

ETHIOPIA

Facts

- In square kilometers Ethiopia is as big as France and Spain combined.
- Addis Ababa (2400 meters above sea level), the capital city of Ethiopia , is the diplomatic capital of Africa.
- Probably due to the high altitude of the country, Ethiopians are famous for being great long distance runners. Almost more than 70% of Africa's mountains are found in Ethiopia.
- The source of the great Blue Nile river is Lake Tana, and Ethiopia contributes more than 85 % of the water.
- Ethiopia as a multi ethnic state is often known as a mosaic of language and culture: more than 83 languages and 200 dialects are spoken through out the country.
- Ethiopia follows the "Julian calendar" consisting of 12 months of 30 days each and a 13th month of 5 or 6 days. It is roughly 7 and half years behind the Gregorian calendar.

□ The Ethiopian fiscal year begins on 8 July and the Ethiopian new year begins on 11 September.

□ The sun dictates the Ethiopian time :when you get up early in the morning you start by counting one and you end up at twelve when the day ends , and start counting again from one when the night begins, and end at twelve o'clock just before the sun rises in the morning. The Ethiopian mid day and mid night is six o'clock.

□ Ethiopia is the only country in Africa with its own language that can be expressed both in spoken and written form-Amharic. And a different church /religious language (Ge'ez) that can also be expressed both in spoken and written form proving that the country was one of the most civilized ancient nation in the time of the Greeks.

□ Ethiopia claims to preserve many Biblical relics among the most famous are the "Arc of the Covenant" and piece of the "True Cross " on which Jesus Christ is believed to have been crucified.

□ The Great Rift valley, which is the only geographical feature of planet earth visible from the moon , cuts Ethiopia in to two crossing the country from top to bottom.

□ Some of the earliest roots of humanity are buried in the rift valley. "Lucy " the oldest direct human ancestor ever found (3.5 Million years old)was unearthed in Hadar .

□ The population of Ethiopia is estimated at 82 million , and different from many advanced nations, 50% of the population are young (under 20).

□ Ethiopia was never colonized.

□ The now widely spread coffee is originated in Ethiopia from a region called Kaffa.

□ Ethiopia is believed to be paradise for bird watchers because more than 813 species of birds live in Ethiopia among them about 16 are never found in any other part of the world.

□ Ethiopia is believed to be the water tower of Africa ,because many rivers that flow in to other African countries originate in Ethiopia, as a result it is believed 50% of the Ethiopian soil have crossed its boundary.

□ Just before 100 years, about 40% of the country was thickly forested. But now only 3 % remain.

□ Ethiopia is famous in rock art. The single tallest monument ever raised by humanity in the BCS is found in the country. Especially in the northern part many churches are not built, they are carved out of a mountain of rock. The famous Lalibela , which consists of about eleven rock churches networked with each other ,is believed to be the 8th world wonder.

□ Ert'ale (North eastern part of the country) is one of the few places on planet earth where one can see active, live , continued and dramatic volcanic eruption/ movement. This same region is known to be one of the lowest and the hottest points of the earth.

□ About 32 % of frog species are endemic to Ethiopia. Some of them have uniquely adapted to their environment. One species swallows snail's whole, another have forgotten how to hop and still another has lost its ears.

□ Ethiopia has more unique species of flora than any other country in Africa. For example the yellow daisy, locally known as meskel flower, (Usually appears in September and October) belongs to the Biden's family and six of them are unique to only Ethiopia.

□ The Gelada Baboon ,one of the seven endemic mammals of Ethiopia is one of the most fascinating: It is described - of all the nonhuman primates, it is the most dexterous, lives in large social groups (up to 800), feeds on grass, has its "sexual skins" on its chest and not on its bottom, has the most complex social system and communication, the female decides who is boss, the young males form bachelor groups, the older males perform a kind of grandfather role looking after the young. In fact this animal is believed to be

not a baboon , it makes up its own genus of monkey.

□ Prince Ruspoli's Turaco, is often described as the rarest, most beautiful, most enigmatic and Ethiopia's most elusive bird. First discovered in 1890s ,disappeared for almost 50 years and reappeared in 1940s, again disappears for almost 30 years and reappears in 1970s. Almost nothing is known about the species, and its nest and eggs have never been seen. However recent sightseeing in Yabelo region, suggest that the bird may not after all be as elusive as it would have us believe.

□ About seven places in Ethiopia are registered by UNESCO as world heritage sites. And this includes the famous Semien mountains national park.

Lalibela: Eighth wonder of the World and is a church carved from a single rock. Formerly known as Roha

