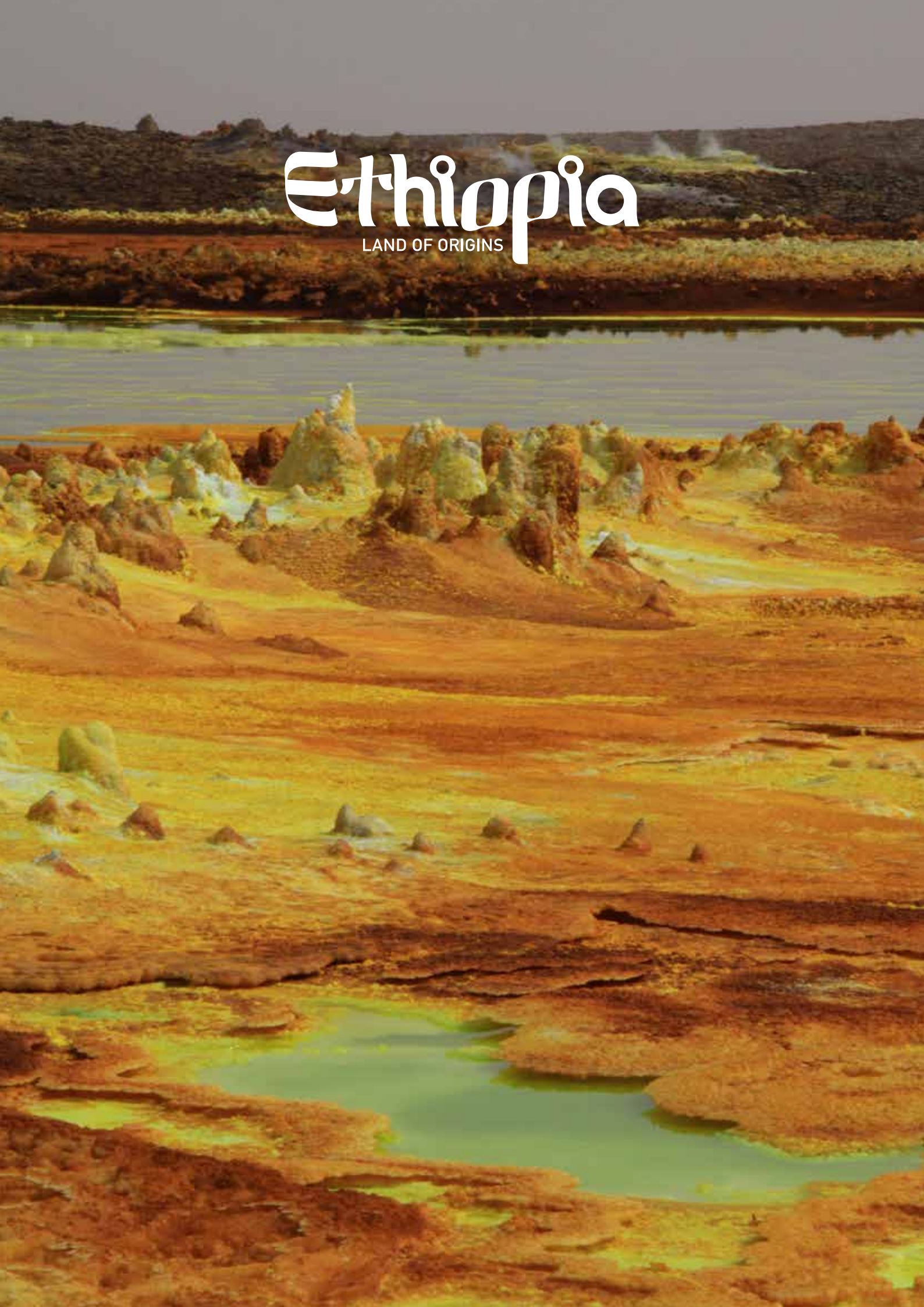


Ethiopia

LAND OF ORIGINS



“
ETHIOPIA INVITES
YOU TO DISCOVER
WHY IT IS THE ORIGIN
OF SO MUCH HISTORY
AND CULTURE,
VIBRANTLY ALIVE
IN A LANDSCAPE OF
DRAMATIC BEAUTY.”



LAND OF ORIGINS

Make time to explore Ethiopia and you will be put in touch with your own origins

As you travel across her great heights and explore her deep places you will experience breath-taking beauty and astounding achievements.

For this is a land of origins. It is the cradle of humanity, where we first walked on two legs. It is also the source of the Blue Nile, the great river whose power and fertility nurtured the origin of civilization itself. And it is the origin of one of life's great pleasures – coffee, our gift to the world.

So come to Ethiopia and take the time to be enchanted by her extraordinary past and to share in her dynamic present. Come, and you will discover why Ethiopia is original in many ways.

*Ethiopia will give you a wealth of discoveries to stimulate your senses
and satisfy your curiosity*



ONLY IN ETHIOPIA - 10 EXPERIENCES THAT MAY WELL CHANGE YOU FOREVER

Meet your ancient ancestor the hominoid skeleton 'Lucy' at the National Museum.

Marvel at the mystical churches of Lalibela, hand-hewn from rock to create the Jerusalem of Africa.

Find out where the biblical Ark of the Covenant is kept in Aksum and walk in the footsteps of the Queen of Sheba.

Visit the castles of Gondar, unique in Africa, and go back to a time of powerful kings.

Discover the astonishing mix of ethnic groups in Southern Ethiopia and learn about their traditional ways of living.

Wander in colourful Harar, the old walled city of a hundred mosques, and the fourth most holy site in Islam.

Trek the Simien Mountains, the Roof of Africa, and enjoy endless vistas or hike in Gheralta to experience the spirituality of centuries old churches dotted among steep pink cliffs.

Explore the out-of-this-world landscapes of the Danakil Depression, the lowest and hottest place on Earth, and climb the Erta Ale volcano.

Tour the lakes and parks along the Great Rift Valley - the only geographical feature visible from the moon.

Take a boat trip on Lake Tana, the source of the mighty Blue Nile, to discover its islands and monasteries.

A history that goes back as far as myth and legend but also boldly embraces today

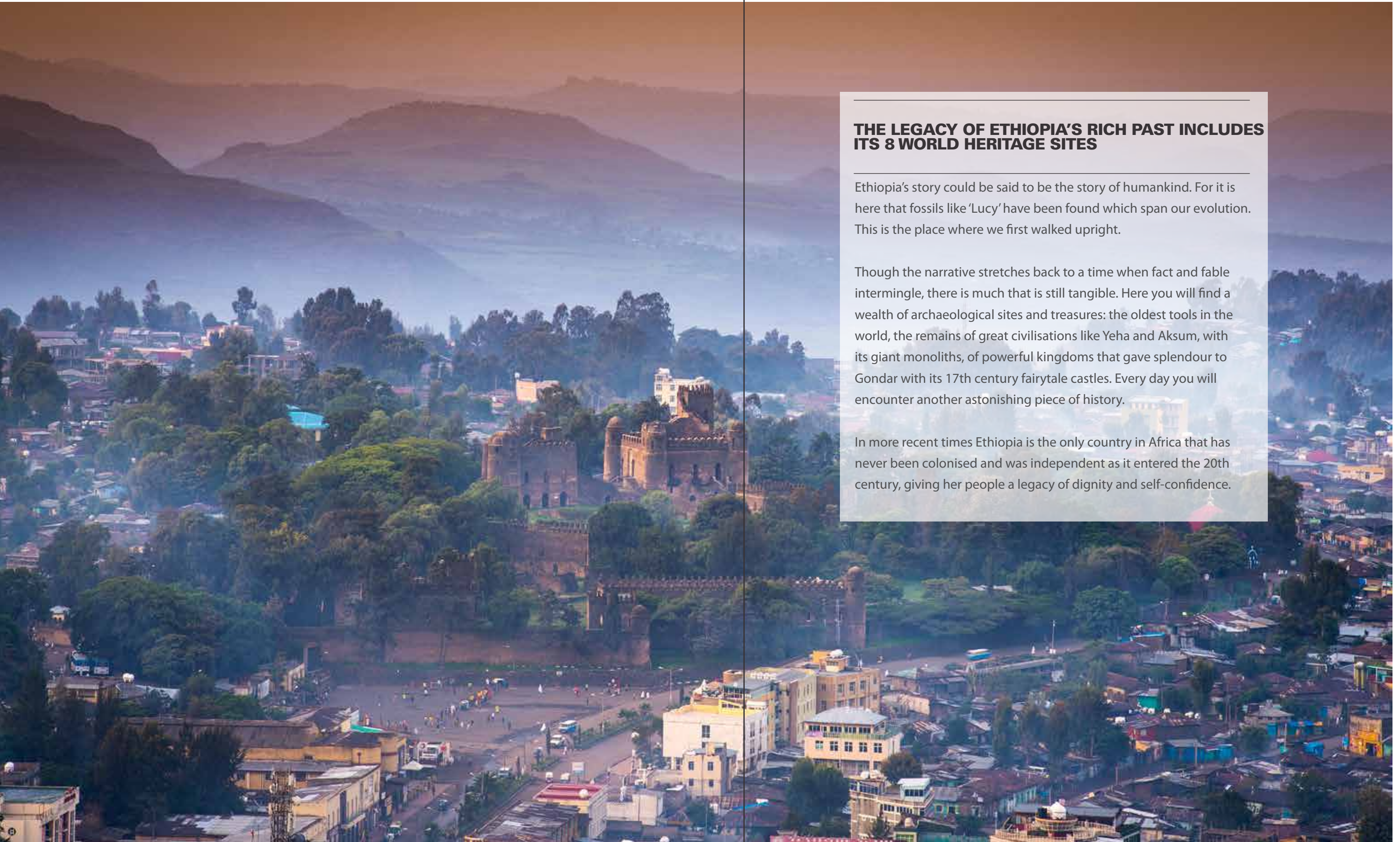


THE LEGACY OF ETHIOPIA'S RICH PAST INCLUDES ITS 8 WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Ethiopia's story could be said to be the story of humankind. For it is here that fossils like 'Lucy' have been found which span our evolution. This is the place where we first walked upright.

Though the narrative stretches back to a time when fact and fable intermingle, there is much that is still tangible. Here you will find a wealth of archaeological sites and treasures: the oldest tools in the world, the remains of great civilisations like Yeha and Aksum, with its giant monoliths, of powerful kingdoms that gave splendour to Gondar with its 17th century fairytale castles. Every day you will encounter another astonishing piece of history.

In more recent times Ethiopia is the only country in Africa that has never been colonised and was independent as it entered the 20th century, giving her people a legacy of dignity and self-confidence.



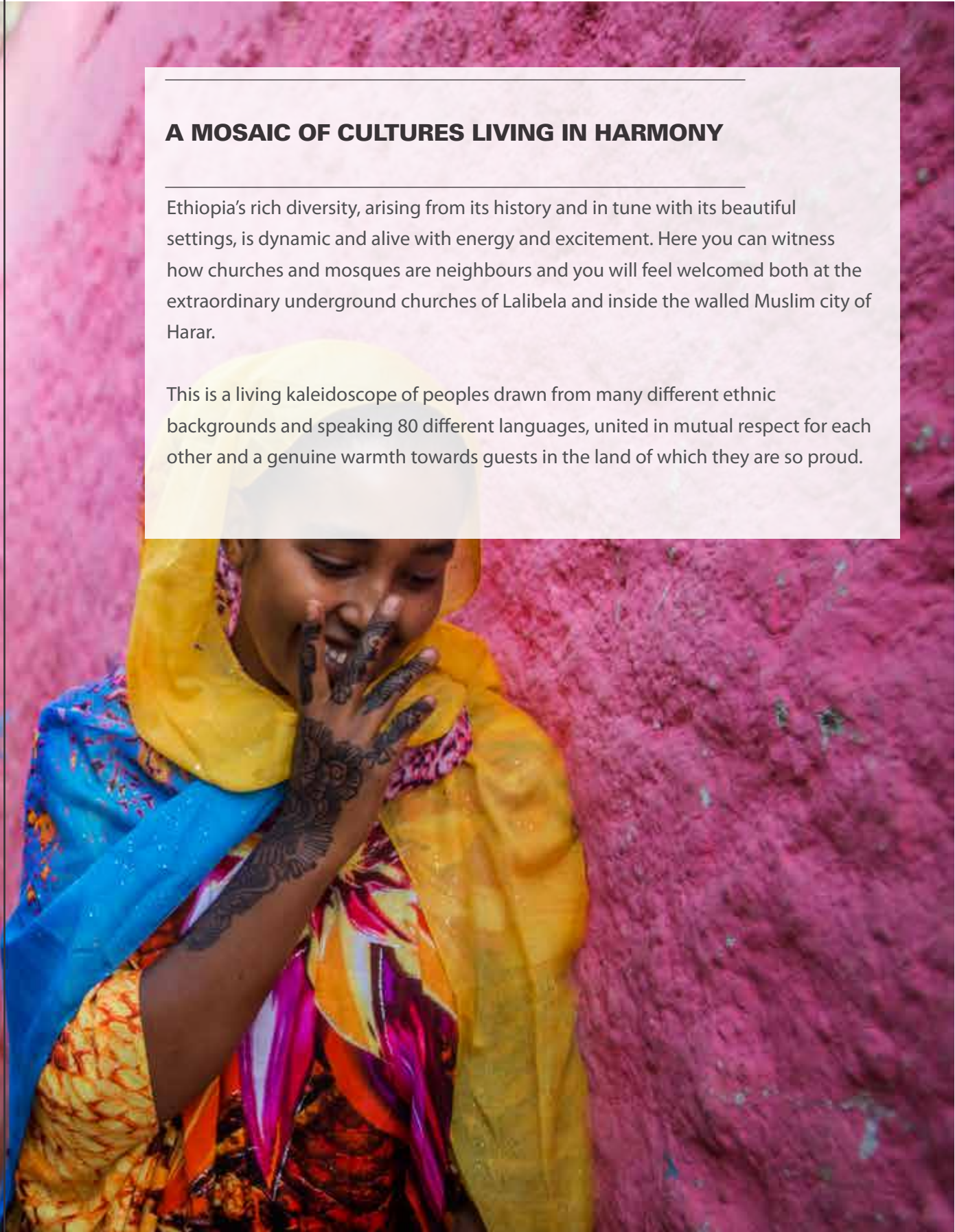
Explore Ethiopia and you will find solace for the soul and inspiration for the senses



A MOSAIC OF CULTURES LIVING IN HARMONY

Ethiopia's rich diversity, arising from its history and in tune with its beautiful settings, is dynamic and alive with energy and excitement. Here you can witness how churches and mosques are neighbours and you will feel welcomed both at the extraordinary underground churches of Lalibela and inside the walled Muslim city of Harar.

This is a living kaleidoscope of peoples drawn from many different ethnic backgrounds and speaking 80 different languages, united in mutual respect for each other and a genuine warmth towards guests in the land of which they are so proud.



Mingle with locals at an Ethiopian festival to feel the country’s heartbeat



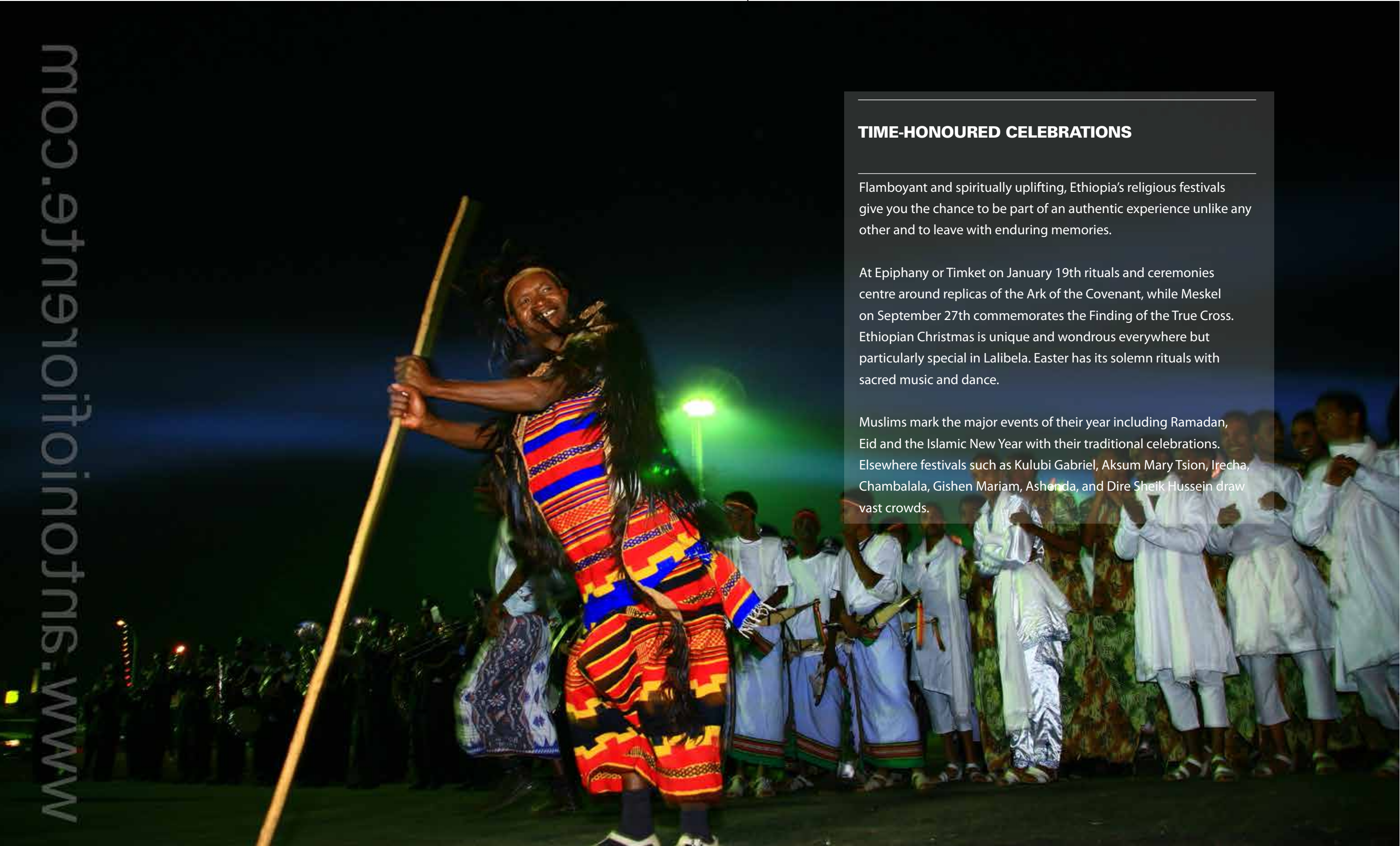
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TIME-HONOURED CELEBRATIONS

Flamboyant and spiritually uplifting, Ethiopia’s religious festivals give you the chance to be part of an authentic experience unlike any other and to leave with enduring memories.

At Epiphany or Timket on January 19th rituals and ceremonies centre around replicas of the Ark of the Covenant, while Meskel on September 27th commemorates the Finding of the True Cross. Ethiopian Christmas is unique and wondrous everywhere but particularly special in Lalibela. Easter has its solemn rituals with sacred music and dance.

Muslims mark the major events of their year including Ramadan, Eid and the Islamic New Year with their traditional celebrations. Elsewhere festivals such as Kulubi Gabriel, Aksum Mary TSION, Irecha, Chambalala, Gishen Mariam, Ashenda, and Dire Sheik Hussein draw vast crowds.



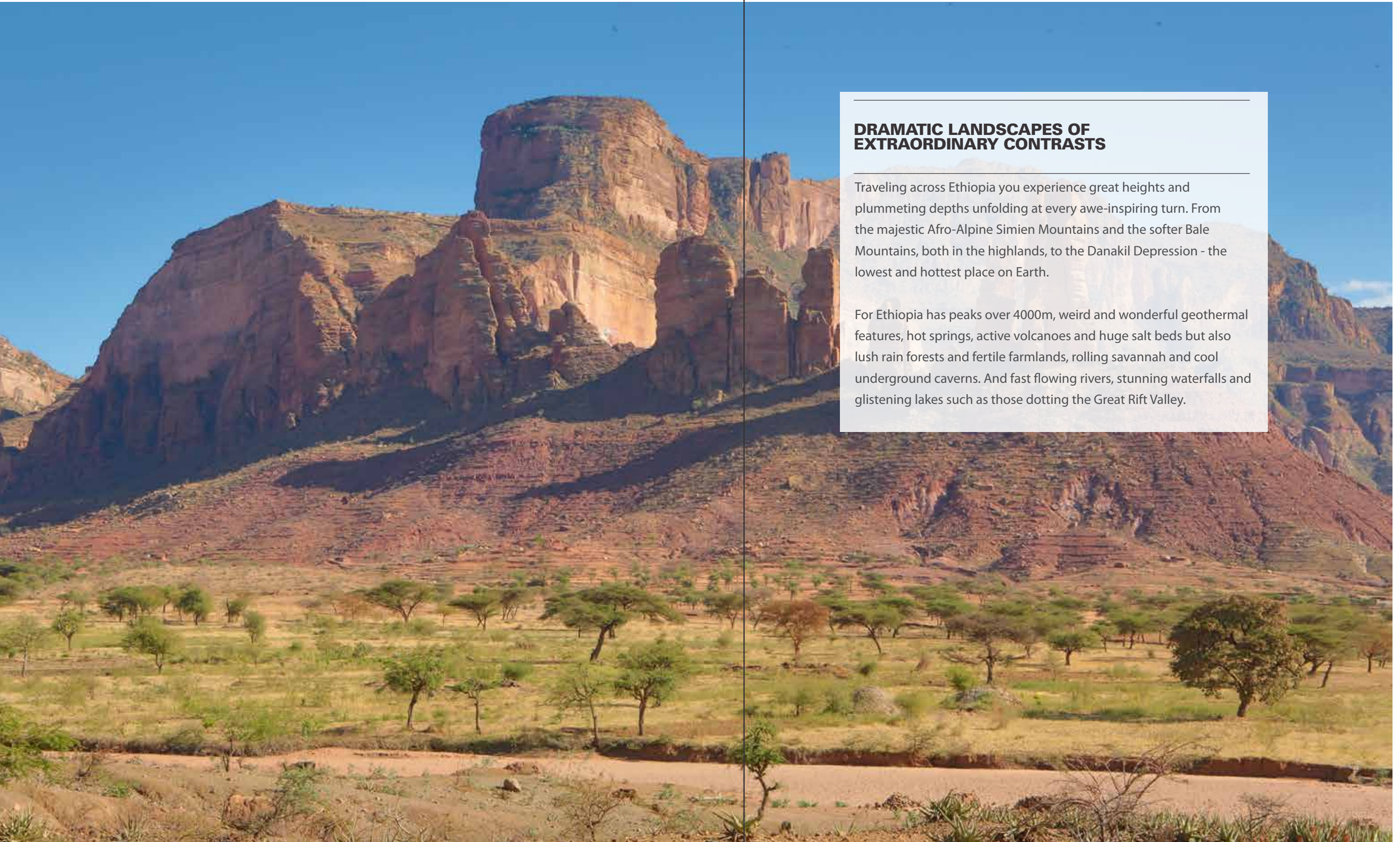
Be inspired by the endless panoramas of the most varied scenery in the world



**DRAMATIC LANDSCAPES OF
EXTRAORDINARY CONTRASTS**

Traveling across Ethiopia you experience great heights and plummeting depths unfolding at every awe-inspiring turn. From the majestic Afro-Alpine Simien Mountains and the softer Bale Mountains, both in the highlands, to the Danakil Depression - the lowest and hottest place on Earth.

For Ethiopia has peaks over 4000m, weird and wonderful geothermal features, hot springs, active volcanoes and huge salt beds but also lush rain forests and fertile farmlands, rolling savannah and cool underground caverns. And fast flowing rivers, stunning waterfalls and glistening lakes such as those dotting the Great Rift Valley.



Be astounded at the animals you will see only in Ethiopia



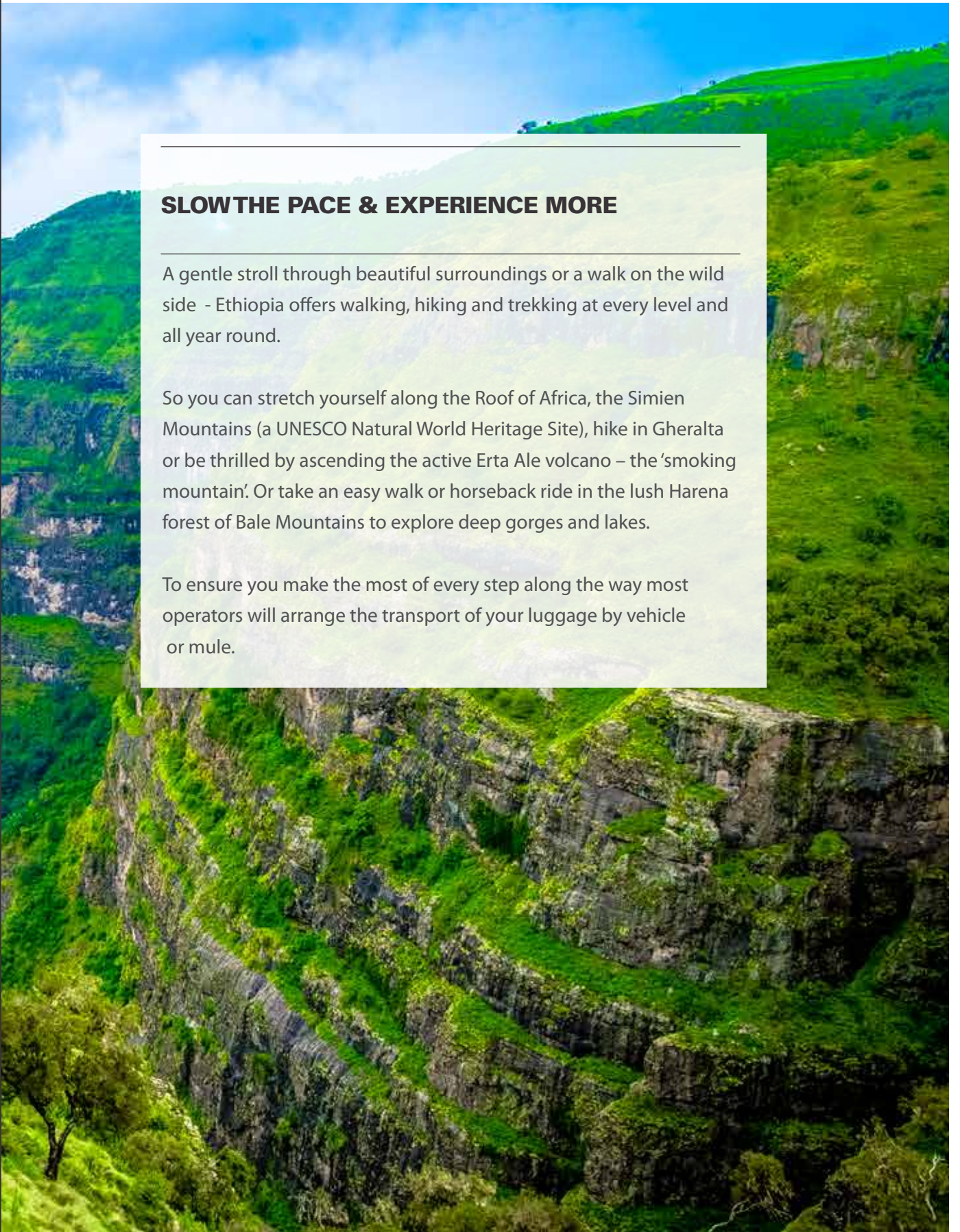
A LAND OF RARE SPECIES
IN THEIR NATURAL HABITATS

The range of terrain and climate make Ethiopia the fourth largest bio-diversity zone on Earth – with more unique species of flora than any other country in Africa – and a wildlife lover’s paradise.

Touring Ethiopia you will see the world’s rarest wolf, the twisted horned, shaggy mountain Nyala and the shy Walia ibex. You will enjoy mingling with the gelada baboons in their natural habitat and you may even have the chance to spot the Abyssinian lion with his black mane. There’s all this plus typical African fauna such as elephants, hippos and zebras.

So diverse and precious are all these natural resources that Ethiopia now has 24 national parks and four Biosphere Reserves to preserve and protect them.

Walk the Roof of Africa or discover many other trails



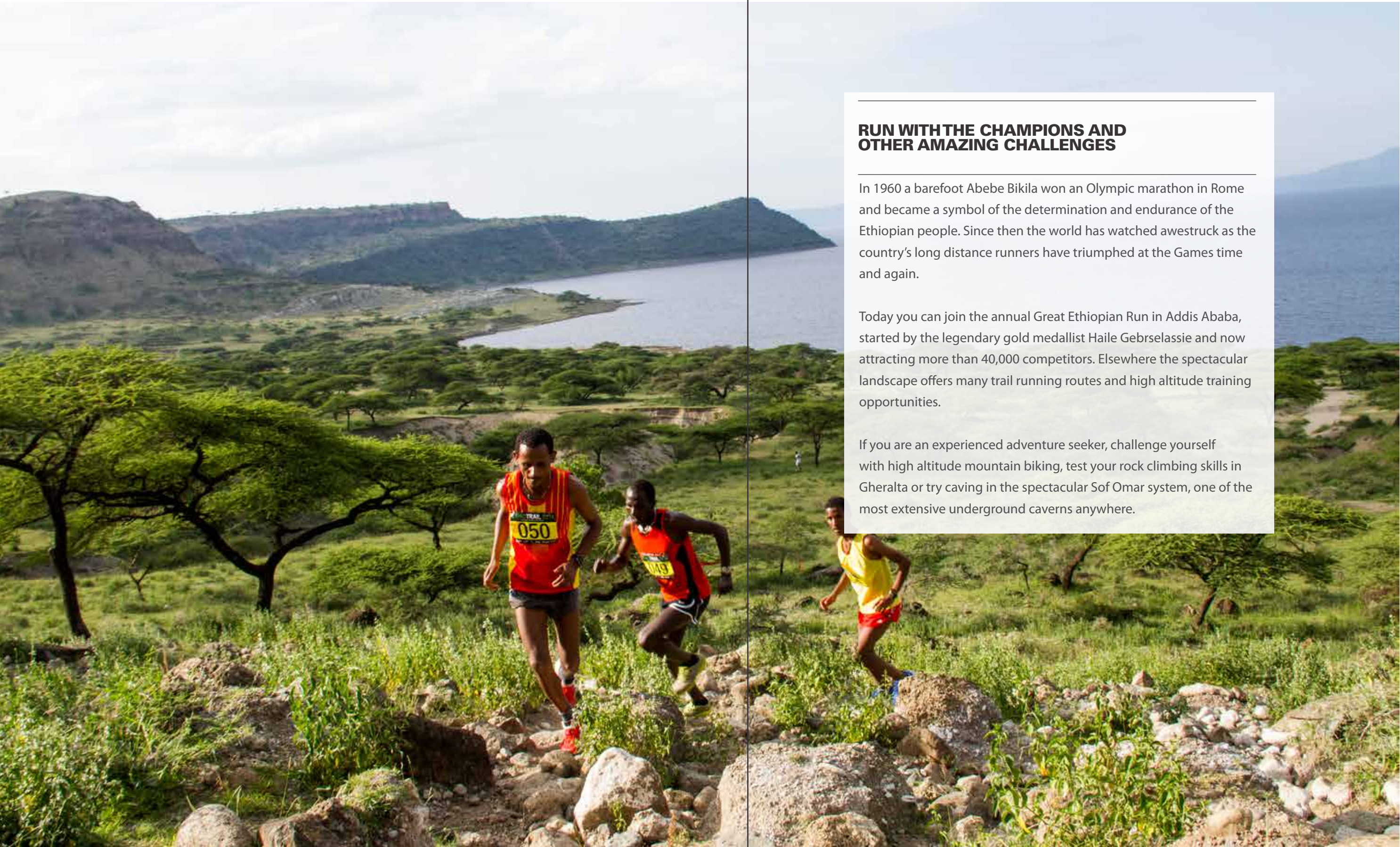
SLOWTHE PACE & EXPERIENCE MORE

A gentle stroll through beautiful surroundings or a walk on the wild side - Ethiopia offers walking, hiking and trekking at every level and all year round.

So you can stretch yourself along the Roof of Africa, the Simien Mountains (a UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site), hike in Gheralta or be thrilled by ascending the active Erta Ale volcano – the ‘smoking mountain’. Or take an easy walk or horseback ride in the lush Harena forest of Bale Mountains to explore deep gorges and lakes.

To ensure you make the most of every step along the way most operators will arrange the transport of your luggage by vehicle or mule.

“I’m lucky. The best possible place in the world for training is Addis Ababa”
Haile Gebrselassie, Olympic Gold Medallist



**RUN WITH THE CHAMPIONS AND
OTHER AMAZING CHALLENGES**

In 1960 a barefoot Abebe Bikila won an Olympic marathon in Rome and became a symbol of the determination and endurance of the Ethiopian people. Since then the world has watched awestruck as the country’s long distance runners have triumphed at the Games time and again.

Today you can join the annual Great Ethiopian Run in Addis Ababa, started by the legendary gold medallist Haile Gebrselassie and now attracting more than 40,000 competitors. Elsewhere the spectacular landscape offers many trail running routes and high altitude training opportunities.

If you are an experienced adventure seeker, challenge yourself with high altitude mountain biking, test your rock climbing skills in Gheralta or try caving in the spectacular Sof Omar system, one of the most extensive underground caverns anywhere.

You can spot unusual birds all over Ethiopia – one of Africa’s leading birding destinations



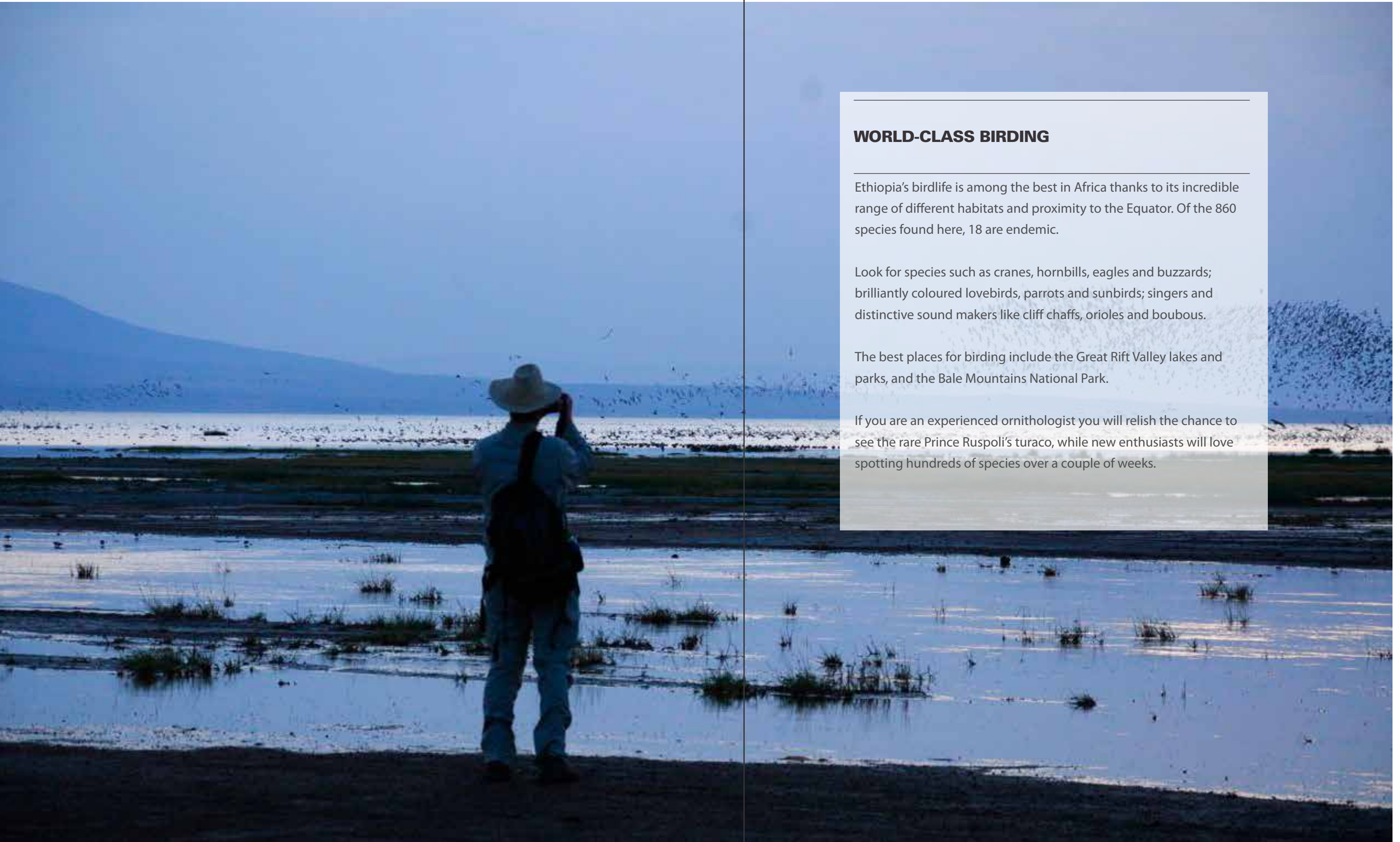
WORLD-CLASS BIRDING

Ethiopia’s birdlife is among the best in Africa thanks to its incredible range of different habitats and proximity to the Equator. Of the 860 species found here, 18 are endemic.

Look for species such as cranes, hornbills, eagles and buzzards; brilliantly coloured lovebirds, parrots and sunbirds; singers and distinctive sound makers like cliff chaffs, orioles and boubous.

The best places for birding include the Great Rift Valley lakes and parks, and the Bale Mountains National Park.

If you are an experienced ornithologist you will relish the chance to see the rare Prince Ruspoli’s turaco, while new enthusiasts will love spotting hundreds of species over a couple of weeks.



Everywhere in Addis the aroma of roasting coffee mingles with the scents of spicy cooking and frankincense



THE VIBRANT DIPLOMATIC CAPITAL OF AFRICA

Ethiopia’s mysterious ancient cities contrast with lively Addis Ababa whose name means ‘New Flower’. Founded in 1887 by Emperor Menelik II, it is today a political and business capital home to the headquarters of the African Union and to one of the largest number of diplomatic missions in the world.

Situated in the highlands - at 2300m - with a year round balmy climate, Addis is a cosmopolitan mix of East and West where you will find interesting churches and museums alongside stylish new cafes, international hotels and restaurants. Not to be missed are the cultural restaurants serving the unique Ethiopian cuisine accompanied by traditional music and dancing.

Addis Ababa has developed an excellent reputation for top level international meetings with high profile guests

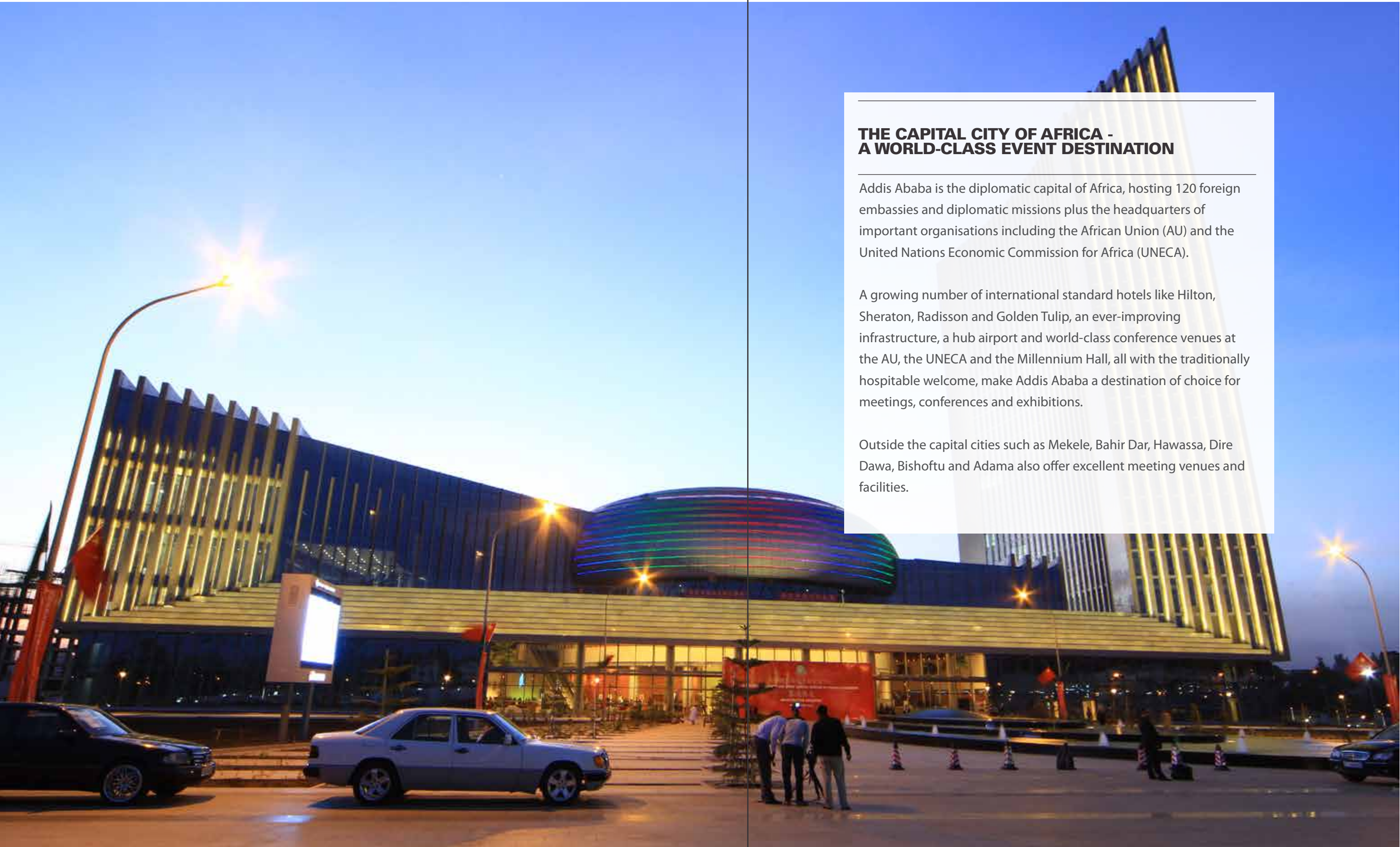


**THE CAPITAL CITY OF AFRICA -
A WORLD-CLASS EVENT DESTINATION**

Addis Ababa is the diplomatic capital of Africa, hosting 120 foreign embassies and diplomatic missions plus the headquarters of important organisations including the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

A growing number of international standard hotels like Hilton, Sheraton, Radisson and Golden Tulip, an ever-improving infrastructure, a hub airport and world-class conference venues at the AU, the UNECA and the Millennium Hall, all with the traditionally hospitable welcome, make Addis Ababa a destination of choice for meetings, conferences and exhibitions.

Outside the capital cities such as Mekele, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, Dire Dawa, Bishoftu and Adama also offer excellent meeting venues and facilities.



GOOD TO KNOW

Ethiopia, a safe and stable country, is a year-round destination but visitors might like to pick a time that suits their particular interests. September to October is wonderful for flowers. October to January may yield the biggest number of birds. Or there’s the festival season to take into consideration. Timket (The Feast of Epiphany) on January 19th and Meskel (The Finding of the True Cross) on September 27th are the most popular but there are many others.

Visitors need visas but an increasing number of nationals can get them on arrival at the airport. Check before you travel and plan to have the fee in cash to pay for the visa.

The national carrier Ethiopian Airlines connects the Bole International airport in Addis Ababa with 90 cities worldwide and also runs domestic routes to the main tourism destinations around this vast country. Other international airlines such as Lufthansa, Qatar Airlines, Saudi, Emirates, Turkish Airlines, Egyptair and Kenya Airways also fly to Bole.

If you prefer the convenience of packaged travel you will find tour operators in your country selling a range of trips to Ethiopia. You can also arrange land and air tours with Ethiopian tour operators, most of them based in Addis Ababa.

The Ethiopian currency is Birr. Changing money is straightforward in cities and bigger towns. Although credit cards are accepted in the largest hotels and lodges, restaurants and shops, you might need cash for smaller establishments and on the roads less travelled.

English is widely spoken but a few words of Amharic can make you new friends.

Pack for a range of temperatures. Ethiopia has five different climatic zones and generally pleasant weather for most of the year, but even hot places get chilly at night.

If you are bringing professional photographic or video equipment, check with the tour operator or local contact before you travel as special customs regulations may apply.

There is accommodation to suit all tastes and all pockets, from big name hotels through the affordable luxury of tourist hotels and lodges, to budget guesthouses.

You can eat and drink well in most places – try the locally produced wine of the Great Rift Valley. Some restaurants serve Western or international food, but it is more fun to sample the local cuisine like sharing gluten free injera flatbreads with spicy and delicious meat tibs.



UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Sites in Ethiopia

- Aksum
- Fasil Ghebbi, Gondar Region
- Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historic Town
- Konso Cultural Landscape
- Lower Valley of the Awash
- Lower Valley of the Omo
- Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela
- Tiya

UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site

- Simien Mountains National Park

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- Meskel Festival

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves

- Kafa
- Lake Tana
- Sheka Forest
- Yayu Coffee





**ETHIOPIA IS TRULY A
WONDROUS LAND. IT IS
HARD TO BELIEVE HOW OLD
IT IS, AND YET HOW NEW. IT
STIRS YOUR SENSES, MOVES
YOUR HEART AND TOUCHES
YOUR SOUL. MAKE IT YOUR
TRAVEL DESTINATION AND
YOU'LL NEVER BE QUITE THE
SAME AGAIN.**



www.ethiopia.travel

