

COWABUNGA FLY-CAMP
(Correspondence for Brian only)

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COWABUNGA MAIN CAM
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Attention!

The following itinerary is meant to help your safari planning. Since 1974, we at Cowabunga Safaris have done many, many kinds and variations of safaris to Namibia.

This is only one kind of safari. Do you want something more upscale? Do you want something more rustic and participatory? If you have a different safari in mind, wish to stay longer, or want to travel to other parts of the continent, tell us. We can make it happen.

"AFRICA UNDER MOBILE CANVAS"

Namibia 4x4 Adventure Safari

Length: 15 days from the USA; 13 days in Africa

Accommodations: 8 nights in luxury, mobile tented camps; 4 nights in hotels. Pictures of accommodations are available on request.

“Facilities”: All accommodations have private, hot-water showers and en suite toilets. “John Wayne Toilet Paper” is provided (be sure to ask Brian about this).

Luxury Mobile Tented Camps - An Additional Explanation:

Our luxury, mobile tented camps are not the same as the camps you might find on a weekend camping trip in the USA. The tents are large - they are big enough to walk into and stand in -- with comfortable twin beds complete with linen and duvets. All tents are bug-proof with mesh windows, have nightstands next to the beds, and, as has been mentioned, possess en suite bathroom facilities. The tents are ingeniously designed to be erected and dismantled in hours, leaving no trace of their existence on the environment.

While we are out exploring, camp staff service our luxury, mobile tents, make our beds, and do laundry. In sum, dedicated friends of Cowabunga look after us royally. All you have to do is enjoy the natural African surroundings!

Fitness Level: Although there will be opportunities for optional walks which are as strenuous or as easy as you want them to be, this is primarily a vehicle-based safari. Only a minimal level of fitness is required.

Gear: Nearly everything is provided on this safari. Safarists, therefore, should bring only the bare essentials: binoculars, camera, three or four changes of clothes in "bush colors" (i.e., khaki, browns and greens - but no camouflage!), a wide-brimmed hat, sunblock, swimsuit, a broken-in pair of comfortable walking shoes, and a pair of flip-flops/water sandals. A warm jacket is a must, especially for the Atlantic coast, as well as for most evenings. Cowabunga's "Safari Briefing," provided under separate cover, covers all aspects of this safari in detail.

Group size: Cowabunga keeps groups small, to better share Africa. Unless otherwise stated, this type of safari will have no more than 10 Safarists. A custom-designed itinerary might have fewer still.

Food: You should NOT go on this type of safari to lose weight! All meals cater to western preferences, are first-class, and excellently prepared. Chefs make exquisite cuisine using a wide array of meats, pastas, and fresh vegetables and fruits. Desserts are delectable and overwhelming - so much so, we encourage all Safarists to practice the Cowabunga mantra: to "Eat dessert first, because life is so uncertain."

Water: Treated drinking water is provided. Everywhere bottled water is available for purchase.

Stay Longer: Experiencing all Africa has to offer is a once-in-a-lifetime privilege for most. Accordingly, some Safarists like to stay longer. We at Cowabunga Safaris understand! If, after this safari, you wish to do additional activities or to continue on to other parts of the continent, we can help. In fact, given our love of the continent, you can bet we'll beg to join you!

Detailed Briefings: Cowabunga provides in-depth written briefings for all Safarists after they sign-on for any safari. Furthermore, when possible, Cowabunga

conducts face-to-face briefings approximately three months before departure. For those who can't make the face-to-face briefings, a detailed transcript of questions and answers is sent to them. Gary, Brian and Nancy always stand ready to brief Safarists at a moment's notice via fax, phone, e-mail or in-person.

-- THE ADVENTURE --

Day 1

EN ROUTE

Our Safari begins! We depart Kansas City for our South African Airlines trans-Atlantic flight to Johannesburg. (D)

Day 2

JOHANNESBURG

We have an afternoon arrival in Johannesburg where we are met and transferred to our hotel. Depending on the time of our arrival, Brian can arrange a tour of Soweto, the famous township from where anti-apartheid activists like Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu carried out their struggle. Dinner tonight, our first night in Africa, is on our own, but Brian can take us to any number of nearby restaurants. (B)

Day 3

WINDHOEK

It's back to the Johannesburg airport this morning for our flight to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. Though a modern city, Windhoek retains a colonial German charm most evident in its architecture. We spend tonight at the Windhoek Country Club, well-situated to explore the city's many museums, walks and shops. B/(L)/D

Days 4 & 5

EASTERN ETOSHA

Today we venture into animal country, to Etosha National Park, one of the most extraordinary wildlife sanctuaries in the world. Covering 22,270 square kilometers (8,685 square miles), this is undoubtedly one of the most important game parks on the sub-continent. For four days we luxury mobile tent camp here: two days on Etosha's eastern side, and two days on its western side.

The heart of the Park is the extensive Etosha Pan. Geologists believe that it was an inland lake millions of years ago, fed by the Kunene River. After the Kunene changed its course to the sea, the once vast lake shrank to its present size. Depending on the season, the pan may be a shallow lake with large flocks of birds, or it may look like a large white dry salt pan. In either event it is a fascinating area -- made all the more so by Etosha's good concentrations of elephant, lion, springbok, gemsbok and hartebeest, as well as the presence of black rhino, leopard and cheetah. Birdlife is prolific with over 326 species recorded, including the crimson-breasted shrike, Namibia's emblematic bird.

Days 6 & 7

WESTERN ETOSHA

Our "migration" from the eastern Etosha to western Etosha somewhat mimics the movements of Etosha's large herds of zebra, blue wildebeest, red hartebeest, springbok

and gemsbok as they migrate from one part of the park to the other. Almost always, animals congregate around the Namutoni Plains, where there is water year round. (Namutoni is also famous for its picturesque Fort.) During our game drives, we should watch for kudu, rare black-faced impala, and bone-chewing giraffes!

Gary and Brian have taken some magnificent photos at Etosha waterholes, but it does require patience. One of the most dramatic waterhole scenes Gary's ever witnessed took place in Etosha, when he watched for hours as a pregnant female gemsbok standing at the edge of the clearing got up her courage to come to the waterhole to drink -- on her knees! B/L/D

Day 8 **DAMARALAND**

Today we wind our way through the canyons, valleys, rock formations and vast expanses of Damaraland. Our destination is the "Fountain of Doubt," Twyfelfontein.

Twyfelfontein has a spectacular collection of rock paintings and engravings, some dating back to the early Stone Age. Many of the animals depicted in the paintings and engravings can no longer be found in the region due to climate change. We'll also explore a petrified forest with rock tree trunks over 100 feet long, most estimated to be around 260 million years old, as well as the "The Burnt Mountains" and "The Organ Pipes," eerie geological formations. Tonight, after sundowners and a gorgeous sunset (if the Safari Gods are willing!), we mobile tent camp in splendid seclusion under a canopy of stars (There's no pollution here, light or otherwise). B/L/D

Day 9 **SWAKOPMUND**

When Brian first visited Swakopmund, he described it in his journal as "a Bavarian village transplanted to a foggy desert coast with a hint of African flavor." Our hotel in Swakopmund, the Hansa Hotel, is near the town's jetty, lighthouse, 1901 railway station (now a hotel) and many other sites. If time allows, we might be able to tour Walvis Bay, the deepwater bay to the south held by South Africa until 1994 when it was finally turned over to Namibian sovereignty (Brian can tell you the fascinating story associated with handover). In order to appreciate Namibia's economic pursuits and associated ecological dilemmas, we might also be able to tour the Rossing Mine, the world's largest open-cast (strip) uranium mine. B/L/D

Day 10 **NAMIB DESERT**

This morning we enter the wilds of the oldest desert on earth: the Namib Desert. This is the home of gemsbok, springbok, and the rare mountain zebra, as well as the welwitschia, an unusual dwarf tree estimated to have a lifespan of up to 1,000 years. Our journey will take us over and around gigantic dunes over 275 meters (902 feet) high, the highest in the world and perfect for Cowabunga sledding! Tonight we establish camp amongst the sandy, shifting, color-changing giants of the Namib. B/L/D

Days 11 & 12**NAMIB-NAUKLUFT**

We enter Namib-Naukluft today, Namibia's largest national park. The park offers a range of ecosystems and topographical features: from granite mountains, to canyons, to estuarine lagoons... In each of these ecosystems one finds unique animal life, most of which depends on mist from the Atlantic Ocean for survival. At the heart of Namib-Naukluft is Sossusvlei, a dusty oasis surrounded by 300 meter-high dunes. Over the course of two days we'll take in all of these striking areas and more, camping in comfort in one of the most remote parts of the world.

B/L/D

Day 13**JOHANNESBURG**

Today is a surreal day: we travel all the way from Namib-Naukluft to Windhoek, where we then catch a flight to Johannesburg. Thus, in a span of hours, we go from one of the most remote places in the world to one of the most modern cities on the African continent! Fortunately our all-suite hotel in Johannesburg is situated on the shores of placid Bruma Lake, allowing for a gentle transition back to our modern existences. B/(L)/D

Day 14**EN ROUTE**

The first part of today we have free, allowing ample time to pack or to tour parts of Johannesburg (Jo'burg is an old haunt of Brian's, as he has done much research at the South African Institute of International Affairs on the University of Witwatersrand in the heart of town). Around midday we transfer to the airport for our flight out of Africa. B/(D)

Day 15**HOME**

This morning we arrive back in the USA. Though our "Africa Under Mobile Canvas" Namibia 4x4 Adventure is over, our memories of Africa's endless diversity and infinite beauty most assuredly will endure. (B/L/D)



Safaris since 1974.