

Namibia Travel Information

Population, Climate & Time Zone

Namibia has 3 distinct natural regions: the wide belt of the Namib Desert, the Central Plateau and the Kalahari Desert. The climate is typical of a semi desert country, with hot days and cool nights. Summer is from October to March. Winter is from May to September.

Namibia is on the same time zone as South Africa (GMT + 2) during the summer period but reverts to one hour behind South Africa for the winter months.

Language

English is the official language of Namibia. German and Afrikaans are also very widely spoken.

Currency

The unit of currency is the Namibia Dollar (N\$) which has the same value as the SA Rand. The South African Rand is accepted as legal tender in Namibia. Travellers cheques are accepted almost everywhere. Those in foreign currencies must be cashed at banks. In general, credit cards are accepted by most hotels as well as in rest camps. No credit cards are accepted at petrol stations.

Tipping

Many restaurants include a service charge on the bill. However, if you wish to tip, 10% is acceptable.

Safety

Keep a note of your traveller's cheques, passport and air ticket numbers in a separate place in case you should lose them. Having a record of these numbers saves time if you need replacement documents. Always carry these on your person and beware of pick-pockets while in crowded places. Most hotels have safe deposit boxes in the bedrooms, making it easier to access your monies or documents. Thompsons highly recommend the use of a hotel safe (extra charge is minimal) to ensure your belongings are secure. A good idea is to photostat the pages of your passport, which have your details.

Health Requirements

If visiting the Northern part of Namibia, it is important to take malaria precautions before you depart for Namibia.

Bilharzia occurs in the East. Tap water is safe and potable unless specifically stated at particular locations.

Tourists traveling by road are advised to carry sufficient water at all times.

Transport

Namibia has 5450 km of tarred roads and 37 000 km of gravel roads. Driving between South Africa and Namibia is quite comfortable on well maintained roads. Although Namibia is rated as having the best gravel roads in the world, travel is extremely hazardous at speeds above 80km per hour.

Activities

Entry gates to the national parks are open from sunrise to sunset (approximately 0600 – 18h00). Please ensure you arrive in time as no entry will be allowed if the gates are closed. 60N\$ per person per day and 10N\$ per vehicle (10 seats or less) will be charged for entry into the Etosha National Park, the Namib-Naukluff Park (Sesriem entrance), Waterberg Plateau PARK, Ai-Ais Transfrontier Park and Skeleton Coast Park. All other parks charge 30N\$ per person per day and 10N\$ per vehicle (10 seats or less).

Children under 16 years of age are free of charge for all parks. Rates above are for SADC residents.

Special Attractions

View wildlife in Etosha National Park. Take a hot air balloon flight over Sossusvlei. See the incomparable Skeleton Coast. Explore the quaint seaside town of Swakopmund. Spend a day viewing the awesome Fish River Canyon. Experience the ghost town of Kolmanskop. See the impressive Bushman paintings in Damaraland. Enjoy a rail safari on the Desert Express.

Don't Forget

No person will be allowed to travel to the Welwitchia's and Namib Naukluft Park without the relevant permits. Permits can only be purchased at the Namibia Wildlife resorts in Swakopmund, Windhoek and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in Windhoek. The office hours are 08h00-13h00 and 14h00-17h00. Costs are N\$20 per person and N\$20 per vehicle. Contact numbers: The Namibia Wildlife resort: 064 405 513. Ministry of Environment and Tourism can be contacted on 061 274 2111

Remember to bring an ample supply of film, as it is expensive in Namibia. As dust and fine sand can be a problem store your camera and lenses in a chamois leather bag or similar. The electricity supply in Namibia is 220/240 volts. Outlets are of the round 3 pin, 15 amps type. Lightweight summer clothing is worn all year round in Namibia. When visiting game parks, guests should avoid wearing bright colours. Rather pack khaki coloured items and make sure that you remember a hat and sunglasses. Always take sun block and mosquito repellent with you. Sunglasses, sun block and sun hats are vital. Cool lightweight cottons are the best gear to pack.

VAT of 15% is levied on all goods and services.

Travel Necessities

No visas are required by SA passport holders only if traveling as bona fide tourists. SA passport holders going on business require a business visa. Your passport must be valid for six months prior to travel. Foreign visitors may require a visa, please check these formalities before you travel. All passengers may take clothes and other articles for personal use, books and periodicals, alcoholic beverages not exceeding 3 litres. 2L of wine and 1L of spirits, 400 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250g of pipe tobacco.

Tourists and visitors in addition may bring the following articles for their own use: Tape recorder, camera, binoculars and a movie camera.

Embassy / Ambassador / High Commission

South African High Commission, Cnr. Jan Jonker & Nelson Mandela Avenue, Windhoek • Tel: 00264 61 205 7111

Local Contact

Thompsons representative:

Dagmar Greef: Tel: 00 264 061 253 002 or
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Please contact Dagmar for transfers or queries or contact the Namib Travel shop for any tours or queries:

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All information was correct at the time of going to print and should only be used as a guideline.

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