



Unique Tours & Safaris

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Springtime in the Succulent Karoo

11 Day/10 Night Accommodated Self- drive or Guided Safari through the south of Namibia and South Africa's Namaqualand focussing on the floral splendour during springtime, from about late July to September

from/to Windhoek via southern Namibia's Kalahari and the Namaqua Wildflower Area in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa.

Please note: This is just a basic tour programme proposal that only covers the main routes to travel and the core hot spots to visit during the Namaqualand Flower Season.

Unique Tours & Safaris highly recommend extending the tour to your liking:

For the African plant life enthusiast, by also including visits to the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park and the remainder of the Succulent Karoo to the north and south of the Gariep (Orange) River to see succulents in bloom;

For the wildlife enthusiast, by incorporating visits of the Augrabies Falls and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park to the east/north-east of Namaqualand.

Extension options to include Namibia's south coast and Sossusvlei in *the Namib Desert* are also available.

Since the flower season in the Succulent Karoo attracts many visits from far and wide, early bookings are essential to secure your preferred accommodations.

Springtime in the Succulent Karoo is a truly unique experience!

The following **basic programme** is recommended **for travels between end July and mid September each year only**. The density of wild flowers and succulents in bloom will depend on the amount of winter rainfalls received by the Succulent Karoo, until you will arrive in the area. Rainfalls might still occur until September and if they do, they will continue to make more flowers appear - often over night!

Travel dates for extended tours incorporating the wild flower and succulent flower season in Namaqualand and in the remainder of the Succulent Karoo can be planned to fall into a longer period, from about **early/mid July to end September/ early October**.

Day 1

Windhoek



Upon arrival at Hosea Kutako International Airport, you take over your rental vehicle and start your explorations in Windhoek. Many a sightseeing spot is to be seen here or if you prefer relax at the swimming pool of your accommodation and enjoy an optional dinner at the famous Joe's Beerhouse.

Windhoek – Khomas Region
Bed & Breakfast



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Days 2 and 3 Windhoek – Kalahari



On the outskirts of the Kalahari amidst the reddish dune sand lies tonight's accommodation. Consider joining a guide on an optional nature drive at sunset or before sunrise to experience the harsh beauty of this desert that extends from Botswana into Namibia and maybe even be lucky to spot some game.

Mariental – Hardap Region
Bed & Breakfast

Day 4 Kalahari - Keetmanshoop Area



Today's journey through the Kalahari, via the villages of Stampriet and Gochas, offers numerous sightseeing options:

Either travel south on a straight route to reach the area to the north-east of Keetmanshoop in the early afternoon already - spend the remainder of the day on optional visits to the Giants Playground, a deposit site of huge granite boulders, the Quiver Tree Forest, a concentration of picturesque tree-sized aloe plants, and a Mesosaurus site whose well preserved fossils provided proof for the drifting apart of continents. All of these places of interest are situated in close proximity of your accommodation. Alternatively, - only if you can start driving at sunrise and are travelling in a 4x4 (and provided your passport is valid for multiple entries to South Africa) -, travel in a south-easterly direction to the Mata Mata Gate of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, on the Namibian/South African border. After completing border formalities, you may spend a few hours exploring the wildlife of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park as a day visitor. In the early afternoon, return to Namibia via Mata Mata and proceed west via Koes to reach your overnight accommodation around sunset (approx. 17h00 during Namibian winter time!).

Keetmanshoop – Karas Region
Bed & Breakfast

Days 5 and 6 Keetmanshoop - Namaqualand, Northern Cape/South Africa



After an easy drive south on good tar roads and entering South Africa at the Noordoewer/Vioolsdrif border post on the Gariiep River (previously: Orange), Namaqualand and its natural beauty beckon. As you proceed via Steinkopf to Springbok, seeing the first patches of wild flowers will make your excitement grow. Springbok is an ideal place to explore the plant life in the west of Namaqualand on walks and optional excursions. A guided visit to the famous Richtersveld of the Succulent Karoo is possible, which was declared a World Heritage Site for hosting the densest succulent population on earth, including a great number of endemic species. Other options include sightseeing of shipwrecks on the South African West Coast and exploring diamond mining operations.

Namaqualand – South Africa
Bed & Breakfast



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Days 7 and 8 Namaqualand



Surely you want to experience more of the flowering Namaqualand. Return to the N7 further east and take up base in Okiep to see carpets of Namaqua daisies and a myriad of other flowering plants on fields and in nature reserves in its immediate and greater surroundings. Optional guided excursions are also on offer from here and highly recommended for visitors interested in an in-depth learning experience of this unique part of south-western Africa.

**Namaqualand - South Africa
Bed & Breakfast**

Any extension option you might like to incorporate in this tour starts from here and requires upgrading to a 4x4 vehicle rental from/to Windhoek:

a. Travelling in a north-westerly direction, after re-entering Namibia, and to include visits of the Fish River Canyon, the southern Namib Desert around Aus and Lüderitz Harbour, as well as the Namib dune desert at Sossusvlei in the Namib-Naukluft-Park en route back to Windhoek. Succulents and wild flowers in bloom may be seen also in the Aus area.

b. Proceeding through north-western Namaqualand and through the Richtersveld Transfrontier Park to Sendelingsdrift, crossing the Gariep River by ferry back to Namibia, and driving north via Rosh Pinah to Aus through the Namibian part of the Succulent Karoo. From Aus, various routing options are available to return to Windhoek.

Please note: Inside the South African part of the Ai-Ais/ Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, there are currently, in 2014, numerous simple camping sites and only one rest camp of inferior quality (near the Gariep ferry departure point). Overnight facilities may improve over time, as development plans will be implemented, but this can take another few years. Until then, **Unique Tours & Safaris** will only propose daily routings to guests on accommodated safaris that allow for overnights outside the park.

If you are planning a camping tour and to explore the Richtersveld for a few days on a self-drive basis, you need to hire one of the more powerful 4x4 vehicle models on offer - the greatest possible ground clearance is required to negotiate the truly rough terrain inside the park! It is also highly advisable at present to travel with at least 2 vehicles.

Succulents and wild flowers in bloom may be seen all the way from Namaqualand in South Africa to the Aus area of Namibia.

c. Another interesting extension option lies to the east and north-east of Okiep, still inside the huge Northern Cape Province: The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park with its amazing wildlife. The scenic route to the park takes the traveller through eastern Namaqualand to the Augrabies Falls of the Gariep River and via Upington north to the Ashkam area and the Twee Rivieren Gate of the Kgalagadi. Provided that accommodation for a minimum of 2 overnights inside the park can be secured, you will be able to return to Namibia through the park's north-western Mata Mata Gate. Alternatively, **Unique Tours & Safaris** recommends staying in one of more comfortable lodges outside the park on Namibian ground and doing day visits for game viewing. In this case, your return trip to Windhoek will take you via the Rietfontein border post and the Keetmanshoop area or through the Namibian part of the Kalahari.

Our basic programme entails a direct route back to Windhoek:



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Day 9

Namaqualand - Keetmanshoop/Namibia



Return to Namibia on the N7 highway and via the border post at Vioolsdrif/Noordoewer. Back in Keetmanshoop, relax at the pool in the garden and enjoy a quiet evening, just right for reviewing the exciting vistas and experiences of the previous days.

Keetmanshoop – Karas Region
Bed & Breakfast

Day 10

Keetmanshoop - Windhoek Area



Returning straight to the buzz of a city, after so much pure nature and the wide open spaces of the country-side, would be a bit harsh. So we suggest that you spend a last night in an accommodation situated on a beautiful farm close to the International Airport. Enjoy an optional nature drive in the later afternoon or take a stroll across farmland for saying good-bye in your own good time.

Windhoek – Khomas Region
Bed & Breakfast

Day 11

Windhoek Area/Departure

Depending on your flights departure time, you are welcome to linger at your accommodations peaceful surroundings. Well in time for your outbound flight drive to the airport and return your vehicle.