

Embassy of Ethiopia at Windows to the World exhibition at Government House in Canberra, Australia

Last Sunday (27 September 2015), the Ethiopian Embassy in Canberra, Australia participated in the Windows to the World program at Government House in Canberra showcasing Ethiopian Coffee, Culture, Tourism and Development to the people of Australia. The event was a huge success with thousands of people visiting the Ethiopian Display and tasting traditional Ethiopian Coffee. Eye-catching dancers displayed some of the traditional dances and costumes of Ethiopia when they took to the stage at lunchtime. The audience was clapping along to the traditional music as they displayed Amharingya, Tigrinya, Orominya, Walaytina and Guraginya dances to a captivated Australian audience. The dances were mixed with information about several of Ethiopia's 80+ ethnic groups and the regional nature of Ethiopian federation. A brief coffee ceremony followed the dances, highlighting the importance of Coffee and the Coffee ceremony to Ethiopian society and culture. Everyone was invited to taste and smell Ethiopian Coffee at the Embassy display during the afternoon.



The Windows to the World program is organised by the Australian Institute of International Affairs and the ACT Government and is designed to allow the public to experience different cultures and broaden their horizons by "Touring the World, without the long-haul flight!". The Ethiopian Embassy was very popular throughout the day with several thousand people experiencing a new aspect of Ethiopia. The day was publicised through a

Traditional Coffee ceremony conducted for Louise Maher of 666 ABC radio on Thursday September 24th, this interview was re-broadcast over the weekend and attracted many Canberrans to the Ethiopian Coffee experience.

Ethiopian Coffee was very popular on the day, with many remarking how it was much better than coffee they had drunk earlier, saying: (Ethiopian coffee is)"Very delicious and very tasty, and if you drink it in the morning you will be happy all





day", "I Drink Yirgacheffe coffee every day, it's the best". As the birthplace of Coffee the different varieties of coffee were of great interest to the Public, particularly Yirgacheffe and Sidamo, which forced the Embassy to obtain extra cups to keep up with demand. People were intrigued after discovering Garden and Forest Coffee and the legend of Kaldi entranced many, with hundreds reading about the birthplace of Coffee, Ethiopia's coffee regions and their different tastes.

The Embassy presented many different aspects of Ethiopian culture, development and tourism, surprising people with new information about Ethiopia. Ethiopia's stability and status as a haven for refugees was well received as was Ethiopia's developing Democracy. Most people had previously heard about Ethiopia, however many people only remembered Ethiopia's period of crisis, instead of over 20 years of Peace, Democracy and Development. The progress Ethiopia has made and its example for Africa's potential was greatly admired.



Ethiopia's historic sites have been increasingly publicised in recent years with many people seeking out the Embassy to discover more information. The Obelisk of Axum and Fasil Ghebbi surprised many with Ethiopia's historic heritage along with the awe-inspiring monolithic rock Churches of Lalibela. While many people were able to identify one treasure of Ethiopia, only those who had visited the country were aware of the extent of Ethiopia's natural beauty and unique tourist attractions.



Many people expressed their surprise at the picturesque scenery of the Simien Mountains in Ethiopia remarking "I didn't expect it to be so green" and "I did not realise Ethiopia had so many mountains". Also popular were Ethiopia's endemic birds and animals, the brochures of Ethiopia's endemic animals being a particular hit with visiting children. The magnificent salt and sulphur formations of the Dallol Sulphur Springs and the spectacular deep red of the Ertale Active Volcano drawing the attention of many of visitors to the natural beauty of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's efforts towards industrialisation and green power were also noticed, in particular Ethiopia's commitment to renewable energy through Hydropower and Wind power which generate over 99% of Ethiopia's electricity. Ethiopia's impressive strides towards a renaissance are being noticed.

The Embassy of Ethiopia would like to thank all Visitors, Diaspora, Windows to the World Organisers and Staff who made the day such a success!

Embassy of Ethiopia
Canberra, Australia.

