

NORTHERN NAMIBIA CAMPING SAFARI

Explore many of Namibia's northern highlights on this fun and interactive camping safari. You'll sleep on comfortable foam mattresses in easy-to-erect dome tents at established campsites. Seek out big game on drives through Etosha National Park, one of Africa's top game parks, and travel across the striking landscapes of Damaraland down to the desolate Skeleton Coast. Your journey is filled with memorable moments, from discovering the *AfriCat Foundation* at Okonjima to spending an enlightening afternoon with villagers at a Himba community. You spend a night at the seaside town of Swakopmund, an adventure playground with a fascinating colonial history, before your safari returns to Windhoek.



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Day 1 - Flight to Namibia

Take a scheduled overnight flight from London Heathrow, via Johannesburg, to Windhoek with *South African Airways*.

Includes dinner on the flight.

Day 2 - Windhoek

You are met at Windhoek Airport when you arrive and driven to your guesthouse to settle in. During the afternoon there is time to relax by the swimming pool or explore around the capital city. There are plenty of good restaurants in Windhoek so we suggest you enjoy dinner out this evening. The guesthouse doesn't provide dinner but it is easy to order something in if you prefer, just ask your hosts for the details.



Includes breakfast on the flight.

Day 3 - Okonjima



After breakfast, you are collected between 08.30 and 09.00 and transferred to meet up with your group and guide. Once you are ready to set off, you begin with a short drive north to reach the town of Okahandja. Local artisans come here from all over Namibia to sell their crafts, as the town is home to one of the country's largest open-air craft markets. Your journey then continues to the base of the Omboroko Mountains where you set up camp at Okonjima's lovely private campsite.

This afternoon is spent learning about the dedicated work of the *AfriCat Foundation* in conserving Namibia's big cats and having the opportunity to get close to some of these magnificent predators.

Windhoek to Okonjima: approx. 3 hours (235km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 4 - Etosha National Park

Rise early for a hearty breakfast, before breaking camp and driving north to reach the eastern boundary of Etosha National Park. You aim to arrive in time for lunch, leaving the afternoon free for some exciting game viewing. Your guide will take you on a game drive in search of wildlife, taking time to stop at sightings and prolific waterholes to watch the action. You finally return to camp around sunset for another night under the star filled African sky.

Okonjima to eastern Etosha: approx. 5 hours (360km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 5 - Etosha National Park

Today you head westwards, game driving your way slowly through different environs of Etosha National Park. There are some spectacular views of the vast, silvery expanse of Etosha Pan and across the surrounding savannah. Game viewing is the days focus; as your guide enables you to appreciate both big and small animal species, as well as spot some of Etosha's many birds. Tonight you camp within the park at Okaukuejo, situated beside a busy floodlit waterhole where you can spend as much of the evening as you like watching game come and go. This well established waterhole is often visited by black rhino, elephant and lion, amongst other species.

Safari drives.

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Day 6 - Himba Community

After an early game drive in Etosha, you set off into the scenic region of Damaraland. Stopping at Outjo to buy fresh produce, there is usually also time to visit the local bakery for a tasty pastry and a drink. You then proceed to Kamanjab where you set up camp nearby a Himba village.



The Himba are a proud and statuesque tribe who have retained their cultural traditions even in this modern age. Their lifestyle has changed little over centuries and traditional dress and customs remain a central part of their existence. You spend the afternoon at the village, where a local guide sensitively introduces you to the community, giving you an insight to Himba life and beliefs. Each aspect of their lives has ritual or meaning, from how they set up their kraal to honour their ancestors, to the way they adorn their hair. You can take time to make new acquaintances and partake in whatever activities they are doing.

South-west Etosha to Kamanjab: approx. 3.5 hours (300km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 7 - Damaraland

Travel west through Damaraland where sandstone mountains and plateaus form remarkable landscapes. At about lunchtime you will reach Twyfelfontein where there's time for a picnic and a short tour. A local guide will walk you through a valley of fascinating ancient Bushmen rock engravings. This is now a *UNESCO* World Heritage Site. From here you continue through more stunning scenery to the base of Namibia's highest mountain, the 2,573m Brandberg massif, where you set up camp.

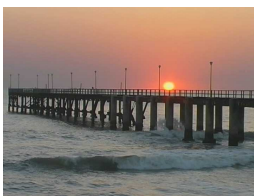
Kamanjab to Brandberg: approx. 5.5 hours (360km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Day 8 - Swakopmund

In the cooler hours of the early morning, you join a local guide on a relatively gentle 90 minute hike into Brandberg to see the famous White Lady rock painting. Believed to be the artwork of nomadic Bushmen, some say the painting is around 20,000 years old. After stretching your legs, another spectacular day's drive takes you across flat gravel plains to the Skeleton Coast, the Namib Desert's desolate but beautiful coastline. You drive alongside the Atlantic Ocean, first detouring to Cape Cross where you encounter an enormous colony of Cape fur seals, and then head south to reach the seaside town of Swakopmund. There is time to settle into your guesthouse before taking a wander through this historic colonial town. There are many interesting shops and craft centers to explore, as well as a pleasant waterfront. There are no set plans for dinner this evening to allow you to choose from a range of excellent and affordable seafood restaurants; your guide will offer to make a reservation for the group to dine together as appeals.



Brandberg to Swakopmund: approx. 4.5 hours (315km)

Includes breakfast and lunch.

Day 9 - Windhoek

This morning is free to choose from a myriad of desert and coastal activities offered in and around Swakopmund, including dune-boarding, quad-biking, sky-diving, dolphin cruises and scenic flights over the desert (all available at extra cost and taken at your own risk). Your guide will explain the options to you in advance and help you arrange bookings with the local operators. Alternatively, spend your morning exploring the shops and cafes around this lovely seaside town. You depart for Windhoek after lunch, arriving back at your guesthouse by late afternoon. Your evening is free, but often your group and guide arrange to meet up for dinner.

Swakopmund to Windhoek: approx. 4 hours (360km)
Includes breakfast.



Day 10 - Flight to London

You have free time before your flight departs to wander around Windhoek's craft market, street stalls, shops and sights before you are met and transferred to Windhoek International Airport for your flight home.

Includes breakfast. Dinner is on the plane.

Day 11 - Arrive in London

SAFARI INFORMATION

This Northern Namibia Camping Safari provides a good introduction to many of the country's northern attractions. You get close to cheetah at Okonjima, game view in Etosha, meet the locals at a Himba village, walk around ancient Bushmen rock art, count thousands of seals at Cape Cross and enjoy coastal activities in Swakopmund. Namibia is a friendly and safe destination for groups, solo travellers and first-time visitors to Africa. It is also a favourite return destination for travellers who have fallen in love with the wide open spaces, fascinating cultures and great wildlife. This guided safari provides an easy and relaxed way to experience all of this, whilst including just about everything you need for a camping safari.

Guide

A professional guide will lead you throughout the Northern Namibia Camping Safari. Your guide will also be your driver, companion, chef and take care of the day to day organisation during the safari. Almost all the guides are Namibian so in addition to information about the wildlife you see, they will be able to teach you a lot about the country and offer insight from their personal experiences. The guides that lead this camping safari are qualified and trained, being able to impart information on most of the flora, fauna and sights that you see. Their general knowledge spans many subjects but they are not specialists, so don't expect them to be experts or use Latin names for every species you see.

Camp assistant

The other crucial person on this camping safari is the camp assistant. It will be their job to do most of the camp chores so you won't need to worry about cooking or washing up. For any traveller that would like to get involved as part of the Namibia camping safari experience, a helping hand is always welcome. You will be asked to erect your own tent, it's very easy once you are shown how, and the guide and assistant will be on hand to help if you get stuck.

Camping equipment

The cost of the Northern Namibia Camping Safari includes good-quality camping equipment which will be transported with you in the vehicle or in a custom-built trailer. You'll stay in easy to assemble two-person canvas dome tents, measuring about 2x2 metres with a fitted ground sheet and mosquito netting sewn into the windows and door.

Each person will have his or her own 5cm thick mattress and a camp chair with backrest. Sleeping bags are also supplied, but you are welcome to bring your own if you prefer ('3 to 4 season' is ideal). As pillows are not supplied, we recommend that you bring a small pillow or inflatable travel cushion with you when you travel.

Vehicles

All the safari vehicles used for this camping safari to Namibia are fitted with seatbelts. For groups of up to four people, a minibus or a 4WD double-cab (pick up) with a purpose-built trailer may be used. However, in most cases a *Toyota Dyna* is used for groups anywhere between two and fourteen people. The Dynas are specifically designed for these camping safaris, including air-cushioned suspension, individual bucket seats and a pop-top roof for use when game viewing.

The safari vehicles are generally fitted with a strip of plugs where you are able to charge batteries, but please note that plug sockets are limited so priority will be given to charging camera and video batteries over mobile phones. Some of the Namibia camping sites will also have a plug point available for use. Namibia uses the same plug as South Africa – a 15 amp with three large round pins. We recommend that you purchase an adaptor suitable for the conversion to South Africa plugs to use whilst travelling around Namibia.

Campsites

The camping sites you stay at during this Namibia safari are usually well established, including ladies and gents ablution facilities with hot and cold running water. There is also likely to be a small kiosk or bar where you can buy drinks and most have a swimming pool. Some of Namibia's more remote camping sites are not well lit so it is important that you bring a good torch with you. While there will be at least one gas lamp lit in camp, this is turned off once everyone has gone to bed. A head torch is useful as you can then keep your hands free whilst in your tent and also if you need to walk around camp after dark.

Language

This camping safari to Namibia is always led by an English speaking guide.

Costs

The camping safari price includes: scheduled international flights from London's Heathrow Airport, via Johannesburg, to Namibia; transport in a specially-adapted safari vehicle; all transfers as noted; camping and accommodation as noted; good-quality camping equipment; camping site fees; entrance fees to all national parks; and usually three meals a day as stipulated.

Meals

The Northern Namibia Camping Safari includes three meals on most days. Breakfasts are usually a buffet selection of cereals, fruit, bread and spreads. Lunch is often a picnic where a table is set up with a choice of bread, cold meats, cheese, pickles and spreads for sandwiches and a separate salad. When you need to head out early on game drives or to catch the sunrise you might begin with a light breakfast and then return to camp for a hot brunch instead of lunch. The guide and camp assistant are adept at bush cuisine, rustling up tasty, wholesome dinners on an open fire. Fresh bread is usually available, while salads, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit are seasonal and will be served wherever possible.

Meals on this camping safari that are not included and are for your own account are lunch and dinner in Windhoek on Day 2, dinner on Day 8 in Swakopmund, lunch and dinner on Day 9 and lunch in Windhoek on Day 10.

Drinks

Tea, coffee and hot chocolate are included whilst you are in your safari camp, as is normal drinking water from the tap. All other drinks will be for your own account. There are many places throughout the safari where you can stock up on soft drinks, wines, beers and bottled mineral water and your guide will point these out to you. Each day's drinks can be kept cool in the vehicle which will have a cool box and/or fridge.

Single travellers

There is no single supplement on the Northern Namibia Camping Safari.

If you are a single traveller, you may be asked to share a tent or room with another person of the same sex. If you would prefer your own tent/room we are happy to request this for you and depending on availability and packing space in the safari vehicle, a single tent will usually be allocated to you.

Age of travellers

Children aged 12 and over are welcome on this camping safari to Namibia. A private safari can be tailor-made and quoted for on request for families travelling with younger children.

Laundry

Laundry is not included in the Northern Namibia Camping Safari. It may be possible however to arrange a laundry service when you are staying two nights in the same camp. Your guide can liaise with campsite staff to request this for you, the cost for which will be extra and payable direct. A bucket or bathroom facilities can also be used to hand wash your clothing yourself.

Luggage

Please limit your luggage to one soft sided bag weighing no more than around 15 kg, a medium sized day pack and a medium sized camera bag.

Visa & passport requirements

It is our current understanding that travellers on British, Canadian, American, Australian and New Zealand passports do not need a visa to visit South Africa or Namibia. However, rules and laws in Africa can change without notice and so it remains **your responsibility** to research and double check the latest visa requirements before you travel.

It is a prerequisite that your passport is valid for at least **six months** from your departure date and that you have at least **three blank pages** available for immigration stamps when entering either South Africa or Namibia. Failure to have this may result in you being refused entry to the country.