



# NAMIBIA Country Lodges

## *Bushman Telegraph*

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**Park** **Mata Mata Gate**



**Welcome to Namibia Country Lodges first official News letter!!** Although our letter is slightly on the long side, we hope to update you on what has been happened in our Lodges and Hotels during 2008 and future developments in the pipeline. We aim to publish at least three newsletters a year to keep you informed.

**Namibia Country Lodges Web Page** Our existing Web Site is currently updated and will soon undergo some major changes. You are welcome to look or download some images in the meanwhile. Once you log on to the site please first click on the refresh icon on the top bar to allow recent updates to download.

### **Auob Country Lodge**

Traveling from Windhoek in a southerly direction, Auob Country Lodge is 150 km from the Mata Mata Gate, entrance to the Kalahari Gemsbok Park. The next time you or your guests plan a trip to the Fishriver Canyon, consider driving the scenic route through the Kalahari – Turn in an easterly direction 11 km before Mariental onto the C20 to Stampriet, continue on the C15 to Gochas, 6 km from Gochas you will find Auob Country Lodge. Depart for the Fishriver Canyon from Keetmanshoop after a sumptuous breakfast and don't forget to visit the Sossolous, Stones, Quiver Tree Forest and Giants Playground en-route.

Guests staying at Auob are guaranteed excellent Kalahari cuisine, prepared by an aspiring chef who recently participated in the 2008 Holiday & Travel Expo competition. Chef Rainhold will tantalize your taste buds with a variety of culinary specialties such as tender and tasty prime cuts of Springbok or Oryx served with wholesome country style vegetables, highly recommendable with a good bottle of red wine. Our buffet dinners also go down well with ice cold brewed Namibian beer. Soak away in our sparkling swimming pool after a few days driving or enjoy a sundowner while exploring the red dunes on a game drive.

Auob farm boasts a variety of antelope species such as Springbok, Oryx, Wildebeest, Zebra, Red-Hartebeest, Steenbok, Eland and Giraffe. Auob Game Reserve recently had to capture and sell 200 Springbok and a Giraffe bull.



balance the fragile environment and maintain a strong gene pool amongst existing herds.

Other events such as the Kalahari Festival brought the local farming community closer together while they enjoyed a day filled with fun and sports at Auob Country Lodge. Next year's festival will be held over the Easter weekend. The ceremonies also contributed to the hustle and bustle at Auob Lodge. The popular venue for special wedding occasions mostly held in the barn or under the thatched lapa next to the swimming pool. Management and staff pay special attention to detail by adding African-Country flair to each wedding they host. The venue is not only ideal for private functions, but also offers accommodation in the form of 26 en-suite rooms and 17 campsites with water and electricity for those coming from far and yonder.

### **Solitaire Country Lodge**

An isolated outpost near Sossusvlei in southwestern Namibia, but as the saying goes in Namibia - "All roads lead to Solitaire". The nostalgic general dealer is well known world-wide for its ample slices of apple pie, coldest drinks, fuel and car repairs. Solitaire has a lodge and camping sites for those visitors, who want to linger longer and explore the deserts environment and its unsurpassed hospitality.

Centrally located on the most travelled roads between Windhoek and Swakopmund, Solitaire is a must stopover, even if it's just to satisfy your curiosity. Well..... if you do decide to stay over, make sure you're in time for an afternoon nature-combined sundowner drive through a part of the Pro-Namibian stunning scenery to only sit back and sip away on a zesty G&T, while the sun sets over the oldest desert on earth.

**Solitaire Bakery** is expanding! Moose's existing house is being revamped into a proper bakery and small tea garden to cater for the steady flow of visitors to the shop and fuel station. Fresh bread, apple pie and pastries will be sold over the counter as per usual, but the bakery will also cater to those who order ahead of time to replenish their larders while on safari.

Mark your calendar for next year's Solitaire Desert Festival hosted over the Independence long weekend 21 March 2009 - Watch the newspapers for more details.

### **De Duine Country Hotel**

Spanish guests from the Kananga safari groups keep the hotel on their favourites list most of the high season. Always impressed and satisfied with our excellent service and hospitality, guests enjoy a relaxing evening at the Bar and lounge, while discussing their exciting journey through Namibia. A steady flow of South African and local Namibian's still visit De Duine as they meander up and down the coast, stopping over for some local gossip in the bar, while enjoying excellent seafood cuisine before retiring to a comfortable bed for the night. Sunday buffet lunch at De Duine remain popular and highly recommended to guests who prefer a good lunch-stop, while traveling up or down the South West Coast.

With the annual Henties Bay Fish Festival during the month of August, De Duine also hosted the motor Rally and Rubber Duck boat events in front of the hotel.

**Read more about:**

**A Moose in the Desert**



Record occupancies pushed the hotel staff to their limits and weighed heavily on food and beverage stocks. Guests applauded De Duine restaurant for their excellent food and friendly service during these events. Adrenaline still ran high as people frolicked and danced to the rhythm of local bands well in to the hours of the next morning.

The Skeleton Coast is feared for its treacherous coastline which has claimed many ships and lives over the centuries. Recently a fishing trawler was swept away by the Benguela long shore current and washed aground onto a sandbank close to the beach. This particular vessel was being towed towards Walvis Bay by a salvage team when the cable snapped and disaster repeated itself again, luckily no lives were lost!!

December is high season at De Duine Hotel and many holiday makers from all corners of Namibia and South Africa plan to invade Henties Bay again this year so we brace ourselves for the invasion.....

The sunsets remain spectacular over the Atlantic ocean and we look forward to host you.

### **Twyfelfontein Country Lodge**

Desert adapted Elephants dominated the scenery with their presence for more than three weeks no-stop around the lodge. The Ellies frequently visited the nearby dam to drink water and munched away on soft green garden plants in the managers living quarters. One of the Elephants up-rooted a diesel pipe while sniffing around the petrol pumps. Staff rapidly secured the leakage to prevent serious environmental damage – Our Ellie will not drink from that again. Guests were thrilled with the Elephant sightings so close to the lodge and had ample time to study these desert dwellers and photograph them in many poses.

The Huab river and Aba-Huab tributary form one of the largest ephemeral systems in the Twyfelfontein area. Desert Elephants predominantly base themselves in the riverbed while living off the green foliage and Camelthorn sustained by the rivers underground aquifers in the dryer months. One of our matriarch Elephant cows recently gave birth to a healthy, wobbling baby and guests regularly spot the herd as they frequent the waterhole close to the lodge.

Self drive tourists and Tour operators drive up and down the riverbed in search of these majestic giants, often disturbing them while they stand sleeping or gracefully minding their business. We have witnessed how people get out of their vehicles and walk up to the Elephants within 10 – 15 meters to take pictures.

**This of course is suicide and not recommendable - be responsible and consider the wildlife and the area they live in.**

#### **Protect the Desert Elephants**

Twyfelfontein Country Lodge hosted visitors of a different kind - "Old Time" Vintage cars from a bygone era and their more modern owners embarked on a daring, epic journey from Cape Town to Namibia, some made it all the way but others broke down and had to be towed away. The oldest model was a 1956 Bentley and a more recent 1972 Mercedes. One of our managers had the honor to drive the 1956 Jaguar..... what a Dame!!





### View - Images from the Past



### **Opuwo Country Hotel**

*Not only your most upper-market establishment on the outskirts of Opuwo but also a popular overnight venue for safari groups visiting the Kunene Park. Our 3 star Hotel has a panoramic view over a beautiful valley depicting the Kaokoland scenery. Considering the distance from any major town, Opuwo Country Hotel provides an excellent three course lunch menu and full dinner with a very good selection of wines from the well stocked cellar.*

*The strong presence of Himba people in Opuwo town and the surrounding area is a real drawing card for tourists wanting to probe into the fading culture & traditions of the Himba people. Guided tours to Himba villages can be pre-arranged and booked directly at the Hotel, if guests wish to interact with the last nomads of Namibia. Our guides are all well experienced and act as translators, explaining the Himba culture in great detail, keen to answer questions about the importance of cattle and the holy fire in the centre of a Himba kraal.*

*Uukwaluudhi concession in the Kaokoland, 83km east from the hotel, is a rich area guests can explore in their own 4x4 vehicles on a full day excursion. A conservancy guide will guide you to the core of the area and accompany you for the duration of your drive. Future plans are in process to develop a small safari camp in this area to afford guests a unique wilderness experience for one or two – further details on this development to be announced during 2009.*

### **Oshakati Country Hotel**

*Amongst the landmarks of the North, Oshakati Country Hotel stands out as an establishment most favored by business people with vested interests revolving around the second largest economic hub of Namibia and its border to Angola. Individual self drive tourists and guided groups visit Ovamboland 4-0 region coming from the Ruacana waterfalls or traversing towards the "place of diamonds" Etosha National Park. Oshakati Country Hotel has been in a fortunate position in the last few months whereby we have experienced more highlights than ever before...um...the opposite!*

*Banqueting has been working hard on strategies to secure ourselves as one of the power houses of the north regarding the facilitation of banqueting and conferences. We have quite a few year-end functions and large conferences confirmed towards the end of this year. Furthermore- our newly acquired facilities enable us to provide high standard service to larger delegations (between 100 and 400) which has made us the preferred service provider for numerous Ministries and large businesses and safari groups.*

*We also hosted quite a few high status events in the second quarter, some of which were quite successful.*



which include the annual Yelula-u-kai HIV Awareness conference in August for 100 Pax for 3 days. The memorable English, Wainright wedding for 100 Pax in 2010 proves our capability to make up a prize presentation all-in-all within a week on half's notice. Oshakati Country Hotel has the expertise, staff and logistics for almost any event!!

Our newly renamed Oasis restaurant's A-la-carte menu and wine list has been updated; the old one was very dull and boring. The a la carte menu also features a category of quality wines matching the appropriate classic dishes. On the Wine List we feature 3 wine estate brands with approximately 8 different variations under each category, these include: Bushman's Creek Estate, L. Toitskloof cellars as well as Spier Wine Estate. Other featured brands include Welbedacht, Lutzville and Villiera. On the culinary front we have starter dishes like Venison Carpaccio and Surf & Turf skewers. Main Courses include: Ravioli with Chili Sauce and Camembert Cheese Sirloin Steaks as well as a Venison Es

Desserts include: Peppermint Liqueur and Ice Cream waffles, Chocolate buns and Choc Nut sundaes. We have also acquired a pizza oven and Bread Oven recently and we are in the process of promoting the venture in the local market where we want to bake fresh bread and pastries for the buffets and outside catering and cakes for Birthday parties, etc.

Unbelievable response was received from our loyal local patrons and foreign visitors since the introduction of our 1 Liter Draught Mug to the "Drumbeat" group of Chinese managed to finish 2 x 30L Draught Barrels during dinner.

Two cozy guide rooms featuring air-con and other facilities like the sister rooms have been added-on to increase occupancy during our peak season.

### **Namushasha Country Lodge**

According to the local folk of the Caprivi and those living in rural villages along the banks of the Kavango, Zambezi, Kwando and Chobe River say, the recent floods was the worst since they can remember. These perennial rivers form the northern border of Namibia, but their catchments in Angola and Zambia received exceptional rains, exceeding the influx of normal water levels to the point of flooding the banks and displacing many people and destroying vast areas of land.

Situated on the back-water of the Kwando River is Namushasha Country Lodge, 25km from Kongola and 115km from Katima Mulilo. Rising floodwaters via the river transformed the surrounding area of the lodge into swampland. Three Kilometers of road towards the lodge was lost and under water, a detour road had to be constructed to make access possible for 2x4 vehicles, busses and safari vehicles. The Namushasha airstrip is still under water and will probably remain so until the rainy season starts again. Our alternative airstrip is 25km away from the lodge but we do pick-ups and drop-offs for guests who charter in. Co-ordinates for the airstrip - 18°06'59" S 23°23'18" E, calcrete surface, 1 300meters long - please arrange beforehand for a pickup from this particular airstrip.

Detours, relocating of game drive vehicles and finding alternative ways to conduct activities added to the challenges faced by our Activities team and guides. Alternative plans and improvising paid off as game sightings remain phenomenal right through the year, guests are rewarded time-and-again with exceptional



**Click on the Photo Gallery for:**

**More images on the Website**

sightings of Elephant, Buffalo, Hippo, Crocodile and other indigenous game in or on the wetland & woodland areas of the Caprivi. Guests are transferred by boat from the lodge to where our game drive vehicles are parked in the Bushmanland National Park. "Monster" is an old 4x4 army truck that has been modified into an authentic game drive vehicle seating up to 30 guests. Tsetse Fly Express is a little brother seating up to 20 guests. Both vehicles have a commanding view over the long grass and navigate the rugged bush and thick sand with ease, much to the excitement of the guests. Birding remains a popular activity, around the water and amongst the trees or while exploring the natural channels of the Kwana River by boat, spotting Malachite and Pied Kingfisher perched on papyrus and banyan trees scanning the clear waters for a small fish-meal.

The Mbukushu Traditional Village next to Namushasha Country Lodge is a museum guests can visit to gather insight to the day to day activities and culture of the local people. Livingston Museum at the entry of the Mamili National Park is also a cultural village. Cultural activities can be conducted with one of our guides or guests may visit the villages on their own by paying an entry fee to the local community.

Spring also brought fresh evening breezes of soft and colorful blossoms to a medley of sweet fragrance while guests enjoy a leisurely drink at the open bar before dinner. October already indicates hot and humid days ahead as the rainy season builds up. Although floods dominated this year's news, more good news are forecasted for the coming rainy season!! Let's not be ungrateful, but be prepared.....

### **Tsumkwe Country Lodge**

For many years it has been necessary to carry extra fuel in spare jerrycans when venturing into Bushmanland and the Kaudom. Much to the delight of Tour Operators and self drive guests, Tsumkwe now has a fully operational petrol station situated in the center of this little town. There is also a shop selling provisions to the local communities and ice cold beverages to those waiting to refuel their thirsty vehicles. The fuel station was built by Namibia Country Lodges and is under the same management as Tsumkwe Country Lodge.

Tsumkwe Country Lodge is currently in operation but also under construction. Extra bungalows are being constructed in conjunction with the existing 9 bungalows, totaling 20 bungalows for 2009. Thatching and revamping of the existing area will kick-off soon, transforming the lapa into a spacious recreational area, a new restaurant and fully functional kitchen. The Reception area and administration office will be centralized in one office to assist more efficiently. Guests book in or out or enquire about activities. Earthmoving equipment has been brought in from Windhoek to raise the ground level around the lodge and the site to avoid rain water flooding the area during the rainy season. Rainy season can occur from October and last until February. Indigenous plants and grasses from the area will be re-introduced to create a natural lush environment around the bungalows and lodge premises once building is completed.

**While Tsumkwe Country Lodge is under construction a 40% discount on the Rack rate will apply on B&B Basis. This offer is valid with immediate effect, will apply until renovations are completed and can be terminated without prior notice.**

**Participate on:**

**Bushman Activities**

**Read more about the-**

**Kalahari Peoples Fund**

**Special Focus and unique to the Nyae Nyae Pans:**

**Wattled Crane**

**Read more about:**

**Tsodilo Hills**

Our Camp terrain was recently upgraded, much to the delight of the nature lover wanting to experience Bushmanland at ground level. All five campsites were cleaned up and boast with a new communal ablution block with hot and cold running water, flush toilets and electric power points. Each campsite has a "braai" area for outside cooking. Wood is also available and can be purchased at the lodge.

Bushman village activities and game drives into the surrounding wilderness are conducted in open 4x4 Mahindra vehicles seating 7 guests + driver-guide. Activities can be booked in advance together with accommodation or directly at the lodge. Bushman cultural activities are very popular and allow guests to experience this intricate culture and highly sociable life style of the Ju/`Hoansi Bushmen. The Nyae Nyae Pans also offer an unforgettable experience and possible encounters with abundant wildlife, flora and a variety of endemic bird species such as the endangered Wattled Crane that congregate around the Pan edges. Take a walk to the famous "HOLBOOM" (hollow tree). This ancient living Baobab tree is located in the middle and can accommodate up to 23 people standing upright.

The closest border from Tsumkwe is Dobe +/- 53 km to the Botswana side. If you do not wish to drive to Sikereti and through KaudomGame Park. If you do not wish to drive through Botswana to enter Namibia again at Bagani through Moherem, remember to stop over at Tsodilo Hills - sacred worshipping grounds of the Bushman gods and over 3000 Bushman paintings amongst the hills.

### Headlines

Namibia Country Lodges has recently amended their **Terms & Conditions** to improve overall occupancy and availability. We feel motivated and positive that our measures will improve our Reservations system and ultimately alleviate the congestion over peak months. The challenge remains evident to also improve our better bed occupancy in our 512 beds during the quieter months. Our Reservations Manager Sybille du Plessis has already started sending new contracts to all our partners who we do business with. If you have not received our contract by now, please inform Sybille by e-mail [reservations@ncl.com](mailto:reservations@ncl.com)

**New Marketing Manager** Frans du Raan was appointed during mid July 2008. He has more on product knowledge, Operator relations and general marketing functions for the company. Please feel free to contact him regarding marketing matters or related issues on e-mail [marketing@ncl.com.na](mailto:marketing@ncl.com.na)

**Petra Feyand-Weilbacher** from **Petra Tourism Services** in Germany has joined Namibia Country Lodges as from 01 October 2008. She will be our new Marketing Consultant in Germany. Petra will be our point of contact in Germany and will also be establishing more awareness for NCL amongst the German Operators – Welcome & Good Luck Petra!!!

e-mail [p.e.t.r.a-marketing@web.de](mailto:p.e.t.r.a-marketing@web.de)

**Craig Edwards from Earthbound Destinations** has a passion for Namibia and manages his own Tourism business, but also promotes Namibia Country Lodges as a destination within Namibia. He aims to create awareness amongst the German Travel Industry by doing workshops or presentations to various Tour Operators.



offices in Gauteng and surrounding towns. Craig operates from Johannesburg and can be contacted on e-mail [craig@earthboundonline.co.za](mailto:craig@earthboundonline.co.za) for press releases or information on Namibia Country Lodges.

Our **Marketing Consultant in Cape Town is Pieter Engelbrecht**. He has been marketing Namibia Country lodges for the past 4 years at shows and Networking sessions. Pieter has a wealth of knowledge and contacts within the Hospitality Industry. He mainly focuses on providing product knowledge and is keen to visit your office a visit. He can be contacted on e-mail [pieter@iafrica.com](mailto:pieter@iafrica.com)

### Our Social Responsibility:

The 2008 Operation Snowball proved to be a success whereby we managed to raise funds to purchase in excess of 400 blankets which was distributed to the needy and others to local schools and orphanages in Oshakati.

Blankets were also handed out to the local community members by Namibia Country Lodge Management as part of the country wide "blanket project". Children and parents gathered at the lodge in appreciation, each receiving a blanket for those cold winter nights.

Our community project – Omdel Soup Kitchen continues to feed hungry school children 3 times a week, the older children also receive meals from De Duine Huis 3 times a week. Winter blankets were recently handed out by De Duine Huis to the Omdel children.



Opuwo Country Hotel in collaboration with Punch Life Style Computers in Windhoek sponsored a complete computer valued at N\$30 000 to Opuwo Country Station to assist them with data-capturing and communications. Computer training is offered by Opuwo Hotel Management as part of the package. The litter cleanup operation is also sponsored by the hotel, supplying food and beverages to the school children participating in this project. Blankets were also distributed amongst the needy.

One of the highlights of each evening at the Twyfelfontein dinner table is when our local choir sings in Damara-Nama while performing their traditional dance steps. The members of the choir donated N\$13 000.00 out of their own funds towards the Blanket Project. Blankets were distributed to the entire Uibas Twyfelfontein Community this year.

Auob Country Lodge, Tsumkwe Country Lodge and Solitaire Country Lodge contributed to the Blanket Project by distributing to their community members.

Thank you for reading through our news, we wish you a productive few months before the end of this year.

All the best from the NCL Team.

From front left: Sybille du Plessis  
Reservations Manager; Meke  
Imbili Consultant; Anneline  
Koekemoer Consultant;

Back right: Willem de Wet  
Managing Director; Thea  
Barnard Consultant; Frans du

*Raan Marketing Manager;  
Sandra Schickerling  
Consultant.*

