



SHONGOLOLO
EXPRESS

SPECIAL ITINERARY

PRETORIA-WINDHOEK • 6 NIGHTS • 2775km



DAY 1: PRETORIA	
	Please check-in a minimum of one hour before departure. Should you wish to visit our museum or do a site tour at Rovos Rail Station, we suggest arriving two hours prior to departure.
12:00	Depart Rovos Rail Station, Pretoria . Travel southeast across the Highveld and the goldfields of the Witwatersrand towards Heidelberg, site of the first Rand gold strike, and Balfour, a small mining town in Mpumalanga.
13:00	Lunch is served in the dining cars.
16:30	Tea in the lounge and observation cars.
19:30	Dinner is served in the dining cars en route to Elandslaagte. <i>Dress: Smart Casual</i>
DAY 2: NAMBITI GAME CONSERVANCY	
05:30	Breakfast is served in the dining cars.
07:30	Enjoy a game drive in the Nambiti Reserve , a private Big Five bush retreat set on 20 000 acres of malaria-free bushveld with incredible biodiversity including savannah, grasslands, thornveld and tall acacia trees.
13:00	Lunch is served in the dining cars.
16:30	Tea in the lounge and observation cars.
19:30	Dinner is served in the dining cars en route to Harrismith. <i>Dress: Smart Casual</i>
	The Drakensberg Mountains were first named by the Voortrekkers who thought the unbroken chain of heavily weathered peaks reminded them of the spines on a dragon's back, hence the name 'Dragon Mountain' or <i>Drakensberg</i> in Afrikaans. Some of the highest peaks sit at 3450m.
DAY 3: GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL PARK & CLARENS	
06:00	Breakfast is served in the dining cars.
08:00	Transfer (±90 min) to Clarens via the Golden Gate Highlands National Park . The park's most notable features are its golden ochre and orange-hued deeply eroded sandstone cliffs and outcrops, especially the Brandwag rock. Enjoy lunch (own account) in the small and picturesque town of Clarens situated in the foothills of the Maluti Mountains .
12:30	Transfer (±60 min) to the Sandstone Heritage Trust , a large agricultural estate that houses an impressive collection of heritage trains, tractors, busses, cars and military vehicles.
15:30	Return to the train in Bethlehem.
16:30	Tea in the lounge and observation cars.
19:30	Dinner is served in the dining cars en route to Kroonstad. <i>Dress: Smart Casual</i>
DAY 4: KIMBERLEY	
07:00	Breakfast is served in the dining cars.
10:30	Enjoy a tour of Kimberley's Diamond Mine Museum and the Big Hole . Capital of the Northern Cape, Kimberley is well known for the discovery of diamonds that led to its establishment in 1871.
13:30	Lunch is served in the dining cars. The observation car will be leading the train until midnight – a different aspect that our rail enthusiasts enjoy.
16:30	Tea in the lounge and observation cars.
19:30	Dinner is served in the dining cars en route to De Aar, an important railway junction. <i>Dress: Smart Casual</i>

	<p>Covering the southwestern reaches of South Africa's interior plateau is the Great Karoo, a high and dry region that takes its name from a Khoi word meaning 'land of great thirst'. Scientists use the name Karoo to describe the geological base for the interior plateau covering two-thirds of southern Africa. Between 150 and 250 million years ago, vast sediments were laid down in a series of three distinct layers. The Dwyka Series is a layer about 900m thick consisting of rocks encased in a matrix of mudstone and moraine believed to be debris of a previous ice age. After its deposition came a period of climatic change when much of the earth was covered in forests, thick swamps, huge lakes and densely vegetated wetlands. From this steamy world of mud, jungles and water, the Ecca Series, a 3000m-thick layer of shale and sandstone, was formed. Locked into rocks of this series is a wealth of fossils ranging from small reptiles to huge tree stumps, some still upright.</p> <p>Above this is the Beaufort Series, a layer of sedimentary deposition about 5600m thick that created the face of the Karoo as we know it today. Over time, igneous material from the centre of the earth forced its way through vertical and horizontal cracks in the Karoo's sedimentary depositions forming dolerite dykes (vertical) and dolerite sills (horizontal). As the soft sedimentary rocks weathered away, the harder or more resistant dolerite dykes and sills remained forming the flat-topped, bell-like buttes that characterise the Karoo.</p> <p>The vast herds of springbok (<i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>) of 150 years ago have been replaced by sheep, one of the few animals able to survive on the low-lying scrub that is the common vegetation. Springbok once migrated across the Karoo in herds of up to 40 000, a sight viewed by David Livingstone. He wrote at the time: 'It is probable that, notwithstanding the continual destruction by firearms, they will continue long to hold their place.' How wrong he was. Today it is rare to see a springbok in the wild beyond the confines of a game farm or reserve. Sheep farming has become the main economic activity of the area, often on large farms of thousands of acres. The dryness of the land is deceptive as water is relatively plentiful deep underground in aquifers. To bring water to the surface farmers use windmills; the turning sails and stark outlines of these structures have become synonymous with the Karoo skyline.</p>
DAY 5: UPINGTON & THE ORANGE RIVER <i>BORDER: NAKOP, SOUTH AFRICA / ARIAMSVLEI, NAMIBIA</i>	
07:00 13:00 15:30 19:30	<p>Breakfast is served in the dining cars until 10:00. The train travels to Upington. Lunch is served in the dining cars. Enjoy a walking tour of Upington followed by a boat cruise on the Orange River. Dinner is served in the dining cars en route to Ariamsvlei. Border formalities with Namibia. <i>Dress: Smart Casual</i></p> <p>The Orange River is the longest river in South Africa (2432km/1511mi). It rises in the Drakensberg Mountains in Lesotho and flows westwards through South Africa to the Atlantic Ocean. It forms part of the borders between South Africa and Lesotho and South Africa and Namibia. Except for Upington, it does not pass through any major cities. Attorney General of the Cape, Sir Thomas Upington was principally responsible for liquidating the business activities of all the Orange River pirates and capturing their leader, Klaas Lucas. When the desperadoes were finally chased away in 1884, the town was founded on the banks of the Orange River and named in his honour.</p>
DAY 6: FISH RIVER CANYON	
06:00 09:00 13:00 16:30 19:30	<p>Breakfast is served in the dining cars. Transfer (±60 min) to the Fish River Canyon. Lunch is served in the dining cars. The train travels along the southern reaches of the Kalahari Basin. Tea in the lounge and observation cars. The train travels north through the Kalahari to Mariental. Dinner is served in the dining cars. <i>Dress: "1920s" Theme or Smart Casual</i></p> <p>The Fish River rises in the centre of the country before flowing south into the Orange River on Namibia's border with South Africa. It has formed the great Fish River Canyon – the largest canyon in the southern hemisphere and probably only second to Arizona's Grand Canyon in terms of size. The vast rocky landscape breaks up into a series of spectacular cliffs. Its size is impressive: 161km long, up to 27km wide and almost 550m at its deepest.</p>
DAY 7: WINDHOEK	
07:00 12:00	<p>Breakfast is served in the dining cars. Arrive at journey's end at Windhoek Station. Transfer to Windhoek Airport.</p> <p>Situated in Namibia's central highlands, Windhoek is an attractive city surrounded by clusters of hills and the impressive Auas and Eros Mountains. The Kalahari semi-desert extends to 900 000km² and covers much of Botswana, parts of Namibia and South Africa. The surrounding basin covers over 2 500 000km², extending farther and encroaching into parts of Angola, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Known as 'Kgalagadi' in Botswana, the Kalahari is not a true desert as it does experience small amounts of rain, with some areas enjoying up to 250mm. The geography is part desert, part plateau. The only constant river, the Okavango, flows into a delta in the northwest forming marshes that are rich in wildlife. Ancient dry riverbeds traverse the central northern reaches of the Kalahari and provide standing pools of water during the rainy season. Previously havens for wild animals, the riverbeds are now mostly grazing spots.</p> <p>Due to variability in rainfall and generally arid conditions, the Kalahari is sparsely populated. In Namibia and South Africa there are large ranches up to 40 000ha in size, raising mostly sheep and ostriches. In Botswana, the land is mainly used on a communal basis with inhabitants raising goats and cattle.</p> <p>The best known of the Kalahari's locals are the so-called bushmen numbering only a few thousand. Squeezed into inhospitable pieces of land, they are often exploited as cheap farm labour. They are the remnants of Southern Africa's original inhabitants who occupied the whole sub-continent long before Black and White settlers invaded their territories. As proof of the fact, there are the superb 'bushmen' rock paintings that are found in great numbers in caves and rock shelters all over Southern Africa. In Namibia, excellent examples can be found in the Damaraland region.</p>

Please dress accordingly for excursions: mornings can be cool then warm up considerably; afternoons can be warm then cool down considerably. Warm clothing, comfortable non-slip walking shoes, hats and sun protection are advised. Rain capes are available.

Excursions may be changed according to schedule achieved. Times are approximate and cannot be guaranteed.
Please check with the Train Manager or reservations@shongololo.com for any updates/changes to the itinerary.

We strongly discourage giving any form of handout to children while travelling. This action may have detrimental consequences to local communities. If you would like to give responsibly, we support many local charities and would be happy to assist.

INCLUDED: Accommodation; all meals; all beverages on board; limited laundry; excursions with a qualified guide (where applicable); entrance fees as per itinerary; transfer to Windhoek Airport; government tax. **EXCLUDED:** All off-train beverages; international sparkling wine; lunch in Clarens; gratuities; personal expenses; visas; travel insurance; pre- and post-tour transfers, accommodation and flights.

MEALS ON BOARD (unless adjusted): Breakfast 07:00-10:00 • Lunch 13:00 • Tea 16:30 • Dinner 19:30.