



# Ethiopia

Churches carved out of solid rock, a calendar with thirteen months, the home of the wild coffee plant, and injera shared from one great platter.

## AT A GLANCE

## Facts to know

### CAPITAL

Addis Ababa

### POPULATION

About 135 million (UN estimate for 2025; Ethiopia's own statistics office gives a lower figure). The last national census was held in 2007

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Amharic was the only working language of the federal government until 2020; Afaan Oromo, Tigrinya, Somali and Afar have since been added. Each region also chooses its own working language

### CURRENCY

Ethiopian birr (ETB)

### AREA

About 1,104,300 km<sup>2</sup>

### GOVERNMENT

Federal parliamentary republic, under the constitution of 1995

### HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Ras Dashen (Ras Dejen), 4,550 m, in the Simien Mountains

### BEST-KNOWN RIVER

The Blue Nile (Abay), which leaves Lake Tana and flows about 800 km through Ethiopia before crossing into Sudan

### NEIGHBOURS

Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan. Ethiopia has had no coastline since Eritrea became independent in 1993

### DRIVES ON THE

Right

### CALLING CODE

+251

### TIME AND CALENDAR

East Africa Time (UTC+3). Ethiopia has its own calendar: from 11 September 2026 it is the year 2019

# A 45-minute trip to Ethiopia

Everything you need is in this pack. No preparation beyond printing. Adapt the timing to your group.

- |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>0 to 5 min</b>   | Welcome. Show the map page and find Ethiopia together. Ask: who has been there, or knows someone from there?                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>5 to 15 min</b>  | Read the facts at a glance, then three moments from the story: AD 330: King Ezana adopts Christianity; 1930: Haile Selassie is crowned emperor; 2025: The Renaissance Dam is inaugurated.                                                             |
| <b>15 to 25 min</b> | At the table: talk about Injera and Doro wat. Idea: bring a small taste (bread, cheese, fruit, tea) if your kitchen can help.                                                                                                                         |
| <b>25 to 30 min</b> | Say it like a local: practise "Tena yistilign" (Hello (polite; literally 'may God give you health for me')), "Selam" (Hello (literally 'peace')), "Endemin neh? / Endemin nesh?" (How are you? (to a man / to a woman)). Everyone says them together. |
| <b>30 to 40 min</b> | Quiz: read the questions aloud, or play the big-screen version at <a href="https://preview.worldstroll.com/countries/ethiopia/group">https://preview.worldstroll.com/countries/ethiopia/group</a> . No scores needed.                                 |
| <b>40 to 45 min</b> | Talk about it (questions page), then stamp or sign everyone's passport page.                                                                                                                                                                          |

## You will need

- This printed pack (one per table, or one each)
- Pens for the quiz
- Optional: a world map or globe, a small tasting, music from the country

# Ethiopia and its cities



- Addis Ababa (Chartered city, in the centre of the country): The National Museum, with a replica of Lucy, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Merkato, a huge open-air market, The African Union headquarters, A light rail line, opened in 2015
- Aksum (Tigray Region, in the far north): The stelae fields and the Obelisk of Aksum, The Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion, Ancient royal tombs
- Mekelle (Capital of the Tigray Region): The palace of Emperor Yohannes IV, Salt caravans from the Danakil, Rock-cut churches in the countryside around it
- Gondar (Amhara Region, north of Lake Tana): The castles of Fasil Ghebbi, The painted ceiling of Debre Berhan Selassie church, The bath of Fasilides, used for Timkat
- Lalibela (Amhara Region, in the northern highlands): The rock-hewn churches, Christmas (Genna) pilgrimages, Mountain views and monasteries nearby

- Bahir Dar (Capital of the Amhara Region): Lake Tana and its monasteries, The Blue Nile Falls nearby, Papyrus boats called tankwa
- Harar (Capital of the Harari Region, in the east): The Jugol, the old walled town, Feeding wild hyenas at night, Harar coffee, Colourful Harari houses
- Dire Dawa (Chartered city, in the east): The old French-built railway station, Kafira market, Trade with Djibouti
- Adama (Oromia Region, in the Rift Valley): The road and railway to Djibouti, Conferences and resorts, Warm Rift Valley weather
- Hawassa (Capital of the Sidama Region): Lake Hawassa and its fish market, Hawassa University, Fichee-Chambalaalla, the Sidama New Year
- Jimma (Oromia Region, in the southwest): Coffee farms and forests, The palace of Abba Jifar II, Jimma University
- Arba Minch (South Ethiopia Region): Nechisar National Park, Crocodiles on Lake Chamo, The forty springs

# A short history of Ethiopia

Ethiopia's story goes back further than almost any other country's. Some of the oldest fossils of human ancestors were found here, including Lucy, who lived about 3.2 million years ago. Around the start of the Common Era, the Kingdom of Aksum grew rich from trade across the Red Sea, and its kings later ruled for many centuries from the highlands. Emperors, churches and monasteries shaped the country until 1974, when the last emperor was overthrown. The events below follow the story from Aksum to today.

## **AD 330**      **King Ezana adopts Christianity**

Around 330, King Ezana of Aksum became a Christian, taught by his tutor Frumentius, a Christian from Syria who became the first head of the Ethiopian Church. Aksum became one of the first Christian kingdoms in the world, and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church still traces its roots to this time.

## **AD 615**      **Early Muslims find refuge in Aksum**

In about 615 (some sources say 613), a small group of the first followers of the Prophet Muhammad fled persecution in Mecca and were given shelter by the Christian king of Aksum, known as the Najashi. This First Hijra is remembered with gratitude in Islamic tradition.

## **1270**      **The Solomonic dynasty begins**

In 1270 Yekuno Amlak overthrew the last king of the Zagwe dynasty, the family that had built the churches of Lalibela. He founded the Solomonic dynasty, which claimed descent from King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and ruled Ethiopia until 1974.

## **1543**      **The Battle of Wayna Daga**

From 1529 the Adal Sultanate, led by Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim, conquered much of the highlands. On 21 February 1543, near Lake Tana, Emperor Gelawdewos, helped by a small force of Portuguese soldiers, defeated and killed the Imam, which ended the long war.

## **1636**      **Gondar becomes the capital**

Earlier emperors moved around the country with their court in great camps. Emperor Fasilides broke with this tradition and made Gondar his permanent capital in 1636. He and the emperors after him built stone

castles there, now the Fasil Ghebbi World Heritage Site.

### **1868      The Battle of Magdala**

Emperor Tewodros II, who had reunited the country after an era of rival princes, held several Europeans hostage, among them British officials. In April 1868 a British army under Robert Napier stormed his mountain fortress at Magdala. Tewodros took his own life rather than be captured, and the British soon withdrew.

### **1886      Addis Ababa is founded**

In 1886 Menelik II, then King of Shewa, and his wife Taytu moved from the cold heights of Mount Entoto to a valley with hot springs below it. Taytu named the new town Addis Ababa, 'new flower', and it became the capital of the whole empire.

### **1896      The Battle of Adwa**

On 1 March 1896, near the town of Adwa in the north, the army of Emperor Menelik II defeated an invading Italian army. Italy had to recognise Ethiopia's independence, and Adwa became a symbol of freedom for people across Africa. Its anniversary is a national holiday.

### **1930      Haile Selassie is crowned emperor**

On 2 November 1930 Ras Tafari Makonnen was crowned emperor and took the name Haile Selassie, meaning 'power of the Trinity'. He ruled until 1974, and is honoured as a divine figure in the Rastafari movement, which takes its name from him.

### **1936      Italy occupies Ethiopia**

Italy under Mussolini invaded in October 1935, using modern weapons and poison gas. Italian troops entered Addis Ababa on 5 May 1936, and Haile Selassie went into exile, where he appealed to the League of Nations for help. Ethiopian patriots kept up a resistance throughout the occupation.

### **1941      The emperor returns to Addis Ababa**

During the Second World War, British, Commonwealth and Ethiopian forces drove the Italians out. On 5 May 1941, exactly five years after Italian troops had entered the city, Haile Selassie returned to Addis Ababa.

**1963**

### **The OAU is founded in Addis Ababa**

On 25 May 1963, leaders of more than 30 independent African states met in Addis Ababa and founded the Organisation of African Unity. It was replaced in 2002 by the African Union, which still has its headquarters in the city.

**1974**

### **The Derg overthrows the emperor**

After years of famine and protests, a committee of army officers known as the Derg deposed Haile Selassie on 12 September 1974. It ended the monarchy and ruled as a harsh military government, fighting long civil wars in the north.

**1991**

### **The Derg falls**

In May 1991 rebel forces took Addis Ababa and the Derg government fell. A new constitution in 1995 turned Ethiopia into a federal republic, with regions drawn mainly along ethnic and language lines.

**1993**

### **Eritrea becomes independent**

After a 30-year war of independence, the people of Eritrea voted for independence in a referendum in April 1993, and Eritrea became a separate country. Since then Ethiopia has had no coastline and trades mainly through the port of Djibouti.

**2025**

### **The Renaissance Dam is inaugurated**

On 9 September 2025 Ethiopia inaugurated the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile, near the border with Sudan. As of 2025 it is the largest hydroelectric power station in Africa. Building began in 2011, and Egypt and Sudan, downstream on the Nile, have long raised concerns about the river's water.

# What people eat in Ethiopia

Almost every Ethiopian meal is built on injera, a large, soft, slightly sour flatbread made from teff, a tiny grain native to the highlands. Stews called wat, spicy with berbere or mild with turmeric, are spooned on top of the injera, and everyone tears off pieces with the right hand to scoop them up from one shared platter. Butter spiced with herbs, called niter kibbeh, gives many dishes their deep flavour. Orthodox Christians fast on Wednesdays, Fridays and during Lent, eating no meat, eggs or dairy, so Ethiopian cooking also has a great range of lentil, chickpea and vegetable dishes. Breakfast is often firfir or genfo, and a meal usually ends with the coffee ceremony.

## Injera

All of Ethiopia, especially the highlands

A large, round sourdough flatbread with a spongy surface full of tiny holes, made from teff flour and water left to ferment for several days. It is cooked on one side only on a wide clay plate called a mitad. Injera is both the plate and the cutlery: stews are served on top of it, and more injera is rolled up on the side for scooping.

## Doro wat

The highlands, especially Amhara and Tigray

A deep red, spicy chicken stew made with a large amount of slowly cooked onions, berbere and spiced butter, with whole hard-boiled eggs added at the end. It is the dish of feast days, above all Christmas and Easter, when the long fast ends, and many people call it the national dish.

## Misir wat

All of Ethiopia

Split red lentils cooked with onions, garlic and berbere into a thick, spicy stew. Made with oil instead of butter, it contains no animal products, so it is one of the most popular dishes on the many fasting days.

## Shiro

Northern Ethiopia and Eritrea

A smooth, thick stew made from powdered chickpeas or broad beans, cooked with onions, garlic and spices. It is cheap, quick and filling, eaten in homes every day, and often brought to the table still bubbling in a small clay pot.

## Tibs

All of Ethiopia

Pieces of beef, lamb or goat quickly fried with onions, green chillies, butter and sometimes rosemary. It can be mild or hot, and is often brought to the table sizzling in a small clay dish over coals.

## Kitfo

The Gurage people of south-central Ethiopia

Finely minced beef mixed with a hot chilli powder called mitmita and warm spiced butter. It is traditionally eaten raw, served with mild fresh cheese, chopped greens and injera or kocho, a bread made from the false banana plant. Kitfo is a favourite for holidays such as Meskel.

## Beyaynetu

All of Ethiopia

A large round of injera covered with small heaps of many different dishes: lentils, split peas, shiro, cabbage, greens, beetroot and more. The fasting version has no animal products at all, which makes it a favourite of vegetarians and vegans visiting Ethiopia.

## Firfir

All of Ethiopia

A popular breakfast of torn pieces of injera or bread fried with spiced butter, berbere and onions, or mixed with leftover wat. It is a good way to use yesterday's injera and is often eaten with a spoon.

## Genfo

The highlands of Ethiopia and Eritrea

A thick porridge of barley or wheat flour, shaped into a mound with a hollow in the middle that is filled with spiced butter and berbere. Pieces are scooped from the edge and dipped into the butter. It is a breakfast for special days and is given to new mothers.

## Ayib

All of Ethiopia, especially the Gurage region

A soft, mild, crumbly fresh cheese made from buttermilk curds, a little like crumbled feta but much milder. It is served beside spicy dishes such as kitfo and doro wat to cool the mouth, often together with chopped greens called gomen.

## Sambusa

All of Ethiopia

Crisp fried triangles of thin pastry filled with spiced lentils or minced meat, onion and green chilli. They are sold as a street snack and are a favourite at the evening meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan.

## Ambasha

The highlands of Ethiopia and Eritrea

A round, slightly sweet bread for celebrations, often flavoured with cardamom or other spices. Before baking, the top is marked with a pattern that looks like a wheel with spokes, so each loaf looks like a decoration.

## Dabo kolo

All of Ethiopia

Small crunchy nuggets of spiced dough, fried or baked, eaten by the handful like pretzels. They are sold in paper cones at kiosks and taken on journeys.

## Coffee (buna)

All of Ethiopia; the coffee plant grows wild in the southwestern highlands

In the coffee ceremony, green beans are washed and roasted in a pan in front of the guests, who are invited to smell the smoke. The beans are ground by hand, boiled in a clay pot called a jebena and poured into small cups, often with sugar, and in some places with salt or butter. Incense burns and popcorn or roasted barley is served alongside. A full ceremony has three rounds, called abol, tona and bereka.

## Tej

The highlands, especially Amhara

A golden honey wine, like mead, made from honey, water and the leaves and twigs of a shrub called gesho, which gives it a slight bitterness. It is served in a round glass flask called a berele, in homes and in tej houses, and usually has about 7 to 11 percent alcohol.

## GOOD MANNERS

# At the table

- Wash your hands before the meal. In many homes a jug of water and a basin are brought to you at the table.
- Eat with your right hand only. Tear off a piece of injera, use it to pinch up some stew, and eat from the part of the shared platter in front of you.
- Your host may lift a rolled mouthful to your lips. This is gursha, a sign of friendship and respect, and it is polite to accept it; you may return the gesture.
- Wait for the host or the eldest person to begin. In many Christian and Muslim homes a short prayer is said first.
- Many Orthodox Christians eat no meat, eggs or dairy on Wednesdays, Fridays and during Lent, and Muslims and Orthodox Christians do not eat pork. Ask

before you bring food as a gift.

- If you are invited to a coffee ceremony, take your time: it can last an hour, and it is polite to stay for more than one cup.

# Doro wat

A deep red, spicy chicken stew made with a large amount of slowly cooked onions, berbere and spiced butter, with whole hard-boiled eggs added at the end. It is the dish of feast days, above all Christmas and Easter, when the long fast ends, and many people call it the national dish.

## Ingredients

- 1 kg chicken pieces on the bone, skin removed
- Juice of 1 lemon and 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 large red onions, very finely chopped
- 100 g niter kibbeh (Ethiopian spiced butter) or ordinary butter
- 3 to 4 tablespoons berbere spice mix
- 4 garlic cloves and a thumb of fresh ginger, finely chopped
- About 300 ml chicken stock or water
- 4 eggs, hard-boiled and peeled

## Method

1. Rub the chicken with the lemon juice and salt and leave it for 15 minutes.
2. Put the onions in a heavy pot without any fat and cook them over a low heat for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring often, until soft and brown. Add a spoonful of water if they begin to stick.
3. Stir in the butter, berbere, garlic and ginger and cook gently for 10 minutes, until the sauce is dark red and smells rich.
4. Add the chicken and the stock, cover and simmer for about 45 minutes, until the chicken is cooked right through and tender. Add a little water if it gets too thick.
5. Cut a few shallow slits in each egg, add them to the pot and simmer for 10 more minutes. Serve on injera, with mild fresh cheese on the side.

# Misir wat

Split red lentils cooked with onions, garlic and berbere into a thick, spicy stew. Made with oil instead of butter, it contains no animal products, so it is one of the most popular dishes on the many fasting days.

## Ingredients

- 250 g split red lentils, rinsed
- 2 red onions, very finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons berbere spice mix
- 3 garlic cloves and 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- About 750 ml water and salt to taste

## Method

1. Cook the onions in a dry pot over a low heat for about 10 minutes, stirring, until soft.
2. Add the oil, berbere, garlic, ginger and tomato paste and cook for 5 minutes, stirring so the spices do not burn.
3. Add the lentils and most of the water and bring to the boil.
4. Lower the heat and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes, stirring now and then and adding water as needed, until the lentils are soft and the stew is thick.
5. Add salt to taste and serve hot on injera.

# Shiro

A smooth, thick stew made from powdered chickpeas or broad beans, cooked with onions, garlic and spices. It is cheap, quick and filling, eaten in homes every day, and often brought to the table still bubbling in a small clay pot.

## Ingredients

- 100 g shiro powder (spiced ground chickpea flour, sold in Ethiopian shops)
- 1 red onion, very finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 small tomato, chopped (optional)
- About 600 ml water and salt to taste

## Method

1. Cook the onion in a dry pan over a low heat for 5 minutes, then add the oil, garlic and tomato and cook for 5 more minutes.
2. Add about 500 ml of water and bring it to the boil.
3. Sprinkle in the shiro powder a little at a time, whisking all the time so that no lumps form.
4. Simmer over a low heat for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring often. Add more water if it becomes too thick; it should be like a thick soup. Take care, as it can spit.
5. Add salt to taste and serve hot with injera.

# Tibs

Pieces of beef, lamb or goat quickly fried with onions, green chillies, butter and sometimes rosemary. It can be mild or hot, and is often brought to the table sizzling in a small clay dish over coals.

## Ingredients

- 500 g tender beef or lamb, cut into small cubes
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 2 green chillies, sliced
- 1 tomato, chopped
- 2 tablespoons niter kibbeh or butter
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary, salt and black pepper

## Method

1. Heat a heavy frying pan until very hot and add the meat without any fat. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, turning, until browned.
2. Add the onion and cook for 3 more minutes.
3. Add the butter, chillies, tomato and rosemary and fry for 5 minutes, stirring, until the meat is cooked right through and the onions are soft.
4. Season with salt and pepper and serve at once with injera.

# Genfo

A thick porridge of barley or wheat flour, shaped into a mound with a hollow in the middle that is filled with spiced butter and berbere. Pieces are scooped from the edge and dipped into the butter. It is a breakfast for special days and is given to new mothers.

## Ingredients

- 200 g barley flour (or wholemeal wheat flour)
- About 750 ml water
- Half a teaspoon of salt
- 60 g niter kibbeh or butter, melted
- 1 to 2 teaspoons berbere spice mix

## Method

1. Bring the water and salt to the boil in a heavy pan.
2. Add the flour a little at a time, stirring hard with a wooden spoon so no lumps form. Take care: thick porridge can spit.
3. Keep stirring over a low heat for 10 to 15 minutes, until the porridge is very thick and smooth and comes away from the pan.
4. Tip it into a bowl, shape it into a mound and press a deep hollow into the middle with the back of a wet spoon.
5. Mix the melted butter with the berbere, pour it into the hollow and serve warm.

# Useful phrases

## Tena yistilign

TEH-nah yis-TIL-lin · Hello (polite; literally 'may God give you health for me')

## Selam

seh-LAHM · Hello (literally 'peace')

## Endemin neh? / Endemin nesh?

en-deh-MIN neh / en-deh-MIN nesh · How are you? (to a man / to a woman)

## Dehna negn

DEH-nah NEN · I'm fine

## Egziabher yimesgen

eg-zee-ah-BEHR yim-MES-gen · Thanks be to God

## Ameseginalehu

ah-meh-seg-NAH-leh-hoo · Thank you

## Ebakh / Ebakish

eh-BAH-kih / eh-BAH-kish · Please (to a man / to a woman)

## Yikirta

yih-KIR-tah · Sorry; excuse me

## Sime ... new

SIH-meh ... NOH · My name is ...

## Sint new?

SINT NOH · How much is it?

## Shint bet yet new?

SHINT BEHT YET NOH · Where is the toilet?

## Englizigna tichilaleh?

en-gee-ZIN-yah tih-chih-LAH-leh · Do you speak English? (to a man)

## Amarigna alchilim

ah-mah-RIN-yah al-chih-LIM · I don't speak Amharic

## **Betam tafach new**

beh-TAHM tah-FAHCH NOH · It's very tasty

## **Buna tetu**

BOO-nah TEH-too · Come and have coffee

## **Enkwan dehna metu**

en-KWAHN DEH-nah MEH-too · Welcome (polite)

## **Melkam Addis Amet**

mel-KAHM ah-DEES AH-met · Happy New Year

## **Melkam Genna**

mel-KAHM GEH-nah · Merry Christmas

## **Chaw**

CHOW · Bye (informal, from the Italian 'ciao')

## Things you might not know

1. Ethiopia has its own calendar with 13 months: twelve months of 30 days and a short thirteenth month, Pagume, of 5 or 6 days. It runs 7 or 8 years behind the Western calendar: New Year falls on 11 September (12 September in the year before a Western leap year), and on 11 September 2026 the year 2019 began.
2. Many Ethiopians count the hours from dawn instead of from midnight. 7 in the morning is '1 o'clock' in Ethiopian time, and noon is '6 o'clock', so to change Western clock time into Ethiopian time you take away 6 hours.
3. The Arabica coffee plant grows wild in the forests of southwestern Ethiopia. The story of Kaldi, the goatherd whose goats danced after eating coffee berries, is a legend, not history.
4. Lucy, a skeleton of a human ancestor who lived about 3.2 million years ago, was found in the Afar region in 1974. She was named after the Beatles song 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds', which was playing in the camp. In Ethiopia she is called Dinkinesh, 'you are marvellous'.
5. Amharic is written in its own script, called fidel, which grew out of the ancient Ge'ez script. Each letter stands for a whole syllable, and there are some 280 letters in all.
6. At the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, Abebe Bikila won the marathon running barefoot. He became the first Ethiopian Olympic champion, and in 1964 in Tokyo he became the first person to win the Olympic marathon twice in a row.
7. As of 2026, Ethiopia has 12 places on the UNESCO World Heritage List, from the churches of Lalibela to the Bale Mountains. The Meskel festival of the True Cross (added in 2013) and the Timkat festival of Epiphany (2019) are on UNESCO's list of intangible heritage too.
8. Dallol, in the Danakil Depression, has the highest average yearly temperature ever recorded for a place where people lived: about 35 °C, measured from 1960 to 1966. The land there lies more than 100 m below sea level and is covered in yellow, green and white salt and sulphur.
9. The gelada, a grass-eating monkey with a bright red patch on its chest, lives only in the Ethiopian highlands. The Ethiopian wolf, which also lives

only in Ethiopia, is Africa's most endangered carnivore.

10. Ethiopian Airlines was founded in 1945 and made its first flights in 1946. As of 2025 it is Africa's largest airline, and Addis Ababa is one of the continent's busiest hubs for connecting flights.
11. Teff, the grain used for injera, is one of the smallest grains in the world. It is native to the highlands of Ethiopia and Eritrea and is naturally gluten free.
12. The name Abyssinia, once used for Ethiopia in English, comes from Habash, an old name for the people of the northern highlands. The Greek name Aithiopia was used by Homer and Herodotus long before it became the name of this country.
13. In June 1936, in exile after Italy's invasion, Emperor Haile Selassie spoke to the League of Nations in Geneva and asked the world to stand by his country. The speech made him a hero to opponents of fascism around the world; Time magazine had already named him its Man of the Year for 1935.

#### TALK ABOUT IT

## Questions for the group

- Have you ever been to Ethiopia, or has someone in your family? What do you remember?
- Have you ever tasted Injera or Doro wat? What is a dish you remember from a trip?
- The Derg falls (1991). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- Eritrea becomes independent (1993). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- Have you seen The rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, in person or in pictures? Which famous place would you most like to see?
- If you could spend one day in any city of Ethiopia, which would it be and why?

## QUIZ

# How well do you know Ethiopia?

Circle the right answer. The answers are on the last page.

**1. In the traditional Ethiopian way of telling the time, counted from dawn, what is 7 in the morning called?**

- A) 7 o'clock
- B) 6 o'clock
- C) 12 o'clock
- D) 1 o'clock

**2. The informal Amharic goodbye 'chaw' comes from the Italian word 'ciao'.**

- A) True
- B) False

**3. Ethiopia has a coastline on the Red Sea.**

- A) True
- B) False

**4. Kitfo, minced beef with chilli powder and spiced butter, is traditionally eaten raw.**

- A) True
- B) False

**5. The Lucy skeleton on show at the National Museum in Addis Ababa is a replica.**

- A) True
- B) False

**6. According to UN estimates for 2025, which is the one African country with more people than Ethiopia?**

- A) South Africa
- B) Kenya
- C) Nigeria
- D) Egypt

**7. In Amharic, 'doro' means beef.**

- A) True
- B) False

**8. Which city lies on the shore of Lake Tana, where the Blue Nile flows out of the lake?**

- A) Hawassa
- B) Harar
- C) Dire Dawa
- D) Bahir Dar

**9. The story of Kaldi, the goatherd whose goats discovered coffee, is a proven historical fact.**

- A) True
- B) False

**10. Many Ethiopians answer 'How are you?' with 'Egziabher yimesgen'. What does it mean?**

- A) Happy New Year
- B) It's very tasty
- C) Welcome
- D) Thanks be to God

**11. About how high above sea level does Addis Ababa lie?**

- A) 355 m
- B) 1,000 m
- C) 4,550 m
- D) 2,355 m

**12. The gelada monkey lives in the rainforests of West Africa.**

- A) True
- B) False

# Quiz answers

## 1. D) 1 o'clock

Ethiopian time counts from about 6 in the morning, so 7 am is 1 o'clock and noon is 6 o'clock.

## 2. True

True. Chaw comes from the Italian 'ciao' and is used between friends.

## 3. False

False. Ethiopia has had no coastline since Eritrea became independent in 1993, and it trades mainly through the port of Djibouti.

## 4. True

True. Kitfo is traditionally raw. It can be ordered lightly warmed (leb leb), which is still partly raw, or fully cooked, which is the safe choice for anyone pregnant, very young, older or unwell.

## 5. True

True. Visitors see a replica, while the original 3.2 million-year-old bones are kept safely in a vault.

## 6. C) Nigeria

By UN estimates, Nigeria has the most people in Africa, and Ethiopia, with about 135 million, is second. Egypt comes third.

## 7. False

False. Doro means chicken, as in doro wat, the chicken stew.

## 8. D) Bahir Dar

Bahir Dar, the capital of the Amhara Region, stands where the Blue Nile leaves Lake Tana. Hawassa lies on a different lake, Lake Hawassa, in the Rift Valley.

## 9. False

False. It is a legend, first written down in 1671, about two centuries after coffee drinking is first recorded. What is true is that the Arabica coffee plant grows wild in Ethiopia's forests.

## 10. D) Thanks be to God

Egziabher yimesgen means 'Thanks be to God', the usual reply to 'how are you?'.

## 11. D) 2,355 m

Addis Ababa lies at about 2,355 m, so take it slowly for the first days. 4,550 m is the height of Ras Dashen, the highest mountain.

## **12. False**

False. The gelada lives only in the Ethiopian highlands, where it grazes on grass on high meadows and cliffs.

# Ethiopia visa page

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Next stops

|                |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Country: _____ | Country: _____ | Country: _____ |
| Country: _____ | Country: _____ | Country: _____ |

Play the interactive version, collect a stamp in your passport:

<https://preview.worldstroll.com/countries/ethiopia>