

Day 1 Oct 04 Depart from the U.S.

All details to com in AFS Trip Tips with excellent group air on fabulous Ethiopian Airlines or you can arrange to Malawi.

Day 2 Oct 05 Welcome to Lilongwe, Malawi

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The tour officially starts today in Lilongwe at the airport around 1pm. Our local guide will meet us and take us to the Sunbird Capital Hotel, nestled in a park at the heart of the city. This 4-star hotel is convenient to everything.

We'll quickly drop our bags and head out for a city tour. We'll visit Parliament as well as the Kamuzu Banda Mausoleum, which honors Malawi's first president after the nation gained independence from Britain. There's time to do a little shopping for local crafts as we tour the marketplace and then we make our way to the World War I and II Memorial. We may have the opportunity to climb the tower at its center to have a breathtaking view of the city. Enjoy our AFS Welcome Dinner tonight to get to know your fellow explorers.

Overnight: Sunbird Capital, Lilongwe (1 night) [link](#)

Day 3 Oct 06 Lilongwe Wildlife Center to Lake Malawi BD

After breakfast buffet, start our day with a visit to the award-winning Lilongwe Wildlife Centre. Set on almost 445 acres of beautiful, lush woodland, the center is both a sanctuary and rehabilitation facility for lions, monkeys, antelope, elephants and more. It not only offers a haven for the injured, its objective is to help return some of the animals to the wild.

We then travel about 2 hours to stunning Lake Malawi and the remarkable Sunbird Livingstonia beach resort. Unpack for three amazing days on the sparkling shores of this massive lake from which the country gets its name. The Livingstonia is located on its own private beach and is the perfect place to either relax or take part in an almost unimaginable array of water sports. Choose from kayaking to water skiing to diving. The lush green mountains form the perfect backdrop to a day of snorkeling and swimming in the crystal-clear waters of the lake. We encourage you to sign up at the hotel beach activity desk for individual excursions to Lizard Island, Heaven Island or Cape Maclear.

Our official Welcome Dinner is this evening in the resorts 5-star restaurant.

Overnight: Sunbird Livingstonia Beach (3 nights) [link](#)

Day 4 Oct 07 Lake Malawi Free Day for Culture BD

While this is a free day, we plan to arrange a visit to the Lifuwu community, which we encourage you to be a part of. This fishing community on the lakeshore gives you an insight as to how the people of Malawi have lived for centuries. You will be taken into the heart of a local community village to meet the village leaders and learn about daily life in a Malawi village. You also have a chance of buying interesting curios. Serious bargaining is encouraged! From the handicraft stalls, move on to Malawi's unique tropical fish farm. The farm processes and exports fish to USA, Europe and within Africa. It is renowned for its export of the many different species of Malawi's endemic and colorful cichlids, the envy of aquarists worldwide. This region is the AIDS orphan capital of the world and in fact, Madonna adopted five of her children from this area. We will visit a school and help bring joy to some of the children here.

Dinner is at the Sunbird this evening.

Overnight: Sunbird Livingstonia Beach

Day 5 Oct 08 FREE DAY FOR LAKE ACTIVITIES BD

One of the deepest lakes on the planet, Lake Malawi is the country's top attraction. This glittering blue jewel stretches along the length of the country, with clear waters and sandy beaches and hundreds of species of colorful cichlid fish – more than in any other lake in the world. There are lots of ways to explore the lake: swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, yachting, kayaking, parasailing, jet ski etc. are on offer. For the land lovers, explore the gardens or go horseback riding. Boat tours can be booked onsite to amazing outer islands, craft museum, croc farm with 500 crocs,

Overnight: Sunbird Livingstonia Beach

Day 6 Oct 09 - Addis Ababa - Welcome to Ethiopia BD

This morning we may our way back to Lilongwe to head to exotic Ethiopia! We fly from Lilongwe to Addis Ababa on Ethiopian Airways, arriving in the early evening. We head immediately to Jupiter International Hotel, one of the finest in Addis.

The name of the city, in Amharic, means "new flower" and its wide avenues are lined with jacaranda trees. Founded in 1886 by King Menelik II, at an altitude of a mile and a half above sea level with an excellent climate all year round. Your evening is free to take advantage of the beautiful property and its gardens. Dinner is included at the hotel.

Overnight: Jupiter International Hotel (1 night)

Day 7 Oct 10 Lalibela

BLD

After breakfast, we catch a flight to the "New Jerusalem" – Lalibella. Listed among the 'Eight wonders of the world', the region's rock-hewn churches must be seen to be believed. Literally carved into the side of the rocky terrain, the towering edifices will leave you in awe of what appears to have been superhuman abilities needed to create them. At the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th centuries King Lalibela built a series of these churches with – as he claimed – the assistance of angels.

In total, there are now 11 cave churches, some of which date back to the 13th-century, and the most famous and iconic church being St. Georges, carved in the shape of a cross, two stories down into the rock. It is said the clusters represent earthly and heavenly Jerusalem respectively.

Our hotel the Mountainview has views of the churches and in the evening, we can see pilgrims, dressed in white making their way to the churches to worship. (All meal included.)

Overnight: Mountain View Hotel (2 nights) [link](#)

Day 8 Oct 11 - Donkey Trek to Asheton Maryam Monastery

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Today, we go take a half day donkey trek high into the hills to the Asheton Maryam Monastery on Mount Abuna Yosef. Located at an altitude of almost two and a half miles above sea level, our sturdy little steeds will aid us in the trek. The view from the top is breathtaking and gives us a panoramic view of Lalibela and the surrounding region. The semi-monolithic church was carved out of a vertical cliff face and the surface quality of the rock is much rougher than in most other churches of Lalibela.

Overnight: Mountain View Hotel

Day 9 Oct 12 - Addis Ababa City & Market Tour

BLD

After breakfast, we fly back to Addis Ababa where we will have a half day tour of the city. We start on Mount Entolo, high above Addis for an incredible panorama of this lush city.

Then continue with a visit to the ethnological museum located in what was once the palace of Ethiopia's last emperor, Haile Selassie. Even for the museum, jaded, this is worth the stop

for its journey through Ethiopian history. Also, we'll visit the Holy Trinity Cathedral church: the official seat of the Orthodox Archdiocese of Addis Ababa. Our last stop is a shopper paradise – the Mercado - Africa's largest open market - Merkato. Here you will find anything imaginable from food stalls, to everyday goods to amazing arts and crafts. And don't forget to bargain!

Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Jupiter International Hotel (1 night)

Day 10 Oct 13 Markets and Departure BD

After breakfast, we visit the National Museum, known to be the best museum in Africa. Ethiopia is called “cradle of humanity” because of the first fossils of the human race found here. It houses incredible cultural and archaeological relics, including a plaster cast of "Lucy," the 3.2 million-year-old Hominid. We will also stop by at Shero Meda Market to see Ethiopian traditional clothes. There is a wide variety of beautiful fabrics, shawls, scarves, dresses, tops and jewellery with lots of choice and good gift ideas.

In the evening, enjoy a farewell traditional dinner where you will experience live cultural music and dance. After dinner we head back to the airport for an overnight flight back home.

Day 11 Oct 14 Arrive home