

DESERT CYCLE DETAILED ITINERARY

With **Save the Rhino Trust (SRT)**, Namibia - 'Nobody knows this wild area like SRT.' The benefit to us of their support & knowledge is immense. The money we raise is their lifeline.



Come cycle the Desert...if you've a hankering for adventure, exquisite scenery, eternal skies; and if you want to do something good for our planet. The wilderness is about connecting with our deeper primordial selves. The raw wild-ness of the desert touches the soul in an inexplicable way. Nature holds total domination in this great dry landscape: utter desolation, abandonment, isolation. Man is small, insignificant and vulnerable here. People who have done this adventure find that they connect with something inexpressible and profound within themselves.

SUPPORT & TIMINGS:

Cycletec provide cycle support & cycle hire to the highest professional standard. Our camp support is of the highest quality: - Tents you can stand up in, mattresses, sheets & duvets. We have scenic showers & long drop loos. The food is delicious & nourishing to fuel our adventure.

Every day we wake early to depart just before sunrise to appreciate the wonder of the golden dawn. Every day arrive by lunch time to a camp ready & set up for us, avoiding the hottest part of the day. The support vehicles are constantly with us (one in front & one behind). There is assistance at hand for any problem & punctures are swiftly dealt with. The afternoons are free to siesta, relax & read. At sundown, we take a walk or climb a hill to toast the sunset.

DAY 1 First stop out of the airport is Cycletec – Our Cycle Gurus. Their huge and fabulously equipped shop provides the very latest in cycle gear for any last minute needs. We then set off for Ugab, a 6 hour journey which takes us past some of Namibia's most stunning scenery: Spitzkoppe, The Brandberg, meaning 'Fire mountain' - Namibia's highest mountain, passing at sundown & witnessing its glow of fire. As light is fading, we arrive in the Ugab River – SRT's base for the Southern Rhino Region, a permanent camp equipped with permanent bush facilities.





The Wonder of Golden Dawn



Dramatic Mountain Scenery

DAY 2 Dawn reveals the full wonder of extraordinary rock strata & wide spreading acacia. An easy start to equip our bikes and sort ourselves out, we set off for a trial 3 hr ride. We follow the valley climbing at a gentle gradient up, until we reach the watershed. Here, with wonder, we look out across the desert, the mountains of the distance and our adventure to come. We abandon our bikes and head back for a lazy afternoon.

Approx Timings & Distance: 3hrs cycling/ 25kms

DAY 3 The first of our ‘before dawn’ starts for the cycle regime: We are woken early for a nourishing breakfast. Into the vehicle, we return to our bikes as dawn is breaking. On the top of the watershed, we stand poised: an eternal view behind us, and another spreading before us into the distance. We launch ourselves downwards and into the desert. A full day of cycling is upon us, at an easy pace. We stop every hour to refuel on water, energy foods and to re-group. There is time out to stop & take photos. Whilst some moments will fully challenge our grit and determination. As with every day we arrive at lunchtime and siesta the afternoon.

Approx Timings & Distance: 6hrs cycling/ 60 kms

DAY 4 Possibly the most scenic day of the cycle, we pass through some dramatic mountainous scenery without an excessive climb! We arrive at another stunning rocky campsite, Eagle’s Rock, where ‘Rosie-Cheeked Lovebirds’ chatter on the cliff face.

Approx Timings & Distance: 4.5hrs cycling/ 40 kms

DAY 5 The 3rd day is when the body starts to tire. We have just a short ride respecting this. We stop at the village of De Reit where excited children run out to greet us. Cycling on we arrive at the rock fortress, Doro Nawas Lodge – a community owned lodge in partnership with Wilderness Safaris. We arrive well before lunch, to enjoy a day of total relax by the pool. After 4 days of camping, sinking into crisp linen is a total joy.

Approx Timings & Distance: 3 hrs cycling/ 30 kms



One of Namibia’s famous Dirt Roads



Doro Nawas Lodge

DAY 6

Another big day: Just a short distance is spent on the rugged track, before we join one of Namibia's famous dirt roads. The smoother surface is a joy especially as we have the biggest climb of the cycle. Spectacular views at the top, we head north, then west towards the coast. A cool breeze from the sea, just 50 kms away, is felt. We arrive at 'Werld's End'- a study centre & base for conservation

Approx Timings & Distance: 6 hrs cycling/65 kms

DAY 7

We are entering the Palmwag Concession, a restricted area where wildlife is plentiful. This basalt rock-scape is the favourite home of the Desert Adapted Rhino, Desert Elephant & other species. Dry river valleys chris-cross the landscape, so the ride becomes a wonderful rollercoaster of up and down.

Approx Timings & Distance: 5.5 hrs cycling/50 kms

DAY 8

The last day's cycle: Reluctantly, we leave our bush camp, with a lingering last wild breakfast. A stop at huge canyon, provides us with a refreshing plunge into water. The palms of Palmwag Lodge draw us on to our destination. An afternoon of lounging by pool is a welcome treat. As the sun sinks, we walk over to the Rhino Centre to understand why their work is important. We have a sun downer up on the hill with a toast Mike Hearn, the inspiration for this cycle, who's work we are by now familiar with.

Approx Timings & Distance: 4 hrs cycling/40 kms

Day 9 (Stay 3 Nights Palmwag Lodge)

A day of total relax by the pool. A walk to a sun-downer spot with views in every direction.

Day 10

Rhino Tracking. We set off into the Wilderness with Save the Rhino Trust as our guides. They show us their expertise in finding the secret hide-out of the Desert Adapted Rhino. We discover the truth about this remarkable creature & its extraordinary survival ability.

Day 11

Return Transfer to Windhoek to fly out. Or continue onwards to Kobo Kobo Hills (3 nights)



Sundown at Palmwag Lodge



Tracking the desert adapted Rhino

SAVE THE RHINO TRUST NAMIBIA SRT

Desert Cycle seeks to continue the work of Mike Hearn who spent 12 years working with SRT before his tragic death in 2005. Over 4 years, Desert Cycle has raised approx £130,000 and become a vital source of income for SRT's work among the communities of Northern Namibia in preserving an extraordinary corner of Africa

This fragile desert landscape is not a National Park. It is communally owned by the people & therefore needs the help of conservation NGOs. SRT's research arm set up by Mike Hearn works to preserve and manage this vast landscape of 20,000 km². SRT works with and through rural communities, the Herero, the Himba & the Damara. Employing them, empowering them & educating them in the management of their valuable natural resources. Rural people are at the centre of SRT's work.

The Desert Adapted Rhino, an endangered subspecies of the black rhino (*Diceros Bicornis Bicornis*), is uniquely adapted to the desert. Saving Rhinos involves saving every desert species of flora and fauna and protecting this glorious landscape.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION – KOBO KOBO HILLS

www.kobokobo.com.na

3 days of total unwind in the wild at this remote and idyllic retreat. Set in a stunning rock scape, an extraordinary pool with a view. It's a pure delight to just hang out and drink it all in, whilst being plied with lovingly prepared food – our hostess Kirstie knows just how to look after exhausted cyclists. There are walks, huge rocks to climb to watch the sundown, or just relax surrounded by birds & wildlife. There's something very special about this place such that people can hardly bear to tear themselves away!

