

# HARVARD

ALUMNI TRAVELS



## NAMIBIA & BOTSWANA

MAY 16 – 30, 2020

### DETAILED ITINERARY

Southern Africa is unrivaled in its extreme diversity of eco-systems. Namibia's Etosha National Park is a literal Noah's ark, with its many life-sustaining waterholes attracting wildlife from miles around including rhino, elephant, lion, zebra and a wide variety of antelope species. The spectacular beauty of Namibia's Namib Naukluft National Park astonishes with its landscape of red dunes, where the ever-changing colors create a photographer's dream.

In Botswana's Okavango Delta, experience an unparalleled safari experience. In this remote and extensive wildlife reserve, a myriad of bird and wildlife awaits, with vast herds of plains game and the predators that follow. Watch a large herd of elephant drink from a river as one of Africa's spectacular sunsets plays out behind them, then embark on a night game drive in search of nocturnal species and the elusive leopard. Join your Harvard study leader, fellow Harvard alumni and like-minded, sophisticated travelers on this journey through Namibia and Botswana.

**GROUP SIZE:** 8 – 10 guests

**PRICING:** \$16,995 per person double occupancy / \$18,995 single occupancy

**STUDY LEADER: Zarin Machanda** Associate in the Department of Human Evolutionary Biology at Harvard University and Assistant Professor in Anthropology at Tufts University. Zarin received her PhD from the Department of Human Evolutionary Biology at Harvard University. Her research revolves around understanding the factors that shape the quality and development of social relationships among primates and specifically chimpanzees. Zarin has spent the last 14 years working with both captive and wild chimpanzees. She has spent almost three years living and conducting research in western Uganda.

# SCHEDULE BY DAY

*B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner*

## SUNDAY, MAY 16

### DEPART U.S.

Depart the U.S. on an overnight flight to Windhoek, Namibia.

## MONDAY, MAY 17

### ARRIVE WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Upon arrival at Windhoek's Hosea Kutako International Airport, clear customs and immigration before transferring to Windhoek Luxury Suites.

This evening, meet your Harvard study leader, fellow travelers, and private specialist guide for welcome drinks and dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Overnight: *Windhoek Luxury Suite (D)*

## TUESDAY, MAY 18

### ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

This morning, board a private charter flight to the Onguma Game Reserve. Situated on the eastern side of Etosha, bordering Fisher's Pan, Onguma Game Reserve is one of Namibia's best kept secrets. Here you are afforded the opportunity of experiencing Africa in all her beauty and diversity. Onguma Game Reserve has more than 84,000 acres of protected land and wildlife, including a family of black rhinos, three of the "Big 5," and more than 300 species of birds.

Onguma is located on the edge of Etosha National Park, Namibia's premier game viewing area. Etosha National Park is one of Africa's most spectacular wildlife sanctuaries, encompassing 8,850 square miles of African wilderness. It is famous for the vast Etosha pan and its semi-desert habitat and diverse wildlife. Rhino, elephant, lion, cheetah, leopard, oryx, zebra, springbok, red hartebeest, giraffe and many other species

are seen in the acacia and mopane woodland and plains which dominate the area.

During your stay at The Fort at Onguma, take twice daily game drives in open-air 4x4 vehicles through Onguma Game Reserve and into the Etosha National Park, accompanied by your local safari expert.

Enjoy one of the best sunset views in all of Namibia – overlooking the beautiful scarceness of the Etosha Pans, decorated only with its wild animals and hundreds of Camel Thorn trees.

Overnight: *The Fort at Onguma (B, L, D)*

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 19

### ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

Enjoy another day in Etosha National Park, partaking in game drives and incredible wildlife viewing.

Overnight: *The Fort at Onguma (B, L, D)*

## THURSDAY, MAY 20

### ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

Enjoy another day in Etosha National Park, partaking in game drives and incredible wildlife viewing.

Overnight: *The Fort at Onguma (B, L, D)*

## FRIDAY, MAY 21

### NAMIB DESERT (SOSSUSVLEI)

This morning, your local safari guide will lead an interpretive nature walk on the Onguma Reserve, seeking out tracks, unique flora, and the smaller residents in the bush.

Mid-morning, a private charter takes you on a scenic flight en-route to the Namib Desert. Fly from Etosha to the coastal town of Swakopmund, where the plane refuels before taking you south along the coastline. From the air, you can see various shipwrecks, abandoned mining camps and a vast sea of sand before landing at the airstrip near Camp

Sossus, your destination for the next two nights.

Sheltered in a naturally formed amphitheater at the base of a granite outcrop, the environmentally low impact Camp Sossus was specifically designed to blend in with its surroundings. Each of the tented rooms is protected from the harsh desert environment by a natural stone wall and shaded by roofs built from recycled oil drums, while the camp's furniture is built in part from recycled metals and repurposed wood pallets. Each room has a private, open-air bathroom with flush toilet and bucket shower (hot water provided) and comfortable twin beds, as well as a shaded day bed and a star bed. Rooms are powered by solar power, and there is a communal charging station for electronics in the main camp area; no WiFi is available in camp.

Desert-adapted wildlife such as ostrich, springbok and gemsbok eke out an existence and are sparsely distributed here. Smaller creatures such as bat-eared fox and aardwolf can be seen at night in the cool desert air, and one bird, the aptly named dune lark, has its entire global distribution limited to the area, so dependent it is on the area's characteristic sands.

In the late afternoon, embark on a nature drive within the Namib Tsaris Conservancy, seeking out the desert-dwelling animals and reveling in the stillness of the scenery.

Overnight: *Camp Sossus (B, L, D)*

## **SATURDAY, MAY 22** NAMIB DESERT (SOSSUSVLEI)

Enter the Namib Naukluft Park on an early morning guided drive to the magnificent towering dunes of Sossusvlei. Sossusvlei is a huge, dried up clay pan with some of the highest sand dunes in the world (900+ feet). This part of the Namib Desert is a photographer's paradise and should be viewed at sunrise when the colors of the dunes come alive and the wonderful shadows cast over the dunes create striking contrasts. A picnic breakfast brought along for the excursion allows you to linger in the park, exploring more of the area.

On the way back to the lodge, stop to explore Sesriem Canyon, one of the very few places here that contains water year-round. After centuries of erosion by the Tsauchab River, the shaded depths of the canyon collect pools of water during the rainy season and protect them from the searing heat of the desert. Your local guide will describe the historic importance of the canyon, as well as what the name "Sesriem" means in Afrikaans.

After the midday at leisure to rest, embark on a sundown drive in the private reserve, followed by dinner at the lodge.

Overnight: *Camp Sossus (B, L, D)*

## **SUNDAY, MAY 23** MAKGADIKGADI PANS NATIONAL PARK

After one last, relaxed morning in the desert, board a private charter flight from Sossusvlei to Windhoek's Hosea Kutako International Airport. Here, connect to a private charter flight direct to Maun, Botswana. After clearing immigration, transfer to Meno a Kwena, located a 90 minutes' drive from Maun. In the late afternoon, venture out on a game drive to explore the area around camp, keeping an eye out for the large herds of zebra that tend to congregate at the Boteti River this time of year.

The Makgadikgadi Pans are a relic of one of the world's largest super lakes; the Makgadikgadi dried up thousands of years ago as a result of the continued shifting of the earth's crust, leaving expansive salt pans that sprawl for miles. The western part of the park, although void of salt pans, is home to large herds of zebra and wildebeest and abundant lions. The area is also home to bushbuck, leopard, cheetah, brown hyenas, spotted hyenas, kudu, porcupine, and rare white rhinos.

Meno a Kwena, which translates to "teeth of the crocodile," is perched on a cliff overlooking the Boteti River and the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park. The Boteti is one of the few rivers that carry water in times of rain deep into the dry and thirsty Kalahari. It is also the western boundary to the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park. In this dry

and arid environment, the river and the two waterholes below the camp are magnets for the wildlife that inhabit the area. There is a telescope and viewing area in the main camp and, further down the slope, a hide complete with chairs, daybed, and bean bags (for the photographers).

Accommodation at Meno a Kwena is in Meru-style safari tents. Each room includes a private bathroom with shower, and outside deck overlooking the Boteti, allowing for game viewing without leaving your room.

Overnight: *Meno A Kwena (B, L, D)*

## **MONDAY, MAY 24**

### **MAKGADIKGADI PANS NATIONAL PARK**

On your full day at Meno a Kwena, embark on a game drive into the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park, searching for elephant, zebra, wildebeest, giraffe and other wildlife that gather along the Boteti. You will also have the opportunity to go on a guided bushwalk with the San bushmen, with the opportunity to learn more about their ancient culture as well as explore the smaller residents in the bush.

Overnight: *Meno A Kwena (B, L, D)*

## **TUESDAY, MAY 25**

### **OKAVANGO DELTA**

This morning, following breakfast and one last safari activity at Meno a Kwena, transfer to the Motopi airstrip for your charter flight to the private Kwara concession, where you will spend the next four nights.

The Okavango Delta qualifies as one of the most unique and beautiful environments on Earth. As flood waters fan out over the Kalahari sands, the Okavango River creates thousands of tiny green islands that sustain antelope, lion, cheetah, hyena, leopard, large populations of elephant, the endangered wild dog, and over 500 species of birds. Kwara's exclusive concession is nestled in the northeastern part of the Delta, with the

protected Moremi Game Reserve bordering the concession to the south. The area is well known for its consistent predator sightings, with lion, cheetah, and leopard being spotted on a regular basis.

Early morning and late afternoon game drives take you through a variety of different vegetation types, down winding tracks, through mopane forests, and across lush grasslands. The waterways are either forded in the vehicles or crossed on rustic log bridges. Additionally, you can explore the Delta on the water in a flat-bottomed motorboat or by mokoro, a traditional dugout canoe, where you drift silently through the lily pads and search for wildlife along the banks of the waterway. During a guided bush walk, explore the area by foot, searching for tracks, interesting flora, birds, and the smaller residents in the bush.

Accommodations are at Kwara Camp, with spacious, tented suites that look towards the nearby lagoon where animals regularly come to drink. Rooms have private bathrooms with indoor and outdoor shower, as well as a claw-foot bathtub. Each suite also boasts a large deck that runs the length of the room, allowing for a private and relaxing spot for armchair game viewing.

Overnight: *Kwara Camp (B, L, D)*

## **WEDNESDAY, MAY 26**

### **OKAVANGO DELTA**

Enjoy another day at Kwara Camp in the Okavango Delta and take part in game drives and other wildlife viewing.

Overnight: *Kwara Camp (B, L, D)*

## **THURSDAY, MAY 27**

### **OKAVANGO DELTA**

Enjoy another day at Kwara Camp in the Okavango Delta and take part in game drives and other wildlife viewing.

Overnight: *Kwara Camp (B, L, D)*

**FRIDAY, MAY 28**  
**OKAVANGO DELTA**

Enjoy another day at Kwara Camp in the Okavango Delta and take part in game drives and other wildlife viewing.

Overnight: *Kwara Camp (B, L, D)*

**SATURDAY, MAY 29**  
**DEPART FOR HOME**

After one last early morning game drive and brunch at the lodge, drive to the Kwara airstrip to board a private charter flight to Maun airport. In Maun, connect to an early afternoon commercial flight to Johannesburg, South Africa. Upon arrival in Johannesburg, proceed to your international flight home.

**SUNDAY, MAY 30**  
**ARRIVE HOME**

Early morning arrival back home.