

DISCOVER ETHIOPIA

*The Source of the Blue Nile
& The Annular Solar Eclipse June 21, 2020*
June 9-23, 2020



Dear Travelers !

We invite you to join us as we discover the unique history, mountains, rock-hewn churches, and natural world of Ethiopia !

A bonus will be seeing the Annular Solar Eclipse on June 21, 2020 at the renowned World Heritage Site of Lalibela. We will also see the headwaters of the Nile at Lake Tana, and the Blue Nile Falls.

To really explore Ethiopia, we will have long drives through spectacular mountainous terrain from Lake Tana to the ancient capital of Gondar, Axum (renowned for its 2,000-year-old stelae), and to the amazing rock-hewn churches at Lalibela.

We will relish the natural world at 10,000 feet in the Simien Mountains, with breathtaking views across Ethiopia and troops of gelada

monkeys grazing around us. With luck, we might see an Ethiopian wolf.

Ethiopia is the highest country in Africa. The fascinating mountainous countryside will be intriguing and breathtaking. We will travel from Addis Ababa at 7,700 feet to Lake Tana at 6,000 feet, and then to Axum and Gondar at 7,000 feet, Lalibela at 8,500 feet.

The trip will be a wonderful opportunity to learn about the cultural heritage of the ancient Ethiopian kingdom and its religious heritage.

Please join us for an amazing adventure !

Margaret

*Margaret M. Betchart
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.
For AAAS Travels & Sigma Xi Expeditions*

ITINERARY

Days 1/2 USA to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Depart from Washington Dulles International Airport at 11 am on a nonstop flight to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, arriving in the morning on Day 2. Check in at the *Golden Tulip Hotel* and then have a day of discovery of Addis Ababa. See the Cathedral and Ethnographic Museum, for a great introduction to Ethiopian culture and history. Welcome dinner.

Day 3 Bahir Dar & Lake Tana Source of the Blue Nile

We will fly from Addis to Bahir Dar and *Kuriftu Resort (2 nights)* on Lake Tana this morning. Lake Tana is 6,000 feet above sea level and is the headwaters for the Blue Nile (Abbay) River. The source for the White Nile is in Uganda, and the rivers meet in Sudan to form the Nile which flows through Egypt. We'll have a boat trip on Lake Tana and learn about the ancient monasteries on the islands.

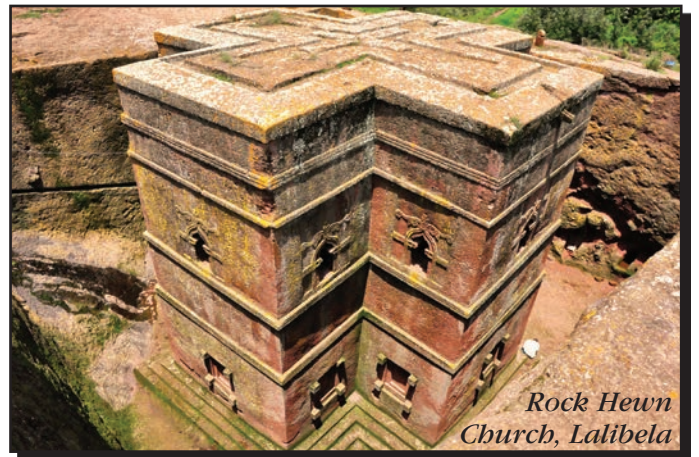
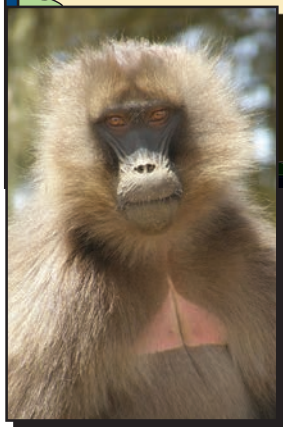
Day 4 Bahir Dar - Blue Nile Falls

We will learn more about the origin of the Nile River on our excursion to the Blue Nile Falls this morning. It is known locally as Abbay or "Great Smoke". The Falls are modest in the dry season, and up to 400 m wide in the rainy season! The Falls have isolated Lake Tana from the rest of the Nile River, creating a unique ecology and endemic fauna in the lake. The river flows from Lake Tana with a series of rapids and thunders down a deep gorge, which until recently was never navigated by anyone.

Day 5 Historic castles in Gondar World Heritage Site

We'll drive this morning to Gondar, and will tour the Royal Enclosure, a UNESCO World Heritage site featuring five castles built by a succession of Ethiopian kings, beginning in the early 17th century. The castles have survived several wars, including air raids during World War II, and are a testament to the resilience of this once mighty African empire. *New Goha Hotel*.

Path of the Annular Solar Eclipse, June 21, 2020



Rock Hewn Church, Lalibela

Day 6 Simien Mountains National Park World Heritage Site

Today we will drive to the gateway of Simien Mountains National Park, and take a 2 to 3 hour hike in the extraordinary landscape of the park. We'll look for the endemic gelada monkeys which populate the Simiens and will stay at *Simien Lodge*, spectacularly situated at 10,000 feet overlooking the vast mountain landscapes of Ethiopia.

Days 7/8 Historic Axum, World Heritage Site

We'll take a spectacular drive to Axum (Aksum), historic capital of the ancient Axumite Empire, with frequent stops at viewpoints along the way. Axum ruled the region from about 400 BCE until the 10th century and is known for the many tall obelisks found there. On Day 8 we will tour the stelae fields, which have been standing for 2,000 years. Also explore the Archaeological Museum and see St. Mary TSION Church which houses the Ark of the Covenant. *Sabeen Hotel (2 nights)*.

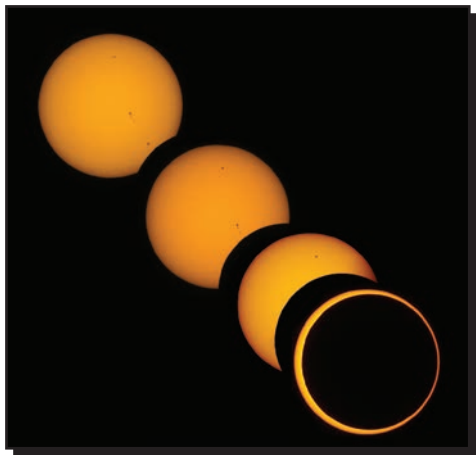
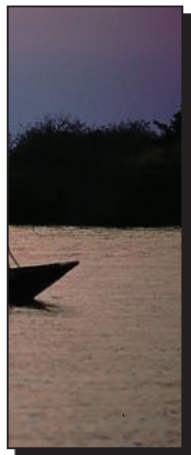
Day 9 Gheralta & Yeha, Ancient Moon Temple

We'll have a drive to *Gheralta Lodge* today, passing the Adwa battlefield, site of Emperor Menelik II's 1895 victory over the invading Italians. Visit the 2,500 year old ruins of Yeha, an ancient moon temple.

Day 10 Tigray's Ancient Rock-Hewn Churches

Today we will visit more of Tigray's remote and ancient rock-hewn churches: Abraha Atsbeha, from the

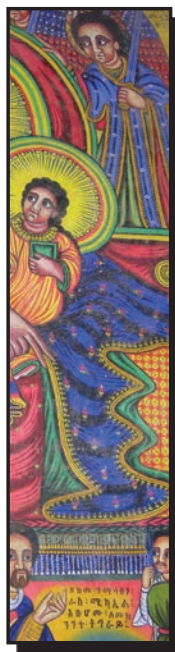




10th century, the beautiful Wukro Chirkos, and Medhane Alem Kesho. *Planet Hotel, Mekele.*

Days 11/12 Lalibela

We'll have a scenic all day drive to historic Lalibela. Arrive in late afternoon to enjoy the sunset from our hotel with a breathtaking view. *Mountain View Hotel (3 nights).* The next day, we will explore the magnificent rock-hewn churches of Lalibela which are a World Heritage Site. These 11 churches were carved directly into the stone mountainside at least 800 years ago. There is a maze of passageways and tunnels, intricately carved reliefs, and fabulous examples of icon paintings. We'll have an eclipse lecture in preparation for tomorrow's Annular Eclipse!



Day 13 Annular Solar Eclipse & Mount Asheton

We'll rise quite early to see the Eclipse slowly start to cover the sun at 6:52 am and then create a dazzling Ring of Fire or Annular Eclipse of 97% of the sun's surface at 8 am. This thrilling spectacle, in this stunning location and in this amazing country, will create a lifelong memory! Later, we'll drive to Yemrehanna Kristos, a beautiful church in a shallow cave that predates the churches of Lalibela. Farewell dinner.

Days 14/15 To Addis Ababa & Home (Or begin Optional Omo River Extension)

Return flight to Addis Ababa. Visit the National Museum, home of the 3 million year old skeleton "Lucy". Dinner with folkloric dancing, then depart on your flight to the USA, arriving at 8:40 am on Day 15.

COSTS & CONDITIONS

Expedition Fee: \$4,995 per person twin share + Air Fare \$1,795 from Washington Dulles to Addis Ababa.

Expedition Fee Includes: Land transport; group airport transfers; two flights in Ethiopia; accommodations twin share; all meals in Ethiopia; entrance fees; tips to local guides and drivers; leadership; administration.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include: International air fare (quoted separately); pre-nights; private transfers; gratuities to expedition leader; optional extension to the Omo Valley; personal items such as laundry, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, snacks; e-visa; photography or video fees; or personal insurance.

What to Expect: This expedition is for travelers who wish to explore the unique history, mountains, rock-hewn churches and natural world of Ethiopia and to see the Annular Solar Eclipse on June 21, 2020 at the renowned World Heritage Site of Lalibela. Also explore the headwaters of the Nile at Lake Tana, and see the Blue Nile Falls. To really explore the country, we have long drives on mountainous terrain several half days and a couple of full days, with elevations from 6,000 to 10,000 feet. We have reasonable chances of clear skies to view the eclipse; however, it could be obscured by clouds or rain. The trip will be an extraordinary opportunity to learn about the cultural heritage of the ancient Ethiopian kingdom and its religious heritage.

Questions or for the Omo Valley Extension flyer: Please contact Taunya, (800) 252-4910.

Flight Info: Group flights are on Ethiopian Airways from Washington, Dulles, RT. (There is only one 737 Max 8 aircraft in their fleet and 90+ other aircraft; we are not flying on a 737 Max 8 on any flights.) AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UNTIL TICKETED.

Accommodations: Are in first class hotels. If you do not have a roommate, you must pay the single supplement of \$795.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments: To reserve a place on this expedition, please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form to: **Ethiopia 2020, Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435.** Balance due 90 days before departure.

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable up to 90 days before departure less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There is no refund after the 90-day period unless your place is resold, then only the \$100 per person handling fee is withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals or other expedition features.

Responsibility: For a statement of Responsibility, please contact the Betchart office.

RESERVATIONS #1581

Yes! I/we want to join the Discover Ethiopia and the Annular Solar Eclipse, June 9-23, 2020, offered by Betchart Expeditions Inc. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we enclose a check for \$_____ (\$500 per person) plus \$_____ (\$500 per person for the Omo Valley Extension, June 22-30, 2020), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _____ Age _____

_____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home (____) _____

Work (____) _____

Email Address _____

Membership (please circle): AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference:

☐ Twin ☐ Single ☐ Twin Share with a friend *or* ☐ assign a roommate

☐ Nonsmoker ☐ Smoker

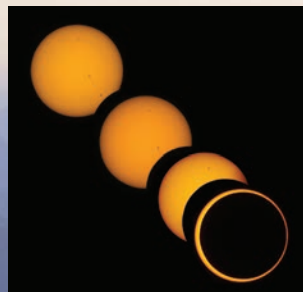
Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

**Please Mail To: Ethiopia 2020
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road,
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

**AAAS Travels
ACS & Sigma Xi Expeditions
The Planetary Society**

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FIRST CLASS

Discover Ethiopia
The Source of the Blue Nile
with the Annular Solar Eclipse June 21
June 9-23, 2020

*Fasil Ghebbi
Castle*



*Gelada monkeys,
Simien Mtns*



*Ethiopian wolf,
Simien Mtns*

