

## 14 Day Namibian Experience – Northern and Southern Regions

**This itinerary details the route as travelling south first; however you may well travel to the north first, covering exactly the same ground but in reverse order.**

This safari has a guaranteed departure every Friday of the year, with a minimum of 2 people. There is no single supplement, and the price is virtually fully inclusive of everything you will need whilst travelling with us. The style is limited participation, assisted camping. Included in the price of the trip there are three accommodated nights.

Collection time, from anywhere within the Windhoek city limits is between 07:30 & 08:00 for the first southern section, (to the Namib Desert) of the trip and between 08:30 & 09:00 for the second northern section, (to Okonjima), of the trip.

This safari can also be combined with:

- Two of the world's natural wonders, the Okavango Delta and the mighty Victoria Falls by combining this trip with our 10 day Delta and Falls Safari.



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### Safari overview

Day	Destinations	Accommodation	Meals	Approximate km
Day 1	Windhoek – Sesriem	Camping	Lunch & Dinner	350 km
Day 2	Sesriem – Namib Desert	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	120 km
Day 3	Namib Desert – Luderitz	Guest House	Breakfast & Lunch	480 km
Day 4	Luderitz – Fish River Canyon	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	420 km
Day 5	Fish River Canyon – Quivertree/Fossil site	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	220 km
Day 6	Quivertree/Fossil site – Kalahari Desert	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	310 km
Day 7	Kalahari Desert - Windhoek	Guest House	Breakfast & Lunch	500 km
Day 8	Windhoek – Okonjima/Africat	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	300 km
Day 9	Okonjima/Africat – Etosha National Park	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	300 km
Day 10	Etosha National Park	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	Game drive
Day 11	Etosha – Kavita Lion Lodge	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	Game drive
Day 12	Kavita Lion Lodge– Twyfelfontein/Damaraland	Camping	Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner	300 km
Day 13	Twyfelfontein/Damaraland – Swakopmund	Guest House	Breakfast & Lunch	420 km
Day 14	Swakopmund - Windhoek	-	Breakfast & Lunch	350 km



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### Day 1 Windhoek – Sesriem area (350 km) (LD) (camping)

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You will be collected at your Windhoek accommodation between 08:00 & 08:30

We travel out over the Eros Mountains and along scenic roads on our way south-west to the desert. We also pass over part of the Naukluft Mountains, which are of particular interest for the ancient geological history of this part of the country. Heading down from Namibia's central plateau by way of the beautiful Remhoogte Pass, we reach open plains and the tiny settlement of Solitaire. We will stop here at the 'N/a'an ku se and Shiloh Jolie-Pitt Foundation', a 500 hectare Conservation Centre which hosts an educational centre and wildlife tracking within the purpose built enclosures and receive information on the carnivore surveillance in the greater Namib area.

We cross some open grass savannah and farmlands before the terrain gives way to the immense red sand dune desert of the Namib. We aim to arrive at our camp during the late afternoon and watch the colours glow and change on distant mountains to the east.

### Day 2 Sesriem area – Sossusvlei – Sesriem area (camping) (BLD)

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A pre-dawn start is essential this morning as we want to catch the soft light of the sunrise on the desert. After passing through Sesriem, the gateway to the dunes, we head into the heart of the dune field, reaching Sossusvlei on foot, trekking the last 5 km through the dunes.

Landscape photo opportunities abound in the cool of the morning, with dawn's soft light first illuminating the dunes from crest down the back slope, then blazing orange everywhere, creating a powerful contrasting vista across the whole desert.

Ancient mineral pans, stunted camel thorn trees and the chance of seeing a gemsbok or ostrich makes it essential to remember your camera!

We spend the morning in and around Sossusvlei, also visiting dune 45. As the day wears on we return to Sesriem for lunch, escaping the heat of the afternoon. As the day cools off in the late afternoon we will take a short excursion to the Sesriem Canyon.

### Day 3 Sesriem area – Lüderitz (480km) (BL) (guesthouse)

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Turning south we travel through the Namib Rand Nature Reserve down to Betta and on to the village of Helmeringhausen. Traversing this sparse, yet beautiful landscape, the terrain begins to change from the immense red sand dune desert of the Namib, we cross some open grass savannah and farmlands. The scenery is harsh, but forever changing. The process of erosion in these areas is well advanced and we pass time rounded "koppies" arid terrain and outcrops of tortured rock.

From Aus we continue on to the coastal town of Lüderitz where its colonial-style buildings cling to the rocks overlooking the bay, on some days a deep iridescent blue, on others grey and stormy, the crisp fresh climate, fishing boats bobbing up and down on the Atlantic horizon, penguins and seals diving beneath the waves, give the town a curious other-worldly allure.

We aim to arrive at our guest house during the late afternoon. Dinner will be at client's own expense tonight.



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### **Day 4** Luderitz – Kolmanskop – Fish River Canyon (420km) (BLD) (camping)

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We arrive at Kolmanskop, a desert ghost town about 20 km out of Luderitz. It was built in the 1920's during the diamond rush and was abandoned when bigger and better diamonds were found further along the coast. The area is still abandoned and the desert has encroached over the entire town, giving an eerie feeling and real meaning to the word "ghost".

We return to Aus through the "forbidden Zone" so named because in years gone by, the alluvial diamonds found in Namibia were simply scattered across the desert. On route we keep a sharp look out for the unique Namib wild horses. These horses are the only feral horses in Namibia and have, very unusually, become adapted to an existence with very limited water. Where they originated is unclear. Many believe they are the descendants of the horses used by the German cavalry during the First World War. Another theory is that they originally came from a stud farm that used to be run by a German Barron, (von Wolff), in the very early colonial days.

From Aus we leave to the Fish River Canyon. We are heading to the main view point where we can see how impressive this canyon actually is. This is an ideal opportunity for photos and to spend some time experiencing this amazing sight. Viewing from the top we can see the river sparkling in the sunlight far below us, and can barely imagine how many millennia it took for the forces of erosion to carve such a magnificent vista.

### **Day 5** Fish River Canyon – Mesosaurus Fossil Camp (220km) (BLD) (camping)

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Leaving the Fish River Canyon behind us we travel to Keetmanshoop, founded in 1860 by the Rhenish Mission Society, the town retains vestiges of its original German buildings as well as several dating back to the arrival of the first Europeans, who trekked across the Orange River to trade, hunt and explore the land. The first of these expeditions was in 1791.

We visit the Mesosaurus Fossil Site and Quiver tree Dolerite Park situated a short distance out of town. The Fossil Site is probably one of the most convincing examples to prove the drifting of continents. The same genus in the same rock formations is to be found in both southern Africa and South America. The Quivertree on the other hand is a living fossil with some 5000 specimens packed into this area.

Quiver trees are not in fact trees; they are a type of aloe, (*Aloe Dichotoma*), so called because the branches fork "dictomously". These weird looking plants dot the landscape in this part of the world and are locally common; however they are one of the world's rarest flora species.

### **Day 6** Mesosaurus Fossil Camp – Kalahari Bagatelle Reserve (310km) (BLD) (camping)

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Leaving the south we begin our journey north-east travelling through the thin strip of Kalahari Desert that protrudes onto the eastern side of Namibia. This area is very dry and is covered by hundreds of ancient longitudinal sand dunes, separated by flat grass covered plains, commonly referred to as roadways. Another characteristic is the striking red color of the dune sand.

Tonight we will camp at Bagatelle Kalahari Game Ranch. Bagatelle in association with the Cheetah conservation fund are the custodians of cheetahs kept in an enclosure. The facility was built exceeding the requirements laid down by the Ministry of Tourism and wildlife and under the guidance of the Cheetah conservation fund. These captive cheetahs are not able to be released into the wild, and have to remain in captivity for the rest of their lives. Their aim is to ensure that this happens in a way that ensures the best quality of life for these speedsters of the African Savanna.

### **Day 7** Kalahari Bagatelle Reserve – Windhoek (500km) (BL) (Camping)

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Participate in an early morning 'Nature drive' which will enable you not only to view the diversified animal and bird life, but also the unique dune topography and vegetation.

We return to Windhoek via Rehoboth, traditional home of the Baster people, we aim to arrive in Windhoek after lunch and you will be taken to your accommodation for the night.



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### **Day 8** Windhoek – Okonjima/Africat (300 km) (BLD) (camping)

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You will be collected between 08:30 & 09:00.

We will travel north, stopping at small towns along the way including Okahandja, where we have time to visit Namibia's largest wood carving market. The market is operated on a local co-operative basis and is one of the best places to shop for truly Namibian souvenirs.

Continuing north, passing through farmland, we aim to arrive at Okonjima during the middle afternoon, giving us time to set up our camp and to relax in the shade for a while before heading out on to the property to take part in the afternoon's activities.

Okonjima is the home of the Africat Foundation, a specialist conservation concern that centres its operations on the African Big Cats, particularly cheetah.

This afternoon you will be taken on a tour during which you will be able to meet, close-up-and-personal, some of the cheetah that are going through the Africat rehabilitation programme.

Most of the animals currently living at Okonjima have been rescued from various desperate situations, being orphaned or caught in a trap, and the aim of rehabilitation process is to attempt to re-introduce them into the wild.

After our educational tour we will return our camp and prepare for dinner under the African stars.

### **Day 9** Okonjima/Africat - Namutoni / East Etosha region (300 km) (BLD) (camping)

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An early start and continuing north we pass through some small towns, making short stops for fresh supplies and fuel.

Continuing on to our East Etosha, Namutoni region camp we again aim to arrive in time for lunch, giving us time to relax before heading into the park during the cool of the late afternoon for our first game drive.

### **Day 10** East Etosha region – Okaukuejo, Etosha National Park (BLD) (camping)

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A full day's game driving. We again leave early to enjoy the cool morning air as we game drive our way through Etosha to Halali camp, situated in the middle of the park. Along the way we visit several waterholes and are afforded splendid views of the massive Etosha Pan. The game viewing is usually excellent and we have the chance to tick off a few new species that are not normally seen on the Namutoni side of the park.

We stop at Halali for a rest and a leisurely lunch. There is time to visit the Halali waterhole and to make use of the swimming pool and bar facilities before continuing on our way and game driving down to Okaukuejo, Etosha's main rest camp and resort where we will check in and set up camp. Originally the site of a German fort built in 1901, Okaukuejo now houses the Etosha Ecological Institute, founded in 1974; the round watchtower is a remnant of the fort.

After your evening meal there are still more chances to see Etosha's big game at a floodlit waterhole, situated on the boundary of our camp and easily reachable within a minute or two on foot.

The waterhole has been described as one of the "best game viewing opportunities in Southern Africa" and the ideal venue to witness peculiar animal politics. Black rhino, Africa's tallest elephants, lion and numerous species of antelope are regular visitors during the cool, dry season.



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### Day 11 Okaukuejo – Kavita Lion Lodge, Kamanjab (300 km) (BLD) (camping)

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Leaving Etosha we begin our journey south with a relatively short drive to the small town of Kamanjab for a short stop before continuing on to Kavita Lion Lodge and Africat North.

A local Otjiwarongo business has chosen to fund a project at AfriCat North - the Communal Carnivore Conservation Project. This team works with farming communities and those surrounding the Etosha National Park, assisting in carnivore management (mainly lion) and advising communal and commercial farmers on how best to protect livestock. This is the first unit of its kind in Namibia.

During the afternoon we visit the project and education centre.

### Day 12 Kavita Lion Lodge – Twyfelfontein (300 km) (BLD) (camping)

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After an early morning start we visit a Himba Village - the only traditionally functioning Himba community outside the far north Kaokoland region of Namibia. These tribes-people have migrated here, lifestyle and customs intact, and are following their traditional way-of-life in their village on a farm, the exact location of the site varies as the Himba occasionally roam to a new location. We will learn about marriage customs, traditional food and the mysteries of the 'Holy Fire' religion.

Today we head into one of the most beautiful desert regions in Namibia, Damaraland. We drive south to the capital of this region, the small town of Khorixas, and then take a detour to the west to visit the ancient Bushman rock engravings at Twyfelfontein. At this location we will have a local guide to conduct us on a short tour before we set up camp for the night.

### Day 13 Twyfelfontein – Swakopmund, Skeleton Coast (420 km) (BL) (chalet)

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From here we head deeper into the desert and pass Namibia's highest mountain, The Brandberg, (2573 m) and more beautiful Damaraland scenery. We make a stop in the small town of Uis, an old mining town, and one of the best places to buy semi-precious stones, for which Namibia is famous. Here, rough Amethyst, Tourmaline etc can be found at bargain prices.

From here we turn directly west and cross the gravel plains on our way to the Atlantic Ocean and the Skeleton Coast. Meeting the ocean at Henties Bay, we first head north along the coast to visit the seal colony at Cape Cross. At certain times of the year as many as 100,000 Cape Fur seals congregate.

The next destination is Swakopmund, following the Skeleton Coast into Namibia's premier seaside town. We aim to arrive in the late afternoon giving us time to explore the town on foot before sunset.

Tonight we take the chance to sample one of the excellent restaurants. The seafood in Swakopmund is superb. Your guide will offer to organise a group meal in a local restaurant for this evening. Participation is recommended but by no means required.

Dinner is for the client's own account.

### Day 14 Swakopmund - Windhoek (BL) (350 km)

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The drive back to Windhoek today will take about 4 and a half hours. We will only depart after lunch, giving us time to spend the morning relaxing in Swakopmund. It has many superb shops, a good stretch of beach (although the Atlantic here is quite cold) and an open-air curio market. There is also a very good museum and the Namibian National Marine Aquarium is located in Swakopmund.

Alternatively, there are various optional activities that can be arranged. These include aeroplane and microlight flights over the desert, scenic drives, fishing trips (both from the beach or in a boat), four-wheel motorcycle (quad bike) trips into the desert and over the sand dunes around Swakopmund, sand boarding trips (also in the dunes), skydiving, surfing, bird-watching and many other activities are available.

Your tour guide will discuss all the possible options with you before you reach Swakopmund and will offer to make bookings in advance of your arrival. (N.B. All extra activities and excursions in Swakopmund are subject to availability and are made at the client's own risk and expense).

This is the last day of our trip and after lunch we will transfer back to the capital city where you will be dropped off at your accommodation.



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### Additional Information

It is strongly recommended that you purchase comprehensive personal travel insurance before you embark on your safari. Travel insurance is for your own protection and we consider it to be an essential part of modern international travel.

Maximum group size is 14 people, with a minimum of 2 participants. Transport for up to 8 people will be in a minibus and for 9 people and more in a Toyota bus / truck.

The style of safari is limited participation, you will be asked to assist put up and take down your own tent, however there will be a camp assistant to complete all the other campsite chores. Your tour guide will do all the shopping, cooking and day-to-day organization of the safari. Unless otherwise specified, all safaris will be conducted in English

#### Safaris include:

1. All transport
2. Three meals a day (unless differently specified)
3. Tap drinking water
4. Tea & coffee in camp
5. All camping equipment
6. Park entrance fees
7. Camping fees
8. Professional guide
9. Camp Assistant
10. Pick up & drop off from accommodation in Windhoek

#### Safaris exclude:

1. Sleeping bag (can be hired)
2. Alcoholic beverages
3. Soft drinks
4. Personal travel insurance

#### Useful items to bring with you:

1. Two litre water bottle
2. Torch
3. Towel
4. Sun hat
5. Camera
6. Pillow

The tents are dome type, which are easy to assemble and your mattresses are approximately 5 cm thick with your own mattress cover, and everyone has a camp chair with a backrest.

Clients are limited to one soft, barrel type bag per person with maximum weight of 15kg, one medium sized hand luggage bag, one medium sized camera bag and a sleeping bag.

We suggest a sleeping bag range of "3 – 4 season". Sleeping bags can be hired by prior arrangement for a cost of N\$: 140.00 per 14 day trip. When packing your clothing please be aware that Namibian summer temperatures (December - March) can reach 45°C, and winter temperatures (June - September) can be as low as -5°C. The rainy season is between December and April.

All evening meals on camping safaris, (unless stipulated), are cooked on an open fire by your guide. Salads and fresh vegetables will be served where possible, but please note in some areas this is not necessarily every day. Fresh fruit will also be supplied when possible. Vegetarians can be catered for but please notify us prior to safari departure.



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Namibia is a low risk malarial destination but we recommend that you seek professional medical advice to enable you to make decisions on personal malaria protection.

All tap water in Namibia has been purified or comes directly from boreholes and is safe to drink. We supply tap drinking water but bottled mineral water is easily available at shops and rest camps should you prefer to drink this.

Electrical plugs are 220 V and are 3 pin (round pin as opposed to square pin). Adaptors can be purchased in Windhoek. It is possible to re-charge batteries at some campsites.



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The Namibian Dollar (N\$) is tied permanently 1-1 to the South African Rand (SAR). SAR, notes and coins are legal tender in Namibia.

Airport transfers and pre-and-post safari accommodation can be arranged on request.

It is customary to tip in Namibia, usually, around 10% at restaurants. Your guide and assistant can be tipped at your own discretion for good service only, but we ask that the guide be tipped separately from your assistant.

