



## Land Rover Experience: 14 Day Skeleton Coast Route

### DAY 1 ARRIVAL AT WINDHOEK to ERINDI

Welcome to Namibia. Our local guide will meet you at Windhoek International Airport on your arrival. You'll be transferred by shuttle to where you'll have your briefing and can familiarise yourself with your vehicle. Everyone will have the opportunity to get acquainted with their Land Rover and get used to driving on the left-hand side of the road. We'll depart to our first destination, enjoying an easy leisurely drive on tarred roads as we head to **Erindi Private Game Reserve** and our lodge for the evening.

**Erindi** is a protected reserve in central Namibia that is a sustainable haven for nature. They pride themselves on their conservation through ecotourism initiatives, which also empower the local communities.

On arrival at the reserve, you'll get a small taste of the many dirt roads yet to come as you drive towards **Old Traders Lodge**. After settling in and freshening up in your room, you'll be treated to a colonial-style high tea to help you revive after your travels, whilst enjoying the views of the waterhole that surrounds the restaurant deck.

We'll depart on a safari drive late afternoon, searching for some of Africa's famous animals, which finishes with a sundowner. Round off your day by simply relaxing and enjoying nature, whilst taking in the breathtaking scenery of untouched Africa. After an exquisite buffet-style dinner, you can fall asleep in comfort and dream of the adventure yet to come.

### DAY 2 ERONGO

This morning after breakfast in front of the hustling waterhole, we'll depart to our next lodge which is Namibia's highest mountain, **The Brandberg**.

The Erongo area is a geological and birding wonderland. Driving west, the distance that we'll cover today is not far but because it's mostly gravel roads and some riverbed cruising, we'll take it easy so that you can get acquainted with your vehicle. Stopping when necessary to take breaks and photo opportunities. We'll make sure that everyone's comfortable with their driving capabilities before pushing the bar.

**The Brandberg mountain**, which means 'burning mountain' in Afrikaans, is a national monument that displays an intense variety of colours formed by volcanic activity interacting with organic material that transformed into a sedimentary bed over 125 million years ago. This is also home to the 'White Lady', a famous bushman rock painting and a protected heritage site.

Arrival at **The White Lady Lodge** will be in the early afternoon, where you can have a relaxing dip in one of their pools, or take a walk around to explore the area.

After lunch, we'll go for a nature drive to look for the desert-adapted Elephants that are commonly found walking and browsing in **the ephemeral Ugab river** and connecting tributaries. These elephants have developed certain adaptations for desert



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life and tend to have relatively broader feet, longer legs, and smaller bodies than other African bush elephants.

Navigating the paths through the river beds is a lot of fun, and here you'll enjoy real 4x4 driving. Taking turns climbing up hills or dipping into dried-out water paths. Ending your day with a lovely meal back at the lodge.

### DAY 3 PALMWAG

Today you'll head north towards **Damaraland** for some continued off-road driving adventure through Namibia's dry riverbeds. The soft sand gives you moments where you'll have to accelerate to get onto the harder clay. The smells and the sounds of nature will fuel the exhilaration of your Land Rover 4x4 driving experience. Many animals and birds can be seen around here such as Springboks, Oryx, Ostriches, and small but prolific birds such as the Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and the brightly coloured Ruppell's Parrot.

We'll stop at **the Bushman rock engravings**, which is the main attraction in this **Twyfelfontein area**. The name 'Twyfelfontein' translates to 'Fountain of Doubt', which refers to the perennial spring situated in the impressive Huab valley flanked by the slopes of a sandstone Table Mountain. This spring attracted Stone Age hunters over 6000 years ago and it was during this time that an extensive group of rock engravings and paintings were produced.

This stop also gives you a moment to stretch your legs and do a bit of easy walking before we continue north through to **the Palmwag Concession**.

Here we'll get another convincing performance of the unparalleled off-road capability of our Land Rovers along rocky roads and spectacular scenery. Stopping to take photos of Namibia's National plant the Welwitschia Mirabilis, which is an ancient plant endemic to **the Namib desert**.

We'll continue to our lodge where we'll have dinner and relax for the rest of the evening.

### DAY 4 ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK (Kamdescha Route)

From Palmwag, we follow **the Kamdescha route** which is renowned for its extremely dusty roads. Passing the Kamdescha Veterinary control point we'll be heading through the plains of the Mopane savannah. It gets really dusty after that. We'll be crossing the so-called "dust holes" where the sand is so fine that it raises dust like water splashing from a puddle while driving through the passage in our Land Rovers.

Our destination today is **the Etosha National Park**, one of the greatest game reserves in the world. Dense bushland and wide-open plains where large Zebra and Antelope herds await us on the journey. The meaning of Etosha is 'place of dry water', but it offers several waterholes, the meeting place for a variety of species. We continue our journey through Etosha National Park from the west until we reach the western side of the park **to explore Namibia's wildlife**.



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We spend the night here at your lodge which only lies a few kilometers from the Galton Gate, which we need to reach before sundown as vehicle movement at night is prohibited.

### DAY 5 NORTHERN ETOSHA

After breakfast, we'll start our full day of '**Game Driving**' through Etosha National Park coming from the western side heading towards the east. This part is also known as the 'Wild West' as it's not on the main tourist route through Etosha. The terrain is rugged, the vegetation is greener than the better-known sides, and there is a very good chance that you can encounter two rare species that are only found in this section of the park: the Black-faced Impala and Hartmann's Mountain Zebra.

Etosha is unique and it's one of the most accessible game reserves in Namibia and Southern Africa. The speed limit is only 60 km/ph for good reason. The driving today will be leisurely as you witness exciting African Wildlife either crossing the road, grazing nonchalantly on the plains, or drinking at one of the many waterholes along the way.

We'll continue on and slowly start seeing more and more cars as we head towards **the famous Etosha Pan**, which is the park's main characteristic. This landmark site is a large endorheic salt pan, forming part of the Kalahari Basin which draws wildlife such as Flamingos & Elephants.

This is a salt pan so large it can be seen from space.

Our day will start coming to an end as we head north to **the King Nehale gate** where we will exit the park. Our lodge is only 1km from the gate and is strikingly set on the Andoni plains. Each chalet has its own private splash pool in which you can soak your tired driving feet and digest all the sightings that you encountered today.

### DAY 6 KUNENE

We have to cover a great distance today so we will start early.

Our drive will be through the bush and past mountains, but mainly sticking to the dirt roads. This part of Namibia is mostly farmlands and the roads are in a fairly decent condition as they don't experience a lot of traffic. Namibia has more kilometers of road per head of population than any other country in Africa. The period from 1965 to date can be characterized by the consolidation and uplifting of **Namibia's roads network to one of the finest in Africa**.

Our journey will take us to tonight's lodge which is situated on the bank of **the Kunene River**. We'll have a sandy but scenic drive, arriving at the lodge by afternoon allowing you to spend the late afternoon at your leisure. The lodge has various activities on offer, or you can choose to simply relax and enjoy a drink whilst overlooking the river and its spectacular location.



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## DAY 7 EPUPA

We'll depart today to **Epupa Falls** also on the Kunene River.

This drive will teach you to master more dusty and challenging roads along the way, but all worthwhile for an extraordinary experience.

Situated in the Kaokoland area of Namibia, Epupa Falls is set near the border of Angola. Named by the Herero people after the spray it creates, Epupa means "waterfalling". The falls consists of a series of little waterfalls created by the Kunene River as it drops 40 meters, creating hundreds of natural pools that provide the Himba people and visitors with a fantastic recreation spot. These incredibly beautiful falls create a spectacular contrast to the arid desert and rugged surrounding mountains.

We can look forward to discovering this unspoiled environment, including the majestic Baobabs and Wild Fig trees.

## DAY 8 MARIENFLUSS

We'll say goodbye to the freshness of the river today and start our journey southwest towards the harsh and unforgiving environment of **the Skeleton Coast**, which holds its own beauty.

This is where the real fun begins! Our direction will be motivated by our collective abilities and sense of adventure as we head off the beaten track towards **Van Zyl's pass and the Marienfluss**.

Here we'll get another demonstration of the unparalleled off-road mobility of our Land Rovers. The route leads us through Namibia's beautiful changing landscape from shores and sandy roads to **the stunning remote Hartmann Valley**, a desolate yet entrancing moonscape of sand and rock. The valley is home to **the Himba**, one of the last true nomads in Africa. A cultural experience with the local Himba people is very rewarding. One of the last truly nomadic tribes in the world, their traditions and dress are fascinating to witness.

In the late afternoon, we'll put up our tent and enjoy a beautiful sundowner around the campfire. We can simply relax and enjoy the peace and quiet as well as clear night skies which are amongst some of the most pristine in the world with their starry skies.

## DAY 9 SKELETON COAST

There aren't many things that beat the feeling of being woken up by noisy Spurfowl in the morning, as they rummage through your campsite looking for any crumbs that may have been left from the previous nights' dinner. Then stepping out of your tent to the sight of pink and yellow skies as the sun rises, only to find that one of your shoes is missing from a curious Jackal that also raided your camp for scraps.

Namibia is a camping paradise. This is why we include 2 nights of wild camping on this journey. For the eternal photographers and the adventurous at heart, you are in heaven! On the road, the never-ending same (yet different) surroundings will keep you spellbound. It's amazing to see what survives in the desert, and we can never



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guarantee, but there is a great chance to **see desert-adapted Wildlife such as Rhino, Lions, and the shy Brown Hyena also known as the Strand Wolf.**

There's a wide choice of sites all over Namibia for seasoned campers, as well as for nervous novices on their first camping holiday, from luxury campsites under shady trees and grassy lawns, to wild places in rivers next to tall banks leftover from previous rainy seasons.

In the late afternoon, we'll reach our campsite, where we'll enjoy a sundowner with one of the most breath-taking sunsets whilst relaxing around the magical campfire. And what could be better than **camping under the Milky Way**? One of the spectacular features of the southern night sky, best viewed under some of the world's darkest skies in Namibia. This is million-star accommodation!

### DAY 10 SKELETON COAST

Today we'll spend the day in **the fascinating Skeleton Coast National Park.** We'll drive along sandy roads and over dunes towards the beach. The fog-shrouded beaches of this sprawling and remote wilderness area are littered with shipwrecks and whale skeletons.

This is where we'll have our first deep sand driving experience. We'll learn how to read the terrain and put the world's most capable vehicle to the test. We'll then head to our remote lodge where we'll stay for the next two nights.

We'll be welcomed by a refreshing breeze from the cold Benguela current and then **the warm Namib desert** sand under our feet, as we settle in at the lodge and get ready for an included sundowner activity where we can take a break from driving and enjoy being driven to the roaring dunes. After dinner, served at the heart of the lodge, we'll retreat to our rooms which are shipwreck-shaped cabins, nestled between the dunes with a view of **the Atlantic Ocean.**

### DAY 11 SKELETON COAST

All activities today will be done with the lodge. One option is **a 4x4 full-day excursion to the Hoarusib River** with another opportunity to see desert-adapted Elephants and Lions or **explore the "Clay Castles"**. The Hoarusib is a dry river known for its steep canyon walls of black and red volcanic rock and strange makalani palms. The oasis character of the river valley and the high wildlife population of Hoarusib makes this one of the last true wilderness areas in Namibia.

Weather permitting, a delicious lunch will be served on the vast empty beach. For the rest of the day, you can relax and enjoy the exclusive lodge and surroundings or if you feel adventurous, they also offer **Quad-biking and Sandboarding activities.** In the evening, we can expect yet another unbelievable sundowner followed by dinner.



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### Day 12 SWAKOPMUND

After breakfast, we'll continue south through the Skeleton Coast National Park. The wind can sometimes be so strong here that you don't see the road due to the sand that is swept in, which makes for a surreal driving experience.

We'll exit the park at the Ugabmund Gate and cross over the Ugab river, which we previously were very acquainted with by the Brandberg. We'll head to **Cape Cross**, where we'll visit the massive seal colony and learn about the history of the area. We'll be able to get very close to these fantastic animals in their protected reserve and have the chance to study their behaviours.

As we drive down towards Swakopmund, we will pass **Zeila Shipwreck** which you will be able to see from the main road. The Zeila was stranded on 25 August 2008 in the early morning hours near "Die Walle", a popular fishing spot about 14km south of Henties Bay. This old fishing trawler was sold as scrap metal to an Indian company by Hangana Fishing of Walvis Bay got stranded after it came loose from its towing line while on its way to Bombay, India shortly after it left Walvis Bay.

**Swakopmund** is a coastal town in Namibia, west of the capital, Windhoek. Its sandy beaches face the Atlantic Ocean. Established by German colonists in 1892, the towns' colonial landmarks include the Swakopmund Lighthouse and the Mole, an old sea wall. Next to the lighthouse, the Swakopmund Museum documents Namibian history. Inland, the elegant Swakopmund Railway Station, now a hotel, also dates to the colonial era.

Tonight, you will be treated to a mouth-watering dinner at a restaurant close to the beach.

### DAY 13 BACK TO CIVILIZATION

After breakfast, we'll use the morning to drive our Land Rovers around the Swakopmund area to get that last exhilarating feeling of **offroad driving**. Swakop is a playground for 4x4's and we'll have a lot of fun **driving on the beach** and teasing the shoreline.

We then hit the tar road back to Windhoek. In the evening, we come together for a **farewell dinner** and to share stories and highlights of our time spent in Namibia.

### DAY 14 WINDHOEK

Experience the thriving capital, **Windhoek**, on the final day of the trip. While strolling through the capital of Namibia you can experience the flair of the colonial era „German Southwest“. Many monuments bring back these times to mind but Windhoek is not only shaped by history and culture but also by modern trends. Since the independence of Namibia in 1990, the capital city has expanded at a fast pace. Many modern buildings emerged, which fit well into the general townscape.



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Depending on your flight time, you'll have the morning to relax and enjoy the nature around this wonderful place. And possibly get a little shopping done too. **The Land Rover team will transfer you to the airport.** Then it's time to say goodbye!

We hope you had a great time with us in Namibia and have made many exciting memories. Have a safe journey and we hope to see you again on one of our future Land Rover Experience Adventures.