

# Namib Desert, Namibia

## Itinerary

**Day 1:** You will be met on arrival at Windhoek International Airport. Your first night is spent at a guesthouse just outside Windhoek.

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.

Overnight at River Crossing, (PO Box 97448, Windhoek. Tel: +264 61 401 494).

[www.rivercrossing.com.na](http://www.rivercrossing.com.na)

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.

**Day 2:** 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, which lies under some ancient Camelthorn trees. After lunch there is an afternoon excursion to the terminal pan of Sossusvlei itself. You are welcome to attempt to climb the towering dunes for a spectacularly panoramic view. Return to camp for a traditional Namibian meal cooked over an open fire.



**Day 3:** Today's ride takes you up a wide grassy valley flanked on one side by the distant Namib Sand Sea. Lunch is at the surprising desert oasis of Solitaire. In the afternoon the route takes you towards the

foothills of the rugged Namib Naukluft Mountains. The camp water trough often attracts mountain zebra, kudu and oryx during the night.



**Day 4:** This morning, ride along ramp-like dunes amongst unspoilt wilderness and striking scenery. In the afternoon the pace quickens as you ride across the wide plains of a riverbed before a gentle climb up to your campsite on a hill. Dinner is served in an old farm dam that has been converted into a wonderful dining room.



**Day 5:** This morning cross some red dunes before a rugged descent into the craggy Gaub Canyon where you stop for lunch. This afternoon sees you climb back out of the canyon before continuing across the wide plains to a cave with far reaching and spectacular views of the badlands of the ephemeral Kuiseb River.



**Day 6:** Today you negotiate the terraces leading 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, flowing just often enough to prevent the dunes from crossing the river. 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.



**Day 7:** Good terrain may afford some faster-paced riding towards the water-point at Ganab where mountain zebra, oryx, ostrich, springbok and if you are lucky some desert-adapted warthogs come to drink. Here the wide grassy plains are scarred by several watercourses, some only distinguishable by the long lines of trees which mark their course, sometimes giving shelter to some desert-adapted giraffe.



**Day 8:** Another day which may afford some faster-paced riding to Hotsas across the Tinkas and Tumas plains, which become ever less vegetated as you approach the coast. On approaching the Marble Mountain, you may be lucky enough to see ostrich and mountain zebra alongside you, curious about the unusual centaurs inhabiting their desert. From now on life-giving evening fog can be expected, producing 5 times as much precipitation than rainfall in this hyper arid area.



**Day 9:** Today's ride takes you through the hyper aridity of true desert-scapes where you encounter the dinosaur-like plants, the gnarled Welwitschia Mirabilis. Strange shapes form and disappear in mirages and fascinating survival devices of desert-adapted creatures astound; this is a land of great antiquity and also tremendous solitude. Pass through the spectacular Moon Valley on your descent to a wonderfully sheltered campsite in the Swakop River.



**Day 10:** Set off on the 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 soft white beach sand of Swakopmund. Tonight's accommodation is a comfortable guesthouse. Meanwhile the horses will enjoy their well-deserved rest in a large sandy paddock with a wonderful view of the sea. After sundowners, enjoy a last memorable

meal together, reminiscing over an adventure unlikely to be forgotten.



**Day 11:** After breakfast say goodbye to your guides and the staff who have helped you along the way. Continue your holiday plans in Namibia or be transferred back to Windhoek, a journey of c.4 hrs. Flights should depart Windhoek 15:00 or later.