

**Simien Mountain Trek (ES 2014)** 

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TOUR **DURATION** 13



Trek Grade: Challenging

Simien Mountains: trek one of Africa's most spectacular and least visited mountain ranges in Africa.

Tour Comfort: Basic

- Ras Dashen: climb Ethiopia's highest peak at 4543m.
- Camping: enjoy wild camping in stunning locations.
- Gondar: discover the medieval Fasilidas Castle and Debre Berhan Church.

## **Tour Essentials**

**Accommodation:** 3 nights Standard Hotel

9 nights Basic Camping

Included Meals: 12 breakfasts, 10

lunches, 9 dinners

**Start Point:** Join tour: Addis Ababa **End Point:** Tour ends: Addis Ababa

**Transport:** Bus, Flight

**Countries:** Ethiopia

# Simien Mountain Trek

The Simien highlands of northern Ethiopia form one of the major mountain massifs in Africa. A highlight is the ascent to the summit of Ras Dashen - Ethiopia's highest peak and the fifth highest on the continent. As we trek through this isolated region we admire the spectacular scenery of rocky plateaux, spires, mesas and deep gorges



### Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

### **Tour Comfort: Basic**

Our basic accommodation can offer the most rewarding and memorable places to stay. These are usually communal or camping style with shared facilities. Running hot and cold water may be unreliable and overall comfort levels are basic.

## **Tour Style: Classic**

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

# Your tour itinerary

## **Tour itinerary notes**

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

### **Your Tour Leader**

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or

# Join tour Addis Ababa

Addis is situated at an elevation of around 2438m and is only about a century old. It has some elegant modern buildings and is quite spacious with wide streets and green areas. It remains the capital of a predominantly rural area and the Mercato is one of the largest open markets in Africa. This afternoon we will make an orientation tour of the city visiting the Ethnographical Museum and the church of the Holy Trinity, whose large dome and slender pinnacles make it a landmark in the city and take a drive up Entoto Hill to take in a panoramic view of Addis Ababa





### Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available



## Fly to Gondar

Today we take a short, but scenic flight to Gondar, located on the high plateau just north of Lake Tana. The town of Gondar was the imperial capital of Ethiopia for 200 years. Gondar's most famous monuments are its exceptionally well preserved 17th century castles. The largest and best is that of King Fasilidas. It is a stone-built construction with round turrets and wooden balconies. This whole complex of buildings is unique in Ethiopia and unlike anything found elsewhere in Africa. On arrival, as well as visiting the castle ruins and King Fasilidas baths, we'll also make a visit to the Debre Berhan Selassie Church famed for its ceiling frescoes of many faces.

Overnight: Standard Hotel **Single Rooms Available** 



### Drive to Simien Mountains N.P. via Debark; PM trek to Sankaber

Today, we drive to Debark, the village base for hiking in the Simien Mountains. The range lies north of Gondar and many of the peaks rise above 4,000m with the highest being Mount Ras Dashen at 4,543m, the fifth highest in Africa. The mountains are criss-crossed with tracks made by the local people travelling from village to village or moving their animals to fresh pastures. The combination of these tracks and the spectacular scenery make for excellent walking. We start our trek with a 2-3 hour walk to our first camp Sankaber. During the trek we may spend each night in a different place. The circuits walked will vary depending on local conditions and on the group's ability. Details of the standard circuit we might take are given below - the itinerary for days 6 to 12 is given as an example only.

### Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available



### Trek to Geech Camp

We trek to Geech camp via Sankaber (approx. 6-7 hours), with the possibility of seeing gelada baboons and red-hot poker plants en route. The gelada baboon is endemic to Ethiopia and has adapted to living on the nearly vertical cliff faces. We may also see the Jinbar river waterfalls today that plummet into Geech Abyss. The Abyss is a vast canyon cut into the main wall of the escarpment.

### Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available



# Hike to Imet Gogo from Geech Camp

A flexible day with a morning option to hike to the viewpoint of Imet Gogo (3926m). From the viewpoint there are spectacular views of the lowlands and across the Simien range with rock spires and mesas prominent (approx. 5 hours return). Keep a close look out for the elusive simien fox. It misnamed as it is not really a fox but a member of the dog family restricted to Ethiopia.

### Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available



## Trek to Chenek Camp

We aim to trek to Chenek camp today on good piste via Inatye (4070m) and along the escarpment (approx. 6-7 hours). This exciting walk traverses the Jinbar river and provides us with fantastic views. You may like to take the opportunity to freshen-up in the nearby stream south of camp.

### Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available



### Trek to Ambikwa

Today we trek to Ambikwa (approx. 11-12 hours) and plan to stop at a spectacular viewpoint (4200m) north of Bwahit where, on clear days, we can see across the Mesheha river to Ras Dashen peak. We then descend steeply and pass through the village of Chiro Leba to follow a stream bed until we reach the large Mesheha River. We'll cross the river and follow a path across the east side of the valley to our camp (3200m) in a little meadow. Ambikwa village is tiny and has a small church. We will then continue for a couple more hours to the campsite en route up to Ras Dashen

### Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available



# Ascent of Ras Dashen; trek to Ambikwa

Starting before sunrise we follow the main valley up and climb steeply via Mizma huts to reach a ridge crest and open grassy slopes (3700m) on our invigorating ascent of Ethiopia's highest mountain. Next we traverse around ridges and climb more steeply to a broad col at 4250m. Keep an eye open for giant lobelia, by far the most spectacular plant of this region with flower stalks up to 8m high. Eventually we enter a huge semicircular basin of rocky peaks and buttresses - Ras Dashen. The last section involves some rock scrambling and climbing to a fine viewpoint at 4543m. We'll spend the rest of the day hiking back to our camp (total walking today approx. 09-10 hours).

Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available



# Trek to Sona

Today we will trek from Ambikwa to the a camp at Sona. There are a couple of good options available to us so we will choose the best option dependant on space available. We will experience great mountain views of Imet Gogo and other peaks and pass through local villages. We will re-cross the River Mesheha (2800m) before climbing up through cultivated fields and villages to 3700m. After passing the newly moved village of Arkwasiye we slowly descend to our camp situated on a cliff just below Sona village at 3000m. (Approx 8-10 hrs walking)

Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available

# Trek to Mekarebia

Today we make our way to Mekarebia. We will descend steeplyfor the first 3 hours to the Ansiye River at an altitude of 1900 m. Here we can have some time to relax for a well earned wash or swim before continuing on our trek to our overnight stop at 1868m. The route we take today will provide good opportunities for birdwatching and will also give us great views of the route we have taken so far. Our campsite will be close to an elementary school which you may have the option of visiting in the afternoon. (Approx 4-6 hrs walking)

Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available

# Trek to Mulit

This morning we immediately descend another 350m to rejoin the Ansiye River. As we walk along the river, criss-crossing in places the birdlife is breathtaking, with vervet monkeys to be seen too. After leaving the Ansiye Valley we will have time to relax beside a lagoon formed by a waterfall. Will will then have a more challending ascent of 500m for the last couple of hours enjoying the views of the Awuzu peaks before reaching our campsite at Mulit at 2100m asl. (Approx 6hrs walking)

Overnight: Basic Camping Your own tent available

# Trek to Adi Arkay, drive to Gondar

This morning we will take our final 2 hr trek to Adi Arkay where we meet our vehicle that will transport us back to Gondar (approx. 5-6 hours drive). As we drive out of the Simien Mountains we'll have time to take in a final look at some of the most spectacular views. There may be time this afternoon to further explore Gondar. You may choose to visit the local market or the nearby ruined palace of Kusquam.

Overnight: Standard Hotel **Single Rooms Available** 

# Fly to Addis; afternoon free. Tour ends

We fly back to the capital this morning and the afternoon is left free for independent exporation.

# **Accommodation and Meals**

## Food & Drink

Included meals: 12 breakfasts, 10 lunches,9 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

# **Budgeting for your Tour**

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

## Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

### **Optional Excursions**

Addis Ababa - National museum £3.00

### **Tipping - Tour Leader**

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### **Tipping - Local Crew**

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$80 for tipping of local drivers, guides, muleteers and for any miscellaneous tipping of hotel staff.

### Foreign Exchange

### **Ethiopia**

ATM Availability: Very Limited. Credit Card Acceptance: Limited.

Travellers Cheques: Very difficult to exchange and are not recommended. Up-to-date information re: global exchange rates can be obtained at https://www.currencyexpress.com/explore/

Local Currency: Ethiopian Birr.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: It is advisable to take your spending money in Sterling, Euros or US Dollars cash (high denomination notes usually get better exchange ates). Please note that any pre- 1999 or torn US Dollar bills will not accepted in Ethiopia. Please keep any receipts as you may be able to change back any unused local currency.

Where to Exchange: Your Tour leader will advise you.

# **Joining your Tour**

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a land only package with Explore

For passengers making their own travel arrangements, please ensure you join the group as described on day one of the tour itinerary. If you are considering purchasing your own airline tickets, you can book these through any travel agent, directly with an airline or through an online flight consolidator. In all cases, we would be happy to arrange transfers to and from the joining point of your tour if required.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Clients booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point. Please refer to separate 'Joining Instructions' for time and place of rendezvous with tour leader

### **Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.



# **Important Information**

### **Travel Insurance**

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

If you require travel insurance for your tour, Explore Worldwide is an appointed representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority. Our travel insurance policy is specially tailored to the needs of the adventure traveller and will cover you for any included activity on any Explore trip. You can either purchase this at the time of booking or call us on 0844 499 0903 after you have booked.

### Visa Information

Ethiopia: Visas for UK nationals can be obtained on arrival, although this can change at short notice, and you should be prepared to queue on arrival. Should you wish to apply for a visa prior to departure, please note that a single entry visa is valid for 30 days from the date of issue, so you must submit your application no more than two weeks prior to departure. It is also possible to apply for a multi-entry visa which is valid for 3 months from issue.

Visas can be obtained through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK; Visaswift, at http://www.visaswift.com/explore.aspx. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

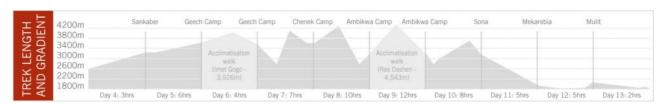
All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

### **Vaccinations & Protection**

### Ethiopia

An International Certificate of Vaccination against yellow fever is required. We recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, diphtheria, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Although the risk is low you may also consider immunisation against rabies and meningococcal meningitis. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against Malaria. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

# **Preparing for your Tour**



### **Trekking Details**

This is a 9 day trek with an average of 6 to 8 hours walking each day. Generally we walk at altitudes between 3000 and 4000m, reaching the highest point at the summit of Ras Dashen, 4543m. Mules carry all food, luggage and equipment. We have graded this trek as challenging.

### **Climate**

### **Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is generally pleasant and warm, but varies with altitude. The long rains usually arrive mid- June to early September and the short rains between mid-February and April although this pattern has been completely erratic in recent times. After the rains, the highlands of northern Ethiopia are usually green and thus particularly scenic. The temperature all year round rarely falls below 18°C. Night-time temperatures in the mountains can be cold and can drop below freezing at higher altitude. There is a strong risk of sunburn at high altitude in Ethiopia. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at http://www.explore.co.uk/weather. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

## Clothing

Socks

It is best to wear a pair of liner socks under a pair of fairly thick loop stitch socks. This helps to protect your feet against blisters. Avoid nylon socks, they are abrasive, don't breathe well and can cause blisters.

After sunset, temperatures can fall below freezing. A very warm jacket is the most convenient way of keeping warm when the temperature drops.



Waterproofs

Breathable waterproofs made from material such as Goretex not only protects against rain and wind but also stops you from overheating. They breathe and avoid condensation that you will experience from nylon waterproofs.

Long Trousers

For everyday walking, light cotton trousers are the most suitable. Jeans are not recommended as they are often difficult to walk in over longer distances and become cumbersome when wet.

Thick jumper/fleece jacket

A thick jumper or fleece jacket is necessary as nights can be very cold at altitude. Make sure that your

waterproof jacket is loose enough to wear over your sweater or fleece.

Track suit

Comfortable around the villages and much more practical (and warmer) to sleep in than pyjamas. Alternatively, thermal underwear is good.

Shorts

Shorts can be very comfortable to walk in but you must carry long trousers with you in case you get either sunburned or cold. Follow your tour leaders advice on local sensitivities to wearing shorts during the trek.

Especially useful in the morning and in the evening at higher altitudes. Also bring a scarf to cover your face from the dust during the day and a warm hat/balaclava.

Swimwear

There will be swimming opportunities during the trek

### **Equipment**

Sleeping Bag As you do not carry it yourself this may be down or synthetic, but it must be 4-season (temperature -10°C to -5°C). A cotton liner helps to keep your bag clean.

Sleeping Mat Regular sleeping mats will be provided but if you would prefer an inflatable thermarest style you will need to bring your own.

Walking Stick/Pole Walking sticks and poles are recommended.

Water Bottle Water along the trail must never be considered as drinkable. Take at least a 2 litre personal water bottle, preferably insulated. A personal supply of water purification tablets/drops is also essential. Powdered fruit juice can be used to disguise the taste. Energy snacks, including chocolate and sweets, are also recommended whilst on trek.

Sunglasses/Snow Goggles A good pair of sunglasses are essential for protection against UV rays and glare at high altitudes.

Sun Hat, High Factor Sun Cream/Block & Lip Salve Choose a high factor suncream (Factor 15 or more) to protect your skin against the sun at high altitudes. A combination sunblock/ lipsalve is ideal for facial protection.

Torch/Batteries/Bulb A small torch is essential for finding things at night. Often a head torch is useful for the early ascent to the summit. Remember to bring some spare batteries.

Toiletries Keep heavy cosmetics to a minimum. Essentials are toothbrush/paste, soap (preferably biodegradable), small towel. Wet wipes are great for a guick clean up, so bring a pack of those.

Personal First Aid Kit On each trek a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials. Please do not give medicines to local people without consulting the tour leader.

### **Footwear**

Walking Boots

Probably the trickiest part of all. We strongly recommend walking in good boots. Trainers, or shoes of a similar ilk simply do not give the ankle support afforded by a decent pair of boots. Many people now trek in the lighter weight Goretex or leather boots They have the advantage that they take little breaking in. The slightly heavier traditional leather walking boots are also good. Avoid the types often found in high street shoe shops which are simply cheap trainers with a higher canvas side sewn on - they give little support and will probably not last the trek. Above all, your boots must be well broken in and comfortable. We do not recommend borrowing or renting boots. It is a good idea to carry your boots in your hand luggage on international flights or wear them - should your luggage be delayed, your well broken in boots are the one thing which will be irreplaceable. Gaiters are useful to keep snow and/or scree out of your boots.

Trainers or Trekking sandals

Useful around the villages and when travelling.

## **Luggage: On Tour**

A kitbag/barrel bag carried by mules on trek, a stuff-sack to store surplus belongings while on trek and a daysac. Pack mules are used to carry equipment, food and most personal gear. Pack heavy/dense items into your kitbag.

Trek Kit Bag

Before leaving Gondar there is plenty of time to re-sort luggage into what you need on trek and what can be left in Gondar. Think about what you are taking on trek (remember your sleeping bag) and then think how big your kit bag needs to be. An ex-army type can usually be obtained cheaply. A nylon or canvas bag with a zip along the top is also suitable. Whatever you choose, it must be strong, as porters are not very gentle with baggage. Soft luggage is preferable! Framed rucksacks are unsuitable. The weight limit for the bag and its contents is 15kg but you will probably find that you do not need this much. Please note there are occasional opportunities to hand wash clothing whilst on the trek.

Small Rucksack/Daysac

During the course of a trekking day, you do not have access to the luggage that is being carried for you

by the porters. In any mountain region the weather can change rapidly and you must be equipped for this eventuality. Your daysac should, therefore, be large enough to carry the following: waterproofs, sweater, long trousers (if walking in shorts), warm hat and gloves, sun hat, sun cream, water bottle (at least 2litre), tissues and your packed lunch. Most people normally find that this adds up to about 2 to 3kg. Camera equipment can be heavy so think carefully when deciding what to take. Other optional items in a daysac might be binoculars, a diary or a book to read at lunch time. It is usually more comfortable to carry a slightly larger pack that is not full than to carry a small pack that is overfull or with 'bits' tied on the outside. Something between 20 and 25 litres capacity is probably



the most suitable. A shoulder bag is not a practical alternative.

Plastic Bags

If you pack your gear in plastic bags inside your kit bag they will stay dry in case of rain. It will also be easier for you to sort through. Remember, the less you have to unpack in the evening, the less you have to repack each morning! A bin liner to pack inside your daysac is also a good idea.

Luggage allowance on tour: 15Kg

# **General Information**

### Food

The prices for meals and drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive. The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

### **Ethiopia**

Lunch £: 3.00 **Dinner £:** 6.00

### **Drink**

### **Ethiopia**

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00

### **Country details**

### **Ethiopia**

**Population:** 82,101,998

Size of Country: 1,104,300 sq km Major Language: Amharic, English Religion: Christian, Muslim

Time Difference to GMT: +3

### **Electric Supply & Plugs**

### **Ethiopia**

2 Pin Round

# Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to - and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

### Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: The Sunshine Orphanage (which cares for abandoned children in



Luxor, Egypt), Education for All (sponsoring children through their secondary education in Morocco), The Hope Foundation (helping an Indian Village to recover from the 2004 Tsunami) and the Mufindi Orphanage, which support AIDS orphans in Tanzania.

We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation, Travel Operators for Tigers (helping save the Bengal Tiger from extinction) and Friends for Conservation. We have also adopted a beautiful Sri Lankan Elephant called 'Serendip'.

We are delighted to have received a Five Star sustainable tourism status from the Association of Independent Tour Operators in recognition of our on-going commitment to sustainable tourism.

### **Cool Earth**

Explore are delighted to support Cool Earth to reduce carbon emissions through preventing the illegal deforestation of the South America rainforest. One of the top sources of global carbon emissions, rainforest deforestation equivalent to the USA's annual emissions, it also destroys flora and fauna, sometimes to the point of extinction. It also degrades the lives and communities of the 350 million residents of the rainforest.

Cool Earth prevents the deforestation through its support of local communities as forest guardians and by focussing on areas in immediate danger of deforestation. It has so far protected over 350,000 acres of rainforest, with each acre saving an emission of 260 tons of CO2, as well as protecting rare animals and plants. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year. In addition to mitigating emissions, when you travel with Explore, you are helping to protect the source of 20% of the world's fresh water and oxygen, as well as the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion people who are reliant on the rainforest. www.coolearth.org

### **Earth Matters**

- The Travel Foundation
  - Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern
  - Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

### Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

# **Booking Your Holiday**

### Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

### Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% nonrefundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

### **100% No Surcharge Guarantee**

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2014.

### **Tour Itinerary Versions**

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.



Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2014 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2014. 2015/16 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

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