

Namib Lodge Safari (NL 2014)

Production of the purpose





- Sossusvlei The world's highest sand dunes.
- Etosha Abundant wildlife from comfortable lodges within the park.
- Damaraland The impressive petrified forest and ancient rock art.
- Swakopmund A charming coastal town with German colonial architecture.
- Cape Cross Seal Colony An amazingly large seal colony on the Atlantic
- Waterberg Plateau A walk in the scenic plateau to discover wildlife.

Tour Essentials

Accommodation: 4 nights Standard Hotel

2 nights Standard

Lodge

5 nights Comfortable

Lodge

Included Meals: 11 breakfasts, 9

lunches, 7 dinners

Start Point: Join tour: Windhoek **End Point:** Tour ends: Windhoek

Transport: Truck **Countries:** Namibia

Namib Lodge Safari

From our customised safari truck we explore the dramatic canyons, towering sand dunes and magnificent wildlife parks of the Namib landscape. Staying in comfortable lodges along the route we track elephants, rhinos and lions through Etosha and Waterberg Plateau National Parks. We also visit the majestic cheetah in a conservation centre and watch seals basking on the coast.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Busy

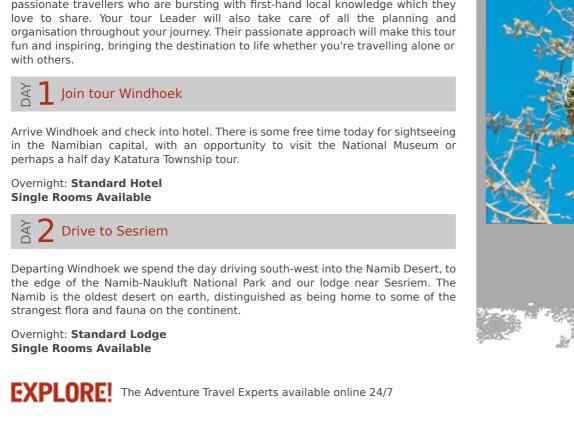
Your tour itinerary

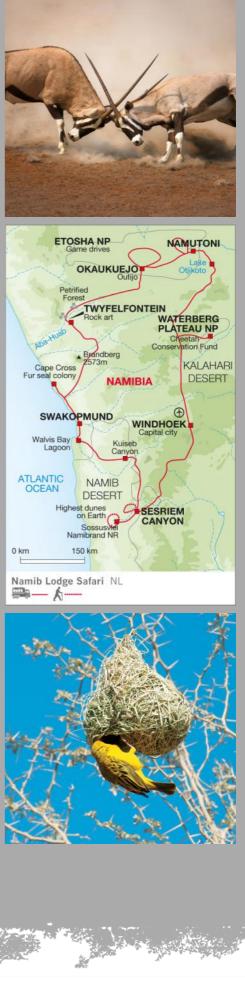
Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they with others.





Exploring Sossusvlei and Sesriem Canyon

Today we drive into the Namib-Naukluft National Park and travel down the Tsauchab Valley to Sossusvlei to watch the sun cast its shadows over the red dunes. Sossusvlei has some of the world's most spectacular sand dunes. The area itself is a vast depression or clay pan, towered over by sand dunes up to 300m high. In the early morning, the first rays of the sun light up the dunes with a deep orange glow - a photographer's delight. It is a wild, beautiful and romantic spot, with sparse vegetation edging a few water courses which flow in from the Tsauchab river. Here springbok and ostrich are often seen. We'll also explore the cool passageways of the Sesriem Canyon on foot. The canyon is small but very picturesque - many plants grow in the shade and shelter offered by the canyon, and water pools attract several species of birds and animals. Sesriem means 'six thongs'; which refers to the six lengths of rawhide rope (from a wagon) needed to make a line long enough to lower from the rim of the gorge to the stream below, in order to haul up a bucket of water.

Overnight: Standard Lodge Single Rooms Available



Drive to Swakopmund via Walvis Bay

An optional early morning balloon ride is an excellent way of gaining a unique perspective of the vast desert landscapes of this stunning region of Namibia. Drifting silently over the dunes, keep your eyes open for desert wildlife foraging for food. Travelling via Solitaire and through the Kuiseb Canyon, we then pass awe-inspiring landscapes as we head across the Namib gravel flats to Walvis Bay. Here a large spit forms a natural deep-sea harbour that attracted the first navigators in the late 1400's. The shallows, located where the spit joins the mainland, are home to a diverse collection of birds, the most spectacular being flamingos and pelicans that feed here seasonally. It's a short drive from here to the coastal town of Swakopmund.

Overnight: Standard Hotel **Single Rooms Available**



In Swakopmund

Swakopmund is one of the world's best examples of German colonial architecture, and served as the German's port into what was then, German South West Africa. Like any port town has a colourful past. Today, there may be time to visit the town's excellent museum, or visit a local township, participate in one of the numerous activities on offer, or just relax! This evening you have the chance to watch the sunset at the nearby coastal dune belt.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available



Drive via Cape Cross Seal Colony to Damaraland

Travelling north towards the Atlantic coast we visit the memorable Cape Cross Seal Colony where between 80,000 and 100,000 Cape fur seals bask in the sun or swim playfully in the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The seals are natural indicators of fish stocks in the ocean. If the fish stocks are healthy, then the seal numbers are high. If the fish stocks are poor, then the seal numbers will be low. The seals are quite big, an average male weighing in at anything up to 187kg (501 lbs.). The females give birth to a single pup around late November to early December. After our visit we head inland, passing the majestic Brandberg Mountain (2,573m and the highest point in Namibia) as we enter the southern part of Damaraland. This afternoon we see the Bushmen paintings and engravings at Twyfelfontein. The massif of Twyfelfontein contains a spectacular record of the rock art of the Khoisan people, painted and incised into the sandstone of the mountain over a thousand years.

Overnight: Comfortable Lodge **Single Rooms Available**



Visit Petrified Forest; drive to Okaukuejo or Halali in Etosha National Park

This morning we will travel to the extraordinary Petrified Forest, with its huge fossilised tree trunks it was declared a National Monument in 1950; it is estimated to be about 200 million years old, and both the bark and the tree rings are perfectly preserved. The Etosha National Park offers, arguably some of the best game viewing in Africa, and Okaukuejo is one of the three rest camps situated within the park where we can stay.

Overnight: Comfortable Lodge **Single Rooms Available**



Game drives in Etosha National Park

We continue our safari through Etosha National Park to our second base at Namutoni. Etosha is an immense, saline desert, covering over 12,400 square miles, and the habitat for 114 species of animals and 340 species of birds. It has been described as the best game reserve on the African continent. Our programme of game drives will depend entirely on the interests of the group, and is left as



flexible as possible. We should see elephant, rhino and hopefully lion. The terrain ranges from dense bush to large open plains where animals roam freely. We drive along the network of gravel roads that criss-cross the Park, visiting the various viewpoints and the permanent waterholes around which animals congregate. There is something enigmatic in the vast silent greywhite pan that covers the reserve.

Overnight: Comfortable Lodge **Single Rooms Available**



Game drives in Etosha National Park

We continue with game drives today. Numerous waterholes and underground springs attract large herds of animals including springbok, zebra, wildebeest and giraffe. At its very heart is the Etosha Pan, which geologists believe was formed some 12 million years ago from an inland lake about the size of Holland. Shrunk to its present dried-up size, it is now a gigantic depression in the ground - flat, saline and silvery, a mysterious place of mirages and dust-laden images.

Overnight: Comfortable Lodge Single Rooms Available



Drive to Waterberg Plateau Park

We leave Etosha and travel via the Cheetah Conservation Foundation at Otjiwarongo to the Waterberg Plateau Park. The CCF is an internationally recognised centre of excellence in research and education on cheetahs and their eco-systems with an extensive visitor's centre which encourages visitors to learn more about these beautiful cats and the efforts being made to save them. Later we will continue to the Waterberg Plateau. The Waterberg is a sandstone mountain which rises over 200m from the surrounding plains and is Namibia's only mountain game park. There are various trails to walk along searching for the elusive Damara Dik-Dik and a good variety of birds.

Overnight: Comfortable Lodge **Single Rooms Available**



Drive to Windhoek

This morning you could choose to explore some of the walking trails on offer or take an optional game drive in the national park. We will then head south and return to Windhoek. We have the chance to stop off en route in Okhandja and visit the local craft market.

Overnight: Standard Hotel Single Rooms Available



Tour ends Windhoek

Our tour ends this morning after breakfast.

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

Great locations and well appointed accommodation characterise this trip. Namibia has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. We start our tour in a superbly located standard hotel with a pleasant restaurant and beer garden, right in the heart of Windhoek. In complete contrast, our next stop is at a family run lodge in the middle of the Namib desert. The gardens and pool here create a lovely atmosphere and the home cooking is great! On to Swakopmund where our small, family run hotel with its great coffee shop is located just minutes from the sea and the centre of town. In Etosha we stay in comfortable bush chalets at two different restcamps with pool, gardens and a bar. Finally at Waterburg plateau we stay in chalets which nestle amongst the trees at the foot of the escarpment.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 11 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 7 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.



Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Sesriem - Optional Hot Air Balloon ride can be taken over the Namib with a sparkling wine breakfast - N\$ 3950 per person (Please note all bookings for this activity must be booked direct with the provider 'Namib Sky Adventure' at http://www.namibsky.com/contact.php) Swakopmund - Scenic flight (1 hour) over the captivating dunes of Sossusvlei £200-£300 depending on numbers. Living desert tour N\$ 600; Museum N\$ 30; Aquarium N\$ 45; Township tour N\$ 450; Half day dolphin cruise in Walvis Bay N\$ 500. Etosha NP - Night game drive N\$ 600.

Waterberg Plateau Park - Game drives N\$ 450 for 4hrs.

Windhoek - Windhoek City tour and Katutura township tour N\$ 250 per person depending on numbers. Amani Lodge 'Big Cat Experience' £85.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow £25 for tipping local crew and staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Namibia

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Windhoek and Swakopmund.

Credit Card Acceptance: Limited.

Travellers Cheques: Are difficult to exchange and should be used as back up Local Currency: Namibian Dollar. South African Rand is legal tender in Namibia.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: USD are readily exchanged in Namibia and GBP to a lesser extent. Take your money in a

combination of ATM cards and cash Where to Exchange: On arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

For passengers making their own travel arrangements, please ensure you join the group as described on day one of the tour itinerary. If you are considering purchasing your own airline tickets, you can book these through any travel agent, directly with an airline or through an online flight consolidator. In all cases, we would be happy to arrange transfers to and from the joining point of your tour if required.

Joining Tour Abroad

Clients booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point. Please refer to separate 'Joining Instructions' for time and place of rendezvous with tour leader

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.



Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

If you require travel insurance for your tour, Explore Worldwide is an appointed representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority. Our travel insurance policy is specially tailored to the needs of the adventure traveller and will cover you for any included activity on any Explore trip. You can either purchase this at the time of booking or call us on 0844 499 0903 after you have booked.

Visa Information

Namibia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Namibia

Nothing compulsory, but we do recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to immunise themselves against meningitis. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Namibia

With a staggering 300 days of sunshine each year, Namibia is a year-round destination, although some may prefer to avoid the heat of high summer. The cold Benguela current keeps the Atlantic coast of the Namib Desert cool and rain-free for most of the year, with a thick coastal fog that lends a mysterious edge to the area. January and February are the hottest months, when daytime temperatures in the heart of the Namib can exceed 40° C (104° F), but nights are usually cool. Winter nights can be fairly cold, but days are generally warm and pleasant.

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, however a warm fleece and sweater/thick shirts are essential, as nights (and daytime) can be very cold, especially from May to September, and game drives tend to take place at dawn and dusk. Brightly coloured clothing is not suitable for game viewing.

Equipment

Bring a torch, water bottle, sun hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Binoculars are essential for game viewing and a 300mm lens is recommended for photography. We also recommend you bring a swimming costume.

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots or robust trainers with a good grip, and sandals.

Luggage: On Tour

A soft bag or holdall/kitbag (or rucksack with detachable frame). There are no porters on this trip to carry luggage.

Luggage allowance on tour: 15Kg

General Information

Food

The prices for meals and drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive. The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.



Namibia

Lunch £: 15.00 Dinner £: 20.00

Drink

Namibia

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 0.80

Country details

Namibia

Population: 2.108.665

Size of Country: 825,418 sq km

Major Language: English, Afrikaans, German

Religion: Christian

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Namibia

3 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to - and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: The Sunshine Orphanage (which cares for abandoned children in Luxor, Egypt), Education for All (sponsoring children through their secondary education in Morocco), The Hope Foundation (helping an Indian Village to recover from the 2004 Tsunami) and the Mufindi Orphanage, which support AIDS orphans in Tanzania.

We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation, Travel Operators for Tigers (helping save the Bengal Tiger from extinction) and Friends for Conservation. We have also adopted a beautiful Sri Lankan Elephant called 'Serendip'.

We are delighted to have received a Five Star sustainable tourism status from the Association of Independent Tour Operators in recognition of our on-going commitment to sustainable tourism.

Explore are delighted to support Cool Earth to reduce carbon emissions through preventing the illegal deforestation of the South America rainforest. One of the top sources of global carbon emissions, rainforest deforestation equivalent to the USA's annual emissions, it also destroys flora and fauna, sometimes to the point of extinction. It also degrades the lives and communities of the 350 million residents of the rainforest.

Cool Earth prevents the deforestation through its support of local communities as forest guardians and by focussing on areas in immediate danger of deforestation. It has so far protected over 350,000 acres of rainforest, with each acre saving an emission of 260 tons of CO2, as well as protecting rare animals and plants. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year. In addition to mitigating emissions, when you travel with Explore, you are

helping to protect the source of 20% of the world's fresh water and oxygen, as well as the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion people who are reliant on the rainforest, www.coolearth.org

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation
 - Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- - Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% nonrefundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2014.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2014 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2014. 2015/16 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

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