

ACACIA AFRICA

CAPE DESERT SAFARI (NORTHBOUND) – TOUR DOSSIER

Tour Code NCDS11

CAPE TOWN - WINDHOEK

11 DAYS

Tour Departure – **08:00**

Pre-departure Meeting – **18:00 day prior to departure**

HIGHLIGHTS

Cape Flats Township Tour
Fish River Canyon
Sossusvlei Sand Dunes
Namib Naukluft Park
Swakopmund
Spitzkoppe
Cape Cross Seal Colony
Etosha National Park



Experience Africa's enormous skies and wild remote landscapes on a journey through some of the continent's most striking scenery. Encounter deep canyons and towering dunes, diverse wildlife and fascinating tribal culture on this exciting tour through Namibia and the Cape, mixed with a host of adrenaline activities along the way.

INTENDED ITINERARY

Whilst it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the tour and on occasion it may be necessary or desirable to make alterations to the published itinerary. Please therefore treat the following as a guide only.

Duration: 11 Days
Countries visited: South Africa, Namibia

DAY 1

Cape Town – Western Cape - Gariep River

Our overland safari begins in cosmopolitan Cape Town, overlooked by Table Mountain and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, one of the world's most picturesque cities. Before we leave the city we take a tour of the Cape Flats – Cape Town's townships, visiting some of the local people and community projects in the area. The townships illustrate both South Africa's tumultuous history and its hope for the future and make a fascinating visit. From here we head north through South Africa's western and northern Cape provinces, a fertile area of winelands and wild flowers that gradually turns increasingly arid as we head towards the Namibian border. We camp in the western Cape area overnight on the way to the Gariep (Orange) River. There will be time to settle into life on the road, meet the rest of the group and enjoy our first night under the huge African sky.

DAY 2 - 5

Fish River Canyon – Namib Naukluft Park

We enter Namibia and arrive at the awesome Fish River Canyon. One of the natural wonders of Africa, some 500m deep and over 160km long, this is the second largest canyon in the world (after the Grand Canyon, USA). Again, there are plenty of opportunities for keen photographers as we spend time around this area and visit the canyon's infamous sharp river bend known as 'Hell's Corner.' After a night near the canyon we continue north until we reach the Namib Naukluft Park, containing the world's oldest desert and the highest sand dunes.

Some of Sossusvlei's dunes are over 300m high and a popular activity here is to trek to the top of one of them in time to watch the sun rise over the open desert. A spectacular sight but be warned, it's an energy sapping climb to the top! Another well worthwhile option is to continue deeper into the park for a nature walk across the salt pans and valley floor, amidst the dunes – a real glimpse of Namibia's unspoilt natural environment. Bring your camera - the shifting colours of the desert as the sun climbs throughout the mid/late morning offer some brilliant photographic opportunities.

DAY 6 - 7 Swakopmund

Continuing on, we drive out of the desert and hit the Atlantic coast at Swakopmund, a small town redolent of Namibia's colonial past but with modern adventure oriented attractions for the visitor. Swakopmund is Namibia's main seaside resort, sandwiched neatly between the desert and the ocean, and is a delightful coastal oasis. Try some adventure desert based activities if you wish –quad biking, sand boarding, skydiving (weather permitting) – or else simply walk along the promenade admiring the ocean and indulge in the town's café culture.

DAY 8 Cape Cross Seal Colony - Spitzkoppe

We leave Swakopmund and continue north, stopping briefly at Cape Cross where, in 1486, the Portuguese mariner Diego Cão first set foot on the coast of southwest Africa. Cape Cross is also home to some 80,000 seals, the largest seal colony along this stretch of coast-line. It's an impressive sight, if not just for the number of seals but also for the immense noise and smell!

Leaving the Cape we turn inland to the beautiful Damaraland region and stop at Spitzkoppe to admire ancient bushman paintings still visible on the peculiar rock formations.

DAY 9 – 11 Etosha National Park - Windhoek

We make our way north to Etosha National Park, a vast reserve of over 20,000 sq km surrounding a central salt depression or 'pan.' The pan is seasonally full of water but specially managed waterholes sustain some 114 mammal and 340 bird species. We spend two nights here, usually making camp near a floodlit waterhole. Observers frequently see a range of night visitors including elephant, giraffe, zebra, even lion and hyena, making it one of the most memorable wildlife encounters in Namibia. After two nights we leave Etosha and turn south to the Windhoek, the capital, a city steeped in German architecture and atmosphere. Take the opportunity to enjoy a night out at one of the local taverns.

We aim to arrive in Windhoek late afternoon on day 11 when the tour officially ends.

TOUR INFORMATION

Travelling overland is great fun, but it can also be challenging! This is a *participation* tour and your help will be needed in setting up the camp each night and assisting (usually on a rota basis) with the various day to day campsite duties, such as shopping, cooking and keeping the truck and camp tidy. But don't worry it's not all hard work and it's a great way to meet the local people and get to know your fellow travellers. Your contribution benefits the success of the tour - most people find the greater their involvement, the greater their enjoyment of the whole trip.

Africa is an adventure destination and travelling here is not always predictable so be prepared to "expect the unexpected" in difficulties or delays which might come our way! However, you'll soon find that the diversity of the African landscape, the wildlife and the communities we pass on our way, make the sometimes rough travel and long driving days worthwhile.

Come with a sense of adventure and a flexible attitude and you will be sure to enjoy your Acacia overland tour across this amazing continent.

TOUR STYLE

Acacia Overland Tour

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Fully equipped safari vehicle, camping and cooking equipment, all road tolls and vehicle taxes, transport, sleeping mattresses, services of driver and tour leader, meals as indicated & Victoria Falls visit.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Local Payment excursions, visas, travel insurance, flights, departure taxes, airport transfers, sleeping bag, optional activities, drinks, tips, meals not mentioned in itinerary, items of a personal nature.

ACCOMMODATION

We use 2-person dome tents with fly sheets, built in ground sheets, zip-up insect screens and thick foam sleeping mattresses. We mainly use designated campsites, which often have permanent wash and shower facilities, electricity points and sometimes even a small shop, bar or swimming pool. We bush camp for two nights in the Okavango Delta, where there are little or no facilities, but just us amidst beautiful wild scenery – a real African highlight.

TRANSPORT

24-seater, self contained, custom-built safari truck with onboard tables, plug sockets, freezer, library, i-pod jack, safety features and 70-litre individual lockers.

MEALS

Meals included are - Breakfast (B) x10, Lunch (L) x9, Dinner (D) x8

These meals are prepared in camp by the group and help preparing the meals is invited. Most dietary requirements can be catered for on the road. Please ensure you inform Acacia of any special requirements when you book or at your earliest convenience.

GAME PARK VISITS

In order to maximise the quality of game driving and to comply with local authority rulings, some of our National Park visits and game viewing is carried out using services provided by local African ground handlers. As well as enhancing our experience it also allows us to contribute at a 'grassroots' level to local economies from which local people benefit. These local services are included in the Local Payment.

TOUR PREPARATION

BOOKING INFORMATION

When you make a confirmed booking for your tour you will be sent your booking documents and a pre-departure booklet with detailed information to help you prepare for your trip. Once you have paid in full you will receive a Travel Voucher giving details of your joining hotel. Cape Town and Windhoek are well served by a number of airlines and your travel agent can advise on flights to the start of the tour.

JOINING INFORMATION

This tour starts in Cape Town. **The pre-departure meeting is held at 18:00 on the evening prior to departure. The tour departs at 08:00 on day 1 and ends in Windhoek on day 11.**

Meeting point in **Cape Town:**
Address:

Ashanti Lodge Green Point
23 Antrim Rd
Three Anchor Bay,
Green Point
Cape Town, 8005,
Tel +27 (0)21 433 1619
Email: info@ashanti.co.za

Pre-dep. meeting:
Tour start time:

18:00 prior to departure day
08:00 on day 1

Tour end point in **Windhoek:**

Address:

Contact details:

E-mail:

Tour end time:

The Cardboard Box

15 Johann Albrecht Street

Windhoek

Tel. +264 61 228994

Fax. +264 61 245595

cbbox@iway.na

Late afternoon / early evening on Day 11

EXTENDING YOUR STAY

If time allows, we suggest you spend a night or two before and after the tour to fully enjoy the site seeing and activities, especially in the Cape Town area. Any additional nights can be booked on a direct pay basis. See below for a guide to extra accommodation costs. These prices may be subject to change especially at time of the World Cup (Jun-Jul 2010) so please contact Acacia or your agent to check current prices.

Description	Price (ZAR)	Description	Price (N\$)
Cape Town		Windhoek	
Pre tour accommodation – Twin pp/pn – B&B	R280	Post tour accommodation – Sgl/Twin p/room	\$200
Pre tour accommodation – Single pp/pn – B&B	R 395	Post tour accommodation – Triple p/room	\$260
Pre tour accommodation – Dorm pp/pn – B&B	R 170	Post tour accommodation – Dorm pp/pn	\$75

WHAT TO BRING

Please try to keep your luggage to a minimum, bearing in mind that most airlines impose a 20kg limit. It should be brought in a soft holdall or rucksack along with a smaller day bag. You will need to bring a mixture of lightweight clothing and warm clothing for the evenings and early morning game drives. You also need a sleeping bag (and small pillow if preferred). We recommended you pack a small torch or headlamp, mosquito spray and a money pouch/ belt that can be easily hidden. Please try to avoid bringing unnecessary valuables and use your hotel safe to store the bulk of your money, passport, and airline tickets. A full 'What to Bring' list is included in our **pre-departure booklet (online version)**, issued when you book.

VACCINATIONS/HEALTH

The table below indicates the vaccinations suggested for travel on this tour but **should be treated as a guide only**. You should seek professional medical advice from your GP or clinic at least six weeks prior to departure.

Please be aware that some of the areas visited on this tour are **malarial** at certain times of the year. We strongly recommend your seeking professional medical advice for the appropriate anti-malarial tablets.

Country	Tetanus	Diphtheria	Polio	Hepatitis A	Hepatitis B	Typhoid	Meningitis	Rabies	Yellow Fever	Malaria
S. Africa	R	R	R	R	-	R	-	-	*	R
Namibia	R	R	R	R	-	R	-	R	*	R

C = Compulsory, **R** = Recommended, * = If travelling from infected countries a certificate of proof may be required.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

The table below indicates the visas required for travel to the countries on this tour but **should be treated as a guide only**. At least one month prior to travel seek confirmation from embassies or a visa specialist, that these requirements are still current. For UK citizens the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) offers free up-to-date travel info: www.fco.gov.uk For other nationalities a number of travel advice websites are listed on the Acacia website.

Nationality	UK	AUS	NZ	USA	CAN	BEL	IRE	NED	DEN	ITA	GER	AUT	SWE	FIN	NOR	MEX	KOR
S. Africa	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Namibia	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

MONEY MATTERS

PERSONAL EXPENSES

Naturally you will require extra money for your own personal spending on the tour, for snacks, drinks, souvenirs, tips and items of a personal nature. Everybody has different spending habits but as a guideline we suggest you budget US\$15-20 per day. Also keep US\$ cash for relevant airport taxes and visas needed, optional activities and any additional accommodation before or after your tour.

- **Spending money** is best carried as cash in US dollars, Sterling or Euro which can then be transferred into local currency on arrival. Your guide can advise how and when you can change the rest of your money throughout the tour.
- **Currencies** are as follows: South Africa – Rand; Namibia – Namibian Dollar. Please note that Rand is legal tender in Namibia at the same rate of exchange as the Namibian Dollar.
- **ATM machines** are found in Windhoek and Cape Town. Please note they are sometimes unreliable (and therefore should not be relied upon).
- **Credit cards** can be used to pay for optional activities although charges may be may be high by western standards (+/- 5%).
- **Travellers cheques** can be difficult to cash but make suitable emergency funds.

We recommend you bring your spending money in several different ways (some cash, some t/cheques, some cards); your guide can best advise on what to use where.

LOCAL PAYMENT

A Local Payment (LP) is to be paid to your tour leader at the pre -departure meeting. The LP fund is administered by the tour leader in conjunction with the group and covers most meals, all game drives using our own vehicle, campsite fees and meals prepared at the truck (usually two or three per day). You can choose to pay either the Basic Local Payment at the beginning, and then pay for your excursions along the way, or else you may pay for everything up front in the Fully Inclusive Local Payment.

Payment must be made in **US\$ cash in clean, post-2001 edition notes**. Traveller's cheques and credit cards **cannot** be accepted as means of payment. The LP amounts set out in the brochure are estimates of local costs at the time of printing. It is subject to inflation, exchange rate changes and local price rises. These may vary from the amounts set out in the brochure or website and on rare occasion where there is a shortfall, passengers will be asked to contribute further. Conversely, where there is a surplus of LP funds at the end of the tour, it will be refunded equally amongst all passengers.

TIPPING

This is always a matter for your own individual discretion but as in many areas where tourism is an important contributor to the economy, it has become customary to give a small gratuity to local staff, including your tour leader and driver, at the end of a tour if services rendered have been to your satisfaction.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In order to give you maximum flexibility on tour we offer a number of optional activities on the tour. To help budget, approximate prices are listed below (in US\$ unless otherwise stated. subject to change and availability).

Activity	Price	Activity	Price
South Africa		Scenic flights	N\$2695
Orange River Canoeing	R200	Tandem skydive	N\$1900
Namibia		Dolphin Cruise	N\$480
Quad Biking	N\$500	Kayaking	N\$600
Sand Boarding	N\$250-N\$350		
Deep Sea Fishing	N\$850		

INSURANCE

It is a booking condition of Acacia that you have full travel insurance valid for the duration of your tour to cover you for medical emergency and repatriation to your home country. Your guide will ask you for a copy of this when you join the tour. It is also important that you leave a copy of your insurance with the person nominated as your emergency contact. We can recommend a respected, specialist travel insurance provider for this tour. Please contact Acacia for more information.

Country Information – SOUTH AFRICA

Facts

Capital:	Pretoria (official), Bloemfontein (judicial), and Cape Town (legislative)
Size:	1 219 090 sq km / 470 693 sq miles
Population:	44,344,136 (Sept. 05)
Groups:	African/Black, White (mainly of Afrikaner and British origin), Coloured, Indian/Asian
Languages:	English, Afrikaans, Ndebele, Xhosa, Zulu, Pedi, Sotho, Tswana, Swati, Venda, Tsonga (all 11 are official languages)
Local time:	GMT + 2
Seasons:	Western Cape: warm (September-April), cold and wet (May-August); East coast: humid all year; Northern provinces: wet (September-April), dry (May-August)
Currency:	1 South African Rand = 100 Cents
Telephone:	Country code 27, international access code 09
Electricity:	220 V / 230 V / 250 V / 50 Hz, the plug fits a 15A socket with three round pins

South Africa is a country rich in minerals, wildlife and scenery; a land of beauty with a complex social and political structure. Having by far the most developed and sophisticated economy on the continent, South Africa is essential to many of the neighbouring countries as an avenue for exports and as provider of electricity and high tech products. An excellent network of roads and an abundance of high quality camp sites makes travelling in and around South Africa an easy and rewarding experience.

Points of Interest

Cape Town

Founded in 1666 as a place where trading ships rounding the Cape of Good Hope could replenish supplies, Cape Town today is South Africa's tourist destination No.1. It is one of the most beautiful cities in the world with plenty of sights and outdoor activities. The natural beauty of the place is defined by mountains (especially the famous Table Mountain) and sea (and not only one, it is here the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans meet).

The 'Mother City' has also has one of the most diverse populations in Africa including descendants from Indonesian, Malay, French, Dutch, British & German settlers, the local Khoisan (Bushman & Hottentot) tribes and the Bantu tribes from the north. It is one of the most tolerant and relaxed cities in Africa.

Places of interest in and around Cape Town:

Table Mountain – Cape Town's trade mark towers 1086 metres above sea level and is accessible by cable car or by several trekking routes (Platteklip Gorge being the most commonly used)

The Castle – Cape Town's oldest remaining building

Bo-Kaap – the old Malay quarter is a predominately Muslim area coined by Malay slaves who were brought in by the Dutch.

Victoria & Albert (V&A) Waterfront – this complex of shops, restaurants and bars attracts over 20 million visitors every year; it also has a oceanarium where you can dive with sharks; there is also the adjacent (and still working) port of Cape Town.

Robben Island – 11 kilometres from the coast, this World Heritage Site features a former prison of Nelson Mandela.

Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens – situated at the eastern side of Table Mountain, these gardens contain a wide variety of mostly indigenous flora with the mountain as a backdrop; in summer concerts are held here every Sunday afternoon

Cape Peninsula – a day tour around the Cape Peninsula will lead you to Hout Bay Harbour with its Cape Fur Seal colony on Duiker Island, Boulders Beach with its jackass penguins and to the Cape Point Nature Reserve where the south-western most point of Africa is to be found

Winelands – the world-renowned wine region around Stellenbosch has some of the oldest and most beautiful wineries in South Africa. Visit the beautiful buildings and sample some excellent wines.

Country Information - NAMIBIA

Facts

Capital:	Windhoek
Size:	824 292 sq km / 318 261 sq miles
Population:	2,030,692 (Sept. 05)
Groups:	Ovambo, Kavango, Herero, Damara, Nama, Caprivian, San (Bushmen), Baster, Tswana (80%), Mixed + European (20%)
Languages:	English, Afrikaans, German, Ovambo, Herero, Kwangali, Nama/Damara, Lozi, Tswana
Local time:	GMT + 2
Seasons:	Dry (April-October), short rains (October-December), long rains (January-March)
Currency:	1 Namibian Dollar = 100 Cents also South African Rand
Telephone:	Country code 264 , international access code 00
Electricity:	220 V / 50 Hz, round pins with ground plug

Having the world's oldest desert, the highest sand dunes, and one of the most notorious coasts to shippers (the 'Skeleton Coast'), Namibia is one of the world's newest independent republics. Previously known as South West Africa, Namibia was a German protectorate up until WW1, when it came under the administration of South Africa. The German heritage is still evident in the architecture and place names (Luderitz, Swakopmund) and in the dress of the Herero tribe womenfolk, who still copy the dress of the 19th century German missionary wives. The country has large stocks of diamonds, copper, uranium, tin, silver and other minerals, and these, plus the more traditional stock raising and fishing underpin the economy. Namibia appears to the visitor huge and empty. The largely desert-like landscape offers stunning scenery. The Fish River Canyon in the south, Etosha National Park in the north and the dunes of the Namib-Naukluft desert in the middle are the main points of interest.

Points of Interest

Fish River Canyon

Fish River Canyon is the largest canyon in Africa -161 kilometres in length, 27 kilometres wide, with a drop from the rim of over 500 metres. The views from the many view points are spectacular. The Fish River itself does not flow every year but when it does, it appears suddenly and with force. During the winter months it is reduced to a few pools. There is a hiking trail along the bottom – some 86 kilometres long, it takes about 5 days to complete and ends in Ai-Ais (hot springs) but is only accessible at certain times of the year.

Etosha National Park

Etosha is one of the largest game parks in Africa, at some 22,270 sq kilometres in area surrounding a central salt pan. The local Ovambo people named Etosha – as 'huge white area' or 'place of dry water'. In the dry season the Pan is an inhospitable lifeless place where salt crystals reflect the sun to form mirages. During the rains however, the Pan changes completely: birds, especially flamingos, flock to it and the land blooms. There are 144 mammal species in the park including the 'Big 5' and game viewing at one of the waterholes can be both relaxing and enjoyable.

Namib-Naukluft Park

Namibia's largest National Park - at 23000 sq kilometres, the fourth largest nature conservation area in the world - lies within the Namib Desert which stretches from the Orange River in the south to the Kunene River in the north (border of Angola). The Nama people call it, appropriately : 'Namib' – meaning 'vast'. Within its borders, the landscape varies from mountain, canyon and gorges to desert plains, lagoons and sand dunes. The main areas are Sossusvlei, the lagoon at Sandwich harbour, and the Naukluft Park.

Sossusvlei + Sesriem canyon

Sossusvlei is a dusty clay pan overlooked by hundreds of towering sand dunes up to 300 metres high. The dunes vary from pale apricot to vivid reds and bright orange. The most famous one is undoubtedly Dune 45. It is best to climb it in the early hours and watch the sunrise from the top.

Sesriem canyon is a small canyon which used to be an important water source for the early explorers and settlers. They used to lower buckets into the Tsauchab River with six thongs from where the Afrikaans name 'Ses Riem' derives. You can take a walk in the canyon where you will find a variety of bird, insects and lizards.

Swakopmund

Namibia's second largest town wedged between the desert and the ocean is redolent of its German colonial past. Swakopmund has a relaxed atmosphere with pleasant promenades, palm trees and gardens and there is plenty to do here. Walk around town – see the pier, lighthouse, the former train station or the Ethnology and Natural History Museum.

Swakopmund has also become Namibia's adventure capital and there is an array of activities on offer: sand boarding, quadbiking, camel rides, offroad driving, sky diving and desert horse riding.

Windhoek

Namibia's capital Windhoek (meaning 'windy corner' in Afrikaans) is an interesting mix of modern city and colonial past. It sits at 1650 metres above sea level and is Namibia's largest city with 15,000 inhabitants. The German influence is still visible and German widely spoken. Local highlights are Christuskirche (German Lutheran church), the Alte Feste (old fort) and State Museum, and the Tintenpalast (ink palace) the parliament. If you happen to be there in October or April, you may experience German culture in form of the Oktoberfest (beer festival) or the Windhoek Carnival.

ACACIA ON THE ROAD

FOOTBALL'S COMING TO AFRICA

In line with the 2010 Football World Cup, in Cape Town, Acacia's keeping its eye on the ball. We've got together with the charity Footballs for Fun to spread some goodwill and love for the beautiful game across the continent. In 2008 all our trucks will carry footballs which can be bought and donated to children in the local towns along our route. The footballs are a perfect ice breaker and playing a game with locals is a great way to make friendships despite language differences. And all the profit (at least £2 from each ball) goes straight back into Africa, helping support a selection of AIDS charities and children's homes. Make a difference, get kicking and buy a ball when you're next on one of our trucks.



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We strongly believe that you get the most out of a journey by respecting the culture and people of the places you visit. On our tours we try to travel in a way that benefits the communities we pass through and minimises negative impact on the environment. This can be from ensuring the campsites we use are clean when we leave and dressing respectfully in conservative areas to getting involved with local charity projects. We ask that you are open to this when you travel with us. Being proactive in responsible travel helps develop cross-cultural understanding and friendships with the local people, and will greatly enhance your experience in Africa.

PHOTOS & STORIES SEARCH

If you've ever thought you can take better pictures than the brochures or have a great travel story and want to see yourself in print, then we're looking for you. If you've captured a great moment on tour, whether it's of the wildlife, local people, landscape or life on the road why not enter our monthly photographic competition starting in 2009. Not only do we give away a monthly prize, you may also see your photos published in a future brochure or on our website. We are also on the lookout for stories of life on the road, the funny, exhilarating, moving or simply unforgettable things you did on tour. We publish the best stories on the Tales from the Road section of our website.

Send your photos or stories to acaciaontheroad@googlemail.com

Photos should be in digital format & good resolution (max 6 pics per person) and labelled with the location of where the photos were taken. Meanwhile if you have a story or anecdote about your tour (up to 400 words) it needn't be word perfect, we'd love to hear about it.

Legalties: You, the photographer/author, retain copyright of all images & words submitted but we reserve the right to use of them for Acacia brochures, promotions & advertising.

For information on our Acacia Small Group Safaris, Adventure Tours, Comfort Class Safaris, Short Breaks & City Stays, Voluntours, Dive Tours, New Horizons and Access Tours or to contact us please visit www.acacia-africa.com

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