

Michelangelo

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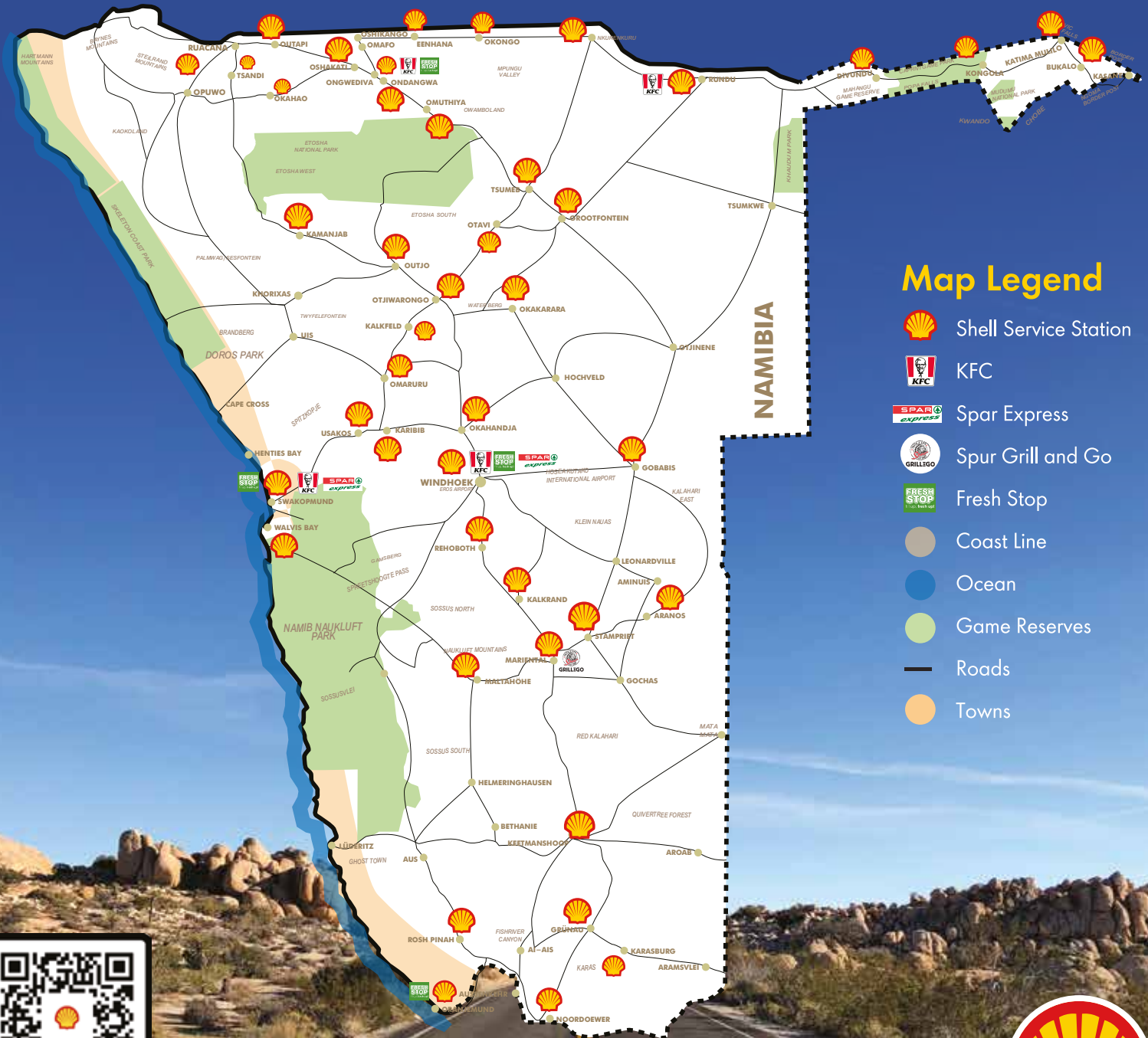
JUNE 2025

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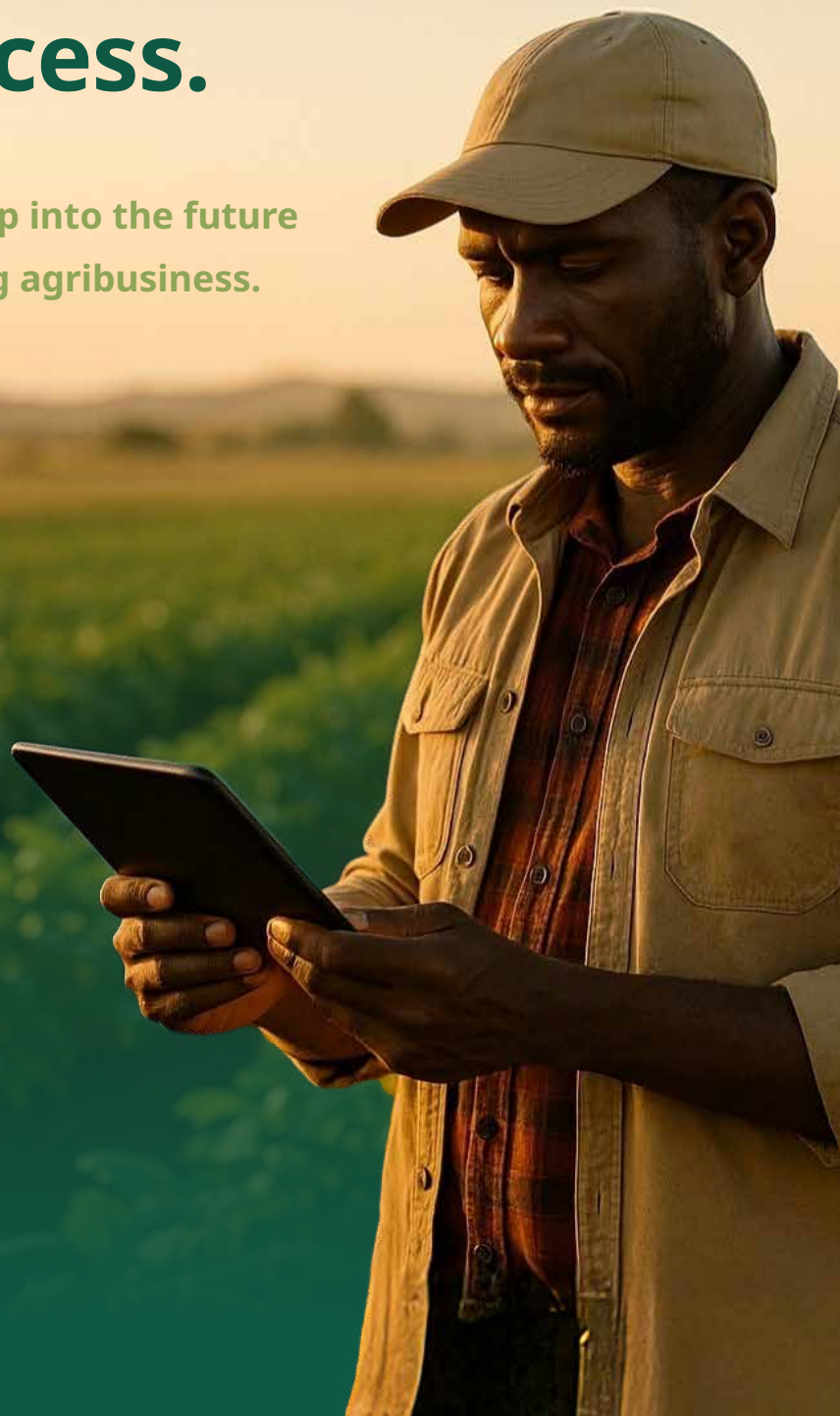
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June in the Land of the Brave

*Glowing landscapes, bold history,
and the warmth of national pride*



It's the month of June, and Namibians, accustomed to the heat of their naturally arid region, have begun to brave the cold weather accompanied by harsh winds. This winter, however, is bathed in a golden glow, with lush grasslands as evidence of the generous rains that have fallen over the land that hosts two of the world's most famous deserts - one of which is the oldest on Earth.

This June is remarkable not just because of the rainfall that still lingers, but also because of the history that reminds us of our journey as a nation. It was in this month that Namibia's voice rose to echo within the chambers of the United Nations and across the world, lighting the path to our freedom after years of armed struggle.

Through national resistance and cold winters, we have endured every challenge and soared above them. This June, Namibia is aglow with promise - a promise that the 3.1 million inhabitants were born to shine, and indeed, destined to rise.

Welcome to the Land of the Brave. Travel safely, embrace her beauty, and be sure to keep warm. ❄️

Her Excellency

Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah

President of the Republic of Namibia



From the Zambezi to Africa

Drawing on the Zambezi's quiet strength, Kingsley Kwenani shares Meatco NCA's bold vision to empower communal farmers, uphold dignity, and unlock the export potential of northern Namibia.

Kingsley Kwenani

Kingsley Kwenani

Chief Executive Officer of Meatco NCA (Pty) Ltd and
Acting Executive Officer of the Meatco Foundation

Dear Readers,

If you had told me back in my days at Sanjo Secondary School, deep in the Caprivi Region, that one day I would be writing to you as the Chief Executive Officer of Meatco NCA (Pty) Ltd and Acting Executive Officer of the Meatco Foundation in Windhoek, I might have chuckled at the thought. Yet, here I am, reflecting on a journey that began in one of Namibia's most unique and captivating regions.

For those who may not be familiar with Caprivi - now officially called the Zambezi Region - allow me to share a little secret: it's unlike anywhere else in Namibia. At its easternmost tip, our country comes within just 150 meters of Zimbabwe, creating one of the world's closest near-quadripoints, where Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe almost meet.

The Caprivi Strip was carved out in 1890, when Germany sought a navigable route to Africa's east coast via the Zambezi River. Their grand plan, however, was halted by nature's masterpiece: the mighty Victoria Falls. Today, this breathtaking region forms part of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) - the world's largest transboundary conservation area, spanning five countries and covering an astounding 444,000 km².

It's worth noting that Meatco's journey began in 1986, originally as the Swameat Corporation, a state-owned enterprise dedicated to meat production and exports. In 2001, it evolved into the Meat Corporation of Namibia through the Meat Corporation of Namibia Act (Act 1 of 2001), reaffirming its commitment to Namibia's farmers by securing fair markets and strong representation.

Established on 1 November 2019, Meatco NCA (Pty) Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Meat Corporation of Namibia. It was created to drive meat processing and marketing operations across Namibia's Northern Communal Area (NCA), which include the Zambezi, Kavango East, Kavango West, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana, and Kunene regions.

Meatco NCA purchases and processes cattle from communal farmers to supply both local and international markets. With abattoir annual slaughter capacity in Katima Mulilo (10,000), Rundu (20,000), Eenhana (5,000), Outapi (5,000), a Mobile Slaughter Unit (5,000) and the Ongwediva Meat Processing Plant, we are proud to be unlocking the NCA's export potential and contributing to economic growth through sustainable, inclusive meat production.

As we move forward, I remain deeply committed to amplifying the voices of our northern producers, not just as contributors to the meat value chain, but as families whose livelihoods depend on fair markets, sustainable practices, and recognition. Each animal sold supports children in school, food on the table, and rural resilience in the face of climate change and economic uncertainty.

At Meatco NCA and Meatco Foundation as the corporate social investment vehicle, we are not only working to unlock the region's export potential but also to align our efforts with Namibia's development goals and the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those focused on poverty eradication, food security, and inclusive economic growth. Our work is about more than meat; it's about dignity, opportunity, and a shared future that leaves no farmer behind. 🌱



ON THE COVER:

Bwabwata National Park: Namibia's best kept safari secret

Bwabwata isn't your typical park—it's a living landscape where people and wildlife coexist in a one-of-a-kind conservation area.

(See pages 36-37 for the full story)

www.gondwana-collection.com



Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of Michelangelo International Wine and Spirits Awards Business Trust.



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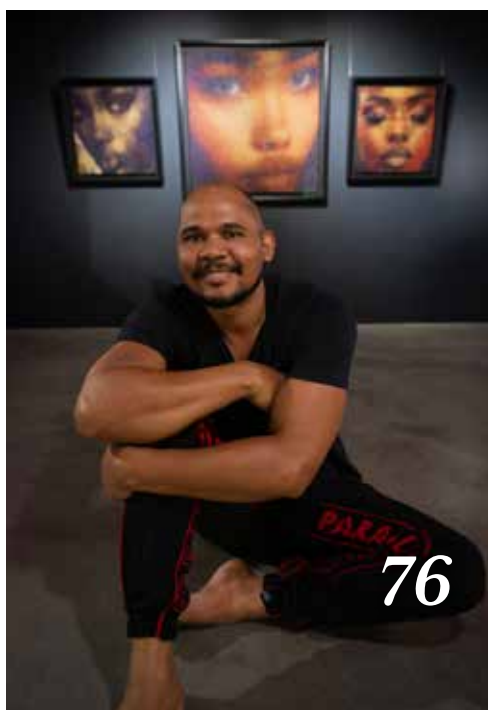
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Hoadacampsite — A Sleep-Out Special!

For campers... here's a wonderful two-night sleep-out special at the glorious Hoadacampsite, located in the #Khoadi//Hoas Conservancy near Grootberg Lodge, just 75 kilometres from Kamanjab. And this camping special includes far more than just two nights' accommodation.

words & photography supplied by Journeys Namibia



Hoda Campsite & Tented Camp is a gem - well known and loved by seasoned campers. Tucked among large grey granite boulders and flourishing mopane trees, it's no wonder that when Hoda announces a special offer... you can hear the stampede!

This delightfully rustic camp is spread across generous spaces that can accommodate multiple tents or vehicles with rooftop tents. Each site caters for up to eight people, while two larger campsites can host groups of up to fourteen guests. The Tented Camp itself can sleep two to ten people.

All campsites are equipped with a charming kitchen and braai (BBQ) facilities, a flushing toilet, and open-air showers. The group sites feature separate bathrooms. Conservation is a driving force here: at Hoda Camp, water for your shower is heated by the same fire used to cook your meals - a thoughtful touch by Journeys Namibia, which constantly seeks to minimise its environmental footprint.

Attention to comfort is evident throughout the camp - especially at the deck and bar area next to the splash pool. Nestled among granite outcrops, this is a wonderfully social space to settle in, soak up the magic of the surroundings, and watch the sun set over Damaraland.

Hoda Camp is an ideal destination for nature lovers to unwind while exploring Namibia's captivating north-western region. This area boasts a remarkable array of rare flora, geological marvels, and extraordinary wildlife, including desert-adapted elephants, rhinos, lions, and many other fascinating species. Days at Hoda can also be spent learning about the local communities who call this region home.



Now for the Hoda Camp sleep-out special:

Included in the rate are two nights' tented accommodation at Hoda; two breakfasts and dinners for two people, prepared in your outdoor camp kitchen; local drinks; and a private vehicle with a guide for your transfer into the Klip River Valley. On the day of the rhino tracking activity, lunch and drinks are also included. Your final evening features a sundowner drink and a special visit from Bob the storyteller, who'll share fascinating tales and insights around the campfire. There's something truly special about Hoda Camp - whether you're sleeping under the stars, cooling off at the pool, or sharing a chilled glass of something special around the braai fire.



A Walk on the Wild Side

Travel journalist Fiona McIntosh joins a media group at Onguma Trails Camp in Namibia, and quickly discovers that hiking through big game areas is high-adrenaline stuff.

words by Fiona McIntosh | photographs by Fiona McIntosh and Onguma Safari Camps



Liberty stops suddenly, clearly startled. A guinea fowl has flown up from under his feet.

“We call them heart attack birds,” our guide laughs. “They wait until you’ve almost stepped on them before flying!”

The first walking trail of its kind in the Etosha region, this new luxury walking safari on a private reserve bordering Etosha is designed for adventurous safari-goers. It offers the opportunity to walk all day and return to the spoils of a luxury tented camp.

After a thorough briefing from our two guides, Liberty Eiseb and Victor Nchindo, we stride out of camp in single file, following a dry riverbed past huge termite mounds resembling pizza ovens. The bases are pocked with burrows, likely dug by aardvarks. We peer in carefully, knowing warthogs or porcupines might also be resident.

The landscape changes. Walking through long, swaying grasses, we spy zebra, wildebeest, a lone gemsbok bull, and a big herd of impala. The twitchers are in heaven, pointing out hornbills, lilac-breasted rollers, and African goshawks.

The guides are in their element: careful, but relaxed and humorous. Hailing from different parts of the country,

they share unique personal experiences and a deep understanding of the bush. Victor points out the distinctive prints of a male lion. Tracking is in their blood.

Formerly a cattle farm, the terrain lends itself well to walking safaris. Since the fences were taken down in January, game has been moving in, with herbivores drawn to the lush grass.

“Giraffe like untouched areas, so that population will rise. Then rhino and elephants will follow and open the area up,” Liberty explains, as we approach an umbrella thorn tree, where, joy of joys, a lavish bush breakfast has been laid out.

After the feast, we continue, stopping to inspect rhino and elephant dung, and yet more feline tracks. But the walk is as much about birds, bush flora, insects, and other little critters as it is about big game sightings. As our senses become attuned, we revel in the smells and sounds of the bush and appreciate the numerous animal encounters.

Back at camp, we’re treated to a late lunch before an afternoon nap. Surrounded by grassland with its own waterhole, it’s an idyllic setting. Trees provide shade for the four elegant, spacious tents.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL & LEISURE—



Since the Phylloxera plague in the 1860s, almost all French vines grow on American rootstocks. Chile, untouched by Phylloxera, still has original French rootstocks from the 1800s.

We leap at the chance for a sundowner drive. None of the animals have collars, but reports indicate a lion nearby. It's barely visible in the long grass, but the eagle-eyed guides spot the big cat - most likely the male we tracked on foot earlier. As darkness falls, a fascinating scene plays out: the predator stalks a herd of wildebeest, which close ranks around their vulnerable calves.

As the chef braais, we sit around the campfire, entranced, as Liberty interprets the night sky. There's no light pollution, no cellphone coverage. Just us, in this unspoiled wilderness.

The sky is dark and moody when we head out on the second day. A cute little Damara dik-dik struts ahead of us, and we learn about bush weather forecasters. "When rain is coming, ants detect the change in humidity and pressure and protect the entrance to their nest by creating a larger hole around it to catch the water," Liberty tells us. It's a wonderful detective story: the more clues we're given, the better we read the tracks and signs. Watching a family of mongoose chase a jackal is the perfect finale. Then we hasten back, energised by the thunder and distant flashes of lightning.

The rain has stopped by mid-afternoon, and we have another lesson in tracking. There are prints of leopard, lion, and hyena in the wet mud - they've all passed through recently. Less obvious is a faint smudge. Mimicking the animal's behaviour, Victor paints a vivid picture of a leopard sleeping on its side, its fur leaving an imprint as it gracefully rises.

On our final day, we encounter a large herd of giraffe and give them a wide berth. They're very chilled, noticing us but still browsing. A tall adult male is clearly the lookout; the others - all females or calves - take their lead from him. Gradually, the curious youngsters move closer to check us out. One still has its umbilical cord, and we feel the privilege of this intimate interaction.

"It's all about communication and respect: we track the animals, but then let them come to us," Victor explains.

As we drive out, I reflect on how spoilt we've been, spending a few days in this magical place where, away from distractions, we could disconnect, slow down, and truly appreciate the bird calls, the smell of rain, and the entrancing flames of the fire. We're sad to leave. The bush has so many stories to tell. I can't wait to hear more of them. 🌿



Please contact your preferred travel agent or tour operator to book your Namibian adventure.

For a night in Windhoek before your safari, The Windhoek Luxury Suites is the perfect base to unwind. Conveniently located in the heart of the capital, it features a lovely pool surrounded by lush gardens and easy access to great restaurants. <https://thewindhoek.com/>

Onguma Nature Reserve, on the eastern fringe of Etosha, is home to four of the Big Five and offers 2- or 3-night walking trails based at the new Onguma Trails Camp.

Rates: N\$26,000 per person (Fully Inclusive) for the two-night experience. No single supplement applies. <https://onguma.com/onguma-trails-camp/>

Enquiries: reservations@onguma.com

Book online: <https://onguma.com/online-booking/>

Before you leave, consider spending a night or two at Zannier Hotels Omaanda, with just 15 individual Owambo-style thatch and clay huts. Set in a 22,000-acre wildlife conservancy half an hour from Windhoek, it's a convenient and relaxing end to your stay. Unwind in the infinity pool as you soak in the magnificent sunsets over the distant hills of the Khomas Hochland Plateau, with an easy road transfer to the airport. <https://www.zannierhotels.com/omaanda/>

"It is good to love many things, for therein lies the true strength, and whosoever loves much performs much, and can accomplish much, and what is done in love, is well done."

—Vincent van Gogh



MINDSCAPES:

Brief Encounters with Namibia's Most Amazing People

words by Linda de Jager | photographs by Pompié Burger

Ian ‘Pompie’ Burger, a Namibian orthopaedic surgeon, is well known for his vibrant and creative photographs of birds - and his quick wit.

His artistic vision has brought several bird books to life, and his skills as a photographer extend beyond birds. He shares a selection of his favourite photographs with Michelangelo, and answers a few quick questions.

What makes you tick?

Kindness and nature.

What types of books do you enjoy reading?

Books on why people do what they do, and what they think but will never tell anyone.

What is it about birds that moves you?

Their beauty and their freedom.

What are your top tips for photographing birds?

It's important to have patience, a love of birds, and good equipment.

I assume you need to be able to anticipate birds' movements?

For that, you need to have patience, patience, and patience. My family does not always appreciate - or share - my patience.

As a bird photographer, you've likely had the opportunity to observe and document the impact of human activities on bird populations and habitats. What is the main takeaway?

In Namibia, the disrespect most people have for trees could eventually leave us with no trees and no wildlife.

What's the most memorable encounter you've had with birds while photographing them?

Sitting at the Carmine Bee-eater colony at Mubala in the Zambezi region for many hours and days.

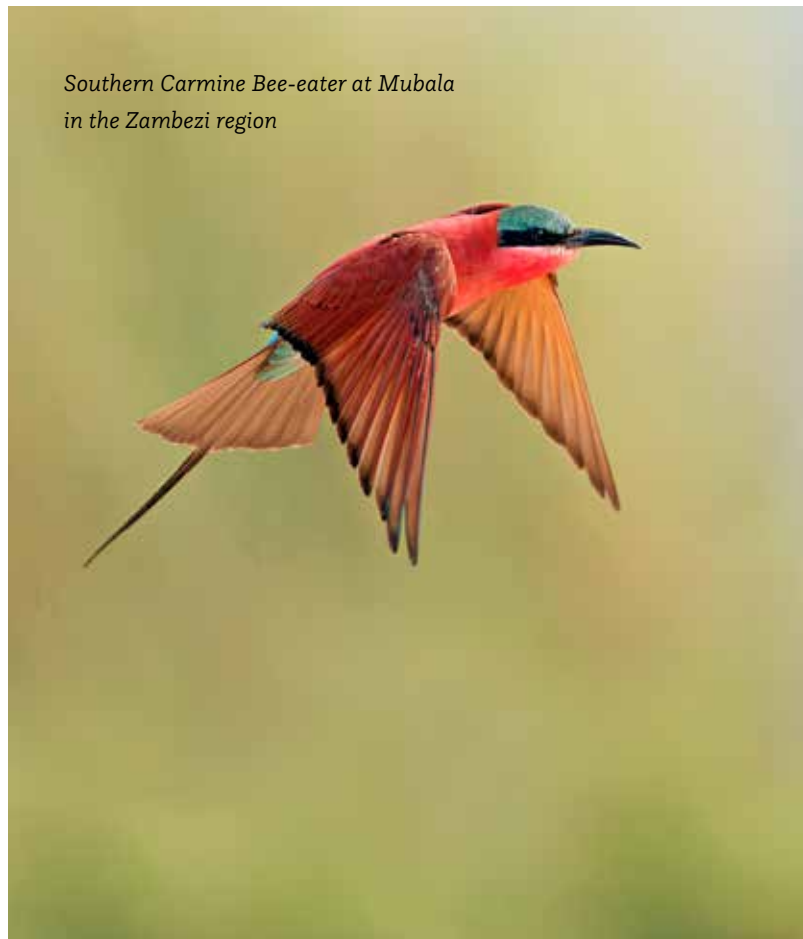
Who has had the biggest influence on you?

My wife, Helga, and ouboet, Ferdie, sharing my love for nature, books, music, kak praat, and photography.🍷

Elephants mourn the loss of a fellow elephant by paying their last respects



Southern Carmine Bee-eater at Mubala in the Zambezi region



Michelangelo

—PROFILE—



*Red-billed Quelea at a watering hole in
Etosha National Park*



Oryx in the magical desert

Your brain consumes about 20% of your body's energy – even though it makes up only about 2% of your body weight.



Namibia Tourism Board Showcases

Spectacular Destinations at INDABA 2025 in Durban, South Africa

The Namibia Tourism Board (NTB) actively participated in Africa's Travel Indaba 2025, held in Durban, South Africa, from May 13 to 15, 2025. As the leading leisure trade show in Africa, organized by South African Tourism, Indaba serves as a crucial platform for promoting African tourism products to both international and local buyers, destination marketers, and leisure service providers.

This year, Namibia was represented alongside 21 distinguished exhibitors, including the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MEFT), Namibia Tracks and Trails, Matiti Safaris, Ondili Lodges Namibia, NatureFriends Safaris, Namibia Wildlife Resorts, Namibia Airports Company, Sandwich Dunes Tours Car Rental, Hammertein Africa Lodge, Fly Namibia, Ohorongo Safaris, Desert Dust Dune Tours Safaris, Gondwana Collection, Namibia2Go, Swakop Cultural Tours, Skeleton Coast Safaris, Ultimate Safaris, Naturally Namibia, Wilderness, Mountain Elephant Safaris, Peoples Tours Safaris, Ombahe Tours, and nine MSMEs (Easy Travel Tours and Transfers; Rafika Tours and Safari; Pewah Tours and Car Rental; Rhema Tours and Travel; The Chef's Palace; Paparazzi Namib Trails and Safaris; Sandwich Dunes Tours Car Rental and About Africa CC; Kate's Nest Guesthouse and Tours), all supported by MEFT.

On May 14th, NTB hosted a "Networking with Namibia" B2B Cocktail Networking Reception and PR Engagement event from 18:00 to 22:00 at the Maharani Hotel. This Namibian-themed gathering aimed to connect buyers with local suppliers and media, fostering opportunities to explore and promote Namibia's rich tourism offerings.

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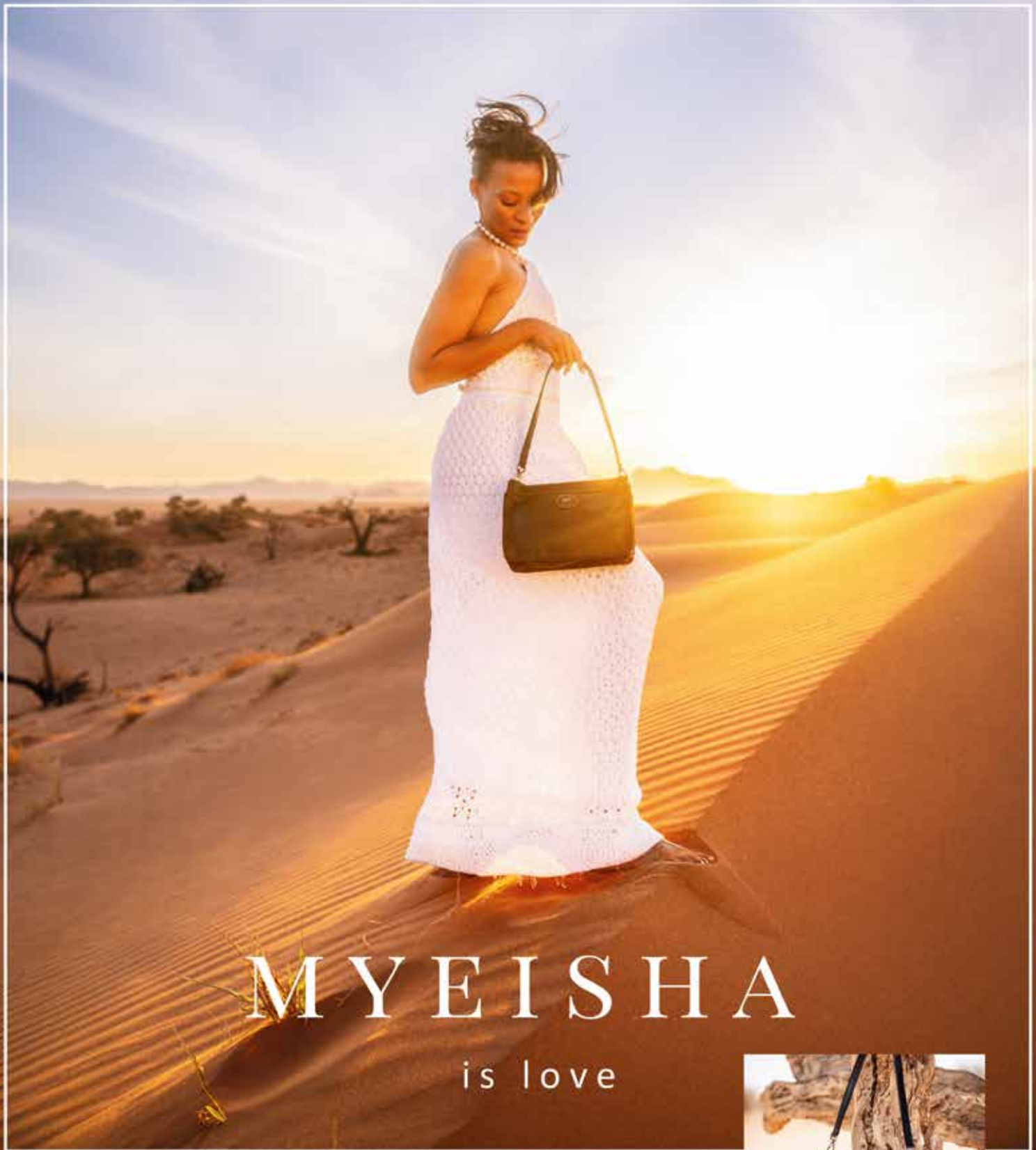
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Dear Diary

Rivers in the Desert? Yes, Please!

When you think of Namibia, the first thing that likely comes to mind is desert — endless dunes, dry landscapes, and that vast, golden silence.

And yes, Namibia certainly has plenty of that.

But did you know... we also have rivers? Real, flowing, vibrant rivers!

Of course, some of them are shy — like the dry riverbeds that hardly see a drop of water.

But if you travel up to the north, into that little arm on the map called the Caprivi Strip, you'll find some of the most beautiful waterways: the Kavango, the Kwando, and the mighty Zambezi.

It may look like a small, unnoticed stretch of land — but trust me, it's not. In fact, it's one of Namibia's best-kept secrets.

An Adventure with Dad

This time, I had the joy of traveling with my dad.

Our destination? The Kavango River, now also called the Chobe — a 1,500 km-long arm of the Zambezi. And getting there was half the adventure: Three countries, three borders — Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia — all within four hours!

(And yes, we collected all three stamps proudly, like true explorers.)

We travelled by plane, safari car, and boat — definitely not your usual road trip!

The journey itself was stunning: The river shimmered under the sun, the grasses along the banks danced in the wind, and the wildlife greeted us with their usual flair.

We saw crocodiles elegantly sliding into the water, hippos



rolling their ears at us, elephants bathing joyfully, and birds showing off their coats in every colour you can imagine.

Sunsets and the Circle of Life

But what stayed with me most were the sunsets.

Whether from a small boat drifting along the river, or from our cozy lodge veranda, sitting quietly next to my dad — every sunset felt like the world holding its breath for a moment. Golden skies melting into peaceful waters. Just magic.

Of course, nature reminds you gently (or not so gently) that you're still in the wild here.

Crocodiles lurking in the water, the sounds of the bush at night — it's all part of the "circle of life" (yes, the real one, not just Disney's version!).

Why You Should Visit

If you ever come to Namibia — and I really hope you do — promise me one thing: Go north. Visit the Caprivi.

It's a part of Namibia that feels like a completely different world — lush, vibrant, full of surprises — and absolutely unforgettable.

I can only recommend putting the Caprivi on your travel bucket list. It's wild. It's grounding. It's beautiful. Just like life itself.

Have you already visited the Caprivi? I'd love to hear your story!

Write to me at deardiary@myeishanamibia.com.

Until next time,

Sandra ❖



Neuras Wine & Wildlife Estate:

*A Symphony of the Namib
Desert, Dreams, and
Conservation*

words by Gerhard Fourie | photographs by N/a'an ku sê



In the heart of Namibia's untamed desert, a true miracle rises from the arid landscape — Neuras Wine and Wildlife Estate. But Neuras is no ordinary vineyard. It is a living, breathing testament to resilience, conservation, and a passion for both nature and winemaking, woven deeply into the fabric of Namibia's identity. More than a century ago, Neuras was little more than a mirage—a lush oasis blessed with natural springs that dared to thrive against the harsh desert backdrop. When Dr. Rudie van Vuuren, Managing Director of N/a'an ku sê, first encountered Neuras, he didn't see just land — he saw limitless potential. He envisioned a sanctuary where fine winemaking could meet fierce conservation. Thus, Neuras was born anew: an oasis of both flavour and purpose.

First discovered by Dr. Rudie van Vuuren during a tracking mission for Lightning — the longest monitored free-roaming leopard in the world — the story of Neuras

began quite by chance. While scanning the vast desert from above, Dr. Rudie spotted an unexpected green oasis shimmering in the midst of the arid landscape. Curious, he decided to land and investigate. Upon touching down, he was met by Alan Walker Davis, the then-owner of Neuras, a man known for one particular rule: he only shared his wine with people he liked. Fortunately, Dr. Rudie made the cut. After a lively introduction and no doubt a good glass or two, he flew back to N/a'an ku sê — not only with a new vision and passion for winemaking, but also with a case of Neuras wines gifted by Alan. Some say it was the wines that truly sealed the deal... and so began the incredible story of Neuras and N/a'an ku sê, a partnership rooted in conservation, passion, and of good wine.

Spread across 14,500 hectares, Neuras is aptly called “the oasis in the desert.” Here, fresh-water fountains gush forth like ancient gifts, and palm trees sway defiantly in



the desert heat. The estate also serves as a safe haven for conflict-scarred cheetahs who cannot be fully rewilded. Within a sprawling 35-hectare camp, these majestic cats find a new rhythm under the endless desert sky. Neuras stands proudly as the second driest vineyard in the world—a testament to human ingenuity and nature’s whimsy. The term “terroir” takes on an entirely new meaning here. Extreme temperatures—soaring to 55°C in summer and plunging to -5°C in winter—sculpt wines that are as bold and resilient as the land itself.

The 2024 vintage bore the marks of just 2mm of rain—an almost unimaginable challenge. Yet, it is precisely these extremes that breathe uniqueness into Neuras’ wines. Each sip captures the harshness, hope, and heart of the desert.

Neuras’ minimal intervention winemaking philosophy ensures that the varietal character shines through: Shiraz, Mourvèdre, and Grenache Noir—all varietals carefully chosen to thrive in this unforgiving climate—form the backbone of the estate’s Rhône-style red wines. Soft tannins,

deep colours, and an elegance shaped by old barrels speak of craftsmanship deeply connected to the earth.

Unlike vineyards blessed with generous rain and temperate seasons, Neuras cannot rely on “phenolic ripeness” for harvesting. Here, sugar content dictates the moment grapes are plucked—a delicate dance where instinct meets experience.

The estate has risen to prominence not only through its exceptional wines but also through a powerful platform: the N/a’an ku sê Ecotourism Collection. Guests from around the world taste more than wine—they taste a story, a mission, a movement. And in 2024, Neuras cemented its place in history when its Ruby Dessert Wine earned a coveted Double Gold at the International Michelangelo Wine & Spirits Awards, judged by an elite panel of international experts—the first Namibian wine ever to achieve this honour. His Excellency Hifikipunye Pohamba, former President of Namibia, personally wrote a heartfelt letter to Dr. Rudie van Vuuren, expressing his gratitude

In Niger, the average woman has 6.6 children –
one of the highest fertility rates in the world.



for the wine and his pride in Namibia producing its own world-class wines — a letter that today holds a place of honour, printed and mounted on the wall at Neuras Lodge for all visitors to see.

What sets Neuras apart in Southern Africa's competitive wine scene is not just the environment, but the spirit behind every bottle. Producing wine in a desert, with limited resources and logistical challenges, demands grit, heart, and authenticity. At Neuras, wine is not mass-produced — it is crafted. Crafted by people who understand hardship, who live conservation, and who know that every grape, every barrel, every bottle carries a piece of Namibia's soul. Harvested in Namibia, bottled in Namibia – 100% Namibian.

"Our wines are real wines made by real people," says the Neuras winemaker. "We stay true to our terroir, to our environment, to our values."

For those seeking to understand the true soul of Neuras, no description will ever fully suffice. As the saying goes in

Afrikaans, "Ons is mense mense, harts mense" — we are people of the heart. Neuras must be felt: under the stars near Sossusvlei, breathing in the vastness of the Naukluft Nature Reserve, or touching the timeless waters of the Hauchab Fountain.

It is a place where photography cannot capture the wonder. It is a place where the wine you drink carries the legacy of leopards, cheetahs, and zebras. It is a place where conservation lives in every glass.

The story of Neuras Wine and Wildlife Estate is far from complete. With the guidance and vision of Dr. Rudie van Vuuren and the passionate team at N/a'an ku sê, the future holds the promise of deeper connections between wine, wildlife, and the wonder of Namibia, the Land of the Brave.

At Neuras, every bottle is more than a toast to the desert's resilience. It is a promise: to preserve, to protect, and to celebrate the wild beauty of one of the world's last true frontiers. 🍇



Unique Safari for the Visually Impaired

Mind's Eye Travel specialises in travel experiences for the visually impaired. In collaboration with Bushtrails Africa Tours and Safaris, they created a one-of-a-kind, multi-country sensory safari tailored for visually impaired travellers.

words by Anne Schaffer | photographs by Jaco van der Westhuizen

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL & LEISURE—



Travel specialists Jaco van der Westhuizen and Sue Bramhall met with one thing in common - a passion for meaningful, accessible travel. Jaco's company, Bushtrails Africa Tours and Safaris, specialises in bespoke safari experiences across Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. Sue's Mind's Eye Travel designs adventures specifically for the visually impaired.

"I was intrigued by Sue's company and felt we could work together to create something truly unique," says Jaco. And they did. In May 2023, a group of visually impaired travellers embarked on an unforgettable two-week safari through Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe.

Sue's safaris are designed to enhance the senses beyond sight. Each visually impaired guest is paired with a sighted

guide - a volunteer who joins the journey to serve as their eyes. "We incorporate as much touch, smell, sound, and taste into the experience as possible," explains Sue. "Our guides use intercom systems in the vehicles, and we bring along audio guidebooks with recordings of bird and animal calls. Guides describe each species and then play its sound. We also visit a taxidermist, where guests can feel the horns, fur, and body shapes of different species - a tactile way to 'see' Africa's wildlife."

The safari is packed with thoughtful, sensory-rich experiences to make the journey as immersive as possible. "We try to stay inside national parks and private game reserves," says Jaco, "so clients can experience night sounds and the unique atmosphere around waterholes." In Victoria

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL & LEISURE—





Falls, guests feel the spray and hear the roar of the mighty waterfall. They also participate in an elephant encounter, where they touch and feed the animals.

Another standout experience is a visit to a Windhoek spa that trains visually impaired individuals to become masseuses - a meaningful stop that connects guests with local empowerment initiatives. The itinerary also includes visits to a traditional Bushman village and a Kavango village for cultural immersion, as well as craft markets and woodcarvers' stalls where browsing is done by touch.

The group travels in two purpose-built, air-conditioned, nine-seater safari Land Cruisers for the 13-day/12-night trip. Guests fly into Namibia and are welcomed at the airport by their Bushtrails tour guide. The safari focuses on Namibia's central and northeastern regions - including Windhoek, Etosha National Park, Bushmanland (the traditional San areas), and the Caprivi Strip - before continuing into Chobe National Park in Botswana and ending at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.

Highlights of the journey include:

- Windhoek Craft Centre and City Tour
- Joe's Beerhouse
- Taxidermy Visit
- Nomad Spa
- Woodcarvers' Market
- Okonjima & AfriCat Foundation
- Leopard Tracking
- Etosha National Park Game Drives
- Bushman Culture Experience
- Okavango River and Kavango Culture
- Mahango Game Reserve
- Tiger Fishing
- Bwabwata and Chobe Game Reserves
- Chobe River Wildlife Cruise
- Sundowner Cruise on the Zambezi
- Victoria Falls and local activities
- The Boma Restaurant and Jungle Junction

This is truly the safari of a lifetime, immersive, thoughtful, and brilliantly designed for those who experience the world beyond sight. 🌿

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Bwabwata National Park:

Namibia's best kept safari secret

Text: Eva-Rakel Johannes | Images: Gondwana Collection Namibia | Layout: Conrad Hegarty

First off, Bwabwata isn't your typical national park. Here, people and the wildlife share the landscape in a unique conservation area that feels more like a National Geographic special in the making. The park, stretching across a whopping 6,100 square kilometers in Namibia's lush Zambezi Region, is home to predators including lion, leopard, cheetah and hyena. Bwabwata is one of the last refuges of wild dogs in Namibia. Common reedbuck, red lechwe, sitatunga, and hippo occur along the rivers. Birds include wattled crane, African skimmer, western-banded snake eagle, wood owl, Pel's fishing owl, Narina trogon, Cape parrot, and both red-billed and yellow-billed oxpeckers.

It also boasts a thriving buffalo population—arguably the best place in Namibia to spot them. Home to around 5 000 people, mainly the Khwe, Mbukushu, Mashi, Subiya and Bavenda communities, who live, farm, and co-exist with nature. This synergy was born out of necessity after Namibian independence when conservation efforts had to balance a large human population with a dwindling wildlife count. The solution? A multi-use park where some areas are set aside for human habitation and others strictly for wildlife.

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) co-manages the park alongside local conservancies in what has become one of Namibia's biggest conservation success stories. Across the country, more than 80 conservancies operate through Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme, employing local game guards and wildlife monitors to safeguard animal populations. This means your tourism dollars directly support conservation efforts and community livelihoods—a win-win for everyone involved. The park stretches from the Okavango River in the west to the Kwando River in the east, encompassing vast floodplains, woodlands, and seasonal pans (omurambas). In a country known for its arid landscapes, Bwabwata is a celebration of trees, wildlife, and water. Fittingly, the park's name—Bwabwata—comes from a local village and refers to the sound of bubbling water, a tribute to this river-blessed terrain.

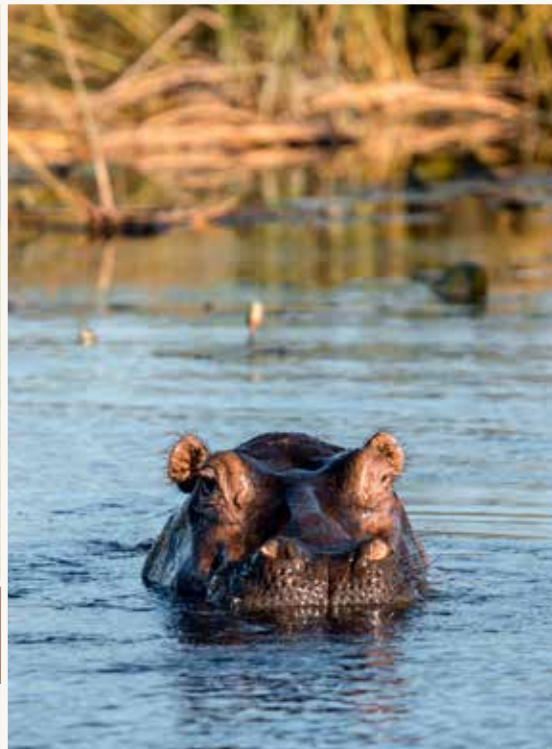
Bwabwata is a water-lover's dream. Unlike Namibia's arid landscapes, this park boasts lush floodplains and winding rivers, making boat safaris a fantastic way to see hippos and crocodiles up close (but not too close, unless you fancy a thrilling swim). The water world is adorned with floating water lilies, while African fish eagles, reed frogs, and grunting hippos provide the soundtrack. It's also part of the larger Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), meaning you're in a wildlife corridor that connects five countries—talk about an all-access pass to nature!

For an untamed wilderness experience, you'll need a place to rest after your adventures. Fortunately, there are fantastic accommodation options to suit different tastes and budgets. Gondwana Collection Namibia offers campsites, a lodge and villa that perfectly blend comfort with nature immersion, such as the Namushasha River Lodge which sits right on the banks of Kwando River or the Namushasha River Villa anchored in a channel of Kwando River as well, for the more luxury seeking traveller.

While at the lodge, explore the green-lawned campsite by following the marked walking trail to the traditional heritage centre. Take an early morning or late afternoon river cruise to explore the channels and discover the diverse bird life. Alternatively, visit Bwabwata National Park by boat and then transfer to a game vehicle for an excursion into the African bush. A crimson Zambezi sunset is very unforgettable. Whether you're a light drinker or not, it's important to have something cold and refreshing to celebrate the day. Plus, Namushasha being located 24km south of Kongola on the C49 (D3501), is an ideal stopover for those travelling to Victoria Falls.

Here's the thing, if you want easy game spotting and paved roads, stick to Etosha. But if you're craving an adventure with a side of conservation, culture, and an untamed wilderness vibe, Bwabwata is calling your name. Just don't forget your mosquito repellent and a sense of humour—you might need both!

I'd like to assume you have your binoculars strung around your neck already so I won't remind you to pack them- see you on the bubbling water!




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Go Fishing in Namibia



Dewald Campher led a group of friends on a fishing expedition to Cape Cross, north of Henties Bay. Did they love every second of it? No doubt about that...

words and photographs by Dewald Campher

Like so many of our African adventures, it began with much excitement and anticipation leading up to the day our journey officially kicked off. This group of clients was no different. We started by talking about a fishing adventure, and after some back-and-forth, I knew the perfect spot for them would be Cape Cross, around 57 km north of Henties Bay in Namibia. Not only is it a premier fishing destination, but it's also a historic landmark along the Namibian coastline en route to the Skeleton Coast. It offers exclusivity and a stunning showcase of the meeting point between the Atlantic Ocean

and the Namib Desert. What might look like “nothing” has so much to offer - if you know where to look.

Cape Cross was founded by Diogo Cão, a Portuguese explorer who erected a stone cross here centuries ago. It's also home to one of the largest mainland Cape fur seal colonies in the world. Over time, Cape Cross developed into a thriving community driven by guano and seal pelt harvesting. In the early 1900s, that boom collapsed. Today, what remains is the iconic cross, Cape Cross Lodge, and a few private houses built around it.

Luckily for us and our clients, we have access to some of



these houses. They're well designed and offer both privacy and exclusivity, making you feel as if you're the only people on the edge of the Namib Desert and Atlantic Ocean.

Because of the remoteness - the nearest town is some distance away - careful planning is crucial, and most supplies must be driven in and preserved for the duration of your stay. Having done this before, I followed my usual routine: I flew in two days ahead to source everything we'd need.

After landing in Walvis Bay, I drove to my accommodation in Swakopmund. The next morning, I collected my 4x4 rental and started shopping for supplies. My clients' flight landed around lunchtime. After picking them up and collecting an additional rental, their adventure officially began.

They had planned a night out in Swakopmund, so I dropped them off at their accommodation and met up with my trusted team. By all accounts, they had a great time, tucking into eisbein (a type of large pork knuckle) and washing it down with some good Namibian beer.

Meanwhile, we headed to Cape Cross to drop off the supplies and prepare the house for their arrival the next day.

Everyone was up bright and early the next morning. After breakfast, we headed to Cape Cross in the mist - ready

to take on the mighty Namib Desert and Atlantic Ocean. When we arrived, the clients' reaction was exactly as expected: total delight. With everyone settled in their sea-view rooms, we unpacked and prepped the fishing gear. Around noon, we headed out for our first session.

As we drove to our first fishing hole, "Canopy," the clients were in awe. Surrounded by desert, they looked out and saw what appeared to be nothing - but we began pointing out what our trained eyes could see: signs of life everywhere.

From the first cast, it was chaos - in the best way. The fish were biting from the start, and the kabeljou (kob) came in full force. Bertie and I were kept busy baiting hooks, landing fish, and casting lines into the right zones. Amid the excitement, we had lunch on the beach and soaked in the beauty of Namibia.

The clients couldn't believe it. They'd arrived with low expectations - hoping just to catch a fish. Instead, they were pulling in double digits on day one! After a great session, we packed up and returned home for a well-earned dinner.

Namibia is known for top-quality meat, so we treated the team to lamb ribs, prepared in true Namibian fashion, complete with all the trimmings. Over dinner, we discussed



the plan for the next day. Some headed to bed early, while others made the most of the night!

The next morning, after breakfast, we returned to the same spot. With the tide still coming in, the morning started slow, but by 11 am., things picked up. The chaos resumed, and the clients landed plenty of fish.

For lunch, I made a fire on the beach. If you've never done this, it's quite the experience. I grilled both meat and some freshly caught fish. Many would agree - there's nothing better than cooking a fresh fish next to the ocean in which it was caught minutes earlier, especially in Namibia.

We fished until about 4 pm., then packed up for another delicious dinner and game-plan discussion. The group opted for a later start the next day, allowing everyone to sleep in.

It turned out to be a wise choice, as the weather had shifted. A front was moving in, and conditions were deteriorating. But hey, it's called fishing and not catching for a reason. We adapted. We decided to target other species and took a long beach drive to find new fishing holes. Along the way, we stopped to catch crabs for bait - another first for the clients (complete with plenty of shrieks from those getting pinched!).

At the new spots, we tried our luck for a big steenbras.

We landed more kabeljou, but weather conditions worsened - strong winds, strong currents, big waves. After trying several locations with limited success, we shifted focus again, this time toward deeper waters in the hopes of landing a shark. We enjoyed our last beach lunch together, but had no more big catches. Still, the clients were thrilled with the previous days' success - and so were we.

That night, we gathered for one last meal, shared stories, and reflected on the memories made. After four intense days, everyone was tired and headed to bed early - with full hearts.

The next morning, we had breakfast and parted ways - some heading north toward Etosha, while the rest returned to Walvis Bay and then home.

Our short but epic adventure had come to an end. I received incredible feedback throughout and after the trip. The clients were deeply grateful for the high-level experience and the memories made.

It reminds me how blessed we are to call Africa our playground and to share its magic with people from all over the world. Once you've experienced an African sunrise and sunset, your heart starts beating like an African drum.

Until our next adventure! ❖

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FROM TRADITION TO TABLE: WINTER'S SECRET INGREDIENT

TRANSFORM YOUR STEWS AND COMFORT DISHES
TO WARM BODY AND SOUL THIS WINTER

THERE IS A CERTAIN WARM, COSY COMFORT
TO A NAMIBIAN WINTER, BUT WE USUALLY SEEK
IT OUTDOORS, IN OUR WARM AFRICAN SUN. AS
THE CHILL OF WINTER SETS IN, HARTLIEF INVITES
YOU TO EXPERIENCE THE TRUE ESSENCE OF
PASSIONATE CRAFTSMANSHIP THAT TRANSFORMS
ORDINARY MEALS INTO MAGIC MOMENTS OF
PURE ENJOYMENT AND CONNECTION.

This is the season when we crave depth, richness and satisfying flavours. For generations, Hartlief has upheld a legacy of world-class quality. With roots firmly planted in European tradition and proud Namibian heritage, every Hartlief product tells a story of exceptional dedication to perfection. Using only naturally reared, export-quality meats and the finest select spices from top global sources, Hartlief continues a diverse tradition where patience and precision are necessities in our pursuit of excellence.

Hartlief brings unparalleled quality to your table and a long-standing reputation of heritage and dedication to age-old craftsmanship. The success of our premium meats has spanned over 70 years in Namibia and has been influenced by centuries of master butchery. Indeed, our Fleischermeister has spent thousands of hours training to perfect the timeless techniques and secret spice blends that have come to make our selection so unique. It is a patient art that has led to the finest of meats.

PURSUING EXCELLENCE

From our humble beginnings in the 1940s to our esteemed position today, one ingredient has never changed: superior quality. Every product is crafted with pride, passion and commitment. In short - crafted according to the Fleischermeister's oath. This oath is more than a promise to uphold quality. It is a legacy fulfilled. From selecting the finest cuts to blending time-honoured recipes with modern innovation, every step is a tribute to excellence.

Our expert team dry-cures meats for precise hours in our specialised salt dry-aging facility, enhancing flavour and creating unmatched tenderness through time-honoured techniques refined with exceptional knowledge. Our smoking process uses only beechwood, ensuring the meat's natural taste remains unmasked. Quality takes time and we perfect it the Fleischermeister's way. This is what sets Hartlief (and your meals) apart.

HARTLIEF'S PERFECT WINTER COMPANIONS

When winter calls for hearty, soul-warming dishes, Hartlief's exceptional range truly comes into its own. Our expertly made sausages - such as the smoky Schlotteger, hearty Debreziner and traditional Käsegriller - are the perfect additions to slow-simmered stews, indulgent, creamy pastas or one-pot meals shared around a family table.

For those seeking diverse options, our Bratwurst and Lamb Bratwurst offer rich, juicy textures perfect for warming family gatherings. The delicate Bockwurst and cheese-infused Käsegriller bring nuanced flavours to winter soups, while the delicious Nürnberger Bratwurst offers a perfect portion of traditional taste.

MOMENTS TO SAVOUR

This winter, we invite you to create meaningful moments, gather with loved ones, share stories over dinner and embrace the chilly season with a sense of celebration. Enjoy a long Sunday brunch or an intimate fireside dinner and let Hartlief bring craftsmanship and a higher level of comfort to every occasion.

Discover the warmth of heritage, the richness of tradition and the depth of flavour that only Hartlief can deliver. Because when food is made with purpose, pride and passion, it does more than satisfy. It connects.

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Made the Fleischermeister's way.**



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HAVE YOU SEEN OUR NEW ROOMS AT *Namushasha River Lodge?*



Celebrating the wonders of the Zambezi water world with rooms fit for a king. The new decoration is inspired by the deep and rich colours of the region and the Kwando River. There's a magic, a feeling or a charm that enraptures you in these northern realms.



Slice of Life:

Battle of the Long Sleeves



As winter settles over Namibia, following an extraordinary rainy season and a rare brush with autumn (in a country that really only knows two seasons), the days grow shorter, and the cold creeps in. Suddenly, fireplaces are back in use, and the winter wardrobe is pulled out of storage: coats, boots, and scarves ready for use.

But for the parents of summer babies, this isn't the start of cozy evenings with hot chocolate and marshmallows or snuggles in cute, fluffy pyjamas. No, this season marks the beginning of The Battle of the Long Sleeves.

The brief autumn gave us a taste of the war to come, but it didn't prepare us for the full ordeal. It is with the cold weather that each wardrobe change morphs into a battle – part physical, part wit, part bribery. Parents and Toddlers wage a tiny, dramatic, short-lived feud.

During cold, early mornings the battles are at their worst, the General (aka the parent) sends in the first infantry of foot soldiers - socks. These brave little troopers are met with screams of protest from the 18-month-old. As one sock slides into place, it's pulled at, rubbed, and scolded for daring to touch the tiny, wiggling toes of this fierce little person.

Next come the archers - a long-sleeved baby-grow or t-shirt. Mayhem erupts as the Toddler fights back. Funny faces and distracting sounds buy just enough time for little fists to emerge through the sleeves. A giggle at the success of putting on the top, is followed immediately by the despair of long

sleeves. The wails would make you think the shirt is made of sandpaper: itchy and torturous. Sleeves are pulled back and forth as the fabric folds around little arms, a look of despair is gifted to the General – “why would you do this to me?”

But the battle isn't over yet; a second layer is needed. The General's heart breaks, just a little.

A tense silence fills the room as the Toddler realises what's coming. Faster than the eye can track, he rolls and is up, ready to defend himself. The General holds their breath (remember, this is all happening on a changing table). One sleeve on, through wails of fury and a rogue foot flying past the General's face. A brief wrestling match later, the second sleeve is in place. Now, for the buttons - who thought buttons were a good idea?!

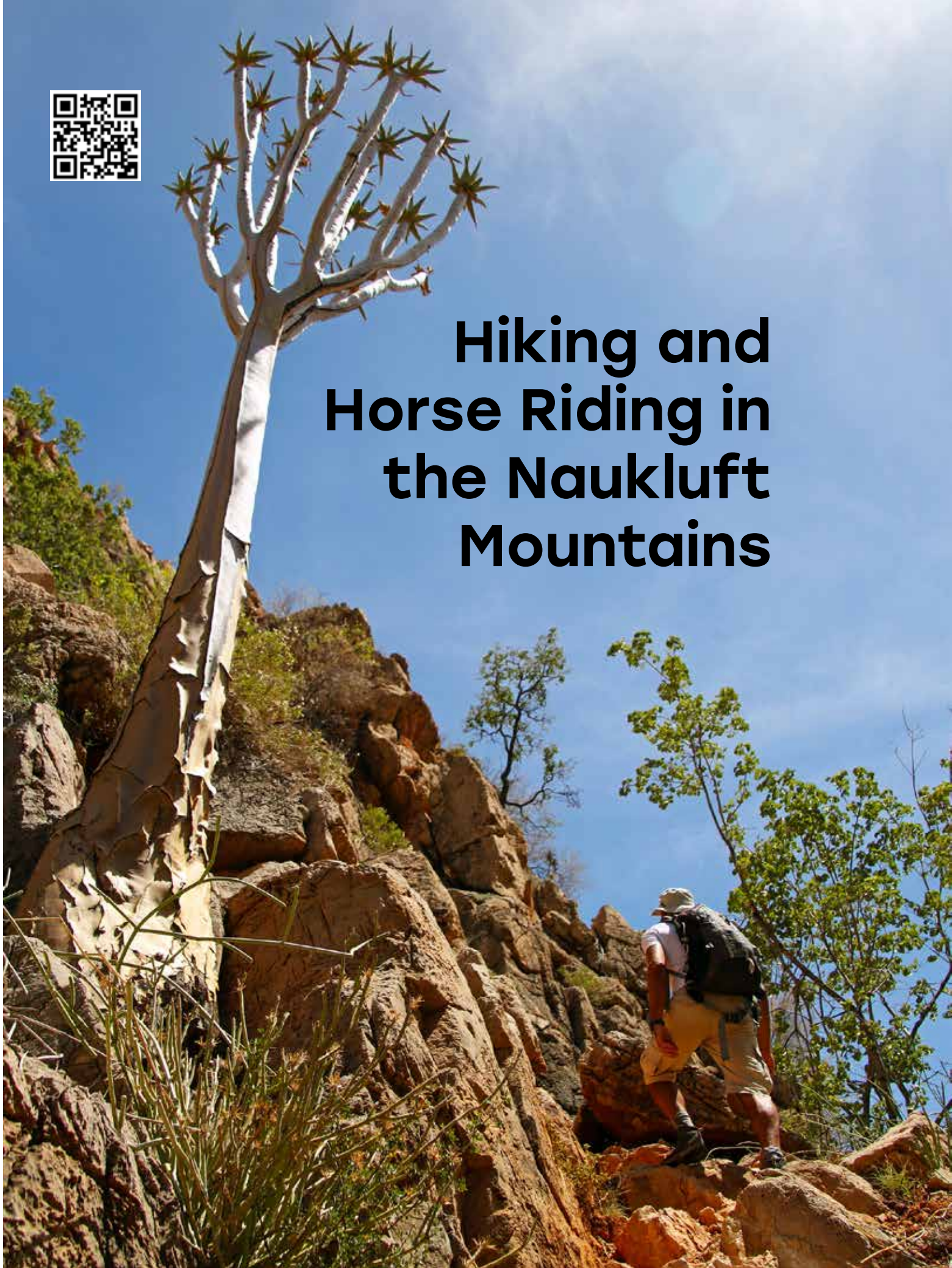
From outside the room, all one hears are primal toddler screams and the desperate negotiation attempts of the parent, trying not to get angry.

Minutes later the battle is seemingly over. Waltzing into the kitchen, raving squeals in tow, the aftermath of the battle. The General appeases the beast with a pre-breakfast piece of cheese.

Instantly placated by his gouda distraction, the Toddler waddles off: one sock already slipping off, jacket buttons mismatched, not a care in the world. Leaving the General slumped over the kitchen counter, sipping a much deserved, lukewarm coffee. There will be peace for the rest of day, at least until bathtime. ❖



Hiking and Horse Riding in the Naukluft Mountains



Southern Namibia's Naukluft Mountains are legendary for many reasons, particularly for avid hikers. At BüllsPort Lodge & Farm (with camping), you have 14 hiking trails to choose from, plus sensational horse riding.

words by Anne Schauffer | photographs supplied



The 10,000-hectare private nature reserve of BüllsPort Lodge & Farm in the Namib-Naukluft Mountains focuses on hiking (14 different hiking trails for all fitness levels) and horse riding. It's the ideal multi-day stop on your tour through the south of Namibia, about a three-hour drive from Windhoek. The mountains of the Naukluft, with their springs, form a charming contrast to the Dune Sea of the Namib.

Meeting BüllsPort's hosts, farmer Ernst Sauber and horse breeder Johanna Sauber, over coffee and cake, sundowners or dinner — this is part of what guests appreciate most. Warm one-on-one conversations provide a deep insight into everyday life on the farm, and it's here that you learn so much about the Namibian way of life.

The Naukluft is one of the top three bucket list hikes, with no other Namibian hiking area offering anywhere near the same variety of trails. In addition to the three trails in the state-owned Naukluft Mountain Zebra Park (part of the Namib-Naukluft Park), there are numerous great hiking trails at BüllsPort Lodge & Farm.



From BüllsPort, the trails allow hikers to experience special places such as the Bogenfels, otherwise difficult to reach. Detailed maps and well-marked paths allow you to explore the Naukluft's natural wonders on your own, with the majority of the 14 hikes free for lodge and camping guests. What makes hiking even more enjoyable is that hikers have the realm of quiver trees and mountain zebras largely to themselves.

The hiking trails are all explicitly rated from easy through to very challenging. There are hikes for everyone, and others only for the highly experienced — day hikes and overnights. The Naukluft Hiking Trail (7 or 8 days with overnight stays in huts), with its ups and downs and climbing passages secured with chains, demands much more from the hiker than the legendary hikes through the Fish River Canyon or up the Brandberg. Two other hikes are the Olive Trail and Waterkloof Trail in the neighbouring Naukluft Mountain Zebra Park. The difficulty level is described as very demanding, where fitness, surefootedness, and 'a bit of courage' are required. These hikes have all

the 'highs and lows' of the Naukluft and take you up to the plateau of the massif and down again through gorges. In places, you have to climb or use chains to move forward on narrow rock ledges.

The detailed hiking maps reveal all. In a nutshell, BüllsPort is paradise for hikers.

So, too, for those who love horses and riding. The horses at BüllsPort Lodge & Farm are not just farm animals — each has its own character, likes and dislikes. BüllsPort would not be BüllsPort without its horse breeding and riding programme, and anyone who sees Johanna Sauber with her horses immediately realises there is a very special relationship. Whether riding lessons, rides for beginners (45 mins), or more demanding rides for advanced to experienced riders (45 mins to 8 hours), the horses are well-schooled, sure-footed and comfortable to ride. Equipment for riders is provided, and all rides are led by a skilled riding guide.

At BüllsPort Lodge, you'll get good free Wi-Fi, hearty farm cuisine, a swimming pool, and a lovely warm approach to hospitality. Wi-Fi is not only in the lounge, but also



in your room and on your private terrace. BüllsPort is understandably very popular with ‘workationers’.

The lodge has 12 spacious, attractively furnished en-suite rooms, including two triple and two family rooms. The rooms are well equipped with everything guests need for a comfortable stay — including air conditioning, ceiling fans, and fridges — and connection to the public power grid guarantees a constant power supply, even at night.

Camping at BüllsPort includes a barbecue fire pit, and each of the four pitches has its own bathroom with a hot shower and separate flush toilet in the shared sanitary building. You won’t have Wi-Fi or electricity, and hot water is via a ‘donkey’ (boiler), heated with wood. On arrival, a member of staff will show you how to light the fire. You can enjoy meals at the lodge (subject to availability). Talk to BüllsPort about booking the entire campsite or single pitches — they have variations on the theme.

You’ll be eating well at BüllsPort, as many ingredients come fresh into the kitchen — spinach, carrots, and herbs from their own garden; milk from their own cows; eggs from

the neighbouring farm; and game meat from necessary game regulation. Meals are prepared according to tried-and-tested farm recipes, including vegetarian and vegan dishes on request. Except on cold winter evenings, guests at BüllsPort Lodge enjoy their dinner by candlelight on the terrace.

BüllsPort also offers an excursion to #Nabasib Primary School, about 15 km away, where a teacher gives you a tour, and afterwards, you’ll enjoy a cultural performance, with students presenting traditional songs and dances.

You can also enjoy a self-drive day trip to Sossusvlei to explore the towering red dunes, the surreal Deadvlei with its ancient trees, and Sesriem Canyon.

Sustainability has been a top priority at BüllsPort for decades, in farming, nature conservation, and hospitality: vegetables from their own garden, solar geysers for hot water, water-saving flush buttons for toilets, and grey water for the garden. BüllsPort Lodge & Farm has been awarded 5 out of 5 possible desert flowers by the independent environmental organisation EcoAwards Namibia. 🌵



DROOMBOS

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Where Strategy Meets Serenity: Conferencing @ DROOMBOS

A business haven only a short drive from the airport and minutes from Windhoek, is the ideal location for your upcoming conference. Every event is expertly planned with more than 14 custom venues, beautiful gardens, and peaceful retreat areas. Droombos provides more than just a meeting; it's an experience, complete with specially designed service and carefully chosen tastings. This is conferencing at its most inspirational, perfect for strategic meetings, team retreats, and sophisticated overnights.



Where Work Meets Wellness: Business Travel. Elevated

When business brings you to Namibia, there's only one address that meets the standard. The rooms are tailored for the modern business traveler, offering thoughtfully designed desks and serene surroundings to foster clarity and focus. But this isn't just about work—it's about how you feel while doing it. Everything is arranged for you, from airport shuttles to short, rejuvenating escapes like guided city tours, hikes, or a quiet ride on horseback.





Where Connection Becomes Culture: Teambuilding Experiences

Teambuilding at Droombos is more than just a day out—it's a purposeful pause to reconnect, recharge, and realign your team. In partnership with Teambuild Namibia, we curate engaging activities designed to foster collaboration, trust, and fresh perspective. These sessions can seamlessly tie into your strategy day, with curated meal breakaways in our tranquil gardens to keep minds sharp and spirits high. It's not just about bonding—it's about building better teams with intention.

Where Flavour Meets Finesse: Tailored Dining Experiences

The culinary experience is at the heart of every gathering. Whether you're planning an intimate celebration or a large-scale event, each dish is crafted with care and purpose. From bespoke menus designed to match your theme or dietary needs, to flawless execution on the day—we make sure every bite leaves a lasting impression. Here, food isn't just served. It's an experience designed to delight, connect, and elevate every moment.



DID YOU KNOW?

Our sister lodge, Simanya River Lodge, has reopened after renovations and now offers the ultimate riverside retreat in Kavango West. Just 13 km from Nkurenkuru and easily reached via the scenic B15 "Timber Route," Simanya combines luxury accommodation with stunning river views, fine dining, a welcoming pub, an infinity pool, and enriching cultural experiences like river cruises and village visits.

The lodge now also features fully equipped conference facilities—ideal for meetings, strategy sessions, and team retreats in a tranquil, inspiring setting. For those seeking privacy, secluded campsites are available too.



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Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025: 'Radiant Bond' Alvaro Herrero (Mekan) (Spain)



Underwater Photographer Of The Year 2025

words by Anne Schaffer | photographs by Underwater Photographer of the Year



Up & Coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025: 'Aurora Underwater' Ruruka (Korea)

Spanish photographer Alvaro Herrero is named Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025, triumphing over 6,750 underwater pictures entered from around the world.

Spanish photographer Alvaro Herrero has been named Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025. His winning photograph, taken in French Polynesia and titled Radiant Bond, captures the special relationship between a mother humpback whale and her newborn calf.

"The mother is accompanying her calf to the surface, because the baby is still so small and clumsy," explained Herrero. "The calf is releasing a few bubbles underwater, showing it is still learning to hold its breath properly. For me, this photo really shows a mother's love and communicates the beauty and fragility of life in our ocean."

"This delicate yet powerful study of a mother and calf's bond says all that is great and good about our world," commented contest judge Peter Rowlands. "We face our challenges, but the increasing populations of humpback whales worldwide show what can be achieved."



'Save Our Seas Foundation' Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year 2025: '1 / 200.000.000' Robert Marc Lehmann (Germany)



British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025: 'The Curious Seal'
David Alpert (UK)

Thailand's population is projected to shrink by half – from 66 million to just 33 million – within the next 60 years.



Behaviour—Winner: 'Face Off' Shunsuke Nakano (Japan)

Other winners in the international categories included Shunsuke Nakano from Japan, with his photo Face Off, showing two extraordinary-looking male Asian sheepshead wrasse jousting over spawning rights. "The harem king, on the right, is over 30 years old," said Nakano, who won the Behaviour category.

Abdulaziz Al Saleh from Kuwait won the Portrait category with his unique shot Hydration, showing camels drinking in the desert from below the water.

Bryant Turffs from the United States won the Compact Cameras category with The Beauty of the Swamp, a picture of a prehistoric gar fish taken in the Everglades with a simple GoPro camera.

Ruruka from the Republic of Korea was named PADI Up & Coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025 for his photo Underwater Aurora, showing a diver in the multi-coloured waters of a cenote sinkhole in Mexico. Ruruka

purposely visited the cenote during the rainy season, when tannin-rich water drains into the sinkhole, creating bands of coloured water. "From where I live, it's a very long way to this location, about 24 hours by plane," said Ruruka. "But it is worth the journey because this unique environment perfectly aligns with the type of images I am trying to create."

"An extraordinary image," commented contest judge Tobias Friedrich. "It is an amazing scene, with a rainbow of freshwater colours in one picture. The high technical quality combined with the golden ratio composition made it a very deserving category winner." (www.padi.com)

The Underwater Photographer of the Year contest is based in the UK, and David Alpert was named British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025 for his image The Curious Seal, which challenges misconceptions that British waters are murky and lifeless. "My photo is from Lundy Island, a marine protected area since 1973," explained Alpert. "British seals

Michelangelo

—PHOTOGRAPHY—



Portrait— Winner: 'Hydration' Abdulaziz Al Saleh (Kuwait)



Compact—Winner:
'The Beauty of the Swamp'
Bryant Turffs (USA)

In less than 50 years, **over half of the world's tropical rainforests have been destroyed.**

Michelangelo

—PHOTOGRAPHY—

are delightfully curious - more interactive than any other species I have dived with around the world. Briefly, I became one of the privileged few, crossing the bridge, able to make a connection with a wild animal."

"This image is truly a stunner," commented contest judge Friedrich. "It is well framed in the seaweeds and has beautiful light beams, so evocative of shallow waters. The composition is completed by the inquisitive look—an excellent portrait."

In the same contest, German photographer Robert Marc Lehmann was named Save Our Seas Foundation Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year 2025, with his photo 1 in 200,000,000, taken in Indonesia. The image shows fishermen hauling a large tiger shark ashore. "This is just one of around 200 million sharks that lose their lives every year at the hands of humans," said Lehmann.

"The composition is immersive, and the timing - capturing the fisherman's gesture - is decisive," said contest

judge Alex Mustard. "Although an everyday occurrence and legal almost everywhere, the man reaching out to stop the photo reveals what his conscience reckons on what they are doing. A picture that takes you straight into the story." (www.saveourseas.com)

About Underwater Photographer of the Year

Underwater Photographer of the Year is an annual UK-based competition that celebrates photography beneath the surface of oceans, lakes, rivers, and even swimming pools, attracting entries from all over the world.

In 2025, the contest attracted 6,750 underwater images, with awarded photographers from 28 different countries. This year's judges were experienced underwater photographers Peter Rowlands, Tobias Friedrich, and Dr Alexander Mustard MBE. 🍷

www.underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com

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Villa Wiese – Where History Sleeps in Style

words and photographs by Tinkie Cornelissen



Nestled in the heart of Swakopmund, The Residence at Villa Wiese is more than just a guesthouse – it's a living piece of history, lovingly restored and steeped in the stories of a bygone era.

Villa Wiese's story begins in 1905, when it was built by Friederich Wiese, a German soldier and engineer who served in the Railway Regiment from 1893 to 1907. During this time, he was trained as a station engineer (Werkmeister). After his military service, Wiese returned to Swakopmund to join the German Foreign Office. There, he played a vital role in the construction of the railway line heading north - known as the Otavibahn - from Swakopmund to Tsumeb via Otavi. He also served as a town council member. In 1913, he returned to Germany, but his architectural legacy endured.

Over the decades, the building was adapted to meet the needs of a growing town. It served as a bustling tavern for German railway workers, a venue for council meetings, a temporary home for a Catholic missionary, and later, a school hostel, an old-age home, and even a church. Each chapter added new layers to Villa Wiese's unique character.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL & LEISURE—



Giraffes are 30 times more likely to be struck by lightning
than humans due to their height.



Fast forward to the present day, and Villa Wiese has been meticulously restored by Johan and Tinkie Cornelissen, who have transformed it into The Residence at Villa Wiese - a guesthouse that blends old-world charm with modern comfort. From the polished wooden floors and original architectural details to the warm, welcoming ambiance, The Residence invites guests to step back in time - without sacrificing comfort.

Travellers from across the globe now pass through its historic halls, drawn by a distinctive blend of heritage, character, and warm hospitality. Whether you're a history enthusiast, an admirer of timeless architecture, or simply seeking a memorable and meaningful stay in Swakopmund, Villa Wiese offers an experience that resonates long after check-out—a place where the past and present meet in comfort and charm.

The Residence at Villa Wiese offers:

Well-appointed Double, Twin, and Family Rooms (sleeps up to five), all en-suite with tea/coffee facilities and a superb breakfast to start your day.

Located at the corner of Theo-Ben Gurirab and Windhüker Streets, The Residence is centrally situated within walking distance of the beach, downtown, and restaurants. If you're looking for an affordable, pet-friendly stay with oodles of character, you've come to the right place. Be sure to visit OSTORA, the in-house art gallery and deli, where you'll discover truly Namibian handmade and homemade delicacies, gifts, and souvenirs.

Whether you travel for work or leisure, the welcoming motto at Villa Wiese is: You're here, you're home, you're happy. 🍷

Explore the **NWR Collections** and discover your perfect Namibian adventure

Whether you seek tranquility in the embrace of nature, timeless elegance in historic settings, or exhilarating adventures amidst breathtaking landscapes, NWR offer something for every discerning traveller.



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17. Mile 72
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Unforgettable Experiences Await in Namibia with NWR

Nestled amidst breathtaking landscapes and teeming with diverse wildlife in exclusive locations of the Protected Areas and National Parks, Namibia offers an unparalleled escape for discerning travellers seeking exceptional experiences. Namibia Wildlife Resorts (NWR), the country's premier hospitality group, invites you to embark on an unforgettable journey through its three distinct collections, each catering to a unique sense of adventure & experience.



Embrace the Untamed Beauty of the Eco Collection

Immerse yourself in the pristine wilderness of Namibia's most extraordinary natural landscapes with the Eco Collection. Discover remote desert oases, lush riverine environments, and towering mountain ranges, all while enjoying the ultimate in sustainable luxury. From the stark beauty of the Namib Desert to the verdant splendor of the Babwata national Park, NWR offers a sanctuary for the soul, where tranquility and adventure intertwine seamlessly.



Indulge in Timeless Elegance with the Classic Collection

Step into a world of refined sophistication with the Classic Collection. Experience the grandeur of Namibia's colonial heritage, where historic lodges and contemporary amenities blend harmoniously to create an atmosphere of timeless elegance. Savor exquisite culinary delights, impeccable service, and breathtaking vistas, all while basking in the warmth of Namibian hospitality.



Embark on Thrilling Adventures with the Adventure Collection

Unleash your inner explorer with the Adventure Collection, designed for those seeking adrenaline-pumping experiences and unforgettable encounters with Namibia's diverse wildlife. From heart-pounding desert safaris and exhilarating white-water rafting and unforgettable wildlife encounters, the Adventure Collection promises an unforgettable journey for the intrepid traveler.

Visit <https://www.nwr.com.na> to explore the NWR Collections and embark on your unforgettable Namibian adventure today.



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CPE	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded
(12-month service duration including installation)	5,119	5,579	5,819	8,059

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Upload Speed (up to)	10Mbps	15Mbps	25Mbps	35Mbps
Internet usage	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
CPE	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded
Monthly charge (N\$) (12-month)	749	879	1,159	1,979
Monthly charge (N\$) (24-month)	679	789	1,039	1,779
Monthly charge (N\$) (36-month)	639	749	979	1,679

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Download Speed (up to)	10Mbps	15Mbps	25Mbps	50Mbps
Upload Speed (up to)	10Mbps	15Mbps	25Mbps	50Mbps
Internet usage	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
CPE	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded
Monthly charge (N\$) (12-month)	799	989	1,299	1,979
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LEISURE

NAMIBIA THROUGH OUR EYES



WHERE ETOSHA MEETS THE SKY

Mokuti's SkyBoma elevates the
African dining experience.

Eight metres above the ground, inspired by the natural ingenuity of meerkats using anthills as vantage points, Mokuti Etosha has created something unique, something extraordinary – the SkyBoma, Namibia's first elevated bush dining experience.

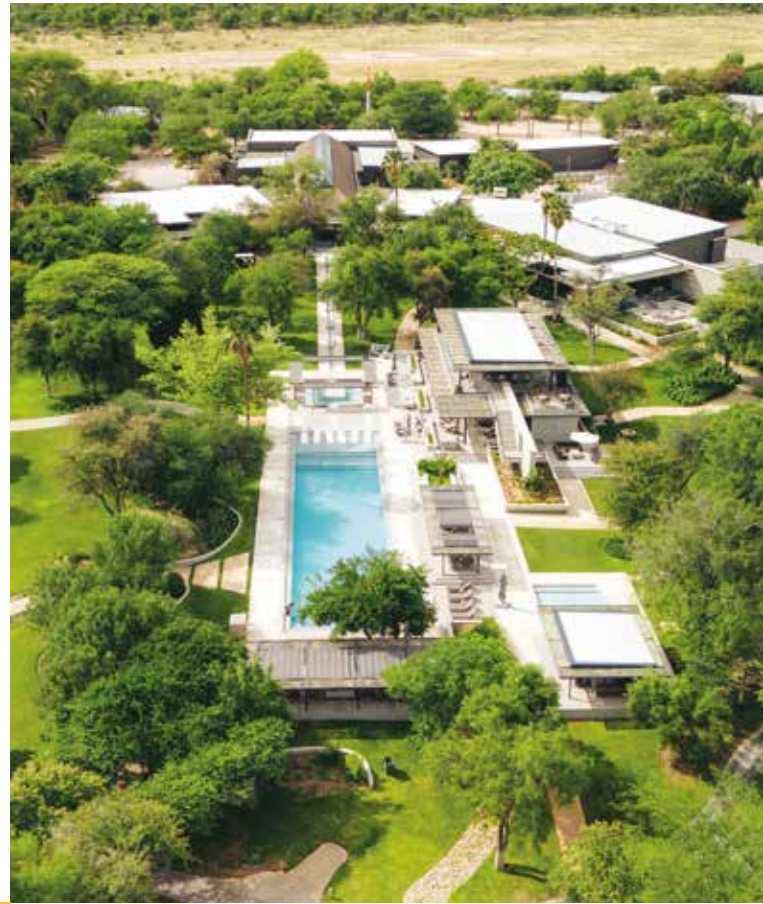
This architectural marvel, located at the gateway to one of Africa's most celebrated wildlife sanctuaries, the Etosha National Park, represents the essence of what Mokuti calls "Africa re-imagined" – a philosophy that honours rich cultural heritage while embracing a future full of possibility and innovation.



A CULINARY THEATRE IN THE SKY

The SkyBoma is a world-class restaurant, but even more so a theatrical celebration of Namibia's exceptional culinary heritage. Here, dining surpasses the ordinary as guests are treated to a meaty feast that showcases why Namibian beef ranks among the world's finest. Namibia's position as one of the top ten beef exporters to the European Union isn't coincidental – it's the result of cattle and game that graze freely across vast, pristine landscapes, creating meat of incomparable quality, flavour and tenderness.

As the sun sets and stars begin to twinkle above the Etosha plains, the SkyBoma transforms into a multisensory journey. The experience begins with a traditional welcome, where guests ascend the "anthill" structure to discover the rich history of the area and Etosha.



A waterhole and Etosha's King Fishers Pan stretch out before them, occasionally revealing wildlife coming to drink as day transitions to night.

"The SkyBoma is where the bush becomes a backdrop and the sky a stage," explains Sven Thieme, O&L Group Executive Chairman and Managing Director of O&L Leisure. "Our Omutomi are your servers and your storytellers, culture-bearers and custodians of Namibian heritage who guide guests through Namibia's exceptional meat story."



INSPIRED BY NATURE, DESIGNED FOR WONDER

The architectural inspiration behind SkyBoma reveals Mokuti's deep connection to its environment. The name "Mokuti" itself means "in the bush" in the local language, making it the perfect setting to showcase our Namibian prime cut procession—an exceptional display of premium meats served in the heart of the wilderness.

The structure itself pays homage to the iconic anthills that dot the Etosha landscape, while its lightweight canvas roof echoes the form of Omayova mushrooms. The balustrade draws design cues from the traditional kraal – the circular enclosures that have protected Namibian communities and their livestock for generations.

Every element of the SkyBoma experience has been astutely considered to celebrate connection – to the land, to cultural heritage and to living-in-the-moment. As flames dance and stars shine overhead, guests find themselves suspended between earth and sky, participating in a re-imagined ritual that feels both ancient and utterly contemporary.

The sounds of Etosha at night provide a natural soundtrack – distant calls of nocturnal creatures, the gentle crackle of fire and the satisfying sizzle of premium cuts on the grill, while the magnificent Namibian night sky unfolds above, adding more magic to an already extraordinary experience.



NAMIBIA – SERVED TO YOU THROUGH OUR EYES

Mokuti's SkyBoma represents O&L Leisure's commitment to "Namibia Through Our Eyes" – an authentic expression of place that invites visitors to experience the country's natural beauty and cultural richness from new perspectives. By elevating guests eight metres above the ground, Mokuti has created a dining venue with a viewpoint from which to appreciate the vastness of Etosha, the brilliance of the Milky Way and the uninterrupted horizons that define the Namibian landscape.

This bold reinvention of the traditional African bush dinner showcases Mokuti's vision of blending timeless beauty with modern luxury. From the welcome ritual at dusk to the final moments under the stars, SkyBoma offers what few dining experiences in the world can – a genuine sense of place, an authentic expression of culinary heritage and stories that will be shared – time and time again.

BOOK NOW AND SEE NAMIBIA
THROUGH OUR EYES

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words by Linda de Jager | photograph supplied



Tracks, Trials, and Triumphs: Johan Steyn's Masters Mission

Johan Steyn, a Gobabis-based athlete and mentor, is proving that age is no barrier to excellence as he racks up medals for Namibia on the masters athletics stage.

Turning 49 in June, Steyn recently returned from a Southern African Masters Athletics event at De Jager Stadium in Oudtshoorn from 1 to 3 May – with three medals.

He competed in five events, earning a bronze medal in the relay race, silver in the 400m, and gold in the 110m hurdles.

Steyn finished fourth in the 200m and 100m, and fifth in long jump.

Along with fellow athletes Buks Myburgh and William van Wyk, they won 13 medals for Namibia.

Masters athletics, sometimes called veteran athletics, refers to organised competitions in track and field, road running, and cross-country running for athletes aged 35 and above.

Overseen by World Masters Athletics (WMA), the events group participants into five-year age brackets to ensure fair competition.

Steyn, a manager at BT Feeds and Agri, also mentors young athletes in his free time.

How do master athlete competitions work?

In Namibia, we compete in various leagues throughout the year, with the Namibia Nationals being the highlight in April. Currently, there's no championship for masters athletes in Namibia, so we travel to South Africa for those competitions.

What motivates you to continue competing at a high level?

The excitement of competing, progressing, and facing personal challenges, along with reconnecting with old friends and achieving new personal bests or records.

How do you prepare for competitions?

Being a coach makes training enjoyable as I work closely with my athletes. We challenge each other to build strength and refine our techniques. I focus on hurdle-based drills that benefit both jumps and sprints, practising on a grass track, since there's no tartan track near Gobabis. I also have access to Gobabis Gymnasium's hurdles for my training, which I'm grateful for.

What has been the highlight of your career as an athlete?

Competing for my country is an honor. Making the national team and stepping onto the track, I realise I'm running not just for myself, but for my country.

The greatest experience is standing on the podium as Namibia's flag is hoisted. The emotions are overwhelming.

What has been your greatest disappointment?

Injury is something no one can truly prepare for.

In 1996, a car accident shattered my Olympic dream. Selected for the national squad, I broke my collarbone and ribs in the crash, needing six months to recover.

But life has taught me anything is possible with determination.

How is training different when one gets older?

After competing in the 400m hurdles for most of my career, I began exploring other events when I started running as a masters athlete in 2022.

When I travel to South Africa to compete, I choose events that provide enough recovery time between competitions.

How do you stay focused under pressure?

At competitions, I wear my headset to block out distractions while listening to my adrenaline-pumping playlist.

I also appreciate not always knowing my competitors beforehand.

What advice would you give younger athletes looking to follow in your footsteps?

It's important to train hard and keep going, no matter your age. If you love the sport, continue practising, explore what opportunities are available, and consider joining a club to compete.

What keeps you coming back?

Running a personal best and setting goals for every event or achieving a new national record.

This can be more rewarding than winning medals.

Who are your mentors?

My dad, Hans Steyn, who passed away in 2014, set a great example for me. He was a talented athlete, and we competed together at national level in 1997 and 1998 – experiences I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Then there's Naomi van Lill and Hella Kuppe (85), both exceptional masters athletes, and my coach, Quinton-Steele Botes, sadly passed away on my birthday a few years ago. He was an incredible mentor.

Your dream is to compete in the 2026 World Biennial Masters Athletics Championships in Daegu, South Korea. Tell us more.

Competing in this event has been my dream since I returned to running. Performing on such a significant stage is a highlight for any athlete. I hope to raise enough funds to make this dream a reality.

What is your fondest childhood memory of training?

We used to take my mom Lizzie's knitting wool to make hurdles in our driveway and hold competitions, but she was never impressed with us using her wool for our games. 🧶



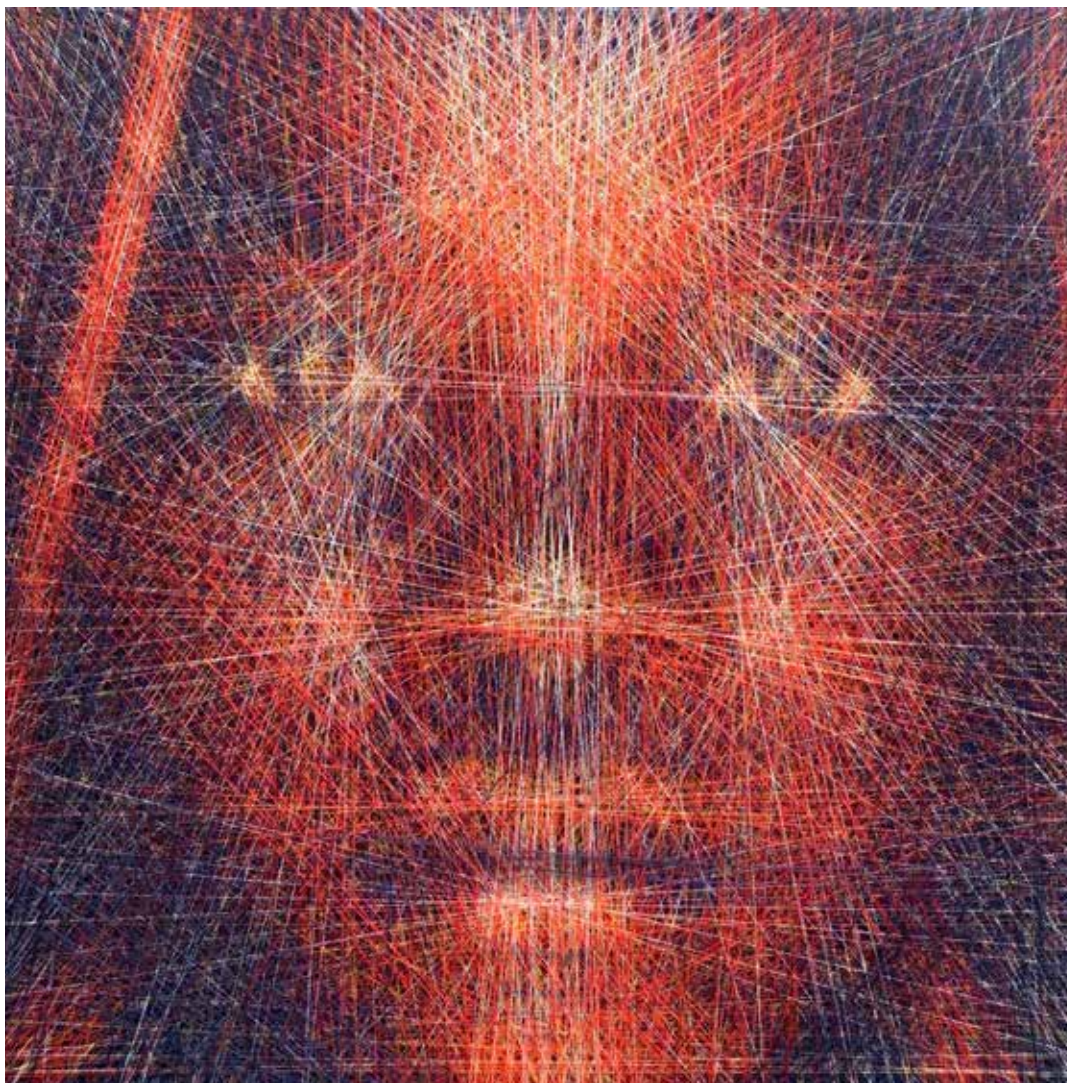


*'I don't want people to
squeeze out the beauty
when they smile.'*



Unravelling the Past, Stitching the Future: The Life and Art of Leandro Solomons

words by Linda de Jager | photographs supplied



With nothing but grit, vision, and a spool of thread, Leandro Solomons has stitched his way from the streets of Katutura to the walls of international galleries.

Fittingly, the name Leandro means “lion man” – a symbol of quiet strength and persistence that echoes through every line of his thread work.

It’s only fitting that the artist’s breakthrough moment came in 2023 in the shape of a lion. Here’s how his life has led to that moment:

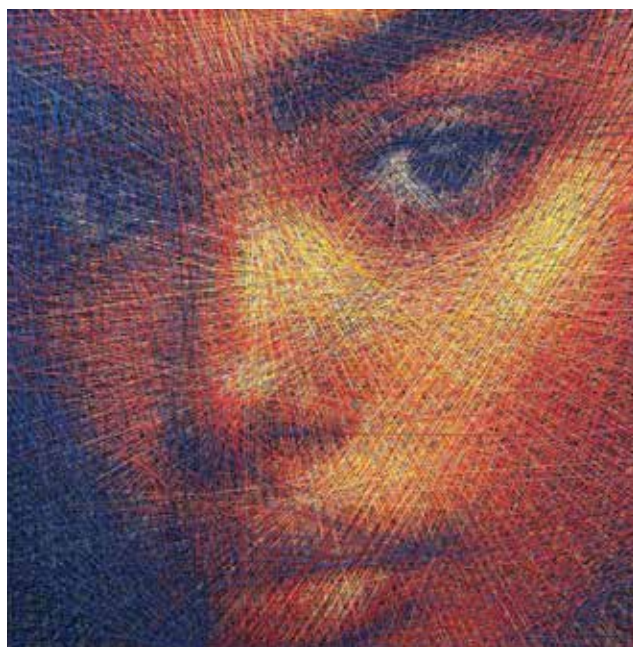
I meet up with Solomons at the Rossouw Modern, a notable gallery at Hermanus.

The exclusive space, founded by Jozua Rossouw and nestled in a historic cottage, is worlds apart from Namibia’s Katutura informal settlement, where Solomons grew up.

This world is best expressed in the Khoekhoe (Damara-Nama) language, which the artist speaks fluently.

One of his favourite Khoekhoe phrases is “/Guri ma / gaeb, !khoe !hutse Afrika”, loosely translating to “lone Oryx, run free for your country, Africa”.

Solomon’s life and tumultuous journey reflect these lines, meant as encouragement, almost like an incantation woven into his existence: a call to take courage and try again and again.



Orphan

Solomons was born at Hermanus on 3 September 1987, with the prospects of a bright future dim given his family's dire circumstances.

He left South Africa for Namibia with his mother, Samantha, at the age of three. He never knew his father, a fisherman from Hermanus.

Unable to look after the boy, Solomons' mother left him in the care of a Damara-Nama woman, Adolfine Goses.

Goses had four children of her own, but took it upon herself to raise four more, including Solomons.

The artist attended school at Katatura and only saw Samantha again at the age of seven.

Unable to pay school fees, he chose to stay at the Namibia Children's Home, an orphanage, to finish his high school career.

"As an orphan, you don't have to pay; you just need a letter confirming your situation," he says.

Solomons developed a passion for art at an early age, inspired by a friend's father who brought home copies of in-flight magazine Flamingo, featuring animals he would draw.

The aspiring young artist eventually won a drawing competition in 2005, celebrating the United Nations' 60th anniversary.

Hustler

Solomons later attended Namibia's College of the Arts for a year, focusing on jewellery design.

"We used long pieces of wire to create sellable items, which ignited my interest in making things."

After school, job opportunities were limited, so he started painting murals and experimenting with pallet furniture in Windhoek to make a living.

"Additionally, I would draw faces. Someone would give me a picture, and I would draw the face. That's how I managed to get by."

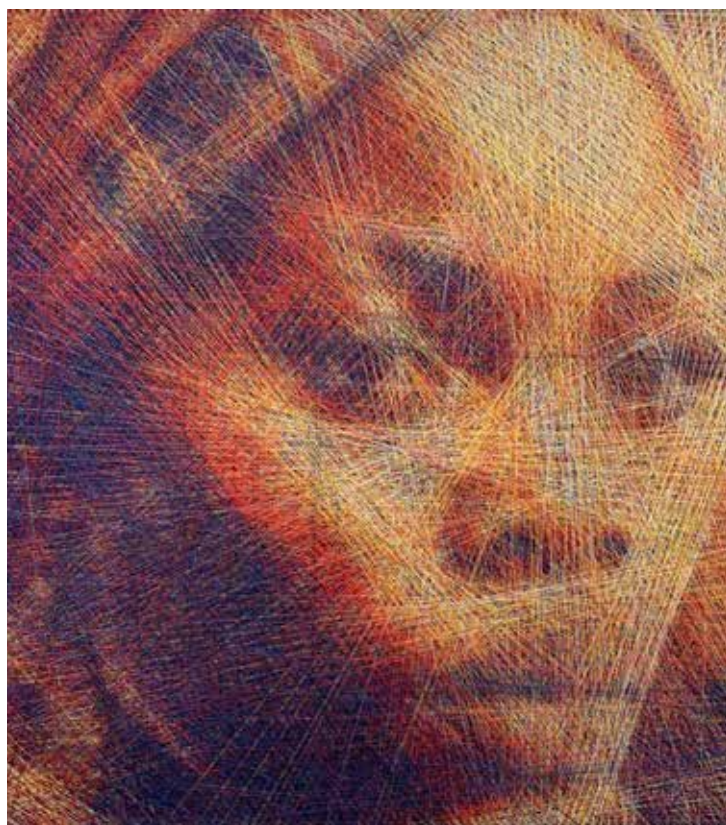
Desperate to put food on the table, Solomons also made drawings of Namibia's first three presidents and tried to sell them to businesses.

He would often end up asking for 50 cent at a local grocery store to buy a half-loaf of bread.

"I worked at the CTM tile retail chain in Namibia for eight years," he says.

His employers noticed his keen sense of creativity and let





him help with the design and setting up of display cabinets.

“And they would encourage me,” he says.

But due to a lack of exposure artists do not thrive in Namibia, he says.

Artist

Things started changing though when Rossouw, who is celebrating 30 years in the art world this year, crossed Solomons’ path.

At 37 years old, he is finally stepping into the role he always believed was meant for him – being a full-time artist.

Solomons is represented by Rossouw, who has helped many artists along the way. Some have gained international recognition, such as Ayanda Mabulu, Jono Dry, Bastiaan van Stenis, and Stuart Dods.

“I love art that takes long to produce. It shows. I truly admire the patience it demands – perhaps because I struggle with it myself,” Rossouw says.

He says Solomon’s art is known as thread art, which falls under fibre art.

“It’s impressive to see someone like Leandro take 50 hours to create a piece that measures 50cm by 50cm or 60cm by 60cm.”

The process demands hands-on learning, Solomons says.

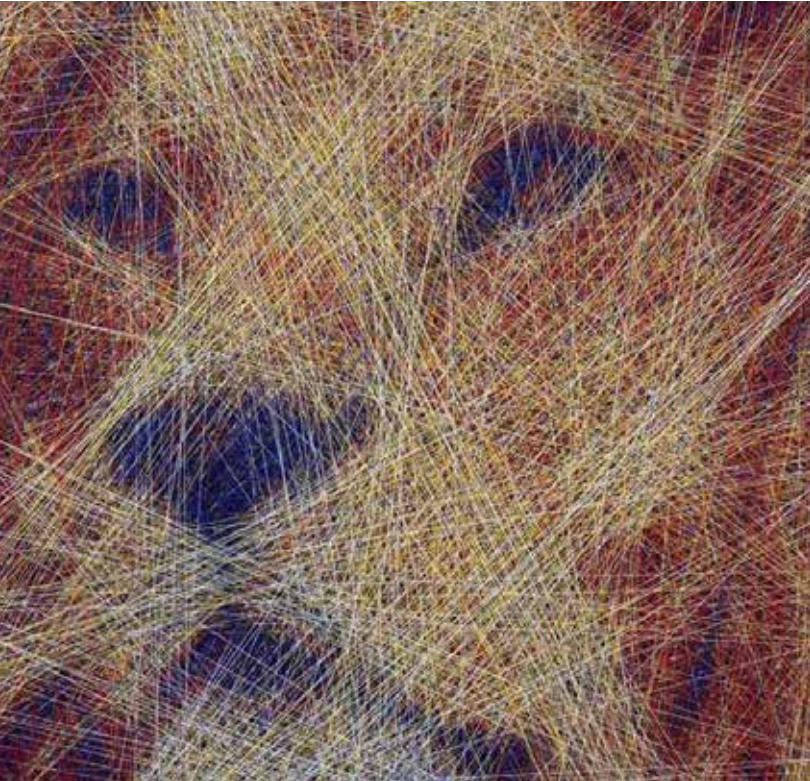
“During the Covid-19 pandemic, while I was confined to my flat, I was inspired by an Instagram post to explore thread art, a medium practised by only a few.

Die-Hard

“My initial attempts were full of mistakes, like choosing the wrong thread and nails, and it took me nearly two years to improve.

“Despite wanting to give up after struggling to create the pieces, I persevered, because I had sold two cars to finance my project and left my job to focus on perfecting my skills.”

Solomons says he digitally reconstructs the entire image he wants to create and overlays it with thread to achieve the right colours – “similar to how a zoomed-in photograph reveals tiny dots”.



“Instead of dots, I use lines to project the face, layering five basic colours: red, blue, yellow, black, and white. I call this ‘threading’ and do it by hand, looping thread around nails positioned at the edges of a board.”

He says he plans an artwork’s colour scheme in advance, balancing his preferences with the client’s requests.

From a distance, his works resemble faces with lines and textures.

“I focus on African faces, preferring natural looks without smiles to capture true beauty and serenity.

“I don’t want people to squeeze out the beauty when they smile,” he says.

Rossouw says doors are starting to open internationally for Solomons.

The Thompson’s Gallery group in the United Kingdom has bought several of Solomon’s works and represents him exclusively in their galleries in London and Aldeburgh.

In addition, a gallery in Boston, United States, also represents him.

Rossouw says he appreciates Solomons’ authenticity, a quality he associates with Namibians.

Consequently, he opened The Tug Gallery at the Jetty at Swakopmund in 1995, but closed it in 2006.

Rossouw first met Solomons when the artist arrived in Hermanus as a young man after writing to a local newspaper to locate members of his family.

Solomons asked Rossouw to give him a chance as an artist, but Rossouw only let him distribute pamphlets on the beach, as he remained unconvinced about displaying Solomons’ work in the gallery.

Despite feeling disheartened and preparing to return to Namibia, the die-hard artist was determined to prove to Rossouw that he truly belonged as an artist.

“He was absolutely determined and tried repeatedly,” says Rossouw.

Lion

One day, the gallery founder asked Solomons which Namibian artist created the lion artwork featured in an Instagram post, as he wanted to get in touch with the person.

“That was me,” Solomons says.

This moment marked the start of a new chapter.

“He asked me to send him a few of my works, so I sent him four of my best pieces . . . Within the first two months, I sold all four of them.”

And the rest is history, he says.

In Retrospect

As I drive back from Hermanus, I reflect on an anecdote Rossouw shared with me as I left the Rossouw Modern.

He once took some of his family members, along with Solomons, to visit the Addo Elephant National Park in the Eastern Cape.

When a rhino suddenly appeared nearby, they were all alarmed – especially when they heard Solomons speak Khoekhoe for the first time.

What came out of his mouth was much like his artworks: Startled and enchanted, as if weaving a spell, he called out to bless the creature.

“In rural Namibia, it’s customary to bless wild creatures; to speak words of goodness over them,” he says.

And Solomons has somehow managed to persevere and create his own visual spells – speaking goodness over everyone who encounters them. ❀



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The Last Word



words by Chris Coetzee

Namibia, in the month of May alone, outnumbers Switzerland's public holidays for the entire year. Meaning? I had time to travel. And goodness, our country is beautiful beyond words. The roads are debatable, but Mother Nature certainly doesn't hold back. No matter where you stay, how luxurious your 4x4 is, or which dusty trail you find yourself on, the chances are high you'll be utterly amazed by her sheer, unfiltered beauty. Namibia doesn't just reveal itself - it unfolds, mile by mile, with each turn more breathtaking than the last.

In a world that is truly a capitalist paradise, Namibia is the hidden secret.

My travels gave me time to reflect on the world as it is - chaotic, fast-moving, and often confusing - and to wonder about the future and all its secret surprises. And let me be clear, I'm not pointing fingers at President Trump.

The speed of global change is concerning, and it's getting hard to decide if it's for better or worse. Take the automotive industry, for instance. Rolls-Royce has traded its handcrafted elegance for digital dashboards, and most cars today feel like oversized kitchen appliances on wheels. We've reached a stage where people are happy to spend more on an upscale fridge than on gold bars — and depreciation has never been so chic.

Let's face it, billions are spent researching consumer behaviour, finding clever emotional triggers to encourage repeated purchases of products we know won't last. Capitalism, you beautifully tragic creature.

As travel becomes easier, destinations worldwide are offering attractions that prioritize profit over authenticity. We call this phenomenon "overtourism", but let's be honest, it's just a polite way of saying "tourist traps." These are places designed to squeeze wallets dry.

For that very specific reason I absolutely love Old Sailor's Restaurant in Swakopmund. A beloved local gem and Michelangelo Approved Destination - located in the heart of town. The menu is a delightful fusion of German, African, and local Namibian flavours. It's the kind of place that makes you wonder if the real treasure in Swakopmund isn't buried under the dunes, but sitting right there on a plate, smothered in garlic butter.

Andy, the owner, has more passion for good food and real experiences than any brand campaign could ever manufacture. He understands what truly matters - far better than anything the capitalist world could slap a price tag on. While others are busy trying to sell you Wi-Fi, Andy's serving up memories on a plate - no subscription required.

Welcome to the future: ridiculous, and proudly absurd. 🍷



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