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For Immediate Release

Namibia's Natural Beauty a Hit with All

From east to west and north to south and everywhere in between, Namibia's wonderful scope of natural beauty has long made it a big draw card for tourists to visit this land of contrasts. Its wide range of topography as well as its variety of rivers, deserts and mountains provides the perfect landscape to travel through and enjoy!

Namibia's surface area is 824 268km² of natural beauty, just waiting to be discovered and explored! From its famous Namib desert stretching along the entire coastal region, the central plateau with its variety of landscapes of jagged mountain ranges and rocky outcrops to its infinite plains and sandy basins, the Kalahari Desert with its picturesque red dunes to the Kavango and Capri regions, famous for its tropical forests, savannah landscapes and variety of rivers, Namibia provides a wide range of scenery in one country.

Sporting a dry climate and known as the most arid country in the Southern African region, Namibia has few perennial rivers, which makes water a major resource for the country. The little bit of rain, when it does fall, falls in the southern hemisphere's summer, except in the south-western regions of Namibia that experiences a winter rainfall.

Namibia boasts 14 vegetation zones with over 120 species of tree and 200 endemic plant species in the area. Speaking of natural beauty, an interesting item to note is that the Namib Desert is the only desert worldwide which is home to the desert elephant, lion, rhino and giraffe. One of the more popular inhabitants, the *Welwitschia mirabilis* is one of the oldest plants known to man and endemic to Namib Desert.

The Skeleton Coast in Namibia is also famous as being more than purely a ship graveyard. Mother Nature has blessed this region abundantly, with even the seemingly barren sand dunes playing host to a specialised fauna system unique to Namibia and worldwide, with a community of interdependent insects, reptiles and small mammals as well as a surprisingly large variety of desert dwelling feathered friends.

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The country generally has cloudless night skies, especially during the drier winter months and this, combined with minimal air pollution and artificial light, ensures perfect conditions of the southern constellations, providing outstanding stargazing conditions. It is popular with both amateur and professional astronomers, with the Khomas Hochland/Gamsberg area west of Windhoek being exceptionally favoured as it has the world's third clearest and least populated sky worldwide.

Many lodges have now acquired medium sized telescopes for guests to make use of and even provide an introduction to astrology for interested parties. Sit back and enjoy the solitude and the galaxy of stars waiting to be sighted...wish upon a star, you never know – your dream may just become a reality!

As the days draw to a close and the sun sets in the sky like an orange ball of fire over the breathtakingly picturesque landscape which is Namibia, take the time to stop and enjoy the view, take a picture or two to capture the moment and enjoy Namibia's natural beauty.

For further information and insight on Namibia's natural beauty, contact the Namibia Tourism Board on (011) 702 9602 or (021) 422 3298 or visit www.namibiatourism.com.na.

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