

Sasendle Adventure Tours



info@sasendle-adventures.com Tel: +27-21-9112275 Fax: +27-21-9307890 "CAPE TO NAMIBIA" SCHEDULED & TAILOR-MADE 4 X 4 TOURS: www.sasendle-adventures.com

This is the Sasendle way: ONE LIFE LIVE IT

Cape Namibia Route Aussenkehr & Namib Desert Bonanza from Cape Town, South Africa to Windhoek, Namibia 2010/2011 13 days / 12 nights

Tour Code RICNAMDE01 (G=Guided)

This tour is similar in routing to Sasendle's *Cape to Namibia Explorer* yet it concentrates far more on the Aussenkehr Park and the Namib Desert.

The tour starts in Cape Town and leads via the beautiful West Coast of South-Africa into the rugged Richtersveld where we cross the Gariep River via Noordoewer into Namibia. We visit the majestic Fish River Canyon and carry on to the Namib Desert and Sossusvlei with its high dunes. Lunar Landscapes and prehistoric Welwitschia Plants surround the coastal resort of Swakopmund. We return inland passing the amazing Spitzkoppe Mountains before the safari ends in Namibia's bustling capital, Windhoek. The safari is conducted in Sasendle 4x4 vehicles and in small groups. Accommodation is provided at comfortable guesthouses and tourist class lodges. The approximate distance for this tour is 3500km.

Day 1: Western Cape Coast

We depart from **Cape Town** in the morning and travel along the R27 taking the scenic coastal route of the Western Cape to Lamberts Bay. En route we visit the Fossil Park Excavation site where fossils like sabre tooth tiger, short necked giraffe and many more fossilized mammals are displayed.

In the afternoon we visit the famous Bird Island. Bird Island provides shelter and protection for thousands of seabirds, particularly Cape gannets, various species of cormorants, and penguins. Photographer's can view the birds fairly close up from a look-out-hide. During the whale season from July to November, Benguela Dolphins and Southern Right Whales are often seen in the area (boat trips optional). During the Namaqua flower season between July and September, the area sports an abundance of colourful flowers.

An opportunity for having lunch (optional) en route will be provided.

Activities Included: Visits of Fossil Park & Bird Island – Park and entry fees included

Overnight: Sir Lamberts Guest House or similar. (BB)

Days 2 AND 3: Western Cape Coast - Namaqualand - Springbok

Spectacular scenery of rugged hills and granite domes offers itself on the drive to our destination at Springbok Lodge. This region is a photographic paradise with succulent and wild flowers in abundance during the flower season between July and September. Springbok's history is closely linked to the copper mining industry, and the colorful culture of the Nama people is widely on display in this area.

A full day excursion (Day 4) to the Goegap Nature Reserve explores the fauna and flora of this remote and mountainous wilderness area. This home to numerous rare mammal, reptile and unique plant species, amongst them the largest concentration of succulents in the world. A picnic lunch for this Goegap Nature Reserve can be ordered from Springbok Lodge, for the guest's own account.

Activities Included: Full day Goegap Nature Reserve - Park Fees included

Overnight: Springbok Lodge or similar. (BB)

Day 4: Springbok - Namibian Border – Gariep River

Today's programme depends on seasonal conditions:

During the **Namaqualand Flower Season** between July and September each year, **and only, if the Namaqua flowers are indeed in bloom:** Visit of the Goegap Nature Reserve & Hester Malan Wild Flower Garden outside Springbok.

Apart from the flora being a magnet for artists, photographers and anyone seeking some nature therapy, the stunning boulder-strewn landscapes of Goegap are sanctuary to 45 mammalian species including springbok, gemsbok, the endangered Hartman's Zebra and the aardwolf amongst several others, and 92 recorded Southern African bird species including ostriches, black eagles, spotted Dikkops and ground woodpeckers.

Taking along picnic lunch (optional) provides the opportunity to extend the visit of Goegap Nature Reserve, until the early afternoon, as we only need about 2.5 hours to proceed to our next destination, on the Namibian side of the Gariep River. The remainder of the day will be at leisure at Orange River Lodge.

Activities Included: Goegap Nature Reserve- Park Fees included.

During the **remainder of the year**, we depart from Springbok immediately after breakfast and travel straight to the South African/Namibian border post at Noordoewer. After completing the immigration formalities, it is only a short drive to our accommodation situated on the bank of the Gariep River.

Once tour participants are settled into their rooms, an **OPTIONAL EXCURSION** is on offer to explore the Namibian part of the Richtersveld that is protected in the Aussenkehr Nature Reserve bordering the Richtersveld Transfrontier Park. Using our own tour vehicle, we explore the magnificent canyons lined by sheer cliffs, the scenic vistas and the fascinating flora and fauna in this semi-desert just north of the fertile Gariep River Valley. This part of the Nama Karoo is a geological wonderland with formations dating back to the break-up of the ancient super-continent of Pangaea, and nowhere else does one get close enough to literally touch its silent rocky witnesses.

OPTIONAL EXCURSION Aussenkehr Nature Reserve:

R650 per person net / min. 2 participants

The excursion takes approx. 5-6 hours. It includes picnic lunch, soft drinks & all cost related to vehicle, guide, and entrance/permit fees for the Aussenkehr Nature Reserve.

Overnight: Orange River Lodge. (BB)

Day 5: Gariep River - Fish River Canyon

Today we travel through the vast landscape of the Nama Karoo admiring its strangely shaped mountains, its fauna and flora. En route northward we take a break at Ai-Ais Rest Camp to relax in the hot spas and around the swimming pools filled with the healing waters of a thermal spring. Here and during our onward journey to the next overnight place, we get a first taste of the great Fish River Canyon, as we take a walk around Ai-Ais and drive along its eastern parameters.

Arriving at today's destination around lunch time, guests have the opportunity to enjoy lunch (optional) at the restaurant of the Cañon Lodge, before we proceed for a few more kilometres deeper into the surrounding landscapes dotted with quiver trees and "wool sack" rocks, to take up accommodation at the Cañon Mountain Camp. Spacious, clean yet unpretentious en suite rooms surround a courtyard, which provides shade, wind-protected seating and especially a feeling of being very close to nature. We are indeed:

During the afternoon, tour guests may take unguided walks in the surroundings of the camp, with marked and easy to negotiate trails starting right at the doorstep of the Mountain Camp. Small game and various bird species may be observed while taking in this beautiful environment of seemingly endless vista across grassy plain towards distant mountain ranges. For those preferring to take it easy, the courtyard's open side allows for beautiful views of the surrounding nature while reading a book or simply indulging in doing nothing.

For dinner (optional), we pay another visit to the restaurant of the nearby lodge.

Overnight: Canon Mountain Camp or similar. (BB)

Day 6: Fish River Canyon - Succulent Karoo - Namib Desert

Next on the menu is a morning visit of the Fish River Canyon, of its northern vantage points near Hobas from where magnificent vistas into the steep gorges may be enjoyed. This is Africa's largest as well as the world's 2nd largest canyon, and only from a bird's eye perspective can it be seen any better than from here. The Fish River that created this natural wonder originates 600 km further north in the Naukluft Mountains and ends south of Ai-Ais, at its confluence with the Gariep River.

Around late morning, we proceed north via Holog and Seeheim, and then west to Aus and the Klein-Aus Vista Homestead, with a stop for snacks and refreshments en route (optional). After check-in, the remainder of the day is at guests' disposal for individual walks and relaxation in these peaceful surroundings situated in the transition area between the Succulent Karoo and the southern Namib Desert. Since this region of Namibia receives rain in only small amounts but during both the summer and winter seasons, plants sporting a myriad of tiny colourful flowers often decorate the plains and rocky outcrops around the accommodation. This is also the realm of the feral horses of the Namib Desert, which enjoy a free life in a concession area of the Namib-Naukluft-Park that the people of Klein-Aus Vista keep an eye on.

Activities Included: Visit of Fish River Canyon outlook points - park fees included

Overnight: Klein-Aus Vista Desert Horse Inn or similar. (BB)

Day 7: Kolmanskop & Lüderitz Excursion from/to Klein-Aus Vista

After breakfast, a day excursion takes us through the Sperrgebiet National Park, previously known as the Prohibited Diamond Mining Area, to the quaint harbour town of Lüderitz. It has an interesting German-colonial background and sports a curious array of historical buildings dating back to the very beginnings of European settlement in former South West Africa and to the start of the diamond rush in Southern Africa, at the end of the 19th century. We take a walk through Lüderitz to see some of the best and best preserved examples of colonial architecture.

We also visit the "ghost town" of Kolmanskop where fortune seekers from around the world once lived near their diamond mining sites, surrounded by all the luxury amenities known to mankind in those days. Today Kolmanskop's dilapidated houses are a constant reminder of the natural forces exuded by the wind and the ever-shifting sands of the Namib Desert. An on-site museum provides a fascinating glimpse into the trials and tribulations as well as the fame and fortunes to be had in a brief and long-gone-by era, before diamonds were discovered at Kimberley in South Africa.

During our return drive to Klein-Aus Vista in the afternoon, we spend some time at a permanent watering hole frequently visited by the wild desert horses of the Namib. They gather here not only to quench their thirst but also for social interactions amongst the herd members that otherwise are spread out far apart while roaming the sparsely vegetated desert plains and mountain valleys in search for food.

A lunch time break in Lüderitz provides tour participants with an opportunity to enjoy a meal (optional).

Activities Included: Ghost Town Tour Kolmanskop - entry fees included

Overnight: Klein-Aus Vista or similar. (BB)

Day 8: Namib Desert - Tiras Mountains – Duwisib Castle

Departing from the Aus area, we travel along one of Namibia's most scenic routes to take us north along the boundary of the Namib Naukluft Park and through the Tiras Mountains Conservancy to a historic phenomenon, Duwisib Castle.

The Namib Naukluft National Park counts amongst the largest nature conservation areas in Africa and not only protects vast parts of the Namib Desert's sand dune fields and gravel plains but also an array of desert-adapted wildlife. Wild ostriches, oryx antelopes, zebras and springbok are often encountered along the way, on savannas on the fringes of the park, with the magnificent scenery of dunes and mountains providing a perfect backdrop for the keen photographer.

Around lunch time, we reach a rather odd relict of Namibia's colonial past: Named Duwisib Castle only for its outward appearance, this former home of an eccentric German settler and his American wife is a perfect example to which lengths early well-off immigrants went to make living and farming in this harsh, arid and sun-beaten environment bearable, if not enjoyable. Duwisib is particularly well preserved and houses a museum, in which numerous personal and household items of its former owners are on display.

More structures and equipment of the same era, e.g. the former forge at Duwisib with the original pair of bellows, can be seen at Duwisib Guest Farm, our accommodation for today. A small number of unpretentious yet clean and comfortable rooms with en-suite facilities look out into the valley and towards Duwisib Castle. Some of the best home-baked cake and traditional farm cooking found anywhere in Namibia may be enjoyed at the guest farm's kiosk situated nearest to the castle that houses the dining room and a souvenir shop of mainly locally made handicraft.

Take a walk across the *veld* that starts right at the doorsteps of our rooms or join the farmer on a sundowner drive in another scenic part of the farm where the much acclaimed Hoodia plant grows wild.

All meals, except breakfast, and all guided activities at Duwisib Guest Farm are for the guest's own account.

Activities Included: Guided visit of Duwisib Castle - entry fees included.

Overnight: Duwisib Guest Farm or similar. (BB)

Day 9: Duwisib - Namib Desert/Sesriem Area

After a leisurely breakfast, we proceed in a north-westerly direction during the morning, through the privately owned NamibRand Nature Reserve with its amazingly varied Namib Desert and mountain scenery, towards the towering peaks of the Naukluft Mountains. To the west of this seemingly impenetrable rocky fortress lies our accommodation, at the foot of a range of petrified dunes. Namib Desert Lodge provides all the creature comforts of a modern 50-room tourist facility, including swimming pool, bar and restaurant.

The afternoon is at leisure. Individual walks in the vicinity and an optional guided excursion for exploring the petrified dunes are on offer at the lodge.

Overnight: Namib Desert Lodge or similar. (BB)

Day 10: Namib Desert/Sossusvlei & Sesriem Canyon Excursion

Today's highlight is the dune desert at Sossusvlei, a truly spectacular sight. We enter the Namib-Naukluft Park, preferably at sunrise when temperatures are still mild and dune contrasts are at their best. Dune 45 en route is the most photographed sand dune and further west, Sossusvlei marks the 'end of the road'. Enjoy a picnic breakfast surrounded by some of the highest sand dunes on earth, in the world's oldest desert. For the energetic, "Big Daddy" is there to challenge them to a climb up its ridge to the top from where magnificent vistas stretch across a sea of sand. We also visit the rugged **Sesriem Canyon**, where the Tsauchab River and erosion have incised a narrow gorge over the millennia. The permanent water pools at its bottom have ensured the survival of nomadic populations in pre-historic times as well as that of early European explorers and the so-called Thirstland Trekkers, in more recent centuries.

On our way back to the Namib Desert Lodge, we take a lunch break at a lodge situated next to the Sesriem Gate of the park where light lunches (optional) and cold beverages are served on a terrace overlooking the dry bed of the ephemeral Tsauchab River and the dunes beyond it. On return to our accommodation, the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Activities Included: Guided Sossusvlei Excursion with Naukluft Park fees included.

Overnight: Namib Desert Lodge or similar. (BB)

Day 11: Sesriem Area – Namib Naukluft Park - Swakopmund

Today's destination is the cool Atlantic Ocean Coast and the quaint town of Swakopmund. Prior to arriving there, we spend a full day travelling north through the scenic Ghaub and Kuiseb Canyons and, after re-entering the Namib Naukluft Park, we traverse the Namib Desert's eerie gravel plains to marvel at the Welwitschia Mirabilis, an ancient plant endemic to this area, and the lunar landscape of the Moon Valley in the Swakop River Valley.

An optional picnic lunch en route is available by prior arrangement.

Activities Included: Naukluft Park permit & fees included

Overnight: Cornerstone Guest House or similar. (BB)

Day 12: Swakopmund

Full day at leisure in Swakopmund, Namibia's premiere sea-side resort steeped in history and boasting a great variety in everything the visitor might be interested in – from cafés, restaurants, souvenir markets and jewellery shops to museums, art galleries, perfectly preserved German-colonial architecture, and kilometres of sandy beaches. Just outside town, the "Small 5" of the Namib Desert may be explored on a half-day guided excursion or the marine and coastal bird life during a boat cruise on the Walvis Bay Lagoon, situated just 30 km south of Swakopmund.

Apart from these most sought-after optional excursions, numerous other activities are on offer:

These include fishing, kayaking, quad biking, sand boarding, tandem-skydives, camel rides, golfing, horse riding, township tours, paragliding, scenic flights by small aircraft or in a hot-air balloon.

The Sasendle guide will assist in making individual arrangements, which all have to be paid for by the guest on the spot.

Overnight: Cornerstone Guest House or similar. (BB)

Day 13: Swakopmund - Windhoek

During the morning, we proceed inland on good tar roads with a last stop at the Okahandja woodcarvers market, before the tour ends in Windhoek.

Guests' departing tonight on an international flight will be transported to a meeting point for the airport transfer, while those staying in town will be dropped off at their respective accommodation, if situated within city boundaries.

Airport transfers & Windhoek accommodation are optional extras that require prior arrangement.

Sasendle Tip:

Return from Windhoek to Cape Town with our 9-day "Namibia – Kalahari - Cape Discovery" Safari (9 days) that explores the cultural and natural riches of the Namibian and South African Kalahari, the Augrabies Falls of the Gariep River and the Great Karoo including Namaqualand.

This safari operates on a scheduled basis once each month, and can also be requested on a tailor-made basis. Allow for 2 nights/1 full day in Windhoek in between tours!

Tour Prices: Please refer to our price lists for Guided Safaris

Departures: On request; tour operators are welcome to request fixed dates

Group Sizes: Min. 2/Max. 4 participants per 4x4 vehicle – Max. 12 guests per departure

Larger groups will be quoted on request & subject to availability of suitable services only

Inclusions and exclusions Richtersveld & Namib Desert Bonanza from Cape Town, South Africa to Windhoek, Namibia 2010/2011 13 days / 12 nights Tour Code RICNAMDE01 (G=Guided)

Included:

- SAT transport in 4x4 vehicle; Public Liability & Passenger Liability Insurance
- Services of a licensed English speaking driver-guide per vehicle
- 12 nights accommodation in comfortable guesthouses/guest farms and tourist class lodges. Meals as stated in program.
- Fees for nature conservation areas, sightseeing & activities as per itinerary (unless stipulated as "OPTIONAL")
- Portage in overnight facilities
- Non-alcoholic beverages on tour vehicle during overland drives (in limited quantities)
- Detailed itinerary & info on places of interest

Excluded:

- Flights / Visa & Permits / Travel Insurances of any kind
- Cost related to the personal use of 3G internet access & GSM cell phone provided by SAT on tour
- Tips & gratuities to hotel/restaurant personnel and guides
- Alcoholic and any other beverages in addition to those included above
- Any optional services/meals/activities/excursions not included/not mentioned in the itinerary
- Any expense of a personal nature such as for phone calls, laundry services, souvenirs, and similar

For more information about this safari please contact:

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