

## 5-Day Danakil Depression & Lalibela Tour

### Daily Departures from Semera | Small Group Danakil Tour | Private Lalibela Experience

Experience two of Ethiopia's most extraordinary UNESCO World Heritage destinations on this professionally operated **5-Day Danakil Depression & Lalibela Tour**.

Journey through the spectacular landscapes of the Danakil Depression—home to colorful hydrothermal fields, vast salt flats, ancient camel caravans, and the legendary Erta Ale Volcano—before discovering the remarkable rock-hewn churches of Lalibela on a private guided tour.

Our Danakil expeditions depart **daily from Semera** with small groups of **8–14 travelers**, providing personalized service, safety, and flexibility. Your Lalibela visit is conducted as a **private guided tour**, allowing you to explore Ethiopia's spiritual heart at your own pace.

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### Tour Highlights

- Daily departures from Semera
  - Small groups (8–14 participants)
  - Private guided tour in Lalibela
  - Explore the colorful Dallol Hydrothermal Field
  - Visit Lake Afdera and Lake Asale
  - Experience traditional Afar salt mining
  - Witness ancient camel caravans crossing the salt flats
  - Overnight camping in the Danakil Desert
  - Hike to the summit of Erta Ale Volcano
  - Visit all major rock-hewn churches of Lalibela (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
  - Professional English-speaking guides throughout the tour
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### Recommended Domestic Flights

#### Danakil Tour

- **Addis Ababa → Semera:** Ethiopian Airlines **ET110**
- **Semera → Addis Ababa:** Ethiopian Airlines **ET165**

## Lalibela Tour

- **Addis Ababa → Lalibela:** Ethiopian Airlines **ET120**
  - **Lalibela → Addis Ababa:** Ethiopian Airlines **ET121**
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## Detailed Itinerary

### Day 1 – Addis Ababa • Semera • Lake Afdera • Hamed Ela

#### Morning

Fly from Addis Ababa to Semera. Upon arrival, meet your professional guide and driver before departing in a fully equipped 4×4 Land Cruiser.

Following a short tour briefing, begin the scenic drive through the Afar Region toward the Danakil Depression.

#### En Route

Travel across dramatic volcanic landscapes, lava fields, desert plains, and traditional Afar villages while learning about the area's fascinating geology and culture.

Stop at beautiful **Lake Afdera**, a natural salt lake famous for its warm mineral-rich waters.

Enjoy:

- Lunch overlooking the lake
- Optional swimming
- Photography opportunities
- Rest break before continuing into the desert

#### Afternoon

Continue to **Hamed Ela**, the gateway to the Danakil Depression.

Before sunset visit:

- Lake Asale
- Traditional salt mining sites
- Endless white salt flats
- Camel caravans transporting hand-cut salt blocks

Watch the unforgettable sunset across one of Earth's most surreal landscapes.

### Accommodation

Open-air desert camping at Hamed Ela.

### Meals

- Lunch
  - Dinner
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## Day 2 – Dallol • Salt Canyon • Camel Caravans • Erta Ale Volcano

### Early Morning

After breakfast, depart for the world-famous **Dallol Hydrothermal Field**.

Explore one of Earth's most colorful geological wonders featuring:

- Bright yellow sulfur formations
- Green acidic pools
- Orange mineral terraces
- Salt crystal formations
- Hydrothermal springs
- Extraordinary volcanic landscapes

Continue exploring:

- Salt Canyon
- Traditional salt extraction sites
- Ancient camel caravans crossing the salt plains

Learn how the Afar people have harvested salt using traditional techniques for centuries.

### Lunch

Picnic lunch in the desert.

### Afternoon

Drive across volcanic terrain toward **Erta Ale Volcano**.

### Evening

Accompanied by experienced local guides, hike to the summit of Erta Ale.

Witness one of the world's few permanent lava lakes glowing beneath the night sky—an unforgettable highlight of your Ethiopian adventure.

### Accommodation

Camping near Erta Ale Volcano.

### Meals

- Breakfast
  - Lunch
  - Dinner
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## Day 3 – Erta Ale • Lake Afdera • Semera • Addis Ababa

Wake before sunrise for one final visit to the volcanic crater.

Morning light provides ideal conditions for photography before beginning the drive back to Semera.

Stop along the way for refreshments and short breaks.

Upon arrival at Semera Airport, board your afternoon flight to Addis Ababa.

Overnight in Addis Ababa.

### Meals

- Breakfast
  - Lunch
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## Day 4 – Addis Ababa • Lalibela

Take the morning flight from Addis Ababa to Lalibela.

Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel for check-in and lunch.

In the afternoon, begin exploring the magnificent **Northwestern Cluster** of Lalibela's rock-hewn churches, carved directly from volcanic rock over 800 years ago.

Visit:

- Bete Medhane Alem
- Bete Maryam
- Bete Meskel
- Bete Denagel
- Bete Golgotha-Mikael (when accessible)

Continue to the masterpiece of Lalibela:

### **Bete Giyorgis (Church of St. George)**

Carved entirely from a single block of volcanic rock in the shape of a cross, Bete Giyorgis is Ethiopia's most iconic church and one of the finest examples of monolithic architecture anywhere in the world.

The churches are connected through an impressive network of tunnels, trenches, and passageways.

### **Accommodation**

Hotel in Lalibela.

### **Meals**

- Breakfast

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## **Day 5 – Lalibela • Addis Ababa**

After breakfast, continue exploring the **Southeastern Cluster** of Lalibela churches.

Visit:

- Bete Gabriel-Rufael
- Bete Merkorios
- Bete Emmanuel
- Bete Abba Libanos
- Bete Lehem (Bethlehem)

If church services are taking place, you may have the opportunity to observe traditional Ethiopian Orthodox worship.

After the tour, transfer to Lalibela Airport for your return flight to Addis Ababa.

## End of Tour

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## Tour Includes

- Airport transfers in Semera
  - One night's hotel accommodation in Lalibela
  - Breakfast in Lalibela
  - Private local guide in Lalibela
  - Private vehicle transfers in Lalibela
  - Entrance fees to all Lalibela churches
  - Comfortable 4x4 Land Cruiser transportation in Danakil
  - Professional English-speaking guide
  - Experienced local Afar guides
  - Professional driver
  - Camping equipment
  - Sleeping mattresses
  - Government permits
  - Local community fees
  - All meals during the Danakil tour
  - Bottled drinking water
  - First-aid equipment
  - Full logistical support
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## Tour Excludes

- Domestic flights
- Addis Ababa–Semera
- Semera–Addis Ababa
- Addis Ababa–Lalibela
- Lalibela–Addis Ababa
- Lunch and dinner in Lalibela
- Ethiopian visa (if applicable)
- Travel insurance
- Alcoholic beverages
- Soft drinks
- Personal expenses
- Laundry services
- Tips and gratuities

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## What to Bring

- Passport
- Small backpack
- Comfortable trekking shoes
- Sandals
- Lightweight clothing
- Long-sleeved shirt
- Light jacket
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen (SPF 50+)
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Spare batteries
- Power bank
- Camera
- Personal medications
- Wet wipes
- Toiletries
- Swimwear
- Reusable water bottle

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## Safety & Security

Your safety is our highest priority.

Our tours are operated by experienced professionals using well-maintained 4×4 vehicles, licensed English-speaking guides, and knowledgeable local Afar guides.

Vehicles carry first-aid kits, spare tires, recovery equipment, emergency supplies, and additional drinking water.

Due to the extreme desert climate, activities are scheduled during the coolest parts of the day whenever possible, with regular hydration and rest breaks.

Guests are advised to remain with the group, follow guide instructions at all times, avoid unstable geothermal areas, respect local customs, and request permission before photographing local residents.

Should weather conditions, volcanic activity, or road conditions require adjustments, the itinerary may be modified to ensure guest safety.

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## Booking & Payment Policy

### Reservation

Advance booking is highly recommended due to limited group sizes.

Reservations are confirmed upon receipt of the required deposit.

### Deposit

A **30% deposit** is required to secure your booking.

The remaining balance must be paid prior to departure according to your booking confirmation.

### Accepted Payment Methods

- Credit Card
- Debit Card

Any applicable payment processing fees are the responsibility of the customer unless otherwise stated.

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## Travel Tips

- Prepare for extremely hot desert temperatures.
  - Drink plenty of water throughout the journey.
  - Wear lightweight, breathable clothing.
  - Bring sturdy walking shoes.
  - Carry a fully charged power bank.
  - Mobile phone coverage is unavailable in many remote areas.
  - Camping facilities are basic due to the remote environment.
  - Bring cash for personal purchases and gratuities.
  - Respect the customs and traditions of the Afar people.
  - Help preserve this extraordinary landscape by leaving no trace.
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