



NAMIBIA DISCOVERY SAFARI

Combining classic Namibia highlights with more remote areas, this is an excellent comfortable camping safari for free-spirited adventurers. You'll discover spectacular scenery of the Namib-Naukluft National Park and the abundant wildlife of Etosha National Park; as well as explore remote corners of Namibia to see small outposts and desolate desert landscapes. Scattered throughout are sensitive, insightful introductions to people from a cross-section of Namibia's traditional cultures: including the fascinating Himba people. It's a trip to get you involved; one where you can really get to grips with Namibia, its wildlife, landscapes and people.



Day 1 – Windhoek

Upon arrival into Namibia you are met at the International Airport and transferred into Windhoek city to your accommodation in a comfortable guesthouse or hotel. The rest of your day is spent at leisure, with time to relax by the swimming pool, or to explore the city centre. Windhoek offers an excellent selection of shops, craft markets and cafes amidst an interesting mix of African and colonial German influences and architecture. In the early evening your guide will meet with you at 6pm to discuss your camping safari and to answer any queries you have. Dinner this evening has not been included, thus giving you the flexibility to dine at the hotel or out in town as appeals.

No meals included.

Days 2 & 3 – Namib-Naukluft National Park

You are collected after breakfast by your safari guide and as a group you head southwest, through the Khomas Hochland highlands and down the escarpment into the Namib Desert. Your campsite sits at the edge of the desert and from here you can watch the evening colours glow and change as the sun sets and the clear night skies brighten with a multitude of stars.

Rising well before the sun the following morning, you drive deep into the Great Dune Sea, where the dawn light spreading over the towering orange dunes is an unforgettable sight. You'll leave the vehicle to walk the last section into the dunes on a desert safari with your guide (4km), exploring in and around Sossusvlei and Dead Vlei. A shuttle service is available at about N\$150 if you prefer, payable locally. Reenergise with lunch under a shady camelthorn tree before travelling back to camp via the small but interesting Sesriem Canyon, where you wander through its cool depths.

Windhoek to Namib Desert: approx. 6 hours (320km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 4 – Swakopmund

Driving north through the desert and then west to the coast you'll cross a broad plain, skirting alongside the mountainous escarpment. After dropping into the deeply incised Kuiseb and Gaub canyons, the road flattens out through barren landscapes, interrupted only by occasional rocky outcrops. Bypassing the port town of Walvis Bay, it's a short drive along the coastal dune belt to Swakopmund. After settling into your guesthouse you can spend your afternoon at leisure.

This quaint town can easily be explored on foot to enjoy its German colonial architecture, attractive waterfront and interesting centre. Swakopmund is also Namibia's epicentre of coastal and desert pursuits. There are a number of optional activities including dune-boarding, quad-biking, seal and dolphin cruises, sky-diving and scenic flights. Your safari guide will explain your options to you and assist you with making the necessary bookings for this afternoon or the following morning (all activities are at extra cost and are undertaken at your own risk). If you prefer a more relaxed pace there are various galleries (including a Crystal Gallery), a museum, aquarium, reptile park, numerous shops, curio stores, craft market and sidewalk cafes to enjoy.

Lunch and dinner has not been included during your stay in Swakopmund, leaving you free to choose from a variety of good restaurants, many serving fresh tasty seafood at reasonable prices.

Namib Desert to Swakopmund: approx. 5.5 hours (300km)

Includes breakfast.



Day 5 - Brandberg

Travel north along the Skeleton coastline to visit Cape Cross seal colony, where tens of thousands of Cape fur seals congregate to breed. Raised walkways allow you to see these gregarious creatures up close. Backtrack to Henties Bay before turning inland, and crossing a forbidding stretch of amazingly flat and empty desert to reach the small outpost of Uis. From here it's a relatively short drive to the foot of Brandberg, Namibia's highest mountain at 2573 metres, and your campsite. The 'fire mountain' is so called because of the effect created by the

setting sun on its western face, causing the granite massif to resemble a red glowing slagheap.

Swakopmund to Brandberg: approx. 4.5 hours (300km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 6 – Kamanjab

Travel further into Damaraland to a *UNESCO* World Heritage Site at Twyfelfontein. Here a local guide leads you around an amazing out-door gallery of ancient Bushman rock art. Engaging the services of a local guide ensures that the knowledge of this important site is maintained and the revenue from tourism is ploughed back into surrounding communities.

There's also time to visit the unique Damara Living Museum, set up by the local Damara community. Like the Bushmen, the Damara people are one of Namibia's oldest tribes. Due to their loose social structures the Damara were not able to defend themselves against stronger aggressors or during colonisation, and their culture has to a great extent been forgotten. Within the framework of the Living Museum, this 'lost culture' has been reconstructed and visitors can experience what their daily routine may have been like. See a blacksmith making weapons and tools, methods of tanning leather to make traditional clothes, examples of their jewellery and crafts, traditional dances, singing and games.

In the afternoon you'll drive northeast to your campsite nearby to the small town of Kamanjab.

Brandberg to Kamanjab: approx. 5.5 hours (360km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Days 7 & 8 – Etosha National Park

Your first stop this morning is a Himba community. Similar to the Maasai of East Africa, the Himba are a proud and statuesque people who have successfully retained their culture in the face of the modern world. They still adhere to traditional customs and dress, their lifestyle having changed little over the centuries. There is significance to be found in all aspects of their lives; from the different ways they style their hair to how they honour their ancestors with a holy fire. Spend time with these fascinating people at a village where a local guide introduces you to their alternative lifestyle and helps you to learn about Himba life and culture.

Continue on to your campsite with an aim to arrive in the early afternoon, usually taking a short break before heading out for your first Etosha game drive. Namibia's Etosha National Park is one of Africa's largest and most established wildlife reserves. It's generally flat landscape and open savannahs make it relatively easy to spot game. At the park's centre lies the expansive Etosha Pan, a shallow bowl of silvery clay spanning 4,590 square kilometres. Along the southern perimeter of this salt pan, a string of waterholes attract large numbers of game to the area – particularly in the dry season. You'll spend your days in Etosha following the rhythm of the animals: rise at dawn to game drive when it is cooler and wildlife is most active; relax during the midday heat and venture out again in the cool of the late afternoon. Your wildlife viewing doesn't end at nightfall as the camp has a flood-lit waterhole which is a great place to sit in the evenings with a drink and a camera, watching nocturnal visitors and their interactions.

Kamanjab to Southern Etosha: approx. 3 hours (270km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 9 – Etosha National Park

Break camp before heading out early to game drive your way eastwards through Etosha's generally arid but varied and striking terrain. There is time to pause and enjoy spectacular views across the silvery expanse of Etosha Pan along the way, as well as stop at waterholes and for significant game sightings. Most of Africa's big-game species are found here,

including a high concentration of lion as well as elephant, giraffe, cheetah, zebra, leopard, ostrich, blue wildebeest, black and white rhino and many species of antelope. Smaller inhabitants include the endemic black-faced impala, Damara dik-dik, warthog, honey badger, black-backed jackal and mongoose. Etosha National Park's birdlife is also prolific with over 300 recorded species. Your campsite tonight is situated on the eastern side of Etosha.



Safari drives
Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 10 – Bushman Community

Exit Etosha National Park and travel east into an area called Bushmanland. The earliest known inhabitants of Namibia are the San. Their language, which differs among different groups, is characterised by clicking sounds – it's fascinating to listen to and extremely hard to imitate. Ostracised by other tribes and colonials alike, the San were driven into the Kalahari Desert where their hunting, tracking and gathering skills enabled them to survive. This area of Namibia is one of the only places where the San are allowed to hunt using their traditional methods.

You'll camp by the Living Museum of the Ju/'Hoansi San, where the local community demonstrate their skills and traditional lifestyle to interested visitors in an interactive way. Tonight's campsite is a simple one, with fairly basic toilet facilities and no shower – it's bush camping!

Eastern Etosha to San Community: approx. 3.5 hours (300km)
Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 11 – Waterberg Plateau

You'll pass through the small towns Grootfontein and Otjiwarongo, around which many of Namibia's larger game and livestock farms can be found. You'll often see game such as springbok, kudu, red hartebeest or giraffe along the fence line at the side of the road. Soon after Otjiwarongo you turn east and drive to the striking Waterberg Plateau and your accommodation on its slopes. The Waterberg Plateau towers 400 metres above the surrounding plains and the view from the top is dramatic. So, after settling in to your chalets you'll climb the track to the top which takes about 45 minutes each way and is of medium difficulty.

San Community to Waterberg: approx. 4.5 hours (430km)
Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 12 - Flight home

Drive back to Windhoek through the small town of Okahandja, where local artisans come to sell their wares at the two large craft markets here. You arrive at Windhoek International Airport in the early afternoon, in time to check in for your scheduled departing flight.

Waterberg to Windhoek Airport: approx. 4 hours (350km)
Includes breakfast.

SAFARI INFORMATION

The Namibia Discovery Safari is an excellent comfortable camping safari ideal for free-spirited adventurers. Most nights are spent under canvas in well-equipped mobile camps, with a few accommodated nights at guesthouses and lodges in between. All the necessary camping gear is provided, including a camp bed, foam mattress, sleeping bag and small pillow. You will need to bring your own towel and toiletries, plus a personal torch is advisable. During the journey you will discover the country's key highlights as well as more remote corners of rural and scenic Namibia not often visited by other travellers.

Guide

This camping safari is led by a professional local guide. Your safari guide will add value to your discovery of Namibia, conveying their knowledge of the country's wildlife, flora, cultures, history, geology and much more. The guides are

chosen for their personable disposition and receive national as well as in-house training. They communicate well in English and are keen to share their safari experiences with their guests. They are able to identify all of the animals, many of the birds, and some of the plants that you encounter and give you lots of additional and often unexpected insights into all your experience.

Camp crew

For a group of up to about six passengers, a camp assistant who is also the camp chef will accompany the guide on this safari. For a group of six to fourteen passengers a second assistant joins the camp team. It's their job to take care of all the camp duties so you need not worry about cooking or washing up. This leaves you and your guide more time to relax and chat about Namibia and your safari experiences.

Camping equipment

Good-quality camping equipment is included in the cost of the Namibia Discovery Safari. You'll stay in spacious 2-person canvas dome tents, about 2.5 x 2.5 metres, with a built in ground sheet. Two large windows with sewn in mosquito netting help to keep the tent well ventilated, or these can be closed against the elements by zipping up an extra canvas layer.

Each twin bedded tent is furnished with camp stretcher-beds, foam mattresses and small pillows. Light sleeping bags are provided during the summer months and heavier sleeping bags during winter. The sleeping bags are machine laundered after every safari, however if you would prefer to travel your own just let us know in advance. Please ensure you bring your own towel as one is not provided.

Vehicles

The Namibia Discovery Safari usually uses a custom-made *Mitsubishi* or *Toyota* safari vehicle complete with sliding windows, seatbelts and a pop-top roof.

Most vehicles have a battery inverter fitted with a plug socket that takes two-prong European plugs. This can be used to recharge essential items such as camera batteries. The vehicle's 24V cigarette lighter socket can also be used to recharge batteries, using a suitable adaptor. You will need to purchase and travel with the necessary adaptors to use either of these charging points. All lodges and many campsites have the generic wall sockets with the same format as those used in South Africa – 3 large round pins. When purchasing the equivalent adaptor ask for one that is compatible with South African style plugs.

Safari travel

This safari visits some of Namibia's more remote regions, which is part of its appeal. However, this does mean that the itinerary involves a number of long drives on roads that are usually, but not always, well maintained.

Namibia camping sites

Almost all of the campsites you stay at during this safari to Namibia are established rest camps. The communal facilities usually include ladies and gents' ablution blocks with hot and cold running water, and some also have a small kiosk or shop where you can buy refreshments and a swimming pool. The exception to this is the campsite by the Ju/'Hoansi San Living Museum on Day 10, which is essentially bush camping. There are toilets there, but no showers available on this night.

The more remote campsites are not always well lit so it is important that you bring your own reliable torch with you, a head torch is often most convenient. The camping gear provided includes some lighting around camp; however a personal torch will come in handy if you need to walk around camp after the lights are out.

Language

The Namibia Discovery Safari is led by an English speaking guide.

Costs

This comfortable camping safari to Namibia includes transport in a specially designed safari vehicle; airport transfers; 3 nights' accommodation as noted; 8 nights in fully serviced mobile camps including all camping equipment; the services of a professional guide and camp staff; campsite fees; all necessary entrance fees to national parks and attractions; and usually three meals a day.

Meals

Almost all your meals are included whilst on this safari to Namibia, with the exception of lunch and dinner in Windhoek on Day 1, lunch and dinner in Swakopmund on Day 4 and lunch on Day 12.

Whilst in the mobile camps, breakfast is usually a light buffet selection of fruit, cereals, yoghurt, bread and spreads. On some days, where an extra early start is required to make the most of the location, the day might begin with rusks, bread and spreads followed later by a cooked brunch of eggs, bacon and sausages. Picnic lunches are typically a choice of bread, fillings and salad with the occasional hot dish offering. Evening meals will be cooked over an open fire and eaten at an outdoor dining table. The safari menu may include dinner dishes such as roast chicken served with mashed potato and salad, beef stroganoff served with rice, and fish fillet served with tomato and onion sauce, rice and vegetables. Camping utensils and crockery consist of durable melamine plates and stainless steel cutlery. Occasionally, paper plates might be used on picnic lunch stops.

Drinks

Whilst you're staying in the mobile camp, tea and coffee are provided. All other beverages, including mineral water, can be purchased at your own expense from shops, restaurants or lodges. Drinks at lodges and restaurants will be charged to your account, to be settled on departure. Your guide will let you know where it is convenient to purchase drinks for on the road and in camp. The safari vehicle has a cool box and/or fridge in which you can store your drinks to keep them cool.

Single travellers

If you are willing to share a twin room/tent with another traveller of the same gender then let us know in advance and we will try to pair you with a suitable match to room with. In the event that a suitable match cannot be found, you will be accommodated in your own room/tent and we will still waive the single supplement - provided that you informed us that you are willing to share when you make the booking with us.

Age of travellers

The Namibia Discovery Safari accommodates children aged 10 and over. Families with children younger than 10 years can take a private guided safari, which will be quoted for on request.

Luggage

We request that you try to keep your luggage to a maximum of 15kg (33lbs) per person. This doesn't include a small daypack or camera bag. Items should be packed into soft squashable bags as large rigid suitcases are very unwieldy and difficult to pack into the safari vehicle.

Laundry

A laundry service is not available on the Namibia Discovery Safari. However, if you bring a little washing powder with you it would be possible for the guide to arrange a bucket and water for you to do a little hand washing, and some string to create a washing line.

Visa & passport requirements

It is always **your responsibility** to get the latest passport and immigration requirements for the countries you will visit or transit through on your holiday from the embassy closest to you. We are also happy to assist with the latest information we have to hand. Our current understanding is that travellers on British, American, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand passports do not need to apply in advance for a tourist visa for Namibia or South Africa. A tourist visa is automatically issued by immigration on arrival at no charge. You may be asked to verify that you are on holiday by showing a copy of your safari itinerary and your departure flight details.

It is essential however that your passport is **valid for at least 6 months** after conclusion of your trip and that there are **at least 2 blank pages** (preferably 3) remaining for immigration stamps each time you enter a country.