

Namibia Prelude

Entrance Requirements

Most Namibia programs will require entry through Johannesburg, South Africa; a popular gateway city for international airlines. Entrance formalities below reflect the requirements of both South Africa and Namibia.

Passports

- A valid passport is required for entry into South Africa and Namibia.
- The passport must be valid for **6 months** after your scheduled return.
- You will need two blank pages per country for entry and exit stamps in the visa section of your passport. "Two blank pages" is defined as the front and back of a page.
- If you **need a new passport** to be issued **act now**: It can take up to 6 weeks to receive your new passport. It is no longer possible to purchase additional pages for an existing passport. If you travel frequently, please consider purchasing a 52-page passport. For more information contact the National Passport Information Center toll free at 877-487-2778 or visit <http://www.travel.state.gov>.

Passengers traveling to Namibia through South Africa must comply with South Africa's entrance formalities for children under the age of 18 which will require additional documentation such as a copy of an unabridged birth certificate reflecting the particulars of both parents. Beware that securing an unabridged birth certificate can take from six to eight weeks.

In the case of one parent traveling with a child, he or she must additionally show consent in the form of an affidavit from the other parent registered on the child's birth certificate, a court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights or legal guardianship in respect of the child, if he or she is the parent or legal guardian of the child or where applicable, a death certificate of the other parent registered as a parent of the child on the birth certificate. For additional details, please consult the nearest South African embassy or consulate. www.saembassy.com

***Advisory:** When you travel, we recommend that you make two copies of your first passport page; keep one copy at home in the unlikely event that your passport is lost, and take one copy along to use as an ID, should you leave your passport behind in the hotel safe deposit box. Air Tickets must be in the same name that appears on your passport so make certain that you are registered on your Classic Escapes program in the same exact way.*

Visa

Visas for South Africa and Namibia are not required for U.S. Citizens for visits of 90 days or less.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

You will be visiting a country with a rich and diverse cultural history, but is on a different continent than we are accustomed to. As a result, you may be exposed to some pathogens that you would not ordinarily encounter in the U.S. There are some preventative steps that you can take to help ensure that you do not bring back to your home more than your luggage.

Inoculations

There are no compulsory vaccinations required for entry into South Africa or Namibia for those traveling from the United States. However, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) suggest that you be up to date on routine vaccines such as:

- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Polio
- Influenza

The CDC recommends these vaccines for MOST travelers. They are NOT mandatory:

- Hepatitis A & B
- Typhoid

Additional Information

The CDC issues regular travel health notices on their website:

- wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/southafrica
- wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/Namibia

Yellow Fever

There is no risk of Yellow Fever in South Africa or Namibia.

Note: If you are traveling from a country with risk of yellow fever, the governments of South Africa and Namibia both require proof of vaccination.

Please consult your physician, local health authority or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at **877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747)** or via their web site at www.cdc.gov/travel for any additional health precautions. For outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization's web site at <http://www.who.int/en/>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/topics/en/>.

Water & Food

Food, even in remote tented camps, is carefully prepared, and the local produce is refreshing. Generally, water throughout Southern Africa is safe to drink directly from the tap. In remote areas water is usually boiled or bottled and is safe to drink but not from the tap. It is very important that you drink plenty of water especially during the warmer months; at least 4 to 6 pints is recommended to limit the effects of dehydration. This excludes tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages, which act as diuretics and actually contributes to dehydration.

Physical Conditioning

To enjoy your trip to the fullest, you should be in good physical and mental health. Your safari will include some strenuous activity, such as hikes in high temperatures over soft sand or rocky and uneven plains. Activities include game drives, walking safaris and rhino tracking on foot. Further, you need to be able to climb into the safari vehicles and bear in mind that rough terrain may bounce you around so you should be prepared.

Travel Insurance & Medical Evacuation

We recommend that you consider a Trip Cancellation policy that also includes medical coverage and evacuation against unforeseen circumstances.

Climatic Conditions

Altitude

Southern Africa offers generally low altitudes, with the exception of Johannesburg. However, much of Namibia is located at an altitude higher than visitors may be used to. At certain heights, the phenomenon known as altitude sickness can occur. There are no specific factors such as age, gender, or physical condition that correlates with susceptibility to altitude sickness. Some people get it and some people don't and some people may experience it one visit and not the next time. Symptoms include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, lack of concentration, nausea, swelling of ankles, and in extreme cases, hallucination. Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, heavy food and strenuous physical activity. Citrus fruits and bananas may diminish the effects. If you do not feel well, take it easy. Put your feet up, drink plenty of clean (boiled or bottled) water, and take a siesta after lunch. People with respiratory problems may be affected by the air pollution of the larger cities, although the local government has taken recent steps to curb emissions.

Altitude Chart: (Feet)

Namibia	
Damaraland	4,202
Etosha National Park	3,585 - 4,291
Sossusvlei	4,419
Swakopmund	6
Windhoek	5,606

Temperature

With 300 sunny days per year, Namibia is definitely a sunny country. Rainfalls can be expected as heavy thunderstorms exclusively in the summer months of November to February. The dry riverbeds then become rapid torrents for a short while and the burnt-out land turns green within a few days. From April to June the temperature during the day lies at about 80°F and the sky is always blue, yet the nights are cool enough for a good sleep. The dry winter months (July to September) are a good time to travel the desert country. Daytime temperatures rarely sink below 70°F. However, on the interior plateau and in the Namib Desert night frosts can certainly occur. The summer months are very hot. One can cope with the summer temperatures in Windhoek quite well because of the altitude of the city. However, the Namib Desert should be avoided in summer when temperatures often rise above 110 °F. The same applies to the tropically humid north-eastern part of Namibia.

At Sossusvlei, the days are commonly hot and sunny. In summer, daytime temperatures can rise to 95°F and night temperatures drop to around 58°F - 65°F. The coastal region is cool and dry throughout the year. Summer is from November to April.

Average Temperature (°F)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Damaraland	65/ 88	64/8 6	63/8 5	58/8 3	51/8 0	45/7 5	44/7 5	49/8 0	57/8 7	62/9 0	64/8 9	65/8 8
Etosha National Park	69/ 94	68/9 2	68/9 1	61/8 9	52/8 5	44/8 0	43/8 0	49/8 7	54/9 5	63/9 8	67/9 1	69/9 6

Sossusvlei	62/ 93	65/9 4	65/9 5	59/9 1	52/8 6	44/8 1	43/8 0	44/8 3	49/8 9	54/9 1	57/9 3	59/9 3
Swakopmund	61/ 83	63/8 5	64/8 8	63/9 0	57/8 7	49/8 3	48/8 3	49/8 2	52/8 2	55/8 2	57/8 3	59/8 3
Windhoek	64/ 87	63/8 4	60/8 2	55/7 8	49/7 3	44/6 9	44/7 0	48/7 5	54/8 1	58/8 5	61/8 6	63/8 8
Average Rainfall (inches):												
Damaraland	8.6	7.7	6.1	1.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3	1.3	3.1	4.3
Etosha National Park	2.1	1.6	1.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.1	1.4
Sossusvlei	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0
Swakopmund	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Windhoek	3.1	3.2	3.1	1.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.5	1.1	1.6

Recommended Packing List

Clothing

- Long-sleeved shirts, slacks and socks to protect you from insect bites and sunburn
- Shorts/skirts
- Long trousers/slacks
- Good quality sunglasses (preferably polarized).
- Sun hat with a brim
- Good walking shoes (running/tennis shoes are fine)
- Sandals or rubber flip/flops for poolside
- Swimsuit with light cover-up garment
- Lightweight jersey for cooler mornings
- Light raingear for summer months (late November to April)
- A set of smart casual evening wear

Toiletries

- Personal toiletries (basic amenities supplied by many establishments)
- Moisturizing cream & suntan lotion
- Insect repellent e.g. Tabard, Rid, Jungle Juice, OFF, etc.
- Basic medical kit (aspirins, plasters, Imodium, antiseptic cream, and Anti-histamine cream, etc.)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Packaged wet tissues ("Wash & Dry" "Wet Ones")
- If you wear contact lenses, we recommend that you bring along a pair of glasses in case you get irritation
- Small sewing kit

Other Things To Pack

- Visas, tickets, passports, money, etc.
- Backpack to use during the day as you tour
- A small flashlight with extra batteries
- Adapter plugs & converters for electrical appliances
- A tiny calculator for estimating cost while shopping
- Binoculars

- Reading material
- Reading glasses
- Journal with pen

Camera Equipment

- Camera, memory cards and chargers
- Lenses, cleaning fluid, lens tissue
- Waterproof/dustproof bags/cover for your camera

Tips on Clothing

Three changes of clothes at the minimum is recommended and should be lightweight, breathable, and versatile. Pack items that will layer well together as the mornings will be cooler and you will want to be able to shed them as the day heats up. Supplex pants and chinos travel better than jeans, which take forever to dry. Pale earth colors such as tan or olive are best for viewing wildlife and birds, but camouflage clothes are illegal in many African countries.

Your primary footwear should be closed toe and comfortable. Open toes can “open” you up to insect bites, stubbed toes, thorns, et cetera. Flip flops should be limited to poolside, the beach or a shower stall. Take care of your feet and they will take care of you, and that includes having socks which can prevent blisters and insect bites.

Power & Connectivity

Most lodges and camps are situated in remote areas and have to generate their own electricity. Each camp has a generator that runs for about six hours per day (three hours in the morning and three in the afternoon when guests are out on activities). These generators charge batteries located at each tented room or supply power to each guest lodge room. Typically, power will be available when you are in the lodge or camp, except for overnight. Therefore, it is imperative that you have your own flashlight handy. Electrical plug outlets will be available in guest rooms.

At a Glance

Voltage	220 - 240Volts / 50Hz
South Africa Adapter Type M	
Namibia Adapter Type C & M	

Cell Phones

Many travelers bring along their cell phones, not only for connecting to the internet and making phone calls, but for the easy to use camera functions. If you plan on using it as a phone keep in mind North American phones may not in South Africa or Namibia, particularly in remote areas. Check with your service provider to determine if you can purchase a plan, or if your phone can be “unlocked”. If it can, you should be able to purchase inexpensive prepaid SIM cards.

Advisory: As most people travel to “get away from it all,” some limitations on the use of these phones when on tour need to be set. We suggest the following guidelines on the use of cell phones:

1. *Keep the ring tone at a low volume to avoid disturbing other guests.*
2. *Use your phone in the privacy of your room and not any of the common areas: dining room, bar/lounge area, or on any of the vehicles.*
3. *Use your phone for outgoing calls and to check messages only. Incoming calls, and the loud ringing that ensues, should be curtailed.*

Time

The United States observes Daylight Savings Time (DST) from the 2nd Sunday of March until the 1st Sunday of November. Namibia is in the Central African Time Zone (CAT) and does not observe Day Light Savings Time (DST). When it is noon time in Namibia it will be 7:00pm EST or 6:00pm DST in New York.

EQUIPMENT

Cameras

From smartphones to SLR cameras, digital photography has now made it simpler than ever to preserve the memories experienced during once-in-a-lifetime adventures. Most digital cameras use either an SD (secure digital) card or a CF (compact flash) card that comes in a variety of storage capacities ranging from 2–128 GB (gigabytes). Depending on the megapixel size of your particular camera and the format in which you choose to shoot your images, an 8GB card can hold as few as 200 images shot in RAW format (normally shot by pros and serious amateurs) to just over 2000 images shot as JPEGs (most common format shot by enthusiasts). For those cameras with megapixels higher than 12, it is recommended that at least 4-8GB cards are used and that you should always bring more than one card in case of card failure or corruption (rare but possible). If you are bringing a laptop, external USB hard drives of 1–2 TB (terabytes) are compact, relatively inexpensive, and an excellent way to store tens of thousands of images. In addition to ensuring that you bring the charger and adaptor/converter for the location to where you are traveling, it is highly recommended that you bring at least one spare, fully charged battery for your camera. There may be locations where dependable power is not available for charging and spare batteries may prove to be invaluable and help ensure that you don't miss any photo opportunities.

Video

Charging facilities for video AND digital cameras should be available in every camp or lodge on the safari, as long as you have a standard charger that will plug into 220 volts. Please bring along enough batteries to last you at least three days of filming.

Binoculars

There will be an opportunity to observe some of the natural treasures of Namibia. Binoculars will add immeasurably to your viewing enjoyment. Preferably, binoculars should be at least 8 power (8x) and have a wide field of view to allow you to quickly find whatever it is you want to see. Some binoculars have the added advantage of "gathering light," making objects brighter in dim morning and evening conditions. This light-gathering capability is determined by a measurement called the "exit pupil", which is calculated by dividing the diameter of the front (objective) lens in millimeters by the power (8x, for example). These two measurements are commonly designated on binoculars as a measurement such as 8x42, which translates to 8 power with a 42 mm objective lens. The exit pupil in this instance is $42/8$, or 5.25. Since the human eye can process light delivered by an exit pupil of about 4.0, these binoculars will appear bright even in dim light.

Some very small binoculars are relatively inexpensive, such as 8x21. With a very narrow field of view (usually about 400 feet at 1,000 yards) and an exit pupil of only $21/8 = 2.6$, these binoculars are designed for viewing stationary objects in bright light, such as at the opera, and are poorly designed for looking at wildlife. You will be far happier with binoculars designated in the range of 8x40 to 10x50.

Flashlights

As the grounds of many lodges and camps are unfenced, it is essential that you bring a small flashlight as you may encounter wild animals at night. You should also bring a spare globe as well as batteries as they may be unobtainable en route.

MONEY MATTERS

Currency

The currency in Namibia is the Namibian Dollar (NAD) and is divided into 100 cents. Coins are issued in denominations of 5c, 10c, 50c, N\$1 and N\$5. Notes come in denominations of N\$10, N\$50 and N\$100. The Namibian dollar is fixed to and equals the South African Rand on a one-to-one basis.

The Namibian Dollar and South African Rand are the only legal tender in Namibia and can be used freely to purchase goods and services in the country. *The Namibian Dollar, however, is not legal tender in South Africa.* 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.

Credit Cards/ATMs

Some major credit cards are accepted such as MasterCard and Visa, but American Express and Diners Club are often **not** accepted. Please note that Discover Card is basically unknown in Southern Africa. Be sure to notify your bank and credit card company when and where you will be traveling and ask what fees, if any will apply.

Note: As there is a potential for fraud anywhere in the world, we highly recommend that you do not use your debit cards overseas and exercise caution when using your credit cards. Do not let the card out of your sight and if a vendor tries to take the card into a back room, ask for your card back immediately and refrain from using it. Keep your valuables on you, including passports and credit cards, or locked in the safety deposit boxes when provided.

Shopping:

In the major centers, 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 (these are made by Herero woman), hand-carved wooden objects, beautifully fashioned jewelry, shoes made of Kudu leather, karosses (rugs made from the pelts of wild animals), and popular SWAKARA garments.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Etiquette

The people of Namibia are welcoming and open, they are known for being very kind to foreigners. It is common courtesy to greet people in the street and ask how they are. If you need to ask someone for help or directions, you should first say hello and ask how they are doing, do not just ask for assistance.

Respecting Wildlife

- The wild animals are not like those found in theme parks – they are **not** tame.
- Many safari camps are unfenced and dangerous animals can (and do!) wander through the camps. Many of the animals and reptiles you will see are potentially dangerous. Attacks by wild animals are rare. However, there are no guarantees that such incidents will not occur.
- Please listen to the lodge and camp staff and guides. The safety precautions need to be taken seriously, and strictly adhered to.
- Don't go wandering off on your own without a guide – even to your rooms. After retiring to your rooms at night, don't leave them.
- Observe animals silently and with a minimum of disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on game drives can frighten the animals away.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Don't imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, pound the vehicle or throw objects.
- Please respect your driver-guide's judgment about proximity to lions, cheetahs and leopards. Don't insist that he take the vehicle closer so you can get a better photograph. A vehicle driven too close can hinder a hunt or cause animals to abandon a hard-earned meal.
- At Classic Escapes, we respect wildlife and are committed to the preservation of the national parks. Off-road driving is strictly prohibited. Please do not encourage your driver to drive off-road where it is not allowed simply to get a good photo, as the damage to the environment might be irreparable.
- Litter tossed on the ground can choke or poison animals and birds and is unsightly.
- Never attempt to feed or approach any wild animal on foot. This is especially important near lodges or in campsites where animals may have become accustomed to human visitors.
- Refrain from smoking on game drives. The dry African bush ignites very easily, and a flash fire can kill animals.