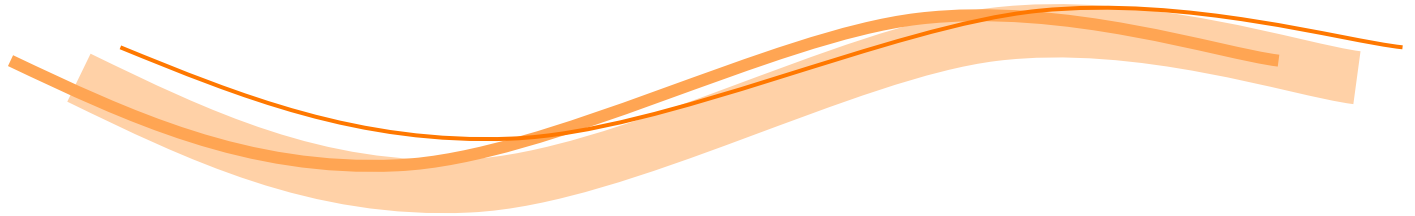




ETHIOPIA





<p>ETHIOPIA</p>	<p>This African country that is about to burst upon the travel world!</p> <p>Forget the negative images of the past - Ethiopia is now a rapidly emerging modern state that has a unique collection of historical sites that reach back in time.</p> <p>From medieval castles, monasteries and rock-hewn churches to the mysterious huge obelisks of past emperors and the Queen of Sheba, to the oldest most complete fossils of ancient hominids anywhere, including 3.2 million year old “Lucy”.</p> <p>This “Land of Origins” also has scenic wonders. The Great African Rift Valley in the south is magnificent, the Simien Mountains rise to 15,000 feet and host wildlife found nowhere else, whilst Lake Tana is the fabled source of the great River Nile.</p> <p>Then there’s the Ethiopian peoples, whose welcoming smiles and friendly waves warm the heart of every visitor, whether in the booming capital of Addis Ababa or in the mud and thatch villages of remote tribal communities.</p>
<p>Location</p>	<p>Ethiopia is a country located in the Horn of Africa. It shares borders with Eritrea to the north and northeast, Djibouti and Somalia to the east, Sudan and South Sudan to the west, and Kenya to the south. With over 100 million inhabitants, Ethiopia is the most populous landlocked country in the world, as well as the second-most populous nation on the African continent after Nigeria. It occupies a total area of 1,100,000 square kilometres, and its capital and largest city is Addis Ababa.</p>
<p>Geography</p>	<p>Ethiopia is the world's 27th-largest country, about one tenth the size of Canada. It lies between the 3rd parallel north and the 15th parallel north and longitudes 33rd meridian east and 48th meridian east.</p> <p>Within Ethiopia is a vast highland complex of mountains and dissected plateaus divided by the Great Rift Valley, which runs generally southwest to northeast and is surrounded by lowlands, steppes, or semi-desert. The great diversity of terrain determines wide variations in climate, soils, natural vegetation, and settlement patterns.</p> <p>Ethiopia is an ecologically diverse country, ranging from the deserts along the eastern border to the tropical forests in the south to extensive Afromontane in the northern and southwestern parts. Lake Tana in the north is the source of the Blue Nile. It also has a large number of endemic species, notably the gelada, the walia ibex and the Ethiopian wolf. The wide range of altitude has given the country a variety of ecologically distinct areas, and this has helped to encourage the evolution of endemic species in ecological isolation.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



Name	The name derives from the Greek for 'burnt face'. The historian Herodotus used the name to denote the parts of Africa below the Sahara that were then known within the Ecumene (inhabitable world).
Population	Its population is estimated at between 95 and 100 million, the second largest in Africa after Nigeria.
Language	Amharigna (Amharic) is the national working language, but other languages such as Oromiffa, Tigrigna, Somali, Harari, Gurage are widely spoken locally. Indeed, the various nation and nationalities of Ethiopia collectively speak more than 80 different languages. Diversity is greatest in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region, where some 53 different languages are spoken by a similar number of ethnic groups, among them the Sidamo, Wolayta, Hadiya, Gurage and dozen-plus tribes of the Omo Valley. Indigenous languages aside, foreign languages such as English and Arabic are quite widely spoken
Currency	The Ethiopian birr is one of the strongest currencies in Africa. Banknotes come in denominations of birr 100, 50, 10, 5 and 1, and centime and birr 1 coins are also minted. Foreign currency, in particular US dollars, pounds sterling and euros, can be changed into birr at private 'forex bureaux', as well as at most banks during banking hours (8.30am to 4pm Mon–Sat). Local currency can be obtained from a countrywide network of 24-hour ATMs with international Visa and MasterCard. The current exchange rate is 17 birr to the Canadian dollar (June 2017)
Tipping	Tipping is still not widespread in Ethiopia, but it is good to leave a few coins for good service or 10% in Addis Ababa restaurants. For professional guides, \$10 a day would be appropriate.
Government	Ethiopia adopted a new federal constitution in December 1994. Composed of nine Regional States and two City Administrations, Ethiopia is now a multiparty democracy that has held democratic elections every five years since May 1995.
Documentation	Canadian visitors to Ethiopia require a visa as well as a Passport. This visa is available on arrival at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa to leisure visitors from the USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, China, Japan, Korea, Israel, Russia, the UK and all other European Union nations. A one-month tourist VOA costs US\$55. Multiple-entry visas are not currently available on arrival, so should be obtained in advance at an embassy. Online visa applications are also planned for roll out this year (2017), so it may be worthwhile checking whether these are now available.
Time zone	Ethiopia is seven hours ahead of EST in Toronto and Montreal.
Health	Ethiopia is a safe and reasonably healthy country provided you take a few common sense precautions. Ensure your inoculations for typhoid, tetanus, polio and hepatitis A are

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>up to date, mainly if you are traveling out of the capital or you will stay away from the largest hotels</p> <p>Anti-malarial prophylactics should be taken if you'll be visiting low-lying moist regions such as the southern Rift Valley and South Omo. There is also a small risk of malaria, especially during the rainy season, at mid-altitude sites such as Bahir Dar and Harar. Malaria is all but absent above 2000m, for instance in Addis Ababa, Gondar, Lalibela and the Bale and Simien mountains.</p> <p>Avoid drinking or brushing your teeth with tap water. Bottled water is safe and widely available.</p> <p>It's a good idea to carry a few packs of antiseptic wet wipes to wash your hands after toilet stops or before meals in more remote areas where running water may not be available.</p>
Safety tips	<p>Ethiopia is a safe and politically stable country, though there may be some risk attached to travel in remote border areas with more volatile neighbours such as Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. None of these areas is likely to be visited on a normal tour.</p> <p>Pickpockets exist in central Addis Ababa but are not a serious cause for concern elsewhere in the country.</p> <p>Overall, Ethiopia is often cited as the safest country in Africa for travellers.</p>

CLIMATE	
General climate	<p>The Ethiopian Highlands cover most of the country and have a climate which is generally considerably cooler than other regions at similar proximity to the Equator. Most of the country's major cities are located at elevations of around 2,000–2,500 m above sea level, including historic capitals such as Gondar and Axum.</p> <p>The modern capital, Addis Ababa, is situated on the foothills of Mount Entoto at an elevation of around 2,400 metres. It experiences a mild climate year round. With temperatures fairly uniform year round, the seasons in Addis Ababa are largely defined by rainfall: a dry season from October to February, a light rainy season from March to May, and a heavy rainy season from June to September. The average annual rainfall is approximately 1,200 millimetres.</p> <p>There are on average 7 hours of sunshine per day. The dry season is the sunniest time of the year, though even at the height of the rainy season in July and August there are still usually several hours per day of bright sunshine. The average annual temperature in Addis Ababa is 16 °C, with daily maximum temperatures averaging 20–25 °C throughout the year, and overnight lows averaging 5–10 °C</p> <p>Most major cities and tourist sites in Ethiopia lie at a similar elevation to Addis Ababa and have a comparable climate. In less elevated regions, particularly the lower lying Ethiopian xeric grasslands and shrublands in</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>the east of the country, the climate can be significantly hotter and drier. Dallol, in the Danakil Depression in this eastern zone, has the world's highest average annual temperature of 34 °C.</p>
Today's weather	Addis Ababa today (20 June 2017) is 25C and sunny.
Best time to visit	<p>Ethiopia can be visited at any time of year, but different seasons have different advantages.</p> <p>Conventional wisdom is that visitors should avoid the rainy season, which usually starts in June, but peaks over July and August in the central and northern highlands. Certainly, highland towns such as Gondar, Lalibela and Addis Ababa can be very damp and cool during the rains. That aside, however, recent improvements in the northern circuit's road network makes the rains far less of an obstacle to travel than would have been the case few years ago. The countryside is also very green and scenic during the rains, and you'll encounter fewer tourists at popular sites such as Lalibela.</p> <p>The late rainy season, from September through to early October, is a lovely time of year. There's a significant drop in precipitation over this period, but the countryside is very green, and punctuated by yellow meskel wild flowers. On 27 September (a day later in leap years), Ethiopia erupts into festival mode to celebrate Meskel, which commemorates the finding of the True Cross more than 1600 years ago.</p> <p>Arguably the optimum time to visit Ethiopia is from mid October to January, when the rains are over but the countryside is still quite green. This is also the peak tourist season, so facilities and sites of interest tend to be busier than at other times. It is well worth aiming to be in Lalibela or Gondar for Timkat (Ethiopian Epiphany), another wonderfully colourful celebration held on 19 January (except on leap years).</p> <p>The late dry season, from February to May, is also a good time to visit, though the scenery tends to become dryer and browner towards the end of this period, except in the far south where the first rains often fall as early as April.</p> <p>Wildlife can be observed throughout the year, but the winter - November to March - is particularly rewarding for birders, as resident species are supplemented by large numbers of Palaearctic migrants.</p>
GETTING AROUND	<p>The national carrier Ethiopian Airlines operates a daily "Historic Route Service" for tourists connecting Addis Ababa to the historic cities of the northern circuit i.e. Aksum, Bahir Dar, Gondar and Lalibela. Connecting flights also run daily between these northern cities.</p> <p>There are also domestic Ethiopian Airlines flights to several other key centres including Arba Minch, Assosa, Dire Dawa, Gambella, Gondar, Jijiga, Jimma, Mekele and Semera.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<p>Getting There</p>	<p>Ethiopian Airlines operates three direct flights weekly from Toronto to Addis Ababa with connections to 53 destinations. It is the only airline to fly directly between Canada and Africa year round.</p> <p>Ethiopian Airlines is the fastest growing Airline in Africa. In its seven decades of operation, Ethiopian has become one of the continent's leading carriers. Ethiopian operates the youngest and most modern fleet to almost one hundred international destinations across five continents. The fleet includes ultra-modern and environmentally friendly aircraft such as Airbus A350, Boeing 787, Boeing 777-300ER, Boeing 777-200LR, Boeing 777-200 Freighter, Bombardier Q-400 double cabin with an average fleet age of five years. Ethiopian is the first airline in Africa to own and operate these aircraft.</p> <p>Ethiopian's Business Class service is called Cloud 9 and is excellent. I experienced this on my trip from Toronto to Addis Ababa and can heartily recommend it. The lie flat beds enabled me to sleep on the 13 hour flight and arrive in Ethiopia the next day refreshed and ready to see the sights!</p> <p>http://ethiopianairlines.ca/</p>
<p>Cities</p>	<p>Addis Ababa</p> <p>Addis Ababa was founded by Emperor Menelik II, who relocated his capital from Ankober to the Entoto Hills in the early 1880s. Following the unusually cold and wet rainy season of 1886, the royal entourage set up temporary camp at the lower-lying Filwoha Hot Springs, largely at the urge of Queen Taitu, who loved its steamy natural baths and christened the site Addis Ababa (New Flower).</p> <p>By the mid-1890s, the new imperial palace at Addis Ababa comprised a 3km² compound enclosing 50 buildings and housing 8,000 people, while the Saturday market near present-day St George's Cathedral drew up to 50,000 people. In 1900, lack of firewood in the immediate vicinity of Addis Ababa prompted Menelik II to consider relocating his capital to Addis Alem (New World), a plan that was scrapped when it was discovered that the Entoto Hills provided ideal conditions for the fast-growing eucalyptus tree, an import from Australia.</p> <p>The capital's development was bolstered by the arrival of the Djibouti railway in 1917 and an associated influx of Armenian and French traders, as well as by the drive for modernization, following the coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1930. Addis Ababa was chosen as the base for the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in 1958, and five years later it was made headquarters of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union. The city's population has grown from around 100,000 at the time of Menelik II's death in 1913 to around six or seven million today.</p> <p>A medieval Christian presence in the Entoto Hills above Addis Ababa is confirmed by the existence of the ruined rock-hewn churches of Washa</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Mikael and Kidus Raguel. The hills also host the city’s oldest functioning church, Entoto Maryam, a traditionally painted octagon perched on the site where Emperor Menelik II was crowned in 1889. Another relict of Menelik II’s reign, St George’s Cathedral later served as the coronation site of Empress Zewditu and Emperor Haile Selassie. Selassie (Trinity) Cathedral, with its Arabesque facade, is where Emperor Haile Selassie was buried in 2000 at a ceremony attended by Rita Marley. Nearby Beata Maryam, noted for its beautifully painted interior, hosts the subterranean mausoleum of Emperor Menelik II and Empress Zewditu. Other examples of religious architecture include the beautiful early 20th century Anwar Grand Mosque, and the gracious Armenian and Greek Orthodox Churches on the Piazza.</p> <p>Addis Ababa is studded with worthwhile museums. The landmark National Museum of Ethiopia is of particular interest for its palaeontological hall, displaying a hominid skeleton stretching back 5.5 million years. Nearby, the IES Ethnographic Museum, set in a former residence of Emperor Haile Selassie (now Addis Ababa University), has a wealth of fascinating displays exploring the cultures of South Omo, as well as the country’s largest collections of traditional musical instruments, costumes and medieval ecclesiastic artworks. Other more subject-specific installations include the Red Terror Martyrs’ Memorial Museum, Addis Ababa Museum, National Postal Museum, Zoological Natural History Museum and the museums associated with St George’s Cathedral, Selassie (Trinity) Cathedral and Entoto Maryam Church.</p> <p>Addis Ababa has a thriving cultural life embracing some excellent art galleries, traditional restaurants and live music venues. A feature of the city is its wonderful cultural restaurants, which are typically housed in traditional tukul-style buildings, and serve the full range of meat-based and vegan Ethiopian specialities, accompanied by colourful traditional music and dance performances. Ethio Jazz and contemporary Ethiopian music can also be experienced at a variety of nightclubs.</p> <p>Addis is Africa’s fourth-largest city and its diplomatic capital – it is also the best place in the country to sample Ethiopian food!</p>
Distances	The distance by road from Addis Ababa to Axum in the north is almost 1,000 kilometres and to Turmi in the south is 650 kilometres.
Ferries	Local ferries connect lakeshore and island communities on Lake Tana and these are a cheap and colourful way of seeing this breathtaking part of the country for those travellers where time efficiency is not an issue.
Trains	Two brand new train options have just opened in Ethiopia. One is the new urban network in Addis Ababa which is the start of a planned light rail network across the city. The second is a connecting long distance rail line between Addis Ababa and Djibouti on the Red Sea Coast.
Car Rental	An increasingly popular option with tourists is to travel overland with one of many reliable operators in Addis Ababa offering group tours and a

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>range of bespoke 4x4 itineraries. At least ten days, ideally longer, is required to drive around the northern circuit, so those with limited time or patience might wish to arrange an itinerary that combines some flights with road transport.</p> <p>More remote parts of the country, such as the Danakil Depression and Erta Ale, or the tribal lands of South Omo, can only realistically be visited on an organised 4x4 expedition with a specialist local operator.</p>
Buses	<p>It is possible to travel by bus to most parts of the country but the level of service varies considerably. I highly recommend sticking to the most modern bus lines when travelling between cities – such travel is still very inexpensive by Canadian standards.</p>
Passes	<p>Ethiopian Airlines does not have a domestic pass, but if you travel on the airline into the country – as you are likely to do – then you are able to purchase internal domestic flights at a very substantially reduced rate which currently equates to around \$40 to \$50 per flight. This makes getting around the country very affordable.</p>

ACCOMMODATION TYPES	<p>The hotel supply in Addis Ababa is growing quickly with an increasing number of properties offering international standards including several apartment hotels and branded hotels: Sheraton, Hilton, Radisson Blue, Golden Tulip, Marriott and Ramada. Smaller hotels and cozy guest-houses are also available.</p> <p>In the main tourism destinations there is a range of accommodation available including urban hotels as well as smaller properties with local charm and lodges in national parks and other unique locations.</p> <p>In the shores of the Langano and Hawasa lakes in the Rift Valley there are a number of resort hotels with large garden areas and beaches. The town of Bahir Dar on the Lake Tana also has a good choice of hotels, some of them by the lake.</p> <p>For more information, try the Addis Ababa Hotel Owners Association at http://addishotelsassociation.com/ And Tripadvisor at http://www.tripadvisor.com/Tourism-g293790-Ethiopia-Vacations.html</p> <p>My personal favourites on my trip to the country were:</p> <p>Paradise Lodge in Arba Minch which is set in tropical grounds on the edge of the Rift Valley overlooking two rift lakes and the National Park of of Nech Sar.</p> <p>Mountain View Hotel in Lalibela which is walking distance to town and yet with stunning views over the valley and mountain ranges from its cliff top perch.</p>
----------------------------	--

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	Goha Hotel in Gondar – another hotel with incredible views, this time set high on a hill overlooking the city from its poolside terraces.
--	--

ETHIOPIAN HIGHLIGHTS	
Lake Tana	<p>This mesmerizing inland sea is fringed by lush tropical vegetation: 3,156 km² Lake Tana is most easily explored from Bahir Dar, a well-equipped port town that doubles as capital of Amhara Region. The source of the Blue Nile, Tana was known to the ancient Egyptians as Coloe, while the ancient Greeks extolled it as the ‘copper-tinted... jewel of Ethiopia’. Sites of interest include the lake's many picturesque island monasteries, most of which date to mediaeval times, and the stupendous Blue Nile Falls south of Bahir Dar. In June 2015, Lake Tana became the centrepiece of a 5,000 km² UNESCO biosphere reserve.</p> <p>The city of the hefty salt bars (amoles) that served as currency in the highlands for many centuries stands on a lushly wooded stretch of lakeshore teeming with birdlife. Its sprawling daily market is a fun place to explore, weaving between stalls that sell everything from traditional handicrafts to fresh tropical fruit. It also hosts several tourist-friendly traditional music venues.</p> <p>Bahir Dar's oldest architectural landmarks are the medieval church of Bahir Dar Giyorgis and an adjacent stone tower built for Emperor Susenyos in the 1620s. On the outskirts of Bahir Dar, the Amhara Martyrs’ Memorial and Museum displays a vast collection of photographs and other artefacts documenting the formation of the civil war against the Derg in the 1980s.</p> <p>At least 20 old monasteries stud the forested islands and peninsulas of Lake Tana. Many were established during the 14th century rule of Amda Tsion, but others, most notably Tana Chirkos, with its trio of ancient Judaic sacrificial pillars, might date back thousands of years. The most popular monastery with tourists, due to its proximity to Bahir Dar and tolerance of female visitors, is Ura Kidane Mihret. which contains some of Ethiopia's finest ecclesiastic artwork in Ethiopia and also has a superb museum. For adventurous seafarers, a full-day boat outing is required to visit the equally worthwhile but more remote likes of Daga Istafanos, Tana Chirkos or Narga Selassie.</p> <p>The 18th century Scottish traveller James Bruce described the Blue Nile Falls, known locally as Tis Isat (Water that Smokes), as: ‘a magnificent sight, that ages, added to the greatest length of human life, would not efface or eradicate from my memory’. It's a sensational spot, with the</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>river kicking up a thunderous wall of spray as it crashes over a 45-metre high cliff before being channelled into a frothing gorge below.</p> <p>Tana supports a remarkable biodiversity. More than 20 fish species are endemic to the lake. Hippos are frequently seen within walking distance of Bahir Dar. Birdlife ranges from flotillas of great white pelicans, to colourful weavers and their neat little nests, to the African fish eagles that perform a haunting duet high in the trees. The conservationist ethos of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church means that many of the lake's monasteries double as virtual nature sanctuaries, protecting a range of forest birds and monkeys.</p> <p>Set on an island in the Nile outlet, Debre Maryam (Mount Mary) is the closest Lake Tana monastery to Bahir Dar. Its treasures include a 14th century illuminated manuscript.</p> <p>The 13th century monastery of Kibran Gebriel lies on a forested crescent island visible from the lake shore at Bahir Dar.</p> <p>Arguably the most beautiful church in the region, Ura Kidane Mihret has an accessible location on the forested Zege Peninsula, and is renowned for its lavishly painted interior and artefacts.</p>
<p>Gondar</p>	<p>Dubbed the Camelot of Africa, the city of Gondar — capital of Ethiopia from 1636 until the mid 19th century — combines a modern veneer with an architectural sensibility harking back to the Middle Ages. The city's physical and architectural centrepiece is Fasil Ghebbi, a stone-walled Royal Compound containing half a dozen fairytale castles including the three-storey original built by Emperor Fasil in the 1630s. The Fasil Ghebbi UNESCO World Heritage Site also incorporates several more remote constructions, most notably the Church of Debre Berhan Selassie, with its beautifully painted interior.</p> <p>Enclosed by tall stone walls, the central Fasil Ghebbi is a 7-hectare 'Royal Compound' housing six fortified stone castles built from the 1630s onward. The most striking is Emperor Fasil's three-storey castle, which stands 32 metres high, and displays a blend of Portuguese, Indian and indigenous Aksumite influences typical of the Gondarine style.</p> <p>Consecrated in 1693 under Emperor Iyasu I, Debre Berhan Selassie ('Mountain of the Enlightened Trinity') was the only major Gondarine church to survive the Mahdist attack of 1888 unscathed - thanks, legend has it, to the intervention of a virulent bee swarm. The ceiling, adorned with 17th-century paintings of 80 cherubic faces, is probably the most famous ecclesiastic artwork in Ethiopia.</p> <p>The sunken Fasil's Pool, overlooked by a two-storey building attributed</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>to Emperor Fasil, is where Gondar's legendarily colourful annual Timkat (Ethiopian Epiphany) celebrations take place on January 19 (a day later in Leap Years).</p> <p>Named after a Coptic convent in Egypt, the 18th century Kuskuum Palace was constructed on the slopes of Debre Tsehay (Mountain of Sun) for the charismatic Empress Mentewab, wife of Emperor Bakaffa, and regent to their son Iyasu II and grandson Iyasu I.</p> <p>On the northern outskirts of Gondar, an abandoned synagogue at Woleka evokes the story of the Beta Israel, a 'lost tribe' of Ethiopian Jews whose last 10,000-or-so adherents were airlifted to Israel during the 1980s.</p>
<p>Axum</p>	<p>The oldest continuously inhabited city in sub-Saharan Africa, Axum was founded more than 3,000 years ago in the days of the Queen of Sheba. It served as capital of the Aksumite Kingdom, which was the dominant trade entity in the Horn of Africa for over a millennium prior to the rise of Islam, stretching from the Sudanese Nile across the Red Sea to Yemen. A UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1980, Axum today is replete with towering obelisks, ruined palaces, engraved tablets and other ancient artefacts dating back to its glory days.</p> <p>Established shortly after Axum's leaders converted to Christianity, the 4th-century Cathedral of Tsion Maryam (Mary of Zion) is Ethiopia's oldest church. The original church, modelled on Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, fell victim to the warrior queen Gudit in the 10th century, but the foundations of one of the original 12 temples is still visible. A replacement church, built in the 17th-century Gondarine style by Emperor Fasilidas, has a beautifully painted interior.</p> <p>Axum's Chapel of the Tablet is said to be where the Biblical Ark of the Covenant now resides. According to legend, this most holy of Old Testament artefacts was carried to Ethiopia by Emperor Menelik I - son of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon of Jerusalem - some 3,000 years ago.</p> <p>A pre-Christian Stelae Field opposite Maryam Tsion incorporates the tallest blocks of solid stone ever erected in ancient times. The largest of the giant stelae, a 33-metre tall granite megalith attributed to the 3rd-century King Remhai, toppled over and shattered whilst it was being erected. Alongside it, the two tallest standing stelae are both comparable in stature to a ten-storey building, standing 25 and 23 metres high.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>The Axum Archaeological Museum displays a wealth of ancient artefacts uncovered around Aksum, ranging from 3rd century Aksumite coins to glasses imported from Egypt.</p> <p>Other sites of interest include May Shum (also known as the Queen of Sheba's pool), the ruined Dongar Palace, a trilingual tablet inscribed in Sabaeen, Ge'ez and Greek by King Ezana, and the 6th century tombs of Kaleb and Gebre Meskel.</p>
<p>Lalibela</p>	<p>Lalibela is the star of the show! Comprising eleven churches and two chapels, Ethiopia's labyrinthine 'New Jerusalem', excavated by King Lalibela in the 12th century and still in active use today, has been dubbed the "Eighth Wonder of the World".</p> <p>Hand-carved into the rock flake by painstaking flake, a process that would have required around 40,000 man-years to complete, Lalibela represents the apex of an Ethiopian church-excavating tradition that dates to the arrival of Christianity circa 350 AD. Many of Lalibela's churches are subterranean monoliths, created in two stages. First, a quadrangle of trenches up to 15 metres deep would be hand-cut into a horizontal rock surface. Only then could the artisans commence work on the actual church, which was excavated into a massive freestanding central block enclosed by the artificial trenches. The church of Bete Medhane Alem, set in one such subterranean courtyard, is the world's largest rock-hewn excavation, supported by 36 internal and 36 external pillars.</p> <p>The most iconic church at Lalibela, Bete Giyorgis is a free-standing monolith carved in the shape of a cross and dedicated to its namesake Saint George. Legend has it that Saint George was so delighted when he saw his church that he rode his horse right over the entrance tunnel, leaving behind hoof prints that are still visible today.</p> <p>The impact of Lalibela is not limited to its architecture. This is also one of the very few UNESCO World Heritage Sites of comparable vintage that functions as a living shrine, one whose ancient stone churches have remained in active use since their excavation almost nine centuries ago.</p> <p>The countryside around Lalibela is studded with many other ancient churches. These include Yemrehanna Kristos, one of the finest surviving examples of Aksumite architecture, constructed in the 11th century with alternating layers of wood and gypsum-faced granite.</p> <p>Comprising five churches and two chapels, Lalibela's Northern church</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>cluster is carved into a complex of subterranean courtyards whose cohesion suggests it was conceived as one unit: Bete Medhane Alem (House of the Saviour of the World), Bete Maryam (House of Mary), Bete Meskel (House of the Cross), Bete Danagel (House of Virgins), Bete Golgotha-Mikael (House of Golgotha-Mikael)</p> <p>The Southern church cluster is more architecturally varied and some of its five churches might have been converted from secular excavations that predate the reign of King Lalibela: Bete Emanuel (House of Emmanuel), Bete Mercurios (House of Saint Mercurios), Bete Abba Libanos (House of Abbot Libanos), Bete Gebriel Raphael (House of St Gabriel Raphael), and Bete Lehem (House of Bread).</p> <p>The last church to be carved at Lalibela, Bete Giyorgis is an iconic cruciform excavated for Saint George after he complained that none of the older churches were dedicated to him.</p>
--	---

<p>UNIQUES</p>	<p>Ethiopia's claim to be the Cradle of Humankind is the strongest of any country in the world, thanks to a remarkable series of paleontological discoveries, mostly in the Afar region of the northern Rift Valley. Indeed, of the 14 fossils and other relicts regarded to be most important in determining our understanding of human evolution, 11 were found in Ethiopia.</p> <p>The most famous fossil unearthed in Ethiopia is Lucy, the partial skeleton of a Australopithecus afarensis female discovered by the anthropologist Professor Donald Johanson and his student Tom Gray at Hadar in 1974. Then the oldest hominid fossil ever discovered at 3.2 million years old, its limb structure demonstrated that bipedalism had evolved much earlier than was previously assumed. The name Lucy derives from the Beatles song 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds', which was playing in camp at the time!</p> <p>In 1997, the Ethiopian anthropologist Yohannes Haile-Selassie discovered the world's oldest undisputed hominid remains, ascribed to the species Ardipithecus kadabba and dated to 5.5 million years old, in Afar.</p> <p>Ethiopia has also yielded the world's oldest-known stone-age tools. Dating back more than 2.5 million years, these were uncovered in Afar at a site called Gona.</p> <p>A more southerly site alongside the Omo River has yielded the oldest-known fossils of anatomically modern humans Homo sapiens</p>
-----------------------	--

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>sapiens. Originally dated at 130,000 years old upon their discovery in the 1960s, this pair of skulls was re-dated at almost 200,000 years old in 2005. This may be about to change following recent (June 2017) discoveries of Homo sapiens fossils in Morocco apparently dating to 300,000 years ago.</p> <p>An excellent paleontological hall in Addis Ababa's National Museum of Ethiopia displays the remains of Lucy as well as several other significant old fossils.</p>
<p>Surprising</p>	<p>When the rest of the world moved from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar in 1582, Ethiopia did not. The result is that Ethiopia is seven or eight years behind the rest of the world, depending upon the time of year. For instance: as I write this in June 2017, the year is 2009 in Ethiopia. One happy result of this is that travellers are instantly seven or eight years younger when they visit Ethiopia!</p>
<p>History</p>	<p>The recorded history of Ethiopia dates back more than 3,000 years to the pre-Aksumite Empire of D'mt, whose capital Yeha lay at the heart of a well organised trade empire that stretched across the Red Sea to Yemen. According to legend, the nearby city of Aksum (which is still inhabited today) was once ruled over by the Queen of Sheba, who famously visited King Solomon of Jerusalem during her reign, and bore him a son who was crowned as Emperor Menelik I. Ethiopians believe it was Menelik I who brought the Ark of the Covenant to Ethiopia, and who founded the Solomonic Dynasty, which endured until the late 20th century reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I.</p> <p>Aksum later served as the capital of the Aksumite Kingdom or Empire, which probably emerged as the dominant trading power in the Horn of Africa in the 4th century BC and retained that role for another 1,000 years under a succession of powerful rulers. Aksum was a major player in commerce between the Roman Empire and India, and its rulers facilitated trade by minting their own currency. Among the great Aksumite rulers was King Basen, or Balthazar, who according to some legends was one of the Three Wise Men who visited the baby Jesus bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.</p> <p>In the 3rd Century AD, the Persian writer Manni listed Aksum along with Persia, China and Rome as one of the world's four greatest kingdoms. In 341 AD, King Ezana founded the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, making Aksum the first major empire to convert to Christianity. In the 7th century, a group of Muslims who had originally converged in Mecca sought refuge from Quraysh persecution by travelling to Aksum, which is known in Islamic history as the First Hijra. Negash, founded at this time, is reputedly the oldest Islamic settlement in Africa.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Ethiopia took its modern shape in the late 19th century under a series of powerful emperors: Tewodros I (ruled 1855-69), Yohannis IV (1872-89) and Menelik II (1889-1913). Following the late 19th century 'Scramble for Africa', Ethiopia remained the only African country not to be colonised, largely as a result of the imperial army's victory over the Italians at the Battle of Adwa on 1 March 1896. Menelik II was the founder of the modern capital Addis Ababa, whose growth was bolstered by the arrival of the Djibouti railway in 1917 and an associated influx of Armenian and French traders, as well as by the drive for modernisation under Emperor Haile Selassie I following his coronation in 1930. In 1963, Addis Ababa was chosen as headquarters of the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union), a role it has retained ever since.</p> <p>Ethiopia today occupies a territory of 1,104,300 square kilometres, making it the tenth-largest country in Africa. Its population is estimated at between 95 and 100 million, the second largest in Africa (after Nigeria). Following the installation of a transitional coalition government in 1991, Ethiopia adopted a new federal constitution in December 1994. Composed of nine Regional States and two City Administrations, Ethiopia is now a multiparty democracy that has held democratic elections every five years since May 1995.</p>
<p>Recommended Reading</p>	<p>I have two strong recommendations for guidebooks in Ethiopia:</p> <p>Bradt Guide to Ethiopia by Philip Briggs (7th edition, 2015). Clocking in at 656 pages, the 7th edition of this long serving guidebook provides the most comprehensive coverage of tourist sites, accommodation and other facilities on the market. Available as a printed book or ebook.</p> <p>Lonely Planet's Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somaliland (5th edition, 2013). Available as a printed book or ebook and with a new edition expected very shortly.</p> <p>I also very much enjoyed the account of one of my favourite travel writers, Dervla Murphy, of her adventurous and insightful journey on foot across the Highlands in the 1960's called "In Ethiopia With a Mule" – still widely available as a reprint.</p>
<p>1000 Places to See Before You Die</p>	<p>Lalibela – The mystery of the subterranean, rock-hewn churches Gonder – Palaces, castles and churches in an ancient capital Omo River Valley – Disappearing tribes Simien Mountains National Park – A trek over the Roof of Africa</p>
<p>Must Sees</p>	<p>Ethiopia is an ancient country whose unique cultural heritage, rich history and remarkable biodiversity are reflected in a tally of nine UNESCO World Heritage Sites - more than any other country in Africa.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Five of these are more fully described elsewhere in these notes.</p> <p>Aksum (1980)</p> <p>Fasil Ghebbi, Gondar (1979)</p> <p>Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historic Town (2006)</p> <p>Konso Cultural Landscape (2011)</p> <p>Lower Valley of the Awash (1980)</p> <p>Lower Valley of the Omo (1980)</p> <p>Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela (1978)</p> <p>Tiya (1980)</p> <p>Simien National Park (1978)</p>
--	---

SPORTS ACTIVITIES	
Soft Adventure	<p>Ethiopia is already renowned as one of Africa's top high-altitude hiking and trekking destinations, but a range of other outdoor activities is on offer, from climbing the spectacular Erta Ale volcano to ballooning above the Great Rift Valley.</p> <p>Overland Expeditions along Ethiopia's extensive and rapidly improving network of surfaced and all-weather roads allows one to experience the rich mosaic of ever-changing landscapes that connect the country's main tourist attractions.</p> <p>Ethiopia's top caving site, the sacred Sof Omar Caves comprise a 15km network of limestone caverns carved by the Web River.</p> <p>Commercial ballooning trips now run out of Addis Ababa, the Rift Valley lakes of Hawassa and Langano, and Bahir Dar on Lake Tana.</p> <p>The Danakil Depression in northeast Ethiopia offers some spectacular opportunities for volcano climbing, notably to Erta Ale, whose 613m-high caldera contains the world's oldest active lava lake.</p> <p>Ethiopia is largely undeveloped as a rock climbing destination, but the sandstone Gheralta Escarpment and gorges of Simien Mountains National Park are rich in potential for experienced practitioners.</p> <p>White water rafting can be undertaken with suitable equipment on the Blue Nile, Omo and Awash rivers.</p>
Caving	<p>Some of Africa's largest and most awe-inspiring cave systems run labyrinthine into the limestone slopes of eastern Ethiopia.</p> <p>Known to be at least 15km long, the Sof Omar Caves, carved by the Web River in the lowlands east of Bale, is Africa's largest network of limestone caverns. No expertise or experience is required to explore a</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>1.7km walking trail that leads from the main entrance through a series of immense cathedral-like chambers studded with limestone pillars that stand up to 20m high.</p> <p>The Sof Omar Caves are named after a renowned 12th-century sheikh who took refuge there. The site is still an important pilgrimage site for Ethiopian Muslims.</p> <p>Set on the steep eastern slopes of the 3,574m-high Mount Arba Gugu, the little known Achare-Aynage Caves form Ethiopia's second most extensive system of subterranean caverns. Sixteen entrances were identified and 7km of passages surveyed by scientific expeditions between 2004 and 2007.</p> <p>The limestone caves of eastern Ethiopia served as canvasses to the cattle-herding people who inhabited the region around 5,000 years ago. The country's best-known prehistoric cave paintings, depicting humans, livestock and various wild animals, can be found on the Laga Oda Rock Shelter near Harar. The little-visited Mount Kundudo, also in the vicinity of Harar, houses a beautiful limestone cave system as well as several superb rock art sites.</p> <p>Many of Ethiopia's most characterful churches have been built into or excavated from caves. Accessible examples include the stunning Aksumite church of Yemrehanna Kristos and pretty monastery of Nakuta La'ab, both near Lalibela.</p>
<p>Climbing</p>	<p>Although largely undeveloped as a climbing destination, Ethiopia boasts some of the most spectacular and challenging rockscapes in Africa, from the sandstone escarpment of Gheralta to the kilometre-deep cliffs that enclose the gorges of Simien Mountains National Park.</p> <p>Most tourists who visit the Gheralta region concentrate on the ancient rock-hewn churches that have been carved into its burnished sandstone cliffs. But these cliffs also offer some fantastically challenging rock climbing, as documented in the book Vertical Ethiopia (http://www.majkaburhardt.com/vertical-ethiopia), which describes a climbing expedition undertaken there by four women climbers in 2007.</p> <p>Ethiopia's tallest mountain ranges, protected within Simien and Bale Mountains National Parks, are both developed primarily as hiking and trekking destinations, and their highest peaks can easily be reached by foot and 4x4 vehicle respectively. However, the Simien Mountains in particular offer a wealth of potential for technical climbing, on cliffs so sheer they support Africa's only indigenous goat, the fearless Walia</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>ibex. Facilities for commercial rock climbing have yet to be developed in Ethiopia. Currently the country is suited only to experienced climbers who bring their own equipment.</p>
<p>Hiking</p>	<p>From bracing multi-day high-altitude treks through the Simien and Bale Mountains to moderately demanding day hikes amidst the remote rock-hewn churches of Gheralta and Lalibela, Ethiopia offers practically limitless opportunities for keen walkers.</p> <p>Described by the intrepid 1920s traveller Rosita Forbes as “the most marvellous of all Abyssinian landscapes”, Simien Mountains National Park, its “stupendous crags” and “gorges of clouded amethyst” rising to 4,533m at Ras Dejen (Africa's fifth-highest mountain), remains the most popular trekking destination in Ethiopia.</p> <p>Traversing windswept Afro-alpine moorlands, babbling mountain streams and intimate evergreen forests, the scenic network of hiking trails through Bale Mountain National Park reliably offers close-up encounters with the endemic Ethiopian wolf, mountain nyala and Bale monkey</p> <p>Guided hikes through recently created Community Conservation Areas such as Mount Abune Yoseph (near Lalibela; http://www.abuneyoseph tourism.org), Guassa Plateau (north of Addis Ababa; http://www.guassaarea.org) and Adaba-Dodola (bordering Bale Mountains; http://www.baletrek.com) offer a combination of wild mountain scenery, good wildlife watching, and the opportunity to support and interact with rural Ethiopian communities.</p> <p>Ancient footpaths, clambering over rocks worn smooth by centuries of continual use, lead adventurous visitors to the many remote rock-hewn churches that adorn the burnished sandstone cliffs of Gheralta. Hiking is good throughout the year, but the scenery is at its best after the rains, from late September until December, when the countryside is swathed in various shades of deep green.</p>
<p>Cycling</p>	<p>Cycling tours through Ethiopia are a great way to experience the stunning countryside at a relaxed pace. An abundance of winding rural roads leading through lovely montane scenery make Ethiopia an ideal country to explore slowly by bike. Set mostly at above 2,500 metres, the elevated countryside around Addis Ababa is also an ideal training ground for serious cyclists wanting to improve their altitude performance.</p> <p>Cycling tours are a relatively new concept in Ethiopia, but several exciting routes are currently being operated by emerging companies.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



<p>Running</p>	<p>Running is Ethiopia's national sport, enjoying a profile comparable to that of football in Europe or baseball in the USA, and the country has produced many world-conquering marathon runners.</p> <p>Ethiopia earned its first Olympic gold medal in 1960, when Abebe Bikila, running barefoot, won the men's marathon in Rome. He repeated the feat - this time wearing shoes - four years later in Tokyo.</p> <p>Ethiopian long-distance runners have claimed another 19 Olympic gold medals since 1964. Champions include the three-time gold medallist Kenenisa Bekele and two-time 10,000m winner Haile Gebrselassie, who also held the world marathon record from 2007 to 2011. The current Olympic record holder for the women's marathon is Tiki Gelana, who finished first at London in 2012.</p> <p>The 10km Great Ethiopian Run (www.ethiopianrun.com), held in Addis Ababa every November since 2001, attracts around 40,000 local and international participants.</p> <p>Established in 2014, the annual Ethiotrail (www.ethiotrail.com) is a trail running marathon set in scenic Abijatta-Shala National Park in the Great Rift Valley. The third edition, with half-marathon and 12km options, is set for August 2016.</p> <p>The 14km Wenchi Lake Trail Run (http://www.wenчилaketraill.com), held every January, follows a high altitude trail around the circumference of the crater lake on Mount Wenchi about 100km west of Addis Ababa.</p> <p>Outside of race time, visitors can join the local athletes that train at Meskel Square in central Addis Ababa every morning and evening. The Entoto Hills and town of Solulta immediately north of Addis Ababa are also popular locations for high altitude training, and have some facilities for running camps. The small town of Bekoji in the southeastern highlands is well known as the birthplace of several elite runners.</p> <p>It is thought that one reason why Ethiopia has produced so many top long-distance runners is due to the high altitudes at which most of the country is set. For the same reason, visiting runners from lower lying climes might well find themselves very out of breath when they head off on a morning jog in the likes of Lalibela, Addis Ababa or Gondar.</p>
<p>Other Activities</p>	<p>Ballooning</p> <p>With its craggy peaks bisected by the majestic Great Rift Valley, the magnificent mountain landscapes of the Ethiopian Highlands are best</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



appreciated from on high.
 Ballooning is a relatively new activity in Ethiopia. The first documented balloon flight was pioneered by Abyssinia Ballooning, a Dutch-operated company, in 2012.
 Abyssinia Ballooning (<http://www.abysiniaballooning.com>) has since operated more than 100 commercial balloon flights, mostly starting in Addis Ababa and exploring the surrounding countryside.
 More recently, Abyssinia Ballooning has started offering flights in the Rift Valley lakes of Hawassa and Langano, as well as from Bahir Dar, close to where the Blue Nile exits Lake Tana.
 Flights are best booked as far in advance as possible. They are weather dependent and almost always run in the early morning, when conditions tend to be most suitable and the light is at its loveliest.

CULTURE

Ethiopia supports more than 80 different ethnic groups, each with its own language, culture, customs and traditions. This diverse mix of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds has created a distinctive national identity that enables the country to offer the rest of the world a unique body of knowledge and experience. These include traditional coffee-drinking ceremonies, food and drink preparation, a variety of costumes, face & body beautification, religious and wedding ceremonies, legends and storytelling, and many other cultural events that attract visitors from all lifestyles.

Ethiopia has three main cultural routes. The northern historic route focusses mainly on Christian and pre-Christian sites, while the eastern route leads you to holy Islamic citadel of Harar, and the southern route explores the animist African cultures of the Omo Valley.

The Great Ethiopian Route: Historic North focuses on the predominantly Christian cultures of Amhara and Tigray. Highlights include the 3,000-year-old city of Aksum, which is still inhabited today, and the 17th century castles at Gondar. The Ethiopian Orthodox culture of the north is, however, epitomised by the age-old rock-hewn churches of Lalibela and Tigray, and the white-robed worshippers who gather there for services, as they have done since time immemorial.

The main focal point of the **Great Ethiopian Route: The East** is the walled Islamic city of Harar, which is regarded to be the world's 4th most holy place by Muslims, and is noted for its wealth of mosques and shrines. Further north, the Danakil Depression is inhabited by the pastoralist Afar, predominantly Islamic camel-herders and salt-miners who have inhabited their harsh homeland for at least 2,000 years.

The most culturally diverse circuit in Ethiopia, the **Great Ethiopian**

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Route: the Cultural Mosaic of the South passes through areas dominated by Islam, Orthodox Christianity, various Protestant denominations, and traditional animists. It also incorporates what is perhaps Ethiopia's most important location for ethnographic tourism in the form of the South Omo Valley, whose astonishing mix of small, contrasting and utterly fascinating ethnic groups includes the Hamar, Gangatom, Karo, Dassench, Bodi, Mursi, Surma and Arbore. Here, visitors have the opportunity to witness a variety of authentic African tradition, including colourful ornaments, elaborate hairstyles, colourful body painting, and unique traditional performing arts.</p>
<p>Arts</p>	<p>The greatest Ethiopian art can be found on the walls of its churches and monasteries all around the country. Some of it is breathtakingly vibrant and colourful. From the 80 cherubs across the ceiling of a church in Gondar to the telling of the Ethiopian Orthodox Biblical stories on the walls of a monastery on the Zege Peninsula on Lake Tana, I was entranced at the story telling properties of Ethiopian art on my travels in the country.</p>
<p>Music</p>	<p>The music of Ethiopia is extremely diverse, with each of the country's 80 ethnic groups being associated with unique sounds. Ethiopian music uses a distinct modal system that is pentatonic, with characteristically long intervals between some notes. Traditional singing in Ethiopia presents diverse styles of polyphony (heterophony, drone, imitation, and counterpoint). Traditionally, lyricism in Ethiopian song writing is strongly associated with views of patriotism or national pride, romance, friendship, and a most unique type of memoire known as 'Tizita'. There was an extraordinary flowering of music in the 1970's known as Ethiopian Swing which is well worth seeking out. Today there are new names that are receiving international acclaim, such as Teddy Afro and Jonny Raga.</p>
<p>Museums</p>	<p>A network of museums in Addis Ababa and elsewhere explores Ethiopia's long and fascinating history, from the first humans to walk the earth many millions of years ago, to the imperial era that ran from around 1000 BC right into the 1970's.</p> <p>The most popular display in Addis Ababa's National Museum of Ethiopia is the superb palaeontological hall. This incorporates some of the world's most ancient hominid fossils, including the 3.2-million-year-old Australopithecus afarensis skull known as Lucy, substantiating Ethiopia's probable status as the Cradle of Humankind.</p> <p>The nearby Institute of Ethiopian Studies' Ethnographic Museum focusses on the country's varied mosaic of cultures. It displays traditional artefacts relating to the Christian and other monotheistic cultures of the highlands, but also dedicates plenty of space to the</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>fascinating animist cultural groups of South Omo, as well as the Afar of the eastern deserts. Highlights include extensive and attractively displayed collections of traditional musical instruments and of religious art dating back to the Middle Ages.</p> <p>Centrally located on Meskel Square, the Red Terror Martyrs' Memorial Museum documents the atrocities committed under the Derg regime of 1975-87.</p> <p>Other subject-specific installations in the capital include the Addis Ababa Museum, National Postal Museum and Zoological Natural History Museum, and the museums associated with St George's Cathedral, Selassie Cathedral and Entoto Maryam Church.</p> <p>The Aksum Archaeological Museum, in the town of the same name, displays a wealth of ancient artefacts uncovered in the vicinity. These include Aksumite coins and engraved tablets from the 3rd century AD, and glasses imported from Egypt.</p> <p>Other worthwhile museums can be found in Harar, Lalibela and Konso. Illuminated manuscripts, gold crosses, imperial crowns and other antiquities dating back to the first millennium AD are stowed away at museums or treasure houses in many ancient monasteries and rock-hewn churches countrywide.</p>
<p>Festivals</p>	<p>Many travellers to Ethiopia try to time their visit to coincide with the colourful festivals of Meskel, Timkat or Enkutatash.</p> <p>Now registered with UNESCO as an element of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, Meskel (27 September) commemorates the alleged 4th century discovery of the True Cross on which Jesus was crucified. The centrepiece of this uniquely Ethiopian festival is the burning of a massive conical pyre called a Damera. The largest ceremony takes place in Addis Ababa's Meskel Square, where hundreds of thousands of people gather to watch the colourfully dressed priests chant, pray and dance. The most historically poignant site to witness Meskel is Aksum's Cathedral of Maryam Tsion.</p> <p>Timkat, the Ethiopian Orthodox equivalent to Epiphany, is celebrated at churches throughout the country on January 19. The best place to be during Timkat is Gondar, where the festivities culminate in a crowded and colourful afternoon re-enactment of the first baptism at the 17th century Fasil's Pool, which is filled with water for the occasion.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Gena or Ledet (7 January), the Ethiopian equivalent to Christmas, is preceded by an all-night vigil following 43 days of fasting that culminate. It is a family-oriented holiday, but in some areas it is marked by traditional dancing or a hockey-like game called Yegenna Chewata, supposedly played by the local shepherds on the night Jesus was born. It is traditional to eat the national dish doro wot (chicken stew) over Gena.</p> <p>The usual Islamic holidays are celebrated in Ethiopia, especially in and around Harar. At the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, the first day of the month of Shewal is celebrated as Eid-al-Fitr. This is followed by six-days of fasting. The 8th day of the month of Shewal is Shewal Eid - a special Harari cultural festival, consisting of 24 hours of celebrations. Harar also comes alive during the Ashura ceremony, which takes place on the 10th day of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. Important Islamic pilgrimage sites holding annual festivals include the Sof Omar Caves and Dire Sheikh Hussein in the lowlands east of the Bale Mountains.</p> <p>A more secular occasion is Enkutatash, or Ethiopian New Year (11 September), which falls on the date that the Queen of Sheba supposedly arrived back in Aksum after having visited King Solomon in Jerusalem. It is celebrated vigorously throughout the country by people of all faiths.</p> <p>Other traditional festivals include the Irecha, which is celebrated by the Oromo people at Lake Hora, in Bishoftu, on the first Sunday after Meskal (September 28), and the Fiche Chambalala, the New Year celebration of the Sidama people of Hawassa.</p>
--	--

<p>ATTRACTIONS</p> <p>Southern Rift Valley Peoples</p>	<p>Misty highland meadows and tall escarpment forests make up much of Southern Ethiopia, but the region is also incised by the gaping kilometre-deep tectonic scar we know as the Great Rift Valley, its acacia-swathed floor dotted with beautiful lakes renowned for their diverse profusion of birds.</p> <p>The ethnic diversity of this astonishing region embraces modern cities such as Hawassa and Arba Minch, but also the walled hilltop warrens of the Konso Cultural Landscape, the remote tribes of South Omo, the singing wells of the desert-dwelling Borena, towering Dorze homesteads and thousand year old island monasteries.</p> <p>South Omo is a unique cultural kaleidoscope populated by 16 different</p>
--	---

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



ethnic groups whose traditional ways of life include body painting and unique hair styles.

The Konso

A UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2011, the Konso Cultural Landscape is named after its agriculturist inhabitants, who have moulded their 230 square kms homeland of semi-arid hills into productive agricultural land. A striking feature of Konso is the ancient hilltop paleta (terrace and walled villages) - strange hobbit-warrens towered over by generation poles felled from a sacred forest, and studded with curvaceous thatched community houses. The Konso are also renowned for their waka grave-markers, anthropomorphic hardwood statues carved to mimic the deceased, and for their communally constructed reservoirs.

Konso's hilltop paleta villages emphasise defensive structures. Each village is encircled by up to six concentric dry-stone basalt walls that stand around 4 metres high and are entered only through two or more ceremonial gates. About two dozen traditional villages are scattered around the World Heritage Site, the most frequently visited being Mecheke, Dokatu, Gamole and Buso.

A village is divided into several subcommittees, each with its own mora, a striking open-sided and thatch-roofed community house. The oldest mora in a village stands alongside a small common where an olahita (generation pole) is erected every 18 years to mark the initiation of a new generation-set. The age of any given paleta can be determined by counting its generation poles: Dokatu with 43 olahita indicating an age of more than 750 years, is claimed to be the oldest village in Konso. In some villages, the exploits of a celebrated age-set is commemorated by the erection of a stone obelisk called a daga-hela, a custom that makes Konso one of the world's last existing megalithic cultures.

The Konso erect impressionistic wooden waka grave-markers at the burial place of an important man or particularly brave warrior. Although many waka can still be seen in situ, the Konso Museum displays around 200 examples that were confiscated by the local authorities after being looted by foreign collectors.

The Konso countryside typically comprises hard, dry, rocky slopes, so the people have developed an extensive system of dry-stone terracing to prevent erosion and create saddles for agriculture. Gesergiyo is a Konso village best known for a nearby gorge filled with skyscraper-like

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



water-sculpted sand pinnacles nicknamed 'New York'. The sacred Kalla Forest is the site of an important chief's compound and the new Konso Coffee Cooperative, which uses a traditional dry method to process the coffee beans.

Lower Omo Valley

Centred on the pretty green town of Jinka, South Omo is Ethiopia's most culturally and linguistically diverse administrative zone, supporting 16 different ethnic groups who all staunchly keep to their unique traditional costumes, customs and beliefs.

The Mursi, inhabitants of South Omo are remarkable for their body art. Hamer women are notable for their long-fringed, hennadyed dreadlocked hairdo, while the men must perform a unique bull-jumping ritual as an initiation into adulthood. The Karo, who live alongside the Omo River as it flows along the zone's western boundary, are celebrated for their colourful ritual body painting.

The best way to explore South Omo is to visit a few of its small towns on their specific market days, when a diverse mix of colourfully-adorned villagers can be seen buying and selling wares.

On my journey to this region of Ethiopia, I spent time with three of the local tribes and each was a moving and fascinating experience, as different from each other as different countries elsewhere in the world.

The **Hamer** people live in mud and thatch huts in the dry far south of the region. They live the simplest of lives in the semi-desert in extended family compounds where the wealth of a family is measured by the cattle each possesses. I saw one of their unique Evangadi dances, as the sun set to their wild calls and thumping feet – a primitive and evocative experience.

The **Konso** live in fortified hilltop villages – I was guided around the village of Gamole, which is encircled by three massive stone walls. Wandering around the high walled trails around the village was like being in a maze, with occasional windows into peaceful family compounds, full of playing children and livestock. The community spaces in the middle of the village featured 'generation poles' which are erected every 18 years to mark the passing of the mantle on to the next generation. Gamole had 43 such poles, meaning that it has been here for almost 800 years.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>The Dorze live high up on the edge of the Rift Valley walls and the journey from Arba Minch up to the mist swirling highland of their villages was dramatic and memorable. Our guide was a member of the Dorze community and he kindly showed us his home in one of the extraordinary Dorze thatched houses that are high, two-storeyed thatch constructions built to look like the elephants heads of distantly remembered reverence. Inside, the homes are large enough to take in not only extended family members but also the family livestock too. They are skilled weavers and the Dorze cotton products are revered across Ethiopia.</p>
<p>Nature</p>	<p>Ethiopia owes its rich biodiversity to the combination of a tropical location and an altitudinal span ranging from 4,533 metres above sea level to 116 metres below sea level. The country is known for its unusually high level of endemism i.e. plant and animal species found nowhere else in the world. Among vertebrates alone, at least 140 species are unique to Ethiopia, including more than 40 mammals and 18 birds.</p> <p>The varied flora embraces the world's most extensive tracts of Afroalpine moorland, along with a varied mix of forest, savannah, desert and cultivation.</p> <p>Ethiopia provides refuge to a typical Afro-tropical fauna, ranging from parrot and pelicans to lions and crocodiles, but it is most notable perhaps for endemic species such as the Ethiopian wolf, gelada baboon and Prince Ruspoli's turaco.</p> <p>Of the 280 mammal species recorded in Ethiopia, at least 40 are found nowhere else in the world. Most of these endemics are relatively inconspicuous shrews, rodents and bats, but the list also contains several larger and more striking species. Among these, the best known are the Ethiopian wolf (the world's rarest wild dog), mountain nyala (a massive spiral-horned antelope), Bale monkey (a bamboo-eater confined to the Harenna Forest), gelada (a grass-eating baboon with a flowing lion-like mane and heart-shaped red chest patch) and Walia ibex (the only goat indigenous to sub-Saharan Africa).</p> <p>Other mammals represented in Ethiopia include the acrobatic black-and-white colobus monkey, small numbers of elephant and buffalo, and a subspecies of lion noted for the males's unusually large black mane.</p> <p>Of the 860 bird species recorded in Ethiopia, a full 18 - including the spectacular Prince Ruspoli's Turaco, Stresemann's Bush Crow and melodious Abyssinian catbird - are national endemics and a similar number are near-endemics whose range only otherwise extends into</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Eritrea. The Simien Mountains are the best place in the world to see the mighty lammergeyer displaying its 2-metre wingspan.</p> <p>Reptiles recorded in Ethiopia range from the heavyweight Nile crocodile and impressive Nile monitor lizard to several tiny species chameleon. At least 16 reptile species are endemic to Ethiopia, along with 26 amphibian and 33 freshwater fish species.</p>
<p>Parks</p>	<p>There are 12 National Parks in Ethiopia and a number of protected Forest Reserves. In the Highlands, the two most important are the Simien Mountains and the Bale Mountains National Parks. There are also four National Parks in the Rift Valley, of which I spent time in the Nech Sar National Park described below.</p> <p>Nech Sar National Park</p> <p>The wildly beautiful and diverse landscapes of Nech Sar National Park include a dense swathe of groundwater forest bordering the town of Arba Minch, the twin lakes Chamo and Abaya, the spiky acacia scrub of the mountainous Bridge of God that divides them, and the wide open Nech Sar ('White Grass') Plains.</p> <p>A popular excursion is a boat trip to Lake Chamo's so-called crocodile market, a stretch of reed-lined sand flats populated by some truly gigantic crocodiles as well as a few pods of hippo and a wealth of aquatic birds. Monkeys are common in the groundwater forest, while the guided walks on the Nech Sar Plains offer a good chance of seeing Burchell's zebra, Grant's gazelle, Swayne's hartebeest, greater kudu and other large ungulates. Star attraction on the park's avian checklist of 275 species is the Nechisar nightjar, <i>Caprimulgus solala</i>, which many regard to be the world's rarest bird. This was first described in 1993 based on the discovery of a single dead bird's wing in Nech Sar a year earlier, and the live bird went unseen until 2009, when it was finally observed by an ornithological expedition to the park.</p>
<p>Mountains</p>	<p>Simien Mountains</p> <p>Ethiopia's premier trekking and walking destination, the 412 square kms Simien Mountains National Park was inscribed as a Natural World Heritage Site in 1979, whereupon UNESCO lauded it as "one of the world's most spectacular landscapes, with jagged mountain peaks deep valleys and sharp precipices dropping some 1,500m". In addition to the splendid scenery and hiking opportunities, the Afromontane meadows and moorlands of the upper Simiens also form one of Ethiopia's most important biodiversity hotspots, populated by an alluring wealth of endemic plants and animals including Walia ibex, gelada baboon and Ethiopian wolf.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



The bedrock of the Simien Mountains comprises a vast and ancient basaltic dome moulded into a series of jagged pinnacles and buttresses by glacial activity and precipitation. More than a dozen of its peaks top the 4,000m mark, including the 4,533m Ras Dejen, which is Ethiopia's tallest mountain.

The Afromontane vegetation of the Simien Mountains includes more than 1,200 plant species, of which three are endemic to the national park. Above 3,700m, the dominant vegetation type is open grassland punctuated by spectacular giant lobelias that stand up to 10m high. Giant heather trees and other ericaceous plants are the main vegetation type between the 3,000m and 3,700m contour.

Simien protects an alluring selection of endemic wildlife. It is the last remaining stronghold of the impressively horned Walia ibex, the only goat indigenous to sub-Saharan Africa. Large troops of gelada baboon are rendered unmistakable by the male's flowing lion-like mane and heart-shaped red chest patch. Gelada monkeys, the last surviving species of a once numerous genus of grazing primates, live only in the high mountain meadows of north-central Ethiopia. Though somewhat protected by the remoteness of their location, they're facing pressure from humans as hunters and farmers encroach. Only about 100,000 to 200,000 geladas remain. A population of around 50 Ethiopian wolves is the world's second largest after Bale Mountains National Park. Other large mammals include Anubis baboon, Hamadryas baboon, grivet monkey, Menelik's bushbuck, klipspringer, common jackal, spotted hyena and leopard.

Simien Mountains National Park is one of northern Ethiopia's key birding sites, with a checklist of 180 species that includes five Ethiopian endemics and 12 near-endemics. However, many would say the true avian star of the Simien is the magnificent lammergeyer, a cliff-loving vulture with a 2-metre wingspan and the only bird in the world with a specialised diet of bone marrow.

The best way to explore the Simien Mountains is on foot or mule back. Several overnight options are available. The 3-day trail connecting Sankaber, Gich, Imet Gogo and Ayna Meda is recommended to those whose main interest is endemic wildlife. For peak-baggers, the ascent to the summit of Ras Dejen could be undertaken as a 3-day hike from Chennek. For those with limited time, it is possible to drive east from Debark to Chennek along an all-weather road, and to exit the car for short walks.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>Visitors to the Simien Mountains must stop at the junction town of Debarq, site of the national park office and guides association, and a few hotels, restaurants, shops and banks. The park entrance gate is at Buyit Ras, 14km east of Debarq along a passable unpaved road. The upmarket Simien Lodge, 6km past Buyit Ras, is at an atmospheric place, lapped often by mountain mists; it has a bar and a restaurant. The closest hutted camp to Debarq and the park gate, Sankaber Camp stands at an altitude of 3,250m and is a reliable place to see the impressive lammergeyer soaring overhead.</p>
<p>Historical Sites</p>	<p>Ethiopia is one of the most devout countries in the world, boasting a unique Orthodox Christian denomination dating back to the 4th century AD, an Islamic tradition established during the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammed, and relicts of a Jewish culture that dates back to the reign of King Solomon.</p> <p>More than 300 rock-hewn churches are dotted around the country, some claimed to be more than 1,500 years old, and most still in use today. In terms of beauty and scope, none surpasses the 13th century complex of rock-hewn churches at Lalibela, which were originally conceived of as a kind of 'New Jerusalem' by King Lalibela, and remain active shrines to this day.</p> <p>Negash, the earliest Islamic settlement in Africa, is the burial site of a group of followers of the Prophet Mohammed who fled from Mecca to Ethiopia in 613 AD to escape persecution. A mosque still stands on the site of the 7th century original.</p> <p>The Biblical Ark of the Covenant, arguably the most holy of Old Testament artefacts, is believed to have first arrived in Ethiopia 3,000 years ago and is today preserved in a guarded temple in Aksum. The Ark is said to have been brought to Aksum by Emperor Menelik I, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, and the founder of the Solomonic dynasty that reigned over Ethiopia until as recently as 1975.</p> <p>This historic walled citadel of Harar, also known as the City of Saints, is the fourth-holiest city in the Islamic world, after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. An important repository of Islamic landmarks, it has a full 82 mosques and 438 Awaach (shrines of important Muslim scholars) crammed into 48 hectares - the largest such concentration in the world. The medieval island churches and monasteries of Lake Tana are known for their architecture, a glorified version of the typical Abyssinian tukuls, as well as their magnificent wall paintings and overflowing treasure houses.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>The abandoned synagogue at Woleka, near Gondar, evokes the story of the Beta Israel, a 'lost tribe' of Ethiopian Jews whose last 10,000-or-so adherents were airlifted to Israel during the 1980s. Set in the lowlands east of the Bale Mountains, the Dire Sheik Hussein Shrine and Sof Omar Cave are important pilgrimage sites that attract hundreds of thousands of domestic and international Muslim pilgrims annually.</p> <p>The Ethiopian countryside is dotted with ancient monasteries and churches that attract vast numbers of pilgrims annually. Among the most important such holy sites are Gishen Maryam, Debre Damo Monastery, and the Cathedral of Maryam TSION in Aksum.</p>
--	---

<p>OTHER ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Shopping</p>	<p>A lively culture of traditional hand-worked craftsmanship and a plethora of markets all over the country make Ethiopia a wonderful destination for connoisseurs of high quality traditional hand woven cloths and other handicrafts.</p> <p>Ethiopia is renowned for its traditional crosses, which are usually made from wood, silver or other metals. Small crosses are worn as necklaces by individual Orthodox Christians, while larger ones are used for ceremonial purposes. Hundreds of designs are available, with different styles being associated with the main northern centres of Aksum, Lalibela or Gondar.</p> <p>Locally woven white or off-white cotton cloths are typical of highland Ethiopia. The shama is the ubiquitous cloth of the male, wrapped around the heads and shoulders on cold mornings, while women use a more elaborate version with a colourful border to make dresses. The country's finest weavers are the Dorze, who live in the highlands above Arba Minch, but their produce can also be bought at Addis Ababa's Shiro Meda market.</p> <p>Hand woven items such as scarves, shawls, table clothes and cotton towels designed for the export market can also be bought directly from some specialised workshops in Addis Ababa. Ethiopia is also recognised for its leather products and it is possible to find a range of good quality leather jackets and bags.</p> <p>For generations, Ethiopians have woven a wide variety of baskets and other containers for domestic use. Harar is said to be the home of the best basket makers, and their naturally-coloured products, often very old, take pride of place on the walls of the old town's Arabic-style</p>
---	---

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>houses. Good baskets are also produced in Aksum.</p> <p>A very popular and utterly unique souvenir, bought easily in the Bahir Dar's market, is the leather 'picnic basket', used by shepherds to carry injera, known as an agelgil.</p> <p>Jimma, in the forested western highlands, is known for its wooden stools. A standard Jimma stool, made out of a single block of wood, is not too expensive, but those with straight or curved backs command a premium.</p> <p>Dry gourds or calabashes, ornamented with leather straps for easier carrying, are used as containers for liquids and dry goods by the people of the south and west. They are sometimes decorated with basketwork or cowrie shells, or incised with geometrical patterns.</p> <p>Terracotta coffee pots are a popular purchase, and readily available everywhere in the country.</p> <p>Do bear in mind that it is illegal to buy and export genuinely old religious manuscripts, icons and church paintings and other artwork without a permit.</p>
Markets	Markets and craft stalls in Addis Ababa and elsewhere provide a great opportunity to go shopping for high quality crosses, handwoven fabrics and other uniquely Ethiopian handicrafts.
Nightlife	Evenings in Addis Ababa can be as lively as you wish, from nightclubs and raucous bars, to excellent restaurants and dance clubs. I enjoyed an evening at Yod Abyssinia which presents authentic Ethiopian dance and music accompanied by a fine buffet table of local food.

CUISINE	The dietary traditions of Ethiopia's varied regions and cultures have created a unique cuisine. The essential components include berbere, a spicy, red pepper paste; niter kibbeh, a spice-infused clarified butter; and injera, a flat, moist sourdough bread with a tangy flavor and airy texture. Food is generally eaten with the hand from a communal plate.
Food	Ethiopia has a unique cuisine, one that will appeal particularly to vegans and those with a taste for spice, but tourist-orientated hotels also serve a varied selection of international dishes catering to less adventurous palates.
	The main Ethiopia staple is injera , a type of foam-textured pancake that comes in three different coloured varieties: white, brown and red. The dough for injera is fermented for three days before it is cooked, hence the texture and a slightly sour taste.

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>The best injera is made with tef, a nutritious fibre-rich gluten-free germ that comprises 15% protein, and contains many times more calcium and iron than other grains. Unique to Ethiopia, tef is also the only grain to contain symbiotic yeast, which means that no other yeast needs to be added to prepare injera.</p> <p>A variety of different stew-like sauces are eaten with injera. These include tibs (spicy fried meat mixed with onions and peppers), shiro (spicy puréed chickpeas) and kai wot (a hot stew usually made with fish, beef, goat or chicken meat).</p> <p>It is customary to eat with your hands in Ethiopia, and for a party of diners to eat from the same plate, tearing off pieces of injera and using them to scoop up the accompaniment.</p> <p>Vegans are well catered for in Ethiopia, since the Orthodox Church recognises around 200 fasting days, when it is forbidden to eat any food containing animal products. Wednesday and Friday are always fasting days, as are the 40 days of Ethiopian Lent (most of March and April) and various other religious holidays. A common dish on fasting days is a kind of vegetable buffet called atkilt bayinetu, which comprises dollops of several vegan dishes placed on a plate of injera.</p> <p>Bread - known locally as dabo - can usually be served in place of injera. Another popular staple, especially in the south, is enset (false banana). Most restaurants catering to tourists will also serve a selection of international dishes, known locally as 'faranji food'.</p>
<p>Drink</p>	<p>Popular drinks include locally brewed beer called tella and a kind of honey wine known as tej. Several varieties of chilled lager-type bottled beer are also available, while red and white Rift Valley Wine is produced by the French-owned Castel Winery in Ziway. Locally bottled Ambo sparkling mineral water is available almost everywhere, along with several brands of still water.</p> <p>Coffee</p> <p>The forests that swathe Ethiopia's western highlands are the original home of coffee, which still grows profusely in the understory along with a wealth of other wildlife and sustainable forest products.</p> <p>The 7,600 square km Kafa Biosphere Reserve is the largest and most accessible of three such UNESCO-recognised reserves that protect Ethiopia's western highlands. It is also an important repository of coffee genetic diversity, since many different varieties of bean still grow wild in the region.</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



	<p>The coffee-yielding montane rainforests of western Ethiopia also harbour numerous other sustainable forest products, including forest cardamom, forest pepper and honey.</p> <p>The new Bonga International Coffee Museum is currently under construction in Bonga, a pleasant forest-fringed town set in the heart of the Kafa Biosphere Reserve.</p> <p>The tourist office in Bonga now offers guided day and overnight walks to several sites associated with the biosphere reserve. These include a stunning natural rock formation known as God's Bridge, and the so-called Mother Coffee Tree, which is the world's oldest living plant of its type.</p> <p>Wildlife likely to be seen in the coffee forests of the west includes the black-and-white colobus monkey, along with a wonderful diversity of highland forest and grassland birds including 11 species endemic to Ethiopia.</p> <p>Other important coffee-producing regions include Harar, Jimma, Yirga Chafe and the Lake Tana Basin. Wild or feral coffee plants are often to be seen in the understory of the small forest patches maintained by many rural churches and monasteries throughout Ethiopia. The Bebeke and Tepi Coffee Estates, respectively the largest and second-largest in the country, are good places to learn about coffee production, and to ramble through dense montane forests alive with birdlife. Both also operate simple but comfortable guesthouses.</p>
Restaurants	<p>Addis Ababa has several wonderful cultural restaurants where a wide range of Ethiopian specialities is served in traditional tukul-style buildings, accompanied by colourful traditional music and dance. I enjoyed the food and the show at Yod Abyssinia in Addis Ababa, which is conveniently situated close to the airport for those with a late night flight home to catch. www.yodethiopia.com</p>
FOR MORE INFO	<p>Websites: http://www.ethiopia.travel/ http://ethiopianairlines.ca/ Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/EthiopiaLandOfOrigins https://www.facebook.com/EthiopianAirlinesCanada</p>
CURRENT DEALS	<p>Ethiopian Airlines often has special deals on their flight from Toronto to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. See their website for the latest information: http://ethiopianairlines.ca/</p>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.



CHRIS' PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

My journey around Ethiopia in May and June of 2017 took me from the capital city of Addis Ababa north to Bahir Dar and Lake Tana and then by road to medieval Gondar. North again to the Simien Mountains and Axum, then south east to Lalibela. From the Highlands south to Arba Minch in the Rift Valley and to the tribal peoples of the Dorze, Kansa and Hamar Peoples and back to Addis. You can hear all about it in the Travel Show podcast on iTunes and see some of my photos on the Travel Show Pinterest board here: <https://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/ethiopia/>

Chris Robinson Associates Inc does not warrant the quality, accuracy or completeness of any claims, statements or information contained within this document. This document was created at the time of broadcast and may not be current.