



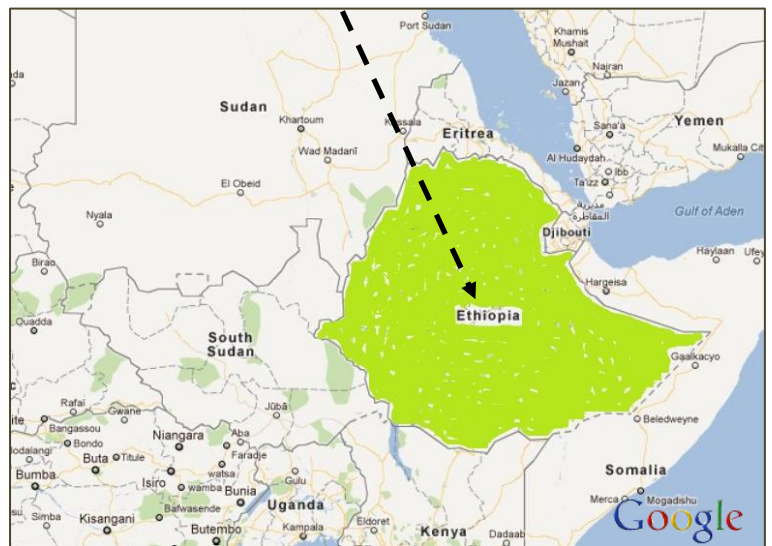
Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, located at 9° N and 38° E.
- We have traveled approximately 41,988 miles (67,573 kilometers) from our starting point in California.



People and Culture

- Ethiopia is also one of the oldest sites of human existence known. It is mentioned by Homer, Herodotus and Pliny the Elder, as well as the Christian New Testament. The ancient Ethiopian monarchy maintained its freedom from colonial rule with the exception of a short-lived Italian occupation from 1936-41.
- Ethiopia has a population of about 90.8 million. The current growth rate is 3.2%, giving Ethiopia one of the fastest-growing populations in the world.
- Though a trend of urbanization is starting to emerge, 83% of the people still live in rural areas. Although 84 languages and 200 dialects are spoken in Ethiopia, the population can be broken down into eight major groups: Oromo (34%), Amhara (32%), Somalis (6%), Tigrayan (6%), Berta (6%), Gurage (4%), Sidama (3%), Wolaita (2%), Afar (2%) and Hadiva (2%).
- Ethiopia was the fastest-growing non-oil-dependent African nation in 2007 and 2008. Agriculture accounts for almost 41 percent of the GDP. Coffee is the largest export. Ethiopia is Africa's second biggest maize producer.
- Most of the country's major cities are located at elevations of around 6,562 to 8,202 feet (2,000 to 2,500 meters).



Traditional Dorze hut looks like a giant beehive
(source: [Flickr/MauritsV](#))

Ethiopian Calendar

Ethiopia still retains the Julian calendar, in which the year is divided into 12 months of 30 days each, and a 13th month of five days and six days during the leap year. The Ethiopian Calendar is almost eight years behind the Gregorian calendar.

source: [EthiopianExcursions.com](#)



Click to learn to play Ethiopian Krar (2:32)



*Ethiopia Wolf seen near the Bale Mountains
(source: [Flickr/James Hopkirk](#))*

Fun Facts

- Dallol, Ethiopia currently holds the record high average temperature for an inhabited location on Earth, with an average annual temperature of 94°F (34°C).
- The longest cave in Africa is located in Ethiopia at Sof Omar. It is 9.4 miles (15.1 kilometers) long.
- Ethiopia has one of the largest numbers of rivers in the world (96).

Source:
[Wikipedia](#)



Blue Nile (source: [Flickr/Ternua](#))

Nature and Environment

- Ethiopia occupies an area of 426,371 square miles (1,104,300 square kilometers) – slightly less than twice the size of Texas or the size of Bolivia. It is a landlocked country, located in the Horn of Africa and is bordered by Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan.
- Ethiopia is a geologically-diverse country, ranging from the deserts along the eastern border to the tropical forests in the south to extensive Afromontane (mountainous region near the tropics) in the northern and southwestern parts of the country.
- The predominant climate type is tropical monsoon; however, the Ethiopian Highlands which cover most of the country have a climate which is generally considerably cooler than other regions at the same latitude. This is called “topographic-induced variation”.
- Ethiopia is often ironically referred to as the "water tower" of Eastern Africa because of the many (14 major) rivers that pour off the high tableland. It also has the greatest water reserves in Africa, but few irrigation systems in place to use it. Just 1% is used for power production and 1.5% for irrigation.

Our Plans

- We have left Kenya and are now in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. We are excited to learn more about Ethiopia's rich history and culture.
- Next, we will be venturing to north of Ethiopia to see the cities of Gonder and Lalibela and trek in the Simien Mountains.
- What would you like to know about Ethiopia? Send us your questions and we will try to include them!

Haile Gebreselassie

During his childhood, "Geb" grew up in a farm and had to run 6.2 miles (10 kilometers) daily to go to school, which laid the foundation for his running career. Since 1992 he has won two Olympic golds, eight World Championships and has set dozens of world records in distances between 3000 meters and the marathon (42 kilometers).

sources: Ethiopia & Eritrea (Lonely Planet), HaileGebrselassie.net

More Information

- <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,COUNTRYPROF,ETH,,4954ce295,0.html>
- <http://www.indexmundi.com/g/r.aspx?v=24&l=en>
- <http://wikitravel.org/en/Ethiopia>
- <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ethiopia.html>
- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html>
- <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Ethiopia>
- <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2859.htm>



Click to watch "Geb" setting the current world record. (1:45)

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