please respect your driver-guides' judgment about your proximity to wildlife. Don't insist that he or she take the vehicle closer so you can get a better photograph. A vehicle driven too close can hinder a hunt or cause animals to abandon a hard-earned meal.
- Litter tossed on the ground can choke or poison animals and birds.
- Never attempt to feed or approach any wild animal on foot. This is especially important near lodges or in campsites where animals may have become accustomed to human visitors. Failure to adhere to this could cause you to be bitten and need immediate rabies shots, which are unpleasant and costly.

- Smoking is not allowed on game drives. The dry African bush ignites very easily, and a flash fire can harm hundreds of animals.

## Conserving the Natural Environment

- Minimize the disposable items you bring on the trip and dispose of your trash properly.
- Ask whether plastic drinking water bottles can be recycled. Most days, it's better to keep your empty bottles with you until you reach your hotel.
- Stay on established trails to avoid damaging plants.
- Don't pick any vegetation, or remove any item of biological interest.

## Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

## Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

## Ethiopian Cuisine

You may have tried Ethiopian food at home, but what you'll get here is totally different as there are ingredients that are only found locally. However one component stays the same, and that's the *injera*, a type of pancake made from a semi-fermented grain called *tef* that serves as a platter,



utensil, and bread all in one. Food is piled on top of the *injera*, and pieces of it are broken off to be used as a scoop for the food. (Or in some restaurants, it will be served on the side like bread.) But be warned: Travelers tend to get “injera fatigue” at some point as the taste is an acquired one—tangy and slightly sour. If that happens to you, stick to the yummy toppings instead. Some typical dishes include:

- **Wat:** Ethiopia’s version of curry, made with lamb, beef, goat, or chicken (in a nod to religious diets, you won’t easily find pork in Ethiopia). *Kai wat* is a spicy reddish version while *alicha wat* is a milder yellow version.
- **Kitfo:** A filling meat dish where raw lean meat is minced and warmed in a pan with butter, hot spices, and thyme (think of a warm steak tartar and you’re not far off). Can be served as *leb leb* (warmed but not cooked) or *betam leb leb* (lightly cooked).
- **Vegetable dishes:** Ethiopian cuisine is very meat-heavy, but on Wednesdays, Fridays, and the 55 days before Ethiopian Easter, vegetarian dishes are the norm as these are considered fasting days, when most locals will avoid meat. Look for dishes like *messer* (lentil curry), *gormen* (collard greens), and *shiro* (a type of humus). If you are a vegetarian, some of these dishes must be ordered in advance on non-feast days, so we recommend that you let your Trip Experience Leader know as soon as possible.
- **Drinks:** Coffee is a big deal here. And no wonder—this might be where it was first drunk. Italian-style lattes and cappuccinos are especially popular, as is local variations that combine coffee with tea or the herb rue (*t’na adam*). For alcoholic beverages try *tej*, which is brewed from honey, local beers, Gouder red wine, or Awash Crystal white wine.

## Kenyan Cuisine

Kenya’s food is as varied as its many tribes. However, there are a few regional differences based on geography. For example, the coastline tends to have the spiciest dishes and use more coconut. This, combined with an Arabic influence, means that coastal cuisine is highly regarded throughout the country. Typical dishes include:

- **Pilau:** A dish of rice, meat, and veggies cooked in beef broth with ginger and aromatic spices
- **Biryani:** A mixed rice dish
- **Chapatti:** Unleavened flat bread
- **Madafu:** Coconut water
- **Kuku wa kupaka:** A flavorful coastal dish that is especially popular. It consists of chicken pieces cooked in a hearty, spicy sauce made with coconut milk, tomato paste, and flavorings such as cumin, turmeric, and lime juice.

As you move into the interior, the food gets less spicy and more reliant on potatoes, maize, and grains like millet and sorghum. The central region is particular is known for its meat and potatoes meals such as:

- **Nyama choma:** A dish of BBQ beef short ribs or goat with a spice rub of turmeric, curry power, black pepper, and salt served on **ugali** (cornmeal).
- **Nyama stew:** A dish which can be prepared with goat, chicken, or beef cooked in oil, onions, curry powder, tomatoes, coriander, and garlic with fresh vegetables.

And then as you continue to the west, the staple ingredients change again to include more chicken and **fresh fish from Lake Victoria**. One of the highlights of the western region is **ingoho**, a poultry dish by the Luhya people that is served only to important visitors, such as prospective in-laws. A whole chicken is roasted to a nice brown color and then braised with onions, spices, and tomatoes. Also well-known in this region is **cornmeal cake and fried fish**.

## Zanzibari Cuisine

Tanzanian cuisine is unique and widely varied. Along the coast, you'll find a decided Indian influence with spices and a wide use of coconut milk. Dishes to try include:

- **Sambusa:** Large fried dumplings filled with spiced potatoes or meat
- **Pilau:** A dish of wild rice
- **Samaki:** Fish cooked in coconut milk)
- **Kashata:** Peanut brittle in coconut milk with cardamom.

As you move away from the coast, you will find a wider variety of fruits and vegetables, including **ndizi** (plantains), **bamia** (okra), **mchicha** (spinach), **njegere** (peas), **maharage** (beans), and **kisamvu** (cassava leaves). These are often be served as part of a platter with a grilled meat: **kuku choma** (chicken), **nyama choma** (beef), or **kiti moto** (pork). The more adventurous may want to try **kisusio soup**, made from boiled bones, scraps of meat, and blood.

Aside from meals, Tanzania also has some tasty and varied snacks, great with a hot beverage like **chai tea** or **kahawa** (coffee). Look for bread-like rolls called **mandazi**, **vitumbua** rice cakes, or flatbreads known as **chapati**. More unusual offerings include **firigisi** (grilled gizzards), **tende** (dates), **daga** (a tiny fried fish), or even grilled grasshoppers (**senene**)! There also various beers produced in Tanzania—Kilimanjaro, Safari, and Serengeti are the best-known brands.

## Tanzanian Cuisine

Tanzanian cuisine is unique and widely varied. Along the coast, you'll find a decided Indian influence with spices and a wide use of coconut milk. As you move away from the coast, you will find a wider variety of fruits and vegetables, including **ndizi** (plantains), **bamia** (okra), **mchicha** (spinach), **njegere** (peas), **maharage** (beans), and **kisamvu** (cassava leaves). These are often be served as part of a platter with a grilled meat: **kuku choma** (chicken), **nyama choma** (beef), or **kiti moto** (pork). Dishes to try are:

- **Sambusa:** This is similar to a samosa in that it is a large fried dumpling only filled with spiced potatoes or meat.

- **Samaki** or kebabs: Are fish cooked in coconut milk.
- **Kashata:** This dish is perfect for anyone with a sweet tooth. It's a sort of peanut brittle in coconut milk with cardamom.
- **Kisusio soup:** This soup is for the more adventurous, made from boiled bones, scraps of meat, and blood.
- More unusual offerings include **firigisi** (grilled gizzards) or even grilled grasshoppers (**senene**).

## Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

### Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

### Crafts & Souvenirs

#### Ethiopia

Popular souvenirs include textiles (such as scarves or a traditional Ethiopian dress called a *caftan*), hand-woven baskets, spices, coffee, jewelry, clay pottery, and wood sculptures.

*Note: The U.S. State Department advises that Ethiopia has strict consequences for the transport of ivory, including fines, detainment, or imprisonment. Also, keep in mind that any replicas or copies of antiques or religious artifacts must be accompanied by a receipt and may still be confiscated.*

#### Kenya

Traditional souvenirs include woodcarvings, gems and gemstone jewelry, batik artwork, traditional African woven cloths, hand-woven carpets and mats, leather goods, Maasai beadwork, carved soapstone, fine basketry, and excellent coffee and tea.

#### Zanzibar

Given the archipelago's reputation as spice islands, it is no surprise that spices are a good bargain here, especially warm spices like cloves, cinnamon, pepper, and tumeric. However saffron does not grow on the island, so be wary of anyone trying to sell it to you. Woodworking items

like small boxes, crates, or chests are popular and evoke the carved doors of Stone Town. Other handicrafts include items made out of *ukili* (palm tree leaves), woven *kikoi* fabrics, or brightly-colored folk art paintings called *tingatinga*.

## Bargaining

Some shops have fixed prices. In the open-air markets prices are usually flexible and negotiating is normal. The only rule is that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change. For bargaining in East Africa, our Trip Experience Leaders suggest that you ask how much the item is, and start your bidding at a quarter of that price, working your way up to half the asking price. This is a good rule of thumb for getting the “right” price.

## Tanzania

The authentic woodcarvings called mokonde are made only in Tanzania, and are prized by collectors worldwide. Usually made of ebony, traditional mokonde art depicts spirit gods, ancestors, and half-human, half-animal figures. Today mokonde has been adapted to include figures of wildlife. You can find smaller figures for less than \$20. Depending on size, style, and quality, larger pieces cost from \$50 to \$500.

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## U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov) has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.

- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

### Ethiopia Customs Regulations

Ethiopia has strict guidelines regarding what is allowed to enter and leave the country. For more information, please visit the U.S. State Department website at <https://travel.state.gov>. A few points to know:

- Personal laptops and video equipment are allowed, but any professional photography/video equipment or laptops intended for anything other than personal use must be declared upon arrival and departure.
- Export permits are required for antiques, religious artifacts, Ethiopian crosses, and wildlife parts. If you decide to purchase any of these items while in Ethiopia, you must request a permit through the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority.

**When buying gemstones—such as Tanzanite set in jewelry—make sure to ask if it comes with a certificate *before* purchasing**, as often transactions that have been completed cannot be reversed due to the TRA (Tanzania Revenue Authority) receipting system.

# DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

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## Ethiopia

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 426,372 square miles
- **Capital:** Addis Ababa
- **Languages:** Amharic is the official national language; Oromo, Somali, Tigrigna, and Afar are also official regional languages.
- **Ethnicity:** Oromo 34.4%, Amhara 27%, Somali 6.2%, Tigray 6.1%, Sidama 4%, Gurage 2.5%, Welaita 2.3%, Hadiya 1.7%, Afar 1.7%, Gamo 1.5%, Gedeo 1.3%, Silte 1.3%, Kefficho 1.2%, other 8.8%
- **Location:** Northern Africa, bordering Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti to the north, Somalia to the east, Kenya to the south, and South Sudan to the west.
- **Geography:** Ethiopia features deserts along the eastern coast and a mountainous terrain in the central regions.
- **Population:** 123,379,924
- **Religions:** Ethiopian Orthodox 43.5%, Muslim 33.9%, Protestant 18.5%, traditional 2.7%, Catholic 0.7%, other 0.6%
- **Time Zone:** Ethiopia is seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it is noon in D.C., it is 7:00 pm in Ethiopia.

### National Holidays: Ethiopia

Ethiopia celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid ul Fitr. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/07 Ethiopian Christmas Day

01/19 Epiphany / Timkat

03/02 Adwa Victory Day

05/01 Labor Day

05/05 Freedom Day

05/28 Derg Downfall Day

### Ethiopia: A Brief History

Ethiopia's known history dates back well over 3,000 years, although most scholars trace the modern country to the Aksumite Kingdom which rose to power in the first century CE. It was a major power on the Red Sea for centuries, subjugating both Yemen and Sudan, and converting to



Christianity in 333 CE. The Aksumite empire fell into decline with the rise of Islam, forcing the Ethiopians to move south into the highlands for refuge. The Aksumites gave way to the Zagwe Dynasty who established a new capital at Lalibela.

Unlike the Aksumites, the Zagwe were very isolated from the other Christian Nations, although they did maintain a degree of contact through Cairo and Jerusalem. For example, when Saladin retook Jerusalem in 1187, he expressly invited the Ethiopian monks to return and even exempted Ethiopian pilgrims from the pilgrim tax, proving that the country was in contact with the Crusader States in the Middle Ages. It was during this period that the Ethiopian king Gebre Mesqel Lalibela ordered the construction of the legendary rock-hewn churches of Lalibela. The Zagwe Dynasty gave way to the Solomonic Dynasty in the 1400s, bringing military reforms and imperial expansion that eventually dominated the Horn of Africa.

Catholic Portuguese missionaries arrived by the 1500s, touching off a political showdown between them and the Muslim Somalis who conquered Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in 1529. But in the end, neither side won as the locals reclaimed their land from the Somalis and all Catholics were expelled by 1632, when a new capital was established at Gondar. A period of peace and prosperity ensued until the country was split apart by warlords in the 18th century and then reunified in 1855 under Emperor Tewodros II. It is this emperor's descendants who would rule the country until 1975. During this time Ethiopia expanded its territory to the present-day borders, defeated an Italian invasion (in 1896), and saw its first reigning empress, Zewditu (1916–1930). It was her successor, Emperor Haile Selassie, who was to prove a key figure in modern Ethiopia.

Part of his impact was due to his role in World War II, when Italian forces launched a second invasion and occupied Ethiopia from 1935–1941. A joint force of British and Ethiopian rebels managed to drive the Italians out of the country by 1943, and Haile Selassie was returned to the throne. He then embarked on a series of widespread reforms, including the introduction of Ethiopia's first written constitution and the abolition of slavery. But his reign was not without controversy, especially in Eritrea, which he declared a province of Ethiopia in 1962, sparking a 30-year conflict. (Eritrea regained its independence after a referendum in 1993.) He was overthrown by a military coup known as the Derg in 1974 and killed by them in 1975.

The new regime was met with armed resistance from large landowners, royalists, and nobility. The resistance was largely centered in Eritrea, adding fire to the already-existing tensions there. Sensing the disarray, Somalia attacked, but was eventually driven out by the Ethiopians with the assistance of Soviet arms and 17,000 Cuban combat forces. This put the country squarely in the Soviet sphere of influence and in 1987, a new Soviet-style constitution was passed by popular referendum. The country was renamed the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The Derg regime continued to hold power until 1991, when their collapse was hastened by droughts and a famine—which affected around 8 million people and left 1 million dead—as well as by insurrections, particularly in the northern regions of Tigray and Eritrea. In 1994, a new constitution was written; the first free general elections were held in 1995. Since then the main political challenges in Ethiopia have been allegations of election corruption; the rise of terrorist

groups in neighboring Somali; and the role of the TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front) a political party based in the northern Tigray Province. But on the bright side, Ethiopia also passed a historical milestone in 2018 when it elected its first female president, Sahle-Work Zewde.

## Kenya

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 224,080 square miles
- **Capital:** Nairobi
- **Languages:** English and Kiswahili are the official languages; numerous indigenous languages are also spoken.
- **Ethnic groups:** Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, non-African (Asian, European, and Arab) 1%
- **Location:** Kenya straddles the equator on the eastern coast of Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania.
- **Geography:** Kenya has an impressively varied landscape. Lake Victoria is on the southwestern border of the country, with Tanzania to the south. The other features of Kenya range from a flat, bush-covered plain in the northeast to beautiful Indian Ocean beaches, scenic highlands, lakes, the Great Rift Valley, and the towering Mount Kenya.
- **Population:** 55,864,655 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Christian 82.5%, Muslim 11.1%, Traditionalists 1.6%, other 1.7%, none 2.4%, unspecified 0.7%
- **Time zone:** Kenya is on East Africa Time, eight hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 2pm in Nairobi.

## National Holidays: Kenya

In addition to the holidays listed below, Kenya celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid al-Fitr. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 Labour Day/May Day

06/01 Madaraka Day

10/20 Mashujaa Day

12/12 Jamhuri Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

## Kenya: A Brief History

Some of the earliest humans made their home in the land now known as Kenya. And since those primordial times, people from all over Africa have migrated here—such as the aristocratic Hima tribe, who moved in prior to A.D. 1000, and established large kingdoms and introduced cattle herding. They were followed by the Bantu-speaking peoples, including the Kikuyu tribe, which remains the largest ethnic group in Kenya today.

This wave of internal migration was followed by outside traders. First the Persians and Arabs, who sailed south from the Middle East as early as the 1st century B.C.E. (during the Roman era). They became a dominant trade presence in the coastal region, giving rise to the development of the Swahili language, which blends Arabic with Bantu—one of the earliest examples of a shared language created for international trade. In time the coastal area was divided up into wealthy city-states known as the Swahili States. While these states had an Arabic influence—notably in the introduction of Islam in 8th century—most scholars believe they retained a Bantu cultural core, giving them a sophisticated cosmopolitan culture that was only enhanced by trade with Asia across the Indian Ocean. Mombasa, one of Kenya's major cities today, originated as one of these city-states.

The first Europeans to have an impact on East Africa were the Portuguese, who arrived by sea in the 15th century with an eye on controlling the Indian Ocean sea routes. They were succeeded by the Omani Arabs in the 1730s, who unified the coastal states but also began amplifying the slave trade, selling prisoners from the interior of Kenya and other nations throughout the Middle East and to plantations in the Caribbean. They in turn were ousted by the British, who by the latter half of the 19th century had become the dominant power, drawing the borders of the newly defined nation of Kenya. The British ended the slave trade but claimed all land outside of so-called “tribal areas” as crown land available for white settlement.

British colonial rule created a stratified social system in Kenya. At the top where the European settlers, brought in to begin large-scale farming so that crops like coffee could be exported. Then a large group of immigrants from India, who came to work on the railroad, open businesses, or as soldiers in World War I. As India had been under British rule for some time, the Indian community was viewed more favorably by the British than the African tribespeople, who were at the bottom of the social ladder. There was also a complex hierarchy among the tribes, depending on which group the British government felt would support them.

This system led to tensions and disparities not only between the Africans and the British, but also between the tribes. The Kikuyus in particular took a lead role in creating political groups that advocated for African suffrage, fairer taxation, and the return of native lands in the 1920s. Many of these movements were put on pause during World War II, when Kenyan soldiers bravely fought for the Allies, and then resumed afterwards. A turning point came in 1952 with the start of the Mau Mau Uprising, a four-year rebellion that put the country on the path to independence in 1963.

It also solidified the political importance of the Kikuyu tribe as they were the primary supporters of the Mau Mau movement. Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of independent Kenya, was a Kikuyu. Though he had been involved in the Mau Mau rebellion, he established moderate, pro-Western policies and was acknowledged as *Mzee*, “the wise old one,” by his own people and many world leaders upon his death in 1978.

Kenyatta’s successor, Daniel arap Moi, continued to follow similar social and economic policies from 1978 to 2002. But Moi’s years as president were not without controversy, especially his personal fortune (rumored to be vast and corrupt), authoritarian methods, and his reliance on ethnic favoritism to stay in power. Under his government, tribal tensions began to bubble over, resulting in mass evictions of the Kikuyu and oppressive measures against other groups, such as the Luo. These tensions, plus periodic attacks by the radical al-Shabab group, have largely dominated recent Kenyan politics in the past decade, but so too have happier news stories, like the discovery of oil and the recent birth of a record number of elephant calves.

## Zanzibar

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 950 square miles
- **Capital:** Zanzibar City
- **Languages:** Swahili is the official language; English and Arabic are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Arabs, Hadimu, Swahili, and Tumbatu
- **Location:** The archipelago is off the eastern coast of mainland Tanzania, in the Indian Ocean
- **Population:** 1,303,569
- **Religions:** Majority Muslim
- **Time Zone:** Tanzania is on Eastern Africa Time, seven to eight hours ahead of U.S. ET (depending if the U.S. is on Daylight Savings Time). When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 2 or 3pm in Zanzibar City.

## National Holidays: Zanzibar

In addition to the holidays listed below, both Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania celebrate a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid el Fitri. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/12 Zanzibar Revolution Day

04/26 Union Day

05/01 Worker's Day

06/07 Saba Saba

08/08 Peasants' Day

10/14 Nyerere Day

12/09 Republic Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

## Zanzibar: A Brief History

Tanzania is home to the Olduvai Gorge, the site where some of the earliest human remains on earth have been discovered. For hundreds of thousands of years, hunter-gatherer societies inhabited the area, though details about them are lost in the mists of time. More recently, the interior of the country has been occupied by pastoral and agricultural societies like the Maasai, who are believed to have migrated from the southern Nile during the 15th to 17th century.

In contrast, the coastal region has a different migration story. Over one thousand years ago, sea-borne traders established a strong Arab presence on Tanzania's Indian Ocean coast, which includes the island of Zanzibar. A vast trade network sprang up, with Zanzibar as a key trading port between Africa, the Middle East, and India. (Sadly, this included a thriving slave trade.) The island's wealth and strategic location drew the attention of the Portuguese, who ruled it for about 200 years starting in 1502. But by the 1700s they were outed by the Sultans of Oman, who reestablished trade with the Arabic world and made Stone Town their capital in 1840.

Rivalry among European colonial powers brought historic change to the area in the late 19th century. The British made Zanzibar their protectorate in 1890 and abolished the slave trade. But on the mainland Britain yielded to Germany when the two countries signed an agreement giving Tanzania (then known as Tanganyika) to the Germans, while Britain got Kenya and Uganda. This agreement ended in World War I, when Germany and Britain fought intense land and naval battles in Tanganyika. Following Germany's defeat in Europe, Britain was put in charge of the League of Nations mandate for Tanganyika.

In the 20th century, the movement to end colonialism in Tanganyika took shape among farmers' unions and cooperatives. Julius Nyerere led the political party that grew out of this movement and became the country's first president when it made a peaceful transition to independence in 1961. The island of Zanzibar gained independence in 1963, in a transition that involved a bloody revolution during which the bulk of the Arab population was expelled. In 1964, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, and Pemba (another offshore island) joined to become the United Republic of Tanzania.

Tanzania's leaders stood at the forefront of African liberation movements during the 1970s and the early 1980s. They allowed Mozambique nationalists to use Tanzanian territory for training and attack bases as they fought for independence from the Portuguese. In 1979, Tanzanian troops helped overthrow the regime of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. President Nyerere also played a key role in the negotiations for ending white rule in Zimbabwe. Although it maintained good relations with the West, Tanzania followed a strongly socialist path in the decades immediately following independence.

Part of the reason Tanzania was able to take such a leading role was the relative lack of tension between tribal groups and the use of the shared language (Swahili) which was adopted early on in 1961. That is not to say that there isn't any friction—the past two decades have seen some strong political divisions, especially between Zanzibar and the mainland. A key example of this divide occurred shortly after the highly contested 2000 general elections, which were won by a party with strong support on the mainland, the CCM. Not long after the election, the offices of the Zanzibar-based opposition party—the CUF—were raided by the police and the CUF chairman was charged with unlawful assembly. Supporters took to the streets in protest, which sadly disintegrated into a violent clash with the police. Ultimately the heads of both parties joined together to restore calm, but the incident prompted many in Tanzania to call for a greater level of freedom for opposition parties.

In addition to political struggles, the residents of Zanzibar have also struggled with their dependence on the mainland for electricity, which is supplied by an underwater cable. In 2008 the cable's connection failed, leaving the island without electricity for roughly one month. (Many in Zanzibar have backup generators for this very reason.) But these internal squabbles are relatively mild, especially compared to other African nations. In recent years the relative stability has helped Tanzania emerge as one of the anchors for the East African region, accepting refugees from the conflicts in Rwanda, hosting peace talks for Burundi, and forming an East African trade alliance with neighboring states like Kenya.

## Tanzania

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 365,755 square miles
- **Capital:** Dodoma
- **Languages:** Swahili is the official language; English and tribal languages are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Mainland – African 99% (of which 95% are Bantu consisting of more than 130 tribes), other 1% (consisting of Asian, European, and Arab); Zanzibar – Arab, African, mixed Arab and African
- **Location:** Tanzania is bordered by Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia



- **Geography:** Mainland Tanzania's landscape is flat and low along the coast. In the interior, a plateau at an average altitude of about 4,000 feet makes up most of the country, and isolated mountain groups rise in the northeast and southwest.
- **Population:** 61,741,120 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Mainland – Christian 61.4%, Muslim 35.2%, folk religion 1.8%, other 0.2%, unaffiliated 1.4%; Zanzibar—majority Muslim
- **Time Zone:** Tanzania is on Eastern Africa Time, eight hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 2pm in Dar es Salaam.

## National Holidays: Tanzania

In addition to the holidays listed below, Tanzania celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid el Fitri. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

01/12 Zanzibar Revolution Day

04/26 Union Day

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06/07 Saba Saba

08/08 Peasants' Day

10/14 Nyerere Day

12/09 Republic Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

## Tanzania: A Brief History

Tanzania is home to the Olduvai Gorge, the site where some of the earliest human remains on earth have been discovered. For hundreds of thousands of years, hunter-gatherer societies inhabited the area, though details about them are lost in the mists of time. More recently, the interior of the country has been occupied by pastoral and agricultural societies.

The cattle-herding Maasai are notable among these. They are believed to have migrated from the southern Nile during the 15th to 17th century, and they continue to live in mainland Tanzania to this day. In the past, this tribe's reputation as fierce warriors may have prevented some intertribal clashes as neither the slave trade nor tribal warfare had much impact in their territory. Interestingly, while the Maasai may have captured the public imagination, they are not a majority tribe in Tanzania, which boasts a stunning diversity of over 100 tribal groups.

In contrast, the coastal region has a different migration story. Over one thousand years ago, sea-borne traders established a strong Arab presence on Tanzania's Indian Ocean coast, which includes the island of Zanzibar. A vast trade network sprang up, with Zanzibar as a key trading port between Africa, the Middle East, and India. (Sadly, this included a thriving slave trade.) The island's wealth and strategic location drew the attention of the Portuguese, who ruled it for about 200 years starting in 1502. But by the 1700s they were outed by the Sultans of Oman, who reestablished trade with the Arabic world and made Stone Town their capital in 1840.

Rivalry among European colonial powers brought historic change to the area in the late 19th century. Livingston and Stanley were among the first Englishmen to arrive in the interior, where Stanley's famous "Dr. Livingston, I presume" was uttered in 1871 by Lake Tanganyika. The British then made Zanzibar their protectorate in 1890 and abolished the slave trade. But on the mainland Britain yielded to Germany when the two countries signed an agreement giving Tanzania (then known as Tanganyika) to the Germans, while Britain got Kenya and Uganda. This agreement ended in World War I, when Germany and Britain fought intense land and naval battles in Tanganyika. Following Germany's defeat in Europe, Britain was put in charge of the League of Nations mandate for Tanganyika.

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Part of the reason Tanzania was able to take such a leading role was the relative lack of tension between tribal groups and the use of the shared language (Swahili) which was adopted early on in 1961. That is not to say that there isn't any friction—the past two decades have seen some strong political divisions, especially between Zanzibar and the mainland—but these internal squabbles are relatively mild compared to other African nations. In recent years the relative stability has helped Tanzania emerge as one of the anchors for the East African region, accepting refugees from the conflicts in Rwanda, hosting peace talks for Burundi, and forming an East African trade alliance with neighboring states like Kenya.

## RESOURCES

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### Suggested Reading

#### Kenya

***Love, Life, and Elephants: An African Love Story*** by Daphne Sheldrick (2012, Memoir) The lively and engaging biography of a much-admired expert on African elephants—and the first person to raise one in captivity from birth. The book recounts her experiences helping her husband to create and run one of Kenya’s national parks and her role in raising orphaned elephants to release back into the wild.

***West with the Night*** by Beryl Markham (1942, Memoir) A childhood in Kenya and a career as a bush pilot during the 1930s—what more could a girl want? The author’s stylish prose evokes her free and adventure-loving spirit. Reissued in 2015.

***Running with the Kenyans: Passion, Adventure, and the Secrets of the Fastest People on Earth*** by Adharanand Finn (2012, Sport) An amateur runner from Britain, Finn uproots his family for a chance to train in Kenya, where many of the best professional runners come from. While some reviewers felt this book was more for the running enthusiast, others praised its mix of sports and travel writing.

***It’s Our Turn to Eat: The Story of a Kenyan Whistle-Blower*** by Michela Wrong (2009, History/Politics) Journalist-turned-author Michela Wrong uses the dramatic true story of anti-corruption officer John Githongo as a way to shed light on tribal politics and corruption in Kenya.

***Out of Africa*** by Isak Dinesen (1937, Biography/Memoir) The classic tale of a young woman who gives up her life in Denmark to run a coffee plantation in Kenya around the time of WWI. Her lyrical descriptions and love for the land and people have made this book an international favorite.

#### Ethiopia

***Beneath the Lion’s Gaze*** (2011) and ***The Shadow King*** (2019) by Maaza Mengiste (Historical Fiction) Award-winning Ethiopian-born author Maaza Mengiste tells the tales of a family during the revolution that resulted in the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 in *Beneath the Lion’s Gaze* and the struggles of an orphaned servant in the 1930s as the country faces Mussolini’s impending invasion in *The Shadow King*.

***Cutting for Stone*** by Abraham Verghese (2009, Fiction) A sweeping novel about the twin sons of a British doctor and Indian nun born and raised in Ethiopia. When they fall for the same woman, one twin flees to America, where he gets a job at a NYC hospital...and then the past catches up to him.

***Sweetness in the Belly*** by Camilla Gibb (2007, Fiction) From the author of *The Kite Runner* comes the story of Lilly, an orphaned British girl raised at a Sufi shrine in Morocco whose life changes dramatically when she goes on pilgrimage Harar, Ethiopia.

***Eating the Flowers of Paradise: One Man's Journey Through Ethiopia and Yemen*** by Kevin Rushby (1999, Travel Narrative) Travels through Ethiopia and Yemen, including an examination of the political and historical landscapes of Ethiopian culture.

***Sign and the Seal: The Quest for the Lost Ark of the Covenant*** by Graham Hancock (1992, History) A British journalist explores the mystery of the Lost Ark of the Covenant.

## Zanzibar

***The Gravel Heart*** by Abdulrazak Gurnah (2017, Fiction) A powerful and poetic novel about the impact of family secrets, this story follows Salim as he grows up in 1970s Zanzibar under the shadow of a distant father, possibly unfaithful mother, and an well-loved uncle who offers him a new life in London. But a new life means new difficulties, and the old secrets haven't really gone away. The author himself immigrated from Zanzibar to Great Britain, and the story resonates with many personal details and insights.

***Zanzibar Uhuru: Revolution, Two Women and the Challenge of Survival*** by Anne M Chappel (2015, Historical Fiction) A bid for independence, a brutal uprising, and a father's difficult choice bind two very different young women—an Arab girl name Fatima and Elizabeth, the daughter of a British official—in ways that take decades to play out. While the story is fiction, many readers felt the book gave them a good background on Zanzibar's history.

***The Sultan's Shadow: One Family's Rule at the Crossroads of East and West*** by Christiane Bird (2010, History) Historian Bird focuses on the end of Arabian rule in Zanzibar, especially Oman's Sultan Said, who ascended to the throne in 1806, and his daughter Princess Salme, whose rebellious life included a love of learning, a secret pregnancy, and marriage with a foreign commoner.

***Death in Zanzibar*** by M.M. Kaye (1999, Mystery) There's a killer loose in Zanzibar, and Dany Ashton is determined to find out who. A fun mystery-romance-adventure in the same vein as Mary Stewart or Agatha Christie.

## Eastern Africa: Kenya & Tanzania

***City of Thorns: Nine Lives in the World's Largest Refugee Camp*** by Ben Rawlence (2016, Nonfiction). The Dadaab refugee camp is the third-largest refugee camp in the world, seen internationally as a looming humanitarian crisis. Rawlence outlines life in the camp, telling the stories of nine inhabitants and the struggles they face on their desperate bid for a better life.

***Love, Life, and Elephants: An African Love Story*** by Daphne Sheldrick (2012, Memoir) The lively and engaging biography of a much-admired expert on African elephants—and the first person to raise one in captivity from birth. The book recounts her experiences helping her husband to create and run one of Kenya's national parks and her role in raising orphaned elephants to release back into the wild.

***Running with the Kenyans: Passion, Adventure, and the Secrets of the Fastest People on Earth*** by Adharanand Finn (2012, Sport) An amateur runner from Britain, Finn uproots his family for a chance to train in Kenya, where many of the best professional runners come from. While some reviewers felt this book was more for the running enthusiast, others praised its mix of sports and travel writing.

***Crazy River: Exploration and Folly in East Africa*** by Richard Grant (2011, Travel Narrative) Author Grant risks his life to travel the relatively unexplored Malagarasi River from Tanzania into Burundi, which he then follows up with a jaunt into Rwanda. At times adventurous, scary, and crazy.

***It's Our Turn to Eat: The Story of a Kenyan Whistle-Blower*** by Michela Wrong (2009, History/Politics) Journalist-turned-author Michela Wrong uses the dramatic true story of anti-corruption officer John Githongo as a way to shed light on tribal politics and corruption in Kenya.

## Suggested Films & Videos

### Ethiopia

***Lamb*** (2015, Drama) When Ephraim is sent to live with some relatives after the death of his mother, he brings his beloved pet lamb with him. But Easter is coming, and Ephraim will do everything he can to ensure his friend survives. *Lamb* was the first Ethiopian film to show at the Cannes Film Festival and has been praised for showcasing rural life in Ethiopia.

***Difret*** (2014, Drama) Loosely based on a real landmark court case in Ethiopia, this story centers around female attorney Meaza Ashenafi as she defends her 14-year-old client Hirut Assefa from murder charges after Hirut shoots a man who tried to abduct her into marriage.

***Live and Become*** (2005, Drama) A touching French-language film about an Ethiopian boy who is Orthodox Christian but disguises himself as Jewish in order to escape famine and emigrate to Israel.

***National Geographic Explorer: Search for the Lost Ark*** (1994, TV Series) A British journalist goes in search of the Ark of the Covenant. Or if you want a more action-adventure take on the subject, *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) is always fun. Note that while the film claims that the Ark of the Covenant is in Egypt, many believe that the Ark is located in a church in Axum, Ethiopia.

### Kenya

***Eye in The Sky*** (2015, Drama/War) A tense and thought-provoking war drama in which British commander Katherine Powell (played by Helen Mirren) faces the most difficult choice of her career. While running a drone mission against terrorists in Kenya, a young girl enters the kill zone, forcing a moral dilemma.

***The First Grader*** (2010, Biopic/Drama) An 84-year old Kenyan villager is determined to learn how to read and write no matter the odds. An uplifting movie based on a true story.

***The Constant Gardener*** (2005, Thriller) A British diplomat, Justin Quale, and his wife Tessa relocate to Kenya. But when Tessa is murdered and British embassy tries to meddle in Justin's investigation, it becomes apparent that Tessa's death is just the tip of the iceberg.

***Nowhere in Africa*** (2001, Drama) A Jewish couple flee Germany for Kenya at the start of WWII and try to build a new life in a strange land. In German, with subtitles.

***Out of Africa*** (1985, Drama/Romance) A young Danish woman falls for Kenya, her new coffee plantation, and a restless big-game hunter in 1910s. Based on the book by the same name and starring Robert Redford and Meryl Streep in one of her early roles.

## Zanzibar

***Curse of an Addict - Zanzibar*** (2015, Documentary). In Zanzibar, heroin is wide-spread, with between 7,000 and 12,000 people struggling with addiction. Follow Seif, a heroin addict, who believes he was cursed into his addiction. Seif struggles with who he once was and who he should have become, battling against his addiction to be the man he wants to be.

***Shadow Tree*** (2014, Short). A Zanzibari boy struggles to keep a fish alive in a muddy puddle, on the water-insecure island.

***Jonah*** (2013, Fantasy/Drama). Two young men, Mbwana and his best friend Juma, photograph a gigantic fish living in the sea near their hometown, bringing international attention to the small Zanzibari town. Years pass and when Mbwana encounters the fish again, he sets out to defeat the beast that ruined his life.

***As Old As My Tongue: The Myth and Life of Bi Kidude*** (2008, Documentary). A world-famous, Zanzibari-born Taarab singer, Bi Kidude was believed to be the oldest touring singer in the world before her death in 2013. While much of her early life is unknown, filmmaker Andy Jones digs into the culture and traditions Bi Kidude was born in as he outlines her career and awards as a Taarab singer.

## Tanzania

***Jane*** (2017, Documentary) An inspiring documentary about the life of Jane Goodall, the world's foremost expert on chimpanzees, and her work at Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania.

***Throw Down Your Heart*** (2008, Music) Did you know the banjo originated in Africa? Well-known banjo player Bela Fleck traces the instrument's roots through Tanzania, Uganda, Gambia, and Mali, jamming with fellow musicians along the way. If you are more interested in the music than the film, some of the songs have been released as an album called ***Throw Down Your Heart: Africa Sessions*** (2020).



## Useful Websites

### **Overseas Adventure Travel**

[www.oattravel.com](http://www.oattravel.com)

### **Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions**

[www.oattravel.com/faq](http://www.oattravel.com/faq)

### **International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)**

[www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

### **Electricity & Plugs**

[www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets)

### **Foreign Exchange Rates**

[www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter)  
[www.oanda.com/converter/classic](http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic)

### **ATM Locators**

[www.mastercard.com/atm](http://www.mastercard.com/atm)  
[www.visa.com/atmlocator](http://www.visa.com/atmlocator)

### **World Weather**

[www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)  
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)  
[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

### **Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)**

[www.travlang.com/languages](http://www.travlang.com/languages)

### **Packing Tips**

[www.travelite.org](http://www.travelite.org)

### **U.S. Customs & Border Protection**

[www.cbp.gov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/travel)

### **Transportation Security**

#### **Administration (TSA)**

[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)

### **National Passport Information Center**

[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

### **Holidays Worldwide**

[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)

### **History & Culture**

[en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

## Useful Apps

### **Flight Stats**

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

### **LoungeBuddy**

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

### **Timeshifter**

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

### **GoogleMaps**

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

### **Triposo**

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

### **Rome2rio**

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

### **Flush or Sit or Squat**

Find a clean toilet anywhere

### **Uber**

Ride sharing around the world

### **Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus**

#### **ATM locations**

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

### **TunnelBear**

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

### **What's App, Skype, or Signal**

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

### **Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel**

Learn dozens of foreign languages

### **Google Translate**

Fast and simple translations

### **XE**

Currency conversions

### **SizeGuide**

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

### **Best Units Converter**

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

### **Tourlina**

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

### **Happy Cow**

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

### **Eatwith**

Dine with locals all over the world

### **Meetup**

Connects you with locals who share your interests

### **Skyview**

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

### **Travello**

Find travel friends on the road

### **ALIX for One**

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

### **TripWhistle**

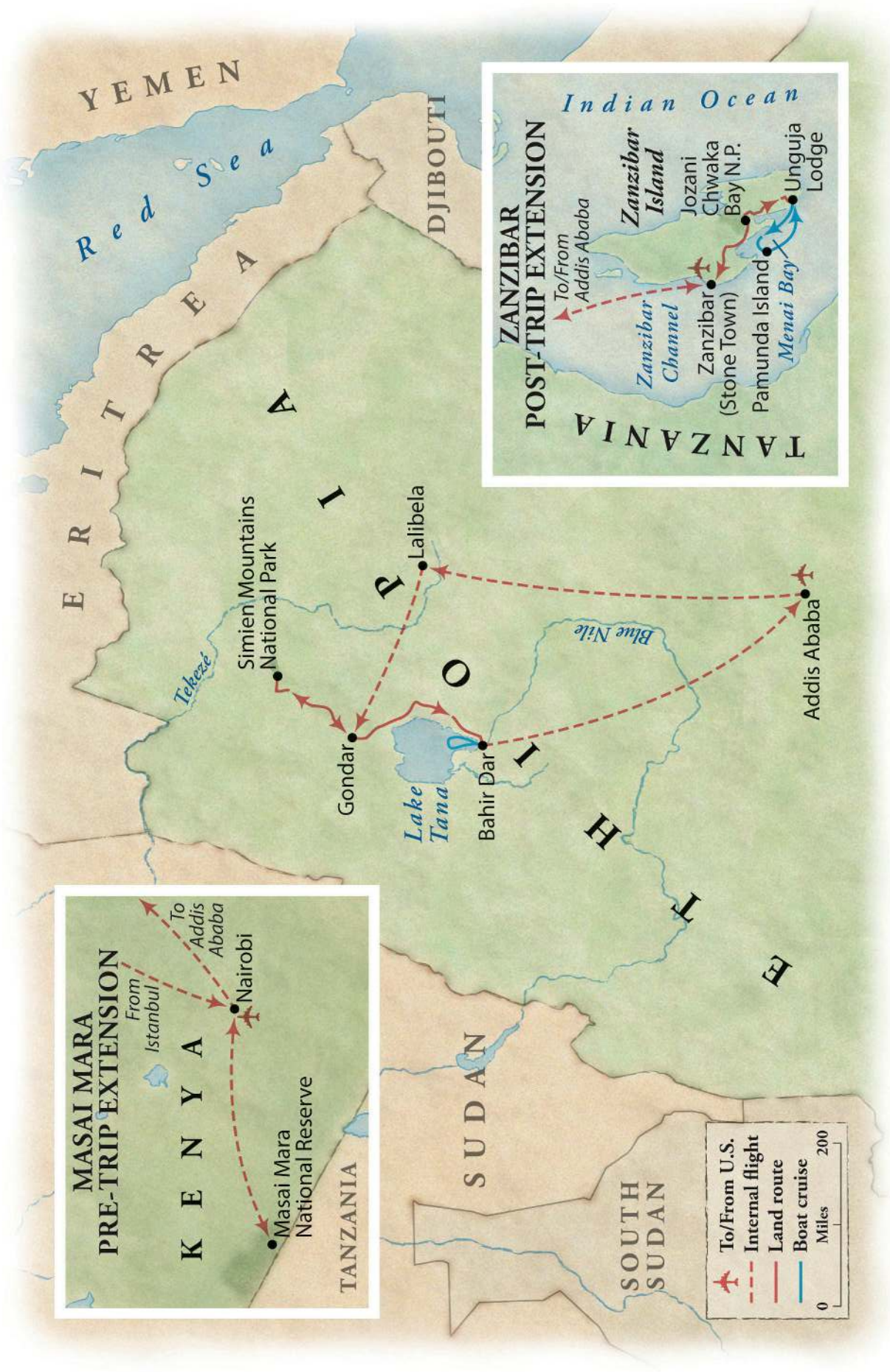
Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

### **GeoSure**

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

### **Chirpey**

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more





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