

**WELCOME TO ETHIOPIA, THE LAND OF ORIGINS**

Ethiopia is an exciting, dynamic and culturally diverse country. From its breath-taking scenery to its rich cultural heritage and traditional culinary delights, there is something for everyone. As rapid economic growth continues to support the development of the city, Addis Ababa is undergoing a massive transformation, with new roads, skyscrapers and a light railway project all contributing to the rising stock of the ‘diplomatic capital of Africa’.

With the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Dr. Abiy, named winner of the 2019 World Tourism Award and the country, four years ago, voted the ‘World’s Best Tourist Destination 2015’ by the European Council of Tourism and Trade, Ethiopia is home to nine UNESCO World Heritage sites, and offers visitors a wealth of historical and cultural sites as well as the opportunity to explore some of the world’s most unique and beautiful landscapes

**THE BRITISH COUNCIL IN ETHIOPIA**

Established in 1943, the British Council in Ethiopia has engaged with generations of young people through a diverse range of educational and cultural programmes. We work with partners in Ethiopia and the UK to showcase excellence, innovation in creativity and bring benefit to the individual and both the UK and Ethiopia.

The British Council office in Addis Ababa has a team of over 80 dedicated professionals working across English,



Education & Society and the Arts. It is also home to a rapidly developing teaching centre as well as the Regional Sub-Saharan Africa English Team, and oversees a number of small-scale projects and programmes in the neighbouring countries of Djibouti and Somaliland

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## ETHIOPIA OVERVIEW

Ethiopia is among the oldest independent countries in the world, one of the oldest civilisations in the world and the only African country which was never colonised. As a regional power, Ethiopia contributes large peacekeeping forces and is a relatively stable presence in the Horn of Africa. It is also the political and diplomatic hub of Africa, with the African Union and UN Economic Commission both seated in Addis Ababa. In the past decade, Ethiopia’s economy has been on a sharp upward trajectory, among the fastest growing in Africa. Foreign Direct Investment and the export sector have seen tremendous growth.

FACT FILE	
FULL NAME	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
CAPITAL	Addis Ababa
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE	Amharic
GOVERNMENT	Federal Democratic Republic
PRIME MINISTER	Dr. Abiy Ahmed
PRESIDENT	Sahle-Work Zewdie
RELIGION	Orthodox Christian (44%), Islam (34%), Protestant (19%), Others (4%)
ETHNIC GROUPS	Oromo, Amhara, Somali, Tigray, 80+ others
LAND AREA	1,104,300 km <sup>2</sup> (27th in the world)
POPULATION	102,403,196(2016 estimate)
GDP	\$240,.705 billion \$2,516 (per capital) (2019 estimate)
CURRENCY	Birr (ETB)
TIME ZONE	GMT+3 (East African Time)
CALLING CODE	+251



## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Please be aware that visa regulations can (and do) change frequently in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Embassy in the home country of the visitors is the best source of up-to-date information.

- Visitors require a valid passport (for a minimum of 6 months) with 2 blank pages.
- Currently, all visitors (except Kenyan and Djiboutian nationals) require visas to enter Ethiopia
- A yellow fever vaccination certificate is an official requirement for visitors arriving from, or have transited through, [countries with risk](#) of yellow fever transmission
- If travelling from the UK, visa application details can be found at: [http://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/consular\\_services/visa.htm](http://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/consular_services/visa.htm)

## BUSINESS VISA

Recent changes in regulations now require those visiting for following reasons to enter Ethiopia on a Business Visa:

1. Visitors coming to conduct research or other studies

2. Visitors coming to participate in and conduct workshops, seminars and other similar activities for a short period of time.
3. members of international, regional, and sub-regional organizations coming to attend brief meetings and/or other business
4. Members of resident diplomatic missions in Ethiopia visiting on official business.

We anticipate the Social Enterprise World Forum visitors will fall under this category; hence you need to ensure you plan to enter Ethiopia with the appropriate Business Visa.

All conference /business visas are currently processed and pre-approved in country by Ethiopian Main Department for Immigration Office in Addis Ababa and this Authority directly advises the Ethiopian Embassy/Mission abroad its approval to issue the visa or to obtain e-visa by applying online. In order to get the conference / business visa approval from the Immigration Authority, the British Council office in Ethiopia will secure a support letter/ Note Verbal/ from the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and this process may take up to **two weeks**.

Visa is valid only for 1 month, if you need visa beyond one-month please check with the British Council team in advance as there are additional requirements and fees involved in visa extension.

#### Documents required for the Business visa process:

1. Copy of valid passport
2. Confirmed flight booking
3. Work/residence permit if you are not a national of the country where visa will be issued
4. A business introduction/invitation letter from the British Council Ethiopia office (Our office will prepare this document for you)

The British Council Ethiopia resources team will support in all visa processes upon receiving the above documents from you. Moreover, once the visa request has been approved by the Immigration Authority & Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the team will advise the outcome and you will need to follow one of the following options to get your business visa

1. **E-visa application (HIGHLY RECOMEDNEED AS THIS IS VERY QUICK AND EFFICIENT):** - Get your visa online by applying for e-visa. Please follow this link to start the application process <https://www.evisa.gov.et/#/apply/start>, and click *HERE* for the guides to complete the e-visa application. Once you open the link, you need to select the business visa section and then the International organization/embassies visa section and apply online

*You will be required to pay the visa fee online using a credit card.*

*The e-visa will be issued within 72 hours after successful applications.*

*At the end of the process please make sure to print the approved e-visa and present to the immigration officers when you arrive at Addis Ababa airport.*

*If you are not able to apply or process visa through the e-visa application, please notify the British Council team so that we can support you complete the application as per the following options*

2. **Visa from Ethiopian Embassy or High commission office:** - *If you cannot complete or apply for visa through the e-visa process, you can apply to the Ethiopian High commission / Embassy in your country*

*Visa related fees are paid at the high commission office.*

*You will be required to fill the visa application form provided by the embassy and present all the documents stated above as part of your application.*

*British Council team will process the visa approval letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA.) MoFA will then write a letter to the Ethiopian Immigration Office and we will follow up the approval process. The visa applicant/s will then get the Business Visa upon arrival at Addis Ababa Airport Terminal Immigration Clearance booth.*

3. **Visa on Arrival:** - *Use this option only if there is no Ethiopian Embassy in your country of resident. Visa on arrival are only if there is no embassy in your country and you can't apply for e- visa online,*

*The visa fee is paid at the airport immigration upon arrival to the immigration officer and you will present all the documents stated above including the visa on arrival approval letter which British Council team will send to you prior to your departure*

Up on your visa applications for any of the 3 options above, you will be requested to present the Invitation / Business Introduction letter and the letter of visa approval from the Ethiopian Immigration office, which the Ethiopian team will arrange and send to you prior to your application. You are also required to prepare your hotel & flight booking confirmation and one recent photo (jpg format for e-visa applicants) to complete the process.

The current visa fee is USD 52 for 1 month,

**Please ensure you inform the British Council team at least two weeks in advance to get everything sorted for your visa application process**

## TOURIST VISA

Nationals of most Western countries can obtain tourist visas on arrival at Bole International Airport for US\$50 for 1 month and \$US75 or its equivalent for 3 months.

Tourist visas can only be issued on arrival to:

- Tourist visa, can be issued valid up to three months on arrival at Bole International Airport for nationals and residents of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Democratic people's Republic of Korea (northern Korea), Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea (south Korea), the Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America.
- Currently, a single-entry tourist visa is being issued with a validity period of one month and if the visitors are planning to extend their stay beyond one month, they need to apply for extension at the Immigration authority before the visa expiry date. Visitors to Ethiopia on tourist visa are not allowed to

seek or take up employment or engage in an official business including attending to official meetings and workshops.

### Immigration status

Once you are in Ethiopia you will not be able to change your immigration status. If you have any concerns about your immigration status in Ethiopia, you should contact the local immigration authorities. Should you have any query on the visa process or require any support; please contact the SEWF team on the website by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.sewf2019.org/about/contact/>

For more information, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.ethiopianembassy.net/visa-information-page/>

<https://www.ethiopiaonlinevisa.com/>

The Ethiopian Embassy in London: <https://www.ethioembassy.org.uk/consular-services/visas/tourist-visa/>

### Or contact:

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs  
E-Mail:- mdina@ethionet.et  
Fax No. : - +251 11 155 32 09 or +251 11 156 49 81  
P. O. Box: - 5741, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT

Ethiopian Airlines and other international carriers offer flights to Addis Ababa and all over the world. Bole International airport has been upgraded in 2004 & 2019 and has many of the modern facilities expected of an international airport. However, flights often leave and arrive at roughly the same time in the evening, so it may well be crowded, and it is important to make sure to get into the right lines. Most officials speak English and will be happy to assist you.

If you are obtaining a Tourist Visa on arrival the queue to do is clearly indicated on the left-hand side. Once you have paid and been issued with the visa you then pass through immigration, where your passport will be stamped with the required period of days or months; check that your visa covers your intended stay as inadvertently over staying your welcome can be a stressful and expensive problem to solve. Those already possessing visas can proceed straight to immigration. Passing through customs is a relatively straightforward process and taxis are available in the car park at the bottom of the stairs/ramp. Ask to see the **official price list**.

## CUSTOMS

On arrival at the airport, visitors must declare all foreign currency exceeding USD 3,000 or equivalent. There is no limit on the amount that may be brought into the country. A maximum of 200 Ethiopian Birr may be imported and exported. All currency exchanges must be made with approved dealers whose transaction records must be retained by the traveller and produced, if required, on departure. Anyone who found to be non-compliant could be liable to the due process of law beyond confiscation of the excess amount.

## MONEY

The currency in Ethiopia is the Ethiopian Birr. It is divided into 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins as well as a one Birr coin, and there are 5, 10, 25, 50, and 100-birr notes.

The Birr is currently at around **35.74= £1**, **29.02 = USD1** and **32.26 = €1**. Latest exchange rates can be found at [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

Although inflation in the past few years means prices have risen sharply, for those accustomed to western prices, Ethiopia is still a relatively inexpensive place to visit.

### CASH

The US dollar is the preferred foreign currency in Ethiopia although the Euro and GBP is also relatively easy to change. Dollars, however, are difficult to acquire in Ethiopia. Regulation requires those changing Birr to dollars to hold a valid onward air ticket which must be presented at the central bank, and then only a maximum of US\$200 can be changed. If staying for a long period of time, you are advised to bring a reserve supply of dollars. Western Union is the best way of receiving cash from abroad and there are branches throughout Addis Ababa, but again, you can only receive the money in Birr.

### ATMs

Branches of Dashen Bank and Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in all major towns have ATMs which accept international Visa cards and an increasing number also accept MasterCard. Reliable ATMs can be found at the airport as well as most of the major hotels in Addis, principally Hilton, Sheraton, Radisson and Intercontinental. Many other banks also have ATMs which claim to accept international cards but often do not. Foreign Solo, Cirrus and Plus cards do **not** work in ATMs in Ethiopia.

### CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are gradually becoming more useful in Addis Ababa with most major hotels and restaurants now equipped to accept payment by Visa or MasterCard, although they may not always be in operation. Cash is the safer bet. Outside of Addis Ababa, cash is also the better option.

## GETTING AROUND ADDIS

Meter taxis have recently begun operating in Addis Ababa, and are a safe and reliable option, with clean, modern cars, fully equipped with seatbelts and airbags. These taxis must be called in advance and can usually arrive in 10-15 minutes or so if necessary. To book an **Addis** meter taxi, dial **+251945545454** and other meter taxis like Adika, Ride, Zay Ride, Pick-Pick and Bole Meter taxis are also operational in the city. The average price for taxi service on call basis is 18 Birr per kilometre.

A much cheaper alternative are the blue minibuses which follow set routes throughout the city during the day (1 Birr 50 Cents for short distances and 3-7 Birr for longer distances), although it is important to find out first which route to take and where you should get off as drivers and attendants don't often speak English. You should also be wary of pickpockets as minibuses are small and can be extremely full during peak hours. To ask a taxi or minibus driver to stop just say 'werajalluh' (literally: a person is getting off here).

It is not advisable to use buses, which are very crowded and slow. A new light railway system has just started running - ask a member of the resources team for more information.

All participants of Social Enterprise World Forum event should check SEWF App for information on transport arranged to and from venue for the main event from the preferred hotels listed on the website below: <https://www.sewf2019.org/accommodation-packages/>

## OUT OF ADDIS

Ethiopian Airlines fly to a wide variety of destinations within Ethiopia. It is important to reconfirm your tickets beforehand as flights are often overbooked and subject to last minute schedule changes.

## LANGUAGE

Over 80 languages are spoken across Ethiopia. Amharic is Ethiopia's national language. While regional languages such as Oromo, Somali and Tigrinya are also important, Amharic is the most widely used and understood language across the country.

All secondary and higher education is conducted in English, so most educated people speak English. English is used in official dealings and widely spoken in shops and restaurants to varying degrees.

A few words of Amharic will be extremely appreciated, greetings in particular. As a foreigner, you will most likely be referred to as a '*faranji*' or '*ferenji*' which literally means 'foreigner' and this is not an overtly negative term. The word for (a) local is '*habesha*'.

## BASIC PHRASES

Please note that Amharic word endings vary according to the gender and the number of people you're speaking to and are represented in the following guide as (m) male or (f) female.

Hello	sa-lam
How are you?	in-det nuh (m) in-det nuhsh (f)
Goodbye	duh-na-hun (m) duh-na-hun-yee (f)
Yes	a-wo
No	ai-duh-lum
Please	i-ba-kih (m) i-ba-kish (f)
Thank you	a-muh-suh-gi-na-luh-hu
Sorry/Excuse me	yi-k'ir-ta
OK/Yes	i-sh(i)

## TIME AND CALENDAR

Ethiopia is in the East Africa Time Zone which is **GMT+3**.

Ethiopia traditionally follows the Coptic calendar and uses an era that is seven years and eight months behind the Western Gregorian calendar. The extra five days tagged on to the Coptic calendar are regarded as the

'thirteenth month'. Government/official documents all use the Coptic calendar, so care should be taken when using such documents.

The time of day is also calculated differently. This follows the traditional Middle Eastern twelve-hour clock, when the twelve hours are counted from dawn, dawn being 6am. Thus 9am is three o'clock in Ethiopia and twelve noon is 6.

Ethiopians are aware of these differences and will usually remember when talking with foreigners to be precise about which calendar or timing they are using. Reference to the Western, or European, calendar is made; and to Ethiopian or European time when the clock is mentioned.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

Compared with many African countries, Ethiopia is remarkably safe. Serious or violent crime is rare and extremely rare against foreigners and travellers. Outside of the capital, the risk of petty crime drops even further.

Muggings and thefts are not common, but they do happen, and visitors should take sensible precautions, particularly at night. It is generally OK to walk around during the day although foreigners may attract attention from beggars and small children. At night, it is better to take a taxi.

Pickpockets tend to operate in the Piazza area of Addis Ababa and are even more frequent in the Mercato (Central Market) area, where it is advised to take an Ethiopian friend with you. A common ruse for pickpockets is for someone to accidentally spit or spill something on you and relieve of your possessions while attempting to help out/apologise/clean up. If someone spits or spills something on you, the best thing to do is to keep walking and ignore any attempts to distract you.

If you plan any business or personal travel outside Addis, please make sure:

- you consult with your local contact person
- check the FCO Travel Advice before departure <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ethiopia>
- check the latest security situation of the local area from different sources like partner organisations
- avoid crowds as they can easily change into a violent confrontation
- avoid driving after dark

***You should avoid crowded areas and remain vigilant if in the city and don't walk alone in the evenings.***

### WOMEN

In comparison to some other African countries, Ethiopia can be a fairly manageable place for women. The risk of rape or serious sexual assault is possibly lower than in many Western countries. Women should, however, avoid dressing provocatively, and take sensible precautions and be aware and alert at all times. It is quite common for men to comment and shout things at foreign women on the street. This, however, is not usually done in an aggressive manner and the best thing you can do is ignore it and keep walking. Women should not walk alone at night.

### BEGGARS

You are advised not to hand cash (or any other item) through your car window as it is illegal and could result in a fine, and to keep car doors locked at all times. (Begging is not illegal, only giving out cash through your car window.)

## CLIMATE AND CLOTHING

### CLIMATE

Ethiopia's generally high-altitude offsets the effects of its positions in the tropics, just to the north of the Equator. Temperatures tend not to vary that much throughout the year. The climate in Addis Ababa is generally mild; it is often cool at night and can feel hot during the day.

The sunniest part of the year is in the dry season runs from October to February, when it can be hot and extremely dusty in the city. There are two rainy seasons, one a lot heavier than the other. The light rains fall between March and May and the heavy rains appear at the beginning of June and usually last until mid-September. It can be quite a bit cooler during these periods. There is, on average, about 7 hours of sunshine a day, and even at the height of the rainy season in July and August, there is likely to be a least a few hours of sunshine here and there.

### TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL

The average annual temperature in Addis Ababa is 16°C, with daily maximum temperatures averaging 20–25°C throughout the year, and overnight lows averaging 5–10°C. Average annual rainfall is around 1,200 mm.

### ALTITUDE

Addis Ababa is situated on the foothills of Mount Entoto at about 2,400m (7874ft) above sea level and is a very up and down as a result. Newcomers to Addis often feel the effects of the altitude, but this is usually fairly mild and should only be transitory. The symptoms could include a loss of appetite, headache, nausea, vomiting or sleeplessness and feeling more tired than usual for the first few weeks. Drinking 2 to 3 litres of water per day helps, and you should continue to drink more water than normal whilst at altitude.

### CLOTHING

The climate in Addis Ababa is moderate and you need to cater for both hot and cold weather. You should, therefore, bring both winter- and summer-weight clothes. Warm clothes are necessary as it can be quite cold during the evenings, especially during the rainy season, during which houses tend to get somewhat cold and damp.

Ethiopians are conservative in their dress and it is much appreciated if visitors follow suit. Dress is important in Ethiopia and an effort to look smart is seen as showing respect to those you are meeting. Ethiopian women traditionally do not expose their shoulders, knees, cleavage or waist in public. If visiting government offices or on business a jacket and a tie is a minimum, a suit preferred for men and the equivalent for women. Sleeveless shirts and shorts are looked down upon, particularly in rural areas, and are unacceptable in churches or mosques. Office dress varies from smart to smart casual.

Almost all recreational clothes should be for warm weather. Both men and women should bring a hat as protection against the sun (which can be fierce at this altitude). A waterproof jacket, wellies and an umbrella are also useful, as downpours can be very heavy during the rainy season. Sun cream is also important as the sun can be very strong given the altitude and Ethiopia's proximity to the equator.

## GEOGRAPHY

At 1,126,829 square kilometres (435,071 square miles) Ethiopia is the world's 27th-largest country, comparable in size to Bolivia. The major portion of Ethiopia lies on the Horn of Africa, which is the easternmost part of the African landmass. Bordering Ethiopia are Sudan and South Sudan to the west, Djibouti and Eritrea to the north, Somalia to the east and Kenya to the south. Within Ethiopia is a vast highland complex of mountains and dissected plateaus divided by the Great Rift Valley, which runs generally southwest to northeast and is surrounded by lowlands, steppes, or semi-desert. The great diversity of terrain determines wide variations in climate, soils, natural vegetation, and settlement patterns.

Ethiopia is an ecologically diverse country, ranging from the deserts along the eastern border to the tropical forests in the south to extensive Afro-montane in the northern and south-western parts. Lake Tana in the north is the source of the Blue Nile. It also has a large number of endemic species, notably the Gelada Baboon, the Walia Ibex and the Ethiopian wolf (or Simien fox). The wide range of altitude has given the country a variety of ecologically distinct areas and, this has helped to encourage the evolution of endemic species in ecological isolation.

## MOBILE AND INTERNET

Ethiopia has a state telecommunications monopoly (Ethio-Telecom) which is widely regarded as unreliable and communications are often patchy as a result.

There are a number of internet cafes dotted around town and Wi-Fi connections are available in most major hotels. Rates do vary, however.

## HEALTH

Please check with your local doctor about recommended vaccinations for Ethiopia. The standard of healthcare in Ethiopia is on the whole relatively low but improving gradually. As such, visitors are advised to have a check-up before travelling and ensure they have adequate medical insurance, including Medevac capability. If taking medication, make sure you bring an adequate supply as availability is limited.

### MOSQUITOES AND MALARIA

Despite the altitude, there are mosquitoes in Addis Ababa, particularly in the greener parts of the city. Mosquitoes are much more prevalent in other parts of the country, particularly below 1800m, where risk of Malaria is significantly higher. If travelling to other parts of the country, relevant precautions should be taken (long sleeves and trousers, insect repellent and prophylactics if advised by your doctor).

### DRINKING WATER

You are advised not to drink tap water and to avoid ice in your drinks in smaller places. Carbonated and still water is readily available. When buying bottled water, ensure it is properly sealed. Hot drinks are generally safe.

It is advisable to carry a supply of anti-diarrhoeal and anti-emetic tablets as well as re-hydration salts in case of unforeseen upsets. Please contact some hospitals in Addis Ababa:

**Nordic Medical Centre +251929105653**

**Myungsung Christian Medical Centre (MCM) +251116292963/6295420**

**American Medical Centre +251-116678000/04/07 +251-115 52 5463**

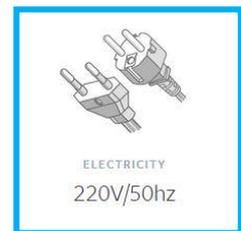
In case of emergencies, contact TEBITA Ambulance Pre-Hospital Emergency Medical Service Dial **8035**

### KEEPING FIT

There are a variety of gym facilities in Addis Ababa, catering for a range of different budgets and interests. [Bole Rock Gym & Spa](#) located at the city’s new downtown (near Edna Mall) is a well-equipped and relatively economical option and has a 25m pool, as well as Spa facilities. There are also gyms and swimming pools at most of the hotels listed on the website.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Ethiopia uses the 2-plain mainland European electricity at a voltage of 220w/50Hz. Many offices have adaptors or multi-use extension cables; however, it is advisable to come prepared with the appropriate adaptor for your electronic appliances.



Due to frequent power surges and power cuts, it is also advisable to bring an electricity power surge protector to protect your electronic appliances.

### BUSINESS HOURS

The following is a list of *standard* working hours for different institutions in Ethiopia:

	Morning	Afternoon	Saturday
British Council Addis Ababa Office	8:30 – 17:00		
Banks, Post Offices, Govt. Offices, Ethio-Telecom	08:30 – 12:00	13:30 – 17:00	08:30 – 11:00
Cafes	06:00 – 21:00		
Restaurants	12:00 – 15:00 / 19:00 – 22:00		
Shops	08:00 – 13:00	14:00 – 18:30	08:00 – 18:30
Supermarkets	08:00 – 21:00		

**NB:** While this is a list of standard opening times, there may of course be some variation.

### HOTELS, RESTAURANTS AND SHOPPING

#### HOTELS

There is a relatively good selection of hotels available in Addis Ababa, catering for a variety of different budgets. Please Visit SEWF website for selection of hotels. <https://www.sewf2019.org/accommodation-packages/>

Outside of the Addis Ababa, the quality of accommodation varies significantly and you are advised to consult webpages such as [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com) and [www.lonelyplanet.com/ethiopia](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/ethiopia) for the latest reviews, rates and contact details.

## RESTAURANTS

Addis Ababa has an increasing number of restaurants and bars of different descriptions, including Indian, Chinese, Armenia, Turkish, French and Italian restaurants. There are also a number of local bars and restaurants dotted all over the city selling delicious traditional Ethiopian food and cheap, good quality local beer. See Ethiopian Cuisine section for more details on Ethiopian food and the Food and Drink annex for more details of restaurants.

## TIPPING

A 10% service charge is sometimes put on the bill, but most waiters will still expect a small tip on top of this. If you park your car and leave for a short while, a person might volunteer to act as a guard (*zabagna*) and should be tipped a few birrs when you return.

## SHOPPING

On the exhibition of SEWF event, you will have great opportunity to shop many items. Moreover, the Piazza area of town has many electrical and jewellery shops, but Churchill Road is the best place to find souvenirs. Both the Hilton and the Sheraton have good quality and slightly more upmarket (and expensive) souvenir shops. Traditional embroidered cotton clothes can be bought in a number of shops on Churchill Road or Shiro Meda. Hand-woven Ethiopian carpets and rugs can be purchased at a variety of local workshops.

There are a number of shopping malls made of up of small boutiques such as Dembel, Getu, Friendship, Mafi and Edna Mall, all in the Bole area.

The central market, known as Mercato, is one of the largest open-air market in Africa. A “sprawling city of tin-roofed stalls”, it can be somewhat overwhelming and is very easy to get lost amongst the myriad of people and stalls. It is advisable to go with someone who knows their way around, and not to take valuables or a large amount of money as pickpockets actively target foreigners. However, Mercato is a fascinating place and you can buy just about anything if you are willing to bargain for it.

## SUPERMARKETS AND AVAILABILITY OF GOODS

There are a number of small/medium-sized supermarkets in Addis Ababa with varying degree of items. The better stocked supermarkets include Novis, Friendship (Bole and Hilton Hotel) and the Shoa Hypermarket, all of which are located and/or have branches in the Bole, Megenagna and Old Airport areas.

## TOILETRIES

Local supplies of toiletries are variable in availability and quality – and Western imports are often very expensive. You should, therefore, bring supplies of deodorants, tampons and sanitary towels, aspirins, plasters, shaving cream, razors, antihistamine creams, insect repellents, sun block and after-sun preparations and diarrhoea remedies with you. The atmosphere is dry, and UV-protecting lip salve, and intensive care lotion, will be soothing for anyone with a sensitive skin.

## NIGHTLIFE AND LEISURE

Ethiopians are very sociable, and coffee shops all over the city are often filled to the brim with people chatting over a macchiato or two or a glass of fresh fruit juice. Local beer is cheap and of a reasonably good quality, and bars usually up fill in the early evenings after work.

## NIGHTLIFE

Addis Ababa has a varied and lively nightlife, ranging from local, tin-shack watering holes to large, upmarket bars and clubs. There is live music throughout the week (mainly Wednesdays and Thursdays) and a vibrant Ethiopian Jazz scene in Addis Ababa. People tend to go out late on the weekend, with bars filling up after 10 and clubs really getting going around 1:30-2am. There are a number of popular bars frequented by expats and locals as well.

**LEISURE**

There are several museum, galleries and cultural centres dotted around the city. The main cinema is at Edna Mall in Bole and shows relatively recent films from abroad as well as Ethiopian films.

**ETHIOPIAN FOOD**

The national food consists of *injera*, a soft, sponge-like flatbread made from *teff*, Ethiopia’s endemic cereal which is gluten free. This is served with a number of spicy sauces known as *wat*. One of the most common *wat* is *shiro*, made from chickpeas and is suitable for all diets, including vegans. Otherwise there are many different types of *wat* to suit all palates, ranging from very hot and red (*qey wat*) which may also contain chicken (*doro wat*), to the milder yellow variety (*alicha wat*), which is usually made with lamb. An alternative is *kitfo*, minced meat which you may want to order cooked as Ethiopians often eat it raw or very lightly cooked (*lebleb*).



In Ethiopia, food is usually shared amongst a group of people and eaten without cutlery. Food is eaten with the right hand only and, to complete the feeling of authenticity may be washed down with a glass of *tej*, a strong, alcoholic drink made from honey, or, of course, a few of the requisite cups of the famously strong Ethiopian *buna* (coffee).

**NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER RESOURCES**

Foreign newspapers (less than a week old) can sometimes be found in the major hotels. English language newspapers and magazines published in Addis include The Ethiopian Herald (government paper), The Daily Monitor, the Reporter, Fortune, Capital, the Sub-Saharan Informer, The Addis Standard and Ethiopian business review (a well-known business magazine).

**DISABILITY**

There are very few facilities for people with disabilities outside of the more upmarket hotels in Addis Ababa. Taxis and buses do not have wheelchair access, there are no ramps on streets and potholes and uneven streets can be hazardous. Getting around on the streets, on public transport and into shops and buildings can be a challenge for those with limited mobility as a result.

For those restricted in other ways, such as visually or aurally, you’ll get plenty of offers of help. Unlike in many Western countries, Ethiopians are not shy about coming forward to offer assistance.

**RELIGION IN ETHIOPIA**

Ethiopia is generally a conservative religious society with the majority of people being Ethiopian Orthodox or Muslim. There are a growing number of evangelical protestant churches.

In Addis Ababa, a wide variety of Church services are available. English-speaking services are held at the International Evangelical Church which has lively services both in the morning at 09:00 and 10:45 and in the evening at 17:00. It is situated 5 minutes away from Mexico Square. St. Matthews Anglican church has services at 08:00, 10:15 and an informal service at 18:00. Holy Saviour Catholic Church on Churchill Road has an English service every Sunday at 10:00 and the Seventh Day Adventist Church near to the Addis Ababa Stadium has service at 09:00 every Saturday morning.

There are no English-speaking mosques in the city; prayers are usually conducted in Arabic or Amharic. Please ask at the British Council if you require any further information on other places of worship.

**We hope this guide helps to have a pleasant and enjoyable stay in Ethiopia, and should you have any inquiries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.**

#### **For more information on Social Enterprise World Forum Event**

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E-mail- [info@sewf2019.org](mailto:info@sewf2019.org)

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#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The following sources were used to collect information and are fully recommended for those wanting to know more about life in Ethiopia.

##### **Ethiopia Country Profile (BBC)**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13349398>

##### **Ethiopia 2019 – World Factbook**

<http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/ethiopia/index.html>

##### **Lonely Planet: Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somaliland**

(Lonely Planet, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2013)

##### **Ethiopia: Customs and Culture, Sarah Howard**

(Kuperad, 2<sup>ND</sup> Edition, 2011)