

## Entrance Requirements

### Passports

- A valid passport is required for entry into Ethiopia.
- The passport must be valid for **6** months after your scheduled return date.
- You will need two blank pages per country for entry and exit stamps in the visa section of your passport. "Two blank pages" is defined as the front and back of a page.
- If you **need a new passport** to be issued **act now**: It can take up to 6 weeks to receive your new passport. It is no longer possible to purchase additional pages for an existing passport. If you travel frequently, please consider purchasing a 52-page passport. For more information contact the National Passport Information Center toll free at 877-487-2778 or visit <http://www.travel.state.gov>.

***Advisory:** When you travel, we recommend that you make two copies of your first passport page; keep one copy at home in the unlikely event that your passport is lost, and take one copy along to use as an ID, should you leave your passport behind in the hotel safe deposit box. Air Tickets must be in the same name that appears on your passport so make certain that you are registered on your Classic Escapes program in the same exact way.*

### Visa

Visas are required for U.S. Citizens visiting Ethiopia. Visas may be secured on arrival at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa. Currently the cost for an Ethiopian visa is U.S. \$50 payable in clean, undamaged bills not older than 2006. Additional information can be found on-line at: [www.ethiopianembassy.org/ConsularServices/ConsularService.php?Page=VisaService01.htm&left=2](http://www.ethiopianembassy.org/ConsularServices/ConsularService.php?Page=VisaService01.htm&left=2)

## Health and Wellness

You will be visiting a country with a rich and diverse cultural history, but is on a different continent than we are accustomed to. As a result, you may be exposed to some pathogens that you would not ordinarily encounter in the U.S. There are some preventative steps that you can take to help ensure that you do not bring back to your home more than your luggage.

### Inoculations

There are no compulsory vaccinations required for entry into Zimbabwe for those traveling from the United States. However, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) suggest that you be up to date on routine vaccines such as:

- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Polio
- Influenza

The CDC recommends these vaccines for MOST travelers. They are NOT mandatory:

- Hepatitis A & B
- Typhoid

In addition, consult your doctor for a prescription for a **Malaria** suppressant at least two weeks prior to departure as some tablets must be taken a week before you depart, as well as during and after trip.

### **Additional Information**

The CDC issues regular travel health notices on their website:

- [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/southafrica](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/southafrica)

### **Yellow Fever**

Although it is not mandatory for entry to Ethiopia, the Centers for Disease Control recommends inoculation against Yellow Fever. Please speak with your physician to determine if immunization is appropriate for you. Once immunized, you will receive a signed yellow fever certificate, which you should carry with your passport. It becomes valid 10 days after vaccination and is good for life. You should keep this certificate with your

**Note:** if you are traveling from a country with risk of yellow fever, the government of Ethiopia requires proof of vaccination.

Please consult your physician, local health authority or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747) or via their web site at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) for any additional health precautions. For outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization's web site at <http://www.who.int/en/>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/topics/en/>.

### **Water & Food**

Food is carefully prepared, and the local cuisine is refreshing. Most meals will include a buffet of some kind, whether it is the entire meal or a portion of it. Generally, water throughout eastern Africa is NOT safe to drink directly from the tap. Fortunately, bottled water is readily available, so please do not allow yourself to become dehydrated. In remote areas water is usually boiled or bottled and is safe to drink but not from the tap. It is very important that you drink plenty of water especially during the warmer months. It is generally recommended that guests drink at least 2 to 3 litres (4 to 6 pints) of water per day to limit the effects of dehydration. This excludes tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages, which act as diuretics and actually contributes to dehydration.

## **Physical Conditioning**

To enjoy your trip to the fullest, you should be in good physical and mental health. Participants should be able to walk at an easy pace over uneven terrain at cities and archaeological sites for three or four hours at a time. Some of the walks are strenuous, and may require ascending/descending uneven and not always defined stairs as well as treks in the national parks. Rough roads may bounce you around so you should be prepared.

## **Travel Insurance & Medical Evacuation**

We recommend that you consider a Trip Cancellation policy that also includes medical coverage and evacuation against unforeseen circumstances.

## **Climatic Conditions**

### **Altitude**

From the peaks of the Bale Mountains to the depths of the Danakil Depression, Ethiopia has some dramatic high and low elevations. There are no specific factors such as age, gender, or physical condition that correlates with susceptibility to altitude sickness. Some people get it and some people don't, and some people may experience it one visit and not the next time. Symptoms include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, lack of concentration, nausea, swelling of ankles, and in extreme cases, hallucination. Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, heavy food and strenuous physical activity. Citrus fruits and bananas may diminish the effects. If you do not feel well, take it easy. Put your feet up, drink plenty of clean (boiled or bottled) water, and take a siesta after lunch. People with respiratory problems may be affected by the air pollution of the larger cities, although the local government has taken recent steps to curb emissions.

### **Altitude Charts: (Feet)**

Addis Ababa	7,454
Bahir Dar	5,860
Bale Mountains	9,800 - 14,360
Danakil (lowest elevation)	-410
Gheralta	7,345
Gondar	8,136
Lalibela	7,815
Simien Mountains at Chenek	11,881

### **Temperature**

Ethiopian weather varies greatly according to elevation. The capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, is located at an elevation of 7,726 feet and as such its climate remains relatively cool throughout the year. Even in

the hottest months (March to May), average highs rarely exceed 77°F. Throughout the year, temperatures drop quickly once the sun goes down, and frosty mornings are common. Towards Ethiopia's borders, elevations decrease and temperatures rise accordingly.

Each region has its own rainfall patterns. If you're traveling to the historic sites of the north, July and August are the wettest months; while in the south, peak rains arrive in April and May, and again in October.

If you're traveling to the [Danakil Depression](#) in the southwest, you don't have to worry about rain; this area boasts the hottest and driest conditions in the world.

Average Temperature (°F)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Addis Ababa	42/78	48/78	52/81	50/80	51/78	52/83	51/76	49/76	47/77	44/77	43/76	43/75
Bahir Dar	54/89	59/90	61/92	64/92	62/87	59/86	58/80	56/80	56/84	55/85	54/87	55/87
Bale Mountains	39/71	45/70	46/73	45/69	46/70	46/72	47/72	47/71	46/71	43/68	42/66	41/67
Gheralta	45/73	54/71	56/75	56/76	58/75	59/81	57/72	56/73	55/77	53/73	49/71	48/70
Gondar	59/75	60/75	63/77	63/74	64/77	63/73	61/70	61/70	61/72	59/73	57/73	57/73
Lalibela	44/73	50/70	53/74	51/76	54/75	57/80	56/75	55/74	53/75	48/73	46/72	46/69
Average Rainfall (inches):	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Addis Ababa	0.3	2.6	5.6	2.0	6.2	2.6	6.6	6.0	5.1	1.7	1.4	0.3
Bahir Dar	0.0	0.4	0.3	1.5	3.9	2.2	11.3	10.5	3.0	1.5	0.0	0.0
Bale Mountains	0.0	0.6	1.9	4.7	5.2	0.3	2.5	1.8	0.8	3.0	5.3	0.5
Gheralta	0.4	6.0	5.4	3.8	10.7	2.0	19.5	23.2	15.4	1.3	0.6	0.2
Gondar	0.6	1.4	2.6	3.3	3.0	4.7	4.7	9.3	5.5	1.2	0.2	0.2
Lalibela	0.0	4.3	4.6	3.0	6.3	0.5	16.3	13.1	4.2	0.4	0.8	0.3

## Recommended Packing List

### Clothing

- Long-sleeved shirts and slacks to protect you from insect bites and sunburn
- Warm socks and sleepwear for chilly nights in the mountains
- Sturdy hiking shoes for hiking and archaeological sites
- Good quality sunglasses (preferably polarized).
- Sun hat with a brim
- Good walking shoes or hiking sneakers
- Fleece or warm jacket for chilly evenings in the mountains
- Light raingear for the wet season (May - September)

## **Toiletries**

- Personal toiletries (basic amenities supplied by many establishments)
- Moisturizing cream & suntan lotion
- Insect repellent e.g. Tabard, Rid, Jungle Juice, OFF, etc.
- Basic medical kit (aspirins, plasters, Imodium, antiseptic cream, and Anti-histamine cream, etc.)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Packaged wet tissues ("Wash & Dry" "Wet Ones")
- Bathing wipes (for camping on the Danakil post-extension)
- If you wear contact lenses, we recommend that you bring along a pair of glasses in case you get irritation
- Small sewing kit

## **Other Things To Pack**

- Visas, tickets, passports, money, etc.
- Backpack to use during the day as you tour
- A small flashlight with extra batteries
- Adapter plugs & converters for electrical appliances
- A tiny calculator for estimating cost while shopping
- Binoculars
- Reading material
- Journal with pen

## **Camera Equipment**

- Camera, memory cards and chargers
- Lenses, cleaning fluid, lens tissue
- Waterproof/dustproof bags/cover for your camera


## **Tips on Clothing**

Three changes of clothes at the minimum is recommended and should be lightweight, breathable, and versatile. Pack items that will layer well together as evenings and mornings will be significantly cooler at higher altitudes and you will want to be able to shed them as the day heats up. Supplex pants and chinos travel better than jeans, which take forever to dry. Pale earth colors such as tan or olive are best for viewing wildlife and birds, but camouflage clothes are illegal in many African countries.

Your primary footwear should be close-toed and comfortable. Open toed shoes can "open" you up to insect bites, stubbed toes, splinters, thorns, et cetera. Flip flops should be limited to poolside or a shower stall. Take care of your feet and they will take care of you, and that includes having socks which can prevent blisters and insect bites.

## Power & Connectivity

Power systems throughout Ethiopia are generally 220/230 volts, 50Hz, Even in the capital of Addis Ababa the electricity supply can be irregular and blackouts can happen.

<b>At a Glance</b>	220 volts / 50 Hz
Adapter Type C	
Adapter Type E/F	
Adapter Type L	

## Cell Phones

Many travelers bring along their cell phones, not only for connecting to the internet and making phone calls, but for the easy to use camera functions. If you plan on using it as a phone keep in mind North American phones may not in Ethiopia, particularly in remote areas. Check with your service provider to determine if you can purchase a plan, or if your phone can be “unlocked”. If it can, you should be able to purchase inexpensive prepaid SIM cards.

***Advisory:** As most people travel to “get away from it all,” some limitations on the use of these phones when on tour need to be set. We suggest the following guidelines on the use of cell phones:*

- 1. Keep the ring tone at a low volume to avoid disturbing other guests.*
- 2. Use your phone in the privacy of your room and not any of the common areas: dining room, bar/lounge area, or on any of the vehicles.*
- 3. Use your phone for outgoing calls and to check messages only. Incoming calls, and the loud ringing that ensues, should be curtailed.*

## **Time**

Ethiopia is on Eastern Africa Time which is 8 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it's 8pm in Ethiopia, it is noon in New York. During Daylight Savings Time, the difference is one hour less.

## **EQUIPMENT**

### **Cameras**

From smartphones to SLR cameras, digital photography has now made it simpler than ever to preserve the memories experienced during once-in-a-lifetime adventures. Most digital cameras use either an SD (secure digital) card or a CF (compact flash) card that comes in a variety of storage capacities ranging from 2-128 GB (gigabytes). Depending on the megapixel size of your particular camera and the format in which you choose to shoot your images, an 8GB card can hold as few as 200 images shot in RAW format (normally shot by pros and serious amateurs) to just over 2000 images shot as JPEGs (most common format shot by enthusiasts). For those cameras with megapixels higher than 12, it is recommended that at least 4-8GB cards are used and that you should always bring more than one card in case of card failure or corruption (rare but possible). If you are bringing a laptop, external USB hard drives of 1-2 TB (terabytes) are compact, relatively inexpensive, and an excellent way to store tens of thousands of images. In addition to ensuring that you bring the charger and adaptor/convertor for the location to where you are traveling, it is highly recommended that you bring at least one spare, fully charged battery for your camera. There may be locations where dependable power is not available for charging and spare batteries may prove to be invaluable and help ensure that you don't miss any photo opportunities.

### **Video**

Charging facilities for video AND digital cameras should be available in every camp or lodge on the safari, as long as you have a standard charger that will plug into 220 volts. Please bring along enough batteries to last you at least three days of filming.

### **Binoculars**

There will be an opportunity to observe some of the natural treasures of Namibia. Binoculars will add immeasurably to your viewing enjoyment. Preferably, binoculars should be at least 8 power (8x) and have a wide field of view to allow you to quickly find whatever it is you want to see. Some binoculars have the added advantage of "gathering light," making objects brighter in dim morning and evening conditions. This light-gathering capability is determined by a measurement called the "exit pupil", which is calculated by dividing the diameter of the front (objective) lens in millimeters by the power (8x, for example). These two measurements are commonly designated on binoculars as a measurement such as 8x42, which translates to 8 power with a 42 mm objective lens. The exit pupil in this instance is  $42/8$ , or 5.25. Since the human eye can process light delivered by an exit pupil of about 4.0, these binoculars will appear bright even in dim light.

Some very small binoculars are relatively inexpensive, such as 8x21. With a very narrow field of view (usually about 400 feet at 1,000 yards) and an exit pupil of only  $21/8 = 2.6$ , these binoculars are designed for viewing stationary objects in bright light, such as at the opera, and are poorly designed for looking at wildlife. You will be far happier with binoculars designated in the range of 8x40 to 10x50.

### Flashlights

As the grounds of many lodges and camps are unfenced, it is essential that you bring a small flashlight as you may encounter wild animals at night. You should also bring a spare globe as well as batteries as they may be unobtainable en route.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Currency

The local currency is the Ethiopian Birr (ETB), made up of 100 cents. Birr notes are available in denominations of 5, 10, 50 and 100. Visitors may import an unlimited amount of foreign currency but this must be declared on arrival to the customs authorities on the appropriate blue-colored form.

### Credit Cards/ATMs

Some major credit cards are accepted such as MasterCard and Visa, but American Express, Discover and Diners Club are often **not** accepted. However, it is advisable to carry some cash in U.S. Dollars for purchases outside urban areas, and tipping. You should not depend on your ATM card outside of the U.S. unless your bank advises otherwise. Local banks will give you notes in local currency.

*Note:* As there is a potential for fraud anywhere in the world, we highly recommend that you do not use your debit cards overseas and exercise caution when using your credit cards. Do not let the card out of your sight and if a vendor tries to take the card into a back room, ask for your card back immediately and refrain from using it. Keep your valuables on you, including passports and credit cards, or locked in the safety deposit boxes when provided.

### Shopping

The widest range of locally made products is found in Addis Ababa but the main tourist destinations (Lalibela, Bahir Dar, Gonder, Aksum, and Harar) all have plentiful souvenir stalls and shops. In marketplaces, bargaining is expected, but prices at shops in towns are fixed. Special purchases include local jewelry (sold by the weight of gold or silver), woodcarvings, illuminated manuscripts and prayer scrolls, wood and metal crosses, leather shields, spears, drums and religious triptych paintings. Addis Ababa's main market (known as the merkado) is thought to be the largest in Africa and is more an experience than a shopping destination. For cheapie souvenirs you're more likely to find a bargain in the myriad of stalls and shops which line Churchill Avenue and around the Piazza district. Gallery 21 (Churchill Avenue) has an excellent reputation for high quality goods. For a market experience that offers well-made local textiles head to Entoto Market on Entoto Avenue. To shop with a purpose don't miss Alert Handicraft Shop (on the Addis Ababa Ring Road) which sells gorgeous embroidered bags, pillows,



and other textiles all made by the Berhan Taye Leprosy Disabled Persons Work Group. Outside of the capital, Aksum is known for its basketry work and the Saturday basket market is the best time to be here if you want to peruse the products.

Shopping advice from World Travel

Guide: <https://www.worldtravelguide.net/guides/africa/ethiopia/shopping-nightlife/>

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Etiquette**

Etiquette is very important in Ethiopia, both socially and in business. Formal attire is expected of men and women. Greetings are very important and the shaking of hands is the norm for first meetings. Ethiopians like to establish good relations with one another and personal relationships are the cornerstone of business. English is understood by most business people in Addis Ababa, as well as some French and Italian. Ethiopians respect their elders and visitors should show the same courtesy.