

**ICON**  
**ADVENTURES®**



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# Simien Mountains Trek

**DEPARTS:**  
**Nov 14, 2011**

**COST PER PERSON:**  
**\$6795**

## INCLUDES:

- Return airfare from Australia to Ethiopia (ex-Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne)
- Internal flights and transfers in Ethiopia
- All accommodation: double or twin share (single supplement available on request)
- All breakfasts, some lunches, and dinner in Addis Ababa on day 13
- Australian host
- Local guides
- National park, exhibit and monument fees
- Government taxes

Note - price is subject to change due to currency fluctuations or increases in flight or other costs.

Come and see some of the most spectacular and untouched scenery on earth – the Simien Mountains of Ethiopia.

At around 4000 metres above sea level there's rugged beauty here with deep canyons, towering cliffs and huge mountains inhabited by troops of Gelada baboons and the rare Walia ibex and Simien wolf.

But don't worry about lugging big backpacks up and down sheer slopes; we will provide staff to carry your gear, put up the tents and prepare your meals so you can fully appreciate the majesty of this seldom-visited part of the world.

This incredible two-week tour also includes visits to the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, the castles of Gondar and the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela.

From Addis we fly to Gondar where you'll see why Gondar is called the Camelot of Africa when we visit 17th century castles of past emperors and one of the most famous of the Ethiopian Coptic churches.

Land transport takes us to the Simien Highlands to start our trek, which includes Imet Gogo, the best viewpoint in the Simien Mountains and Chenek, the most scenic of all the camps in the highlands.

After five nights in the highlands we return to Gondar for one night before we fly to Lalibela to see the unique 12th and 13th century churches carved out of solid rock. Then it's back to Addis Ababa to enjoy a night of traditional Ethiopian food, music and dancing.

Come with us for a memorable insight into the beauty, culture and diversity of Ethiopia and its people.

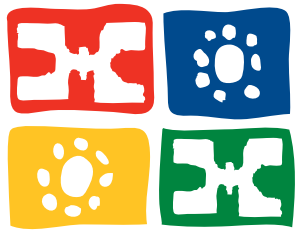
**Don't hesitate to call James Holden on 0403 418 263 if you have any specific questions about the itinerary.**



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# Itinerary

Date	Activity	Overnight
<b>MON Nov 14</b> <b>DAY 1 (meals on plane)</b>	Flights from Australian airports.	<b>On plane</b>
<b>TUES Nov 15</b> <b>DAY 2</b> <b>(breakfast on plane)</b>	Arrive in Addis Ababa. Check into our hotel and rest for the afternoon. Or for those who would like get out and about into the bustling city of Addis Ababa, there is much to be seen, including museums, shops, churches and historical sites. Addis Ababa's many cafes and patisseries serve excellent coffee or try an espris – a layered juice drink, which is an Ethiopian speciality.	<b>Ghion Hotel</b> <b>Addis Ababa</b>
<b>WED Nov 16</b> <b>DAY 3 (B)</b>	Morning visit to the Mercarto – Africa's largest market: an enormous maze of stalls, kiosks and small shops where you can buy tribal silver and jewellery, wooden artifacts, woven baskets, traditional embroidered cotton cloth and clothing and pungent spices. Afternoon drive up to the Entoto Maryam church and the former site of Menelek's capital in the Entoto hills.	<b>Ghion Hotel</b> <b>Addis Ababa</b>
<b>THUR Nov 17</b> <b>DAY 4 (B)</b>	Flight from Addis Ababa to Gondar where we'll visit Fasil Ghebbi, the seven-hectare royal compound containing five castles built in the 16th and 17th centuries by Ethiopian emperors, and the ornate and beautifully decorated church of Debre Birhan Selassie, which houses some of the best ecclesiastical art in Ethiopia. Watch the sun set from the terrace of the Goha Hotel, which is perched on a hill above Gondar.	<b>Goha Hotel</b> <b>Gondar</b>
<b>FRI Nov 18</b> <b>DAY 5 (B,L,D)</b>	Four hour drive to the start of the trek. We pass through Debark, a small town 90 km north of Gondar to collect our Simien Park guides and scouts. From there we drive up into the mountains and you'll get the first glimpse of the majesty of the Simiens (about 3500 metres). At Sankabar we'll organise our mules to carry our gear for the rest of the trek (mules can be organised for riding – see extra information). Troops of gelada baboons often graze nearby.	<b>Sankabar Camp</b> <b>Simien Mountains</b>
<b>SAT Nov 19</b> <b>DAY 6 (B,L,D)</b>	Trek from Sankabar to Geech camp along the edge of the Geech Abyss via the Jin Bahir waterfall which plunges more than 400 metres into the chasm. We'll cross the Jin Bahir river then make the climb to Geech camp at nearly 4000 metres (about six hours).	<b>Geech Camp</b> <b>Simien Moutains</b>
<b>SUN Nov 20</b> <b>DAY 7 (B,L,D)</b>	In the morning we'll hike to Imet Gogo mountain, said to be the best viewpoint in the Simiens. From there we'll circle back via Saha, where there are more spectacular views, to Geech camp (about five hours).	<b>Geech Camp</b> <b>Simien Mountains</b>
<b>MON Nov 21</b> <b>DAY 8 (B,L,D)</b>	From Geech we head south to meet the path between Michotis and Chenek. Cross the Jinbar river and climb up to have lunch at the spectacular viewpoint of Ennatiye. From there the path follows the edge of the escarpment and we head down to Chenek, the most scenic campsite in the Simien Mountains, with views back towards Imet Gogo and the other rocky headlands (about six hours).	<b>Chenek Camp</b> <b>Simien Mountains</b>
<b>TUES Nov 22</b> <b>DAY 9 (B,L,D)</b>	Trek up to Bwahit mountain, which at 4430 metres, is the second highest mountain in the Simien Highlands. Fantastic views back towards Geech and Sankabar and towards the mountains around Ras Dashen. Head back down to Chenek for the night (about seven hours). Optional rest day at Chenek for those who do not want to climb Bwahit mountain.	<b>Chenek Camp</b> <b>Simien Mountains</b>
<b>WED Nov 23</b> <b>DAY 10 (B)</b>	Today our transport collects us from Chenek and takes us back to Gondar for the night. Visit Ploughshare Craft Centre at the Falasha village on the way, established to train and support young single mothers. Afternoon at leisure.	<b>Fogera Hotel</b> <b>Gondar</b>
<b>THUR Nov 24</b> <b>DAY 11 (B)</b>	Morning flight from Gondar to Lalibela, a striking town set at over 2500 metres in wild, craggy mountains with two-storey stone houses that are quite different to those in the rest of Ethiopia. Afternoon at leisure.	<b>Lal hotel</b> <b>Lalibela</b>
<b>FRI Nov 25</b> <b>DAY 12 (B)</b>	Today we visit the huge 12th and 13th century rock churches carved below ground level and connected by a maze of subterranean passages. Each of the many churches is unique and intricately carved. Wander through the northern and southern clusters and visit the most famous of the rock-hewn churches – Bet Giorgis – the house of St George.	<b>Lal hotel</b> <b>Lalibela</b>
<b>SAT Nov 26</b> <b>DAY 13 (B,D)</b>	Morning flight from Lalibela to Addis Ababa. Afternoon at leisure. In the evening we'll have a traditional Ethiopian feast of spicy stews (wots) served on 'plates' of large spongy flatbread (ingera). There will also be traditional music and we'll have a chance to watch and join in with Ethiopian dancing.	<b>Ghion Hotel</b> <b>Addis Ababa</b>
<b>SUN Nov 27</b> <b>DAY 14 (B)</b>	Day at leisure. This is the morning of Africa's biggest road race, the Great Ethiopian Run, which is held in Addis Ababa each year. It's an amazing spectacle with over 30,000 runners taking part (call James Holden on 0403 418 263 if you would like to participate). International flights depart in the evening.	<b>On plane</b>
<b>MON Nov 28</b> <b>DAY 15</b> <b>(meals on plane)</b>	Home!	



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## Live to travel: travel to give

### Our philosophy

At Icon Adventures we are serious about responsible travel. We aim to respect the culture of the communities we visit and protect the unique environments in which they live. Above all, we want to ensure that your travel experience is unforgettable for all the right reasons.

Our team receives ongoing training to ensure high levels of environmental care. From off-setting carbon emissions to packing-out rubbish, our aim is to minimise the environmental impact of your visit. We recognise that we have an opportunity to make a positive economic impact on the communities we visit. We always choose locally owned operators/suppliers who employ local people and offer reasonable working conditions and payment to local staff.

Icon Adventures supports a number of outstanding local community projects which promote environmental conservation, education and sustainable economic development.

### Ethiopian community projects we support

- Australian African Children's Aid and Support Association ([www.aacasa.org.au](http://www.aacasa.org.au))

AACASA provides food, education and health care to orphaned and vulnerable children. It also offers childcare facilities and training to young single mothers so they can support themselves and their children.

- Ethiopian school desk project

Icon Adventures provides desks and chairs for some of the most isolated and poorly resourced schools in Ethiopia. These are manufactured in a local workshop in Debarq and transported to schools in the Simien Mountains. This is an ongoing project: your booking means we can purchase a desk and bench seat which will seat three children.



*LEFT: Chris Ramsey (left) and our Ethiopian representative Israel (right) with a Debarq workshop employee and the first batch of desks destined for schools in the Simien Mountains.*



*RIGHT: James Holden presenting medical and other aid to Marcie of the Grace Centre in Bahar Dar (see [www.gracecentres.org](http://www.gracecentres.org)).*

**We donate a percentage of profits from this tour to the Ethiopian projects we support**

## Extra information

Warm clothes are advisable for the evenings in the Simien Mountains where night-time temperatures can drop to below freezing point. After cool starts, day-time temperatures should be comfortably warm (around 20 degrees C). The weather during the rest of the trip should be warm (20-25 degrees C) with cool nights (5-10 degrees C).

Riding mules are available (at approximately AUD\$10 per person per day) for people who want a break from walking. A moderate to good degree of fitness is required for the trekking part of the tour. There may be up to seven hours of walking per day (12 to 18 kilometres) over hilly terrain and mostly on well-defined tracks. Much of the trekking is at an altitude at over 3500 metres above sea level (maximum is 4430 metres – Bwahit Mountain).

**Vaccinations:** Please consult your nearest travel doctor for the most up-to-date recommendations for vaccinations for travelling to Ethiopia. Your travel doctor may also recommend that you take anti-malarial medication. Essential items to bring: Sunscreen is very important. The very clear in the Simien Mountains can quickly lead to sunburn of unprotected skin. A broad-brimmed hat is also very important. You will need a sleeping bag (rated to -3 degrees) and sleeping mat. A duffel bag is recommended for your gear - these can be purchased from Icon Adventures.

A 12 day tour of Southern Ethiopia, including the Rift Valley lakes, national parks and remote tribes, can be added to this trip. Please contact James Holden on 0403 418 263 for more information.

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# Booking form

To secure your spot on the Simien Mountains Trek, please complete this form and fax it to: **07 3103 4606**

Or post to: **Icon Adventures, PO Box 1121, Toowoomba QLD, 4350**

For booking information or specific enquiries about this itinerary, please contact **James Holden on 0403 418 263.**



**A percentage of profits from this tour goes to our Ethiopian projects**

**Simien Mountains Trek (departs Nov 14, 2011) @ \$6795\* per person (twin share)**

**Please advise me of single supplement or business class options**

PASSENGER 1

PASSENGER 2

FIRST NAME .....

SURNAME .....

HOME ADDRESS .....

DATE OF BIRTH .....

TELEPHONE .....

MOBILE .....

EMAIL .....

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME .....

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER .....

SIGNED: PASSENGER 1 ..... PASSENGER 2 .....

DATE .....

**Please send your deposit of \$1500 per person to secure your booking**

Payment options (please tick preferred option):

**Cheque:** Please make cheques payable to Discover Africa (postal address is at the top of this form).

**Direct deposit:** Discover Africa Icon, BSB: 013 533, account number: 480 560 778 (ANZ, Bendigo). Please use your surname and the code ST1111 as the reference when making a direct deposit.

**Credit card:** We accept credit card payments over the phone. Please call 0403 418 263 (a small fee applies).

\* Price may be subject to change due to increased flight or other costs or variations in exchange rates.

Full terms and conditions are available at [www.iconadventures.com](http://www.iconadventures.com)



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