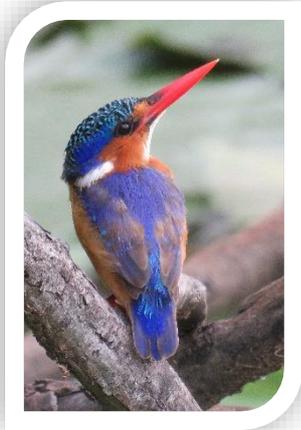


CHEEPERS! **AFRICA**



Namibia with a Touch of Zambia & Botswana



**18 days / 17 nights
December 2017
Guide: Errol de Beer
with Adam & Gina Kent**



Overview

This incredible tour of contrasts will take us to three World Heritage sites, from the mighty Victoria Falls and the serene Okavango Delta Panhandle, to the arid expanses of the Namib Desert. We'll be treated to a vast array of endemic and desert-adapted birds of the dry west, a taste of the spectacular shorebirding around Walvis Bay, incredible waterbirds in the Okavango Delta and the incredible supporting cast of the African savannas. From Pel's Fishing-Owl to Dune Lark and African Skimmer to Damara Tern, this tour offers some of the best birding in southern Africa. Namibia is also a photographer's dream, with wonderfully obliging birds, amazing scenery, and a great diversity of mammals, including Africa's famous Big Five.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1

Your international flights will arrive in Livingstone from various destinations, usually via Johannesburg in South Africa. Most flights arrive just after lunch which will allow us enough time to visit the mighty Victoria Falls. The native name, Mosi-oa-Tunya, means the smoke that thunders. We'll encounter our first birds here, possibly including the handsome Schalow's Turaco, the dowdy Terrestrial Brownbul or even a noisy family group of Yellow-breasted Apalis. Time permitting we might also pop in at the local wastewater treatment plant which can turn up all kinds of things, including the likes of Dickinson's Kestrel, African Swamphen, African Rail, Zebra Waxbill and several species of waterfowl. From town we have a short drive to our lodge situated on the banks of the mighty Zambezi River. **O/N [Camp Nkwazi](#), Livingstone, Zambia.**

Day 2

Today we'll head out very early to reach our destination at the crack of dawn. The Machile area is renowned for being one of the most accessible places in Zambia to see the near endemic Black-cheeked Lovebird. Our breakfast stop at a small wetland often produce Yellow-throated Sandgrouse, Saddle-billed Stork, Hamerkop, Grey-rumped Swallow and numerous Meyer's Parrots, whilst enjoying our packed breakfast. The Mopane woodland is a favourite amongst hole-nesting species such as Arnott's Chat, Meve's Starling, and African Grey Hornbill. Grassy areas often have Swainson's Francolin, Southern Ground Hornbill and the sought after Black Coucal. After several kilometres on a rough track we'll finally get into the strike zone for the Lovebirds, stopping and listening will be our modus operandi to locate these little critters, we can also expect the likes of Bennet's Woodpecker, Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike and White Helmetshrike. If all goes well we should be done and dusted around lunch, which will enable us to get back to the lodge for some afternoon birding. **O/N Camp Nkwazi, Livingstone, Zambia.**

Day 3

We have a fairly busy day ahead of us, starting with some early morning birding near the lodge before breakfast. Our search will concentrate on Racket-tailed Roller, Miombo Barbet and Miombo Rock-Thrush, all three of these highly sought-after species occurring side-by-side not too far from our lodge. We'll return for breakfast and get on the road shortly thereafter, heading west to our next destination, the Caprivi Strip of Namibia. En route we have one more stop to look for Lesser Jacana, with the possibility of African Pygmy-Goose, White-backed Duck, Slaty Egret and Greater Painted-Snipe. We'll enter Namibia near the town of Katimo Mulilo, where we might stop briefly for Schalow's Turaco if we failed to locate them in Livingstone before heading to our lodge, hopefully arriving in time for some afternoon birding. **O/N [Kalizo Lodge](#), Katimo Mulilo, Namibia.**

Day 4

Early morning at the lodge can be excellent birding, with the likes of Southern Carmine Bee-eater, Gabon Boubou, Horus Swift and Mariqua Sunbird all possible. We'll depart shortly after breakfast stopping at several wetlands on the way out to try for African Openbill, Rufous-bellied Heron, Coppery-tailed Coucal and African Marsh-Harrier. Another fairly long drive will take us west across the Caprivi and into the Bwabwata National Park, we cross the Kwando River, which is always worth a stop. Scanning the extensive floodplain from the bridge often produces birds such as Saddle-billed Stork and a variety of waterfowl. Continuing onwards we'll be on the lookout for raptors, with the likes of Dark Chanting-Goshawk, Lizard Buzzard, Martial Eagle, Bateleur and Brown Snake-Eagle often encountered. **O/N [Mahango Lodge](#) or similar, Divundu, Namibia.**

Day 5

With just a short distance to travel to Shakawe in Botswana, will have time to bird the area around Divundu thoroughly before crossing the border. Birding around the lodge before breakfast should

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produce the likes of African Snipe, Hartlaub's Babbler, Grey-headed Bushshrike, and possibly the Luapula subspecies of the Winding Cisticola,. After breakfast we'll head into the Mahango Game Reserve, a fabulous birding spot where one can bird the dry woodland that borders the extensive floodplains of the Kavango River and of course the floodplains themselves. The superb Crimson-breasted Gonolek calls Mahango its home, alongside birds such as Crested Barbet, Grey Tit-Flycatcher, Broad-billed Roller and the African subspecies of the Eurasian Hoopoe. We also have another shot at Slaty Egret, African Spoonbill, Intermediate Egret and even the stately Wattled Crane here. Several big mammals occur here, and we are likely to bump into Elephant, African Buffalo, Hippopotamus, Roan Antelope, Sable Antelope and if we're lucky, even Lion. Another short stop just north of the park is usually a good stake-out for Rock Pratincole when the water levels are low enough to expose rocks. Time permitting, we could visit the Buffalo Camp section of Mahango where we could locate the likes of Black-faced Babbler and Bennet's Woodpecker before heading back into Botswana. **O/N [Drotsky's Cabins](#), Shakawe, Botswana.**

Day 6

A full day exploring the Panhandle of the spectacular Okavango Delta awaits us! In the morning by boat, we'll look for Pel's Fishing-Owl, Slaty Egret, White-backed Night-Heron, White-fronted Bee-eater and several species of kingfisher. Other good birds to look out for are Banded Snake-Eagle, Long-crested Eagle, Greater Swamp-Warbler, Chirping Cisticola, Little Rush-Warbler, Little Bittern and occasionally even Allen's Gallinule. Extensive woodland around the lodge usually hold Brown Firefinch, Retz's Helmetshrike and African-Green Pigeon, drier woodland nearby usually has Bradfield's Hornbill and Black-faced Babbler. At dusk we'll try and locate African Barred Owlet as well as Fiery-necked Nightjar. **O/N [Drotsky's Cabins](#), Shakawe, Botswana.**

Day 7

A fairly early departure will see us heading back into Namibia and then heading west again towards Rundu, we'll pass through some extensive areas of broad-leaved and Teak woodland where we'll have a good go at finding the likes of Souza's Shrike and Tinkling Cisticola on the way and we could also encounter Green-cap Eremomela. Sharp-tailed Starlings are a bit of a hit and miss affair but we'll keep our eyes peeled nonetheless. This is usually another good road for raptors and we are sure to add to our ever-growing list. Depending on our time of arrival in Rundu, we might be able to squeeze in some afternoon birding at the local sewage works where several regional rarities have been recorded over the years and there is usually a nice surprise waiting. **O/N [Hakusembe River Lodge](#), Rundu, Namibia,**

Day 8

After an early morning coffee we head out for some birding before breakfast. We could get lucky with the likes of Ovambo Sparrowhawk or Burnt-neck Eremomela. Our usual ritual of departure after breakfast will again prevail, with a short stop to look for Rufous-bellied Tit just outside the town of Rundu en route to the amazing Etosha National Park. This is mostly a driving day with short birding stops on the way as we need to reach the park in time before gate closing time. **O/N [Namutoni Camp](#), Etosha National Park, Namibia,**

Day 9

Our first morning in one of Africa's great parks, we'll do a short game drive to a nearby waterhole before breakfast and hope to get our first taste of more typical Namibian avifauna as well as the chance of great big game sightings. Tawny Eagles are abundant and several vulture species are present as well, including the magnificent Lappet-faced Vulture. Carp's Tit and White-crowned Shrike are often seen on the route to the main entrance gate, the latter are somewhat nomadic and unpredictable in occurrence. The diminutive Damara Dik-Dik, a curious small antelope is very common around this area and should provide good photographic opportunities. After breakfast we'll be heading west to our next camp in Etosha, birding en route should hopefully produce

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chances at Burchell's, Temminck's and Double-banded Coursers. The stately Secretary-Bird is often seen along with Kori Bustard along this route and we'll also have several chances to get closer to the Etosha Pan after which the park is named, here we have a good chance for Chestnut-banded Plover. Note that the water levels in the pan can vary tremendously and whilst it is normally dry, wet years can produce a waterbird spectacle with thousands of flamingos and pelicans present. At camp we'll make full use of the chance to enjoy the floodlit waterhole, a feature shared by all the main camps in Etosha. We usually see Double-banded Sandgrouse coming in to drink just after dusk. **O/N [Halali Camp](#), Etosha National Park, Namibia.**

Day 10

Another full day in the park, we now head further west from the centre of the park. Before breakfast we'll look for some of the resident Owls around camp and hope to find African Scops and Southern White-faced owls. Before leaving camp we'll hopefully connect with Violet Woodhoopoe and Damara Red-billed Hornbill. The more open areas to the west usually harbour Double-banded Courser, Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark, Gabar Goshawk and several species of lark. We should also encounter our first Sociable Weaver colonies and the possibility of finding a Pygmy Falcon sharing the Weaver's nests. We will focus much of our attention on the waterholes dotting the park and acting as magnets for hundreds of mammals and birds, often followed by opportunistic predators, both avian and mammalian. Commonly encountered mammal species are Black-faced Impala, Red-Hartebeest, Elephant, Giraffe, Greater Kudu, Gemsbok and Springbok. Possible carnivores include Black-backed Jackal, Lion, African Wild Cat, Spotted Hyena and even Leopard and Cheetah. Some of the commoner birds here are Grey Go-away-bird, Cape Starling, Variable (White-bellied) Sunbird, Brubru and Cardinal Woodpecker. Rufous-eared Warbler occurs here as an isolated population. **O/N [Okaukuejo Camp](#), Etosha NP, Namibia.**

Day 11

Today we will transect into the far western part of Etosha, an area that used to be off-limits to the public for many years. At first we will bird the area just north of Okaukuejo for birds such as Pink-billed and Spike-heeled larks, White-quilled Bustard, Capped Wheatear and Pale Chanting-Goshawk before making our way to Dolomite camp for lunch. This camp is quite different from the other camps, offering such speciality birds as Hartlaub's Francolin, Ruppell's Parrot, Rockrunner, Short-toed Rock-Thrush and Violet Woodhoopoe. Commoner birds such as Black-fronted Bulbul and Red-headed Finch are easily seen in and around the camp **O/N [Dolomite Camp](#) or [Hobatere Lodge](#), Etosha NP, Namibia.**

Day 12

A long drive awaits us as we head to the northern extremities of Namibia for some tantalizing birding. Some pre-breakfast birding for any birds we might have missed and then some essential stops on our way north, again raptors will be evident with species such as Booted Eagle and Augur Buzzard high on the list of probabilities. As we near the town of Ruacana we'll notice a definite change in vegetation as well as some stunning vistas as we descent the escarpment into the Kunene River Valley. A brief stop to enjoy the spectacular views could even reward us with our first Cinderella Waxbills, often see along here. We'll arrive at the lodge in the late afternoon, just in time to enjoy sundowners, overlooking the Kunene River with Angola beckoning on the opposite bank. **O/N [Kunene River Lodge](#), Ruacana, Namibia.**

Day 13

We have a full suite of specials on the birding radar today, we are privileged to share camp with Collared Palm-Thrush, Bare-cheeked Babbler, Holub's Golden-Weaver and Tropical Boubou, whilst White-backed Night-Heron is often seen by carefully scanning the opposite bank of the Kunene River. There is an optional outing for Angola Cave-Chat at a minimal fee. This is pretty hardcore though, as it is a rough 4x4 trek over some rough terrain to the inhospitable Zebra

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Mountains where this bird was discovered as an isolated population a few years back. Some participants might simply choose to enjoy more relaxed birding around the lodge. Late afternoon will see us head to a nearby spot where we should hopefully locate the elusive Grey Kestrel and perhaps even a Dusky Lark. **O/N [Kunene River Lodge](#), Ruacana, Namibia.**

Day 14

Early morning birding around the lodge can hold many surprises and for a few seasons the lodge had a very obliging African Crake in the gardens near the pool. This is also the best time to be on the lookout for Red-necked Francolin, whilst Ruppel's Parrot can be exceptionally common here in some years. Rosy-faced Lovebirds often steal the show. After breakfast we'll have a short outing in search of Cinderella Waxbill if we failed to locate them up to now. With a long list of specialty birds in the bag, we'll tackle the long drive to Kamanjab, where we will stay at another superb birding spot on the Namib Escarpment. **O/N [Toko Lodge](#), Kamanjab area, Namibia.**

Day 15

Again birding around the lodge early morning can be most rewarding, with Namibian specials such as White-tailed Shrike, Monteiro's Hornbill, Carp's Tit, Rockrunner, Hartlaubs' Francolin and Common Scimitarbill. Other commoner birds like Green-winged Pytilia, Black-faced Waxbill, Barred Wren-Warbler and Ashy Tit makes up the supporting cast. We bid Kamanjab farewell as we head south towards the old mining town of Uis near Namibia's highest mountain, known as Brandberg (Burning Mountain). We are now well and truly entering the more arid parts of Namibia and will be on the lookout for Ruppell's and Ludwig's bustards, Benguella Lark, Stark's Lark and Bradfield's Swift to name but a few. **O/N [White Lady Lodge](#), Brandberg area, Uis, Namibia.**

Day 16

Early morning birding around the lodge could produce the likes of Bearded Woodpecker, Grey-backed Cisticola and Layard's Tit-Babbler. After breakfast we'll head for the coast with some stops en-route for arguably Namibia's toughest endemic, Herero Chat and further on for Gray's Lark, Trac-Trac Chat and Karoo Eremomela. Pretty soon we catch our first glimpses of the Atlantic, providing it's a clear day of course and the rolling fog that the west coast of Namibia is famous for hasn't decided to hide the ocean under its blanket. Time and weather permitting we'll make some stops at various spots along the coast where we'll be on the lookout for African Oystercatcher, White-fronted Plovers and who knows maybe even the likes of Sooty Shearwater or White-chinned Petrel. **O/N [Lagoon Lodge](#) or [Amijicaja Guesthouse](#), Walvis Bay, Namibia.**

Day 17

Our lodge is situated right on the Walvis Bay Lagoon and often has Orange River White-eye in the garden. Soon after breakfast we'll head inland again for our appointment with another Namibian endemic, Dune Lark. We'll find this bird at the base of some majestic red sand dunes. The area often holds a variety of other species such as Bokmakierie, Southern Fiscal and Dusky Sunbird. We should be back in town for lunch before heading to the Mile 2 Saltworks at Swakopmund where we will search for Cape, Bank and Crested Cormorants, in addition to Damara Tern and a plethora of shorebirds. **O/N [Lagoon Lodge](#) or [Amijicaja Guesthouse](#), Walvis Bay, Namibia.**

Day 18

This is our final morning in Namibia and we will concentrate our efforts on the local salt works as well as the extensive bay where we will have another chance at Damara Tern as well as Hartlaub's Gull, Common Ringed Plover, Red-necked Phalarope and Bar-tailed Godwit. All too soon we'll have to head for the airport on the outskirts of Walvis Bay from where you'll fly to Johannesburg for your connecting flights home.

---End of Trip---

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Cost

Cost for the 18-day Namibia trip Based on 6 guests: ZAR 66,230 (~\$5,130 US at 13:1 exch. Rate) per person sharing with a single supplement of ZAR 5,200 (~\$400 US at 13:1 exch. rate)

What's Included:

The above quote includes:

1. Vehicle
2. Fuel
3. All lodging
4. All meals
5. Full time bird guide
6. Meals and accommodation for tour leader/guide
7. Mineral water
8. All entrance fees
9. The domestic flight from Katimo Mulilo, Namibia to Windhoek, Namibia

The quote excludes:

1. Items of a personal nature
2. Any drinks besides mineral water
3. All optional activities not mentioned in the itinerary
4. All International Flights, Airport Taxes & Visa Costs. Johannesburg-Livingston and Windhoek-Johannesburg flight usually around \$150 USD.
5. Travel and/or personal Insurance
6. Telephone calls
7. Laundry
8. Special gratuities

Important Notes:

- Please note that the itinerary is subject to availability and no reservations have been made yet. Availability will determine the final itinerary and the costs will be adjusted accordingly.
- Prices are subject to foreign exchange fluctuations
- Please be aware that some of the birding areas mentioned in this itinerary are very remote and can become inaccessible due to bad weather, bush fires or poor road conditions and in these cases the guide will change, substitute or omit a particular spot at his/her discretion.
- Optional night drives for approximately are now possible from most camps in Etosha National Park for an additional free and we encourage you to join at least one of these during the course of our stay in the park.



Our safari vehicles (pictured above) have pop-up roofs that we keep open when driving off-highway and windows that slide down for quick bird viewing and photography.