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ADVENTURE TOURS

Lower Omo River Valley Tour - 7 Days Itinerary

Day 1

Fly one hour with Ethiopian Airlines from Addis Ababa to Jinka in the far south of Ethiopia to a new airport with asphalt runway on a modern Bombardier Q400 twin prop aircraft. Arrival time is about 2 pm.

Lunch in Jinka in a local restaurant.

Visit the colourful Jinka market and the Ethnographic Museum for an introduction to the history and cultures of the region.

Overnight in the recently built Nasa Hotel.

Day 2

Drive through hill country and across bushy flats through Mago National Park to visit a Mursi tribal village. This is where the women are known for their famous clay lip plates.

Lunch back in Jinka.

Drive to Turmi town which will be our base to visit tribes in the Lower Omo River Valley.

Overnight in Turmi at Buska Lodge.

Total driving today is 250 km. About 210 km is on mostly good gravel road and 42 km is on asphalt.

Day 3

In the morning, drive from Turmi 60 km to a Kara tribal village on the banks of the Omo River. Experience a cultural coffee ceremony and be offered a traditional coffee brewed from coffee bean husks. Be welcomed into a traditional home. Take lots of photos as per transparent financial arrangements made through our guide with the community.

Back to Turmi for lunch.

In the afternoon, visit the Hamar market and later spend time in a Hamar tribal village and meet a local family in their home.

Overnight in Turmi at Buska Lodge.

Day 4

In the morning drive 70 km from Turmi to Omorate town to visit a Dassanech tribal community. A highlight today is being paddled across the Omo River in a traditional dugout canoe and walking 2 km across the dry flats of the river flood plain to a thorn-bush walled village. Away from the tree lined river's edge, the landscape is bare like a desert. This is the dry season so there is no flood risk.

This remote spot is a wonderful place to buy authentic traditional gifts at good prices but please don't bargain too hard. The prices here are much better than in Addis Ababa.

Back to Turmi for lunch.

In the afternoon, hope for news of a Hamar tribal Bull-Jumping male initiation ceremony. These are authentic and not staged for tourists. Our guides stay in touch with their excellent network of community contacts to hear of any events in the area. The hosts are happy as they receive our courtesy payment through our guide. Please note, this cost is reasonable at around (Ethiopian Birr) ETB 600 per person (~US\$ 22). It is extra to clients because seeing this event is not a certainty, so is not included in the tour price.

Overnight in Turmi at Buska Lodge.

Day 5

In the morning, drive about 30 km to Dimeka and visit the largest market in the Hamar tribal area.

Lunch in Dimeka.

In the afternoon, drive 210 km through scenic mountains and valleys to Konso community which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site village in hill country. Konso is an old, and never colonised, African treasure.

Overnight in Konso at Kanta Lodge.

Day 6

In the morning visit Konso village and the Chief's traditional compound. See the ancient fortifications, terraced agriculture, the carved Waka sculptures erected in memory of past chiefs and war heroes, walk on sacred ground to see Waka burial sculptures for chiefs. Visit Konso museum to gain further insights into this defended hill-top culture.

Drive 160 km on good road to reach Arba Minch town for lunch. This well watered area is a fruit bowl. The local mango smoothies are incredible. Flavoursome freshwater fish dishes ensure delicious alfresco dining. We will have lunch in the palm shaded courtyard of a hotel with a popular restaurant. Really tasty vegan and vegetarian options are always available given Ethiopia's many Christian and Muslim holy days with ancient, vegan dietary rules. Ethiopia's uncolonised, indigenous cuisine is amongst the finest in Africa. This is evidenced by Ethiopian restaurants being in many western countries including Auckland, New Zealand.

In the afternoon, drive to Dorze village to visit people of the Dorze tribe. Their traditional houses resemble giant, domed bee hives. The house on the left is much older than the other. Find out how you can tell.

See how the false banana plant is harvested and processed and sample some local honey. Check out the distinctive designs of the colourful fabrics at the local weaving co-op.

Overnight in Arba Minch at Paradise Lodge.

Day 7

In the morning enjoy a boat ride on Lake Chamo and get up close to some very large crocodiles, hippos and water birds.

Lunch in Arba Minch.

In the afternoon, fly Ethiopian Airlines back to Addis Ababa. Arrival in Addis Ababa marks the end of this tour. We are happy to suggest accommodation to suit every budget level.

Contact us today to join a travel group with
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