



### **Know before you go:**

#### **Namibia**

Namibia is a country of stunning contrasts with two great deserts: the Namib and its sea of red sand runs along the entire Atlantic coastline, while the Kalahari in the eastern interior is a sparsely vegetated savannah that sprawls across the border into neighboring countries. In-between lies the Central Plateau, with open plains and rugged mountains. Famed for its vast open landscapes, endless blue skies, sunny weather and tranquil starry nights, Namibia is the fifth largest country in Africa, encompassing 824 292 square kilometers.

The most important sectors of the Namibian economy are mining, fishing, agriculture and tourism; with the latter being the fastest growing sector. Mining accounts for 8% of GDP, however, provides more than 50% of foreign exchange earnings. Rich in alluvial diamond deposits, Namibia is also the fourth-largest exporter of nonfuel minerals in Africa, the world's fifth-largest producer of uranium, and the producer of large quantities of lead, zinc, tin, silver, copper and tungsten. Agriculture is Namibia's largest employer, with an estimated 46% of the workforce; however, it normally imports about 50% of its cereal requirements. The Namibian economy is closely linked to South Africa with the Namibian Dollar pegged one-to-one to the South African rand.

#### **Currency**

The currency in Namibia is the Namibian Dollar (NAD) which is fixed to and therefore equivalent to the South African Rand (ZAR).

#### **Language**

The official language is English, while Afrikaans and German are also widely used. There are numerous African languages and dialects which fall into two main groups, namely Bantu and Khoisan.

## Time

Namibia operates on daylight saving time as follows –

Summer: From the first Sunday in September to the first Sunday in April – Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) + 2 hours. Winter: From the first Sunday in April to the first Sunday in September – Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) + 1 hour.

## Climate

The weather in southern Africa is generally pleasant throughout the year – warm to hot days, and cool to warm nights. During our winter months however (May to September), it can get really cold at night and in the early morning, particularly when on safari, so we would like to suggest that you pack accordingly – very warm clothing including an anorak/winter jacket, a beanie, scarf and gloves are recommended. Please also refer to our packing suggestions list.

The climate is typically semi-desert with hot days and cool nights. The cold Benguela Current keeps the coast cool and free of rain most of the year – Namibia averages about 300 days of sunshine annually. The rainy season lasts from October to April, while the rest of the year is dry and cloudless. Humidity is generally very low in most parts, however, can reach as high as 80% in the extreme north during summer. The average rainfall is 50 millimetres (1.97 inches) along the coast to 350 millimetres (13.78 inches) in the central interior and 700 millimetres (27.56 inches) in the Caprivi. If you are travelling on a self-drive basis, you must exercise caution when crossing riverbeds and camping during the summer months as flash floods can occur from the sporadic rains. It is perfectly safe to travel by road at this time, although a 4x4 or vehicle with high ground clearance is recommended.

Mid-summer temperatures may rise to over 40°C (104°F). Winter days are warm, however, dawn temperatures may drop to freezing. Along the coast it is cool with low rainfall and fog prevails from late afternoon until mid-morning.

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### Passports:

U.S. passports, in order to be considered valid for travel to Namibia, must have at least six months of validity remaining beyond the traveler's planned date of exit from Namibia. Travelers with insufficient passport validity are strongly advised to obtain new passports prior to travel. The U.S. Embassy cannot provide new passports on an emergency basis if U.S. citizen travelers are denied admission. Bearers of U.S. passports who plan to visit Namibia for tourism or informal business meetings for less than 90 days may obtain visas at the port of entry free of charge. Travelers coming for study or work in any capacity – even if the work is unpaid or voluntary – must obtain appropriate study/work permits prior to entering Namibia. Namibian officials will not issue such permits at the port of entry. Blank Visa Pages: All travelers to or from Namibia via other countries in the region are strongly encouraged to have a minimum of six or more unstamped visa pages in their passports prior to commencing travel (this does NOT include the annotation/endorsement pages at the back of the passport). Please visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/namibia.html> for further information.

Please see health information for travelers to Namibia:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/namibia>

### Credit Cards

International MasterCard and Visa credit cards are generally accepted throughout Namibia. Holders of other cards are advised to clarify with a commercial bank whether their card is acceptable in Namibia, although with effect from 31 March 2014, American Express and Diners Club specifically are no longer accepted in Namibia. Some fuel filling stations will not accept credit cards as a form of payment.

### Banks

Banking Hours:

Monday – Friday: 09:00 – 15:30 Saturday: 09:00 – 11:00

### Shopping

In the major centers, such as Windhoek and Swakopmund, many shops specialize in attractive local products and curios, such as the popular dolls dressed in traditional Herero style made by Herero women; hand-carved wooden objects,

leather products, the popular woven Karakul carpets and Nakara garments, and beautifully fashioned jewelry incorporating Namibia's wealth of precious and semi precious stones. A visit to the Namibia Craft Centre in the Old Breweries Building in Windhoek is recommended as it showcases Namibian crafts, art, fashion and products, all made in Namibia by Namibians. The Center also offers art galleries, restaurants and cafés specializing in Namibian cuisine. Some shops are open on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings, however, are closed on public holidays.

#### Value Added Tax (VAT)

All goods and services in Namibia are priced to include value added tax (VAT) of 15%. Visitors to Namibia may reclaim VAT on their purchases at the Hosea Kutako International Airport (Windhoek), Eros Airport (Windhoek) and Walvis Bay Airport. A 30% luxury items tax is subtracted from the cost of luxury items such as jewellery or Swakara garments when tourists present their passport and air ticket at the time of purchase. Further enquiries can be made through the Ministry of Finance – Telephone: + 264 61 209 2405, Fax: + 264 61 209 2001.

Joining your Safari Please carefully check which of the two Windhoek airports you will be flying to/from as transfer times differ greatly. Hosea Kutako International Airport (Windhoek) is about 40 kilometers out of town, whereas Eros Airport (Windhoek) is in the center of town.

#### Driving in Namibia

In Namibia, one drives on the left hand side of the road. The speed limit is usually 60 kilometres per hour in built up areas, 70 kilometers per hour on gravel roads and 120 kilometers per hour on major tar roads. Safety belts must be used at all times.

#### Excess Luggage (for those flying on light aircraft )

If you need to bring luggage in excess of your allowance, you may have the option of buying an extra seat. This "seat in plane" allows for a maximum of 70 kg (154 lbs) excess weight, on the proviso that the bag/s conforms to the dimensions 40 x 40 x 80 cm (16 x 16 x 31 inches); soft bag, i.e. no wheels/frame/rigid structures; able to physically fit onto a light aircraft seat; able to be physically secured with one seatbelt; will not impact on the comfort of other guests on the flight. The additional cost of this varies depending on your flight schedule so please contact us for further details. If you do not require the excess luggage to accompany you on your trip and you arrive/depart via Windhoek, we can make storage

arrangements at Windhoek town or airport offices. The luggage can then be returned to you either at your hotel in Windhoek (if you are staying overnight) or by baggage transfer to the airport. This service, which is normally the most economical method of handling excess luggage in Namibia, is charged for at a nominal rate and you are advised to pre-book it through Our Africa Safaris prior to travel. We do not anticipate any problems with stored luggage being damaged or stolen, however, guests must ensure that they are in possession of full travel insurance including luggage cover.

### Power Supply

Most camps are situated in pristine and remote wilderness areas. These camps generate their own electricity. This is achieved through making use of generators which charge a bank of batteries and provide electricity to the camp through an inverter system.

This, in turn, provides 220V power in each tented room for lighting and fans. Where generators alone are used, these run for approximately 7 – 9 hours per day (mostly when guests are out on activities) charging the aforementioned battery bank during this time.

Hot water is provided through solar geysers, eliminating the need to provide electricity to power demanding electrical geysers. In some cases, inclement weather may reduce the efficiency of the solar geysers and in the event that this occurs, camp managers can be contacted for alternative arrangements.

Most camps in Namibia have 220V plug points in the rooms which can be used to charge batteries and sleep apnoea machines, however, these are not suitable for hairdryers and electric shavers. Where there are no plug points in the rooms, facilities for charging batteries are available in the main area.

Serious digital photographers may wish to bring a mobile device for the downloading of images. All equipment needs to be compatible with 220V power or have an adaptor to convert the 220V to 110V. You are advised to bring a spare battery for use while the other one is being charged, a power converter/adaptor if applicable, cables for computers or cameras and additional flash cards.

In cities and towns all electrical appliances run on 220V/240V. Outlets are round 3-pin, 15-amp plugs. While some camps can supply adaptors (3-prong round, 3-prong square, 2-prong round, 2-prong flat) it is advisable that you carry your own. As a responsible ecotourism operator with conservation as our core value we strive to reduce our own energy use. Please help us save energy by using appliances sparingly.

## Clothing

Sun hat/bush hat

Headscarf/bandana – particularly for dusty dry regions

Golf-shirts and/or T-shirts – preferably with a sleeve to protect your shoulders from the sun

Long-sleeved cotton shirts

Shorts and/or skirts – really short skirts are not practical for getting in and out of game drive vehicles

Long trousers/slacks

Track suit

Pyjamas – lightweight for summer and warm/thermal for winter

Underwear – on game drives the roads can be bumpy and uneven so a suitable bra may be required

Socks – thermal options are recommended for the winter months

Good closed walking shoes (running/tennis shoes are fine)

Sandals – preferably low heeled or flat if you are going on safari

Swimming costume

Lightweight jersey or fleece in summer

Light rain gear or jacket for summer months

Warm jersey or fleece plus anorak or parka in winter

Scarf, gloves and beanies/woolen hats for the cold winter months

More formal attire for your stay at prestigious city hotels or on one of the luxury trains.

## Equipment/Other

Good quality sunglasses, UV protected, preferably polarized. Tinted fashion glasses are not good in strong light.

If you wear contact lenses, we recommend that you bring along a pair of glasses in case you get irritation from the dust.

Personal toiletries (basic amenities are supplied by most establishments)

Moisturizing cream and suntan lotion – SPF 30 or higher recommended

Insect repellent for body application, e.g. Tabard, Rid, Jungle Juice, etc.

Tissues/Wet Wipes

Basic medical kit (aspirins, plasters, Imodium, antiseptic cream and antihistamine cream, etc.)

Malaria tablets (if applicable)

Antihistamine tablets if you suffer from any allergies

Anti-nausea tablets if you suffer from motion sickness

Torch

Southern African bird guide if you are a keen birder, e.g., Newman's or Sasol

Camera equipment including spare batteries, chargers, film, flash cards, memory sticks, etc.

Waterproof/dustproof bag or cover for your camera

We highly recommend that you bring your own pair of binoculars for viewing both wildlife and birds. The recommended general purpose binocular specifications are 8x40 or 10x42.

Visas, tickets, passports, money, credit cards, insurance details, etc.

NOTE 1: Bright colors and white are not advisable whilst on safari. **Camouflage clothing is not recommended for travel in African countries.**

NOTE 2: There may be a restriction on luggage limits on your safari – please ensure that you have the details from your agent according to your itinerary and ask your agent ahead of time if you would like details on the feasibility and costs of taking excess luggage with you on any of these restricted luggage safaris.