



## Travel-Information Namibia

### TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

The Namibian Government require all visitors to Namibia to have at **least two full blank pages** in their passports on arrival into the country and require that the passport be **valid for at least six months beyond the intended departure date from Namibia**. Proof of onward travel documents are also required. Please check your visa requirements. Terra Nova cannot be held responsible for refusal of entry into a country for any reason whatsoever.

### CURRENCY

The currency in Namibia is the Namibian Dollar (NAM\$), which is fixed to and therefore equivalent to the South African Rand (ZAR). The Namibian Dollar and South African Rand are the only legal tender in Namibia and can be used freely to purchase goods and services. **The Namibian Dollar, however, is not legal tender in South Africa.**

Traveller's cheques and foreign currency can be exchanged at any of the commercial banks, which are well represented throughout the country. Visitors may bring any amount of foreign currency into the country. Further information and assistance can be obtained from any commercial bank in Namibia. Wilderness Safaris' camps in Namibia also accept US dollars, Euro and British Pounds as payment for curios, drinks, etc.

### CREDIT CARDS

International Visa and MasterCard credit cards are generally accepted throughout Namibia. Holders of other cards are advised to clarify with a commercial bank whether their card is acceptable in Namibia. Credit cards are not accepted at some fuel filling stations.

### BANKS

Banks are open Mondays to Fridays from 09h00-15h30 and on Saturdays from 09h00-11h00.

### ATM/Bank Teller Safety Tips:

ATM fraud in particular escalated amongst tourists in the big cities - herewith some safety tips as recommended by First National Bank :

- Be vigilant whenever approaching an ATM. If you feel unsafe, rather come back at another time or use an alternative machine.
- Never let a stranger assist you at an ATM and shield the keypad and screen with your body, especially when entering your PIN.
- If you suspects that the machine has been tampered with, walk away from it and report your suspicion to the security guard.
- Once again, please note that FNB will never ask for confidential details like PIN codes.

## **PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

The dates of certain public holidays change from year to year. – refer below. If a public holiday falls on a Sunday, then the Monday is also declared a public holiday. During this time, most shops are closed or only some grocery shops are open for limited hours. We recommend you avoid staying in the cities over long weekends or public holidays.

01 January New Year's Day

21 March Independence Day

Varies Good Friday

Varies Easter Monday

01 May Worker's Day

04 May Cassinga Day

25 May Ascension Day and Africa Day

26 August Heroes' Day

10 December International Human Rights Day

25 December Christmas Day

26 December Boxing Day

## **SHOPPING**

In the major centres, such as Windhoek and Swakopmund, many shops specialize in attractive local products such as diamonds, semi-precious stones, curios of all types including dolls dressed in the traditional Herero style (made by the local Herero woman), hand-carved wooden objects, beautifully fashioned jewellery, leather shoes, karosses rugs and popular woven Swakara garments. Shops are closed on Saturday afternoons and Sunday afternoons, as well as all public holidays, with only a select few open on a Sunday morning.

## **TAX**

All goods and services in Namibia are priced to include value added tax (VAT) of 15%.

Visitors to Namibia may reclaim VAT on their purchases at the Hosea Kutako International Airport, Eros Airport and Walvis Bay Airport. Further enquiries can be made through the Ministry of Finance -

Telephone: + (264) (61) 209 2405, Fax: + (264) (61) 209 2001

A 30% luxury items tax is subtracted from the cost of such luxury items as jewellery or Swakara garments when tourists present their passport and air ticket at the time of purchase.

## **DUTY FREE**

Please note that there is no duty free shopping available at Johannesburg International Airport on flights to Namibia. Please make sure any duty free purchases of film, alcohol, etc. are made before arriving in southern Africa.

## **EXCESS LUGGAGE**

If your itinerary includes light aircraft sectors and you need to bring more luggage than the stipulated allowance, please consult us for details on the excess luggage options that are available at an additional cost.

If you do not require the excess luggage to accompany you on your trip and you arrive/depart via Windhoek, we can make storage arrangements at our Windhoek office. The luggage can then be returned to you either at your hotel in Windhoek (if you are staying overnight) or by baggage transfer to the airport. This service, which is normally the most economical method of handling excess luggage in Namibia, is charged for at a nominal rate and you are advised to pre-book it through your agent prior to travel.

## **LAUNDRY**

Laundry can be done at most camps. At some camps washing of clothes is done by hand and here because of cultural reasons, both men's and women's 'smalls' are not washed by staff in the camp laundry service. At other camps washing machines and different cultural norms mean that this is not a problem and all laundry can be handled by the laundry service.

## **POWER AT SOME CAMPS**

Some camps are situated in remote areas and have to generate their own electricity. Camps therefore use generators which run for about 6 – 7 hours per day (when guests are out on activities) or solar panels. In most camps, these generators charge a bank of batteries known as an inverter system which provides 220v power in each tented room for lighting and ceiling fans. Serious digital photographers should bring a laptop computer for downloading of images. Laptops need to be able to accept 220V power or have an adaptor to convert the 220V to 110V. Guests should bring: a spare battery for use while the other is being charged, a power converter/adaptor if applicable, cables for computers or cameras, at least 4 x 2GB flash cards.) In major cities all electrical appliances run on 220/240v. Outlets are round 3-pin, 15 amp plugs.

## **DRINKS POLICY**

The drinks policies in camps, lodges or hotels differ from each other. Please refer to your itinerary for specific details.

## **CHECK-IN/OUT TIMES**

Hotels in the Namibia towns and cities generally have a check in time of 14h00 and a check out time of 10h00, though many lodges and hotels will try to be accommodating and flexible if they are not too fully booked the preceding night. Otherwise we recommend you book a day room in advance to secure a longer stay in your room.

## **DRIVING**

In Namibia one drives on the left hand side of the road. The speed limit is usually 60 kph in built up areas, 70 kph on gravel roads and 120 kph on major tar roads. Safety belts must be used at all times. The driver or any authorized co-driver must produce a valid unendorsed drivers license at time of rental. The driver's license needs to be in English with photo. If not, an International drivers license will be required.

**Self- Drive Itineraries:** Whilst conducting your own self-drive itinerary, there are many factors beyond our control. Terra Nova will therefore not accept any liability, responsibility or claim for compensation, for any incident or accident involving you (the client), your vehicle and/or any third party.

## **LANGUAGE**

The official language is English. German and Afrikaans are also widely used and there are numerous African languages and dialects which fall into two main groups, namely Bantu and Khoisan. German is spoken widely in Swakopmund.

## **TIME**

Namibia operates on daylight saving time as follows:

**Summer:** From the first Sunday in September to the first Sunday in April - two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)

**Winter:** From the first Sunday in April to the first Sunday in September - one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)

## **CLIMATE**

The below is a rough guideline to an understanding of Namibia weather patterns. This is by no means the last word. Patterns can change and rains may be later or earlier from year to year. Data on Windhoek and Swakopmund minimum and maximum temperatures and also monthly rainfall follow. These towns are a good general indication of the weather patterns in the regions discussed below.

The climate is typically semi-desert with hot days and cool nights. The cold Benguela Current keeps the coast cool and free of rain most of the year; Namibia averages about 300 days of sunshine a year. The rainy season lasts from October to April. The rest of the year is dry and cloudless.

Humidity is generally very low in most parts, but can reach as high as 80% in the extreme north during summer. The average rainfall is 50mm along the coast to 350mm in the central interior and 700mm in the Caprivi. Guests should pack warm and cold clothing for any visit to Namibia. Those guests self driving must exercise caution when crossing riverbeds and camping during the summer months as flash floods can occur from the sporadic rains.

It is perfectly safe to travel by road at this time, though a 4x4 or vehicle with high ground clearance is recommended. The rest of the year is dry and cloudless.

Midsummer temperatures may rise to over 40°C (104°F). Winter days are warm but dawn temperatures may drop to freezing. Along the coast it is cool with low rainfall and fog prevails from late afternoon until mid-morning

**January to March** is the peak of summer and the rainy months. Days are normally warm with afternoon cloud build up and possible showers although these are usually short-lived. Game viewing after good rains is generally not that good at the wildlife destinations. Northern Namibia and the Caprivi usually receive most of Namibia's annual rainfall.

During **April to May** morning temperatures start to drop and the evenings are cooler soon after sunset. Rainfall is limited. As rain water pans dry out game viewing can improve slowly.

The early part of **June** is very cold in the mornings and evenings, occasionally even dropping below zero, and winter lasts until **August**. Days are sunny and pleasant however, with windy spells towards the end of this period. Warm clothing is recommend for the evenings and early mornings. Game viewing is excellent in the dry winter months in certain destinations.

Spring starts in **September** and the days are much warmer with the occasional cool evening and morning. Game viewing is excellent during this time. Trees begin to come into leaf.

From **October** we experience very warm sunny days with warm evenings. Some rains are experienced sporadically, though larger showers can be expected usually only around **December**. Wildlife sightings is affected depending how early and serve the rains have started. **December** can be among the hottest months of the year, averaging often 35Deg Cel to 40 Deg Cel in the shade.

Along the coast it is year round cool with low rainfall and fog prevails from late afternoon until midmorning. Due to the close approximation of our Skeleton Coast Camp to the Atlantic Ocean, as well as Swakopmund's location on the coast, the cool breeze off the coast can cool the days down quite a bit, so warm clothes are recommended for the evenings and early mornings if you stay at these destinations.

#### **RECOMMENDED READING**

We recommend the following books specific to the Namibian region. A further list of recommended books is contained in our pre tour information.

- This is Namibia** - Gerald Cubitt & Peter Joyce
- Birds of Namibia, a Photographic Guide** - Ian & Jackie Sinclair
- Skeleton Coast** - Ami Schoeman
- Etosha Visual Souvenir** - Darryl Balfour
- Namibia: The Beautiful Land** - David Bristow
- Namibia: African Adventurers Guide** - Olivier and Olivier
- Globetrotter Travel Map and Travel Guide to Namibia**
- Waterberg, Namib & Damaraland Flora** - Craven
- Desert Adventure: In Search of Wilderness in Namibia and Botswana** – Paul Augustinus
- Namibia – the Bradt Travel Guide** – Chris McIntyre

**Everyone should bring their own pair of BINOCULARS in order to get the most out of the safari**

#### **Terra Nova Tours**

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