

Ju'hoansi Bushman Safari



Highlights

Namibia is host to five bushmen tribes, modern bearers of an ancient cultural heritage that our common ancestors once shared; a lifestyle so deeply interwoven with the land itself that there is no distinct boundary between what is human and what is natural. Meet and experience the unique life of the hospitable Ju'hoansi tribe on this five day bushman safari.

The indigenous Southern African tribes collectively referred to as San, or Bushmen, are some of the world's last remaining peoples still living as hunter-gatherers, with a cultural tradition stretching back thousands of years. They live surrounded by some of the most awe-inspiring landscape anywhere on Earth, a place that to most Westerners might seem utterly inhospitable, yet with their extraordinary local knowledge and skills they manage to thrive, even in the face of the threat and allure of modern technological society. A people continually mindful of their resources, never taking more than they need, the Bushmen may still have much to teach us about the place of humans on the planet.

You'll meet the Ju'hoansi, one of Namibia's five Bushman tribes, and some of the last that still live in the same way as their ancestors did. You'll visit one of their villages in the immense Nyae Nyae Conservancy- 9,000 square kilometres of land officially recognized as belonging to -and controlled by- the Bushmen, where you'll meet the headman of the village, and in the evenings witness dancing expressed with the whole being- dance as a vital part of life and means of expression, where the only "special occasion" required is that one is alive, on this day. You'll be shown the phenomenal skill of these people as they demonstrate how they read the land for tracking, and find out about their herbal knowledge, the accumulation of thousands of years of living in harmony with the land around them.

Is it for me?

This is a tour for those interested in experiencing something truly unique: meeting and learning from members of an extant culture whose ways are older than agriculture. You won't be passing through along an air-conditioned glass corridor; this is an experience that will immerse you in another world: for two days and nights you will be sharing village life. Food, shelter, activities and everything else are simply as they are in day-to-day Ju'hoansi life. If you're looking for something that will reawaken in you a sense of the true values of life and our place in the scheme of things, this trip will deliver in spades.

Accommodation

For the first and last nights of your trip you'll stay at Roy's rest Camp, on Elandslaagte farm, near Grootfontein, a place at once luxurious and close to the Earth. It has five standard rooms and two family rooms, all with ensuite facilities, air conditioning, mosquito nets and private braai (cooking) areas, in attractive, uniquely designed bungalows. There are 5 standard rooms and 2 family rooms all with en-suite facilities and private braai (barbecue) areas.

The camp also has a thatched dining area, swimming pool, fully-stocked bar and a curio shop. As you might expect in Southern Africa, food is filling, nutritious and tasty (Vegetarians note: Namibia, like South Africa, is a meat-loving nation!)

The other two nights of your tour will be spent enjoying the hospitality of your hosts, the Ju'hoansi. You will be accommodated in huts similar to those they live in, and gather food and eat with them as they do. Canvas

Prices from

1,341 GBP (5 days) per person

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camping tents are also provided as an alternative.

Itinerary

Day 1: Upon your arrival at Windhoek, we will immediately head north towards Roy's Rest Camp. This rustic and beautifully constructed camp will give you the first taste of what lies ahead. With a swimming pool, bar and restaurant available, you will come to appreciate the luxuries of mankind before heading into the vastness that is Bushmanland.

Day 2: After breakfast you'll head eastwards to the Nyae Nyae Conservancy, a San community ownership programme that focuses on wildlife conservation and sustainable utilization. After being offered the opportunity to buy some rare Ostrich shelled bracelets and necklaces from the San community, you'll head on to the small village of Tjokwe, where, amongst giant baobab trees, with a game watering hole close by, you'll drawn back in time. The day's activities include visiting the headman of the village, and the chance to experience one of the main attractions of the Ju'hoansi - their joy of living. This they will express through dance and clapping of hands that is unmatched and unique to say the very least. You'll spend the night in a traditional grass hut - to enhance the feeling of living like your host community.

Day 3: Tjokwe Area (20 km)

Today the expert art of tracking and collecting bush food and medicines will open your eyes to a world of ancestral past. You will witness how these people literally live off the land, always making sure to leave enough for tomorrow. If you wish, you can also walk to the famous Gura Fountain, 6 km away. By the end of the day, you will be able to collect food for yourself, which can be enjoyed around a fire beneath the stars. Again, a joyful dance will cap off the night.

Day 4: Tjokwe-Roy's Rest Camp (300 km)

The morning will start with a short walk around the watering hole looking for signs of the land. Crafts and curios will be available from the village. After lunch, you'll head back to Roy's Rest Camp where the day will come to an end.

Day 5: Roy's Rest Camp-Windhoek (500 km)

On the way back to Windhoek we can stop over at the famous Okahandja wood markets where you will have a last chance to buy curios.

Details

Getting there

You need to get to Windhoek. There are direct flights from most major UK airports.

Price includes

Tour as described, including transfers to and from Windhoek, meals (as specified), visits, guides and activities.

Price details

Price quoted above is based on two sharing. There are discounts for larger groups.

Available

Jan—Dec

Typical Duration

5 days

Comfort level

Down to earth (hostels, camping, huts)

Experience required

A reasonable level of fitness and interest is all that is needed