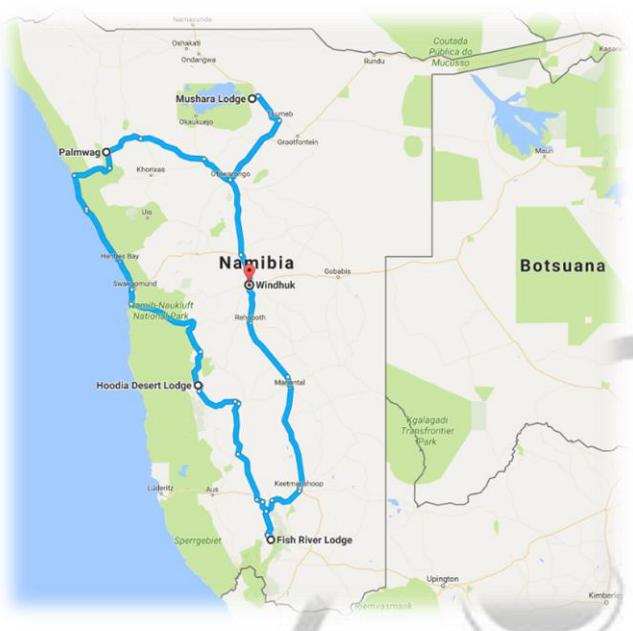




The Highlights of Namibia – The perky Toko



This fly-in safari will take you to the second largest canyon in the world, to the oldest desert in the world, to the small coastal town of Swakopmund, to the beautiful landscapes of Damaraland as well as to the renowned Etosha National Park.



Day 1: Windhoek

A representative of African Bush Bird Tours will welcome you at the Windhoek International Airport. Your tour starts with a transfer into the capital city of Namibia, Windhoek.

Windhoek is the capital and largest city of the Republic of Namibia. It is located in central Namibia in the Khomas Highland plateau area, at around 1 700 metres above sea level. The population of Windhoek in 2011 was 322 500 and grows continually due to an influx from all over Namibia. The town developed at the site of a permanent spring known to the indigenous pastoral communities. It developed rapidly after Jonker Afrikaner, Captain of the Orlam, settled here in 1840 and built a stone church for his community. However, in the decades thereafter multiple wars and hostilities led to the neglect and destruction of the new settlement such that Windhoek was founded a second time in 1890 by Imperial German army Major Curt von François. Windhoek is the social, economic, and cultural centre of the country. Nearly every Namibian national enterprise, governmental body, educational and cultural institution is headquartered here.

Notable landmarks are: Parliament Gardens, Christ Church (lutheran church opened in 1910, built in the gothic revival style with Art Nouveau elements.), Tintenpalast (Ink Palace -within Parliament Gardens, the seat of both chambers of the Parliament of Namibia. Built between 1912 and 1913 and situated just north of Robert Mugabe Avenue), Alte Feste (built in 1890 and houses the National Museum), Reiterdenkmal (Equestrian Monument - a statue celebrating the victory of the German Empire over the Herero and Nama in the Herero and Namaqua War of 1904–1907), Supreme Court of Namibia Built between 1994 and 1996 it is Windhoek's only building erected post-independence in an African style of architecture.

Overnight in the Olive Grove Guesthouse

Accommodation:	Olive Grove Guesthouse
Room type:	Luxury
Meals included:	Breakfast
Description:	Olive Grove is a small upmarket accommodation establishment situated close to Windhoek city centre in a quiet, peaceful area. Big Sky's first property in Windhoek and bordering The Olive Exclusive, the guesthouse takes homely atmosphere to a different level. Recently completely refurbished, each room has been decorated

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and painted with new colour schemes allowing a different feel, but with the same elegant and simplistic emphasis on décor. The newly renovated, open-plan kitchen allows guests to see how meals are prepared, while they enjoy a drink in the lounge. The menu was also reinvented and is now fully a la carte, quite unique for a guesthouse. Home-style food is rounded off with great presentation, pushing up the level of the guesthouse dining experience. The upper deck has been revamped into a private dining corner, with two Moroccan-style sections, for guests to get comfy on the large pillows and enjoy the ambience and view from the top. The on-site Wellness Room offers a selection of professional services, to assist guests on their journey towards inner and outer well-being. Whilst each of the ten rooms and one suite cater for every need of the most discerning traveller, the emphasis remains one of simplicity and elegance.

Other:

Swimming pool, restaurant, WiFi, laundry service, air-condition, safe, TV, VISA and MASTER



Day 2: Windhoek - Fish River Canyon

Your private charter fly-in safari starts from Windhoek Eros Airport and will take you to the far south of Namibia - to the Fish River Canyon. This canyon is the second largest in the world. The rest of the day is spent at leisure – enjoy the most stunning views from the lodge, whilst relaxing at the swimming pool.

Overnight at the Fish River Lodge

Accommodation:	Fish River Lodge
Room Type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast / Dinner
Description:	A cold drink at the pool while watching Namibia's impressive Making the most of the beautiful vistas, the Fish River Lodge has been built in harmony with its stark, striking surroundings. Completed in 2009, all the buildings that make up the lodge pay tribute to the amazing landscape, offering spectacular views of the Fish River Canyon from sunrise to sunset. The architecture and interiors of Fish River Lodge have taken their cue from the rugged landscape that surround it. 20 private chalets are dotted along the edge of the canyon, flanking both sides of the main lodge. As with the main building, guests can soak up the enchanting views. An outdoor platform allows for sleeping under the stars on warm nights.
Activities included:	Full day canyon drive
Others:	Swimming pool, coffee and tea facilities, WiFi, laundry Service, VISA and Master Card



Day 3: Fish River Canyon - Sossusvlei

On a guided drive into the canyon, which starts in the early morning, you will have the opportunity to experience this canyon from different viewpoints, enjoy an adventurous drive down into the canyon and will be able to explore some areas on foot. The Fish River Canyon is located in the south of Namibia. It is the second largest canyon in the world and the largest in Africa, as well as the second most visited tourist attraction in Namibia. It features a gigantic ravine, in total about 160 km long, up to 27 km wide and in places almost 550 metres deep. The Fish River is the longest interior river in Namibia. It cuts deep into the plateau which is today dry, stony and sparsely covered with hardy drought-resistant plants. The river flows intermittently, usually flooding in late summer; the rest of the year it becomes a chain of long narrow pools. Upstream the river runs through horizontal dolomite strata. These strata formed part of the canyon about 650 million years ago when plate movement cracked the earth, the first process in the formation of the Fish River Canyon. Lower down, a granite complex system is exposed to form a characteristic river bed that results in forms like Fingerspitze. In this area, a fault runs north-south, which accounts for the gorge-like channel and the presence of hot sulphurous springs.

Today's flight over the Namib Desert will give you the experience of the vast distances of landscapes of Namibia. You will participate on a scenic drive in the afternoon. The rest of the day you will have at leisure.

Overnight at the Hoodia Desert Lodge

Accommodation:	Hoodia Desert Lodge
Room Type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast / Dinner
Description:	The lodge opened in 2008 to accommodate guests from all over the world on an individual and small scale. Therefore only 11 luxury chalets with great distance from each other were planned to assure privacy in this breath-taking environment. The lodge is family-owned and managed by Thomas & Henreza Becker, both enthusiastic regarding professional hospitality with a personal human approach. Theofeline and Armas, the skilled and enthusiastic chefs deliver in co-operation with Henreza delicious creations of international and local cuisine. With Kaarina and Selma you meet two charming and hearty attentive waitresses which will cater for your needs.
Activities included:	Guided Sossusvlei excursion



Day 4: Sossusvlei – Swakopmund

Just before sunrise, we start off to the famous dunes of Sossusvlei. Experience the colour change of the dunes as the bountiful sunshine passes over them.

The sand dunes of Sossusvlei in the Namib Desert are thought to be the highest dunes in the world. The best time to view Sossusvlei is close to sunrise and sunset, when colours and shades change constantly, offering a photographer's dream. The midday heat is intense and best spent in the shade. 'Vlei' is the Afrikaans word for a shallow depression or pan, surrounded by spectacular red dunes, sometimes fills with water. The pan only has water on rare occasions, during exceptional rainy seasons, when the Tsauchab River flows into this pan. The Sossusvlei is mostly a dry vlei except in good rainy season. The sand-dunes at Sossusvlei are some 60km from the Sesriem gate (the entrance to the park) and the drive takes about an hour. The area also hosts various vleis, such as the Naravlei, so called because of the countless cucumber-like melons (a vital source of nourishment for many desert creatures, including man) growing around the edge of the pan. Dead Vlei boasts dead camelthorn trees, some being over 800 years old. Out of view from the 2x4 car park, tucked behind a dune, is Hiddenvlei. Many species of bird shelter here on both dead and live camelthorn trees. One would think that nothing can survive in temperatures that surpass 40°C during the day and fall to below freezing at night, but life manages to exist under the sand. Tiny tracks at the base of the dunes give away the presence of game. Examples are the tok-tokkie beetle, one of over 200 species of tenebrionid living in the Namib Desert, lizards and reptiles and mole, surviving on droplets of water formed by fog. Even jackal, springbok, ostrich and oryx also survive in this area. The Sesriem Canyon derives its name from the fact that early Afrikaner trekkers had to use six ('ses') leather thongs ('riem') so that their buckets could reach the water far below. Because it is so deep and sheltered, it often holds water well into the dry season.

Afterwards we will return to the lodge and fly over the wonderful dune landscape to the Atlantic coastline towards Swakopmund.

Overnight at the Villa Margherita

Accommodation:	Villa Margherita Guesthouse
Room Type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast
Description:	Villa Margherita, The Charming House, is an antique colonial villa in the heart of Swakopmund and offers unique and exquisite accommodation for connoisseurs looking for a truly remarkable retreat. A fusion of contemporary charm and a historic colonial building. With its few double rooms, most of them having a private lounge area, Villa Margherita offers seclusion and personalized service. The guesthouse also offers dinners as well



as massages.

Others:

Card

TV, safe, hair dryer, WiFi, laundry service, VISA and Mater



Day 5: Swakopmund

On this morning, you will be taken to Walvis Bay for a dolphin cruise in the lagoon. Whilst learning a lot about the marine life of the Atlantic Ocean, you can enjoy some fresh oysters and champagne on board. You will be back in Swakopmund by lunch time. The afternoon is at leisure.

Swakopmund (German for "Mouth of the Swakop River") is the ideal holiday destination of Namibia which lies on the west coast only 350km from Windhoek. Swakopmund was founded in 1892 as the main harbour for German South-West Africa, and a sizable part of its population is still German-speaking today. Boats were offloaded at Swakopmund's landmark, the jetty. However, the natural potential of Swakopmund as a holiday resort was recognized, and this potential has subsequently been developed. Today tourism-related services form an important part of the town's economy. This little town is rich in beautiful German colonial architecture/buildings, e.g. the beautiful old train station which was converted into a hotel, the prison, the Woerman House which used to be the head office of the Woermann Line (colonial shipping line) and now houses the public library and shops, the Light House, the Jetty which now houses a restaurant, just to mention a few. Swakopmund has an excellent museum on the history of Namibia / Southwest Africa. Swakopmund has a lot to offer which include attractions like the National Marine Aquarium, the Crystal Gallery, the Martin Luther Steam locomotive and "things to do" like fishing, skydiving and quad biking, dune riding, ballooning, camel riding and excellent shopping possibilities.

Overnight at the Villa Margherita

Day 6: Swakopmund – Damaraland

Enjoy another good breakfast in the guesthouse, before your flight will take off into Namibia's inland - to the bizarre landscapes of the Damaraland. If weather permitting, you'll fly along a part of the Skeleton Coast.

Damaraland is one of the most scenic areas in Namibia, a huge, untamed, ruggedly beautiful region that offers the more traveller a more adventurous challenge. Here there are prehistoric water courses with open plains and grassland, massive granite koppies and deep gorges. Towards the west, the geography changes dramatically with endless sandy wastes, that incredibly are able to sustain small, but wide-ranging, populations of desert-adapted elephant, black rhino, giraffe, ostrich and springbok. These animals have adapted their lifestyles to survive the harshness of the sun-blistered, almost waterless desert spaces. Elephant move through euphorbia bush country,



and can travel up to 70km in a day in search of food and water and unusually, do not destroy trees in their quest for food. Follow black rhino cow and her calf in typical Damaraland 'melkbos' terrain. Together, Damaraland and Kaokoland are known as the Kaokoveld.

You may want to join some of the activities offered by the lodge in the afternoon such as guided walks and scenic drives.

Overnight at Etendeka Mountain Camp

Accommodation:	Etendeka Mountain camp
Room Type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Description:	In the foothills of the Grootberg massif, in stunning scenery set amidst the ancient Etendeka lava flows of northern Damaraland, you will find Etendeka Mountain Camp. Here the ancient basalt has been slowly eroded over millennia, leaving scattered boulders lying upon dramatic flat-topped mountains. The emphasis here is on Nature, and this eco-friendly camp bears testimony to her many riches. Accommodation is in ten en-suite meru tents, which are connected by pathways to the main dining tent. Extensive use is made of solar power throughout, both in the kitchen and the guest bathrooms, as well as for general electricity requirements. Necessary comforts have not been overlooked though, and these include flush toilets, hot-and-cold running water and the stunning open-air "bucket" shower. Simple, fresh, wholesome meals are prepared, either on solar or on open fires, and enjoyed under African skies. Desert adapted wildlife forge a precarious existence amongst the towering basalt mountains and Mopani-shaded rivers beds of the Kunene region. This apparently unforgiving landscape is actually refuge to a diverse number of plant and mammal species. Desert elephant and black rhino share boulder strewn valleys with watchful cheetah and thundering herds of oryx. Dew darkened game trails show the heavy track marks of lion and the mountain zebra they hunt. Scorpions prowl between volcanic rock shards and snake eagles drift through the warm afternoon breeze. Your days here are spent exploring the area on foot and in open game drive vehicles with the exceptionally knowledgeable guides. This is not a fast-paced safari, but rather a privileged introduction to an environment that holds many of Namibia's unique natural attractions.
Activities included:	Nature drives, guided walks
Others:	Mosquito net

Day 7: Damaraland

Once again you have the opportunity to take part in guided walks and drives through these scenic landscapes. On many occasions, you'll have the possibility to see some of the antelopes of this region, or if you are very luck, see the Desert Elephants.

Desert elephants are not a distinct species of elephant but are African bush elephants that have made their homes in the Namib and Sahara deserts. It was believed at one time that they were a subspecies of the African bush elephant but this is no longer thought to be the case. Desert-dwelling elephants were once more widespread in Africa than they are now and are currently



found only in Namibia and Mali. They tend to migrate from one waterhole to another following traditional route which depend on the seasonal availability of food and water. They face pressure from poaching and from changes in land use by humans. The Kunene Region in the north-west of Namibia is an area of mostly sandy desert, rocky mountains and stony plains which covers about 115,154 square kilometres (44,461 sq mi). Elephants have traditionally lived in this area and in the earlier part of the 20th century there were about 3,000 in the Kunene Region. By the 1980s these had greatly diminished in number, however since then, conservation measures have been put in place and by 2013 the number of elephants had increased to about 600. In 1995-6 there were good rains in Namibia and the elephants expanded their range southwards to the Ugab River. In the Hoanib River area male elephants have tusks but about a third of the female elephants there are tusk less. Adult bull desert elephants are usually solitary and roam over large areas. One was recorded as travelling between the Skeleton Coast National Park and the Etosha National Park in a few months. Other bulls have occasionally moved into the area from better-watered regions to the east. The family groups in which most desert elephants move are small and usually consist of a female elephant and her offspring or two sisters and their dependent young. They tend to stay near the ephemeral rivers where there is greater availability of food. Some groups are resident in the Hoarusib River valley and a single group stays permanently near the Hoanib River while other groups move between the two, a distance of about 70 kilometres (43 mi). They usually make the trek in a single night, when the temperature is cooler than by day. At certain times of year, they move inland along narrow traditional paths to mountain areas in search of myrrh bushes (*Commiphora* spp.) which seem to be a favourite foodstuff.

Overnight at Etendeka Mountain Camp

Day 8: Damaraland - Etosha National Park

Today we fly to the eastern boarder of the Etosha National Park.

In the vast arid space of Northern Namibia lies one of Southern Africa's best loved wildlife sanctuaries. Etosha National Park offers excellent game viewing in one of Africa's most accessible venues. Zebra and springbok are scattered across the endless horizon, while the many waterholes attract endangered black rhinoceros, lion, elephant and large numbers of antelope. Etosha, meaning 'place of dry water', is encloses a huge, flat calcrete depression (or pan) of about 5 000km². The 'Pan' provides a great, parched, silver-white backdrop of shimmering mirages to an area of semi-arid savannah grassland and thorn scrub. The pan itself contains water only after very good rains and sometimes for only a few days each year, but is enough to stimulate the growth of a blue-green algae which lures thousands of flamingos. Etosha was first established in 1907, when Namibia was a German colony known as South West Africa. At the time, the park's original 100,000 km² made it the largest game reserve in the world. Due to political changes since its original establishment, the park is now slightly less than a quarter of its original area, but still remains a very large and significant area in which wildlife is protected. The salt pans are the most noticeable geological features in the Etosha national park. The main depression covers an area of about 5 000 square kilometres and is roughly 130 km long and as wide as 50 km places. The hypersaline conditions of the pan limit the species that can permanently inhabit the pan itself; occurrences of extremophile micro-organisms are present, which species can tolerate the hypersaline conditions. The salt pan is usually dry, but fills with water briefly in the summer, when it attracts pelicans and flamingos in particular. In the dry season, winds blowing across the salt pan pick up saline dust and carry it across the country and out over the southern Atlantic. This salt enrichment provides minerals to the soil downwind of the pan on which some wildlife depends, though the salinity also creates challenges to farming.



On a guided afternoon drive into the Etosha National Park you will get to know Africa's wild animals.

Overnight at Mushara Lodge

Accommodation:	Mushara Lodge
Room type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast / Dinner
Description:	Located just 8 km from the Von Lindequist Gate on the eastern boundary of Etosha National Park, Mushara Lodge is an ideal overnight stop for visitors to the game reserve. The lodge consists of ten spacious chalets, one family unit, a triple room and two single rooms. The name Mushara is derived from the Purple Pod Terminalia tree which grows abundantly on the lodge grounds and in the surroundings. The thatched public area includes a small library with a selection of good books, a bar with an extensive wine cellar, an airy lounge complete with welcoming fireplace for winter evenings, a dining area and a well-stocked curio shop. Great attention has been paid to the décor, which is an eclectic blend of traditional African and modern works of art mixed with original older paintings. Ten well-spaced thatched chalets are arranged in horseshoe shape around the swimming pool. All the chalets and individual rooms are extremely spacious and equipped with air-conditioning, mosquito net, mini-bar, safe, tea and coffee station, sockets for charging storage batteries and direct telephone connection. The bathrooms are en-suite with separate toilette. The chalets and single rooms have a shower, whereas the triple room and the family house have a shower and bath. One of Mushara's prominent features is its large bright blue swimming pool, surrounded by green lawns which are kept.
Activities included:	3 x game drives into the Etosha National Park in an open safari vehicle
Others:	swimming pool, safe, laundry service, WiFi at reception, air-condition, mosquito net, tea and coffee station, VISA and MasterCard



Day 9: Etosha National Park

Enjoy the early morning as well as afternoon safari into the National Park to witness the wilderness once again. With only a little luck you will see some elephants, giraffes and lions. The afternoon is at leisure at the beautiful Mushara Lodge.

Overnight at Mushara Lodge



Day 10: Etosha National Park – Windhoek International Airport

After a hearty breakfast, you will leave Mushara Lodge and fly via the central highland back to the Windhoek International Airport.

*** Hope to see you again ***

