

## BLUE SKIES, RED DESERTS & DUNES

9 DAYS IN NAMIBIA APRIL - OCTOBER 2018

Namibia is utterly different to anywhere else in Africa – a land of vast expanses of moving, rippling rusty sands, great blue skies, and the grey of the ocean. We appreciate the colours, starkness and beauty of the landscape that is more impressive when seen from the air. Any animal that we see surviving here, thriving here, stands out as an icon of evolution – especially black and grey gemsboks (oryx), sandy white springboks, unique zebra and desert adapted elephants.



### 8-NIGHT/9-DAY ITINERARY

Key to meals included in cost - B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner

Day 1	Arrive in Windhoek, Namibia. 1 night at Olive Exclusive	D only
Days 2&3	Scheduled flight to Sossusvlei for 2 nights at Little Kulala	B,L,D
Days 4&5	Scheduled flight to Damaraland for 2 nights at Desert Rhino Camp	B,L,D
Days 6-8	Scheduled flight to Hoanib for 3 nights at Hoanib Camp, Skeleton Coast	B,L,D
Day 9	Last Day. Scheduled flight to Windhoek to connect international flight out	B only

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## ACTIVITIES

Windhoek - Shopping (Cost of activities in Windhoek is not included in safari price)

Sossusvlei area - Game drives, walks, quad bike rides (Sossusvlei Desert Lodge only), balloon rides (extra cost)

Desert Rhino Camp - Game drives, bush walks, night drives, rhino tracking (shared basis & 12 years or more), pool

Hoanib Camp - Naure/Game drives, walks, night drives, pool



## LOGISTICS

Windhoek International Airport - Olive Exclusive - ½ hour drive

Eros (Windhoek) Airport - Sossusvlei Area - 1 hours flight

Sossusvlei Area- Desert - Rhino Camp (Palmwag area) - 2½ - 3 hours scenic flight

Desert Rhino Camp - Hoanib Camp - 1 hour-1h 45mins flight

Hoanib Camp - Windhoek International Airport 1 hour flight

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## WINDHOEK & THE OLIVE EXCLUSIVE



Windhoek International Airport is 40 kilometers (25 miles) from Windhoek. Upon arrival you are met and transferred by road to the Olive Exclusive Hotel, situated in Windhoek.

The Olive Exclusive is a welcoming boutique hotel situated in the quiet, peaceful suburb of Eros. This luxurious hotel provides exclusive suite accommodation with beautiful views over the olive trees towards the mountains surrounding Windhoek.

Each inviting suite boasts an expansive balcony and plunge pool and has its own lounge area and

dining room, providing the option to enjoy meals in your own room, or to join the other guests for meals at the main restaurant. The en-suite rooms offer all the added luxuries of satellite TV, iPod music system, fully-stocked mini-bar, premier wine selection, direct-dial telephones, air conditioning, hair-dryer, wall-mounted safe, personal computer for internet access, complimentary wireless internet access, goose-down duvets, 100% cotton linen and style in abundance. The overall feel is one of indulgent luxury, while still retaining the simplicity and elegance for which Olive Grove has become well-known.



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## SOSSUSVLEI AREA, NAMIBIA

There is hardly a book on Namibia that doesn't show a stunning photograph of the rich red dunes at Sossusvlei. The scenery is outstanding, even by Namibian desert standards. Interestingly, the dunes seem to change colour from a rich deep russet to a golden colour once the sun is high. Ascending a dune in this area at dusk or dawn can be an amazing, spiritual experience. The dunes cover a vast area, including some national and private reserves.



Sossusvlei itself is situated in the middle of the Namib Naukluft National Park. The valley of the Tsauchab River provides convenient dune-free access to Sossusvlei from the Sesreim area to the east. During occasional floods the river flows westwards from its source in the Naukluft and Zaris Mountains and ends at Sossusvlei, where the river is blocked by massive dunes. At such times the water can stay for a while due to a clay-capped

bedrock and this is what supports the vegetation in Sossusvlei. Most of the time Sossusvlei is a sandy dry pan, surrounded by massive dunes, deep in the Namib desert.

## NAMIB NAUKLUFT NATIONAL PARK

The Namib Naukluft National Park covers an area of 49,768 km<sup>2</sup> (19,216 sq mi), and so is one of the largest national parks in Africa. Climbing one of the dunes near Sossusvlei (some are reportedly the highest in the world at 300m high) is a rewarding feat. A favorite is "Big Daddy" which forms the eastern edge of "Dead vlei" - another adjoining vlei renowned for its unique beauty. The shifting of the dunes has cut off Dead Vlei from all sources of water, except the extremely rare rainfall, so here the only trees are gnarled dead ones which form natural works of art.



This park was originally created to link the former Namib Desert Park with the Naukluft Mountain Zebra Park, guaranteeing freedom of movement for migratory wildlife that depended on the two areas for survival. More land would have enabled this area to be further preserved, but finances did not allow. Luckily, the popularity of Sossusvlei and the surrounding dunes, and the wisdom of ranchers in the area wishing to diversify from a livestock dominated industry in this extremely fragile land, resulted in the creation of various private reserves, which form a buffer zone and effectively enlarge the protected area. These also disperse environmental and tourism pressure on the core area.

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## LITTLE KULALA CAMP, KULALA WILDERNESS RESERVE, NEAR SOSSUSVLEI

The private 37 000-hectare Kulala Wilderness Reserve borders the Namib Naukluft National Park, only 65 kilometres from the famous Sossusvlei valley. Little Kulala Lodge is a luxurious desert retreat situated in the reserve.



### LITTLE KULALA LODGE

Little Kulala is one of the most stylish lodges in Namibia's extraordinary Sossusvlei area. The main lodge includes library, wine cellar, craft boutique, lounge and dining areas, overlooking a waterhole. Dining under the clear Namibian skies is a possibility.

The 11 thatched climate controlled villas (kulalas) merge impeccably into the desert landscape, each with its private plunge pool, and rooftop 'skybed' for romantic stargazing, with both indoor and outdoor showers.

While here we enjoy nature drives into the desert in 4x4 vehicles, walking trails in the Kulala Wilderness Reserve, and most spectacular of all - a visit to the red dunes of Sossusvlei.



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## **PALMWAG RESERVE, DAMARALAND**

This camp is in the heart of the dramatic mountainous and stony desert known as Damaraland, on the million acre, private Palmwag Reserve. The reserve's freshwater springs support healthy populations of the famous desert-adapted black rhino, elephant, Hartmann's mountain zebra, giraffe, oryx, springbok and



kudu, as well as large numbers of predators such as lion, cheetah, leopard and brown and spotted hyena.

During our stay we can track rhino on foot or by vehicle, or we can take a full day outing with a picnic lunch. We can also go on night game drives. Desert Rhino Camp is involved with the Save the Rhino Trust, an organization that has been responsible for the survival of the rare black rhino in the area. While here we have our own private vehicle.



## **DESERT RHINO CAMP, DAMARALAND**

Accommodation consists of eight large meru-style tents, offering wonderful views of the desert and mountains. The en-suite bathroom has a flush toilet and bucket showers.

**CONNECTIVITY** The camp does not have internet connection or cell phone coverage.

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## HOANIB SKELETON COAST CAMP, SKELETON COAST

Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp is located in the northern part of the private Palmwag Concession in one of the most remote areas of Kaokoland.



The camp is protected from the wind by rugged hills to the east and west, and is close to the confluence of two tributaries of the dry Hoanib River to the north. The sandy bed of the Hoanib is frequented by desert elephant, southern giraffe, gemsbok and many other animals in search of water.

The camp is ideally placed to benefit from abundant wildlife near the Hoanib, the surrounding dry stony deserts of the Palmwag area, and is within reach of the coast of the Skelton Coast. Here the desert sands contrast with the deep blue Atlantic ocean.

Colonies of Cape fur seals sunbathe on the shoreline, and jackals and other predators sneak in and out of the masses hoping to find sick, weak or young individuals.



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The camp consists of seven large tents and one family unit, each comprising en-suite bedrooms with shaded outdoor decks. All tents look out over stunning, starkly beautiful scenery and offer guests all the luxuries and amenities for an unforgettable stay.

Diverse activities showcase spectacular scenery, unexpected oases and enormous sand dunes.



## EXCURSION & ACTIVITIES

### **Skeleton Coast excursion**

On a stay of three nights (or more) full-day excursions to the Skeleton Coast are offered. This fascinating 4x4 excursion is a 4-5 hour drive to the coast, exploring the wilderness and wildlife of the Hoanib River and floodplain, the dune fields and Klein Oasis. The Skeleton Coast itself reveals a rocky coastline with huge Cape fur seal colonies and a few shipwreck remains. The return to camp is usually a 20-minute scenic flight, viewing the country from a different perspective. (Flight is weather dependent.) We leave camp early with a picnic lunch. By around 2pm we are ready to take the flight back. The Skeleton Coast Excursion is currently limited to a maximum of 10 guests per excursion. Due to the number of vehicles and aircraft available, this excursion is not possible on a private basis.

Typically harsh desert conditions prevail in this area with regards to heat, fog rolling in from the sea, high winds and flooding rivers. On occasion, these conditions may affect the duration and routing of the excursion and guests are driven both ways or as is the case when it rains and the floodplains fill with water - flown both ways. In this case, departure from camp will be at 10:00 to allow time for the fog to clear. The return to camp will remain as departure from Mowe Bay at 14:00. At the discretion of the camp manager and duty pilot, with safety and overall comfort being the major criteria, decisions on the format of the excursion on any given day will be finalised in camp. Being weather dependent, it cannot be guaranteed and should it not take place, no refund is possible.

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### Water Springs

Day trips to remote water springs can be organised. These oases are a fascinating respite from the dry surrounds of the desert and offer the chance of seeing wildlife coming to drink as well as plenty of birdlife. These full-day trips are done in our semi-closed game drive vehicles, with a stop for a picnic at a scenic spot along the way.



### SPECIAL SPECIES

Desert adapted elephant, Hartmann's zebra, gemsbok (oryx), southern giraffe, springbok, brown hyaena, black-backed jackal, lion, Cape fur seal on the Skeleton Coast and welwitschia plants.

**CONNECTIVITY** -The camp does not have internet connection or cell phone coverage.

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## **COSTS PER PERSON FOR THE ABOVE 9 DAY ITINERARY IN 2018**

The actual cost is billed in Namibian Dollars, so it depends on the US\$-Namibian\$ rate at the time of payment. In January 2018, there were approximately N\$12 to US\$1.

Costs include internal scheduled flights beginning and ending in Windhoek, and are based on sharing a twin or double bedded tent/room.

### **OPTION A - With an A Step Ahead professional guide throughout and private activities**

Number of guests in the group	4	6	8
High season (June-Oct) in N\$ (ZAR)	N\$ 189,900	N\$ 162,500	N\$ 160,500
Mid season (Apr/May) in N\$ (ZAR)	N\$ 160,000	N\$ 132,000	N\$ 129,900

(In January 2018 N\$ 200,000 was approximately equivalent to US \$ 16,200)

Your *A Step Ahead* guide is there to orchestrate your whole safari, provide continuity from one camp to another, see to any special requests and arrange for unusual touches to your safari. As an African professional with years of experience, he ensures the trip is varied and fun, and provides extra, often broader knowledge, adding to the valued local knowledge of the excellent resident guides in the various camps.

### **OPTION B - With excellent regional camp/lodge guides in each place and activities shared with other guests (without A Step Ahead professional guide).**

Number of guests in the group	4, 6 or 8
High season (June-Oct) in N\$ (ZAR)	N\$ 131,100
Mid season (Apr/May) in N\$ (ZAR)	N\$ 100,600

(In January 2018 N\$ 100,000 was approximately equivalent to US \$ 8,100)

### **NOTES:**

1. The internal flights are based on using scheduled flights. They go at fixed times and there are likely to be stops on the way. It is also possible to fly by private charter instead of scheduled flight. The private charters go direct, with no stops en route. We can provide private charter costs on request and these can sometimes be more economical than the scheduled flights - depending on the group size and routing.
2. It is possible to do the trip without an ASA guide but still with private activities. We can provide cost supplements on request.
3. The Namibian dollar is pegged to the South African Rand so is worth the same as the SA Rand (ZAR).
4. April and May are excellent months for a safari in Namibia, with significant savings on high season rates.
5. Low season rates (11 January-31 Mar & 1st November- 19th December) are available on request.
6. It is possible to extend this safari to include other parts of Namibia, a stay in parts of Botswana or South Africa.



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### **INCLUDED / NOT INCLUDED**

**Included in the above safari cost:** Accommodation in best available twin-bedded tent/room on shared basis (2 people per room) everywhere; all meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 9; two activities a day - a morning and an afternoon activity while in the camps (not in Windhoek); the services of local resident guides; all park entry fees; airport transfers to the camps and to/from Windhoek airport; laundry service (reasonable amounts - water is limited at Desert Rhino Camp so laundry should be kept to a minimum); soft and local alcoholic drinks (except premium brands) at safari camps (not in Windhoek). Option A includes an A Step Ahead professional guide and private safari vehicle to enable you to do private activities. Option B includes activities shared with other guests in camp;

**Not included in the above safari price:** Any lunches, drinks or activities in Windhoek; any medical services or emergency medical evacuation; premium or foreign brand alcoholic drinks; items of a personal nature (e.g. visas, airport taxes, telephone or fax services, massages, internet services etc.); laundry in Windhoek; activities not included in the lodge rates e.g. helicopter rides or balloon flights near Sossusvlei; any kind of insurance (medical, health, trip & travel, or any other insurance); gratuities; any regional flights other than the flights stated in the itinerary; international flights to/from and within Africa. An A Step Ahead professional guide and private activities are NOT included in the Option B rates.



PLEASE SEE OUR **TERMS & CONDITIONS (2017)** DOCUMENT FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON TERMS AND INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

**Note:** This safari is sold and organized by **A Step Ahead S.L.**

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