

**NAMIBIA ETOSHA SAFARI &
SWAKOPMUND ADVENTURE**

WEEKEND OVERVIEW

If you're looking for amazing wildlife opportunities, beautiful and unique landscapes and a chance to see Namibia's tallest dune, then look no further! The Etosha & Swakopmund Adventure is a fantastic way to explore three of Namibia's greatest highlights.

Everyone will venture out into Etosha National Park in a custom built safari vehicle, allowing you to get up close and see the wildlife roaming around you with the pop up roof and large windows.

As we seek out the myriad of waterholes, we are on the look out for predators and prey alike. With over 114 species of mammal, 350 species of bird and 110 species of reptile, you are set for an incredible experience like no other! We will head out into the reserve on three separate occasions, where we may encounter lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, giraffe, wildebeest, eland and more – it's impossible to mention them all!

We will explore the beautiful Damaraland that gives a "Big Sky" experience, where the towering pink granite koppies seem to touch the very sky on our horizon. This stunning region of mountains and grasslands will wow you in every season and will also provide you with the unique chance to meet some of the local tribes, Himba, Herero and Damara people.

As we pass the shadow of Namibia's highest mountain (The Brandberg), we will head west and down to the Atlantic Ocean. Reaching the wild and rugged Skeleton Coast, we will follow the ocean road into the unusual and quirky town of Swakopmund. Along the way you will have the opportunity to witness and take some photos of famous shipwrecks and have the option of heading to Walvis Bay to see all of the flamingos and impressive Dune 7 – the tallest dune in Namibia.

The structured trip will ensure you see as much of Namibia as possible. You will be transported by a custom built safari vehicle that has a pop up roof and air-conditioning – providing the best views and comfort.

A local tour guide will accompany you throughout the trip and will show you around all of the sites, so you get to fully appreciate their history and also learn all about the animals you see.

The trips are open to all TMR volunteers, where you will have the opportunity to join with other tourists - a guaranteed fantastic social experience.

Each trip starts on a Monday and finishes on the Saturday, costing **£830 per person**.

The following are included within this fee:

- All transport in a private vehicle
- 5 night's accommodation
- Most meals (indicated below)
- All entrance fees
- Return airport transfer

START DATES

The Etosha & Swakopmund Adventure trip will start every Monday throughout the year.

As the adventure trip lasts for 6 days, you will need to book this as an optional extra for when your volunteer placement ends. It cannot be organised for during your volunteering period due to the length of time you would miss.

Please bear this in mind when booking flights or other onwards arrangements. If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to get in touch.



BOOKING YOUR PLACE

You can simply add this adventure trip when applying for selected programmes in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe under 'Optional Extras'.

If you have already signed up for one of our volunteer programmes and would like to add this adventure trip, you can simply request this within your My Trip account.

Places on our weekend trips are non-refundable and non-transferable between volunteers.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 (MONDAY) – WINDHOEK

There is not much planned for today, but everyone will arrive into Windhoek and settle in to the hostel in the centre of the capital.

If you have been volunteering with us at the Namibia Wildlife Sanctuary, then you can simply arrange your transfer to the hostel with the local team whilst there.

If you are joining us from one of our programmes in South Africa or Zimbabwe, then the local team in Namibia will pick you up from the airport and transport you to the hotel.

Everyone is welcome to lounge around the swimming pool and enjoy your new surroundings. Alternatively, you can explore the capital, with many shops, restaurants and attractions nearby.

DAY 2 (TUESDAY) – WINDHOEK, ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

Everyone will be collected from the hostel around 7am, before heading off to have your pre-departure meeting.

After a short introduction and overview, we will hop on board the safari bus and start making our way North out of Windhoek.

We will make a quick stop in the small town of Otjiwarongo for everyone to buy snacks and drinks before continuing to Etosha National Park. We will enjoy a light lunch whilst on the move.

We should enter Etosha National Park mid-afternoon and we will set off on a game drive straight away to maximise our time on safari searching for wildlife!

Etosha is absolutely huge, measuring just over 22,000 square kilometres. The national park is home to 114 species of mammal, 350 species of bird, 110 species of reptile, uncountable numbers of insect and, somewhat bizarrely, one species of fish.

There are good chances of spotting many of these different creatures as we tour through the park, stopping at the various waterholes along our way.

All visitors must be in camp by sunset and we aim to arrive at our lodge at Halali just before sunset. Everyone can then settle into their rooms, with en-suite bathroom and tea/coffee facilities.

The 'game show' in Etosha doesn't stop when the sun goes down though. As we are staying within the national park, you will have the added benefit of being able to walk down to the Moringa Waterhole for some extra game viewing under floodlights.

A visit, or two, is highly recommended this evening as we can expect many species to visit Moringa during the night and this waterhole is known to be very popular with elephant and the critically endangered black rhino.



DAY 3 (WEDNESDAY) – ETHOSHA NATIONAL PARK

We have the whole day to explore Etosha and we want to make the most of it. The park gates open at sunrise and we aim to be on our way just as the sun breaches the horizon. Early morning is usually a productive time for game viewing and first thing in the morning is a good time to catch big cats returning from the hunt.

After a successful few hours on safari, we will return to Halali for breakfast and to load the vehicle before heading out into the park once again.

Etosha is a desert landscape and water is the most scarce natural resource. There are however numerous waterholes here, both natural and man-made, and our game driving technique is to take in as many as of these possible. Here we hope that the game will come to us as the thirsty animals attend for a much needed drink.

On our way today we will stop to have a closer look at the Etosha Pan. The name Etosha translates as 'great white space' but this name does not do justice to the immensity of the pan. Over 4,700 square km of dazzling white mineral pan, so big that it can be seen from space.

We exit Etosha at the Anderson gate close to sunset and it is just a short drive to our accommodation. You will normally stay in Taleni in Etosha Village in comfortable spacious twin share rooms with modern en-suite bathroom facilities. An ideal space to sit back, relax and enjoy the beauty that surrounds you. A fantastic dinner is prepared by our guide this evening.

DAY 4 (THURSDAY) – DAMARALAND, SKELETON COAST, SWAKOPMUND

After breakfast we aim to be on the road by 07:30. We are heading for the Skeleton Coast and plan on taking the scenic route! We first head south on the main road, passing the small town of Outjo, then onwards towards the west and picking up the gravel road as we travel through an area known as Damaraland.

Damaraland is famed for its scenery, mountains, open grasslands, tall koppies, (small hills of round pink granite boulders) wide open spaces and big sky.

We also have the chance to meet some of the locals as there are several places along the road today where we can find informal shops selling locally made, hand crafted souvenirs. We should come across some of the ladies from the Himba, Herero and Damara tribes and most often they are wearing their traditional dress. You will have the opportunity to interact with some of the colourful local characters who live in this harsh environment.

We continue on through the beautiful landscape, making a stop for a light picnic lunch under the shadow of Namibia's highest mountain, the Brandberg.

Rising up from the desert floor, this giant monolith is 2,573 m above sea level and is formed of pink tinged granite.

As we continue our journey west we will soon arrive at the coast and the chilly Atlantic Ocean. The whole coastline of Namibia is known as the Skeleton Coast and it is easy to see why. This barren seaboard has forbidding mountains and barren beaches. The wind, the waves and the huge fog banks all conspire to push ships onto the beach. The countless mariners that, in olden



times, found themselves shipwrecked here faced the stark prospect of no fresh water, no food, no rescue and a slow death by exposure. Their shipmates who went down with their ship were thought to be the lucky ones.

Heading south on the coastal road our next stop is a more recent shipwreck. Around 15km south of Henties Bay, you will find The Zeila, a fishing trawler that was beached in 2008. She was an old vessel that had been sold for scrap and was under tow at the time. The cable snapped and, as so many vessels before her, she was caught in the swell and currents and ended up on the beach. She lays quite close to the shore and is well positioned for photos.

We complete the final leg of today's journey into Swakopmund. After checking into the accommodation, you will have the rest of the day to explore the town.

It is an interesting town to say the least, bounded to the north, the east and the south by the mighty sand dunes of the Namib Desert and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean.

Swakopmund boasts some truly excellent restaurants and again your guide will be able to help you with recommendations and bookings.

DAY 5 – SWAKOPMUND, WALVIS BAY, DUNE 7, WINDHOEK

We have a more leisurely start this morning, with a welcome lie-in and a big breakfast. Everyone will have the opportunity to take a wander around town, where there are some great curio shops, excellent book shops and many small eateries serving delicious food to try out.

For anybody who would like to be a bit more active, there is time for an excursion with our guide to the port town of Walvis Bay and to the

impressive Dune 7, located 7 km outside the town – **please note this is an additional cost.**

Just 40km along the coast to the south is Walvis Bay. The lagoon is an internationally recognised Ramsar site and is renowned for its birdlife - in particular flamingos. You will usually find an abundant number of flamingos that are within easy photo distance from the shore.

Heading back to Swakopmund, we then take the main tar road back to Windhoek. We will have a light lunch en-route and everyone will be dropped off at the central hostel where you stayed on the first night.

The rest of the evening is free for you to relax or to explore more of the capital.

DAY 6 – WINDHOEK

There is nothing planned today and you are welcome to make use of the hostel facilities until you need to head off for your flight.

The return transfer is included within the trip price and you can simply organise this whilst at the hostel.

ACCOMMODATION

On Monday and Friday night you will stay within a central hostel in Windhoek, giving you time to relax and prepare for the upcoming tour and your departure from Namibia. The hostel is located just a few minutes walk from Wernhull shopping centre, restaurants and many local attractions. You will either have your own private room or being sharing with one other, with the hostel boasting a nice swimming pool and an amazing outdoor communal area – complete with sunbeds, pool table and bar.

On Tuesday night we will stay within Etosha National Park at the Halali Resort.



The rooms are basic, but very comfortable and perfect for getting a good night's rest. You will be sharing with one other person (same sex, twin beds) and have your own private en-suite bathroom.

One of the benefits of staying at the resort is that you will have access to Moringa waterhole that is floodlit all night. We highly recommend heading down to sit and watch at least once or twice, with many animals throughout the night making an appearance to have a much needed drink.

On Wednesday night you will stay at Taleni in Etosha Village – around 5km from Andersons Gate. The Etosha Village has been recognised for their eco-friendly practices. You will be staying in twin-share permanent tents (think glamping) that have private en-suite bathrooms

On Thursday night you will stay at the Hotel A La Mer in Swakopmund. Based in the heart of town, you will have many restaurants and shops on your doorstep and the beach just a minute's walk down the road. Similar to the other nights, you will be staying in modern basic twin rooms that boast a private en-suite bathroom.

MEALS

As part of the tour, there are many meals included within the price. These will generally be typical Namibian cuisine, although alternative options may be available.

Please find below an overview of what meals are included within the price –

Monday – No meals

Tuesday – Lunch & Dinner

Wednesday – Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Thursday – Breakfast & Lunch

Friday – Breakfast & Lunch

Saturday – No meals

On Monday, Friday evening and Saturday, you will be able to eat at the hostel or venture down into the capital where there are many restaurants to choose from. Whilst in Swakopmund on Thursday, you will be able to choose from the wide choices of restaurants in town for dinner.

Drinks and snacks between meals are not provided and will need to be purchased at your own expense.

TRANSPORT

If you have been volunteering with us at the Namibia Wildlife Sanctuary, then you can simply arrange your transfer to the hostel with the local team whilst there.

If you are joining us from one of our programmes in South Africa or Zimbabwe, then the local team in Namibia will pick you up from the airport and transport you to the hotel. The airport transfers are included within the adventure trip price and we will ensure everything is arranged for your airport pickup / arrival.

Whilst in Namibia, you can then simply talk with the local team to arrange your return transfer for any time on the Saturday – this is also included.

You will travel around Namibia in a private custom built safari vehicle. The large and spacious bus has extra large windows and a pop up roof, allowing you to clearly see the views and animals. On top of this, there is air conditioning and USB charging capabilities.

A member of the tour organisation will accompany you throughout the adventure trip, ensuring you don't miss any animals and



allowing you to learn all about the history and culture of the country.

