



THE
DESERT ELEPHANT SAFARI
NAMIBIA

SWAKOPMUND - DAMARALAND

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

DAY 1:

Arrive in Walvis Bay, overnight at the Bay View close to Swakopmund.

DAY 2:

Drive to Ozondjou Camp in southern Damaraland, overnight Ozondjou

DAYS 3-5:

Mobile safari in search of desert elephant herds along the Ugab and/or Huab River systems
Fly-camping in the desert from fully serviced camp

DAY 6:

Return to Ozondjou

DAY 7:

Return to Swakopmund and overnight at the Bay View.

DAY 8:

Departure flight from Walvis Bay.

The legendary desert elephants of Namibia have beguiled conservationist and scientists for years. The safari explores this sense of wonder about them, how they adapt and survive in such harsh conditions. As we explore the beautiful rugged wild-lands of Damaraland in search of close up encounters with the herds, we camp wild in the desert and spend time with passionate local conservationists along the way.



DETAILED ITINERARY FOLLOWS ...

PLEASE NOTE

The duration, destinations and activities on our privately guided safari are based on our style and preference for delivering memorable safari encounters. However, flexibility is assured in tailoring your ultimate safari, and we trust that the itinerary provides you with insight into our differences and unique approach. Please feel free to contact our office to discuss variations, or design an itinerary of your choice.

NAMIBIA



Located on the Atlantic seaboard of south-western Africa, the vast, arid and incredibly remote wild-lands of Namibia are some of the most spectacular wilderness tapestries on the continent. Secluded valleys, ephemeral riverbeds and extinct craters support a staggering array of incredibly adapted and fascinating life. The Namib desert, the oldest on earth extends along the coastline to the legendary Skeleton Coast to the alluring northern boundary of the Cunene River. A desert of rivers, majestic mountains, springs and valleys form the interior. And then there are the desert elephants, a uniquely adapted population that occur in Namibia only. Explore more about these fascinating habitats, wildlife, history and alluring remoteness on our Namibian safari!

DAMARALAND

Damaraland refers to the region between the Ugab and Hoanib Rivers; both mysterious desert waterways that support incredible life in the harsh landscapes. A 100 million year old extinct volcano, the iconic Brandberg which is the highest point in Namibia dominates the skyline. Many folk ask what Damaraland is like: "rolling hills, gravel plains, secret springs, dinosaur footprints and a remoteness as old as time itself, is the best way to describe it".



ALAN McSMITH

For over 30 years Alan has lived and worked as a wilderness guide and tracker exploring the wild-lands of six African countries. An Alan McSmith Safari is a meaningful journey of unsurpassed discovery as the pulse of Africa beats wildest off the beaten track, around a remote desert campfire or out on foot. These safaris also explore real time conservation issues and our commitment to low impact safaris, sustainable logistics and dignified interactions with people, animals and the environment is non-negotiable

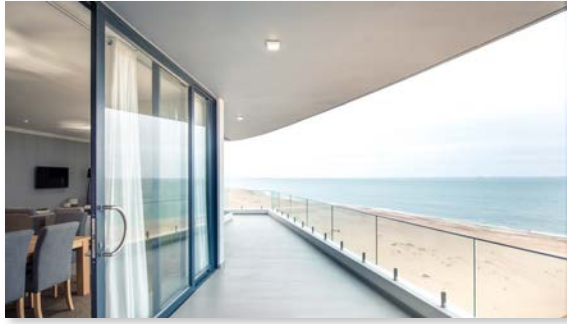


For Alan, wilderness is no longer just a place, its a way of life.

www.alanmcsmith.com

Day 1: Arrival at Walvis Bay, Overnight at The Bay View

The safari begins on arrival at Walvis Bay Airport about 50kms south of Swakopmund. Walvis Bay (meaning "Whale Bay") was first traversed by Portuguese mariners in 1498, but only occupied by the British colonial empire in the late 19th century as a valuable natural harbour. A road transfer up the coast



is a dramatic introduction to the Namib Desert, the oldest on earth and the only true African desert other than the Sahara.

We arrive at the Bay View resort, short distance from Swakopmund and check in. The resort and modern facilities are stunningly located on the Atlantic and is an ideal first stop to launch the Namibian safari. Comfortable suites are all sea-facing. Dinner and overnight at Bay View.

Day 2: Ozondjou Trails Camp, Damaraland

After breakfast we depart by road and bypass Swakopmund which is located on mouth of the Swakop River and was established as a natural harbour during German occupation (Namibia was then known as German South West Africa) in 1892. This history is very much evident in colourful architecture, which lends a unique charm to the environs.

We carry on and drive north along the coast toward Henties Bay. We turn inland and drive eastwards world the old mining town of Uis. The Brandberg Mountain, a 100 million year old Volvo and Namibia's highest peak dominates the skyline to the north as we drive around it. The terrain changes from coastal dunes to rocky gravel plains, with stunning vistas and look-outs. Its possible to find signs of the Ugab elephant herds as we approach the camp

Day 2: Ozondjou Trails Camp, Damaraland

After breakfast, we depart Swakopmund by road and drive north along the coast toward Henties Bay. We turn inland and drive eastwards world the old mining town of Uis. The Brandberg Mountain, a 100 million year old Volvo and Namibia's highest peak dominates the skyline to the north as we drive around it. The terrain changes from coastal dunes to rocky gravel plains, with stunning vistas and look-outs. Its possible to find signs of the Ugab elephant herds as we approach the camp



We arrive at Ozonjou Camp (approx 6 hours from Swakopmund) located on a rocky cliff overlooking the Ugab River, Its a wonderful located to base our desert elephant expedition and we settle in and enjoy the dramatic landscapes.

A short afternoon walk is optional and we return to the camp for dinner and overnight.

Ozondjou

Ozondjou (aptly meaning 'elephants' in the local Herero language) offers us a delightful tented a-la Damaraland base camp. Large en-suite Meru tents are dotted around a plain overlooking the rolling valleys below. The main tented lounge and dining area is perched on a rock-face overlooking the Ugab River, the southern boundary of Damaraland.

Namibian desert safari life is unique; spectacular locations and sensational secluded camps are epitomise the spirit of bedouin-style travel and exploration. The desert landscapes are harsh and exposed, this is not a normal lush green African safari. But makes all the sense in the world! Sensational solitude, silence and serenity define Damaraland and Ozondjou.

The camp is operated in a joint venture benefitting the communities of the neighbouring Sorris Sorris conservancy.



Days 3 to 5: Desert elephant expedition in the region

After a hearty breakfast we depart on our desert elephant expedition in our open Toyota land cruiser. We spend 3 nights of fly-camping along the Ugab River in search of the resident herds here. A support vehicle heads out with us and our safari team will prepare a mobile tented fly-camp along the way. We will be fully self-contained and carry all supplies, food and drinks for the following three days!

The elephants will be confined in the green ana-tree islands Ugab, Huab Rivers or Aba-Huab rivers making use of any seasonal surface water and natural springs. We have complete flexibility to search the springs and riverbeds, or possibly enjoy walks to vantage points over the riverbeds, and sit with the elephants for unlimited periods.

Other game, although sparse, includes duiker, Hartman's zebra, oryx, kudu, jackal, leopard and possibly brown hyena. Birds are excellent with notable desert specials such as Ludwig's bustard and double-banded courser.



Lunch picnic breaks and siestas are enjoyed in the Ugab as we follow the elephant movements. A campsite for each night is selected according to the elephant locations and accessibility.

The fly-camp is a simple, classic desert mobile safari affair. Two-man canvas dome tents with sewn in groundsheet are time and tested, each containing a bedroll with linens, duvets and pillows. An open air bucket shower and long-drop loo complete the facilities. Meals are prepared on an open fire beneath the vast Namibian sky.

The legendary desert elephants of Damaraland

The habitat of Namibia supports isolated herds of uniquely desert-adapted elephants, quite unlike any other in southern-Africa. These remarkable animals survive brutal conditions with specifically adapted behaviour and habits. They are somewhat smaller than their savanna counterparts and with larger feet they are able to traverse up rocky gorges in search of spring water. They certainly challenge our contemporary understanding of elephant biology, habits and endurance. Our fly-camping expedition allows us to access the ephemeral riverbeds of the Ugab and/or Huab Rivers in search of the herds. We discover more about their fascinating ecology and conservation challenges. Please visit Alan's blog <https://alanmcsmith.weebly.com/unjovu.html>, for some stories of these remarkable animals.

Our project partners: EHRA (Elephant Human Relations Aid)



Our project partners in Damaraland are an established volunteer organisation that operate elephant conservation and hands-on ground work initiatives. They have been active in the area for over 10 years and in the process have come to know the habits of the desert elephants incredibly well, with knowledge of the seasonal, and even daily movements. Consequently, the elephants in the area are accustomed to the landcruisers and close up encounters are possible.

Day 6: Return to Ozondjou

After a leisurely morning following up any elephant activity, we wind down the elephant expedition and slowly return back to Ozondjou. The arrival time is unclear but the idea would be to have some down-time and relax. Lunch at Ozondjou.

The afternoon could be spent visiting the EHRA base camp close by operation and discovering more about the challenges of desert elephant conservation.

Dinner and overnight at Ozondjou

PS* it is possible to add on a flying safari toward the Hoanib region or even up to Serra Cafema on the Cunene River. Please feel free to make contact with us to discuss how it would work.

Day 7: Return drive to Swakopmund and arrive at the Bay View

After breakfast we return by road and arrive at the Bay View for our final night.

Day 8: Departure flight from Walvis Bay

After breakfast we depart Swakopmund by road and return to Walvis Bay Airport for ongoing travel plans. Time permitting, we could do a short tour of Swakopmund taking in the pier and museum.

SAFARI ENDS
TSAMAYA SENTLE !
(Bon Voyage)

What makes the safari unique?

1. A combination of secluded and intimate safari camps and unique destinations.
2. The unique desert elephants of Namibia - one of Africa's true conservation icons
3. Discover more about Voortrekker, the late legendary desert elephant bull.
4. Spend time with specialists research unravelling the elephant history and biology
5. Camp in totally secluded destinations.
6. Explore remote rivers: The Ugab and Huab, visiting isolated springs.
7. Visit Tsiseb Gorge and the Brandberg, the highest point in Namibia.
8. Explore the Skeleton Coast and Namib Desert, the oldest desert on earth.
9. Other supremely adapted mammals such as Hartmans's Zebra and Oryx.
10. Stay at Swakopmund and enjoy the town's rich architecture.
11. A personally crafted adventure led by Alan McSmith, Africa's leading private safari and elephant specialist guide.

Optional modules that could be included or added on:

1. An exploratory safari further north into the Kaokoveld (in search of desert lions) is possible on day 8. This could be extended further with a fly-in safari up to Serra Cafema on the Cunene River is possible on day 8.
2. A visit to the Namib-Naukluft National Park, and Dead Vlei based from Swakopmund could be added.
3. An overland safari to Etosha is possible to add on.
4. An extended overland to Kaudom to visit Bushman communities is possible.