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Heart of Namibia Safari Adventure, 7 Day Travel Plan





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Day 1

***MONDAY* WINDHOEK AIRPORT - WINDHOEK CITY CENTER (50KM) | HILTON HOTEL**

You will be collected from Windhoek's Hosea Kutako International airport and transferred to the luxurious Hilton Hotel in Windhoek City's heart. After checking in and having some time to relax, for clients who have arrived in Windhoek before 12:00 midday, an interesting and exciting excursion is planned for the afternoon.

We will drive out to the internationally known N/a'an ku se Wildlife Sanctuary. Located about 50 km to the east of Windhoek. N/a'an ku se is a sanctuary dedicated to rehabilitating sick, injured, and orphaned animals. The ultimate focus is to reintroduce these sometimes rare and endangered species back into their natural habitat so that they can live life wild and free. Sadly though, in many cases, this is not possible. Some of the animals that come to N/a'an ku se would not, ever again, be able to fend for themselves in their native yet cruel natural environment. Instead, they take "early retirement" and find themselves a permanent home at N/a'an ku se. We will be introduced to species like the baboon, caracal, lion, and cheetah. Wild dogs and leopards are also living at N/a'an ku se together with many smaller mammals, and we can watch some of the N/a'an ku se "locals" have their supper. Returning to Windhoek in the late afternoon. Dinner tonight is at your own account from the many excellent restaurants available in Namibia's capital city.

Overnight at the [Hilton Hotel](#) or Similar.



Day 2

***TUESDAY* WINDHOEK - ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK (500KM) | HALALI CAMP**

You will be collected from your accommodation within the Windhoek city limits at 07:00 and transferred to Chameleon Safaris Head Quarters for a short pre-departure meeting. Heading north from Windhoek, we stop briefly at the small town of Otjiwarongo to gather some last-minute supplies before continuing on to Etosha, and we enjoy a light lunch pack whilst “on the move.” We enter Etosha National Park, and game drives us to our overnight Halali Camp accommodation.

Etosha is huge, just over 22,000 square km, and is home to 114 species of mammal, 350 species of bird, 110 species of reptile, uncountable numbers of insect, and, somewhat bizarrely, one species of fish. There are good chances of spotting many of these creatures as we tour the park, stopping at the various waterholes along the way. All visitors must be in camp by sunset, and we aim to arrive at our lodge at Halali just before sunset and with time to settle into our rooms, with en-suite bathrooms and tea/coffee facilities. The name for Halali is taken from a bugle refrain originally used during sport hunting with horses and hounds in Europe. The bugler would sound the Halali to signify that the hunt was over. This was considered appropriate for Etosha as inside the protection of the National Park, the hunting of animals is over forever.

The ‘game show’ in Etosha doesn’t stop when the sun goes down. All the Etosha camps have floodlit waterholes for extra game viewing opportunities. The Halali waterhole is called Moringa, after the moringa trees that are abundant here, and it is located within walking distance from our accommodation. A visit, or two, is highly recommended this evening, as we can expect many species to visit Moringa at night. This waterhole is known to be very popular with elephants and the critically endangered black rhino.



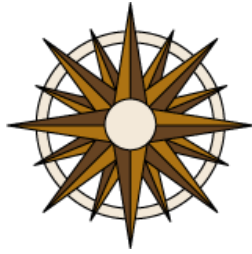
Overnight at [Halali Camp](#) (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) or Similar.

Day 3

***WEDNESDAY* ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK - TALENI (70KM) | ETOSHA VILLAGE**

We have the whole day to explore Etosha and want to make the most of it. The park gates open at sunrise, and we aim to go just as the sun breaches the horizon. Early morning is usually a productive time for game viewing, and first thing in the morning is a good time to catch big cats returning from the hunt. We return to Halali for breakfast and load our vehicle before heading out into the park again in search of a big game. Etosha is a desert landscape; water is the most scarce natural resource. There are, however, numerous waterholes here, both natural and man-made, and our game-driving technique is to take in as many as possible. Here we hope the game will come to us as the thirsty animals attend for a much-needed drink. On our way today, we will stop to have a closer look at the Etosha Pan. The name Etosha translates as 'great white space,' but this name does not do justice to the pan's immensity. Over 4,700 square km of dazzling white mineral pan is so big that it can be seen from space. We exit Etosha at the Anderson gate close to sunset, and it is just a short drive to our accommodation in a comfortable, spacious twin share room with modern en-suite bathroom facilities. An ideal space to sit back, relax, and enjoy the beauty surrounding you. Our guide prepares a fantastic dinner this evening.

Overnight at [Etosha Village](#) (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) or Similar.



Day 4

***THURSDAY* ETOSHA - SWAKOPMUND (510KM) | HOTEL A LA MER**

After breakfast, we aim to be on the road by 07:30 today. We are heading for the Skeleton Coast and taking the scenic route. We first head south on the main road, passing the small town of Outjo, then onwards towards the west and picking up the gravel road as we travel through an area known as Damaraland. Damaraland is famed for its scenery, mountains, open grasslands, tall koppies, (small hills), round pink granite boulders, wide open spaces, and big sky. We also have a chance to meet some of the locals as there are several places along our road today where we can find informal shops selling locally made, hand-crafted souvenirs. Represented here, we usually find ladies from the Himba, Herero, and Damara tribes, and most often, they wear their traditional dress. Here we can interact with some colorful local characters living in this harsh environment. Making a small purchase here is a good way to contribute directly to the local economy. We continue through the beautiful landscape, stopping for a light picnic lunch, under the shadow of Namibia's highest mountain, the Brandberg. Rising from the desert floor, this giant monolith is 2,573 m above sea level and formed of pink-tinged granite. We continue our journey west and soon arrive at the coast and the chilly Atlantic Ocean. The whole coastline of Namibia is known as the Skeleton Coast, and it is easy to see why this barren seaboard is so named with its forbidding mountains and barren beaches. The wind, the waves, and the huge fog banks conspire to push ships onto the beach. In olden times, countless mariners found themselves shipwrecked here and faced the stark prospect of no fresh water, no food, no rescue, and a slow death by exposure. Their Shipmates who went down with their ship were thought to be the lucky ones. We are heading south on the coast road, and a more recent shipwreck is our next stop. 15 km south of the small town of Henties Bay, a fishing trawler, The Zeila, was



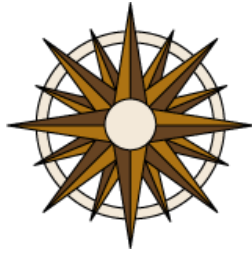
beached in 2008. She was an old vessel that had been sold for scrap and was under tow at the time. The cable snapped, and, like so many vessels before her, she was caught in the swell and currents and ended up on the beach. She lays quite close to the shore and is well-positioned for photos. We complete the final leg of our journey into Swakopmund. We check into our accommodation. The centrally located A La Mer hotel and the town are easily explored on foot from our central location. Captain Kurt von François of the imperial colonial army of the German empire in 1892 founded Swakopmund. (He also founded Windhoek in 1890). It is an interesting town, to say the least, bounded to the north, the east, and the south by the mighty sand dunes of the Namib Desert and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean. There are still many examples of German colonial architecture to be seen, and the German language is still widely used. Swakopmund boasts some truly excellent restaurants, and again your guide will be able to help you with recommendations and bookings.

Overnight at [Hotel a La Mer](#) (Breakfast, Lunch) or Similar.

Day 5

***FRIDAY* SWAKOPMUND - SESRIEM (350KM) |
DESERT CAMP**

We have the option to have a more leisurely start this morning as we are only leaving Swakopmund in the middle morning. Your guide will let you know the exact time of departure. If you choose not to have a lie in then Swakopmund offers many opportunities to keep us busy during our morning here. The town center is small and easily explored on foot, but many extra, optional activities are also available. For those who love adrenaline, quad biking, and sand boarding is also very popular if you fancy careering down the slip face of a sand dune at 60 km per hour. Our guide will discuss all the options with you in



advance and will be able to facilitate any bookings that we would like to make. Departing Swakopmund in the mid-morning, we head east into the desert. We first cross the Namib gravel plains, largely flat, and seemingly barren terrain broken up by huge mountain inselbergs. We have two mountain passes to traverse this afternoon, first is the mighty Kuiseb Pass, and we follow the road from the top of the mountains, dropping steeply down into the canyon carved over eons by the Kuiseb River on its way to debouch into the ocean at the port town of Walvis Bay. We climb up from the banks of the river and over the pass, traveling through the mountain peaks and onto the second, smaller canyon of the Gaub River, a tributary of the Kuiseb. We emerge from the mountains onto a flat road and almost immediately cross the Tropic of Capricorn at 23.5 south degrees. There is a signpost at this auspicious spot, and we stop along the road for photos. From here, we continue through the desert landscape to stretch our legs and to our destination for today, Desert Camp, located very close to the National Park entrance at Sesriem, the gateway to the dunes at Sossusvlei. A pool and bar are available, and our guide over an open fire prepares dinner.

Overnight at [Desert Camp](#) (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) or Similar.

Day 6

***SATURDAY* SOSSUSVLEI - DEAD VLEI - DUNE 45 - SESRIEM CANYON (120 KM) | DESERT CAMP**

Sunrise in the dunes is the name of the game this morning, and that means a pre-dawn start and a very early breakfast. The best time to photograph the dunes is around sunrise and sunset. This is when you can see towering sand dunes illuminated a glowing orange, apricot red on one side, and covered in shadows on the other. The depth of field is amazing at this time of day. From



Sesriem, we quickly cover the 60 km into the dunes and arrive at the 2x4 car park where all 2-wheel drive vehicles must stop. From here, we enter the ancient Tsauchab River bed for the last 5km leg to Sossusvlei. The Tsauchab River is ephemeral, it only flows seasonally, when there is enough rain, and for the most part, the riverbed is dry. Eons ago, during these rare floods, the Tsauchab sometimes received enough water to flow all the way to the Atlantic Ocean. However, as the millennia passed and the dune fields began to form, (around five million years ago), wind-blown sand invaded the riverbeds. The rivers became increasingly constricted by sand until, eventually, the occasional floods could not break through the sand barriers that the wind had erected. The valley we drove along this morning to get here is kept free of sand by the Tsauchab, but Sossusvlei is now permanently waters end. Sossusvlei does still sometimes flood (perhaps once in a decade). After good rains in the Naukluft Mountains, where the river rises, Sossusvlei can become inundated, and the lake that this creates can last for many months, but no longer can the river find its original path to the Atlantic. There is a 4x4 shuttle service that will transport us through the sandy terrain of the riverbed. We will visit Dead Vlei, an ancient pan completely surrounded by dunes, strikingly populated with dead, skeletal camelthorn trees. These trees have been a feature of this landscape for over 1000 years. Dunes almost surround Sossusvlei, just one narrow path kept open by the Tsauchab River. We have time to explore the area on foot and to climb one of the highest dunes in the world, some towering 300 m above us. The views are breathtaking and justly famous. We drive back the way we came, (there is only one road), stopping at the iconic Dune 45 (so named as it is 45 km from Sesriem. There is time to climb Dune 45 if you still have energy, or perhaps just a sit in the shade at the base of the dune will suffice. Driving back to Sesriem, we take a short excursion to see the Sesriem Canyon. Only four km from Sesriem, this canyon has been carved out of the landscape by the Tsauchab River.



Around two million years ago, there was an ice age in Europe. This caused glaciers to form and resulted in a worldwide drop in sea level. The knock-on effect of this at Sesriem Canyon was that it increased the length and water flow of the Tsauchab River. This greater force of water allowed the Tsauchab to begin cutting through the terrain resulting in the canyon we can see today. We can easily walk into the riverbed, it is usually much cooler in the canyon, and we can follow the river for some way along its journey to Sossusvlei. We head back to Desert Camp in the late afternoon.

Overnight at [Desert Camp](#) (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) or Similar.

Day 7

***SUNDAY* SESRIEM - WINDHOEK AIRPORT
(320KM) | DEPART**

Our last day today, but excitement is still on the menu. We head back to Solitaire and join an open vehicle to visit one of their local conservation projects, in this case, cheetah. Solitaire is home to a number of cheetahs that, for different reasons, cannot be released back into the wild. This excursion allows us the chance to learn all about the cheetah, and the work done by local conservation projects, and also get some incredible photos of the world's fastest land mammal. After the activity, we sample the apple pie that has made this homestead famous. There is some lovely mountain scenery on our drive back to Windhoek. The road climbs onto and over Namibia's central plateau, and we return to Windhoek via the small community at BüellsPort and the small town of Rehoboth. We arrive mid-afternoon and will be dropped at Chameleon Backpackers or the accommodation of your choice within Windhoek city limits.



We will transfer you to Windhoek's international airport for those who choose to fly today. NO FLIGHTS DEPARTING PRIOR TO 18H00 should be booked in case unexpected delays occur when returning from your safari.

Included in the price:

- Transport in a custom-built safari vehicle with a pop-up roof and USB charging capabilities & air-conditioning
- Services of a professional English-speaking guide
- 6 nights' accommodation in twin share rooms with en-suite bathrooms as stated above in the Travel Plan
- Meals as stated in the Travel Plan
- National park entry fees (2 days Etosha & 1 day Sossusvlei)
- Carnivore Feeding activity at N/a'ankuse Wildlife Sanctuary
- Game drives mentioned in the Travel Plan
- Sossusvlei excursion (including 4x4 shuttle) and cheetah activity at Solitaire
- Return Airport transfers

Excluded from the price:

- International or Domestic flights
- All drinks
- Snacks between meals
- Tips for your safari guide
- Entry Visa into Namibia
- Travel and Health Insurance
- All personal costs