



Ethiopia

Simien Mountains Trek

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



Do something extraordinary.....

ITINERARY	Ethiopia • Simien Mountains Trek
14 DAYS • 13 NIGHTS	Addis Ababa – Gondar – Debarq/Sankaber – Simien Mountains – Geech – Chenek – Ambiquo – Arkwaziye – Loma – Mulit – Adi Arkai – Lalibela

HIGHLIGHTS	TOUR ESSENTIALS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Trek through remote rural communities of this ancient land ■ Reach Ethiopia’s highest peak of Ras Dejen (4563m) ■ See fascinating wildlife such as the lion like Gelada Baboon ■ Visit centuries old Churches on Lake Tana and Lalibela 	<p>Tour Style</p> <p>Tour Start</p> <p>Tour End</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>Included Meals</p> <p>Difficulty Level</p>	<p>Trekking Adventure</p> <p>Addis Ababa</p> <p>Addis Ababa</p> <p>Hotel, Camp</p> <p>13 Breakfasts, 12 Lunches, 12 Dinners</p> <p>Very difficult</p>



SIMIEN MOUNTAINS

Your expedition will take you through this amazing country, from the fertile lowlands and rural communities to the summit of Ras Dejen. We will visit the island Churches of Lake Tana and through remote villages of the Simien region. We will also visit the awesome excavated Churches of Lalibela.

Ethiopia is still one of the world’s best kept secrets. Join us on this unbelievable and unforgettable expedition.



ETHIOPIA, *an overview*

Ethiopia remains an enigma to many. It is an ancient land with history going back 3000 years. Its society is rich with colourful culture, of secret societies and centuries old Churches. Ethiopia retains the Julian calendar of 13 months in a year and is said to be home of the Holy Grail of the Old Testament. The northern and central regions of the country boast some of the most magnificent mountain ranges in all of Africa. In this region alone there are over 20, 4000m peaks. These ancient ranges are dramatic, with enormous gorges being gouged out by torrents of water over the millennia. They are the home of the beautiful lion like Gelada Baboon and the highest peak of Ethiopia, Ras Dejen (4563m).

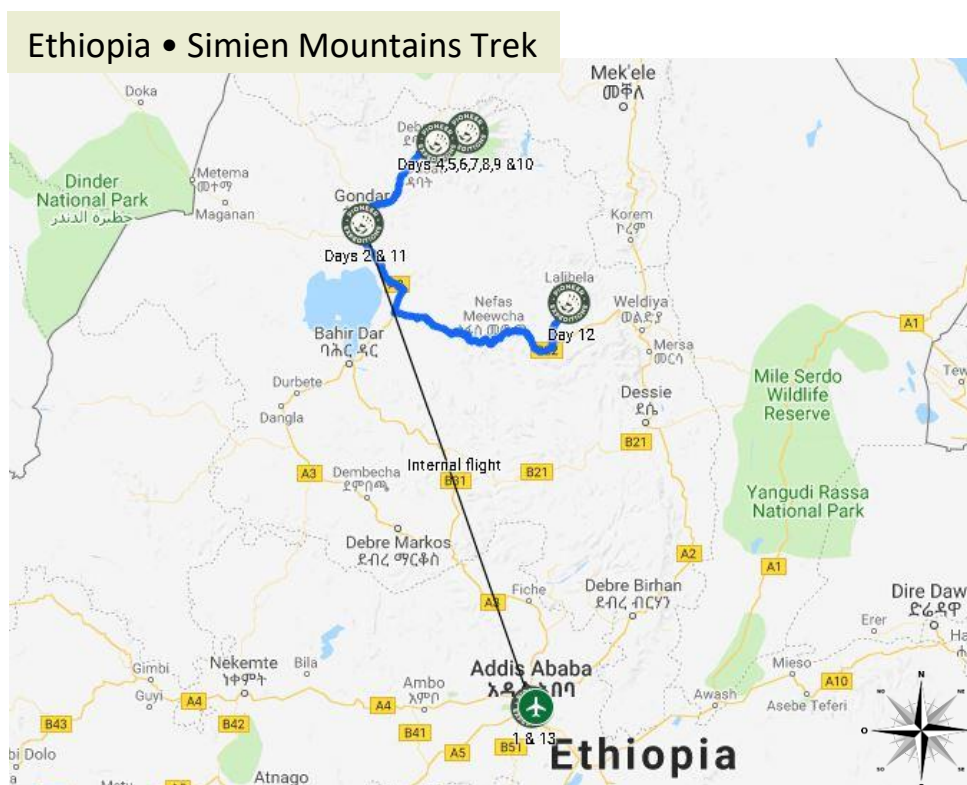
WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

Pioneer Expeditions are one of the few specialists that really *do* off the beaten track and unique adventures. The team have a real passion for wildlife and adventure travel which we love to share with our clients. We delight in searching the world for new destinations, new experiences and creating the most incredible adventures.

We like to introduce our clients to unique, the different, and the incredible. Whether it is through wildlife tracking, sea kayaking, snorkelling, trekking, rafting, cycling or observing wildlife in its natural environment, we want to give you the real Pioneer experience.

From the moment you choose to travel with Pioneer Expeditions until you return back home, you are supported by our dedicated team. We listen to what you want and can create an itinerary around your specific needs, working with your budget and with a commitment to responsible travel.

ITINERARY



DAY 1: ADDIS ABABA

Arrive in Addis Ababa and welcomed by our local agent representative for transfer to Hotel.



Overnight:
Hilton Hotel



Meals:
Nil



Distance:
N/A



Activities:
Travel

DAY 2: GONDAR

After breakfast we head back to the airport for the internal flight to Gondar, the former capital of Ethiopia. On arrival, transfer to the Goha Hotel for lunch. This afternoon we will visit the walled Royal enclosure which contains several well preserved and medieval looking castles, dating from as early as 1650. Gondar is well placed, watered by mountain torrents and sitting at an altitude of 2300 meters. There are views from the city, which extend across the surrounding farmland to Lake Tana, 35kilometers to the south. This is a historic settlement with an atmosphere of mystery.



Overnight:
**Haile Grand
Resort**



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Short flight



Activities:
Culture

DAY 3: DEBARK - SANKABER

In the cool of the morning, we will make the 2 to 3 hour drive from Gondar to Debark. This is a small market town at an altitude of 2700 meters close to the boundary of the Simien Mountains National Park. Here, an armed scout-one of the park regulations joins you. Then we drive towards Sankaber where you walk the last couple of hours of the day to your camp for the night.



© Franck Charton



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Approx. 2-3hr drive



Activities:
Transfer

DAY 4: SANKABER – GEECH

Today we will meet the muleteers and the trek equipment is loaded on to their mules. Starting out, you descend in the Michwantis valley and begin the climb up the other side, making a short diversion to see one of the most impressive sights in the Simien Mountains, where the Jinbar River plummets into the Geech Abyss.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking



DAY 5: GEECH – CHENEK

The route today takes us along the edge of the escarpment to the promontory and a small peak known as Imetgogo. From here you descend into an open, grassy valley filled with 3 and 4-meter tall giant Lobelias. The Chenek campsite offers superb views across to the opposite escarpment and the prominent peak of Imetgogo.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 6: CHENEK – AMBIQUO

To reach the village of Ambiquo at the foot of Ras Dejen, you must initially climb up above your camp towards Amba Bhawit (4477m.), the second highest mountain in the range. At 4200m you pass through Bhaut pass. Here, you will also get your first sighting of the Ras Dashen (4620m), the highest point in a wall of cliffs and peaks on the skyline. Crossing the Meshawa River after more than 1000 meters of descent, you climb steeply to the village of Ambiquo.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 7: AMBIQUO - SUMMIT DAY

Today's climb to the highest point in Ethiopia, the summit of Ras Dejen, requires a dawn start. You climb slowly and steadily through giant Lobelia forests, passing the tiny, perched village of Mizma and gaining an area of open pasture where there are herds of cattle and goats with their attendant herdsmen. The triple-summitted bulk of Ras Dejen looms above and it is far from obvious which of these is the highest. Finally, after 5 hours of ascent, you reach steeper, rocky ground and a short scramble to the cairned summit. We usually take an hours rest on top to enjoy the views that, in clear weather, extend to North of Ethiopia. A 3 hour descent takes you back to the campsite in Ambiquo.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 8: AMBIQUO – ARKWAZIYE

Rather than retracing your trek to Sankaber (which is the usual Simien Mountains trek) we have chosen to extend the itinerary and make the return towards Gondar through the lowlands, which will give you the chance to see a greater range of the Ethiopian countryside. Descending from your camp at Ambiquo for an hour, you then have an easy 3-hour stroll, heading back westwards to the camping place in Arkwaziye (3600m.)



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 9: ARKWAZIYE – LOMA

A day of descent, as you head for the village of Makarabia in the region known as Lamo. You are leaving behind the high plateau and your route crosses several major ridges before dropping 1000meters alongside Ansiya River to the rarely visited lowlands. It becomes progressively warmer as you descend to the camp at Loma (2000m.).



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking



DAY 10: MULIT

An easy day, contouring far below the escarpment on a trail, which passes through scrub and stands of palm trees. You have plenty of opportunity to interact with the local people and learn a little about their way of life. Set beneath towering rock pinnacles. The campsite faces across the valley to a circle of mountains with Amba Tsion in the center.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 11: ADI ARKAI – GONDAR

A final short stroll of a little over 2-hours takes you to the market town of Adi Arkai (1700m.). Here you say goodbye to your trek crew, have a look around the bazaar and then board the car for the drive back to Gondar.



Overnight:
**Haile Grand
Resort**



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 12: GONDAR – LALIBELA

In the morning, transfer to Gondar Airport to leave for Lalibela which used to be called Roha until the end of 12th century. Today the little town of Lalibela is home to the remarkably excavated 12th century rock hewn churches. Once you have checked into your hotel we will start visiting the first group (consisting of 6 churches) of churches that symbolizes the New Jerusalem. In the afternoon visit the second group of churches (consisting of 4 churches) and the third group consisting of only one but possibly the most beautiful and monolithic of the all, the church of St. George. It is said to symbolize Noah's Ark. Overnight in Mountain View Hotel.

NB. While entering each church, you are kindly requested to take off shoes and dress modestly. This should be applied to all the churches in Ethiopia.



Overnight:
**Maribela
Lodges**



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Short flight



Activities:
Culture

DAY 13: LALIBELA - ADDIS ABABA

In the morning drive to the Airport for your flight to Addis Ababa en route, visit the cave church of Na'akuto La'ab. Na'akuto La'ab is the nephew and the successor of king Lalibela. The church is simple but attractive and built under a natural cave. Then flight to Addis. That night we will have a farewell dinner for all.



Overnight:
Hilton Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Short flight



Activities:
Culture

DAY 14: ADDIS ABABA & DEPARTURE

Transfer to airport for return home End of Expedition!!



Overnight:
n/a



Meals:
B



Distance:
Flight home

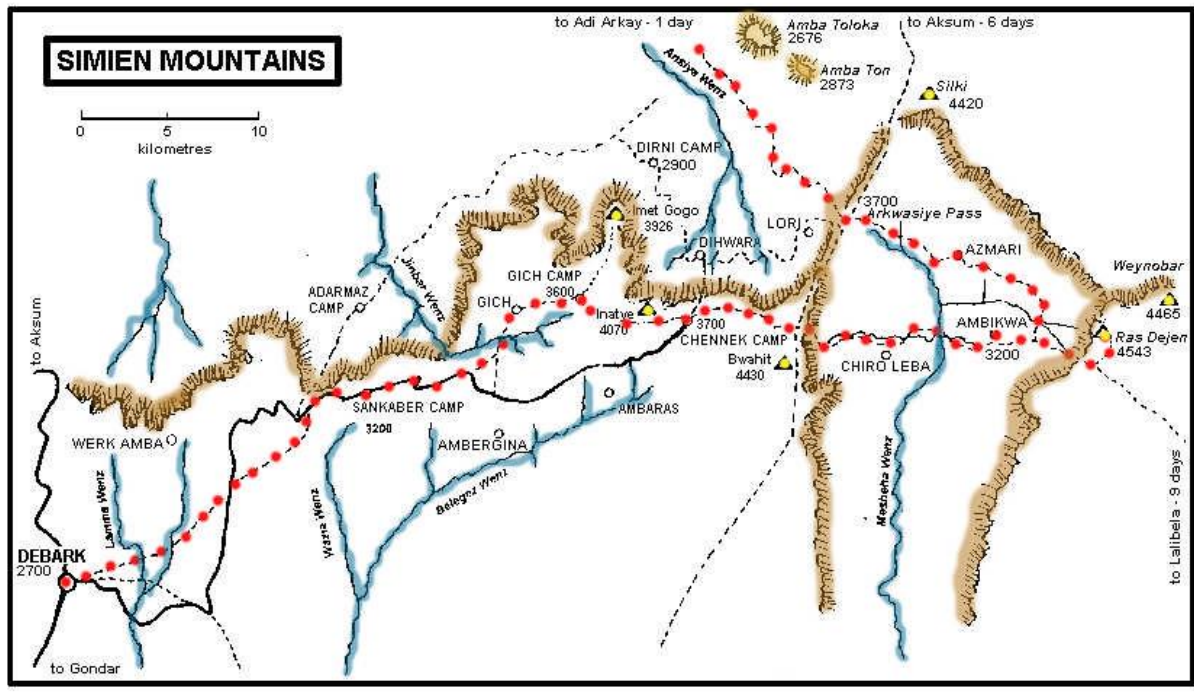


Activities:
Travel



OPTIONAL EXTENSION

Ethiopia is an awesome and huge country, diverse in both its terrain and culture. After the Simien Expedition, why not see another side of Ethiopia by heading south into Omo River region where we will see both fascinating wildlife and colourful and fascinating cultures such as the Hammer, Karo and Dassanech tribes. Contact us for further information.



WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE SAID

"For me it was a truly amazing experience from every point of view"

-D.Halliday



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INCLUDED

- Hotel accommodation (double room sharing)
- International air transport
- Internal airfares
- All the 3 meals of the day according to the itinerary.
- All transfers and city tours
- All entrance fees
- Ground transportation
- Camping gear (Tent, mattress, sheets etc)
- Experienced Guide
- Experienced cook/chef and porters

NOT INCLUDED

- Meals other than mentioned
- Domestic airport tax
- Telephone, laundry, any payable drink and porters for luggage
- Tips and any other personal interest, which is not specified in the itinerary.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITY DURATION

5-7 + hours

SEASON

January through December

BEST TIME TO GO

September through November

GROUP SIZE

2-8 pax

EXPEDITION SCHEDULE

Annual scheduled Group Departure or Tailor made to suit your dates.

TREKKING INFORMATION

This is a physically demanding trek. If you would like something a little less demanding we can create an alternative itinerary for you.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a Very Difficult level (sometimes 7 + hours per day). This means that you will need to be Fit and Training will be required.



THE PIONEER BOOKING PROCESS

Where do you go from here? Well, you can feel free to email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com if you're interested in this trip, or any of our other expeditions from around the world. Visit our website www.pioneerexpeditions.com to unearth all of our other equally amazing trips and destinations.

1. Contact us -

We will be happy to answer any questions or enquiries you may have. From here we will begin to plan and put together your dream adventure holiday! Alternatively, on our website you will find our booking and enquiry forms; once filled in, we will be notified of your enquiry and will get back to you ASAP.

2. Leave everything to us -

Everything will be arranged and booked by us, but we will make sure to keep you updated every step of the way. In addition, we can arrange your international flights if needed, as we have access to competitive airfares. We can also arrange any additional tours or additional night's accommodation.

3. Wait for your adventure to begin -

Sit back and count down the days until your trip of a lifetime with Pioneer Expeditions. We'll handle all of the last minute preparations and provide you with everything you need. All practical information will be sent out to you, prior to your trip.

If you feel like altering this itinerary to suit your personal preferences, we can arrange all of that and more – just get in contact with us and let us know your requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

