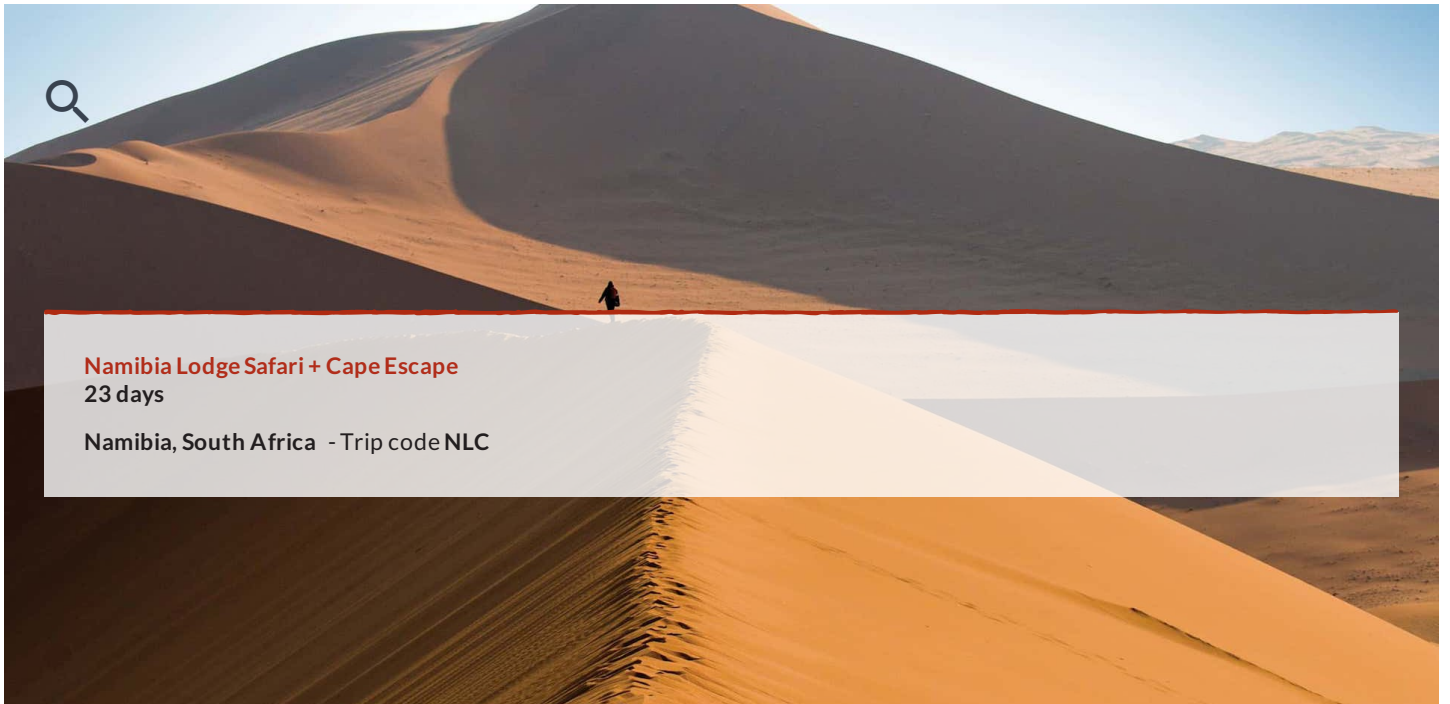


EXPLORE!



Namibia Lodge Safari + Cape Escape

This adventure combines a journey across the desert landscapes and national parks of Namibia with a tour of South Africa's scenic Western Cape. We can watch the sun's rays cast shadows over the world's highest sand dunes and walk along narrow paths through Sesriem Canyon. Staying in comfortable lodges along the route we track big game through Etosha and Waterberg Plateau National Parks. We fly south to the Cape Peninsula, following the Indian Ocean coastline and travelling inland to the fertile valleys. We hike up the legendary Table Mountain and explore the ancient limestone Cango Caves. We also watch the penguins frolic on Boulders Beach and visit an ostrich farm in the heart of the winelands. This trip offers the chance to explore two unique destinations on one fantastic holiday.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Sossusvlei** - The world's highest sand dunes.
- ★ **Etosha** - Abundant wildlife from comfortable lodges within the park.
- ★ **Damaraland** - The impressive petrified forest and ancient rock art.
- ★ **Cape Town** - An iconic, vibrant city surrounded by mountain and sea.
- ★ **Cape Peninsula** - Visit Cape of Good Hope and the resident penguin colony.
- ★ **Stellenbosch** - World renowned vineyards overlooked by stunning, rugged mountains.
- ★ **Tsitsikamma National Park** - A marine and forest park in the heart of the famous Garden Route.
- ★ **Hermanus** - The best place in Southern Africa to admire the humpback whales (in season)

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join tour Windhoek

Arrive Windhoek and check into hotel. There is some free time today for sightseeing in the Namibian capital, with an opportunity to visit the National Museum or perhaps a half day Katatura Township tour.



Accommodation: Hotel Safari (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Drive through Namib Desert to Sesriem

Departing Windhoek we spend the day driving south-west into the Namib Desert, to the edge of the Namib-Naukluft National Park and our lodge near Sesriem. The Namib is the oldest desert on earth, distinguished as being home to some of the strangest flora and fauna on the continent.



Accommodation: Hammerstein Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 3 - Exploring the highest sand dunes in the world in Sossusvlei

Today we drive into the Namib-Naukluft National Park and travel down the Tsauchab Valley to Sossusvlei to watch the sun cast its shadows over the red dunes. Sossusvlei has some of the world's most spectacular sand dunes. The area itself is a vast depression or clay pan, towered over by sand dunes up to 300m high. In the early morning, the first rays of the sun light up the dunes with a deep orange glow - a photographer's delight. It is a wild, beautiful and romantic spot, with sparse vegetation edging a few water courses which flow in from the Tsauchab river. Here springbok and ostrich are often seen. We'll also explore the cool passageways of the Sesriem Canyon on foot. The canyon is small but very picturesque - many plants grow in the shade and shelter offered by the canyon, and water pools attract several species of birds and animals. Sesriem means 'six thongs'; which refers to the six lengths of rawhide rope (from a wagon) needed to make a line long enough to lower from the rim of the gorge to the stream below, in order to haul up a bucket of water.



Accommodation: Hammerstein Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 4 - Drive to Swakopmund via Walvis Bay

Travelling via Solitaire and through the Kuiseb Canyon, we then pass awe-inspiring landscapes as we head across the Namib gravel flats to Walvis Bay. Here a large spit forms a natural deep-sea harbour that attracted the first navigators in the late 1400's. The shallows, located where the spit joins the mainland, are home to a diverse collection of birds, the most spectacular being flamingos and pelicans that feed here seasonally. It's a short drive from here to the coastal town of Swakopmund.



Accommodation: Amanpuri Travellers Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Lunch

DAY 5 - Swakopmund, Explore the colonial town or time for optional activities

Swakopmund is one of the world's best examples of German colonial architecture, and served as the German's port into what was then, German South West Africa. Like any port town has a colourful past. Today, there may be time to visit the town's excellent museum, or visit a local township, participate in one of the numerous activities on offer, or just relax! This evening you have the chance to watch the sunset at the nearby coastal dune belt.



Accommodation: Amanpuri Travellers Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Drive via Cape Cross Seal Colony to Damaraland

Travelling north towards the Atlantic coast we visit the memorable Cape Cross Seal Colony where between 80,000 and 100,000 Cape fur seals bask in the sun or swim playfully in the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The seals are natural indicators of fish stocks in the ocean. If the fish stocks are healthy, then the seal numbers are high. If the fish stocks are poor, then the seal numbers will be low. The seals are quite big, an average male weighing in at anything up to 187kg (501 lbs.). The females give birth to a single pup around late November to early December. After our visit we head inland, towards the majestic Brandberg Mountain (2,573m and the highest point in Namibia) and stopping at the Brandberg White Lady Paintings. These famous San Bushman paintings can be found throughout the Brandberg Mountain area and are a spectacle to behold. To reach the rock paintings we will walk via mostly flat terrain between rock formations and it will take us approximately 1 hour to reach. Do remember to wear comfortable walking footwear and have a hat, suntan lotion and plenty of water with you today.



Accommodation: Brandberg White Lady Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 7 - Visit Himba Village; drive towards Etosha National Park

This morning we have the privilege to meet the Himba people and learn about their traditions and way of life. The Himba are the last semi-nomadic herders in Namibia and their simple lifestyle has remained unchanged for generations as these people have preferred their traditional life style to modernization. They have become iconic for using a characteristic red paste made of butter, fat and red ochre that they apply to their body and which serves an aesthetic purpose in beautifying their body as well as protecting them from the scorching sun. We interact with these friendly and proud people before continuing our journey to the edge of Etosha National Park, arguably one of the finest national parks in Africa.



Accommodation: Toshari Lodge (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 8 - Game drives in Etosha National Park

This morning we enter Etosha National park for an early morning game drive. Etosha is an immense, saline desert, covering over 12,400 square miles, and the habitat for 114 species of animals and 340 species of birds. It has been described as the best game reserve on the African continent. Our programme of game drives will depend entirely on the interests of the group, and is left as flexible as possible. We should see elephant, rhino and hopefully lion. The terrain ranges from dense bush to large open plains where animals roam freely. We drive along the network of gravel roads that criss-cross the Park, visiting the various viewpoints and the permanent waterholes around which animals congregate. There is something enigmatic in the vast silent greywhite pan that covers the reserve.



Accommodation: Halali Rest Camp (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 9 - Game drives in Etosha National Park

We continue with game drives today. Numerous waterholes and underground springs attract large herds of animals including springbok, zebra, wildebeest and giraffe. At its very heart is the Etosha Pan, which geologists believe was formed some 12 million years ago from an inland lake about the size of Holland. Shrunken to its present dried-up size, it is now a gigantic depression in the ground - flat, saline and silvery, a mysterious place of mirages and dust-laden images.



Accommodation: Halali Rest Camp (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 10 - Visit Cheetah Conservation foundation; Waterberg Plateau Park

We leave Etosha and travel via the Cheetah Conservation Foundation at Otjiwarongo to the Waterberg Plateau Park. The CCF is an internationally recognised centre of excellence in research and education on cheetahs and their eco-systems with an extensive visitor's centre which encourages visitors to learn more about these beautiful cats and the efforts being made to save them. Later we will continue to the Waterberg Plateau. The Waterberg is a sandstone mountain which rises over 200m from the surrounding plains and is Namibia's only mountain game park. There are various trails to walk along searching for the elusive Damara Dik-Dik and a good variety of birds.



Accommodation: Waterberg Restcamp Bungalows (or similar)



Premium Lodge



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 11 - Morning walks or optional game drives; head to Windhoek

This morning you could choose to explore some of the walking trails on offer or take an optional game drive in the national park. We will then head south and return to Windhoek. We have the chance to stop off en route in Okhandja and visit the local craft market.



Accommodation: Hotel Safari (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Lunch

DAY 12 - Tour ends Windhoek

Today you end your trip in Namibia and fly from Windhoek to Cape Town. Upon arrival here you will be met at the airport and transferred to our hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to explore the city at leisure. Cape Town embodies the feeling of energy and hope that South Africans feel for the future of their country with its spectacular natural assets, modern high-tech city centre and mixed population living peaceably together and at the same time retaining their own customs. Cape fur seals can often be seen playfully frolicking in the harbour waters of the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Free day in Cape Town

Today is free time for you to enjoy the diversity of Cape Town. There are optional activities such as visiting the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, the District Six Museum, Robben Island or take one of the sightseeing buses around the city limits. Tonight you will meet your Tour Leader and rest of the group on your Cape Escape trip.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Tour Cape Peninsula National Park

We spend the whole day enjoying a comprehensive sightseeing tour of the many points of interest on the Cape Peninsula. We drive to Hout Bay, an attractive fishing port once flanked by dense forest with a dramatic background. Here you can take a short optional boat trip out to Seal Island. The island is home to about 1000 Cape fur seals and is guarded by the impressive 'Sentinel'; a towering mountain that guards the harbour. One of the highlights today is a visit to the Cape of Good Hope, first seen by a European in 1488 when Diaz sailed round it on his search for a sea route to the East Indies. A century later Sir Francis Drake described it as 'the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth'. But it was another century before the Dutch East Indies Trading Company established a permanent settlement to supply ships with cattle and water traded from the indigenous Khoi who reared livestock on the land around the coast. We climb up to a viewpoint and watch the reputed turbulent clash of the warm Agulhas current from the Indian Ocean meeting the cold Benguela current from the Atlantic.

If you're feeling active, a short trail leads down to Cape Point. Boulders beach is worth a stop to see an amazing resident African penguin colony, one of the only places in the world where this sea bird resides! Then, passing perfect sandy beaches we return to Cape Town city.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 15 - Ascend Table Mountain; drive Stellenbosch

This morning we plan to ascend Table Mountain. You may choose to take a 3-4 hour hiking trail up to the top accompanied by your Tour Leader (if the weather is clear). Alternatively, an aerial cableway runs frequently to and from the summit, although it does

close for 2 weeks for maintenance each year roughly from the end of July. This is our first encounter with some of the unique and colourful flowers from the Cape Floral Kingdom. This plant kingdom has more indigenous plant species per square metre than anywhere else on earth! Views from the top are simply stunning. A network of trails criss-cross the plateau that provide a variety of vantage points. Later in the day we'll head out of Cape Town to stay on a guest farm in the Stellenbosch region. The Stellenbosch region produces some of the finest 'New World Wines'. Wines that have been honed over several centuries by the Afrikaans wine growers, so we'll make sure we sample some of the latest vintages!



Accommodation: Stellenbosch Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 16 - Exploring the historic town of Stellenbosch and the winelands

To the north and east of Cape Town are the Cape Winelands, whose rugged mountains, rise sheer from rolling green valleys, neatly planted with vineyards and dotted with white washed manor houses. This is an image more reminiscent of a central European fairy tale than 'Darkest Africa'! Stellenbosch is one of the most beautiful and heritage-rich towns in southern Africa. Entering the town via historic Dorp Street is akin to stepping into the pages of a history book. A settlement was first established here in 1679 following the discovery of a river running through a fertile, green valley by Simon van der Stel, then Governor of the Cape. There is an opportunity to stroll through this historic town and take in the distinct architecture that reflects South Africa's rich and diverse history. You can choose to explore on your own following selfguided trails or take an optional guided tour. If you are feeling energetic, you may like to take a walk on the Helderberg Mountains just behind Stellenbosch.



Accommodation: Stellenbosch Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 17 - Scenic drive to Oudtshoorn, stopping in wine country on route

We start early on our scenic journey into the Little Karoo as there are several points of interest worth visiting en route. Located in the heart of the verdant Breede River Valley (the largest of the Western Cape's fruit and wine producing valleys), Worcester is home to the Karoo National Botanical Garden - a haven for rare or endangered plants. While our drive through the centre of town gives views of the fine Victorian town buildings. We continue our drive through the stark and arid landscapes of the Little Karoo heading east through Barrydale & Ladismith. Finally, we reach our accommodation close to Oudtshoorn in the traditional centre of South Africa's ostrich farming industry.



Accommodation: Kleinplaas Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 18 - In Oudtshoorn, exploring the Cango Caves

We head off early this morning to experience the stunning variety of landscapes of this region and start off by exploring the massive limestone caverns of the Cango Caves where guided tours of varying durations run regularly throughout the day (optional). The caves are an underground wonderland of extraordinary structures millions of years old. The combination of dripping rainwater and limestone has led to the creation of some of nature's most breathtaking natural structures. A local European farmer, by the name of van Zyl, first discovered the caves late in the 18th century. Although, in times past, the local Khoisan sheltered in the cave complex's entrance but they never ventured any further into the cave complex. When van Zyl, with a single candle, entered the cave complex and its first massive chamber and spoke, he realised from his muffled voice that there was something far bigger and grander than his candle light could show. Ever since then the caves have been enjoyed and explored by professionals and amateurs alike.



Accommodation: Kleinplaas Resort (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 19 - Drive to Knysna, walk on pensinula looking for Seals and Dolphins

After leaving Oudtshoorn we travel over the protea-covered on the dramatic Outeniqua pass through the Outeniqua Mountains. These mountains form a very formidable barrier between the dry interior and the lush coastal strip known as the 'Garden Route'. Knysna was originally a harbour, forestry and mining centre. The setting will give you a real appreciation of how skillful maritime captains of old were to pilot their vessels in, and out of the lagoon. Knysna's lagoon is the foundation of the town's wealth. It was here that ships could shelter and victual and valuable raw material like wood could be transported to other centres of industry. It was also home to the reputed illegitimate son of King George III, George Rex. He is considered the main driving force in establishing Knysna as a commercial town. Today it is noteworthy as an artists' retreat and adventure activity base and has twice been voted South Africa's favourite town. Later today it may also be possible to take an easy walk on the magnificent Robberg Peninsula. Named after the seal colony found there by Dutch sailors. From here the views of the coastline are fantastic and it is easy to understand why our early ancestors used this peninsula as a home. From the peninsula have a really good chance of seeing seals, dolphins and the Southern Right Whale. During June to late November, the whales come into calmer and warmer waters to calve and nurse their young.



Accommodation: Lagoon Inn (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 20 - Visit Tsitsikamma National Park, optional walks and short treks

No visit to the Garden Route would be complete without a visit to the magnificent Tsitsikamma National Park. Tsitsikamma is a marine and forest park, stretching for some 80 km, from a lagoon at Nature's Valley to the mouth of the Groot River. The lush forest and the sheer cliffs provide an ideal setting for a short walk in the forests to the suspension bridge that spans the mouth of Storm's River, and you have the option to join a canopy tour, during which you can 'fly' through the forest on a zipwire. The rugged coastline with crashing waves and the forest covered cliffs are simply spellbinding. While you are here, you must definitely sample the excellent local seafood available in the area! You will leave the Garden Route promising yourself you will someday come back!



Accommodation: Lagoon Inn (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 21 - Game drive in Boteilierskop Reserve, drive to Swellendam

This morning we have an early start to drive to Botelierskop Private Game Reserve to take a 3 hour game drive. You will be accompanied by a local guide in your open 4x4 safari vehicle in the 3000ha reserve to view African wildlife in its natural habitat. There are around 1800 animals in the reserve including rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, eland, bontebok and black impala. There are also orphaned elephants and in the lion sanctuary a small number of orphaned lions. Following the game drive we will continue to follow

the garden route to the farming region of Swellendam, a lovely old town with numerous Cape Dutch buildings.



Accommodation: Round the Bend Lodge (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 22 - Along the 'Whale Route' to Cape Town

On our penultimate day we follow the acclaimed 'Whale Route' along the dramatic south coast to Cape Town. Our first stop is wild and dramatic Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point in Africa. It is also the point where the Atlantic Ocean officially meets the Indian Ocean. We then drive on to the small seaside resort of Hermanus that is regarded as one of the premier spots for whale-watching in Africa, if not the world! Every year, between June and December, Southern Right whales spend a few months every year in the Cape, mating and calving. Hermanus is one of the best places to see them as they come very close inshore and the cliff top coastal walk offers many convenient viewing points. The calving and mating is a spectacle not to be missed! Hermanus is the only place in the world to employ a 'whale crier'. He keeps everybody informed of the whereabouts of the whales by blowing his kelp horn. The whale crier is as much a part of the whale watching as the whales are. Finally, we return to Cape Town via Betty's Bay and Gordon's Bay coast affording spectacular views across both Walker Bay and False Bay. Please note: Final timings of today's itinerary are flexible and

depend on seasonality and the likelihood of spotting whales. Out of whale season we may arrive in Cape Town earlier in the day.



Accommodation: Cape Town Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 23 - Tour ends Cape Town

Most of today is left free for personal exploration before the flight to London this evening. You may choose to visit the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. The gardens lie on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain and consist of landscaped gardens of indigenous plants and trees. The gardens are a living display of floral beauty and features 4700 of the estimated 20000 species of indigenous South African flora, and close to 50 per cent of the Peninsula's floral wealth! You may opt to take a boat trip to visit Robben Island. It has had a dark history serving as a prison. It is here that Nelson Mandela served most of his prison sentence under the South African government. It is now a worthy and powerful symbol of the optimism and hope for the future of South Africa. (If you are interested in booking this please see below) If this all sounds far too strenuous, you could just soak up the vibrant and colourful atmosphere at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and just wander or do some last minute shopping! You may want to take a short city tour with your tour leader.



Meals Provided: Breakfast



Cape Town water crisis

Product Manager, Naomi Jackson, has just returned from South Africa. Read her thoughts of Cape Town's water crisis and how it will affect you.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 22
Lunch: 9
Dinner: 8



Transport

Minibus
On Foot
Truck



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)



Accommodation

3 nights standard cabins
12 nights standard hotel
5 nights standard lodge
1 nights simple lodge
1 nights premium lodge

Trip information

Country information

Namibia

Climate

With a staggering 300 days of sunshine each year, Namibia is a year-round destination, although some may prefer to avoid the heat of high summer. The cold Benguela current keeps the Atlantic coast of the Namib Desert cool and rain-free for most of the year, with a thick coastal fog that lends a mysterious edge to the area. January and February are the hottest months, when daytime temperatures in the heart of the Namib can exceed 40°C (104°F), but nights are usually cool. Winter nights can be fairly cold, but days are generally warm and pleasant.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

English, Afrikaans, German

South Africa

Climate

Mild throughout the year and can thus be visited year round. The Western Cape has a Mediterranean-type climate, with warm, dry summers and cold winters with rainfall. Summer runs from November to March, with temperatures averaging 22oC to 34oC. The months of April and October are generally warm and sunny. Winter is also a good time to visit as towns and sites are not so crowded and the countryside is more verdant, but it can be cold. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Time difference to GMT

+2

Plugs

3 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

Afrikaans, English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

In Namibia:

Swakopmund - Living desert half day tour N\$ 750; Museum N\$ 30; Aquarium N\$ 45; Township tour N\$ 500; Half day dolphin cruise in Walvis Bay N\$ 750.

Etosha NP - Night game drive N\$730.

Waterberg Plateau Park - Game drives N\$ 610 for 4hrs.

Prices are per person and some excursions may have a minimum passenger number to operate.

In the Western Cape:

Cape Town - Robben Island (3.5 hour tour) R340; Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens R65; Table Mountain cable car - from R293 return /R151 one way

Cape Peninsula - Seal Island boat trip R80.

Stellenbosch - Guided tour available R80; Wine tasting R32.

Cango Caves - Guided tour of caves from R110. depending on duration; Ostrich Farm R130.

Plettenberg Bay - Whale watching R750.

Tsitsikamma NP - Canopy trail R650.

Oudsthoorn - Wildlife ranch R160.

Knysna - Robberg Nature Reserve walk R40.; Township Tour R400.

If you would like to book an excursion to Robben Island, the former prison where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated please use this link: <http://www.robben-island.org.za/> It is very important that you book a morning ferry for day 13 of the tour. If there are spaces it is also possible to book this excursion locally, but this is subject to availability.

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, however a warm fleece and sweater/thick shirts are essential, as nights (and daytime) can be very cold, especially from May to September, and game drives tend to take place at dawn and dusk. Brightly coloured clothing is not suitable for game viewing.

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots or robust trainers with a good grip, and sandals.

Luggage

15Kg

Luggage: On tour

A soft bag or holdall/kitbag (or rucksack with detachable frame). There are no porters on this trip to carry luggage.

Equipment

Bring a torch, water bottle, sun hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Binoculars are essential for game viewing and a 300mm lens is recommended for photography. We also recommend you bring a swimming costume.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow £25 for tipping local crew and staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Country Information

Namibia

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£15

Dinner price

£20

Beer price

£1.5

Water price

£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Namibian Dollar. South African Rand is legal tender in Namibia.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

USD are readily exchanged in Namibia and GBP to a lesser extent. Take your money in a combination of ATM cards and cash

Where To Exchange

On arrival.

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Windhoek and Swakopmund.

Credit Card Acceptance

Limited.

Travellers Cheques

Are difficult to exchange and should be used as back up

South Africa

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£6

Dinner price

£12

Beer price

£1.2

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Rand.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Take your money in a combination of cash and an ATM card. Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged.

Where To Exchange

Most towns or cities, your tour leader will advise you.

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on debit cards from ATM's in most South African towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

In large shops and restaurants.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Minibus, On Foot, Truck

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

In Namibia: Great locations and well appointed accommodation characterise this trip. Namibia has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. We start our tour in a superbly located standard hotel with a pleasant restaurant and beer garden, right in the heart of Windhoek. In complete contrast, our next stop is at a family run lodge in the middle of the Namib desert. The gardens and pool here create a lovely atmosphere and the home cooking is great! On to Swakopmund where our small, family run hotel with its great coffee shop is located just minutes from the sea and the centre of town. In Etosha we stay in comfortable bush chalets at two different restcamps with pool, gardens and a bar. Finally at Waterburg plateau we stay in chalets which nestle amongst the trees at the foot of the escarpment.

In the Western Cape: South Africa has a good tourism infrastructure and generally good service standards. Outside of our midrange, hotel in Cape town, much of our accommodation is in small, family run guesthouses, farms and inns. These are more than just B&Bs; individually styled and tastefully furnished, with en suite rooms and often lovely gardens and a pool. The properties we use give a real taste of traditional South African hospitality and we love supporting these small local businesses. In Stellenbosch we stay in the guesthouse of a working wine farm which gives us a great feel for the country whilst staying in comfortable accommodation. We can also enjoy some great home cooking and views from the pool.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Travelling with Minors via South Africa (including transits) and Namibia²

Regulations affecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via South Africa are in place. The law states that parents and/or guardians are requested by the airline and/or South Africa immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling with. Please refer to the South African House website and your airline for full requirements.

Please refer to the FCO website for information on travelling with minors to Namibia:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/namibia/entry-requirements>

Namibia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

South Africa: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, US and Canadian citizens. New Zealand passport holders do require a visa, please consult your local consulate for full information. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. All visitors should ensure their passport is machine readable and has two blank pages when entering and leaving South Africa. The South African Immigration officials will not allow child/infant pages to be used for this purpose and visitors without the stipulated blank pages will be denied entry.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.^{s20}

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom. Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Namibia

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we do recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid and polio. Please note that all travellers aged over 9 months old that have travelled from or have transitted via a country with a risk of yellow fever transmission, will need to present a Yellow Fever certificate at immigration/borders in Namibia for inspection. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to immunise themselves against meningitis. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

South Africa

Vaccinations

Please note that you will be required to supply a yellow fever certificate that has been issued at least 10 days prior to arrival in South Africa if you have travelled from or via a country where yellow fever is endemic. We recommend protection against hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid, polio and diphtheria. According to various travel health sources, the Western Cape is not regarded as a malaria risk area. If you are travelling to other areas in South Africa please check with your doctor about malaria requirements. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
