CairoNairobi (ECN)

Nairobi to Cairo 1 days, departing 22 May 2013

Comfort Zone: Basic Luxury
Physical Challenge: Easy Hard
Trip Style: Overlanding
Route: Nairobi to Cairo
Length: 1 days
Transport: Overland expedition vehicle.
Accommodation: Many wildcamps, some campsites and small hostel/hotel

Ratings for this trip

Comfort Zone: Basic / Adventurous

Basic comfort levels. Expect to rough it every now and again. On OVERLAND TRIPS be prepared to have some nights wild camping, campsites with basic facilities as well as some basic hotels, often on a multi-share basis. Some of the roads we travel along may be poor. On our ADVENTURE HOLIDAYS you will stay in simple, budget (1-2 star) accommodation with some shared facilities. Some accommodation may be on a multi-share basis and transport will be mainly local.

Physical Challenge: Strenuous in parts

STRENUOUS IN PARTS: These are physical tours; we may well be travelling at high altitudes, across deserts or through hot and steamy tropical countries. Physically it can be quite tough, but not necessarily all the time and there will be plenty of rest days and time to relax as well. The fitter you are the more you will enjoy the trip.

Countries Visited

Egypt

Egypt is a country full of international celebrated sites including the Pyramids and the River Nile. One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Pyramids are one of the most visited sites in the world. If you travel to Egypt, a trip to these is a must. The River Nile is another must see spot, as it travels through 5 countries including Egypt. Weaving through the Sahara Desert, it covers an incredible distance of over 4000 miles.

The capital is Cairo, and it is the largest city in Africa. It has many interesting places to visit, such as the Cairo Tower and Egyptian museums. The city might be large, but so is the opportunity to get involved to experience the Egyptian culture.

Ancient Egypt spans back an incredible 6000 years and throughout the history music has been central to it's culture. The God Thoth was credited with the invention of music by the Ancient Egyptians. Today typical folk music is alive in the rural parts of the country and is a classic tradition. As the piano and violin were introduced into Egypt, the music became more classical at the beginning of the 20th century. Like the music, the cuisine too is beautiful. "Ful Medames" is flowing with vegetables and is one of the national dishes of Egypt.

Egypt has an amazing history, and with so much to be discovered, there is an adventure waiting to be found.

Ethiopia

With a friendly atmosphere, a country brimming with history, tribes and national parks. Ethiopia is a country that is as diverse as you can get in Africa.

Along the Sudanese frontier it changes from semi-desert to high mountains. The highland area and the Simien Mountains are known as the Roof of Africa and are home to the ancient Ethiopian Christian kingdom. In the far east of the country is a vast desert, home to Islamic nomads. In the south is the Rift Valley with stunning lakes and flora and fauna. To the south-west are the unique tribal lands of the Omo Valley and Mago National Park.

The principle national park is the Simien Mountains National Park, and with the range of wildlife in the park and great mountain vistas, it is nothing short of amazing. The parks most famous inhabitants are the Gelada Baboons.

Ethiopia is an ancient Christian kingdom and has architecture unusual in this part of Africa as a result. The rock churches of Lalibela and the forts of Gondar are completely unique in East Africa.

It is a country full of life and colour, and this is expressed through the sound of music. It is very diverse, as so many cultures across the country have their own sound. Most of Ethiopia's music is folk inspired and is influenced from other North African countries. The range of sound is diverse and there are many traditional instruments. Chordophones, Aerophones, Idiophones and Membranophones are the most common sounds used in traditional music.

Vegetables and meat are the basis of many of the dishes in Ethiopia. Berbere is an ingredient used in many dishes. A cross between chilli powder and other spices give dishes a distinct taste when added to beautiful stews. Food brings Ethiopians together, and the act of Goorshsa shows this. This is the act of ripping off a piece of injera bread, rolling it in the sauce and placing it in a friend's mouth. This is an act of friendship and the larger the injera, the greater the friendship.

Kenya

Kenya is a country full of life and colour; of tribes and tradition and of wildlife and game parks.

In the lively capital of Nairobi there are so many attractions to fill a few days. The Karen Blixen museum was donated by Denmark after popularity of 'Out of Africa'. The location of the museum now is also home to some beautiful wildlife including horses. Most visitors also take in the elephant orphanage and giraffe sanctuary, offering the chance to feed the giraffes from a raised platform.

Of course it's the wildlife that draws most people to Kenya due its excellent national parks and reserves such as The Maasai Mara (also known as the Masai Mara to the Mara to locals), Nakuru and Samburu . Of course most people want to get a snap of the big five but there are also good chances of seeing the lesser predators of the genet, jackal and hyena.

Mount Kenya is the country's highest mountain and is the 2nd largest mountain in Africa after Kilimanjaro. Standing at a height of over 5000 metres, it towers over the surrounding plains and is no mean feat to scale with most climbers regarding it as more of a challenge that it's taller cousin in Tanzania .

Kenya's music scene is one of the most eclectic in the whole of Africa. With over 40 regional languages across the country, the folk music of Kenya is incredibly varied. Many of the regions have their own type of music, and one of the most inspiring is the Polyphonic style of the Maasai region in which chanting makes up the song's rhythm.

Tribes all over Kenya are proud of their products, whether it is music or textiles or food. The staple diet is mainly maize based and although each region has its own specific taste, there are many that are common across the country. One of these is Sukuma wiki. It is a phrase that means "to push the week". This meal is full of seasonal vegetables which will last a family a week.

Kenya does pack a lot into a small space but don't underestimate the country, in terms of tourism it is Africa’s biggest hit!

Sudan

Sudan is one of the least visited places in Africa, yet it has so much to offer. The friendliness of the Sudanese people is legendary in traveller circles. For a country that has experienced such bad political problems and such a long and drawn out civil war it is amazing that the local people are so welcoming. People are genuinely warm and always willing to help. This is the country where you want to brush up on your smattering of Arabic. Just a few words can open doors into chai houses, into living rooms and into the world of Sudanese hospitality. People are genuinely curious and pleased to see outsiders.

Khartoum is the capital city and it is full of life. With museums and shopping, there is always activities to partake in. The river Nile cuts north through the city creating a scenic view throughout the capital. There's a place to relax in the Botanical Gardens.

Sudan is famous for its fantastically well preserved temples and pyramids. Much less known that the ones in north neighbour Egypt but no less interesting. Perhaps the most splendid of all the Kushite temples and pyramids are those at Meroe, Naqa and Musawwarat. The pyramids at Meroe are the most impressive in Nubia and the site is very well preserved and restored.

When a guest arrives at a house, they are offered a drink of Abre or Tabrihana, which is a non alcoholic fruity drink. They will be seated at a low table with cushions on the floor and will be offered a towel to wipe their hands. A large cloth is given to cover the knees. An important ritual in Sudan is serving water from an Ebrig, which is a copper pitcher and the water is caught in a beautiful copper basin. As for the food itself there are many beautiful dishes - soup, salad, spices. One dish is called Machi. This is a dish of tomatoes stuffed with beef. This dish is popular across Sudan. The red hot spice of Shatna is used in many dishes and is the real taste of the country. Dessert is often prepared and served on a side table before the main meal. A traditional dish is creme caramela and is normally decorated and served to a guest with a spoon after the main meal has been consumed.

Cherish memories of a forgotten country. Meet some of the friendliest people in the world. Become involved in the traditions and you'll never forget the magic of Sudan.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1: Nairobi

Wed 22 May 2013

Border Information: If Joining in Nairobi, enter Kenya at Nairobi Airport.

Group meeting at 18:00hrs. Staying in a comfortable hotel with good facilities.

If you arrive early why not head out and explore the National Museum of Kenya, the Karen Blixen Museum (author of Out of Africa), or Bomas (displays of traditional homesteads of several Kenyan tribes in an outdoor village).

Hotel for the night: Kivi Milimani Hotel
Kivi Milimani Hotel.
Milimani Road
PO Box 20681
Nairobi
+254-20-2722358

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight in Kenya's capital, Nairobi	Included in tour
NNP Animal orphanage & Safari walk, Nairobi	USD 20
Karen Blixen Museum, Nairobi	USD 14
Giraffe Centre, Nairobi	USD 12
Carnivore Restaurant, Nairobi	USD 40
Bomas of Kenya, Nairobi	USD 40
National Museum, Nairobi	USD 14

Nairobi

Nairobi is a lively city with a cosmopolitan atmosphere. The Kenyan capital takes it's name from the Maasai meaning 'Place of Cool Waters'. Today it is a busy, bustling place that comes alive through it's many markets, shops, bars and restaurants, not

to mention it's vibrant nightlife. If you have time to explore the city, the National Museum of Kenya and Karen Blixen Museum are both worth a visit, or you can get up close to the Giraffe's and help to feed them at the Langata Giraffe Centre.

Day 2: Lake Naivasha

Thu 23 May 2013

This morning we depart for our camp on the shores of Lake Naivasha (140 km, approx 3-4 hours), one of the most beautiful of the Great Rift Valley bodies of water, to relax by the lakeside.

Our camp ground has showers and flush toilets.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the Elsamere Born Free foundation & High tea at Lake Naivasha	Included in tour
Walking safaris with big game in Naivasha	USD 40
Hippo spotting boat trip, Lake Naivasha	USD 20

Lake Naivasha

One of the few freshwater lakes in the Great Rift Valley, Lake Naivasha has floating islands of papyrus reeds and a border of flat-topped acacias. It's also home to a healthy population of hippos a tremendous variety of birds and the Elsamere Conservation Centre, once the home of the Adamsons of 'Born Free' fame.

Day 3 to 4: Nakuru National Park

Fri 24 May to Sat 25 May 2013

We have the morning free to explore a little more before departing for our campsite near to Nakuru town (120 km, approx 3-4 hours).

The following day we head into Nakuru National Park for a game drive in Jeeps.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Safari in Lake Nakuru National Park	Included in tour
Kenyan colonial farm visit	

Nakuru National Park

Lake Nakuru National Park was established in 1968 to protect the huge flocks of lesser and greater flamingos that live here. At times there are over one million of these spectacular birds roaming around the acrid waters of the soda lake that is the centrepiece of the park. Even if you are not a keen birdwatcher the sight is inspiring and it is not hard to understand why the lake has become such a favourite for African wildlife documentaries. Nakuru is also where much of the film "Out of Africa" was shot.

The park is located on the floor of the Rift Valley and is a mixture of bushland, forest and rocky escarpment. Each area is an important habitat for many different species of wildlife. Besides the prolific birdlife, the park is also well established as one of East Africa's premier parks for big game. Beside the lake, hippo, waterbuck, warthogs, Bohor's reedbuck and zebra can regularly be found. Further up in the forests there's a large population of black and white colobus monkeys; and the ultimate forest predator, the leopard. The bushland on the valley floor is home to a large variety of antelope and gazelle including eland, impala, Chandler's reedbuck and the tiny dikdik; and the inevitable pride of lions.You can also see Rothschild giraffe here, but Nakuru's biggest draw is probably it's rhinos. In the late 1980s the Kenyan Wildlife Services used the park as a rhino sanctuary, and it now has a stable black and white rhino population.

Day 5: Naro Moru

Sun 26 May 2013

Leaving Nakuru, we travel through fantastic scenery as we travel to the slopes of Mt Kenya, spending the night on the grounds of one of the many lodges that are dotted around the area.

We might choose to utilise one of our spare days here to explore nearby Sweet Water Game Sanctuary or take the opportunity to explore the lower slopes of Mt Kenya.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight in Naro Moru at the foothills of Mount Kenya	Included in tour
Horse riding, Naro Moru	USD 15
Nayaroi caves (Mau Mau) & waterfalls, Naro Moru	USD 15
Nature Trails, Naro Moru	USD 10

Day 6 to 7: Samburu National Reserve, Samburu community village visit

Mon 27 May to Tue 28 May 2013

We travel on to Samburu National Reserve (140 km, approx 4-5hours).

We'll take a game drive into the park and also visit a Samburu Village just outside the Samburu National Reserve

The camp is in the heart of the park. Facilities are drop toilets and cold showers.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Wildlife safari in Samburu National Reserve	Included in tour
Visit to Samburu tribal community and cultural project	Included in tour

Samburu National Reserve

The Samburu region has hardly been touched by tourism and its pristine wilderness is home to a fascinating mix of Kenya's nomadic tribes who still retain traditional ways of life. These tribes include the Samburu, Rendille, Turkana, and Kalenjin.

The Samburu National Reserve is famous for its reticulated giraffes, Grevy's zebras, graceful gerenuks, and Beisa oryx, whilst crocodiles are often seen in the river. If we are lucky, we may also see lions or leopards here. The Ewaso Nyiro River meanders through the reserve forming a ribbon of oases in the parched landscape.

We will visit the Samburu Cultural Centre outside Samburu National Reserve. Similar in appearance to the Maasai but lesser known, the Samburu are a proud warrior tribe. Here we watch traditional Samburu dancing, and learn about Samburu tribal life and customs. The project is run by Samburu tribesmen for the benefit of the community.

Samburu community village visit

We stay at a Samburu village just outside the Samburu National Reserve. Similar in appearance to the Maasai but less known, the Samburu are a proud warrior tribe. Here we watch traditional Samburu dancing, and learn about Samburu tribal life and customs. The project is run by Samburu tribesmen for the benefit of the community.

Day 8 to 9: Moyale, Marsabit

Wed 29 May to Thu 30 May 2013

The following day we travel on to Marsabit (240 km, approx 7-10 hours). The road will be a little bumpy to say the least however the scenery makes up for this as we travel through the black lunar landscape and pass mountain greenery, spectacular craters, watercourses, bush country and termite mounds.

Due to security issues in this particular area we will be accompanied by two police escorts.

The following day we make our way to the border town of Moyale (265 km, approx 8-11 hours), where we set up camp.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Remote overland journey through the wilds of southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya	

Moyale

The market town of Moyale splits the countries of Kenya and Ethiopia. There is a nice atmosphere that runs throughout the town and more of this can be discovered through exploring.

Marsabit

Marsabit lies on the extinct volcano of Mount Marsabit. Surrounded by forests on the hills, it is a contrasting image to the deserts in the background. At the heart of the forest is Lake Paradise. This gorgeous site attracts animals such as elephants and buffaloes to the spot and this and the Bongole Crater create a fascinating location for people all over to come and gaze at the beauty of the town.

Day 10: Konso

Fri 31 May 2013

Border information: Exit Kenya at Moyale, Enter Ethiopia at Moyale

This morning we cross the border in to Ethiopia, we then have a full day of travel on towards Konso (330 km, approx 8-9 hours) home to the local Konso people. We mayl have time to explore the local market and perhaps take a tour of some traditional houses.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight in Konzo, centre of the Konso people	Included in tour
Visit the cultural handicraft market in Konso	

Konso

In the far south of Ethiopia on the banks of the Sagan river is Konso, gateway to the Omo Valley. The whole way of life in the villages here has changed little over the centuries and old traditions are strongly upheld.

Konso Development Association (KDA)

Some 550 km south of Addis Ababa, near to Konso, the Gersale Village is working rehabilitate and conserve land that has been exploited by years of overuse.

The Konso Development Association (KDA) is working with the local community to rehabilitate degraded lands in the Gersale village. The community-based nursery raises a range of tree seedlings while soil and water conservation activities lay the groundwork for reviving an ecosystem in otherwise harsh conditions. After touring the nursery you will be able to plant seedlings in a degraded area during a ceremony blessed by a local elder. Nametags with the name of the donor, date of the planting and country of origin will be made to commemorate the donation and hung in the nursery. The collection of nametags will represent a global village of travelers and donors who have worked alongside local villagers to restore the natural resource base and provide sustainable livelihoods through a healthier, more productive ecosystem.

To ensure sustainability, part of the travelers' contribution goes towards hiring community members to regularly water and care for the seedlings.

Reforestation revitalizes land, allowing farmers to eventually work the soil in a sustainable way, and attracts native wildlife. Locals raise trees in community-based nurseries, cultivating a variety of seedlings and create "Community Commitment" enclosures to protect newly planted seedlings. Soil and water conservation activities help ensure that the community led effort is sustainable long-term. Already, KDA and local community members have planted over 40,000 trees in sensitive watersheds and have a goal of planting at least 150,000 more.

How you can help

You can plant trees in the Gersale Village by letting your tour leader know you want to make a donation and include a visit to the project during your visit to Konso. While traveling you can donate directly to our project partners in the field as part of your visit. Upon return you can also donate to these projects on the Global Giving website online.

$20 = to plant a tree in Konso and support its maintenance by local communities

About KDA

KDA was founded in 2000 as a response to the natural and socio-economic problems at the root the region's pervasive poverty. KDA is a community-based development organization that facilitates work to sustainably improve the livelihood and living conditions of the people in the Woreda region.

Day 11 to 13: Omo Valley Region

Sat 01 Jun to Mon 03 Jun 2013

In the far south of the country lies the Omo Valley area. We drive down through this remote region (145 km, approx 5-6 hours) to either the settlement of Turmi or Jinka which is our launch point for the Omo Valley. From here we will spend 3 nights and 4 days visiting a combination of markets and small tribal settlements in the surrounding region.

You should be aware we will be travelling through very remote areas where road and sanitary conditions will be rough. We will staying in basic camp sites.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided Omo Valley Tribal Tour visiting either the Hamer, Banna, Mursi or Ari tribes.	Included in tour

Omo Valley Region

The Omo Valley region is unusual in that it is home to so many different tribes all living very close to one another in such a small area. Anthropologists believe that this is because thousands of years ago this area of Africa acted as a kind of ethnic crossroads, as different groups of people migrated between north, south, east and west.

Exploring the many small communities and settlements here will give you a fascinating insight into the different tribes, their cultures, traditions and way of life. On Dragoman trips we travel with a local guide, who will be able to introduce us to the Hamer, Arbore and the Dascensch tribes, among others.

There are also other tribal groupings throughout the area and our guide will point out the different tribes and their customs. Life is distinctly tribal throughout the region, with few modern amenities.

Day 14 to 15: Arba Minch

Tue 04 Jun to Wed 05 Jun 2013

Leaving the Omo Valley we drive to Arba Minch (110 km, approx 2-3 hours).

We spend time here to allow exploration of the area. Options include a five-hour boat trip into Lake Chamo National Park to the Crocodile Market.

For those who prefer a less strenuous day, you can hire bikes and ride around the local area, or perhaps visit the local government-run crocodile farm.

We will camp for two nights in Arba Minch

Activity	Approximate Cost
2 nights exploring Arba Minch and the surrounding area	Included in tour
Bicycle hire, Arba Minch	USD 10
Boat trip on Lake Chamo to see the crocodile 'market'	USD 65
Visit to the Crocodile farm, Arba Minch	USD 5

Arba Minch

Meaning 'forty springs', Arba Minch takes its name from the streams found between the two Rift Valley lakes of Abaya and Chamo. The town has stunning views over the lakes and surrounding forested areas, and also has an excellent and vibrant market.

Lake Chamo National Park is home to what the locals refer to as the 'crocodile market'. This is a place on the shores of the lake where vast numbers of crocs congregate, some of which reach over seven metres in length. The lake is home to the Guji and Ganjule people who traditionally hunt hippos and are famed for their 'ambatch boats', which resemble the boats carved in the tombs of the ancient Egyptians

Day 16: Wendo Genet

Thu 06 Jun 2013

We head today to Wendo Genet located approx. 35Kms from the town of Awasa located on the shores of Lake Awasa.

Tonight we will camp in the grounds of the Hot Spring Hotel.

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Activity	Approximate Cost
Relax in the Hot Springs at Wendo Genet	USD

Wendo Genet

Wendo Genet (also known as Wondo Genet) is a resort town in Ethiopia. Located southeast of Shashemene in the Sidama Zone of the Southern Nations.

Wendo Genet is known for its hot springs and is surrounded by primary Ethiopian forests. The Wendo Genet hotel was established in 1964, on land used as recreation site for the royal family until 1975. Emperor Haile Selassie bequeathed its name, meaning "Wondo Paradise", in reference to the beautiful panorama with a rich endowment of forests, wildlife and abundant water.

Day 17: Awassa

Fri 07 Jun 2013

Today we will head to Awassa to visit the Awassa Childrens Project which is an organisation dedicated to housing, feeding, educating, providing health care and AIDS Education to children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic in Africa.

After visiting the project we will stop in Awassa town for shopping and stay overnight in Awassa Town in a small local run pension.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the Awassa Childrens Project	Included in tour

Awassa

Awassa (also spelled Awasa or Hawassa) is a city in Ethiopia, on the shores of Lake Awassa in the Great Rift Valley where fishing is it major local industry.

Awassa was capital of the former Sidamo Province from about 1978 until the province was abolished with the adoption of the 1995 Constitution. This city is home to Hawassa University, Awasa Adventist College, and a major market. Important local attractions include the St. Gabriel Church and the Awassa Kenema Stadium.

During our time in Awassa we will visit the Awassa Childrens Project. The Awassa Children's Project promotes sensible, culturally responsible relief work aimed at assisting children primarily orphaned by AIDS, educating people in Africa's Sub-Saharan region about AIDS prevention, and offering a proactive and immediate approach towards the resolution of serious health and social issues facing the region.

The Awassa Children’s Project (ACP) is a grassroots non-profit organization formed in 2001. ACP supports several organizations in Awassa, Ethiopia: a children’s centre that provides housing, food and education for over 60 children orphaned by AIDS; One Love Theatre (OLT), an AIDS education theatre company; and the Awassa Youth Campus, a community center in downtown Awassa which features-free to all Awassa children-aikido, sports, tutoring, art, music and a library, among other activities. These organizations continue to grow and dramatically improve the lives of Awassa children and the community in which they live. Especially in these times of dramatically increasing

food costs in Ethiopia, your support is critical to our continued success.

For further information on the project please go to http://www.awassachildrensproject.org/

Day 18 to 20: Bale Mountains National Park

Sat 08 Jun to Mon 10 Jun 2013

Leaving Wendo Genet we drive on towards the Bale Mountains National Park (180 km, approx. 4-5 hours).

We will drive high onto the plateau in search of the Ethiopian Wolf.

In the Bale Mountains we stay in dorms in a basic lodge.

Activity	Approximate Cost
3 nights in the wilds of Bale Mountains National Park	Included in tour

Bale Mountains National Park

Bale Mountains National Park is situated on a high plateau surrounded by mountain peaks which soar to over 4000 metres in height. As you climb into the hills the terrain changes from forest on the lower slopes through junipers and heather to the exotic moorlands of the plateau, criss-crossed by fast-flowing streams. This beautiful park is home to three species unique to Ethiopia; the Simien red fox, Menelik's Bushbuck and the Mountain Nyala. There are some 200 species of bird within the park including 13 of Ethiopia's 23 endemic species.

Day 21 to 22: Lake Ziway, Tulu Gudo Island

Tue 11 Jun to Wed 12 Jun 2013

North of the town of Shashemene is the beautiful Lake Ziway.

We will stay at Lake Ziway for 2 nights during which time we will take a boat tour across Lake Ziway to Tulu Gudo Island for a guided tour.

During your time at Lake Ziway you will also have the option to become involved in the Stoves and Livelihoods community project whereby you can make a donation to the project.

Our 2 nights will be spent in a small local run hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of Tulu Gudo Island on Lake Ziway	Included in tour
Scenic boat trip across Lake Ziway to Tulu Gudo Island	Included in tour
Get invloved with the "Stoves & Livelihood" project at Lake Ziway	USD 34

Lake Ziway

Lake Ziway, about 60 miles south of Addis Ababa, and its surrounding area, nurtures an array of wildlife. Birds, hippopotamuses and fish roam the lake, which is dotted with five islands. One of the islands, Tulo Gudo, is said to have housed the Ark of the Covenant in the ninth century. Long inhabited by the Gurage, an ethnic group rich in history and culture, the areas surrounding the lake are now under unprecedented pressure from deforestation.

Promoting Energy Saving Stoves to Save Livelihoods
Sustainable Environment and Development Action (SEDA)

Persistent poverty has created an informal industry of deforestation. Workers cut trees to sell as fuel and women gather wood to cook long hours over open fires.

The “Stoves and Livelihoods” project is designed to improve the health of local families and conserve the natural environment by introducing energy saving stoves to communities throughout the Central Rift Valley. These low-tech stoves cut firewood consumption in half. In addition to conserving local forests, the project protects women and children, who are most susceptible to the common respiratory illnesses caused by traditional indoor cooking methods. Often responsible for cutting firewood, women and children save up to two hours a day gathering fuel. And by protecting the natural environment, the project and its champions are creating a virtuous cycle that promotes a sustainable tourism economy, which pays dividends to workers and maintains the destination’s iconic appeal.

How you can help.....

You can provide a cook stove to someone in need by letting your tour leader know you want to make a donation during the visit to the project. You can donate directly to our project partners in the field as part of your visit. Upon return you can also donate to these projects on the Global Giving website online.

Even small donations can make a huge impact!

$34 = 1 cook stove provided to a family, and training to help ensure reduction in deforestation and cleaner household air

About SEDA

SEDA has been working on promotion of environmentally friendly technologies complimented by

various environmental rehabilitation, livelihood development and community based eco-tourism projects in numerous districts of Central Rift Valley since 1994. The organization has focused on promoting energy saving stoves as a key environmental development strategy. So far, more than 2000 women have been trained and given fuel efficient stoves through SEDA.

Tulu Gudo Island

Among Ethiopia's many ancient legends is that of the Ark of the Covenant. One of the islands on Lake Ziway, Tullo Gudo, is said to have housed the Ark of the Covenant in the ninth century

The story goes that King Menelik I, the son of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, brought the powerful relic to Ethiopia in the 4th century B.C. Hidden within the Saint Mary Zion Church in Aksum, the Ark rested peacefully until the 10th century when the violent campaigns of warrior-Queen Gudit threatened to destroy the church. To protect the Ark, it was carried far south to the island now known as Tulu Gudo, where it remained for some 70 years before being safely returned to Aksum. Those that brought the Ark to Tulu Gudo came to be known as the Zay people, the guardians of the Ark. Tulu Gudo's Maryam Tsion Monastery boasts a number of millennium-old manuscripts that are said to have accompanied the Ark of the Covenant on its journey to the island.

On Tulu Gudo Island we learn about the unique culture of the Zay people. Though just 900 of them live on the island, their culture and language are completely different from the surrounding Oromo people. We pass through the village, meet the community, experience the local way of life, and discover traditional weaving. The Maryam Tsion Monastery is the highlight of the tour. Home to a fascinating collection of ancient relics dating back over 1,000 years, the monastery houses relics such as the beautiful Gedle-Kidusen manuscript, a parchment book written in Ge'ez, as well as a number of stunning platters and crosses.

Day 23: Addis Ababa

Thu 13 Jun 2013

We travel from Lake Abiyata to Addis Ababa (215 km, approx 5-6 hours).

Why not take the chance to head to one of the city's many restaurants for the chance to eat some local food and perhaps listen to some traditional music.

In Addis Ababa we stay in a hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa	Included in tour
Overland journey to Addis through the immense Blue Nile Gorge	Included in tour

Addis Ababa

Referred to more commonly as "Addis", Addis Ababa (220 km, approx 7-8 hours) lies amongst wooded hills at an altitude of about 2300 metres, giving it a pleasant climate. Addis has many sights to offer visitors and we have free time to explore the sites. Get a fascinating glimpse into Ethiopia's many tribal groups at the Ethnological Museum, see the stunning fossil collection at the National Museum, and don't miss the chaotic bustle of the Merkato (local market). All manner of arts and crafts can be found in the souvenir shops on Churchill Avenue.

Day 24: Addis Ababa

Fri 14 Jun 2013

Border Information: If finishing in Addis, exit Ethiopia at Addis Airport.

If continuing on then you will have free time to explore the sights of Addis Ababa.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit "Lucy" at the National Museum, Addis Ababa	
Stroll through the Mercato one of the largest markets in Africa, Addis Ababa	
Visit Africa Hall - a symbol of African independence and optimism, Addis Ababa	
St George's Cathedral (Giorgis Cathedral) built to commemorate Ethiopia's victory over the Italians, Addis Ababa	
Visit the Menelik Mausoleum, built to serve as the tombs of emperors and princes, Addis Ababa	

Day 25: Addis Ababa

Sat 15 Jun 2013

Border Information: If Joining in Addis enter Ethiopia at Addis Airport.

There will be a group meeting at 18.00hrs.

We stay for 2 nights in a comfortable hotel with good facilities in Addis Ababa.

Hotel for the night: Hotel Taitu
Itege Hotel Taitu
Downtown (Piazza)
Addis Ababa
Tel: +251 11 1 560787
0.0Km from the City Centre
7 Kms from Bole International Airport

Activity	Approximate Cost
Explore Ethiopia's capital city, Addis Ababa	Included in tour

Day 26: Addis Ababa

Sun 16 Jun 2013

Why not take the chance to head to one of the city's many restaurants for the chance to eat some local food and perhaps listen to some traditional music.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit "Lucy" at the National Museum, Addis Ababa	
Stroll through the Mercato one of the largest markets in Africa, Addis Ababa	
Visit Africa Hall - a symbol of African independence and optimism, Addis Ababa	
St George's Cathedral (Giorgis Cathedral) built to commemorate Ethiopia's victory over the Italians, Addis Ababa	
Visit the Menelik Mausoleum, built to serve as the tombs of emperors and princes, Addis Ababa	

Day 27: Dejen

Mon 17 Jun 2013

We spend a night in Dejen (260 km, approx 7-8 hours), visiting the Blue Nile Gorge en route.

We cross the dramatic Blue Nile Gorge which is 1 km deep, taking a couple of hours to drive down to the bottom, cross the river and drive back up the other side.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overland journey into the immense Blue Nile Gorge	Included in tour

Day 28 to 30: Bahir Dar

Tue 18 Jun to Thu 20 Jun 2013

Travel on to Bahir Dar (270 km, approx. 6-7 hours), where we have a 3 night stay. Located on the shores of Lake Tana and only a few hundred metres from the source of the mighty Blue Nile, this is a fascinating place.

In Bahir Dar we stay in a hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Boat trip on Lake Tana from Bahir Dar to visit the monasteries	Included in tour
Witness the stunning Blue Nile Falls	Included in tour
3 nights at Bahir Dar	Included in tour

Bahir Dar

A few kilometres down the river from Bahir Dar are the spectacular Blue Nile Falls - locally known as Tissisat Falls (literally translating as 'water that smokes'). After walking around the falls, we use local reed boats to cross the river upstream. On the lake itself are a number of monasteries on islands and peninsulas and we take the opportunity to visit two on our boat trip. These churches feature the traditional murals and decoration of the Orthodox Church. We cross the dramatic Blue Nile Gorge which is 1 km deep, taking a couple of hours to drive down to the bottom, cross the river and drive back up the other side.

Day 31 to 33: Lalibela

Fri 21 Jun to Sun 23 Jun 2013

Full day journey of 310 km to the medieval town of Lalibela where we stay for 3 nights in a Local, friendly hotel.

We walk with a local guide who is able to unlock the fascinating history of both the churches and Lalibela itself.

In Lalibela we stay in a basic hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of rock churches, monastery and visit to a local school at Lalibela	Included in tour

Lalibela

Hidden in the hills of northern Ethiopia is the small town of Lalibela. This medieval village has grown up around 13 monolithic churches hewn from rock in the 12th Century. It's an awe-inspiring feat of engineering which must have taken many years and thousands of men to complete. Fortunately the village is underdeveloped as a tourist site and still has its original Ethiopian charm.

Each of the churches is unique in design and beautifully carved. Legend has it that King Lalibela completed all the work in 12 days with the help of a band of angels who carved the rocks for him day and night.

The church of Asheten Mariam is hidden in the rugged hills behind the village. You may like to trek there on foot or take a mule to this fascinating monastery and enjoy the incredible views on the way.

Day 34: Woldiya

Mon 24 Jun 2013

Leaving the town behind we travel around 170 km (approx 7-8 hours) before bushcamping for the night.

Day 35: Mekele

Tue 25 Jun 2013

From our bush camp it is a full day's journey to Mekele (266 km, approx 8-9 hours).

Mekele is the base for exploring the intriguing rock-hewn churches of Tigray. Sculpted into cliff faces or pre-existing caves, there are at least 120 churches with many of the churches located in clusters; the most famous being Gheralta, Takatisfi, Tembien and Atsbi.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Explore the Tigray rock-hewn churches at Mekele	Included in tour
Visit the Debre Demo Monastery around Mekele	

Mekele

Mekele is a cultral town famous for its churches and desert landscape. Historians date Mekele to be founded in the 13th century and it is a place with a colourful history. Derg The Tigrayan People's Liberation Front Monument is one of the most famous points and can be seen from nearly any place in the town. The palace of King Yohannes IV is a chance to see so much of Mekeles history during the reign of this king. The churches are worth a visit, as they are just beautiful.

Day 36 to 37: Axum

Wed 26 Jun to Thu 27 Jun 2013

It is a full day's journey from Mekele to Axum (300 km, approx 8-9 hours).

Once in Axum (Aksum), we take a guided city tour which will take in the main sights of this fascinating town, the site of Ethiopia's oldest city.

In Axum (Aksum) we stay in a basic hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of palaces and temples in historic Axum	Included in tour
Visit the Church of St Mary of Zion at Axum	

Axum

Axum is the site of Ethiopia's oldest city. It has some impressive obelisks carved from single blocks of granite - the tallest still standing is 23 metres high and was probably transported by elephants from a nearby quarry. The scale of the monuments in this Stelae field are testament to the enormous importance that the ancient kingdom of Axum once enjoyed.

Close to the town are the ruins of a palace that is said to have belonged to the Queen of Sheba. There is also a complex of several churches, which have been built over the ages around the same site. The most interesting, is a small unimposing building with a green picket fence that holds the crowns of various former Ethiopian emperors and is said to house the original Ark of the Covenant.

Day 38: Enda Selassie

Fri 28 Jun 2013

Leaving Axum behind we travel toward Debark (255 km, approx 13 hours). it a very long travel day to Debark. Whilst the distance is not to far the roads in this part of Ethiopia are rough. We may choose to break the journey and stop over in Sellassie for the night if the roads are particularly bad.

Day 39: Debark

Sat 29 Jun 2013

Once in Debark we set to arranging our trek into the mountains. The process can take quiet some time as we arrange permits, campsites and scouts and guides.

Debark

Standing at the gateway to the Simien Mountains is the town of Debark. Many people pass through here to experience the wonders that these mountains have to offer. With this beauty in its landscape, Debark has some of the most amazing scenery in Ethiopia.

Day 40 to 42: Simien Mountains National Park, Debark

Sun 30 Jun to Tue 02 Jul 2013

We will trek for the next two days, the route we take and time we trek each day will be decided by you as a group, it is also possible to spilt in to two groups if need be. The adventurous may choose to hire mules to trek even further in search of klipspringer, Walia ibex or the

gelada baboon and perhaps if you are lucky a glimpse of an endangered Simien fox. This park is very impressive, with huge volcanic cores jutting up from the plateau to from high altitude plains where only grasses, junipers and giant lobelias grow. There are some fabulous views to be enjoyed.

In the Simien Mountains we stay for two nights at a campsite.

The following day we will return to Debark for the night.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided treks in the Simien Mountains National Park	Included in tour

Simien Mountains National Park

The Simien Mountains are known for their dramatic and spectacular scenery; jagged mountain peaks flank deep valleys and high altitude plains where only grasses, junipers and giant lobelias grow. This is one of the major mountain regions of Africa, home to mountain Ras Dejen (4543m), the fourth highest peak in the continent. The National Park was created primarily to protect a type of wild goat, the Walia Ibex; and the Gelada Baboon and rare Ethiopian Wolf are also found here. Standing on top of a sharp precipice and gazing out over the magnificent landscape here will take your breath away, so it's definitely worth taking a bit of time to explore. The area is a great place to do some trekking, or you can hire mules to go in search of some of the more easily spotted wildlife, like the klipspringer, ibex and baboon.

Day 43: Gondar

Wed 03 Jul 2013

Leaving the mountains behind, we travel on to Gonder (100 km, approx 4 -5 hours).

We spend two nights in Gonder at a small pension.

Gondar

The historic city of Gondar is known as the city of castles and palaces. This was once the capital of Ethiopia in the reign of King Fasilidas who built the first castle. Successive kings added their own castles to the complex. On the outskirts of the town there is also Fasilidas' Bath, which is an interesting building standing in an artificial pool which is still filled for occasional religious ceremonies. At the Debre Berhan Sellassie Church we can see the famous ceiling which is painted with hundreds of faces of angels and hear about the church's fascinating yet violent history.

Day 44: Gondar

Thu 04 Jul 2013

Today take our tour of Gonder where we gain a fascinating insight into ancient times.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of Castles and Bath complexes in ancient Gondar	Included in tour

Day 45: Gondar

Fri 05 Jul 2013

Border Information: If finishing in Gonder, exit Ethiopia at Gonder Airport.

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Gonder.

For passengers continuing their journey on to Khartoum your night stop will not be in Gonder. Instead today you will have a drive day of approx 400kms crossing the border into Sudan to the Gedaref area where tonight we will aim to Bush camp.

Day 46: Gedaref

Sat 06 Jul 2013

Border Information: Exit Ethiopia at Metema, enter Sudan at Metema.

Today is a drive day of approx 400kms where we will cross the border into Sudan and head to the Gedaref area where tonight we aim to Bush camp.

Day 47: Khartoum

Sun 07 Jul 2013

Today is a full day drive of approx. 400Kms to the capital of Sudan, Khartoum. Tonight we will stay at a local hotel.

Khartoum

Khartoum is a place to explore. The city is really two cities: the colonial city of the British and General Gordon on one side of the river, and the sprawling settlements of Omdurman on the other. Here you find one of Africa's most interesting markets where for the souvenir hunters you can get some excellent Beja Ben Amer tribal swords. These tribal people are easy to spot. Very tall and distinguished-looking, with the telltale hair and traditional swords slung over the shoulder. Their ancestors played a major role in the Dervish uprisings in the 19th Century at the battle of Omdurman. The best place to find out more about this period of Sudanese history is in the Khalifa Museum in Omdurman, near the Mahdi's tomb.

Day 48: Khartoum
Mon 08 Jul 2013

Today is a free day to explore.

Day 49 to 50: Khartoum
Tue 09 Jul to Wed 10 Jul 2013

Border Information: If Joining in Khartoum, enter Sudan at Khartoum Airport.

There are no activities planned today until the important group meeting at 18.00hrs. This is where you will meet your Dragoman crew and our local facilitator who will accompany us on the truck for the duration that we are in Sudan.

You have free time to explore Khartoum including the bustling Omdurman market.

In Khartoum we stay at a well located hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Explore Omdurman market in Khartoum	
Mardis tomb & Khalifa Museum Entrance, Khartoum	USD 1

Day 51: Meroe, Naqa
Thu 11 Jul 2013

Today we leave the hustle and bustle of Khartoum behind us as we head out to Meroe stopping to explore the the Kushite temples of Naqa and Musawwarat. If time allows today we will visit the Pyramids at Meroe.

Tonight we aim to wild camp at Meroe.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided visit of Meroe Pyramids	Included in tour
Guided visit to the Naqa and Musawwarat Temples	Included in tour

Meroe
Meroe is at the heart of the ancient Kingdom of Nubia. Early signs of culture in Nubia (northern Sudan and southern Egypt) first appear around 3500 B.C., when Egypt was in the throes of the Old Kingdom. Over time, the Nubian Kushite kingdom became increasingly powerful and consequently the Egyptians began to feel threatened, which prompted an invasion where they attempted to subdue their close neighbours. Having given in to occupation, Kush effectively became a province of Egypt between 1500 B.C. and 1100 B.C. During this time the Egyptians controlled all the trade and the mineral wealth, in particular the gold mines. This is what made Egypt the richest nation in the world between about 1500 and 1100 B.C. The two cultures were assimilated and in reality became one.

The Egyptians eventually withdrew from Nubia around 1100 B.C. and in the ensuing vacuum a group of powerful kings arose. The Pharaohs of the Kush had aspirations far beyond their frontiers. One of them, Pharaoh Kashta, was invited by the powerful priests of Amun in Thebes to intercede on their behalf in the internal conflict between the reigning Egyptian Pharaohs. Consequently he and his successor Piankhy received the blessings of the priests, proceeded north, conquered and reunified the warring states and thus began the rule of the "Black Pharaohs". From 760 B.C. through to 660 B.C. the Black Pharaohs did more than rule; they reinvented Egypt with a cultural renaissance. Some of the finest treasures, temples and artwork date from the period of Nubian Rule. The Nubian period in Egypt is known as the 25th Dynasty. However their reign in Egypt was shortlived, as at the zenith of their glory the Assyrians invaded Egypt and the Nubian Pharaohs fled south with their armies and court to the Kingdom of Kush, from where they continued to harass the new Pharaohs of Egypt from afar.

In around 593 B.C. the Egyptian Pharaoh Psamtik II had had enough of the Kush kings claiming his throne and he invaded Nubia with Egyptian troops, Greek mercenaries and a fleet of ships. During the invasion temples and towns were destroyed and the Nubians butchered but the Kingdom of Kush was by no means finished. Ironically, while Egypt was to endure successive invasions from Persia, Macedonia and finally by Rome, the Kingdom of Kush continued to flourish under an unbroken line of kings until the 4th Century A.D.

Perhaps the most splendid of all the Kushite temples and pyramids are those at Meroe, Naqa and Musawwarat. The pyramids at Meroe are the most impressive in Nubia and the site is very well preserved and restored. By the 4th Century B.C., the Kushite kings had moved south down the Nile and set up the royal city in and around Meroe. The southern culture gradually prevailed over Egyptian culture and the area became a powerful centre of trade between the north and the south. The site of Meroe was home to a large population supported by advanced irrigation and a centralised political system. This was high culture, and the area was in its zenith. Roman baths, royal palaces, pyramids and temples all tell the tale of an advanced Egyptian-style civilisation. Today the site is virtually unvisited. Scattered across the sands of the desert are numerous steep pyramids with entrance pylons. The guardian of this Nubian site has been there since 1977 and has probably seen every visitor who has passed through since then. While the mainstream tourists flock to the Egyptian ruins to our north, you will have this remarkable site to yourself. Only a few travellers and one or two tour groups a year come here.

Naqa

50 kilometers east of The River Nile lies the ruins of the ancient city of the Kushitic Kingdom - Naqa. The site is one of the largest in the country and 2 of the largest temples here are still very well preserved. Naqa has a very important place in history as it served as one of the centres of the Kingdom of Meroe and it served as a bridge between Africa and the Mediterranean. The original temples have some fine carvings upon them and it is pleasantly shocking how these delicate artifacts have survived thousands of years.

Day 52 to 54: Merowe Wildcamp, Jebel Barkul, Dongola, Wawa Wild camp

Fri 12 Jul to Sun 14 Jul 2013

To travel up through Northern Sudan is to journey across deserts finding your way through the dunes or along the plains.

On the road from Atbara in the South to Wadi Halfa in the north there are a succession of ruined temples along the River Nile. As you would imagine with such a long history of civilisation, these date back to many different periods of Kushite and Egyptian history. Many are in a poor state of repair, but some are classics.

We will try to visit one or more of the following: the Temple of Sulb, the Temple of Deffufa near Dongola and the pyramids and temple complex on top of Jebel Barkal near the town of Merowe (as opposed to Meroe which is near Atbara).

This portion of the trip is rugged. We will be travelling through the desert sands, following the Nile as it cuts through vast fields of sand dunes. Along the Nile small villages and towns cling to a narrow belt of cultivation. Trade routes through the area date back to ancient times, but the roads are mere sandy tracks, often difficult to find and always a struggle to get through. You will be expected to help sand mat the vehicles and to be part of this expedition. There are no passengers here, only people who are prepared to get stuck in to achieve their goal - the exploration of the relics of the Kushite kingdom and the Nile Valley of northern Sudan.

These nights we camp out in the desert vastness as we sit around our camp fire in the middle of this wilderness.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the Kushite temples and pyramids at Jebel Barkal	Included in tour
Visit to the Temple of Deffufa	Included in tour

Jebel Barkul

On the road between Dongola and Merowe we explore ruins at of the Temple of Amun at Jebel (Mount) Barkal. On the hill top of Jebel Barkul the Temple of Jebel Bakul was one of the earliest capitals and spiritual centres of Kush.

The all-powerful Pharaoh Ramses II constructed a temple to the Theban god Amun here in the 13th Century B.C. 600 years later the great Nubian Pharaoh King Taharqa had the mountain's peak covered in gold during his reign in the 7th Century B.C. A monument remains to him with his name inscribed on it. The area has numerous sites, including some great tombs and pyramids at El Kurru, just south of Jebel Bakul. These contain the tombs of the famous Kashta and his son Piye (Piankhi) (the conquerors of Egypt), five earlier generations, together with Piye's successors Shabako, Shabatko and Tanutamun, and 14 pyramids of the queens. The pyramids at nearby Nuri contained 21 kings, together with 52 queens and princes. Taharqa, the penultimate king of the 25th Dynasty, was the first king to build his tomb at Nuri, and it is the biggest pyramid ever built at the site. These pyramids are on the opposite bank of the river from Jebel Barkal and are much larger than the earlier pyramids at El Kurru, reaching heights of 20-30m. However they are in pretty poor condition and probably only warrant a short stop. There are some excellent views of the pyramids if you have the energy to climb to the top of Jebel Bakul.

Day 55: Wadi Halfa, Temple of Sulb

Mon 15 Jul 2013

Today we will visit the Temple of Sulb early in the morning before our final direv in Sudan brings us to Wadi Halfa.

The road in between Wawa and Wadi Halfa heads inland from the Nile along a rough piste through rocky terrain. We are well away from civilisation here and you will see few other travellers on this section of the journey.

Tonight we will stay in a rustic Guesthouse in Wadi Halfa

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the Temple of Sulb	Included in tour

Temple of Sulb

The road between Abri and Dongola heads along the River Nile. Oases punctuate the beauty of the desert. Date palms line the shoreline and the traditional plain white houses are all dotted with coloured Nubian doorways. Our route takes us from village to village through deep-sanded tracks. Across the river opposite the small village of Wawa lies the remains of the Temple of Sulb. The temple is spectacular and very much in the Egyptian style. We take a half hour boat trip by small boat along the Nile through stunning scenery. It is the positioning and the remoteness of these sites along the Nile that makes them interesting. We usually stay with a local family in the village of Wawa for the night.

Day 56: Wadi Halfa
Tue 16 Jul 2013

The port of Wadi Halfa is our exit point of Sudan and is situated on the southernmost tip of Lake Nasser in the Sudanese Sahara and is the most northerly place in Sudan.

Today is free to explore Wadi Halfa and prepare for the Ferry crossing the next day.

Tonight we stay in a Rustic Guesthouse in Wadi Halfa.

Day 57: Lake Nasser
Wed 17 Jul 2013

Border Information: Exit Sudan at Wadi Halfa, enter Egypt at Aswan.

From Wadi Halfa we board a ferry to cross Lake Nasser.

The crossing of Lake Nasser is certainly an experience. Don't expect a Nile cruise boat or you may be disappointed! An old passenger ferry plies the waters between Aswan and Wadi Halfa and it has limited comforts. However, to make up for this you will be travelling through the spectacular scenery of a harsh and craggy desert landscape. The journey usually lasts 17 hours, but it is notoriously unpredictable. Depending on sailing routes and conditions we should pass the beautiful temple of Abu Simbel en route to Wadi Halfa.

Accommodation aboard the ferry is very basic.

Day 58 to 60: Aswan
Thu 18 Jul to Sat 20 Jul 2013

Upon disembarking the ferry we have a short drive of 20 km (approx. 30 minutes) to Aswan in Egypt where we have three nights to enjoy wealth of history and culture that Aswan has to offer.

You will have 2 full days to explore the sites of Aswan.

In Aswan we stay in a simple hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
3 night stay in Aswan to explore the surrounding area	Included in tour
Felucca day trip, Aswan	USD 15
Excursion to Abu Simbel	USD 120
Philae Temple Sound & Light, Aswan	USD 5
High Dam trip, Aswan	USD 2
Elephantine/Kitchener Island Boat Trip, Aswan	USD 10
Tombs of the Nobles, Aswan	USD 5

Aswan
Aswan is a beautiful town, situated on one of the most picturesque parts of the Nile with stunning vistas, a great and vibrant souq, and the whole town is characterised by the Nubian people. It is an ideal place to relax, perhaps by taking an afternoon boat trip, finishing with drinks on the terrace of the Old Cataract Hotel. Later in the evening take a wander into the souq. The atmosphere of the Aswan souq is second to none and some excellent bargains can be had.

At Aswan you can visit the Philae temples, a quarry with an unfinished obelisk, and the high dam, built to control the flow of the Nile thus creating Lake Nasser, the largest artificial lake in the world. There is also an opportunity to trek into the desert by camel to a deserted 6th century monastery. You may take an option to fly or drive down to Abu Simbel to visit the two magnificent temples. They were moved uphill from the rising floodwaters of Lake Nasser by a Unesco project in the 1960s. Perhaps finish off your days with a visit to the stunning new Aswan Museum, before dinner on one of the many floating river front restaurants.

There are so many other activities around Aswan, but you should not miss the opportunity to take at least a short ride in a felucca, the local sailing boat - a great way to experience the ultimate Nile sunset.

Day 61 to 63: Luxor, Edfu
Sun 21 Jul to Tue 23 Jul 2013

This morning we head to Luxor, a drive of around 220 km taking around 3.5 hours.

On the way we make a visit to The Temple of Horus in Edfu (also known as the Temple of Edfu) is considered the best-preserved cult temple in Egypt.

In Luxor we take a donkey ride on the west bank before visiting the tombs in the Valley of the King's. This is one of the highlights of any trip to Egypt. The amazingly well preserved paintings in the tombs of the Pharaohs are brought to life on this guided adventure. We will also go and see the biggest of all Egyptian temples, the mighty Karnak with a local Egyptologist.

There is also plenty of free time for you to explore. Perhaps hire a bicycle to ride through sugarcane fields and nearby villages to see a different side of Luxor. It is worth visiting the smaller Luxor temple located smack in the middle of town and the small but beautiful Luxor Museum filled with priceless treasures from this amazing area.

In Luxor we stay in a hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of the Karnak Temple & Valley of the Kings at Luxor	Included in tour
Visit to the remains of the ancient settlement of Edfu	Included in tour

Luxor

Situated on the banks of the Nile, Luxor was once the ancient Egyptian capital of Thebes. From the spectacular temple complex of Karnak to the unbelievable paintings and hieroglyphs in the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, this open-air museum is full of wonderfully preserved reminders of the Pharaohs.

Edfu

The Temple of Horus in Edfu (also known as the Temple of Edfu) is considered the best-preserved cult temple in Egypt. This partly because it was built later than most: in the Ptolemaic era from 237 to 57 BC. Edfu is also the second largest temple in Egypt after Karnark Temple.

Despite its later date the temple exactly reflects the traditional pharaonic architecture providing an excellent idea of how all the temples once must have looked.

Day 64: El Kharga Oasis

Wed 24 Jul 2013

Driving about 8.5 hours today (280 km) we reach the El Kharga Oasis.

Desert travel is uniquely romantic. No matter what desert you are crossing, being in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by solitude and wilderness, is a fantastic experience. It is even better when you can camp out in the desert and visit true oases. The Egyptian Western Desert has five thriving oases and on our route through the desert we will be able to visit four of these: Bahariya, Dakhla and El Kharga.

We will visit El Kharga Oasis and its surrounding area. Here there are numerous other sites of antiquities. You will have the opportunity to visit a number of these including the Bagawaat Necropolis, Hibis Temple and Kharga Museum.

Tonight will be camping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Kharga Museum, El Kharga Oasis	USD 5
Bogawaat Necropolis, El Kharga Oasis	USD 5
Hibis temple, El Kharga Oasis	USD 5

El Kharga Oasis

El Kharga Oasis is definitely a place to go for exploration. There are many monumental sites here, including the Temple of Hibis. You can go for a camel ride around the oasis, and this could be an adventure in itself. The palm tree lined city is the spot to find beautiful handcrafts and unspoilt springs. It is a beauty of Egypt and will certainly create life long memories.

Day 65: Dakhla Oasis

Thu 25 Jul 2013

Today we drive about 280 km to reach the Dakhla Oasis.

We can also take the optional opportunity to trek out into the desert here for the day or even overnight on camels. The overnight trip is a favourite, heading off into the desert and camping out by hot springs for the night.

Tonight will be camping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight Camel Safari into the Western Desert	USD 35

Dakhla Oasis

Verdant cultivated areas and a great wall of rose-hued rock across the northern horizon make a feast for the eyes in Dakhla Oasis. Dakhla has Pharaonic, Roman and Coptic antiquities, dunes, palm groves and hot springs to explore.

Day 66: White Desert Wildcamp

Fri 26 Jul 2013

The following morning we have a free morning in Dakhla or some may be returning from the overnight camel safari. This afternoon we drive about 5 hours (250 km) to reach our bush camp in the White Desert.

Tonight will be camping.

Day 67: Bahariya Oasis

Sat 27 Jul 2013

Today we drive about 6 hours (250 km) through the White Desert to reach Bahariya Oasis.

We will visit the museum that houses the golden mummies. Just south of the oasis lie the White and the Black Deserts. We will spend a day exploring these as well as visiting Crystal Mountain.

Tonight will be camping.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overland journey into the Western Desert Oasis Route	Included in tour
Visit to the Valley of the Golden Mummies, Crystal Mountain and Black Desert	Included in tour

Bahariya Oasis

Situated in Egypt's Great Western Desert, Bahariya is the smallest of the four oases in this area. It used to serve as an artery between Libya and Egypt, but these days people come here to enjoy the hot springs and palm groves, and to get a feel for the Western Desert.

There are numerous sites of antiquities including the Temple of Alexander and various Ptolemaic tombs, as well as a museum that houses the golden mummies found here. Just south of the oasis lie the White and Black Deserts, easily visited from the town.

Day 68: Egyptian coast Wild camp, El Alamein

Sun 28 Jul 2013

Today is a drive day as we head north from Bahariya Oasis, by passing Cairo we head to the coast. If we get time today we will stop at the war cemeteries & museum at El Alemain.

Tonight we aim to wild camp en route to Siwa.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit to the battleground of El Alamein	Included in tour

El Alamein

Alamein cemetry contains the graves of men who died at all stages of the Western Desert campaigns, brought in from a wide area, but especially those who died in the Battle of El Alamein at the end of October 1942 and in the period immediately before that. The cemetery now contains 7,240 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, of which 815 are unidentified. There are also 102 war graves of other nationalities. The Alamein CREMATION MEMORIAL, which stands in the south-eastern part of El Alamein War Cemetery, commemorates more than 600 men whose remains were cremated in Egypt and Libya during the war, in accordance with their faith

Day 69 to 70: Siwa Oasis

Mon 29 Jul to Tue 30 Jul 2013

We head south into Egypt's Western Desert to the Siwa Paradise. This area is famous for its dates and olives, and is one of the most beautiful landscapes of Egypt.

We will be treated to a Bedouin meal on the first night and you will have the option on the second day of a Half day or Full day desert safari.

We will stay here for 2 nights in rooms.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Back into the desert to the surreal Siwa Oasis, Alexander is said to be buried here	Included in tour

Day 71 to 72: Alexandria

Wed 31 Jul to Thu 01 Aug 2013

Leaving the desert behind us we jounry back north towards the coastal City of Alexandria where we will base ourselves for 2 nights. If we didn't manage to stop already at El Alamein then we will do so on this day.

Whilst in Alexandria we will stay in a comfortable hotel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
2 nights to explore the city of Alexandria	Included in tour

Alexandria

Egypt's second largest city and main port, Alexandria was built by the Greek architect Dinocrates in 331 BC under the orders of Alexander the Great. The city, immortalising Alexander's name, quickly flourished into a prominent cultural, intellectual, political and economic metropolis.

Day 73: Cairo

Fri 02 Aug 2013

Our final drive today is of approx. 230Km from Alexandria to our final destination of Cairo.

We will arrive in Cairo late afternoon and check into our comfortable hotel located in the district of Dokki, Giza. The hotel is a short drive from the Egyptian museum and downtown Cairo

Activity	Approximate Cost
2 or 3 night stay in Cairo	Included in tour

Cairo

Situated on the banks of the River Nile, Cairo is the largest city in Africa. There are plenty of things to see and do with free time in Cairo. Take a walk along the Corniche or travel along the river by felucca. If the crowds and the noise of the city are too much, catch the metro into the oldest part of the city, the Coptic Christian sector - with its narrow cobbled streets and ancient churches, it's a haven of peace and quiet.

The Egyptian Museum, which holds the fabulous Tutankhamun collection, mosques dating back to the time of Mohammed and the famous Khan-el-Khalili bazaar are just a few of the sites that Cairo has to offer. You can spend time visiting the Pyramids and the Sphinx at Giza, and at night you can witness the famous sound and light show. Nearby is the Necropolis of Saqqara, which you can visit by horse or camel through the desert.

Day 74: Cairo

Sat 03 Aug 2013

After breakfast we set off in the truck for our full day guided tour of the Pyramids at Giza and Saqqara.

We will aim to be back in Cairo for around 4pm today and stay over night in the same hotel.

Tonight is the last night of the trip so we will go out for our final night group meal together.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided visit to the Giza and Saqqara Pyramids, Cairo	Included in tour
Entrance to Cairo Tower	USD 6
Sound & Light show at the Pyramids & Sphinx, Cairo	USD 10
Entrance to Red Pyramid & Bent Pyramid, Cairo	USD 5
Entrance Pyramid of Cheops, Cairo	USD 15

Day 75: Cairo

Sun 04 Aug 2013

Border Information: If finishing in Cairo, exit Egypt at Cairo Airport.

This morning you will head out on your final activity for a half day guided visit to the Egyptian Museum.

The trip will finish at approx. 4pm.

Today is the end of this section of the trip. However if you are continuing on to Casablanca and Morocco then your leader will assist you with getting to the airport for your included flight. You will overnight tonight in a comfortable hotel in either Cairo or Casablanca, (depending on the flight times and availability).

Activity	Approximate Cost
Guided tour of the Cairo Egyptian Museum	Included in tour

Visa Information:

Important Notes

The routes, activities and places visited described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

We intend following the planned route but exact night stops cannot be guaranteed. It sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our basic planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. By their very nature overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, often in areas without western infrastructure. You should expect that some these areas do not adhere to western safety standards.

Specific Sudan notes

Rough roads, remote deserts and few western amenities, a true expedition. This itinerary will be flexible and is likely to vary from that published. There is little or no tourist infrastructure in Sudan.

Directional differences to this itinerary

The itineraries for this trip differ depending on the direction of which you are travelling.

The Southbound trip will spend 2 nights in the city of Alexandria in Egypt, 9 nights will be spent in Sudan including 2 nights on the Red Sea Coast North of Port Sudan.

The Northbound trip will spend either 7 or 8 nights in Sudan and will not visit the Red Sea Coast. In Egypt you will have 2 extra nights in the Desert at Siwa and 2 nights in the city of Alexandria*

Physical Preparation

Physical preparation for the North, East & South Africa and Middle East Itineraries

Travelling in North, East & South Africa or Middle East can be demanding - long, rough travel days, dusty conditions and basic campsites all provide a challenge. The conditions in the North can be more challenging than in the East or South, where public camp sites and bathroom facilities can be very basic and may be non existent in the case of bush camps. You will need to be fit enough to help every day with the camp chores (cooking, washing up, general camp set up) as well as putting up and taking down your own tent. There are some long driving days and some early morning starts. The step up into the overland vehicle, while not overly high can become tiring and you need to judge yourself to be physically fit enough to haul yourself up and down the step at least 8-10 times a day. There are some long days driving on rough roads on all itineraries.

Altitude

Please note that this trip spends time above 2800 metres/9200 feet where it is possible for travellers to experience some adverse effects on your health due to the altitude, potentially including Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE).
Because of this it is very important that you make yourself aware of the cause and effects of travelling at altitude and monitor your health during this trip.

For further information please click here to download our AMS information sheet or check out the following website www.high-altitude-medicine.com

Your leader will also hand you a copy of the AMS information sheet during your trip as well as holding a short meeting prior to travelling to altitudes above 2800m/9200ft for the first time.

If you are starting your trip in a destination above 2800m/9200ft we strongly advise reading this information prior to arrival.

Visa Information

Most countries we visit on our travels will require visas. Some are best obtained before you leave home and others can be obtained en-route. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for obtaining visas is yours, we will endeavour to assist you wherever possible.

The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. The information provided is given in good faith and we do try to keep the visa information as up to date as possible. Please be aware though that rules do change, often without prior warning, which is why it is important that you check for yourself.

For visas that are needed in advance you can choose to submit the applications directly to the relevant embassy /consulate. However our recommendation is that you use a visa agent to assist you with your applications. While this does increase the cost it will make the process much easier for you. Dragoman have teamed up with 'The Visa Machine' to create a safe, secure, hassle-free way of obtaining visas and visa advice. Our unique link within their website is designed to make the visa process as straightforward as possible. Simply go to https://dragoman.thevisamachine.com and click on your region of travel followed by your trip route and 'The Visa Machine' will advise you about not only the required visas but also the dates by which you should apply. 'The Visa Machine' can then assist you in the actual visa application thus taking all the worry and hassle out of the process. This should apply for ALL nationalities and countries of residence.

As you will need to submit your passport together with your applications, we recommend that you avoid making any travel plans in the weeks leading up to your departure. However if you do need to travel in this period please let us know as soon as possible so that we can help you work out the options for your visa application process.

Egypt

We recommend that all nationalities check with their respective embassies.

Visas are easily attainable on arrival at Cairo airport or ferry ports for most nationalities for US$15 to be paid in cash, but please check with your embassy before departure. On arrival to Cairo airport you buy your visa at any of the banks before proceeding to immigration. You will be given a stamp that you then need to put into your passport yourself. A single entry visa is valid for three months from date of issue and entitles the bearer to one month in Egypt. Multiple entry visas are not available at the airport or any border crossings.

Southbound Egypt & Sudan trip

Most nationalities can obtain an Egyptian visa upon arrival (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand. Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA). Some nationalities must obtain a visa in advance.

Northbound Sudan & Egypt trip

Most nationalisities can obtain an Egyptian visa upon arrival at the port in Aswan (see above). Some nationalities must obtain a visa in advance.

Sudan visa note

If you plan to obtain a Sudan visa en route in Nairobi or Addis Ababa on a Northbound trip you will need to obtain an Egyptian visa in advance. Please refer to Sudan Northbound visa information for further information.

Ethiopia

Most nationalities require a visa for entry to Ethiopia and you must obtain this before travel in your county of residency. Most Embassies or Consulates of Ethiopia only accept visa applications from nationals of the county in which the Embassy is located so for example the Ethiopian Embassy in London will only accept applications from British passport holders or those who hold an appropriate work / residency visa in their passport. Please see this website to find your closest embassy or consulate http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-of/ethiopia.

Important: If you have not obtained an Ethiopian visa before travel this could result in you having to send your passport back to your country of residency to obtain the visa at an extra personal cost, and could even result in you missing days of the trip waiting for your passport to return.

Please also note: If you are travelling on a long combination trip i.e. starting in Cape Town or Cairo you must apply for a 3 or 6 month visa to ensure the visa is still valid upon entry. The Embassies in Cairo and Nairobi no longer issue visas to non Egyptian or Kenyan residents so you will NOT be able to obtain one in either of these places.

Visa on arrival at Addis Ababa airport

Some tourist visas can also be issued on arrival at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport.

Tourist visas can only be issued on arrival to:
• foreign nationals who are coming from countries where there is no Ethiopian Mission
• foreign nationals who are coming from and are permanent residents in any of the following internationally recognised tourist-generating countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea Republic, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

If applying for a tourist visa on arrival, visitors will need to bring with them two recent passport-sized photographs and no less than US $20 before their application can be processed.

When applying for the visa the form will ask you for a contact in Ethiopia please put:

Hotel Taitu
Piazza
Addis Ababa
+251 111 560787

Kenya

Kenyan visas are required by most nationalities.

Single entry visas are available at the point of entry to most nationalities and cost $50USD or $20USD (post 2003 US dollar bills) for transit visas. (Some nationalities require visas to be purchased in advance - you MUST check before departure).

Multiple entry visas are required for people travelling to Rwanda to visit the Gorillas. We recommend that you obtain this in advance as you cannot obtain a Multiple entry visa at the border. However if you are unable to obtain a multiple entry visa before travel you will have to purchase Single visas upon each entry into Kenya at the border.

For more information, including application forms and visa fee rates, is available at http://www.kenyahighcommission.net. Kenya there is an airport departure tax of $20. Payment is also accepted in Kenyan Shillings. This tax is normally included in the price of airline tickets but if you are unsure, you should check with the airline or travel company.

Sudan Northbound

The process of obtaining a visa for Sudan can be a complicated one so it is vital that you read the following information thoroughly.

All nationalities require a visa to enter Sudan and it is recommended that you obtain this visa **in advance** of your trip.

All nationalities must check with their respective embassies.

The whole process of obtaining a Sudan visa before travel can take up to 8 weeks and there are a few ways in which you can apply for your Sudan.

In advance

1. Direct with the embassy

If you choose this option please check with the Embassy as some embassies will organise the authorisation for you as part of the visa application service. If the Embassy does not provide this authorization then you will have to obtain this through waleed.travel@gmail.com at Lendi Travel who can help you obtain this for a fee.

For UK citizens please visit the Embassy of Sudan in London for details on how to apply for the tourist visa http://www.sudan-embassy.co.uk

For US citizens please visit the Embassy of Sudan in Washington on details of how to apply for the tourist visa www.sudanembassy.org

For Australian citizens please visit the following website for details of your closest Sudan Mission http://protocol.dfat.gov.au/Mission/list.rails

2. through a visa agent - The Visa Machine

If you decide to obtain your visa through The Visa Machine please contact them directly for all the information.

En route (on trip) / before your trips starts

1. Embassy of Sudan in Nairobi, Kenya

If you have obtained both your Ethiopian visa and Egyptian visa in advance OR if you are flying out of Khartoum and have proof of exit such as your flight ticket. You can apply for a Sudan visa in Nairobi without an authorisation letter. You will however, be required to submit a letter of Introduction from your own Embassy confirming your nationality and stating there is no reason you cannot travel. Some Embassies charge a fee for this letter.

The visa cost can vary significantly, between $50 - $180 USD and takes 1-2 days. You will need approximately 6 passport photos for the visa.

US citizens who are unable to obtain the tourist visa before travel can obtain this in Nairobi, however you must first apply for your authorisation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Sudan. We recommend that you contact Waleed Arafat at Lendi Travel in Sudan - waleed.travel@gmail.com who can apply for your authorization number on your behalf for a fee (approx. $165 USD)

2. Embassy of Sudan in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

If you are travelling on a longer combination trip, you can obtain your visa en route in Addis Ababa but the process can take 3 working days. In order to apply for a Sudanese visa in Addis Ababa you must first apply for an authorisation letter in advance. We recommend that you contact Waleed Arafat at Lendi Travel in Sudan - waleed.travel@gmail.com who can apply for your authorization on your behalf for a fee (approx $165 USD).

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the process of authorisation being controlled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sudan Dragoman will not become involved in any way in the authorisation process.

We do try and keep these notes as up to date as possible however the process of obtaining visas can suddenly change at any time. For this reason we advise you to always check with the Embassy.

Registration in Sudan

Everyone is required to register with the Aliens Department in Sudan. 2 passport size photos are will be required for this and a fee charged per person (payable in Sudanese Pounds and equivalent of around £35). Once registered, you are not required to obtain an exit visa to leave the country. You are required to pay US$20 per person airport tax.

Personal Spending

Based on the range that previous travellers have spent on this trip, we recommend you allow between a minimum of US$10 and a maximum of US$20 per day.

This will cover individual expenses such as drinks, meals whilst out and also when staying in hotels, souvenirs, tips and personal permits.

What else you need to know

Currencies & Cash

It is not really worth trying to buy local currencies before you travel. Do also bear in mind that many countries have strict regulations about the amount of their own local currency you are allowed to import - if you are found with amounts in excess of the allowed amounts, it may well be confiscated!

For obvious security reasons we hesitate to recommend you bring lots of cash with you, a sensible mix of cash, travellers cheques, cash passports such as TravelEx cards and ATM cards is best. However, most of our past passengers have said they wished they had been told to bring more cash. Apart from the convenience of being able to change money in many more places, you will sometimes get a much better exchange rate for cash.

You should take a mixture of denomination notes. Banks and moneychangers in most countries will now only accept bills with a metallic strip running top to bottom of the bill and which are dated from **2003** or later. You should not take worn or damaged notes, or any that have been written on.

Cash machines are readily available in most of East and Southern Africa but are not always reliable therefore we recommend that you do not rely on them as your only source of cash. Please note that there are no cash machines in Sudan.

Credit cards such as Visa and American Express are the most commonly accepted, but be prepared for very high commission charges. Please do not rely on cards for daily use, as they are not always accepted outside of larger towns and cities. Please bring a mixture of small and large denominations as in more remote areas it can be hard to change amounts over $50.

Pre and post trip accommodation and connecting flights

At Dragoman we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of your joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay. Dragoman can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on.

While Dragoman is happy to assist with booking your pre and post trip accommodation, it is important that you understand you may be able to book your own room at a cheaper rate directly through the hotel or on the internet. Our additional accommodation prices are based on the hotel's rate plus an administration fee. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival, however we do have pre paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer as not all hotels offer this service.

Accommodation on tour

Dragoman overland trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether camping or staying in hotels and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers will share with people of the same sex for the duration of the trip, in accommodation ranging from twin to multi-share. The type and variety of accommodation is determined by conditions on each of our routes. The campsites will range from rather basic to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars. In some cases it may also be possible to upgrade locally to bungalows, lodges or even tree-houses. One of the highlights of overlanding is that in more remote areas we will wild camp. This allows us to get far away from the tourist crowds to some beautiful, secluded spots. We will also arrange as many village or local homestays as possible, allowing us to get close to indigenous populations and ensures our money stays within local communities.

Group size?

The maximum group size we take on our overland journeys ranges from 19 to 22 depending on the geographical location, however the average number of passengers is more likely to be around 16.

Please note that there is an overlap of 2 trips in Zanzibar. This means a group starting a trip in Nairobi for example will visit Zanzibar at the same time as groups starting their trips in Dar es Salaam. In practical terms this means there could be up to 44 group members in Zanzibar at the same time.

Who travels with Dragoman?

Our passengers come from around the world and are always an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split, males to females and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that overlanding should be open to as many people as possible and so although we have a minimum age limit of 18, as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you, whatever your age is. One

of the beauties of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way and as well as the variety of people that you will meet.

Our Community

At any time before or after you book you can join our community - Dragoland. This is a great place to ask questions before you travel and catch up with your fellow travellers once your trip has finished. You can share photos, videos and stories You can also download a selection of free travel apps. See the home page to sign in, it's free and easy.

We also have a Facebook page where travellers regularly swap info with each other - you can join here

Our crew and guides

Our crew are passionate about travel and always up for adventure. It takes someone special to become a Dragoman leader. Our crew undergo the most intensive training program of all overland companies, spending 10 weeks learning the ropes at our base in Suffolk, UK and then up to six months on the road as a trainee. On all Dragoman overlanding trips two western crew who are responsible for the group and the overall organisation will accompany you. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad knowledge of the places visited and to offer suggestions of things to do and see. In East and Southern Africa we will also have an African camp master/cook who is in charge of running the camp and organising all of the meals. Their knowledge of the local produce makes shopping at the markets great fun and you will learn how to prepare and cook some unusual dishes. In the rest of Africa, South America and the majority of Central Asia and China we use local guides who may stay with us for just a few hours or will actually travel with us for some or all of the journey. In these cases they become a third crew member and are able to offer their local knowledge as well as a real insight into the lives of the local people.

(If travelling in East & Southern Africa, also please see the note about our code-share crew)

Your tour leader has a duty of care to all of their passengers and therefore they have the authority to ask passengers to leave the trip if they require medical assistance, are behaving in an anti-social manner or refuse to comply with local laws and customs. In all matters relating to the trip, the leader's decision will be final and we appreciate your respect of this.

Medical conditions

We ask all of our passengers to declare any pre-existing medical conditions and in some cases you will be asked to complete one of our medical questionnaires. For trips that travel to areas of high altitude we also require all passengers to complete an altitude questionnaire. The ratings for each trip are a good indication of how challenging they are and in some cases passengers should be prepared for some long driving days and possible limited facilities. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns.

Vaccinations

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to region and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest advice on the region(s) you are planning to travel in. It is essential that you check with either your doctor or a travel clinic in good time before you travel.

In the UK we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive, up to date vaccination and health information. Dragoman customers will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at Nomad Travel clinics.

A good source of up to date information is the World Health Organisation - http://www.who.int/en/

Malaria

Get expert advice before travelling about types of malaria pills and take them as instructed. Recommended types do change from time to time and from area to area. Consult your vaccination centre for the most up-to-date requirements

The mosquito usually bites between the hours of dusk and dawn and so covering up by wear long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light coloured and buttoned at the wrists can help. Do not sleep without closing windows, tent doors or, if sleeping out, use a mosquito net. Wear repellent applied directly to the skin or soaked into clothing.

Treating clothes and mosquito nets with a Permetherin solution provides significant protection. It should be available at most travel stores. Mosquito coils are useful on still nights, in hotel rooms but cannot be used inside the tents.

Meals and group participation

On an overland journey you are more than just a passenger, you're part of the crew, pitching in to set up camp, shop for food, cook and generally help out. We operate a rota system, dividing the group into smaller units of 5 or 6 people, so that these duties are shared equally amongst the group. These jobs will include things like collecting water and

firewood, loading the back locker, supervising the kitty and food stores etc. While camping on overland journeys, all meals will be included in the kitty and this means that you will be working as a group to prepare meals and cook for your group. (On trips south of Nairobi we have a cook on board the truck, however you will still be required to help prepare meals). If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and also remind your crew at your welcome meeting. A typical camp breakfast might be toast with spreads, cereal and something hot such as eggs or pancakes as well as tea and coffee. Lunch is almost always a sandwich heaped high with healthy salad and assorted fillings, with fruit to follow. Dinner might be a BBQ, risotto, pasta dish and there is always the chance to try some local cooking. Generally our passengers find the more they put into a trip, the more they benefit from it.

Responsible tourism & code of conduct

Dragoman is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We are dedicated to making sure that we adopt a responsible attitude to the areas through which we travel and believe that our trips should benefit the local people and their environment. Dragoman recognises that we are guests of local communities and strive to make these communities our partners, so that they benefit directly from our visit.

You can find full details of Dragoman's responsible tourism policy linked from the home page. All passengers are required to obey all laws of the countries through which we pass. This particularly applies to the smuggling of contraband and possession of narcotic drugs, firearms, antiquities and ivory. Any passenger found contravening such laws or customs may be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Overland travel and security

One of the real advantages of overland travel is that the vehicle provides a very real level of security when travelling. There is no doubt that a properly equipped overland vehicle, with safes, fully lockable doors and windows is an obvious advantage when travelling in much of the world. We recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt whilst travelling for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items (although most of these can be locked in the safe whilst you are on the trip) and advise passengers to leave any valuable jewellery, watches etc at home. Generally speaking, you will not be travelling on local public transport and will have the added security of travelling in a group with experienced crew on hand to offer advice.

Please note: Any personal effects that are left on the truck, even if they are stored in the safe, are left at your own risk and Dragoman cannot be held responsible for any damage or theft that may occur.

The safety of our passengers, leaders and operators is a major priority of Dragoman. With this in mind we monitor world events very closely. By the very nature of the adventure travel that we take, there are risks and hazards that are inherent in our itineraries. Dragoman makes operational decisions based on informed advice from a number of sources:

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice

Reports from other travel companies and local suppliers

Leaders reports from off the road

Local contacts we have built up over 29 years of experience

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. You should always make yourself aware of the travel advice before you book and again before you travel. Below are links to some of the websites

Britain. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country

Australia. http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/

New Zealand. http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/

United States. http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html

Canada. http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp

Dragoman has comprehensive passenger liability protection and tour operator insurance. These policies have total indemnities of £3,000,000 and £10,000,000 respectively. This is in addition to local vehicle insurance and your personal travel insurance.

Emergency contact

We have a dedicated 24 hour telephone number which should only be used once you have left the UK and in the event of a real emergency. Should you need to call the number, we will do what we can to help but please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours.

If your flight is delayed or cancelled, please let us know and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in theses trip notes. If you cannot get through leave a message and a contact number as these will be regularly checked and the crew informed if necessary.

Emergency Number: +44 (0) 7985106564.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip.

Whatever policy you choose, you must ensure that it is designed for adventure/overland travel. As such it must cover you for adventure activities such as white water rafting, trekking, horse-riding and that the 24 Hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries – for example they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or if you were trekking in the Andes. Please double check if you have annual travel and/or credit card policies to ensure they have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not able to cope with adventure travel to remote areas. We recommend that any policy has the following minimum levels of cover: Medical (incl. repatriation) £5,000,000 Personal Liability £5,000,000 Cancellation and Curtailment £5,000 Loss of Baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice.

Issues on the trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer_relations@dragoman.co.uk. You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of the trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or "visitor's" passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for you trip. If you change your passport please remember to inform us.

Luggage & Kit List

Although you will not have to carry your main bag long distances you will need to help load and unload them onto the truck. For this reason we recommend that you use a backpack or soft bag rather than a heavy suitcase. During your trip your main luggage will be kept in the back locker so you will also need a small daypack. This can be used to carry your camera, water bottle and other personal effects for daily use.

The size of baggage that can be brought on this tour is limited by the locker space on the truck. Different trucks have different-sized lockers however to be safe we recommend that your bag be no larger than 66cm deep, 30cm wide, and 30cm high. The weight limit for luggage on all trucks is maximum 20kg. Backpacks should not have an external frame unless it can be easily removed and stored separately to avoid damaging other people's luggage.

Your clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in. On overland trips Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats (except on routes between Nairobi and Cape Town where ground mats are provided).

The clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in, which will vary depending on which part of the world you're heading to. On overland trips Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats*, so you'll need to bring those with you. Think about the climate and altitude of the areas you'll be travelling to, there's nothing worse than being cold at night so it's worth investing in a decent sleeping bag if it's likely to get cold. And remember even when it's warm during the day, it can often get cold at night, particularly in desert regions.

**Ground mats are provided on our non "in-depth" overland trips that run in South and East Africa, between Nairobi and Cape Town.*

For a general idea of what you need this list provides a guide:

- Sleeping bag - Check the expected climate en route. Nights in desert and mountain regions can be very cold in winter months
- Mattress or compressed foam
- A day pack is useful for short hikes in the countryside, wandering around cities, etc and also for keeping inside the vehicle for items used during the day
- 2 sets of comfortable travelling clothes (light, easily washable cotton clothes are best)
- 1 set of casual but smart clothes for evenings out. Women should bring a skirt that covers their knees and a scarf for visiting places of worship
- 2 pairs of shorts
- Sun hat or warm hat if trekking
- 1 pair of sunglasses
- Warm sweater/fleeces
- 1 waterproof jacket with hood
- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes/boots (or ankle height canvas jungle boots)
- 1 pair of sandals or flip-flops
- Underwear and socks (thermals are also a good idea if you are travelling to altitude or to the desert as it can get very cold at night)
- Swimwear
- 2 small towels
- Washing kit, including a small mirror
- Clothes washing detergent, small scrubbing brush & washing line (just a length of cord)
- Head torch/flashlight with spare batteries & bulbs (only the 3 standard sizes of round 1.5v batteries are widely available en route)
- Passport photos (average of 2 per country for which visas will be applied for en route)
- Good water bottle at least 1 litre
- A pouch or money belt worn inside your clothing, or unobtrusive pocket sewn into the inside of a pair of loose fitting trousers, is a must.
- Alarm clock
- Pocket calculator (useful when exchanging money)
- Writing materials & notebook/diary
- Multi purpose knife
- Cotton sheet sleeping bag (or sheet folded and sewn up on 2 sides). It will help keep your sleeping bag clean, and can be used on its own on warm nights.
- Mosquito net - The tents supplied by us have mosquito netting and you will only need a net if you think you will sleep out under the stars a lot of the time.
- "Wet Ones" (moistened tissues) and hand gel
- Toilet paper – this can be purchased almost everywhere en-route but one roll is worth packing
- Assorted sized plastic bags - protects clothing and equipment from dust and damp

For a comprehensive kit lists take a look at the Dragoman kit list that Nomad Travel have created. Dragoman customers will receive a 10% discount on all equipment purchased either online or in store. Click to see the kit lists www.nomadtravel.co.uk/kitlist/overlanders-kit-list

Water

The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in bottles, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 liters of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion end up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments.

Please avoid the purchase of bottled water by using the chemically sterilized water stored in the purpose built storage tank or in water jerry cans in your Overland vehicle. You are free to refill your bottle as many times a day as you like. You are helping the environment and your hip pocket!

Personal medical kit

All of our trucks have a fully stocked medical kit onboard for use in emergency situations only. Therefore in addition to this we recommend that you purchase your own personal medical kit. In the UK we have teamed up with Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics to produce the Dragoman Travel Medical Kit. It has been designed in conjunction with the truck kits and contains everything you would need for any minor accidents. For more details please visit their website:

nomadtravel.co.uk/catalog/view/dragoman-medical-kit

Electrical equipment

Your vehicle will be equipped with a 12 volt socket so to charge your iPod, MP3 player, camera, laptop and mobile phone you will need a DC 12 volt adapter - the type that can be used from a cigarette lighter in your car. Please be aware that only one piece of equipment can be charged at a time and it will not be allowed if there is a risk of running the vehicle's batteries low. Batteries may also be recharged from hotel room wall sockets and the majority of the campsites we stay at have electricity points so please bring along your normal charging adapters as well. You will need to ensure that you have the correct country adaptor for your specific charger.

The kitty

The Kitty is a group fund paid separately from the trip price at the start of your trip which covers all things that the whole group does, such as:

- Hotel accommodation and campsite fees
- Meals whilst camping (not in hotels)
- Activities listed as included (e.g. National Park entrances, excursions and local guides).

It is an amount that each passenger puts into a central fund and is monitored by the Dragoman crew. It's payable in full at the start of your trip, and in instalments at the start of each individual trip on combination trips

The kitty system is very unique to over landing as it allows us to have flexibility on the road. You can see exactly how your money is being spent and ensure that you are getting the best value by buying locally.

The kitty advertised in the brochure is an estimate at the time of printing. Local inflation and costs vary throughout the year and so we review kitties on a monthly basis. Once you book your trip it is very important that you check our website on a regular basis and just before departure for any changes to the kitty amount.

Your kitty can be paid in a mixture of US Dollar cash and local currency and most of our travellers choose to bring a cash passport with them for withdrawing local currency (you can visit www.cashpassport.com for further information on these). This is a very secure way of carrying your money whilst travelling. You treat them exactly like an ATM card and draw out local currency from an ATM to give to your leader within each country.

Travellers cheques have become increasingly difficult to change around the world with passengers and our leaders experiencing huge frustration and numerous hours spent trying to find a bank which will change travellers cheques. For this reason we no longer accept them on our trips.

Continuing your trip

Having an amazing trip and met a great group of people? Having too much fun to go home yet? If on your trip you decide you would like to continue, then why not speak to your trip leader who can advise you of the cost and availability of continuing your journey.

Contingency emergency fund

Sometimes, civil or political unrest, or reasons beyond Dragoman's control (e.g. a natural disaster), can mean that an itinerary is disrupted and we have to make a contingency plan. This may involve hiring alternate transport or even the whole group flying over an area. Although Dragoman will help organise travel arrangements, in circumstances outside Dragoman's control you should be prepared to contribute towards the costs and therefore we ask you to bring along a 'Contingency Fund' of USD400. In almost all cases trips run smoothly and this fund is therefore never used. We also recommend that you take along an internationally recognised credit or charge card with a decent limit in case of emergencies, such as medical treatment en route, or even the need to be repatriated; though these occurrences are rare. Remember that travel insurance policies usually only refund you for expenses after you have already paid out.

Tipping

Tipping is entirely voluntary. The Dragoman crew may be travelling with you for many weeks and usually they become good friends with most members of the group. It is sometimes easy to forget that they do work hard to ensure that you do have a great trip. If you feel you would like to tip them, they certainly would appreciate it. On a number of our trips, we also use a local guide as well as our own Dragoman crew. These guides live and travel with you through their home country and it is usual to tip them when they leave. We recommend USD10 to USD15 per person.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey, once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, information and kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these Trip Notes

These trip notes were printed on 23/05/2013