

# Abercrombie & Kent



## ETHIOPIA: THE HISTORIC ROUTE

This little visited destination — source of the Blue Nile — offers a spectacular adventure for the intrepid traveller.

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Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries, Luxury African Safaris



Africa, Ethiopia



11 days, from  
AU\$10,335pp

FREQUENT  
FLYER 



Private

## Journey Overview

This little visited destination — source of the Blue Nile — offers a spectacular adventure for the intrepid traveller. The country's magic unfolds as you trek in the majestic Simien Mountains and discover painted monasteries, ancient castles and rock-hewn churches. Experience traditional village life, visit Africa's largest market and be welcomed into a private home to participate in an Ethiopian coffee ceremony.

### Journey Highlights

Explore the sacred city of churches, Lalibela

Discover Ethiopian hospitality at a typical coffee ceremony

Marvel at idyllic farming scenes and colourful local markets

Spot rare flora and fauna in the Simien Mountains

Visit the oldest continuously inhabited town south of the Sahara, Axum



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## Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrive Addis Ababa

Arrival transfer to your hotel.

***Sheraton Addis (Standard Room) | Meals: D***

### Day 2: Addis Ababa

Explore the city of Addis Ababa, founded in 1886. Visit the National Museum, home to the fossilised hominid 'Lucy'; St. George and Holy Trinity Cathedrals and the Mercato, Africa's largest market. There is also an opportunity to visit the ZOMA museum an environmentally conscious art installation.

***Sheraton Addis (Standard Room) | Meals: BLD***

### Day 3: Addis Ababa - Bahir Dar.

Fly north to Bahir Dar, located on the southern shores of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile. Afternoon sightseeing of this town, referred to by some as the Ethiopian Riviera, thanks to its wide streets shaded by palm trees and views across Lake Tana's shimmering waters.

***Kuriftu Spa & Resort | Meals: BLD***

### Day 4: Bahir Dar.

Hike to the beautiful Tis Isat Falls (Blue Nile Falls) followed by an afternoon cruise on Lake Tana. Watch local fishermen at work in traditional papyrus reed boats and visit a selection of the remote island monasteries including Ura Kidane Mehret with its extraordinary murals and frescoes.

***Kuriftu Spa & Resort | Meals: BLD***

### Day 5: Bahir Dar - Simien Mountains.

Skirt the northern shores of the lake passing rural villages and farmers along the road to Godar, the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century capital. Famous for its medieval castles and churches, some of the sights you'll explore include Fasiledes Castle and the 16<sup>th</sup> century Church of Debre Birhan Selassie with its iconic ceiling of painted angels. Late afternoon, continue by road to the breathtaking Simien Mountains National Park, UNESCO World Heritage site. Your lodge is situated on the edge of an escarpment with breathtaking views all around.

***Limalimo Lodge | BLD***

**Day 6: Simien Mountains - Gondar.**

Spend a full day exploring the parks truly dramatic jagged mountain peaks, deep valleys and sharp precipices. The national park is also home to some extremely rare animals such as the Gelade monkey, the Simien fox and the Walia ibex, found nowhere else in the world. Discover the extraordinary wildlife and scenery on a short trek through the park. Afterwards return by road to Gondar.

***Gondar Hills Resort / Meals: BLD***

**Day 7: Gondar - Axum.**

A flight north to the oldest city in Ethiopia. An afternoon exploring the ancient trading posts and the impressive Stelae Fields which carved columns represent the tombs of ancient rulers.

***Atranos Hotel / Meals: BLD***

**Day 8: Axum - Lalibela.**

Fly to the World Heritage site of Lalibela. Explore the monolithic red-hued churches carved into the rock. Your guide will lead you through the network of crevices and tunnels linking each of the churches. Still in use today step inside and you may see a robed priest observing the faith in time-honoured fashion.

***Mezena Lodge / Meals: BLD***

**Day 9: Lalibela.**

Discover the eastern group of rock churches. Smaller in size, these are no less impressive with intricate carvings and many dark tunnels to explore. Finish the day with an Ethiopian coffee ceremony.

***Mezena Lodge / Meals: BLD***

**Day 10: Lalibela - Addis Ababa.**

Journey back to Addis Ababa by air.

***Sheraton Addis / Meals: BLD***

**Day 11: Depart Addis Ababa.**

Transfer to the airport where your tour ends.

***Meals: B***

## Accommodation

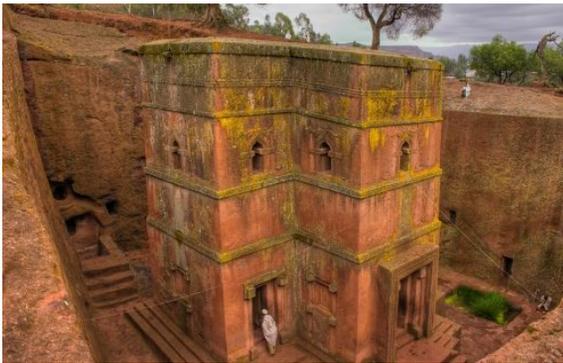
### Mezena Lodge



Situated on the eastern side of the city of Lalibela in extensive grounds, Mezena Lodge opened in late 2017. A blend of classic Ethiopian and modern design, this eco-lodge boasts 30 large stone and thatch bungalows each with private veranda and delightful views of the surrounding hills. An all-day dining restaurant is available to guests plus a bar and outdoor swimming pool. Spa services also available. Lodge staff are employed from the local community.

## Extraordinary Experiences

Our in-country presence allows our Journey Designers to include exceptional activities and experiences that are beyond the reach of the average traveller. Here are just a few examples.



### Stand in Awe of Monolithic Monuments in Lalibela

This “New Jerusalem” of monolithic churches and rock-hewn architecture draws Ethiopian Orthodox pilgrims from the farthest corners of the country. Carved straight down into Lalibela’s red volcanic rock hills, the holy city’s 11 monolithic churches are ringed by trenches, courtyards, graves and hermit cells, connected by a tangled maze of tunnels and passageways.



### Discover tribal customs in the Omo Valley

Home to an incredible number of ethnic groups, the tribes around the Omo Valley have lived there for centuries and follow many ancient practices. Explore their villages, learn about local customs and wander through bustling markets which are a unique way to observe the social interaction and commercial dealings between the different groups.



## Behold the Medieval Stone Castles of Gondar

Gondar, nicknamed the “Camelot of Africa,” was founded in 1636, and its stone castles, churches and monasteries are a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Learn from an expert how these citadels were later reimagined in the Baroque style by Jesuit missionaries. Then, continue to Debre Birhan Selassie Church to admire the frescoes on its walls and ceiling depicting magnificent biblical and medieval scenes.



## Trek the Highlands of Simien Mountains National Park

Simien Mountains National Park — a UNESCO World Heritage Site — features terrain dotted with deep valleys, escarpments and a high plateau. Explore this rugged homeland of the walia ibex and lion-maned gelada monkey on a guided hike. Survey dramatic basalt lava landscapes, watching for unique flora and keeping your camera ready for sightings of rarities like the Ethiopian wolf and the lammergeier, an impressive bird of prey.



## Learn the Secrets of Ethiopian Cuisine, Addis Ababa

The distinctively hot and piquant flavours of Ethiopian cuisine are derived from the variety of spices used in its wots (stews) and tibs (curry). Learn to cook these popular local dishes in a cooking class with tips from a chef in Addis Ababa. Then, taste what you helped create, eating as Ethiopians do from communal plates lined with injera, a traditional fermented bread, savouring a moment that captures the spirit of everyday life in this ancient land.



# Abercrombie & Kent

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