

Ethiopia

Continent: Africa

Languages Spoken: Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Somali, Afar, English (official working language)

Population: 126,527,060

Currency: Ethiopian Birr (ETB)

Area: 1,104,300

Main Landmarks:

- {'name': 'Lalibela Rock-Hewn Churches', 'writeup': 'A group of 11 medieval monolithic churches carved out of rock, considered a pilgrimage site and a UNESCO World Heritage site.'}
- {'name': 'Simien Mountains National Park', 'writeup': 'Known for dramatic mountain scenery and endemic wildlife including the Ethiopian wolf and Gelada baboon.'}
- {'name': 'Aksum Obelisks', 'writeup': 'Ancient stelae marking the ruins of the Kingdom of Aksum, an important center of early Christianity.'}
- {'name': 'The Blue Nile Falls', 'writeup': "A spectacular waterfall on the Blue Nile river, locally known as 'Tis Issat' meaning 'smoking water.'"}

Head of State / Government:

President Sahle-Work Zewde

Main Cultural Events:

- {'name': 'Timkat', 'writeup': 'Ethiopian Orthodox celebration of Epiphany, featuring colorful processions and religious ceremonies.'}
- {'name': 'Meskel', 'writeup': 'Festival commemorating the discovery of the True Cross, marked by bonfires and community gatherings.'}
- {'name': 'Enkutatash', 'writeup': 'Ethiopian New Year celebrated with music, dancing, and gift-giving in September.'}

Food & Cuisine:

Ethiopian cuisine is known for injera, a sourdough flatbread, served with various spicy stews called wats, often featuring lentils, beef, chicken, or vegetables, reflecting the country's rich agricultural heritage and religious fasting traditions.

Brief History:

Ethiopia is one of the oldest nations in the world, with human habitation dating back millions of years. It was home to the ancient Kingdom of Aksum and is notable for resisting colonization, maintaining independence except for a brief Italian occupation. It is the origin of coffee and has a unique Christian tradition dating back to the 4th century.

Important People:

- Haile Selassie - Former Emperor and key figure in Ethiopian and African history.
- Lucy (Australopithecus afarensis) - Famous early hominid fossil discovered in Ethiopia.
- Meles Zenawi - Former Prime Minister who led Ethiopia's economic reforms.

- Tewodros II - Emperor known for efforts to modernize Ethiopia.

Current Conflicts:

Ethiopia has experienced internal conflicts, notably the Tigray conflict beginning in 2020 involving the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, leading to humanitarian concerns and regional instability.

Youtube Links:

- Ethiopia Travel Guide - Top Places to Visit
- The History of Ethiopia Explained
- Ethiopian Food and Culture Documentary
- Simien Mountains National Park - Ethiopia's Natural Wonder
- Understanding the Tigray Conflict in Ethiopia