

ACTIVITIES

4x4 Safaris

Namibia with its wide-open spaces and good road network provides for easy self-drive trips, however driving on gravel roads and long distances has had its toll on plenty a visitor, hence see our travel section on safety tips and insure that you require local car rental and tour companies to instruct you well on driving and vehicle recovery.

Although the country and regions is easily accessible some regions do lend themselves to some serious "off-roading" meaning that tracks which insist on the driver knowing his stuff, do exist and will satisfy any urge, however off-roading does not mean to literally chase all over the place ruining the pristine environment and for those who will follow. These 4x4 experiences are offered guided-self drive and self-drive, some off the best driving experiences are found in the sand sea of the Namib Desert and operators like Coast Way Tours offer guided self drive tours all the way from Luderitz to Walvisbay, exploring the barren sandy coast.

Some dedicated 4x4 routes are available to the novice and some off the best can organised through the Henties Bay Tourism office, their selection includes the following routes:

MESSUM CRATER ROUTE, OMARURU RIVER ROUTE, UGAB MENHIR ROUTE, BRANDBERG WEST ROUTE, TWYFELFONTEIN ROUTE, DOROS CRATER ROUTE and DAMARALAND MINERALS ROUTE.

For more information please visit

www.hentiesbay.com/Tourism/4x4Route_files/4x4route.htm

Self-drive guides focus on looking after the vehicles and seeing beautiful sunsets and sunrises and camping in rugged wild places where the true beauty and solitude of Namibia's beauty can be most appreciated. Single vehicles or groups of a maximum of four vehicles can be accommodated from a minimum of 7 to a maximum of 20 days. Conditions that can be expected in Namibia is slow driving over rocky tracks, sandy stretches, plenty of sunshine but every day a beautiful campfire with lively discussions.

Depending on the requirements of individuals or the group, daily driving distances include many stops to indicate interesting places, plants, birds and animals or for having refreshments. Evening stops are early during the afternoon to give individuals plenty of privacy and if camping safaris are undertaken, enough time to prepare food for the evening and refreshments for the next day's driving.

Traveling through Namibia may include the more remote parts of Damaraland, the Ugab and Huab valleys to follow elephants during their daily wanderings, as well as an extensive visit to the rugged and sparsely populated Kaokoland with its Himba inhabitants.

Prior to a safari operators will inform guests of the basic food and fuel requirements for the length of the drive. Guests are required to join their guide for the first day for a briefing and help given in planning the logistics.

A nominal guiding fee per day is charged by some operators per group of vehicles and not per individual. However, fuel is for the account of the group.

For more info on self-drive guide books please visit:
www.sakkierothmann.com

Angling

Rock and surf angling is still the most popular sport along the West Coast and thousands of angler's from all over Southern Africa visit the tourist recreational area between Walvis Bay and Henties Bay every year from February to April to partake in this popular sport. Although anglers are nowadays limited to fixed quotas, angling fish species such as Kabeljou, Steenbras, Galjoen and Blacktail can be caught along the easily accessible angling spots, some with unusual names such as Sarah se gat, (Sarah's hole) or Skilpadgat (Tortoise's hole).

Shark angling

Shark angling is fast becoming a popular sport along the Namibian beaches. Namibia is one of the few countries in the world following a national action plan for the conservation of shark species. No shark may be taken for trophy, or be left on the beach. All sharks should be returned live to the sea. It is for this reason that intending shark anglers are advised to contact a registered angling tour guide who will supply the appropriate equipment and bait whilst ensuring the best possible adventure for the experienced or novice angler.

The season for shark angling is from November to May.

The much sought-after Coppershark or Bronzy, *Carcharhinus brachyurus*, weighs between 50 kg and 190 kg and offers a real challenge for the keen angler. It prefers cooler waters and inhabits the continental shelf from the surfline to a depth of 100 m. It feeds on bony fishes such as Cape gurnard and sole. Shore anglers along the Namibian coast often catch it and the Namibian record for a copper shark is 176 kg.

Shark angling requires specific angling equipment and the following are recommended: Purglass 400/4 rod, Daiwa 450 reel, 17 kg breaking strain, 130 pd steel trace and 2x 10/0 hooks. Bait normally used is mullet and mackerel. All of these can be obtained from local shops where prospective anglers will be assisted by angling specialists. The best area for shark angling stretches from Jakkalsputz to Mile 100. Tour guides in Coastal Towns are excellently equipped to take groups of anglers on excursions to the best spots for shark angling.

For more information please visit:
www.hentiesbay.com/Tourism/rocksurf_files/rocksurf.htm
www.walvisbay.com.na/adventure.htm

Astronomy

Namibia is a open arid region and no where better will you find the night sky than in such desert locations. Many visitors to the country come from the northern hemisphere, hence the southern hemisphere's new array of constellations and stars are a breath taking experience. Many lodges and tour operators provide their guest with a lay-men's introduction to astrology sometimes while out on game drive and sometimes with small telescopes, however for the novice there are plenty of opportunities.

Amateur astronomy in Namibia

Namibia, especially the Khomas Hochland/Gamsberg area west of Windhoek, has the third clearest, least light-polluted sky in the world Many tourist lodges have their own telescopes (up to 16" diameter) so that it is unnecessary for guests from overseas to bring their own. There is an impressive 'farm' of telescopes and other equipment at the guest farm Hakos, maintained by the German based International Amateur Observatory. The Capella observatory, near Windhoek, has a 24" reflector, one of the largest amateur telescopes in Africa.

Hakos

Two hours' drive away from Windhoek, on top of the Gamsberg Pass, you will find Guest Farm Hakos. Amateur Astronomers especially like the farm, because the high elevation at the edge of the desert gives best opportunities for observation and photography. A 45 cm (17.7") telescope at f/3.6 designed for astrophotography on a huge English frame mount and a Celestron 14 telescope on a heavy German mount (350 kg) as well as some smaller telescopes are already in operation and ready for use. In the near future additional telescopes with a mirror diameter up to 80 cm (31.5 inches) will be put into operation.

Capella Observatory

The Capella-Observatory is located about 20km southwest of Windhoek (Namibia) at the Kupferberg (Cooperhill), about 2100 m above sea level. The nearness to Windhoek results in a light polluted sky to the North East direction, but to the South direction the sky is as black as a hole. First experiences show, that the seeing, which is so important for astronomical images, is moderate (2.5" FWHM) to good (1.5" FWHM). Until now, the observatory have no experiences with the seeing in the "cold season" (May-August), but hope to have even better values soon.

Rooisand Telescope Dome

Rooisand Desert Lodge is situated 2hours west of the capital, it houses a 15 meter high dome equipped with three astronomical telescopes amateur astronomers capable of handling the equipment are allowed to use the dome alone, other interested parties will be assisted.

For more information on astronomy please visit:

www.capella-observatory.com

Ballooning

Ballooning is like a magic carpet ride. While you fly, you do not feel any turbulence as you are travelling at the current wind speed. The tranquillity of your flight will give you plenty photographic opportunities and unsurpassed views.

The pilot controls perfectly his altitude- but has no steering wheel. He will control his direction choosing the wind channels he will find at different levels. The ground crew has a permanent radio contact with the pilot. At Sossusvlei a spectacular launching and take off as the sun rises over the world's oldest desert over windswept dunes and the splendour of the desert play-out in front of you as you soar with the winds for an hour over the ocean of sand and mountains, endless vista of shadow and light.

After landing, the dream is not over. In the middle of nowhere, you come back to earth with an « Out of Africa » Champagne Breakfast. A memorable Flight Certificate is presented, and the drive back is with an open 4x4. Ballooning within the Twyfelfontein Conservancy your balloon flight will give you a bird's eye view over the magnificent Damaraland desert scenery, which includes a unique variety of desert flora and fauna and fascinating geological formations. At Swakopmund one can enjoy an early morning balloon flight and experience the contrast of the desert and Atlantic Ocean as you drift along the coast.

For more information please contact any local operator.

Birding

For the enthusiastic birder to Namibia, the vast variety of both resident and migratory birds can only be exciting. Most bird species favour specific habitats above others and thus Namibia is blessed with a variety of birding destinations where the keen twitcher can satisfy their interests by sighting and recording new species.

Pelican

Some species are sighted more regularly when water and food sources are not in abundance; however some locations like Etosha are much more viable for birding during the rainy season than that of game viewing.

Falcon

Stable water sources during the early months of summer are always a good choice for a serious day of birding. Birding is popular all over Namibia even among locals, thus be comforted that it is an activity available across the country. Some major birding locations include the following, Etosha National Park, Waterberg Plateau, the Caprivi and northern river systems, as well as the coast, with spots like Sandwich Harbour and Walvis Bay lagoon. The Namib Desert offer great opportunities for sighting rare endemics like the Herero Chat and Dune Lark.

In general, birding is very adequate in the country providing from the smallest, Scaly Feathered Finch to the heaviest flying bird, the Corrie Bustard.

Others include:

- Rockrunner
- Damara tern
- African fish eagle
- Menteiro's hornbill

Various operators include birding within their activities and some specialise purely in birding safaris. For any further assistance please contact us.

Canoeing, Kayaking and Rafting

Though Namibia is mostly an arid region, the country boast plenty of reservoirs and rivers and kayaking are offered at the coast in Walvisbay exploring the lagoon and the popular birdlife up to 1500 00 birds in summer, the lagoon is grade as a wetland of international importance. Canoeing is also offered on the Kunene and Okavango rivers as an additional activity on the lodges located next to these rivers. On the Kunene River a certain Kunene River Lodge and Epupa Camp specialise in Rafting and Canoeing on the river, the Kunene experience combines the adrenaline of the sport with the stark contrast of river and desert and has plenty of sightseeing, cultural and wildlife surprises. Rafting on the Orange River otherwise known as the Gariep River on the southern border of Namibia is quite unique as the Orange River is an older slower flowing river than the Kunene and is perfect for families with young ones.

For more information please visit:

www.walvisbay.com.na/adventure.htm

Catamaran

From meeting with Pelicans to feeding Seals, all can be seen while comfortably relaxing on a Catamaran's, trampolines or on deck, whilst enjoying a glass of champagne and snacks, experience Walvis Bay in luxury, style and comfort, Departure is from the Walvis Bay Yacht Club and continue into the beautiful Bay Area, which holds more beauty than the eye can see - A Shipwreck, Lighthouse, Oyster Platforms, different Bird species, Seals and more Marine Life. Taste our own Walvis Bay cultivated Oysters proceed on to the ever-growing Pelican Point to have a closer look at the Lighthouse. The old supply railway spoors can still be seen from the years when the Lighthouse was still occupied by the Coast Guards. Pelican Point also has its own little Jetty, but this facility is only used for our Corporate and Team Building Charters.

Moving around the Point, 3 different types of Dolphins may be encountered, namely: the Heavy side Dolphins – which are the most important, as they are endemic to the coast of Namibia, Dusky Dolphins and Atlantic Bottlenose Dolphins.

In Season, the larger mammals like the Southern Right Whale and the Humpback Whales may be spotted, and with a bit of extra special luck the mighty Killer Whales (Orcas). Rare sightings of the Sunfish and the Leatherback Turtles also keep guest on the look out!

For more information please contact us or visit:
www.walvisbay.com.na/adventure.htm

Caving

Namibia has over a 120 registered caves situated across the country and its various environments providing plenty of adrenaline and educative experiences. The longest cave in Namibia is the Arnhem Caves, with slightly over 4800 m total passage length and intersect ground-water. The cave at one stage contained very large deposits of bat guano, which has been extracted on a large scale. It is presently the only tourist cave in Namibia. Its marketing as a tourist attraction is unusual, as the cave is very dusty and dry, with almost no secondary cave formations. It is advertised as an underground trail, and visitors are only allowed torches or cave lamps to negotiate Arnhem's large chambers and winding passages. Visitors therefore experience a genuine cave ambience, livened with unexpected evidence of human endeavour left behind by guano miners. The minimal development causes minimal disturbance of the extensive and diverse bat population, which also ensures the conservation of several unique invertebrate species. Most visitors prefer a guided tour, though the trail was designed to allow self-guided visits. Overnight accommodation is available at the site. In view of other caves in Namibia some facts must be kept in mind.

Permission from landowners is required to visit their property. Unannounced visits are generally discouraged, and trespassing (visits without permission) is illegal. Visits to certain caves require official permits.

Some Namibian caves contain thick deposits of dry bat guano. Visitors are recommended to wear industrial dust masks in those caves. Visitors should appreciate the ecological importance of bats, and should not needlessly disturb bat colonies, particularly during the Namibian wet season (January - April) when bats are breeding.

Carbide is not regularly available in Namibia. Visitors should arrange to ship carbide from their home countries or from South Africa or Zambia.

Cave diving require specialized equipment and training, as it is a hazardous venture. Local diving clubs have cave diving, deep diving, and diving medicine experience. Liaison with the Namibian Underwater Federation is strongly recommended. Though special permission for cave diving is not yet required, authorities are likely to take a dim view of unannounced expeditions, particularly in case of accidents. Prospective divers should also note that many cave pools harbour endemic fauna, and that permits may be required to visit such caves.

Caving or mountaineering equipment are not readily available in Namibia, for sale or for hire, and visitors should ensure that they have all equipment that may be required. It should be taken into account that most cave entrances are vertical, and ladders or ropes will be required. Visitors are reminded that equipment for hazardous expeditions to African countries should always include a comprehensive first aid kit.

Namibian caves often contain endemic species. Please take note that the collection of any animal or plant material, including invertebrates, is illegal without a permit from the Namibian Ministry of Environment & Tourism.

Namibia is an arid country, and all cave formations are relatively rare and individually unique. Even formations that are relatively common in other countries may be very scarce in Namibia, and visitors should take the utmost care not to dirty or destroy formations of any kind. Please take note that export permits are required for geological and mineralogical samples.

Cave disease (histoplasmosis) has not been recorded from any Namibian caves, and care should be taken not to introduce spores of the fungus. Prospective visitors, particularly if they come from countries with histoplasmosis, or visit Namibia after caving in such countries, are therefore requested to ensure that all their equipment are cleaned and sanitized before entering Namibia. Such simple precautions may keep Namibian caves uninfected and safe for casual visitors, e.g. the indigenous population.

The National Museum of Namibia maintains local inventories of cave sites, cave maps, biospeleology, and cave literature. Cave locations and survey maps are made available on request to bona fide research visitors. Assistance with this effort will be greatly appreciated, which can be done by depositing copies of any relevant publications; cave surveys; cave research results; exact cave localities; and any other relevant information, documentation, or materials; within Namibia. Valuable information from past caving visits has been lost because no archival records have been kept.

African honeybees (the notorious killer bee of the Americas) often nest in overhangs above cave entrances. If bees are present, it is recommended to enter caves early (before the bees become too active). Exiting such a cave may be exciting. Leopards, porcupines, and baboons are some of the more likely dangerous animals that may be encountered in caves, particularly close to entrances. All large animals are dangerous when cornered. They should rather be photographed in game reserves. Some unique or very rare minerals are known from Namibian caves, though all are inconspicuous. Some caves, e.g. Rössing cave, were vandalized by local mineral collectors, and subsequently by scientific prospectors. Visitors should take note that a permit from the Namibian Mining Commissioner is required to export mineral, rock, and soil samples.

Some cavers gag at the ammonia smell of bat urine. Duty-free perfume may be a solution. Some Namibian caves contain significant concentrations of CO₂ and require standard caving precautions. Other caves, e.g. Rössing, occur in areas with considerable uranium deposits, but determinations of radon concentrations have not yet been made. Methane emissions by mammalian troglodytes usually disperse rapidly, and can be avoided by forbidding bean, onion, and prune diets, particularly where tight squeezes are encountered.

All the popular guides to Namibia advise that Namibia has good tourist infrastructure; that hitchhiking is not a very effective means of transport; and that public transport services are virtually non-existent. Though few visitors believe it, one can overnight safely in most rural areas and next to most roads in Namibia. Exceptions are within large towns and close to the Angolan border, in which case formal camping areas are recommended. Serious cavers will need a vehicle. Roads in Namibia are very good and well maintained, and renting a 4x4 is rarely necessary. All major caving areas can be reached comfortably with a normal car.

Visitors are reminded that any pre-historical rock art, material remains, and/or other forms of archaeological and fossil evidence are protected in place by Namibia's National Heritage legislation, and may not be tampered with in any way without a special research permit. Any finds, whether only potsherds, signs of occupation, or artefact-rich sites, should be reported to the National Museum's Archaeological Laboratory. No material evidence should be removed from such sites, though detailed descriptions and photographs are welcome. All archaeological and fossiliferous sites are recorded in a site register. Please try to restrain the urge to create contemporary rock-art.

Namibia has excellent medical services, including air ambulances, but no mountain or cave rescue services. Expedition leaders should also take into account that Namibia is a large country with a low-density population, and medical centres are in larger towns only. Arrangements for possible accident response should therefore be made well in advance, and should make provision for considerable response time. When remote areas of Namibia are to be visited, a contact person, fixed itinerary, scheduled reports, and subscription to an air medical evacuation service are recommended.

To view a cave register please visit:
www.natmus.cul.na/projects/cave/index.html

Conferencing

Conferences and incentives are unlimited in Namibia, the country has the ability and infrastructure to suit any requirements and are quickly becoming popular for its wilderness based incentives. Conferences can be arranged to suit small to large groups with through some very creative techniques, being it mobile out in the desert or on game

Windhoek

lodges or even in the capital. Major city centres have multiple venues that offer all-in-house services from catering, logistics, planning or equipment. The country also offers a wide variety of entertainment and group activities; teambuilding is available in all locations. Pre/Post tours can be custom made to suit the conference aims and the country's natural locations to relax the atmosphere. Dynamic Event Company's offer specialised services for conferences, incentive travel and leisure travel. Providing clients with unparalleled experiences, while showcasing the beauty and diversity of Namibia. Exciting events and activities offered include theme evenings, game drives with a lion feed, desert barbeques, sand boarding, 4x4 obstacle course driving, parasailing, hiking, archery, kayaking, excursions to train trips.

For more information please visit: www.windhoekcc.org.na

Cultural

Cultural tourism is a growing interest in the Namibian travel market. The country boasts diverse populations widely distributed over the country. Every area has a traditional culture and a vibrant history. Though cultural aspects are worked into most packaged safaris, custom-made safaris are widely

Himba

available and many operators specialize in cultural tours. Namibia has a population of about 1.8 million and a density of about 2 people per 1km². English is the official language. The indigenous languages are mostly divided into Bantu languages spoken by the Herero, Owambo, Kavango, Caprivians and Tswana, indo-Germanic languages spoken by the Afrikaners, German, English and Khoisan languages spoken by the Bushmen and Damara>Nama. Community based tourism is heavily supported by government and many conservancies offer activities and camping facilities. NACOBTA is a Namibian NGO that supports, develops and markets these operations - inquiries can be made through their office.

Other cultural interest may be found in most towns, as many boast local museums and numerous historical buildings, monuments and sights. Apart from the indigenous cultures Namibia has a kaleidoscope culture to share with the visitor where everyday life consists of a blend between traditional and colonial heritage, easily experienced in the Namibian cuisine and architecture.

Dining Out

A Culinary Journey... This is/was the slogan of our national carrier Air Namibia, referring to the service of the airline. However it could also be used to describe our dining establishments and our unique Namibian cuisine.

Namibia's rich tapestry of peoples and diverse cultural expression is manifested in the food. It is a wonderful *mélange* of historic influences, cultural diversity and environment mixed together producing a delicious assortment of Namibian culinary treats.

Namibian beef is, according to the EU, amongst the best quality beef in the world, rivaling Argentina. Thus it stands to reason that Namibians are loyal and dedicated meat eaters, and why not. When the cattle are fed the "old fashion way" resulting in healthy breeding and quality meat.... I say again why not!

The regional Namibian cuisine is as fascinating as the diverse landscape, equally tantalizing and fulfilling. The cuisine in the North of the country boasts a wide variety of dishes; from Ekaka (spinach) and Omakunde (brown beans) to the traditional Oshiwambo chicken.

Meandering east, we experience the most divine Herero bread, Omboroto Jotjiherero and the porridge of all porridges, Orutlere Romaere, made with maize and milk. Continuing on our journey, we must experience Namibia's famous Potjiekos, made with lamb or chicken with vegetables and cooked in the three legged black over the fire. This journey would not be complete without tasting the mouth watering Dumpling Dish also cooked on the fire, which creates a taste like the smell of the bush, wild and exotic. And the "piece de resistance", Bean/Samp, which is crushed maize and brown beans served with pounded beef. The only beef accepted in this spectacular dish is the "hind leg". Can you imagine!

Venturing on, we come to the People of the South and the fun of Rooster Brood with braai vleis which is roasted bread on coals served with sausages and the traditional braai meats (barbecued). The braai is a Namibian experience not to be missed.

As we are traveling we might want to stop for a refreshing and filling drink of Oshikundu or Maxau, made of mahangu (millets) and mealie, respectfully. We just journeyed through some of the rich terrain of Namibian foods.

Namibia, rich in natural resources and foods is equally rich in eating establishments. The capital of Namibia has been referred to as the "the Switzerland of Africa" and indeed it is when it comes to eateries.

Your taste buds can be more than satisfied in this Capital; from French to Chinese and by no means overlooking the most popular German restaurants.

Restaurants with names like N.I.C.E, which is nice indeed and for the clientele that wants the best and expects the best, from the moment they enter the door. You would not be disappointed. Places called The Bay Leaf, Butchers Grill, Blue Olive, Café Society, Café Vanilla and the SNOB Espresso Bar.

Then we have Castles and beer gardens, grills, bistros, zoo cafes, craft cafes and more cafes and lots of coffee shops. Namibia has restaurants to meet all needs and palates. For the truly up market for the clientele waiting to be spoilt there are; The Heinitzburg Castle and experience in food and ambience found only in Europe, N.I.C.E, Gathemann Restaurant if you a cozy but elegant environment with the food to match, to name a few. For the fun lively eatery, with less formality, there are places like; The Butcher's Grill, Tal Indian Restaurant, where you will truly think you was in New Delhi. Sardinia's is a favorite for its home cooked Italian cuisine in an equally homey atmosphere. The litumba Restaurant can only be described as an African experience, set in the bush and all the game meat you can eat. Joe's Beer House is a favorite amongst the tourist, set in a colonial setting, surrounded by colonial memorabilia and good food.

We have eateries that cater to those on the run, those just looking for a pick-me up with a good cup of coffee, cappuccino and espresso, just like in Italy. Not to be missed is Jenny's Place set amongst the lush and rich fauna and flora.

All in all, Namibia is the place to experience; its wide open spaces, beautiful terrain and added to that, all the wonderful and memorable meals you have ever imagine.

For more dining experiences please visit:
www.diningoutnamibia.com

Dune & Sandboarding

The Namib Desert, the oldest in the world, is reputed to house some of the largest sand dunes on this planet. Come conquer these constantly shifting and powerfully towering beauties by zooming down the sheer slip faces on a traditional Swakopmund sandboard or carve up the dune with style and skill on a snowboard adapted for sand. Lie down boarding: Catch your breath and gasp at the slope as you lie face down, dangling over the edge of the slip face, before being pushed off the edge and sent on your way down the curving rolling, sandy slopes. Beginning on training rides, Little Nellie and Brigit, we master the basics. With confidence under the belt, we then wind our way around the dune to the terrible twins, Lizzie and Dizzie, where a heart stopping 80kph can be reached!!! Ease off the dune towards the beer on the Gentle Valley. An unsurpassed adrenalin buzz! Highly recommended for snowboarders, surfers and even the inexperienced boarder. Top range equipment and excellent instruction make this activity a must do for the determined adventurer.

Dune & Sandboarding are predominantly offered at Swakopmund and Walvis Bay the two major centers in the tourist recreational area, the dunes are situated around and between the two towns facing the Atlantic Ocean. Numerous operators provide boarding activities or equipment hire, for those who have no previous experience it is recommended to use a guided activity operator, as boarding like any other adventure activity has an element of danger.

For further information please contact:
namibi@iway.na
www.walvisbay.com.na/adventure.htm

Flying

Namibia has extensive airstrips across the country providing an extensive air transport system. Fly-in safaris are popular with visitors to Namibia who wish not to travel long distances and periods by road. Pilots/ novices visiting the country have various options, craft can be hired or flown in, and training can be done in Namibia or recreational flying at various locations. The popular location for flying in Namibia is at Bitterwasser Lodge, which is situated between Uhlenhorst and Hoachanas. Bitterwasser Lodge gives visitors an ideal opportunity to experience the un-spoilt beauty of Namibia on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, with the comfort of a beautifully situated lodge. The Bitterwasser saltpan with its diameter of 3 kilometers is used as a runway system. Soon, the extraordinary thermal conditions of the Kalahari Desert became world famous. Not only incredibly fast, but also exceptionally long glider flights have been and are flown regularly in Bitterwasser. As one of the world's leading soaring centers, Bitterwasser offers soaring, scenic flights with a glider, micro-light or motorized planes, hot air ballooning, as well as nature drives, a swimming pool and biking.

Inquire at any local Travel Agency or Air Charter company.

For further information on Civil Aviation in Namibia please visit:
www.caa.co.za/resource%20center/av.%20medicine/AME%20SADEC.htm

Game Tracking

Namibia is very successful with conservation of fauna and flora; hence wildlife can be experienced in many ways, the most exciting being on foot tracking the bigger species. Most lodges operate on private land or concessions and thus offer on foot experiences guided by professionals. Rhino, Elephants and many more can be seen on foot, being it in the arid Namib or Dammaraland regions or in the Caprivi along the many rivers.

Tracking on foot is potentially dangerous and thus guides employed to lead such expeditions are highly trained and organizations providing such activities must adhere to strict regulations. This is an experience for those who want to walk and do some of their game viewing on foot. Being on foot and following the tracks and sign of a larger specie can be really exciting as well as superbly rewarding if you can find the animal you have been following. This experience is more intense and slower paced than viewing from a vehicle - you get time to enjoy an environment free of vehicle noise while the flora and small fauna - pointed out by the tracking team - help point you in the direction of bigger game. If you want to tick off the 'big five' and see large herds of animals then this is not the activity for you.

A normal schedule at for tracking will be a dawn wake up call with coffee/tea - meet at the dinning area for a light breakfast and then head off with the safari guides and trackers when the sun is up looking for the ever evasive specie of the day and smaller ones keeping you company on your route - have a picnic brunch and return to camp for an afternoon siesta - set off after tea for an afternoon walk and game drive. This routine gets you into the bush when the game is active and keeps you out of the bush in the heat of the day when the game is lounging in the shade.

Please contact any qualified local operator for assistance.

Geology

Namibia's varied geology encompasses rocks of Archaean to Phanerozoic age, thus covering more than 2600 million years of earth history. Nearly half of the country's surface area is bedrock exposure, while the remainder is covered by young surficial deposits of the Kalahari and Namib Deserts.

Metamorphic inliers consisting of highly deformed gneisses, amphibolites, metasediments and associated intrusive rocks occur in the central and northern parts of the country, and represent some of the oldest rocks of Palaeoproterozoic age (ca. 2200 to 1800 Ma) in Namibia. The Kunene and Grootfontein Igneous Complexes in the north, the volcanic Orange River Group and the Vioolsdrif Granite Suite in the south, as well as the volcanosedimentary Khoabendus Group and Rehoboth Sequence also belong to this age group.

The Mesoproterozoic (1800 to 1000 Ma) is represented by the Namaqua Metamorphic Complex, which comprises granitic gneisses, metasediments and granitic/metabasic intrusions, and by the volcanosedimentary Sinclair Sequence of central Namibia, with its associated granites (e.g. Gamsberg Suite).

The coastal and intracontinental arms of the late Proterozoic Damara Orogen (800 to 500 Ma) underlie large parts of northwestern and central Namibia, with stable platform carbonates in the north and a variety of metasedimentary rocks pointing to more variable depositional conditions further south. Along the southwestern coast, the volcanosedimentary Gariep Belt is interpreted as the southern extension of the Damara Orogen. During the later stages of orogenic evolution the shallow-marine clastic sediments of the Nama Group, which covers much of central southern Namibia, were derived from the uplifted Damara and Gariep Belts.

Sedimentary and volcanic rocks of the Permian to Jurassic Karoo Sequence occur in the Aranos, Huab and Waterberg Basins, in the southeastern and northwestern parts of the country. They are extensively intruded by dolerite sills and dyke swarms, which in collusion with predominantly basaltic volcanism (e.g. Etendeka Plateau) and a number of alkaline subvolcanic intrusions (e.g. Brandberg, Spitzkoppe, Erongo), mark the break-up of Gondwana, and the formation of the South Atlantic ocean during the Cretaceous. The currently last chapter of Namibia's exciting geological history is represented by the widespread Tertiary to Recent (less than 50 Ma) sediments of the Namib and Kalahari Sequences.

Targets for mineral exploration have been identified throughout the stratigraphic column. Metamorphic complexes host a variety of prospective environments, such as copper-molybdenum porphyry, volcano-exhalative base metals and gold, volcanogenic copper, sedimentary-exhalative lead-zinc, shear-zone gold and beryllium-niobium-tantalum pegmatites. Meso- to Neoproterozoic rocks locally contain extensive red-bed copper, while calc-alkaline granitoid intrusives of that age have potential for porphyry and hydrothermal copper, as well as for vein-type gold mineralisation.

In the Neoproterozoic Damara Orogen and Gariep Belt, mineralisation is associated with successive phases of intracontinental rifting (copper, graphite), spreading and the formation of passive continental margins (volcano-exhalative base metals, e.g. Rosh Pinah {1}, Skorpion {2}; sedimentary-exhalative lead-zinc, eg. Tsongoari {3}; glaciomarine iron-manganese, e.g. Otjosondu

{4}). Besshi-type copper-pyrite (e.g. Otjihase {5}) is related to mid-ocean ridge development, whereas subsequent subduction led to the localised enrichment of carbonate-hosted base metals (e.g. Tsumeb {6} and Kombat {7}), uraniferous granites (Rössing {8}), rare metal and tin pegmatites (Uis {9}, Rubicon {10}), as well as skarn tungsten and gold (Navachab {11}).

Coal measures are hosted in Permian rocks of the Karoo Sequence, while Cretaceous anorogenic complexes, contain a variety of semi-precious stones, fluorite (Okorusu {12}), apatite, rare earth elements, iron and base metals. Following the discovery of the offshore Kudu gas field of Cretaceous age {13}, recent hydrocarbon exploration also intersected oil-prone source rocks in boreholes. Tertiary epigenetic uranium mineralisation occurs in calcretes above basement rocks, while salt is produced by solar seawater evaporation (e.g. Walvis Bay and Swakopmund Salt Works {14}).

The major growth area of Namibia's mining industry, however, is offshore diamond mining, with the country featuring among the world's top five producers. The Tertiary to Quaternary diamondiferous deposits are currently exploited along the southwestern coast, both off - and onshore {15}, employing techniques, which are used nowhere else in the world.

Geology is a topic which the traveler will find in discussion on any tour in Namibia however ment for the lay-men enthusiast, for the novice or fanatic most tour operators provide custom tours which visit and focus on the detailed side of Namibian geology while enjoying all the rest the country has to offer.

For more information please visit:
www.mme.gov.na/gsn/geoinfo.htm

Hiking

Good walking in Namibia

Largely untouched scenery, majestic plateau mountains and extinct volcanoes, gentle dunes and coarse gravel plains, deep canyons and rugged mountain ranges. If you explore these landscapes on foot, you have the leisure and the opportunity to take a closer look at the many little - and not so little

Landscape

- miracles which fill this arid country with life: plants like Bushman Grass, the stone plants (Lithops), the Quiver Tree and the Acacias; animals like the gracious Springbok, the majestic Kudu, the frugal Oryx, the shy Mountain Zebra or even the elegant Giraffe.

Whether you enjoy hiking, mountaineering, free-climbing or 'just' walking – you will find your perfect spot to do so. Namibia boasts two of the most famous and most challenging trails in southern Africa: The Fish River Hiking Trail through the winding gorge of the Fish River Canyon, which is several hundred

Mountaineering

metres deep, and the Naukluft Hiking Trail in the rugged solitude of the Naukluft Mountains. Those who aim for the top are drawn to Spitzkoppe ('Namibia's Matterhorn') or Brandberg with Königstein, the highest peak in the country. Even running enthusiasts will not be disappointed: there is an annual Bush Marathon... And if you want no more than a little exercise or a leisurely nature walk, you can follow the trails which many guest farms and lodges have set up with lots of loving care.

Hiking in national parks

Trails which come under the responsibility of the public nature conservation authority take hikers deep into areas to which other visitors do not have access. Some of the tours are only permitted with a professional guide, while others have to be tackled without. Furthermore, many hikes take several days with nights spent either in the open or in very rudimentary huts – which in some places are no more than a shelter of low walls. On these routes hikers thus have to carry all their provisions and equipment and enough water for at least one day. This alone requires an excellent physical constitution.

Public routes are often subject to various regulations, which are listed with the description of the trails following below.

A fee is due for most trails in national parks. Nowadays a so-called day visitor's fee may also be charged. This is a utilisation fee which you pay in the rest-camp where your hike starts and ends, whether you use the facilities or not. Hiking trails as well as accommodation at the rest-camps should be booked well in advance at

Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd.
Central Reservation Office
Private Bag 13267, Windhoek, Namibia
Tel. +264 (0)61 - 236975-8
Fax. +264 (0)61 - 224900
Email: reservations@nwr.com.na

Hiking and mountaineering on guest farms, in private nature conservation areas and communal conservancies

During the past years numerous trails have been established through private initiatives. They are decidedly diverse, from a one-hour botanical instruction course to hikes of several hours or several days. Again, some routes require a professional guide, others can be undertaken without. Because of the variety on offer, everybody will find a suitable trail - whether you just want to stretch your legs after hours of driving or whether you are looking for a physical challenge.

Sometimes hikes are included in the price of your accommodation, sometimes they are charged separately. They have to be booked directly with the respective tour operators or accommodation facilities. Usually you receive a little map before setting out.

Please contact us for further hiking on these properties.

Fish River Canyon

The Fish River Canyon is situated in Namibia's far south. It is about 160 km long, several kilometres wide and approximately 550 metres deep. For its sheer size alone it is considered one of the most spectacular canyons on earth. Add the vast, tranquil solitude of the harsh, reddish-brown desert landscape through which the Fish River has dug its course.

Fish River Canyon

All of this has no doubt contributed to the legendary fame of the Fish River Hiking Trail.

Fish River Hiking Trail (80 km)

The Fish River Hiking Trail leads through a conservation area which has remained almost undisturbed by human activity for decades. The winding walls of the gorges, which seem to continue forever, and the canyon's enormous dimensions have hikers stop in wonder again and again. They also help to mentally adjust the scale of our existence.

Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, Kudu, Oryx-Antelope and Springbok can be found in the canyon's vicinity. The canyon itself is frequented by Baboons, Leopards, several species of antelope as well as many bird species, some of them rare. And occasionally you may encounter 'wild' horses which are thought to originate from deserted farms along the canyon.

The 80 km route can be managed in 3 to 5 days. The night before the hike should be spent in the vicinity of the starting point. Obvious choices are the public camping site at Hobas or one of the facilities at the neighbouring, private Gondwana Cañon Park. The hike starts about 12 km from Hobas rest-camp, slightly north of the main viewing point. The thermal baths of Ai-Ais, situated down-river, mark the end of the tour. Day visitors are not permitted to descend into the canyon.

The descent into the canyon is quite taxing, and you need to be free from giddiness. With your heavy backpack you climb down 500 metres over the steep eroding bank. The trail itself mainly follows the course of the river. The first 16 km to a sulphur spring are quite exhausting because of numerous rocks and long stretches of soft sand, but they are also seen as the most beautiful part of the trail. From there the canyon widens and you walk on gravel plains. Depending on the water level you have to wade through the river more or less frequently. One of the highlights for many

hikers, is the finish at Ai-Ais - and the first sip of an ice-cold beer in the restaurant of the thermal baths.

Please note:

- Due to the very high temperatures in the canyon – 40 degrees Celsius at midday in winter – the trail is only open from 15 April to 15 September.
- Reservations can be made 12 months in advance at Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd. You should apply well before your envisaged hike – this trail is often fully booked for weeks.
- The minimum number of participants in a group is three, the maximum is 40. Currently it is being considered to reduce the maximum number of hikers to 25 per day. The minimum age is 12 years, and children have to be accompanied by adults.
- Even if reservations have been confirmed, hikers can only set out if enough clean water for drinking is available in the river bed. To this end the Fish River must have carried water at least once a year in the area of the trail.
- The other extreme is late, heavy rainfall which makes hiking in the riverbed too dangerous because of the risk of flooding. Therefore you are well advised to enquire whether the trail is open, before you arrive at the canyon.
- On arrival you have to produce a medical certificate which is not older than 40 days. You receive a standard form from Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd together with your booking confirmation. You have to make your own arrangements for transport to the starting point and for the return-trip from Ai-Ais.
- Apart from your hiking gear you have to bring all your provisions for the tour. Hobas has no restaurant and no shopping facilities. A 2-litre-bottle of water is a must!
- You do not need a tent, although you might want to pack something light against rain. The Fish River area occasionally experiences rain in winter.
- Sunsets are brief and darkness falls quickly, especially in the canyon. Start looking for a place to stay for the night in adequate time.
- Emergency exits are available at 'Palm Springs' (a sulphur spring) and at the 'Von Trotha Grave' if somebody has to end the hike prematurely or needs to be rescued.

Hardap Dam, Mariental

Hardap Dam, Namibia's largest storage lake, is situated in the south, north-west of Mariental. Ever since the dam was built in 1963, Namibians flock to the enormous body of water - a rarity in this country - for weekends.

Hiking trail at Hardap Dam (9 km, 15 km)

The surroundings of the artificial lake, proclaimed a nature conservation area in 1964, are also available for hiking. You have to drive to the starting point of the two trails because they are in the back part of the park. There are hardly any trees in the area, and even in winter you should remember to bring sun protection. With a little luck you will spot Ostrich, Zebra, Kudu, Wildebeest or Springbok.

These trails do not have to be booked at Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd.; there is no extra fee for hikers spending the night at the rest-camp, day-visitors may have to pay something. Before setting out you should enquire at the park's office about the current whereabouts of the Black Rhinos. There are five of them – and you do not necessarily want to encounter a Rhino while hiking.

The Naukluft Hiking Trail (55 km, 61 km or 120 km)

The Naukluft Mountains are a very diverse, extraordinarily beautiful hiking area. Wide hills and steep ridges alternate with deep, shaded gorges; they often hold refreshingly cool pools of water. The differences in altitude which you have to take in your stride are considerable in places, but your toiling is always rewarded with fantastic views. Grips and chains have been installed in some difficult spots where the rock faces are so steep that you really need to be free of giddiness!

Apart from the shy Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, the area is also home to Kudu, Springbok, Oryx, Klipspringer, Steenbok and Leopard. The permanent sources of water in the gorges attract lots of birds – even several types of breeding eagles and vultures can be detected in the cliffs.

The Naukluft Hiking Trail is regarded as one of the most challenging in southern Africa. The total distance of 120 km can be managed in about eight days. If that is more than you bargained for you can end your hike after four days and 61 km at 'Tsams Ost', or you can shorten it to a round-trip of 55 km. Before and after the hike you can spend the night in an old farmhouse near the park's office. The accommodation is included in the hiking fee. If you want something more comfortable, you have many guest farms in the vicinity of the park to choose from. The start and finish of the trail is the Naukluft Camping Site. During the hike you spend the nights either in rudimentary huts, or in shelters consisting of low walls which offer only poor protection against cold winds. There is drinking water available at all the sites.

Please note:

- Due to the high temperatures in summer (35 – 40 degrees Celsius) the trail is open only from the first Tuesday in March until the last Saturday in October.
- Hiking is restricted to Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays of the first three weeks of each month.
- Reservations can be made twelve months in advance at Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd. Early reservations are strongly recommended.
- The minimum number of participants in a group is three, the maximum is 12. The minimum age is 12 years, and children have to be accompanied by adults.

- On arrival you have to produce a medical certificate which is not older than 40 days. You receive a standard form from Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd. together with your booking confirmation.
- Apart from your equipment you have to bring all your provisions. If you take the 8-day-hike you can store half of your provisions at 'Tsams Ost'. There you can also park a car to get back to the starting point after the 4-day-hike. There are no shopping facilities at the Naukluft; the closest farm store is at Büllsport.
- Bring warm, windproof clothing for the evenings and a quality sleeping bag, as temperatures often drop to freezing point.
- Baboons at the Naukluft Camping Site have become specialists in relieving tourists of their provisions. Thus take care never to leave food items – not even tins – in your tent, in the cool box or lying somewhere in the camp. Lock everything in your car!
- Even in the Naukluft Mountains water is not available everywhere and at any time. You have to fill your water bottle at the hut every morning! A 2-litre-bottle is a must!
- Fires are not permitted in most places. Bring a gas cooker.
- The trail leads through a very isolated area. In an emergency it could take some time to get help. Walk carefully. Look out for snakes in your path.

Apart from the 4 and 8-day-trails there are two routes for day visitors. No medical certificate is required and no advance booking. Both trails are open throughout the year – in summer it is a good idea to get going at sunrise to avoid some of the heat!

Olive Trail (10 km)

You should calculate at least four hours for this trail. The start and finish is about three km from the park's office. This trail takes you steeply uphill to an altitude of about 2,000 metres. From there it is back to the start: downhill through a spectacular gorge which is secured with chains at one end.

Waterkloof Trail (17 km)

For this rather demanding hike you have to reserve about 6 to 8 hours. The start and finish is the camping site, where you simply follow the big yellow footprints. The route first takes you uphill through dense vegetation, then follows the course of a river; after that, more climbing – to an altitude of 1,910 metres. From there it is downhill, through a gorge with puddles of water, and back to the camping site.

Waterberg

East of Otjiwarongo, in Namibia's central north, an elongated table mountain rises from its surroundings, visible from afar: Waterberg. Due to its location, its properties and the special fauna and flora Waterberg is an ideal hiking area as well.

As a result of the inaccessible cliffs of the mountain and the availability of water, a diverse flora was able to develop. Enormous figs and Ana trees thrive in the valleys; ferns, moss and lichen

cover the rock faces, and evergreen shrubs make you feel as if you were strolling in a tropical, extraordinarily fertile landscape.

Today the plateau is home to the Black and White Rhino, as well as Sable Antelope, Roan Antelope and the Eland, to name but a few. Another special feature of this park is the last Namibian colony of Cape Vultures, which has dwindled to an estimated eleven birds.

Waterberg Trail (42 km)

Most of the trail is easy walking without any particular exertion. Only the stretch up to the plateau and down to the rest-camp is steep, otherwise the path is relatively even. The most beautiful part is the section along the edge of the plateau – ever so often you will marvel at the magnificent views of the flat, seemingly endless plain of the savannah.

The walking time alone is about 20 hours. Depending on how often you want to take a break, you should calculate 3 to 4 days. The trail starts and ends at the Bernabé-de-la-Bat rest-camp. It is advisable to spend the night before and after the hike at the rest-camp or at one of the guest farms in the vicinity, as you will be hiking for about six hours each on the first and last day of the trail. During the hike, nights are mostly spent in open, but covered huts are available. Toilets and water are also available.

Please note:

- The trail is only open from 1 April to 30 November. Hikes have to start on Wednesdays, returning the following Sunday at the latest.
- Reservations can be made 12 months in advance at Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd. Mark 'unguided' on your application to avoid confusion with the Wilderness Trail. Early reservations are strongly recommended because only one group is permitted per week!
- The minimum number of hikers in a group is three, the maximum is 10. The minimum age is 12 years, and children have to be accompanied by adults.
- No medical certificate is required.
- You have to bring all your equipment and provisions. Shopping facilities in the rest-camp are minimal.
- Bring warm, windproof clothing for the evenings and a quality sleeping bag, as temperatures can drop to freezing point during the night. At times a raincoat may be useful.
- There are no natural sources of water on the plateau. You have to refill your water bottle at the hut every morning! A 2-litre-bottle is a must!
- No fires are permitted in most places on the plateau. Bring a gas cooker.
- No medical certificate is required.

- You have to bring all your equipment and provisions. Shopping facilities in the rest-camp are minimal.
- Bring warm, windproof clothing for the evenings and a quality sleeping bag, as temperatures can drop to freezing point during the night. At times a raincoat may be useful.
- There are no natural sources of water on the plateau. You have to refill your water bottle at the hut every morning! A 2-litre-bottle is a must!
- No fires are permitted in most places on the plateau. Bring a gas cooker.
- Walk carefully and attentively. Watch out for snakes on the path.
- There are Rhinos in the park. Do not provoke them. Always look out for an escape route (a tree or rock) in an emergency. Here, too, baboons can make a nuisance of themselves. Do not leave anything lying about without keeping a watchful eye, and do not feed baboons!

Waterberg Wilderness Trail (about 15 km daily)

If you prefer to be introduced to the nature of Waterberg Plateau Park by a ranger you can join a guided tour in the wilderness area. The tours are conducted from a permanent camp. The length and pace are adapted to the weakest member of the group – the daily average is 15 km. But frequent stops are made to explain fauna and flora, and you have ample time to take pictures. And thanks to the permanent camp you do not have to lug a heavy backpack along.

These hikes are offered from April to November on every second, third and fourth Thursday of the month. They end at midday on Sunday. The minimum number of participants is 6, the maximum is 8. The minimum age is 12, and children have to be accompanied by adults. No medical certificate is required. You only have to bring your sleeping bag and your own provisions. Everything else – from tents to crockery and water - is provided. The meeting point is the Onjoka Gate, about 15 km north-east of the Bernabé-de-la-Bat rest-camp. From there you are taken up to the plateau by vehicle.

Walks in the Bernabé-de-la-Bat rest-camp

The vegetation, usually lush and green, is the first thing that every visitor to Waterberg notices. In the wider surroundings of the rest-camp you have nine established walks for exploring nature. All of them are well-signposted and in most parts not particularly demanding. You receive a map on registration in the park's office. One of these walks, the Mountain View Walk, deserves special mention: It leads over the precipice straight up to the plateau. No problem for well-exercised hikers, but older folk should take their time. You need about 30 minutes to get to the top and will be rewarded with a magnificent view of the savannah below. This is also a favourite spot for an early sundowner.

Daan Viljoen

Daan Viljoen Park is practically on Windhoek's doorstep, in the hilly landscape of Khomas Hochland. With an area of just over 39 km² this park is relatively small, but when you have just arrived in Windhoek it is a good starting point for your first encounter with Namibia's nature.

During weekends, the 9-km-route described below is frequented by quite a few Windhoekers. It is a very special feature of hiking in Daan Viljoen Park that you literally rub shoulders with many harmless species of game. At bends and slopes you will encounter small groups of Zebra, Kudu, Oryx, Eland and Gnu. Even six Giraffes roam the park. In addition there are about 200 bird species which you can watch at the dam, for example.

The Red-Bushwillow-Trail (9 km)

This trail starts at the swimming pool in the rest-camp and gently leads to a hill-top, the highest elevation in the park, affording a wonderful view of Windhoek and the Khomas Hochland. This is the best spot for a picnic. The trail then leads steeply down-hill into the valley of a seasonal river. It follows the river's course and after a steep stretch uphill ends behind the restaurant at the dam.

The Sweet-Thorn Trail (32 km)

This trail can comfortably be done in two days. The first 6 km are the same as the Red-Bushwillow-Trail, but then it forks off into the northern part of the park. This is an area to which day visitors do not have access. Thus it is rather untouched. Poles mark the way – though at times they are barely visible in the tall grass. The night is spent in an open hut, where water is available. The following day you return into the hills and back to the finish at the dam.

Hiking is possible throughout the year, but only one group is permitted per day. The minimum number of participants is 3, the maximum is 12. The minimum age is 12 years. Bookings are made at Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd. A medical certificate is not required. Apart from your hiking gear you have to bring all your provisions and a cooker. No fires are permitted. Please bear in mind that you are hiking at an altitude of about 1,700 metres. Nights can be bitterly cold in winter (May to September).

Buffalo-Thorn-Trail (3 km)

This trail is suitable for strolling. It starts at the park's office and follows the course of a seasonal river to 'Stengel' dam. You need about two hours for both ways.

Spitzkoppe

One of Namibia's special attractions can be found near the Erongo Mountains and about 50 km north-east of the small town of Usakos: Greater Spitzkoppe. This granite Inselberg is one of the country's landmarks. Its weathered shapes, some of them bizarre, and its surroundings attract scores of visitors and photographers. At 1,728 metres this mountain is also one of the big challenges for rock-climbers. It is not without reason that Greater Spitzkoppe is dubbed 'Namibia's Matterhorn'.

The formation of these Inselbergs – Greater Spitzkoppe and nearby Small Spitzkoppe, as well as the Pontok Mountains – dates back to about 100 million years ago. At that time the area was still covered by the base of the Damara Mountains, which are 500 million years old. The ground surface was two kilometres higher than it is now – which means still a few hundred metres higher than the summit of Greater Spitzkoppe as we know it today. About 100 million years ago magma penetrated the base of the Damara Mountains, but solidified before reaching the surface. In the course of millions of years the softer rock of the mountains was eroded by wind and other forces, while at the same time the hard, resistant granite of Greater and Small Spitzkoppe as well as the Pontok Mountains was bared.

Spitzkoppe does not offer any established hiking trails, even though there is a chain in one place to facilitate the ascent. Otherwise you are your own trailblazer. You can spend the night at one of the many guest farms in the vicinity of the Erongo Mountains or at the communal camping site at the foot of Spitzkoppe.

Ugab

The seasonal Ugab River forms the southern border of Skeleton Coast Park, about 200 km north of Swakopmund.

Ugab-River Hiking Trail (50 km)

Nature Conservation offers a 3-day guided tour in this area. The route leads along the Ugab River, across gravel plains, past rock formations and through the coastal desert. During the hike participants are introduced to the animals and plants which survive in these arid surroundings. With a little luck you encounter Springbok, Oryx, Zebra or even Rhino.

This tour is only conducted from April to October. It starts on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month and ends on the following Thursday afternoon. The minimum number of participants is 6, the maximum 8; the minimum age is 12 years. Bookings should be made well in advance at Namibia Wildlife Resorts Ltd. On arrival a medical certificate has to be produced which may not be older than 40 days. You will receive the standard form together with the confirmation of your application.

The trail starts and ends at the Ugab Gate, the southern entrance to the Skeleton Coast Park. It is a good idea to spend the night before the hike at the camping site of Mile 108. During the hike nights are spent in the open. Water is available. Apart from your hiking gear you have to bring all your provisions and a cooker. Fires are not permitted.

Brandberg

West of Uis the majestic Brandberg Massif rises from the flat, arid semi-desert. With an altitude of about 2,000 metres it is visible from a considerable distance. Its peak, the 2,573 m Königstein, is the highest in the country. This vast area became particularly known for its rock paintings. The most famous of all, the 'White Lady', is only one of an estimated 50,000 paintings. Despite of its rock art Brandberg has remained relatively untouched by tourism – ideal for hikers and mountaineers looking for solitude, original conditions and tranquillity.

The geological history of the Brandberg Massif is similar to that of the Spitzkoppe Mountains: 130 million years ago magma penetrated layers, which were still several kilometres thick, but did not reach the surface. As the layers eroded through the ages, only the enormous mountain remained.

Brandberg is difficult to negotiate – it is a non-stop scramble over boulders of varying size which erosion has 'thrown' into the valley. The strenuous terrain is doubtlessly one of the reasons why even today Brandberg is not attracting masses, but remains something of a mountaineer's secret destination. It takes three days to get to the top, as well as experience and an excellent physical condition. Apart from that you can easily get lost, and you need to know where to find water, which is in a few places only. Sum total: this tour should only be attempted with a guide. For this purpose

some members of the local community at Brandberg were trained to become so-called 'Daureb Mountain Guides'.

You have to bring all your hiking gear, provisions and enough water for one day – it may be possible to hire a porter. The night before the hike is best spent at the Ugab communal camping site or at one of the guest houses in Uis. During the tour nights are spent in the open.

Daureb(Brandberg) Mountain Guides

P.O. Box 159, Uis

Tel. and Fax. +264 - (0)64 - 504162

or through NACOBTA (Namibia Community Based Tourism Association) in Windhoek

Tel. +264 - (0)61 - 255977, Fax. +264 - (0)61 - 255957

Email: nacobta@iafrica.com.na

Visiting the 'White Lady'

Even though there is agreement today that the 'White Lady' is in fact a man, it still is Namibia's most famous rock painting. You get there and back in about two hours on a well-established footpath. From Tsiseb Gorge you will be accompanied by local guides without whom visitors are no longer permitted into the area. Since the narrow valley becomes very hot during summer you should set out early and take enough water with you.

Epupa

Four guided tours of 2 to 5 hours, amongst others through the hills of the Epupa Basin or the riverine vegetation at the Kunene. The guides are members of the local population (the Himba people), who were trained with the help of various organisations. There is a small bookings office right next to the falls. For further information contact

Helge Denker, Windhoek

Tel. +264 - (0)61 - 259725

Email: wildheartjourneys@iway.na

Hints

- Hiking and mountain-climbing is always at your own risk.
- If available, get a hiking map so that you always know your whereabouts.
- Notify a trusted person before you set out and also tell them when you intend to be back at the latest. In an emergency they will start looking for you. Remember to always notify them of your safe return as well.
- Wear sturdy hiking boots, preferably covering your ankles. Sandals are totally out of place in Namibia's bush.
- Start off early, especially during the summer months (November to April), so that you arrive at your destination before the midday heat sets in. It is a good idea to rest during the hottest part of the day.

- Never leave without a hat and remember to take sun glasses and a sun lotion.
- Carry enough water with you: at least 2–3 litres per person per day!
- Depending on the route, you may want to take a first aid kit which possibly includes snake serum. Get advice at a pharmacy.
- Bring your binoculars.
- Keep your eyes on the path and stop if you want to look around. Always watch out for loose rubble and for snakes.
- You are welcome to refresh yourself in the pools and spring-water basins of the seasonal rivers, but do not pollute them with soap; the next person may want to drink that water!
- Never leave any litter behind.
- Among others, the following foods are recommended for hiking tours of several days: oats, muesli, biscuits, nuts, dried fruit, instant soups, dehydrated vegetables, pasta, processed cheese, tinned meat and fish, powder milk, tea, coffee, salt, preserves, fresh fruit. Also remember to take toilet paper and tablets for treating your drinking water.

Mountaineering and Free-Climbing

Routes for mountaineering or free-climbing are still considered a secret of sorts - but that is about to change. Several peaks are more than 2,000 metres high, most notably Königstein, the roof of fascinating Brandberg. However, it is not only the altitude but even more so the temperatures which pose a considerable challenge to mountaineers and free-climbers. Opportunities for these sports exist at Brandberg, Greater Spitzkoppe and the Pontok Mountains, near Windhoek, at Blutkoppe in the Namib Naukluft Park as well as at some farms. For more information contact

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 Email: ameib@natron.net

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Sphinxblick Horseriding & Guest Farm (near Usakos)

P.O. Box 249, Swakopmund
 Tel. +264 - (0)64 - 530809, Fax. +264 - (0)64 - 402930
 Email: sphinxblick@natron.net

Koiimasis Guest Farm

Tel. +264 - (0)638 - 6530 (farm-line)

MCSA - The Mountain Club of South Africa Namibia Section
Stefan de Wet
P.O. Box 2448, Windhoek
Email: asdewet@iafrica.com.na

Hunting

Namibia as a Hunting Destination

Namibia has been 'Africa's best kept hunting secret' for the last number of years. With the representation of NAPHA (hereafter Namibia Professional Hunters Association) at various international shows, as well as very good marketing by NAPHA's members, Namibia is now one of the top hunting destinations in Africa. Namibia ranks second only to Tanzania when it comes to national revenue generated.

Our diversity of huntable species – numbering 46 (not including 'non-indigenous species, of which NAPHA does not approve), as well as our dramatic scenery makes us a highly desirable destination.

The following are the most commonly hunted species in Namibia:

- Oryx (Gemsbok)
- Kudu
- Warthog
- Springbuck
- Red / Cape Hartebeest
- Blesbuck
- Blue Wildebeest
- Eland
- Common Impala
- Black Wildebeest
- Burchell's zebra

Species uniquely indigenous to Namibia include:

- Hartmann Zebra
- Black-faced Impala*
- Damara Dik-Dik

*This specie may not be exported to the USA, as per Fish & Wildlife ban.

The safety, political security, well developed infrastructure as well as the friendliness and genuine warm hospitality of the Namibian people overwhelms most of our first-World hunters. More often than not, they return to our land of sunshine and wide open spaces with their whole family.

For more information please visit and read the following website and document.

www.natron.net/napha

For more information on Hunting, download the PDF below.

- [Hunters Information Package](#) 127 kb

Paragliding

Paragliding in Namibia is usually done with a guide that knows the conditions and flying sites in Namibia. Namibia can be a very hostile environment to fly in if you are not familiar with the conditions and it is strongly advised not to try this on your own steam. Activity operators offer experienced guides and instructors to help you make your dream holiday a safe and very enjoyable one. Namibia has some of the most spectacular flying sites in the world and for those who have experienced flying in Namibia will be the first to tell you this. It is a dream experience.

On the coast the dunes ranging from 70m-150m, lend itself as one of the great training and fun flying sites of the world. A real playground!! The dunes are regulated by the local training school to insure safety and reduce overcrowding. It is best to be in a travel group because it makes the trip cheaper for example rented 4x4 vehicles, accommodation, training and excursions are divided into the group. Hence available tours are scheduled start from September to the end of March which is the main season and the best flying times in Namibia. Tours include all transfers, specialized training in strong wind reverse launch techniques, Accommodation, guiding and permits.

Even though we have reduced to a small number, our association and National rules still apply and are checked. So if you would like to fly in Namibia you must contact the association or associated school. This is necessary because we have had serious accidents which could have been prevented if these pilots were properly briefed by our local authority or pilots. So please you as foreign pilots are most welcome to visit us but please make sure you stay within our National rules and regulations. All pilots coming on our tours are automatically legal in Namibia under the umbrella of our School.

For more information please visit:

www.paraglidingnam.com

Photography

Namibia, the thirstland wilderness, offers a selection of the finest photographic opportunities. This land of contrast and beauty is ideally suited to the professional and amateur alike. Whether the passion is for images of people, nature or landscapes, Namibia has it all and more. This destination features a wide range of photo subjects and the superb weather provides excellent light variations. This ensures the visitor can exercise creative styles or simply record the unique beauty of the land, its inhabitants and its abundant nature.

To capture prized images our visitors can travel by land or air. The country is ideally suited to both, with a good road infrastructure and a selection of aircraft for charter. Some air charter companies operate aircraft with clear windows allowing sharp aerial photography. Vehicles utilized for guided travel feature sliding windows for use where wildlife may be shy or present a danger. A selection of suitable rental vehicles is available for independent travel. Itineraries are tailor made to include the specific subject interests of the visitor. Options include group or private travel on a guided or independent basis.

Africa, the continent of big game, has many game reserves and parks. The great Etosha National Park is probably one of the best for game numbers, variety, as well as viewing game throughout the day. The vegetation in most parts is rather sparse. Etosha is fantastic for the wildlife photographer.

Namibia photographic safaris are designed for the keen or professional photographer. Even though any tour or safari to Namibia is, and can be. Photographic safaris are different to other tours where visitors spend more time in certain areas such as photographing desert and dune landscapes or wildlife in Etosha and Kaokoland. Namibian operators know that a photographer needs more time, has to study the light, has to find the correct site, as well as having a specific interest, hence the options of guided or self-drive is available from most tour operators, world class photographic shops in all towns to assist with technical details or repairs.

When travelling to Namibia please bare in mind that the country is a warm country and dusty, hence insure that camera bags seal effectively, that you bring along cleaning equipment and remember that the sun is very bright, even more in areas like Etosha where the ground is very whitish, so insure that adequate UV and polarised filters accompany you on safari.

For further information please contact any local tour operator.

Quadbiking

Quadbiking have become one of the more popular day activities in Namibia, many lodges around the country offers quadbike outings to view game and scenery, however the coastal towns of Swakopmund and Walvis Bay has become the adventure mega of the country and quadbiking fuetures prominently. This is one of the best ways to access parts of the sand dunes that even 4x4's can't reach. There is a bit of controversy over the use of bikes in the sand dunes as it poses a threat to some of the rare animal species and plant life that make the sand dunes their homes. However, the legitimate companies that make quadbiking in the dunes an adventure experience also make conserving their environment a priority.

They have set out a route that goes for about 35km in an area that's great to practice your wheelies on but causes little damage. There are two types of bikes you can choose from. For those who are a little unsure of their motorbiking skills there are semi automatic bikes, while for those who wish to go hell for leather and have some idea of what they are doing there are manual quad bikes. These operators offer great value for money, including transport, equipment, a bit of training and even throw in a drink or two.

Safaris around Namibia which visit the two towns generally have time for you to enjoy the quadbiking, and the activity can easily be included into your self drive safari around Namibia.

For more information please visit:

www.walvisbay.com.na/adventure.htm

www.swakop.com/swakopmund.htm

Skydiving

Namibia's premiere drop zone is located just outside the coastal town of Swakopmund. The scenery viewed whilst floating peacefully under an inflated parachute is simply breath-taking. Some Skydiving Clubs have been operating since 1980, and carry on a long tradition of high quality skydiving, training and fun that has always been associated with the coastal town. There are two skydiving clubs in Swakopmund that offer a professional training service. If you are already a skydiver you can arrange a scheduled jump and if you are a novice there are two options available. You can complete a one day training course that will qualify you for a static line jump on the same day. (Jumping with a static line means that when you jump, you are tied to the aeroplane with a special cord that automatically opens your parachute). Or you can do a much shorter course and complete a tandem, freefall jump. A tandem jump means that you are physically strapped to a qualified instructor. You jump out the plane together, freefall for 30 seconds or so and the instructor does all the hard stuff, like making sure your parachute opens.

For more information please visit:

www.swakop.com/activities.htm

Sport

Northwest of Usakos, rising out of the Namib, is the 2,000m (6562ft) Spitzkoppe where there is good mountaineering. Some of the coastal and river areas provide good opportunities for fishing, especially in the waters of the northern Caprivi strip. There are several hiking trails in the Fish River Canyon, the Naukluft Mountains, the Ugab River and the Waterberg Plateau Park. Sand gliding, sand boarding and quad biking at the coast are all pastimes which are popular amongst local people.

Balloon safaris

Balloon safaris are organised by some tour operators. There are excellent opportunities for bird watching. Namibia's flat terrain and vast open spaces provide good off-road cycling. Namibia has several cave systems that provides excellent exploring opportunities, these include Arnhem Caves and the Erongo Mountains.

Rugby, football, cricket and tennis are amongst the local sport favourites. Other sports and activities range widely, including four-wheel drive activities with plenty of routes available for the keen enthusiast. Water sports are available at numerous dams, while at the coast these range from sport fishing to kayaking and sailing.

Football

Many unique sporting events happen annually. Oval track and drag racing, motocross races and freestyle events, inline hockey games, netball, volleyball and swimming events are all scheduled during the year. Many of these activities are available through tour operators and those sports not mentioned are available on custom made itineraries.

A multi-marathon at Sesriem and Sossusvlei in the Dune Namib had its premiere in early June 2004. The '100 Miles of Namib Desert' has now become an annual event. Over the course of several consecutive days 100 miles (146 km), are run in several legs. The finish is the famous Sossusvlei, where the highest dunes of the world stop the seasonal Tsauchab River from reaching the sea. Participants stay at Sossusvlei Lodge. The multi-marathon is arranged by the Italian company Zitoway Sport & Adventure which also organises the annual event '100 km of Sahara'.

The 'O & L Bush Marathon', held at Midgard Lodge in May, has already become a tradition. The participants are (semi-) professional athletes preparing for big competitions, but also runners of any age who just take part for the fun of it. The distances to choose from are 42 km (two rounds), 21 km (one round) and a 10 km run as well as a 10 km walk. The ground is mostly firm sand; one third of the route is farm tracks leading through a landscape of trees and shrubs, while two thirds follow a partly hilly gravel road. Participants from Europe should allow themselves at least one week to adapt to the altitude (1,600 m above sea-level).

Further information and entry: Sossusvlei Lodge
P.O. Box 6900
Windhoek
Tel +264 - (0)63 - 693223, Fax +264 - (0)63 - 693227
Email: gm@sossusvleilodge.com
Web: www.sossusvleilodge.com

Midgard Lodge
P.O. Box 16, Windhoek,
Tel. +264 - (0)62 - 503888, Fax +264 - (0)62 - 503818
Email: midgard@mweb.com.na
Web: www.namibsunhotels.com.na

Wellness

Where else would you expect Namibians to offer wellness products to our visitors than anywhere but the wilderness? The country hosts an adequate collection of wellness locations, whether it is with the fresh winds blowing off the Atlantic at the coasts, or the inspiring calls of the birds in the bush-veldt.

Namibian Coast

Wellness offerings are normally associated with accommodation establishments and provide the guest a range of offerings to rejuvenate both body and soul. In or close to Windhoek various wellness offerings are available, incorporating activities on location and in town with body massages, exfoliating treatments, mud therapies and much more. Locations are pristine and the presence of Mother Nature adds to the overall therapy.

Areas of wellness offerings include Swakopmund, Luderitz, Etosha, Windhoek, the Gamsberg, Huab River and Omaruru.

Many travelers prefer to work a wellness stop into their itinerary, a good decision for those traveling self-drive or have a complex air-charter itinerary, providing some R&R amongst the excitement of exploring Namibia's diversity of wildlife and scenery.

For further information on establishments offering wellness products please contact Namibia Tourism Board.

For more information please contact:

Namibia Tourism Board (NTB)

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