

DOSSIER: NSV – 14 Day Desert & Delta

Local Payment – USD 270

Payable in cash to the guide on departure. Only small denomination (\$50, \$20, \$10, \$5) notes printed after 2000 will be accepted. Includes 2-night Okavango Delta Excursion, Chobe NP Fee & River Cruise and Victoria Falls NP Fee.

Countries Visited

Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Important Note: We will only go to Zambia in the unlikely event that we cannot go to Zimbabwe.

Vehicle

Overland Truck

Malaria

Malaria prophylactics are required. Very Low Risk of Malaria in Northern Namibia, but the risk increases to High risk as we travel north to Zimbabwe.

Departure Point

Villa Wiese, Cnr. Theo Gurirab & Windhoek Street, Swakopmund, Namibia. Tel.: +264 (0) 64 407 105

www.villawiese.com

End Point

Savanna Lodge, 68 Courtney Selous Crescent, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Tel: +263 13 44424

www.safpar.co.za/savanna.html

What's included

Meals as indicated on the itinerary, accommodation, registered guides, transport and selected activities as per itinerary.

What's excluded

All items of a personal nature, alcohol, snacks, souvenirs, tips and optional activities (see list for an indication of prices).

Health

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disability that you may have.

Visas

Please note that these are your responsibility. Some nationalities require visas for Namibia and Botswana. Most nationalities will require visas for Zimbabwe. See Pre Departure Booklet for more information.

Climate

The African sun is very strong, especially in Namibia and Botswana. Please use a factor 30 sunscreen and wear a hat. You should drink at least 3 litres of water per day to avoid dehydration. It can also get very cold during winter months on this route. Please see Pre Departure Booklet for detailed information.

Currency and Banking

South African Rand is the most widely used currency on this route. US Dollar cash can be used for optional activities. In Botswana, the Pula is the local currency. You can change your Rand or Dollars to Pula when you enter Botswana. ATMs do not always work in Botswana. Travellers Cheques can take a long time to change into cash and often incur unreasonable charges. Credit Cards cannot always be processed – especially in remote areas. USD Notes printed before 2000 (i.e. the old style notes) will not be accepted and many places will not accept USD100 notes, so make sure to bring lots of USD1, USD5 and USD10 notes for tips and craft markets. Please see Pre Departure Booklet for detailed information on each country.

Vaccinations

No vaccinations are prescribed by law by the countries being visited on this tour. Please see the Pre Departure Information booklet for detailed information on vaccinations in Africa.

Onward Travel

This tour can be linked to the Kruger Park, East African Adventure or Discover Mozambique. Our 2-day Transit to Johannesburg is the cheapest way to get from VFA to JHB.

Pre and Post Tour Accommodation

If you require accommodation before or after your tour we can arrange this for you. We can also arrange airport transfers – contact your travel agent to make these bookings.

Arrival

Please be sure to arrive 1 day before your tour is due to depart. This will avoid any problems such as forgotten luggage, misplaced bags or any unpredictable problems such as airline strikes or delayed flight arrival.

Departure

Please book your flight to depart the day after the tour officially ends. This is to account for any delays that we may experience due to unpredictable road conditions.

Note: All information is subject to change without prior notice. Travel times and campsites can change depending on road or weather conditions, etc. These are used as a guideline only.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Country	Area	Activity	Price Range
Namibia	Swakopmund	Sky Diving	R1900 to R2500
Namibia	Swakopmund	Quadbiking	R500 to R650
Namibia	Swakopmund	Sandboarding	R350 to R400
Namibia	Swakopmund	Dinner at local restaurant	R150 to R300
Namibia	Swakopmund	Dolphin Cruise	R450 to R540
Namibia	Etosha	Night Drive in Etosha NP with Park Rangers	R500 to R600
Namibia	Etosha	Dawn Drive in Etosha NP with Park Ranger	R400 to R500
Namibia	Windhoek	Dinner at local restaurant	R150 to R300
Botswana	Ghanzi	Hunter-gatherer Guided Walk	P60 to P75
Botswana	Ghanzi	Trance Dance (min 6 people, book in advance)	P120 to P150
Botswana	Ghanzi	Game Drive (min 6 people)	P70 to P85
Botswana	Kasane	Chobe National Park Game Drive	\$40 to \$50
Botswana	Maun	Scenic Flight over Okavango Delta (Min 5)	\$60 to \$70

Botswana	Okavango	Tips for Polers - Per Person, Per Day	\$5	to	\$8
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	Dinner at local restaurant	\$45	to	\$60
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	White Water Rafting - Full Day	\$110	to	\$150
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	Combo River Board and Rafting - Full Day	\$140	to	\$160
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	Bungee Jump	\$95	to	\$150
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	Zambezi Sunset Cruise	\$45	to	\$60
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	Elephant Encounter	\$95	to	\$120
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls	Lion Encounter (Walking with Lions)	\$115	to	\$130

Note:

There are more optional activities being created every day – we have listed only the most popular. If there is something specific you would like to do then speak to your guide as they will be able to assist you.

Day 1 NAMIBIA, SWAKOPMUND

In Swakopmund you will be briefed on the optional activities available here. Day 1 is free for you to explore the town or try one of the many adventure activities. *Optional Activities: Quadbiking, Sandboarding, Sky Diving, Dolphin Cruise etc.*

Meals:	Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Hostel (Dorm room): Villa Wiese www.villawiese.com
Facilities:	Shared Ablutions, Bar, drinkable water.
Included Activities:	Stop off in Walvis Bay to view Flamingos
Route:	Solitaire to Swakopmund. ±300 km
Travel time:	±4-5 hrs (including Walvis Bay)

Swakopmund was founded two years later than Windhoek, in 1892, by Captain Curt von Francois as the main harbour of German South West Africa. Increased traffic between Germany and its colony necessitated establishing of own port as Walvis Bay, located 33 kilometres south, was already in British possession. The choice fell on Swakopmund where water could be found and because other sites checked (including Cape Cross) were unsuitable.

The majority of towns and villages in Namibia have grown out of indigenous settlements and very often were located close to sources of water. Names of places given by original inhabitants were very descriptive and in many cases those names were retained by European settlers who sometimes simplified pronunciations of the names. Nama word "Tsoakhaub" can be translated as "excrement opening" which was offensive but accurate description of the waters of Swakop river at the time of coming down in floods carrying masses of mud, sand, pieces of vegetation and animal corpses. The masses of dirty and muddy water were emptied into the ocean and the indigenous name described it very well.

The Nama name was changed to "Swachaub" and with proclamation of Swakopmund as independent district in 1896 the present way of writing came into use.

Surrounded by the Namib Desert on three sides and the cold Atlantic waters to the west, Swakopmund enjoys a temperate climate. The average temperature ranges between 15°C (59°F) to 25°C (77°F). Rainfall is less than 15 mm per year, making gutters and drainpipes on buildings a rarity. The cold Benguela current supplies moisture for the area in the form of fog that can reach as deep as 140 km (87 mi) inland. The fauna and flora of the area has adapted to this phenomenon and now relies upon the fog as a source of moisture.

Swakopmund is well known for adventure sports including: Skydiving, Sandboarding and Quadbiking. You guides will be able to assist you in deciding on a suitable activity, alternatively spend the day exploring the town and enjoying the various coffee shops and souvenir shops.

DAY 2 SPITZKOPPE

We leave all the trappings of modern life behind us and drive inland to the mysterious Spitzkoppe. Tonight we camp in the wild.

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Bush Camp: Spitzkoppe Community Campsite www.natron.net/nacobta/spitzkoppe/main.html
Facilities:	No facilities. Long drop toilets.
Route:	Swakopmund to Spitzkoppe. ±170 km
Travel time:	±3-4 hrs

Spitzkoppe

The Spitzkoppe between Usakos and Swakopmund is also described as the "Matterhorn of Namibia". Rising to a altitude of about 1 800 metres, the Spitzkoppe is by no means Namibia's highest mountain, however, due to its striking outlines, it is regarded as the most well-known mountain in the country. Situated on a seemingly endless, dry plain, the island of mountains can be seen from far away.

The granite massif, which is part of the Erongo Mountains, was created by the collapse of a gigantic volcano more than 100 million years ago and the subsequent erosion, which exposed the volcanic rock, granite.

One can go for beautiful walks in this stunning landscape and climb about between the bizarre rock formations. For those interested in flora, there is a lot to look at, like the yellow Butter Trees and the Poison Tree (*euphorbia virosa*), which leaks an extremely poisonous white juice; the Bushmen use this to poison their arrows.

Bushman paintings can be found in various places, many in the "Bushman Paradise" under an overhanging rock wall.

The difference in height between the peak of the mountain and the surrounding land is 700 metres. Next to the Spitzkoppe lie the "Little Spitzkoppe" with a height of 1584 metres above sea level and the Pontok mountains. Despite appearances, it is quite difficult to climb the Spitzkoppe, first conquered in 1946. Only experienced and well-prepared mountaineers with adequate equipment should take this mountain on. In summer, it is out of the question, because the rock gets so hot, you would burn your hands immediately.

DAY 3 HIMBA TRIBES

After some early morning exploration we continue inland and drive towards Kamanjab. The Himba are a pastoral people and predominantly breed cattle or goats, they are easily recognisable by their unique style of dress.

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Camp: Himba Camp (no website available)
Facilities:	Bush shower and basic toilets.
Route:	Spitzkoppe to Kamanjab. ±340 km
Travel time:	±5- 6 hrs

Himba Visit

The Himba ethnic groups, who have kept their ethnic individuality and culture, live in the seclusion of the Kaokoland. The friendly people are closely related to the Herero. Both ethnic groups speak the same language. Depending on the time of year, they move with their herds to different watering places. Clothes, hairstyle and jewellery are all of particular significance to the Himba and are part of their tradition and culture. Even newborn babies are adorned with pearl necklaces. When the children are a little older, bangles made of beaten copper and shells are added.

The proud Himba women take several hours for beauty care every morning. The entire body is rubbed with a cream, which consists of rancid butterfat and ochre powder. The aromatic resin of the Omuzumba bush is added as well. The cream lends the body an intense reddish shine, which corresponds to the Himba ideal of beauty.

Situated about 20 km outside of town, a guided tour around the village will, not only give you an in depth insight into the life and ways of the last traditional tribe in Namibia, the Ova-Himba, but an amazing photographic opportunity as well.

You will experience the milking ceremony, the smoke bath, be informed on the beliefs around the holy fire, ancestors, and herbal medicine. You will also learn about the jewellery and hairstyles to imitate the status of each tribe member and their close relationship with nature, their cattle and children.

Your guide Jaco is an Afrikaans-speaking white male who has lived with his Himba family within the Himba Culture now for several years and speaks the language fluently. He was adopted into the Himba Culture by an old chief, Tjsikume Bhahona, who lives in the mountains at Ongkongo near Opuwo. After spending a lot of time with his new adopted family, Jaco decided to return home to the farm of his father just outside of Kamanjab where he still had herds of Nguni Cattle, goats and some sheep. Chief Tjsikume has later asked Jaco if some of his people can come live on the farm to help him look after his goats and cattle. Part of the family then moved to the farm and built a traditional village to stay true to their culture.

The income generated from these excursions, helps to sustain the tribe from day to day, buying food and supplies, medicine (if necessary) and taking care of the children adopted by Jaco from various families unable to support them, some of them needing books and clothing for school.

Please take note that the village is not for show or a human zoo, you will be allowed inside these amazing peoples' home and have a cultural exchange. Please respect their lives and ways as they would respect yours and in this way help preserve their culture and traditions.

DAY 4/5 ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

Etosha National Park is the venue for some of the most unique game viewing experiences in Africa. We will go on various game drives, and spend our evenings at the abundant water holes for some excellent game photography.

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Camp: Okaukuejo, Halali or Namutoni www.nwr.com.na/etosha.php
Facilities:	Drinkable water, shared ablutions, bar, shop, post box, swimming pool and waterholes at all campsites.
Route:	Kamanjab to Etosha NP. ±270 km
Travel time:	±3-4 hrs

Etosha National Park, with its wealth of animal and plant life, lies in the North of Namibia and covers an area of 22 270km²; the Etosha pan's size is 4 590km². In 1851 the explorers Sir Francis Galton and Charles Anderson were the first Europeans to visit the great pan known as Etosha (the white place of mirages). The area around it teemed with game animals and the spectacle during the rainy season of December to March, with the pan filled with water more than a meter deep and countless flamingos resting here, made this one of the most exciting wildlife areas in Africa.

Fifty years later the German government built a fort at the eastern end of the pan, at Namutoni. In 1904 the Wambo attacked this fort; only seven German policemen were stationed in the fort at the time and they were short of ammunition, after seven hours of fighting they slipped away in the night and made their way southwards until they encountered a German colony coming to their relief. The combined party returned to the fort in Etosha and recaptured it. The fort had been badly looted and largely destroyed by the Wambo warriors, as a result a new fort was built – a glistening white, 'Beau Geste' stronghold, which until today has never been under attack. The new fort was a police post until the 1950's. In 1907 the German government proclaimed Etosha Pan and its surroundings a game reserve. The amenities weren't built until 1952 however, when the construction of rest camps and roads began, particularly along the southern edge of the pan, where there are perennial waterholes that attract a concentration of wild animals.

DAY 6 WINDHOEK

After an early morning game drive we set off towards Windhoek in the centre of Namibia. On the way we stop at a popular craft market. In the afternoon we go on a short city tour. *Optional Activities: Dinner out at Joe's Beer House.*

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation:	Hostel (Dorm Room): Cardboard Box Backpackers www.ahj.addr.com/facilities.html
Facilities:	Drinkable water. shared ablutions, bar, swimming pool.
Route:	Etosha to Windhoek. ±550 km
Travel time:	±8-9 hrs

The Windhoek city centre is characterized by a proliferation of German style buildings, a lasting reminder of Namibia's early colonial history. Early buildings such as the Alte Feste (old fort), Christuskirche and Tintenpalast (the parliament buildings) are of particular historical interest. In a typical display of unintentional Namibian irony, the Alte Feste Fort, once the bastion of German colonialism, now houses the National Museum which places particular emphasis on the freedom struggle and Namibian independence. Windhoek has had several names the earliest of which were the Damara /Ais //Gams (the "/" indicates a click in Nama spelling) which means firewater and the Herero Otjimuisse or place of steam. The area was also called Queen Adelaide's Baths for a (mercifully) brief time. Several opinions are offered for the origin of the present name; the most popular of these is that sometime before 1840 Jonker Afrikaner, a Nama leader, named the area Winterhoek, after the farm in South Africa where he was born. Windhoek, or windy corner, is a corruption of this name.

Windhoek has Namibia's only international airport. During the day the city centre has a European cafe culture. German cuisine dominates, but Namibian influence can be found in the quantity, and quality, of meat on offer (vegetarians be warned, Namibia is carnivore country!). Nightlife in the city centre is limited to a few restaurants and the occasional night club. Rather strangely most of the nightlife happens outside of the city centre in the suburbs and township areas. During South African occupation Windhoek was divided into three areas: Windhoek for the whites, Khomasdal for the coloureds and Katutura for the blacks. The safest and most informative way of visiting these areas is on a Windhoek Township Tour. Most importantly Windhoek is home to Namibia's brewing industry, and for the less active Windhoek is a great place to wile away the time while sipping a cold beer.

DAY 7 GHANZI, BOTSWANA

It is a scenic drive to the Buitepos border, where we cross into Botswana. Once at camp we will meet with a local Bushmen community and experience some traditional Tribal Dancing. *Optional Activity: Guided Walk-Hunting Gathering/Village, Trance Dance (min 6 x clients advance booking), Game Drives (min 6 x clients)*

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Camp: Ghanzi Trail Blazers (no available website)
Facilities:	Hot showers, shared ablutions.
Route:	Windhoek to Ghanzi. ±516 km
Travel time:	±8-9 hrs, plus a border crossing on this day.
Border post:	Namibia: Buitepos, Tel.: +264 62 560 405, Open: 07h00-22h00 Botswana: Mamanu, Tel.: +2676592013/2064, Open: 07h00-24h00

The San People who were formally know as the Bushmen, are indigenous to Botswana (and Namibia) and have lived here for over 30,000 years. It is truly an incredible experience to get an understanding of what Africa was like so many years ago and how the people survived in these desert conditions when their very existence was based on the land. It is said that the word San meant 'wild people who can't farm', however historically they didn't have a collective word for themselves. Now they call themselves Ncoakhoe meaning 'red people', but it seems San has stuck. They were nomadic people – primarily hunter gatherers, moving to where the food and water could be found.

It is estimated that there are 55,000 San people left, with 60% of them living in Botswana and many examples of their cave drawing's can be found dotted around. Sadly nowadays, their existence is similar to the aboriginals and can be found in 'squalid alcohol plagued settlements' or on farms and cattle posts. You will notice a visible difference between Botswana and Namibia; that being people and livestock. As we cross the border we'll start to see villagers, cattle, donkeys, and sheep roaming along the side of the highway. Sometimes the donkeys and cows sit in the middle of the road and any amount of horn blowing won't get them out of the road.

Independent since 1966 (formally a British protectorate) three of the world's richest diamond mines were discovered in the country, and this has made Botswana quite a rich nation, allowing them to pick and choose their future. Now 40yrs old, it is known as the African success story. Politically stable and with the foresight to invest in education, healthcare, high economic standards and without the racial issues that have plagued other countries has resulted in Botswana having the best economy in sub-Saharan Africa. The government has employed a strategy of high income - low impact tourism. This is where they reduce the number of tourists entering any area of the country by charging a lot more than neighbouring countries, thereby making it more restrictive for the budget traveller

DAY 8/9/10 MAUN – OKAVANGO DELTA

Another early day! Our journey takes us from Ghanzi towards Maun. We spend the night here (Maun) and prepare for our 2-night bush-camping experience. Your guides will provide you with a briefing about the next few days' activities and the community run tourism operation. From here we will enter the Delta using local transport. If the water level allows we will take a mokoro (traditional canoe) as well as a nature walk with the local people. *Optional Activity: Scenic flight over the Delta (time allowing).*

Day 8

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Camp: Sitatunga www.deltarain.com/sitatunga.htm
Facilities:	Hot showers, shared ablutions, bar and a swimming pool.
Route:	Ghanzi to Maun. ±300 km
Travel time:	±4-5 hrs

Day 9 (Day 1 in Delta)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
 Accommodation: Camp: Bush Camp www.deltarain.com/mokoro.htm
 Facilities: No facilities – bush camping
 Route: Maun to Bush Camp

Day 10 (Day 2 in Delta)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
 Accommodation: Camp: Bush Camp www.deltarain.com/mokoro.htm
 Facilities: No facilities – bush camping

Please note that we cannot guarantee that there will be time to go on a scenic flight.

Maun

Since Maun's founding in 1915 as the tribal capital of the Batawana people, it has had a reputation as a hard-living 'Wild West' town helping the local cattle ranching and hunting operations. However, with the growth of the tourism industry and the completion of the tar road from Nata in the early 1990s, Maun has developed swiftly, losing much of its old town character. It is now home to over 30,000 people. Maun is today a thriving, chaotic tourist town, infamous for its infestation of donkeys and to lesser extent, goats. These animals can be seen standing around on their own as the local farmers arrive in the innumerable taxis to sell their wares on the kerbside.

With the influx of tourism dollars, the typical traditional Rondavels of yesteryear have been replaced by square but modestly sized cinderblock homes roofed with tin and, rarely, tiles. It is not unusual to see mud rondavels with satellite dishes, attesting to the increasing affluence of Botswana, and the increasingly reliability of power and communications in Maun. Likewise, mobile phone service in Maun is excellent to a range of about 20 to 25km depending on weather.

Opposite the main shopping strip which has grown around Riley's Garage, multi-level air-conditioned shopping centres are incongruously surrounded by potholes, dusty or muddy car parking lots, also inevitably a marketplace for whoever wishes to sell. There is now, also, no less than three major chain supermarkets, Cbstore, Spar, Shoprite and a Nandos.

Okavango delta

The Okavango delta is one of the world's largest inland water systems. Its headwaters start in Angola's western highlands, with numerous tributaries joining to form the Cubango River, which then flows through Namibia (called the Kavango) and finally enters Botswana, where it is then called the Okavango. Millions of years ago the Okavango River used to flow into a large inland lake called Lake Makgadikgadi (now Makgadikgadi Pans). Tectonic activity and faulting interrupted the flow of the river causing it to back up and form what is now the Okavango Delta. This has created a unique system of waterways that now supports a vast array of animal and plant life that would have otherwise been a dry Kalahari Savannah.

The delta's floods are fed by the rains in Angola and Zambia, which start in October and finish sometime in April. The floods only cross the border between Botswana and Namibia in December and will only reach the bottom end of the delta (Maun) sometime in July, taking almost nine months from the source to the bottom. This slow meandering pace of the flood is due to the very minor drop in elevation - little more than 60 meters over a distance of 450 kilometres!

The delta environment has large numbers of animal populations that are otherwise rare, such as Crocodile, Red Lechwe, Sitatunga, Elephant, Wild dogs, Buffalo, Wattled crane, as well as the other more common mammals and bird life.

DAY 11 GWETA

We leave the Delta behind us and travel east to Gweta, which is located halfway between Maun and Nata, near the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
 Accommodation: Camp: Planet Baobab Campsite www.unchartedafrica.co.za/page.php?p_id=59
 Facilities: Hot showers, shared ablutions, bar and swimming pool.
 Route: Maun to Gweta. ±201 km
 Travel time: ± 2-3hrs (4x4 & mokoro transfers), ±3hrs driving in truck.

Along the cracked and crop-less landscape on the road between Maun and Francistown, where elephants tear up any tree that dares to raise its head, a large grey hulk looms into sight at the edge of the road. If this is an elephant it is a very peculiar one! As the eyes recognise a giant anteater, the brain begins to wonder what might have been in that last beer?

But, follow the side road pointed out by that anteater snout and you will discover the intriguingly named "Planet Baobab". Welcome to the Baobab capital of the world and home of the Kalahari Surf Club! The average age of each baobab tree; 4000 years and beyond, the boundless salt pans of the Makgadikgadi, a lunar landscape the size of Switzerland.

Thankfully, the funkiest bar in the Kalahari awaits your pleasure, a well known watering hole for travellers of every description and the more colourful characters from Maun. At any one time, locals jostle the cross-continentals who have slogged it through the bush, and worse, to get here. Just a stone's throw from all this beer and bustle is the elephant's paddling pool. Oblivious to Guests crouching in the nearby trees, the elephants and travellers mostly ignore each other.

DAY 12 BOTSWANA - CHOBE NATIONAL PARK

When we arrive at Kasane we set up camp on the bank of the Chobe River. The afternoon is spent game viewing from a boat in the Chobe National Park. This is an excellent opportunity to view Africa's spectacular wildlife. You will have the chance to experience an early morning game drive the following day.

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation:	Camp: Thebe River Safaris www.openafrica.org/participant/thebe-river-safaris
Facilities:	Hot showers, good ablutions, bar and swimming pool.
Included Activities:	Sunset Boat Cruise in the Chobe NP
Route:	Gweta to Kasane. ±400 km
Travel time:	± 6-7hrs

Chobe National Park

The Chobe National Park, which is the second largest national park in Botswana and covers 10,566 square kilometres, has one of the greatest concentrations of game found on the African continent. Its uniqueness in the abundance of wildlife and the true African nature of the region, offers a safari experience of a lifetime.

The park is divided into four distinctly different eco systems: Serondela with its lush plains and dense forests in the Chobe River area in the extreme north-east; the Savuti Marsh in the west about fifty kilometres north of Mababe gate; the Linyanti Swamps in the north-west and the hot dry hinterland in between.

The original inhabitants of what is now the park were the San people, otherwise known in Botswana as the Basarwa. They were hunter-gatherers who lived by moving from one area to another in search of water, wild fruits and wild animals. The San were later joined by groups of the Basubiya people and later still, around 1911, by a group of Batawana led by Sekgoma. When the country was divided into various land tenure systems, late last century and early this century, the larger part of the area that is now the national park was classified as crown land. In 1931 the idea of creating a national park in the area was first mooted, in order to protect the wildlife from extinction and to attract visitors. In 1932, an area of some 24,000 square kilometres in the Chobe district was declared a non-hunting area and the following year, the protected area was increased to 31,600 square kilometres. However, heavy tsetse fly infestations resulted in the whole idea lapsing in 1943. In 1957, the idea of a national park was raised again when an area of about 21,000 square kilometres was proposed as a game reserve and eventually a reduced area was gazetted in 1960 as Chobe Game Reserve. Later, in 1967, the reserve was declared a national park - the first national park in Botswana.

There was a large settlement, based on the timber industry, at Serondela, some remains of which can still be seen today. This settlement was gradually moved out and the Chobe National Park was finally empty of human occupation in 1975. In 1980 and again in 1987, the boundaries were altered, increasing the park to its present size.

The Chobe Elephant

A major feature of Chobe National Park is its elephant population. First of all, the Chobe elephant comprise part of what is probably the largest surviving continuous elephant population. This population covers most of northern Botswana plus northwestern Zimbabwe. The Botswana's elephant population is currently estimated at around 120,000. This elephant population has built up steadily from a few thousand since the early 1900s and has escaped the massive illegal poaching that decimated other populations in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Chobe elephant are migratory, making seasonal movements of up to 200 kilometres from the Chobe and Linyanti rivers, where they concentrate in the dry season, to the pans in the southeast of the park, to which they disperse in the rains. The elephants, in this area have the distinction of being the largest in body size of all living elephants though the ivory is brittle and you will not see many huge tuskers among these rangy beasts.

DAY 13 ZIMBABWE - VICTORIA FALLS

On arrival in Victoria Falls we have time to plan the next day's adventure activities before we visit the spectacular Victoria Falls National Park and experience the thundering of the mighty Zambezi. The popular optional sunset cruise includes dinner and drinks. *Optional Activities: Chobe morning game drive.*

Meals:	Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation:	Hostel: (Dorm Rooms) Savanna Lodge www.safpar.co.za/savanna.html
Facilities:	Drinkable water, hot showers, shared ablutions, bar, swimming pool.
Route:	Kasane to Vic Falls. ±100 km
Travel time:	±2 hrs plus border crossing
Border posts:	Botswana: Kazangula Road, +26721 50320, Open: 06h00-20h00 Zimbabwe: Kazangula Road, +26721 50320, Open: 06h00-18h00

The small tourist town of Victoria Falls is located within walking distance of the famous waterfall. Victoria Falls is also an adventure hub with activities that include the ever-popular white water rafting, the flight over the Falls, an encounter with the Lions as well as the opportunity to ride an Elephant!

Once we have crossed the border in to Zimbabwe it is a short drive to town where we will be briefed about all the different activities available. Choose carefully as almost all of them are really worth doing, speak to your guides for some advice. Please be aware that you cannot use credit/debit cards in Zimbabwe, so cash (Rand or USD) is best. The prices of the activities are listed at the beginning of this dossier so you can make sure to bring what you need.

The Victoria Falls

Mosi-oa-Tunya is the name used by the local people and Victoria Falls is the later name given by Scottish explorer Dr. David Livingstone for Britain's Queen Victoria.

While it is neither the highest nor the widest waterfall in the world, the claim it is the largest is based on a width of 1.7 kilometres (1 mile) and height of 108 meters (360 ft), forming the largest sheet of falling water in the world.

The unusual form of Victoria Falls enables virtually the whole width of the falls to be viewed face-on, at the same level as the top, from as close as 60 metres (200 ft), because the whole Zambezi River drops into a deep, narrow slot like chasm, connected to a long series of gorges. Few other waterfalls allow such a close approach on foot.

Victoria Falls are one of Africa's major tourist attractions, and are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The falls are shared between Zambia and Zimbabwe, and each country has a national park to protect them and a town serving as a tourism centre: Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park and Livingstone in Zambia, and Victoria Falls National Park and the town of Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.

For a considerable distance above the falls, the Zambezi flows over a level sheet of basalt, in a shallow valley bounded by low and distant sandstone hills. The river's course is dotted with numerous tree-covered islands, which increase in number as the river approaches the falls. There are no mountains, escarpments, or deep valleys which might be expected to create a waterfall, only flat plateau extending hundreds of kilometres in all directions.

The falls are formed as the full width of the river plummets in a single vertical drop into a chasm 60–120 metres (200–400 ft) wide, carved by its waters along a fracture zone in the basalt plateau. The depth of the chasm, called the First Gorge, varies from 80 metres (262 ft) at its western end to 108 metres (360 ft) in the centre. The only outlet to the First Gorge is a 110- metre-wide (360 ft) gap about two-thirds of the way across the width of the falls from the western end, through which the whole volume of the river pours into the Victoria Falls gorges.

There are two islands on the crest of the falls that are large enough to divide the curtain of water even at full flood: Boaruka Island (or Cataract Island) near the western bank, and Livingstone Island near the middle. At less than full flood, additional islets divide the curtain of water into separate parallel streams. The main streams are named, in order from Zimbabwe (west) to Zambia (east): Leaping Water (called Devil's Cataract by some), Main Falls, Rainbow Falls (the highest) and the Eastern Cataract.

DAY 14 VICTORIA FALLS

Most people will spend the day White Water Rafting, a not-to-be-missed experience of a lifetime! Vic Falls offers many exciting alternatives. *Optional Activities: White Water Rafting, Bungee Jump, Elephant Excursion, Dinner out.*

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Own Arrangements / Post tour accommodation can be booked through AFTours

Tour Ends

This tour ends today at Savanna Lodge, you can book an additional night here www.safpar.co.za/savanna.html or at the Elephant Hills Hotel www.africansunhotels.com/Index.cfm?fuseaction=HOTELS.info&name=Elephant_Hills_Resort You need to pre book this accommodation through your travel agent or AFTours.

NB – It is possible to book our NTVJ transfer to Johannesburg (2-days) straight after this tour, as this is one of the cheapest ways to get from Victoria Falls to Johannesburg. The transfer will depart on Day 15 at 6am.

TIPPING ON TOUR

Southern Africa: In general tipping in restaurants is generally expected and is around 10% for good service, more if you have received exceptional service, and, feel free not to tip at all if you received poor service. Tipping taxi drivers etc is really at your own discretion and not always expected. If in doubt please ask your guides.

Our guides do work hard, but they are also paid at (and often above) industry levels for this work. Our Crew can be tipped if you feel that they have done a good job and/or gone above and beyond the call of duty.

The best way to arrange tips is to elect one person in the group to collect the money. We recommend USD1 (or about R5) per day per person, per guide as a fair tip. So if you have 3-crew on a tour, we would recommend that 3 envelopes are used and each crew members name written on one. Place what you feel is fair in to each envelope and the elected person can give these to the crew at the end of the tour. If you do not feel that the crew deserve a tip, please, do not tip them. You must remember that tipping is only for exceptional service and is not at all compulsory or expected.

THANK YOU FOR TRAVELLING WITH ADVENTURE FANTASY TOURS (AFTours)

At the end of your tour you will be provided with feedback forms. These forms are confidential and should be given to your crew in a sealed envelope. If you are not sure of the confidentiality of the feedback form please feel free to email us as well on admin@overlandtravel.com Please make sure to also complete the feedback form as we use the answers on these forms to improve and maintain our service levels.

Accommodation providers are subject to change without notice, the accommodation listed in this dossier is our preferred supplier, but sometimes due to availability, we are unable to make use of the property listed in this dossier. If we cannot use the accommodation provider as listed we will substitute another property of similar standards, however, en-suite facilities are not always guaranteed.