

ITINERARY FOR MR HAIG X 6
CONTRASTS OF EITHIOPIA
GONDAR, SIMIEN MOUNTAINS, LALIBELA AND BALE MOUNTAINS



General Information

Although the access route is difficult to traverse, the Bale Mountains are worth visiting because they contain the richest flora and fauna of the alpine habitat in all of Ethiopia. The park occupies a surface area of 2,470 square km and includes altitudes from 1,500 - 4,400 meters (4,920 - 14,350 feet). This provides a unique diversity of landscape, vegetation, and fauna.

The park is divided by the Hareenna Cliff, which runs through it like a fracture from east to west, creating three clearly differentiated areas within the reserve. The northern part is known as Gaysay, named after a small river that crosses it and flows into the Weyb River near the settlement of Dinsho. The central part, just above the cliff, is the Sanette

Plateau which rises to more than 4,000 meters. The southern part, below the cliff, is a densely forested area known as the Hareenna Forest.

In the area surrounding Dinsho, one can find the endemic *Tragelaphus scriptus* Menelik's bushbuck, (decua). This is the smallest member of the *Tragelaphus* group reaching up to 1.5 meters long and 1 meter tall at the withers. The other endemic mammals found in the park are the Simien Fox, Mountain Nyala, and the giant mole rat. The park shelters more than 10 endemic birds, too.

The best season to visit the park is the dry season, from November to February when there are abundant clear days. The temperature can reach up to 30°C during the morning and drop to -7°C at night.



Day 1 (February 1, 2020): Arrival

Upon arrival you will be welcomed by your guide and drive about 15 minutes to your hotel. You will have a welcome dinner at your hotel. We can book a tour of Addis Ababa if you would like – please ask!

Golden Tulip Hotel or Similar including dinner and breakfast

The Golden Tulip Addis Ababa is a striking, brand new hotel with a convenient location. This 4 star hotel in Addis Ababa is situated near to the city center and there are 90 spacious 4 star hotel rooms and suites and non-smoking rooms are available as well as Wi-Fi access. All rooms are air conditioned and are equipped with satellite television, a large writing desk, in-room safe, direct dial international telephone and tea/coffee making facilities. The bathrooms are all equipped with hairdryers. The hotel offers 24-hour room service and laundry services.

Day 2 (February 2, 2020): Fly Addis – Gondar

Fly from Addis Ababa to Gondar - the 17th century capital of Ethiopia. Today you will visit the Imperial Castle Compound of Gondar (UNESCO World Heritage Site), the 'Bath of Emperor Fasiladas', the church of Quskuam Mariam (17th century AD), the residence of Empress Mintewab, and the church of Debre Birhan Sillassie which is famous for its wall and ceiling paintings. **Mayleko Lodge or Similar on full board for 1 night**

Mayleko lodge is one of the best properties in Gondar located a short distance from the airport and ancient royal enclosures. It is a place where Ethiopian tradition runs true. Situated in pristine landscape, the lodge offers 21 bungalows, a gourmet restaurant, a swimming pool and a golf driving range.



Day 3 (February 3, 2020): Gondar – to Simien Mountains National Park

After breakfast, leave Gondar and drive to Sankaber- the headquarters of Simien Mountains National Park- passing rural villages and crossing mountain passes with stunning vistas.

The Simien Mountains National park occupies a surface area of 180 km sq. The park situated between 4,430 and 1,900 meters (6,200 - 4,500 feet), boasts varied flora with three marked botanical areas. The highest parts have meadows with little vegetation, characteristic of afro alpine zones. Here we can find the endemic *Lobelia rhynchopetalum*, small groups of perpetual flowers, *Helichrysum*, and the striking *Kniphofia foliosa*.

Spend the afternoon, walking near your lodge to spot the endemic Gelada baboon and appreciate the breath-taking scenery.

Limalimo Lodge or Similar on full board for 1 nights



Limalimo lodge is a sustainable and boutique 12 room lodge uniquely positioned within Ethiopia's Simen Mountain National Park. Perched on an escarpment, the lodge overlooks high plateaus and deep gullies, offering breath-taking views and the opportunity to see wildlife found nowhere else on earth. The Lodge is positioned over 10 hectares; the bar and restaurant are perched on top of the hill with views across the Mountains, whilst the 12 rooms are scattered

privately around the site. Surrounded by indigenous highland trees, this is a contemporary lodge influenced by its natural surroundings and traditional Ethiopian design. The interiors include beautiful modern Ethiopian textile, hand-crafted fixtures, and locally produced art.

Day 4 (February 4, 2020): Camping in Chenek

After breakfast, head out to Chenek where it's possible to spot the endemic, Walia Ibex. The landscape in the area is remarkably picturesque with panoramic vistas overlooking the deep gorges of the Escarpment.

Today explore the pinnacles, valleys and wildlife of this stunning region. The beauty of the ranges can be discovered by following century old footpaths and it is possible to see Gelada Baboons who reside here amidst the local pasture lands.

Camping in Chenek on full board for 1 night



Day 5 (February 5, 2020): Simien Mountains

Today you will have a second chance to try and find the Walia Ibex, if not successful the previous night. Chenek has one of the best views in the Simien Mountains. There are outstanding views of the gorge and mountain range and it is easy to understand why the striking formations have been described as 'the chess pieces of the Gods'. Then return back to **Limalimo Lodge for one night on full board.**

6 (February 6, 2020): Fly Gondar - Lalibela

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight to Lalibela which is home to the 12th century hand carved rock churches of King Lalibela (1181 - 1221) whom the town is named after. After lunch in your hotel, visit the first group churches of Lalibela (UNESCO World Heritage Site) which are found northeast of a stream named 'River Jordan'.

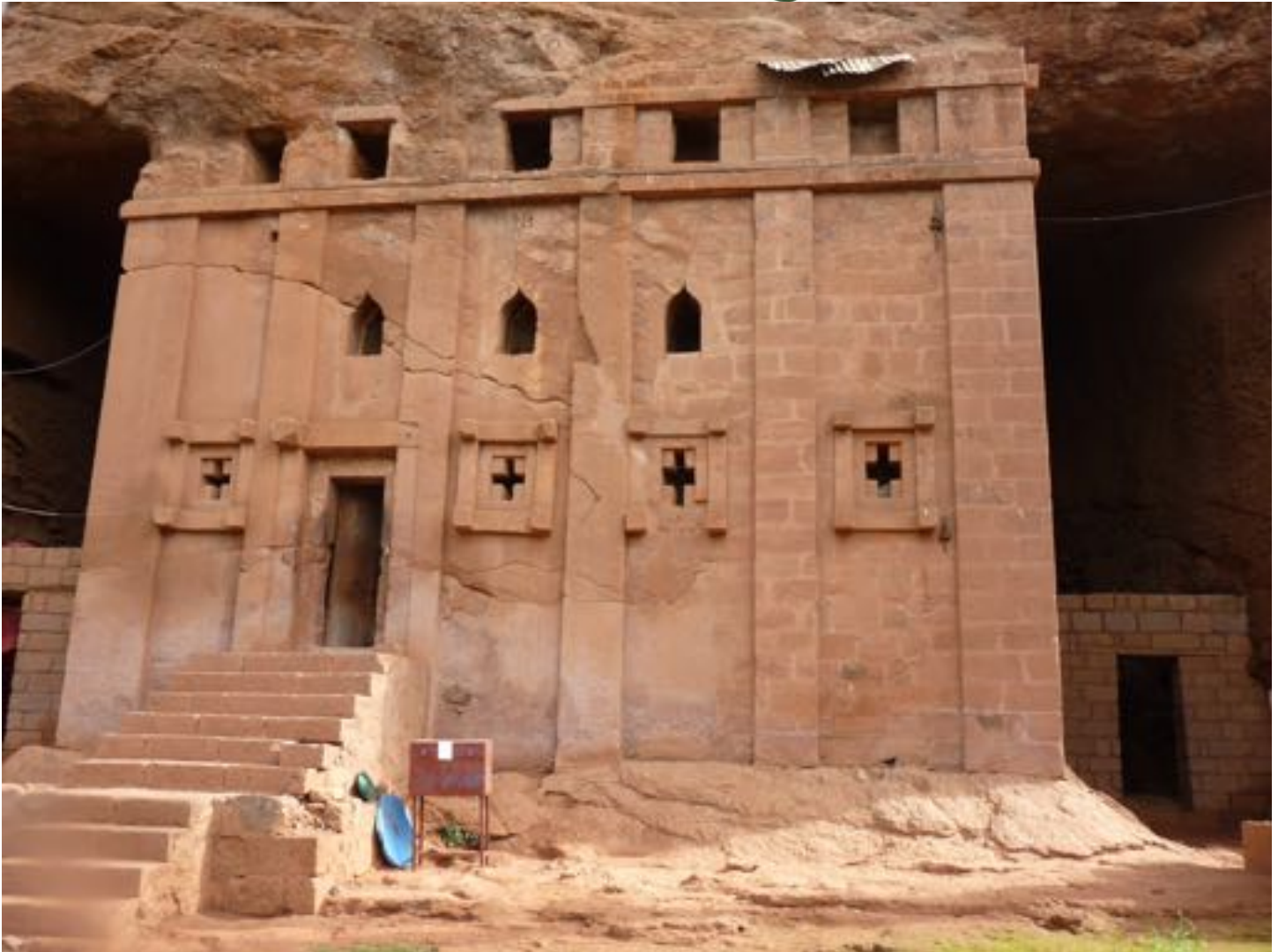
Maribela Hotel or Similar on full board for 3 nights

Maribela hotel is one of the best hotels in Lalibela. The hotel offers great view to the awe inspiring Lalibela mountains. Rooms are spacious and well furnished. The tasteful interior decoration gives every guest the very best in Lalibela. Lovely flowers adorn the space in the private balcony. A cosy daybed is made available so you can enjoy the gorgeous views. The restaurant serves tasty Ethiopian and Continental dishes prepared by a team of culinary experts led by experienced chef.

Day 7 (February 7, 2020): Lalibela

This morning you will visit the second and the third group of churches of Lalibela. In the afternoon you will drive to visit the Neakuto Le'ab cave church of Lalibela.

Maribela Hotel or Similar on full board



Day 8 (February 8, 2020): Lalibela

A highlight today as you ride a mule to the hill top semi monolithic church of Asheten Mariam (13th Century AD). The peak of the hill offers a wonderful viewpoint to have bird eye view of the surrounding area including the town of Lalibela. In the afternoon walk to the local village and join a family to experience their way of life. We bake Injera (Ethiopian typical food) and cook “Wat” (local stew). Finally we dine our dinner together with the family and enjoy the typical Ethiopian coffee ceremony. There will be story telling by the local old people (head of the family) about local culture and traditions.

Maribela Hotel or Similar on full board

Day 9 (February 9, 2020): Fly Lalibela – Addis – Drive Langano

Fly back to Addis then continue driving to Langano visiting the pre-historic archeological site of Melka Kunture, and the stele field of Tiya (UNESCO World Heritage Site). At Lake Langano enjoy swimming and bird watching.

Sabana Beach Resort or Similar on full board for 1 night

A lake side beach resort which is found on the shore of Lake Langano. The resort has many beautiful and carefully designed rooms with excellent view to the lake. All bungalows are situated on a cliff top, each having their own distinctive view over the expansive Lake Langano. Surrounded by green grass, acacia and palm trees, local flowers and a sandy area the atmosphere is set for true relaxation . It has a wonderful restaurant and bar with a nice spot to enjoy the view over the lake. Accommodation is traditionally styled and very comfortable. By day or at sunset, take a stroll along the lake-front or around the resort's vast grounds.

Day 10 (February 10, 2020): Drive Langano – Bale Mountains

This morning start driving to the Bale Mountains. Today you will be hiking around the headquarters of the park to spot the endemic mammals such as Mountain Nyala, Menelik bush buck and the common mammals like warthog, reed buck, gray dicker.

Bale Mountains Lodge or similar on full board for 3 nights



The central lodge nestles into the hillside so as to minimize the visual impact on the surrounding area, and is built using local slate-grey coloured stone.

The attached dining room is a 'tukul' in style featuring a thatched roof, with a sweep of windows maximizing the amazing views of the natural clearing and mountain range beyond. A central sunken fireplace creates a snug area in which to relax during the chillier mountain evenings. All lodge 'menyetta-bets' (guest-rooms) are spacious and comfortable with a wood burning stove in each room to provide warmth and a cosy atmosphere. Furniture is being manufactured locally using sustainable wood, and all our soft furnishings are locally sourced and are of the highest quality with an emphasis on comfort with Ethiopian style. The Service Quarters for Bale Mountain Lodge, which includes staff accommodation, laundry, maintenance and store facilities, along with staff ablutions and study and conservation facilities, are also built to the highest standards using local materials in order to blend into the surroundings.

Day 11 (February 11, 2020): Bale Mountains

Today will be a day of great contrasts with amazing scenery and birding. We will depart early, and ascend the Bale massif onto the Sanetti Plateau, which is between 3800m and 4377m above sea level. This site is an Important Bird Area of immense importance, supporting seven globally threatened species and nearly all of Ethiopia's Highland biome species. Our main target today is to see the plateau's most celebrated resident, the Ethiopian or Simien Wolf, crowned with the unenviable title of "the world's rarest canid." Watching these vibrantly colored animals, most closely related to the European Timber Wolf, exhibiting their hunting prowess while pouncing on Giant Mole-rats (another endemic to the Sanetti Plateau), is surely amongst Africa's greatest wildlife experiences. We should enjoy excellent photographic opportunities in this unique mountain wonderland.

Bale Mountains Lodge on full board



**Day 12 (February 12, 2020): Bale Mountains**

Today you will spend the day exploring the surroundings with your guide. If possible you will visit the nearby school which is the Rira primary school.

Bale Mountains Lodge on full board

Day 13 (February 13, 2020): Drive Bale Mountains – Awassa

After breakfast, drive to the park's entrance to meet with park warden and scouts then drive the same way until the town of Shashamane and then continue to Awassa, one of the rift valley Lakes. Today you will have a boat ride on lake Awassa, you can possibly spot hippos here.

The rest of the day will be free at Haile resort, at the bank of Lake Awassa, where we will have the chance to enjoy the great sunset over the lake.

Haile Resort or similar on full board for 1 night

The Haile Resort, owned by the world Champion athlete Hale G. Sillasie, is gracefully situated on the lake front. It is a low-rise resort-style hotel with spectacular lake views and azure waters offers a unique experience of Ethiopian culture. There is standard swimming pool and spa service. Haile resort offers a rich variety of dining experiences ranging from all day dining restaurant serving global cuisine, to Multi cuisine Restaurant and a signature of Asian & Classic Haike restaurant under the direction of the executive chef.

Day 14 (February 14, 2020): Drive Awassa – Addis Ababa

In the morning visit the fish market at shore of lake Awassa before driving back to Addis visiting the rift valley lakes Ziway, Abijatta and Shalla. If we have time, we will visit the famous Gallery of Lemma Guya.

In the evening, you will have farewell dinner at one of the best traditional restaurants in Addis with folkloric dancers. Transfer to the airport for your international flight.

Price includes:-

- Accommodation on a double room sharing basis
- Meals – Bed and breakfast in Addis and full board elsewhere
- All entrance fees as per the itinerary
- All airport transfers and ground transportation
- Professional English speaking guide accompanying you throughout the tour and local guides at each spot
- Mule hire, mobile camping gear and private cook for the camping day
- Scout fees
- Government tax

Price does not include:-

- International and domestic airfare
- Lunch and dinner in Addis Ababa
- Any alcoholic drinks
- Personal expense like souvenirs, laundry, etc.
- Photographic fees
- Tips
- Any expense which is not stated in the 'Included List' above



TRACKS SAFARIS – WE GET YOU CLOSER TO ETHIOPIA!