

Timket - Ethiopian Epiphany



HISTORY OF THE FESTIVAL

Timket is the greatest festival of the Ethiopian year, falling just 2 weeks after Ethiopian Christmas.

It is actually a 3-day affair preceded by the eve of Timket when the dramatic processions take place through a night of fasting, to the great day itself and the commemoration of Christ's baptism in the Jordan River.

Ketera, the Eve of Timket is when the Priests bring out the Tabots - replicas of the 2 tablets of laws received by Moses, which are normally housed inside the altar symbolizing the Ark of the Covenant.

Priests bless the water of the pool or river where the next day's celebration will take place.

It is the Tabot, rather than the church building which is consecrated and given extreme reverence. Visitors have the unique chance to experience a festival lost to the rest of the world.

Wednesday, 16th January 2013:- Arrival

Up on Arrival you will be met by our tour representative and transferred to your hotel. Over night Ghion hotel or similar.

Thursday, 17th January 2013: Addis - Bahir Dar



Fly from Addis to Bahir Dar and visit the Blue Nile Falls before lunch. In the afternoon, have a boat trip on Ethiopia's largest water body - Lake Tana to visit the island monasteries of Ura Kidane Mihret and Azwa Mariam Over night Tana Hotel or similar.

Friday, 18th January 2013: Bahir Dar - Gondar



Drive from Bahir Dar to Gondar - the 17th century capital of Ethiopia. This afternoon, visit the most colorful religious celebration of **the eve of Timket (Epiphany)** which is held to memorize the baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. All the replicas of the Ark of the Covenant will be accompanied by crowds of colorfully dressed Christians to a nearby water place. And the priests and the deacons of the churches spend the night praying, singing religious songs, and dancing. Over night Goha Hotel or similar.

Saturday, 19th January 2013: Gondar



After early breakfast, attend the celebration on which the replicas of Ark of the Covenant will be accompanied back to their respective churches with the same dancing and singing. In the afternoon, visit the Imperial Castle Compound of Gondar, the Bath of Emperor Fasiledes and the church of Debre Birhan Silassie, which is famous for its wall and ceiling paintings. Over night Goha Hotel or similar.

Sunday, 20th January 2013: Gondar - Axum



Fly to Axum - the earliest capital of Ethiopia. Visit the Archaeological museum of Axum, the famous stele park (UNESCO World Heritage Site), the church of St. Mary of Zion which is believed to be the last resting place of the original Ark of the Covenant, the palace and tomb of King Kaleb and Gebre Meskel (6th Century AD), and the ruin palace of the Queen of Sheba (9th Century BC). Over night Remhai hotel or similar.

Monday, 21th January 2013: Excursion trip Yeha

A short drive will take you to the 5th century BC Yeha an oblong pagan temple. It was built with stone blocks with out the use of mortar. This temple is currently considered the oldest temple in Ethiopia. Drive back to Axum for over night at Remhai or Yeha hotel.

Tuesday, 22nd January 2013: Axum - Lalibela

Fly to Lalibela - the home of the 12th rock hewn churches and Ethiopia's top tourist attraction. In the afternoon, visit the first group of the rock-hewn churches Lalibela. Over night Mountain View Hotel or similar.

Wednesday, 23rd January 2013: Lalibela



In the morning, mule back ride to the hill top semi monolithic church of Asheten Mariam (13th century AD). Getting to the top of the hill rewards with great and unforgettable scenery of the area. In the afternoon, visit the remaining second and the third group of the churches of Lalibela. Over night Mountain View Hotel or similar.

Thursday, 24th January 2013: Lalibela - Addis

Morning you will be transferred to the airport to fly back to Addis. Over night Ghion hotel or similar.



Friday, 25th January 2013: Addis Ababa



Have full day city tour of Addis that includes the National Archeological museum where the fossil remain of the oldest hominid, Lucy is found, the Ethnological museum with its display of cultural facts of Ethiopian people, trinity cathedral church, St, George church, Merkato the largest open air market in east Africa and Finally drive to Mount Entoto to have panoramic view of Addis.. In the evening, you will be our guest in one of the traditional restaurants of Addis, to taste the cuisines of Ethiopian people and watch their folk dances. After the dinner, you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back home.