

The Dress that Caused All the Fuss

By Karen Nguyen

This trip to Eritrea was my first time visiting an African country and it was a wonderful experience. I got to wander around the city of Asmara and never once did I think or feel I was in danger. Eritreans, from my experience on this trip, are very open and friendly.



I recall a particular experience at the market in Asmara that demonstrates Eritreans' friendliness and openness. I had walked to the market from the Sunshine hotel in the morning to pick up a dress I had commissioned at the end of the last week. I walked to the market and just took in the sights and sounds in the city. The problem arose when I was trying to find the exact tailor and I kept getting lost. It was fun initially but after a while I got lost completely. I knew it was near Keren street because that was the only landmark I could remember from a few days ago when I had last visited the market. All the streets were starting to look the same.



After about an hour, I caved and finally asked for help. I walked into a store that sold jewelry and showed the store owner the card I had gotten from the tailor. He had his son walk me all the way there. We went left, right and down too many streets for me to count. Along the way, his son got lost and had to ask for directions from someone inside a convenience store. He accompanied me all the way and confirmed that this was the tailor I had commissioned the dress from. It turns out we were off by a street or two. Eventually we found our way there.

I offered to buy him a snack or something but he politely refused and said it was not a big deal. We parted soon after and I picked up my dress.

After that long winded adventure, I decided to take a taxi back to the hotel. The dress will always have that memory attached to it as it was an adventure in itself to find the fabric shop that sold me my dress.

