

# EXPLORE!



## Simien Mountain Trek and Lalibela

13 days

Ethiopia - Trip code ES

## Simien Mountain Trek and Lalibela

Trek through the Simien highlands of northern Ethiopia and ascend to the summit of Ras Dashen - Ethiopia's highest peak. Discover this isolated region, admiring the spectacular scenery of rocky plateaus, dramatic peaks and deep gorges, keeping an eye out for gelada baboons. Explore Lalibela, home to the impressive rock-cut churches and visit the castles of Gondar.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Simien Mountains** - Trek one of Africa's most spectacular and least visited mountain ranges in Africa.
- ★ **Ras Dashen** - Climb Ethiopia's highest peak at 4543m.
- ★ **Camping** - Enjoy wild camping in stunning locations.
- ★ **Gondar** - Discover the medieval Fasilidas Castle and Debre Berhan Church.
- ★ **Lalibela** - Explore impressive churches carved in rocks.

### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

#### Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

#### WALKING GRADE:

##### Challenging

You need to have a good level of fitness and previous trekking experience is recommended. Trekking days are generally longer, challenging and at higher altitudes. Terrain may be difficult and ascents and descents are often demanding.

#### GROUP SIZE:

##### 10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join tour Addis Ababa. PM orientation tour of the city

Addis is situated at an elevation of around 2,438m and is just over a century old. It has some elegant modern buildings and is quite spacious with wide streets and green areas. It remains the capital of a predominantly rural area and the Mercato is one of the largest open markets in Africa. This afternoon we will have an orientation tour of the city visiting the Ethnographical Museum and the church of the Holy Trinity, whose large dome and slender pinnacles make it a landmark in the city, followed by a drive up Entoto Hill to take in a panoramic view of Addis Ababa.



**Accommodation: Ghion Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available




Meals Provided: None

### DAY 2 - Fly to Gondar and visit local sites including castle ruins


Today we take a short, but scenic flight to Gondar, located on the high plateau just north of Lake Tana. The town of Gondar was the imperial capital of Ethiopia for 200 years. Gondar's most famous monuments are its exceptionally well preserved 17th century castles. The largest and best is that of King Fasilidas. It is a stone-built construction with round turrets and wooden balconies. This whole complex of buildings is unique in Ethiopia and unlike anything found elsewhere in Africa. On arrival, as well as visiting the castle ruins and King Fasilidas baths, we'll also make a visit to the Debre Berhan Selassie Church famed for its ceiling frescoes of many angel faces.




**Accommodation: Goha Hotel** (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

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 Swimming pool available

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 3 - Drive to Simien Mountains National Park via Debarq; PM trek to Sankaber

Today, we drive to Debarq, the village base for hiking in the Simien Mountains. The range lies north of Gondar and many of the peaks rise above 4,000m with the highest being Mount Ras Dashen at 4,543m. The mountains are criss-crossed with tracks made by the local people travelling from village to village or moving their animals to fresh pastures. The combination of these tracks and the spectacular scenery make for excellent walking. We start our trek with a walk to our first camp Sankaber. Today's 5.5km walk is expected to take around 2.5hrs.

\* During the trek we may spend each night in a different place. The circuits walked will vary depending on local conditions and on the group's ability. Details of the standard circuit we might take are given below - the itinerary for days 6 to 12 is given as an example only.




**Accommodation: Sankaber Camp** (or similar)


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 Simple Camping

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

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## DAY 4 - Trek to Geech Camp via Sankaber

We trek today to Geech camp via Sankaber, with the possibility of seeing baboons and red-hot poker plants en route. The gelada baboon is endemic to Ethiopia and has adapted to living on the nearly vertical cliff faces. We may also see the Jinbar river waterfalls today that plummet into Geech Abyss. The Abyss is a vast canyon cut into the main wall of the escarpment.

Today's 12km walk is expected to take around 6hrs.




**Accommodation: Geech Camp** (or similar)


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 Simple Camping

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

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## DAY 5 - Optional acclimatisation hike to Imet Gogo from Geech Camp

A flexible day with a morning optional acclimatisation hike to the viewpoint of Imet Gogo (3,926m). From the viewpoint there are spectacular views of the lowlands and across the Simien range with rock spires and mesas prominent. Keep a close look out for the elusive simien fox. It's misnamed as it is not really a fox but a member of the dog family restricted to Ethiopia.

Today's optional 10km walk is expected to take around 4hrs.



**Accommodation: Geech Camp** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## DAY 6 - Trek to Chenek Camp traversing the Jinbar river

We aim to trek to Chenek camp today on a good trail via Inatye (4,070m) and along the escarpment. This exciting walk traverses the Jinbar river and provides us with fantastic views. You may like to take the opportunity to freshen-up in the nearby stream south of camp.

Today's 13km walk is expected to take around 8hrs.



**Accommodation: Chenek Camp** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## DAY 7 - Trek to Ambikwa

Today we trek to Ambikwa and plan to stop at a spectacular viewpoint (4,200m) north of Bwahit where, on clear days, we can see across the Mesheha river to Ras Dashen peak. We then descend steeply and pass through the village of Chiro Leba to follow a stream bed until we reach the large Mesheha River. We'll cross the river and follow a path up the east side of the valley to Ambikwa village, (3,200m) where our camp near to a small church.

Today's 17km walk is expected to take around 11hrs.



**Accommodation: Ambikwa Camp** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## DAY 8 - Ascent of Ras Dashen; returning to Ambikwa

Starting before sunrise we follow the main valley up and climb steeply via Mizma village houses to reach a ridge crest and open grassy slopes (3,700m) on our invigorating ascent of Ethiopia's highest mountain. Next we traverse around ridges and climb more steeply to a broad col at 4250m. Keep an eye open for giant lobelia, by far the most spectacular plant of this region with flower stalks up to 8m high. Eventually we enter a huge semicircular basin of rocky peaks and buttresses - Ras Dashen. The last section involves some steep scrambling and climbing to a fine viewpoint at 4,543m. We'll spend the rest of the day hiking back to our camp.

Today's 21km walk is expected to take around 12hrs.



**Accommodation: Ambikwa Camp** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## DAY 9 - Recross the Mesheha River en route to Arkwasiye

Today we recross the Mesheha River as we make our way to Arkwasiye and our campsite there (3,700m). Today trek has a different feel to it as we walk through the fields and meet local farmers cultivating their land. We will have the opportunity to visit the local school and meet the children.

Today's 15km walk is expected to take around 6hrs.



**Accommodation: Arkwasiye Camp** (or similar)



Simple Camping



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner


## DAY 10 - Walk to roadhead and drive to Gondar

This morning we walk from Arkwasiye to the roadhead where our vehicle will be waiting. From there drive to Gondar passing by Chenek (3,620 m). We have an early start this morning for our trek. We leave with a packed lunch before our drive to Gondar. The drive takes four to five hours and about a third of the road is unmade. On arrival we check into our hotel for the night.


Today's 4 km walk is expected to take around 2 hours.




**Accommodation: Goha Hotel** (or similar)

 Standard Hotel


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 Swimming pool available

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast and Lunch

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## DAY 11 - Fly to Lalibela. Visit rock stone churches

This morning we fly to Lalibela for a two-night stay in one of the world's most remarkable historic sites. Although churches carved in rock are found in other parts of the world, those found in Ethiopia are particularly interesting. Generally, they were excavated on all sides of a rectangle, leaving a large block of granite isolated in the centre. This rock was then shaped and formed both inside and out and the carvings show extremely skilful workmanship. Lalibela, the New Jerusalem, is thought to have been constructed some 800 years ago by King Lalibela as his capital city. These days, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is a small village. This afternoon's tour involves a certain amount of scrambling through a labyrinth of tunnels. The churches stand in two main groups on either side of a stream, known locally as 'The River Jordan'. There are 11 rock-cut churches, and we will visit several. The most impressive of the churches is Bet Giorgis, which is carved in the form of a Greek cross and approached through a passage in the rock. Between them, these rock-cut churches are one of the great wonders of the world.




**Accommodation: Panoramic View Hotel** (or similar)

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 Standard Hotel

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 12 - Mule trek to Ashatan Maryam Church

Located among the mountains that encircle Lalibela are several more isolated churches. Using mules, we journey for some two hours to Ashatan Maryam Church and are rewarded with stunning views over Lalibela and the peaks and mountains of these remote highlands. Reached by steep shale paths, it will be necessary to dismount in places due to the terrain. Good footwear is a must. Vertigo sufferers or people with a low level of fitness may choose not to partake in the mule trek, your tour leader can advise you.

This afternoon we return to Lalibela, allowing more time to explore the rock-cut churches.



**Accommodation: Panoramic View Hotel** (or similar)

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 Standard Hotel

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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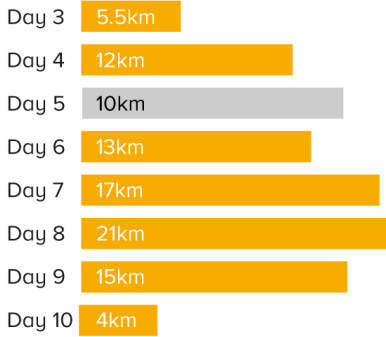
# DAY 13 - Fly to Addis where tour ends

We fly back to Addis Ababa this morning where the tour ends.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

## Walking and Trekking information

### DAILY DISTANCE



 Optional Walks

### Walking grade

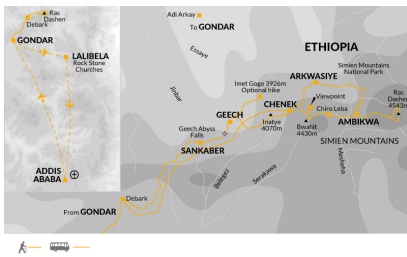
Challenging

### Trek details

Trek on 8 days for between 2.5 to 12 hours, mostly above 3,000m (day 5 is optional). Maximum altitude is 4,543m. Mules carry all food, luggage and equipment.

### Max walking altitude (m)

4543



# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 12  
Lunch: 8  
Dinner: 7



## Transport

Bus  
4WD  
Flight



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Cook  
Driver(s)  
Local Guide(s)  
Muleteer(s)



## Accommodation

7 nights simple camping  
5 nights standard hotel

# Trip information

## Country information

### Ethiopia

#### Climate

Ethiopia is generally pleasant and warm, but varies with altitude. The long rains usually arrive mid- June to early September and the short rains between mid-February and April although this pattern has been completely erratic in recent times. After the rains, the highlands of northern Ethiopia are usually green and thus particularly scenic. The temperature all year round rarely falls below 18°C. Night-time temperatures in the mountains can be cold and can drop below freezing at higher altitude. There is a strong risk of sunburn at high altitude in Ethiopia. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

#### Time difference to GMT

+3

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Christian, Islam

#### Language

Amharic, English

## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.



## Clothing

**Socks** - It is best to wear a pair of liner socks under a pair of fairly thick loop stitch socks. This helps to protect your feet against blisters. Avoid nylon socks, they are abrasive, don't breathe well and can cause blisters.

**Jacket** - After sunset, temperatures can fall below freezing. A very warm jacket is the most convenient way of keeping warm when the temperature drops.

**Waterproofs** - Breathable waterproofs made from material such as Goretex not only protects against rain and wind but also stops you from overheating. They breathe and avoid condensation that you will experience from nylon waterproofs.

**Long Trousers** - For everyday walking, light cotton trousers are the most suitable. Jeans are not recommended as they are often difficult to walk in over longer distances and become cumbersome when wet.

**Thick jumper/fleece jacket** - A thick jumper or fleece jacket is necessary as nights can be very cold at altitude. Make sure that your waterproof jacket is loose enough to wear over your sweater or fleece.

**Track suit** - Comfortable around the villages and much more practical (and warmer) to sleep in than pyjamas. Alternatively, thermal underwear is good.

**Shorts** - Shorts can be very comfortable to walk in but you must carry long trousers with you in case you get either sunburned or cold. Follow your tour leaders advice on local sensitivities to wearing shorts during the trek.

**Gloves** - Especially useful in the morning and in the evening at higher altitudes. Also bring a scarf to cover your face from the dust during the day and a warm hat/balaclava.

**Swimwear** - There will be swimming opportunities during the trek

## Footwear

We recommend you bring waterproof walking boots with ankle support and good tread- leather or fabric are both fine. Trekking shoes will not be suitable for the walks as they do not give ankle support.

Gaiters are useful to keep snow and scree out of your boots and bringing spare boot laces is advised.

Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

You may choose to bring trainers which will be useful in villages and general wear.

## Luggage

15Kg

### Luggage: On tour

A kitbag/barrel bag carried by mules on trek, a stuff-sack to store surplus belongings while on trek and a daysac. Pack mules are used to carry equipment, food and most personal gear. Pack heavy/dense items into your kitbag.

#### Trek Kit Bag

Before leaving Gondar there is plenty of time to re-sort luggage into what you need on trek and what can be left in Gondar. Think about what you are taking on trek (remember your sleeping bag) and then think how big your kit bag needs to be. An ex-army type can usually be obtained cheaply. A nylon or canvas bag with a zip along the top is also suitable. Whatever you choose, it must be strong, as porters are not very gentle with baggage. Soft luggage is preferable! Framed rucksacks are unsuitable. The weight limit for the bag and its contents is 15kg but you will probably find that you do not need this much. Please note there are occasional opportunities to hand wash clothing whilst on the trek.

#### Small Rucksack/Daysac

During the course of a trekking day, you do not have access to the luggage that is being carried for you by the porters. In any mountain region the weather can change rapidly and you must be equipped for this eventuality. Your daysac should, therefore, be large enough to carry the following: waterproofs, sweater, long trousers (if walking in shorts), warm hat and gloves, sun hat, sun cream, water bottle (at least 2litre), tissues and your packed lunch. Most people normally find that this adds up to about 2 to 3kg. Camera equipment can be heavy so think carefully when deciding what to take. Other optional items in a daysac might be binoculars, a diary or a book to read at lunch time. It is usually more comfortable to carry a slightly larger pack that is not full than to carry a small pack that is overfull or with 'bits' tied on the outside. Something between 20 and 25 litres capacity is probably the most suitable. A shoulder bag is not a practical alternative.

## Dry Bags

If you pack your gear in dry bags or plastic bags inside your kit bag they will stay dry in case of rain. It will also be easier for you to sort through. Remember, the less you have to unpack in the evening, the less you have to repack each morning! A bin liner to pack inside your daysac is also a good idea.

## Equipment

**Sleeping Bag** - As you do not carry it yourself this may be down or synthetic, but it must be 4-season (temperature -10°C to -5°C). A silk or fleece liner helps to keep your bag clean and adds an extra season.

**Sleeping Mat** - Regular sleeping mats will be provided but if you would prefer an inflatable thermarest style you will need to bring your own.

Walking poles are recommended.

**Water Bottle** - Water along the trail must never be considered as drinkable. Take at least a 1 litre personal water bottle, preferably insulated. Each day you must sterilise water with purification tablets/drops with which to fill your own bottle. If you dislike the taste of sterilised water, it is a good idea to add some powdered fruit juice. On this trip you **MUST** bring your own personal supply of water purification tablets/drops (such as Chlorine Dioxide), enough to purify 30 litres is advised. For environmental reasons, we do not encourage the purchase of bottled mineral water nor the boiling of water due to fuel and power shortages.

Energy snacks, including chocolate and sweets, are also recommended whilst on trek.

**Sunglasses/Goggles** - A good pair of sunglasses are essential for protection against UV rays and glare at high altitudes.

**Sun Hat, High Factor Sun Cream/Block & Lip Salve** - Choose a high factor sunscreen (Factor 15 or more) to protect your skin against the sun at high altitudes. A combination sunblock/lipsalve is ideal for facial protection.

**Torch/Batteries/Bulb** - A small torch is essential for finding things at night. Often a head torch is useful for the early ascent to the summit. Remember to bring some spare batteries.

**Toiletries** - Keep heavy cosmetics to a minimum. Essentials are toothbrush/paste, soap (preferably biodegradable), small towel. Wet wipes are great for a quick clean up, so bring a pack of those.

**Personal First Aid Kit** - on each trek a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials. Please do not give medicines to local staff without consulting the tour leader.

**Equipment Hire and Trek Training Days** - Trek Hire UK hire out a wide range of kit including quality sleeping bags, down jackets, therm-a-rest sleeping mats and walking poles <http://www.trekhireuk.com>. They also run regular trek training and preparation days from their base in the Surrey Hills, ideal for getting an indication of your overall fitness level and also covering advice on kit and altitude.

The following equipment list is provided by Explore once you are on the trek:

- 2-person tents
- Sleeping mat
- Stools and table
- Portable toilet tent

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow approx. US\$100 for tipping of local drivers, guides, muleteers and for any miscellaneous tipping of hotel staff.

## Country Information

### Ethiopia

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

**Lunch price**

£3 - 5

**Dinner price**

£6 - 10

**Beer price**

£1.5

**Water price**

£1

## Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Ethiopian Birr.

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

It is advisable to take your spending money in Sterling, Euros or US Dollars cash (high denomination notes usually get better exchange rates). Please note that any pre- 1999 or torn US Dollar bills will not be accepted in Ethiopia. Please keep any receipts as you may be able to change back any unused local currency.

**Where To Exchange**

Your Tour leader will advise you.

**ATM Availability**

Very Limited.

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Limited.

**Travellers Cheques**

Very difficult to exchange and are not recommended.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus, 4WD, Flight

### Accommodation notes

**Booking a Single Room**

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Trekking in the Simien Mountains we spend 7 nights wild camping. Two-man and three-man tents are provided with plenty of room for one or two people and bags. There is also a dining tent and basic long drop toilets. The trek is fully supported by our team of mountain guides, cook and camp assistants who set up the camp (before you arrive), take down the tents, and prepare our meals. A bowl of warm water will be provided to you for washing each morning and when you get to camp after a day's walking. Mules will be used to carry water, tents and all bags except daysacks.

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

### **Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

## **Price Guarantee**

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

## **Visa and Passport Information**

Ethiopia: Visas for UK nationals can be obtained on arrival, although this can change at short notice, and you should be prepared to queue on arrival. Please ensure you have 2 recent passport sized photos with you when applying on arrival, these may or may not be asked for.

For a single entry visa you can apply via the e-visa website: <https://www.evisa.gov.et/#/home>. You will need to print a copy of your evisa approval letter and present this with your passport at immigration upon your arrival. The approval letter will take a minimum of 3 days to be processed so we strongly advise for you to apply within plenty of time before your departure. You will be permitted to stay within Ethiopia for upto 30 days or upto 90 days depending on which single entry visa you request. We strongly recommend for you to read the Help section on the e-visa website before applying.

Should you wish to apply for a visa prior to departure via the consulate in the UK, please note that a single entry visa is valid for 30 days from the date of issue, so you must submit your application no more than two weeks prior to departure. It is also possible to apply for a multi-entry visa which is valid for 3 months from issue.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## **Booking conditions**

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

## **Transfers**

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### **Booking a land only package with Explore**

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### **Joining Tour Abroad**

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## **Insurance**

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Maximum altitude (m)

4543

## Altitude information

In the Simien Mountains trekking is strenuous with 6-8 hrs a day walking on average, at altitudes of 3,000- 4,500m, though there are some longer days (including the ascent of Ras Dashen, 4,543m). There is very little flat walking involved. We cover approx 65 miles, ascend 7460m and descend 6880m. Your leader will ensure that during your stay in the mountains you acclimatise enough before an ascent of Ras Dashen. At altitude you will find yourself moving slower than usual, but this gives an excellent opportunity to admire the spectacular views. Bear in mind that the trek to the summit of Ras Dashen is optional, and can be omitted if so wished.

Please note this trip goes to an altitude where there is a risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), a common and usually harmless condition caused by reduced air pressure and a lower concentration of oxygen. Whilst the itinerary has been specifically designed to allow your body to acclimatise gradually, the speed of onset and severity - as well as the height at which AMS develops can vary greatly between individuals; being physically fit affords no special protection. If symptoms occur while on tour you must let your tour leader know immediately. For further advice when travelling at altitude we recommend visiting the medical advice website of "Medex" and downloading their information booklet: [http://medex.org.uk/medex\\_book/english\\_version.php](http://medex.org.uk/medex_book/english_version.php)

Travellers with heart or lung conditions, anaemia, asthma, high blood pressure, or taking the contraceptive pill must seek the advice of their GP and specifically mention the maximum altitude the trip reaches (please refer to Tour Essentials box on front page of your Tour Notes). Please take these to your medical appointment so that your doctor has the full details of your trip.

You must have adequate travel insurance for your trip. Please ensure that your insurance policy covers you to the maximum altitude indicated above. If you have Explore insurance you will be covered to this altitude.

## Ethiopia

### Vaccinations

We recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, diphtheria, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Although the risk is low you may also consider immunisation against rabies and meningococcal meningitis. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against Malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.