



# Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



## Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are in Northern Ethiopia, located at 13° N and 38° E.
- We have traveled approximately 42,512 miles (68,416 kilometers) from our starting point in California.
- There are three regions in Northern Ethiopia:



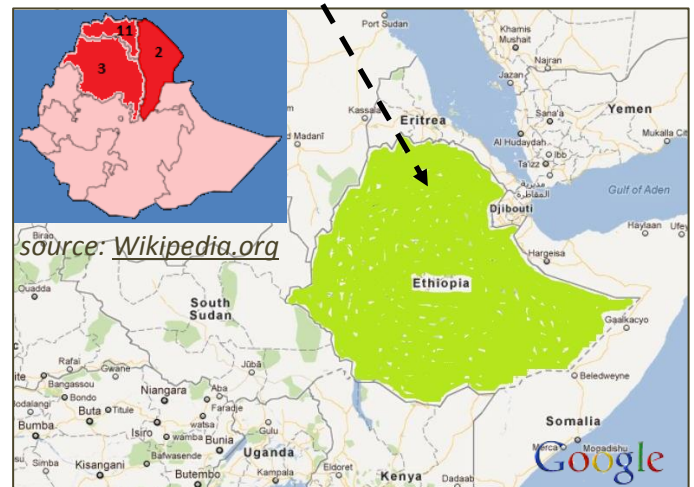
3 - Amhara



11 - Tigray



2 - Afar



## People and Culture

- Northern Ethiopia is made up of the Amhara, Tigray and Afar regions. Together these regions contain 24 million of the Ethiopia's 82 million people or 29 percent of the total.
- The Amhara region (Region 3 on the map on the first page) has the greatest population of the three regions with 18 million people. The most prominent ethnic group in this region is the Amharic-speaking Amhara people (91 percent). Amharic is of Semitic origin both in its alphabet and words shared with Hebrew and Arabic. Eighty-two percent of the people are Orthodox Christians. The Amhara people are mostly farmers.
- The Tigray region (Region 11) has four million people. The most prominent ethnic group in this region is the Tigrinya-speaking Tigray people (97 percent). Ninety-six percent of the people are Orthodox Christian. The Tigray people are farmers, herders and woodworkers.
- The Afar region (Region 2) has a population of 1.4 million people. The most prominent ethnic group in this region is Afar-speaking Afar people (90 percent). Ninety-five percent of the people in this region are Muslim. The Afar people engage in herding, mining (salt) and fishing.



Children of the Amhara, Tigray and Afar regions.  
(sources: [Flickr.com/hiro008](https://www.flickr.com/photos/hiro008/),  
[Flickr.com/waterdotorg](https://www.flickr.com/photos/waterdotorg/), [Flickr.com/ch images](https://www.flickr.com/photos/chimages/))



A modern usage of Amharic: the label of a  
Coca-Cola bottle.  
(source: [Wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org/))



Rock-hewn church in Lalibela  
(source: [fotopedia/Raphaël Fauveau](https://www.fotopedia.com/pages/Rapha%C3%ACl-Fauveau))



*Gelada baboon mother and baby seen in Semien Mountains National Park (source: [Flickr.com/Stefan Geens](http://Flickr.com/StefanGeens))*

### Fun Facts

- Ras Dashan is the highest point in Ethiopia and is located in the Simien Mountains.
- The lowest point in Ethiopia is located in the Afar Depression at 410 feet (125 meters) below sea level.
- Dallol (also part of the Afar Depression) is one of the hottest places on Earth. The temperature averages 118 °F (48 °C) during the dry season from March to September.

Sources:  
[CIA.gov](http://CIA.gov),  
[Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org)



*Erta Ale volcano (source: [fotopedia/filippo jean](http://fotopedia/filippo jean))*

## Nature and Environment

- Northern Ethiopia is 117,277 square miles (303,745 square kilometers), representing 28 percent of the total area of the country.
- The Afar Depression is located in Afar region of Ethiopia but also extends into neighboring Eritrea and Djibouti. It is part of the Great Rift Valley. The Awash River flows into the depression, where it ends in a chain of lakes of increasing in salinity (saltiness).
- Simien Mountains National Park is an UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site. The park is home to some extremely rare animals such as the Gelada Baboon, Simien Fox and Walia Ibex, a goat found nowhere else in the world. It is also home to over 400 bird species. Two other national parks exist in Northern Ethiopia: Awash and Yangudi Rassa.
- Ethiopia's largest inland body of water is Lake Tana, which is the source of the Blue Nile River. It is located in Amhara Region.
- Erta Ale is an active shield volcano located in the Afar Region of northeastern Ethiopia. It is the most active volcano in Ethiopia. Erta Ale stands 2,011 feet (613 meters). It has a lava lake at the summit - one of only four in the world.

## Our Plans

- We have been in Northern Ethiopia for a couple of days. Later in the week, we will be entering Simien Mountains National Park for our trek. Darren can't wait to record video of the Gelada Baboons located there.
- We preparing for our next countries, United Arab Emirates and Jordan, which are technically part of Asia. However, this region is often referred to as the Middle East because of its location between Northern Africa and Western Asia.
- What would you like to know about Ethiopia? Send us your comments and questions and we will try to include them!

## More Information

- <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/ethiopia/northern-ethiopia>
- <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/9>

## Did you know?

- At age five or six, the children of the Amhara spend their days watching the family animals, mainly sheep.
- The Tigrinya people have a rich heritage of music and dance using drums and stringed instruments tuned to their 5-tone scale.
- The Afar people are nomadic, moving from highland to lowlands with the seasons and rise and fall of the flood waters of the rivers.

Source: [OrvilleJenkins.com](http://OrvilleJenkins.com)

## Our Partners



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported License.