Ethiopia: Cradle of Civilization

15 days from $6,197 total price from Boston, New York ($5,595 air & land inclusive plus $602 airline taxes and fees)

Travel with us to a land apart, where man first walked the earth, where age-old cultures still resonate, and where a profound spirituality colors everyday life. From ancient rock-hewn churches and legendary sites to breathtaking landscapes and endemic wildlife, Ethiopia offers our small group a journey befitting of its noble – and epic – history.

Day 1: Depart U.S. for Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Day 2: Arrive Addis Ababa We arrive in the Ethiopian capital (“Addis”) and transfer to our hotel. As guests’ arrival times may vary, we have no scheduled activities or meals planned for today.

Day 3: Addis Ababa This morning we meet our fellow travelers at a briefing about the journey ahead then set out to explore this exciting, diverse capital. Tour highlights include the National Museum, where we see casts of the 3.2-million-year-old fossilized hominid Lucy, one of man’s earliest ancestors. We also visit Holy Trinity Cathedral, a national landmark and resting place of Emperor Haile Selassie, his wife, and other notables. Tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner at our hotel. B, L, D

Day 4: Addis Ababa/Bahir Dar Early this morning, we transfer to the airport for the flight to Bahir Dar on the shores of Lake Tana, origin of the Blue Nile. Upon arrival, we visit the Negede people to watch them craft the small papyrus vessels used on the lake for centuries. We travel the lake ourselves this afternoon en route to the Zege Peninsula, known for its round grass-roofed churches with magnificent murals. We see the Azoa Maria and Ura Kidane churches, both typical examples of ancient Ethiopian orthodox architecture, then visit the 14th-century Ura Kidane Mehret, a monastery deep in the forest, known for its fine frescoes, manuscripts, and golden ecclesiastical objects. Along the way, we may see some of the monkeys and birdlife that call the forest home. B, L, D

Day 5: Bahir Dar We depart for the Blue Nile Falls, one of Ethiopia’s most popular sights. We hike up to the falls, where we’re rewarded with beautiful views of the fabled cataract that measures more than 1,300 feet wide and 150 feet high. Then we visit the city’s handcraft market. The rest of the day is at leisure to relax or explore as we wish. B, D

Day 6: Bahir Dar/Gondar We travel north by coach today to Gondar, the former royal capital known especially for its evocative castle complex. Upon arrival, we have lunch then explore the 17th-century enclosure of castles, palaces, and stables of Fasil Ghebbi, now a UNESCO site. We also tour the Debre Berhan Selassie Church, fancifully decorated in murals whose angels’ faces have become motifs of Ethiopian art and design. B, L, D

Day 7: Gondar/Simien Mountains National Park A stunning landscape of saw-toothed peaks and canyon-like gorges, sharp precipices and rugged...
escarpments awaits as we arrive midday at our lodge in this exotic park. We spend the afternoon exploring the park; later, we join in a discussion on the social behaviors of the gelada baboon found here, the last survivors of an ancient species. B,L,D

Day 8: Simien Mountains National Park  We spend a full day on safari in this incredible natural setting, a UNESCO site and home to rare and endemic wildlife. As we explore, we may encounter the klip-springer and common jackal, as well as the friendly gelada baboons. We drive up to Sankaber (altitude 10,564 ft.), where we’re rewarded with views of the breathtaking landscape of gorges and valleys B,L,D

Day 9: Simien Mountains/Axum  This morning we depart by coach for Axum (approx. 7 hours), stopping en route for lunch and arriving late afternoon. We dine tonight at our hotel in this historic capital. B,L,D

Day 10: Axum  A major trading power from about 400 BCE to the 10th century, the Kingdom of Axum brought Christianity to Ethiopia. Today’s Axum, the kingdom’s former capital and Ethiopia’s holiest city, boasts a host of UNESCO archaeological sites, many of which we see on our full-day tour. We explore Stelae Park, site of giant stelae and obelisks which proclaimed the kingdom’s might, including the Obelisk of Axum, the largest single piece of stone erected anywhere on earth. We also see several royal tombs, and visit St. Mary of Zion Church, purported site of the Ark of the Covenant. B,L,D

Day 11: Axum/Lalibela  We fly today to Lalibela, renowned for its 11 monolithic rock churches dating from the 7th to 13th centuries, and as a revered center of Ethiopian Christianity. We see these UNESCO sites for ourselves as we visit several churches, some carved into the rock and others freestanding. Highlights include Bet Medhane Alem, which resembles a Greek temple; Bet Emanuel, with its elaborate exterior; and elegant Bet Giyorgis. B,L,D

Day 12: Lalibela  We get an intimate look at Ethiopian culture today, as we travel about 1½ hours outside the city to the remarkable cave church of Yemrehanna Kristos, set in a cavern and decorated with elaborate carvings and murals. Then we attend a traditional coffee ceremony, a time-honored ritual that reflects traditional hospitality. The country’s major export, Ethiopian coffee compares to the best in the world, and holds a position of prominence in local life. B,L,D

Day 13: Lalibela/Addis Ababa  We return to Addis Ababa by air today, arriving at our hotel midday. The remainder of the day is at leisure before we gather to celebrate our Ethiopia adventure at tonight’s farewell dinner. B,D

Day 14: Addis Ababa/Depart for U.S.  We depart for the airport and our return flights to the U.S. B

Day 15: Arrive U.S.  We arrive in the U.S. and connect to the airport and our return flights to the U.S. A

Our Tour Price Includes

- 5 nights’ accommodations: 1 night in Arba Minch at Haile Resort (Sup. First Class); 2 nights in Turmi at Paradise Lodge (First Class); 1 night in Jinka at Eco-Omo Lodge (First Class); 1 night (plus day room) in Addis Ababa at Sheraton Addis (Deluxe)
- 14 meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 5 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing, including visit with Dorze people; cruise on Lake Chamo; Konso UNESCO site; Magno National Park; excursion to Mursi village; visit with southern tribespeople in Omo Valley UNESCO site
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- Private van transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Airport transfers
- Gratuities for dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers

Please note that guests on the extension will leave Addis Ababa on Day 14.

Our Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip air transportation from listed cities; all flights within itinerary
- 12 nights’ accommodations in Deluxe, Superior First Class, and First Class hotels and lodges
- 32 meals: 12 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 11 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing as described, including all park entrance fees
- Mineral water while on tour
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- Private coach bus transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Gratuities for hotel and lodge staff, including dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers
- $100 frequent traveler credit towards your next UCLA/Odysseys Unlimited tour ($200 after 3 tours; $300 after 10 tours)

Please consult your personal physician if you have concerns.

For reservations, call UCLA Alumni Travel at 310-206-0613 or email travel@alumni.ucla.edu
Tour Prices
Tour prices quoted are guaranteed through December 31, 2021, and include accommodations based on double occupancy; airfare from your departure city; airline taxes, surcharges, and fees, and port charges and cruise line fees (where applicable), which are subject to change until final payment has been made; internal air, rail, and motorcoach transportation; meals, sightseeing, and transfers as described; hotel taxes; entrance fees for included sightseeing; the services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director; services of a UCLA Lecturer or Host with a minimum of 15 travelers; luggage handling for one bag per person; and all gratuities as described below. Please note that the cost of air upgrades is subject to change.

Gratuities
Tour prices include all gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers on base tours and on optional extensions when accompanied by an Odysseys Unlimited representative. Please note that gratuities for the Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and shipboard personnel (if a cruise is included in your tour) are not included. These tips are optional and should be extended on a voluntary basis. Gratuities are not included on “On Your Own” optional extensions.

Not Included in Your Tour Price
Airfare from your hometown to your departure city; costs of passports and visas; personal expenses such as beverages, laundry, room service, and meals not specified; immunizations and inoculations; communications charges; airport transfers when purchasing a land-only package; gratuities to your Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and shipboard personnel (if a cruise is included in your tour), which are at your discretion (suggested gratuities: $10-$15 per guest, per day); and a Travel Protection Plan. Additional baggage fees levied directly by the airline(s) may apply and are subject to change at any time. You should confirm directly with your airline(s) prior to departure.

Registration and Payment
A deposit of $500 per person confirms your reservation and is fully refundable up to 95 days prior to departure. Full payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure and may be made by personal check or credit card. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. reserves the right to cancel any reservations that are not paid in full at any time after final payment is due. If you make your reservation after the final payment date, payment in full will be required upon reservation.

Cancellations and Refunds
If you must cancel your tour, the effective date of cancellation will be upon our receipt of your written notification. Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following per person charges:
For all tours (except as noted)

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For Ethiopia: Cradle of Civilization, Machu Picchu to the Galapagos, Journey through Vietnam, Egypt & the Eternal Nile, Patagonian Frontiers

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Please note that we will not refund the cost of any unused portion of your tour package, should you or your travel companion cancel your participation during the tour. If because of low participation Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. cancels your tour, you will receive a complete refund of all payments you have made to us.

Pre-Departure

After reserving your tour, you will receive pre-departure mailings that include a detailed itinerary, visa requirements, and reading list. We will send your final tour documents, including airline itineraries (with e-ticket numbers) two to three weeks before departure.

Single Travelers

We welcome single travelers, and offer a limited number of single accommodations on each tour. Because hotel and cruise rates are priced by the room or cabin, the per person cost for accommodations occupied by one person is higher than that shared by two people. We will endeavor to keep single supplements at a reasonable cost. Please note that single rooms in many foreign hotels may be smaller than those to which you are accustomed.

Changes to Your Reservation

We will not charge a fee for any changes made to your reservation outside of 95 days before departure. From 94 to 30 days before departure, if you make any changes to your reservation, a $100 per person administrative fee will apply, in addition to any fees or penalties imposed by airlines, hotels, or other third parties. Changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. If your reservation changes from double occupancy to single occupancy for any reason or at any time, you will be charged the single supplement.

Please note that no changes to your reservation can be made within 30 days of departure.

Required Information

Upon reservation, we will need to obtain from you the following, in accordance with the Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) Secure Flight program (for details, please visit www.tsa.gov), as well as for our travel partners: for international tours – your full name as it appears on your passport, date of birth, and gender; for domestic tours – your full name as it appears on your passport, date of birth, and gender. In addition, airlines may require that we provide them with your contact information prior to departure. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, or if you use a different passport (international tours) or other form of government-issued photo identification (domestic tours) than originally cited, you will be responsible for charges associated with the ticket’s reissue.

Travel Documents

A passport valid for at least six months after the completion of your tour is required for U.S. citizens on all international tours in this catalog. If your tour requires a visa(s), we strongly recommend that you have at least six blank visa pages available; for tours not requiring a visa(s), we recommend that your passport have at least three blank visa pages. We will send you specific visa and entry requirements after you make a reservation. You are responsible for obtaining these documents. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact your embassy or consulate to ensure you obtain the proper documentation.

Smoking

For the convenience of the majority of our travelers, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. has a No Smoking policy (including e-cigarettes and
vaping) on all tour buses. We will arrange sufficient rest stops so those who wish to smoke may do so.

**Health and Medical Issues**

We welcome all travelers, but request that you be in good health to participate in an Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. tour. All of our tours involve a reasonable amount of walking (typically two to three miles per day), often uphill or on uneven or cobblestone streets. You must be able to get on and off motorcoaches and boats on your own. We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance if you require the use of a wheelchair or have other personal needs; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that a number of our itineraries, for reasons beyond our control, do not accommodate wheelchairs. Please call or e-mail us to inquire and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and the UCLA Alumni Association reserve the right to remove anyone whose physical condition or behavior, in our opinion, compromises the operation of the tour or detracts from the enjoyment or safety of the other tour members. In that event, the UCLA Alumni Association and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour. While we do our best to accommodate food allergy concerns, we cannot guarantee zero cross-contamination.

**Air Transportation**

Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. includes in its tour price round trip economy air from designated gateway cities as shown and contracts with those airlines they feel provide the level of service, routings, and value necessary for your entire trip. While another airline may offer more direct service, it may be at a price unavailable at the lower group rates that enable us to offer you the best possible travel value. You will receive your preliminary air schedule approximately 2½ months prior to departure. Please note that seat assignment on your flight is usually done at airport check-in. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. is unable to guarantee any seat assignments. Due to the nature of tour operator tickets, other restrictions apply, including, but not limited to, frequent flyer mileage accrual, stopovers, alternate travel dates, upgrades, and airline taxes and fees. If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, Land Only is available on most tours. Since international and domestic air schedules are subject to change at any time, we recommend that if you choose to make your own airline reservations, you do not purchase non-refundable tickets or those with high penalties for changes. In addition, we recommend that you not purchase your tickets until final payment is due. If you choose to make your own air arrangements, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and the UCLA Alumni Association will incur no liability for any loss resulting from cancellation of this tour or changes therein. In any event, neither Odysseys’s Unlimited, Inc., nor the UCLA Alumni Association is responsible for losses, direct or indirect, or missed components of a trip which result from air delays, cancellations, rerouting or any other air-related problem.

**Responsibility**

The liability of the UCLA Alumni Association, as sponsor, and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., as tour operator, is strictly limited. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. purchases transportation, hotel accommodations, and restaurant and other services from independent suppliers not under its control. It serves only as an agent for these suppliers in securing tour arrangements, and therefore will not accept responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, or of their employees, agents, servants, or representatives. The UCLA Alumni Association and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. are not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, or delay that may be caused by events not within its control, including, without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party. All coupons, receipts, and tickets issued are subject to the terms and conditions specified by the air carriers, cruise line, and other independent suppliers. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. will make every effort to operate our tours as planned, but we reserve the right to make itinerary changes as necessary. If unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality. Cruise itineraries may change due to factors such as government regulations, water levels, or weather conditions.
Enclosed is my/our deposit for $______($500 per person) for ____ person(s) on the tour listed below. I/We understand the final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, VISA, or by personal check. Please make check payable to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., and send, along with completed reservation form, to: UCLA Alumni Association, Attn: Alumni Travel, James West Alumni Center, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1397. Or call UCLA Alumni Travel at 310-206-0613; e-mail: travel@alumni.ucla.edu.

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- I am currently a sustaining donor.
- I have enclosed a check made payable to the UCLA Foundation for:
  - $100
  - $500
  - $1,000

*Sustaining donors include Gold, Life and Blue Members as well as anyone that has made a qualifying donation of $100 or more to the UCLA Alumni Association Support Fund in the past year.