



Journey with the volcano expert

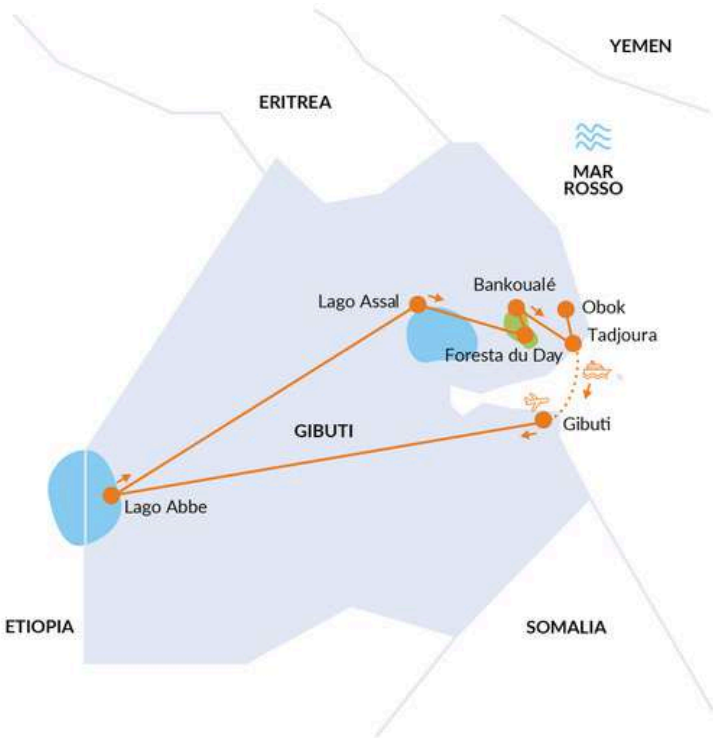
DJIBOUTI



12 days

12-23 February 2025

English speaking tour leader



The 'unforgettable' of the trip:

- The landscapes of **Lake Abbé**, described as the 'moon on earth'.
- The shimmering glow of **Lake Assal** and the **salt caravans of the Afar nomads**
- The Dantean landscapes of **Ghoubbet** and the incredible volcanic site of **Ardoukoba**
- The **Day Forest National Park**, the **Bankoualé oasis** and the **Abourma rock art site**
- The arabesque charm of **Tadjoura** and the **Sable Blancs beach**
- The French colonial vestiges at **Obok**, the **Ras Bir lighthouse** and the mangroves of **Godoria**
- The **Moucha island**, with its beaches of soft white sand
- Snorkelling with impressive **whale sharks**



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DJIBOUTI

All the best of Djibouti, in a voyage of discovery that will take us to this small and often forgotten country in the Horn of Africa, which, like no other, brings to mind the 'moon on earth'. A territory characterised by an extraordinary geological vivacity, capable of offering exciting images of a bizarre, harsh and wonderful nature.

This is the meeting point of three great systems of fractures in the earth's crust that generate geological situations unique in the world, volcanoes, lava deserts, blinding expanses of salt; it is from here that the great African Rift Valley starts, where the process of hominisation began. It is here that two nomadic populations live, dividing the territory into two exact parts, the Dancals (Afar) to the north and the Somalis (Issa) to the south; it is here that the colonial dispute between the Italians and the French began after the opening of the Suez Canal. It is here that the great cartoonist Hugo Pratt was inspired to trace the odyssey of his hero Corto Maltese. And it is here today that the strategic fate of the Horn of Africa to the west and the Arabian Peninsula to the east is being played out.

Djibouti brings us into contact with extreme nature, where volcanic earth meets the sea with breathtaking coastlines, where geological processes unleash all their power and beauty. Trekking in this region is an experience one remembers for a long time for its incredible and evocative landscapes, exploring the coastline, the coral reef and its islands is truly rewarding.

Those with that irrepressible thirst for knowledge in their blood, what many call the 'Ulysses factor', cannot miss out on an experience in Djibouti.



Luca Lupi

A scientist and populariser, he has travelled and explored African regions in particular for a long time. During his university studies in geology, he organised scientific and naturalistic expeditions to the world's most diverse volcanoes. To his credit he has books on volcanoes and earthquakes translated into four languages. He has held dozens of conferences and courses on his subjects all over Italy and abroad. Today, he is considered the leading multidisciplinary expert on Dancalia, a region straddling Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. Also specialised in the field of historical-geographical research, he directs the Explora series for which he has personally produced volumes on various Italian explorers. For his contributions to the subject he has been repeatedly honoured by the Italian Geographic Society.



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DJIBOUTI

Day 1: Wednesday 12 February

Outward flight/Djibouti (JIB)

Evening flight to Djibouti, overnight by plane.

Day 2: Thursday 13 February

Djibuti

On arrival meet with Kanaga Africa Tours staff who will arrange the transfer to Hotel Menelik or similar. Assistance for the exchange of Euros and possible purchase of a local phone card. Lunch in a restaurant. In the afternoon, city tour of GIBUTI, a multi-ethnic city and the main port of the Horn of Africa. We will visit the colonial-era train station, the African quarter, with its markets and the Hamoudi mosque (exterior), the European quarter, with its bars and shops, the presidential palace (exterior) overlooking the Escale, the marina. Dinner in a restaurant and overnight stay in a hotel in a double room with services.



Djibouti city



Through the streets of the African quarter

Day 3: Friday 14 February

Djibuti/Grand Barra/Lake Abbé

Breakfast at the hotel and departure westwards, crossing two large desert plains, the PETIT BARRA and the GRAND BARRA, an incredible expanse of white clay dried out by the sun, a place where it is easy to meet gazelles and... mirages. Lunch in a restaurant in Dikhil. Continue through the village of As Eyla to arrive at LAKE ABBÉ before sunset, to watch the sun go down behind the limestone chimneys. A characteristic endoreic lake, i.e. landlocked, fed mainly by the Auasc river from Ethiopia, it is home to one of the most beautiful and unusual geological spectacles: the calcium-rich waters, very hot because they are heated by the rocks in contact with the magma below, rise up from the numerous fractures meeting colder waters on the surface of the lake, causing the rapid deposition of limestone in the form of very porous travertine that accumulates in imposing chimneys up to tens of metres high. Accommodation at the Campement d'Asboley, in traditional huts with shared beds, showers and spartan bathrooms. Dinner and overnight stay.



The 'moon on earth'



Surreal landscapes of Lake Abbé



Sunset over the chimneys of Lake Abbé



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Day 4: Saturday 15 February

Lake Abbé/Gaggade/Allouili

Breakfast at the Campement and exploration of the surroundings of LAKE ABBE', a lunar landscape of steaming limestone chimneys, sulphur-smelling boiling water springs and groups of pink flamingos. Then on to Dikhil, lunch in a restaurant. We cross the GAGGADE plain to the village of Allouili, where we set up our tented camp. Dinner and overnight at the camp, in double igloo tents.



Reawakening at the Campement d'Asboley

Day 5: Sunday 16 February

Allouili/Kalafa (Hiking*) Lake Assal/Ghoubbet

Breakfast at the camp and TREKKING ON FOOT (14 km, approx. 5h00) to Lake Assal, accompanied by dromedaries and Afar porters. Lunch box on the way. Early afternoon arrival in Kalafa, where we will meet the 4x4s and continue on to LAKE ASSAL, the lowest point on the African continent, located at -155 metres below sea level. Situated at the western end of the Ghoubbet al-Kharab, Lake Assal is essentially made up of rainwater and a large quantity of water of marine origin, which manages to reach the lake thanks to the cracks joining it to the arm of the sea. Due to the very strong evaporation, the mixed waters instead of lowering their salinity increase it to values up to 10 times higher than the marine salinity. Evaporation causes the formation of whitish deposits of evaporites, mainly salt and gypsum, which cover a large expanse visible all around the lake. We will admire this turquoise-coloured lake bordered by large salt deposits, a mine used by the AFAR NOMADI who still today load sacks of salt onto their dromedaries before embarking on a long caravan journey to Ethiopia. Departure for the GULF OF GHoubbet (Ghoubbet el Kharab, the 'gulf of demons'), where we will be able to admire a Dantesque scenery, where the water of the bight is surrounded by ashen mountains and hides a series of submarine volcanoes, of which the 'devil's islands' are an emerging testimony. Accommodation at Campement Ghoubbet, in traditional huts with shared beds, showers and spartan bathrooms.



Encounters on Lake Abbé



Lake Assal



Evaporites on Lake Assal

** During the trek there will be Afar porters with their dromedaries. Those who do not wish to do the trek on foot can continue by 4x4 to Lake Assal with the drivers.*



Ghoubbet and Devil's Island



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Day 6: Monday 17 February

Ghoubbet/Day Forest

After breakfast, exploration of the GHOUBBET area, with breathtaking viewpoints. It is in this area that the three great fracture systems of the earth's crust meet (Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and the great African Rift Valley). At its centre, between Lake Assal and the sea, is a sinking pit, linked to a widening of the fractures that generated an active volcanic zone where the ARDOUKOBA VULCAN formed in 1978. The volcanic activity has left numerous testimonies such as various slag cones, formations and lava tunnels that we will explore. Picnic lunch and continuation towards the GODA MOUNTAINS, accommodation at the Campement du Day. Dinner and overnight stay at the Campement, in traditional huts equipped with a bed, showers and shared bathrooms.



Ardoukoba volcanic zone



Goda Mountains

Day 7: Tuesday 18 February

Day Forest/Ardo/Bankoualé

After breakfast, departure to discover FORESTA DU DAY, a green spot at 1,500 metres above sea level offering incredible views of the Gulf of Tadjoura. In addition to its incredibly varied flora, this forest is famous for being the habitat of the Djibouti francolin, an endemic species, and for providing shelter to deer, monkeys and... leopards. Picnic lunch and on to Bankoualé through beautiful mountain scenery and nomadic encampments. Stop at the village of ARDO, where Afar women have created a handicraft cooperative where you can see the famous baskets being made. Arrival at the green oasis of BANKOUALE', walk to discover its surroundings, made up of enchanting gardens and fruit trees and waterways. Dinner and overnight stay at the Campement, in traditional huts with shared beds, showers and spartan bathrooms.



Campement du Day



Afar woman in Ardo



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Day 8: Wednesday 19 February

Bankoualé/Abourma/Bankoualé (Hiking*) Bankoualé/Tadjoura

After breakfast, short transfer by 4x4 and departure for TREKKING ON FOOT (9 km, approx. 4h00) to discover the ABOURMA rock art site. In a spectacular landscape of rocky reliefs and expanses of boulders, you can admire Neolithic engravings depicting giraffes, antelopes, oryx, ostriches... and human figures. Lunch box. We will have the opportunity to meet some Afar nomad camps and socialise with the welcoming inhabitants. Meeting with the 4x4s and continuation to Tadjoura. Accommodation at the Hotel du Golfe or similar, dinner and overnight stay in a double room with services.

** Those who do not wish to do the route on foot can explore the surroundings of Bankoualé with the drivers.*



Abourma engravings



Afar camp

Day 9: Thursday 20 February

Tadjoura/Plage de Sables Blancs/Tadjoura

After breakfast at the hotel, we set off to discover the mysterious TADJOURA, a picturesque town with an Arabian style, whitewashed houses, palm trees and numerous mosques. Visit the qat market and the women's handicraft cooperative. We then head to a small paradise on earth, the PLAGE DE SABLES BLANCS ('white sand beach'). Lunch at the Hotel du Sable Blanc by the sea. Afternoon dedicated to relaxing in the sun and exploring the seabed of the RED SEA, made up of gorgonians and colourful tropical fish. Return to Tadjoura in the evening, dinner and overnight at the hotel.



Tadjoura



Plage de Sable Blancs

Day 10: Friday 21 February

Tadjoura/Godoria/Tadjoura/Djibuti

After breakfast, transfer to OBOK, a town from which French colonialism began and which preserves vestiges of the era such as the governor's house and the navy cemetery. We also visit the RAS BIR lighthouse and the beautiful mangrove area of GODORIA, where we take a boat trip. Lunch box and return to Tadjoura. Departure by ferry (approx. 1h00) across the gulf to the capital (times are random, in case we return by land). On arrival in the capital, accommodation at the Hotel Menelik or similar, dinner in a restaurant and overnight in double rooms with services.



Mangrove habitat in Godoria



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Day 11: Saturday 22 February

Djibuti

Breakfast at the hotel and free day at leisure. Possibility of boat excursion to discover the island's marine treasures (one activity of your choice):

- MOUCHA ISLAND, which offers deserted white beaches, crystal-clear waters full of colourful fish to explore by snorkelling;
- The sighting of WHALE SHARKS and, for those who wish, the adrenaline-filled experience of diving among them with mask and flippers, almost touching them.

Return to Djibouti city for lunch in a restaurant. Some rooms in day use and transfer to the airport, end of services.

Day 12: Sunday 23 February

Djibuti (JIB)/Return flight

Arrival at the destination airport.



Beach on Moucha Island



Snorkelling with whale sharks



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Individual participation fee in double room/tent (min. 3/max. 16 pax)

3,090 €/pax

in promotion at € 2,990
for bookings before 12/11/2024

in promotion at € 2,890
for bookings before 12/08/2024

Supplements:

- Enrollment fee: **free!**
- Single room/tent: **150 €**
- Single tent: **50 €**
- Extra night in Djibouti: **110 €/room**
- Transfer out of hours: **30 €/pax/way**
- Djibouti visa service: **120 €/pax**
- D11 excursion: **660 €/boat (max. 6 pax/boat)**
- Est. Harar or Somaliland: **ask for programme**

The fee includes:

- English speaking tour leader (6 to 16 pax);
- French-speaking local guide;
- Visits and excursions as per itinerary;
- All transfers in 4x4 Toyota or similar (max. 4 clients/car), including drivers and diesel;
- Transfers to/from the airport (recommended company);
- Full-board meals;
- 9 overnight stays as mentioned in the itinerary (4 in hotel, 4 in campement, 1 in tent);
- Field equipment.

The fee doesn't include:

- Djibouti visa;
- Cancellation, health, baggage insurance;
- Air flights;
- Transfers to/from the airport (non-ET flights);
- Drinks and mineral water;
- Sleeping bag and pillow;
- Photo and video tips;
- Tips and personal expenses;
- Everything mentioned in 'supplements';
- Anything not expressly mentioned in 'the price includes'.