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Sossuvlei & Etosha Camping Safari

Wednesday – Monday (6D/5N)

A budget-friendly camping safari ticking off Namibia's highlights
Sossuvlei Etosha NP Dead Vlei Swakopmund Sesriem



This 6 day, 5 night budget camping safari is action-packed and stuffed full of many of Namibia's Best of the Best attractions !

The world's highest sand dunes in the world's oldest desert await and welcome us, as does the historic coastal town of Swakopmund where we can sample the delights of the excellent restaurants and wild activities in and around this coastal area.

We'll enjoy a scenic drive across to world-renowned Etosha National Park, where we spend 1 full day plus an afternoon game viewing, searching for predators & prey alike. Spend your evenings at the floodlit waterhole waiting for animals to come and drink in this wildlife paradise.

** There are also accommodated tours available rather than camping **



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Trip Highlights:

- Safaris in Etosha National Park
- Climb the iconic dunes at Sossusvlei
- Iconic photo ops at Dead Vlei and Solitaire
- Explore the quirky town of Swakopmund
- Camping under the stars!

Snapshot

- **Starts** : Windhoek, Wednesdays year round (0700)
- **Ends** : Windhoek, Monday pm
- **Duration** : 6 days, 5 nights
- **Price** : AUD \$2,250
- **Accommodation**: Twin share tents, shared ablution at the campsite (4 nights) + 1 night twin-share room with en-suite bathroom
- **Meals**: 5 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 4 dinners
- **What's included**: English speaking guide, camping equipment (excluding sleeping bag which can be hired), most meals, pick up and drop off at accommodation within Windhoek, National Park entry fees
- **What's not included**: Flights, tips, travel insurance, optional activities, accommodation in Windhoek

*** Solo travellers will be matched with another traveller of the same gender on a twin share basis**

*** This Camping Safari is on a full participation basis, meaning you have to put up and break down your own tent as well as clean your own dishes**

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Itinerary

Day 1 (Wednesday) Windhoek to Sesriem campsite

You will be collected from your accommodation within the Windhoek city limits at 07:00 and transferred to head quarters for a short pre-departure meeting.

There is some lovely mountain scenery on our drive to Sesriem. The road climbs up onto and over Namibia's central plateau and we stop at the small town of Rehoboth for essential supplies. Back on the road we pass via the small community at BüellsPort from here we continue on through the desert landscape. We aim to arrive at Sesriem around lunchtime and make our campsite under a huge, ancient camelthorn tree from where we can glimpse the towering red dunes of the world's oldest desert. We enjoy a late afternoon picnic-style lunch after setting up camp.

In the late afternoon, there is the option with which to start our time in the world's oldest desert. A short drive will take us to Elim Dune, for the best golden light before sunset. From here, if you would like to, it is a relatively short walk back, through the desert, to our camp.

Day 2 (Thursday) Sesriem to Sossusvlei

Sunrise in the dunes is the name of the game this morning and that means a pre-dawn start. Our first stop will be at Dune 45 and we cover this first distance in darkness and early morning twilight. We arrive at the top of Dune 45 and climb to a vantage point for sunrise, watching as the colours grow and change with the ever-altering light.



Back to the vehicle for a quick breakfast and we carry on to Sossusvlei, jumping into a 4x4 for the last 5km leg along the ancient Tsauchab Riverbed to Sossusvlei itself. We will visit Dead Vlei, an ancient pan completely surrounded by sand, that is strikingly populated with

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dead, skeletal camelthorn trees. These trees have been a feature of this landscape for over 1000 years. We have time to explore the area on foot and to climb one of the highest dunes in the world, some towering 300 m above us, the views are breathtaking and justly famous.

We drive back to Sesriem for lunch and perhaps a dip in the swimming pool, and in the afternoon we take a short excursion to Sesriem Canyon. Only four km from our campsite, this canyon has been carved out of the landscape by the Tsauchab River. We can easily walk into the riverbed, it is usually much cooler in the canyon and we can follow the river for some way along its journey to Sossusvlei.

Day 3 (Friday) Sesriem to Swakopmund

Departing after an early breakfast we head west into the desert. We first cross the Namib gravel plains, large areas of flat and seemingly barren terrain broken up by huge mountain inselbergs. Our first stop this morning is the tiny town of Solitaire where we can stretch our legs and sample the apple pie that has made this homestead famous. It's a quirky little place with amazing photo opportunities of the old farm vehicles scattered around the grounds.



We cross the Tropic of Capricorn at 23.5 south degrees. We have two mountain passes to traverse this morning before we drop steeply down into the canyon carved over eons by the Kuiseb River on its way to the ocean. We climb up from the banks of the river and over the pass, traveling through the mountain peaks. We emerge from the mountains onto a flat road that takes us all the way to the town of Walvis Bay. We have lunch at Walvis Bay lagoon and complete the final leg of our journey into Swakopmund

Swakopmund offers many opportunities to keep us busy during our time here. The town center is small and easily explored on foot but there are also many extra, optional activities available. Scenic flights over the desert are very popular and for the more adventurous perhaps try skydiving or quad biking over and in the Namib dunes. Our guide will discuss all

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the options with you in advance and will be able to facilitate any bookings that we would like to make.

Dinner tonight is for your own account, Swakopmund boasts some truly excellent restaurants and again our guide will be able to help you with recommendations and bookings

Day 4 (Saturday) Swakopmund to Etosha

After breakfast, we aim to be on the road by 0900 heading on the main scenic road, passing the small town of Outjo, and onwards to Etosha National Park.

We are introduced to the park with a short game drive between the main entrance gate (Anderson Gate) and Okaukuejo Camp with a good chance to spot big game right from the very start. Etosha is huge, just over 22,000 square km and is home to 114 species of mammal, 350 species of bird and 110 species of reptile.

After setting up our campsite, depending on time we will head out for a short late afternoon game drive in search of big game. Elephant, rhino, giraffe and the big cats are often seen in this area. We also look for the smaller species, several types of antelope and gazelle abound, zebra are common and the bird life can be spectacular.



All visitors must be back in camp at sunset, but the 'game show' doesn't stop when the sun goes down. Assessable on foot and only a short walk from our campsite, Okaukuejo is justly famous for its flood-lit waterhole where we are afforded the chance to see all of Etosha's treasures. Big cats, elephant and the whole spectrum of smaller game, but in particular, this is our best chance of getting up close to a black rhino. Namibia is the last stronghold of these critically endangered creatures but here, at Okaukuejo, they are regular visitors.

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Day 5 (Sunday) Exploring Etosha

We have the whole day to explore Etosha and we want to make the most of it. The park gates open at sunrise and after a quick cup of coffee and a snack we will aim to be on our way as the sun breaches the horizon. Early morning is usually a productive time for game viewing and first thing in the morning is a good time to catch big cats returning from the hunt. Today we will meet our local guide at the gates of the park and have a full day of game driving on an open game viewer.

Along the way, we will make a stop at a designated picnic area for a quick breakfast before continuing our game drive en route to the camp at Halali where we will have lunch. There is a small shop with basic merchandise and a few souvenirs and there will also be time for a swim in the pool. There is also time to visit the Halali camp waterhole before we head back out into the park for our afternoon game drive.

On our way back to Okaukuejo we will stop to have a closer look at the Etosha Pan. The name Etosha translates as 'great white space' but this name does not do justice to the immensity of the salt pan. Over 4,700 square km of the dazzling white mineral pan, is so big that it can be seen from space.



Keeping a sharp lookout for game as we wind our way back to Okaukuejo, we aim to arrive back at our just before sunset and just in time for the best hour of the day at the Okaukuejo waterhole.

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Day 6 (Monday) Etosha to Windhoek

After breaking camp for the last time, we will game drive to the park exit, hoping to catch sight of some magnificent predators and plains game before heading south to Windhoek, we stop briefly at the small town of Okahandja to refuel our vehicle. This is also where we will find Namibia's largest wood carving market. Craftsmen from all over Namibia come here to showcase a wide variety of items both large and small. Here we have the opportunity to collect a truly Namibian souvenir and at the same time to support the local artists and communities.

We aim to be back in Windhoek in the late afternoon and there will be a shuttle service to take you to your accommodation within the Windhoek City limits.

We recommend that departure flights are not scheduled for today.

