



Omo Valley - 10 Nights & 11 Days

Day 01: Arrival

You will be met up on arrival and transferred to Ghion Hotel for the an overnight stay.

Day 02: Sightseeing Addis

Day 03: Addis – Langano

Today you will drive Southwards to Langano. En route visit Lake Ziway the largest of the upper Rift Valley lakes with an area of 400 sq. km. Its shores are lined with reeds and water lilies, sheltering a variety of water birds. Proceed towards Lake Langano. The lake is a place to enjoy water activities. Though its mineral content gives it a brown color and a soapy nature, the water is actually safe and pleasant for swimming. Overnight at the Sabana Lodge.

Day 04: Langano - Chench - Arba Minch

In the morning, we drive first along a scenic route to the mountain village of Chench, home of the Dorze people who are renowned for their hand-woven cotton garments called Shamma. Their distinctive houses - towering beehive shaped structures made from woven thatch – are unique in the area. In this area women also prepare Kotcho (flat bread) out of the trunk of Enset, false banana. Being the staple for about the third of Ethiopians Kotcho is nowadays highly regarded for its nutritional value and is consumed both in towns and countryside. For the major part, Enset culture is widely known among the Gurage and the Sidama people where it could be preserved for as long as a decade and more and thus qualifies as the best foodstuff for periods of possible famine. In one of the villages you will have an opportunity to see the process of making Kotcho. They also hand-weave heavy blankets called Bulluko. A much thinner cotton cloth, which has a wide demand countryside, is used to tailor dresses for women. Special skills are necessary to design and weave the multicolored intricate edging, called Tibeb. Visit and proceed towards the town of Arba Minch - meaning forty springs. Set high on the escarpment, it commands incomparable views over the twin lakes Chamo and Abaya. Overnight at the Swaynes Hotel/Paradise Lodge.

Day 05: Arba Minch - Konso –Jinka

Leaving Arba Minch, you will drive southwards to Jinka. En route you will visit the Konso people, who live in a land of low terraced hills, are generally well-known for their diligence. Their elaborately terraced hillside grows some of the county's best coffee. They have an articulate tradition and erect peculiar totems on the grave of their deceased. The economy of the Konso rests on an exceptionally intensive agriculture involving irrigation and terracing of mountain slopes. Corn is the staple crop, cotton and coffee are cash crops. To protect the fields, the Konso maintain their cattle in stalls and feed them by hand. The women participate in all spheres of daily life – be it in the field or house building – in addition to the domestic toll that they have to stand alone for. In building their houses particularly it is the women who collect rocks and construct the walls. Most Konso hide workers are women who learn their skills from their mothers or other female relatives. They produce soft leather products for bedding, bags, drums, and even ritual clothing. Polygamy is accepted, though only few men can afford more than one wife. You will also experience interesting cultural encounters meeting with different tribes along the way. These tribes include the pastoralist Tsemay as well as the semi-pastoralist and coffee-cultivating Ari & Benna. Overnight at the Jinka Resort.



Day 06: Jinka – Mago - Jinka

Today, take a day excursion to the Mago National Park to visit the Mursi at one of their villages. The Mursi are one of the most original ethnic groups. They live in very low huts made of straw leaves. The women like to wear terra-cotta on their enormously stretched lower lips and ear lobes. The men are famous for their hairstyle. The distinctive habit of wearing the labial and lobular plates by Mursi women is shared by the other Surmic groups. A small incision is made in the lower lip and ear lobes of a young Mursi girl during incision rituals a small wooden or ceramic disc is inserted in to the incision and gradually replaced by a larger one until the full sized disc can be worn. However, not all women wear these labial or lobular discs. Visit and drive back to Jinka. After having some rest you will visit one of the Ari villages while they are making different designs of pot. Overnight camping at the Rocky valley camp site.

Day 07: Jinka – Turmi

Leaving Jinka, drive to Turmi where the Hamar people live. The Hamar are among the most beautiful and dignified people in the Omo basin. The women wear elegant leather skirts festooned with tiny pearls. Elaborate hairstyles are another form of personal adornment. The Hamar are superstitious and believe that evil or bad luck (mingi) exists in certain unholy or impure things. The intestine of a goat or a cow is read at the birth of each child to determine its fate. In addition, a child born out of wedlock is given away or left to die and one of the mother's front upper teeth is removed. Otherwise the family would risk crop failure, drought or ill health.

In Hamar culture gender roles are extremely defined. Men do nothing, Women do lots of work, grow crops (the staple is sorghum, alongside beans, maize and pumpkins). They're also responsible for collecting water, doing the cooking and looking after the children - who start helping the family by herding the goats from around the age of eight.

The Marriage requires 'bride wealth', a payment made to the woman's family and generally made up of goats, cattle and guns. If a man can afford the bride wealth, he can have three or four wives. Women only marry one man. Due to these men tend to be older than their wives, they often die first. Lots of Hamar households are thus headed by women who have survived their husbands.

If the day is Saturday you will visit the Dimeka Market, these markets are simple affairs and lack the size and color associated with other Ethiopian markets. The female vendors take up more space than the merchandise being displayed. Overnight camping at Turmi.

Day 08: Turmi – Yabello

Depart Turmi for Yabello visiting en route the Arobre tribe. In this tribe the girls are circumcised/ cut on their wedding day. The circumcision ceremony is held in her husband's homestead. Before the ceremony, her father and brothers will bless her, without which her father's age-mates will curse him and then it could happen that her father dies because it is not acceptable if a girl is not circumcised when she marries. The girls are thus scared not to lose their father that way. On your way visit the Borena pastoralists herding their innumerable cattle. Overnight at the Yabello Motel.



Day 09: Yabello – Yirgalem

Leaving Yabello, drive to Yirgalem passing through a number of coffee and various fruit cultivating towns with splendid greenery everywhere. Proceed towards the Aregash Lodge. This lodge is a natural retreat of astounding beauty and tranquility. Nestled between coffee plantation field and lush vegetation in Yirgalem Town, the Aregash Lodge is a natural retreat of astounding beauty and tranquility. The Bamboo thatched Tukuls contemplate the traditional Sidama villages nearby. The nearby forest is home for diverse mammals and birds. The coffee plantation and the nightly visit of hyenas are further attractions to be found in the surrounding area. Overnight at the Aregash Lodge.

Day 10: Yirgalem – Addis

After breakfast, drive to the town of Awassa. En route visit the fish market around Lake Awassa. Around the lake we could encounter birds like: hamerkop, marabou stork, sacred ibis, yellow billed stork and Egyptian geese and continue to the nearby Lakes Abiyatta and Shala. Lake Abiyata is shallow, with myriads of water birds, predominantly flamingos, while Lake Shala sits at the bottom of a 250m (820ft) deep creator, where flamingos breed. The two lakes are a haven for a large number of resident and migratory bird species making it perfect place for bird watching. Overnight at the Ghion Hotel.

Day 11: Sightseeing Addis - Departure

This day you will begin your city tour of Addis with a drive up to mount Entoto. Descending down to Shiro meda, visit the Women's Handcrafts Promotion Center. This center was established in 1999 with the aim of upgrading existing skills of poor women engaged in various income-generating activities, particularly home based traditional handicrafts. Then drive to visit textile factories mainly run/owned by women entrepreneurs, the visit includes Sara Garments, Trio Craft.

In the afternoon drive to the Buttered and Smoked – Ethiopian Beauty Treatment, this traditional “Butter massage” takes place for 45 minutes by beautiful Ethiopian attendants, albeit with butter (smelt and felt a bit odd) from head to toe, a huge blob for your hair and your body. You will be wrapped with a blanket to stop the smoke escaping and to ensure that you get a good sweat up. They use some local woods for smoking and home made butter. The Butter massage is only used by women.

In the evening you will attend a folkloric dinner where you will have a chance to taste several national dishes and watch dances of the various ethnic groups of Ethiopia. The traditional coffee ceremony will also be served.

Later you will be transferred to Bole International Airport for your departure.