

NAMIBIA - NAMIB DESERT

ITINERARY

Day 1

The meeting point is Windhoek and we will arrange transfers for you.

On the first day of the ride your flight can arrive at Windhoek International Airport at any time. You will then be transferred to a Windhoek guesthouse, where you spend the first night. Check-in at the guesthouse is usually from 13:00. If you arrive before this you can make use of the main facilities until your room is ready.

On departure day the journey back to Windhoek by road usually takes around 5 hours. Flights should depart Windhoek after 15:00.

At the end of the ride you may choose to fly back from Walvis Bay via Johannesburg rather than transferring back to Windhoek by road. A transfer from Swakopmund to Walvis Bay airport can be arranged for you, (a journey of around 30 minutes). There is no refund if you choose not to take the road transfer back to Windhoek.

Overnight River Crossing Lodge. The first night of the ride is spent at River Crossing, a comfortable lodge located on a 6500 hectare reserve just outside Windhoek, (River Crossing, PO Box 97448, Windhoek. Tel: +264 61 401 494).

Meet the rest of your riding group for dinner. A Namibia Horse Safari Company representative will brief the group about what to expect during your adventure.



River Crossing Lodge

Guest accommodation is in bungalows; each with ensuite facilities and a veranda which overlooks the reserve.



Inside one of the guest bungalows at River Crossing

Day 2

The following is a sample itinerary to be used as a rough guideline of how the days might pan out. Usually you can expect to ride for between around 4 and 8 hours each day, covering 20-50km over varied terrain. The route, overnight stops and hours in the saddle can change, but always with your best interests in mind.

After breakfast you depart for the Sossusvlei area (a journey of about 5 hours) via the Spreetshoogte Pass which affords the first enticing glimpse of the seemingly endless Namib Desert below. Meet the horses and back-up crew at the first campsite.

After lunch there is an afternoon excursion to the terminal pan of Sossusvlei. You are welcome to attempt to climb the towering dunes for a spectacularly panoramic view.



The red dunes of Sossusvlei

Return to camp for a traditional Namibian meal cooked over an open fire. For the next 8 nights you will be camping in the desert. A tent is pitched for you at sunset if you want it. However many people choose to forego the tent and to take their camp bed to a quiet spot and sleep under the stars, which is a unique and wonderful experience.



Your swag (canvas bag) contains a sleeping mat, duvet and pillows. Additional quilts and covers are available so please do ask for these if you are feeling cold at night.



The luggage is transported by trucks and the riders meet the back-up vehicles at the camps. On most nights a shower is set up so that you can wash off the dust.

A single tent can usually be erected and single rooms are possible on the two nights spent in lodges (subject to availability) and a supplement is payable for this.

Overnight Namib Desert - Solitaire Camp. A wild desert camp.



Day 3

Set off from camp and ride amid the Naukluft Mountains. The first day is a relatively short ride, to allow you to become acquainted with your horse and the desert terrain.



Overnight Namib Desert - Pascales River Ramp. A remote camping spot.



Day 4

The landscape changes all the time, and the pace will quicken as the terrain allows.



It is an undulating landscape as you traverse through and around the foothills of the Naukluft Mountains.

Overnight Namib Desert - Gaub Edge Camp. A remote desert camp.



Day 5

Continue across the plains. Enjoy the stamina of your horse as you experience some faster riding.

As the evening light descends, enjoy sundowners and dinner as the Milky Way appears overhead.



Overnight Namib Desert Aruvlei Campsite. A very basic, remote campsite in the desert.



Day 6

Namibia's rivers rarely flow now, but they all run through deep valleys etched at a time when the land was wetter and sea levels were lower. Your riding route crosses two river canyons on the way to the plains of the Namib - the Gaub and the larger Kuiseb.



Negotiate terraces that lead down to the bizarrely rugged Kuiseb River, with a technical descent into the riverbed. It is this river which forms a dramatic end to the Namib Sand Sea. The tracks of mountain zebra criss-cross the steep sides of the canyon, all leading to a year-round supply of precious water which is preserved by the high, narrow walls of the canyon.



Later, reach the great plains of the central Namib.

Overnight Namib Desert - Ganab Camp. A beautifully located wild camp in the desert.



Day 7

Reach the great plains of the central Namib, where there should be the chance for some faster riding.



Overnight Namib Desert Bloedkoppie Campsite. A camp site near Blutkuppe - a large dome shaped granite inselberg.



The Blutkuppe.

Day 8

Good going on the wide plains of the Namib affords the chance of some faster paced riding. Dry watercourses, distinguishable by the long lines of acacia trees marking their course, are much favoured resting places for giraffe, springbok and oryx.



Overnight Namib Desert Marble Mountain Camp. A remote camp.



The horses eagerly awaiting breakfast

Day 9

As the plains become more arid, strange shapes form and disappear in mirages. You might see the Welwitschia Mirabilis - gnarled, dinosaur-like plants which tell of a land of great antiquity and tremendous solitude.

The Swakop River Basin has eroded an ancient geology (600 million years), exposing a bizarre moon-like landscape. Curious black ridges of dolerite intrusions form whalebacks on the hills surrounding the basin.



Overnight Namib Desert - Rowans Campsite. A desert campsite on the final approach to Swakopmund.



One of the horses resting in camp

Day 10

Set off on your final ride down the Swakop River to the coastal dunes, before reaching the Atlantic Ocean. See your first glimpse of a town in ten days! The last stretch of riding is along the beach at Swakopmund.

Tonight's accommodation is a comfortable guesthouse. Meanwhile the horses will enjoy their well-deserved rest in a large sandy paddock.

After sundowners, enjoy a last memorable meal together, reminiscing over an adventure unlikely to be forgotten.



Overnight Beach Hotel Swakopmund. A comfortable hotel just a stone's throw from the Atlantic Ocean.

Occasionally an alternative hotel in the area is used.



Day 11

After breakfast, say goodbye to your guides and the staff who have helped you along the way. Be transferred to Windhoek by road, a journey of c. 5 hours.