

EXPLORE!

Tour Notes



Namib Lodge Safari + Cape Escape (NLC 2015)



TOUR DURATION
23
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Busy

Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard

tour Code: NLC

Tour Highlights - Namib Lodge Safari + Cape Escape

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Cape Town - An iconic, vibrant city surrounded by mountain and sea.
- ✓ Cape Peninsula - Visit Cape of Good Hope and the resident penguin colony.
- ✓ Stellenbosch - World renowned vineyards overlooked by stunning, rugged mountains.
- ✓ Tsitsikamma National Park - A marine and forest park in the heart of the famous Garden Route.
- ✓ Hermanus - The best place in Southern Africa to admire the humpback whales (in season).

Tour Essentials

Accommodation: 12 nights Standard Hotel
7 nights Standard Lodge
1 night Comfortable Lodge

Included Meals: 22 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 7 dinners

Start Point: Join tour: Windhoek

End Point: Tour ends: Cape Town

Transport: Bus, Truck

Countries: Namibia

Namib Lodge Safari + Cape Escape

This adventure combines a journey across the desert landscapes and national parks of Namibia with a tour of South Africa's scenic Western Cape. We can watch the sun's rays cast shadows over the world's highest sand dunes and walk along narrow paths through Sesriem Canyon. Staying in comfortable lodges along the route we track big game through Etosha and Waterberg Plateau National Parks. We fly south to the Cape Peninsula, following the Indian Ocean coastline and travelling inland to the fertile valleys. We hike up the legendary Table Mountain and explore the ancient limestone Cango Caves. We also watch the penguins frolic on Boulders Beach and visit an ostrich farm in the heart of the winelands. This trip offers the chance to explore two unique destinations on one fantastic holiday.

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

There may be early starts, long journeys and tiring days along the way, but you'll return home feeling you've really experienced as much as you possibly could.

Your tour itinerary

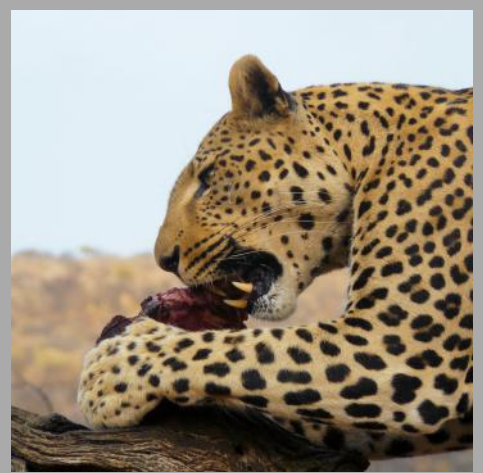
Tour itinerary notes

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.

DAY 1 Join tour Windhoek

Arrive Windhoek and check into hotel. There is some free time today for sightseeing in the Namibian capital, with an opportunity to visit the National Museum or perhaps a half day Katutura Township tour.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available




 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Drive to Sesriem

Departing Windhoek we spend the day driving south-west into the Namib Desert, to the edge of the Namib-Naukluft National Park and our lodge near Sesriem. The Namib is the oldest desert on earth, distinguished as being home to some of the strangest flora and fauna on the continent.


Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 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 Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Drive to Swakopmund via Walvis Bay

Travelling via Solitaire and through the Kuiseb Canyon, we pass aweinspiring 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 Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5 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 Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 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.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Visit Petrified Forest; drive to Okaukuejo or Halali in Etosha National Park

This morning 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. We then have the privilege to meet the Himba people and learn about their traditions and way of life. The Himba are the last semi-nomadic herders in Namibia and their simple lifestyle has remained unchanged for generations as these people have preferred their traditional life style to modernization. They have become iconic for using a characteristic red paste made of butter, fat and red ochre that they apply to their body and which serves an aesthetic purpose in beautifying their body as well as protecting them from the scorching sun. We interact with these friendly and proud people before continuing our journey to Etosha National Park, arguably one of the finest national parks in Africa.


Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 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.


Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 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. Shrunken 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.


Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 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 Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 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 Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 12 Fly to Cape Town

Arrive Cape Town and check-in to our hotel. Cape Town embodies the feeling of energy and hope that South Africans feel for the future of their country with its spectacular natural assets, modern high-tech city centre and mixed population living peaceably together and at the same time retaining their own customs. Cape fur seals can often be seen playfully frolicking in the harbour waters of the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 13 Free day in Cape Town

Today is free for you to enjoy the diversity of Cape town. There are optional activities such as visiting the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, the District Six Museum, Robben Island or take one of the sightseeing buses around the city limits.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 14 Tour Cape Peninsula National Park

We spend the whole day enjoying a comprehensive sightseeing tour of the many points of interest on the Cape Peninsula. We drive to Hout Bay, an attractive fishing port once flanked by dense forest with a dramatic background. Here you can take a short optional boat trip out to Seal Island. The island is home to about 1000 Cape fur seals and is guarded by the impressive 'Sentinel'; a towering mountain that guards the harbour. One of the highlights today is a visit to the Cape of Good Hope, first seen by a European in 1488 when Diaz sailed round it on his search for a sea route to the East Indies. A century later Sir Francis Drake described it as 'the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth'. But it was another century before the Dutch East Indies Trading Company established a permanent settlement to supply ships with cattle and water traded from the indigenous Khoi who reared livestock on the land around the coast. We climb up to a viewpoint and watch the reputed turbulent clash of the warm Agulhas current from the Indian Ocean meeting the cold Benguela current from the Atlantic. If you're feeling active, a short trail leads down to Cape Point. Boulders beach is worth a stop to see an amazing resident African penguin colony, one of the only places in the world where this sea bird resides! Then, passing perfect sandy beaches we return to Cape Town city.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 15 Ascend Table Mountain; drive Stellenbosch

This morning we plan to ascend Table Mountain. You may choose to take a 3-4 hour hiking trail up to the top accompanied by your Tour Leader (if the weather is clear). Alternatively, an aerial cableway runs frequently to and from the summit. This is our first encounter with some of the unique and colourful flowers from the Cape Floral Kingdom. This plant kingdom has more indigenous plant species per square metre than anywhere else on earth! Views from the top are simply stunning. A network of trails criss-cross the plateau that provide a variety of vantage points. Later in the day we'll head out of Cape Town to stay on a guest farm in the Stellenbosch region. The Stellenbosch region produces some of the finest 'New World Wines'. Wines that have been honed over several centuries by the Afrikaans wine growers, so we'll make sure we sample some of the latest vintages!

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 16 In Stellenbosch, visit a vineyard

To the north and east of Cape Town are the Cape Winelands, whose rugged mountains, rise sheer from rolling green valleys, neatly planted with vineyards and dotted with white washed manor houses. This is an image more reminiscent of a central European fairy tale than 'Darkest Africa'! Stellenbosch is one of the most beautiful and heritage-rich towns in southern Africa. Entering the town via historic Dorp Street is akin to stepping into the pages of a history book. A settlement was first established here in 1679 following the discovery of a river running through a fertile, green valley by Simon van der Stel, then Governor of the Cape. There is an opportunity to stroll through this historic town and take in the distinct architecture that reflects South Africa's rich and diverse history. You can choose to explore on your own following selfguided trails or take an optional guided tour. If you are feeling energetic, you may like to take a walk on the Helderberg Mountains just behind Stellenbosch.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

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 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **17** Drive to Oudtshoorn

We start early on our scenic journey into the Little Karoo as there are several points of interest worth visiting en route. Located in the heart of the verdant Breede River Valley (the largest of the Western Cape's fruit and wine producing valleys), Worcester is home to the Karoo National Botanical Garden – a haven for rare or endangered plants. A short walk around the centre of town allows a glimpse of the fine Victorian town buildings. We continue our drive through the stark and arid landscapes of the Little Karoo heading east through Barrydale & Ladismith. Finally, we reach our accommodation close to Oudtshoorn in the traditional centre of South Africa's ostrich farming industry.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **18** In Oudtshoorn

We head off early this morning to experience the stunning variety of landscapes of this region and start off by exploring the massive limestone caverns of the Cango Caves where guided tours of varying durations run regularly throughout the day (optional). The caves are an underground wonderland of extraordinary structures millions of years old. The combination of dripping rainwater and limestone has led to the creation of some of nature's most breathtaking natural structures. A local European farmer, by the name of van Zyl, first discovered the caves late in the 18th century. Although, in times past, the local Khoisan sheltered in the cave complex's entrance but they never ventured any further into the cave complex. When van Zyl, with a single candle, entered the cave complex and its first massive chamber and spoke, he realised from his muffled voice that there was something far bigger and grander than his candle light could show. Ever since then the caves have been enjoyed and explored by professionals and amateurs alike.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **19** To Knysna

After leaving Oudtshoorn we travel over the protea-covered on the dramatic Outeniqua pass through the Outeniqua Mountains. These mountains form a very formidable barrier between the dry interior and the lush coastal strip known as the 'Garden Route'. Knysna was originally a harbour, forestry and mining centre. The setting will give you a real appreciation of how skillful maritime captains of old were to pilot their vessels in, and out of the lagoon. Knysna's lagoon is the foundation of the town's wealth. It was here that ships could shelter and victual and valuable raw material like wood could be transported to other centres of industry. It was also home to the reputed illegitimate son of King George III, George Rex. He is considered the main driving force in establishing Knysna as a commercial town. Today it is noteworthy as an artists' retreat and adventure activity base and has twice been voted South Africa's favourite town. Later today it may also be possible to take an easy walk on the magnificent Robberg Peninsula. Named after the seal colony found there by Dutch sailors. From here the views of the coastline are fantastic and it is easy to understand why our early ancestors used this peninsula as a home. From the peninsula have a really good chance of seeing seals, dolphins and the Southern Right Whale. During June to late November, the whales come into calmer and warmer waters to calve and nurse their young.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **20** In Knysna; visit Tsitsikamma Park

No visit to the Garden Route would be complete without a visit to the magnificent Tsitsikamma National Park. Tsitsikamma is a marine and forest park, stretching for some 80 km, from a lagoon at Nature's Valley to the mouth of the Groot River. The lush forest and the sheer cliffs provide an ideal setting for a short walk in the forests to the suspension bridge that spans the mouth of Storm's River. The rugged coastline with crashing waves and the forest covered cliffs are simply spellbinding. While you are here, you must definitely sample the excellent local seafood available in the area! You will leave the Garden Route promising yourself you will someday come back!

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 21 Visit Botelierskop Private Game reserve, drive to Swellendam

This morning we have an early start to drive to Botelierskop Private Game Reserve to take a 3 hour game drive. You will be accompanied by a local guide in your open 4x4 safari vehicle in the 3000ha reserve to view African wildlife in its natural habitat. There are around 1800 animals in the reserve including rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, eland, bontebok and black impala. There are also orphaned elephants and in the lion sanctuary a small number of orphaned lions. Following the game drive we will continue to follow the garden route to the farming region of Swellendam, a lovely old town with numerous Cape Dutch buildings, interesting museums and art galleries. Later this afternoon you may choose to visit a local township, considered to be one of the highlights of this tour.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 22 Along the 'Whale Route' to Cape Town

On our penultimate day we follow the acclaimed 'Whale Route' along the dramatic south coast to Cape Town. Our first stop is wild and dramatic Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point in Africa. It is also the point where the Atlantic Ocean officially meets the Indian Ocean. We then drive on to the small seaside resort of Hermanus that is regarded as one of the premier spots for whale-watching in Africa, if not the world! Every year, between June and December, Southern Right whales spend a few months every year in the Cape, mating and calving. Hermanus is one of the best places to see them as they come very close inshore and the cliff top coastal walk offers many convenient viewing points. The calving and mating is a spectacle not to be missed! Hermanus is the only place in the world to employ a 'whale crier'. He keeps everybody informed of the whereabouts of the whales by blowing his kelp horn. The whale crier is as much a part of the whale watching as the whales are. Finally, we return to Cape Town via Betty's Bay and Gordon's Bay coast affording spectacular views across both Walker Bay and False Bay. Please note: Final timings of today's itinerary are flexible and depend on seasonality and the likelihood of spotting whales. Out of whale season we may arrive in Cape Town earlier in the day.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 23 Tour ends Cape Town

Most of today is left free for personal exploration before the flight to London this evening. You may choose to visit the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. The gardens lie on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain and consist of landscaped gardens of indigenous plants and trees. The gardens are a living display of floral beauty and features 4700 of the estimated 20000 species of indigenous South African flora, and close to 50 per cent of the Peninsula's floral wealth! You may opt to take a boat trip to visit Robben Island. It has had a dark history serving as a prison. It is here that Nelson Mandela served most of his prison sentence under the South African government. It is now a worthy and powerful symbol of the optimism and hope for the future of South Africa. (If you are interested in booking this please see below) If this all sounds far too strenuous, you could just soak up the vibrant and colourful atmosphere at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and just wander or do some last minute shopping! You may want to take a short city tour with your tour leader.



Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

In Namibia: 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.

In the Western Cape: South Africa has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. Outside of our midrange, hotel in Cape town, much of our accommodation is in small, family run guesthouses, farms and inns. These are more than just B&Bs; individually styled and tastefully furnished, with en suite rooms and often lovely gardens and a pool. The properties we use give a real taste of traditional South African hospitality and we love supporting these small local businesses. In Stellenbosch we stay in the guesthouse of a working wine farm which gives us a great feel for the country whilst staying in comfortable accommodation. We can also enjoy some great home cooking and views from the pool. Also of note is our thatched country lodge at Oudtshoorn.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 22 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.

Food

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

The prices for 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.

Namibia

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 0.80

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

In Namibia:

Swakopmund - Scenic flight (1 hour) over Soussusvlei £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

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

Windhoek - Katutura township tour N\$250 per person depending on numbers.

In the Western Cape:

Cape Town - Robben Island (3.5 hour tour) £22; Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens £3. Cape Peninsula - Seal Island boat trip £5.

Stellenbosch - Guided tour available £5; Wine tasting £2.

Cango Caves - Guided tour of caves £7-8 depending on duration; Ostrich Farm £6.

Swellendam - Township tour £9; Marloth Nature Reserve £6.

Hermanus - Whale watching £50.

Plettenberg Bay - Whale watching £44.

Tsitsikamma NP - Canopy trail £42.

Oudsthoorn - Wildlife ranch £9.

Knysna - Robberg Nature Reserve walk £3.

If you would like to book an excursion to Robben Island, the former prison where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated please use this link: <http://www.robben-island.org.za/> It is very important that you book the 9am ferry for day 13 of the tour. If there are spaces it is also possible to book this excursion locally, but this is subject to availability.

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

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

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. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

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.

South Africa: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their

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local embassy or consular office.

All visitors should ensure their passport has two consecutive blank pages for the entry stamp. The South African Immigration officials will not allow child/ infant pages to be used for this purpose and visitors without the stipulated blank pages will be denied entry.

For all tours departing from October 1st 2014 it will be obligatory for parents travelling with children to show the child's full birth certificate, and where only one parent is accompanying, proof of parental or legal authority to travel with the child (eg an affidavit from the other parent, a court order or - if applicable - a death certificate). You should travel with these documents in case you're asked to provide them.

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. Also take long trousers, a waterproof and windproof jacket. Take a swimming costume and towel.

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. Mosquito nets are not required as the accommodation provides screening where necessary.

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

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

EXPLORE! The Adventure Travel Experts available online 24/7

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, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of 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 traditions, 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: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

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
- [Tourism Concern](#)
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.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable 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 2014 and 31st December 2015.

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: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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