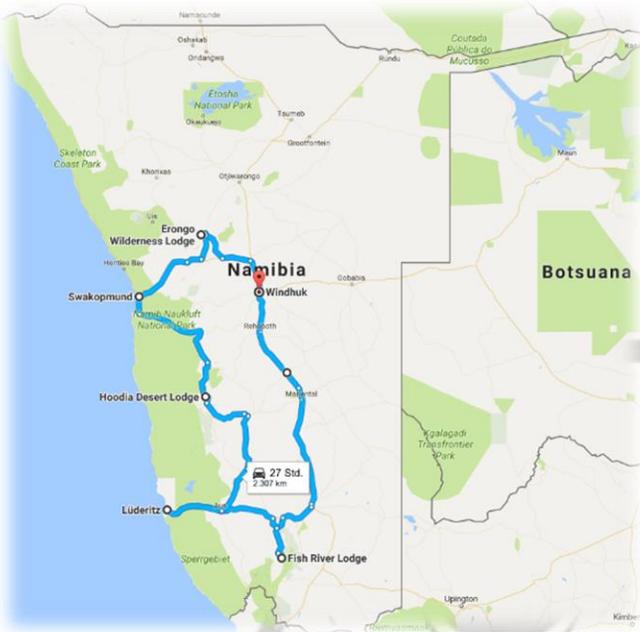




Namibia South – Der chatty Social Weaver



Experience the sightseeing's of Namibia south! You will see the world's 2nd largest natural gorge, visit some of the world's highest dunes and the world's oldest desert – this is a tour with many superlatives.



Day 1: Airport – Windhoek

Arrive in Windhoek. Spend the day at leisure. 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.

Übernachtung im Villa Violet Gästehaus

Accommodation:**Villa Violet Bed & Breakfast****Room type:**

Standard

Meals included:

Breakfast

Description:

Situated in the leafy suburb of Klein Windhoek, Villa Violet Bed & Breakfast offers a sparkling new, fresh and modern accommodation option when visiting the city centre. The en-suite rooms front onto a grassy central area. The rooms open out onto a patio with tables and chairs, and a small turquoise-blue pool glistens invitingly at the bottom of the garden. The B&B is in close proximity to restaurants and shops, and a short drive away from the city centre, making it not only an appealing place to stay but a convenient stop when entering or leaving the country. Your hosts, Heidi, Ben and the team will welcome you in Afrikaans, English,

French and German.

Others:

Swimming pool, WiFi, laundry service, air-condition, safe, VISA und MASTER



Day 2: Windhoek – Kalahari

Your journey leads you into the centre of the Kalahari Desert via Rehoboth and Kalkrand. You will be able to take part on an optional guided scenic drive through the red sand dune landscape on the ranch.

The Kalahari Desert (in Afrikaans "Dorsland", meaning "thirst land" or "thirsty land") is a large semi-arid sandy savannah in Southern Africa extending 1.2 million square kilometres, covering much of Botswana and parts of Namibia and South Africa. As semi-desert, with huge tracts of excellent grazing after good rains, the Kalahari supports more animals and plants than a true desert, such as the Namib Desert to the west. There are small amounts of rainfall and the summer temperature is very high. The surrounding Kalahari Basin covers over 2 500 000 square kilometres extending farther into Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, and encroaching into parts of Angola, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The only permanent river, the Okavango, flows into a delta in the northwest, forming marshes that are rich in wildlife. Ancient dry riverbeds—called omuramba—traverse the Central Northern reaches of the Kalahari and provide standing pools of water during the rainy season. Previously havens for wild animals from elephants to giraffes, and for predators such as lions and cheetahs, the riverbeds are now mostly grazing spots, though leopards and cheetahs can still be found. Among deserts of the southern hemisphere the Kalahari most closely resembles some Australian deserts in its latitude and its mode of formation.

Übernachtung in der Kalahari Red Dunes Lodge

Accommodation:

Kalahari Red Dunes Lodge

Room Type:

Standard

Meals included:

Breakfast / Dinner

Description:

The lodge is easily accessible via a tar road – only 198km south of Windhoek into the direction of Mariental and is situated in a nature reserve characterized by two deserts: the Kalahari Desert: infinite chains of red sand dunes alternate with green valleys. The lovely view will charm every visitor. It is the home of oryxes, springboks, and kudus. The Great Karoo desert: vast grass steppes, dry river courses with abundant water bank vegetation, small dry lakes, and tree savanna. Giraffes, zebras, gnus, elands, impalas, and nyalas prefer this region. Enjoy the Kalahari Desert from one of twelve individual guest houses. The stilted guest houses are arranged around a Vlei, a natural dry lake. All walking paths from the guest houses to the main building are paved, barrier-free, and well-lit. Exterior walls made from canvas and the traditional



African thatched roofs guarantee an excellent indoor climate even with high outside temperatures. All bathrooms are built as solid construction. The living space of each guest house varies from 50 to 60sqm. During the summer season, you can have breakfast on our large terrace. Enjoy the extensive buffet and ask the cook to prepare omelettes according to your wishes. During the Namibian winter, mornings and evenings are too cool to sit outside. Then, the open fireplace will keep the restaurant nice and warm.

Optional activities:

Game drive, sundowner drive, hiking trails

Others:

Swimming pool, WiFi, laundry service, air-condition, safe, mosquito net, VISA and Master card



Day 3: Kalahari – Fish River Canyon

After breakfast drive via Mariental and Keetmanshoop to the Fish River Canyon. En-route you can visit the Quivertree Forest near Keetmanshoop.

Aloe dichotoma (the quiver tree or kokerboom) is a tall, branching species of aloe, indigenous to Southern Africa, specifically in the Northern Cape region of South Africa, and parts of Southern Namibia. Known as Choje to the indigenous San people, the quiver tree gets its English common name from their practice of hollowing out the tubular branches of Aloe dichotoma to form quivers for their arrows. The species name "dichotoma" refers to how the stems repeatedly branch into two ("dichotomous" branching) as the plant grows.

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 queue 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.

Optional activities:

sundowner drive, full day canyon drive, walking trails

Others:

Swimming pool, coffee and tea facilities, WiFi, laundry Service, VISA and MasterCard



Day 4: Fish River Canyon

Visit the Fish River Canyon, a spectacular natural phenomenon. From the different viewpoints, you have the chance to get a feeling of the enormity of the second largest canyon in the world. 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.

Übernachtung in der Fish River Lodge

Day 5: Fish River Canyon – Lüderitz

Drive via Seeheim and Aus towards the coastal town of Lüderitz. If you are lucky, you will see the wild horses of the Namib Desert.

The Wild Horses of the Namib hold a powerful fascination. For centuries, their origin was shrouded in mystery. Their habitat, the barren plains around Garub on the eastern fringe of the Namib Desert (part of the Namib-Naukluft Park), is no paradise. Nevertheless, they have managed to adapt to the harsh conditions and the arid land which fulfils all their needs. Their forebears, once in the service of mankind, gained their freedom a century ago to live their lives in the vastness of the Namib Desert away from human civilisation, according to the natural ways of the land. Perhaps our yearning for the wild and free is the reason for our deep attraction to the Namib horses and explains why thousands of travellers visit Garub every year. Decades of intensive research have resulted in a detailed understanding of the horses and their environment. The research conclusively substantiated that the horses are a harmonious part of the desert ecosystem and have found their home at Garub. There have been several theories proposed over the years as to the origin of the wild horses. The two most likely stem from the period between 1915 and 1925. During World War One, Union of South Africa troops were stationed at Garub. Reports from the time make reference to 10 000 soldiers with 6 000 horses who pitched camp on the dusty expanse at the edge of the Namib Desert. They relied on the water from the borehole

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that was used to replenish locomotives at the nearby railway line and supplement the water for the town of Lüderitz. The German forces had set up a stronghold in the hills at Aus, 25km to the east. The base comprised a series of entrenchments, supply routes, a radio mast and housed two planes, which bombed the Union camp intermittently. The last attack was on the 27 March 1915 to mask the Germans' retreat, scattering the Union horses.

These horses adapted to the harsh circumstances of the rugged desert. End of the day by taking a walk through the historic town of Lüderitz.

Overnight at Alte Loge Guesthouse

Accommodation:	Alte Loge Guesthouse
Room Type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast
Description:	Offering a lush garden and a terrace, Alte Loge Guesthouse is a B&B located in Lüderitz. The individually decorated rooms have sea or garden views, a desk and a private bathroom with either a bathtub or a shower. During winter, you can also relax by the fireplace in the communal lounge. This property also has one of the best-rated locations in Lüderitz!
Others:	Safe, WiFi, laundry service, VISA and Master Card



Day 6: Lüderitzbucht

Explore the harbour town and the surrounding area today. You can drive to the ancient diamond ghost town Kolmanskuppe or travel along the coastline to visit the Diaz Point and the bays along the way. In town, you can go to the museum, the Goerke House or the 'Felsenkirche'. Do you maybe want to book a guided tour to the Rock Arch or visit Elisabeth Bay in the restricted diamond area? What about a boat cruise to a penguin island?

Overnight at Alte Loge Guesthouse

Day 7: Lüderitz – Sossusvlei

Your journey leads you back to the interior of Namibia. Drive via Aus into the direction of Sesriem to reach the lodge nearby whilst driving along stunning landscape. En-route you can visit the Duwisib Castle which was built in the middle of nowhere.

Duwisib Castle, is a grand pseudo-medieval looking fortress in the hills of the semi-arid Southern Namib region of Namibia. It was built by 'Baron' Captain Hans Heinrich von Wolf (born in Dresden, 1873), who was posted to (then) German West Africa. After the German-Nama war Captain von



Wolf went home to Dresden and married the stepdaughter of the US consul, Miss Jayta Humphreys, on 8 April 1907. They decided to settle in South West Africa and bought eight farms in the Maltahöhe area. Eminent architect Wilhelm Sander was commissioned to design a building and construction commenced in 1908. Most materials were imported from Germany and stonemasons were hired from Italy, Sweden and Ireland. It was hoped that the castle would bear a resemblance to some of the existing German Forts in Namibia. Much of the raw materials for the construction of the fort were imported from Germany, landing at Lüderitz. The resulting edifice consisted of 22 rooms. While they were travelling to Europe in 1914, the First World War broke out and the ship carrying Von Wolf and his wife was diverted to Rio de Janeiro. Jayta Humphreys had retained her American citizenship and found passage to Europe on a Dutch ship; legend has it the Baron had to travel disguised as a woman. On arrival in Europe the Baron re-joined the German army, and was killed at the Battle of the Somme in 1916, just two weeks after signing up. His wife could not bring herself to return to Namibia alone and never again laid claim to the majestic castle. She spent the rest of her life in the South of England. What are said to be descendants of their fine thoroughbred horses can be seen today roaming free and wild as Namib Desert Horses along the roadside and in the restricted diamond areas, although whether this is the origin of these herds is not accurately known.

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.
Optional activities:	Sossusvlei excursion, sundowner drive



Day 8: Sossusvlei

Explore the Sossusvlei, surrounded by the world's highest dunes, today in the early morning. 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. Experience the colour change of the dunes as the bountiful sunshine passes over them. Visit some more sight sighting areas such as the Dead Vlei as well as Dune 45 and the Sesriem Canyon.

Overnight at the Hoodia Desert Lodge

Day 9: Sossusvlei - Swakopmund

Once again, the route leads you to the coast of Namibia. Drive via Solitaire through the barren Namib Desert with its unique eco-system. You can visit the ancient Welwitschia plants and the moonlandscape.

The Namib Desert, the world's oldest desert (43 million years), covers just under 50 000km² and incorporates the Namib Naukluft Park, a section of the diamond area to the south and the Skeleton Coast to the north, which was recently proclaimed as the Dorop Park. It includes the Swakop River and Kuiseb River Canyons, which are dry rivers, except in exceptional good rainy seasons. The Namib Desert is host to a fascinating array of bizarre plants and animals who all adapted to the desert conditions, surviving mostly from the fog from the coast in sand dunes and vast gravel plains. A desert tour with an expert guide, who shows and explains its inhabitant's magical ways of survive, is well worth it (please book this tour with us in advance). An amazing variety of game can also be seen in different parts of the desert: various species of antelopes such as oryx and springbuck, desert elephant, giraffes, lion, rhino and a multitude of insects, vertebrae, invertebrate etc.

Overnight at The Delight

Accommodation:	The Delight Swakopmund
Room type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast
Description:	Amongst the town's captivating contrasts and old traditions, Gondwana's Delight is a fresh breeze in the desert. Conveniently located within short walking distance of the 'Mole', our modern, uplifting and inviting hotel is the ideal base for your stay. Every effort is made to surprise and delight guests with thoughtful touches and locally inspired reasons to smile. From the easy comfort of our hotel, the warm and welcoming service

Gondwana is known for, to the assistance provided by our knowledgeable Delight Host for anything from activity bookings to dinner reservations – your stay is always an effortless and memorable experience.

Others:

WiFi, laundry service, air-condition, safe, fridge, hair dryer, coffee station, VISA und MASTER



Day 10: Swakopmund

Enjoy the day 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 harbor 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 Delight

Day 11: Swakopmund – Erongo Wilderness Lodge

After another good breakfast at the guesthouse, you will depart to the Erongo Mountains, and driver via Usakos to the lodge. En-route you have the possibility to visit a SAN Living Museum, to learn more about their traditional lives.

The stunning Erongo Mountains are located in Damaraland, west of the town of Omaruru, and represent a 130-million-year-old volcanic complex of about 30km in diameter. The variety of rock and landscape formations in the Erongo mountains are every nature lovers, photographers and artists dream, with its spectacular, magical and dramatic light changes and contrasting light, transforming the mountain backdrop, granite flats and gigantic boulders into magical colours, especially early evenings and during sunset, the mountain range into magical colours. The

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mountain range also offers plentiful game, wildlife and birds. Precious stones are mined in the Erongo, especially aquamarine. The famous Phillips Cave is also situated here, known for its rock and cave paintings, which are protected heritage sights. The highest elevation surveyed is "Hohenstein" in the southwest of the mountain with 2 319m height, the Erongo Mountains in 2 216m height, and the highest human settlement in Namibia is situated here at 1 792m height. Overnight at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge

Accommodation:	Erongo Wilderness Lodge
Room type:	Standard
Meals included:	Breakfast / Dinner
Description:	There is a special wilderness area in Namibia, encircled by the Erongo Mountains where the desert, mountain, and bushveld ecosystems combine. Here, in a secluded valley, you will find the lodge in a dramatic setting of granite boulders and breathtaking views. The lodge has 10 tented chalets, built on stilts, set against towering granite formations. Each chalet has its own niche amongst the rocks, ensuring peace, privacy and exclusivity. The luxury Meru tents are pitched under steep thatched roofs for shade, and have netting across all windows and doors, allowing only the breeze to enter. The en-suite bathrooms are cunningly built around the existing rocks and trees in a very natural way. With its own private deck, bush-style mini-bar, and spectacular setting, each chalet is the perfect way to experience the lush Erongo environment. Set atop a separate granite hill, the restaurant and lounge also offer spectacular views of the mountain landscape. Guests are able to observe the wildlife from the outside deck at the floodlit waterhole below. With a large, central fireplace, comfortable lounge and our 'mokoro' bar, this area is as much for unwinding as it is for fine wining and dining. Languid days are spent at the adjacent swimming pool and 'relaxation' deck.
Optional activities:	walking trails, sundowner walk, nature drives, birding
Others:	Swimming pool, WiFi in reception area, laundry service, safe, coffee station, VISA and MASTER



Day 12: Erongo Wilderness Lodge – Windhoek

Your trip is coming to an end now – you will drive via Okahandja to Windhoek and then onwards to the airport for your flight back home.

*** Hope to see you again soon ***