



TRIP ITINERARY

Explore Namibia (Guided)

Namibia



This trip gives an opportunity to view game 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.

Highlights:

- Travel with one of Namibia's most reputable and well-known naturalist guides.
- Stay in the only camp inside the world's 4th largest National Park.
- Climb some of the world's highest free-standing sand dunes.
- Track for desert-adapted elephants.
- Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Twyfelfontein.
- Visit an authentic and remote Himba settlement.
- Explore 2 very different parts of the Etosha National Park by spending time on both the Ongava and Onguma Private Game Reserves.
- Visit the world renowned Big Cat research centre run by the AfriCat Foundation.



At Native Escapes, we have undertaken a large amount of research in Namibia to find the best small group trip available – and believe we have it here: the standard of guiding is superb, the itinerary allows for time to appreciate the destination and the standard of accommodation is excellent. Meals and excursions as per the itinerary are included. The trips are guaranteed to depart with a minimum of 1 guest, and maximum of 7.

Day 1

Overnight flight from the UK 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 dress.

Overnight: Galton House

Day 3

You then depart Windhoek in your safari vehicle with your private guide and drive southwest through the scenic Khomas Hochland highlands before heading down the Great Escarpment into the Namib Desert below, stopping for a picnic lunch at a scenic location along the way.



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You arrive at Sossus Dune Lodge in the midafternoon and you will stay here 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 explore Elim Dune. However, if you prefer, you can just relax and soak in the scenic and tranquil surroundings at Sossus Dune Lodge.

Sesriem Canyon has evolved through centuries of erosion by the Tsauchab River which has incised a narrow gorge about 1.5 km long and 30 meters deep into the surrounding conglomerates, exposing the varying layers of sedimentation deposited over millions of years. The shaded cool depths of the canyon allow pools of water to gather during the rainy season and remain for much of the year round. These pools were a vital source of water for early settlers who drew water for their livestock by knotting six (ses) lengths of rawhide thongs (riems) together, hence the canyon and surrounding area became known as Sesriem. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included).

Day 4

This morning you will need to rise early for a magical excursion with your guide in the Namib Naukluft National Park, normally setting off before sunrise to capture the dunes whilst the light is soft and shadows accentuate the towering shapes and curves. This area boasts some of the highest free-standing sand dunes in the world and 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. Once you have explored Sossusvlei, Deadvlei and surrounding dune fields to your heart's content you can enjoy a relaxed picnic brunch in the shade of a camel thorn tree. You then return to Sossus Dune Lodge in the early afternoon in time for a late lunch, with the option to visit Sesriem Canyon afterwards if you haven't already done so the day before. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure (from experience, this is usually welcomed after an exhilarating morning in the dunes). Overnight Sossus Dune Lodge – breakfast, lunch and dinner

Day 5

The fascinating drive today takes you northwest through the 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 a popular restaurant which specialises in fresh seafood.

Note: there is an option to include a sunrise balloon flight or scenic light aircraft flight over the Namib Naukluft National Park before you depart for Swakopmund. (at supplementary cost). The light aircraft flight gives you a birds eye view of the dunes, sea, abandoned mining camps, shipwrecks, sandwich harbor and salt pans, before landing at Swakopmund airport later in the day where you will be met by your guide.

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. During your two nights in Swakopmund you will be accommodated at a fantastic new, modern and somewhat quirky hotel, ideally located in Swakopmund. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included) Overnight: Centrally Located Guesthouse



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Day 6

After an early breakfast your guide will drive you along the scenic coastal road back south to Walvis Bay for a memorable kayaking or catamaran adventure. On the kayaking trip, after meeting your guide you will be taken on a short scenic drive to Pelican Point to see its lighthouse and windswept beauty, stopping briefly at the salt works to view the variety of birdlife on your way to the launch point. The kayaking is an ideal way of seeing Cape fur seals, Heaviside and bottlenose dolphins, pelicans, flamingos and a wide variety of other sea birds. If you are lucky, there is also a chance of seeing whales, leatherback turtles and sunfish. During the course of the day the guide will stop and inform you about the environment and light refreshments will be served on the beach before heading back to Walvis Bay.

Alternatively you may partake in a catamaran trip if the kayaking doesn't appeal. On this memorable trip you head further out to sea where there is perhaps more opportunities for getting closer to the dolphins and Cape fur seals. During the excursion you will be served local sparkling wine and fresh oysters, before you will return to the jetty at roughly midday.

You then have the opportunity to explore the waterfront area of Walvis Bay further before returning to Swakopmund for an afternoon at leisure. 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 and more (all at extra cost). (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included)

Overnight: Centrally Located Guesthouse

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. 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) Overnight: Camp Kipwe

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 search for game, including the elusive desert adapted elephants. 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) Overnight: Camp Kipwe

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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. The Himbas 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 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 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 and Dinner included) Overnight: Etosha Mountain Lodge

Day 10

Today after breakfast you will game drive your way east across the western section of the park. 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. 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. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included) Overnight Onguma Tree Top Camp

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) : Overnight Onguma Tree Top Camp

Day 12

Your early departure will take you south from Onguma Tree Top via Tsumeb, Otavi and Otjiwarongo to reach Okonjima's AfriCat Day Centre, a wonderful highlight with which to conclude your safari. You will arrive in time for lunch before embarking on an exciting and informative game drive and tour of the centre. Here you will learn about the function and vision of the AfriCat Foundation and will also get to meet some of the Foundation's special carnivore ambassadors. After the excursion and freshening up, the journey continues further south to arrive back in Windhoek in the late afternoon, just as the sun is setting. Upon your arrival in Windhoek you will be transferred to your accommodation.

Overnight Galton House (breakfast and lunch included) **There is also an option to extend this trip with a 1 or 2 night stay at Okonjima – contact us for details.**

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Day 13

You have the morning in Windhoek before transfer back to Windhoek Airport and your onward flight. (Breakfast included)

Day 14

Arrive UK.

This trip includes all accommodation, transportation in a luxury air-conditioned safari vehicle, Meals stipulated above, Services of a registered and experienced English-speaking safari guide, Entrance fees and excursions as described in above itinerary, Return airport transfers from Windhoek International Airport – Windhoek – Windhoek International Airport, Mineral water on board the safari vehicle, Welcome pack.

GENERAL INFORMATION – PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THE FOLLOWING

Passports: Please ensure these are valid for travel and that you are in possession of valid visas (if required see below). You are required to take out comprehensive travel insurance to safeguard against cancellation and curtailment, medical expenses, repatriation expenses, damage/theft/loss of personal baggage, money and personal belongings.

Visas: Not required for South Africa, Namibia or Botswana for UK or Irish nationals for stays of up to 90 days. An onward or return ticket is required, as well as sufficient funds and documents needed for further travel. Please note that visitors to South Africa must have a MINIMUM of two blank/empty VISA pages in their passport each time entry is sought. Visitors to South Africa with foreign passports who do not comply with these requirements will either be stopped from boarding their aircraft at their point of departure or risk deportation on arrival in South Africa.

Health: The World Health Organisation (www.who.int/en/) recommends that all travellers to Southern Africa are inoculated against diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio as well as for Hepatitis B. Inoculation against Hepatitis A and Typhoid is also recommended for travel in South Africa. Depending on the area visited, anti-malarial drugs may also be recommended. All travellers should seek advice from their local GP or travel clinic for up-to-date advice on vaccinations and different malarial options. Travel insurance is part of the Terms and Conditions of your trip with Native Escapes it is essential that you purchase comprehensive travel insurance for your trip. Your insurance should be inclusive of full medical cover including costs of emergency repatriation, cancellation and travel delay.

Native Escapes complies with the UK Package & Travel Regulations 1992. Holidays with flights included are covered by the company's ATOL Bond (Air Travel Organisers' Licence) held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). This means that in the unfortunate event that our company should fail, the CAA will arrange any necessary repatriation and any refund of monies paid to Native Escapes in advance. Our ATOL number is 9709. We have testimonials on our website: visit www.nativeescapes.com/aboutus for more information.