

AFRICAN DAWN

5 JANUARY 2027 - 28 JANUARY 2027

Tour Cost (\$AUD):\$23,750
Single Supplement (\$AUD):\$4,050

Tour Duration:24 days



OVERVIEW

African Dawn is a 24-day tour that will show you many faces of this great continent. It's a mix of diverse experiences and sights, from Lake Victoria and the source of the Nile in Uganda, to the rare mountain gorillas of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park: from the tiny land-locked nation of Rwanda and on to Ethiopia – the cradle of civilisation.

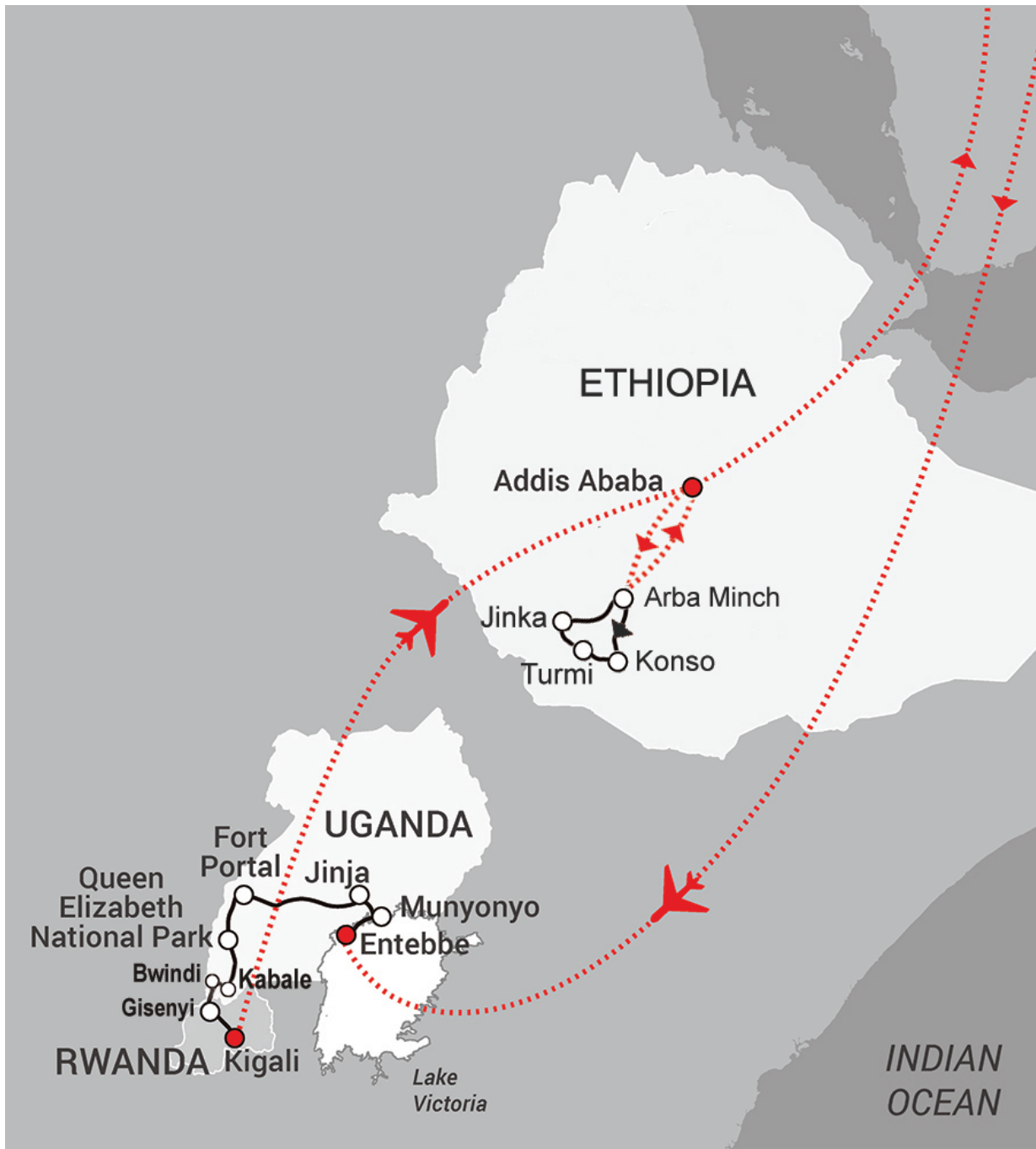
Imagine an adventure that starts with the thrill of seeing Lake Victoria and the River Nile, as it starts its epic journey northwards; an adventure that continues across the 'Mountains of the Moon' and onto one of the great wildlife parks in Africa, Queen Elizabeth National Park; an adventure that then heads south through the islands of Lake Bunyonyi and on to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, home of the rare mountain gorilla. Imagine a walk that will bring you into close contact with a gorilla family on the forested slopes of the mountains, and on to the tiny land-locked nation of Rwanda; an adventure that then moves eastward to Ethiopia, the cradle of civilisation, for arguably the most amazing festival in the world, Timkat, which celebrates the Baptism of Christ. Then in complete contrast, we head south to the great Omo Valley, home to a diverse range of Ethiopia's tribal groups who still live in their settlements and villages as they have done for hundreds of years. Join us on this extraordinary and varied 24-day adventure!

Tour Fitness Level: Active

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TOUR MAP



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ITINERARY

05/01/2027 Australia – Dubai

Depart from your chosen Australian airport on the flight to Dubai.

06/01/2027 Dubai – Entebbe – Munyonyo (D)

On arrival in Dubai we connect with the flight to Entebbe.

Depart Dubai Emirates EK 729, 09.45
Arrive Entebbe 14.10

On arrival in Entebbe we transfer to Munyonyo, superbly situated on the banks of Lake Victoria. This evening we enjoy dinner on the terrace of our beautiful resort.

The Speke Resort

Munyonyo, Kampala

07/01/2027 Kampala (BLD)

After breakfast we take a city tour of Kampala including the markets. The afternoon is at leisure and in the evening we enjoy a BBQ at the edge of Lake Victoria.

08/01/2027 Source of the Nile: Jinja (BLD)

The main reservoir and source of the Nile, Lake Victoria is the second largest freshwater lake in the world after Baikal in Eastern Siberia and is situated between the Western and Eastern Rift Valleys. Like Baikal, many rivers flow into Lake Victoria but only one flows out: the Nile. Today we drive to Jinja where we board a boat that takes us to the very spot where the Nile bubbles up from Lake Victoria and begins its epic journey to the Mediterranean. Lunch is a picnic beside a memorial to John Hanning Speke at the spot where he first saw the Nile.

09/01/2027 Kampala – Fort Portal (BLD)

This morning we drive through lush countryside and banana plantations as we pass Kibale Forest. After lunch at Fort Portal we enter Kibale National Park, home to 12 species of primates including a population of habituated chimpanzees. After visiting the chimps we drive into the Rwenzori Mountains – the famous Mountains of the Moon.

Mountains of the Moon Hotel & Resort

Fort Portal

10/01/2027 Fort Portal – Queen Elizabeth National Park (BLD)

After breakfast we cross the Equator and enter Queen Elizabeth National Park. Here the country is untouched, with lush vegetation and rich in wildlife. To the west of our lodge lie the Rwenzoris, while to the east are the spectacularly raised Rift Valley Hills. The two are separated by the meandering Kazinga Channel that flows into the great George and Edward lakes.

Mweya Safari Lodge

Queen Elizabeth National Park

11/01/2027 Queen Elizabeth NP (BLD)

Queen Elizabeth National Park is home to lions, leopards, elephants, hippos, hyenas, crocodiles and waterbuck, as well as more than 600 species of birds that flock around the Kazinga Channel. This morning we enjoy an early sunrise game drive before returning to the lodge for breakfast. In the afternoon we take a boat ride to see the diverse animal and bird life of the Kazinga Channel.

12/01/2027 Queen Elizabeth NP – Kabale (BLD)

This morning we have another early morning game drive before leaving for the border town of Kabale. Passing many coffee and banana plantations en-

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route, we arrive in Kabale in the evening and transfer to our hotel.

Arcadia Cottages

Kabale

13/01/2027 Kabale – Bwindi (BLD)

After breakfast we take a boat ride on beautiful Lake Bunyonyi and visit some of its lush islands. After lunch we board 4WD vehicles for the two hour journey to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Four Gorillas Lodge

Rubugri – Rushaga

14/01/2027 Bwindi (BLD)

After a short briefing from park rangers on gorilla protection and protocol, we enter Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. Our exhilarating walk through the cultivated foothills of the mountains offers stirring views in all directions. Bwindi is home to an incredible diversity of flora and fauna, with some 120 mammal species and 350 species of bird. But the most famous inhabitants are the approximately 400 mountain gorillas who live in the densely forested mountain slopes. Our first contact with the gorillas will be unforgettable.

15/01/2027 Bwindi – Kigali (BLD)

After breakfast we head south to the Uganda/Rwanda border and, after completing customs and immigration formalities, we enter the tiny land-locked nation often referred to as 'the Switzerland of Africa'. Shortly after crossing the border we arrive at the Iby Iwacu cultural village and enjoy a lively display of music and dance. After lunch we continue south to the Rwandan capital, Kigali.

Serena Hotel

Kigali

16/01/2027 Kigali (BLD)

Kigali is a very pleasant modern city situated among rolling hills. Although it is home to a million people, it enjoys a very relaxed pace of life and it is extremely friendly and safe. Kigali and its people bear witness to a country that has successfully forged reconciliation and enjoyed social and economic stability for more than ten years. Today we take a walking tour of this delightful capital, passing by the presidential palace, craft markets and the famous 'Hotel Rwanda'.

17/01/2027 Kigali – Addis Ababa (BLD)

This morning is at leisure and after lunch we transfer to the airport for our flight to Addis Ababa.

Depart Kigali Ethiopian Airlines ET 86, 17.40
Arrive Addis Ababa 21.05

Welcome to the 'Cradle of Civilisation'! Ethiopia is one of the world's most extraordinary, yet least visited, countries. Lying in the mountains at an elevation of 2,500m, Addis Ababa is the third highest capital city in the world. It enjoys a superb climate with an average year-round temperature of 25 degrees. On arrival in Addis Ababa we transfer to our hotel, where we enjoy a late dinner.

Grand Haile Resort

Addis Ababa

18/01/2027 Addis Ababa (BLD)

This morning we visit the fascinating National Museum where the oldest human skeleton 'Lucy' is on display. Today is also the start of the Timkat Festival and in the afternoon we join the throng of white-veiled worshippers as they dance and sing in the streets to the beating of drums. The Arc of the Covenant is paraded through the streets and the procession then moves to a water source where the festival proper will take place early in the morning.

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19/01/2027 Addis Ababa – Arba Minch (BLD)

Today the festival reaches its climax as priests in satin robes and the Patriarch celebrate a communal service and bless the pool of holy water. Thousands of joyous people throng to the compound waiting for a drop of holy water which priests spray into the crowd. It is a truly remarkable spectacle and the atmosphere is one of great excitement and joy. We are privileged to view this extraordinary festival from within the compound with the priests and Patriarch. Returning to our hotel we enjoy lunch before transferring to the airport for our flight to Arba Minch.

Depart Addis Ababa Ethiopian Airlines ET 135, 15.10
Arrive Arba Minch 16.15

On arrival in Arba Minch we transfer to our hotel.

Haile Resort

Arba Minch

20/01/2027 Arba Minch (BLD)

Bordered by verdant mountains and picturesque highland villages, Arba Minch is the gateway to the Omo Valley. The area is rich in agriculture and is known for a great variety of fruit including mango, banana, orange, apple, guava and pineapple. In addition, Lakes Abaya and Chamo, the largest Rift Valley lakes in Ethiopia, provide an abundant source of fish which include tiger-fish, Nile perch, tilapia and catfish. Today we explore Lake Chamo, a sanctuary for vast numbers of hippopotamus. The lake is also home to the giant Nile crocodiles, which can measure up to seven metres in length. The lake's bird life is a veritable feast on the eyes as hordes of yellow weaver birds flit constantly through the trees, and vivid-coloured kingfishers skim the lake where great white pelicans, storks, ibises, hornbills and cormorants plumb the waters for food.

21/01/2027 Arba Minch – Konso (BLD)

This morning we visit the village of Dorze, situated on the very top of Mount Goge. The Dorze people are a hard working tribe renowned for their skill in weaving, carpentry and other traditional crafts. Every Dorze compound is self-sufficient, surrounded by a small-holding of crops and characterised by their remarkable bee-hive shaped dwellings made from false (Abyssinian) banana leaves. These can measure up to six metres high ensuring they last for years despite termites constantly eating away at the base. After lunch we start to move further south and soon the contoured landscape of Konso starts to unfold. On arrival in Konso we transfer to our hotel.

Kanta Lodge

Konso

22/01/2027 Konso – Turmi (BLD)

The walled towns and settlements of Konso are located on hill summits selected for their strategic and defensive advantages. The cultural spaces inside the walled towns, called moras, retain an important and central role in the life of the Konso people. The erection of stones and poles is also part of the Konso tradition: a pole is raised every 18 years, marking the start of a new generation. Thus, the age of a village can be determined by how many poles are standing. This morning we visit one of the UNESCO listed Konso villages, before continuing our journey to Key Afar, which hosts a vibrant market once a week when thousands of Banna, Hamar and Tsemay peoples descend on it to buy and sell goods. After our visit to the market we continue to Turmi.

Paradise Lodge

Turmi

23/01/2027 Turmi (BLD)

Turmi is the home of the Hamar people – a fine

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looking tribe whose men and women take great pride in their appearance, shaving and colouring their hair, oiling their bodies and decorating themselves with beads and bracelets worn around arms and legs. Today we visit one of the villages of the Hamar people.

24/01/2027 Turmi – Qorcho – Turmi (BLD)

Today we visit a small tribe known as Karo. With a population of around 2,000 they live along the east bank of the great Omo River and practise flood retreat cultivation, growing sorghum, maize and beans. Like many of the tribes in the Omo, they paint their bodies and faces with white chalk to prepare for a ceremony. The chalk is mixed with yellow rock, red iron ore and charcoal. Face masks are worn at times and they have clay hair buns with feathers in them. Red clay mixed with butter is put into their hair and clothing is made from animal skin. The women scar their chests believing it makes them beautiful. The men's scars represent an enemy or dangerous animal killed. Most men in the tribe have two or three wives.

25/01/2027 Turmi – Jinka (BLD)

Today we make the short drive to Jinka in Mago National Park on the eastern shore of the Omo River.

Eco Lodge

Jinka

26/01/2027 Jinka – Arba Minch (BLD)

Today we drive back to Arba Minch and have the afternoon at leisure.

Haile Resort

Arba Minch

27/01/2027 Arba Minch – Addis Ababa – Dubai (B)

After an early breakfast we transfer to the airport for our flight to Addis Ababa.

Depart Arba Minch Ethiopian Air ET 170, 10.20

Arrive Addis Ababa 11.25

Depart Addis Ababa Emirates EK 724, 14.50

Arrive Dubai 20.00

On arrival into Dubai connect with your flight back to Australia.

28/01/2027 Dubai – Australia

We arrive home in Australia today.