

## **THE AFRICAN TOUCH**

### **Victoria Falls/ZIMBABWE-BOTSWANA-NAMIBIA/Windhhoek**

**Day 1-3** - Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls is, by some measures, the largest waterfall in the world. For some, Mosi oa Tunya – The Smoke That Thunders is the highlight of their trip. The Zambezi plunges 1,000 metres over the gorge, creating a mist cloud that rises metres into the air and the thundering force can be heard from Victoria Falls town. Our first three nights are spent at Pamusha Lodge and we spend our days exploring Victoria Falls and taking part in the many adventure activities.

**Day 4-5** - From Zimbabwe we travel to Chobe National Park in Botswana, one of the worlds' largest wilderness areas covering approximately 11,000sqm. This park has the highest elephant concentration in Africa – over 120,000. The next morning we set off in 4WD vehicles on a game drive, where we spot elephants, hippos, sables, antelopes, buffaloes, crocodiles and many birds. In the evening we cruise in the relaxing waters of the Chobe River with the opportunity to see more game.

**Day 6-7** - Next stop is Maun, the delta is one of the world's largest inland waterways and its tranquility and quietness have a calming effect on those who visit it. The next morning we leave early in open 4WD vehicles to drive past tiny villages and farmland to the edge of the delta where guides pole us around in mokoros (dug-out canoes) as we explore the extensive waterways, plant life, in particular beautiful water lilies, and wildlife. The guides will take us on a bush walk in small groups. The included flight over the Delta offers remarkable views of this unspoiled wilderness and the best place to get an understanding of how big the Delta is.

**Day 8** - We have around 300km to get to Ghanzi. Ghanzi is world renowned as a centre for the Bushmen (San) of the Kalahari. This afternoon we'll walk with these Bushmen and witness their skills as gatherers and trackers firsthand, it's a revelation not easily forgotten.

**Day 9-10** - Today we have a big drive day as we head to the Waterberg Plateau. The area was occupied by Germans in the early 1900s and the old police station, a grand colonial structure is now a stunning bar and restaurant. The next day before heading to Tsumeb we'll take a nature walk along the top of the plateau where black or white rhino and buffalo have been introduced into the sanctuary for breeding.

**Day 11-13** - For the next three nights we stay in Etosha National Park. The Etosha pan dominates the park and is roughly 130km long and in places as wide as 50km. A vast array of animals lives around the pan, including elephant, lion, gemsbok, zebra, black rhino, giraffe, cheetah and leopard. After sunset each evening, you can watch the animals at the watering holes near the camping area, which is safe and lit with flood lights.

**Day 14-15** - Next we travel on to a cheetah conservation project -- where we interact with these special mammals. The farmers have several tame cheetahs which we meet in the garden of their home before, travelling on the back of a ute and standing on a trailer, we enter a 250ha reserve to watch wild cheetah being fed. While we're here we also visit the Himba people for a fascinating cultural experience.

**Day 16** – Today we'll visit some rock engravings and learn about the history of the San people and their carvings. The carvings depict the animals and lifestyle of some of the earliest-known African people. From here we head to the majestic Spitzkoppe, where we bush camp for the night. Spitzkoppe is a huge granite outcrop and offers plenty of interesting walks. It has one of the most beautiful sunsets and sunrises in Namibia and is the perfect place to star gaze and experience the peace and quietness of this magnificent open land.

**Day 17-19** - This morning we visit the Cape Cross Seal colony which is located at the spot of the landing place of the first Dutch settler who marked the spot with a cross. Then we head to Swakopmund, with its mind-boggling lunar landscapes, unforgettable sunsets and bizarre plants, is the perfect place to spend a few days – and sleep in real beds. As well as strolling through the shops in the centre of this tourist town, there are numerous fun optional activities for the more adventurous: quad biking in the dunes, desert tours, fishing, sky diving, scenic flights etc. As a group we will take a local township tour where we meet people from Herero, Damara, Owambo and Nama origin and learn some of their culture.

**Day 20-21** - Departing Swakopmund, we make our way to Sesriem campsite, on the edge of the Namib Desert. The following day is spent exploring this stunning area. We visit Sossusvlei – a clay pan, enclosed by the world's largest sand dunes, up to 300m high, which are formed by equal and opposing winds. After driving for about 60km between the dunes, we board open 4WD vehicles which take us to the soda pan. We have the opportunity to climb the world famous Dune 45 for an unforgettable sunset over the desert. We also visit Sesriem Canyon, a small canyon typical of the area.

**Day 22** - Fish River Canyon is the 2nd largest and oldest canyon in the world and one of the most impressive natural formations of southern Africa. It was formed approximately 500 million years ago, with some rocks at the bottom dating up to 2600 million years. Time is spent here admiring the scenery.

**Day 23** - Next we head to Ai-Ais Hot Springs. With exquisitely designed pools it is an excellent place to relax after a dusty day's drive. These hot springs, with temperatures of 60 degrees Celsius, are rich in minerals and are reputed to have healing qualities.

**Day 24** - Next is Keetmanshoop which is famous for The Giants Playground and The Quiver Tree Forest near the camp. The distinctive trees got their name because the natives used the wood to make quivers for their arrows. The camp is on a 15,000ha farm on which about 3000 sheep are grazed. The farmers at Gariganus Farm have 40ha fenced to contain cheetahs which can kill 125 sheep a night. In the homestead's garden there's an enclosure where we can watch the cheetahs eat dinner – they purr like cats and, when excited, emit an unusual chirp.

**Day 25-26** - Windhoek is a peaceful and relaxed city in a country with a record of good political stability, it's also known as one of the safest and cleanest cities on the African continent. Walking around gives us a good feel of the place, with its very Germanic architecture. Time is allowed to have a look in the shops and get your own lunch before heading back to Arebbusch Travel Lodge. Our final group meal is at the well known Joe's beerhouse.