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Michelangelo

—FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK—



Namibia



A Season of Unity

Honoring Namibia's Strength and Resilience

Dear Reader

The beautiful season of the month of November is upon us.

On the surface, life in our country appears as vibrant and dynamic as ever. Namibia's charm is undeniable. Yet, we are acutely aware of the significant moment at hand: the upcoming elections. This is a time when our political landscape reminds us of the responsibility we hold as citizens to vote and thereby consolidate our democracy.

Namibia with her resilient people, continues to inspire me. Every day, I am moved by everyone working under the blazing heat of our Namibian sun. I have tremendous respect for each one who contributes positively to our economy and the welfare of Namibians.

The unseen efforts and sacrifices made individually and collectively by Namibians, are remarkable. Our progress, our achievements, and our peace and stability are not mere coincidences; they are the results of tireless dedication and hard work of Namibian citizens, investors, tourists and those who believe in our dream of shared prosperity.

We may have a population of just 3.3 million people, but I can assure you that every single Namibian is unique, loving and caring. In this context, the African proverb stating, "The sun does not forget a village just because it is small," has deep resonance and relevance.

Our nation is a wonder of diverse cultures and backgrounds, each contributing to the richness that is Namibia. Let the sun shine brightly on every corner of our country, and let the rains be plentiful, making the month of November beautiful for us all.

Thank you to everyone, for leaving a positive footprint in the gem we call Namibia.

With heartfelt regards



His Excellency
Dr. Nangolo Mbumba,
President of the Republic
of Namibia



Route from Abenab Mine to Abenab Lodge

Born of the peasant parents, children of the Nomadic, never in my weirdest dream could I think of climbing the corporate ladder, neither ever thought of being part of the decision-making processes in the biggest corporates in Namibia. Dining with the kings and queens of the world is a wish for everyone, but few do get it on their curriculum and achievements, but I had the honor in the corporate journey to sit with grand titles around big tables.

Growing up in the village, nobody amongst my peers knew what a train was, sitting on the bakkie of the car was such a privilege as my kinked hair was blown by the wind, if ever. Traveling the world, teaches humanity, while being surrounded by extraordinary people lifts your dreams.

It is funny how the past has a wrapping itself in warmth, even if it wasn't simple at the time. I left the city for the place called Abenab – a place surrounded by tranquil bush scenery whose doors closed in 1958. No one thought it could ever be a tourist destination. It was just a memory, a shadow of something that once was.

When we began operating Abenab Lodge in 2022, we had no idea that we were situated in a unique location – home to second largest man-made open pit mine in the world. Is there recipe for running a successful lodge in the wild? Maybe, maybe not. The recipe is in the hands of the beholder – not quite simple, nobody has it. With the support of the Himba/Zemba and Khoi-khoi San

staff, we strived to ensure our guests experience peace and bush therapy in the middle of nowhere. The initial years were a steep learning curve, as we were new to the tourism industry, its language and its demands. This is the Namibia and wild, after all.

There is a suitcase on my bed, and I'm supposed to be packing for my trip to China-promoting tourism not just for Abenab Lodge, but for Namibia herself. My mind is wandering not packing, since I need to finish this guest note for Michelangelo Magazine and my thought keep pulling me back to early days. Back then, life felt a little more predictable. Maybe even ease. I can still picture my office in Windhoek, the hum of the city, the rhythm of daily life, invitation to events, the meetings, the sense that everything was in its place. There was comfort in that – a perception of security. Or maybe is just the feeling looking back.

We didn't take the easy path. Abenab was in ruin before we got our hands on it and its infrastructures reclaimed by nature. However, to us it became a dream that refuse to go – a place where reality and possibility blurred.

It would've been easier to walk away, to let it stay forgotten. Some people thought we were out of our minds. And maybe we were, since financial and administrative resources to realize the dream were far-fetched.

Soon we realize that tourism isn't about running a lodge or chasing profits. It's more about selling an authentic



Lorna P Mwale

Lorna P Mwale

Managing Director & Founder

Abenab Lodge

smile and rendering quality service, it's about the people, the stories and presenting the very unique country we live in, it is not about the best English, but the commitment and dedication to serve from the heart. Namibia sells itself as every area differs from the other, but we wanted to add more to the story, as this is the only country we have, Namibia. To show the people the beauty beneath the surface. We wanted to uplift not just the beloved country, but the different people and culture who live in it.

Many years serving in charity environment propelled us to lean on the less privilege, who have no skills or served in this industry before. The “rejects” as you might call them, but granting them an opportunity to add value and contribute to the best experience of Abenab Lodge even though some couldn't even write. I'll admit, it might have seemed crazy to many in the industry. Sometimes even to myself. But I've always believed that uplifting skills in this way is also part of corporate social investment.

Namibia isn't just about its landscapes or its wildlife. It's about the people – the spark, the raw talent that's just waiting to be polished. And that's our story to date. We invested in our people, believing that what you plant will definitely grow. And the results led us to winning a Booking.com Traveller Review Award in 2023.

Abenab Lodge is just not beautiful because of the peaceful serene environment, it is beautiful because of

the people, who have poured their hearts into making it what it is today. The historic second largest man-made open pit with exposure to underground tunnels, the revitalization of the hydrotherapy spa and the adrenaline rush on the zipline over the pit. We remain grateful to those who stood by us, by giving us advices, training and more to the Michelangelo magazine for presenting our story to the world. Grateful to those who believed in us, who saw what we sometimes didn't see. A proverb in my language: “Riches is not money, but people.” Thank you to our countless colorless children!

So here I am, with the suitcase still half-packed, my mind running over the road that led me here. Life has a way of steering you in directions you never anticipated. What started as a wild dream has turned into something bigger than we ever imagined. Even though I'm about to board the plane and travel halfway across the world, a part of me will always be at Abenab Lodge, rooted in the land. One day, it'll be even bigger. We know it. Sometimes, it is the unexpected that gives you the most solid ground to stand on. When we think of Abenab Lodge, we can feel that solid ground beneath our feet. We have built something worth holding onto, something that will continue to grow and flourish.

Whenever you visit Namibia, make it a point to put us on your itinerary for unforgettable memories. And that's the real recipe for success, isn't it? 🍷



ON THE COVER:

Kambaku Wildlife Reserve

Kambaku Wildlife Reserve is set at the foot of the Waterberg Plateau, a two-hour drive from Etosha. Welcome to Kambuku's elegant fourstar lodge, an adventure in the tented camp...and a sensational Spa.

(See pages 14 - 17 for the full story)



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



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Kambaku Wildlife Reserve

Kambaku Wildlife Reserve is set at the foot of the Waterberg Plateau, a two-hour drive from Etosha. Welcome to Kambaku's elegant four-star lodge, an adventure in the tented camp...and a sensational Spa.



KAMBAKU SAFARI LODGE in the Reserve is a delightful four-star boutique hotel, with everything from daily wildlife experiences, hammocks under palm trees, garden with a swimming pool, a well-lit waterhole in front of the garden, and three course dinners under the stars. With ten select, extremely well-appointed suites, you'll also find both family accommodation and that for solo travellers, with no additional single supplement to pay.

As a guest of the lodge, you'll not only enjoy excellent food, but Kambaku's wildlife programme is also remarkably diverse. Every morning and afternoon, you can choose between game drives, bush walks, wildlife

watching at waterholes, and even mountain biking with experienced guides (this is included in the room rate). Additionally, there are some special highlights that can be booked for an extra fee: extended safari rides through the savanna, a champagne breakfast in the bush, or a glamping adventure at Kambaku's rustic, small Bush Camp. This latter adventure is a highlight for lodge guests who seek a truly unique camping safari experience in Namibia. For one night, you trade the luxurious rooms and four-star comforts of the Kambaku Safari Lodge for thrilling moments of glamping in the heart of the African bush. You'll sleep in simple two-person tents, elevated on wooden stilts for protection from wildlife, with access via



The total lion population in Namibia is estimated at around 800 individuals if those in the private reserves are counted.



iron ladders. Sleeping bags, pillows, woollen blankets, a cosy fire pit, and a shower with breathtaking views of the surrounding wilderness; complete the scene with a BBQ under the stars, a local guide by your side, and a morning hike to the largest waterhole in the Reserve. Kambaku Bush Camp is exclusively available to guests of Kambaku Safari Lodge.

And then for the ultimate in relaxation, there's the Kambaku Bush Spa, where you can also purchase Namibian-made natural skincare products. This is where wellness meets safari, and you'll be able to enjoy spoils...from facials and Swedish massages to Kambaku's signature full-body treatments.

For some, body and beauty treatments are an essential part of any holiday. Others may only indulge in a massage occasionally. Kambaku's Bush Spa offers a range of treatments, massages, fascia therapy, and intensive skincare options to suit every guest – ensuring that you make the most of each day here in Namibia.

Kambaku Wildlife Reserve has so much to offer, from a list of over 200 birds, to a range of wildlife...sensational food, glorious accommodation, and that essential element of adventure. You'll have so many choices, including excursions to Etosha.

You'll be in your element when you're in their environment. 🍷

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Photograph by: Creative Lab Namibia



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DEAR DIARY...

—A MONTHLY COLUMN BY SANDRA BAUMEISTER—



Fading Footprints...



Photo by Jule Heubach

A WHILE AGO, I found myself standing in the back of a bakkie, with the warm wind against my face.

I've always known that rhinos were endangered, but truthfully, they weren't animals that captured my imagination. I am more drawn to the wild beauty of lions, leopards—creatures draped in fur, embodying the allure of the savannah. Rhinos, with their thick skin and prehistoric presence, felt distant, almost unrelatable. That was, until I visited the Rhino Momma Project near Outjo, Namibia.

This visit changed everything. With the warm wind against my face, I was helping to feed rhinos under the African sun. I saw a side of rhinos I had never imagined—curious, caring, almost friendly in their demeanor. As they slowly approached, their huge frames moved with surprising grace. I experience an unexpected warmth in their eyes; it is as though they were reaching out in quiet connection, breaking through my preconceived notions. I can assure you, it's memories and not time that stays forever.

I need to confess, I fell in love, and their endangered status became more than just a distant fact but a personal reality. These creatures, who had once felt like mere shadows of Africa's wildlife, now held a deep place in my heart. Their story became mine, and I understood that their survival was as fragile as their massive bodies were strong.

Namibia is home to the largest black rhino population

in the world, with an estimated 2,156 individuals. It also shelters around 1,234 white rhinos. These numbers sounds reassuring until you remember that at the start of the 20th century, 500,000 rhinos roamed the earth. By 1970, that number had plummeted to 70,000. Today, we are left with only around 27,000 wild rhinos, a heartbreaking testament to how quickly we can lose what we don't protect.

At the Rhino Momma Project, the work to save these extraordinary animals is relentless and full of passion. I was humbled by the dedication of the people there, devoting their lives to ensuring that these ancient mammals endure for generations to come. Their work is not just about conservation—it's about giving our children, and future generations, the chance to stand where I stood, watching a sunset in the company of rhinos.

I stood there, utterly humbled, as the sun dipped beneath the horizon, casting a golden glow over the silent, grazing rhinos. In that moment, the enormity of their fight for survival hit me like never before. These magnificent creatures deserve to live safely, to thrive in the wild, and to continue inspiring awe in everyone lucky enough to encounter them.

If I can shout to the world, if ever you find yourself in Namibia, be sure to experience a moment like this. Be part of something unforgettable. ❖

For more information visit: www.rhinomomma.com

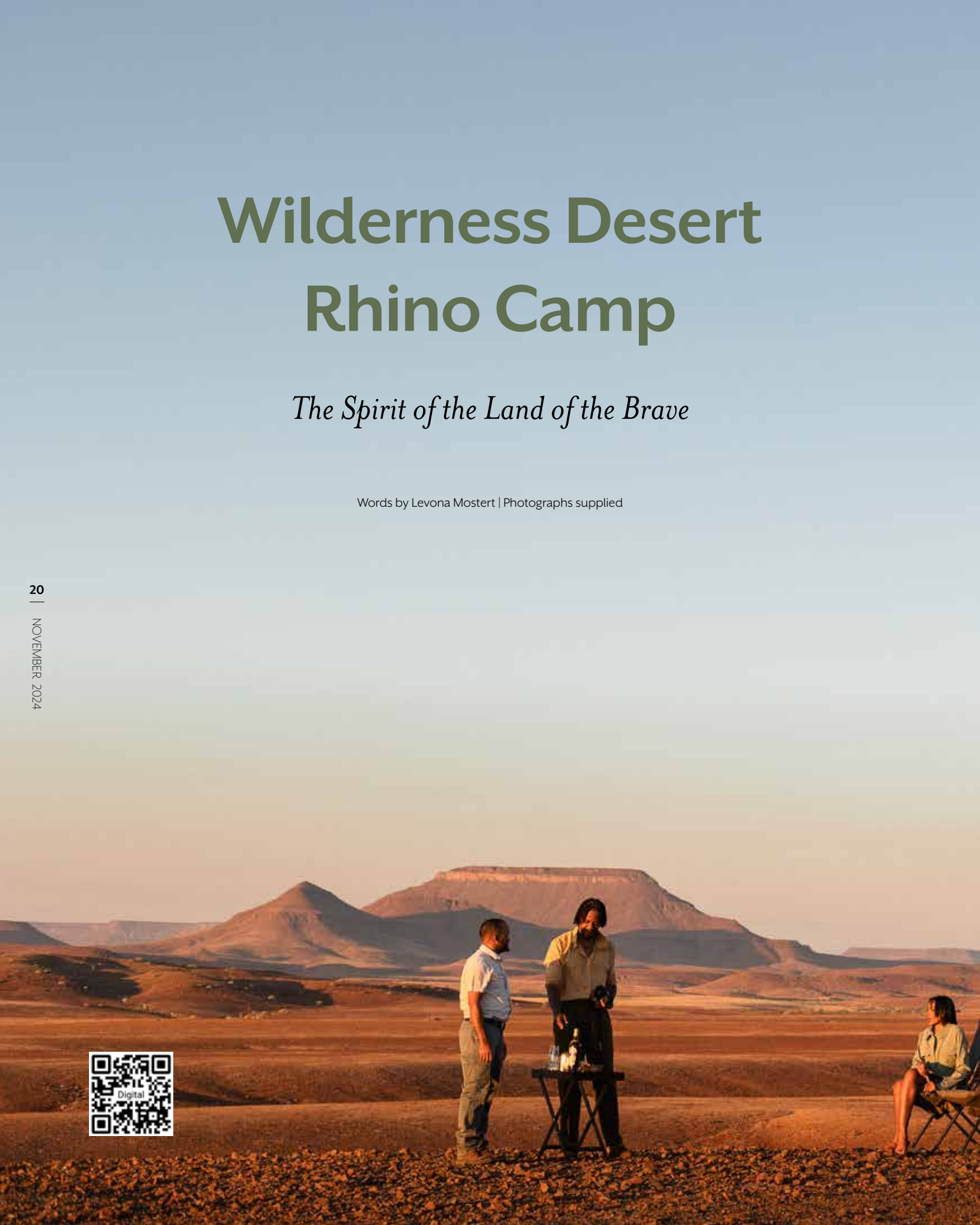
Liebe Gruesse—Sandra Baumeister

Wilderness Desert Rhino Camp

The Spirit of the Land of the Brave

Words by Levona Mostert | Photographs supplied

20 | NOVEMBER 2024



SEPTEMBER 23RD, 2024, I found myself at Hosea Kutako International Airport making my way to Wilderness' Desert Rhino Camp in Damaraland, situated between the Namib and Kalahari Deserts. Concurrently, I read the personalised letter from our President of the Republic of Namibia for the Michelangelo Magazine. I was struck by his heartwarming closing line: "Welcome to the Gem that we call the land of the brave, and may you experience her extraordinary wonders, flavours, beauty and richness".

From the first warm greeting by the tour operators to the final farewell from the pilot, it felt tailored specifically for a President - how could His Excellency Honourable Dr Nangolo Mbumba, know?

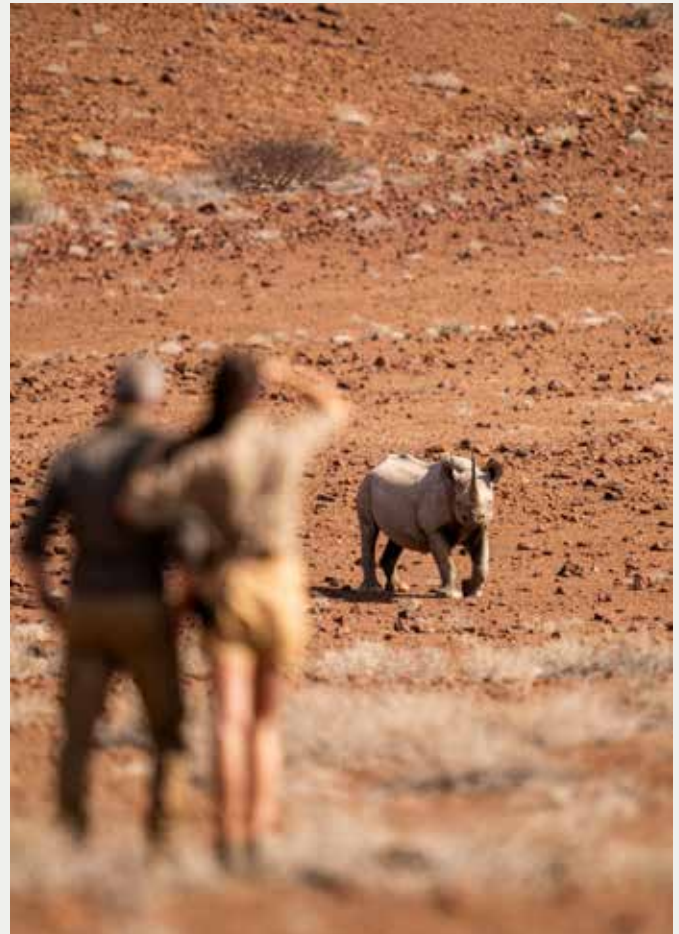
When I arrived at the camp, I was welcomed with a beautiful song and dance by the staff, an authentic expression of Namibia's rich culture and heart of its people. It was a moment of pure joy, setting the tone for what was

to come. A cool lavender-scented towel and a refreshing drink were offered as I took in the wide, open lounge that gazed out at the untouched wilderness. It felt like an invitation to breathe deeply and reconnect with the beauty around me, a place only known to a few. Is this some of the hidden wonder His Excellency is referring to, I wonder?

The thoughtfully crafted itinerary ensured that every moment of my stay would be meaningful, and I felt honoured by the care that went into making my short time there so special.

As I walked into my room and opened the glass doors to the luxurious yet naturally blended interior, I was struck by how effortlessly it all connected to the breathtaking landscape outside. The doors slid open on both sides, revealing the vast and peaceful surroundings. It was as if the camp had a way of quieting your mind, returning it to what's important - could this be the gem His Excellency was referring to?



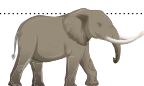


On my sundowner safari, clouds drifted above, offering the hope of rain, while the red rocky terrain and sparse greenery reminded me of Namibia's resilient beauty. I watched as a herd of springbok grazed in the distance, oblivious to my presence, completely in tune with their instinctual rhythm. Though I didn't spot any mountain zebras, the sunset that painted the horizon was pure magic - a gentle reminder of the tranquillity and raw beauty of our country.

That evening, the camp's Rhino Briefing prepared us for the following day's adventure: Rhino Tracking. Meeting the couple who would join me on the safari game drive only added to my excitement. I had no idea just how intricate the dos and don'ts would be - NO PERFUME, SINGLE

FILE WALKING, STAYING DOWNWIND, and WEARING NEUTRAL COLOURS. Learning about the Black Rhino's incredible sense of smell and hearing, I gained a deeper respect for the creatures we would encounter. And when I finally saw a rhino up close, engaging in the very behaviour my son had told me about, like spraying urine to mark territory, I was captivated.

But the most memorable moment of the game drive was seeing an apex predator, a desert lioness just meters away from me. Hearing the distant call of a male lion heightened the intensity of the experience. I learned that a male giraffe, a casualty of a fierce territorial fight, had drawn the lions to the area. It was a reminder of the raw, untamed reality of nature, and the age-old survival of the fittest laws prevailing.



Although Olifantsrus Etosha now represents conservation, 525 elephants were culled here from 1983 to 1985.



With the untouched beauty of the Namibian night sky above, and mouthwatering cuisine laid out in front of us, it felt like a magical conspiracy to confirm that there are places where dreams do come true.

Sitting in that untouched wilderness, I felt a profound sense of how vital conservation truly is. Wilderness' 'Three Impact Pillars' - Educate, Empower, Protect - resonated deeply with me. From providing scholarships to underprivileged students to employing local communities, Wilderness is creating real 'pathways out of poverty'. Their partnership with Save the Rhino Trust Namibia (SRT), working together to protect endangered species like the Desert-adapted Black Rhino, is a powerful example of how committed they are to safeguarding this fragile ecosystem.

What made my experience at Wilderness Desert Rhino Camp truly once-in-a-lifetime was the overwhelming sense of harmony - humans and animals coexisting in a way that felt both natural and sacred. Ranata Suzuki once said; "Nostalgia is the heart's way of reminding you of something you once loved. It travels in many forms; on a song, in scent, or in photographs....". I think we can add Wilderness Desert Rhino Camp to her list. It is on that conclusion I declare Wilderness Desert Rhino Camp as a *Michelangelo Magazine Approved* property. There's no higher praise. Our President got it so right, when he said, and I quote; "Welcome to the gem that we call the LAND OF THE BRAVE" 🍇



Kh/aisi h/oa n!oreha o //âkhxaos kh!a

Most who read this title will not understand it. To you, it may seem a creative arrangement of keyboard characters rather than a language. But for a marginalised few, the symbols and sounds carry the weight of survival, a language teetering on the brink of extinction — much like their own existence.



THE SAN LIVE IN A STATE OF UNCERTAINTY. Caught between belonging and exile. The original inhabitants of this Land of the Brave, yet somehow still removed from it. They walk a tightrope between past and present, forgotten by many... but not by all. There are still those brave enough to fight for this land's true inhabitants. It's wild souls. Animal and human alike.

Marlice van Vuuren – Barefoot in the Land of the Brave

Growing up in the wilderness of Namibia, Marlice van Vuuren's childhood was anything but ordinary. Her playground was the vast, untamed expanse of the Namibian landscape, and her closest companions were wild animals – baboons, lions, and a Vervet monkey that rarely left her side. “I grew up with lions sleeping in my bed, sucking on my finger because they couldn't sleep,” she recalls with a soft laugh, reflecting on the unique experiences that shaped her life. These early connections, woven deeply into the fabric of her being, ignited a lifelong devotion to conservation. For Marlice, wildlife is

not just a passion; it's her calling.

Born into a family of conservationists, Marlice's parents were trailblazers in their own right, founding Namibia's first wildlife sanctuary. Her father, a member of the then Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and her mother were both relentless advocates for wildlife protection, fighting for laws and policies that would safeguard Namibia's fragile ecosystems. “My parents were my biggest influences, and now my husband, Rudie, and my children drive me forward,” Marlice says, acknowledging the generations of dedication that have paved the way for her own work.

But the path of conservation is not always smooth. Marlice's journey has been fraught with challenges, many of which have tested her resilience. “The biggest challenge is fighting for the rights of animals, especially the ones that aren't charismatic or don't bring in tourism money,” she says. “In Namibia, the right to life is not always the first option for animals.” Whether it's a meerkat or an elephant, Marlice has had to face the reality that animals often lose their lives in conflicts with human interests,



and this daily struggle has shaped her into a fierce advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves.

One of the most heartbreaking moments in her career involved witnessing the devastating aftermath of poaching – a scene she still struggles to describe. “Standing next to a dead rhino, with its horn brutally hacked off, while its baby tries to nudge it awake – it destroys a part of your soul,” she shares, her voice tinged with raw emotion. But even in these moments of despair, Marlice finds strength in the victories, small as they may be. “Every time we catch a poacher, it feels like justice, even if it’s just for that moment.”

For Marlice, conservation is about more than just protecting individual animals; it’s about preserving ecosystems and finding a delicate balance between wildlife and human communities. In Namibia, where droughts and human-wildlife conflict are intensifying due to climate change, this balance is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. She explains that we’re facing a serious crisis with water and food shortages, and animals are competing with humans for these resources. “The only way forward is to protect large areas of land and make sure animals have the right to survive alongside us.”

Despite the challenges, Marlice is unwavering in her belief that conservation is the key to Namibia’s future. She sees tourism as a vital part of the solution, helping to create jobs and provide economic incentives for



Among the lion species known to roam beaches are the Namibian desert lions; an uncommon and unusual behaviour.

preserving the country's wild spaces. "Conservation linked to tourism is the cornerstone of survival for both humans and animals in Namibia," she says, highlighting the potential for private reserves and large protected areas to benefit both people and wildlife.

On a more personal level, Marlice admits that the emotional toll of her work can be overwhelming. She often finds herself deeply connected to the animals she cares for, especially those she raises from infancy. "I've had to sit up all night with baby animals, feeding them, keeping them warm, and then losing them because they're not ready for the wild," she shares, the pain of those losses evident in her voice. "It's heartbreaking, but it also makes the successes all the more rewarding."

One such success is her work with Namibia's wild dog population, a species that is particularly close to her heart. "My dream is to see Namibia's wild dogs thriving, with stable numbers and protected corridors where they can roam freely," she says. For Marlice, the ultimate goal is to create a network of safe spaces for wildlife, from Etosha National Park to the Caprivi Strip for example, where animals can live without fear of being hunted or displaced by human activity.

As she looks to the future, Marlice's vision is both ambitious and grounded in her deep connection to Namibia's land and people. She dreams of a Namibia where marginalised communities like the San people, alongside who she grew up and whose language she speaks fluently, are empowered to preserve their culture and indigenous knowledge, passing down their understanding of the land to future generations. "Education is the cornerstone of our survival," she says firmly. "If we don't educate our people, there will be nothing left – no animals, no land, no future."

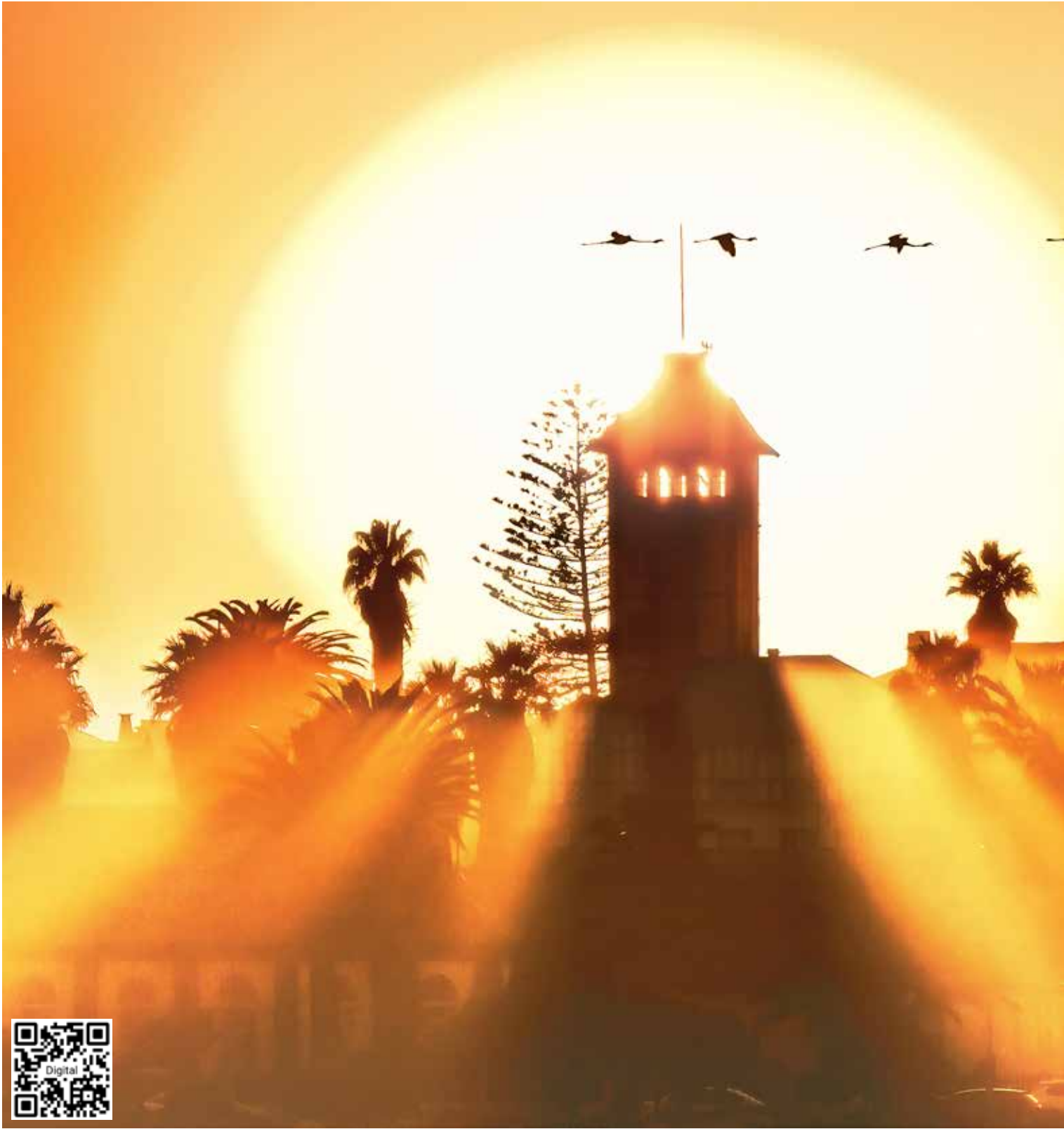
Her husband, Rudie, and their children are as much a part of her conservation journey as the animals she protects. "My life is my work, and my work is my life," she says simply. "I am so blessed to be able to live this dream, surrounded by the people I love, doing the work I was born to do."

In the end, Marlice van Vuuren's legacy will not only be the animals she has saved or the land she has protected, but also the countless lives – human and animal alike – that she has touched along the way. Her

story is one of relentless dedication, unwavering love, and an unbreakable bond with the wild places of Namibia. It's a legacy that will inspire future generations of conservationists to continue the fight for a world where animals and humans can thrive together.

Through it all, Marlice remains deeply rooted in the soil of this land of endless horizons – this Land of the Brave. Like the young girl who once roamed wild through the Namibian wilderness alongside her animal companions, Marlice's spirit remains untamed, barefoot, and bold. She is a champion of conservation – a paragon of strength, though at times a beautiful contradiction. One moment, she's knee-deep in mud in her khakis, and the next, she's confidently striding in designer heels – only to kick them off in the middle of a glamorous affair, returning to her barefoot roots once again. Always, she finds her way back to nature. 🌿





Sunrises and Sunsets

Ukrainian-born Olga Nesterenko lives in Swakopmund. To say she's passionate about Namibia—and photographing it—is an understatement.

Words and photographs by Olga Nesterenko





OLG A NESTERENKO WAS BORN IN UKRAINE and grew up in Zaporizhzhia, the centre of Cossacks. She says, “The word Cossack means a freedom-loving person. So when I landed in Namibia (many moons ago), it really felt like home - I fell in love with it at first sight. A feeling of freedom is in the air here. Cossacks are known for their courage, independence and keen sense of justice. Land of the Brave - Land of Freedom - these are not just words for me, but a style of life, and these are the main common features of Ukraine and Namibia, as for me.

Michelangelo spoke to Olga about her life in Namibia, and her photography:

Where do you live now?

I have been living in Swakopmund for over 10 years – before that, Ondangwa. Swakopmund, like the entire Namibia, is a photographer’s paradise. The town has its own unique atmosphere - morning mist, through

which you can see the shadows of people, cars, buildings and you feel like you’re in a fiction movie. It resembles some kind of phantasmagoria, but it’s all real, you see everything with your own eyes. Or a spectacular sunset in the evening. I have thousands upon thousands of sunset photos, but I keep on photographing it because it’s different every time. And sure, amazing architecture. Despite living here for so many years, I find something new and fascinating every time.

In the north of the country (where I lived before) and inland there is a different atmosphere - endless horizons, where you feel like a grain of sand in this huge world, where you can breathe deeply, witnessing nature and wildlife at that moment.

There is a reason why Namibia is one of top countries for travellers to visit.



12 million metric tons of plastic go into the oceans annually, the equivalent of 100,000 Blue whales. Ocean plastic might overshadow the fish.



Did you study anything at school or post-school or was this a hobby and you're self taught?

My dad enjoyed photography, and always took me into the darkroom to develop his photographs and show me this scientific magic. As a small girl, I watched my dad and his photography, I also read books and professional magazines, and attended photographers' workshops and courses.

When I was studying Design, I discovered Photoshop, an amazing programme with endless options for editing photos. Nowadays with YouTube and articles on specialised webpages, it has become much easier.

I also attended several workshops and courses in Namibia - we are all different, so there is always something to learn from another person.

Did you have any mentors? What or whom inspires you?

A significant role is played by talented Solly Levy (I think most Namibians admire his magnificent photographs). At

first I just adored and was inspired by his artwork, then we met and for many years now I have been learning from him. His passion for photography and love of the country shows through in everything he does. He shares his knowledge and skills completely openly and even recharges you with his energy.

He unlocked the miracles of Lightroom for me, a modern, more advanced 'darkroom' for the photographer. Before you had to do it all with your own hands, dipping the photos into various basins, but now you use a slider on your computer.

Is this your full-time work? What kind of photography do you focus on?

Of course, I shoot the landscape here - these are my happy-go-lucky places. Natural scenic beauty makes me feel alive from the inside. It's simply impossible to live in Namibia and not take pictures of nature. Maybe that's



why there are so many photographers here. I know many tourists who say they took more photos during their trips here than they ever did in their lifetime.

In my photographs, I try to capture the moment. Not just the fact that there is a scenic view, but to make it clear to anyone who looks at this photo why I wanted to photograph this landscape right now - to evoke emotions in a person. After all, it is emotions, moments that remain in the memory, by which we can later recall the whole sequence of things. Emotions fill our lives.

As a Marketing Specialist and Administrative Manager, I photograph commercial projects, approaching the shooting with my own knowledge and experience. I try to capture the essence of the subject and purpose of the company.

I also photograph events, and try to convey different emotions here too. I love capturing happy moments on camera, portraying that exact mood. And I'm glad to be able to offer this to people.

Was being a full-time photographer always the dream?

Photography has remained the same magic for me as it was in my childhood. I don't remember myself without a camera in my hand. Always and everywhere. Cameras changed, but my love of photography remains the same.

I never dreamed of working as a photographer (I have a totally different educational background). It was always my hobby. My dream was (and still is) to travel and take pictures. I want to show people the world through my eyes, to tell a story. Each photograph is not just a record of a magnificent landscape, but a whole story that a person can imagine while looking at this particular photo.

What's your favourite subject?

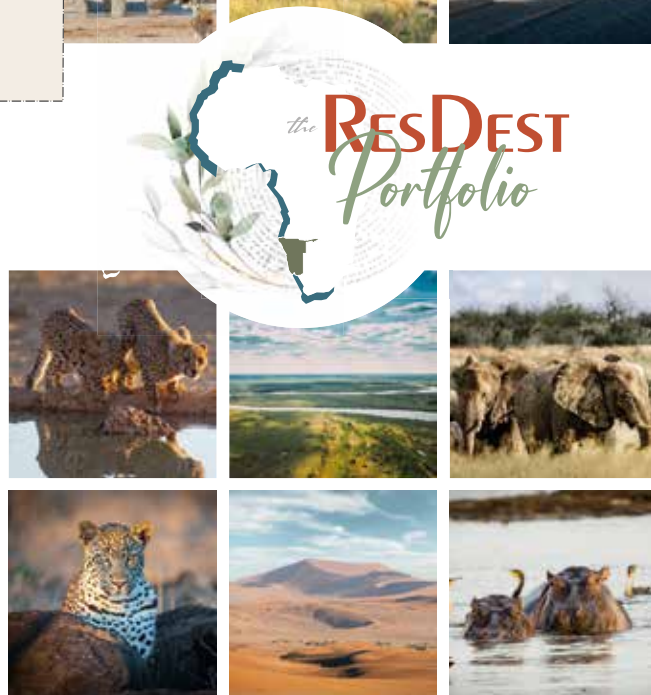
"When I admire the wonders of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in the worship of the creator." — Mahatma Gandhi.

I love light and the sun. So of course sunsets and sunrises, sunbeams breaking through the foliage or - as only Swakopmund can be - through the mist, the shadows created by these rays - these are my favourite photos. They even call me Sunbeam.

Another great passion of mine is the Moon. The moon fascinates us in her simplicity. Everyone knows that Namibia is one of the top three countries for stargazing. But the Moon here is absolutely magnificent! When you stare at the Moon you realise it is trying to teach you something, a lot of beautiful quotes have been written by famous people. It has always attracted or even beckoned me, but in Namibia I learnt how to photograph it. Many people think I combine photos, but I don't. For me it's a whole process. I research where and when it will rise/set, and go. And there I hope for a moment of luck - an aeroplane flying past the moon, people and cars getting into the frame, a bird soaring upwards.

"With freedom, flowers, books, and the moon, who could not be perfectly happy?"—Oscar Wilde

When I visited Namibia for the first time, I was amazed at how perfectly untouched nature and humans coexist here. I still can't get used to it. I don't know any other place like this on earth. That's what I want to convey in my photos. 🍷



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6 Signs you need to travel to Namibia

Text: Marlene Orffer | Images: Gondwana Collection Namibia | Layout: Conrad Hegarty

Inspired by some film photo memories, join me as I delve into the six undeniable signs that point you toward the extraordinary experience of travelling to Namibia. The ultimate destination for those seeking “something more.”

1. You're Tired of Crowds and Want to Be Alone with the Stars

If you're weary of the turmoil that city life can so eagerly heap upon one's shoulders and if you dream of gazing at the celestial canopy in solitude, the vast desert landscape will provide you with all the isolation your soul has been yearning for. Who needs human interaction when you can chat with the Milky Way?

I suggest you stay at Namib Dune Star Camp on your star-studded trip through Namibia. It's here where I shared my secrets with the likes of faithful old Venus and her friend, the Southern Cross

2. You're Secretly Training for a Mars Mission

Still stuck on interstellar explorations? If you've been reading the newspapers or just chitter-chattering with anyone, you'll be well aware of the Mission to Mars. Perhaps you've developed a secret ambition to be the next space pioneer of our generation. Or whatever your astronautical plans may hold, Namibia welcomes people from all walks of life and is ready to welcome you to training camp.

The rusty desert vistas will transport you to a place that feels straight out of the Red Planet. It comes as no surprise that Namibia's otherworldly scenery has become a go-to destination for films in the sci-fi genre.

3. You've Got an Unquenchable Thirst for Adventure

Tired of the same-old-same-old boring bungee jumping or ice climbing? In Namibia, extreme adventure is the name of the game. From skydiving (or paragliding) over surreal landscapes where the desert meets the sea, quad biking through the world's oldest desert, surfing the longest barrels up for grabs, conquering the hike up the Fish River Canyon, to abseiling down age-old granite kopjes— the list of adrenaline-pumping escapades is as endless as your thirst for the thrill.

So, really? Ditch the mundane, pack your sense of adventure, and head to Namibia.

4. You're a Wildlife Paparazzo

It's a fact by now: Namibia's diverse wildlife scenery is so photogenic that even the most seasoned photographers (I might be referring to the National Geographic brigade) get jealous. From chasing the big cats (I mean this VERY figuratively) to the desert elephants or the more intricate tiny role-players of our ecosystems like the shy Namib Web-Footed Gecko. Namibia is and will always remain what they call 'a photographer's paradise.'

Pack those bazooka lenses and a little bit of patience to capture the best in the modelling industry. Even more than wildlife, the breathtaking landscapes, dunes, and dramatic sunsets provide endless opportunities for capturing near-perfect moments.

5. You're Convinced that the “Road Less Travelled” Is Actually a Joke

If you've always believed that “off the beaten path” was just a phrase people used to make their vacations sound interesting – you know, those stories that always ignite an unwelcome sensation of jealousy - Namibia is here to prove you wrong, and them right. Jealous again?

Prepare to navigate roads so remote that even your GPS will question the choices that have brought your life to this point. But don't be fooled because there's a fairly good reason that the American poet Robert Frost once said, “and I, I took the one less travelled by.” They lead to prepossessing destinations and must-see sceneries that you might just miss on the beaten track – there's only like one of those “beaten” ones in Namibia, in any case.

6. You're Desperate for a Digital Detox

If your smartphone or social media addiction has reached epic proportions, and you need a break from the endless notifications or the notorious keyboard warriors, head to Namibia's remote regions. There's weak to no cell signal, leading to the biggest treat of all: NO SOCIAL MEDIA. Embrace the peace, freedom and quiet as you embark on an involuntary digital detox journey (bet you couldn't read that without twisting your tongue), one that we all know we need to take nowadays.

My suggestion? Go camping in the Zambezi or the Etosha area. There's an abundance of fauna and flora activities to engage your mind, allowing you to forget about those pesky blue lights that seem to follow your gaze all day long.

Whether you've found yourself nodding in agreement with all 6 signs or you're purely intrigued by the allure of this captivating land, one thing is certain: Namibia leaves an indelible mark on the souls of those who seek her wondrous offerings—count me among them.

As we conclude our journey through these six undeniable signs, know that Namibia's call will forever echo in your heart—a reminder that there's always “something more” to discover in the world outside, and it all begins with taking that first step... to Namibia, of course.





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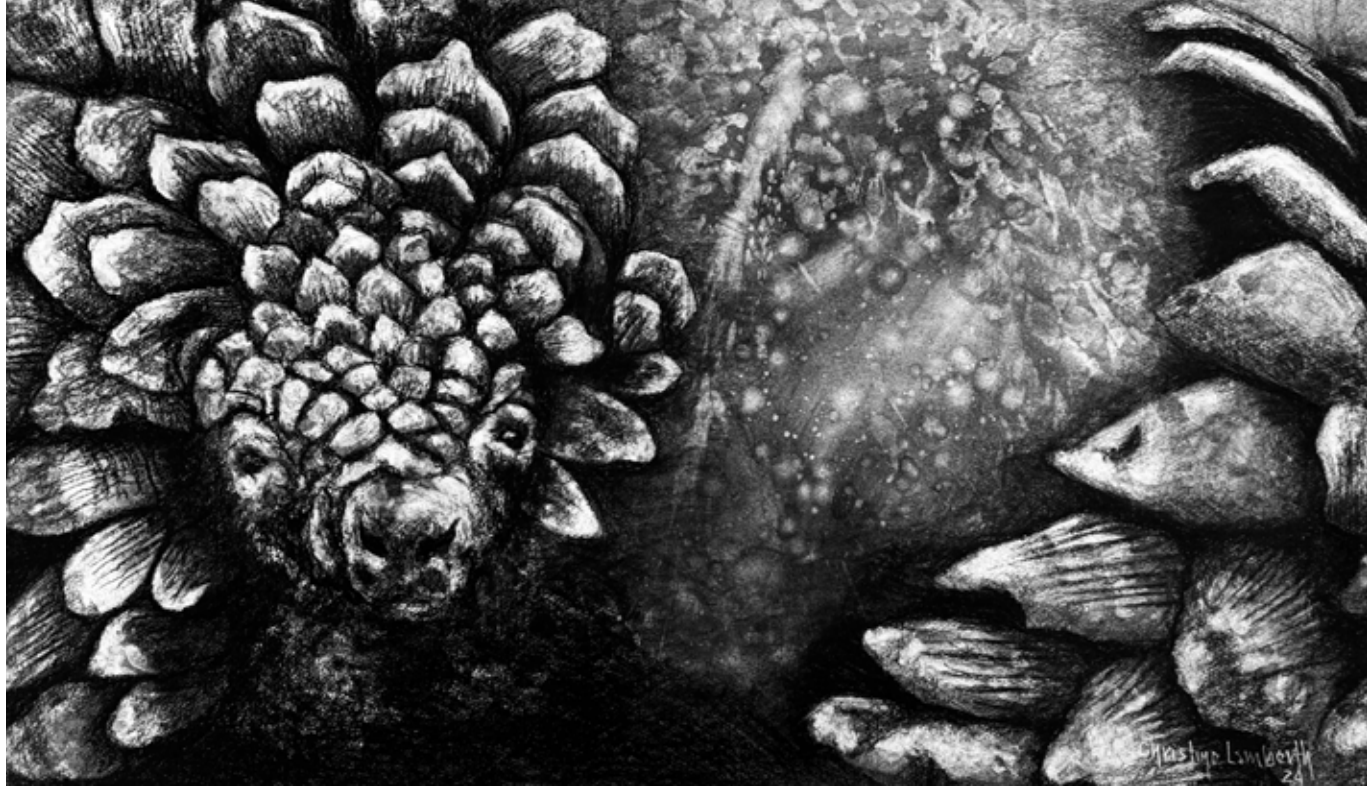
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Africa Wildlife Artist of the Year Competition

Early entries for the Africa Wildlife Artist of the Year Competition for 2025 are trickling in to the Fine Art Gallery. Michelangelo magazine is proud to be the Fine Art Gallery's media partner for this important competition, and as previously, all proceeds go to the designated wildlife beneficiary.

Words by Fine Art Gallery | Photographs by Christine Lamberth, Dewald Basson & Denzel Beukes



AFRICA WILDLIFE ARTIST OF THE YEAR COMPETITION has gained remarkable attention beyond Namibia's borders.

We were able to raise an incredible N\$ 56,000 in 2023 with the launch of the competition for the Peace Park Foundation's Namibian projects. This year, we surpassed that achievement with a proud total of N\$ 106,800 raised for AfriCat, thanks to the generous participation of artists and supporters. We had participants from ten different countries, including the UK, Germany, Italy, Israel, Australia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa and Namibia, with over 100 entries. As always, all entry fees, as well as proceeds from sales, are donated to the beneficiary.

Looking ahead, the Pangolin Conservation & Research Foundation will be the beneficiary for 2025. As the most trafficked mammal worldwide, used for medicinal purposes, pangolins need urgent protection, and we sincerely hope to top this year's achievement to make a meaningful difference.

For this year's campaign, award-winning wildlife artist Christine Lamberth has worked on a pangolin piece, which is now the official face of the campaign. Christine has been with us since day one. Namibian artist Denzel Beukes has also captured attention with his remarkable work that reflects on the pangolin as a commodity, incorporating Namibian banknotes. Denzel has even written a moving poem about the pangolin.

*Hi, I am Pangolin, your scaley brother.
I am not dangerous, in fact I run under cover.
You kill me for your survival.
Use excuses that it's ancient and tribal.
I am not meat or medicine.
I deserve to live, just like any citizen.*

*Once I'm gone you will understand.
Making every scale count makes you the bigger man.
This is really not complaining.
I'm warning you, you are downscaling.*

*Love me for my nature, and not your currency.
I am your friend not your enemy.
I don't want to be dramatic, but this is true.
You need me, as much as I need you.*

We're thrilled that our competition has earned the nickname "AWAY" (Africa Wildlife Artist of the Year). The first entries are in, with Dewald Basson setting a high standard for the competition.

To answer a frequent question: artists do not need to submit pangolin-specific artworks; all wildlife art is welcome. While there are many species that need our support, we believe in focusing on one beneficiary at a time to provide substantial support.



The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reports that the global military expenditure amounted to \$1,822 billion in 2018.



The call for submissions is now open, and artists can submit their work at www.art-in-namibia.com. The entry fee is N\$ 200 per artwork, and submissions close on 28th February 2025 at midnight. The prizegiving and award ceremony will take place during the *Night of the Galleries* in Swakopmund on 19th April 2025.

Information about the artists

Christine Lamberth, a wildlife artist from Rorke's Drift, South Africa, has exhibited her Africentric work globally, emphasizing the exploitation of Africa's wildlife. Her recent focus on pangolins challenges romanticized views of Africa, urging conservation efforts.

Denzel Beukes, a Namibian artist, uses socio-political themes, incorporating Namibian banknotes into his art to highlight pangolins' commodification and the illegal trade. His work blends visual art with poetry to amplify his message.



Dewald Basson, a seasoned wildlife artist from Phalaborwa near Kruger National Park, has spent over four decades creating art inspired by Africa's wildlife, reflecting both its beauty and conservation challenges.

Information about the Pangolin Conservation & Research Foundation

Founded in 2021, the Pangolin Conservation and Research Foundation (PCRF) in Namibia focuses on research, conservation, education, and community engagement to protect pangolins. The foundation studies Temminck's ground pangolin and monitors released individuals while raising awareness about the threats from illegal trafficking. PCRF also involves local rangers and students in conservation efforts and has tagged several pangolins to track their adaptation to the wild. Namibia's poaching issues persist, making safe habitats like the Okonjima Nature Reserve essential for pangolins' survival and research.❖



Rehoboth women making a lasting impression more than a century ago. (Source: Rehoboth museum)

Just a regular Rehoboth princess

Linda de Jager delves into Rehoboth's rich culture, highlighting the resilience of the Basters and their transformation of a once-stigmatized identity into a source of pride, revealed through an encounter with a local who treasures Princess Diana memorabilia.

Words by Linda de Jager | Photographs supplied

THE TOWN OF REHOBOTH, located 90 km south of Namibia's capital, Windhoek, is full of surprises.

I once directed a television segment on the Rehoboth community and got a brief glimpse of the town and its people.

The term 'Baster' stems from the word 'bastard', referring to a child born out of wedlock. Early settlers, particularly white farmers, often did not marry the Nama women they were romantically involved with.

Mirroring the rest of Namibia, the town is home to a mix of highly affluent business people, who often work in Windhoek, and many less privileged individuals.

CHECK THAT BASTER!

The Basters of Rehoboth are well known for their unique sense of humour and dry wit.

An amusing encounter took place on a dusty Rehoboth

street where I found myself while directing this segment, along with my film crew. A boisterous car with a broken exhaust box, or shall I say, a very exhausted exhaust box, dashed past – taking the corner with a sexy swing and screeching tyres – far over the speed limit.

Amused, the community liaison officer guiding the crew stepped aside, placed his hand on his hip, and dryly remarked: "Kyk net so 'n Rehoboth Baster, nê." This loosely translates to: "Now there's a real Rehoboth Baster."

Only locals can get away with such jokes, and outsiders are best advised not to attempt this kind of teasing.

A CINDERELLA STORY

Soon after this incident, an elderly woman approached me, tugging at my sleeves. Let's call her 'Auntie Cinderella', as the years had eroded her real name from my memories.



Rebeka Gawanas, who lived in Rehoboth most of her life, is captured at NamPost attired to collect her pension. (Photo: Linda de Jager)

She invited me to see something at her house – something she considered a real treasure.

She even asked if I would be interested in filming it.

I followed her, and something in her watchful gaze, guarded eyes, visible bruises, and wrinkled hands told me she may have experienced her fair share of hardship. I felt it was somehow important to sit down and hear what she wanted to share.

There, in her sparsely furnished house, on a small wooden table with a wobbly leg, lay a large heap of threadbare photo albums. She patted her flowery, dilapidated couch invitingly, and I dutifully sat down while she started paging through album after album, accompanied by much pointing and smiling.

Article after article and photo after photo depicted the life story of one person chronologically – and one person only: Diana, Princess of Wales.

Sometimes glamorous, sometimes sad, the photos and articles from magazines and newspapers – some slightly yellowed – told the story of this icon.

It started off with early-day pictures of a shy Diana in her notorious see-through dress as a young girl, and her spectacular marriage to King Charles III (then Prince of Wales) in July 1981.

Then there were photos of her as the mother of princes William and Harry, and so on and so forth, with the images showing the eventual progression towards her unhappy ending.

With a watchful eye on the clock and the film crew murmuring impatiently outside, I finally interrupted Aunty Cinderella's long monologue.

"But aunty, why do you like Princess Diana so much?" I asked.



Plastic products entered the market in 1907, whereas large scale manufacture started in 1952.



*Eight-year-old Rehoboth resident Chloe Britz strikes a royal pose for the camera on the porch of the Rehoboth museum on Main Road.
(Photo: Linda de Jager)*

REHOBOTH FAST FACTS

The name "Rehoboth" originates from the Bible. Genesis 26:22 in the Old Testament, reads: "He moved on from there and dug another well, and no one quarrelled over it. He named it Rehoboth, saying, 'Now the Lord has given us room, and we will flourish in the land.'"

- The Cape Coloureds, led by Captain Hermanus van Wyk, migrated from South Africa to Rehoboth in 1868. They settled after discovering water springs in the region.
- Initially, in 1868, the community consisted of 300 individuals. As of the 2024 census, the community has grown to 50 000 Basters.
- The term "baster" comes from the word "bastard," which refers to a child born out of wedlock. Early settlers, particularly white farmers, often did not marry the Nama women with whom they had children (often due to Apartheid laws). This gradually changed over time.

Source: Rehoboth Museum

My question was met with a long, thoughtful silence, followed by an answer along these lines: "Sy was 'n baie mooi vrou, en ai, tog so hoog op die bene."

This can be loosely translated as: "She was a very beautiful woman, and wow, so high up on those legs."

Perhaps Aunt Cinderella could relate to Diana's troubled marriage and her well-documented struggles. Perhaps it was a longing for glory. Nevertheless, Aunt Cinderella guided me to a universal truth.

Numerous folk and fairy tales revolve around a girl from humble beginnings whose fortunes take a sudden turn, resulting in her becoming a princess or a queen.

Another well-known tale is that of the ugly duckling turning into a beautiful swan – but only after a life of mistreatment and mockery.

WEARING SHAME LIKE A CROWN

The universal truth is that everyone, regardless of their social status, longs for the respect often only afforded to royalty.

If mistreated, the only antidote is to fight tooth and nail to keep your dreams alive – and to make it part of your daily routine – even if you are unfairly shunned and scorned in public.

If keeping your dreams alive means meticulously collecting and organising articles about a deceased royal in a yellowing heap of albums day after day, then so be it.

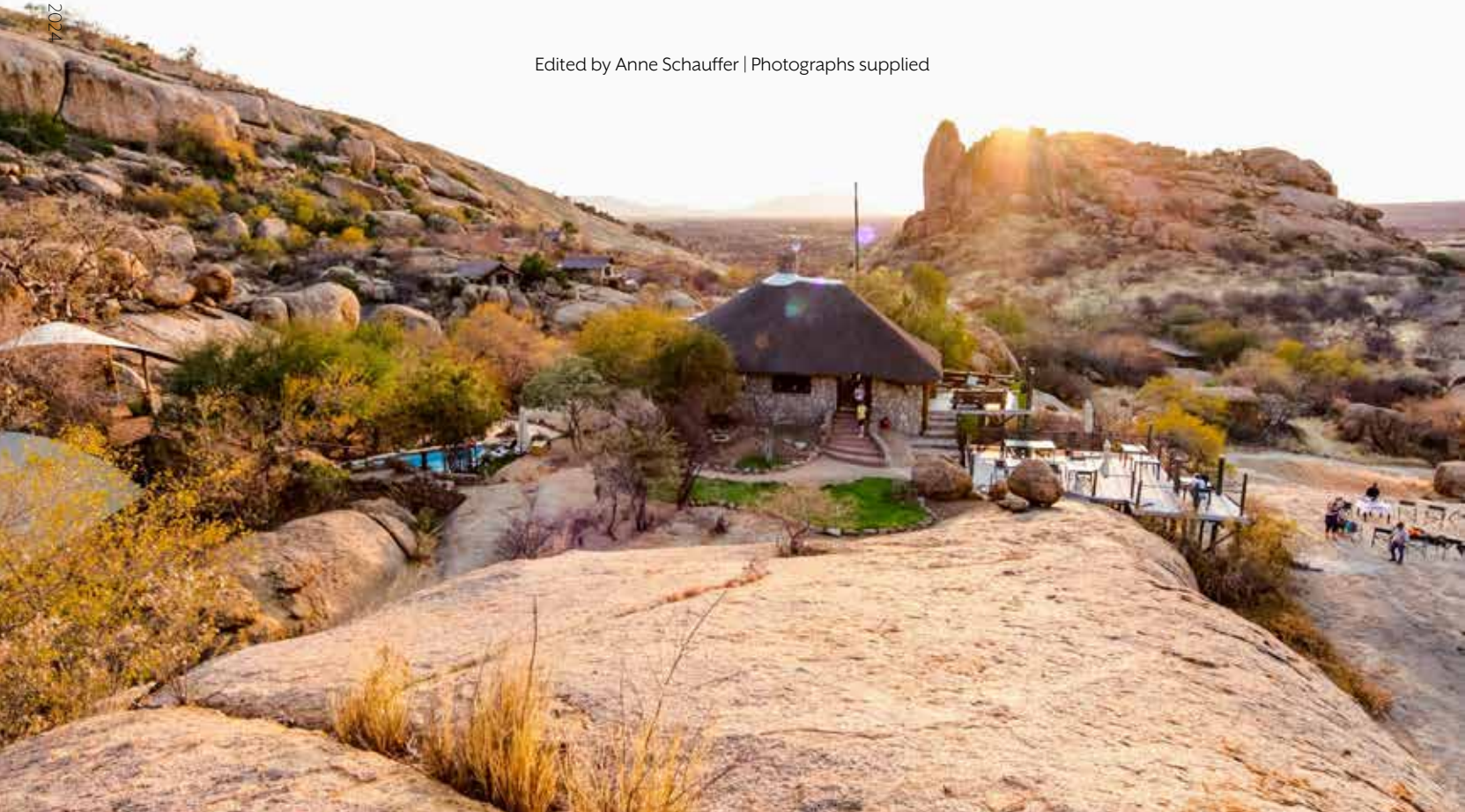
In the same spirit, Aunt Cinderella's community, the Rehoboth Basters, took a once demeaning word like "bastard", redefined it, imbued it with real-life colour, claimed it, owned it, and now wear it proudly as a crown. ❖



Ondudu Safari Lodge

Ondudu Lodge is the founding member of the 2,000 square kilometre Erongo Mountain Nature Conservancy, which brings together 30 private landowners in a concerted effort to conserve this diverse Eden.

Edited by Anne Schauffer | Photographs supplied





FOURTEEN KILOMETRES WEST of the small town of Omaruru, Ondudu Safari Lodge is set among the rugged granite koppies (hills) of the lower Erongo Mountains, where desert, mountain, and bushveld ecosystems combine. At 1,245 meters above sea level, the mountains are a geological wonder, the ruin of a volcano formed over 130 million years ago. In and among these gigantic boulders, you'll find ancient Bushmen rock paintings.

Resting on top of granite boulders, the lodge is built from the local natural stone with a sprawling thatch roof. Raised wooden walkways and stone steps, hewn from the granite of the ancient volcano, connect the main lodge to the luxurious tented chalets all perched on stilts between giant boulders.

The first inhabitants of this area, the San, still maintain their old ways, and allow us a peek into their world with

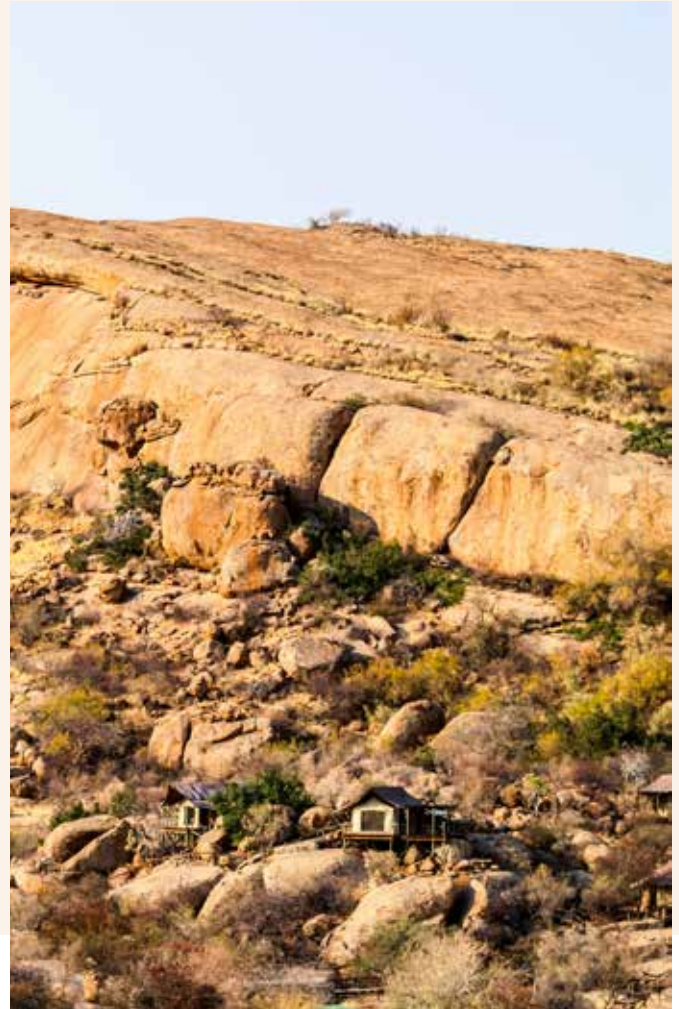
arranged tours. Visit Paula's Cave and the Ju/'Hoansi San Living Museum for a glimpse into local heritage.

The area is also well-known for its excellent hiking trails, where you can take a relaxing stroll or go on a guided walk, suitable for the more experienced hiker. You can also choose a scenic or nature drive – sunset and sunrise – which are photographer's delights!

For birders, Namibia has around 900 species...and here at Erongo Mountain Nature Conservancy, you'll find around 260 local species. The mountain is home to a vast array of plant, reptile, mammal and bird species that are endemic or near endemic in Namibia.

The lack of artificial light in the vast expanse, ensures that you'll be stargazing come nightfall. You'll see the Milky Way as you've never seen it before. Many different constellations can easily be seen once the sun has set.





In the shadows of this ancient volcano, you can choose to stay in one of the twelve tented chalets, each with its own deck for you to enjoy the surroundings from. Or, you can enjoy the special isolation of the Treehouse...an experience not to be missed if you are looking for solitude and silence, where the only sounds are those of animals and wind in the trees.

At Ondudu, you'll be extremely well fed...with warm hospitality and tasty meals prepared with local ingredients. There's a little swimming pool that's so welcome in summer, and from one of the two viewing decks, you can also spot the small rock dassies (hyrax), the endemic dassies, or even the elusive Damara dik-dik, all vying for space at the waterhole. ❁

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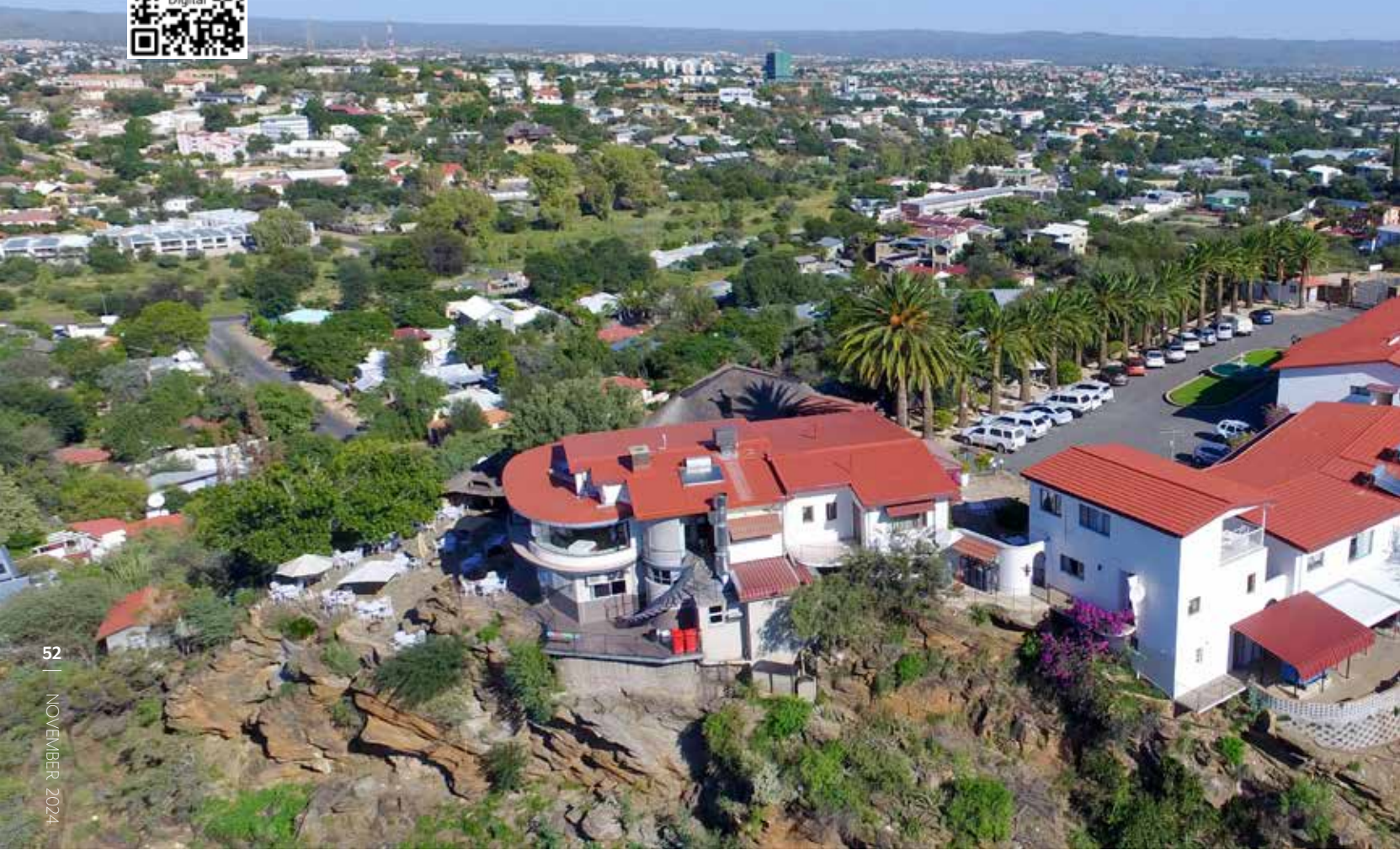


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Thule—The Privilege of A Shared Home

Since its inception in 1959, the story of Thule—a stunning estate that embodies the essence of Namibian beauty and hospitality—reflects a legacy of visionaries who have shaped its history and significance in the heart of Windhoek.



OUR PROVENANCE BEGAN sometime in 1959, but it's with recent reference from our President, His Excellency, Dr. Nangolo Mbumba, "the Privilege of Home" that I wish to share our story.

And what a privilege it is. From the ever-shifting sand dunes, the expansive savannahs, to the ephemeral rivers, this vast land of the brave has no shortage of wonder and unparalleled beauty that fills every Namibian with pride to call it home.

Backtrack 64 years when a gentleman called Mr. Edmund Lafrenz was in search of a unique home for him and his wife. One can only imagine that this sense of fascination is what drove Mr. Lafrenz to purchase the most sought-after plot on the hilltop in Eros.

Construction of this jaw-dropping residence began in 1960, and was completed by mid-1960. It was so beautiful that it was certainly an undeniable privilege to call it

home. From the stylish mid-century modern interiors with high-end finishes, spectacular panoramic views and lush garden, this luxury home was undoubtedly the envy of many. There could not have been a more appropriate name for the estate than Thule, an old Norse term meaning 'the place where the real and imaginary meet'.

That being said, Mr. Lafrenz was already a prominent figure in Namibia, with his name synonymous with industry both in Windhoek and across the country. His residence, therefore, needed to reflect his status. One thing was certain - the piece of paradise cultivated by Mr. and Mrs. Lafrenz remains today, a dream come true.

In the 2000s, the residence changed owners and became the property of Mr. Wolfgang Egerer. As a prominent property developer himself - following in the footsteps of Mr. Lafrenz - it is no surprise that Mr. Egerer had also been drawn to the magnificent estate. Although



In Switzerland it is unlawful after 10pm for a car door to be slammed.



he had initially purchased the property with the intention of developing luxury apartments, after consultation with a renowned architect, Piet Odendaal, he chose instead to develop a luxury hotel on the property, thus sharing her with the world.

In transforming the property, Mr. Egerer determined to preserve as much of the original residence as possible. He ensured that the hotel retained all those unique aspects of the original residence that made it truly one of a kind. To this day, one can find traces of the original home throughout the hotel, such as the palm trees originally

planted by Mr. Lafrenz, or the wrought iron gates, or even the custom wine barrel drinks cabinet located in the restaurant. The property has a rich history for those with eyes to see.

In an act of true hospitality, Mr. Egerer chose to share the privilege of calling this paradise home with all Windhoek visitors. In a sense, he cemented his legacy of the Lafrenz house, allowing the home's timeless beauty to live on in the hearts of all her fortunate visitors. As the saying goes, 'to be loved is to be known', and Namibia ought to be known and loved by all. ❖

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Tucked away on the outskirts of Windhoek, Droombos offers a serene escape into nature's embrace, where time slows down, and the beauty of the Namibian landscape unfolds before you. Whether you're here on business or with family, Droombos promises a unique blend of tranquility and adventure, making it the perfect retreat for any traveler.

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At Droombos, we believe every moment should be savored. Our home-style meals are prepared with care, bringing together local flavors that offer a true taste of Namibia. For those seeking something special, indulge in our brandy and chocolate pairings, or explore the rich flavors of our wine and gin tastings.

Whether you're lounging by the pool, strolling through our beautiful gardens, or catching up on emails in our garden pods equipped with internet and electricity, there's always something to enjoy. Droombos is where comfort, nature, and memorable experiences meet.



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Directions: Travel on B6 towards Hosea Kutako, by passing Avis Dam and the old Red Train Bridge. Turn right, towards River Crossing and Vineyard. Keep left towards the Vineyard Country Lodge, where Droombos awaits.





For Lovers Of Horses And Dogs

The Okakambe Equine Organisation Namibia (OEON) is an NGO for horse and dog rescue, raising funds for their rescued animals by, among other things, hosting wonderful short, day or overnight outrides in the glorious Namibian landscape which surrounds them.

Edited by Anne Schauffer | Photographs supplied





OKAKAMBE IS LOCATED in the western part of Namibia, between the Atlantic coast and the Namib, 12km inland along the dry Swakop riverbed, and the Namibian coast. Deriving its name from the Herero and Shivambo languages – meaning ‘horse’ - Okakambe Stables was founded about 32 years ago by German-born and raised Kathrin Schaefer Stiege.

Kathrin had always yearned to own her own horse-riding school in Africa, and she did just that, beginning with only two horses for riding lessons. Today, she has transformed her focus and her name into Okakambe Equine Organisation Namibia (OEON), an NGO for the rescue and rehabilitation of canines and equines; also the development and education of Namibian and international horse lovers and horse-related Namibian employees.

For animal lovers - particularly horse lovers - this is a wonderful place to volunteer, and many do. Funds are raised for the NGO via this channel.

OEON has over 20 well-trained and well-fed horses on the farm, including Hanoverians, thoroughbreds, Friesians, Arabs and others of which many are rehabilitated rescue horses or ‘handovers’. They live in large paddocks with appropriate surroundings for their breed, and are constantly stimulated by their close contact with each other and the people who choose to ride there.

For Kathrin, her special horse trails are one of a number of ways to raise funds for the NGO. Participants experience a unique time on horseback among the desert’s wildlife, seldom able to be seen from a moving car. An overnight trail begins with an early morning



Since the 1990s, China is experiencing the most prolonged phase of deflation

Michelangelo



breakfast, followed by an early start while it's cool and the desert wildlife is active. It's generally lunch and a rest time in the shade of a tree or rocks around midday, and in the evenings, a hearty meal prepared on an open fire and served under the stars. The daily distance covered is around 20 to 30km - depending on the riders' experience and weather conditions – and, as Kathrin says, “the wellbeing of the horses and our guests will always be our priority.” Camps will be set up with canvas dome tents and paraffin storm lanterns. Camp materials as well as your bag with your overnight clothing will be transported from camp to camp by OEON's mobile unit.

It's also possible to have a short outride – one to three hours – or even day tours.

The outrides are small excursions through the dry Swakop

riverbed, through some of the small canyons into the little moon landscape. The rides take you past the burned mountain “Nuberooffkop”, back into the Swakop River valley.

The day tours on horseback starts at 9h00 and last around five to six hours.

Riders are led down into the Swakop River valley, through the little moon landscape, over to the sand dunes. Here the horses take guests along the old historic railway track from where the ride will go on towards the beach. Thereafter, riders head along the Swakop River bed past the greens of the golf course and back to Okahambe's stables.

To say Kathrin Schaefer Stiege is an animal lover, is an understatement. If you're one too, you'll feel right at home here. And if you're a horse rider, do yourself a favour, sign up for an overnight trail...you'll love it! 🐾

19  19



LEISURE

CHOBE WATER VILLAS ZAMBEZI



NAMIBIA THROUGH OUR EYES

Explore Chobe Water Villas, a sanctuary where two mighty rivers converge, forming a wetland paradise that celebrates nature and wildlife. Found on the banks of the Chobe River at the very tip of Namibia's Zambezi Region, this luxury destination embodies sustainability, diversity and breathtaking scenery. It offers discerning travellers an unforgettable, magical experience wrapped up in the natural beauty of Chobe National Park. Chobe Water Villas combines world-class hospitality with engaging wildlife encounters.



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Our exclusive activities and entertainment will captivate you with personalised and authentic experiences that can be designed around your special requests.

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THE CHOBE WATER VILLAS VISION

At the core of the vision is the "O&L Leisure Experience," a philosophy rooted in purity, inspiration and the finest handpicked elements.

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Our activities will be curated and guided by experienced experts, ensuring that you have access to unique and specialised adventures.

At Chobe Water Villas, we offer more than just a destination—we provide an unparalleled experience that connects you to the beauty of nature and stories that stir the soul. Immerse yourself in a journey that leaves you with cherished memories, emotional fulfilment and inspiration to carry with you long after you've left.

We invite you to experience the rejuvenated Chobe Water Villas, where personalised hospitality meets enhanced luxury.

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KEEPING NAMIBIAN TOURISTS SAFE

Why It Matters Creating a Safe Environment for All Visitors

Tourism is a vital sector in Namibia's economy, contributing significantly to GDP and providing thousands of jobs, which underscores the need to ensure tourist safety to maintain this economic lifeline. With a concerning increase in crime against tourists traveling to Namibia, both local authorities and the community must prioritize the protection of visitors. Ensuring safe travel experiences not only enhances Namibia's reputation as a welcoming destination but also fosters trust among potential tourists.

Ultimately, safeguarding tourists is crucial for sustaining Namibia's thriving tourism industry and ensuring that it continues to benefit our society. A positive tourism experience fosters repeat visits and word-of-mouth promotion, ultimately leading to increased investments in the local hospitality and service industries. To ensure that tourists continue to travel to Namibia, it is crucial to always prioritize their safety. When travellers feel secure in their environment, they are more likely to share their positive experiences with friends and family, encouraging others to explore the beauty of Namibia.

By focusing on the well-being of tourists, Namibians can enhance the reputation of their country on the global stage, resulting in a thriving tourism sector that benefits the entire community. Next time you encounter a tourist in Namibia, remember that their safety is not only important for their well-being but also for the reputation of our country as a travel destination.

Safety is a core value of the Namibia Tourism Board. We are actively caring for our tourists and aim for zero incidents. Recent reports of an increase in crime against tourists traveling to Namibia highlight the urgent need to prioritize their safety. By ensuring a safe environment for tourists, we not only protect our country's image but also support community development projects funded by tourism revenue. This creates a more sustainable economic future for all Namibians, making it crucial to take action and address any threats to the safety of tourists in our country.

Let us all work together toward keeping Namibia safe and welcoming for all visitors. By embodying the value of safety, we can create an exceptional experience for tourists, thereby strengthening our economy and reinforcing Namibia's position as a premier travel destination.



Prepared by: Flora Quest

Corporate Communication Practitioner

Email address: flora.quest@namibiatourism.com.na

Namibia Tourism Board



Sander Vos (Netherlands), Courtesy All About Photo
1st Place Winner (*Series: Interpolation*)

SHAPES

Twenty five talented photographers won places in the All About Photo Magazine, under the theme SHAPES

Edited by Anne Schaffer | Photographs by All About Photo (AAP)

THE ALL ABOUT PHOTO (AAP) Magazine #42 chose Shapes as the theme, and photographers across the globe rose to the challenge: “We invited photographers to explore the theme of Shapes as a crucial element of visual storytelling and composition. From abstract forms to intricate architectural details, we were looking for submissions that highlighted the power of shape and form in photography, whether used to create pure visual impact or to enhance a deeper narrative.

“The mastery of shape is central to the art of photography. It can transform everyday scenes into stunning visual masterpieces, guiding the viewer’s eye and evoking emotion. Whether through geometric patterns, organic curves, or the clever use of positive and negative space, shapes play a pivotal role in enhancing the overall aesthetic and mood of an image.

“This year, we present 25 exceptional photographers whose work embodies the diverse and creative interpretations of shape. Hailing from 12 different countries across 4 continents, their photographs span a wide range of styles, including architecture, landscape, street, still life and abstraction. Each artist brings a unique perspective and technique, demonstrating the endless possibilities that arise when composition and form take centre stage.”



Bence Mate (Hungary), Courtesy All About Photo
2nd Place Winner (*Image: White Fang*)



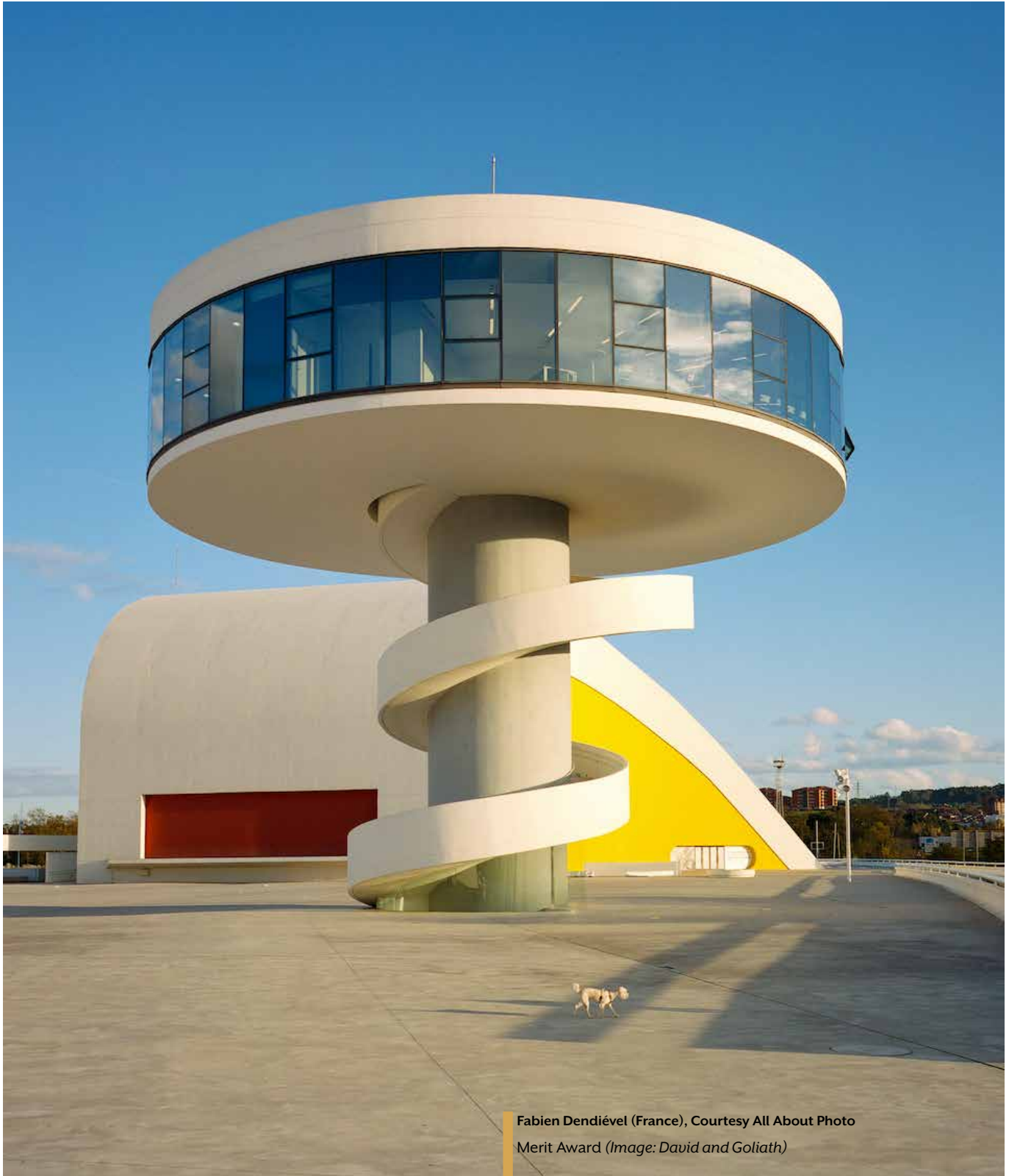
Jakub Wencek (Poland), Courtesy All About Photo
3rd Place Winner (*Image: The black hole*)



At present there are 56 wars; the maximum since World War II.



Florian Bouziges (France), Courtesy All About Photo
Merit Award (Image: Portal)



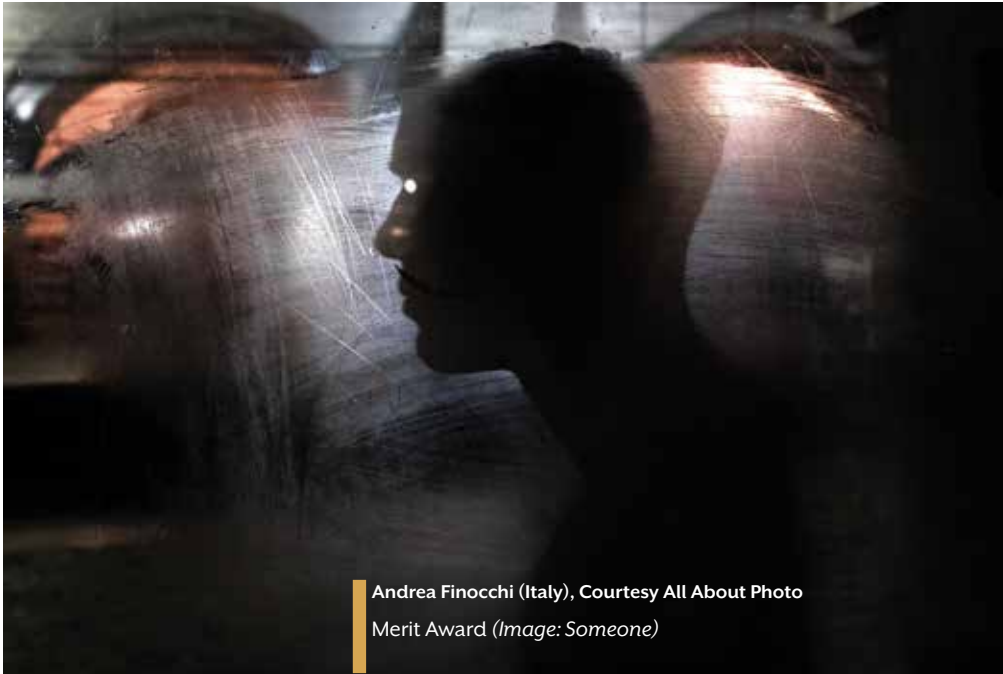
Fabien Dendiéval (France), Courtesy All About Photo
Merit Award (Image: David and Goliath)



The North Pole has one sunrise each year, around March 21st.
The sun sets at around September 21st.

Michelangelo

—PHOTOGRAPHY—



Andrea Finocchi (Italy), Courtesy All About Photo
Merit Award (Image: Someone)

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Let's Go To The Beach

*There's a little bit of off-grid luxury in the Wilderness,
just waiting for you and yours — Milkwood and
Cheesewood Cabins. Listen up...*

Edited by Anne Schaffer | Photographs supplied





EIGHT KILOMETERS FROM Wilderness Main Beach, and you'll find these hidden gems. If you know Wilderness, you'll know it's the perfect city escapees' destination...with loads to do if you want to. If you don't, you also have a treat in store. It can be anything from seclusion to a full-on family holiday, with fishing, sunbathing, swimming, surfing, paragliding, kayaking, leisurely walks on immaculate Blue Flag beaches...and loads more besides. Up to you.

Luxury comes in off gridliving. The luxurious open plan Milkwood Cabin houses three people comfortably. You'll have a king-size bed with the best quality bedding and a double sofa bed, full kitchen, living area with a TV and fireplace, patio with loungers, a hot tub and bathroom with bath, vanity and private outside shower. Heavenly towels for the bath, the shower and the beach await.





The living space spills out onto the patio with panoramic views over Island Lake and the cabin is fully open plan, with a small lounge nook and the Indian Ocean. The open plan interiors offer a spacious place to relax; choose Netflix and chill, sun tan on the patio loungers, or soak in the wood fired hot tub. Shower in nature with your own private outdoor shower or opt to bath with a view.

The larger Cheesewood Cabin houses six guests in two two-bedded bedrooms (and a double sleeper couch) with two bathrooms.

This is off-the grid luxury living...including uncapped wifi. The tap water goes through a filtration system and is clean and safe to use.

And when it's time to leave the beach or the hot tub, consider these options. For eating and drinking, try Milkwood Village Friday Night Market; Joplins Steak Bar; The Girls on The Square; Serendipity Wilderness; or Salima's. And if you're an action man or woman, these are for you: Garden Route Trail Park; paragliding; guided Nature Walks; Kloofing the Kaaimans River; horse riding into the indigenous forests; and Wilderness River Safaris.

The Wilderness is a glorious area to stay – resting your head for a few nights at Milkwood and/or Cheesewood Cabins, puts it a notch or two higher. ❁



YOUR MEMORIES, OUR LEGACY NAMIBIA BY LEGACY

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BARBARA PALVIN

Beefing up Namibian Road Trips

Words by Linda de Jager | Photograph supplied



*Namibia's meat is loved by locals and tourists alike, and in charge of ensuring the country keeps delivering high-quality meat is **Dr. Anja Boshoff**. As the executive of meat standards at the Livestock and Livestock Products Board of Namibia, she helped develop the concept of establishing a Namibian meat route for travellers in Namibia.*

Why a Namibian meat route? The Meat Route of Namibia was established to provide visitors a simple guide to buying local meat. Namibia is a vast country, lending itself to self-drive adventures. It was important to identify meat retailers across the entire country on the most popular routes. Namibia, with its small population and 80% of the land suitable for agriculture, is a net exporter of meat. Therefore, it's only fitting to treat our guests to that meat as well!

What puts a Namibian butcher on the meat route map? To participate in the Meat Route of Namibia, the meat presented for sale must be 100% Namibian, and the shop must provide a pleasant shopping experience and preferably introduce tourists to local culture.

Why is Namibian meat so sought after? Namibian meat is naturally produced without the use of growth promoters. During times of drought supplemental feeding is provided to ensure livestock production needs are met as part of the Namibian Animal Welfare focus.

Further to that, a large portion of Namibian livestock is community farmed, using traditional farming methods, and is also game friendly since the larger part of Namibia boasts the presence of game in co-existence with livestock.

Namibia was one of the first countries in the world to include nature conservation in its constitution.

Why is fork-to-plate traceability relevant? Traceability is a very important aspect of both animal and public health. A well-implemented traceability system, like the one in Namibia, ensures that livestock only move to abattoirs from areas and farms where no restriction in terms of animal health is in place.

This allows Namibia to certify with integrity the origin and health status of meat for export purposes, providing its trading partners the appropriate level of protection.

Additionally, the abattoir provides the supplying farmer public health information, and traceability can also be incorporated during times of tracing back for animal and public health purposes.

What are the Livestock and Livestock Products Board's key milestones in the last five years? The Livestock and Livestock

Products Board of Namibia was previously known as the Meat Board of Namibia. The effectiveness and success of the board have led to the addition of controlled products under the regulation of the Livestock Board of Namibia. These include poultry, eggs, dairy, and hides and skins.

An online platform, the Namibian Livestock Identification and Traceability System (NamLITS), was expanded with more functionality for farmers under the management and drive of the Livestock Board.

The Livestock Board was appointed by the Wagyu Breeders Society of Namibia as the third-party verification and certification for wagyu beef exported to the European Union.

The board's verification of free-range and grain-fed livestock has been approved by the European Union, and the board established an animal health emergency fund in 1994.

Interesting new markets are opening up. Tell us more about them. Namibia is servicing several lucrative markets, like the European Union, Norway, the United States and China. However, the aim now is to add the Middle East.

What are some of the key challenges you are faced with? Recurring droughts, after which Namibian livestock numbers never truly recover. Widespread bush encroachment is a result of this, which reduces the grass cover and consequently carrying capacity of the land. Ever-changing trade requirements and environments are a challenge for which the goalpost keeps shifting, increasing input costs in the value chain as well as the administrative burden.

If you could give tourists one tip on Namibian meat, what would that be?

Our meat is best enjoyed cooked or braaied over an open fire, surrounded by the uniquely beautiful Namibian landscape together with family and friends, and is perfectly complemented by our world-famous locally brewed beer.

What is your favourite meat dish and how do you prepare it? It is almost impossible to choose a favourite! I truly enjoy pork or beef rashers braaied on a medium fire to allow a longer cooking time to render the fat and get the crackling crispy, using simple spices to enhance meat's natural flavour. 🍷

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