

ETHIOPIA



Country Dialling Code (Tel/Fax): ++372

Ethiopian Commission for Tourism: PO Box 2183 Addis Ababa Tel: (1)-517-470 Fax: (1)-513-899 E-mail: tour-com@telecom.net.et

Capital: Addis Ababa Time: GMT + 2

Background: Unique among African countries, the ancient Ethiopian monarchy maintained its freedom from colonial rule, one exception being the Italian occupation of 1936-41. In 1974 a military junta, the Derg, deposed Emperor Haile SALASSIE (who had ruled since 1930) and established a socialist state. Torn by bloody coups, uprisings, wide-scale drought, and massive refugee problems, the regime was finally toppled by a coalition of rebel forces, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), in 1991. A constitution was adopted in 1994 and Ethiopia's first multiparty elections were held in 1995. A border war with Eritrea that erupted in May 1998 has strengthened the ruling coalition, but has hurt the nation's economy.

Location: Eastern Africa, west of Somalia

Map References: Africa

Climate: tropical monsoon with wide topographic-induced variation

Terrain: high plateau with central mountain range divided by Great Rift Valley

Natural Resources: small reserves of gold, platinum, copper, potash, natural gas, hydropower

Population: 64,117,452

Nationality: noun: Ethiopian(s) adjective: Ethiopian

Ethnic Groups: Oromo 40%, Amhara and Tigre 32%, Sidamo 9%, Shankella 6%, Somali 6%, Afar 4%, Gurage 2%, other 1%

Religions: Muslim 45%-50%, Ethiopian Orthodox 35%-40%, animist 12%, other 3%-8%

Languages: Amharic, Tigrinya, Orominga, Guaraginga, Somali, Arabic, other local languages, English (major foreign language taught in schools)

Economy: Ethiopia's economy is based on agriculture, which accounts for half of GDP, 90% of exports, and 80% of total employment. The agricultural sector suffers from frequent periods of drought and poor cultivation practices, and as many as 4.6 million people need food assistance annually. Coffee is critical to the Ethiopian economy, and Ethiopia earned \$267 million in 1999 by exporting 105,000 metric tons. According to current estimates, coffee contributes 10% of Ethiopia's GDP. More than 15 million people (25% of the population) derive their livelihood from the coffee sector. Other exports include live animals, hides, gold, and qat. In December 1999, Ethiopia signed a \$1.4 billion joint venture deal to develop a huge natural gas field in the Somali Regional State. The war with Eritrea has forced the government to spend scarce resources on the military and forced the government to scale back ambitious development plans. Foreign investment has declined significantly. Government taxes imposed in late 1999 to raise money for the war will depress an already weak economy. The war has forced the government to improve roads and other parts of the previously neglected infrastructure, but only certain regions of the nation have benefited.

Industries: food processing, beverages, textiles, chemicals, metals processing, cement

Currency: 1 birr (Br) = 100 cents

Railways: total: 681 km (Ethiopian segment of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railroad) narrow gauge: 681 km 1,000-m gauge

note: in April 1998, Djibouti and Ethiopia announced plans to revitalize the century-old railroad that links their capitals; since May 1998 Ethiopia has expended considerable effort to repair and maintain the lines

Highways: total: 28,500 km paved: 4,275 km unpaved: 24,225 km (1996 est.)

Ports and Harbors: none; Ethiopia is landlocked and was by agreement with Eritrea using the ports of Assab and Massawa; since the border dispute with Eritrea flared, Ethiopia has used the port of Djibouti for nearly all of its imports

Airports: 85 (1999 est.) Airports - with paved runways: total: 11 over 3,047 m: 3 2,438 to 3,047 m: 6 1,524 to 2,437 m: 2 (1999 est.) Airports - with unpaved runways: total: 74 over 3,047 m: 22,438 to 3,047 m: 7 1,524 to 2,437 m: 11 914 to 1,523 m: 35 under 914 m: 19 (1999 est.)

Visa: required by all.

Duty Free: goods permitted: 100 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 225g of tobacco, 1 litre of alcoholic beverages, 2 bottles or 500ml of perfume, gifts up to the value of Birr10.

Health: a yellow fever certificate is required from travellers over 1 year of age coming from infected areas. Malaria and Bilharzia risk. All water should be regarded as potentially contaminated.

HOTELS•MOTELS•INNS

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 or www.Ethiopianairlines.com / Main Base: Bole International Airport

ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES, P.O. Box 1755, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Tel: (25 11) 612 222 Fax: (25 11) 611 474

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