

AKKAM



ADDEE
LELISE DHUGAA

Commissioner of the
Oromia Tourism Commission

Dear readers,

After months of planning and painstaking work, we are delighted to be presenting you this third issue of our long-awaited Visit Oromia magazine.

The idea for this magazine came about as soon as the Oromia Tourism Commission itself was incorporated, with me as its first Commissioner. Back then, we saw a clear need in Ethiopia for the type of high quality publication that the travel and tourism sector around the world was used to. This affected Oromia significantly more as the already existing publication around tourism and travel didn't include much of what our beautiful Land of Diversity has to offer – whatever little content there was, Oromia was severely underrepresented in it.

It was with this and other considerations in mind that work started on our first ever travel magazine. The first issue focused on the Karrayyu Oromo people, documenting their fascinating and beautifully traditional life along the northern part of the Great Rift Valley in Oromia. This issue, the third in the series and the first produced in collaboration with a professional publishing company, is something we have also been working on for many months. We incorporated all of the learnings from our first successful attempt and worked even harder to give you, our dear readers, a magazine that you not only want to read and peruse through, but one you will want to keep as a souvenir.

We say that confidently because of the work we did to make this issue an experience in great storytelling. Among the stories we tell in this issue are those from the amazingly diverse Great Rift Valley Lakes region. The region extends from Lake Basaka in the land of the Karrayyu to Bishan Gurracha close to the beautiful city of Hawassa in Sidama.

The Great Rift Valley is a dip in the geography of Ethiopia and Oromia that makes for some very interesting landscapes and bodies of water. It is inhabited by different people groups with different cultures and ways of life suited to the valley. Stories abound here, and we have sent some of the best photographers and writers to bring them to you. Our editors have done a great job of crafting these stories into eclectic pieces that do the Rift Valley justice.

I hope you'll love these stories and see the Great Rift Valley Lakes region for the amazing destinations that they are. I hope these stories speak to you and nudge you to give the towns, lakes, mountains, springs, and the amazing people of the valley a visit or two as they have done for me.

Finally, I'd like to invite you to take a look at the various small tips strewn throughout the pages of the magazine and see if some of them might be to your liking.

Lelise Dhugaa

The Commissioner of the Oromia Tourism Commission