

# Sasendle Adventure Tours



This is the Sasendle way: ONE LIFE LIVE IT

## Cape Namibia Route Southern Namibia & Kgalagadi Special 2010/2011 12 days / 11 nights Tour Code SOUNAM01 (G=Guided)

The majestic Table Mountain disappears in our rear view mirror as we leave Cape Town and cruise north towards the South African/Namibian border. After crossing the Gariep (Orange) River into Namibia, at Vioolsdrif/Noordoewer, a wonder world of fascinating deserts, wildlife and vast ancient landscapes awaits the visitor. The great Fish River Canyon, the Succulent Karoo, the feral horses of the Namib and historic sites such as Aus, the 'ghost town' of Kolmanskop and Lüderitz are just some of the highlights to be explored in the south western parts of the country. While proceeding east into the Kalahari, we encounter a Giant's Playground and a Quiver Tree Forest. Our next destination in the Kalahari, back on South African soil, is an ideal base from where to experience the wildlife of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park during two full days. The return trip to the Cape takes in the Augrabies Falls near Upington, the Great Karoo Basin with its unique flora and landscapes as well as quaint Calvinia. The safari is guided and conducted in Sasendle 4x4 vehicles, with a min. of 2/max. of 12 participants. Accommodation is in comfortable guesthouses & tourist class lodges. Approx. 4500 km.

### Day 1: Western Cape - Northern Cape - Namibia

We depart from **Cape Town** in the morning and travel north along the N7. After crossing the Gariep River, which forms the natural border between South Africa and Namibia, we soon reach our first overnight stop situated right on the river's bank. It borders the Ai-Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Conservation Park which spans some of the most spectacular scenery of the arid and desert environments in southern Africa. The park is characterised by a unique and impressive variety of plant species.

Orange River Lodge comprises of 12 double and family rooms, each with private bathroom, air-conditioning, TV and tea/coffee facility. Meals are served in a thatched lapa and a bar offers typical friendly Namibian atmosphere.

### Overnight Orange River Lodge (DBB)

### Day 2: Full Day Excursion Ai-Ais & Fish River Canyon

Spectacular scenery of rugged hills and granite domes line the first part of our route north through the fascinating landscapes of the Nama Karoo with its unique fauna and flora. A break at the Ai-Ais Rest Camp provides opportunities for having lunch (optional), taking a walk, enjoying a swimming pool filled with thermal water from a natural spring, and observing the rich birdlife at the southern end of the world's second-largest canyon: the Fish River Canyon. Carved into dark layers of rock by the Fish River that originates 600 km further north in the Naukluft Mountains and drains into the Gariep River south of Ai-Ais, its steep winding gorges are a sight to behold. On our way north to the canyon's most famous viewpoints near Hobas, first magnificent vistas of this natural wonder may be enjoyed. The Fish River Canyon, - approx. 160 km long, up to 27 km wide and 700m deep -, is a silent witness of the unfathomable forces at work that broke apart the ancient super-continent of Gondwana. We return to our accommodation at the Gariep River in the late afternoon.

### Overnight Orange River Lodge (DBB)

### Day 3: Gariep River - Succulent Karoo/Aus

Depending on weather and road conditions, our tour continues west into the Succulent Karoo and to the fringes of the Namib Desert near Aus, either via Sendelingsdrift and Rosh Pinah or via the Klein Karas Mountains and Seeheim. Both routes take the visitor through the mostly uninhabited terrain of Nama Karoo characterised by wind-swept plains and rugged mountain ranges that support little else but crouching vegetation and small game species. This part of Namibia is situated in the transition zone of summer and winter rain falls and receives only very little rain during both seasons. When it does though, nature explodes into a kaleidoscope of colours from the tiny flowers of countless succulents.

We take a brief look at the historic village of Aus prior to check-in at our accommodation for the coming 3 nights.

### Overnight Klein-Aus Vista (DBB)

### Please note:

When travelling from Orange River Lodge via Sendelingsdrift and Rosh Pinah to Klein-Aus Vista, our tour has to cross the Fish River near its confluence with the Gariep River. Parts if not all of the bridge across the Fish River get washed away almost every summer, due to high water levels after heavy rains, making it impassable. Repairs can sometimes take several months. Even if the bridge is not affected by rain, the gravel road along the Gariep River, to the west of the Orange River Lodge/Aussenkehr settlement towards Sendelingsdrift, may still become unmanageable and prevent our travelling on this route to Klein-Aus Vista.

**Should it become necessary on Tour Day 3 to take the alternative route from Orange River Lodge via Seeheim to Klein-Aus Vista, Sasendle will offer the following option to tour guests:**

**Provided all tour participants agree, the program on Days 2 & 3 can be amended to:**

**DAY 2** (Instead of Fish River Canyon excursion)

Visit of 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.

**This additional visit of the Aussenkehr Nature Reserve will be an OPTIONAL EXCURSION:**

**R650 per person net / min. 2 participants** (price valid until 31 Oct 2010)

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.

**DAY 3** (Instead of driving from Orange River Lodge via Grünau/Klein Karas Mountains and Seeheim to Aus)

Early departure from Orange River Lodge for a drive on gravel roads along a scenic route to the northern view points of the Fish River Canyon (same route we would have taken for the canyon visit on Day 2 but by-passing Ai-Ais). After the canyon visit, we have lunch at the nearby Cañon Roadhouse & drive via Seeheim to Klein-Aus Vista.

Services on Day 3 are included in tour prices. Accommodation for both nights: unchanged.

**Day 4: Full Day Excursion Lüderitz & Kolmanskop**

After traversing the gravel plains of the newly established Sperrgebiet National Park, previously known as the Prohibited Diamond Area, we reach the 'ghost town' of Kolmanskop where the first diamonds in Southern Africa were found, about 100 years ago. Once the most modernly equipped and busy base of fortune seekers, the Kolmanskop of today fights a never-ending battle against the shifting sands of the Namib Desert. During a guided tour around the remaining buildings, the diamond fever of days-gone-by comes alive once more.

Our next stop is the quaint harbour town of Lüderitz with its interesting German colonial background and curious array of historical buildings. Angra Paguena, the Little Bay, was already known to European seafarers in the 1600s but a permanent trading post followed a town were only established at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. In recent years, the harbor of Lüderitz – being only one of two natural deep-sea harbours on the Namibian coast – increasingly gained importance in the country's export trade. On the desert plains west of Aus live some of the world's few wild desert-dwelling horses. These magnificent creatures may often be observed roaming the sparsely vegetated plains and valleys of the south-eastern Namib Naukluft Park and gathering at a permanent watering point that was established in recent years to ensure the small group's survival also in years of severe drought. Although the horses' origins remain shrouded in mystery, even after extensive scientific research, it is great news for any animal lover that their number is on the increase again.

**Overnight Klein-Aus Vista (DBB)**

**Day 5: Fauna & Flora of the Aus Mountains**

Klein-Aus Vista is located in the Aus Mountains overlooking parts of the Namib Desert. The climate is usually warm to hot and arid but occasional snow has been recorded in particularly cold winter seasons. The property surrounding the lodge comprises of three farms which together cover almost 30000 hectares of diverse landscapes and a great bio-diversity ranging from Succulent Karoo to desert plains.

Exploring this land on foot is an experience not to be missed. Nothing reveals its beauty in more detail than taking in sounds, smells, colors, the climate and atmosphere first hand and all at once.

We therefore set aside a full day for our tour guests to enjoy at their leisure.

There are 5 marked Hiking Trails to choose from, taking between 2 to 5 hours to complete and suitable for different levels of fitness. The trails are safe to explore the flora and fauna of the Succulent & Nama Karoo on our own.

**Overnight Klein-Aus Vista (DBB)**

**Day 6: Namib Desert – Kalahari/Namibia**

After a leisurely breakfast, our safari continues eastward and via Keetmanshoop into the south-western extents of the Kalahari that covers most of Botswana but stretches into Namibia as much as into South Africa. Commonly called a desert due to its lack of surface water this is anything but a desolate, lifeless place. Kalahari sand is very fertile given sufficient water and its magnificent vegetated dune belts support an array of wildlife.

On its western fringes, one finds extraordinary natural features such as the Giant's Playground made up of huge granite boulders, Namibia's densest quiver tree forest comprising of more than 5000 specimens, and Mesosaurus fossils that provide the most convincing proof that Southern Africa and South America were once part of the same continent. We visit these unusual sites en route to today's overnight accommodation.

**Overnight Mesosaurus Camp (DBB)**

### **Day 7: Kalahari/Namibia – Kalahari/South Africa**

Today, our tour proceeds through the ever-changing landscapes of the south-western Kalahari in order to return to South Africa via the Rietfontein border post and to take up base near the entrance to the famous Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park amidst red Kalahari sand dunes.

The remainder of the day is at leisure at the Molopo Kalahari Lodge where optional activities are on offer.

#### **Overnight Molopo Kalahari Lodge (DBB)**

### **Day 8 and Day 9: Full Day Excursions Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park**

Two full days are dedicated to game drives in the park that was re-named from Kalahari Gemsbok National Park a few years ago, after its consolidation with Botswana's Central Kalahari Game Reserve and the signing of agreements with Namibia to extend this wildlife sanctuary towards the west in decades to come.

Our game observations are going to take us in different directions along the beds of ephemeral rivers, toward the Mata-Mata and Nossob Camps. Unfortunately, the accommodation in both these camps is currently not meeting Sasendle standards and we therefore overnight in comfortable lodges outside the park, until the situation will be remedied.

Kgalagadi became renowned for its large populations of big cats like cheetah, leopard and the famous black-mane Kalahari lion. The park is also home to a large variety of other game species of which Oryx, springbok, blue wildebeest and red hartebeest are regularly encountered. It is a bird watcher's paradise too with more than 20 larger raptor species recorded.

#### **Overnight Molopo Kalahari Lodge (DBB) – both nights**

### **Day 10: Augrabies**

The next leg of the journey takes us southwards through the Northern Cape Region and Upington to South Africa's largest waterfall, the Augrabies Falls. Here the Gariep River drops 191 meters into the ravine. We take a walk along wooden pathways to also enjoy the great bird life and rock hyrax basking in the sun.

Our hosts at today's accommodation near the falls take particular pride in the elegant comfort they provide.

#### **Overnight Vergelegen Guest House (DBB)**

### **Day 11: Northern Cape - Calvinia**

After a full day's drive south through the Great Karoo, we arrive at the historic village of Calvinia. Surrounded by two prominent landmarks, the Hantam Reunite Mountains, Calvinia boasts the world's largest 'post box' and a museum filled with oddities and memorabilia from time gone by. During the Namaqualand Flower Season (Aug & Sep) the seemingly barren and dry countryside transforms itself into a flower-wonderland.

#### **Overnight Hantam Huis (DBB)**

### **Day 12: Cape Town**

Today we return through Citrusdal where most of South Africa's citrus fruits are grown, passed the picturesque Cedarberg Mountain Range and via Piketberg and Malmesbury to Cape Town.

The tour terminates with the transfer of participants to their respective accommodation in town (not included).

**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 & Exclusions**

### **Southern Namibia & Kgalagadi Special 2010/2011**

**12 days / 11 nights**

**Tour Code SOUNAM01 (G=Guided)**

#### **Included:**

- SAT transport in 4x4 vehicle; Public Liability & Passenger Liability Insurance
- Services of a licensed English speaking driver-guide per vehicle
- 11 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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