

Explore Namibia



Overview

This trip gives an opportunity to view the Big Five in their natural habitat, see how injured or orphaned big cats are rehabilitated back into the wild, gain an insight into the ancient culture of the San people, provides a choice of water, land or dune-based activity options and includes a sunrise excursion into the colourful Namibian desert. We stay in mainly small lodge based accommodations where African hospitality, cuisine and comfort are the focus. All our accommodation bases are eco-friendly, and at least one is also a base for a cheetah and leopard rehabilitation project. Our expert guide will provide lively information along the way on wildlife, local tribal cultures and ancient rock art formations.

Trip Highlights

- Game viewing in Etosha National Park with expert guide
- See how Big Cats are rehabilitated back into the wild
- See the ancient rock art of the San people
- Visit a remote and authentic Himba settlement
- Take a hot air balloon ride over the desert or eco-quad bike over the sand dunes
- Catch the desert at sunrise as the red & orange hues change

Day 1

Overnight flight from London to Windhoek

Day 2

Transfer from Windhoek Airport to a local B&B. Depending on arrival time, this afternoon, you may choose to take a guided tour of the City. The city mixes modern architecture and latest fashions alongside old colonial German buildings and Herero women in their traditional Victorian dresses. It's well worth stopping for a coffee (or something stronger) in a local café to watch the world go by. **Meal Arrangements:** None included.

Day 3

Today you set off on your safari, with your private guide, driving south-west through the scenic Khomas Hochland highlands before you head down the escarpment into the Namib Desert below. Apicnic lunch will be served at a scenic location en-route. You will arrive at your accommodation in the late afternoon where you will stay for two nights whilst you explore the remarkable sights of the Namib Desert with your guide. If there is still time today, your guide will take you to visit Sesriem Canyon, a nearby geological attraction, or you can relax and soak in the scenic and tranquil surroundings at your Desert Camp.

The Camp lies nestled on the banks of the Tsauchab River, overlooked by the impressive Naukluft Mountains and offers comfortable accommodation in thatched and tented bungalows equipped with a private open-air bathroom, air-conditioning, minibar, tea and coffee station and a shaded balcony. The camp restaurant serves excellent traditional and international cuisine accompanied by a wide selection of South African wines from the underground wine cellar. A wooden walkway leads you to a refreshing swimming pool sculpted into natural rock. This wonderful camp is a welcomed oasis from which to enjoy your memorable desert experience. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)



Day 4

This morning you will rise early for a magical excursion with your guide into the Namib Naukluft National Park, entering the Park gates at sunrise to capture the dunes whilst the light is soft and shadows accentuate their towering shapes and curves. This area boasts some of the highest free-standing sand dunes in the world. Your guide will give you an insight on the formation of the Namib Desert and its myriad of fascinating creatures and plants that have adapted to survive these harsh environs. After a picnic breakfast under the shade of a camel thorn tree, we return to Camp in the early afternoon for a late lunch, stopping off to view Sesriem Canyon if you haven't already done so the day before. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 5

NOTE: Option to include a sunrise balloon flight over the Namib Naukluft National Park before you depart for Swakopmund (optional extra at additional cost).

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The fascinating drive today takes you northwest through awesome and ever changing desert landscapes of the Namib Naukluft National Park, including the impressive Gaub and Kuiseb canyons. You will meet the coast at the port town of Walvis Bay and then continue north to Swakopmund where you can enjoy the pleasant seaside location and cooler coastal air for your next two nights. There will be time this afternoon to wander around town and along the waterfront on foot if appeals, before heading off for dinner at the popular Tug Restaurant by the jetty which specialises in fresh seafood.

Swakopmund resembles a small, German coastal resort nestled between the desert and the sea, and is a perfect example of German colonial architecture blending with good hotels, restaurants, museum, and coffee shops. The elaborate railway building and others are of interest, as are the various arts and crafts centres which you may wish to visit. Although the sea is normally cold for swimming there are pleasant beaches and the cooler climate is refreshing after the time spent in the desert.

During your two nights in Swakopmund you will be accommodated at a charming and welcoming guesthouse conveniently located just minutes walk from the centre of town and the waterfront. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 6

After an early breakfast your guide will drive you along the scenic coastal road back to Walvis Bay for a memorable seal and dolphin cruise within the outer lagoon and harbour. This is an ideal way of seeing Cape fur seals, heavyside and bottlenose dolphins, pelicans, flamingos and a wide variety of sea birds. If you are lucky, there is also a chance of seeing whales, leatherback turtles and sunfish. During the course of the cruise snacks will be served along with local sparkling wine and fresh oysters.

You will return to the jetty at roughly 12h30 after which you may like to explore Walvis Bay further before returning to Swakopmund for an afternoon at leisure at your guesthouse or in town. You may also like to partake in some of the many activities that Swakopmund has to offer, these include camel rides, scenic flights, quad-biking in the dunes, sky diving and more (all at extra cost). (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 7

Continue on your safari, heading north and east into Damaraland, with stops to view game and absorb the vastness of the area along the way. Damaraland is typified by displays of colour, magnificent table topped mountains, rock formations and bizarre-looking vegetation. The present day landscape has been formed by the erosion of wind, water and geological forces which have formed rolling hills, dunes, gravel plains and ancient river terraces. It is the variety and loneliness of the area as well as the scenic splendour which will reward and astound you, providing an authentic understanding of the word 'wilderness'.

If time allows this afternoon your guide will take you to visit the nearby attractions and geological sites of Twyfelfontein rock engravings (recently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site), Burnt Mountain and the Organ Pipes - if not there is plenty of time to do so tomorrow.

You stay for 2 nights at a camp in the heart of Damaraland, ideally located a short drive from the local attractions in the area. The Camp is nestled amongst an outcrop of giant granite boulders, a stones throw away from the ephemeral Aba Huab riverbed where desert adapted elephants often traverse. Each comfortable thatched bungalow is simply but tastefully furnished with en-suite bathroom. In the centre of the camp lies a large alfresco dining area, bar, lounge and reception with an inviting fireplace nearby to relax beside in the evenings. A refreshing swimming pool and lovely views also complement the Camp. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 8

After an early breakfast you will be treated to an exciting 4x4 excursion along the ephemeral Aba Huab River valley to explore this remarkable region and to



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search for game, including the elusive desert adapted elephants if they are in the area. Damaraland is home to a variety of desert adapted wildlife and hidden desert treasures.

You will return to Camp for lunch and this afternoon you may visit Twyfelfontein and other nearby attractions if you haven't already done so, or take a walk with your guide into the local area around Camp, or relax and enjoy some well deserved leisure time. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 9

Today after breakfast you depart for Etosha National Park. Along the way, your guide will take you to visit a local Himba Settlement – you may have to search for a while as the semi-nomadic Himba people sometimes move location with no notice. They are one of the last most traditional peoples of Namibia and have little time for conventional practices. You will learn about the customs and traditions of this very proud culture, and will be given a privileged insight into their way of life, beliefs and everyday routine.

You enter Etosha National Park on the western boundary and game drive your way on to the camp, arriving in the early afternoon. This section of Etosha National Park has until recently had access restricted to research and rehabilitation of game, and boasts some of the highest number of wildlife throughout the park. The rest of the afternoon could be spent game viewing at the Camp's waterhole or possibly heading out again with your guide. After dinner you will head out on an exciting night drive, which will give you a good chance of seeing nocturnal animals like the Spring Hare, aardvark, cape and bat-eared foxes, aardwolf, and possibly some of the larger cats.

Your accommodation offers en-suite chalets nestled amongst rocky outcrops: the bar and restaurant area offer crimson sunrise and sunset views over the surrounding savannah. (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner included).

Day 10

Today after breakfast you will game drive your way east across the western section of the Park to arrive at Okaukuejo Resort in the early afternoon, having had lunch en route. The afternoon can be spent game viewing at the excellent waterhole where game comes and goes day and night, or possibly heading out on another game drive with your guide.

These two days will be spent exploring Etosha National Park on game drives, visiting selected waterholes and the expansive Etosha Pan. Okaukuejo Resort also has an excellent waterhole that is floodlit at night for game viewing.

Etosha National Park covers 22 270 sq km of which approx. 5 000 sq km is the 'Pan', an area classified as a saline depression. The park consists of grassland, woodland and savannah where the game-viewing centres around the numerous springs and waterholes at which several species can often be seen at one time. The Park boasts some 114 mammal and over 340 bird species and the Etosha Pan is one of the most important breeding grounds for southern Africa's flamingo population.

There is abundant wildlife in Etosha, and there is a wide variety of both mammal and bird species that can be found. Mammals often seen when exploring the park include elephant, black rhino, lion, giraffe, eland, kudu, gemsbok, Damara dik-dik, zebra, cheetah, leopard, hyena, honey badger, and warthog ("remote controlled pigs") as well as our endemic black faced impala. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 11

Full day of exciting game viewing within Etosha National Park today, on game drives with your guide and at Okaukuejo's busy waterhole. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 12

Game drive on the way out of Etosha and then continue south to stay at Okonjima Bush Camp, located by the Omboroko Mountains near Waterberg

a journey of about 4 hours. Here you can enjoy the welcoming atmosphere, superb accommodation, and fantastic activities. As you will be completely pampered by the lodge staff and guides, your guide will make sure that you are settled in before continuing on to Windhoek, and then returning to collect you again on check out in two days time.

Okonjima is home to the AfriCat Foundation which focuses on the research and rehabilitation of Africa's big cats, especially injured or captured leopards and cheetah. Close encounters with lion, leopard and cheetah are an unforgettable highlight. Activities include leopard tracking, a visit to the cheetah welfare project, tracking cheetah on foot, guided walks (in particular the 'Bushmen trail'), bird-watching, and visits to the night hide where nocturnal animals such as porcupine, caracal, honey badger, and even leopard may be seen. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Day 13

You have the option to go on a morning activity before brunch, after which we leave Okonjima and drive back to Windhoek (a journey of about 3 hours). If there is time, you can visit a craft market for souvenirs and stop off at our base in town to freshen up before going on to the international airport in good time for your onward or return flight.

You return to Windhoek airport or alternatively may opt for a final night in Windhoek before returning home. (Breakfast and lunch included)

Day 14

Arrive London

Included

Accommodation as stated
Transportation in a luxury air conditions safari vehicle
Meals as stipulated
Services of a registered and experience English speaking safari guide
Entrance fees and excursions as described
Return airport transfers from Windhoek International Airport
Mineral water on board the safari vehicle
Welcome Pak

Excluded

Meals not included on the itinerary
Entrance fees not included on the itinerary
Drinks, with the exception of mineral water on board the vehicle
Laundry
Gratuities
Items of a personal nature



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2012 Departure Dates (including travel dates from London)

31st March – 13th April; 12th May – 25th May; 16th June – 29th June

14th July – 27th July; 11th – 24th August; 8th – 21st September

6th – 19th October; 3rd – 16th November

These are guaranteed departure dates.

Costs: £3,210.00 / 3,850.00 Euros per person based on 2 people sharing.

Single Supplement £390 / 470 Euros

Costs exclude international flights.

Flights

We have not included the price of flights in costs as many client prefer to book their own flights. We are, however, happy to quote for and book flights: our ATOL number is 9709.

Trip Extension Options

Namibia provides a number of options for trip extensions: including a stay at a Game & Spa Resort located just outside Windhoek, or a visit to Cape Town or the Victoria Falls. Call us on + 44 (0) 1342 834700 or email at info@nativeescapes.com for more information and ideas.

How to Book

To check availability for this fabulous guided trip in Namibia, call us on +44 (0) 1342 834700 or email us at info@nativeescapes.com with your preferred travel dates.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Visas

Visas are not required for UK or Irish nationals. All visitors require a passport valid for at least six months after the period of their intended stay, and documents for return or onward travel. Passports should have at least two unused pages for endorsements by the Namibian Immigration Service.

Note: Passport and visa requirements are liable to change at short notice. Travellers are advised to check their entry requirements with their embassy or consulate

Health

The World Health Organisation (www.who.int/en/) recommends that all travellers are inoculated against diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio as well as for hepatitis B.

Hepatitis A, malaria and typhoid are also recommended by the Centres for Disease Control & Prevention (www.cdc.gov) for travel in Namibia. All travellers should seek advice from their local GP or travel clinic for up to date advice on vaccinations and different malarial options.

Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all bookings. Guests on group departures must take their policy documents with them on the trip as the guide will ask to see this at the start. The documentation must state in writing that you are the named policyholder and that the cover is valid for the period of travel.

The policy document must also indicate that medical expenses and emergency repatriation cover is included and a 24 hour contact telephone number for the insurance company must be shown on the documentation in case of emergency. Guests unable to provide all this information at the start of the trip will be asked to purchase a policy prior to joining the trip.

Electricity supply

220v, 3pin South African plug. Adaptors are required to charge cameras, etc.

Money

Currency is the Namibian dollar which is linked to the South African rand. The rand is also legal tender in Namibia at a rate of 1:1.

What to bring

Binoculars, torch, walking shoes, swimming gear, plenty of high factor sunscreen, sunhat, insect repellent, camera, a day pack. Warm clothing is recommended for evenings, and a waterproof jacket. Lightweight clothing is recommended for the day. Avoid brightly coloured clothing for game viewing.

Tipping

It is normal to tip for good service in bars and restaurants in Namibia. Guests may also consider tipping their guide at their discretion.

