

Wildlife & Dunes of Namibia



Trip style:
Walking with sightseeing

Destination:
📍 Namibia

Walking Grade
1-4

Carbon Footprint:
👤 3143kg CO2

Holiday Overview

Exceptional wildlife, photogenic deserts, and beautiful coastline makes Namibia a must-see destination for first-timers or returning visitors. Stand atop sky-high sand dunes in the Namib Desert, seek out big game with an Etosha National Park safari, and keep your eyes peeled for whales, dolphins, seals, turtles, and sunfish during a boat trip in beautiful Walvis Bay. Equally stand out is the granite landscape of the Erongo mountain range for a wealth of bird life, reptiles, mammals, and plants that are endemic or near endemic. Most fascinating of all are the unique cultures which you will experience meeting the Damara people, the San, and the Himba tribe.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Experiencing the Sossusvlei dunes in the Namib Desert
- Spotting pelicans and flamingos at Walvis Bay Lagoon
- Taking a boat ride from Swakopmund in search of the 'Marine Big 5'
- Watching the sun set over the Erongo Mountains
- Admiring ancient rock art at Twyfelfontein
- Enjoying game drives at Etosha National Park
- Meeting local tribes and learning about their history, traditions and daily life
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 14 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Local Tour Manager who leads walks and sightseeing
- Game drives led by experienced safari leaders
- 14 nights' touring accommodation across Namibia
- 14 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 14 dinners
- All tips, sightseeing and national park entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- All in-destination transport
- Return flights from London including baggage and transfers

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Day 1 Depart the UK

Our with-flights guests depart the UK on an overnight flight to Windhoek.

Day 2 Arrive in Windhoek

We arrive in Windhoek and are joined by our without-flight guests. We'll enjoy an afternoon city tour of Windhoek, the vibrant heart of Namibia. Discover the unique blend of tradition and modernity that makes this a must-see destination. Later, we'll enjoy dinner at Windhoek's famous restaurant, Joe's Beerhouse. With an extensive menu catering for all tastes and classic and signature cocktails including non-alcoholic Joe's is a great place for your welcome dinner.

Day 3 Namib Desert

After breakfast we'll travel into the majestic Namib Desert which means "place where there is nothing". This is the world's oldest desert stretching along the Atlantic coast of Namibia, Angola and South Africa. Despite its name the desert rich with biodiversity, ancient cultures and incredible moving seas of red sands that form mega-dunes. On arrival at our eco-friendly camp settle into your cabin and then take a stroll to the tops of dunes to see the vastness of the desert. Make your way to the wide central deck and enjoy a sundowner while watching the sunset before a delicious dinner is served.

Day 4 Sossusvlei

An early start gets us on the road for our all day excursion to Sossusvlei, Dead Vlei and Sesriem Canyon. Sossusvlei is a salt and clay pan surrounded by towering red dunes. Dead Vlei (dead marsh) is a stark white clay pan dotted with dead camel

thorn trees that are 600 years old. The dark skeletons rising out of the white pan with the surrounding red dunes and bright blue skies create a surreal atmosphere and is a photographer's dream.

After our visit we continue on to our lodge where we take a sundowner drive in the petrified dunes of the Gondwana Namib Park. These dunes solidified into sandstone during wetter periods from 20 to 8 million years ago. They are richly coloured from red brown to golden and are especially beautiful at sunset.

Day 5 Namib Naukluft National Park

Enjoy the stillness of the morning with a sunrise walk over the dunes. Leaving our lodge we head to the town of Solitaire on the edge of the Namib Naukluft National Park. We stop at a small bakery founded by Percy 'Moose' McGregor a Scottish adventurer who included a German apple pie in his range of baked goods. His pie and warm welcome quickly caught on and visitors come from near and far to sample his famous pie. Who would have thought you would find a favourite humble dessert in the middle of Namibia. From here we continue our drive through spectacular scenery to our next accommodation, in the Naukluft National Park

Late afternoon we will take a scenic sundowner drive into the desert. Look out for mountain zebra, ostrich and oryx. We may even find *Welwitschia mirabilis* a unique ancient plant known for its incredible longevity (over 2,000 years).

There is an option to do a late night guided walk to spot nocturnal animals and insects.

Day 6 Swakopmund

After breakfast, we depart for the coastal town of Swakopmund, where we'll be staying for the next two nights. The valleys of the Swakop River form an otherworldly landscape and is likened to the moon's surface. It came into existence as the river cut through the softer surface deposits. These soft materials were laid down some 460 million years ago when the area's climate was wet. Swakopmund is a bustling seaside town characterised by 19th-century German

colonial architecture. On arrival in the town, we check into the hotel, and you will have free time until we head out for dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 7 Walvis Bay Lagoon

Today we visit Walvis Bay Lagoon and join one of the catamarans for a marine cruise. We hope to spot dolphins, whales, turtles, seals and mola mola (sunfish). Our initial route takes us past oyster farms as we approach Pelican Point with its landmark lighthouse and 60,000 resident Cape Fur Seals. On the south side of Walvis Bay is a great lagoon that attracts tens of thousands of birds, including many flamingos. The lagoon, salt pans and the bird sanctuary which form the Walvis Bay Wetlands are one of the most important coastal wetlands of southern Africa. Tea and coffee is served on board. Following our marine adventure, we will return to our Swakopmund hotel, and the rest of the day is at leisure.

Day 8 Damaraland Day 1

Today we leave the coast and head into Damaraland. We will visit amazing Twyfelfontein, home to ancient rock engravings and petroglyphs created by the indigenous San people. Modern estimates suggest there are around 5,000 engravings with 2,000 in the main area. We will also visit the Damara Living Museum. Living museums in Africa are social enterprises aimed at maintaining ancient cultures and traditions especially for the younger generations and for providing a source of income to marginalised groups. The museum is an interactive experience with a reconstructed village where you will see how Damara people lived in the past. We will arrive at our lodge in the late afternoon and then head out for a guided sundowners walk.

Day 9 Damaraland Day 2

Discover small native wildlife and the drought-resistant flora on a morning hike with a knowledgeable local guide. The wildlife in this area include Namaqua Rock Rats, Lesser Red Musk Shrew and Damara Mole Rat. Look to the skies for a range of birds including Monteiro's Hornbill, Rock runner, White-tailed Shrike, Carp's Tit and Rüppell's Parrot. You

may also see raptures such as Verreaux's Eagle, Peregrine Falcon and Egyptian Vulture. After lunch we take a scenic drive to search for the larger wildlife endemic to this region. These include desert Elephants, Black Rhino, Gemsbok (Oryx), Springbok, Kudu, Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, Giraffe, Lion and Cheetah. Return to our lodge for leisure time.

Day 10 Erongo Mountains Day 1

Travel across the wide-open plains of the Damaraland to the dry riverbed of the Uniab River which forms a prominent green belt in the desert. This is an ephemeral river, meaning it is usually dry but flows often underground. The lush vegetation is an attraction to the local wildlife. We travel on and receive a warm welcome from the Himba people in Ozohere village. They are semi-nomadic pastoralists, herding cattle and goats. They have a distinct culture, rich traditions, and a striking appearance, especially the women's red ochre body paint which symbolises beauty and also protects the skin. We continue on to our lodge for the next two nights and are welcomed by an iced tea. After settling in, dinner will be served.

Day 11 Erongo Mountains Day 2

We will spend the morning on a bush walk to the Living Museum of the San. The San are considered to be the oldest surviving indigenous hunter-gatherer community in southern Africa. They are known for their incredible rock carving skills, their story telling, music and trance dances. They have a strong reverence for nature and extensive ecological knowledge. During our visit you will have the chance to interact with the villagers and watch demonstrations of traditional survival techniques. The bush walk includes the San rock carving and they will share information about the use of certain medicinal plants. After we will return to the lodge for leisure time.

Day 12 Etosha National Park Day 1

Leaving Damaraland behind our journey takes us to the vast salt pans and diverse wildlife of the Etosha National Park. Widely considered to be one of the best national parks in the world its vast shimmering salt pan attracts a wide range of wildlife to its waterholes providing incredible viewing. While usually dry and white, during the rainy season it can become a shallow lake which attracts flamingos and other waterbirds. On arrival at our lodge, settle in, grab a drink from the bar and take in the views of the vast expanse of mopane woodland from the deck. Tomorrow, we head out on a full day game drive.

Day 13 Etosha National Park Day 2

Full Day in Etosha National Park with our own guide and private vehicles. Once we pass the park gates, we will be on the watch for wildlife, stopping whenever they are close - we may even have to stop while they cross the road in front of us - wildlife has the right of way! The wildlife are free roaming, and we hope to see lions, elephants, leopards, black and white rhinos (4 of the big 5) along with zebra, giraffe, wildebeest and antelope. We will stop at one of the park restaurants for lunch and then head out again for the afternoon to continue our search for wonderful wildlife. On return to our lodge there is time to freshen up and relax before dinner which is sure to be filled with conversation about the day.

Day 14 Otjiwarongo Day 1

After breakfast we depart for Otjiwarongo in the Waterberg region. On the way we visit the Cheetah Conservation Fund. The CCF works to develop best practices that benefit the entire ecosystem upon which the cheetah depends. This beautiful big cat is under threat of extinction in the wild. Once widespread in Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and

into central India they now only inhabit 10% of their original range. We will see the CCFs Ambassador Cheetahs while learning about the programs that address the concerns for wildlife populations and the human communities that share the landscape. Settle into your chalet overlooking a waterhole at our lodge for the next two nights.

Day 15 Otjiwarongo Day 2

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast and free time this morning. This afternoon we take a guided walk around the Otjiwa reserve. The lodge's expert guides know this area like the back of their hands. From the smallest insects to 4 legged wildlife, you will learn all about Namibia's natural world and enjoy walking in the wild.

Day 16 Departure Day

After breakfast we travel back to our starting point Windhoek International airport for your homebound flights.

Day 17 Arrive UK

With-flight guests arrive back in the UK.

Daily Walk Options



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.

Accommodation

Namib Desert Lodge, Namib - Namibia

The main building and the chalets of Namib Desert Lodge are spread out along the foot of the fossilised dunes of the ancient Namib desert. A restaurant and bar, an inviting terrace with views of the fossilised dunes and two swimming pools beckon you to linger and relax. Oryx antelope and springbok appear at the illuminated watering hole. Rooms are set amongst gardens, are air conditioned, have tea/coffee making facilities and verandas where you can relax and watch the sunset over the grassy plains or the petrified dunes.

Namib Dune Star Camp, Namib - Namibia

Escape from the world and enjoy the vast desert wilderness and magnificent night skies at our comfortable eco-friendly camp with chalet accommodation. The central hub of the camp is the dining room and bar where you can sit on the terrace and take in the panoramic views. Solar powered chalets have en-suites and a terrace with seating. After the dunes have transformed to gold and the distant mountains glow purple, it's time to wheel beds onto balconies for a night under the glittering sky of the Namib.

Rostock Ritz Desert Lodge & Spa, Namib - Namibia

This desert lodge is nestled into the base of a mountain on a fenceless 12,000-hectare property on the edge of the Namib Desert. Herds of Zebras, Springbuck, Ostriches and Oryx are free to roam this vast land. At sunset a water hole close to the lodge attract a range of wildlife. There is a swimming pool, a restaurant and bar. Accommodation is in

rondavels which are traditional circular-shaped rock dwellings, complete with en-suite bathrooms and a private balcony from where you can take in the panoramic views and sit and star gaze in the evening.

Etosha Safari Lodge, Etosha National Park – Namibia

Guests rave about the view: the restaurant and chalets, situated on a hillock, offer magnificent views of the African bush savannah. All of the 65 double room chalets have air conditioners and mosquito nets, and a choice of three swimming pools between them. Apart from the restaurant and bar there is a wooden platform for sundowners high above the Mopani bush.

Otjiwa Lodge, Waterberg Region – Namibia

Set amidst the unspoilt beauty of Namibia's oldest game farm, Otjiwa Safari Lodge is the ultimate holiday destination for those in search of an authentic African experience that meets the very best in international tourism standards. All the chalets overlook the water hole, and offer spacious bedrooms with traditional African decor, and large modern bathrooms with shower. True Namibian hospitality and personal service go without saying.

Palmwag Lodge, Damaraland – Namibia

Located on the Uniab River in Damaraland, an area that is home to a wide range of wildlife such as Black Rhino, Giraffe, Zebra and Gemsbok. Facilities include a pool, fully licensed bar, and a restaurant and souvenir shop. Rooms are stone and thatch bungalows with en-suite, tea/coffee making facilities and a private veranda.

Swakopmund Plaza Hotel – Namibia

Ideally located in the heart of Swakopmund, this hotel puts you in strolling distance of the town's historic centre and a cluster of shops, bars, and restaurants. Spacious rooms in neutral tones come with little splashes of colour and all the modern comforts and conveniences you'd expect. There is a mini bar, tea and coffee making facilities and free high speed internet. As for facilities, there's a rooftop terrace with views over the coast, plus a small bistro-style restaurant where breakfast is served.

Avani Hotel, Windhoek – Namibia

One of Windhoek's standout landmarks is also one of its most stylish hotels. The Avani Windhoek Hotel & Casino offers comfortable modern rooms to rest and relax in, plus a rooftop pool area complete with a restaurant and bar that serve up outstanding views over the city. Location-wise it's only a few hundred metres from the city's main monuments and attractions, as well as a cluster of shops and a craft market. Room facilities include flat screen TV, minibar, coffee/tea making facilities and Wi-Fi. There is a desk and seats. Bathrooms have a bath/shower.

Ai-Aiba Rock Painting Lodge, Erongo – Namibia

The Rock Painting Lodge sits against a dramatic backdrop of imposing granite boulders in the foothills of the Erongo Mountain range. The lodge's 10 African-inspired chalets offer comfortable accommodation that optimises the unique setting. Large windows frame the rocky landscape and bush Savannah, while a shaded balcony provides the perfect spot to relax, listen to the sounds of nature, and wake up to the pink and blue hues of the African morning sky. Each air-conditioned room has a small lounge with a tea and coffee station, an electronic safe, plus spacious bathrooms complete with a walk-in shower.

Safety on your holiday

Safety information

Please inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions and other directions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services.. Please then call our emergency number (sent in your final dispatch) and let us know there is a problem.

Dietary requirements

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements and we will do our best to meet your needs.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

Vaccinations & health

Vaccinations & health information for Namibia

Travellers should be up to date with routine vaccination courses and boosters as recommended in the UK. These vaccinations include for example measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine and diphtheria-tetanus-polio vaccine.

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see if any health precautions are needed. The following websites provide a wealth of information on travelling and health: www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk.

Please also check regarding anti-malarial tablets as Namibia is a malaria active zone.

It is recommended for most travellers to have:

- Hepatitis A
- Tetanus
- Typhoid.

Some travellers may require or should consider:

- Cholera
- Hepatitis B
- Rabies
- Tuberculosis.

Passports & visas

Passport & Visa information for Namibia

Passports

Your passport should be valid for a minimum of 6 months from the date of entry into Namibia and have at least 1 completely blank page for Namibian immigration to use.

You should carry identification with you at all times; unless you need to have your passport with you for immigration purposes or passing through security checkpoints, leave it in your hotel safe and carry a photocopy for ID.

Visas

From **1 April 2025** a new visa scheme will come into effect for UK nationals visiting Namibia. The new visas will be available to purchase on arrival at Namibian entry points or can be applied for via a new online portal before travel to Namibia. Please visit the website www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/namibia for further information. If you have a different nationality passport please check with the Namibian Government for your entry requirements.

Essential information

Packing list

Namibia is a typical desert with warm to hot sunny days year round and chilly early mornings and evenings. Lightweight clothing and layers are advisable to accommodate the differing temperatures. Our tour runs in the dry season when evenings are not the coldest though temperatures can go down to single figures.

Essentials

- Walking shoes that have ankle support and good grip (heavy boots are not necessary)
- Insulated jacket/top for evening when temperatures drop in the desert
- Lightweight clothing for the heat
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Sunglasses
- Insect repellent
- Torch (handy for hotel grounds and in the room)
- Water bottle (water is provided throughout the tour)
- Rucksack/day pack
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles (if you prefer using them)
- Swimwear and travel towel (loges have pools)
- Camera/mobile phone

Optional

- Mat (something small to sit on for picnics or rest stops when walking)

Joining instructions (without Flights)

Travel independently

If you prefer to book the holiday without flights and make your own travel arrangements you will still be able to make use of the return group transfers between the airport and hotel, which are included in the cost of your holiday. You must contact us on [+44 \(0\)20 3974 8865](tel:+442039748865) or email [This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.](mailto:info@hfholidays.co.uk) at least 8 weeks before your holiday start date to provide your flight details if you wish to join the transfers. If you do not contact us, we will assume you are making independent travel arrangements.

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives. If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

Useful Information

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/>

Modest dress

On your trip we advise you to dress modestly and respectfully. Both men and women should aim to cover their shoulders and knees, especially if visiting religious sites or rural areas. Opt for loose-fitting and conservative clothing to show respect for local customs and traditions.

Luggage

Luggage information for Namibia Guided Walking Holiday

Luggage allowance

Baggage allowance 1 piece checked-in luggage (max 23kg). Please check details of your airline's baggage allowance, as shown on your e-ticket. Remember to also check any connecting flights you may have booked.

Lost/damaged luggage

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may decide to settle your claim immediately. You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport.

Local currency

Local currency for Namibia

Namibia uses the Namibian Dollar (NAD, N\$) which is linked on a one to one exchange with the South African Rand (ZAR). Rand is legal tender in Namibia, but the N\$ cannot be used in South Africa. If you wish to purchase currency before arriving in Namibia, it is easiest to buy Rand as the Namibian Dollar is seldom available in banks outside of Namibia.

Banks are found in most towns and are generally open from 9am to 3.30pm on weekdays and 8.30 to 11am on Saturdays; they are closed on Sundays and public holidays. Most of them offer foreign exchange services - with cash, bank and credit cards as well as traveller's cheques. You can also obtain cash from many ATMs. Several international banks have branches in main city centres.

Always advise your bank that you are travelling outside of the country as they might block your purchases if they have not been informed.

Local time

Local time for Namibia

GMT/UTC +2 hours

Please take note that the National council has recently (Sep 17) passed the Namibian Time Bill which means that in future Namibia will not have a summer & winter time.

Electricity

Electricity information for Namibia

220/240v, 3 point round pin adaptor is required.

ATM availability

ATM availability for Namibia

Banks are found in most towns, and are generally open from 09h00 to 15h30 on weekdays and 08h30 to 11h00 on Saturdays. Closed on Sundays and public holidays. Most of them offer foreign exchange services - with cash, bank and credit cards as well as travellers cheques. You can also obtain cash from many of the ATMs. Several international banks have branches in main city centres. Always advise your bank that you are travelling outside of the country as they might block your purchases if they have not been informed.

Suggested reading & maps

Suggested reading and maps for Namibia

Suggested reading

- Lonely Planet, Botswana & Namibia (2013)
- Timothy Eyre, Sun, Sea, Sand and Fog: Two weeks in Namibia, (2014)
- Henno Martin, The Sheltering Desert (2002)

Maps

Although you won't need them, if you'd like any maps of the destination, you can obtain some in advance from The Map Shop: www.themapshop.co.uk

Tripnote validity

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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