

Guided Desert Hike on NamibRand Nature Reserve

The beauty of the Tok Tokkie walking trail is the fact that you closely experience so many different aspects of the beautiful desert - from mountainous terrain to sandy dunes. In addition to the fantastic scenery and unfenced game, like herds of oryx and springbok, the desert holds big and small wonders of adaptation that cannot be experienced while driving. Let your experienced nature guide explain all this to you, relax with a sun downer and enjoy a three-course dinner before falling asleep under the stars...

Itinerary

(Meals: **B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner**)

Day 01

You should arrive at the Tok Tokkie farmhouse **by 14h30**. As the drive from Sesriem is 110 km and takes about $\pm 1h30$ it is important to keep an eye on the time.

Upon arrival at the Tok Tokkie farm house, you will be introduced to your guide. Prior to departing on a short scenic drive to the starting point of the trail you will be given a daypack with a water bottle and some raisins and a cup. All you have to do is add your camera, binoculars and a book to read during the heat of the day. Your luggage needed for the duration of the trail will be transferred to your overnight camp by vehicle.

From your drop-off point in the sand dunes it is a short walk to your first overnight camp. The dunes are not the massive ones that are encountered at Sossusvlei, but small, vegetated dunes that have a unique beauty of their own. Relax with a sundowner, marvel at the magnificent scenery and start "feeling" the desert. Enjoy a wholesome three-course dinner and unwind before falling asleep in the open under a blanket of stars


Walking time: morning: 0 hrs / afternoon: 1 – 2 hrs

Sleeping out in the open on stretcher beds; (L around 13h00 if pre-booked, D)

Day 02

Early morning tea or coffee is served before sunrise followed by a light breakfast so that you can set off in the cool of the early morning. You will be given a lunch pack, as the day heats up it is time to stop at a shady spot. The highlight of the walk is the breathtaking view of the dunes and plains as well as the "coming alive" of the desert as the guide allows you to feel, smell, taste and see the oldest living desert in the world. The "morning news", as written in the sand of the dunes is always fascinating and with some luck, and the guide's trained eyes, you may spot some of the desert specials. (Golden Mole, Dancing White Lady, Barking Gecko, Dune Lark, Flightless Wasp to name some). You spend a good part of the morning on the mountain, before descending the other side to a dry riverbed.

During the course of the day your guide will explain the wonders of the Namib - how the fascinating desert flora survives by tapping underground water from the riverbed, how insect life, which is prolific, adapts to the harsh environment. Birding is surprisingly good and you may be lucky enough to see one of Namib endemics, the Dune Lark. Larger animals you might come across include Bat-eared Fox, Oryx, Springbok and Ostrich.



As the day heats up it is time to stop at a shady spot where you can enjoy your lunch pack and fill up your water bottles. There is plenty of time to relax, have a siesta and reflect on all you have seen. As the heat recedes you start walking – on and through the dunes to your second overnight spot. The scene in front of you is an endless dune sea and “fairy circles” with a backdrop of magnificent mountain scenery. Photography is spectacular as the shadows on the dunes create an ever-changing palette of colours shortly before sunset.

A delicious dinner after a long and enjoyable day is indeed welcome. The sound of barking geckoes, the occasional cry of a hyena, the hoo-hoo of spotted eagle owls, and more likely than not, the silence accompanies you through the night.

Walking time: morning: 4 – 4.5 hrs / afternoon: 2 – 2.5 hrs, Sleeping out in the open on stretcher beds; (BLD)

Day 03

Once again you are woken in the soft light shortly before sunrise. Coffee and breakfast is served before you set off through the dune field. The soft and rolling dunes are interspersed by camel thorn trees, which provide welcome shade for a rest. Today’s walk is easy and you arrive at Tok Tokkie farmhouse at approximately 10:30. When time allows we visit the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET), a non-profit, donor sponsored trust, which aims at developing environmentally responsible citizens of Namibia. (www.nadeet.org)

Walking time: morning: 3 – 3.5 hrs / afternoon: 0 hrs, (B)

NB – sometimes this walk is turned around, so the landscape will be seen at different times of the day. This is at Tok Tokkie’s discretion.

Notes

- 1) Group size is limited to two to eight guests. Larger groups will be taken only if the guests are travelling together.
- 2) Personal packs should not weigh more than 10kg. Keep camera equipment light; a telephoto lens for animals and birds, and a wide angle for scenery are recommended. Whilst walking there are no facilities to charge batteries for video cameras so be sure to have sufficient batteries available.
- 3) Bathroom facilities comprise a long-drop toilet, bucket shower and a hand basin at the overnight camps. During the day toilet paper and matches are provided.
- 4) Fresh water for drinking will be available at lunch spots and overnight camps.
- 5) If you have any special dietary requirements please be sure to inform us in advance so that the necessary planning may be done to ensure that you have an enjoyable walk.
- 6) Rates include all meals as stated above, the services of a guide and “back-up” crew as well as the transfer to the starting point. Tea, coffee and juice, beer, wine and soft drinks are freely available in overnight camps.
- 7) Although it is unlikely that you will come across the back up vehicle during your walk, the guide is in radio contact allowing for a quick return to the farmhouse in the unlikely event of an accident or medical emergency.
- 8) Your guide carries an extensive first-aid kit. All guides have a working knowledge of first aid.
- 9) Contact lenses are uncomfortable in the sandy and dry desert. Please wear your glasses instead.

What You Need to Bring

- Curiosity and good humour
- Camera equipment and binoculars (bring plenty of spare films)
- Comfortable worn-in walking shoes - NOT new walking shoes, these will cause great discomfort and spoil your walk
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and insect repellent.

Clothing Needed (please have a closer look at the climate hints)

- Light and comfortable clothing
- Jacket and pullover for cool evenings
- Sport shoes or sandals for the evening
- A hat or cap is essential.
- Warm clothes in the winter months (beanie, scarf and gloves)

Climate

The seasons in Namibia are reversed compared to those in Europe. During the European winter months we have summer in Namibia and vice versa. Winter and summer in Namibia differ from what we are used to in Europe, though. The winter in Namibia is the cooler dry season, which is characterised by high temperature changes and hardly any rainfall. It can get very cold at night in the desert (June to August down to -5°C). During the day temperatures may rise up to 25°C. The Namibian summer (January to end of March) is the rainy season and it seldom rains during the other months. November and December are very hot with temperatures over 30°C, so it is essential to pack the suitable clothes. Rest assured that you will not encounter a grey sky that will linger for weeks! So bring some Sandals, walking shoes, light cotton clothes (Shorts and shirts), a jacket or fleece pullover and long trousers. We have seen everything: from beanies and gloves to bikinis!!

Character of and Requirements for the Trail

The trail is not difficult, but challenging. Fitness and good condition is essential as the trails entail 7 to 8 hours walking. Your main luggage will be transported by a back-up vehicle; you only have to carry a day pack, including a lunch pack, water and your camera equipment. As some of the routes lead through rough terrain and over sand dunes it requires well-balanced and secure walking. Please be aware of high temperature fluctuations, which can reach a high of 35°C during the day whilst sometimes plummeting down to -5°C at night, which can cause additional stress to your heart and circulation. We recommend you to prepare yourself for the trail with some fitness training.

Force Majeure

It goes without saying that we do our utmost to conduct the tour as described in the program; we cannot vouch for it, however. Unfavorable weather conditions, organizational problems, unforeseen events or other factors may force us to change the course of the tour. We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Recommendation

We urgently recommend that comprehensive insurance cover be taken out before embarking on the tour to

- make provision for cancellation and curtailment
- medical expenses, emergency evacuation, repatriation
- loss or damage of personal baggage

Unlimited Travel & Car Hire cc will not be held responsible for any costs arising from any of the above events. Restriction of liability also applies if clients were unaware of this policy.