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## 7 Nights 8 in Eritrea - 2009/2010

### Day 1

Arrival Asmara Intl Airport and proceed to Ambassador Hotel

### Day 2

Asmara city Tour starting at the Cathedral (Sermon) on Liberty Avenue built in 1923 by the Cappucini Monks. We move to the Orthodox Church and the Mosque built in 1938 during colonial era. We end the stroll in that area by visiting Fish market near the Municipality.

Leaving the court house to the left, we reach the Bowling centre which was built by the Fenili Family. The much talked about resourcefulness of the Eritreans is exposed when we visit Medeber, scattered workshops where young and old are busy forming and converting materials for the daily use of the people. From there we move to Cinema Hamasiem in the foot of Idaaga Aarbi. Returning to the town Asmara offer beautiful entertainment centres like the Cinema Impero, Cinema Roma, Cinema Odeon, Cinema Dante, Cinema Croce Rossa. - Teatro Asmara and Cinema Capitol with 2000 seats. Each showing excellent interior and facade of quality architectural designs.

Villa Roma, the Italian Ambassador's Residence, the suspended wings of the FIAT Tagliero gas station, the AGIP gas station in Godaif, are further must see unique structures. Tracing the Italian heritage we drive by the Albergho Hamasiem, Albergho Italia, Albergho C.I.A.O, Monumento General Galiano -Igri Hazhaz. Asmara has more than 2000 years history, and a local tradition of Mai Melatze where Menelik the I

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was born to Queen of Sheba on her journey back to Axum, her capital city, after her visit to Jerusalem. Leaving this area, aka Mai Bella, we visit the open market > Shouk. Where souvenirs can be purchased and come to the infamous prison Kaserma Mussolini, the central prison.

After seeing the old Train station, we drive by and observe many art deco villas and few of the bigger structures like the main post office. We conclude our tour by visiting the interesting national museum.

Ovn Ambassador Hotel \*\*\*

### Day 3

**Dekemhare - 40 kms southeast of Asmara.**

Not far from here, in Gura the then Abyssinian Empire against the Egyptians won a historical battle. The Egyptian crown prince was taken prisoner. It is presumed that probably this happening might have been one of the reasons why Egyptians did not try to make further attempts to infiltrate into the highlands. The Italians built the modern town of Dekemhare as the centre of industrial activities.

Seganeitti is a smaller town 62 kms southeast of Asmara and is known for its cactus fruits and Sycamore trees, traditionally used as an assembly location of the villagers. One of the trees is memorialised and embossed in the five Nakfa Eritrean currency.

### Adi Keyih

some 111 kms southeast of Asmara is the biggest town in the region and 11 kms south of here is Quohaito an archaeological site known as Queen of Sheba's Dam which dates back circa 500 BC. It is expected that further excavation will show the import



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ance of this place in the history of the region. By itself, the present ruins of the ancient city of Quohaito are very impressive because of its mere size.

Senafe is located 136 kms southeast of Asmara. Just 2 km south of here is a partially excavated site known as the ancient city of Metera with the landmark of an Obelisk with an inscription dating back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Sena = Sanaa - Fen = Where is Sanaa ?. Historians believe that during Queen of Sheba reign the south Arabian migration continued and named this place Senafe after trying to look over at Sanaa climbing on the tallest mountain in this area. Ovn Ambassador Hotel\*\*\*in Asmara

#### DAY 4

\*\*Adi Quala is located circa 92 kms south of Asmara, it is just few kms from the Ethiopian boundary. A fair size market place, mainly for donkeys, mules and other merchandise too. Villagers come here to barter or sell for money. Of interest to any traveller, especially For the European traveller is the Italian Mausoleum just 6 km, south of the town. This is a historical place where about 8000 Italian troops killed in the famous battle of Adua in 1896 rest in peace. They fought along side many Eritrean soldiers when Italy decided to join in the scramble for Africa. This disaster for Italy that was trying to be counted as one of the big powers of that time was painful. It gave Mussolini the rationale to attack Ethiopia in 1935.

**\*\* Not possible at this time!!**

Debaruba is a small but historically an interesting town that lies between Asmara and Mendefera. Through the middle ages this town played an important role in the history of the country. Now it is growing fast into a large industrial and mining town. G

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eologists have determined that the surrounding area is full of precious minerals such as Copper, Gold and etc. This can be easily seen looking at the colours of the landscape.

Mendefera is the provincial capital for the southern region, known as Zoba Debub and is located 54 kms south of Asmara. It is fertile, its outreach extending to western lowlands known as the breadbasket of Eritrea. During the Axumite kingdom civilization and later, Mendefera played a big role because it was a main trade centre and a crossroad to the Red Sea. The town has a good infrastructure and a good town planning dating back to the colonial era. The St. Giorgio school that has offered a great deal of education was founded by a famous Italian in the 1930s. Many Eritrean intellectuals were educated in this school. Own in Asmara Hotel Ambassador\*\*\*

## Day 5

Keren is Driving past the beautiful hilly Hamasien villages with their traditional Hidmo houses and leaving the highlands, the road descends the escarpment towards Keren. This old and beautiful settlement is known for its healthy weather and the friendliness of its people. That is why also it is called Keren Tsaeda = Keren the white. Located 90 kms west of Asmara, (population 74.800 and 1.392 meters above sea-level) is the provincial capital

of Zoba Anseba. Keren is a trading centre as well as a crossroad to various language, ethnic groups and religions. The Swiss born Munzinger Pasha, the Vice-Roy of the Egyptian Khedive at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, has written much about Keren and its history. In modern times the Beja wars with the highlanders and the occupation by the Egyptians and later by the Italians have left their imprints. Keren did become p

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part of the second World War history since one of the toughest battles of the allies against the Axis was conducted here in 1941.

The camel caravan market on Monday mornings is something worth experiencing. The Turkish style Mosque built in 1894, the miniature replica of the Cathedral in Asmara at the centre of the town, known as St. Antonio Cathedral built in 1925, the St. Michael's Church that houses the tomb of Bishop Fillipos Presutt of the early French Lazarites rite (1845-1914) are very interesting historical spots that will be visited.

Mariam De Aarit, a Shrine inside a Baobab grotto inaugurated by the fifth Vicar Apostolico Msgr. Touvier on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 1881 is a popular open air religious spot inviting people of all denominations for its services showing "Unity in Diversity". Mariam De Aarit's annual commemoration is a pilgrimage day, celebrated on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May each year. It has become a national happening and is being celebrated internationally by many Eritreans living abroad. Ovn in Keren Sarina Hotel \*\*\*

### *Day 6*

After visiting the camel market early morning, we shall proceed to visit Elabered Orchard. Italian entrepreneurs developed the village of Elabered into an agro-industrial conglomerate producing citrus fruits and dairy products. After years of neglect it is being now revitalized and it has the potential to cover not only the local requirement but as in the 1960s also to export to the Middle East and Europe. Just few kilometers from Elabered is the famous Monastery of Debresina.



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This ancient Monastery was founded around 480 AD by the monk, Frumenatius and is dedicated to St. Mary. The patron's day is celebrated in big every year on June 29<sup>th</sup>, attracting thousands of pilgrims from all over the country.

Massawa via Asmara to this beautiful city which is the main port of the country. It is located two hours drive east of Asmara. It has an interesting history dating back centuries. Towards the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottomans established control of Massawa making it a major outlet for slave trade, pearls, hides and fish. Having passed through many hands, Abyssinian, Turks, Egyptians, Italians and the British, Massawa now with its Oriental and Mediterranean architecture has changed into a charming city. It is now developing into a major economic hub of the region. The weather is temperate from September through March and then it becomes hot and humid reaching temperatures up to 50 degree centigrade in August. Ovn Gurgussum Hotel Massawa

## Day 7

In the vicinity of Massawa, visiting a Rashaida tribe family, the shrimp farm, near the Gurgussum beach. Ovn in Massawa.

**USD 780,- pp min.4 participants**

- Meet and assist at airport
  - Toyota Sedan with A/C
  - DB+B/Fast Hotel Accommodation
  - Museum entrance Fee
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- English/Italian Guide/driver

Not included in the price above

- Alcoholic drinks
- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Airport security tax USD 20 each
- Air Ticket
- Single Supplement USD 155,-pp

*Dameratours reserves the right to change the route and price with or without notice.*