
- **History of the Nama, life around the Orange River and the red dunes of the Kalahari**

- *Windhoek – Aus – Orange River – Kalahari South – Windhoek*

14 Days / 13 Nights

31 May 2026 – 13 June 2026



The Southern Namibia is a landscape where time seems to stretch across millennia, revealing a story written not only in historical records but also in stone, sand, and silence. This excursion invites participants to explore a region shaped by powerful natural forces and profound human experiences, where the environment and history are inseparably intertwined. From vast desert plains to rugged mountain ranges and a lake, the terrain itself provides a living archive of adaptation, survival, and change.

The history of southern Namibia is deeply rooted in the interaction between people and this often harsh, yet strikingly beautiful environment. Indigenous communities, such as the Nama and Damara, developed ways of life finely attuned to the rhythms of the land, navigating scarce water resources and seasonal shifts with remarkable resilience. Later historical events, including the arrival of European settlers and the expansion of colonial infrastructure, were likewise influenced by the geographic realities of the region – its aridity, isolation, and natural barriers shaping settlement patterns, trade routes, and conflict.

At the same time, the natural habitat of southern Namibia tells its own story of endurance and transformation. The Namib Desert, one of the oldest deserts in the world, has evolved over millions of years, fostering uniquely adapted flora and fauna that survive in extreme conditions. Geological formations, fossil records, and riverbeds serve as reminders of climatic shifts and environmental changes that have influenced both biodiversity and human activity over time.

This excursion aims to bring these narratives together, offering a deeper understanding of how historical developments cannot be separated from the landscapes in which they occurred. By examining the connections between ecological conditions and human decisions, participants will gain insight into how southern Namibia's past continues to shape its present.

SUMMARY OF TOUR

Accommodations	Destination	Start	End	Basis	Nights
Africa Safari Lodge	Mariental	31 May	1 Jun	D, B&B	1
Bahnhof Hotel Aus	Aus	1 Jun	3 Jun	D, B&B	2
Op My Stoep Lodge	Orange River	3 Jun	4 Jun	D, B&B	1
Norotshama River Resort	Orange River	4 Jun	7 Jun	D, B&B	3
Sandfontein Lodge & Nature Reserve	Warmbad	7 Jun	9 Jun	FB	2
Goibib Mountain Lodge	Keetmanshoop	9 Jun	10 Jun	D, B&B	1
Schützenhaus Guesthouse	Keetmanshoop	10 Jun	11 Jun	FB	1
Torgos Safari Lodge	Kalahari South	11 Jun	12 Jun	D, B&B	1
Kalahari Farmhouse Gondwana	Kalahari	12 Jun	13 Jun	D, B&B	1
End of Tour					

Key

B&B: Bed and Breakfast

D, B&B: Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

FB: Full Board (Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch)

Day 1: Sunday, 31 May – Africa Safari Lodge



The old school building in Kub was officially opened on 1 August 1910. The school closed in the late 1950s.

Day Itinerary

Departure from Windhoek is at 7h00. The meeting point is in the street to the Eros Airport, behind the entrance to the Mövenpick – former Safari Court Hotel. The first stop will be the historical site Kub, where we will also enjoy a small picnic lunch. In Gibeon, a hotspot during the Nama war, we will be able to make ourselves a general picture of what happened in 1904. The Africa Safari Lodge (<https://africasafarilodge.com.na>) will house us for this night.

Day 2: Monday, 1 June – Bahnhof Hotel Aus



The region is characterised by the world's only entirely arid plant hotspot, boasting over 5,000 plant species – nearly 40% endemic and 18% threatened – and the richest succulent flora globally.

Day Itinerary

We continue through Gibeon and Helmeringhausen to Bethanien, enjoying the beautiful landscape of the area. In Bethanien, we will visit the *Schmeelenhaus* as well as the *Frederickhaus* and the old missionary church. These were locations of great importance during the times of South West Africa. In Aus, we will get off the bus for the day (<https://hotel-aus.com>).

Day 3: Tuesday, 2 June – Bahnhof Hotel Aus



*Aar's extremely isolated and pristine location makes it all the more appealing to the interested visitor. Early in the 20th century, German palaeontologists discovered the fossilised remains of soft-bodied organisms that had become trapped in sandy layers sandwiched between layers of siltstone and whale. These fossils were later classified as species of the genus *Rangea* that lived*

during the Ediacaran Period, 635 to 542 million years ago.

Day Itinerary

Today, we will visit Farm Aar, a site unbelievably rich in rock art and a researcher's dream when looking into the Proterozoic period. After a small lunch, we have a closer look at the surroundings of Aus.

Day 4: Wednesday, 3 June – Op My Stoep Lodge, Orange River



The Orange River snakes its way through one of Southern Africa's harshest environments, bringing life to an area of sheer rugged beauty, supporting various vineyards in the desert.

Day Itinerary

The scenic route from Aus over Rosh Pinah all the way to Oranjemund exclusively follows the Orange River. A visit to *Jasper's house*, the Oranjemund Museum, will round off the day before reaching the Op My Stoep Lodge (<https://www.opmystoep.com>).

Day 5: Thursday, 4 June – Norotshama River Resort, Orange River



View onto the Orange River at Norotshama

Day Itinerary

Heading east, we follow the Orange River all the way to Aussenkehr, having barren dry land to the left, and the ever-flowing water-carrying river to the right. Short stops at various scenic or historic sites will ensure many photo opportunities. In Aussenkehr, a little town where the main business is the production of grapes and some vegetables, we reach our destination for today, Norotshama River Resort (<https://www.norotshamaresort.com>).

Day 6: Friday, 5 June – Norotshama River Resort, Orange River



Reed houses at Aussenkehr

Day Itinerary

Today, we'll take a tour of vineyards and get to experience the production of Namibian Brandy. The sound of water flowing and the wide area of green grass at Norotshama invite all to spend some time in the shade of the big trees and relax.

Day 7: Saturday, 6 June – Norotshama River Resort, Orange River

*Barren land
along the C37*

Day Itinerary

Not having to pack up just yet, today promises a special treat. We will be driving on the C37 to Ai-Ais to see the breath-taking landscape and learn more about the “Cornelius Clash”.

Day 8: Sunday, 7 June – Sandfontein Lodge & Nature Reserve

The Sandfontein Lodge & Nature Reserve, a private hideaway with magical mountain scenery and just five eco-conscious bungalows.

Day Itinerary

We say goodbye to Norotshama, drive through Noordoewer to Sandfontein Lodge & Nature Reserve (<https://www.sandfontein.com>). The ever-changing scenery is eye candy for sure.

Day 9: Monday, 8 June – Sandfontein Lodge & Nature Reserve

**Day Itinerary**

It is time to change the seating. A 4x4 tour to Ramansdrift, the primary border crossing until the mid-1950s, allows for detailed insight into the unrests during WW1 and the Nama war.

Day 10: Tuesday, 9 June – Goibib Mountain Lodge**Day Itinerary**

The journey continues to the Groot Karas area via Warmbad and Karasburg, and today will end in the Goibib Mountain Lodge (<https://www.goibibmountainlodge.net>). Armin Jagdhuber will take you back over a century in time, to the time of Bondelswarts and the history of Karasburg (South Kalkrand) and Warmbad.

Day 11: Wednesday, 10 June – Schützenhaus Guesthouse

*One of the remains of a Lime Kiln resembling a
giant anthill*

Day Itinerary

We'll drive through Holoog to Keetmanshoop. And of course, we will stop at the Naute Kristall Cellar and Distillery. The destination today is the Schützenhaus Guesthouse, sleeping in the oldest German Club in Southern Africa, having been founded already in 1907 (<https://schuetzenhaus-namibia.com>).

Day 12: Thursday, 11 June – Torgos Safari Lodge



One of the many Mesosaurus fossils

Day Itinerary

Today we'll set off to the Mata Mata area, visiting the Mesosaurus fossils and the Quiver Tree Forest on the way. In the town of Koes, we will be offered more information on the "Feldskoendraers".

The TorgosSafari Lodge, where we will spend the night, is a true hideaway amongst a forest of Camelthorn trees (<https://torgoslodgenam.com>).

Day 13: Friday, 12 June – Kalahari Farmhouse



*Gondwana Kalahari
Farmhouse*

Day Itinerary

Travelling along the Olifants River and through Gochas, we today head to Stampriet. The beautiful Kalahari promises a combination of large semi-arid sandy savannah draped over a gently rolling inland sea. For the last evening, the group is invited to reflect on almost 2 weeks of breathtaking landscapes, recent and ancient history of southern Namibia, at the Gondwana Collection Kalahari Farmhouse (<https://gondwana-collection.com>).

Day 14: Saturday, 13 June – Windhoek



Day Itinerary

Today it's time to pack our bags for the last time. Over Hoachanas, Uhlenhorst and Rehoboth, we drive back to Windhoek and will arrive in the late afternoon.