

NAMIBIA

-OFTEN COPIED, NEVER SURPASSED-

UNTAMED



'Resurrection,' winner in the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition.

Squiver

A dead camel thorn tree in Deadvlei.



HIGHLIGHTS:

- Night photography
- Quiver trees
- Bizarre rock formations
- Star photography lecture
- Star trails lecture
- Kolmanskop ghost town
- Sossusvlei
- Deadvlei
- Giant red sand dunes
- Microlight flight over dunes
- Flamingoes
- Boat cruise
- Pelicans
- Dune excursion
- Image reviews
- Camping at Spitzkoppe
- Rock Arch
- Postprocessing workshop
- You may have some fun too

NAMIBIA UNTAMED

THE ULTIMATE LANDSCAPE ITINERARY

Date: 1 - 15 May 2021 (15 days)

Tour leader: Ryan Dyar

Genre: landscape and some wildlife

Fee: 7.500 EURO from Windhoek, Namibia

Single Supplement: 950 EURO for a single room

Deposit: 1,500 EURO per person

Group size: min. 8, max. 12 guests

Level: all experience levels (non-photographing partners will also enjoy this tour!)

We will be photographing endless desert landscapes, fairytale-like quivertrees and fascinating natural rock formations. We will visit a sand-covered mining ghost town, explore the world's highest and most spectacular red sand dunes of Sossusvlei, and take amazing night shots at Deadvlei. We will top it all off with 3 days of safari at a private game reserve to see lion, elephant, rhino, zebra and giraffe - to name just a few.

Namibia is the place for night photography, and there will be several sessions where we'll be shooting the incredible Namibian night skies. On this tour there will be a dedicated workshop explaining everything you need to know about photographing the stars, star trails and light painting, and we will help you to get stunning results in the field.

We have made special arrangements for microlight flights over the dunes, a breath-taking photo experience you will never forget and that no one else offers!

All accommodation is in comfortable guest houses and luxury lodges. This trip is suitable for photographers of all experience levels. There will be daily briefings, in the field instructions, raw processing tips, and image reviews in the evenings. You'll return with spectacular images!



Quiver trees at night in the south of Namibia. This series won First Prize in the Travel Photographer of the Year.

WHY VISIT NAMIBIA?

FOR ITS SURREAL LANDSCAPES

Fairy-tale like quiver trees in the South, a sand-covered diamond mining ghost town in the middle of the desert, 350 meter high red sand dunes, and 700 year old tree skeletons on a white clay pan - Namibia has some of the most surreal and photogenic landscapes on the planet. And we will visit all of them.

FOR THE EMPTINESS

Namibia takes the fifth place on the list of least densely populated countries in the world. The last census puts its population density at 2.56 people per square km. For comparison, The Netherlands is the fifth most densely populated country in the world with a whopping 407 people per square km!

FOR THE NAMIB DESERT

Having endured arid or semi-arid conditions for roughly 55–80 million years, the Namib is considered the oldest desert in the world. The Namib Naukluft National Park is the largest game park in Africa and the fourth largest in the world. The giant red sand dunes are the tallest in the world, in places rising more than 300 meters (almost 1000 feet) above the desert floor.

FOR THE NIGHT SKY

In 2012 the Namib Rand Nature Reserve was selected by the International Dark Sky Association as an official dark sky reserve on account of its low light pollution and cloudless night skies. The dry desert air and low humidity create the perfect conditions for star gazing and night photography.

FOR ITS CONSERVATION

Namibia was the first African country to incorporate protection of the environment into its constitution. Today, over 43% of Namibia's surface area is under conservation management. This includes national parks and reserves, communal and commercial conservancies, community forests, and private nature reserves. Wildlife is now embraced as a complimentary land use method to agriculture and livestock herding.

Namibia now boasts the largest free-roaming population of black rhinos and cheetahs in the world and is the only country with an expanding population of free-roaming lions. Namibia's elephant population more than doubled between 1995 and 2008 from 7,500 to

A night shot of one of our rooms inside the Namib Naukluft National Park. Staying inside the park means that we'll be able to get to the dunes before sunrise and stay until after sunset.





Everyone likes sunset, even oryx.

WHY VISIT NAMIBIA WITH SQUIVER?

In 2018 we will visit our favourite African country for the 20th time. We were the first company to offer specialised photography tours to Namibia, and when Marsel first shared his Namibia images on the internet, most people had never seen pictures of the surreal landscapes before, and some had never even heard of it. Well, that has changed. Marsel's Namibia images are famous all over the world, have won major international awards, and have been published in National Geographic magazine. Our Namibia tour is now, by far, our most copied tour - often the itineraries are an exact copy of ours, sometimes even on the same dates. So does that mean you can get the same tour elsewhere? No, it doesn't. Here's why.

We have travelled and photographed in Namibia for 15 years - we know the country by heart. We know all the perfect spots and the best angles from years of experience and don't just rely on some local tour operator. And very important: we have a very good relationship with the people in Namibia. This is especially important when you want to visit places no one else does, or when you need special permission to stay out late in places where no one else is allowed to.

We are still the only company that is allowed to do night photography in Deadvlei, and we are the only company to offer microlighting - the most effective and spectacular way to shoot the famous Namib sand dunes.

Marsel was the world's first photographer to create a series of night photographs in Namibia, and his award-winning images have made Namibia the go-to night photography destination it is today. There is a time for being modest, but this is not it.

On this tour either Marsel or Ryan will be your photography instructor. They will teach you all there is to know about night photography, star trails, composition, and post processing. Both Marsel and Ryan have superior Photoshop skills, and they are happy to share their knowledge with you. As a matter of fact, Ryan has produced a series of outstanding instructional Photoshop videos that can be purchased online, and all participants traveling with him on this tour will get the entire series for free!

Our current itinerary is the result of years of experience and endless fine-tuning. After every trip we evaluate the tour with our guests, and ask them how we can improve. We take their feedback very seriously, because we want to offer the best Namibia tour in the world. And we do.

That's it? No, we are very proud to have a return customer rate of over 80%. People that have travelled with us often travel with us again and again. Surely that must mean something.

Our trips attract photographers of all experience levels from all over the world. You don't need a lot of experience or expensive camera gear to return with great images. We will make sure that you get the best results with whatever equipment you have.

Our guests come from all over the world, so the language we speak on all tours is English.



DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAM

Our Namibia tour is our longest running and most popular tour. Nevertheless, we still manage to improve our schedule, increasing the photographic opportunities.

> We now offer three nights photography at the Quivertree Forest. We know from experience that night photography takes practice and we want to make sure you have enough opportunities to get some good pictures of the stars, also from this wonderful location. Because the night sky is simply magical and definitely worth an extra day!

> This tour takes place in winter, because of the clear skies. Although the waterhole in Etosha is famous, game drives can be pretty quiet in terms of animal activity. That's why we have decided to change our wildlife photography location from Etosha to a private game reserve. This way the wildlife photography part of the tour will become even more productive.

> Not only the game drives will be better, we also give you an extra day to photograph the animals! Instead of two nights in Etosha and one night in Windhoek, we now spend our last three nights in the private game reserve. This way you get five game drives instead of just two!

/DAY 1

Everyone should be arriving today in Windhoek. Upon arrival you will be transported to our luxury lodge, just outside Windhoek, set on a small hill with beautiful views of the African bush. You need to arrive at Windhoek airport no later than 2:30 PM in the afternoon (14.30 hrs), so you won't miss the general briefing and instructions on night photography for tomorrow's shoot, followed by a delicious welcome-dinner.

Some of our guests from the USA / Canada / Australia side of the globe may decide to come in a day earlier, just to get adjusted to the time zone. We have a very full and exciting program waiting for you, which we would like you to enjoy to the fullest! The lodge we stay in on the first night is the perfect place to relax.

Overnight at a luxury lodge outside Windhoek (DBB)

/DAY 2

After an early breakfast we hop into our bus, which will be our means of transport for the remainder of the round trip. We like to offer our guest the maximum of comfort, and that is why we use a 40-seater bus for only 14 people! Everyone will have a window seat and more than enough room for their photo equipment next to them.



Although it is a long drive, we will arrive in time for an afternoon photo session at the Quivertree Forest. It is a unique and rocky area with a high concentration of quivertrees.

The quivertree is a beautiful and peculiar tree, which is a distinctive relative of the Aloe plant. It is actually the national plant of Namibia. The quivertree has a thick, corky, bark that flakes into sharp-edged sections on the main trunk. The late



afternoon sun will emphasise the golden bark of the trees, making them look even more unusual.

When the sun sets, we put in practice what we learned yesterday during the night photography workshop, and shoot these beautiful trees with the twinkling stars above them. Our aim will be to capture the Milky Way. Namibia is the perfect place to photograph the night sky, due to its geographical location, climate and lack of light pollution. It is in the top 5 of best star-gazing locations in the world.

We will be staying at a guest farm at the Quivertree Forest, to make maximum use of the beauty of our surroundings. The accommodation is simple, but very welcoming. The meals are home-style-cooking.

Overnight at a guest farm near Keetmanshoop (FB)

/DAY 3

We will start our day with photographing cheetahs at first light. At the farm they have several orphaned cheetahs in large enclosures, and the owner of the farm is happy to take



> The cheetah is the fastest land animal in the world, reaching speeds of up to 113 km/h. They can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in just 3 seconds.

> When running, cheetahs use their tail to steer, like a rudder for a boat.

> Cheetahs are the only big cat that can turn in mid-air while sprinting.

> Cheetahs make distinct facial expressions to signal their mood.

> Females are solitary, whereas males tend to live in small groups of 2-3 individuals, usually brothers.

> The cheetah originated over 4 million years ago. That's long before any of the other big cats of today.

> Cheetahs are the only big cat that cannot roar. They can purr though and usually purr most loudly when they are grooming or sitting near other cheetahs.

> While lions and leopards usually do their hunting at night, cheetahs hunt for food during the day.

> A cheetah has amazing eyesight during the day and can spot prey from 5 km away.

> Cheetahs cannot climb trees and have poor night vision.

> Cheetahs only need to drink once every three to four days.

> The cheetah's scientific name is *Acinonyx Jubatus*, which comes from the word *chita* meaning spotted one.

> A cheetah has between 2,000-3,000 spots.

> Most cheetah cubs are killed by lions.

CHEETAH





A sand-filled room in a deserted diamond mining town.
This image was published as a double page spread in
National Geographic magazine, and it was a First Prize
winner in the International Photography Awards.

 NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC



everyone for a meet & greet with the cheetahs. They are truly magnificent animals and you'll be able to get some good close up and interesting low-angle shots.

We'll go into town to give a presentation on composition, and instructions on how to shoot star trails, followed by lunch.

We will end the day with an afternoon and dusk shoot at Giant's Playground. It is a location with big dolerite rocks. Some seem to be stacked and neatly placed on top of each other, as if a giant has been playing with them. Hence the name of this place.

We will photograph the rock formations and the beautiful quiver trees while the sun colors them bright orange. And we'll shoot until it is dark enough to photograph the stars again. We come back after we set up the cameras for shooting star trails to have dinner and dream of the cameras clicking away, catching the stars circling our planet.

Overnight at a guest farm near Keetmanshoop (FB)

/DAY 4

We have another full day of photography at Giants Playground. The mornings are perfect to concentrate on the strong shapes of the lonely quiver trees; they make an ideal

subject for shooting silhouettes, using the early morning colors to enhance the fairy-tale look of these trees.

After lunch at the farm we go back, and we'll have another opportunity shooting stationary stars and star trails at this beautiful location. We know from experience that night photography is not always easy and that practice makes perfect. So it's good to have another chance to practice getting it all right :-)

Traveling with Squiver means that you are not only taken to the best locations to photograph; we will also make sure you come back with great pictures. The pictures below are from participants on an earlier Squiver tour, who had never shot star trails before.

Overnight at a guest farm near Keetmanshoop (FB)



/DAY 5

The day starts early for another dawn shoot at the Giant's Playground, catching the first coloration in the sky. After breakfast we'll hop into the bus and travel towards Lüderitz, a small and usually extremely windy coastal town.

As we get closer to Lüderitz, the landscape gets dryer and dryer, turning into a desert with endless views and yellow sand dunes near the coast. We will have lunch on our way.

This afternoon you can either discover Lüderitz, relax or read a book. Or make use of the opportunity to have a sneak preview of Kolmanskop and visit this abandoned ghost mining town for a couple of hours of shooting in the afternoon. Marsel will give some specific pointers on how to handle the contrasty light and windy conditions.



Kolmanskop is closed for regular tourists in the afternoon, but we have arranged a special permit so we can stay until sunset.

Overnight at a hotel in Lüderitz (FB)

/DAY 6

We will head out for Kolmanskop and arrive at sunrise to enter with our special permits (the gate officially opens at 9 AM). It is the perfect opportunity to improve your shots from yesterday. We will spend a full morning photographing the empty houses and sand covered rooms, trying to capture the eerie feeling of this abandoned town.



A small herd of oryx, running on one of the giant red sand dunes near Sossusvlei. Photographed from a microlight. First Prize in the National Geographic Traveler contest.





After 6 hours of shooting, you will be ready for some lunch! Afterwards we continue our journey north. Today we'll say goodbye to tar roads and we all have to get used to the pace of driving on gravel roads. Slowly the landscape changes and gets more mountainous. We have dinner and spend the night en route to our next destination: the red sand dunes of the Namib Rand and Sossusvlei region.

Overnight at a hotel in Helmeringhausen (FB)

/DAY 7

After breakfast we head out again. We will soon see the first red dunes and they will get bigger as we travel towards Sesriem, the gate to the Sossusvlei region.

After everyone has settled into their spacious tented rooms on stilts, with a stunning view on the dunes in the distance, we all go on a drive into the park to discover the beauty it has in store for us.



For those interested, we can also arrange helicopter flights over the dunes during our stay here.

We will visit Deadvlei, where we will photograph one of the most picturesque and iconic landscapes of Namibia. We focus on Deadvlei, as the dead trees, the white pan and the dunes surrounding them is the most interesting for photography.

Up to now, we have always been able to arrange special permission to stay in the dunes until it is dark, based on our excellent relationship with the park, giving you the opportunity to photograph this stunning setting framed by the stars of the Milky Way. There is even a possibility to set up your camera to photograph star trails in Deadvlei. A really unique opportunity, as most people need to be back at the gate to leave the park at sunset! Namibia however has been getting more busy, and with a larger influx of tourists, the rules are getting more strict. Please keep in mind that we will do our utmost to get our group access to Deadvlei in the dark hours, but that it is not guaranteed. We foresee no problems, but should we - for any reason - no longer be allowed to get in to Deadvlei in the dark hours, this will not be accepted as grounds to cancel the trip.

Overnight at a luxurious lodge inside the Namib Naukluft park (FB)



/DAY 8 AND 9

We have a full day in the park. The days start very early and we drive off when it is still dark, in order to catch the first rays of sunlight over the dunes.



We will photograph pre-dawn and sunrise in deadvlei until 8.30 am, when the light gets harsher, the temperature gets higher and the regular tourists arrive.

The afternoon takes you back to deadvlei, ending with photographing these photogenic location with millions of stars.

Or you can choose to photograph dunescapes in the afternoon, ending with night photography using the textures of the dunes as the subject, framed by the Milky Way.

Overnight at a luxurious lodge inside the Namib Naukluft park (FB)

/DAY 10

After breakfast in the lodge we leave the Sossusvlei region behind and head further north, towards the coastal town of Walvis Bay. Prepare yourself for a complete change in weather, as Walvis Bay can be foggy and quite chilly, especially after the warmer temperatures we have gotten used to in the south of Namibia and the Sossusvlei region.

We will have lunch in Walvis Bay, at the best place on the coast to eat calamari. Finger licking good! After lunch we check in to our boutique guesthouse, which will be our home for the next three nights.

Marsel's first star trail image from Deadvlei created quite a stir amongst landscape photographers. He was the world's first photographer to create a series of night shots in Deadvlei, and his pictures have made Namibia the go-to night photography destination it is today.





Dead camel thorn trees in rare foggy conditions in Deadvlei. This series won First Prize in the Travel Photographer of the Year.



Walvis Bay is famous for its flamingos, which feed in the lagoon and the surrounding wetlands. It is considered one of the prime locations worldwide to see flamingos, with numbers reaching over 40,000 individuals. You will be able to see both the Lesser and the Greater flamingo here and photograph them from a close distance. How close? Well... the shot above was taken by Daniella with an iPhone!



The guesthouse we selected is located right at the Walvis Bay lagoon and you can walk on the promenade that surrounds it. Depending on the tide, the flamingos are at walking distance from our guesthouse.

We'll have dinner at a restaurant in the bay and fall asleep in our comfortable guesthouse after a long day.

Overnight at a boutique guesthouse in Walvis Bay (FB)



/DAY 11

This morning starts with a welcome change from all the sand we've seen in the past days: we take a boat cruise in the early morning! Pelicans often fly along with the boat, allowing for spectacular wide angle shots of these beautiful large birds.



We will also see a colony of Cape Fur seals. This species is characterized by thick fur coats that range between dark brown and a lighter golden brown. You'll visit Pelican Point where these inquisitive and entertaining creatures live in abundance. While out on the boat, you'll likely see the playful side of these marine mammals. The younger ones often enjoy the adventure of coming right up to the boat. They'll also put on a show by playing in the surf, while the more mature seals will stay on the shore and bask in the sun.



We have hired a private boat for our group and leave earlier than the official sailing times, to make maximum use of the light.

The afternoon will be spend in the dunes, taking you in 4WD vehicles to where the dunes meet the ocean. Not only a fun excursion, but also offering you a spectacular sight!

Overnight at a boutique guesthouse in Walvis Bay (FB)

/DAY 12

You can start the day with taking a stroll at the lagoon, photographing the flamingoes along the promenade. This morning we have reserved for some image processing tips & tricks in the meeting room of our guesthouse.

In the afternoon we offer the opportunity to take you on another adventure: flying in a microlight over the dunes around Walvis Bay. The dunes are simply spectacular from above and flying over them in a microlight is absolutely awesome.

Although microlighting is a common activity in surrounding countries, this is not the case in Namibia. We are the only tour company in the world that offers this in Namibia!



In a microlight you have a view to the front and to both sides and you're in direct radio contact with a professional pilot, who will make sure you will see the dunes from the perfect angle, selecting the best route for you. And if you see something interesting, or want a closer look, you simply ask the pilot and he will take you there! Flights last around 20 minutes and should be booked in advance.

Please note that micro lighting is not 100% guaranteed which is why we don't included this excursion in the tour fee. If weather conditions are not good (for instance too much wind), or if the microlight pilots are not able to fly our group for whatever reason, we will have to cancel this activity.

A gyrocopter flies over the endless sand dunes of the Namib Desert. The sensual shapes and sculpting light are a photographer's dream. Shot from a microlight airplane.

THE IDEA OF WILDERNESS NEEDS NO DEFENSE,
IT ONLY NEEDS DEFENDERS.

//EDWARD ABBEY

Thousands of flamingoes are feeding in the shallow waters near Walvis Bay. Photographed from a microlight airplane.



Cancelling the microlighting is by no means sufficient grounds to cancel your participation on this tour, even if we know beforehand that micro lighting will not be possible.

Those who are not doing the microlighting, will have the afternoon at leisure. Time to relax, sort images, prepare for an image review, or photograph the flamingoes and pelicans in the lagoon at sunset.

Overnight at a boutique guesthouse in Walvis Bay (FB)

/DAY 13

After an optional shoot with the flamingos at sunrise, we will drive this morning to Spitzkoppe, where we have lunch. This is a really stunning area to photograph huge boulder formations in the golden light of the afternoon. We will make camp in between the rocks and camp out under the stars!

Everyone will be sleeping in tents, which have been especially set up for our group on the campground of Spitzkoppe. The tents offer a "regular" bed, and in the back of your tent you can even take a shower. So it is definitely camping in style!

We will also do night photography on this location, trying to capture the stars as they twinkle above the rock arch that made this area famous.

Overnight at a private mobile camp (FB)



/DAY 14

We have another full day to explore this amazing area, full of "islands" of boulders and rock formations.

We will use the heat of the day to go through our images and what the best way is to process them.



We have all night to photograph the night sky again, allowing you to time the position of the milky will complement your composition.



Overnight at a private mobile camp (FB)

/DAY 15

In the morning we can photograph Spitzkoppe as the first rays of sunshine hit the rocks. After a nice breakfast in camp, we hop into the bus and drive to a private game reserve, with a luxurious lodge.

After breakfast we head back to Windhoek, and our group will be transferred to the international airport of Windhoek. Unfortunately, it is time to fly home, with lots of fantastic memories and amazing photographs!



A Namaqua chameleon catches breakfast in the dunes near Walvis Bay. This image was awarded in the Nature's Best International Photography Awards.

PARTICIPATION FEE & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The participation fee is € 6,500 p.p, based on sharing. Group size will be between 8 and 12 guests. A single room is available with a single supplement of € 950. If you want to share a room but we cannot find a room mate for you, we will have to charge you the single supplement. You can download our terms & conditions [here](#).

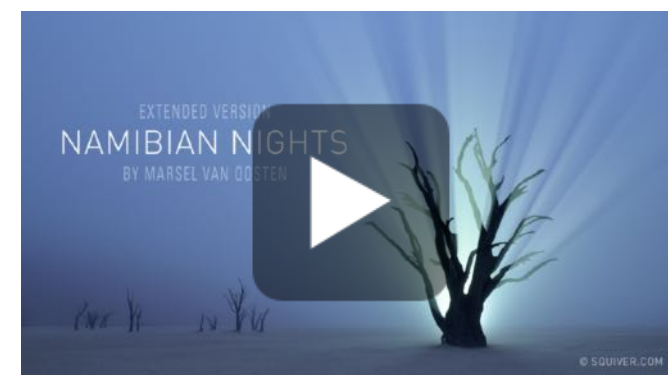
INCLUDED IN THE TOUR:

- transfer from and to the airport
- very comfortable accommodation
- all meals and drinks (apart from hard liquor and cocktails)
- all entrance fees, activities as described, special permits

- transport in a very spacious 40-seater bus (with 12 guests)
- excursions in 4x4 vehicles in the dunes
- private boat cruise
- excursions in safari vehicles in a private game reserve
- workshops on night photography, presentation on composition
- in-the-field tips & tricks, image reviews

NOT INCLUDED:

- your international ticket to Windhoek
- drinks from the minibar at the private game reserve
- gratuities
- microlighting (350 USD p.p.)



'Namibian Nights'. Time-lapse video that won First Prize in the Travel Photographer of the Year. Click to view.

Deadvei at its spookiest. Photographed at night in rare foggy conditions. The combination of fog, the night sky, and artificial backlight makes this one of the most original images ever shot at this iconic location.

TESTIMONIALS

'Many thanks for such a fantastic itinerary on the Namibia Untamed tour. You combined great photographic opportunities with a most memorable holiday experience.'

-Kah Kit Yoong, Australia

'Perfectly organized trip to some very well and some little known photographic spots in beautiful Namibia. It improved my skills and my photographic way of looking and photograph landscape and detail in the landscape. Marsel and Daniëlla make sure that you are at the right spot at the most beautiful light of the day.'

-Evelien Schermer, The Netherlands

'An exceptional tour. Well balanced and would suit everyone from beginner to advanced. Stunning scenery, fantastic locations, and the planning was perfect. Long days but well worth it! I certainly could not have achieved the same results by visiting Namibia by myself. Thank you so much for the most memorable photographic trip of my life. I wholeheartedly recommend this trip to everyone.'

-Tony McLean, UK

'As a complete beginner with no prior knowledge of photography I did not think I would be able to participate much and that was not the case - I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learned a lot from Marsel's reviews and workshops. Daniëlla is a great organizer and nurturer! Thank you both for a wonderful trip. I am very inspired to go further and learn more...'

-Luana, South Africa

'A "must" for the budding landscape photographer.'

-Diego Merino, USA

'Marsel is an exceptional photographer and equally schooled teacher. It doesn't matter what your skill level is by attending this trip you will definitely increase your skill level. Apart from Marsel's in the field instruction, he also holds classroom workshops where you can visualize what he is teaching you. Highly recommended. Thank You, Marsel and Daniëlla.'

-Chris Gray, Canada

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