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WHO ARE THE **KARRAYYUU?**



The ancient and Cushitic Karrayyuu people belong to the largest ethnolinguistic group in Ethiopia, the Oromo, and live within the depths of the Great Rift Valley, where they lead a nomadic-pastoral lifestyle. Because the Karrayyuu have maintained a closed-door policy for centuries, what is known about these ancient people is just a fraction of the fascinating culture and land they inhabit. This arrangement has been beneficial for the Karrayyuu despite the challenges of not being widely known in today's world. While it has led to the Karrayyuu being able to preserve their traditional way of life with little

interruption, it has also held them back from benefiting from tourism.

The story of the Karrayyuu is one of many layers and facets, and to understand it, one must read the paragraphs of tradition and the pages of culture on which the tale was built. To get this minute glimpse into the life of this unique Oromo people, it might be a good idea to start by looking at their history as well as the systems and institutions that govern it all.



A trio of young Karrayyu men pose as they get ready for the Baallii ceremony where a new cohort of Gadaa leaders assume power



Bedecked in her cultural outfit, a Karrayyu woman poses in front of traditional items of beauty and household utility