



SADDLETRAVEL.COM

Damara Elephant Safari

Weight limit: 85kg

Nearest airport: Windhoek

11 days/10 nights/8 days riding



Prepare yourself for an extraordinary adventure in Namibia, a country teeming with breathtaking natural beauty! Imagine exploring Damaraland, a wild and untamed region where dramatic landscapes burst with vibrant hues. Embark on an exhilarating safari journey from Twyfelfontein to the Skeleton Coast, where every twist and turn brings new excitement. This is no ordinary ride—get ready for awe-inspiring

encounters with elephants, rhinos, and possibly even lions! Designed for experienced riders seeking their next adrenaline rush, this epic horse riding safari is a true test of skill and endurance. Are you ready to take on the challenge of a lifetime?

The Riding

Expect to ride 20 – 50 km per day at all paces over rough desert terrain.

From Twyfelfontein to the Skeleton Coast, the sheer remoteness of this challenging horse riding safari makes it unsuitable for inexperienced riders since encounters with elephant, rhino and even lion are possible. The terrain is very varied and you will ride at all places. Although fast, the horses are extremely responsive, enthusiastic and easy and comfortable to ride at speed.

Level of riding and fitness

This is one of the most adventurous trails we offer and is only suitable for intermediate or advanced riders with a good level of current fitness. You must be able to mount your horse from the ground unaided, and must feel completely at ease riding at all paces and over uneven terrain. It is important to be secure and balanced in the saddle and capable of riding up to 50kms a day, often at speed. On the trail you will be responsible for grooming, checking over and tacking up your own horse.

We also recommend that any rider wishing to join this ride spends a regular amount of time in the saddle before this trip to be ready physically. The average time in the saddle on this trail is 6 hours per day.

Heavier riders can be taken by arrangement with a supplement for an extra horse. Additional horses are required for riders weighing over 85kg in riding gear.

Guides & group size

Your guides have been running these remote horse riding safaris for almost 30 years and are knowledgeable, attentive and experienced. They have travelled across these lands many times so you'll be in safe hands.

Group size 5-12

Horses & Tack

Horses at this destination are a real mix and include Arab, Haflinger, Lippizzaner, Trakehner, and even the famous wild horses of the Namib desert. They range in height from 14.2-16hh, are fast,

fit and sure footed. Raised on rough terrain, all of them make kind and reliable companions for the trail. These horses live free as a herd in the bush when they are not on safari, each horse generally working no more than six safaris each season. This keeps them interested in the job and in good form, both mentally and physically. The horses are mainly ridden in skirted endurance saddles, mostly in snaffle bridles and on a long rein. They are well-schooled, responsive and experienced in the desert.

Accommodation & dining

On the first and last night of the ride you'll stay in luxury lodges, usually with swimming pools. If you do not want to share, you can request a single room at the beginning or end of the trail subject to availability and a supplementary charge.

Most guests choose to sleep out under the glorious canopy of desert stars during the ride - a very special experience. Large dome tents can be provided if required but why not enjoy the spectacular view of the milky way!.

Camp beds are supplied with a bedroll consisting of a canvas bag containing an insulating mattress, down duvet and pillow. You are welcome to add a fleece liner if you feel you might get cold but extra blankets are available on request. Hot 'bucket showers' are available at all camps. Overnight camps are usually pitched at sunset followed by a typical Namibian meal cooked over an open fire.

Breakfast is usually porridge or cereal, eggs, coffee or tea and a hot dish. At lunch you'll meet up with the supply trucks and either a hot lunch is served or sandwiches/wraps are enjoyed under a shady tree. Dinner is a delight of typical Namibian fare; wild game, free-range beef or karoo mutton served as braai (grilled over an open fire) or potjie (pot casserole) with vegetables and a dessert.

The menu is suitable for vegetarians but it is important to inform us of dietary requirements when booking – we will endeavour to accommodate your needs but please keep in mind that you will be in extremely remote areas making it difficult to cater to some complex dietary issues. Tea, coffee and juice are always available in camp with a fully stocked bar available in the evenings.

Itinerary

Day 1

Welcome to Namibia!

A shuttle service will collect you from Windhoek International Airport (Hosea Kutako) to your first overnight in Windhoek (your name will be on a welcome board). Meet your fellow riders

and host/riding guide Andrew Gillies for sundowners and dinner at River Crossing Lodge. Andrew will give you a thorough briefing about your adventure.

Day 2

Day two starts with an early breakfast and then the exciting journey north (approximately 7 hour transit including a stop on the way for lunch) to our camp in the Aba Huab river.

In the afternoon we visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Twyfelfontein with its 5000 year-old petroglyphs. Elephant sometimes walk through camp at night....light sleepers be warned.

Day 3-6

With the rising sun at our back, we begin our westward journey to the distant Atlantic. In these ephemeral river systems, the cycles of rainfall dictate the seasonal movement of game which is not concentrated, but we can encounter elephants, rhino, oryx, springbok, and other desert-adapted game.

Here huge glacial valleys, impressive tableland mountains exhumed by erosion, folds and fractures resulting from cataclysmic eruptions present a well preserved snapshot of a land of great antiquity.

From the Huab we cross the mountains to the Ugab river valley, staying overnight at Save The Rhino's campsite on the banks of the river.

Day 7-10

Leaving the river valley's we now cross the vastness of the Coastal plains with the striking massive of the Brandberg (burning mountain) behind us now. Here good going allow for some fast-paced riding as we approach the dramatic Messum Caldera, the eroded remains of a massive collapsed volcano.

Our last ride takes us across striking hyper-arid desert plains to the ocean at last - the spectacularly formidable Skeleton Coast, apparently so called for the wrecked hulks of stranded ships which dot this coastline. The cold upwelling Benguela current results in some diverse weather conditions from hot desert easterlies to cold south Atlantic westerlies and fog - a place of extremes! See blog on fog deserts

We overnight in the small coastal town of Henties Bay in a wonderful private house with the most spectacular view over the Atlantic Ocean.

Day 11

Early breakfast and transfer to Windhoek (just over 5-hour commute) arriving around 13:00 - in time for departure flights from Windhoek International Airport after 15:00



Price includes:

- 2 nights lodge accommodation
- 8 nights camping accommodation
- 8 days of riding
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Dinners
- All drinks while on the ride
- Return transfers from/to Windhoek airport at set times
- Local transfers during the ride
- Luggage transportation

- A visit to the World Heritage site of Twyfelfontein petroglyphs

Price excludes:

- Flights
- Travel insurance
- Drinks in lodges (first and last nights)
- Additional transfers (for example if flights are delayed)

Single Supplement available at an extra charge price TBA for 2026

Flights & Airport transfers

Do not book flights until you have received the Booking confirmation email from saddletravel.com.

Please plan your flights to/from as follows:

On the first day of your holiday your flight should arrive at Windhoek by 6pm

On the last day of your holiday your flight should depart Windhoek after 3pm

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What to bring

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your helmet in your hand luggage, so should your luggage not make it to the destination you'll still be able to ride.

- ☐ Lightweight riding hat
- ☐ A wide-brimmed sun hat with strap or baseball cap

- ☐ Lightweight riding boots
- ☐ Comfortable shoes for camp
- ☐ Sunglasses on a string
- ☐ Bandana/buff to help protect from sun and dust
- ☐ Comfortable clothes to ride in including jodhpurs/long trousers and chaps, long sleeved cotton shirts, jersey or long sleeved fleece, sleeveless vest with pockets
- ☐ Lightweight waterproof/windbreaker jacket. Layering is key as temperatures fluctuate during the day
- ☐ Warm clothes for evenings including a woolly hat, socks and gloves
- ☐ Shorts, t-shirts, sarong, flip-flops or comfortable clothes to wear around camp and showers
- ☐ Sunblock, lip balm
- ☐ Towel
- ☐ Mosquito repellent.
- ☐ Plasters to protect areas of skin that might chafe
- ☐ Antihistamine and antiseptic cream
- ☐ Head torch
- ☐ Camera and spare batteries
- ☐ Although you'll be provided with a warm down-filled bedroll, you may want to add your own fleece or silk lining if you get cold
- ☐ Soft luggage, well labeled and split in 2 bags if over 15 kgs

Climate

The best time to visit Namibia is from April to September when the days are sunny and warm (25 Celsius) with cool, even cold evenings. At other times the desert is too hot to make riding practical during the day. Temperatures begin to climb mid to late September with the rainy season beginning in November, peaking in January and ending in March/April.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip. Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Namibia for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/namibia/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements. Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

The currency is Namibia dollars, equal to and linked to South African Rand and can be used interchangeably. There is a bureau de change at the Airport, and both Visa and MasterCard can be used in most places in cities and larger towns. There will be occasions when money is needed i.e. for drinks in Swakopmund. Money is best changed at the airport as there are not many opportunities while on the trail.

Tipping is at your discretion. If you do decide to tip it is best given to the guide. They can then arrange distribution amongst all camp staff, as there are many behind the scenes staff.

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms saddletravel.com

Holidays are confirmed with 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before the start date. If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50%

30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If the ride operator is closed or you are unable to travel due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.



SADDLETRAVEL.COM

Contact details

+44 1497 888 228 WhatsApp
trails@saddletravel.com

CN: 05411320

<https://saddletravel.com>