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Nature & Cultural Journeys
for the Discerning Traveler

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO JOIN

THE LIVING DESERT

ON AN ADVENTURE TO

NAMIBIA

APRICOT HUED DUNES & DESERT ADAPTED WILDLIFE

JUNE 11 TO 23, 2019



YOUR ITINERARY

DAYS 1/2~TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY~JUNE 11/12

LOS ANGELES/NEW YORK/ EN ROUTE

Your journey begins as you board your overnight flight to Johannesburg via New York. (Meals Aloft)

DAY 3~THURSDAY~JUNE 13

JOHANNESBURG/WINDHOEK

Arrive Johannesburg in the morning and connect with your flight to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. With over 300,000 inhabitants, it is the biggest city in the country.

Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner at your hotel.



Your home for the night is the Windhoek Country Club which boasts a unique combination of exceptional service, luxury accommodation and tranquil setting.

Overnight at the WINDHOEK COUNTRY CLUB. (B,D) www.windhoek.co.za

DAYS 4/5~FRIDAY/SATURDAY~JUNE 14/15

WINDHOEK/OTJIWARONGO/CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND (CCF)



In the morning, discover this pretty town which is beautifully situated in a valley, and combines the architecture of a modern city with numerous buildings in the style of the German colonial era. Early buildings such as the Alte Feste (old fort), Christuskirche and Tinenpalast (the parliament buildings) are of particular historical interest. One of the most remarkable features of Windhoek is the mountains and hills that encircle the city standing at 5,428 ft. above sea level.

Begin your exploration of this picturesque country as you drive to Otjiwarongo. After checking into your hotel, your first game run is enjoyed with the lodge's open vehicles. The farm boasts an abundance of game, including eland and white rhino, black wildebeest and hartebeest.



Next day, gain firsthand knowledge of one of Africa's most critical conservation efforts. Namibia is home to the continent's largest population of cheetahs, where they are endangered not only by their own genetic constraints, but also by their food source, which can include livestock belonging to local ranchers. In an effort to support this critically endangered cat, the Fund reaches out to the wild, where cheetahs struggle for survival, and this 44,480-acre farm in Namibia provides a permanent base of operations. Enjoy a chance to talk to the director of CCF, American conservationist Dr. Laurie Marker, who has devoted her life to the preservation of the cheetah, and learn about their research efforts, plus a unique chance to see and photograph rescued cheetahs. Dr. Marker is a recipient of San Diego Zoo Global's prestigious Conservation Medal for Lifetime Achievement. She has been a member of the Society of Woman Geographers since 1990 and was awarded the Gold Medal in 2008, the highest honor given for original, innovative and pioneering contributions of major significance to the world's knowledge and understanding of the universe in which we live.



Activities while at CCF will include a guided tour of the facility and Educational Centre, as well as a catered luncheon for your group. You'll discover the stunning landscape of this region on a game drive. This is home to Kalahari gemsbok and the beautiful Waterberg Conservancy escarpment. You will meet the livestock and Anatolian dogs and learn how they help protect the wild cheetahs, and also experience the exercising and running of facility's cheetahs up close as they chase their lure system.

Set amidst the unspoiled beauty of Namibia's oldest game farm, Otjiwa Safari Lodge is situated 18 miles southwest of Otjiwarongo. The lodge offer sundowners, walking trails, game drives, bird-watching, and visits of a nearby vulture hotel. The warmly furnished rooms and two-bedroom chalets feature leather furniture and safari-themed decor, as well as minifridges and air-conditioning. Amenities include three outdoor pools, a lounge/bar area and free Wi-Fi. Overnights at the OTJIWA SAFARI LODGE. (B,L,D Daily) <https://otjiwa.com.na/>
Approximate driving time Windhoek to Otjiwarongo: 4 hours



DAYS 6/7~SUNDAY/MONDAY~JUNE 16/17

ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK/ETOSHA SAFARI LODGE

Your next adventure awaits as your scenic drive now takes you to the edge of Etosha National Park. Etosha boasts great concentrations of game, especially in the dry winter months, with wonderful views out onto the salt pans which dominate the center of the park. Large herds of plains game gather around the waterholes in the dry season making for exciting

game viewing. Species that can be seen year-round include elephant, lion, leopard, cheetah, giraffe, both Burchell's and Hartmann's zebra, wildebeest, springbok, oryx, kudu and the diminutive Damara dik-dik. Of the 114-mammal species found in the park, several are rare and endangered, such as black rhino and black-faced impala. The latter is endemic to northwestern Namibia and southwestern Angola. Etosha's current population of approximately 300 black rhinos represents one of the few growing populations in the world. Etosha's elephants are reputed to be of the largest in Africa with the tallest measuring up to 13 feet at the shoulder, reappearing in the early 1950s after an absence of nearly half a century.



Birdlife is also excellent with Ostrich and raptors in abundance. The huge Kori Bustard, weighing over 30 pounds, lives mostly on the ground as well, seldom summoning the strength to propel its enormous mass into flight. Yellow-billed Hornbills are common and over 300 more bird species have been spotted. In years of good rain, the salt pan becomes a temporary lagoon. Flamingos and White Pelicans wing in to breed. Local specials include the Short-toed Rockthrush, Hautlaubs Francolin, Rockrunner, Ruppells Parrot, White-tailed Shrike and Chestnut Weaver.



Spend two nights at Etosha Safari Lodge, located on the Southern boundary of Etosha. This is your base to explore Etosha on game drives with the lodge open vehicles. The rooms are located on a hillock, overlooking magnificent views. Rooms are open plan with two beds, en suite bathrooms, a small verandah, air-conditioners and tea/coffee facilities.

Overnights at the ETOSHA SAFARI LODGE. (B,L,D Daily) <https://store.gondwana-collection.com/accommodation/etosha-safari-camp>.
Approximate driving time Otjiwarongo to Etosha: 3 hours



DAYS 8/9~TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY~JUNE 18/19
ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK/SOUTHERN
DAMARALAND/TWYFELFONTEIN

Your drive takes you south into Damaraland, an area marked by steep mountain massifs that tower over meandering riverbeds and form the survival structure for desert elephant, black rhino and a myriad of free roaming antelope species. As you approach the flat-topped mountains of Damaraland, you know your next destination is in sight. The area presents endless vistas across stark plains, ancient valleys, and soaring peaks. The brooding mass of the Brandberg Mountains provides a focal point, almost 65 miles to the south. Early morning mists, generated by the meeting of the icy Atlantic and the warm landmass along the Skeleton Coast, drift inland along the river line, providing sustenance to varied life forms. The river flows only once or twice during the short rainy season, seldom breaking through the dunes to the ocean. Burnt Mountain is a fascinating formation of metamorphized shale burnt millions of years ago that dazzles with shimmering colors when hit by sunlight.

This afternoon, explore an ancient Petrified Forest complete with petrified bark, growth rings and wood grain which was brought down from Central Africa and established here 260 million years ago.



Afterwards visit the Damara Living Museum. Here you will observe and experience the traditional Damara way of life right in the heart of their traditional homelands; a unique opportunity to see a way of life that is slowly dying out, and their way of preserving their identity.

Next morning, explore the rock engravings created on the red sandstone cliffs of Twyfelfontein, inhabited by the stone-age hunter-gatherers of the Wilton stone age culture group since approximately 6,000 years ago. Around 2,000 to 2,500 years ago, the Khoikhoi, an ethnic group related to the San (Bushmen) came into the area who protected the rock art and created more of their own. There are over 5,000 rock engravings in this incredible spot which is a World Heritage site.



In the afternoon, go in search of desert-adapted elephant that roam dry riverbeds to witness their unique and playful behaviors, including sand baths. There's other wildlife here, too, from springbok to giraffe, and an abundance of birdlife, including the Secretary Bird, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Booted Eagle and the endemic Rupell's Korhaan. In 4x4 open vehicles, search for herds of steenbok, kudu and gemsbok.

The Twyfelfontein Country Lodge is situated within the UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Twyfelfontein area, a very vulnerable and delicate ecosystem, is renowned for some of the best examples of san rock paintings and engravings in Southern Africa. The lodge has 56 simple rooms with a colonial vibe and with all the amenities that you might require. All rooms have magnificent views of the surrounding plains or mountains. It is not unusual to be treated to the sight of the famous desert elephants from your verandah.

Overnight at TWYFELFONTEIN COUNTRY LODGE. (B,L,D Daily) <https://www.twyfelfontein.com.na/>
Approximate driving time Etosha to Damaraland: 4 ½ hours



DAYS 10/11~THURSDAY/FRIDAY~JUNE 20/21 DAMARALAND/SWAKOPMUND

Leave the dry and arid inland behind and travel via Cape Fria towards Cape Cross to see the seals that make their home here by the thousands.

Then travel to charming Swakopmund, Namibia's second largest city, dotted with charming Bavarian spires and elaborate Germanic architecture rising through the daily fog banks. One of the best-preserved examples of German colonial architecture in the world, Swakopmund was founded in 1892 as the main harbor for German Southwest Africa. It is one of the few places anywhere outside of Europe where a sizable minority of the population speaks German and has German roots. Now a city with around 35,000 inhabitants, Swakopmund is Namibia's premier beach resort.



Swakopmund, with its fresh onshore breezes, is a welcome change from the aridity of the past days in Namibia, and you will no doubt want to wander along the city's beaches or stroll through the thoroughly modern downtown shops. The beaches offer good opportunities to see birds such as the near-endemic Damara Tern, African Black Oystercatcher, Great Crested Grebe, and Chestnut-banded Plover. The city offers modern pubs and bakeries, and one of the best weaving spots in Africa to learn about the art and purchase colorful rugs to bring home. You will get a chance to discover all on a city sightseeing tour.





Next day presents a most interesting mix of sea and dunes as you travel to Walvis Bay to enjoy a morning dolphin boat cruise and look for flamingos that frequent the Lagoon. Inquisitive seals will swim up to your boat looking for something to eat. At Pelican Point entertainment is provided by a large seal colony and pods of Heavyside and Bottlenose Dolphins swimming alongside the boats. For bird lovers, apart from seeing flamingos, cormorants and pelicans, there are common sightings of White Chinned Petrel, Wilson's Storm Petrel, Black Oystercatcher and even the African Penguin. Round off your adventure with fresh Walvis Bay oysters, snacks and cold sparkling wine served on board the boat.

Your tour cannot be complete without an adrenaline induced dune tour, and that's what you'll get this afternoon. Namibia has some of the world's highest dunes, and it is magical to sip your sparkling wine, have fresh oysters from the sea, and watch the magical sun going down. Tonight, enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Your home for the next two nights is the Strand Hotel, uniquely located on the historic and iconic

Swakopmund Mole and surrounded on three sides by the Southern Atlantic Ocean. Its beautiful architecture is influenced by the Namibian German History, with residential interiors, allowing you to feel right at home.

Overnights at STRAND HOTEL. (B,L,D Daily)

<http://www.namibian.org/travel/lodging/private/strand.htm>

Approximate driving time Damaraland to Swakopmund: 8 to 9 hours excluding stops along the way.



DAYS 12/13~SATURDAY/SUNDAY~JUNE 22/23

WALVIS BAY/JOHANNESBURG/NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

Enjoy one last breakfast in this beautiful country before returning to Johannesburg and boarding your overnight flight to New York where you connect with your flight home, bringing with you the memories of all the wonderful sights of Southern Africa. (B, Meals Aloft)



OPTIONAL POST-EXTENSION TO SOSSUSVLEI

**DAYS 12/13/14~SATURDAY/SUNDAY/MONDAY~JUNE 22/23/24
SWAKOPMUND/SOSSUSVLEI**

Bid farewell to your fellow tour members who are returning to the USA and prepare to continue your adventure as you fly to Sossusvlei. In the Nama language, Namib means vast, which you will find to be an understatement. The Namib Desert, the world's oldest arid region, has been around for over 80 million years and extends along Namibia's entire Atlantic coast. Namib landscapes range from the mountainous red dunes in the south to the center's interior plains and flat-topped, steep-sided, isolated mountains called inselbergs. The desert is scored by a number of rivers that rise in the Central Plateau but seldom carry water. The parched Namib Desert has endless orange dunes blown into razor sharp ridges by the sand-shifting wind. These dunes are some of the highest in the world, and just begging to be climbed barefoot. The older the dune, the brighter the color from slow iron oxidization and minute fragments of garnets. Animals, insects and plants have adapted to live in this generally inhospitable region and apart from infrequent rains, rely on the sea mist that rolls far inland for moisture.



The best time to see the dunes is at sunrise when the colors are magnetic from the rising sun. You'll spend a good portion of the day in the park, viewing the various dunes, climbing and having fun at some of them, photographing the iconic Dead Vlei. Look for the animals that call this inhospitable land home – gemsbok, ostrich, springbok, black-backed jackal, and birds. Afterward, visit the Sesriem Canyon, a life sustaining natural phenomenon in the heart of the Namib Desert.



Activities over the next three days will include early morning guided nature drives to the spectacular. Nature drives and walks are also offered on the private reserve with incredible views, desert animals and smaller desert fauna and flora. On one of the days you will enjoy a horseback ride with sundowners. An option, *at an extra cost – currently \$715 per person and subject to change*, is early morning ballooning, beginning at first light. The 60-90-minute balloon safari offers a truly unique experience to soar silently above the magnificent sand dunes and desert, with a champagne breakfast being served at your landing site.

Located on a private nature reserve near the UNESCO World Heritage Site "Namib Sand Sea," the Desert Homestead Lodge offers comfortable hospitality in a natural atmosphere. Recently renovated, guests can expect upgrades with environment-friendly technology, such as solar power for electric and hot water. Other amenities offered are free internet and outdoor pool.

Overnights at DESERT HOMESTEAD LODGE. (B,L,D Daily) <http://www.deserthomesteadlodge.com/?lang=en>

DAY 15~TUESDAY~JUNE 25

SOSSUSVLEI/WINDHOEK/JOHANNESBURG/EN ROUTE

Depart on your flight back to Johannesburg, via Windhoek, where you will board your overnight flight to Cincinnati. (B, Meals Aloft)

DAY 16~WEDNESDAY~JUNE 26

NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

This morning you land in the USA, bringing with you the memories of all the wonderful sights of Southern Africa.



INCLUSIONS

- Accommodations throughout as indicated or similar.
- All meals daily at camps. Other meals as indicated.
- Transportation by bus and all wildlife viewing by land cruisers, driven by professional driver/ guides.
- Local Namibian English speaking guide will accompany the group on the main program only.
- A host from Living Desert, will accompany the group with a minimum of 15 travelers on the main trip and 10 travelers on the extension.
- Complimentary bottled water in vehicles while touring.
- All applicable hotel and lodge taxes and gratuities.
- All park and attractions entry fees.
- Complimentary passport wallet and luggage tags.
- Complimentary emergency evacuation insurance.

EXCLUSIONS

- Roundtrip air transportation from Los Angeles to Johannesburg including estimated taxes & fuel surcharges (quoted separately).
- Flight from Johannesburg to Windhoek, returning from Walvis Bay (quoted separately).
- Passport and visa fees and service charges for obtaining visas. No visa is required for Namibia or South Africa.
- Excess baggage charges levied by airlines.
- Meals and beverages, other than specified.
- Laundry and other items of a personal nature.
- Gratuities to driver/ guides, specialist guide, and other conveyance attendants.
- Alcoholic and other beverages not mentioned in itinerary.
- Personal and baggage insurance.
- Cost for anything not specifically mentioned in the listing above.

Please Note That The Itinerary Sequence Is Correct At The Time Of Writing, And Is Subject To Change.

CLASSIC ESCAPES CONSERVATION FUND

In keeping with our mission to provide exciting, educational, and fun-filled experiences that nurture and directly support the diverse wildlife and cultures we visit around the world, Classic Escapes has established the Classic Escapes Conservation Fund to ensure that a percentage of all profits go to support conservation and wildlife researchers performing their critical work in the field. Project support has included environmental education efforts in India and Bhutan, wild dog and cheetah conservation in Botswana, Kenya and Namibia, and global Earth Day education via school internet programs. By traveling with Classic Escapes, you are supporting travel as a tool for building the mutual respect, awareness and understanding that are vital to preserving this planet for future generations.



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Participants

- Participants must be able to climb in and out of safari 4x4 vehicles unassisted, as well as into small aircraft. They should also be able to tolerate riding on uneven, bumpy dirt roads for periods of time, as well as some off-road experiences when opportunities allow.
- Participants should also be able to stand and / or walk moderate distances for up to a few hours at a time when visiting villages, towns or various sites. Some, if not most, of this walking may be on uneven ground, sand dunes, or uphill, often at higher elevations and altitudes that many people are not used to.
- Namibia is associated with heat, although not high humidity. You need to be able to tolerate high temperatures during the day. The temperature usually cools off considerably in the evenings.

General

- True adventure in travel can sometimes be accompanied by unexpected changes in conditions, itineraries and occasionally your accommodations.
- Participants should travel with a spirit of adventure and flexibility. Remember to pack your patience and sense of humor! Be willing to look past self-imposed ideals of Western amenities and do not compare these new experiences with your life back home. Travel often includes visiting destinations with modest infrastructures and a bending definition of comfort. That being said, most locations on your itinerary are nestled in absolute luxury where pampering is the norm.
- Participants should generally be in good health and prepared to travel in locations without medical facilities.

Air Schedules

Choosing the best possible air arrangements for our travelers is always a challenge. We work with many airlines that offer the best level of service, routings and value for our programs. While there may indeed be more direct routings available with another airline, the cost of these flights may not be within the budget that allows us to give you the best value possible. If you prefer to purchase your own international air, please feel free to choose the "land only" rate for this program. **The start and end city for this program is Johannesburg, South Africa.**

Upon registration, you must provide your full legal name as it appears on your passport. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, you will be responsible for charges associated with reissuing the ticket.



SAFARI AIR LUGGAGE RESTRICTIONS

It is of vital importance that all guests traveling to Namibia strictly adhere to the luggage limits and regulations as stipulated below.

LUGGAGE WEIGHT LIMIT PER PERSON *	44.092 Lbs. (20 kg's) - total weight inclusive of luggage and hand luggage/camera equipment.
LUGGAGE TYPE	Soft sided bags - no hard-shelled bags, wheels or frames allowed.
LUGGAGE DIMENSIONS**	10 inches wide x 12 inches high x 24 inches long.

Please note:

*This is the total weight including both luggage and hand luggage/camera equipment. This is a safety requirement due to the sensitive weight and balance checks on the small aircraft and must be strictly adhered to. Travelers who require additional luggage must pre-book and pay for this on confirmation of the reservation. We would like to remind you that complimentary laundry services are available in all camps and lodges.

**Please keep in mind that the baggage compartments on most of the light aircraft are only 25cm (10 inches) high, so the pilots must have the ability to manipulate the bag into the compartment.



NO WHEELED OR PULL HANDCASES



NO HARD BODY CASES



SOFT SIDED BAGS WITH WHEELS THAT ARE NOT IN HARD FRAME

HANDLING OF INCORRECT LUGGAGE ON ARRIVAL

Guests arriving in Namibia, who have not adhered to the luggage guidelines as per above, will NOT be able to depart on the scheduled charter. They will be given the option to book a private charter at additional costs to be paid directly prior to departure and subject to the availability of aircraft at the time of booking these flights. No refunds on the costs paid for scheduled charters which were missed due to their incorrect luggage and or accommodation not provided due to this delay will be provided. In all cases, additional arrangements for transfers, overnight accommodation in Maun or Kasane and meals are for the guests own account.

ASSISTANCE WITH BAGGAGE PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

Please be made aware of luggage restrictions on Charter Flights prior to departure. Guests are restricted to 1 bag of 44.092 lbs. only in soft style bags. Rigid suitcases and excess luggage should be pre-arranged and will be at an additional cost.