

Leaflove self-drive Safari

discovering the north-western Part of Namibia

„Damara- & Kaokoland“

9 PAGES - 16 DAYS

“Traveling – it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller.”

– Ibn Battuta

Overview

Undoubtedly, one of the most sought-after and comprehensive self-drive adventure tours designed for enthusiasts of wildlife, nature, culture, and stunning landscapes. This journey unfolds in the pristine, less-visited north-western region of Namibia, away from the crowds, offering a rich tapestry of experiences.

The tour commences with immersive wildlife encounters in picturesque wilderness areas, providing ample opportunities for capturing remarkable animal photographs. Venturing further into Namibia's north-western semi-desert region, which boasts captivating geological and scenic wonders, you'll discover the allure of the Damara and Kaokoland regions.

Here, the pastoral communities of the OvaHimba and Damara people coexist amidst breathtaking desert vistas. Notably, the Hoanib Valley, the Hoarusib River, and the Etendeka Formation stand out as particularly mesmerizing. This is the realm of the famed desert elephants, desert lions, and the endemic Hartmann's mountain zebras, which draw visitors to this remarkable terrain.

Prepare to be enchanted by a wealth of wildlife encounters, a diverse array of flora, ever-changing landscapes, and captivating geological transformations throughout this unforgettable journey.



Self-driving yet well-informed

We always put together our trips to be informative and enriching. While you drive the connecting routes yourself, we arrange the necessary locally guided safari drives and activities for you on-site.

Logistics @ arrival

- * Locate us as you enter the airport's arrival hall – we're eager to assist you.
- * Our team at Leaflove Safari will efficiently manage and oversee the vehicle handover, including insurance logistics.
- * You'll receive your vouchers, maps, a detailed route description, and, of course, a warm welcome package.
- * Additionally, we'll equip you with a GPS device featuring pre-programmed routes in the 'Tracks 4 Africa' system!

Day 1 & 2

relaxed game viewing...

- * 2 nights at a comfortable lodge in the middle of a private nature reserve.



inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast
- * 2x game drives in open game vehicles guided by well-trained rangers.

Biodiversity: Arrival & drive into a wildlife rich nature reserve

185 km - approx. 2 h driving time

In the acacia savannah of the central high plateau, a red sandy hilly landscape awaits you with wonderful photo opportunities such as the high termite mounds and umbrella acacias.

We have planned two nights here, as the locally guided game drives offer you a wide variety of game viewing opportunities.

The locally guided game drives in the afternoons are highly recommended and pachyderms and big cats are often spotted.

At the waterholes right at the lodge, giraffes, numerous antelope species and many birds can be observed and photographed in a relaxed atmosphere... ideal if you want to "be the late bird" but still catch the worm.

natural: We've chosen a lodge right along the Omaruru Dry River, where animals frequently gather at the waterhole due to supplementary feeding. While this may reduce the wilderness effect, it's ideal for families seeking close encounters with various species.

classic: You'll stay at a sought-after lodge known for well-guided game drives, offering opportunities to spot predators like lions and leopards. It's a medium-sized lodge where you can mingle with other tourists. Some animals are tagged, potentially impacting the wildlife experience, but overall, the experiences and photo opportunities are fantastic.

luxury: Although animal density is somewhat lower here, the accommodation and services are top-notch, and the crowds are manageable. Game drives yield ample wildlife sightings, and the diverse flora supports a wide variety of small animals and birds.

Day 3

take a deep breath, enjoy the scenery...

- * 1 night directly at the Ugab Terraces with beautiful views and high-quality ambience.

inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast

The „Vingerklip“ & Namibian Monument Valley

210 km - approx. 3,2 h driving time

Unpredictably, limestone reefs rise from a landscape adorned with termite mounds. The Ugab Terraces, while not as vast as America's Monument Valley, boast a striking erosion valley that's a geological marvel. The centrepiece is an enormous rock formation known as the "Vingerklip," translating to "Rock Finger."

You can embark on a brief hike through the steep Mopane savannah, tracing these dramatic reefs up to the colossal stone finger, standing tall and imposing in the midst of this unique terrain.



Additional Days in Etosha Park?

some wildlife fun. . .

- * 2 nights in the central area of the National Park at a good private lodge outside the park or in a semi-state Waterhole Chalet directly at the world famous Okaukuejo Waterhole.

inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast



Etosha National Park - Central

210 km - approx. 5 h driving time (slowly through the Park)

"Great White Place" A pan of nothingness over 4000 km² in area, is fringed by ever-changing vegetation. You will pass through a dry forest into an endless grass steppe looking at zebras, which ends again in an acacia savannah with giraffes and finally you could find lions resting in the shade of dense mopane trees.

The wildlife has lost its fear of vehicles and offers excellent opportunities for game viewing and photography, so leave early and take your time...

Several antelope species such as springbok, red hartebeest, wildebeest, steenbok, dik-dik, the rare black-nosed impala and oryx can be found along the way. Predators such as lions are seen more often, leopards and cheetahs somewhat less frequently. Pachyderms such as both rhino species and elephants are also at home here, giraffes lurk around many a tree and there is also plenty to see of small animals and birds.

Natural: The private lodges in the central area tend to be quite spacious and popular among tourists. While this may not be a concern for many, it can lead to crowding, especially considering most of your time will be spent in the park.

Classic: Although Okaukuejo does offer more affordable double rooms, we've opted for and charged for chalets situated near the waterhole. Please be prepared for higher visitor numbers in this area and be understanding when it comes to accommodation and service... but do note that the location near the waterhole is highly coveted.

Luxury: For those seeking solitude and superior accommodations, we highly recommend choosing one of our handpicked, top-rated boutique lodges outside the park. This will ensure a more exclusive experience away from the crowds.



Remark:

You can easily drive in the park with your rental car and observe animals as you please. However, the lodges also offer game drives in open safari vehicles, which can provide the advantage of additional animal information and observations, as the local guides are knowledgeable, and you are certainly "going to see more". Let us know, whether you have special interests like birds or plants, this will help us find the right guide for you.

Days 4 & 5

naturally...

- * 2 nights at a lodge situated directly on the Otjovasandu dry river, in the middle of the Mopane savannah near large winter thorn acacias.

inclusive:

- * Full board
- * 2x local guided game drives / night game drives



Hobatere Communal Nature Reserve in Damaraland

230 km - approx. 3 h driving time

The long drive through the west of Etosha National Park (if you have booked the additional days) leads to many waterholes, which are often unexpectedly visited by Africa's mammals. A truly "untouched" nature, where wildlife can still follow the daily rhythm of Africa. Expect encounters with endemic Hartmann's mountain zebra, numerous antelope and giraffe. Lions, leopards, cheetahs and elephants like to roam this area, being able to observe them is always a matter of luck (and a little experience).

We also recommend to use this area if you are a birder, as Bare-cheeked Babbler, Little Sparrowhawk and Scops Owllet can already be found in the garden here.

The lodge offers night drives, which can lead to encounters with aardvark, porcupine, genet, bat-eared fox, spring hare and other nocturnal animals.



Days 6 & 7

rise early...

- * 1 bed directly at the Epupa Falls at a rustic tented lodge.
- * 1 bed near Opuwo, with wonderful views of the Mopane savannah of Kaokoland

inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast
- * Locally guided game drive to a Himba village. Contact, communication and opportunities for photography by the local guide (mostly Himba himself).

Kaokoland & the Himba at Epupa Falls

380 km - approx. 5 h driving time

As you drive up to the Kunene river, which borders Angola and Namibia, you might want to stop and marvel at the interesting botany next to road.

The cattle herds, a very colourful conglomerate of skinny beasts with long horns, have right of way and give you some birding opportunities, since oxpeckers are often seen riding along...

Interestingly, the herdsmen of these herds belong to the Himba people. The first settlements are already visible along the way and you could gain an insight into the traditional life of these pastoralists. A local guide organised by us beforehand, will help you visit a „Kraal“ or village. You are shown, for example, how the ladies rub themselves with ochre fat. The Himba guide serves as a communication bridge between you and these pastoralist people, you are thus allowed to take pictures without worrying to offend anybody. The Epupa Waterfalls are an impressive natural spectacle and a playground for animals, locals and a few tourists.



Days 8 & 9

little paradises, rather in winter...

- * 2 nights at a strategically located lodge on the Hoanib Dry River.

inclusive:

- * Full board
- * locally guided game drive: Desert Elephant Experience (Full Day)

Hoanib, River of the Desert Elephants

180 km - approx. 3 h driving time (lokal Transfer inclusive)

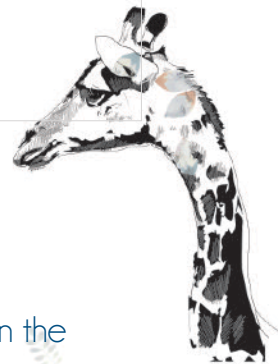
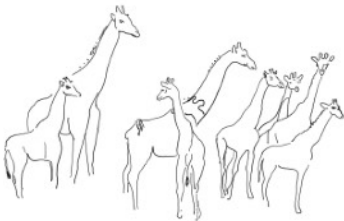
Fine sand dunes stretch up between slate, sandstone and granite mountains, valleys are covered with grass, dry rivers mostly lined by dense stands of mopane trees. This colourful mix of landscapes is breathtakingly beautiful to experience.

Far...far away of the usual tourist "circle" the absolute stunning wilderness of Namibia waits to be explored. We take you, on a locally guided trip in an open vehicle, into the valley of the Hoanib, a sandy dry river lined with gigantic Winter-thorn acacias, delivering the so much needed pods desert-dwelling elephants survive on!

The dry rivers of Kaoko and Damaraland are linear oases and the home ranges of the desert elephant. We will try to show you these animals on a locally guided game drive of several hours. Some of our guests are very lucky to spot lions here. It is worth mentioning that this is the last semi-desert wilderness where elephants, rhinos and lions still occur.

natural: The lodges in this area are quite expensive, they are very remote and will have to pay concession fees. We have chosen a cheaper option for you, but you have to drive 60km to start the drive in the Hoanib Dry River. You can drive directly from the lodge in an open four-wheel drive, but we recommend driving your own car to Sesfontein and then changing to the open four-wheel drive safari-vehicle!

classic & luxury: This is a truly unique luxury tented lodge situated on the Hoanib and Obias Dry River. Here you get a fully-inclusive adventure at the highest level in the middle of the real wilderness of Namibia. You have the highlight of the Hoanib right on your doorstep and thus a good starting point to search for the desert elephants and many giraffes in this dry river full of gigantic winter thorn acacias.



Additional Days in the Skeleton Coast? „once in a lifetime“

- * 2 nights where the Atlantic Ocean, linear oasis of the Hoarusib, the Skeleton Coast and the fantastic landscapes of the Namib meet.
Accommodation class: luxury

inclusive:

- * Full board
- * Locally guided game drives that can lead to encounters with desert elephants and some wilderness surprises!

Shipwreck Lodge, an experience in the Skeleton Coast Park

Transfers are organised by us, self-drive not possible.

Yes, it still exists, this one abandoned place in the world that is truly beautiful and unique in untouched wilderness... without ever having to meet the neighbour or other tourists. No one is allowed here! Except, for now, you!...The Skeleton Coast Park offers in its rough desert nature wonderful nature observations in extremely changeable completely untouched rugged, yet stunningly beautiful, wilderness - landscape.

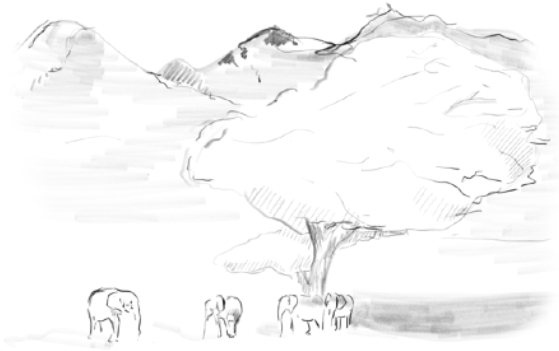
Additional Days at Hoarusib?

little paradises, rather in winter...

- * 2 nights at Hoarusib on Okahirongo, one of Namibia's most individual and exclusive lodges. Accommodation class: *luxury*

inclusive:

- * Full board
- * locally guided drives in the Hoarusib and surroundings



Days 10 & 11

please wait for me by the palm trees...

- * 2 nights in high quality safari bungalows overlooking the Etendeka Mountains and the palm grove of the Uniab River.

inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast

optional activities:

- * "Rhino tracking day game drive
- * Sundowner game drive
- * Guided walks

Hoarusib, pristine desert paradise

150 km - approx. 3 h driving time (Transfer through the thick-sand Riverbed inclusive)

The Hoarusib, another linear oasis, winds its way through the "deep" Kaokoland, but is still easy to reach and explore on a guided four-wheel drive tour. On this well-designed trip, you will experience the upper and lower Hoarusib and therefore have good opportunities to experience the beautiful moments that you otherwise only know from television.

You will be taking part in locally guided drives along the Hoarusib riverbed and will constantly find yourself fascinated by changing landscapes and unexpectedly interesting wildlife.

This part of the trip is particularly interesting, as the area seems empty of tourists and unexplored. Later on this you will also enter the western Hoarusib, which again presents a completely new picture with absolutely stunning views of the Skeleton Coast National Park within this arid paradise.

Damaraland & Etendeka

115 km - approx. 1,5h driving time

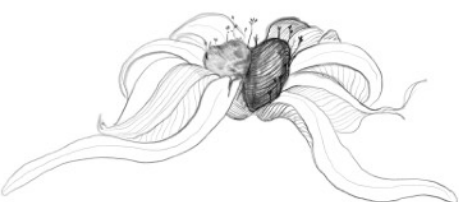
Within the basaltic Etendeka Formation of Damaraland lies the Palmwag spring nestled in dense reeds and waving Makalani palm trees. The water attracts desert elephants, giraffes, various antelopes such as springbok and oryx and among poisonous Euphorbia bushes you might spot small herds of endemic Hartmann's mountain zebra.

The dry rivers of Damaraland are home to desert elephants, black rhinos and desert lions. These coveted animals attract many visitors to this semi-desert.

A locally guided day tour (optional) is designed to show you the endangered black, also called hook-lipped, rhinoceros. Naturally, you will also see a lot of other game, even desert elephants on the move and, at times, even the shy and skittish desert lions.

natural: The lodge at Palmwag offers well-equipped tented chalets for rent at a reasonable price. Meals are included and can be taken in the lodge restaurant.

classic & luxury: The lodge at Palmwag has different rooms. We have chosen the comfort room in both versions for you, as these have a beautiful view and are privately arranged.



Days 12 & 13

set in stone..

- * 2 overnight stays amidst exemplary gigantic granite bubbles at a specially chosen lodge.

inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast
- * Guided tour to the petroglyphs at Twyfelfontein
- * Guided four-wheel drive game drive into the dry river Awa-Huab to look for the desert elephants.

Twyfelfontein

110 km - approx. 1,5 h driving time

Worth seeing are the 4000 - 6000 year old petroglyphs at "Twyfelfontein", the "Burnt Mountain" and the basaltic "Organ Pipes". About 200 million years ago, huge, primordial "cordaites" trees were washed up here in great mud floods from Central Africa and covered with muddy masses. Due to the exclusion of oxygen, petrification took place and these "fossilised trees" can be admired today as an amazingly strange geological formation.

The dry Huab River finds its way west through this geologically striking desert region. The gigantic Ana trees, also called "winter thorn acacias", produce red pods which are gladly eaten by desert-dwelling elephants. A locally guided trip will take you off the beaten track to get you close to these wonderful mammals.

natural: The lodges in this fascinating landscape are actually all very comfortable. We have chosen a rustic but comfortable tented lodge for you, which is very centrally located and built into a pretty landscape.

classic: Even in the classic version, we let our clients dig a little deeper into their pockets here, as this lodge, magnificently built into the round rocks, is a highlight in itself. The sunset at the viewpoint is said to be "the most beautiful in Namibia"... look forward to it! - individual bungalow

luxury: At a fantastically situated, extremely stylish lodge, we have chosen a Luxury View Room for you, the Mountain Suite would also be possible. A Swiss regular customer recently told me "you would not be able to get over your amazement here"..

Days 14 & 15

It piles up..

- * 2 nights in a fairytale landscape surrounded by monstrous granite spheres in a selected lodge

inclusive:

- * Dinner, bed and breakfast

Spitzkoppe & the mighty Erongo

230 km - approx. 3h driving time

Even from a distance, Namibia's best-known "island mountain", the Spitzkoppe, stands out like a natural monument from the flat gravel surface of the Namib.

Bushmen have painted clearly visible scenarios of hunting and wildlife on the smooth granite walls. The landscape looks like a fairytale - scenery and offers wonderful photo opportunities.

The gigantic granite spheres of the Erongo are impressive, as the visitors literally feel "dwarfed" between the towering rock faces of these magma mountains. Some legendary rock paintings, semi-endemic bird species and remarkable semi-desert flora await the hiker or walker here.

- * Bushman Walk (optional): Here you will meet authentic Bushmen who will be happy to open your eyes through a short walk. You will learn how to set traps, use herbal remedies and go hunting. You will also see how a fire can easily be lit and that wonderful jewellery can be cut from ostrich eggs.



natural: The Erongo truly shines at Ameib, where you can embark on captivating hikes to the Bulls Party, a remarkable cluster of granite boulders, and Phillip's Cave. We've arranged a cozy farm-style guesthouse nearby for your first evening. The following day, you'll stay in a well-appointed tented chalet, providing excellent access to the Bushmen of the region.

classic: For your first night, we've selected a strategically positioned and charming lodge nestled amidst the granite mountains, offering superb hiking opportunities and convenient access to the local Bushmen. On the second evening, we've chosen a rustic-natural lodge right in the heart of the Erongo, where you can indulge in wonderful hikes and enjoy game and bird watching.

luxury: Perched high atop the Erongo Mountains, this intimate and exclusive lodge boasts exceptional cuisine, breathtaking vistas, and personalized attention. While the access roads to the Bushmen are a few kilometres away, the quality and uniqueness of this lodge experience more than compensate for the distance.

Day 16

plan your next Namibian stay...

Hope to see you again...

289 km - approx. 4 h driving time (Windhoek)

200 km - approx. 2 h driving time (Walvis Bay)

inclusive:

* Transfer to the airport



Straight ahead on the east-west route you will reach Windhoek or alternatively Walvis Bay again. In Windhoek your journey unfortunately comes to an end, we very much hope to welcome you back in good health and spirits.

You will be taken to the airport after dropping off your rental car.

Of course, you can still explore the city and visit the Craftcentre beforehand, for example, where Namibian artists offer their handicrafts for sale.

Departure today or tomorrow?!

There are many night flights to Europe. So many of our guests decide to combine the last leg with the airport transfer and check in in the afternoon.

However, as others would like to get to know the city better or take the stress factor out of the last day, we like to book another bed within Windhoek or a stylish accommodation close to the airport.

Some guests book an additional component, such as a fly-in to the Caprivi, the Okavango Delta or a few days in Cape Town.

Indicative prices for 2024:

Participants per vehicle	<i>Natural</i>	<i>Classic</i>	<i>Luxury</i>
1 Person	U\$ 5,777.00	U\$ 8,574.00	U\$ 10,161.00
2 Persons	U\$ 4,345.00	U\$ 7,141.00	U\$ 8,727.00
3 Persons	U\$ 3,866.00	U\$ 6,663.00	U\$ 8,250.00
4 Persons	U\$ 3,627.00	U\$ 6,424.00	U\$ 8,011.00
Single room supplement	U\$ 529.00	U\$ 887.00	U\$ 1,889.00

Inclusions:

Rental Car:

- * Off-road and safari-friendly 4x4 Toyota Fortuner or Land Cruiser (up to 4 people)
cheaper options available
- * Tires suitable for gravel roads
- * Two spare tires in good condition
- * Maximum insurance coverage with lowest possible access (conditions apply)
- * Complimentary airport transfers and handling

Services:

- * Transfers as indicated in the itinerary
- * Accommodations and meals as indicated in the itinerary
- * Activities as indicated in the itinerary
- * Pre-programmed GPS with route itinerary / Tracks for Africa



An OFFER, especially for you...

Please provide us with the following information for your personal quotation:

- * Number of participants per vehicle
- * Double room / Single room
- * Travel date (approximate)
- * Accommodation class: *natural, classic, luxury* or combined?
- * Special requirements for the vehicle (child seats, automatic, etc.)

Exclusions:

- * Personal expenses
- * Additional optional activities
- * Beverages and gratuities
- * International and domestic flights
- * Fuel for the vehicle
- * Entrance fees to national parks and local attractions on the itinerary (to be paid on-site)
- * Visa expenses

Contact Namibia

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