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India was cool. Unfortunately, if you're cheap and want to get from DC to India and back, you have to fly

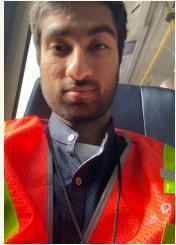


Ethiopian



Before I even begin this rant, it is mandatory that you listen to this in the background: [ETH Airlines Music](#)

Oh what's that? You **don't** want to listen to shahka-ka-ba-daio during boarding, safety video, takeoff, all meals, and deplaning?
That's too damn bad. You have to.



Now, when you book your Ethiopian Airlines flight ticket, you will notice that no matter where you are headed, you will have a layover in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia.

I used to work for **Delta Air Lines**, a classic hub-and-spoke system airline. I can personally attest to the efficiency of investing in a strong airport and letting it handle the bulk of your connections. Delta leverages Atlanta and makes it the busiest airport in the world.



Addis Ababa, however, is not a strong airport. It is very disconnected from Ethiopian Airlines itself, leading to much of the staff having no clue where the facilities are or what you are supposed to do. Should I go through security if I don't have my hotel voucher yet? Idk maybe. Where can I get my hotel voucher? Idk, hope it's not before security.

(Spoiler: it is. you waited 2 hours just to have to go back, get the voucher, and then wait in that line all over again.)



Now you may be thinking: **HOTEL VOUCHER???** And yes, that's right. For any Addis Ababa layover over 8 hours, Ethiopian Airlines grants you a complimentary hotel.

And what's MORE? They proclaim (in the app and in all email correspondence), it will be in the **SKYLIGHT HOTEL**



Looks nice huh? Yeah, you won't be staying there. They've been booked since you graduated high school. You will be staying in the 3-star **ADDISINIA HOTEL**. The shower will not work and the dinner will consist of undercooked rice and soggy vegetables.



No matter, you foolishly think *like an idiot*: you'll just get some rest on the plane. No you won't because of a little thing called:



Sheba Duty Free

Every three hours during the flight, for ten minutes, all the lights will come on and all of the seatback screens will play a series of advertisements for duty-free items ranging from whiskey to cologne to gucci bags. **This is an unskippable advertisement.** Were you watching a movie? Too bad, duty free on the screen. Were you asleep? Too bad, duty free over the airplane loudspeakers.

What's next? Sheba Duty Free hell ends, and finally the server gives you your food. And surely it's absolutely disgusting, right?

Nah, actually the food was very good. Some of the best airplane food I've ever had.



Finally, you've arrived to Mumbai! After 3 hours in Customs hell, you're ready to get your bag and go home. But wait... where's your bag?

You go to the Ethiopian Airlines desk to ask. **There isn't one.**