

ADDIS ABABA

Welcome to Ethiopia

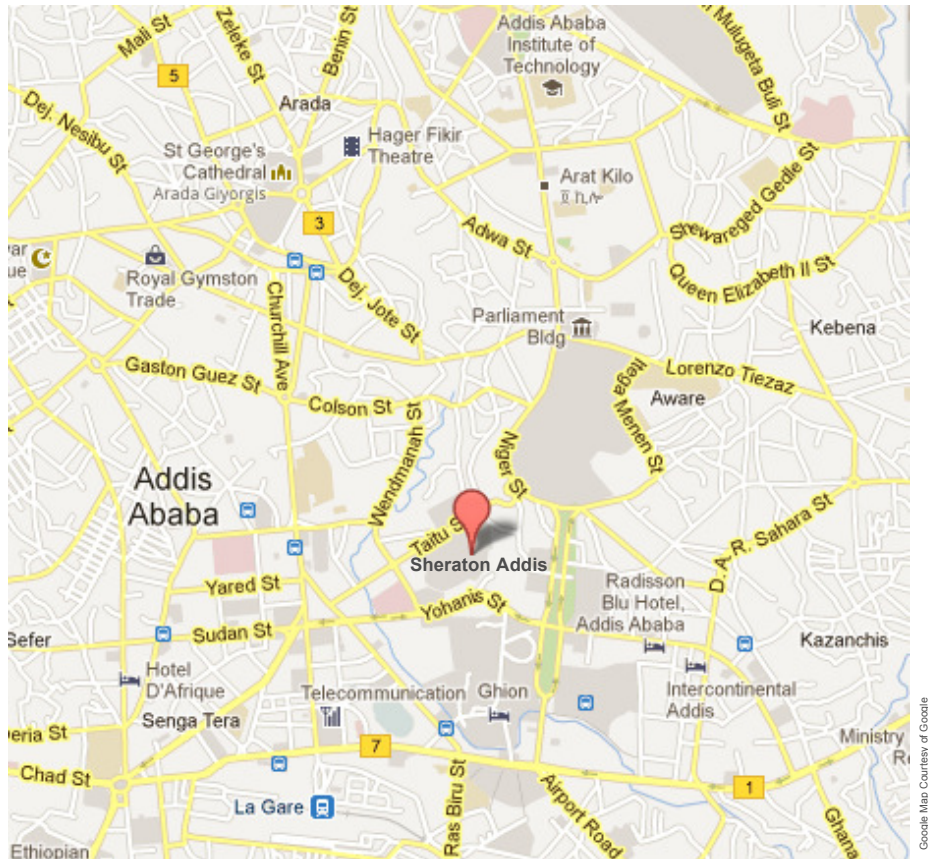


Ethiopia's capital city Addis Ababa is a culturally rich and diverse city, known for its religious and historical customs and traditions. About 125 churches exist in the city, representing Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant faiths.

Founded by Emperor Menelik in 1887, Addis Ababa is third-highest capital city in the world, as it rises from the foot of Mount Entoto to more than 3,000 meters in the mountains to the north. As a result, temperatures are generally moderate and range, on average, from 58 to 72 degrees F in April and May.

The metropolis is a hub of economic, social and political activity of Ethiopia, as well as all of Africa. Growth has evolved organically, so you can find modern buildings and villas, as well as traditional wattle and daub homes all within the city. To best navigate the city, use landmarks. Few streets have names, and when they do, they may not be named correctly on maps.

Cash is more widely used than credit cards. There is a Dashen Bank located in the Sheraton Addis. About 1,857 Ethiopian Birr equal \$1 USD.



Things To Do

1. Ethnological Museum (Algeria Street Piazza)

M-F 8am-5pm, Sat-Sun 9am-5pm

+251-0118-50-0625

www.ethiomuseums.org

Image Source: Yy via Flickr/Creative Commons



Located on the grounds of Addis Ababa University, the museum is located in Ethiopia's last emperor, Haile Selassie's, former palace. Exhibits depict the history and culture of Ethiopia, and provide information about the lifestyles of various ethnic groups. Outfits, instruments, tools and other artifacts accompany each ethnic exhibit.

3. National Museum of Ethiopia (Between Amist Kilo Avenue and Ababa Graduate School in front of Blue Top Restaurant)

8:30am-5:30pm

PH: +251-11-111-9131 ext. 7150

www.ethiomuseums.org

Image Source: Myrland via Flickr/Creative Commons



The National Museum's exhibits span several centuries, with archaeological relics, artifacts and art from pre-historic, ancient and modern periods. The most famous exhibit is "Lucy," a 107-centimeter-tall hominid skeleton said to be 3.5 million years old. She is usually located in the basement, but at this time Lucy is on temporary loan to the United States. A replica is present.

2. Mercato Open Air Market (Addis Ketema Area)

Closed on Sundays

Image Source: Jannet via Flickr/Creative Commons



The mercato (Italian for market), dubs itself the largest outdoor market in the world, spanning 114 hectares, 7,100 businesses and about 2,500 retail shops. Although no longer "open air," it is a vibrant place where you can find tourist souvenirs, fabric, metal goods, spices, coffee and more. Bargaining is the norm. It's helpful to pre-arrange a guide to help navigate the market and secure better prices.

However, avoid on-the-spot "brokers" who will try to steer you toward certain stores in exchange for a kick-back from the merchant.

4. Bole Medhane Alem Cathedral (Near the Bole International Airport on Cameroon and Djibuti Streets)

Image Source: Leand Paul via Flickr/Creative Commons



This Ethiopian Orthodox cathedral, whose name means "Savior of the World," is the second-largest church on the continent and was built in 2005. Today, some 127 churches exist in Addis Ababa. Of those, 108 belong to Orthodox, nine to Catholic and 10 to Protestant Christian faiths.

Things To Do (continued)

- 5. 'Red Terror' Martyrs Memorial Museum (Bole Road near Maskal Square)**
M-Sun 8am-6pm
PH: +251-11-515-6197
www.rtmmm.org



RTMMM evokes emotions similar to what you might find at Washington's Holocaust Memorial Museum. Between 1977 and 1978, Mengistu Haile Mariam declared war on his enemies and his Derg committed a campaign of killing. The museum says 500,000 people were killed during the "Red Terror," including more than 1,000 children between ages 11 and 13. According to museum staff – former Derg victims – 725 mass graves were found containing 4,855 bodies.

- 6. St. George's Cathedral (North end of Churchill Road)**
8-9am and 12-2pm daily



Built in 1896 to commemorate Ethiopia's victory over the Italians, the octagonal church is where Empress Zewditu and Emperor Haile Selassie were crowned. The interior is decorated with huge paintings and mosaics. Ceremonial clothes and ancient manuscripts are on display. The cathedral also houses the work of Afewerk Tekle, the Ethiopian artist responsible for the stained glass in Africa Hall. The top of the tower provides a great city view.

- 7. Holy Trinity Cathedral (Off Niger Street by the Parliament)**
M-F 7am-6pm, Sat-Sun 9am-6pm
+251-11-156-4619



Holy Trinity Cathedral is the resting place of Emperor Haille Selassie, who is located with his wife in the back of the building behind a gate. At the church, you will find statues lining walls and filling the surrounding gardens.

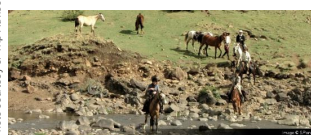
Sights Outside Addis Ababa

- 8. Entoto Hills**



On a clear day, Entoto Hill, the highest peak in Addis Ababa, offers splendid city views. There you will find the first churches of Addis Ababa (called Kiddus Raguel and St. Mary), Menelik II's first palace and Entoto National Park. Walking on the mountain provides views of rural life, forests and farmland.

- 9. Equus Ethiopia**
PH: +251-91-136-8659
www.equus-ethiopia.com



Twenty-five minutes outside Addis Ababa, this horseback riding company offers unique access to Ethiopia's culture with trail rides, treks and camping. Half-day or full-day trips, longer treks with overnight camping, or rides catered to your schedule can be arranged. As you traverse the countryside, breathe in the scent of eucalyptus forests and listen for baboons in the background. Guides are said to speak good English.

- 10. Adadi Mariam**



Adadi Mariam rock-hewn church is approximately 90 kilometers south of Addis Ababa. The foundation is estimated to date back to the 13th century. The church is still frequented today by local Ethiopian Orthodox members. The church has been cut from the rock, which was excavated, and cells have been cut to create meditation rooms.

- 11. Tiya Stelae Prehistoric Site (Soddo)**



Tiya, a UNESCO site, is among the most important of the roughly 160 archaeological sites discovered in the Soddo region, south of Addis Ababa. The site contains 36 monuments, including 32 carved stelae covered with symbols.

They are the remains of ancient Ethiopian cultures whose age has not yet been determined.

- 12. Rock-Hewn Churches (Lalibela)**



Some 645 km from Addis Ababa is another UNESCO site, where 11 medieval monolithic churches were carved out of rock. The buildings are attributed to King Lalibela, who set out to construct a "New Jerusalem" in the 12th century after Muslim conquests halted Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The churches were chiseled out from the living rock, forming doors, windows, roofs, etc.

Safety

The U.S. State Department strongly advises U.S. citizens to "review their personal safety and security posture in Addis Ababa, especially when frequenting prominent public places and landmarks." Pick-pocketing and other petty crimes are common. Purse snatchings and harassment by gangs of youths in the Bole area have occurred during the day and night. Travelers are advised to exercise caution in crowded areas, especially in the large, open-air Mercato market. Limit the amount of cash you carry, and leave valuables such as passports, jewelry and airlines tickets in a hotel safe or other secure place.

Do not buy counterfeit and pirated goods, as they are illegal in the United States, as well as prohibited by local law. Additionally, ivory trade is banned in Ethiopia, so even if ivory jewelry has been purchased elsewhere, it may be confiscated and travelers may face a fine.

Tourists should be cautious on roads outside Addis Ababa. Travel should be limited to daylight hours and in convoys, when possible. Be aware that some motorists signaling a mechanical problem or loose tire may actually be a trick used by thieves to get vehicles to stop.

While Ethiopia (including centrally located Addis Ababa) is generally stable, the State Department suggests taking precautions in the North (in red on map) and East (in blue). Domestic insurgent groups, extremists from Somalia and the heavy military presence along the border with Eritrea pose risks to safety and security. Additionally, sporadic inter-ethnic clashes are a concern throughout the Gambella region (in green) in the West.

For more information about safety and security in Ethiopia, visit http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1113.htm#safety



Where to Eat

Ethiopia is home to more than 80 ethnic groups, each with their own language. More than 3 million people live in Addis Ababa. The diversity of people and cultural backgrounds has led to a cosmopolitan restaurant and nightlife scene. Bole Road especially features several restaurants, bars and clubs.

Food is generally cheap. The national dish, *Injera*, is a yeast-risen flatbread with a sourdough taste and slightly spongy texture. Locals eat it for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The national drink is *tej*, brewed from honey. *Tela* is like a beer.

In addition to the Sheraton Addis' top-rated restaurants, try the following Trip Advisor favorites.

- 1. Tomoca Coffee (Corner of Wavel Street and Churchill Avenue)**
PH: +251-11-111-1781
www.tomocacoffee.com
Breakfast



Photo courtesy of Tomoca Coffee www.tomocacoffee.com

Tomoca is a café renown for serving the city's best coffee, which it has done for almost 60 years. The shop is a popular tourist stop and provides few tables at which guests can linger. However, it will vacuum-pack roasted beans in bulk for you to take home or to give as gifts. For those not familiar with Ethiopia's best, a map on the wall shows the country's coffee regions, while a chart explains the flavors and preparation.

- 2. La Mandoline (Behind Medhane Alem Church next to Swiss Café, just off Bole Tele Road in Bole)**
9am-10pm, closed on Mondays
PH: +251-11-111-1781
Breakfast/Brunch, After Hours



Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

This French restaurant offers breakfast, brunch and late night options. Food and drinks are said to live up to Paris standards and are accompanied by excellent service.

- 3. Yod Abyssinia Cultural Restaurant (Bole Medhaniyalem Area next to Brass Hospital near the airport)**
PH: +251-11-661-2985
www.yodethiopia.com
Lunch, Dinner, Reservations Recommended



Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

Tourists dine at this restaurant more for the cultural music and dance performances than for the standard Ethiopian fare. Nevertheless, it's an enjoyable experience that provides a glimpse of the country's many ethnic groups. Performances are at night.

- 4. Enya's Mediterranean Kitchen (Off Namibia Street behind Haimi Hotel)**
PH: +251-91-279-5876
Breakfast/Brunch, After Hours



Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

Enya's Mediterranean Kitchen is a hidden Greek gem in the city, where owner Enya will treat you like guests in her home. The restaurant also serves Middle Eastern and Turkish fare, and has a good wine selection. A Greek buffet brunch is served on Sundays.

- 5. Habesha Restaurant (On Bole Road near Wollo Sefer Junction)**
Lunch, Dinner, Reservations Recommended

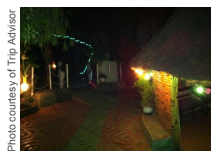


Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

Habesha Restaurant offers diners an authentic Ethiopian meal, where they will sit on wooden stools around a mesop (Ethiopian dinner table). This is a lower-key alternative to Yod Abyssinia, according to reviewers. Waiters are kind, as well as often talented dancers. Singing and dancing shows are held at night.

- 6. Kaldi's Coffee (Multiple Locations)**
PH: +251-11-371-4258
www.kaldis-coffee.com
Breakfast/Brunch, After Hours



Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

Known as the "Starbucks of Addis," this coffee shop chain has locations throughout the city. Good coffee drinks and light fare are available. Known for caramel macchiatos.

- 7. Top View (Up the hill from the Megenagna Roundabout)**
Closed on Mondays
PH: +251-11-651-1573
Lunch, Dinner



Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

This Italian restaurant is known for its great view, although recent diners say the view is slightly obscured by a municipal building. Regardless, food is fresh and tasteful.

- 8. Ristorante Castelli (In front of Mahmoud Music Shop, Mahatma-Gandhi Street in Piazza)**
Closed on Sundays
PH: +251-11-157-1757
Lunch, Dinner, After Hours, Reservations Recommended

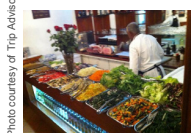


Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

This top Italian restaurant around since 1942 has served such notable guests as Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt. Main dishes and desserts are equally delectable. Previous diners suggest pasta, grilled fish, chicken and salads. Call for reservations.

- 9. Bait Al Mandi (Opposite Yoli Building)**
M-Sun 11:30am-10pm
PH: +251-92-024-2424
www.baitalmandiaddis.com
Lunch, Dinner



Photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

At Bait Al Mandi, excellent Yemeni cuisine is served by cordial staff. Popular dishes include mofo, selta, meat mandi and hummus.

- 10. Club Juventus/Ristorante da Linda (Behind Meskel Square)**
PH: +251-91-121-9729
Lunch, Dinner, Reservations Recommended on Fridays

A solid range of Italian food is served in an old-style setting. Highlights include the homemade pasta, ravioli and good wine selection. The friendly bar is a great place to meet locals. The gym/play area next door makes the restaurant especially kid-friendly.