

NAMIBIAN DISCOVERY

14 Day tour to Windhoek, Kalahari Desert, Fish River Canyon, Lüderitz, Namib Desert, Swakopmund, Damaraland, Etosha National Park & Windhoek

The classic Namibian Safari. This is an introduction to the major highlights Namibia has to offer. The contrasting landscapes of the country, including the awe-inspiring Fish River Canyon, the surreal Namib Desert and the majestic mountain ranges in Damaraland mixed with the vibrant cultures that live there and the amazing wildlife in the national parks and conservancies. This safari will leave you engrossed in Namibia.

DAY 1 (FRI) ARRIVAL WINDHOEK

Arrival Windhoek today; you are met and transferred to hotel for 1 night.

Hotel: Windhoek Safari Court

DAY 2 (SAT) WINDHOEK > KALAHARI DESERT

MEAL: B/D

Leaving Windhoek, we travel into the largest sand mass on Earth, the Kalahari Desert. The Kalahari is a vast semi desert of wind-blown sand held by a sparse mantle of thorn scrub making it the largest continuous stretch of sand covering 9 African countries. Unlike other true deserts, the Kalahari does receive erratic rainfall. For many therefore 'thirstland' is a more fitting description. Lacking permanent surface water, the Kalahari is a challenging place to live except for those who have adapted to not only survive but flourish here. The Bushmen refer to it as the 'Soul of the World', an emotive description for this area! With its deep red sand dunes and endless grass plains interspersed with acacia's and shrubs, it is still home to a surprising large amount of specially adapted wildlife. Enjoy the opportunity to experience the red dunes, wildlife and plants, in this desert environment on an optional nature drive.

Check-in to Zebra Kalahari Lodge & Spa

DAY 3 (SUN) KALAHARI DESERT > FISH RIVER CANYON

MEAL: B/D

We continue south through arid and extensive rocky plains. Visiting the unique Garas quiver tree forest you are welcomed by quirky man-made sculptures of scrap metal which set a contrast to this serene, timeless space with Quiver trees and aloes nestled amongst huge dolerite boulders, stacked in a mysterious way, the area is also aptly referred to as "Giant's Playground". We continue to our lodge, situated in close vicinity to the Fish River Canyon. Here we can explore the area on foot or on an optional guided nature drive in the later afternoon highlighting the Quiver trees, rugged landscape and impressive sweeping rock formations.

DAY 4 (MON) FISH RIVER CANYON > LÜDERITZ

MEAL: B/D

Our morning starts on the edge of the Fish River Canyon where we gaze into this magnificent geological phenomenon. The Fish River Canyon is located in the northern part of the Nama Karoo and is the second largest canyon on earth, featuring a gigantic ravine that measures in total about 160 km long, up to 27 km wide and in places almost 550 meters deep. The Fish River is the longest interior river found in Namibia, but its current flow is just a drop compared with the immense volume of water that poured down its length in ages past. We continue our journey past the Naute dam, where we shortly stop at the Naute Kristall Cellar and Distillery, to optionally taste some of the unique liquors or simply enjoy a delicious cup of coffee. Proceeding onwards we head towards the coastal town of Lüderitz. On the way to Lüderitz we stop at Garub, viewing point for the Wild Horses of the Namib Desert.

Check-in to Luderitz Nest Hotel

DAY 5 (TUE) LÜDERITZ

MEAL: B/D

Our morning starts with a visit to Kolmanskop ghost town. Kolmanskop is a deserted Diamond Mining Town in the Sperrgebiet National Park. Once an opulent and decadent town, a monument to the Diamond boom and built to last...until the diamonds ran out. Today Kolmanskop stands as a haunting monument to the thriving past, offering visitor's unique photo motives into a bygone era. On our return to town, we visit Diaz Point with its Padrao on a cliff overlooking the harsh Atlantic Ocean commemorating the initial Portuguese explorers and explore the forlorn coast. Arriving back in Lüderitz we explore this small, historic town.

DAY 6 (WED) LÜDERITZ > NAMIB DESERT

MEAL: B/D

After an early breakfast we travel across wide open plains north along the Tiras Mountain range to our lodge in the Namib Desert. We are located in close proximity to Sesriem the gateway to Sossusvlei, Dead Vlei and Sesriem Canyon, with some of the highest sand dunes on Earth towering over the white desert plains. The afternoon can be spent relaxing at the sparkling pool, enjoying the vast open desert plains, or taking part in optional activities offered at the lodge.

Check-in to Elegant Desert Lodge

DAY 7 (THU) NAMIB DESERT

MEAL: B/D

The morning demands an early start. Entering the Namib Naukluft National Park with sunrise, the first rays of sunlight paint the mountains of sand into a variety of apricot, red and orange, contrasted against a crisp blue skyline, enrapturing our senses, and providing an opportunity to capture this awesome landscape on film. You will be captivated by the surreal Deadvlei surrounded by some of the highest dunes on earth and Sossusvlei, where the dry Tsauchab River ends abruptly amongst dunes. Take the opportunity to walk up one of these majestic dunes to admire the desert landscape beneath. Thereafter we visit the Sesriem Canyon, a life sustaining natural phenomenon in the heart of the Namib Desert.

DAY 8 (FRI) NAMIB DESERT > SWAKOPMUND

MEAL: B

After breakfast we continue our journey approaching the little settlement of Solitaire on the edge of the Namib Naukluft National Park, feeling like you have arrived in the middle of nowhere. Here it is worthwhile to enjoy a cup of coffee with the delightful apple-pie written about in so many travel books before travelling via the desolate, rolling hills of the Kuiseb Valley towards the Atlantic Ocean. Reaching the coastal harbour town of Walvis Bay, we visit the shallow lagoon, one of the most important wetland areas on the African continent and a RAMSAR World Heritage Site. Over 80% of the African flamingos feed in this lagoon and present a breath-taking picture when they appear in groups. Continuing along the scenic route between the dune belt and the Atlantic Ocean we reach Swakopmund, where the rest of the day is spent at leisure. With palm-lined streets and seaside promenades, Swakopmund is a popular holiday destination in Namibia.

Check-in to Europa Hof Hotel

DAY 9 (SAT) SWAKOPMUND

MEAL: B

Swakopmund is often referred to as the “playground of Namibia”, it has numerous activities ranging from, adventure to exploring the fascinating features of the Namib Desert and the animals and plants that occur and survive here. Embrace the relaxed pace of this idyllic coastal town whilst enjoying coffee and freshly baked pastries in one of the many café’s. Alternatively explore the rugged, sweltering desert on a day tour, or view this awesome, environment from the air on a scenic flight. Find your inner child and push adrenaline to its limits with extreme adventures such as skydiving over the desert or quad biking and sand boarding on the dunes. Take time to get the feel of this quaint town with its historic buildings, museums, shopping arcades and beach bar that has transformed into its own personality by the vibrant use of colour and the bohemian lifestyle.

DAY 10 (SUN) SWAKOPMUND > DAMARALAND

MEAL: B/D

On long yet interesting and scenic roads we head further north, traveling past the Brandberg, Namibia’s highest mountain (2.579m), into the Damaraland, one of the least populated and geologically diverse areas in Africa. This harsh, rocky environment is home to the elusive desert elephant, the black rhino and free-roaming antelope species. Accompanied by a local Damara guide we visit Twyfelfontein, a UNESCO heritage site where Bushman communities engraved and painted over 2.500 pictures some 6.000 years ago! After a visit to the nearby Living Museum of the Damara we proceed to the Petrified Forest - a geological phenomenon depicting the creation and metamorphosis of wood into stone amongst some of the oldest landmasses on Earth. Here we also see the Welwitschia mirabilis plant – the oldest living desert plant on Earth.

Check-in to Damara Mopane Lodge Gondwana Collection Namibia

DAY 11 (MON) DAMARALAND > ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

MEAL: B/D

After a relaxed breakfast, we travel towards the Etosha National Park, famous for its vast amount of wildlife. Once we have reached our camp located just outside of the National Park, we head onto our first safari into the National Park. Together with our guide we explore the various waterholes located close to Okaukuejo and the Anderson gate. Optional and time permitting open vehicle game drives can be booked with the lodge.

Check-in to Etosha Safari Camp Gondwana Collection Namibia

DAY 12 (TUE) ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

MEAL: B/D

The day is devoted purely to the abundant wildlife found in the Etosha National Park, which surrounds a parched salt desert known as the Etosha Pan. The park is home to 4 of the Big Five - elephant, lion, leopard and rhino. The Park was proclaimed as Namibia's first conservation area in 1907 by the then Governor, von Lindequist. Despite the size of the Etosha National Park, only the southern edge of the pan is accessible to visitors. Game viewing in the park is largely focussed around the waterholes, some of which are spring fed and some supplied from a borehole, ideal places to sit and watch over 114 different game species, or for an avid birder, in excess of 340 bird species. Popular game species such as giraffe, blue wildebeest, plains and mountain zebra, hyena, lion, leopard, antelopes such as kudu, oryx, eland, as well as some of the endangered species such as Black rhino, cheetah and the black-faced impala are all found here. An extensive network of roads link the over 30 water holes allowing visitors the opportunity of an extensive game viewing safari over the stretch of the park as each different area will provide different encounters.

Check-in to Mokuti Etosha Lodge

DAY 13 (WED) ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

MEAL: B/D

Today your guide again takes you on a game drive in the Etosha National Park, or optionally you can book an open game drive park drive with the lodge. We may encounter animal species we have not seen the previous day and look forward to any new surprises at the different waterholes visited. The Etosha Pan dominates the park. This salt pan desert, which is nearly completely enclosed by the park and is lined by numerous watering holes, is roughly 130 km long and as wide as 50 km in places. During Etosha's notorious dry spells the pan is a deathly place, lying parched and cracked under the molten African sun. It is claimed that game viewing is best during the dry spells as animals will then congregate closer to water. But even in the rainy season the park remains an abundant wildlife haven. You then have the pleasure of experiencing the rebirth of life as the young foals, cubs and chicks are seen frolicking with their parents and the sprouting new green shrubs and grasses create a pleasing green oasis. In the afternoon we travel back to our lodge, where we enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure.

DAY 14 (THU) DEPARTURE

MEAL: B

After breakfast we travel back through the centre of the country exposing bushland savannah to the capital in the centre of the country. Time permitting, en-route we may stop at the famous wood carvers market in Okahandja or the craft market in the main street in Windhoek to pick up a last few souvenirs. Windhoek is a cosmopolitan melting pot of European architecture with African culture, with a variety of good restaurants to choose from. You will be dropped off at your accommodation of choice, or transferred to the airport for your outward flight.

Same day flight departures out of Windhoek International are only possible after 19h00.