



Abercrombie & Kent

EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

NAMIBIA

COUNTRY INFORMATION, FACTS & ADVICE

Namibia

Namibia, officially the Republic of Namibia, is a country in southern Africa whose western border is the Atlantic Ocean. It shares land borders with Angola and Zambia to the north, Botswana to the east and South Africa to the south and east. Although it does not border with Zimbabwe, less than 200 meters of riverbed (essentially the Zambia/Botswana border) separates them at their closest points. It gained independence from South Africa on 21 March 1990, following the Namibian War of Independence. Its capital and largest city is Windhoek. Namibia is a member state of the United Nations (UN), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU), and the Commonwealth of Nations.

The dry lands of Namibia were inhabited since early times by Bushmen, Damara, and Namaqua, and since about the 14th century AD by immigrating Bantu who came with the Bantu expansion. It became a German Imperial protectorate in 1884 and remained a German colony until the end of World War I. In 1920, the League of Nations mandated the country to South Africa, which imposed its laws and, from 1948, its apartheid policy.

Uprisings and demands by African leaders led the UN to assume direct responsibility over the territory. It recognized the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as the official representative of the Namibian people in 1973. Namibia, however, remained under South African administration during this time. Following internal violence, South Africa installed an interim administration in Namibia in 1985. Namibia obtained full independence from South Africa in 1990, with the exception of Walvis Bay and the Penguin Islands, which remained under South African control until 1994.

Namibia has a population of 2.1 million people and a stable multi-party parliamentary democracy. Agriculture, herding, tourism and the mining industry – including mining for gem diamonds, uranium, gold, silver, and base metals – form the backbone of Namibia's economy. Given the presence of the arid Namib Desert, it is one of the least densely populated countries in the world.

Namibia offers unparalleled attractions. From the red dunes of the **Namib Desert** with its unique fauna and flora to the wild **Skeleton Coast** - the largest ship graveyard - and the game rich **Etosha National Park** which is also a big five area. Namibia is a photographer's paradise. Safaris in Namibia offer a rich cultural and wildlife experience - enjoy wide open spaces nestled between the vast desert landscape and the Atlantic Ocean. Principal sights include **Damaraland**, with its fascinating geological features and some of the most extensive rock paintings and engravings in the world. **Sossusvlei** boasts ochre coloured sand dunes, some reaching heights of 360 metres – the highest on earth.

Getting into Namibia

Please check with your nearest local embassy or high commission for the most up to date information before travelling. Passport holders are responsible for obtaining the required documentation applicable for entry.

Visitors may be required to obtain a Visa depending on nationality. Please note visas are not available on arrival.

- Nationalities that require a visa: <https://mha.gov.na/web/mhai/countries-exempted-from-visa-requirements>
- Apply for a Visa: <https://mha.gov.na/web/mhai/visas-immigration-control-act-act-no-7>

All visitors are required to carry a passport that is valid for six months beyond the intended length of stay. Passports should have at least 3 blank pages next to each other per entry.

Travelling with children

Regulations aimed at improving the safety of children travelling in and out of Namibia and Botswana have been implemented. All children under the age of 18 will require an unabridged birth certificate together with a valid passport when travelling to or from any of the above-mentioned countries, as well as travellers in transit with a transit visa. The following documents will be required when travelling:

Child and both parents

- An unabridged birth certificate (UBC)
- A valid passport for the child

Child and one parent

Parent must produce

- An unabridged birth certificate (UBC)
- A valid passport for the child
- A court order (where applicable) / death certificate (of any deceased parent reflected on the UBC) / affidavit confirming the absent parent has given permission for the child to travel.
- Certified copies of both parents' ID / passport.

Child and guardian

Guardian must produce

- An unabridged birth certificate (UBC)
- A valid passport for the child
- A court order (where applicable) / death certificate (of deceased parent/s reflected on the UBC) / affidavit confirming the parents have given permission for the child to travel.
- Copies of parents / guardian ID / passport.
- Contact details of parents / guardian

Child unaccompanied

- An unabridged birth certificate
- A valid passport
- A court order (where applicable) / death certificate (of deceased parent/s reflected on the UBC) / affidavit from both parents or legal guardian confirming permission to travel.
- A letter from the person who will receive the child including their full contact details and residential address and a certified copy of their ID / passport.
- Contact details of parents / guardian.

Keeping Healthy in Namibia

It is important that you check with a qualified health professional for the most current information concerning your travel itinerary and personal health history.

Anti-Malarial precautions are an absolute necessity when visiting the game parks in the region. It is important that you check with a qualified health professional for the most current information concerning your travel itinerary and personal health history.

The sun in the southern hemisphere is extremely strong - do wear an effective sunscreen and hat during the summer. It is advisable to avoid the noonday sun. Recommended SPF is 30.

Throughout Southern Africa it is safe to eat all foods and drink tap water in cities and towns. Purified water in flasks or bottled water is provided at game lodges throughout the region. It is also suggested that you bring a smaller traveller's kit with remedies for minor stomach ailments or motion sickness. You should include an adequate supply (in your hand luggage) of any prescribed medication you may require while traveling.

Travellers with physical disabilities and those who require frequent or on-going medical attention should advise A&K of their health situation at the time of booking (or at the time such a situation occurs should this be after the reservation is made).

We do recommend that you take out comprehensive travel insurance to cover you in the event of a medical emergency.

Tipping

Tipping is not compulsory. You are travelling on an independent itinerary and the cost of your program does not include gratuities. Tipping is a very personal matter and should only be considered when the staff have gone above and beyond for you. Should you feel you would like to acknowledge their service, please consider the following as a rough guide, per day.

Type of Service	Number of guests travelling					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tour Director	15	30	45	60	75	90
Driver / Guide (Half day)	8	16	24	32	40	48
Driver / Guide (Full day)	12	24	36	48	60	72
Hotel Porters	5	10	15	20	25	30
Professional Guide	15	30	45	60	75	90
Ranger	15	30	45	60	75	90
Tracker	8	16	24	32	40	48
Lodge staff	12	24	36	48	60	72

Please note: Currency is in USD

The above tipping guidelines are recommendations only and are not compulsory. Please use your own discretion in tipping, based on quality of service.

Restaurants

It is customary to add 10% to the bill in restaurants, if the service has been satisfactory.

Taxis

Taxi drivers do not expect to be tipped but they appreciate the fare being rounded up.

Porterage

If you are being transferred by an Abercrombie & Kent representative from the airport to a hotel, then porterage and tipping of porters is already included. Porterage and tipping of porters for transfers from one hotel to another is as above.

Blue Train and Rovos Rail

Tip at the end of your journey USD 15 per person per day. These gratuities may be placed in a central box or an envelope, which will be provided.

Talk the talk

English	Deutsch (German)
Welcome	Willkommen
Hello	Hallo, Guten Tag
How are you?	Wie gehts?
I'm fine thanks, and you?	Mir geht es gud, danke und Ihnen?
Good morning	Guten Morgen
Good afternoon	Guten Nachmittag, Guten Tag
Good evening	Guten Abend
Good night	Gute Nacht
Goodbye	Auf Wiedersehen (frm), Tschuss (inf)
Good luck	Alles Gute!
How much is this?	Wieviel kostet das?
Thank you	Danke, Danke schön
Please	Bitte

Weather

Winter (May - September)

Temperatures range in the interior from 18C to 25C during the day. Below freezing and frost are common at night.

Summer (October - April)

Average temperatures range from 20C to 35C during the day and temperatures above 40C are often recorded in the extreme north and south of the country. At the coast the temperature is generally much cooler, ranging from 15C to 25C, and fog is common.

Early rains may occur from October onwards and the main rainy season falls between January and April. During this time flash floods are common.

What to Pack

The Namibian Government has announced a ban on plastic bags in all its game parks and reserves. Namibia Wildlife Resorts (NWR) announced that the ban is in immediate effect and covers all National Parks and Reserves in the country. Plastic bags will be confiscated upon entry into any Namibian National Park or Reserve.

Comfortable clothing is suitable throughout the year. It is certainly not necessary to bring a separate change of clothing for day and evening, and it is recommended that you keep luggage to a minimum for your own comfort and ease of transport, especially if you are using light aircraft transfers. The most practical items to pack for safari are:

- Blouses with long sleeves (even in summer, they will protect you from the sun and the mosquitos)
- Cotton t-shirts and tops
- Shorts for the day. Jeans or chinos for evenings and cooler days
- Fleece, sweater or warm jacket for game drives
- Comfortable walking shoes (hiking boots are not necessary)
- Sun block, sunglasses and hat
- Camera
- Swimwear, as most hotels/lodges have swimming pools
- A small alarm clock, small torch and bird guidebook

Layers are most practical for the fluctuating day/night temperatures of Namibia. It is advisable that your clothing be as neutral as possible in the bush (beige and khaki is ideal). If you wear prescription glasses or contact lenses, we recommend that you bring an extra pair of glasses or a copy of the prescription.

Please note that all luxury hotels and most game lodges offer a same-day laundry service (some at additional charges). This is a good reason not to pack too many clothes!

Please take note of the below baggage restrictions at OR Tambo International Airport

- Only regular-shaped bags will be allowed to be checked in. This means that the bags must have at least one flat surface to be accepted
- Round or irregular-shaped bags will not be allowed
- Bags with long straps will not be allowed

Passengers who try to check in bags that don't conform to these rules will have the option of having their baggage wrapped with one flat side at airport-approved baggage wrapping stations.

Religion & Etiquette

More than 90% of Namibian citizens identify themselves as Christian. Other religions practiced in the country include Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and the Baha'i Faith. Practitioners of these religious groups are predominantly immigrants, descendants of immigrants, or recent converts. They reside primarily in urban areas.

Foreign missionary groups operate in the country. The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respects this right in practice.

Money

Currency: Both Namibian dollars and South African Rand are equal in value and are accepted as legal tender anywhere in Namibia. When departing Namibia we recommend that any cash you take with you is in South African Rand as Namibian dollars are generally not easily exchanged outside of Namibia.

Banking hours:

Weekdays: 09h00 – 15h30

Saturdays: 09h00 – 11h00

Sundays & public holidays: Closed

Credit Cards: Visa and Master Card are usually accepted throughout Southern Africa, but American Express and Diners Club are not as widely accepted.

Traveller's cheques:

Traveller's cheques can be exchanged at most bureaux de change and banks (with passport identification). Suppliers of services are less likely to accept traveller's cheques.

Tax & Customs:

Value Added Tax (VAT) in Namibia is 15% all round. Bona fide tourists to Namibia are exempt from paying sales duty or excise duty on luxury items such as jewellery or Swakara (fur) garments.

Time Zone

Namibia follows West Africa Time, or WAT, the time zone used in west-central Africa. The zone is one hour ahead of UTC, which makes it the same as Central European Time when CET is not observing daylight savings.

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 (these are made by Herero woman), hand-carved wooden objects, beautifully fashioned jewellery, shoes made of Kudu leather, *karosses* (rugs made from the pelts of wild animals) and popular Swakara garments.

As a courtesy to our clients, our office will, if requested, help refer you to a shop that carries the merchandise you are looking for. This is not intended as A&K's endorsement of the shop nor responsibility for merchandise (or shipping arrangements) purchased from the shop.

Local Food & Drink

Namibian cuisine is influenced by two primary cultural strands:

- Cookery practised by indigenous people of Namibia such as the Himba, Herero and San groups
- Settler cookery introduced during the colonial period by Germans, Afrikaners and the British

In the pre-colonial period indigenous cuisine was characterised by the use of a very wide range of fruits, nuts, bulbs, leaves and other products gathered from wild plants and by the hunting of wild game. The domestication of cattle in the region about two thousand years ago by Khoisan groups enabled the use of milk products and the availability of meat. However, during the colonial period the seizure of communal land in Namibia helped to discourage traditional agriculture and reduced the extent of land available to black people.

German influence on white Namibian cookery remains very strong. One example of German settler cuisine is *Wiener schnitzel*. The German brewing tradition continued in colonial German South West Africa, with German lager beers including Hansa and Windhoek lagers still brewed in the country for domestic consumption and export.