

Sossusvlei



Many visitors to Namibia say that no part of the desert is visually more stunning than Sossusvlei with its monumentally high dunes, the shadows of their sinuous crests and warm colours continually changing as the day waxes and wanes. These gigantic star-shaped mountains of sand up to 325 meters high are a sought-after topic for photographers.

The warm tints of the sand, ranging from pale apricot to brick orange and deep red, contrast vividly with the dazzling white surfaces of the large clay pans at their bases. One of these, referred to as Dead Pan, is a large expanse of dry white clay, punctuated by skeletons of ancient camel-thorn trees, dated as being up to 500 years old.

Sossusvlei's mountainous dunes lie at the end of the erosional trough formed by the Tsauchab River. They are shaped by strong multi-directional winds, primarily the south-western, and have three to five sinuous crests, which meet at the highest point to give them their star shape, best seen from the air.

When it has rained sufficiently in the interior for the Tsauchab River to come down in flood and fill the main pan, flamingos and other aquatic birds are attracted to the area, bringing alive this surreal wonder of nature. There is no accommodation at Sossusvlei itself. A variety of lodges - most are presented in this brochure - are located just outside the Sesriem gate. The distance from this official gate to the dunes is about 60 kilometres. Sossusvlei can only be visited between sunrise and sunset.

Sossusvlei is a 'must-see'. The problem is, everybody wants to go there, which

makes it very touristic and overcrowded. Hence, we suggest you stay one night at any of the plentiful lodges close to Sossuvlei, go in and tick off (been there, done that, got the t-shirt) and then venture on to Wolwedans and NamibRand to spend exclusive quality time far away from the maddening crowds.

Sossusvlei excursions by road are NOT offered from Wolwedans, unless you have a private plane and can fly there in the early morning hours.