



FANOS Ethiopia Tours

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Ethiopian Food and Drinks

Ethiopian food is one of the world's best kept secrets. Ethiopian food is an exotically spicy mix of vegetables, slow-simmered meat or grain stews, and fresh meat sautés.

Ethiopia is a place of high plateaus and low-lying plains, and home to over 80 million people. The northern high country is populated mainly by Christians, while the plains are home to Muslims and animists. Dietary restrictions due to religions and location have given rise to a wide variety of both meat and vegetarian dishes.

Ethiopian dishes are prepared with a distinctive variety of unique spices, which lend an unforgettably striking dimension to its exotic cookery. Grains like millet, sorghum, wheat and ancient teff, a tiny round grain closely resembling millet, form the basic breadstuffs of the diet. Most farming in Ethiopia is subsistence, so the vegetables and animals are often grown and raised at home. The ancient practice of beekeeping produces exquisite honey. It is fermented to make **tej**, the Ethiopian honey wine.

Essential components of Ethiopian cooking are **berbere**, a spicy red pepper paste, **niter kibbeh**, a spice-infused clarified butter, and injera. **Injera**, the sourdough pancake-like bread of Ethiopia, is



made from a fermented sourdough teff batter - in this way, it has a slightly tangy flavor and a wonderful light and airy texture. Most traditional dishes have a stew consistency. **Alicha** indicates a mild stew while **Wots** are stews with the spicy flavor of berberé. Sautéed meats add to the variety of a meal.

Dining in Ethiopia is characterized by sharing food from a common plate, signifying the bonds of loyalty, family, and

friendship. The traditional Ethiopian meal is served on a large platter that is draped with the crepe-like injera bread, with the selection of foods decoratively arranged around the center dish. To eat, diners simply tear off a piece of injera, use it to scoop up some of the various dishes and pop it in their mouths. Extra injera is usually served on the side. Honey wine, beer or telba, a flaxseed drink, are served as beverages.

Ethiopia is as individual in its food and drink as it is in so many other aspects of daily life. Even though the menu choice is not particularly wide, the Ethiopian people delight in sharing what they have with habesha and farengi alike.

While the outside world may think famine is a permanent concern in Ethiopia, the majority of the countries are able to secure their daily sustenance, either through growing their own food or exchanging goods at market.

The staple fare of the Ethiopian home is injera, a pancake usually made from a locally grown cereal called **Teff**, which is found only in Ethiopia. The Teff batter is fermented for three days before being cooked over a large open wood fire. A typical meal will consist of a large injera, the size of a round coffee table, on which other dishes are placed such as boiled vegetables, spicy sauces, milk curds and on special days, chicken, beef, lamb or fish.



Traditional Ethiopian food served on the basketry

The most commonly found dish is called **shiro wot** ('wot' means sauce or stew) which is made from chickpeas and is eaten at any meal of the day. The national dish is **Doro wot** which consists of pieces of chicken and hard-boiled eggs served in a hot sauce made with a spice called **berbera** (the predominant flavoring in Ethiopia). Doro wot is usually reserved for special occasions, particularly Ethiopian New Year. More affluent households will enjoy meat dishes such as 'tibs'

(fried lamb) while on Wednesdays and Fridays and during the fasting season, only animal-product-free dishes will be consumed by most Orthodox Christians.

An rather unusual Ethiopian delicacy is raw meat (usually beef), which is eaten at special occasions such as religious ceremonies and weddings. So much raw meat is eaten by Ethiopians that occasionally tablets have to be taken to kill off worms in their digestive system!

Usually the women in the house prepare the food. When it's ready, the master of the house sits down to eat first along with any guests present, followed by any other adults and then the children last. Bread is a common accompaniment in many areas.

The national drink is **(Buna) coffee**, originating in Ethiopia and providing one of the major exports of the country. Every meal will, where possible, conclude or commence with the coffee



Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony

ceremony, when green coffee beans are washed, roasted, ground and boiled in water; all this taking place on a bed of fresh grass and in front of the family or guests. Many people say that coffee served in an Ethiopian home is the best they have experienced. **Shai (tea)** is also popular in Ethiopia, and is usually served in small glasses with no milk and plenty of sugar. **T'ejj** is more often reserved for special occasions and is a potent and cloudy honey-wine.

Ethiopians love to invite visitors into their home for coffee ceremonies, injera with Shiro additionally the Ethiopia see hospitality as an important part of everyday life. If you are invited you can expect to be well fed, and encouraged to eat more!

When you travel with us you will share the Ethiopian hospitality!!!

Book one of our tours & get entitled the Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony!!

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Your get way to visit Ethiopia

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