



Richtersveld/Namibia - Self-Drive/Camping Safari Tour - June/July 2013



Foreward by Sydney Alexander

I would like all of us to explore/experience and enjoy as many interesting places as possible within the short period of time of our tour.

For this reason it may be necessary on certain days to travel long distances, with some rough roads, some early departures with meals on the road, in order to reach our end of the day goal (***as per itinerary which may be subject to change***) before dark, thus avoiding to drive after dark AT ALL COST.

Itinerary (*which may be subject to change if influenced by factors beyond our control*)

Day 1 - Friday 21 June 2013

All vehicles and participants depart at 04h00 from "Swartland" Engen One Stop - Philidelphia on the N7. All vehicles travel in convoy, with rest and fuel refill stops to be decided. Springbok will be the main stop en-route, for fuel and requirement purchases, before taking the gravel road towards "Lekersing" in the Richtersveld conservancy. Overnight camp will be on a farm "Kalkfontein" with basic amenities. Group camp fire briefings will be held every evening after supper for the tour duration.

Day 2 - Saturday 22 June 2013

Drive-out, after an early breakfast, briefly explore "lekkersing" and meet its people, then on to Sendelingsdrift stopping en-route to visit and explore "Die Wondergat". At "Sendilingsdrift" enter the Richtersveld National Park and enjoy a scenic experience in South Africa's only Mountain Desert Park. Stop to photograph rock formations and plant life, which is unique to the Richtersveld.

A bit of rough road driving will bring us to "De Hoop" campsite next to the Gariiep/Orange River, our camp site for the next two nights. If time allows, we can go on a short exploratory/sight-seeing drive, or you may prepare to cool down in the river, or try your hand at fishing.

Day 3 - Sunday 23 June 2013

The day is spent exploring the Richtersveld National Park, with a drive where it may be advisable for each vehicle to have a spare jerry-can of fuel. Crossing the "Springbok Vlakte", keeping a watchfull eye for rock formations, plant life, animals, insects and reptiles and visiting other camp sites, where we can stop for lunch before returning to our camp site at "De Hoop". Ending the day with a late afternoon, frolicking or fishing in the river.

Day 4 - Monday 24 June 2013

Depart "De Hoop" camp early, at first light on rough track to Sendelingsdrift. Border cross the Gariiep/Orange River into Namibia, by ferry. Rest and refuel at "Aus" and "Helmeringhausen" (German P.O.W. camp and cemeteries - WW1). Gravel road to "Sesriem" via "Zarishoogte Pass". Overnight camp at Sesriem.

Day 5 - Tuesday 25 June 2013

Depart early for drive to "Sossosvlei" (obtain permit at office). Stop for breakfast and hike up "Dune 45". 4x2 Vehicle passengers to arrange lift with 4x4 vehicles for the thick sand drive to Sossosvlei/Deadvlei. Walk to the vlei and hike up one of the highest sand dunes.

Back to Sesriem camp for late lunch. Drive-out walk and explore Sesriem Canyon. At camp, enjoy a swim in the pool before a second overnight supper and campfire.

Day 6 - Wednesday 26 June 2013

Depart Sesriem camp after breakfast. On the way to "Walvis Bay", crossing the "Tropic of Capricorn", travel through the "Namib Naukluft Park", over the "Moon Landscap" and stop and see "Dune 7". On the way out to Swakopmund, make time for a Quad-bike dune ride (especially for the younger participants), en-route, before enjoying a genuine German cold beer at a Café/Pub, and possibly a lunch of "Mopane Worms" or "Schweinnenohren" (vark ore). Ride along the coastal road to "Hentiesbay", for an overnight camp, shopping for supplies and/or surf fishing.

Day 7 - Thursday 27 June 2013

Depart Hentiesbay for "Uis" (a mining town) drive to the "Brandberg" and see the famous "Whielady" rock painting and others. See the ancient desert plant, "Welwitchia Mirabilis" and on the way to the "Burnt Mountain", the rockslabs named "Organ Pipes". The highlight is a visit to "Twyfelfontein", Namibia's first world heritage site, which has Africa's largest rock art collection. Spend the night camping at the "Aba Huab" camp nearby.

Day 8 - Friday 28 June 2013

On the way to "Khorixas" (Dramara Country), visit and explore the "Petrified Forest" and its mysterious history of fossilised tree trunks, dating back some 250 million years. Drive-out to the "Etoshia National Park" via "Kamanjab", purchasing supplies. Set up camp at "Okaukuejo" with floodlit waterhole, where you can sit and watch wild animals congregate. Go on a game drive and return to camp and enjoy a cool-down in the swimming pool and a visit to the pool-bar.

Day 9 - Saturday 29 June 2013

After breakfast, depart "Okaukuejo" and drive to "Halali" camp (our second night's stay in Etoshia National Park) en-route we do a game drive, visiting various animal drinking waterholes as well as the main "Etoshia Salt Pan". After setting up camp at "Halali", you can watch animals at the camp's waterhole and have a swim in the swimming pools. Tonight we are having camp-fire celebrations, for tomorrow we turn due south again.

Day 10 - Sunday 30 June 2013

We do a game drive on the way out of Etoshia National Park, with a visit to "Namutoni" (the camp with the old German Fort) before we head out south to "Tsumeb", for a lunch break and purchasing supplies for our overnight camp at the municipal park at "Otjiwarongo".

Day 11 - Monday 1 July 2013

Today we drive to "Kalkfeld" where we turn off the main highway to a farm, for permission to see the fossilised dinosaur footprints, of animals living about 200 million years ago. Drive on to "Okahandja" before a stop at the "Herero" wood carver's market, before heading to Windhoek (The capital of Namibia), for lunch and a brief sight-seeing visit. Our overnight camp will be further south at "Rehoboth" the town of the "Basters".

Day 12 - Tuesday 2 July 2013

Drive out to Mariental, then Keetmanshoop to "Gonwana Canyon Nature Park" setting up overnight camp at "Canon Road House".

Day 13 - Wednesday 3 July 2013

Enter "Hobas camp gate" for a sight-seeing visit, driving to the view points on the rim of the "Fish River Canyon". Overnight at Ai-Ais camp (*with its mineral springs*). Take a walk along the Fish River or up the mountain. Swim in lukewarm outside pool or relax in the indoor sauna and then refreshments at the bar. Tonight will be our last camp-fire in Namibia.

Day 14 - Thursday 4 July 2013

After a lazy breakfast, break camp and drive-out to "Noordoever" border post via a river route. At "Vioolsdrift" RSA, turn on Kotzeshoop road to "Rooiwal Winkel" for camp supplies. Overnight at "Overbos Park", next to the Gariep/Orange River, relax and enjoy cabbage bread.

Day 15 - Friday 5 July 2013

A late morning drive up the "Helskloof Pass" in the Richtersveld. See the succulents and ancient rock-engravings en-route to "Eksteenfontein". Return for relaxing second overnight camp in the "Jagermeister Bar" at Overbos camp.

Day 16 - Saturday 6 July 2013

Drive out on N7 to Springbok for fuel stop and last camp supplies. Our last overnight camp on the tour will be at "The Baths" at Citrusdal, with its hot mineral springs.

Day 17 - Sunday 7 July 2013

On N7 from Citrusdal to Cape Town, with a final "Tour Group Stop" at the "Swartland" Engen One Stop garage, before returning to our homes.