



Gathemann House on Independence Avenue, Windhoek

## WINDHOEK

A small, friendly capital, Windhoek is spread across a wide valley between bush-covered hills. As you stroll through the centre, the pavement cafés and picturesque old German architecture conspire to give a spacious, European feel, whilst street vendors remind you that this is Africa.

The office blocks are tall, but not skyscrapers, and the pace is active, but not frantic. The shops are good, especially for leather, gems and African curios, and the few restaurants are generally great value.

On your arrival we suggest a night at one of Windhoek's high-quality guesthouses to give you time and space to relax, especially if you are self driving.

The contemporary **Elegant Guesthouse** in a quiet residential area is a good-value choice. With just six tasteful rooms, it's a peaceful place for a first or last night stop.

In the pleasant district of Klein Windhoek is **Olive Grove Guesthouse**. The ten stylish, Moroccan-themed rooms (and one suite) all have verandas, and cool, grey interiors giving a refreshingly contemporary feel. Olive Grove offers massages and treatments: ideal for relaxing and unwinding after a long flight or at the end of an adventurous trip. The welcome here is warm and the food excellent!

Next door, the brand-new **Olive Exclusive Boutique Hotel** is an exclusive sister property to the Olive Grove. Luxurious and stylish, it promises seven impeccably

designed suites, four of which have their own private plunge pool.

Stylish yet traditional, the **Heintzburg Hotel** is a small converted castle with superb views of the city. It has a pool, the city's most refined dining, a great wine cellar and luxurious rooms.

Other possibilities in Windhoek include the contemporary **Vertigo Boutique Hotel**, with its city views; **Haus Sonneneck**, which is particularly good for families; the newly renovated **Villa Violet**; the friendly and modern **Village Courtyard**; and **Pension Palmquell**. On a hillside with stunning panoramas, **Hotel Pension Thule** has 25 large, modern rooms with air conditioning, and plenty of contemporary chrome and glass.

There are also a few out-of-town options near the capital. **River Crossing** is a delightful lodge situated on a game farm less than 15 minutes' drive from the heart of Windhoek. With good food and stunning views of the Auas Mountains, this is a great base to explore on foot, horseback or by Land Rover.

Further afield, 40 minutes' drive southeast

### Township Tour

If you have half a day in Windhoek, we can arrange a fascinating township tour. About 10km from Windhoek's centre, Katutura is a bustling suburb housing people from several different Namibian cultures. With a local guide, you'll explore the history, development and people of Katutura. Each trip is different, but you might take in a local market, a shebeen (local bar), a women's craft market and perhaps a local café. It is a diverse, fun and lively place to visit, and trips here usually take about three hours.

### Desert Express

The *Desert Express* is a luxury train service that runs overnight between Windhoek and Swakopmund, once every week in either direction. Dine in style as the sun sets and the moon rises above spectacular Namibian landscapes, then retire to your compact, comfortable cabin, with its en-suite shower and toilet. Ask our team for further details, and note that we will have to design your itinerary around the train's schedule.

of Windhoek, **GocheGanas** is Namibia's top spa. It offers quite good game activities within its 60km<sup>2</sup> reserve, combined with hydrotherapies, nutrition consultations, destress, detox, massage treatments and endless other opportunities for pampering!

Always ask us for news of what's best in and around Windhoek. Several of *Expert Africa's* team lived in Windhoek for most of their lives, and still have family and friends there; they are constantly updated on developments.