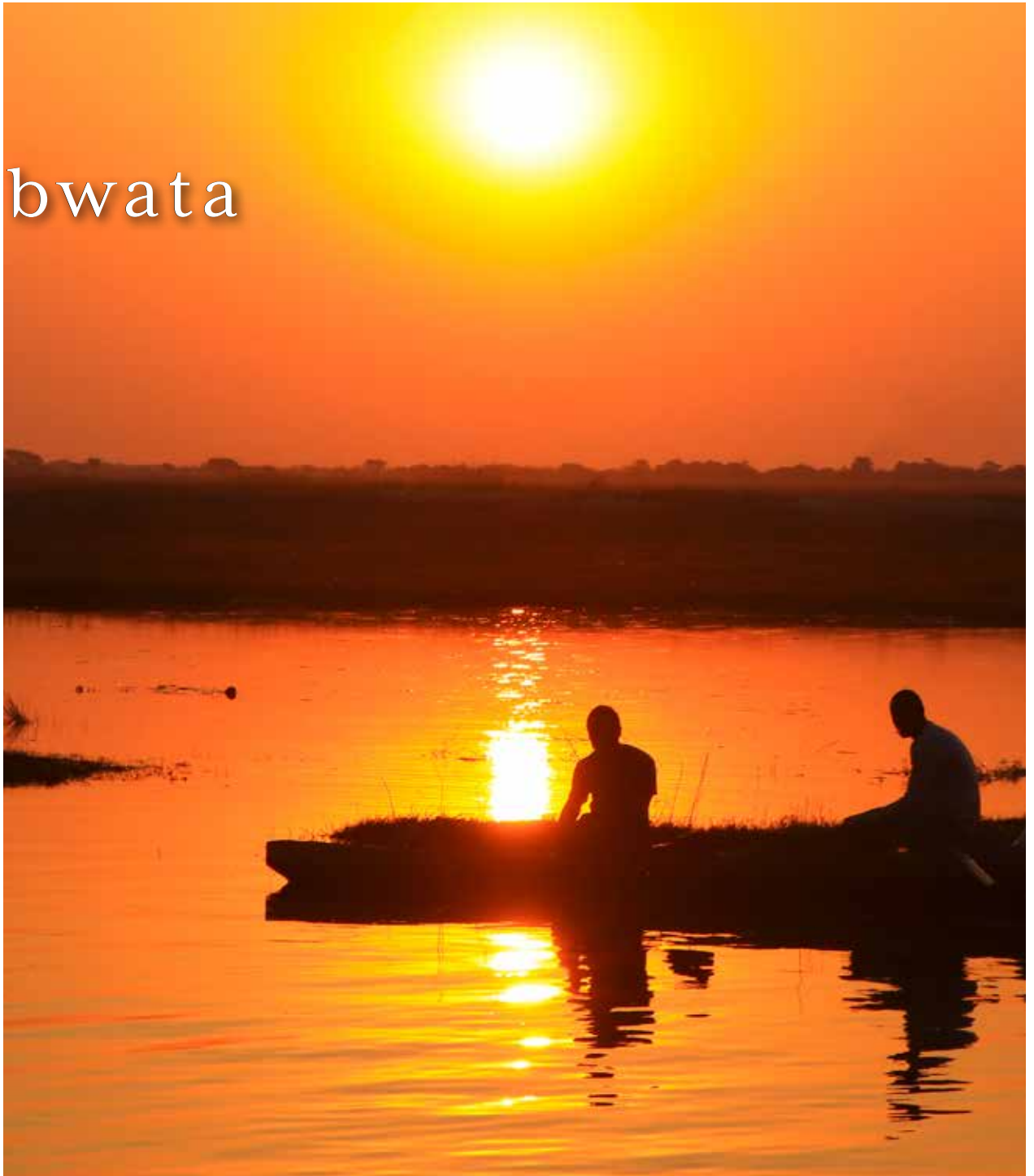


Michelangelo

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move as one.**





Honourable Veikko Nekundi
Minister of Works and Transport
Republic of Namibia

Building Beyond Distance

In a vast country with a finite purse, every road, runway and port has to be built to last.

Dear Michelangelo readers,

I was born in Otshitutuma village in the Omusati Region during Headmanship of Tatekulu Johanness Gweshuku. It was a very different Namibia then, so too, a different village. Our population was estimated at just over 900,000 people, independence was more than twelve years away, and the nation we know today was still waiting to be born.

Nearly fifty years later, much has changed. The country we inherited is no longer a promise waiting to happen -it is our reality and our responsibility. We owe it to those who sacrificed for this land to build with precision, and we owe it to those who follow, to leave behind something that lasts.



Our population has tripled within a single lifetime, yet Namibia remains one of the most sparsely populated nations on Earth, with roughly 3.7 people per square kilometre. That sounds like a statistic until you try to build roads, schools, hospitals, power networks, and economic opportunity across 824,000 square kilometres. Then it becomes a stark national reality. We are building a vast country with a relatively small population and a strictly finite national purse.

Every Namibian dollar must work hard. Our national road network stretches across approximately 48,538 kilometres, which is enough to circle the Earth and keep going.

Etosha National Park offers a clear, practical picture of what this takes. Between 2019 and 2023, we spent approximately N\$164 million rehabilitating just under 276 kilometres of roads inside the park. That is the stubborn economics of gravel: you grade it, the rain comes, the traffic comes, the corrugations return, and eventually, so does the grader.

When we evaluate upgrading critical routes to sealed roads, the question cannot simply be, *What will it cost to build?* We must also ask, *What will it cost not to?* Sometimes the higher initial investment today is the far cheaper path over twenty years.

Of course, doing this responsibly brings its own hurdles. Environmental assessments, regulatory processes, and feasibility studies matter because our heritage requires protection and future generations deserve well-considered decisions. But the future does not stand still while we complete another report. Our task is to protect what we have without delaying what we need.

A road in Namibia transcends gravel and asphalt to form part of a crucial economic chain. A single visitor who stays at a lodge in Etosha supports an airline, an airport, a car rental agency, a fuel station, a guide, a restaurant, a conservancy,

an artisan, and a local farmer. Most of these people will never meet, yet economically, they sit at the very same table. Investment in transport infrastructure reaches far beyond the road itself.

That same ambition drives our work beyond our borders. The Trans-Kalahari Corridor extends for over 1,900 kilometres, and the Walvis Bay–Ndola–Lubumbashi Corridor reaches 2,500 kilometres into Southern Africa. Our domestic market may be compact, but our economic reach does not have to be.

Walvis Bay is perhaps our finest example of refusing to let geography dictate potential. When expansion was required for a modern container terminal and no land existed, we reclaimed 40 hectares from the Atlantic Ocean and built strategic infrastructure where there was once only sea, more than doubling container capacity. Tell a Namibian there is an obstacle, and before long, someone is asking where we can build the solution.

We bring that determination to our regional rail links and the expansion of our aviation network. Aviation, in particular, demands a human perspective. Namibia's vastness is one of our greatest privileges, but distance extracts a cost. Time with the people we love is our most precious commodity. Expanding air access and opening new routes does more than link destinations. It shrinks distance, giving time back to our people.

Ultimately, infrastructure is a statement of faith. It tells an investor: *you can reach a market*. It tells a traveler: *you can reach the experience*. It tells an entrepreneur: *your business can grow beyond the town where it was born*. and most importantly, it tells every Namibian, whether in a bustling urban centre, a homestead in Omusati, or a remote settlement in Karas, *that distance will not be allowed to decide their destiny*.

Welcome to the Land of the Brave. Enjoy the journey. 🌀



DRIES VAN DER SANDT
Marketing Director
Namibia Breweries Limited

Don't Let Busy Get in the Way of Living

Why balance, a timely pause and our shared humanity matter in life's fast lane

As we move into the latter part of the year, life shifts into a faster gear. Deadlines draw closer, diaries fill and the pressure to deliver intensifies. Momentum can be energising, but it can also consume us. If we are not careful, busy becomes the measure of a successful life — and we become so focused on making a life that we forget to live it.

That is why balance matters. We all need moments to stop, breathe and refill our tanks — to reboot so that we can re-energise, regain focus and return with greater purpose. A pause is not lost time; it is often what reconnects us with meaning, with the people around us and with the kind of human being we want to be.

For many of us, the challenge is that balance is treated as something to be earned later — after the presentation, the seminar, the target, the difficult week or the next important milestone. But “later” has a habit of moving further away. There will always be another demand waiting. If we postpone living until everything is done, we may discover that we have spent years preparing for a moment that never arrives.



That thought brings to mind the question at the heart of The Killers' song "Human": "Are we human, or are we dancer?" Behind the unusual line lies a deeper tension between living with intention and simply following the steps society expects of us. Are we choosing our own rhythm — or moving through a routine already choreographed for us?

It is an uncomfortable question because conformity can look remarkably like success. Our days are full. We work, plan, respond, commute and chase the next deadline. We tend to measure progress in meetings attended, tasks completed and KPIs achieved. We do what is necessary, productive and expected. Making a living matters — but have we become so busy performing life that we have forgotten we are also here to live it?

Perhaps the more important measure is not only what we accomplish, but what we notice along the way. What really matters? The people we love. The conversations that are not rushed. The moments that restore perspective. The courage to pause, to question the script and to make room for joy, curiosity and rest. These are not distractions from a meaningful life; they are what make life meaningful.

This does not require a dramatic reinvention. Sometimes it begins with small choices: putting the phone away during a meal, taking the long route home, listening without planning the next response, or allowing silence to remain unfilled. These moments can seem ordinary, yet they interrupt the pace that keeps us on autopilot. They remind us that attention is one of the most valuable things we can give — to our work, to another person and to ourselves.

This is where Namibia offers more than a destination; it offers a reset. Beneath an immense sky, beside the stillness of the coast or while watching the desert change colour at sunset, urgency begins to loosen its grip. Our landscapes do more than impress the eye. They create space to breathe, to think and to remember that the world is larger than today's list of obligations.

Perhaps that is why travel within our own country can be so powerful. We do not always need to cross an ocean to gain distance from the familiar. A weekend on

the road, a morning walk before the town wakes, or time spent around a fire can change the scale of our concerns. Namibia teaches perspective quietly. Its distances slow us down, its horizons draw our eyes outward and its silence allows thoughts that have been crowded out to return.

And Namibia's restorative power lies not only in its breathtaking scenery. It lives in its people: in an easy greeting, a shared story, unexpected laughter and the warmth offered by someone who was a stranger moments before. These encounters bring us back to something deeply human — kindness, connection, trust and belonging.

In those exchanges, status and schedules matter less. What remains is the simple recognition of one person by another. A sincere "How are you?" can become an invitation to be present rather than a phrase spoken in passing. Hospitality, humour and generosity remind us that a good life is not built only through achievement. It is also built through the quality of our relationships and the memories we create together.

The answer may therefore be simpler than we think. We do not necessarily need to escape our lives; we need to return to them more consciously. Balance is not a perfect division of hours between work and leisure. It is the ability to recognise when one part of life has become so loud that everything else can no longer be heard. It is choosing, again and again, to protect time for what restores us and for the people who make the journey worthwhile.

Namibia has so much to explore and absorb, from its remarkable nature to its everyday human exchanges. It invites us to slow down, step out of the choreography of expectation and rediscover our own rhythm. And when we return to our desks, responsibilities and routines, perhaps we can carry some of that spaciousness with us — not as a memory reserved for holidays, but as a more deliberate way of moving through ordinary days.

So, to return to the song's enduring question: are we human, or are we simply following the steps? Let us answer through the way we live. Pause. Explore. Connect. Share.

Be kind — not only to others, but also to yourself. And above all, remember to be human. 🌀



ON THE COVER:

Where rivers shape the landscape and wildlife moves freely across borders, Bwabwata reveals a greener, wilder side of Namibia. Journey into the country's far northeast with Marc Springer, following the waterways and wetlands of this remarkable wilderness. Discover Exploring Paradise on page 12.

Cover photograph by:
Marc Springer



Namibia Tourism Board

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Exploring Paradise

words and photographs by Marc Springer

*A Water-Rich Wilderness
Shaped by Four Mighty
Rivers, Remote, Untamed
and Far from the Well-
Trodden Safari Trail*



Namibia is generally associated with the desert it derives its name from: arid plains, endless savannas, rugged mountains and towering dunes. There is a part of the country, however, that defies that description. A remote, lush, subtropical wetland known as Caprivi.

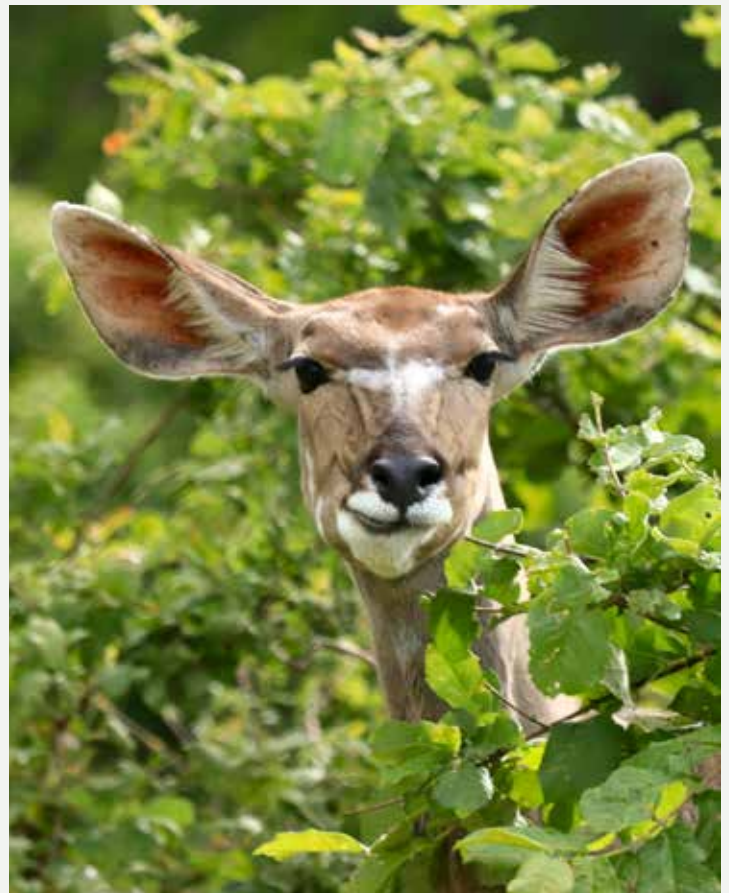
It starts with a faint whisper. The soft rustling of leaves on surrounding trees, followed by the distant rumbling of thunder. The prospect of rain brings a shift in colour and atmosphere. What began as a light breeze turns into a wind carrying the promise of an end to the dry season. An end to deprivation and hardship. And the beginning of a period of plenty.

As ominous clouds begin moving in, darkening the sky, a herd of elephants emerges from the twilight like ghosts, making its way to the water to drink. There's a sense of renewal in the air now. A feeling of rebirth ushered in by the first raindrops falling on thirsty land. This is the moment of change and rejuvenation. When the surrounding landscape starts turning from grey to green. When the Zambezi Region, commonly known as Caprivi, becomes a vibrant paradise.

We're on a viewing platform at the aptly named Horseshoe Bend, a U-shaped curve of the Kwando River,

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



Tigers look orange to humans because we have trichromatic colour vision. But to their prey with dichromatic colour vision, such as deer, tigers appear green.

located in Bwabwata National Park, which covers an area of 1,280 km². It's a place that looks and feels completely different from the rest of the country. Whether it's the tall trees lining the roads like sentinels, the abundance of water and wildlife, or the pristine surroundings, largely unaffected by human endeavour, this is still what many tourists believe Africa to be: a wild and untamed place where nature rules and humans exist by its grace.

As dusk falls, the rain intensifies and the dark swallows the light, we descend the viewing platform to make our way back to camp. No words are spoken. It's as if we just shared a special experience that will bond us forever. As if we would ruin the moment by talking about it.

The Caprivi is a geographic anomaly extending from the northwestern corner of the country like an appendage and bordering Angola, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The strangely shaped strip of land, extending for 450 km and covering an area of about 20,000 square kilometres, is defined by four mighty rivers – the Zambezi, Kwando, Linyanti and Chobe.

It's these rivers that shape their surroundings and the lives of the people living here. They represent the lifeblood of the land, creating vast marshlands that support a variety of animals such as sitatunga, lechwe, hippos, crocodiles and buffalo, rarely seen elsewhere in Namibia. In addition, the floodplains and reed channels are home to over 400 bird species, among them the iconic African fish eagle and kingfisher, making the area an oasis for ornithologists.

Wildlife in the area is protected by three national parks, allowing animals to roam freely and creating a transboundary conservation area where they can follow migratory routes, moving between neighbouring countries with little regard for man-made borders.

Over 140,000 people live in Caprivi, representing diverse communities such as the Masubia, Mafwe and Khwe San,

typically surviving through crop farming, stockbreeding, fishing and selling local crafts to passing travellers. Apart from some bigger settlements such as Rundu, Katima Mulilo and Divundu, the population is mostly concentrated in small villages consisting of traditional homesteads made from wood, clay, reed and thatch.

A widely used mode of transport is the mokoro, a traditional dugout canoe propelled forward by a long pole used to steer the boat through shallow waters and navigate the dense network of rivers, channels and lakes. Hand-carved from a single large tree trunk, these canoes not only serve as taxis to transport people and cargo along rivers and canals but also offer tourists an eco-friendly way to view wildlife at water level.

Typically accessed via Rundu in the west, the Caprivi also serves as a gateway to the Okavango Panhandle, Chobe National Park in Botswana and Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. So, while it may be remote, its relative isolation is also its biggest gift to travellers seeking an authentic experience beyond the well-trodden tourist trail.

You won't find long queues of safari vehicles crowding around animals or visitors lining up at well-known viewpoints here. What you will find is tranquility. And inner peace. When the sun rises over a misty river, turning the water into shades of gold, it more than makes up for the long journey to get here.

When watching a herd of buffalo roaming around, predators stalking prey through dense woodlands, or crocodiles basking along riverbanks, you'll wonder why you didn't come here sooner. When the last thing you hear before falling asleep is the roar of a lion, the call of a fish eagle, or the grunt of a hippo, you'll never want to leave this place again.

This wild heart of Africa, that will capture your soul and stay with you long after you've returned home. This hidden paradise in a remote corner of Namibia called Caprivi. 📍



Strength, Sacrifice and the Front Line of Conservation

Wildlife Ranger Challenge 2026



Across Africa's vast wilderness areas, there are men and women who rise each day knowing that their work carries an extraordinary responsibility. They walk the fence lines, follow tracks through the dust, patrol beneath the unforgiving African sun and stand between some of the continent's most vulnerable wildlife and those who would do them harm.

They are Africa's wildlife rangers.

The Wildlife Ranger Challenge 2026 once again shone a spotlight on these remarkable conservation heroes, bringing rangers together in a celebration of strength, endurance, knowledge, teamwork and, above all, dedication to the natural world they have committed their lives to protecting.

For the anti-poaching teams of the N/a'an ku sê Foundation in Namibia, the challenge was an opportunity not simply to test themselves physically and mentally, but to represent the very essence of what it means to be a wildlife ranger.

The Wildlife Ranger Challenge is about far more than who can run the fastest or complete the most repetitions. Ranger work demands a unique combination of physical fitness, mental resilience, knowledge, discipline and the ability to perform under pressure.

Protecting More Than 50,000 Hectares

For the N/a'an ku sê Foundation, anti-poaching is not an occasional exercise. It is a 24-hour commitment.

The Foundation operates three anti-poaching units comprising, in total, more than 60 male and female rangers. Together, these teams are responsible for protecting in excess of 50,000 hectares of Namibian wilderness.

Their patrol areas provide refuge for an extraordinary diversity of wildlife, including some of Africa's most vulnerable and endangered species.

Black and white rhinos roam these protected landscapes. Elephants move through the bushveld, while African wild dogs, one of the continent's most threatened large carnivores; are afforded the space and security they need.

Anti-poaching work is demanding, often taking place in remote areas and under difficult environmental conditions. Rangers patrol extensive landscapes, monitor wildlife and remain alert to potential threats. In order to protect Namibia's natural heritage for generations to come.

The Ultimate Test: 21 Kilometres and 22 Kilograms

On Saturday, 19 September 2026, the Wildlife Ranger Challenge became a truly continent-wide demonstration of endurance, unity and commitment. A remarkable 160 ranger teams across 19 African countries competed in a synchronised 21 km race, taking on the challenge in full ranger kit.

Across borders and landscapes, rangers ran together in purpose, thousands of kilometres apart, yet united by the same mission: the protection of Africa's wildlife and wild spaces.

For the N/a'an ku sê Foundation's rangers in Namibia, the task could be reduced to two daunting numbers: 21 kilometres. A 22-kilogram backpack.

In reality, it was an extraordinary test of endurance.

N/a'an ku sê's rangers took on the challenge from all three of the Foundation's anti-poaching locations: N/a'an ku sê Lodge & Wildlife Sanctuary, TimBila Nature Reserve by N/a'an ku sê and the Harnas Foundation Wildlife Sanctuary.

With heavily weighted backpacks strapped firmly to their shoulders, the rangers set out across the very landscapes they work so tirelessly to protect.

Kilometre after kilometre, they pushed forward.

Twenty two kilograms weighs heavily from the very first steps. Over 21 kilometres, every stride demands determination. Legs tired, shoulders ached and the weight seems to grow heavier with every passing kilometre.

Yet the rangers were not alone.

N/a'an ku sê staff and members of the public joined in on the action, running distances of 5 km, 10 km and 20 km to encourage the rangers and experience something of the exertion demanded of them. Named the N/a'an ku sê WildFit Ranger Edition – the Ultimate Nature Race, the event is intended to highlight and support anti-poaching efforts while giving participants a very real taste of the physical endurance

required on the conservation front line.

Their participation brought another dimension to the day, transforming the event into a shared show of solidarity. Every kilometre completed alongside the rangers became a gesture of encouragement and a reminder that protecting wildlife is a responsibility that extends beyond those wearing the ranger uniform.

The challenge represented something much bigger than physical endurance.

It symbolised the weight of responsibility Africa's rangers carry every day.

Behind every protected rhino is a network of people working to keep it safe. Behind elephants roaming peacefully through protected landscapes are people keeping watch. Behind every African wild dog pack able to move through the wilderness is a conservation effort that requires people on the ground.

Technology, research and conservation management all have important roles to play, but there remains no substitute for dedicated boots on the ground.

The N/a'an ku sê Foundation is immensely proud of its anti-poaching teams and of every ranger who took part in the Wildlife Ranger Challenge 2026.

Thank you for standing watch over Africa's wild places and the extraordinary creatures within them. 🌍





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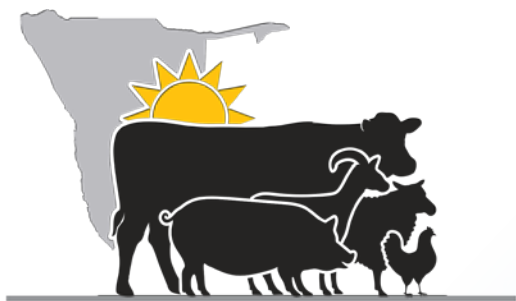
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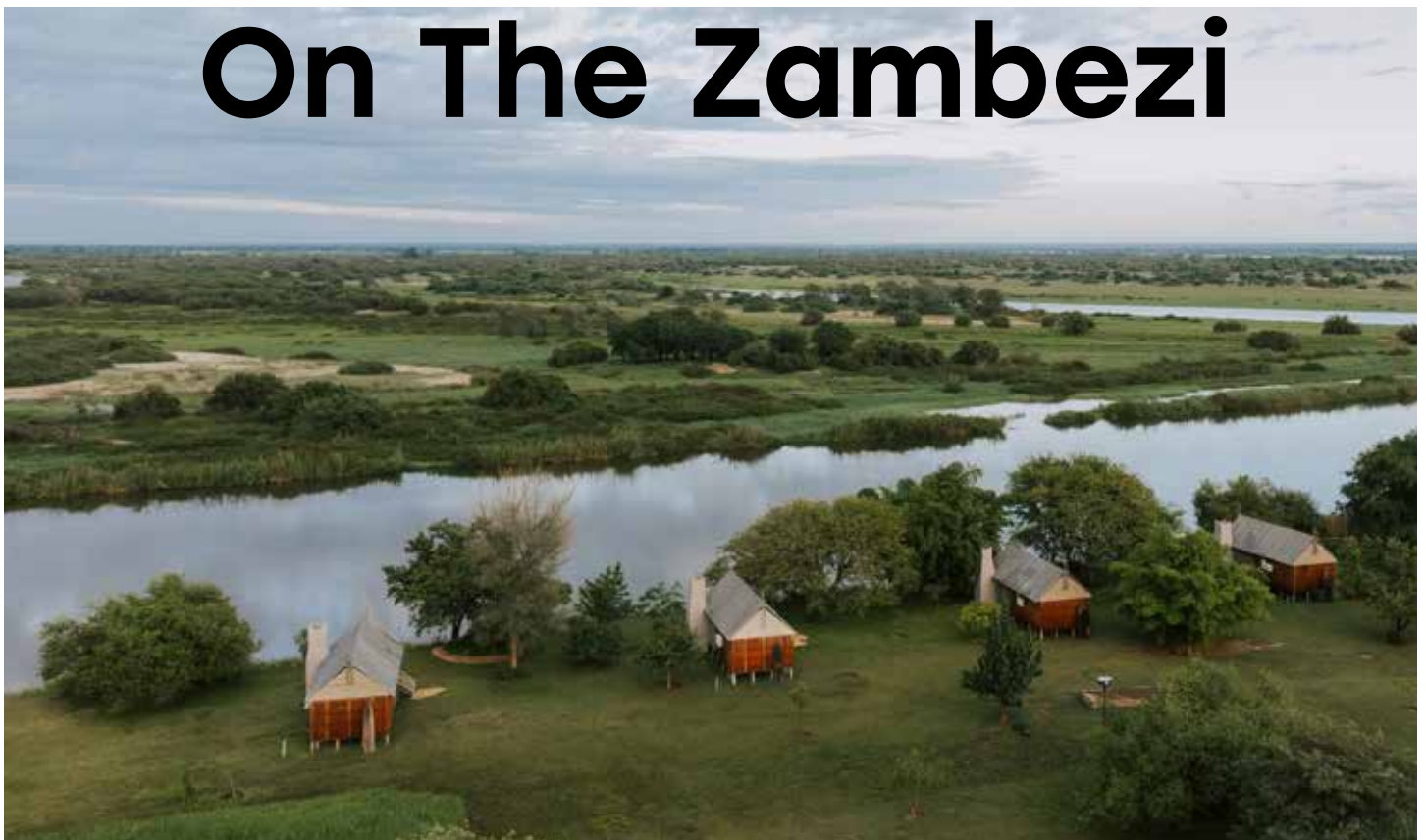
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The Good Life On The Zambezi





From Riverside Retreat to Houseboat Adventures and Life on the Water

edited by Anne Schauffer | photographs supplied



Just 30 km outside Katima Mulilo in Namibia's far north-eastern corner, sits Muchenje River Lodge on the banks of the mighty Zambezi River. Idyllic for those longing for a fishing break, a complete break, or a daybreak opportunity to visit Victoria Falls and Chobe, there's also the Shamwari Houseboat experience to consider.

Owners William and Amy Blair head up Muchenje River Lodge and Shamwari Houseboat's dedicated hospitality team, and their warmth and welcome is contagious...as you'll find out. The supreme riverside setting of Muchenje – endless views along the Zambezi – is enough to calm the most frazzled of city nerves. Put nature's rhythm together with delightfully comfortable accommodation, quintessential African sunsets, and exceptional fishing opportunities (beginners and seasoned anglers), and you'll never want to leave. Comfortable, airy rooms and chalets line the Zambezi River's edge, sheltered beneath tall riverine trees. The sweeping lawn and gardens open effortlessly into the natural landscape, creating a calm and immersive riverfront experience. Accommodation includes four intimate units designed for two guests, as well as four spacious family units featuring two interleading rooms – each with its own private bathroom – ideal for families or groups of four sharing.

There's an onsite restaurant, bar and free Wi-Fi connectivity in the main area, with loads of quiet peaceful spaces to rest. You'll feel like you've swapped that planet for this.

There's also a peaceful garden setting camping experience. Not on the river, but in a quiet, leafy setting. The five campsites have generously sized hot-water shared ablutions, braais, power points and ample space for tents, trailers or small campers. It's a simple, comfortable base for

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



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guests seeking affordability, convenience, with easy access to all lodge facilities.

Considerably more retreat than resort, Muchenje is designed to provide an environment and activities that help you reconnect.

The Shamwari Houseboat is arguably the Blair's pride and joy. Based on the Upper Zambezi River near Mwandi (on the Namibian side), it's a magical floating lodge for minimum 6, maximum 8, with two people in each of the four en suite rooms, each room opening on to the river via vast sliding windows. Bookings are confirmed on a sole-use basis, and delectable home-style chef-prepared meals are included. There's a large dining area, a lounge, braai deck and jacuzzi, so this is supreme, convivial comfort. This extraordinary experience enables you to travel 55 kilometres downstream from Katimo Mulilo to

Despite what you may have seen in the movies, ancient Egyptians did not booby-trap the pyramids.



the confluence of the Zambezi and Chobe Rivers. And no surprise, this stretch of the Zambezi has strong currents and deep channels, so you'll have access to diverse fish species. It's renowned for its tiger fishing, as well as Nembwe and other predatory bream species. You'll have comfortable, well-equipped boats, knowledgeable local guides, and river views aplenty. Every angler's dream.

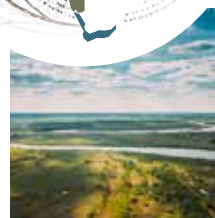
From Muchenje, with the team's assistance, you can explore near and far, to your heart's content: Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe), including visits to the tourist markets in Livingstone and Victoria Falls; Chobe National Park (Botswana); or closer to home, local attractions and scenic viewpoints, as well as birding hotspots and nature walks.

For the Blairs, life, their lodge, and the environment is

treated with huge respect. Much of the equipment in the lodge and the Houseboat, is solar powered, so you enjoy a quieter, cleaner, more environmentally responsible experience. In addition, they're committed to operating sustainably, so protection of the river environment is paramount. People matter, and they support local employment and source supplies from nearby communities.

Muchenje River Lodge offers convenient and memorable boat transfers for guests connecting to the Shamwari Houseboat or travelling between countries.

Muchenje and Shamwari offer different, but equally wonderful experiences, all dependent on what you're looking for. But rest assured, everybody will find that illusive sense of peace. ☺



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www.bagatelle-lodge.com

BP  **BüllsPort Lodge & Farm**
buellsport-naukluft.com

CH  **Cornerstone Guest House**
www.cornerstoneguesthouse.com

CG  **Corona Guest Farm**
www.coronaguestfarm.com

EL  **Etusis Lodge**
www.etusis.com

FI  **Frans Indongo Lodge**
www.indongolodge.com

FL  **Fiume Lodge**
www.fiume-lodge.com

FS  **Fort Sesfontein**
www.fortsesfontein.com

GR  **Gecko Ridge**
www.geckoridge.com.na

GM  **Goibib Mountain Lodge**
www.goibibmountainlodge.net

HL  **Huab Lodge**
www.huab.com

JB  **Jackalberry Tented Camp**
www.jbcamp.com

KN  **Kashana Namibia**
www.kashana-namibia.com

NV  **Namib's Valley Lodge**
www.namibsvally.com

NS  **Ndlovu Collection**
www.ndlovu.com

NL  **Nkasa Lupala Tented Camp**
www.nkasalupalalodge.com

ON  **Ohange Lodge**
www.ohange.com

OL  **Otjiwa Eagle's Rest**
www.otjiwa.com.na

OL  **Otjiwa Thornbush Tented Camp**
www.otjiwa.com.na/thorn-bush-tented-camp

OL  **Otjiwa Savanna Luxury Villa**
www.otjiwa.com.na/savanna-luxury-villa

OL  **Otjiwa Mountain Lodge**
www.otjiwamountainlodge.com

SL  **Serondela Lodge**
www.serondelalodge.com

UT  **Ugab Terrace Lodge**
www.ugabterracelodge.com



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When Namibia Smells the Rain

*The First Rains Turn
Namibians into Tourists in
Their Own Country*

words & illustration by Karel Swanepoel



Tourists, and I include myself in this, seek out opposition to their identity. That is the fundamental description of novelty. Not opposition in an aggravated way, but in a way that makes you feel as if you are undergoing a unique experience, something non-mundane. Wet-country people go to dry places, hot to cold, desert to forest. Novelty lights up the mind. Synapses clap hands. Creativity wakes up and dormant parts of the brain switch their lights back on.

There are times, though, when locals start reacting like tourists.

Here in Namibia, it happens during the first seasonal rain in springtime, normally early September.

A few nondescript clouds gather like they are attending a thirty-year school reunion. At first, they don't know how to talk to each other anymore, but as more arrive, the awkward conversation starts. Gossip spreads about Stratus picking up weight and Cumulus not even bothering to show up. Then Mr East Western arrives, rounds up the stragglers who have been sitting in the corner contemplating leaving, and the antisocial white tufts clump together into a shindig grey. With a thunderous clap, he opens the reunion and you look up just as a fat confetti raindrop hits you on the cheek.

Namibia flings its windows and doors open. People laugh and compliment life, the earth, Mother Nature, as her petrichor rises and a whole nation inhales a gulp of pure joy. To a dry country like Namibia, where winter humidity forces even the most premium day cream to rewrite its own product description from lasting twelve hours to lasting until now - now, if you're lucky - that first smell is a holiday. It makes people feel as if they are visiting somewhere else for a moment, tourists without moving a metre.

Apparently, humans have a very specific olfactory receptor called OR11A1. It picks up the smell of geosmin, the natural compound that creates petrichor. If you dropped a single teaspoon of geosmin into an Olympic-size swimming pool, humans would detect it instantly. Our noses are more sensitive to it than a shark is to blood. Sharks smell blood to find a snack or seven, but what are we supposed to do with our strange superpower?

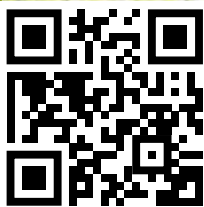
Scientists think we used petrichor to move toward areas where rain had fallen, in search of fresh plant growth and huntable game. Thanks to modern convenience, the need for those resources has long passed, yet we kept the ability. So now, every time the first raindrops fall, we get to go on a tiny little vacation. 🌧️

19  19

LEISURE

NAMIBIA THROUGH OUR EYES

Scan and discover
how recovery, nature
and adventure come
together.



RENEWAL IN THE

LAP OF LEISURE

The word spa is said to trace back to a small Belgian town, famed since Roman times for the healing power of its thermal springs. By the sixteenth century it had entered the English language, carrying a promise that has barely changed in five hundred years: warm water, a slower pulse and a body given permission to rest. That promise is being rediscovered.

While travel has typically been associated with adventure, discovery and movement, today a growing



number of travellers are seeking something equally valuable: recovery. Wellness travel is evolving beyond traditional spa escapes into experiences that help people reconnect with themselves, spend time in nature and return home feeling restored. Industry insights point to a growing desire for travel that creates space for meaningful moments, deeper connection and genuine wellbeing. [cntraveler.com], [gulfnews.com]

Namibia has always had a natural understanding of this balance. Wide-open landscapes, quiet horizons and a pace shaped by nature invite visitors to slow down almost instinctively. Across OL Leisure's portfolio, wellness is a meaningful part of the guest experience, complementing adventure, wildlife encounters and time spent outdoors with opportunities for rest, renewal and recovery.



SPRING'S INVITATION TO PAUSE AT MIDGARD OTJIHAVERA WINDHOEK

Just beyond Windhoek, **Midgard** offers a welcome change of pace as winter gives way to spring. The first signs of seasonal renewal begin to colour the landscape, creating an atmosphere that encourages guests to spend more time outdoors, reconnect with loved ones and enjoy the restorative power of nature.

At the heart of this experience is Camelthorn Spa, where wellness forms part of a balanced getaway. Following a morning walk, a family outing or time spent exploring the property, guests can retreat to treatments designed to release tension and restore equilibrium.

The spa's offering includes BABOR facial journeys, grounding massages and full-body experiences that support physical and mental wellbeing.

Surrounded by the natural beauty of the Otjihavera landscape, Camelthorn Spa reflects Midgard's philosophy of balance: time spent exploring, balanced by time spent restoring. Spring at Midgard is a season and a reason to reset before the year picks up speed again.



FINDING YOUR RHYTHM ON THE OKAVANGO

If Midgard represents a gentle reset, **Divava Okavango** offers a deeper connection to nature's rhythms.

The Riverside Spa's private treatment rooms look out over reed beds and river channels where elephant and buffalo come to drink.

The therapies inside echo what's happening outside: a river sand scrub using the same coarse grains found along the lodge's paths, stones drawn from the riverbed for a hot stone massage, a coconut wrap that leaves skin as soft as the morning mist over the water. Even the bath water carries the scent of warm milk and honey.

Days here are built around cruises, birdwatching and golden hour at Popa Falls, with the spa as quiet counterweight — proof that stillness and safari can comfortably share a single itinerary.



BALANCING DISCOVERY AND RECOVERY AT CHOBE WATER VILLAS ZAMBEZI

Adventure and wellness are often viewed as opposites, yet at **Chobe Water Villas** they exist in harmony.

Here, unforgettable wildlife encounters, river-based experiences and exploration are balanced by opportunities to slow down and recharge. Overlooking the Chobe River, Haven Spa creates a peaceful setting where guests can transition from the excitement of discovery to the comfort of recovery.

The spa's wellness offering includes full-body massages, specialised stretching therapies, scalp treatments, facial experiences and signature BABOR treatments designed to promote relaxation and wellbeing.

The experience feels particularly meaningful after a day spent on safari or watching wildlife along the riverbanks. Nature delivers the adventure. Haven Spa provides the balance.

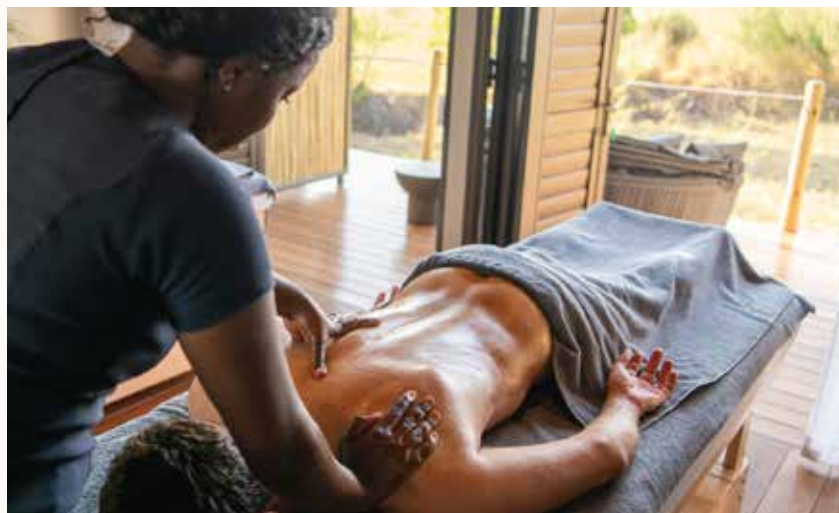


Scan for your next
restorative escape.



A DIFFERENT SIDE OF THE JOURNEY

While each destination offers its own expression of wellness, they share a common purpose: creating space for guests to pause.



Across the wider OL Leisure portfolio, properties such as **Strand Hotel Swakopmund**, **Mokuti Etosha** and **Le Mirage Sossusvlei** continue to offer their own opportunities to relax, reconnect and enjoy meaningful time away. Each property carries its own rhythm, but the invitation is the same: come for the adventure, stay a little longer for the recovery.

Sometimes the most memorable journeys are not defined by how much we do, but by how completely we allow ourselves to reconnect with what matters most.

Sources: Wellness travel insights adapted from Condé Nast Traveler's 2026 wellness travel trends report and wider travel industry reporting on restorative and connection-focused travel trends. [cntraveler.com], [gulfnews.com]



WHO WE ARE

The **Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN)** regulates telecommunications, broadcasting, postal services and radio spectrum, while working to protect consumers and expand access to communication services.

As Namibia's digital landscape evolves, CRAN is strengthening the foundations for a **secure, connected and inclusive digital economy**, supported by initiatives such as the **Universal Service Fund, NAM-CSIRT** and **DigiNam**.



Emilia Nghikembua
Chief Executive Officer

OBJECTIVES AND STAKEHOLDER VALUE

CRAN works to create a communication environment that **protects consumers, encourages innovation and expands access** to digital services across Namibia.

Through initiatives such as **USF, NAM-CSIRT** and **DigiNam**, CRAN is expanding connectivity, strengthening cybersecurity and building digital trust. Together, these efforts support **government, businesses, service providers and consumers** as Namibia moves towards a more secure, innovative and digitally enabled future.



Tanswell Davies
Executive: Governance,
Risk & Compliance



Elton Witbooi
Executive: ICT



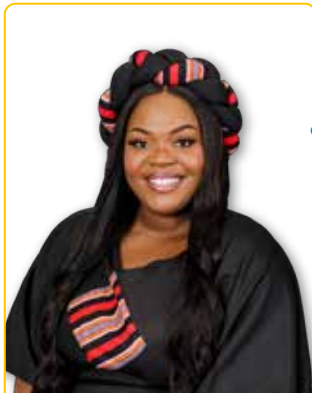
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Executive: Communication &
Consumer Relations



Helene Vosloo
Executive: Economics &
Market Development



Maria Moses
Executive: Finance &
Administration



Josephine Shigwedha
Executive: Regulatory & Corporate
Legal Services



Pascal Haingura
Executive: Engineering &
Technical Services



Cornelia Shipindo
Acting Executive: NAM-CSIRT

A TASTE OF NAMIBIA

WELCOME TO GONDWANA COLLECTION

At Gondwana Collection Namibia, the journey doesn't begin at check-in. It begins the moment you step out of the car, with something thoughtfully crafted to reflect the place you've just arrived in.

Across the group's lodges, the welcoming drinks are a sensory delight that make you feel instantly at home in a foreign land while setting the tone for the stay ahead.

A Welcoming Fit for a King

The welcome at Etosha King Nehale is quintessentially Namibian: an Oshikandela ice lolly. A frozen twist on the beloved local drinking yoghurt; it is creamy, tangy, refreshing and for locals... instantly recognisable.

This cool treat is a playful nod to Owambo culture, the very essence from which the lodge draws its inspiration. With that first bite, you are not a tourist anymore, you are a guest in a family home.

A Flavour Deeply Rooted in Southern Namibia

Further south, as you journey toward the dramatic landscapes of Fish River Canyon, the welcome shifts to a taste born directly from the arid earth. Here, guests are greeted with a glass of the classic prickly pear - a handcrafted, home-made fruit concentrate.

This humble desert dweller thrives among rugged mountains, generously offering its deep pink fruit to create a vibrant refreshment. Served over ice, it is the perfect reward after a long day on



the road; a cool, organically produced remedy for a hot day under the Namibian Sun.

The vibrant pink drink offers a taste of the region before guests have even settled into their rooms. The prickly pear has become something of a Namibian icon, thriving in harsh, dry landscapes where other plants struggle to survive.

Sweet, refreshing and naturally colourful, it captures the resilience and beauty of the south in a single glass. Like the lodge itself, the welcome drink is simple, authentic and unmistakably Namibian.

Pink Slushies for Pink Cheeks

At The Desert Grace in the Namib, the welcome takes on a different character. As you enter the cool, elegant interior, you are handed a glass with the lodge's signature pink drink- a delectable refresher against the arid Desert air.

The arrival takes on a more whimsical hue in the form of a pink slushie, served perfectly chilled with striking vibrancy, inspired by the well-known pink sands of the surrounding desert.

More Than a Drink

These gestures, while they may seem small, carry a deeper intention. They are a homecoming, a handshake from the team and a first introduction to the landscapes, cultures and stories that make each destination unique. Each sip is thoughtfully designed to wash away the dust of the road and replace it with a graceful side of Namibian hospitality.

Before you've unpacked your bags or explored the surroundings, you've already had your first taste of the place. And that is exactly the point.

Welcome to Gondwana Collection. Welcome to Namibia. Welcome Home.



Scan the QR Code and
book your next stay.



GONDWANA
L·U·N·A
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NAMIBIA



THE LUNA COLLECTION

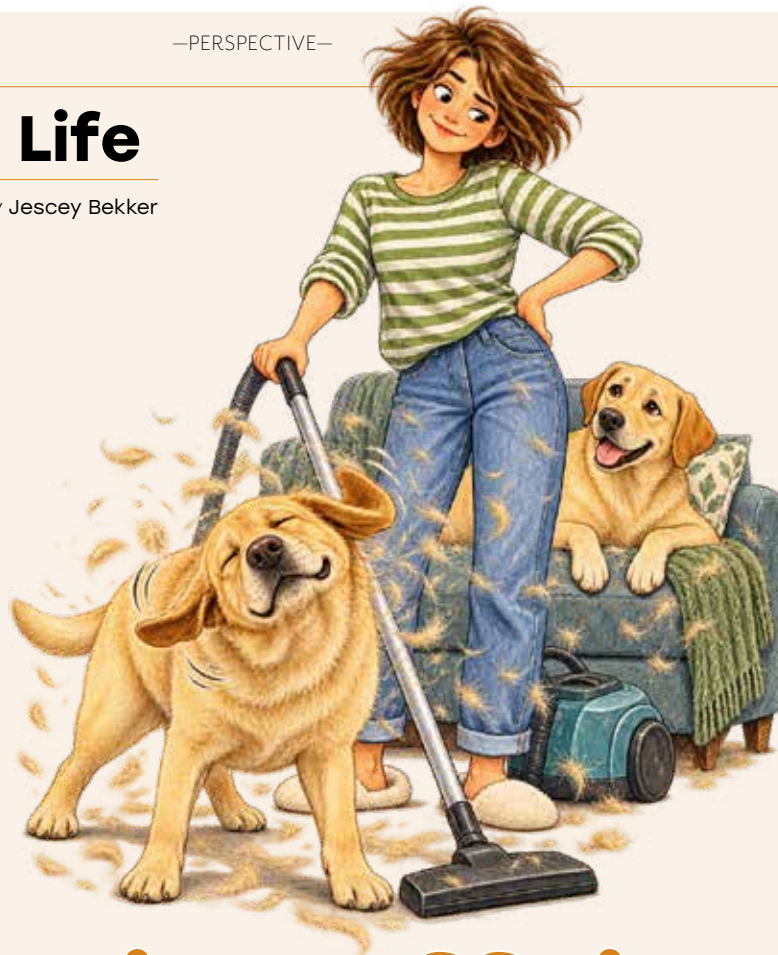


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Code and
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LUNA OFFERS A RARE KIND OF LUXURY.

Slice of Life

words by Jescey Bekker



A hairy affair

Spring has sprung, and with it the bizarre need to clear out and scrub cupboards, purge wardrobes and vacuum every inch of the house. In my household, this comes with an added layer of complication I would never have anticipated 10 years ago...

I have shared the trials and tribulations of Princess Freya the bullterrier. I have not, however, introduced the not so dynamic duo, the labradors of our home - Hurley and Tobey.

I love my boys to bits. I do not, however, love the volumes of golden fur that comes with them. While I know all dogs shed, with Labs (as I can imagine with all thick-furred pooches), this is not something to underestimate. While I only strictly have two Labradors in the house, by sheer weight of hair I have at least five and a half.

And the hair is everywhere...

On the couch, under the couch, in the couch. Cupboards and carpets and the sliding door grooves.

I know this, because I have spent the last number of weeks hunting down where else the endless golden tufts could be hiding.

What's worse, just as you think you are making progress, Tubby Toby gives a shake and poof! Hundreds of golden strands float through the air and land on the clean, vacuumed and washed floor. I have considered vacuuming the boys; but they won't sit still long enough ... fortunately they only shed once a year, but the first 365 days are really rough.

Even while tampering into the garden, pruning the flower bushes, you will find bundles of golden fur tucked along the branches. In the pool, in the pool filter... the tufts are incredible at playing hide and seek.

So, the process continues and we spring-clean well into winter, then start again. Ultimately, the fur is worth the love and snuggles the boys bring to our home, so we take it with a huff, and keep the vacuum close. 🌀

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Dear Diary

words by Sandra Baumeister



My Neighbours Have Hooves

Ten years in Namibia, and a lemon party I was not invited to

Ten years.
That is how long I have lived in Namibia now,
and I still catch myself doing the arithmetic, as if the
number might come out differently the second time.

I arrived with a suitcase full of intentions. Good linen. Firm
opinions about how a house should look. A belief, quietly held, that
a home is something you arrange and then maintain. Ten years
later I know better. Out here, a home is something you negotiate.
Daily. With parties who were not consulted about the lease.

Because my neighbours, dear diary, have hooves.

They also have hooves' worth of manners, which is to say
none at all, and I have come to find this deeply restful.

The Ones Who Come At Dusk

We live outside Windhoek, far enough that the streetlights
give up long before our gate. In the late afternoon the hills go
copper, and then the traffic starts. Eland, stepping through
the thorn like they are late for something dignified. Warthogs,
trotting in single file with their tails up like little antennae, all
of them radiating the confidence of animals who have never
once looked in a mirror. Giraffes further off, moving the way
clouds move, with that strange slow-motion elegance that
makes you forget to breathe.

I have watched them from the terrace with a glass of wine
in my hand for ten years and I have never once become used to
it. I hope I never do.

Then the sun goes, and the night shift arrives.

First the frogs. Not one or two — an entire chorus, tuning
up around the water like a badly organised orchestra that
nonetheless commits absolutely. Then, later, the jackals. That
thin, rising call that other people find eerie and that I have
come to hear as a kind of curfew bell. If you have never fallen
asleep to jackals, I cannot fully explain it. It is not peaceful,
exactly. It is better than peaceful. It is company.

Guests sometimes ask me how I sleep with all that noise.
I never sleep as well anywhere else.

What The Eland Taught Me First

I should have learnt all of this in my first week.

When we moved in, I planted bougainvillea at the entrance.
Not one bush, not two — the whole approach, because I had a
picture in my head of what an entrance ought to look like, and
in that picture there was a wall of magenta and coral and that
impossible papery pink.

They were glorious. For roughly one day.

The next morning I came out with my coffee and every
flower was gone. Not scattered. Not broken. Eaten, neatly, from
the top down, by a delegation of eland who had clearly been
waiting all night for exactly this moment and had discussed it
among themselves beforehand.

I have planted bougainvillea many times since.

*They live inside the fence now — watered, fed,
protected, spoken to encouragingly. And they
have never once come close to that first morning.*

Ten years, and I still cannot reproduce it. I have made my
peace with the suspicion that the plants themselves know the
difference between a garden and a landscape, and quietly
preferred the landscape.

In Which I Have A Mediterranean Phase

Now. My weakness. I like beautiful things. Candles,
cushions, colour, a vase that is always full of something. I
cannot help it, and after ten years I have stopped apologising
for it. Our house sits in the middle of Africa and looks, if I am
honest, as though Audrey Hepburn had a hand in the styling.



Just with more dust. Considerably more dust.

And at some point during my Mediterranean phase, I put lemons on the terrace.

Lemons, dear diary. In vases. Bright, waxy, fragrant, absolutely pointless. I loved them. I hummed when I walked past them, which my dogs found suspicious and which I deny to this day.

You already know where this is going.

The Lemon Party

We had been walking in the hills — red dust, warm backs, three dogs and no particular hurry. Then Simba went stiff. Ears up, tail up, that sharp little stride he saves for things he has personally decided are enemies of the state.

I knew before we rounded the corner.

The terrace looked like the end of a very good wedding. Lemon peel everywhere. The tablecloth half in the pool. A vase on its side. Muddy handprints along the railing, and — I am almost certain — evidence that someone had been swimming.

Baboons.

Simba went off like an alarm system with legs. Malou and Luna followed, mostly on principle. And I stood in the middle of my ruined arrangement, in my lemon mush, and felt my heart genuinely wobble between crying and laughing.

I laughed. What else do you do when you have been robbed by a troop of animals who clearly had a better afternoon than you did?

They had snacks. They had a pool. They had each other. Honestly, if you set out to design the perfect party, you would land more or less exactly where they did, minus the vase.

I fetched the broom. Simba patrolled the perimeter for the rest of the day like a small furry head of security, and I let him,

because everyone deserves to feel useful.

Later I told the dogs, in the serious voice I use when I want them to understand something: those are not friends. Baboons are strong, clever, unpredictable. They have teeth you do not want to be near. It is one of the honest lessons of this place — that wonder and caution are not opposites, and that the animals you find enchanting are under no obligation to find you anything at all.

What I Did Instead

I do not put fruit outside anymore.

Someone told me baboons dislike shell lanterns, so now the terrace has shell lanterns. I should say plainly that I have no evidence for this whatsoever, and it is entirely possible the baboons simply have not got around to us again. But they make a lovely sound in the wind, and I have decided to take the credit.

Still, I miss the lemons. A bit of yellow suited that table.

Ten Years In

Here is what I have actually learnt, and it took the full decade.

I came here thinking I would settle in. That I would arrange things, and they would stay arranged, and the house would be a small tidy argument I was winning against the landscape.

That is not how it works. The dust comes back. The frogs get louder before rain. The eland walk through as if the fence is a suggestion. The bougainvillea still refuses to perform. And every so often a troop of baboons will decide your terrace is the venue and your styling is the catering.

You can spend your life sweeping. Or you can accept that you live somewhere that is still, fundamentally, wild — and that you are not the host here; you are on the guest list.

I do still hum when I walk past the lanterns, though.

Some things ten years cannot fix.

Until next time, ☺

Janet

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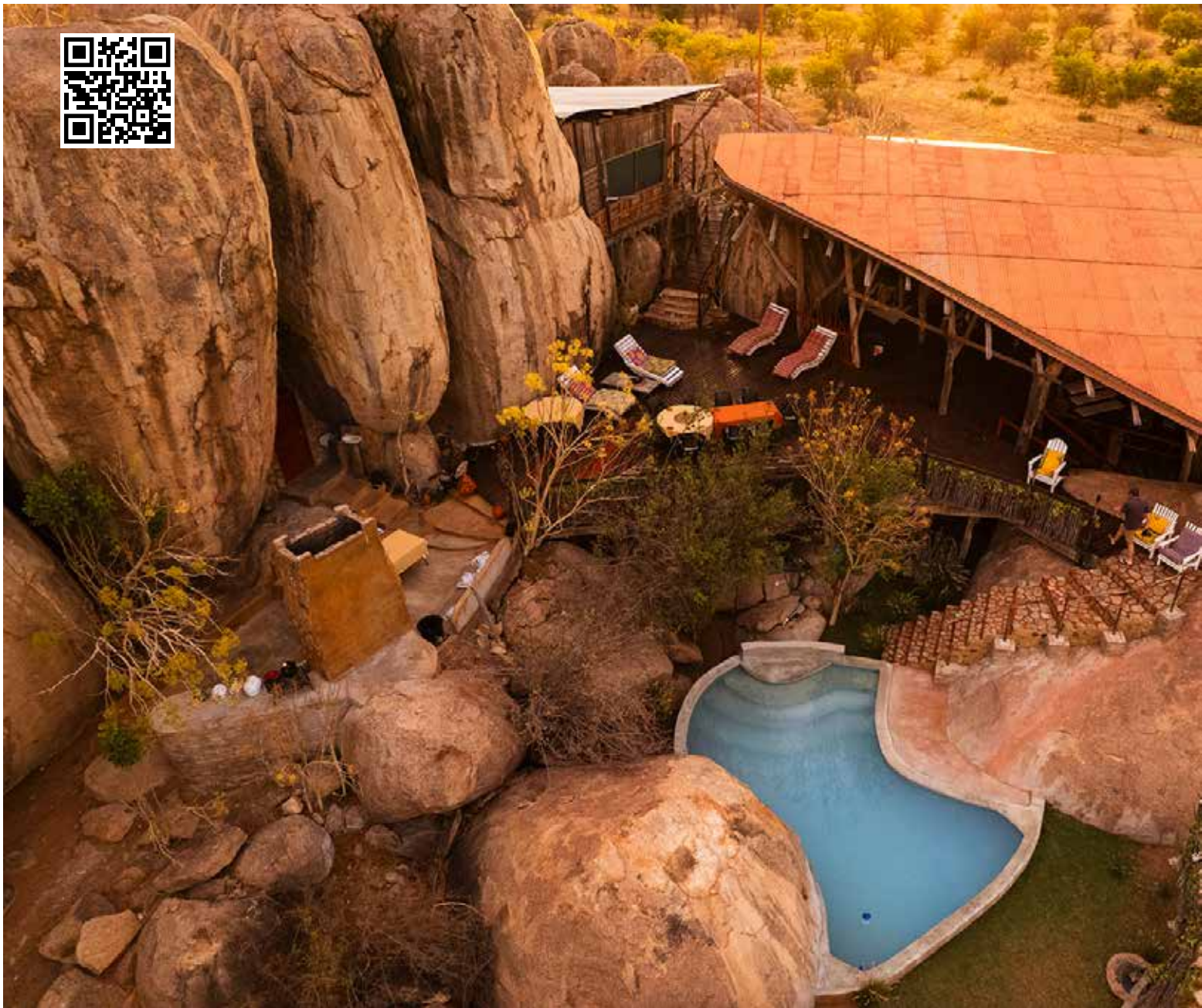
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acclaimed Namibian
spirit.*



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Escape to Onjowewe

*A Hideaway Among
the Boulders*

edited by Anne Schauffer | photographs supplied



Slow down, and consider a getaway that's out of the ordinary. Onjowewe is built around switching off, not a packed itinerary — no Wi-Fi, little signal, nowhere to be.

Enjoy more by doing less. It's the premise (and promise) on which Hideaways Namibia chooses its properties and experiences. Onjowewe is one such experience. Twenty kilometres east of Kamanjab on the C40, you'll find

Onjowewe: the Treehouse - originally built for a film set! - Bush Camp, the Campsite and the Himba Village.

Etosha National Park is about an hour's drive away, close enough for a day trip or a stop on the way in or out. And another activity worth planning around is a guided visit to the Otjikandero Himba Village, a cultural exchange arranged respectfully through the local community trust.

At Onjowewe, accommodation for ten (max.) is in the



Treehouse. The simpler side of Onjowewe offers three tented accommodations at the Bush Camp and three overland campsites at Duncan's. The Onjowewe Treehouse and Bush Camp are exclusively booked per group.

Some say the Treehouse used to be Peter Pan's hideaway in Neverland. It's built on two levels, with three spacious bedrooms, a total of three double beds and four single beds, and two en-suite bathrooms. Bedded into the boulders, each room has a clear, private view across the bushveld.

Tucked into the world of the Treehouse is a sparkling pool, a spacious outside veranda and a large, open-plan living area. Each morning, you'll rise to a typically hearty Namibian breakfast; in the evening, you'll look forward to a farmstyle dinner, served on the beautiful deck overlooking the African bush savannah. (The Treehouse is booked on a DBB basis; local Namibians only may self cater) At night, stargazing from the deck of the Treehouse is magical — no generator hum, no light pollution, just the boulders cooling off after dark. It's silent, but beautifully sociable.

A cash bar is also available with beer, wine, soft drinks and mixers (for guests' account). Staff members are around during the day and on standby, if guests wish them to be, during mealtimes.

Onjowewe Bush Camp has three individual tented accommodations, with a generous communal ablution block. Tent One has a double bed (with extra space for a single bed), and the other tents each have two single beds. The Bush Camp has its own sparkling splash pool

with a spacious relaxation area. Lanterns and candles are provided in the main areas at sunset — there is no permanent electricity on the premises.

For local Namibians who choose to self cater, there's a cooking and barbecue area available next to the dining area, and you can rent a self-catering box with all the necessary utensils; firewood is available for purchase.

Ideal for small or bigger groups, Duncan's Campsite offers three individual camping grounds for one overlander each. There's an ablution block and a washing and barbecue area. Firewood is available for purchase, and there's no power supply.

For a cultural immersion, guests can arrange a locally guided visit to a nearby Himba village. Onjowewe also offers a traditional Himba dinner there. Tours of the Himba village are locally guided, with the remuneration going directly into the Otjikandero Community Trust fund account. The Otjikandero Community Trust village is a community supporting 45 orphan children. For more information about this, contact Hideaways Namibia — they'll fill you in on the details.

If out of the ordinary is your preferred holiday mode, Onjowewe awaits you. The Treehouse is the perfect remote getaway for a group of like-minded friends or family keen to spend time together, stargazing around a fire, connecting with nature and each other, and not wasting time hunting for a cellphone signal that's not to be found. 📶



Public Notice



Namibia Tourism Board

MANDATORY TOURISM LEVY COMPLIANCE

To All Registered Accommodation Establishments and Regulated Tourism Businesses

The Namibia Tourism Board (NTB), established in terms of the Namibia Tourism Board Act, 2000 (Act No. 21 of 2000), is mandated to promote Namibia as a tourism destination and to regulate the tourism industry, including the registration of accommodation establishments and regulated tourism businesses and the administration and collection of the prescribed Tourism Levy.

1. Statutory Requirements

In terms of Section 29 of the Namibia Tourism Board Act, 2000 (Act No. 21 of 2000), and the Namibia Tourism Board Regulations nr.2, Government Notice No. 137 of 2004, every operator of a registered accommodation establishment is legally required to collect the prescribed Tourism Levy from guests on behalf of the Namibia Tourism Board and remit the levy within the prescribed timeframes, on or before the applicable due date following each two-month levy period.

Levy submissions must be accompanied by a fully completed Tourism Levy Return & Statistics Form and proof of payment to ensure accurate reconciliation and reporting.

2. Offences and Penalties for Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with the statutory requirements relating to the collection and timely remittance of Tourism Levies, as provided for under Section 29 of the Namibia Tourism Board Act, 2000 (Act No. 21 of 2000), and the applicable provisions of the Namibia Tourism Board Regulations, Government Notice No. 137 of 2004, constitutes non-compliance and may result in penalties and enforcement action. Operators are therefore advised of the

Late Payment of Tourism Levy:

Any levy amount not paid by the prescribed due date attracts an additional charge of 5% of the outstanding levy amount for each month, or part of a month, during which the amount remains unpaid, in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Namibia Tourism Board Regulations, Government Notice No. 137 of 2004.

Offence Non-compliance:

Where an owner fails to pay an outstanding levy or accrued additional charges within 14 days after receiving a written demand from the Board, the owner commits an offence and, upon conviction, is liable to a fine not exceeding N\$4,000, imprisonment for a period not exceeding one (1) year, or both, as provided for under Regulation 6 of the Namibia Tourism Board Regulations, Government Notice No. 137 of 2004.



Withdrawal of Registration:

Continued non-compliance with prescribed registration requirements may result in regulatory enforcement action, including the withdrawal of registration in terms of Section 26 of the Namibia Tourism Board Act, 2000 (Act No. 21 of 2000), where applicable and subject to the procedures prescribed in the Act.

Verification of Account Status & Reconciliation

Operators may verify their accounts through the following channels:



Email Inquiry:

Contact the Finance Division via email at debtors@namibiatourism.com.na



In Person:

Visit the NTB Head Office or regional offices during standard operating hours.

3. How to Pay

Levy payments must be remitted using your official NTB Registration Number as the primary beneficiary reference. Payments can be made via:

Direct Bank Transfer / EFT:

Remit payments directly to the designated NTB Levy Bank Account (banking details are available on the Levy Return Form or website). Proof of payment together with the Levy Return Form must be emailed to debtors@namibiatourism.com.na.

In-Person Office Visit:

Pay via card facility or deposit verification at the NTB Finance Counter.

Issued by:

Flora Quest, CPRP

Manager: Stakeholder Engagement,
Corporate Communication & PRO
Namibia Tourism Board (NTB)

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



Monte Bello Guesthouse

A Fresh Take on City Living

edited by Anne Schaffer | photographs supplied



A deep breath of fresh air swept through Monte Bello Guesthouse earlier this year, as they reopened their doors after a stylish refurbishment. Welcoming to both leisure and business travellers, this light and bright guesthouse is conveniently close to Windhoek's business district and city centre.

Monte Bello Guesthouse is no conventional city hotel. Yes, it's close to all key amenities — and well suited to both leisure travellers and business guests — but it's far more like an intimate, private guesthouse with a chilled, more personal atmosphere. Monte Bello has its own character and a sense of place — you'll feel it.

It's the ideal stopover for winding down after a Namibian journey...or indeed, recovering after a flight into the country, the perfect place for a refresh and revival before embarking on your Namibian adventure. Its location

also makes it a practical base for exploring Windhoek while still being away from the busier city environment. With easy access to the main routes north and south, it's close to Medi-Clinic Hospital and only 40 minutes away from Windhoek Hosea Kutako International Airport.

At Monte Bello, the sense of comfort is tangible. Spacious, light-filled rooms, stylishly decorated, show attention to detail at every turn. Rooms which lead on to the delightful garden, swimming pool and patio with loungers give a wonderful sense of space.

Accommodation is thoughtfully designed, with a range of rooms from Classic and Luxury to Family and Premium, Twin and King. Every room is air-conditioned and en-suite, with luxurious white linen, complimentary Wi-Fi, a tea and coffee station, mini-fridge, cable TV and a little safe. This is what restful looks and feels like.

Michelangelo

—TRAVEL—



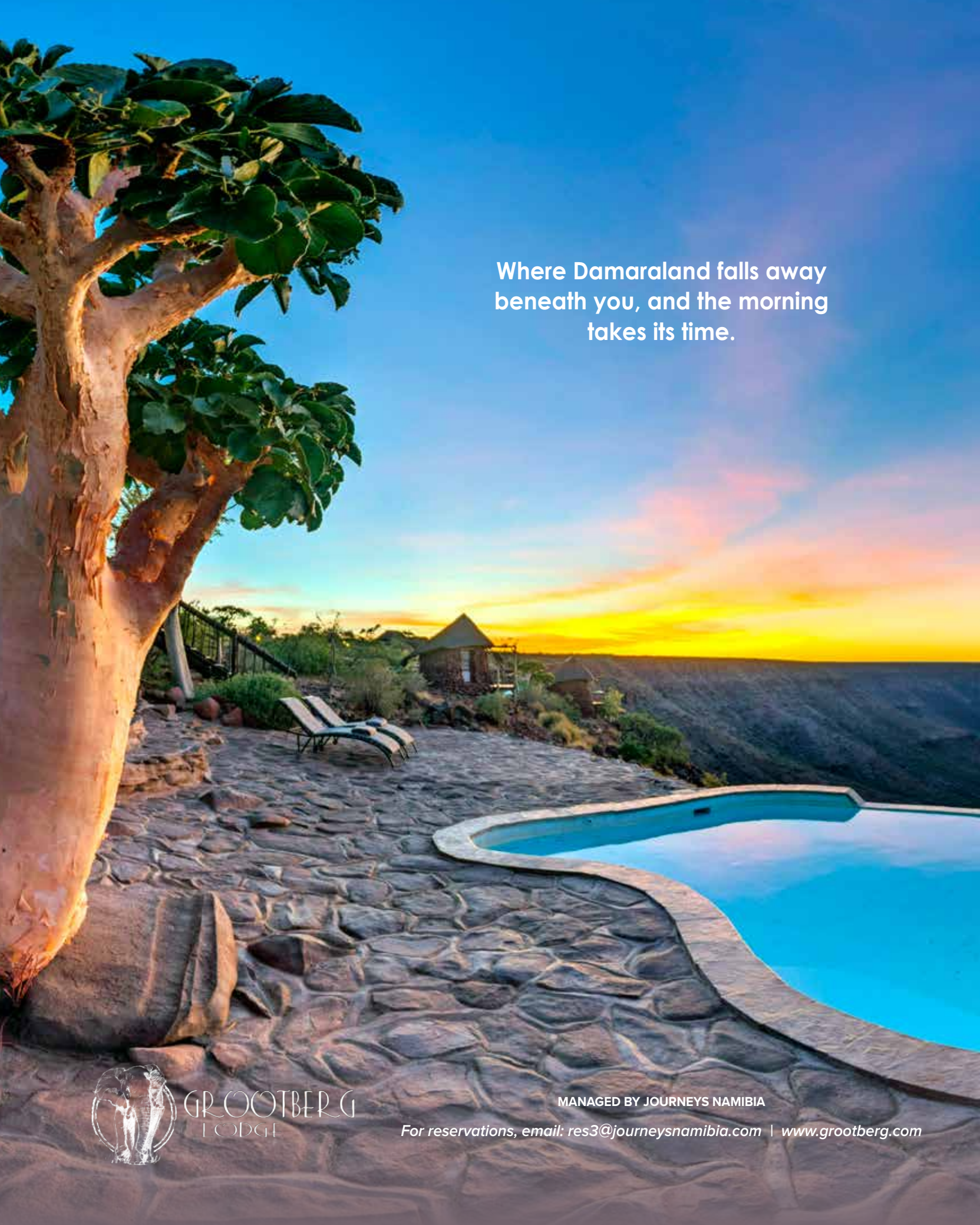
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At Monte Bello, you'll start each day with a sumptuous breakfast in the charming dining room. Then, if you're keen to explore Windhoek, the front-of-house staff are keen to assist. They'll team you up with knowledgeable local guides who know just how to bring the city's history and culture to life. For those who want to go it alone, you'll be pointed in the right direction.

For shopping, lunching or dining, Maerua Mall, Grove Mall and Wernhil Park are all within easy reach of the guesthouse. There are numerous restaurants and markets, such as the Sunday one at Zest Restaurant, with food stalls, crafts, fresh produce, music and a great community vibe — enjoy a lazy brunch there while browsing. On a Saturday, the Bio Market is well worth a visit for fresh organic produce, artisan goods and a relaxed community atmosphere. For art and craft lovers, head straight for the Namibia Craft Centre.

If you're looking for conveniently located style and comfort, Monte Bello Guesthouse has a room just for you. You'll find it at 30 Akwamaryn Street in Windhoek. 📍



Where Damaraland falls away
beneath you, and the morning
takes its time.



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A MASTERPIECE REIMAGINED: The Story Behind the Great Brands Media Website



From Print Presence to Digital Home, Turning a Vision into Something Real

For the longest time, the Great Brands Media website was little more than a digital extension of its flagship publication, Michelangelo Magazine. What began as a publishing company centred around Michelangelo Magazine has gradually developed into something extraordinary. The magazine itself has travelled far beyond the place in which it is produced, connecting stories, destinations, brands, businesses and people across borders.

We currently operate a live network of more than 42 million active QR codes, generating real-time data, real audience intelligence and a scale of measurable engagement that places us in a league few media platforms can claim.

Today, our digital readership reaches people in 157 countries. And the magazine's journey has extended well beyond readership alone. Copies of Michelangelo Magazine are held by institutions including the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library and the University of Toronto.

And importantly, this was never about replacing print with digital.

Print continues to have its own value, particularly in a world increasingly saturated with digital messages. A beautifully produced publication can command attention in a way that a fleeting digital advertisement sometimes cannot. The intention was therefore not to move away from print, but to create a digital platform that could complement it and give Great Brands Media a proper digital home.

That sounded simple enough.

It wasn't.

Enter the Wild West

The architecture behind the website was mapped out. We knew what we wanted the platform to do and had a fairly clear idea of where we wanted to go. The complexities were, on the surface, relatively modest.

Finding someone to execute the vision without turning a manageable project into a technical monster, however, proved to be another story.

The digital development industry can sometimes feel a little like the Wild West. Gunslingers are a dime a dozen, and for every straightforward requirement there seems to be someone ready to explain why it needs three additional layers of complexity — usually accompanied by a corresponding increase in the quotation.

After a number of conversations with different suppliers, proposals that became increasingly complicated and costings that seemed increasingly disconnected from the original brief, we eventually parked the project. For a little over a year, the Great Brands Media website sat waiting for the right person to come along.

Our first conversation was relatively brief. We explained what we were looking for, what we wanted the website to achieve and where we saw the business going. What stood out was not a grand sales pitch or an attempt to impress us with technical terminology.

It was the opposite. Gontran listened. He understood the requirement. He understood the practicalities. And, importantly, he did not try to make the project more complicated than it needed to be. There was an immediate sense that we had finally found someone who understood the difference between building a website and building the right website.

Of course, getting the transaction to work required a little negotiation. We had to find a financial position that made sense for both sides, and after some discussion, we did. The project was finally back on the road.

Then Reality Happened

The funny thing about websites is that they always look considerably easier from the outside.

Our project was no exception.

Tirelessly, we worked through the process. Ideas were discussed, adjusted, challenged and refined. Things that seemed obvious at the beginning sometimes became complicated once we actually started building them.

At certain points, it genuinely felt as though we were going around in circles without getting anywhere. But this is where the value of the person building the website becomes apparent. A good website developer does not

simply take instructions and disappear behind a screen. They need to understand the business, question what doesn't make sense, find solutions when something doesn't work and, perhaps most importantly, remain patient when the client changes their mind for the fourth time.

One of the things that became increasingly apparent during the process was that building a website is not simply about technical ability. Technical ability gets you started.

Gontran took the time to understand what Great Brands Media was trying to achieve and why certain things mattered to us. He was able to take a concept that existed largely in our heads and turn it into something tangible.

That process requires more than coding. It requires listening, patience, problem-solving and the willingness to go back to the drawing board when something isn't quite right. There were certainly moments when we wondered whether we were ever going to get to the other side of the project.

But eventually, the pieces began to fall into place. What had started as a long-delayed website project became a functioning digital platform that gives Great Brands Media a presence beyond the pages of its publications.

And perhaps that is the greatest testament to Gontran's work. He didn't simply deliver a website. He helped us turn an idea into something real.

Looking back at the journey, the most valuable part of the experience was not that everything went perfectly. It didn't. Projects of this nature rarely do. The value was having someone on the other side who remained committed to finding a way forward.

In an industry where complexity can sometimes be used to justify cost, and where technical language can make clients feel as though they need a translator just to understand what they are buying, Gontran brought something considerably more valuable to the table: clarity.

He understood the brief. He understood the business. He listened, adapted and worked through the problems with us. Sometimes the difference between a project that remains an idea and one that becomes reality is simply finding the right person to build it.

If you need someone to build you a website, there is no shortage of people willing to send you a quotation. If you need someone who tries to understand the business, improves the idea, speaks fluent human and still remembers that budgets are real things, speak to Gontran. 📞



A Life Built on the Land

*At Omatozu, every sunrise
tells a story. Come and
listen*

edited by Anne Schaffer | photographs supplied



Some places are built. Others are earned. Just an hour from Windhoek, where the Ombotzo Mountains watch over rolling thornveld and ancient granite koppies, lies a farm that has quietly evolved over more than four decades. It is a place where wildlife roams freely, where every road and water point has been created with purpose, and where guests are invited to experience something increasingly rare in modern travel: authenticity. This is Omatozu.

And while visitors may arrive for a weekend escape or as the first or final stop on a Namibian adventure, they soon discover they are stepping into something much deeper than accommodation. They are stepping into the story of a family — and, in particular, one remarkable woman.

The Heart Behind Omatozu

When Carla and her late husband, Heiko, bought the farm in 1983, there was little more than raw potential. Roads had to be built. Water infrastructure installed. Fences erected. Wildlife carefully introduced.

What followed was never a quick project. It became a life's work.

Following Heiko's passing in 2009, Carla moved permanently to Omatozu. Together with her second husband, Arthur, a retired veterinarian, she continued building the farm with determination, resilience and an unwavering belief in the future of the land.

With limited resources but an extraordinary vision, Carla steadily transformed Omatozu into the thriving working game



farm it is today. At the same time, Omatozu Camp began to take shape — little by little. What started with three safari tents and four campsites gradually evolved into the Omatozu Collection, now offering three catered safari tents, six spacious campsites, each with its own private ablution facilities, The Bungalow@Omatozu, and a welcoming lapa where guests naturally gather after a day spent exploring the farm.

Every improvement was made with patience and purpose. Carla expanded the road network, improved water infrastructure, restored bushveld through sustainable bush thinning, carefully managed wildlife populations and continually invested in the farm's future, always balancing conservation with the realities of farming.

Today, the farm is home to 21 species of plains game, restored habitats, carefully managed veld and thriving biodiversity. It stands as a testament to Carla's quiet determination, resilience and enduring commitment to the land.

Life Moves Differently Here

Unlike destinations that promise endless activity, Omatozu offers something altogether more valuable.

Time.

Time to sit quietly on a shaded veranda as animals wander down to drink at the dam.

Time to watch the colours of the granite hills soften as the

afternoon light fades into evening.

Time to notice the scent carried on the breeze after the first summer rain, the chorus of birds greeting the sunrise or the silence that arrives long after darkness settles over the bush.

Guests quickly discover that the greatest luxury here is not found in extravagant indulgence, but in the opportunity to reconnect — with nature, with loved ones and often with themselves.

A New Chapter

The latest expression of this philosophy is The Omatozu Collection — offering guests different ways to experience life on the farm without losing its authentic character.

Safari Tents@Omatozu: For those seeking a classic safari experience, three beautifully appointed safari tents combine comfort with catered hospitality beneath the trees.

Camping@Omatozu: Independent travellers can choose from six spacious campsites, each with its own private ablution facilities, offering privacy while remaining immersed in nature.

The newest addition is The Bungalow@Omatozu.

Originally built as her son's home overlooking the camp dam, the house offered the perfect opportunity for a new chapter. Rather than letting it stand empty, Carla envisioned a place where families and friends



could gather, slow down and experience life on a working game farm in complete comfort. The house has been thoughtfully transformed into contemporary self-catering accommodation for up to eight guests, complemented by two separate en-suite guest rooms and generous outdoor living spaces overlooking the dam.

At the heart of the camp is the welcoming lapa — a place where guests naturally come together over a meal, a drink or stories shared around the fire after a day spent exploring the farm. Whether staying in one of the three safari tents, one of the six private campsites with their own ablution facilities, or enjoying the privacy of The Bungalow, every guest becomes part of the same unhurried rhythm of life at Omatozu.

A Working Farm, Not a Theme Park

Perhaps what makes Omatozu most memorable is that nothing here feels manufactured.

This is a genuine working game farm, where the rhythm of each day is shaped by the land. While guests relax and explore, farm life continues around them — roads are maintained, waterholes checked, wildlife monitored, fences repaired and the veld carefully managed. Every day brings new challenges, from the unpredictability of the seasons to the ongoing responsibility of caring for both the land and its wildlife.

This authenticity creates an experience that cannot be replicated.

Visitors may drive the self-guided game routes, hike among the granite koppies, enjoy home-cooked dinners around the camp's lapa or simply spend an afternoon beside the swimming pool. Yet somehow the most treasured memories are often the simplest ones — a kudu appearing unexpectedly between the thorn trees, the crackle of a braai fire or the quiet satisfaction of doing absolutely nothing at all.

An Easy Escape

For Windhoek residents, Omatozu offers one of Namibia's most accessible weekend retreats. Just an hour's drive from the capital, it feels worlds away from everyday life.

For international visitors, it provides the perfect beginning or gentle finale to a Namibian journey — an opportunity to settle into the rhythm of the country before travelling further afield, or to savour one last sunrise before boarding a flight home.

There are many beautiful places to stay in Namibia.

But few have been shaped so completely by the hands, perseverance and vision of the people who call them home.

At Omatozu, life still moves at the pace of nature. And perhaps that is the greatest luxury of all. 🌿



Mark and Toni Renele, who started Beach House Breweries

Beach House Brewery

Getting the Balance Right

words by Linda de Jager | photographs supplied



“My journey through hands-on work taught me that building—whether it’s a house you craft yourself, a business, or a community—is really about shaping a lifestyle. That philosophy ties together life experience and a sense of place, just as here in Walvis Bay.”

A Taste of the Atlantic

There’s nothing quite like enjoying a Beach House Brewery beer beside the Atlantic in Walvis Bay. Sitting on the sand with a locally brewed Beach House Brewery beer in hand, watching the waves roll in and knowing it was brewed right here in the desert town where I was born, is deeply satisfying.

Walvis Bay is known for its ocean, salty air, fishing boats, dunes and surf — not craft beer. Yet Beach House Brewery fits right in.

Perhaps it is because the brewery reflects the town itself: practical and unpretentious, with a touch of creativity thrown in.

The Journey to Craft

“We learned everything by trying and testing,” says Mark Renecke, who started Beach House Brewery by investing in quality equipment and figuring things out step

by step. It took three years of experimentation to create a beer they were proud of.

“Sometimes you have to invest twice to get it right. We got splashed with beer more times than I can count,” he says with a laugh.

For Mark, the process is part of the appeal. He finds it both comforting and satisfying — a matter of experimenting, adjusting and getting the balance right. And when it comes to brewing, balance is everything. Getting the grain-to-husk ratio right, he says, is key to producing a great beer.

Locally, however, Mark is better known for pioneering industrial combustion systems for salt drying and fishmeal production through his business, Rentech Trading, than for brewing beer. He settled in Namibia about 40 years ago, married Toni, who grew up in Walvis Bay, and together they have two children, Jaime and Lee.

Toni manages the brewery’s accounting and says they



will soon launch a light beer with added electrolytes — aimed at sports enthusiasts and outdoor adventurers.

A Beer for Every Mood

Their son Jaime, the general manager, describes their three beers as simple and coastal — a fitting description for a brewery born beside the Atlantic.

“We have the Immigration Smash, a clean and balanced 4.2% ABV beer made with just one malt and one hop; Donkey Bay Pale Ale, a golden 4.9% ABV brew with citrus notes and a hint of bitterness, inspired by the Namibian coast; and Mussels Lager, a crisp, refreshing 4.9% ABV beer made for easy, social drinking. Each beer is approachable and celebrates Walvis Bay’s relaxed, easygoing lifestyle,” he says. Though rooted in Walvis Bay, Beach House Brewery beers have found fans far beyond its borders.

Crafting a Namibian Identity

Toni believes the brand stands out for its connection to Namibia’s active outdoor lifestyle, blending innovative brewing with full flavor and an easy-drinking style. Mark’s true passion? Innovation—always asking how things can run better, smarter, and more sustainably. He was among the first to bring combustion management tech to Africa, helping clients cut fuel costs by up to 10%. Switching businesses from diesel to heavy fuel oil saved clients roughly R1 per liter. Now, Mark sees another shift coming: from HFO to liquefied petroleum gas. “We’re on the cusp of changing from HFO to LPG,” Mark says. The technology

is already in place locally, and he expects the transition to gather pace as Namibia’s oil industry grows. But for Mark, technology is just part of the story. At the heart of it all: creating value for everyone involved. “I’m always after win-win,” he says. “The customer saves, we make a profit—it’s an art.” That same sense of balance shows up in his beer.

When he began brewing Beach House Brewery beer, Mark wasn’t aiming for the boldest or most intense craft beer—in fact, he wanted the opposite. “Craft beers are often too intense for me,” he says. “I’ve tried them, but they can be a bit much.” He wanted a beer with character, not one that overwhelms. “Some beers taste like water, while some craft beers go too far the other way. I wanted something in the middle.” This philosophy mirrors his business approach: it’s not about extremes but about finding balance where everyone benefits. “And I think we’ve achieved that.” Their goal is to brew 12,000 liters of Beach House Brewery beer a month, but Mark emphasizes enjoying the process over chasing productivity.

Long before Beach House Brewery beer existed, there was a fascination with heat. The same mind that questioned how to make boilers, burners and furnaces more efficient eventually found an unexpected outlet in brewing. Mark credits his son with the idea to start brewing.

Beach House Brewery was established in 2025, after the company began experimenting with brewing. After three years of trial and testing, the first commercial beers were released at the end of 2025. Today, they handle everything in-house, from brewing to labelling and tinning.



Jarrold Joosten, who has a pharmaceutical background, joined the company in 2025. He says,

“It’s great that I get to make beer. It’s basically cooking on a large scale. And I get to move around, learn new things about boilers and how you come to brew, basically. It’s super.” And there is quite a bit to learn.

Brewing might seem all about hops, malt and yeast, but it is also energy-intensive. Heating water, boiling wort and producing steam all require significant heat. That is where combustion technology comes in—and it is an area Mark knows well. Through his company, Rentech Trading, which he started in 1998, Mark has focused on providing reliable heat and steam to industrial clients. Based in Walvis Bay and Windhoek, the company designs, installs and maintains boiler and burner systems in Namibia, with a growing emphasis on efficiency and emissions.

For brewers, efficient fuel burning means getting the heat they need while reducing waste and costs. It is another example of how Mark’s experience in industrial technology connects with the beer being brewed in Walvis Bay.

Making something out of nothing

Mark grew up in a boarding school in Villiersdorp in the Southern Cape, learning early how to make something out of nothing.

“I wanted to build something for myself and my children,” he recalls.

Drawing on his fishing background, he noticed the steam boilers used by pelagic fishing companies and

eventually started a business supplying burners. His Navy experience also inspired the idea.

“Everyone thought I was mad,” he says, “because in a desert, they expected me to focus on refrigeration, not heating.”

“While I was in the Navy, I did three years of diesel trade here,” he continues.

“My journey through hands-on work taught me that building—whether it’s a house you craft yourself, a business, or a community—is really about shaping a lifestyle. That philosophy ties together life experience and a sense of place, just like here in Walvis Bay.”

Being the first brewery in Walvis Bay feels like an extension of building something meaningful—creating experiences that become part of the local lifestyle.

“I like bringing things first.”

Enjoying a Beach House Brewery beer on the beach at sunset, I found myself reflecting on one of my greatest blessings: attending school in Walvis Bay, where children from every background learned side by side.

Those experiences taught me something valuable: underdogs often have the best ideas—and the grit to turn them into reality.

Beach House Brewery seems to carry that same spirit: “We do it ourselves, so we do it right.”

Cheers!

You can find Beach House Brewery beers at Two Beards, Goldenfang Restaurant, Total Long Beach, Sorellas, Rojos, selected Spar outlets, Col’Cacchio, and Embassy Liquors in Windhoek. 🍷



PostFin and FLI take Financial Literacy to Communities across Namibia

As part of its commitment to promoting financial inclusion and empowering communities, NamPost Financial Brokers t/a PostFin, a subsidiary of NamPost, partnered with the Financial Literacy Initiative (FLI), a programme under the Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises, to roll out a six-month Financial Literacy Programme (*FinLit*) across Namibia. As a registered microlending institution, PostFin recognises the importance of complementing access to finance with financial education.

At PostFin, we believe that financial inclusion extends beyond access to financial services. It also involves empowering individuals with the knowledge and confidence to make informed financial decisions that support their long-term well-being and economic participation. Financial inclusion and financial literacy go hand in hand. This belief underpins PostFin's vision of being *"the trusted partner for fast and innovative financial solutions that uplift livelihoods"*, the initiative reflects the Company's commitment to supporting sustainable socioeconomic development through financial education and responsible access to financial services.

The campaign took finance conversations directly into communities, focusing on practical topics such as budgeting, saving, responsible borrowing, debt management and making informed decisions. Over the course of the six-month campaign, PostFin reached communities across eight regions: Omaheke, Khomas, Hardap, Otjozondjupa, Omusati, Ohangwena, Zambezi and Kavango East.

For PostFin, the value of the campaign extended beyond sharing information. Engaging directly with communities created an opportunity to listen to participants' experiences, understand some of the financial challenges they face and gain insight into the realities that shape their financial decisions. These engagements offered valuable perspectives that can help PostFin continuously strengthen its services and responsible lending practices, particularly in underserved communities.

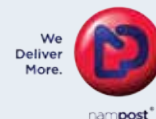
"What stood out most for me was the level of engagement from community members: Participants actively shared their experiences, asked questions and demonstrated a genuine interest in improving their financial decision-making. This highlighted the value and relevance of financial literacy initiatives within our communities," said Ms. Kainde, Marketing and Communications Officer at PostFin.

The partnership with the FLI further strengthened the campaign by bringing together a shared commitment to building a more financially informed and resilient Namibia. The campaign reinforced the importance of taking financial education beyond urban communities.

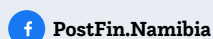
As part of the campaign, PostFin also distributed care packages to attendees as a token of appreciation for their participation and engagement. PostFin extends its sincere gratitude to Metro, for its generous sponsorship and support, which contributed significantly to the success of the initiative.

Although the FLI campaign has concluded, the conversation does not end here. PostFin remains committed to supporting future financial education (*FinLit*) initiatives and expanding its community outreach efforts. 🌱

PostFin
Subsidiary of Namibia Post Ltd.



For further information, please visit PostFin's website
(www.postfin.com.na) and its Social Media pages





“Everyone has limits to what they know, and space takes us beyond those limits. Every time.”

Former legal eagle reaches for the stars



Zandré Duvenhage isn't your typical face in astronomy.

words by Linda de Jager | photographs supplied

Originally a lawyer from Windhoek, Namibia, Zandré graduated from North-West University with a BCom and LLB before returning home to practise law, focusing on intellectual property and commercial disputes.

In 2022, his career took a surprising turn when he became involved with the Africa Millimetre Telescope (AMT) as a local programme liaison, working with Radboud University in the Netherlands and the University of Namibia (Unam).

Now based in Windhoek, Zandré plays a key part in science outreach and education for the AMT project. He's helped coordinate the Unam/AMT mobile planetarium programme, working alongside a dedicated team of presenters who bring astronomy to life for learners and

communities across Namibia.

The Unam/AMT mobile planetarium team received the Royal Astronomical Society's Annie Maunder Medal for Outreach in 2024. Despite his legal background, Zandré has carved out a unique role at the intersection of law, science communication, and education, making him an intriguing figure in Namibian science.

He's also the International Astronomical Union national astronomy education coordinator for Namibia, passionate about sharing the excitement of astronomy with schools and communities nationwide.

Alongside his work in astronomy, Zandré serves as a pastor at a local church in Windhoek. He brings to both roles a deep appreciation of the wonders of creation and a desire to serve others and inspire curiosity.



Did Africa's first millimetre-wave radio telescope in the Khomas Highlands mark a new chapter for astronomy in Namibia?

It was more about shifting gears than starting a new chapter.

Previous projects have paved the way for this, and we're really standing on the shoulders of giants – the country's High Energy Stereoscopic System (HESS) project is called the 'giant' of Africa.

But Namibia has always been ready for more.

The HESS project has been doing amazing science for the past 25 years, and I think it is the perfect time for a shift in gears in Namibia's science and astronomy field.

How did you become involved in the project, and what sparked your interest in black holes?

I was invited to a space talk at Windhoek High School in July 2019 – just after the first-ever image of a black hole was released.

I had no knowledge of that, but leading up to the event, I became more and more excited.

To my surprise, the talk was delivered by leading black hole scientists, and the anticipation was tangible in the room when Prof. Heino Falcke walked onto the stage. His first words captivated me: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth . . ."

I was hooked. Not your typical opening for a science talk. Falcke went on to quote the first four verses of Genesis and then moved on to the history of modern physics, Einstein and general relativity – all the way to how the first image of a black hole was produced.

I was in awe. I really wanted to be part of this.

The next speaker was just as enigmatic. Dr. Marc Klein Wolt followed, describing the Africa Millimetre Telescope and why the team is in Namibia.

And the rest is history.

Where does the project stand today, and what are the next major milestones?

We are busy finalising the design for the telescope's foundation. We will be receiving the antenna early next year and will start assembling.

The first home of the AMT will be farm Gollschau next to the HESS project. Once the access road to Gamsberg has been sorted out, we will move the AMT to the plateau.

This is quite intense. When imaging something that is 26 000 light years away, you really want to stand firm. It is like imaging the width of a piece of hair in Cape Town as seen from London.



After a decade of spending time under Gamsberg's night skies, how has your perspective on life, the universe and your place within it changed?

The crisp night skies of Namibia always leave me in awe of creation and with an appreciation of the opportunity to live in this beautiful country.

Through the AMT Fellowship programme and its mobile planetarium, you're helping to bring astronomy and this experience to communities across Namibia.

What does it mean to you to make the subject more accessible and inspire the next generation?

I think things like space and astronomy are quite universal (pun intended).

Everyone has limits to what they know, and space takes us beyond those limits. Every time. To infinity and beyond.

The planetarium has a very powerful way of creating that awe and wonder in people of all ages. Much of that is thanks to our planetarium team.

Our presenters bring the stories alive, welcome questions and help learners explore ideas that may be completely new to them.

I have the privilege of helping to coordinate this work, but they deserve enormous credit for the experiences people take away.

From two-year-olds to the last two presidents of Namibia, everyone is captivated. And I think that is a beautiful point of departure for curiosity.

To realise you don't know everything is quite humbling. And that smallness is not a place of despair. Rather, like the Psalmist says in Psalm 8:4: "What is man that you are mindful of him?"

This leaves me with a sense of wonder and belonging – that even in the vastness of creation, we are known and valued by its Creator.

On 25 November 2030, a total solar eclipse will cross central Namibia. How do you envisage Namibia experiencing this extraordinary event?

My dream is for this to become a shared Namibian moment: children, families and visitors looking up together in awe.

I'd love to see it draw visitors from across the world, generate substantial tourism income and create real opportunities for local businesses and communities, while leaving a lasting curiosity about science and our place in the universe.

If lodges realise that Namibia has some of the darkest skies in the world, they can already start building this into their marketing and guest experiences.



It took about 12 years to fully fence Etosha National Park, from 1961 to 1973.



One eclipse. One big wish.

If the 2030 solar eclipse could help make one dream for Namibia come true, what would yours be?

Share your vision in **fewer than 100 words** and stand a chance to win a double-page article in Michelangelo Magazine. WhatsApp your wish to +264 81 668 0697.

Entries close on 30 November 2026.

Let's see where your dream takes us.

**Standard terms and conditions apply.*

The 2030 eclipse could be a major milestone in positioning Namibia internationally as a place to experience the night sky, attracting visitors in the years leading up to it and long afterwards.

Another dream of yours is to tell the story of Namibian scientist and icon Japie van Zyl. How did he influence you personally?

This is quite cool. When I was a lawyer at Fisher, Quarmbay & Pfeifer Attorneys, there was a plaque outside my office after Dr Japie van Zyl inaugurated the building in 2012.

It was quite inspiring to be reminded of his story every day amid all the stress and pressure of cases.

I had the privilege of hearing him speak at Walvis Bay and met him briefly over a coffee at Hansa Hotel at Swakopmund afterwards. His dedication to inspiring the next generation really stuck with me.

The night skies inspired him from an early age, and that set him on a trajectory to oversee more than half a dozen successful Mars missions as the director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

And his heart was really about creating that moment of inspiration for others.

He told stories of how he would get up super early (in the United States, where he stayed) to do a Zoom call with Grade 2 learners at Walvis Bay once a week just to answer their questions about the universe and to foster further curiosity.

I like to think our planetarium team is carrying that spirit forward, creating those moments of inspiration for the next generation.

What stayed with me about Japie was his willingness to make time for children's questions, and I see that same generosity in our presenters. 🌌

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Beyond the BOARDROOM

STRATEGY SESSIONS - CONFERENCES - CORPORATE EVENTS

As businesses begin planning for the year ahead, Droombos Estate offers a refreshing alternative to the traditional boardroom.

Surrounded by gardens and tranquil spaces just outside the bustle of Windhoek, the Estate provides an inspiring setting for strategy sessions, conferences, workshops, team gatherings and corporate events.

The place where delegates trades the fluorescent lights and recycled air for shaded courtyards and open sky. The change of scene tends to change the conversation, with sharper thinking, easier candour, ideas that would not have surfaced across a laminate table.

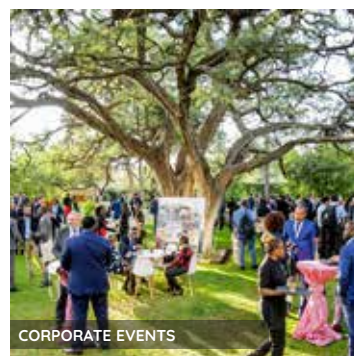
This is not a retreat from the work it is a more deliberate way of doing it. With full-service catering, comfortable accommodation and flexible event setups mean an entire gathering can unfold on one estate, from start to finish. What remains once the agenda closes is a kind of connection that rarely survives a laminate table.



STRATEGY SESSIONS



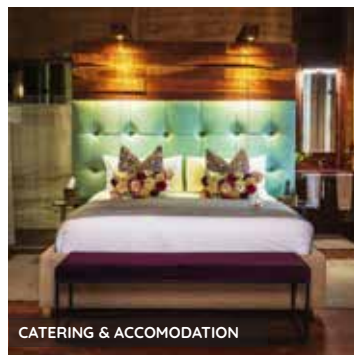
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WHERE THE ROAD MEETS THE RIVER

Then comes that first glimpse of water. After hours on the road, arriving at Simanya feels like discovering another Namibia entirely – greener, slower, alive with birds and river life. Whether settling into a lodge room or pitching camp beneath open skies, this is where the road trip changes pace. Park the car, and let the river take over.



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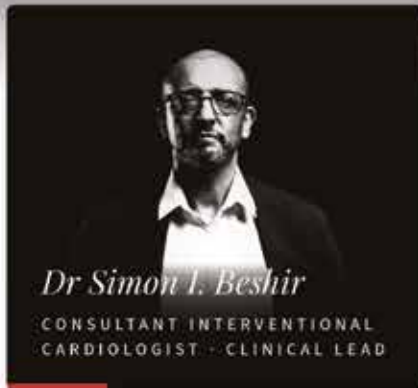
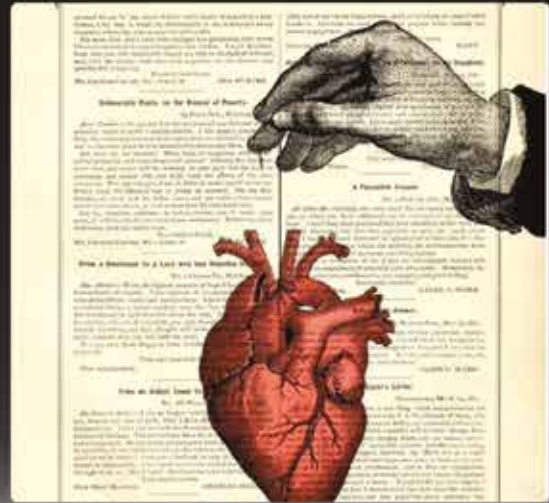
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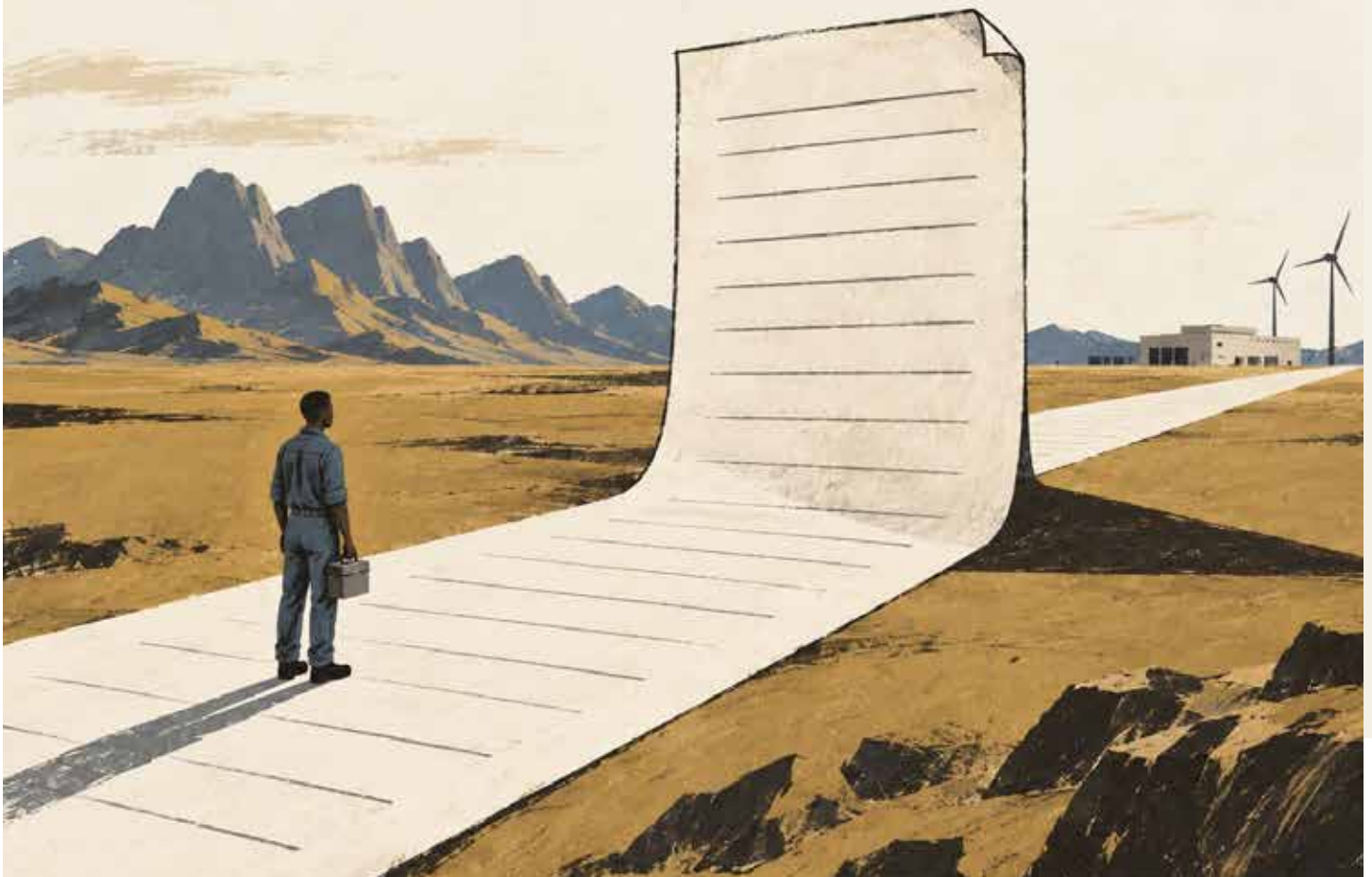


—PERSPECTIVE—

Namibia:

Still Waiting for the Investment Code

words by Dunia P. Zongwe and Linda de Jager | photographs supplied | Illustration are AI generated





Julia Muetudhana is the Acting CEO of the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB)



Dunia P. Zongwe is an Associate Professor in the School of Law at the University of Namibia

Riches Beneath the Uncertainty

Namibia has earned a reputation as one of Africa's most attractive investment destinations. Yet as investor interest reaches new highs, the country's proposed Investment Promotion and Facilitation Bill has become one of its most controversial pieces of legislation. Critics warn it could undermine the very investment it seeks to attract.

What is fueling investor anxiety? The answer lies in a striking paradox: Namibia's natural resources are abundant, yet its legal framework remains uncertain. Offshore, TotalEnergies' Venus discovery is estimated at a billion barrels of oil; onshore reserves include uranium, lithium, and renewable energy potential to power a future hydrogen economy. While the land beckons investors, regulatory ambiguity holds them back.

For more than thirty years, Namibia has struggled to modernize its outdated 1990 Foreign Investment Act—a law widely regarded as obsolete by government officials, business leaders, and legal experts. Attempts to reform it have repeatedly faltered: a 2016 Act was gazetted but never enacted; a 2021 bill was introduced and then withdrawn; and subsequent drafts stalled in 2022 and 2023. The most recent 2025 draft was sharply criticized by top legal advisors as “unconstitutional” and too vague to implement.

Analysts say Article 99 of the Constitution requires a comprehensive Investment Code, yet parliament has repeatedly introduced only incremental legislation, falling short of meaningful reform.

Namibia's 142-year journey to establish clear rules for foreign investment

Six legal eras. One hundred and forty-two years.
Yet Namibia is still waiting for the comprehensive Investment Code envisaged by its Constitution.



01



1884–1915

German colonial rule

Foreign companies gained access to land and minerals through concession arrangements and colonial mining laws, including the Imperial Mining Ordinances of 1888 and 1905.



KEY FEATURE

Concessions and mining laws laid the foundation for foreign resource exploitation.

02



1915–1966

South African administration

After Germany's defeat, South Africa administered the territory under a League of Nations mandate. Land and mineral rights were reorganised under South African legislation and policy, while major foreign mining interests expanded.



KEY FEATURE

The investment system remained part of a colonial structure, with limited indigenous control over land and resources.

03



1966–1990

A battle over legal authority

In 1966, the UN terminated South Africa's mandate. In 1971, the International Court of Justice declared South Africa's continued presence illegal. In 1974, the UN Council for Namibia adopted Decree No. 1 to protect the country's natural resources.



KEY FEATURE

International law and economic reality diverged. Companies continued operating under South African authority until independence.

04



1990–2016

Independence, but an inherited framework

The Foreign Investments Act 27 of 1990 became Namibia's principal foreign-investment law. It provides national treatment and protections such as the Certificate of Status Investment.

But Article 99 of the Constitution requires an Investment Code to be adopted by Parliament.



KEY FEATURE

The comprehensive Investment Code never materialised – more than three decades later.

05



2016

The law that never commenced

The Namibia Investment Promotion Act 9 of 2016 introduced greater government oversight, reserved sectors and investment approval requirements.

But although it was gazetted in 2016, it was never brought into force. The 1990 Act remains in place.



KEY FEATURE

A new framework was on the books, but never came into effect.

06



2021–2026

Reform without resolution

A new Investment Promotion and Facilitation Bill (IPFB) was introduced in 2021, but withdrawn and subjected to further consultation and redrafting. By 2026, the government was still preparing new legislation.

Senior counsel Heathcote has argued that the proposed IPFB is unconstitutional and impermissibly vague, particularly in relation to Article 99. That remains a legal opinion, not a court ruling.



KEY FEATURE

The reform process continues, but the country still lacks a settled, comprehensive investment framework.

From Colonial Memory to Modern Investment

Sceptics contend that investment continues to flow despite policy uncertainty—foreign direct investment (FDI) reached approximately US\$2 billion in 2024. They argue that when mineral wealth is abundant, investors are willing to overlook a degree of political and regulatory risk.

Yet beneath Namibia's wealth lies a vulnerability. In 2017, Fitch downgraded the country's rating, citing concerns around the investment law. RWE abandoned its proposed US\$10-billion hydrogen project, although uncertainty was not the only reason, while the Orange Basin oil discoveries remain stalled. EPRA (2026) describes this broader environment as a "permission-based economy."

Some warn that the state, exercising its sovereign power, is becoming the authority that decides who invests and who is left out. Others say that having clear, predictable investment laws does not mean Namibia is giving up control to foreign investors. Instead, clear laws can strengthen the government's ability to control and manage investment.

History instructs both skeptics and reformers. Namibia's experience with foreign capital is marked by trauma: German concession companies fenced the land, and genocide emptied it. Against this backdrop, ministerial caution is rooted in collective memory, not whim. Policies such as investment screening, reserved sectors, and empowerment clauses reflect the government's resolve not to lose control of its resources again.

Parallel Concerns

Yet hesitation carries a cost. As investment bills stall, gross fixed capital formation has fallen from about N\$45 billion in 2015 to N\$26 billion in the early 2020s. Mining accounts for 67.7% of FDI, while manufacturing lags at just 6.2%, reinforcing an enclave economy with few jobs and

weak local links. Uncertainty isn't abstract: it's a factory that never opens, a license that never lands, a young person who never clocks in. It remains unclear whether these concerns will lead to a full rewrite of the bill. However, positive signs suggest Namibia is committed to maintaining financial credibility.

In 2025, Namibia reached a milestone by redeeming its second Eurobond, valued at US\$750 million, the largest single debt maturity in the country's history.

Meanwhile, Julia Muetudhana, Acting CEO of the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), says Namibia has strengthened its regulatory and business environment by addressing 13 requirements of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), leading to Namibia's removal from the FATF grey list in June 2026.

"This restored international financial credibility and showed foreign investors the country's system is transparent and secure.

In October 2025, the Namibia Regulators Forum was established via the Bank of Namibia (BoN) to improve regulatory coordination and the ease of doing business.

The first Namibia Public-Private Forum (NamPPF), chaired by President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, also advanced various investment reforms, including a commitment to a five-year investor visa," Muetudhana says.

Nonetheless, though the grey list is gone, the grey areas remain. The rocks can wait; capital cannot. Between them stands the law—and for now, the law keeps everyone waiting. 

Dunia P. Zongwe is an Associate Professor in the School of Law at the University of Namibia, and Linda de Jager is a seasoned journalist working in Namibia and South Africa. This article was first published in the Financial Mail in an adapted form.



The Last Word

words by Chris Coetzee

I don't know whether you have ever seen *The Ghost and the Darkness*. If you haven't, it is based on the extraordinary true story of two man-eating lions that terrorised railway workers in Tsavo, Kenya, in 1898. For months, they moved through the darkness, entering camps, dragging men from their tents and turning an ambitious railway project into a place of genuine fear.

They became known as the Ghost and the Darkness.

I remember very clearly the first time I watched it. I must have been nine or ten years old, and we were on the farm. It was evening, and the family was outside around the fire having what we would naturally call a braai — or, for some of you, a barbecue.

At some point, I ran outside into the darkness.

And then I heard, far off in the distance, lions roaring.

They had most probably wandered beyond the boundaries of Etosha National Park, as lions occasionally did in those days. But when you are nine or ten years old, with *The Ghost and the Darkness* still very fresh in your imagination, such practical explanations offer remarkably little comfort.

I can still remember that feeling.

It is strange how memory works. Entire years can disappear into a blur, yet one sound, one particular feeling can remain almost perfectly preserved for decades.

More than a century after the events at Tsavo, the story still unsettles us.

And lately, I have begun to recognise that feeling again.

Not the lions, of course.

But that same uncomfortable sense that something is moving beyond the firelight, difficult to define, yet increasingly difficult to ignore.

This time, I don't think it has claws or teeth.

It appears in other forms: systems that have grown too powerful to question, structures that continue protecting themselves long after they have forgotten whom they were meant to serve, arrogance disguised as authority, and an increasingly troubling sense of entitlement.

Perhaps most dangerous of all is the arrogance that comes from absolute certainty — the belief that because we think we are right, we somehow acquire a right over somebody else's time, choices, behaviour or even the direction of their life.

And perhaps, without quite noticing it, we begin surrendering some of those things ourselves. Our time. Our choices. The hours and days we give to systems and obligations we have convinced ourselves cannot function without us.

We begin to believe that the sacrifices belonged to somebody else: another generation, another country, another community or ethnic group. Somebody else fought the battles. Somebody else carried the burden. Somebody else built the institutions, defended the freedoms and laid the foundations on which we now stand.

And somewhere along the way, we begin to confuse inheritance with entitlement.

We inherit the benefits and start believing we inherited a permanent guarantee of them too.

But history has never offered such guarantees.

Freedom, dignity, tolerance and the right to live one's own life are not treasures that one generation secures forever and leaves safely in a vault for the next. They survive only for as long as each generation understands their value — and respects in others the very freedoms it demands for itself.

Perhaps that includes remembering that our own time is ours too.

This month's approved destination? Take the leave. Fill in the form. Pack the car. Take your family, your friends or someone you love, and do the road trip. I hate to break it to you, but the system is already looking at ways to replace you.

Someone or something else will answer the email.

Someone else will sit in your chair. The budget will move. The software will improve. AI will absorb another task. And the machine will continue with an efficiency designed to insult your pay cheque.

We spend years convincing ourselves that everything will collapse if we step away, while the system is proving the opposite.

So take the leave.

Because while we are busy serving the system, it is taking something from us too: time. Time from our lives, from our children and from the people we love. And unlike the email, the meeting or the budget, that time cannot be replaced.

The danger is no longer something roaring beyond the fence.

This time, it is far more powerful than that — and perhaps far closer. 🦁



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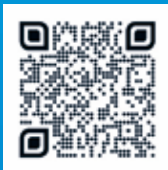
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