



MICHAEL POHAMBHA HAINDONGO

“It excites me to take guests on safari and show them the beauty and diversity that Namibia and Africa have to offer. It’s like discovering new gems each and every day.”

Guiding Experience: Mike has been guiding since 2004.

Regional Knowledge & Expertise: Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Ideal for Accompanying: Adventurous families, multi-generational family travel, couples, solo travellers, small groups.

Areas of Special Interest: Wildlife, Kunene region of Namibia, travelling, reading, hiking.

Qualifications:

- Mike is based at Etosha Heights, but he can guide anywhere else in Namibia.
- He has a Nature Conservation and Management Diploma Polytechnic, NATH level 3.
- He has Wilderness Safaris entry level and intermediate guide training, and has worked in all the Wilderness camps in Namibia.
- Weapon proficiency level 2 from Ongava Game Reserve and FGASA level 1.
- Guide training plus 7 years working as an overland guide with Ultimate Safaris.
- Cheetah conservation future leaders training with National Geographic Children Expeditions.
- Freelance with Thomson Safaris and Nomad Tours.
- Managing and guiding with Hoodia Desert Lodge.
- Expedition training with CCA, now And Beyond.
- Boat and river training with Serra Cafema.

Languages: English, Afrikaans, basic Portuguese, very basic Spanish, Oshiwambo. Herero, Kimbundu.

Currently Lives: Etosha Heights, in Namibia.

Michael was born in 1979, in Kwanza Norte Central Angola. His parents were part of the SWAPO Liberation movement, so he was raised in an Angolan SWAPO refugee camp until the age 9 years, when he was included in a school programme in Cuba. Run by UNICEF as a joint venture with the Red Cross, this presented a life-changing opportunity for Michael and other Namibian children, who also went to Germany, Romania and Slovakia.

The programme was terminated in 1990 when Namibia gained its independence, and Michael joined his mother back in Namibia in 1994, to complete high school in Oshakati and Windhoek, respectively. After leaving school, he enrolled at the Polytechnic of Namibia, now the University of Science and Technology, to study Nature Conservation and Management. While at the Polytech, Michael was introduced to Lloyd Camp, a guide trainer. For his in-service training, Michael was placed at Desert Rhino camp and divided his time between the camp and working with Mike Hearn of Save the Rhino Trust.

After leaving the Polytech, Michael travelled to South Africa to do the FGASA course (Field Guides Association of South Africa), and started his guiding career at Londolozi. He then worked with AndBeyond (previously CC Africa) as both camp assistant and guide. A move back to Namibia led to Michael joining Wilderness Safaris, working at most of their Namibian properties as well as guiding their overland safaris. A seven-year overland guiding stint with Ultimate Safaris followed, before Michael joined Natural Selection – where he is now based at Etosha Heights. With 17 years of guiding experience in Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe – plus a host of courses and qualifications under his belt – Michael has great all-round knowledge!

