

INFORMATION PACK FOR NAMIBIA

1. Visa Requirements

Visas are not required for members of the EEC or USA. However you will need a valid passport with at least six months validity. As visa requirements can change from time to time please check with the Namibian High Commission, 6 Chandos Street, London W1G 9LU, tel: 020 7636 6244.

If travelling on to South Africa you **MUST** have 2 blank pages in your passport to enter the country.

2. Tickets, check-in

a) Tickets

Confirmation of your flight reservation will already have been sent to you or will be sent shortly. Your full ticket will be sent to you when we have received your final payment. This must be made not later than 8 weeks before departure. For sponsored challenges payment is required 10 weeks before departure.

b) Airport check-in

Check-in before departure is normally 3 hours ahead of flight time. We do not generally send a representative to UK airports; but you will be met at your destination by a G & M agent. For British Airways flights departure is from Heathrow Terminal 5. For Air Namibia flights departure is from Gatwick North Terminal and luggage allowance is 20 kgs. Occasionally if your flight to Namibia has a change of aircraft enroute you may travel out from one terminal and return to another. Always double check this to avoid confusion with car parking, meetings, etc. Please note on Business class flights the luggage allowance is increased by 10kgs on all above flights but remember, if taking internal flights, your luggage allowance will be considerably less.

d) Departure Taxes

Departure taxes have varied enormously in recent years. Your international tax will appear on your invoice but there may be local departure taxes to pay on the ground.

e) Baggage

On light aircraft within Namibia the luggage limit is strictly 12kgs. Luggage must be carried in a soft sided bag as hard suitcases will not fit into the aircraft. Please observe these restrictions as they are solely for your safety. If you turn up with very heavy luggage your luggage may not be allowed on the flight or you may be made to pay for an extra seat if available. If on safari with us the camps and lodges will provide complimentary shampoo, soap, towels etc. A daily laundry service is also available often free or at a nominal charge. This makes travelling light easier. However please note desert regions offer limited laundry service because of water conservation.

f) Comfort on the journey

Sitting still for long periods frequently leads to swollen ankles and sometimes muscle cramps in the legs can occur. Try not to sit down for too long. Rotate your ankles at regular intervals to help avoid swelling. Wear loose fitting clothing and have something warm to wear, as the air-conditioning can be very cold. When it is convenient, get out of your seat and move around the cabin, to avoid traveller's thrombosis. Whilst on the flight, if you have a headache it is probably due to dehydration, so drink plenty of fluids (non alcoholic). Set your watch to your destination time as soon as possible before take-off and mentally try to do the 'right' things at the right time. On arrival, try your hardest to fit in with the new time and resist the temptation of going to sleep too early or getting up too early. We can request special meals with the airline and alert them to any allergies you may have but we must advise that this is on a request basis and cannot be guaranteed. Please let us know as soon as possible, if you have not already, if you require a vegetarian meal as we need to inform the airline at the latest one week before departure.

3. Health and immunization requirements

At the time of writing the recommended immunisations are - Tetanus and Polio (if not vaccinated within the last 10 years), Typhoid, Hepatitis A and meningitis. If travelling for a long period you should discuss a rabies vaccination with your GP. Good protection against malaria is strongly recommended and should be started at least 2 weeks before leaving the country. Most importantly - insect bite precautions eg. insect repellent containing DEET (Autan or Jungle Formula or Pure DEET). However medical requirements are subject to change and it is advisable to check with your local travel clinic before travelling.

It must be remembered that, despite a good infrastructure, Namibia is a third-world country. Strict observance of all medical requirements are a must and we strongly recommend that you obtain a medical kit to carry with you. It is also very important to remember not to swim in rivers or lakes unless you have been advised by your guide that it is safe to do so. Otherwise general hygiene is merely common sense i.e. wash hands before preparing food and eating, avoid ice in drinks etc. Countrywide medical services are limited, but Windhoek has good hospital facilities. However visitors should carry an adequate supply of all medicines they may need with them.

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4. Climate

Skeleton Coast temperatures are comfortable all year round. The most arid climate is found in the central Namib which enjoys typically clear and windy weather. In the desert areas summer daytime temperatures can reach over 40c but can fall to below freezing at night. Coastal areas often experience fog. In the winter the Namib region is warmed by east winds which reach their peak between June and August. On the central plateau the climate is very pleasant during winter months because of the low humidity and gentle breeze.

Short rains fall between October and December the main rains fall between January to April.

5. Currency

Currency is the Namibian dollar which is interchangeable with the South African Rand. Most visitors use SA rand which may be reconverted to sterling. Namibian dollars cannot be converted to sterling. The use of credit cards will be limited to lodges and restaurants. However with a visa card you can draw cash at Barclays Bank automatic teller machines.

6. Tipping

On safari your guide will expect a tip of approximately US\$3-\$5 per person per day.

Many of the smaller lodges will have a box for tipping kitchen staff. We recommend about \$3 per person per day into this kitty to be divided between the staff. Do remember that tipping is discretionary and dependent on the service you receive. You may decide to tip more or less than the above guidelines.

Most hotels, restaurants and taxi drivers will expect a 10% tip. However check that service has not been added to restaurant bills first.

7. General

Language

The official language is English but it is a first language for only about 2% of the population. Afrikaans and German are more widely used. There are many different tribes in Namibia and each tribe has their own language.

Time

Namibia is 2 hours ahead of GMT.

Energy

Electricity is 220 volts with both round and rectangular 3 prong plugs in use. Occasionally two prong plugs are used. A universal adaptor is recommended. In tented lodges and camps solar power and small generators are used. Therefore don't take electrical appliances with you unless staying in hotels

8. Personal possessions

If you are on an organised tour you are very unlikely to have to worry about theft. However if you are spending time in Windhoek or any of the larger cities you must be sensible. This means using the hotel safe for valuables, not going out alone at night, not taking out a large wad of cash to pay for a small item and only using taxis ordered from your hotel.

If you do not have a hotel safe keep passport, airline tickets etc. in a separate pouch worn next to your skin.

9. Chronological check list

- a) Check passport has at least 6 months validity
- b) Vaccinations, anti-malarial and personal medicines
- c) Double check packing list and check thoroughly for passport, tickets, travellers cheques etc.
- d) Driving licence

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10. Information for Self Drive itineraries

You will need a clean UK driving licence. Additional drivers will be charged for at N\$ 50.00 per additional driver, per rental. You will be required to leave a deposit when collecting your car. Do remember that driving is on the left hand side in Namibia. The speed limit on tarred roads is 120km per hour however we advise a slower speed unless you are well acquainted with local traffic conditions. On other roads the suggested speed is 60-80km per hour. When driving on gravel/dirt/sand roads please keep to the left and watch out for the sandy borders along the road. If you hit these borders at high speed you may overturn your vehicle. In dusty conditions it is advisable to switch on your lights to be more easily observed by other road users. We recommend you do **not** drive at night. However if this is absolutely essential for any reason then drive with your headlights on to enable you to see any animals on or near the road.

The wearing of seat belts is compulsory.

Your hire vehicle will come with maps or a GPS system. However you may wish to hire a second spare wheel. You can request this directly or ask us to pre-book this for you. Our car rental includes breakdown service due to mechanical failure. If you breakdown because of negligence the service will still be offered but must be paid for.

Mobile Phone Hire Many guests on a self drive hire a mobile phone in case of a break down. Whilst these can prove very useful there are certain places where it is not possible to use a cell phone. The itineraries we recommend are some of the most popular itineraries, being used by many tourists and the longest days' driving is approx. 5 hours. In the unlikely case of a breakdown the longest one might be stranded might be about 2 hours but it is unlikely to be that long. **However we strongly suggest you plan your itinerary to leave early morning and avoid driving at night when there is unlikely to be any passing traffic.**

One way rentals: There is usually a drop off charge charged per kilometer.

Although covered by CDW, the renter is still responsible for 100% of the responsibility if caused by negligence or accidents on gravel roads, or where no other vehicle, animal or object is involved. Payment of Theft Loss Waiver covers 100% of the applicable responsibility for loss of the vehicle and/or any part thereof as a result of theft.

ADDITIONAL COLLISION DAMAGE WAIVER (ACDW)

Payment of Collision Damage Waiver covers 100% of the applicable responsibility for damage to the vehicle and/or part thereof as a result of collision. The renter is still liable for the full damage to the vehicle if caused by negligence, road conditions not suitable for the vehicle, areas disallowed by Budget unless written permission obtained, by an unauthorised driver or where the renter is in breach of any provisions of the rental agreement. Payment of Theft Loss Waiver covers 100% of the applicable responsibility for loss of the vehicle and / or any part thereof as a result of theft

National Park Fees

Please also note that if taking a self-drive itinerary you will be required to pay park fees entering the National Parks. These vary but the following is a rough guide:

<u>Etosha National Park</u>	Adults N\$30, vehicle N\$10 and N\$1 children under 16
<u>Waterberg Plateau Park</u>	Adults N\$10, Vehicle N\$10, and N\$1 children under 16
<u>Skeleton Coast Park</u>	Adults N\$20, vehicle N\$10 and N\$1 children under 16
<u>Cape Cross Seal Reserve</u>	Adults N\$10, vehicle N\$10, and N\$1 children under 16
<u>Namib Naukluft Park</u>	Adults N\$10, vehicles N\$10 and N\$1 children under 16
<u>Fish River Canyon</u>	Adults N\$10, vehicle N\$10 and N\$1 children under 16

NB Only 4x4 vehicles are allowed into Sossusvlei. If hiring a saloon car you will have to take a 4x4 excursion into the dunes. This can be arranged from your accommodation.

Quad biking is available from Swakopmund and may be booked locally or in advance.

SUGGESTED KIT LIST FOR SAFARIS

Whilst on safari it is advisable to wear neutral colours in the day - avoiding black and white

If you are intending to walk a lot on safari, good walking boots are also recommended with light shoes for evening.

- 1) Long trousers for evenings
- 2) Light cotton shirts with long sleeves
- 3) T-shirts
- 4) Shorts
- 5) Light, loose underwear, cotton socks
- 6) Sunglasses and wide brimmed hat
- 7) Toiletries to include sun block with a high protection factor
- 8) Warm jacket, hat and gloves for early morning game drives (esp. June-August)
- 9) Camera equipment with plenty of film.
- 10) Lightweight binoculars
- 11) If a contact lens wearer we recommend you bring along a pair of glasses as the dust can irritate. Possibly also eye drops. Tissues and wet wipes
- 12) A small flashlight with spare battery and spare bulb (only for mobile camping safaris)
- 13) Light rain gear for summer months (late November to early April)
- 14) A good wildlife and bird guide makes game viewing more interesting and exciting
- 15) **Medical kit** to include - pain killers, adhesive dressings, insect repellent containing DEET, antiseptic spray, anti-diarrhoea tablets, bandage, and any other medication that you normally use. Very useful are rehydration salts such as Dioralyte. Take one during international flights to reduce the effects of air travel. If you expect to be travelling in remote places for a long time it may also be advisable to buy an emergency kit which contains a variety of sterilised and sealed items of equipment such as syringes, needles, suture materials that are normally used by a doctor or nurse in a medical emergency.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

We cannot stress enough the need for adequate precautions against malaria.

Malaria can kill and there are particularly nasty strains of malaria in Africa. The rule is: do not get bitten; but take anti-malarial tablets just in case. Use a potent mosquito repellent, such as DEET, and apply it to clothes and arm bands; wear long sleeves and trousers at dawn and dusk.

Carry a roll-on repellent in your day-pack and apply it just before landing if arriving in the evening.