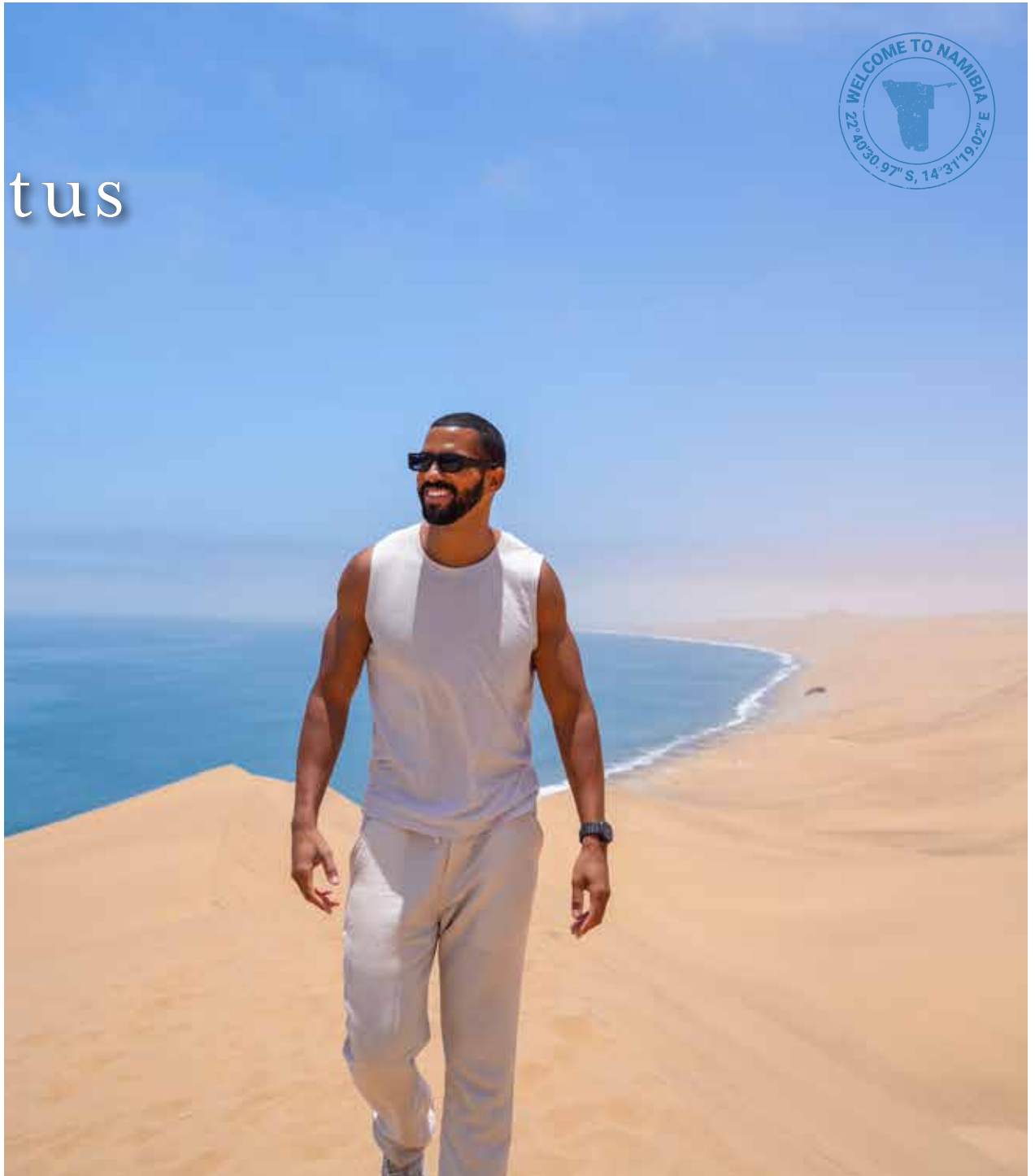


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Honourable Emma Inamutila Theofelus
Minister of Information, Communication,
and Technology
Republic of Namibia

Dear readers,

Happy Independence, Namibia.

This month, we do not simply mark a date in our country's history.

We honour a decision. A decision forged in sacrifice, sustained by courage, and entrusted to us with responsibility.

There are moments in the life of a nation that are not simply historical; they are formative. They do not merely mark time; they shape the identity of that nation.

Our Independence was, and is, the beginning of a dream.

On 21 March 1990, Namibia did more than assume sovereignty. She found her voice, a sovereign voice, a collective voice, a global voice. That voice was entrusted to us by those who sacrificed and believed that every Namibian child born of this soil deserved the right to call this beautifully contrasting land home.

Independence gave us that voice.

What we continue to choose to build with it will define us.

At Michelangelo Magazine, we often reflect on landscapes, deserts, rivers, silence, and scale. Yet within those landscapes lie profound lessons about leadership and nationhood.



Michelangelo

—FROM NAMIBIA TO THE WORLD—

Unity, we are reminded, is not identical perspective. It does not require uniformity of thought, nor does it demand the absence of debate. Unity is alignment around principle. It is the shared commitment that, though we may differ in opinion on many aspects of what it means to be fundamentally and patriotically Namibian, we remain anchored in dignity, loyalty, constitutional order, and the long-term prosperity of our nation.

There is wisdom written into our land.

The Okavango River, seeping quietly into the Kalahari Desert, transforms one of the most extreme landscapes on Earth into one of the world's most abundant ecosystems – The Okavango Delta.

The miracle is not that the desert exists.

The miracle is what aligned flow can accomplish. It converts limitation into possibility.

So it is with a nation.

When principles align, when liberty is exercised with responsibility, when justice anchors progress, when unity steadies diversity, even the harshest conditions can yield abundance.

As custodians of voice - in business, in leadership, in community - we carry a responsibility that extends beyond rhetoric. Our words shape perception. Our conduct shapes credibility. Our alignment shapes destiny.

May our voice not merely seek to be heard, but to build.

May our unity not silence diversity, but strengthen it.

May our stewardship honour the trust placed in us.

And may we, like the quiet waters of the Okavango, flow with purpose, transforming even the most challenging terrain into a landscape of dignity and possibility.

With respect,

With reflection,

And with unwavering belief in Namibia, our Motherland.

Namibia is in all of us. We need to guard her peace and stability jealously. We need to anchor our identities in her, first and foremost, before we extend our other parallel identities in culture, tribe, language, history, and pan-Africanism.

As Namibians, we need to decide what makes us completely ONE and hold onto that very tightly.

For it is Brand Namibia that will carry us through the tough and happy times that a nation will inevitably experience.

We love you, our Motherland. Happy Independence, Namibia. 🇳🇲

When people ask me how a psychology graduate from the University of Namibia ended up managing a hotel on Namibia's windswept coast, I smile. Because the truth is, I never really left hospitality... I was simply finding my way back home.

I grew up in this industry. The rhythm of guest arrivals, the satisfaction of a well-executed service, the quiet pride in creating memorable experiences; these were the sounds of my childhood. But like many young Namibians, I felt the pull to explore, to test myself beyond familiar borders. So, I went to Germany.

Germany taught me precision. It taught me systems. Throughout my career, I worked my way through hotels, luxury lodges, B&Bs, backpackers, and even student accommodation. Each experience added another layer to my understanding of hospitality in all its forms. I learned that luxury is not always about thread count or chandeliers; sometimes it is about genuine warmth in a budget guesthouse, or the perfect coffee in a bustling hotel lobby.

I was searching, though I did not quite know for what.

What I discovered was this: excellence in hospitality is not location-dependent. The standards I absorbed in Europe - the attention to detail, the operational rigour - all of it came home with me. More importantly, it needed to come home with me.

The ultimate journey began at Lüderitz Nest Hotel. It is where I first understood what professional hospitality could be in a 73-room seaview property perched on the edge of the Atlantic, where Namibian warmth meets international standards. But I needed to see beyond our coast, to understand what excellence looked like elsewhere before I could truly appreciate what we were building here.

Returning was not a retreat. It was a conscious choice to bring everything I learned back to where my hospitality

journey began. Now, continuing with Lüderitz Nest Hotel in a leadership capacity, I am applying those global insights to elevate what we have always done well. We are proving every day that exceptional hospitality thrives in Namibia's unique landscape, not despite our location, but because of it.

Every team member, every service touchpoint, every carefully considered detail reflects a commitment to hospitality that rivals anything I experienced abroad.

And here is what I have learned about leadership in this industry: it is not a given. It is earned through dedication, diligence and consistency. Day after day. Guest after guest. Challenge after challenge.

Being a young woman in this role means proving myself constantly, yes. But it also means bringing fresh perspectives, unwavering standards, and a determination to elevate Namibian hospitality to new heights.

We are part of a generation reshaping this industry – young professionals, many of them women, who have gained international experience and chosen to return home. Who understand that Namibia's tourism sector is not just about wildlife and desert landscapes; it is about creating experiences that leave guests changed and that make them ambassadors for our country long after they have left our shores.

We are here. We are capable. And we are shaping Namibia's hospitality future.

So, when visitors arrive at Lüderitz Nest Hotel, they are not just checking into a four-star hotel on Namibia's dramatic southern coast. They are experiencing the dedication of a team that believes in excellence, the vision of young leaders committed to their country, and the evolution of an industry that is claiming its place on the global stage.

This is what coming home looks like. And we are just getting started. 🌍



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ON THE COVER:

The Art of Slow Travel

A journey through Midgard and Le Mirage where presence, stillness and thoughtful luxury turn travel into a true exhale.

(See pages 16-19 for the full story)

www.ol-leisure.com

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Namibia Tourism Board

Michelangelo Magazine supports responsible tourism. We encourage readers to book only with Namibia Tourism Board-registered properties and operators.

On behalf of the Michelangelo Magazine Team
Proudly Namibian | Globally Positioned



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ISSN: 2026-8998

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Michelangelo Magazine
Shop #2 Ferreira's Garden Centre, Maxwell Street, Southern Industrial Area, Windhoek, Namibia

Printer
Solitaire Press (Pty) Limited
Windhoek, NAMIBIA

"Good Level Contributor" according to the NPPC BEE scorecard
ISO 9001:2015 Certified company

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Reviving the San-Dal

*From the First Footprint to the Revival of
an Ancient Craft in Namibia.*

words and photographs supplied by Future Footwear Foundation | edited by Anne Schaffer



The first recorded human footprint is 3.7 million years old. But it is not for another 3.69 million years that we find the first shoe. That means our ancestors were walking, running, and hunting barefoot for millions of years.

The first African sandals were made solely to protect feet from heat and desert thorns — nothing more. Most indigenous shoemaking was barefoot shoemaking. Indigenous people understood the importance of respecting nature, from the way resources were used to allowing feet to do their thing. This knowledge allowed them to survive the harshest environments for thousands of years.

The project started with a focus on understanding how footwear impacts human health, through the research of Catherine Willems (researcher at KASK & Conservatorium (HOGENT) and founder of the Future Footwear Foundation). As a design anthropologist, shoemaker, and biomechanics

expert coming from a long line of shoemakers, she co-creates footwear and walks with traditional artisans across the world. Through this process, she observed how some traditional footwear is closer to barefoot walking — having minimal impact on both the body and the environment.

The N!ang N!osi — the traditional hunting sandal of the San people of Southern Africa — is such a minimal shoe. In collaboration with Galahad Clark (CEO of Vivobarefoot), who also comes from a long line of shoemakers, and two design students from KASK School of Arts, Flora Blommaert and Sofie Verclyte, Willems travelled to Namibia, where they encountered Jul’hoan San cobblers still making hunting sandals adapted to the Kalahari environment.

At the time, hunting restrictions meant access to traditional skins was becoming increasingly difficult, pushing makers to rely on improvised materials such as old



car tyres and discarded leather. From this encounter, the San-Dal project grew. Together with local cobblers, the Future Footwear Foundation worked to support the continuation of this making practice by helping reintroduce appropriate materials and creating conditions for the makers to lead the process themselves. The cobblers did what they have always done best: make the sandals.

Meet the San-Dal

Guided by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Future Footwear Foundation has established a long-term partnership with the Jul'hoansi people in and around Nhoma, Namibia, to support the regeneration of a lost craft and preserve ancient (barefoot) wisdom — creating barefoot San-Dals nearly identical to those of their ancestors.

The original hunting sandal, called N!ang n!osi, features a back strap, a double lace between the toes, and a two-layer sole. FFF has adapted this ancient design for modern life by adding a new buckle system instead of laces. This makes the sandals easier to put on and take off, making them ideal for everyday use in urban and outdoor settings.



Reviving a Lost Craft

The sandals are made by San cobblers, alongside seamstresses who sew the cloth hunting bags in which the sandals are packed and add the removable eggshell accessories. They use the traditional materials and techniques their ancestors would have used.

Until the 1950s, the San people wore hunting sandals made from eland skin, called N!ang N!osi, literally meaning ‘eland skin sandals’ in Ju!’hoansi. Due to limited access to eland, they began making sandals from car tyres. This shift was influenced by the colonial regime, border policies, and the decline of their traditional lands in the Kalahari. Western fashion and the availability of second-hand shoes also contributed to the decline of traditional eland-hide footwear.

By 2016, only a few San elders remained who retained knowledge of making the eland hunting sandal, passed down through observation of previous generations.

The traditional sandal, tested over generations, is not only a beautiful and functional object but also offers insight into the mindset and worldview of its makers. For the San community of Nhoma, its significance lies not only in the sandal itself, but also in the narrative and history surrounding it. The cobblers now carry this project into the future, giving it new meaning while exploring sustainable design approaches and livelihoods.

What Makes the San-Dal so Comfortable?

It is not cushioning or support, but the opposite: the sandal allows the foot to move as it was meant to. With a sole made from two layers of thick, natural leather, it protects the foot while maintaining direct contact with the ground. With no arch support, heel lift, or padding, the sandal allows natural stability, sensory feedback, and balance to do the work.

Its “secret” lies in its minimalism — a design that has withstood the test of time and works with the body, not against it.

The Workshop

Established in 2022, the workshop is a bottom-up collaborative initiative between, amongst others, the Ju!’hoansi community, the Future Footwear Foundation as facilitator, and Nina Maritz, an award-winning Namibian architect renowned for her expertise in sustainable and vernacular architecture. Constructed using earth-bag architecture, the workshop showcases the use of locally available soils to create robust structures.

The new workplace pays homage to the surrounding environment and the resourcefulness of the Ju!’hoansi cobblers. This purposeful space preserves ancestral knowledge, enabling cobblers to produce their original barefoot shoes.

The San-Dal project forms an integral part of the Future Footwear Foundation’s broader initiatives. As a centre of excellence and research, the foundation explores the dynamic interplay between human locomotion, creativity, and how people engage with their surroundings through shoemaking. Through collaborative efforts, FFF partners with various shoemaking communities, including the Ju!’hoan San, to promote sustainable footwear practices.

With generous support from the Pupkewitz Foundation (Namibia), Rotary Beveren (Belgium), KASK & Conservatorium (HOAGENT) (Belgium), and Vivobarefoot (UK), the solar-powered atelier in Nhoma became a reality.

Catherine Willems, founder of FFF, explains: “All proceeds from San-Dal purchases go towards material costs, management, salaries, and capital for the local ecosystem. By connecting the San with a global barefoot community, we hope to establish a thriving social enterprise for generations to come.”



To learn more about the Sandal project, check the book **Tju!ho: Thoughtful Ways of Making and Walking**

<https://www.japsambooks.nl/products/tju-ho>

Where Can You Find a San-Dal?

SOUTH AFRICA, CAPE TOWN:
!Khwa ttu – San Heritage Centre
For a discount, mention this code when purchasing at the Centre: MICHELANGELO-SAN-DAL-30

NAMIBIA, NHOMA:
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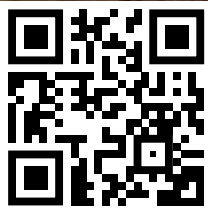
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THE ART

OF SLOW TRAVEL

*My Journey to Presence –
by Pierre Abena*

When travel becomes your work, it's easy to move through places without fully absorbing them. After weeks of constant movement - flights, drives, locations - I arrived at **Midgard Otjihavera Windhoek** not knowing I was about to rediscover what it means to truly exhale.

The drive in set the tone immediately. Even after passing the first gate, that stretch through open farmland, horses and wide greenery shifted something in my nervous system. Midgard eases you into the experience instead of overwhelming you. That's when I realised I could actually slow down and just take it all in.



FINDING YOUR RHYTHM

For me, slow travel is choosing presence over productivity. It's about letting a destination set the pace instead of your schedule. Midgard made that effortless. The open farm setting naturally encourages slower mornings and quieter moments.

One of my favourite experiences was driving up into the mountains to watch the sunset on my first evening. I didn't rush or try too hard to document it. I simply sat and watched the light change. That moment reminded me why slowing down is essential.

From Midgard, I travelled to **Le Mirage Sossusvlei**, where the desert strips everything back to the essentials. Spending the night sleeping under the stars on the rooftop, with a clear sky filled with stars and the Milky Way overhead, was grounding in a way that's hard to replicate.



There were no distractions, just space and stillness. What do you think of when you're staring at the stars and your mind could wander anywhere? It was a humbling situation that made me conscious of my thoughts and my ability to control them and be present.

Sunset became my ritual at Le Mirage. Almost every evening, I made a point of pausing and being present for it. The way the light softened over the desert, the quiet that settled in and the occasional wildlife passing nearby made those moments feel very intimate. One evening, a jackal wandered close by while oryx moved through the landscape. Those sunsets became my daily reset, a simple but meaningful way to slow down and reconnect.



THE DETAILS THAT MATTER

What makes both properties special is the freedom they give you. There's no pressure to follow a schedule or maximise every moment. You wake up and move through the day based on how you feel, not the time.

I've stayed in many visually stunning places, but beauty alone doesn't define luxury for me. Thoughtful luxury is about intention. It's how hospitality is delivered, not just what's presented. Refined luxury shows up in the details: anticipating needs, creating ease and making guests feel genuinely seen.

Wellness experiences including the massages helped deepen that sense of calm. After extended travel, you don't always realise how much tension your body is holding. Those moments of care allowed me to fully settle into the rhythm of each place.

Climbing Big Daddy dune is a moment I'll always carry with me. The climb was challenging, but sitting at the top afterwards was incredibly rewarding. There was nothing around me except sand, sky and the air filling my lungs.

That experience shifted my perspective. When I returned home, I found myself more appreciative of simplicity... food, comfort, routine. Travel like this reminds you of the work behind sustainability and preservation. When life feels rushed, that memory reminds me that sometimes all we need is open air.

Remote environments reshape how you experience time. Without constant stimulation or rigid schedules, you naturally slow down. You move based on your needs rather than habit. These experiences have influenced how I approach daily life, reminding me that slowing down isn't indulgent. It's grounding.

Immersive travel heightens my awareness. I return home more appreciative of simplicity, sustainability and intention. These experiences inspire curiosity, pushing me to explore beyond familiar paths and to engage more deeply with people and places.

Travel like this shifts the mindset from consuming experiences to participating in them. And that, I've learned, is where the real exhale happens.



Both locations – Midgard and Le Mirage - are deeply connected to nature, which naturally shifts your attention away from distractions and back to your surroundings. Wandering the grounds at Midgard or taking in the vastness of the desert at Le Mirage invites you to slow down, observe and simply be present.



**Pierre Abena - Model, Actor
& Content Creator**



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find your exhale
moment.**



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Surf's Up!

Riding Namibia's Wild Atlantic Coast

Edited by Anne Schaffer | Photographs and information by Surf Guide Namibia



Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



Namibia's Atlantic coastline is rugged, powerful and - say those really in the know - surprisingly welcoming to surfers of all levels.

Surf Guide Namibia is the country's original surf school and has been introducing travellers to one of Africa's most surprising adventures: surfing.

Owner and main instructor Tristan Volschenk and the Surf Guide Namibia team feel strongly about how they operate: "With only a handful of instructors, each lesson feels more like a friendship than a class. Beginners are guided patiently through the basics - learning how to balance on the board, read the waves and respect the sea. In this way, we offer a gentle introduction on beaches in and around Swakopmund, where consistent swells and sandy breaks create ideal conditions for first-timers all year round."

December may be especially popular with locals due to school holidays and warm weather, but each season brings people from all over the world to the coast. The instructors even enjoy the hot east-weather days, disliked by many locals because of heavy sandstorms. In the windless evenings, however, conditions allow for a warm sunset session in the ocean.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



22 | MARCH 2026



During lessons, the school focuses on building confidence in the water, especially with younger surfers, as a large portion of their students are children. Later on, tailored coaching helps refine technique and prepare surfers for more challenging waves.

For advanced surfers, the school provides guided trips to Skeleton Bay, one of the world’s most famous left-hand barrels. Known for its speed and length, it is a wave that demands respect — and local knowledge. Surf Guide Namibia’s expertise ensures surfers approach it safely and with the best chance of success. However, it is definitely not for the faint-hearted: powerful currents in cold waters make it challenging even for professionals who fly in from far away to ride this legendary barrel.

For Tristan, the extreme solitude is what sets Namibia apart: “Unlike the crowded line-ups of Morocco, South Africa or Bali, here you might share a break with only a handful of surfers — and a pod of dolphins. The silence of the desert, the roar of the Atlantic, and the warmth of a small surf community combine into something rare: surfing as sport, meditation and passion.” 🌊

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TWINKLE, TWINKLE, DESERT STAR



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I HAVE DISCOVERED A PLACE WHERE STARS TWINKLE, AND CHILDHOOD LULLABIES BECOME REALITY. A PLACE THAT, NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, FEELS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE. HERE, UNDER A CANOPY OF INFINITE STARS, IN THE WORLD'S OLDEST DESERT, GUESTS REDISCOVER A PART OF THEMSELVES THAT NEVER STOPPED LOOKING UP.

Far from city lights, the Namib Desert's reveals one of planet's top three most spectacular stargazing experiences. With virtually no light pollution, the sky reveals incredible clarity, allowing visitors to see constellations, planets, Magellanic Clouds, and the Milky Way in vivid detail.

The desert's clean, crisp air, high altitude, along with the near-total absence of humidity further makes the stars appear closer and brighter. On clear desert nights, even the galaxy's dark dust lanes and dense star fields are clearly visible to the naked eye, making it a dream destination for astronomers, photographers, and anyone seeking to connect with the cosmos.

STARDUST DREAMS: SLEEPING BENEATH CELESTIAL SPLENDOUR

Namib Dune Star Camp in Namibia, part of Gondwana's Namib Desert Collection, invites you the chance to experience one of the clearest night skies on Earth. At this eco-friendly camp, guests can roll their beds onto private decks and fall asleep under the dazzling sky. It combines the thrill of sleeping out in nature, beneath the stars, with the comfort of soft bedding, creating the perfect setting to drift off under the infinite starlight from the warmth of your bed.

Situated deep in the Namib Desert, which is recognised as a Gold Tier International Dark Sky Reserve, the camp offers guided night walks under a blanket of twinkling stars. On these walks, guests get an opportunity to wander and learn to read the desert by starlight, trace the shapes of constellations once used by ancient travellers, identify nocturnal creatures that emerge after the

sun retreats, and listen to stories passed down through generations of Namibian oral tradition - ultimately offering a full immersion in celestial splendour.

CELESTIAL WONDERS UNSEEN FROM NORTHERN SKIES: AN ANCESTRAL COMPASS

Stars have long held profound significance for the indigenous peoples of Namibia. Their ancestors used the night sky as both a compass and calendar, navigation by the Milky Way, timing seasonal changes, and telling tales of creation and life.

In the southern hemisphere, the centre of the Milky Way passes directly overhead during the dry winter months (from May to August), offering a brighter, denser view of our galaxy than most people ever see.

Unlike the northern hemisphere, stargazers in the Namib Desert are treated to constellations and celestial wonders that are only visible south of the equator, most notably, the Southern Cross (Crux).

NAMIB DUNE STAR CAMP: YOUR PRIVATE OBSERVATORY

When night gives way to morning, and the final stars fade, you wake up knowing you've felt something infinite: a moment between earth and eternity. In the Namib, the stars may disappear with the sun, but the wonder they awaken lingers long after like a lullaby the soul will never forget.

To enjoy a magical night under the stars at the Namib Dune Star Camp
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Slice of Life

words by Jescey Bekker



Month-end Madness



Recently, I made the rookie mistake of ending up in a mall at month-end.

What's worse, I decided it was a good idea to go grocery shopping.

In my defence, it was the weekend before month-end, so I didn't think it would be as hectic as it was.

My goodness, was I wrong.

I felt like I was suddenly thrust into an arena, fighting for survival.

I understand busy. I understand that loud and full spaces can be overwhelming to the senses. What I do not understand is the aggression. It's grocery shopping, not the Hunger Games! There is no shortage of items on the shelves. It's not Covid lockdown with the strange concern that toilet paper will run out... it is just a Saturday morning in a grocery store. But no.

You spend a moment perusing the cheese selection a little "too long" and the person behind you starts huffing and puffing like the big bad wolf outside the little pig's house. You try to divert from the steady (fast-paced) stream of trolleys to get into the next aisle... stares and twitching eyebrows. Heaven forbid you suddenly stop to greet someone or look at a special.

Twenty minutes in, I ended up taking a break in the pet food aisle. At least that was an option. Quiet and empty (maybe if they had pets, they wouldn't be so agro).

Deep breath. Push back into the chaos.

Then comes the queue to pay... easily half a kilometre in either direction to funnel into the chute. Here, people forget all about Covid lockdowns, because suddenly social distancing is a thing of the past. Somewhere you hear a toddler crying and squealing, a parent saying, "You cannot open it yet." Sigh. Thank goodness my toddler is at home with hubby. Only 10 more people in the queue ahead of me...

Eventually, an hour and a half, and most certainly a handful of extra grey hairs later, I scurry from the store and make my way to pay the parking ticket. (This took its own short lifetime to complete.) And off I go. Loading my groceries into the car, returning the trolley, and back into the car. Hopping in, door closed. Quiet. Sigh of relief.

As I leave the parking garage, I am thankful that this is the most difficult part of the month. A blessing indeed. And even though I vow to never go to town at month-end ever again, in the back of my mind I know I will, once again, be attending the Hunger Games next month. May the odds be ever in our favour. ☺

Public Notice

Important Update on Tariff Adjustments

20 January 2026



Dear Customer,

Starting 1 February 2026, Telecom Namibia will make some changes to its service prices. This is called tariff re-balancing, which simply means adjusting prices, so they match the cost of providing services and help us invest in better technology. Some prices will go down a lot, while a few will increase slightly.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Namibia is moving towards a more digital economy, and we want to make sure you have fast, reliable, and affordable services. To do this, we have to invest over N\$2.3 billion in the coming years to:

- Expand fibre-to-the-home/business and strengthen our national fibre network.
- Upgrade mobile networks (3G, 4G, 4.5G) and prepare for 5G.
- Improve international connectivity through the Google Equiano undersea cable.
- Enhance billing systems and customer self-service platforms.
- Invest in cybersecurity, cloud services, and backup power solutions.

These upgrades will support Namibia's Vision 2030 and ensure better internet, mobile coverage, and digital services for everyone.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

Here are the main highlights of the new prices:

1. Local Calls (Fixed to Mobile):

- From N\$1.29 to N\$0.90 per minute (30% cheaper).
- TN Mobile standard rate drops from N\$1.45 to N\$0.90 per minute (38% cheaper).

2. International Calls:

- Calls to the USA drop from N\$9.90 to N\$3.65 per minute.
- Calls to Australia, Kenya, Portugal, Netherlands drop from N\$9.90 to N\$4.99 per minute.

3. Fixed Broadband Internet:

- Old 10Mbps plans prices: N\$909–N\$1,225.
- New price: N\$407–N\$534 (about 56% cheaper).
- Faster speeds now available (up to 500Mbps).

4. Simplified Packages:

- Home and Business plans merged into one set of offers—easier to choose, same value for everyone.

5. Other Adjustments:

- Some fixed-line and ISDN charges updated, but most reductions are on mobile and broadband.

Full details are attached below in Annexure A - Key Highlights of the Tariff Rebalancing, and also available at: www.telecom.na/tariffs.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

- Cheaper calls (local and international).
- Much lower internet costs with faster speeds.
- Better network and services as we invest in upgrades.

We know price changes can be challenging, and we appreciate your understanding as we work to secure Namibia's digital future.

For any questions or help:

- **Call Centre:** 11000
- **WhatsApp:** +264 85 211 1111
- **Email:** customercare@telecom.na
- **Social Media:** @telecomnamibia

Thank you for supporting us as we build a digitally ready Namibia for all.

Best regards,

Stanley Shanapinda
Chief Executive Officer
Telecom Namibia

FOLLOW US!



www.telecom.na



WELCOME TO NAMIBIA

TRAVEL WELL TRAVEL SAFE



CLIMATE AWARENESS

- **Hot days, cold nights**
pack light clothes and warm layers.
- **Hydrate regularly**
desert conditions can dehydrate quickly.
- Always use sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses.

ROAD SAFETY

- Drive on the left.
- Gravel roads require slow, careful driving.
- **Avoid driving at night**-wildlife is often active.
- Ensure your vehicle is roadworthy and carry a spare tire and fuel.

PERSONAL SAFETY

- Keep valuables out of sight, especially in urban areas.
- Avoid isolated areas at night.
- Respect local customs and traditions.
- Ask permission before photographing people.

WILDLIFE SAFETY

- Do not feed or approach wild animals.
- Remain inside vehicles in game parks.
- Store food safely when camping and follow park rules.

HEALTH & EMERGENCIES

- Travel insurance is essential.
- Take malaria precautions when visiting the north.
- **All-round emergency:**
10111 or 999 or 112 and MVA National Accident
Response: 9682

GENERAL TRAVEL TIPS

- **Currency:** Namibian Dollar (NAD) – equal to South African Rand (ZAR).
- **Language:** English is official; local languages and Afrikaans are widely spoken.
- **Help us protect Namibia's beauty** – leave only footprints.

Safety Alert Know your rights

Only use accommodation and shuttle services registered with the Namibia Tourism Board (NTB).

- ✓ All lodges, guesthouses, and transport providers must have valid NTB registration.
- ✓ You have the right to request proof of registration.
- ✓ Look for the official NTB certificate at reception or ask your shuttle driver to show registration.
- ✓ When unsure, check or report with NTB

**City of Windhoek police
Emergency services: (24hr)**
061 211 111

Fire Brigade:
998

**Crime prevention:
Windhoek city**
+264 (0) 61 290 2239
+264 (0) 61 290 2018

Med Rescue
+264 (61) 249777
+264 (61) 230 505/6/7

Toll-free number:
+264 (0) 61 302 302

Emergency Rescue 24
084 124

Ambulance:
10177

Lifeline
086 132 2322

Crisis Response
+264 81 881 8181
+264 61 303 395





On One Knee at Sandwich Harbour?

*Where Dunes, Light and Love Align in
Moments Beyond the Ordinary*

edited by Anne Schaffer | photographs by Retha Vorster

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—

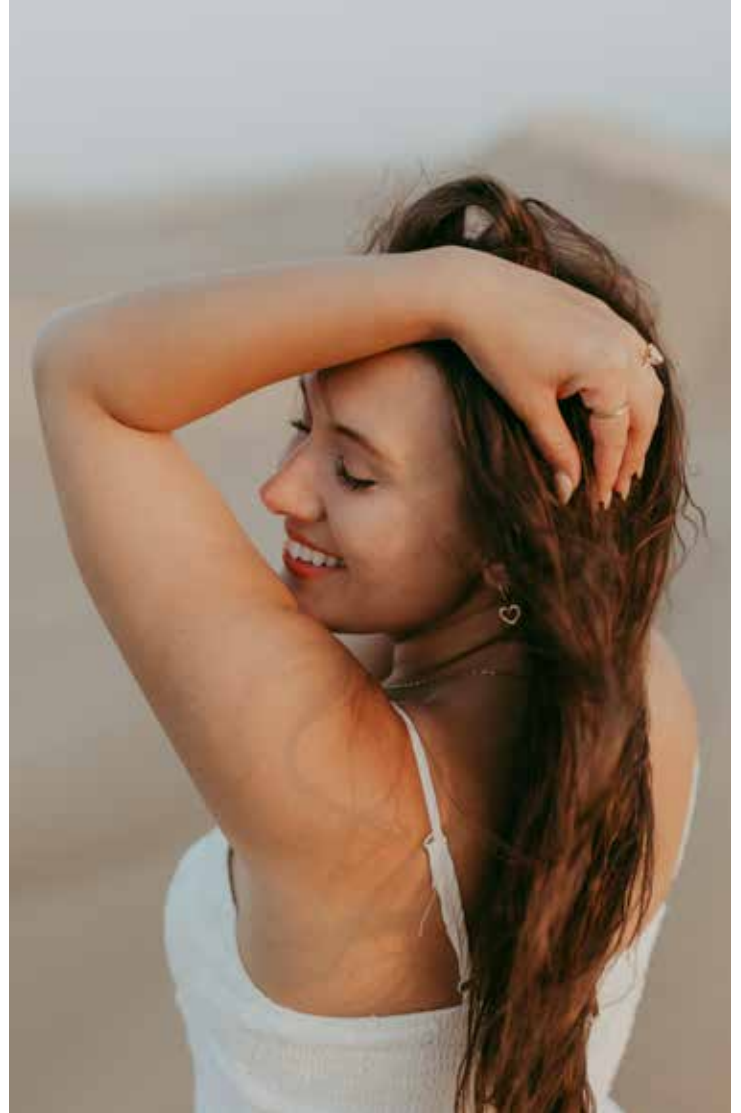


Retha Vorster is a professional photographer based in Swakopmund. She's combined safaris with her photography, offering guests something quite different - a relaxed, but magnificent photographic record of their trip.

Retha Vorster's Black Pearl Discovery Tours in Swakopmund was launched in 2024, with the idea of offering photoshoot experiences designed specifically for visitors to Namibia. For Retha, the most satisfying aspect is bringing in expert guides to do what they do best, while she does what she does best - photography, as unobtrusively as she can. Depending on where the tour goes, Retha may need to choose a guide with 4x4 driving skills and a strong knowledge of the terrain. That's what happened with a recent trip to Sandwich Harbour: "It was an afternoon tour and photoshoot combination for a couple visiting from the United States, and the event was precisely why I began - and love - Black Pearl. Travellers get a chance to enjoy their journey while having it documented professionally in a natural, relaxed way. I'm there, but soon no more than part of the landscape."

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



There was one curveball — a good one, though. A marriage proposal. Retha takes up the story: “On this trip, I partnered with Michael from iVentures, which allowed me to focus fully on the couple and their photographs while he guided us safely along the route and shared interesting information along the way.

“We began the afternoon at the Walvis Bay Lagoon, where the flamingos never fail to impress. From there we stopped at the pink salt pans, and later along a stretch of beach known for its subtle pink-toned sand. While Michael showed them each location, I captured easy, natural photos - nothing overly posed, just the two of them enjoying the experience together.”

And the engagement? Heading towards Sandwich Harbour, there was an extra layer of excitement behind the scenes, says Retha: “Byron had contacted me beforehand to let me know he planned to propose to Kaylie, so Michael and I worked quietly together to make sure everything unfolded at the right moment.

“We stopped at a few viewpoints along the dunes, taking advantage of the changing light and dramatic scenery while building towards sunset. When the golden light finally arrived, we headed to the well-known Kodak viewpoint.

“I asked Kaylie to walk a little ahead so I could photograph her from behind Byron’s shoulder. That was his cue. He

The Okavango River never reaches the ocean - it disappears into the sands of the Kalahari desert.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



followed her, asked her to turn around, and went down on one knee with the ring in his hand.” She grins. “I couldn’t hear what he was saying — I didn’t need to. The emotion between them said it all. It was private and heartfelt.”

The sun dipped below the horizon soon after, and because the wind was so strong, the team didn’t end up setting out the picnic usually included in the tour. It didn’t detract from the occasion, and they happily celebrated with champagne, completely caught up in the moment. “It was one of those afternoons that reminds me how special it is to witness and preserve milestones like this.”

Black Pearl Discovery Tours works with solo travellers,

couples or families, collaborating with established tour operators - from a one-hour session in the dunes, on the beach, or around Swakopmund’s historic architecture, to a full tour paired with photography for those wanting something more immersive. Many people feel uncomfortable being photographed, so the goal is to create an environment that is easygoing and enjoyable.

Clearly, it works. “Retha didn’t just take photos of our engagement - she preserved a moment in time we will carry with us for the rest of our lives,” said Byron. There you have it. 📸

Dear Diary

words by Sandra Baumeister

The One Who Is Loved Most





Some places stay with you long after you have left. Kifaru is one of them.

I recently visited Kifaru Lodge, a beautiful lodge close to Outjo and home to the inspiring Rhino Momma Project. I had been there before, but this time felt different. This time, I came to meet someone very special.

For those of you who may not know me yet: I am the founder of Myeisha Leather Products. In Windhoek, I run a small studio and workshop where my team and I create high-end leather bags. Myeisha is built on social entrepreneurship. The women who work with me often come without formal education or prior skills. What they bring instead is courage, dedication, and an incredible willingness to learn. Over the years, they have grown into highly skilled artisans, and today we can proudly say: leather goods made in Namibia can stand confidently on the world stage.

Being a Namibian company also means taking responsibility. For us, success is not only measured in beautiful products, but in impact. We support a small kindergarten in a Windhoek township, and we created a special collection — the Rhino Range — to support Namibia's wildlife. Rhinos, among the most endangered species on Earth, have a very special place in our hearts.

And that is what brought me back to Kifaru.

From the moment I arrived, I was welcomed with warmth and generosity. I felt spoiled, cared for, and — if I may say so — treated a little bit like a queen. But the real magic happened early in the morning. I woke before dawn and watched the sun rise from my room. A deep red fireball slowly lifted itself over the horizon, flooding the bush with light. It was one of the most beautiful sunrises I have seen in my ten years of living in Namibia. Knowing that the rhinos on the property were witnessing the same sunrise somehow made it even more special.

Through our Rhino Range, we raise funds that are donated to the Rhino Momma Project, supporting their tireless and passionate work. As a result, we were given an incredible honour: we were allowed to name one of the baby rhinos.

Of course, the name was clear. MYEISHA — which means “the one who is loved the most.”

We didn't know if we would find her that day. Nature does not follow schedules. But luck — and perhaps a little magic — was on our side. Her mother, named Sandra (I like to think that wasn't a coincidence), appeared proudly with her calf, almost as if she knew we were there for this moment. And there she was: a beautiful young rhino, calm, curious, and now officially named MYEISHA.

Spending time with these gentle giants is deeply grounding. Whether during a sundowner, watching the sun disappear and welcoming the night, or during a breakfast shared quietly among rhinos — an experience that Kifaru offers and that still feels almost unreal. Where else in the world do we have the privilege of sharing a meal with such calm, powerful animals? They bring perspective. They bring peace. They remind me of what truly matters: time in nature, respect for life, and remembering where we come from.

I am deeply grateful to the entire Kifaru team and the Rhino Momma Project for their dedication, passion, and love for these extraordinary animals. And I already know — I will be back. Hopefully to see MYEISHA again, growing strong and healthy, exactly as she is meant to be.

Until then, this memory will stay with me. A sunrise. A baby rhino. And a reminder that love, when shared, can truly make a difference.

With gratitude from the heart of Namibia, Sandra. 🐘

Luxury meets humanity.

Luca Tote Shiduli Tan
Excluding shipping

Every Myeisha bag tells a story. About our craftswomen, who lead self-determined lives. About Namibian children in underprivileged schools, whom we support every day. About you and the freedom to carry a bag that matters. Each one is handmade and truly unique.
www.myeishanamibia.com



MYEISHA



We can help with quick and easy cross-border transactions

The power to make cross-border payments lies at your fingertips. By simply using the **FNB App** or **FNB Online Banking**, you can easily transact with South Africa, Lesotho and Eswatini (CMA countries) as well as the rest of the world.

Make a global payment on the FNB App

1. From the Menu, select 'Forex' then select 'Global Payments'
2. Select 'Beneficiary list'
3. Select 'Pay' next to the beneficiary
4. Select the account that payment will be made from and enter payment details
5. Select BoP code (reason for payment)
6. Accept the terms and conditions
7. Confirm that the details are correct
8. Accept quote
9. Select 'Finish'

Make a global payment with FNB Online Banking

1. Select 'Forex'
2. Select 'Pay' next to the beneficiary
3. Select the account that payment will be made from and enter payment details
4. Select BoP code (reason for payment)
5. Accept the terms and conditions and click 'Confirm'
6. Accept quote
7. Select 'Finish'

Please note that all transactions to CMA countries must be initiated as a forex transaction and not EFT.

061 299 8733

CMARandpayments@fnbnamibia.com.na

OLDMUTUAL

FROM DEBT TO DIRECTION

TWO METHODS FOR TAKING BACK CONTROL AND
BUILDING FINANCIAL FREEDOM.

Article by: **Ingrith Tjivela**, Sales and Distribution Manager,
Old Mutual Finance, Old Mutual Namibia



DO GREAT THINGS EVERYDAY

Debt can feel like a shadow that follows you everywhere. It weighs on decisions, limits choices and steals peace of mind. Yet many people underestimate how quickly momentum can build once a plan is in place. There are two practical methods that consistently help people take back control: the debt snowball and the debt stacking method. Both work for a simple reason: they turn a vague intention into a clear journey with visible progress.

The snowball method focuses on behaviour. You start by paying off the smallest balance first while maintaining minimum payments on the rest. Clearing a small account gives you a quick win, and that win builds momentum. Human beings respond to progress. Each account you close proves that the path is working, and the confidence pushes you forward. Once one debt is gone, the payment that is freed up rolls into the next. The snowball grows.

The stacking method focuses on maths. Instead of targeting the smallest amount, you target the highest interest rate. This saves you the most money over time. Once the highest-rate debt is cleared, you roll that payment into the next highest. It is slower to celebrate early wins, but financially efficient. The long-term savings can be significant because interest is the real opponent in the debt journey.

Which method is best? The honest answer is: the one you will stay committed to. If quick wins keep you motivated, start with the snowball. If you prefer optimisation and precision, choose stacking. Some people blend the two: starting with one small quick victory, then switching to the highest interest first. What matters is consistency. A plan only works when you work the plan.

Protection is the secret ingredient. Do not take on new debt while clearing the old. Set your debit orders for the day after payday so you never negotiate with yourself. Use any windfalls, refunds, bonuses or small extra income to accelerate the process. Track balances monthly. Watching the numbers fall is empowering and reinforces the habit. Debt reduction is more emotional than mathematical. Small victories keep the mind steady.

Debt does not define character. It is a season, not a sentence. With discipline and a structure, you can shorten that season dramatically. The goal is not just to reach zero. The goal is to free your future income so it can build the life you imagine instead of repaying the past. Choose your path, stay with it for six months, and watch how quickly the shadow begins to lift.





Ultimate Adrenaline Rush

Where Desert Meets the Sky

edited by Anne Schaffer | photographs by Ground Rush Adventures

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



Consider this. Epic Namibian scenery, a next-level adrenaline rush, and more fun than you can imagine... all from a very lofty perspective! That's the breathtaking skydive – tandem or solo – over the Swakopmund landscape offered by 28-year-in-business Ground Rush Adventures, all certified instructors. Beginners and pros... welcome!

Holding the country's safety record is quite an achievement for Ground Rush Adventures, and a great comforting hug for anybody keen to make the leap of faith. The company has managed over 150,000 jumps to date, and 70,000 smiling tandem skydivers can be found all over the world. And if you're really serious about this and want certification, there are many 'graduates' wandering around waving their qualification.

For beginners, tandem skydiving is perfect. You're high above the Namib Desert in Ground Rush Adventures' striking yellow aircraft, 'The Angel', adorned with its hand-painted phoenix and angel. The view from the plane is utterly sensational... and then it's time for you and your instructor to tandem dive out of the plane and freefall at over 200 km per hour. Yes, the adrenaline rush is real, but you're literally in the hands of licensed skydivers who've taken care of other tandem divers for nigh on 30 years. Of course, once the parachute opens, the world goes quiet. You'll slow down, then steer through the sky before gliding down smoothly onto solid ground. You also have choices for your jump... from 10,000, 12,000 or 15,000 feet, and you can choose from two packages if you'd like a photographer alongside you to capture your jump, the scenery and more.

Michelangelo



When Namibia became independent in 1990 under Sam Nujoma, it embedded environmental protection into its Constitution – the first country in the world to do so.

Michelangelo



It's always about safety first, so when you arrive at the Swakopmund Airport drop-off zone (your own transport or Ground Rush Adventures' courtesy bus), you'll be given a detailed briefing by your tandem instructor and then be suited up. No shortcuts, ever. Every harness and safety check is done thoroughly. You'll watch others land while you're getting ready for your own lift-off!

Ground Rush Adventures in Swakopmund is a family-run business, so if skydiving is for you, you'll be able to get really involved in a host of activities and certifications under their watchful eyes. For the tandem jump, the minimum age is 10 years old – with parental consent – and there is no maximum age. You'll need to be under 95 kg and in good general health. It's all about a state of mind... so if you're keen to tick this off the bucket list, give Ground Rush a call. What a way to see the dunes, the sea, perhaps the rolling mist, and who knows what else? Unmissable. 🌪️

info@skydiveswakop.com; +264 (0)81 124 5167



Artist: Michael Mansfield "The Curious Observer"



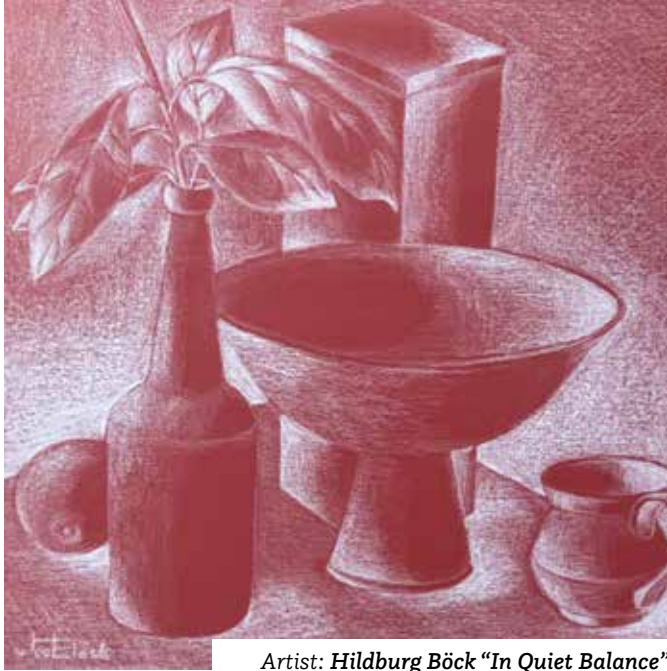
Artist: Annette Kamfer "Where we Gather"



The Beauty of Staying Still

An Invitation to Pause, Observe and Rediscover the Poetry of the Everyday

words and photographs by the Fine Art Gallery, Swakopmund



Artist: *Hildburg Böck* "In Quiet Balance"



Artist: *Diane Ackerman - Johnson* "Bowl of Thorns"



Artist: *Shirley Howells* "Held in Colour"

Still life is one of the most enduring yet often overlooked genres in art. It does not demand attention. It invites it.

In a time when images are loud and fleeting, still life invites a different kind of looking — slower, more attentive, more personal. It centres on ordinary objects: a bowl, a jug, fruit on a table. And yet, in the hands of an artist, these quiet arrangements become reflections of place, rhythm, and lived experience.

In Namibia, still life has always had its own character. Far removed from abundance or theatrical display, it speaks instead of restraint, repetition, and familiarity. Artists return to the same objects not out of limitation, but out of recognition — because meaning accumulates over time.

In this small presentation, we introduce six still life works by Namibian artists, bringing together different generations and approaches. Each work stands on its own, yet all share a sensitivity to proportion, surface, and mood.

Among them is a still life by Johannes Blatt, signed 1971, created during his later, more expressionistic phase. Here, form loosens, texture becomes more pronounced, and objects carry presence rather than precision. It is a work that does not explain itself—it simply remains.

Placed alongside contemporary works, Blatt's painting opens a quiet dialogue across time. It reminds us that still life is not a historical exercise, but a living genre — one that continues to evolve while remaining deeply rooted in observation.

Still life has a particular way of inhabiting a space. It doesn't dominate a room, yet it is rarely overlooked. Over time, these works become part of daily life, revealing themselves slowly, in different light, in changing moods.

We invite you to look again — without haste — at these works and at the genre itself. 🌀

NAMPOWER: INNOVATING TODAY, EMPOWERING TOMORROW

Across the vast landscapes of Namibia, innovation hums through every transmission line and substation. From Swakopmund to Ruacana, from Auas to Omaruru, NamPower is rewriting Africa's energy story, one breakthrough at a time. NamPower has delivered four first-in-Africa energy innovations, each designed to keep the lights on and the nation moving forward.



Powering Mobility: Rhino and Buffalo

Namibia's first state-of-the-art mobile substations, Rhino and Buffalo, are engineered for resilience, flexibility and rapid deployment. With 20 MVA capacity each, these mobile giants ensure uninterrupted power wherever it's needed most, supporting up to 20,000 households, industries and municipalities. They redefine reliability, proving that Namibia can move power to where progress happens.



Stabilising the Grid: Africa's First Air Core High Voltage Shunt Reactors

At Auas, Gerus and Kunene substations, NamPower has installed 420 kV Air Core High Voltage Shunt Reactors, the first of their kind in Africa and second only to Germany worldwide. These next-generation systems stabilise voltages along Namibia's new 400 kV Auas-Gerus transmission line, ensuring a stronger, safer and more efficient grid while cutting maintenance costs and environmental risks.



Storing Tomorrow's Energy: Omburu Battery Energy Storage System Project

Namibia's first utility-scale battery energy storage system is rising near Omaruru.

The 51MW/51MWh Omburu BESS will store renewable energy and release it when demand peaks, ensuring continuous supply and grid stability. Funded through the German-Namibian Development Cooperation and NamPower's own investment, the Omburu BESS embodies a clean, smart and sustainable energy future for Namibia.



Digitising Power: Sekelduin, Africa's First Fully Digital Substation

At Swakopmund, NamPower commissioned the Sekelduin Substation, Africa's first fully digital substation, designed and built entirely by Africans. Using IEC 61850 digital architecture, cyber-secure SCADA systems, and Mixed Technology Switchgear, Sekelduin represents the next frontier of smart, data-driven power management which is resilient, intelligent and future-ready.



Harnessing the power of the sun: 100MW Sores / Gaib Power Station

NamPower has once again set the benchmark for innovation and progress with the groundbreaking of the 100 MW Sores /Gaib Solar Power Station, the largest solar project in Namibia's history and a bold stride toward national energy independence.

Located in Rosh Pinah, //Karas Region, the Sores /Gaib project (meaning "Power of the Sun" in Khoekhoegowab) is more than a renewable energy milestone; it's a national statement of intent: that Namibia's energy future will be clean, local and sustainable.

Backed by a N\$1.6 billion investment, including a N\$1.3 billion concessional loan from KfW Development Bank under the German-Namibian cooperation, the project forms a cornerstone of NamPower's long-term vision to diversify the country's energy mix and strengthen grid security.

Together, these innovations are more than milestones - they are proof of NamPower's leadership in Africa's energy transformation. Through bold vision, ingenuity and technical excellence, NamPower continues to ensure reliability, sustainability and progress to power national growth, for generations to come.



Anne Pack with her pure Aqua Royale Water

Proudly Namibian:

The king's water packs a punch

words and photographs by Linda de Jager

Like small streams joining one river, Anne Pack's Aqua Royale bottled water brings together her community, childhood memories, an ancient fountain, and Herero heritage.

Tasting this water for the first time, sourced from the White Nossob River between Witvlei and Gobabis on farm Okasewa, I was convinced of its quality.

Thanks to the Namibian 'bush telegraph', I quickly tracked down Anne to place my order for more and to discover more about the water's history and unique origin.

She arrived in her small delivery vehicle and brought the water straight to my doorstep, displaying typical German efficiency.

Anne launched her small business in 2005, after returning from Germany, where she studied business economics and marketing while working at Merz & Krell, a pen and pencil manufacturer, through the Max Planck Apprenticeship School.

As a student, she never imagined the key to her business dreams lay beneath the White Nossob River on farm Okasewa, where she grew up and still lives today.

Okasewa means 'little water' or 'rainwater' in the Herero language.

For royals only

Anne's parents, Ulla and Ulli, were cattle farmers in the Omaheke region, an area well known for its Herero community and cattle farming.

She says her parents often turned to the local people for advice on buying cattle.

"The Herero have a remarkable eye for cattle and can spot quality at a glance," she says.

A regular visitor told Anne's father about the fountain on the farm the Herero people had used for generations.

"That was many years ago. I can't remember his name, but we've been drinking the water ever since."

She says the man explained that only Herero kings and their royal descendants were allowed to use this water for their cattle.

Her father later told her it was for this reason that they called it 'the king's water'.

"And that's why I named my product Aqua Royale."

Anne says she and her father came up with the name together when she shared her dream to sell the farm's water with him.

"We drank this wonderful water throughout our childhood, not realising how special it was," she says.

Today, she refers to the water as her health elixir.

"The water lies beneath rocks that shift under the river, keeping it naturally protected. No dirt can get in. It's filtered by the White Nossob sand and rocks, so it remains pure and untouched."

Years later, when Anne started her business, she had the water tested at Analytical Laboratory Services in Namibia, and later also at HBICON GmbH in Germany.

Science has confirmed what the Herero visitor said all those years ago.

"Germany is known for its high-quality drinking water, so I wanted to double-check the results, even though Namibian labs are also very reliable.

"Both tests showed the water is exceptionally pure and rich in minerals, especially calcium, magnesium, and iron."

Extra flavour

Anne says she adds lemon, ginger, parsley, oranges or apples to the water for extra flavour. She encourages mothers to do the same for their children, making healthy water more appealing than sugary drinks.

She pumps the water from a borehole on the farm and filters it with a micron filter and ultraviolet light to remove algae. This process keeps the bottled water fresh for months, she says.

A passion project

Anne firmly believes the farm's water helps her manage her severe asthma.

She calls the venture a turning point in her life and her passion. When she started the project in 2005, it was with only three customers. Today, this number has grown to about 100.

"I started delivering water in crates, but they were too heavy. Through trial and error, I found better solutions."

Anne now runs a smooth, efficient business.

"At first, I had to learn where to find suppliers. I used to buy labels from East London, but now I source everything from Namibia -- caps, boxes, bottles, and labels. I believe in supporting local manufacturers, even if it's more expensive, because it helps grow our economy."



Personal touch

The idea to hand-deliver water bottles to homes, including in Windhoek, came to her while studying in Germany when Anne herself made use of hand-delivered services.

“I also remembered how, as a child at Swakopmund, milk and newspapers were delivered right to our doorstep. I wanted to bring that same convenience to my customers.

“People are so busy these days, so I want to make life easier by delivering the heavy water bottles to them.”

Anne supplies Gobabis and surroundings, and also travels to Windhoek on Mondays to deliver her water personally.

“I want to give my customers a personal touch. Delivering water helps me grow as a naturally introverted person. It encourages me to get out, meet people, and come out of my shell.

“I believe in building close relationships with my customers, so they can contact me directly with any questions or issues. People want to know the owner, not just a delivery person. If there’s a problem, I resolve it quickly. This personal connection matters to me,” she says.

The fact that the business is small makes it even more personal, she says.

Anne says her business has grown through word of mouth and adds: “Many of my clients use this water to improve the taste of their coffee.

“It is excellent water, because the calcium, magnesium,

and iron are never filtered out. Drinking it gives you part of your daily mineral requirements.”

She says she is convinced that Aqua Royale balances body and mind.

“Water has helped me balance my lifestyle. The daily recommended water intake is calculated as follows: kg x 40 ml = litres per day,” she explains.

This means a person weighing 60kg needs to consume about 2.4 litres daily.

“For me, it’s all about health. I believe this water helps with itchy eyes and skin. You don’t need many extra supplements if you drink this water.

“Everything works better -- your lungs, heart, and brain,” she claims.

Recycling


Anne is particularly proud of the bottle’s shape, specifically designed to fit better in a standard fridge.

She hopes to switch to biodegradable plastic in the future.

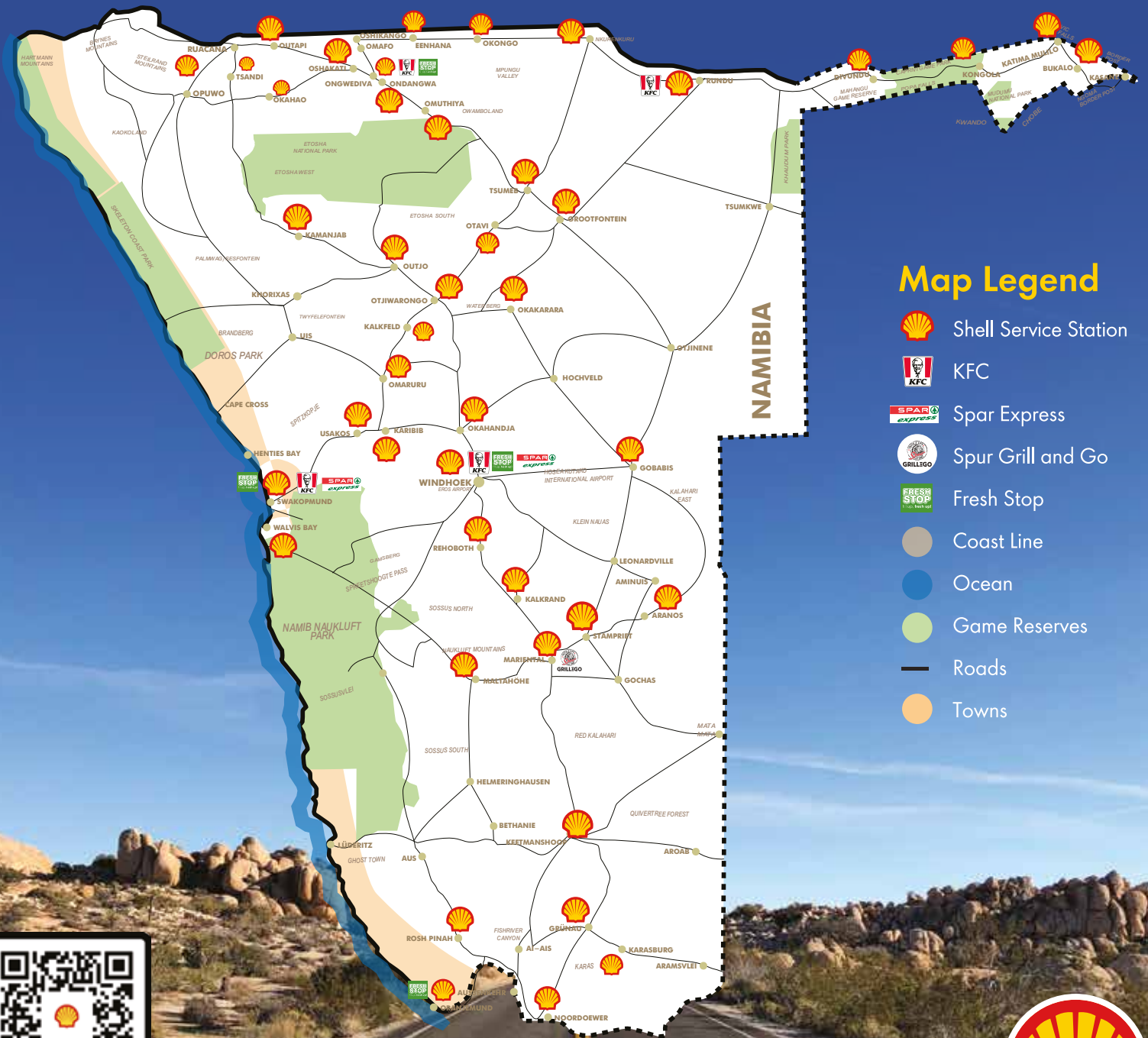
“I’m looking for local suppliers,” she says.

Anne currently delivers the water bottles in a cardboard box and collects the empties at the next delivery. The boxes are given to Dagbreek School for the Intellectually Impaired, which receives a small fee from Rent a Drum for collecting the plastics.










“This way, my business also helps Dagbreek School support local employment.”

For more information, contact Anne at +264 81 238 7155. 

Whatever your journey, Choose Shell



Map Legend

-  Shell Service Station
-  KFC
-  Spar Express
-  Spur Grill and Go
-  Fresh Stop
-  Coast Line
-  Ocean
-  Game Reserves
-  Roads
-  Towns



SCAN ME





A Body of Work

*From Earth to Expression,
Sculpting Stories in Clay Rooted
in Nature, Shaped by Hand*

words by Anne Schaffer | photograph supplied

Michelangelo

—ART—



Betsie Van Rensburg is a ceramicist, a potter, somebody who was drawn to the tactile nature of clay at a young age. Today, she considers herself largely a sculptor in clay and leans heavily on nature as her inspiration and the human form as her means of expression. Michelangelo chatted to Betsie.

Betsie was born in 1950 in the small town of Barkly West in the Northern Cape, near Kimberley in South Africa. She grew up on the Vaalharts irrigation scheme, where her father was a farmer and her mother managed a busy household while raising six children. For Betsie, “growing up close to the land shaped me more than I realised at the time.”

When did your creativity begin?

I was always creating as a child, especially drawing and painting, even though we had very limited materials. At primary school we officially had an art class once a week, but it was rarely used for that purpose.

My first experience of clay came through play. We used to dig black, coarse clay from the bottom of a ground dam and try to make small pots. They were not very successful, but the feeling of clay in my hands stayed with me.

How did pottery become a serious part of your life?

Many years later, while working and raising two children, I enrolled in an evening pottery class at a technical school in Bloemfontein. My husband was studying theology full-time at the university at the time. I attended the course for six months, which laid the foundation for my ongoing relationship with clay.

After that, I largely taught myself through books and trial and error, especially learning to throw on the wheel and to fire clay. When we moved to Tsumeb in Namibia, I started attending pottery workshops in Windhoek through the Pottery Association of Namibia (PAN), despite having to travel 430 km each time.

Michelangelo

—ART—



A hummingbird's heart can beat over 1,000 times per minute
– humans average about 60–100 beats per minute.

Michelangelo

—ART—



In 2004, we moved to Swakopmund. I started a guesthouse, discovered that the coastal climate suited clay perfectly, and over the last ten years I have been working as a full-time potter.

What inspires your work?

Clay satisfies my natural instinct to create in a way I cannot really explain. I enjoy drawing and painting, but after two or three hours I instinctively stop. In my clay studio, however, I can work for six to eight hours without interruption.

Nature is my main source of inspiration. The Namibian desert, sea, and wildlife find their way into my work through form, colour, texture, and lived experience — sometimes directly, sometimes more subtly.

What are you currently working on?

My focus has shifted more towards sculptural work, particularly the human body or parts thereof. The idea of the pot as a container remains important to me, but often now as a sculptural object rather than a functional one — something that carries a story or message.

Tell us about Betta's Art.

I work from my home studio, Betta's Art, where I also offer workshops from time to time. My work is sold through selected outlets as well as through formal exhibitions.

I have held three solo exhibitions — one in Windhoek and two in Swakopmund. I have also participated in all PAN Biennales, several themed exhibitions, and a variety of group exhibitions over the years. 🌐

Cell: +264 81 279 5927 | Facebook: Betta's Art

“Nature has always been a source of various wisdoms. It lends itself to being a superb anchor for human understanding via integrated storytelling.”



Nature's wisdom

– EQ tourism showcases
Namibia's vast life lessons

words by Linda de Jager | photograph supplied

Picture this: The sun is rising over the Namibian desert, a lone tree is standing resilient among ancient dunes, and a guide invites you not only to look, but to reflect and grow.

This is the promise of emotional intelligence (EQ) tourism -- a movement using Namibia's nature and storytelling to teach emotional intelligence through transformative travel and professional training.

The landscape becomes a teacher, blending nature with life lessons.

The brainchild of Siegfried Lange, EQ tourism is an invitation to experience Namibia in a new way.

Lange is a managing consultant at Capacity Grow, which develops and facilitates training, capacity building, executive coaching, and life coaching for businesses and individuals.

Supported in concept by executive director of environment and tourism Sikongo Haihambo, who wrote the book's foreword, the initiative aims to nurture national pride, preserve local wisdom, and offer visitors meaningful, transformative moments.

Lange earned his master's degree in clinical psychology with a thesis on developing emotional intelligence. He has written three books and co-written three more on the subject -- among them 'Emotionally Debt-Free' and 'The Laws of OUR Nature'.

His latest offering, 'EQ Tourism Volume I', was published by Capacity Grow in 2025, complementing the EQ tourism initiative.

How would you summarise your latest book in a nutshell?

'EQ Tourism Volume I' aims to equip the Namibian tourism industry and all Namibians to combine the knowledge of animals, plants, scenery and culture with life lessons, enabling them to live more fulfilled and balanced lives.

How would you define emotional intelligence?

Emotional intelligence is about three things: recognising your emotions and the emotions of others, understanding where they're coming from, and managing them.

This makes emotional intelligence both simple and complex. It is key to human interaction and success. It helps teams thrive -- not just in the short term.

If you can't manage or understand your own emotions, it's hard to work well with others.

How was the idea behind the book born?

A client of mine, a company, requested that I take them on a safari combined with emotional intelligence training.

My first thought was that holidaying and training don't go together, but they convinced me.

We visited the Deadvlei near Sossusvlei in the Namib-Naukluft National Park in southwestern Namibia. As we drove there, the guide explained that the !Nara plant, an unusual melon that is endemic to the Namib Desert, has a root that goes more than 100m deep into the sand to reach water.

It is the only green plant in this environment. Later, we discussed our own 'taproots' and what grounds us emotionally.

That evening, we searched for scorpions with blue lights and talked about the 'scorpions' in our own lives -- the hidden challenges we need to reveal.

Seeing the team's positive responses to this, I realised the potential of tourism being used to teach emotional intelligence.

You use an interesting example to position this in the Namibian context. Tell us more.

Let's say, hypothetically speaking, Hiroshi, a young Japanese traveller, journeys to Namibia. His name means 'wise'.

The East is often associated with wisdom, meditation, reflection, and serenity, but few connect wisdom with Namibia.

Hiroshi's guide, Nongombe, is Namibian. Nongombe means 'the one who reasons'.

Together, they reach Deadvlei. Nongombe is an emotional intelligence guide.

In the valley, Nongombe asks Hiroshi what he sees. "Nothing," Hiroshi replies. Nongombe points to a lone, dry tree -- proof that seasons and fortunes change. This valley once thrived.

Nongombe says people often cling to a specific season of their lives. But life is like the dunes -- always shifting, even though one may not notice.

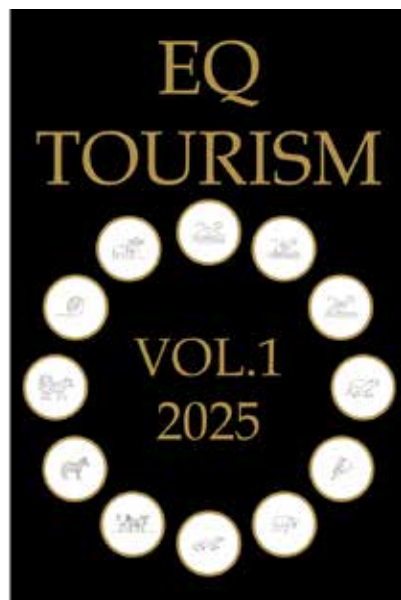
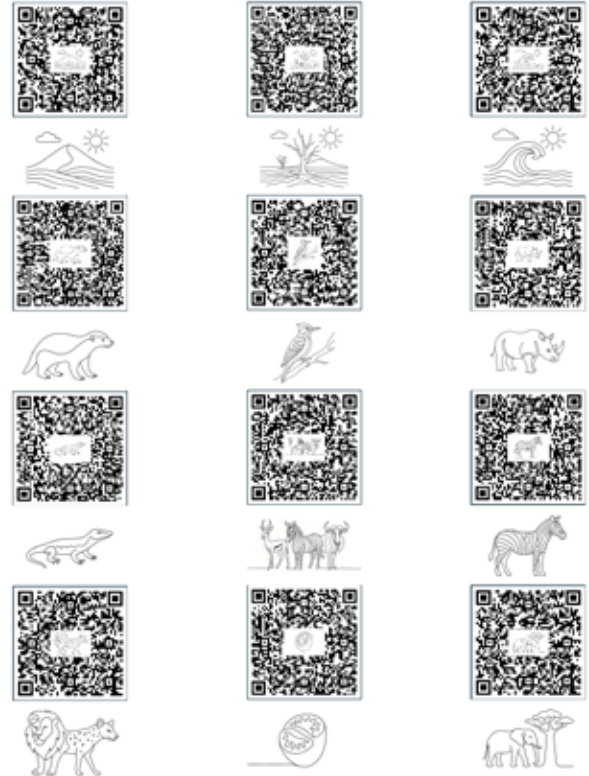
Change, he says, happens grain by grain. The shifting of a single grain transforms the desert, just as life consists of small moments.

Nongombe encourages Hiroshi to find his own 'dunes'

Authors interviews per chapter are available at the following QR Codes:



Workbooks on the chapters are available at the following QR Codes:



Front Cover



Back Cover

Cancer drugs alone generated over US\$217 billion last year, making oncology one of the largest therapeutic segments in pharmaceuticals.

-- the significant elements in his life that change 'one grain at a time'.

He says the wind, or forces of change, reveals in which direction the elements will move toward.

Hiroshi ultimately discovers wisdom in Namibia -- where he least expects it.

Could you offer readers a glimpse of select chapters?

Psychologist Dalene Gous in the chapter 'Protecting Yourself Against Yourself' uses Bennett's Woodpecker's shock-absorbing skull as a metaphor for shielding oneself from destructive behaviour.

Menette Namupembe's chapter, 'Navigating Change -- Lessons from the Deadvlei', shares insights on perseverance inspired by the region. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in industrial psychology,

Engineer Martin van der Merwe explores lessons from honey badgers, inspired by his child's curiosity and his own analytical approach. Lawyer Ester Embanga develops the 'zebra principle' -- drawing on her profession's emphasis on listening, considering different viewpoints, and embracing multiple perspectives. These are all core skills for emotional intelligence and life.

'EQ Tourism Volume 1' poses reflection questions after each chapter. Tell us more.

QR codes at the back of the book direct readers to worksheets that help them apply the content in their personal and professional lives.

Each chapter begins with a brief overview of a concept. It then provides a detailed unpacking of the concept, followed by a story that explains how a tourist might experience the concept.

In conclusion, the chapter includes questions that help the reader reflect on the concepts.

How did you select contributors to the book?

We issued a general call for authors at a meeting of the Professional Speakers Association of Namibia. We also posted a general call on Capacity Grow's social media platforms.

We contacted associates we often engage with at Capacity Grow, such as psychologist Dalene Gous. All individuals who expressed interest submitted a brief 100-word overview of their idea. We grouped the applications received into three categories: animals, plants, and scenery.

How can this book be used by individuals or companies to improve emotional intelligence?

The concepts in the book could be offered to corporations as training. The books could be given to staff members as a gift to foster enthusiasm for learning from nature.

We believe the greatest gift lies within the book -- teaching people to think differently about experiences in nature and to restore the ancient gift of telling stories about nature that deepen our insights and wisdom.

Why should we preserve this type of wisdom?

This knowledge can boost tourism and help our country thrive.

Interested parties can order the book and commit teams to our training. Even better, they could contribute stories. I see us writing more books and growing our knowledge.

Anyone with relevant life skills and wisdom could write a chapter for the next book.

Who is your target market?

Our target market has evolved. We want to build this knowledge base by first working with local companies, offering immersive training sessions in boardrooms or other engaging settings.

We may also host sessions outdoors, like at lodges. As more tourism partners join, we'll start training EQ guides to help people connect nature with life lessons.

My goal is for Namibia to become known as a destination for emotional intelligence.

Namibia is perfect for this, because it is known for its warm and welcoming people. 🌍





ALPHA
Retirement Fund.



The Alpha Retirement Fund: A New Chapter in Secure Retirement

What is the Alpha Retirement Fund?

The Alpha Retirement Fund is a tax-efficient retirement savings vehicle designed to offer members complete peace of mind throughout their professional journey. At its core, it is an ethically governed pension fund, underwritten by a policy of insurance from Liberty. This structure ensures that your future is not left solely to the unpredictability of market movements; instead, you are insured against perils, providing a safety net that has been proven necessary by the past.

Your pension is more than just a monthly contribution; it is the foundation of your future freedom. The Fund was established with a singular mission: to ensure that every member can retire with dignity while maintaining the highest possible standard of living they enjoyed during their economically active years. We focus on the "why" because we believe every Namibian deserves a retirement that is sustainable, protected, and reflective of their hard work.

A New Beginning: The Seal of Trust

This is about more than just a new look, it is a formal commitment to our members.

Our new logo is designed to act as a "Stamp of Approval." Much like a traditional wax seal on a precious document, it signifies that your investment is signed, sealed, and safe. This seal represents the trust you place in us and our promise that your retirement benefits are handled with the highest level of care.

Ethically Governed: The Fund is placed under the care and diligence of a well-versed Board of Trustees who manage all affairs in the best interest of the members.

Signed and Sealed: Our governance ensures strict regulatory compliance, meaning your path to retirement is managed through a transparent and legislated process.

Dignity Through Integrity: We lead with ethics to ensure that when you reach your "golden years," the promises made today are the realities you experience tomorrow.

Protection and Customization

As we move forward with this new beginning, we continue to offer the robust protections and flexibility that define the Alpha Namibia Retirement Fund:

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Namibia's New National Carrier Set for 2026 Take-off

words by Linda de Jager | photographs supplied by Namibia Airports Company



Namibia's tourism sector is showing real signs of recovery, and much of this momentum comes down to one thing: better air connectivity.

Just a few years ago, reaching Namibia meant dealing with limited flight choices, long layovers, and unaffordable tickets.

Now, more airlines are flying to Namibia, new direct routes are opening up from key African cities, and Europe and the government is working closely with industry leaders to make air travel more accessible and reliable.

Initiatives like Air Connect Namibia have played a big part in this progress, bringing together airports, businesses, and tourism authorities to attract more flights and improve airport services. The main international gateway, Hosea

Kutako International Airport, is being upgraded to handle more passengers and offer a better experience. Regional airports are also getting much-needed attention.

Meanwhile, Westair Aviation Group, based at Eros Airport in Windhoek, has played its part in consistently improving air links in Namibia.

But there is irony amid the growth: Namibia currently lacks a national airline, and there is heated debate about whether it is realistic and whether the reintroduction is rumour or fact.

Linda de Jager speaks to Jonas Sheelongo, executive director of works and transport and accounting officer, to find out more.



Is this initiative still on the cards, and by when will a new national airline become a reality?

Yes, the initiative is actively moving forward. The Namibian government, under the leadership of president Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, has confirmed its commitment to launching a new national airline.

The official launch and commencement of operations are targeted for between June and December 2026. It is important to note that the government is not reviving the defunct Air Namibia, but is creating a new national airline designed for financial and operational sustainability.

The Cabinet recently approved a name for this new entity, which will be 'Namibia Air (Pty) Ltd'.

A comprehensive market study to assess the new airline's viability and market demand has been completed by the inter-ministerial technical committee and will be tabled soon.

When is the expression of interest for a public-private partnership expected to be finalised?

The expression of interest for private sector partners through government-to-government arrangements commenced in April/May 2025 and negotiations are still ongoing.

The government is in talks with potential strategic partners among major global airlines, and shareholder structures may be adjusted once a successful partner is on board, though the state intends to retain a majority interest.

How much money has the Namibian government allocated to a feasibility study on a new national carrier?

The government has allocated N\$20 million (about US\$1.1 million) during the 2025/66 financial year through

African elephants can detect rainstorms from over 200 km away through low-frequency vibrations.



the Ministry of Works and Transport to fund studies for a new national airline.

What impact has the liquidation of Air Namibia had on the country?

The liquidation of Air Namibia in 2021 has left a significant void in the market. The consequences have included an evident deficit in the domestic, regional and international air capacity, which has directly impacted tourism, business and leisure travel, and the timely transport of cargo.

This has led to increased reliance on foreign carriers, making travel more expensive and less direct for passengers, and creating complexities for multi-destination itineraries that are popular in the region.

What lessons can be learned from Air Namibia's troubled history?

Air Namibia's collapse, with liabilities of nearly N\$5.4 billion against assets of just over N\$1 billion, offers stark lessons. The airline was described as a 'bottomless pit' for taxpayer money and a 'political playground' where decisions were made based on commercially unsound views.

The new model aims to avoid these pitfalls by ensuring that seasoned industry professionals will lead and manage the affairs of the airline, complemented by technical and strategic partners.

Our analysis identified several critical considerations: Fleet planning is crucial. Identifying and securing modern, fuel-efficient aircraft remains critical. Relying on older, less efficient planes would increase fuel and maintenance costs from day one.

Roughly 200,000 elephants roam the Kavango-Zambezi Conservation Area (KAZA) – the largest contiguous elephant population on Earth.



Jonas Sheelongo, Executive Director of Works and Transport and Accounting Officer

The new airline will also require investment in spare parts, crews, and robust systems. Therefore a financially solid, experienced equity and strategic partner is even more critical.

Cost control is furthermore paramount. With thin margins in the airline business globally, strict capital allocation discipline and working capital optimisation are essential.

The new airline must be run on commercial principles and commercially sound decisions to avoid a repeat of Air Namibia.

What is your strategy for establishing the new airline?

The strategy rests on several key principles, like public-private partnerships (PPP).

Combining state oversight with private sector expertise, capital, and operational discipline would ensure the airline is operated on a solid business foundation.

Strategic and commercial viability is crucial. The establishment of the new airline will be based on informed data from a market study, focusing on profitable routes, fleet optimisation, and cost discipline to prevent financial mistakes.

We will also focus on sustainability and modernisation. The new airline must be financially resilient and environmentally sustainable, employing fuel-efficient aircraft and modern technology, while also focusing on employment creation and building capacity.

Ethiopian Airlines provides a compelling continental example of a successful airline. Additionally, Namibia has been exploring strategic alliances with successful carriers like Emirates Airlines, Qatar Airways and Turkish Airlines to gain strategic, technical and operational support.

We are convinced that the establishment of the new airline with a robust and disciplined strategy is the right thing to do.

Why is having a national airline described as a matter of sovereignty for Namibia?

A national airline ensures Namibia has control over its own connectivity and access to global markets through strategic partnerships.

Our approach creates a balanced dependence on strategic foreign carriers for pricing and schedule reliability, which is crucial for the movement of people and goods.

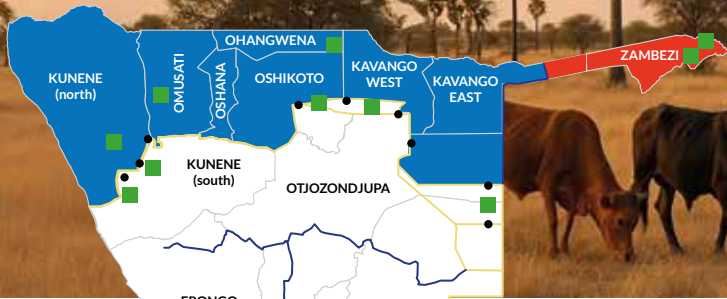
It's also a symbol of national pride and a tool for economic independence, ensuring that the country's airspace and access are not entirely surrendered to foreign carriers. This is in line with the Single African Air Transport Market.

How is this initiative in line with Namibia's drive to attract more business travellers and host more international conferences?

Establishing a new airline means creating an additional critical enabler to complement Namibia's ambition to become a logistics hub.

Restoring and expanding domestic, regional and international routes will facilitate easier, faster, and more reliable travel for business and leisure travellers, while also providing easier access and connectivity for visiting family and friends. 🌍

***Air Connect Namibia's stakeholders include the Namibia Airports Company, the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board, the Walvis Bay Corridor Group, the Namibia Tourism Board, Gondwana Collection Namibia, the City of Windhoek and the Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations.**



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Application of good hygiene practice
- HACCP accredited processing plant
Application of good hygiene/manufacturing practices

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- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
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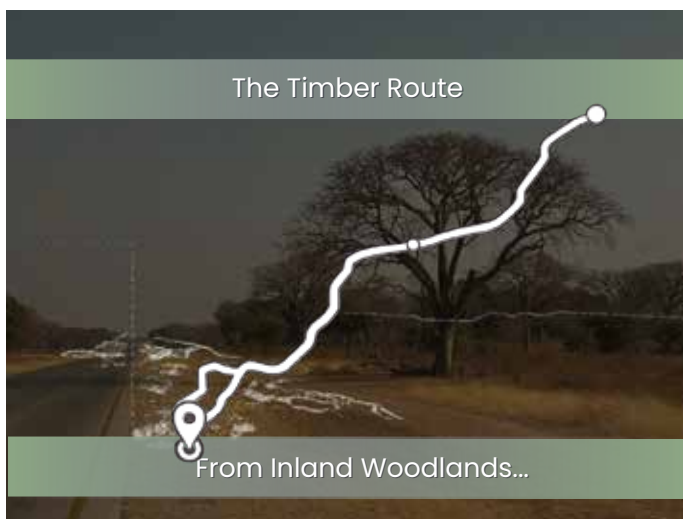
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THE TWO ROUTES

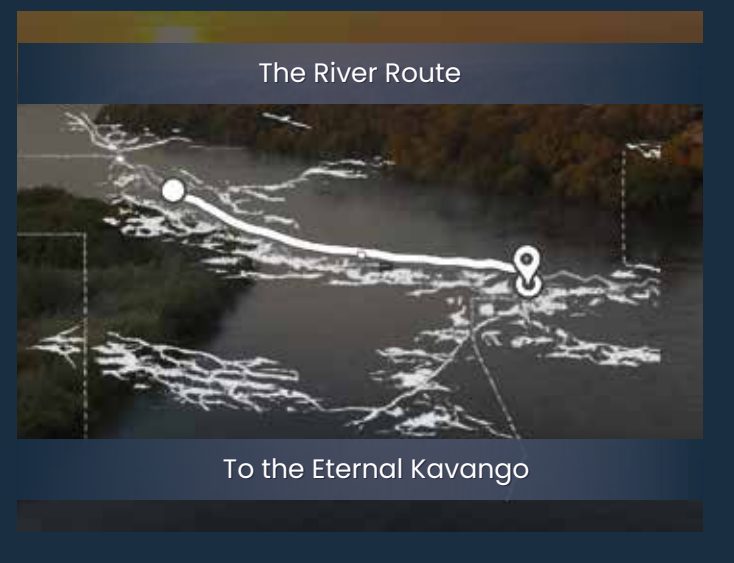
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*An Off-Grid Mountain
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words by Anne Schaffer | photographs supplied

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



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A real horse can produce far more than one horsepower

— up to about 24 horsepower at peak output.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



with Riversdale and Swellendam each around 30 minutes away. Ideally, bring everything you need and never leave your little haven. You won't want to miss the sunrises and sunsets, or the stargazing, as you relax in the wood-fired hot tub.

If fishing is your meditation, bring your own equipment and enjoy your Me Time (catch and release).

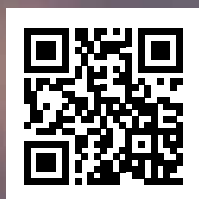
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<https://www.lifetree-escapes.co.za/stays/honeybird-cabin>



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Eningu Kalahari Lodge

*An Intimate Gateway to
Namibia's Clay, Camelthorn
and Quiet Horizons*

words by Anne Schaffer | photographs supplied

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



Eningu is the Oshiwambo word for porcupine, and if you're lucky, you'll spot one at night here. Eningu offers a range of activities that celebrate nature, culture, and the freedom to explore. Close to the airport, it's a perfect spot to begin or end your visit to Namibia.

With only nine en-suite rooms, Eningu Kalahari Lodge is a delightfully intimate home from home... only in a grand landscape that'll take your breath away. The unique adobe-style lodge was built from 120,000 handmade clay bricks. The original bricks were sourced locally from the farm and its surrounds, making them a very eco-friendly material with which to build.

Eningu is set in the vast camelthorn savannah of the Kalahari, and its numerous well-marked walking trails allow you to immerse yourself in the extraordinary beauty of Namibia. Not only can you explore, but along the routes you'll discover fascinating information about the area's geology, history and wildlife. The trail includes 23 stations focusing on medicinal plants, wildlife, and local farming practices. At Eningu, they want you to scratch beneath the surface.

The lodge grounds cover about 56 hectares, and if you're keen for a longer walk, you're welcome to explore the trails on neighbouring Farm Peperkorrel as well (you'll find a walking map in your room). Farm Peperkorrel houses

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—TRAVEL—



the stone art gallery of internationally acclaimed artist Dörte Berner and her impressive stone sculptures. A small selection of her work is displayed in Eningu's gardens as a preview, and the staff are happy to assist in arranging a visit to her Home of Sculptures, a ten-minute drive away (visits are limited). There's also an arts and crafts shop on the property, featuring locally sourced craft supporting the local community. The team supports fair-trade organisations and purchases directly from artists.

The Eningu waterhole is a real drawcard, with regular sightings of wildlife such as oryx, springbok, impala, eland,

kudu, warthog, baboons and steenbok. You might also come across them on a walking trail – all trails lie within the fenced area. After dinner, you can visit the hide to observe nocturnal animals such as jackals and porcupines.

In the lodge grounds, you'll find fun sports such as archery (for adults only), badminton and volleyball. You're also free to jog on the main entrance road – about 5.3 km to the gate.

Eningu has varying-sized accommodation, so whether you're a couple or a family, there's the perfect configuration for you. Each of the rooms has a private outdoor seating area,

Humans can detect a candle flame from about 2 km away in perfect darkness.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



offering a wonderful vantage point from which to soak up the Namibian landscape. The rooms include one twin room, one double room, six triple rooms and one family unit, the latter including an en-suite shower, queen-sized bed, two single beds with mosquito nets, and a sleeper couch. It also offers indoor and outdoor seating - ideal for a relaxed, spacious stay.

The lodge has a popular and inviting swimming pool and roof deck, so all signs point to icy drinks, sundowners and glorious sunsets.

Life at Eningu has a rhythm that's unhurried and

relaxed. There's an underground wine cellar built into the Kalahari sand and natural rock – clay walls provide ideal humidity. The cellar entrance is visible from the lapa, and you can select your own bottle. The team in the kitchen is exceptional...as endorsed by the guests' rave reviews. Meals are fresh and innovative, served with homemade breads, game meat from the farm, and seasonal vegetables, herbs and salads from the garden.

Eningu Kalahari Lodge is different. It's laidback, it's gentle on your mind... yet it offers all the elements to introduce you to – or bid you farewell from – the wonders of Namibia. 🌿

The Last Word



words by Chris Coetzee

In a recent column in *The Times*, I read an opinion piece by the well-known television personality Jeremy Clarkson, who declared that he hates solar panels.

Apparently, they hurt his eyes and instantly make him angry. Wind turbines, however, he finds beautiful.

Now, I know beauty is subjective.

And yet, there are moments when beauty arrives unannounced and rearranges one's sense of scale entirely.

Some days ago, as thunder rolled across the horizon of our capital, a kind gentleman, S.W. van Wyk, glanced upward and remarked,

"Die oubaas begin fotos neem." "The boss upstairs has started taking photos."

I thought of it again when I encountered a toddler wearing a shirt that boldly announced, "Oh, I can't wait to be king." He stood beside a picture-perfect Avis Dam, storm clouds gathering theatrically behind him. Complete Simba confidence. A small sovereign surveying his kingdom. This image was what I would call memorable. The Oubaas took many photos, and this made me smile.

Talking about memorable experiences, it has recently dawned on me that I may, in fact, be operating at some degree of personal risk. A lady recently stopped me in the street, visibly concerned, to ask how I could possibly have shared "the secret" in last month's Last Word. In her view, such things should never be written about, as they would most certainly drive up the price. In this case, she warned, the price of her favourite boerewors would suffer the consequences.

Which brings me to a place that sits on the edge of one of Africa's great natural theatres. On the Andoni Plains, within the historic Ovamboland cultural region, lies Etosha King Nehale Lodge of the Gondwana Collection Namibia. From here, the landscape stretches outward into Etosha and northward into Ovamboland.

When a storm gathers and the gods begin their conversation, memories are not merely made; they are engraved. With thunder in the air, the land itself seems to speak in a voice too expansive for words. It offers a rare privilege: a place from which to witness the quiet magic of Africa.

The world seldom remembers what was louder or taller, but it holds fast to what was true. It remembers great kings not for the height of their thrones, but for the depth of their presence.

Etosha King Nehale is one of these places.

Thus, this is not merely a lodge fit for a king - it is, unmistakably, a Michelangelo Magazine Approved Destination.

And while I am at it, I would like to extend an invitation to Mr Clarkson to return to Namibia. It is entirely possible that prolonged exposure to horsepower and studio lighting can distort one's calibration of beauty. Namibia, I suspect, would refresh the memory and leave you with impressions so indelible that, long after you have left, something within you will still roar like a king.

Happy Independence, Namibia. 🇳🇲



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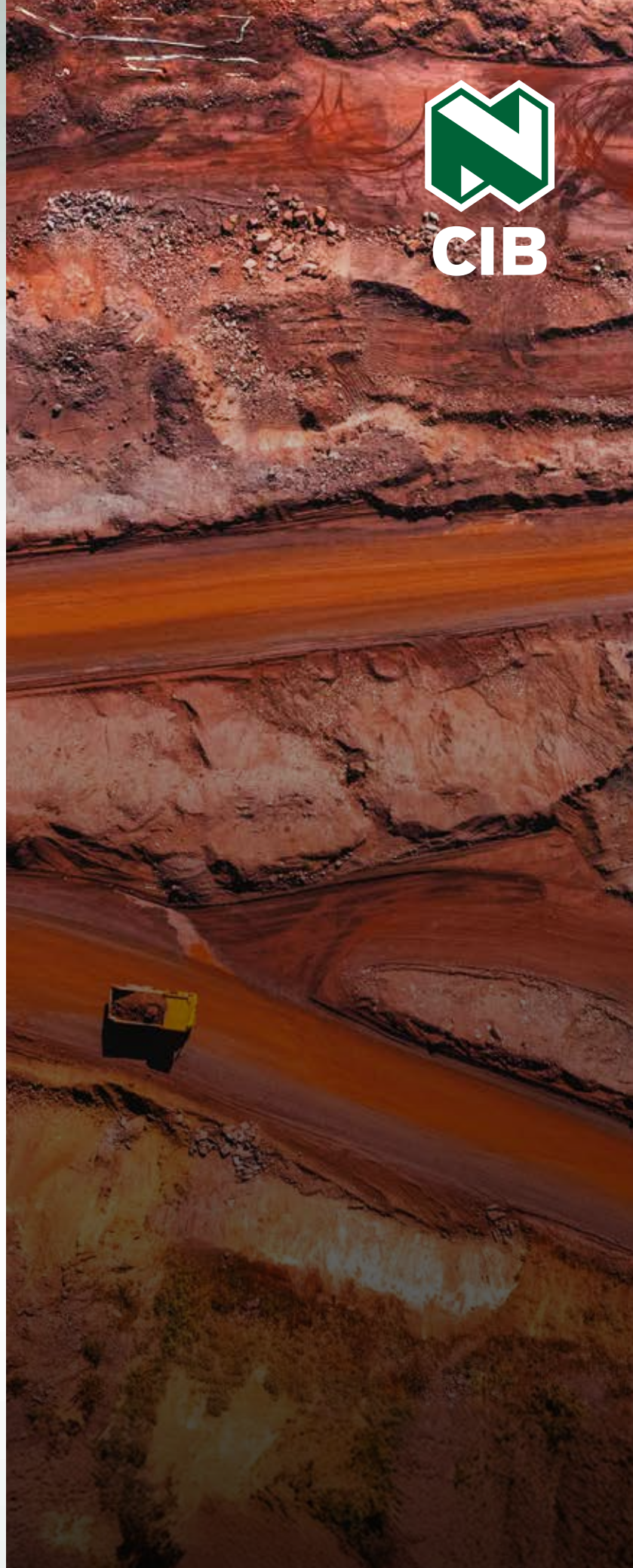
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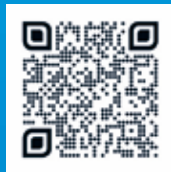
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