



# Nazareth College & Visions Global Empowerment Ethiopia Service-Learning Trip Itinerary *December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

Addis Ababa \* Awassa \* Arba Minch

## DAY 1

**Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>**

*USA → Addis Ababa*

- Group departure from Toronto to Ethiopia at 10:00am on Ethiopian Airlines

## DAY 2

**Monday, December 30<sup>th</sup>**

*Addis Ababa*

- Group arrival at 7:00am at Addis Ababa - Ethiopia's capital city
  - Upon arrival, Visions Trip Lead will meet group and transfer everyone by private vehicle to hotel for check-in
- Brief welcome and orientation upon arrival
- Potential sightseeing around Addis Ababa, including visit to Mount Entoto, National Museum of Ethiopia and other sites (time permitting)
- Rest & overnight at [Addissinia Hotel](#) or comparable

## DAY 3

**Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>**

*Addis Ababa*

- Spend the day conducting learning games & activities with Deaf children attending a Visions-sponsored "early learners" classroom at Menelik School in Addis Ababa

## DAY 4

**Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>**

*Addis Ababa → Awassa*

- Drive to the city of Awassa (also known as "Hawassa") – the capital of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region – about a 4-hour drive south of Addis Ababa
  - We will be joined for the next week by 2-4 Visions Ethiopia staff from Bahir Dar, another project site in the Amhara Region of the country

- Visions Ethiopia staff (Deaf teachers & Interpreters) will give an “Introduction to Ethiopian Sign Language and Amharic” tutorial
- Conduct group planning and prep work at the hotel for the next several days of service work
- Overnight at [Haile Resort – Hawassa](#) or comparable

## DAY 5

**Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>**

*Awassa*

- Breakfast (buffet) will be at the hotel restaurant every morning (starting from 6:00am)
- 8:30am departure for Tabor School
  - Working in close collaboration with our local staff in Awassa (2), visiting staff from Bahir Dar (4) and volunteer Interpreters (2) from Addis Ababa, we will conduct educational programs for Deaf youth each day for the next 5 days in a row from roughly 9:00am – 4:00pm each day (specific plans TBD)
  - Lunch will be a catered (traditional, vegan) meal at the school every day
- Upon returning to the hotel each afternoon, we will meet as a group to debrief the day’s activities and make plans for the following day.
- Dinner each night will be at the hotel unless other arrangements are made.

## DAY 6

**Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>**

*Awassa*

- Continue service activities

## DAY 7

**Saturday, January 4<sup>th</sup>**

*Awassa*

- Continue service activities

## DAY 8

**Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Awassa*

- Continue service activities

## DAY 9

**Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>**

*Awassa*

- Continue service activities
- Group farewell dinner with all local staff & volunteers





## DAY 10

**Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>**

*Awassa → Arba Minch*

- Do some sightseeing in Awassa in the morning, including visit to the morning fish market and visit to Millenium Park to see various species of monkeys and birds (including the giant marabou stork)
- After lunch, depart for Arba Minch – about a 5-hour drive south of Awassa
- Overnight at [Paradise Lodge](#) or [Haile Resort – Arba Minch](#), or comparable



## DAY 11

**Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>**

*Arba Minch*

- Go for a safari in Nechisar National Park to see gazelles, zebras, baboons, flamingos, and other wildlife and visit the “Forty Springs” natural springs inside the park
- Visit to Dorze Village to learn about the traditional customs and way of life for the Dorze people
- In the evening, we will do a group trip reflection and enjoy dinner at the lodge

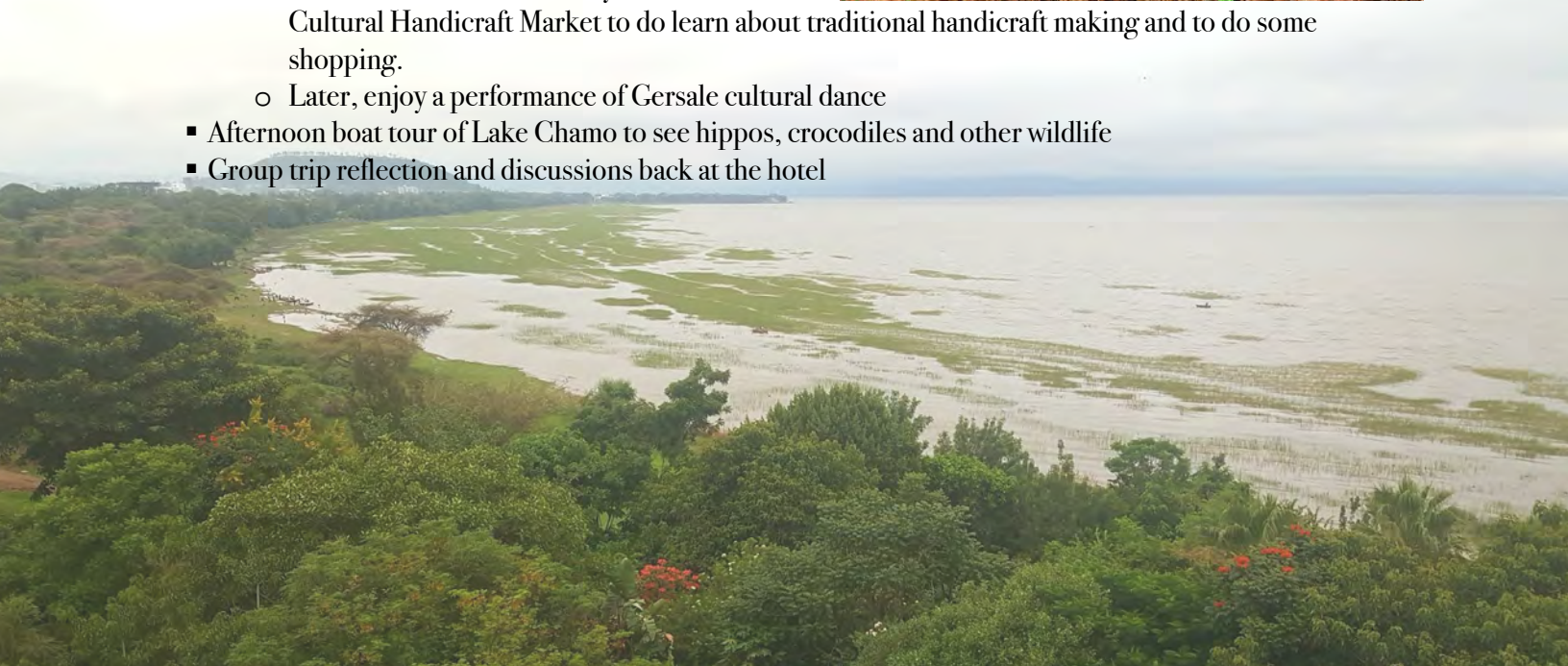


## DAY 12

**Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>**

*Arba Minch*

- Visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of the [Konso Cultural Landscape](#) – about a 2-hour drive south of Arba Minch – to see the impressive rock formations, stone-walled terraces and fortified settlements.
  - While there, visit the Komaya Heart of Konso Cultural Handicraft Market to do learn about traditional handicraft making and to do some shopping.
  - Later, enjoy a performance of Gersale cultural dance
- Afternoon boat tour of Lake Chamo to see hippos, crocodiles and other wildlife
- Group trip reflection and discussions back at the hotel



## DAY 13

**Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>**

*Arba Minch → Addis Ababa → USA*

- Time permitting, visit the Crocodile Ranch in the morning to witness the feeding of these magnificent beasts
- Catch return nonstop flight in the afternoon from Arba Minch to Addis Ababa on Ethiopian Airlines
- Afternoon shopping for coffee, spices, honey, souvenirs, etc.
- Be at Addis Ababa Airport by 8:00pm in order to catch return flight home on Ethiopian Airlines departing at 11:00pm

## DAY 14

**Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup>**

*Addis Ababa → USA*

- Arrival at Toronto Airport at 7:45am

**\*Please be advised: travel dates & itinerary are subject to change**

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Best estimates show that upwards of 40% of all children in Ethiopia are left out of formal education entirely. Factor in having a disability to that equation, and students with special needs are even more unlikely to access a formal education. Ethiopian Deaf children and adults in particular experience tremendous discrimination in education, healthcare, employment, public services, and everyday communication and activities.

In an effort to improve the situation for Deaf youth & adults in Bahir Dar (in the northwest of Ethiopia), Awassa (southern Ethiopia), and the capital city of Addis Ababa, Visions Global Empowerment (“Visions”) has been spearheading various initiatives since 2012 aimed at improving education, inclusion and the overall quality of life for Deaf persons. Working in close partnership with local staff and partners, we have been collectively striving toward the development of thoughtful interventions including increasing the accessibility and quality of life skills training, Ethiopian Sign Language (EthSL) instruction, job training and opportunities, public education and awareness raising, medical care, early childhood education, social activities, and other educational support for Deaf Ethiopians and their families. More details of this ongoing, year-round work can be found on the Visions website ([www.VisionsGlobalEmpowerment.org](http://www.VisionsGlobalEmpowerment.org)).

## NAZARETH COLLEGE’S 5<sup>TH</sup> SERVICE-LEARNING TRIP

This volunteer program represents Visions’ 17<sup>th</sup> scheduled group service-learning trip to Ethiopia over the past 8 years (in which over 130 individuals have volunteered their time already), and our 5<sup>th</sup> service-learning trip in partnership with Nazareth College. As part of this experience, program participants will be spending time with local Deaf leaders, staff, and teachers; conducting site visits to local schools and ongoing Visions’ projects; conducting training programs for schoolchildren, young adults, & parents at public schools in Addis Ababa & Awassa; and learning about the issues that shape the lives of Ethiopian schoolchildren.



In addition to the volunteer component, this trip will provide an opportunity to see local development projects in action. Participants will meet with local NGO workers and make field visits to various projects designed to make a difference in communities in need. Volunteers will also have time for periodic sightseeing and leisure, providing an opportunity to see some of the many fascinating sights that Ethiopia has to offer. Participants will experience some of the historical and archaeological heritage, nature/wildlife, and more. All of this will give volunteers an opportunity to experience Ethiopian culture and engage in what amounts



to a powerful cross-cultural exchange and learning experience. This trip also provides an opportunity to gain exposure to Amharic & Ethiopian Sign Language and to share insights & experiences with our Ethiopian counterparts about culture, language, development, and more.

## **SIGHTSEEING & LEISURE**

Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, is a bustling cosmopolitan center and the home of the African Union, many UN offices, embassies, and more. It serves as our entry point into the country as well, with the group arriving and departing from Bole International Airport (ADD). Students may have a little time to explore this major African city, including visiting the National Museum to see the infamous “Lucy” and “Ardi”; Meskel Square; and other interesting sites (*dependent on international flight arrival & departure details*). We will have time to do some shopping as well – coffee, spices, honey, textiles, and other souvenirs always make for good gifts.

In Awassa, we will have opportunities for exploration and sightseeing as well, including a visit to Millenium Park to see different species of monkeys and birds, including the giant marabou stork. We will also arrange to visit the local fishing market on the shores of Lake Awassa.

Finally, students will have a few days for leisure and reflection at the end of the trip as they visit the southern city of Arba Minch. Enjoy a safari through the Nechisar National Park, home to gazelle, zebras, baboons, flamingoes, and a whole host of other wildlife, as well as a short hike to the natural springs of “Forty Springs”. Awassa is also well known for its resident crocodile population, a large number of which can be found at the Crocodile Ranch, where (time permitting) we will be able to see large numbers of these incredible animals and possibly even witness a feeding sessions. We will also visit a village of the Dorze people, who will share some of their traditional customs and way of life. Finally, we will take a half-day trip to the southern most point of our journey – Konso Cultural Landscape – to view the incredible natural landscape and experience some of the local culture, including Gersale cultural dance.

## **BUILDING LOCAL BONDS**

Our program has been designed to work concurrently to develop skills in students, adults, local partners, teachers, university students, other community members, and volunteers abroad. Using facilitated learning techniques, team building, and gradual ownership of curriculum and activities leadership, volunteers and children develop confidence, skill, and teamwork capabilities. Our goal of supplementing the educational opportunities for students and professionals in Deaf education in Ethiopia while honoring Ethiopian Sign Language, indigenous language, and the richness of Ethiopian cultures provide an experience for all participants that is both rich and respectful of all. As Visions’ development work continues year-round, we will follow up on any program-specific goals or projects that emerge from this service-learning trip, and encourage all participants to stay involved in these efforts long-term.

## TRAVEL MAP

