

Historic Route with Christmas Festival in Lalibela

Tour Summary

Ethiopia has a number of festivals, many of them unique. Ethiopian festivals are colorful, fascinating and are all year round. Both traditional and religious festivals are celebrated by its diverse ethnic groups with their picturesque native lives in their most rustic settings.

Timket (the feast of Epiphany), falling on 19th January, is the greatest festival of the year, followed in importance by **Meskal** (Finding of the true cross) on 27th September. Easter is the most solemn of festivals but the **Ethiopia New Year (Enkutatash)** falls on 11th of September in the Western calendar. **Genna** (Ethiopia Christmas) is celebrated on 7th January. Among the traditional and religious festivals mostly visited by locals includes: Kulubi Gabriel, Sheikh Hussein, Gishen Mariam, Axum Tsion, Sof Omar, Erecha and Ashenda. Crowds pray for health, for a new baby, for a special favor or a good harvest, or to give thanks for wishes already granted.

The following festival tour programs covers major religious festivals in Ethiopia combined with historic route attractions and **WUB ETHIOPIA TOURS** is ready to take you to such unique, exquisite religious chants and jubilation places.

- **Tour Code: WET-402**
- **Tour title: Historic Route with Christmas Festival in Lalibela**
- **Duration: 7nights & 8days**
- **Transportation: Flight and Surface driving**

Day1. Arrive to Bole international airport and transfer to hotel. Depending on the time of your arrival make Addis Ababa city tour including National Museum where you will see 3.4 million years old hominid (Lucy) ,historical Trinity Cathedral Church and Ethnographic museum, which chronicles Ethiopia's rich cultural diversity. Overnight hotel

Day2. Bahirdar and lake Tana Monasteries

Morning fly to Bahirdar and make a boat trip on Ethiopia's largest water body - Lake Tana (3,600 Km Sq) to visit the medieval period island monasteries of Ura Kidane Mihret (14th Century AD) and Azwa Mariam (14th Century AD). Afternoon, after lunch, visit the Blue Nile Falls, one of the most spectacular falls in Africa, 400m wide when in flood and dropping over a sheer chasm more than 45m deep. Overnight hotel

Day3. Drive to Gondar

Drive to Gondar and visit the 17th century capital of Ethiopia. In Gondar, visit the Imperial Castle Compound of Gondar, the Bath of Emperor Fasiladas and the church of Debre Birhan Sillassie which is famous for its wall and ceiling paintings. Overnight Hotel

Day4. Gondar-Semien Mountain National Park

Early morning drive to Semien Mountains National Park and visit its exceptional natural beauty which includes superb scenery, endemic fauna and flora. Continue drive and spot endemic Wallia Ibex, Gelada Baboon, Bushbuck, and Klipspringer. Late in the evening drive back to Gondar. Overnight Hotel

Day5. Fly to Lalibela

Morning fly to Lalibela - the home for 12 rock hewn churches, UNESCO registered and Ethiopia's top tourist attraction. After check in to hotel and short break, visit the first group of the stunning churches of Lalibela, which is hewn out from single rock with superb architecture. Overnight Hotel

Day6. Lalibela and Christmas Festival

After early breakfast, attend the colorful celebration of the **Ethiopian Christmas** (Birth of Christ). In the afternoon, visit the second and the third group of churches of King Lalibela (UNESCO World Heritage Site). Overnight Hotel

Day7. Axum

Morning flight to Axum - the earliest capital of Ethiopia and after check in your hotel 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 Maskel (6th Century AD), and the ruin palace of the Queen of Sheba (9th Century BC). Overnight Hotel

Day8. Fly back to Addis Ababa

Morning after breakfast transfer to airport for your flight back to Addis Ababa. Afternoon after lunch break enjoy shopping for souvenir and participate in the farewell dinner in famous Ethiopian traditional restaurant. Then transfer to airport for departure.