Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Okapuka endurance training

NAMIBIA

A **endurance ride** on fit, endurance trained Arabian horses within a **private game reserve** north of Windhoek. Discover what it takes to be an endurance rider, and end your holiday on a high and participate in an **official race in Namibia**. Venture into the mountains or across the savannah in search of rich wildlife.

Endurance	**10 days / 7 days riding -**	**From £0**	


Enjoy an endurance riding holiday in Namibia


Ride Okapuka's beautiful Arabian horses


Discover the Namibian bush on horseback

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Compete in a real FEI endurance race
- Discover what it takes to be an endurance rider and train on the beautiful Arabian horses
- Good game viewing including rhino, giraffe, eland, kudu and the rare sable antelope.
- No dangerous game such as elephant or lion to restrict your riding
- Small groups of riders (no more than 6 plus guides)
- Comfortable lodge accommodation
- Malaria free private game reserve

Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - WINDHOEK - No riding

Fly from Europe to Windhoek. There are no direct flights from the UK to Namibia and so it is likely that you will fly via Johannesburg.

Flights are not included but can be booked on request.

Day 2 — 2: WINDHOEK - OKAPUKA - 1-2 hours riding

Okapuka Lodge

You will be met on arrival at Windhoek airport and transferred to the lodge, about 45 mins north of Windhoek. If you arrive early enough then there is time for a short ride to get to know your horse. A team briefing of what to expect in the coming week.

Your first evening at the lodge where you can enjoy an aperitif and a delicious meal, before a restful night in preparation for your first full day in the saddle.

The following programme is only given for indicative purposes. It may vary depending on weather conditions, seasons, etc.

Day 3 — 3: OKAPUKA - 4 to 5 hours riding

Okapuka Lodge

After an early breakfast, head to the stables for your first full morning ride. Head out across the savannah in search of plains game such as giraffe, zebra, various antelope and rhino.

Return to the lodge for lunch and an afternoon of endurance training. Here, you will discuss the rules, regulations and veterinary checks.

Dinner and overnight at the lodge.

Day 4 — 4: OKAPUKA - 5 hours riding

Okapuka Lodge

Set off on a picnic ride, with c. 3 hours riding in the morning and a further c. 2 hours in the afternoon. Follow game trails and canter along dry riverbeds - you should be feeling quite comfortable on your horse by now and ready for some faster riding.

After a relaxing picnic lunch in the shade, return to the lodge in the afternoon for your second ride in the heart of the reserve.

Day 5 — 5: OKAPUKA - 4-5 hours riding

Okapuka Lodge

After breakfast head out for a day of great game viewing where you can see the animals that inhabit the Koudou reserve. After a morning in the saddle, return to the lodge for lunch and a siesta.
In the afternoon, you will set out on horseback for an afternoon of endurance training. Accompanied by Ingeborg, you will be given the best advice for the competition ahead.

Dinner and overnight at the lodge.

Day 6 — 6: OKAPUKA - 4 hours riding

Okapuka Lodge

This morning, you will discover another part of the reserve where you will continue your endurance training.

If you have chosen to compete in an official race, today is the day you prepare for the big race ahead. After your and your horse are prepared and ready, travel by road to the start of the race. When arriving, horses must complete their first veterinary check.

In the evening, trainers and FEI officials will debrief all competitors in regards to the itinerary and race rules.

An exciting evening ahead. Dinner with fellow competitors.

Day 7 — 7: OKAPUKA - 4h30 riding or endurance race

Okapuka Lodge

If you have chosen to take part in the endurance initiation course, dependant on your skill, you will compete in a mini race that is organised by the reserve at the team to give you a small taste of what a real endurance race is like.

If you are participating in the official race, today is the big day! An early morning wake up to be ready for the 6am race start! You will be assisted by a member of the team to help you prepare your horse to FEI standard, and to help you complete the necessary veterinary checks.
Depending on the terrain and distance, the speed of the race can vary. However, the standard speed is usually around 18 km/h.

After the race, the care of your horse is priority before settling down from all of the excitement before the award ceremony begins. An aperitif and well deserved meal with your fellow competitors to end your day, and the unforgettable experience on horseback.

Day 8 — 8: OKAPUKA - 4h30 riding or drive back

Okapuka Lodge

For the endurance initiation riders, a late breakfast this morning before hopping on board to enjoy your last full day in the saddle. A new area to explore, looking for game and racing along the dried out riverbeds. One last lunch in the bush, before returning back to the lodge where you can make the most of the long, sandy canter tracks.

If you participated in the official race, you will spend your morning caring for your horse before heading back by road to he lodge.

A farewell dinner at the lodge.

Day 9 — 9: OKAPUKA - WINDHOEK - 1-2 hours riding

If your flight departs after midday then there will be time for a short ride this morning. You will then be transferred to the airport in time for your flight home. Please note that if your flight departs in the afternoon then you may need to vacate your room at the lodge, but you can still use the communal facilities.

Alternatively you may like to extend your stay with a Mountain trail (3 days / 2 nights)

International flights are not included but can be booked for you on request.

Day 10 — 10: EUROPE

Arrive back into Europe in the morning.

DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Price details

No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.
- Flights to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Prices are based on two riders sharing a double or twin room.

- Listed prices are based on the basic introduction to endurance programme. If you would like to participate in an official competition, please see details and rates below.

- Groups are made up of 1 to 6 international riders, plus guides

- You can arrive and depart on any day. Please contact us for a personalised quote.

- There is a single supplement payable for anyone in a single room. This is c. €315/£275 for the week in 2020. If you sign up as a single rider, this will be invoiced and reimbursed as soon as a sharer is found for you.

- There is a rider weight limit of 85kgs. It is possible to join the ride if you weigh slightly more than this, but there is a supplement payable of c. €500/£430 for a second horse. Please enquire if you weigh more than 85kgs.

- Airport transfers:
> €200/£175 from Windhoek Kutako Airport, return per vehicle (4 riders max)
> €110/£95 from Windhoek city, return per vehicle (4 riders max)

- Non-riders are welcome and will be offered the usual safari game drives and walks at a discounted rate of €1813/£1550.

- Children discount (children -12 yo sharing with their parents): -15% (sharing with their parent, children menu at meal times).

OFFICIAL ENDURANCE RACES:

The following dates (2020) will be available for guest riders to join the team on one of their endurance competitions (please note the date may show as full above, as they are strictly reserved to those willing to take part in the endurance races. Contact us for availability if you are interested).

February 7 & 8 – Windhoek area (2 hour drive)
February 28 & 29 – Otjiwarongo area (4 hour drive)
April 3 & 4 – Tsumeb area (5 hour drive)
May 22 & 23 – Otjiwarongo area (4 hour drive)
June 19 & 20 – Windhoek area (2 hour drive)
July 3 & 4 – Tsumeb area (5 hour drive)
October 17 – Otjiwarongo area (4 hour drive)
October 30 & 31 – Windhoek area (2 hour drive)

All distances (20, 30, 40, 60, 80, 100 & 120km) are NERA. Due to the increase in our temperature the competitions in October will have a maximum distance 80km.
Guest riders do not have to be member of an endurance club or to be endurance riders, but they do need to be fit. For those riders not being a member of a club, the maximum distance is 80km with an average speed of 16km/h due to the fact that they are considered novice endurance riders.

Prices if booking with official endurance races in 2020:

Endurance programme with NERA race (1 day) : €3730/£3170/$4095
Endurance programme with NERA race (2 days) : €3980/£3385/$4370
Endurance programme with CEI/FEI race (1 day) : €4080/£3470/$4480
Endurance programme with CEI/FEI race (2 days) : €4330/£3680/$4755
Please Note
The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.
The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English speaking horse guide

LOGISTIC

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

ACCOMMODATION

Double room in lodge based on Stable Room.

MEALS

Full board from first dinner to last breakfast

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Bar drinks (other than water/wine with meals)
Lunch on D9

TRANSPORTS

International flights

EXTRA

Tips to local team

EXTRAS

Endurance race fees (see dates and prices)

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as

your travel is booked in case of cancellation.
Visas and personal purchase

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement

TRANSPORT

Airport transfers from/to Windhoek: per vehicle with 6 passengers maximum

LOGISTIC

Extra horse supplement for anyone weighing over 85 kg

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

There are 24 pure bred Arabian horses and 4 Arabian crosses. Many are home-bred or have been imported and some compete in endurance competitions.

You ride in lightweight endurance saddles (Leon Liversage) which are comfortable for horse and rider. They have a sheepskin cover and saddle bags. Most horses are ridden in snaffles but some are ridden in a rope halter.

There is a rider weight limit of 85kg.

Guide & local team

You are usually guided by your host Ingeborg or her niece Sacha. Both are experienced endurance riders and guides.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a capable rider who is confident on a fit and forward going Arabian horse.

There is a rider weight limit of 80 kg/12,6 stones for endurance rides. If you weigh more than this please contact us for availability, and please remember there will be a supplement to guarantee another horse.

PACE

The pace is varied to include walk when viewing game as well as some long trots and canters. These are Arabian horses and many are trained for endurance, so the canters can be long.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You are expected to groom and tack up your own horse, and to help un-tack and wash down after riding.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

The horses are all Arabians and so you need to be a confident and experienced rider, capable of handling a fit horse. The weather can be hot and dry with an intense sun, so you need to be fit for long hours in the saddle.

Novice horses and novice riders are athletes that have not yet successfully completed their novice class: 2 x a distance between 40 & 60km and 2 x a distance of 80km, or 3 x a distance of 80km. All with a maximum average speed 16kph. After having successfully finished these required distances within a 24-month period the athlete is allowed to compete on CEI/FEI-level.
Advanced athletes that have completed their novices class may (still) be restricted to participate in either a CEI/FEI1*, CEI/FEI2* or CEI/FEI3* ride.

Depending on your riding ability, fitness and health, the horse's temperament as well as you being a novice rider or a member of an endurance club, the team will decide what distance you can do. If you are a novice endurance rider your maximum distance on the ride is 80km. And your average speed is a maximum of 16kph.

If you are a member of an endurance club please bring your logbook so that you can add your kilometres.
The decision on what distance you ride remains with Okapuka. Whatever distance you ride, you are expected to finish (well) and at the same time have fun riding their gorgeous and very fit horses. And please make sure that you are fit!

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Saddles bags are provided so that you can carry water bottles and your personal equipment (camera, suncream etc) during the day.
We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

You stay at the lodge in either Park or Stable rooms.
The thatched Park rooms overlook the riverbed or have a view over the savannah. They have a fan and there is a supplement to stay in these rooms.
The Stable rooms overlook the sandy paddocks where the horses rest. They have en-suite shower rooms and are spacious but less luxurious than the Park rooms.

MEALS

Meals are usually eaten at the lodge, although there are occasional picnics on full day rides. The lodge restaurant specialises in game dishes based on Namibian and European cuisine. There is an extensive wine list which includes many top South African wines. All meals are included but drinks are payable locally so that you can choose from the bar.

CLIMATE

The summer (October - March) can be hot, with temperatures reaching 40c on particularly hot days. The winter (May-Sept) offers pleasant temperatures during the day (15-22c) but the nights can be cool (as low as zero).
Namibia is a dry country so there are few days of rain, but if it does rain then it is usually during the hot, summer months when it is quite welcome!

TIPS

Tips are welcome but not expected. We recommend c. USD 10 per person per day, but you should give what you feel comfortable with. We recommend giving the tips to your guide who can distribute them amongst all of the staff members.

PACKING LIST

Head
- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana

Upper body
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and thorns
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee and it's better to be prepared. Layering is key to cope with the fluctuations in temperature between day and night
- Casual clothes for the evening

Legs
- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Shorts for non-riding trips
- Casual clothes for the evening

Hands and Feet
- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps to protect against thorns. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for moving around the lodge and camp
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear

Other useful items
- Swimsuit
- Sarong
- Binoculars for viewing game
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night

In your luggage
- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. Some toiletries are provided by the camps so you can pack lighter.

In your hand luggage
- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

Medical kit
- Sunscreen and lip balm - must be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing deet
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Ear plugs, particularly if you are a light sleeper
- Anti malarial tablets and Yellow Fever Certificate if required (check with your doctor)
- Water bottle

Our Recommendations
- Wherever possible you should wear neutral colours, such as beige, brown or natural bush colours for riding as bright colours, such as red, yellow or white can startle the wildlife and they will see you long before you've seen them.
- Evenings are nice and relaxed, and long sleeves and light trousers are recommended to avoid mosquitoes!
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Carry a copy of your passport and insurance details with you.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please see this page .