

5 Amazing Sights in Ethiopia



With direct flights from Hong Kong and Singapore, Ethiopia in Northeast Africa is fast becoming a must-visit for those looking for incredible culture, architecture, scenery and magic. Here, **Lightfoot Travel** reveal some best bits.

#1

Monasteries and Waterfalls in Bahir Dar

Bahir Dar is the lakeside capital of the Amhara region. Here you can explore the colourful sites of Lake Tana (the largest lake in Ethiopia), including the Blue Nile Falls (known as Tis Isat – or “Smoke of Fire” – due to its continuous spray) and 14th-century monasteries that dot the islands on the lake. Ura Kidhane Mihret is reputed to be one of the most beautiful of these, and its elaborate and colourful murals make for spectacular viewing.



Simien Mountains National Park

This UNESCO World Heritage-listed site is one of Africa’s most beautiful ranges, full of dramatic cliffs, rocky escarpments and sweeping views. Kick back and quietly spy on groups of gelada monkeys playing, or keep an eye on the magnificent walia ibex, an endangered species found only in the northern mountains of Ethiopia.

#2



#3

Lalibela, the “Eighth Wonder of the World”

Lalibela, with its majestic churches, was among the first sites in the world to receive the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage designation. The almost-pristine condition and incredible orientation of the churches, literally carved out of the ground, is perhaps why they’ve been granted the unofficial world-wonder title. Set a few hours aside and marvel at the eleven medieval structures that some locals believe were constructed by labourers during the day, and by angels at night.

#4

Turmi and the Omo River Valley

Get a fascinating culture fix as you meet local tribes such as the lip-stretching Mursi, the bull-jumping inhabitants of Hamer Village, and the body-painting Karo tribe, who all appear untouched by 21st-century life. There are over 50 tribes to discover, all with their own traditions, rituals and dress that are truly captivating.



#5



Bale Mountain National Park

Bale Mountain National Park is home to a staggering 60 percent of Ethiopia’s wolves, the world’s rarest carnivore. But don’t worry, you can keep a safe distance and encounter plenty of other wildlife, including 78 species of mammals (like the nyala, Starck’s hare and Bale monkey), 310 species of birds (including the yellow-fronted parrot and Abyssinian longclaw), and many reptiles and amphibians. After you’ve been wowed by the animals? Hiking here is an absolute must, with one essential stop-off being the beautiful Bale Mountain Lodge, nestled deep within the park. *a*

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