

CLASSIC NAMIBIA EXPERIENCE



This safari travels the classic route through Namibia, encompassing its key highlights. Experience the country in depth with a knowledgeable and professional guide. Stay in a combination of good lodges and comfortable guesthouses, with adventurous nights spent under canvas at luxury mobile camps where each tent has comfortable beds and is en-suite. Visit the fascinating *Cheetah Conservation Fund* and learn about their admirable work in conserving Namibia's cheetah population, before searching them out on safari drives in Etosha National Park. Marvel at ancient rock art at Twyfelfontein, a *UNESCO* World Heritage Site; enjoy coastal activities and colonial history in Swakopmund; and be awestruck by the tallest dunes on earth at Sossusvlei.

Day 1 - Windhoek

After clearing customs at Windhoek Airport you will be met and transferred to your accommodation in a comfortable hotel or guesthouse in one of the city's quiet suburbs. There is time to relax before you meet your guide who briefs you on the safari and answers any queries you might have. Dinner is for your own account tonight allowing you to try out one of the many good restaurants available in Windhoek, or you can order in if you prefer.

No meals included.

Day 2 – Cheetah Conservation Fund

Your safari guide collects you after breakfast for an easy drive north through the towns of Okahandja and Otjiwarongo. Turning east onto a gravel road you'll continue on to the *Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)*, where you arrive in time for lunch. *CCF* is a non-profit organisation committed to the long-term conservation and preservation of Namibia's cheetah population. The education centre here is fascinating and you can learn more about the rescue, relocation and education work that the foundation does, before watching some of the resident cats being fed.

After this insightful and memorable experience you'll continue on to your accommodation in a comfortable lodge situated on a game farm about an hours drive away.

Windhoek to CCF area: approx. 4 hours (320km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Days 3 & 4 - Etosha National Park

After a hearty breakfast you drive north to the town of Tsumeb, where you may make a short stop to stock up on supplies. Your destination is Namutoni Camp (or similar accommodation), situated within Etosha National Park. During the afternoon there is usually time to head out into the park on your first exciting safari drive.

Rise early the following morning to enjoy a full day of game viewing; spending your time spotting animals as you drive between the surrounding waterholes and stopping by the busiest to watch the action. In your search for wildlife you will cover several different types of terrain, from open savannah to mopane woodlands.

CCF area to eastern Etosha Park: approx. 4.5 hours (310km)

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 5 - Etosha National Park

Day 5 is an enthralling day of game viewing as you slowly head west across Etosha, taking your time to stop at waterholes and game sightings along the way. The route takes you along the southern edge of Etosha Pan, a vast shallow depression of silvery-white clay that fills with water only in exceptional rainy seasons. Otherwise it's bone dry, but around it are numerous perennial springs that attract wildlife, particularly in the dry season. At this time it is not uncommon to see a variety of species congregating at these waterholes and the interaction between them is fascinating.

You will be accommodated in en-suite bungalows at Okaukuejo Camp (or similar accommodation) in the park's southwest region. After dinner at the camp's restaurant you can slope off with a drink and watch the action at the flood-lit waterhole – there is usually plenty to see with elephant, rhino and lion being regular visitors.

Safari drives.

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Days 6 & 7 - Damaraland

Exit Etosha National Park, and travel south towards the town of Outjo before turning west to the mountainous landscapes of Damaraland. Your destination is the Mowani foothills where your luxury mobile camp stands, surrounded by huge granite boulders and superb scenery.

The following morning you make the most of the cool air to take a guided walk around Twyfelfontein; a sandstone valley that shelters an amazing open-air gallery of ancient Bushman rock art, recently declared a *UNESCO* World Heritage Site. There's also time to visit the nearby 'Organ Pipe' rock formations, the surreal Burnt Mountain, and a Damara Living Museum. Together with the Bushmen, the Damara people belong to the oldest nations in Namibia. Due to their loose social structures the Damara way of life suffered during the colonization of Namibia by more aggressive peoples. To help keep the Damara culture alive, community projects such as this Living Museum have been created. The museum replicates a Damara Village and showcases the daily way of life with scenes including a blacksmith making tools and weapons, how leather was tanned to produce cloths, traditional crafts, dancing, singing games and much more.

During the afternoon you are treated to a nature drive along the scenic river valley with a possibility of encountering wildlife, including the elusive desert-adapted elephant. Stop for a sundowner drink at Welwitschia Hill before heading back to camp for a hearty dinner.

Etosha National Park to Damaraland: approx. 6 hours (470km)
Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Days 8 & 9 - Swakopmund

Before heading south you stop for a cultural visit at a Himba village. The Ovahimba are a semi-nomadic tribe who live in scattered settlements throughout the region. This community retains their traditional way of life and welcome visitors to come and experience their unique culture. A local guide introduces you to the community and helps you to understand their background and customs.

Back on the road, you circumnavigate Brandberg, which at 2,573m is Namibia's highest mountain. Pause at the small outpost of Uis where semi-precious stones such as amethyst and tourmaline can often be found at bargain prices. Uis was once a bustling community established around a large tin mine, but the mines closure in the early 1990's has led the town into a sleepy decline.

From Uis you cross what seems an endless and forbidding desert plain on your way to the Atlantic Ocean and the Skeleton Coast. It's then an easy drive south to the charming coastal town of Swakopmund where you will settle into a lovely guesthouse. During the afternoon you have free time to browse among the many interesting shops, galleries and craft centre.

The following morning your safari guide takes you on a short drive south along a stunning coastal road to the port town of Walvis Bay. Here you join a memorable seal and dolphin cruise into the harbour which gives you the opportunity to see some of the Skeleton Coast's rich marine life including Heaviside and bottlenose dolphins, playful Cape fur seals, flamingos, pelicans, cormorants and much more. Drinks are available throughout the cruise and snacks, along with fresh oysters and local champagne, are served before heading back to the jetty.

Dinner on both nights in Swakopmund is for your own account so that you can choose between a variety of great restaurants, located on the waterfront or in the town centre. Ask your guide to recommend their favourites. The seafood is excellent, as is the locally grown Swakopmund asparagus when in season.

Damaraland to Swakopmund: approx. 6 hours (315km)
Includes breakfast.

Days 10 & 11 - Namib Desert

Today you drive inland through varied and spectacular landscapes devoid of civilisation as you aim for your luxury mobile camp on the edge of the Namib Desert. You head south-east, traversing barren gravel plains before dropping into the deeply incised Kuseb and Gaub canyons. The road follows the base of the mountainous escarpment to the east and vast desert plains to the west. You might make a short stop at the tiny desert outpost of Solitaire for refreshments and perhaps some homemade apple pie, before arriving at your private camp in the mid-to-late afternoon.

Rise before dawn to drive deep into some of Namibia's most breathtaking desert landscapes. The Namib-Naukluft National Park is home to the world's highest free-standing dunes, towering around 300m above the surrounding plains. The rising sun creates amazing patterns of light and shadow over the orange desert sands, a captivating sight and a

photographers dream. You drive along the Tsauchab River valley until it is closed off by encroaching sands, and continue on foot to experience the desert up close. Spend the morning exploring Sossusvlei and Dead Vlei; a natural clay pan where the skeletons of dead camelthorn trees point towards the sky. The view from the top of one of these gigantic dunes is always spectacular if you have the energy to climb them! During the afternoon you'll visit Sesriem Canyon and wander through its conglomerate walls that have been carved by the ephemeral Tsauchab River. Return to your camp in time to watch the evening hues change and glow across the distant mountain range.

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

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 12 – Windhoek & flight home

Pass through yet more stunning scenery on your return journey to Windhoek as you climb up and over the escarpment into the Khomas Hochland highlands. You will arrive back in Namibia's capital city at about midday, ready to transfer to the airport for your scheduled afternoon flight home.

Namib Desert to Windhoek Airport: approx. 6 hours (375km)

Includes breakfast.

SAFARI INFORMATION

This Classic Namibia Experience offers a great mix of adventure and comfort as you travel the classic route through Namibia, encompassing the key highlights. Gain an insight to one of Namibia's most successful conservation foundations at the *Cheetah Conservation Fund*, and one of its most fascinating cultures at a Himba village. Take in Etosha's game, Damaraland's attractions, Swakopmund's coastal activities and the Namib Desert's breathtaking landscapes. You will be led by a knowledgeable and professional guide, staying in a combination of good lodges and comfortable guesthouses, with adventurous nights spent under canvas at private luxury mobile camps. The mobile camp is fully serviced by an experienced camp crew and each tent is furnished with comfortable beds and en-suite facilities.

Guide

You will be led by a professional and personable local guide throughout the Classic Namibia Experience. The safari guides are picked carefully and trained well. They speak good English and will give you a fascinating local perspective as well as an understanding about the sights you encounter. You will be able to learn a lot about Namibia; its flora and fauna, different cultures, history, geology and much more. Your guide will be able to identify all of the animals, many of the birds, and some of the plants that you see.

Camp staff

A safari crew and a camp chef travel in a separate vehicle and will erect your luxury mobile camp ready for your arrival whilst you take a more exploratory route with your guide. The camp crew will take care of all the camp logistics, ensuring you have relaxing and comfortable nights under canvas.

Luxury mobile camps

Whilst in the exclusive luxury mobile camp you will stay in twin-bedded, spacious walk-in safari tents. The comfortable beds have thick mattresses, linen, duvets, pillows and blankets. Each tent is furnished with a canvas luggage rack, a safari trunk and bedside tables with small reading lamps.

In a separate compartment of your tent is an en-suite bathroom with bucket shower and flush toilet. Each bathroom also has a hand basin, mirror, towels and complimentary toiletries.

Although lighting is provided around camp and in your tent, we recommend that you also bring your own torch to use in less well-lit areas around camp, such as walking between your tent and the dining tent.

Vehicles

The vehicle usually used for the Classic Namibia Experience is a 4WD *Land Cruiser* with sliding windows, seatbelts and a pop-top roof.

Each vehicle is fitted with an inverter and a strip of plugs, allowing travellers the opportunity to charge batteries whilst travelling in the vehicle or when in camp. These vehicle plugs take a standard two-pin 220V charger that is usually supplied when you buy electrical equipment. If you do not have a two-pin charger, we recommend you purchase the

necessary adaptor. The plugs in the vehicle are only to be used to recharge essential items such as camera batteries; they are not to be used for charging electric toothbrushes or for using electronics such as hairdryers.

For charging/using equipment when staying at lodges, the generic wall plugs in Namibia have 3 large round pins, 220V – the same style of plug that is also used in South Africa. It is relatively easy to find a suitable adaptor (generally described for use in South Africa), which we suggest you purchase for your safari through Namibia.

Language

The Classic Namibia Experience is guided in English.

Costs

This luxury camping and lodge safari to Namibia includes transport in a specially modified safari vehicle; airport transfers; accommodated nights in a combination of good lodges and comfortable guesthouses; camping nights in a private luxury mobile camp; full camping equipment; campsite fees; entrance fees to all national parks and sites visited and usually three meals a day.

Meals

The Classic Namibia Experience includes almost all meals. The only excluded meals are lunch and dinner in Windhoek on Day 1, lunch and dinner in Swakopmund on Days 8 & 9 and lunch on Day 12 before you depart.

Drinks

The majority of drinks during the Classic Namibia Experience will be for your own account. Complimentary tea and coffee, as well as South African wine with dinner, is served whilst in the luxury mobile camp and mineral water is provided in your safari vehicle throughout the journey.

All other drinks must be bought at your own expense. Your guide will let you know where to stock up on beverages such as soft drinks, spirits and beer for your nights camping. The safari vehicle has a cool box or fridge in which you can keep your drinks cold. There will be a bar at each of the lodges and at restaurants where drinks will be charged to your account, to be settled before you depart.

Single travellers

If you are willing and able to share a twin tent/room with another single traveller of the same gender during this accommodated and luxury camping safari, then the single supplement can be waived. However, if no suitable match can be made then the single supplement will be charged.

Age of travellers

Children from the age of 12 are welcome to join scheduled departures on the Classic Namibia Experience. Children aged 10 and 11 years may be accommodated on request, please enquire with us. For parties with children under 10, a private tailor-made safari can be quoted for on request.

Luggage

The luggage limit on the Classic Namibia Experience is 15kg (33lbs) per person, plus a daypack and camera bag. Please use a soft sided, squashable bag for your main luggage; one that can easily be stored into the luggage compartment. Large rigid suitcases are not suitable.

Laundry

A laundry service is not included on this lodge and luxury camping safari. However, it is possible to arrange for laundry to be done for you whilst staying at the guesthouse in Swakopmund (Days 8 & 9). The guesthouse will add a charge to your room account for this service.

Throughout the safari you can always ask your guide for a bucket of water should you want to do some hand washing. We recommend you take a small packet of washing powder with you or buy some at a shop once in Namibia. There is space in the tent to hang a small amount of clothing to dry or you can take some string with you to fashion a temporary washing line. Namibia's usually warm and arid climate will dry your washing very quickly.

Visa & passport requirements

Our current understanding is that travellers with British, Canadian, American, Australian and New Zealand passports do not require a visa to visit Namibia (or South Africa) on holiday. However, as immigration regulations in Africa can change without notice, we strongly recommend you speak to us and your nearest relevant embassy to get the latest update a

few months and then weeks before you travel. It is vital that you ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your travel to Namibia and that you have **at least 2 (preferably 3) blank pages** for immigrations stamps each time you enter a country. These must be visa pages and not the 'endorsement' pages included at the back of some passports.

It is **your responsibility** to ensure that you fulfill the correct visa and passport regulations before you travel.