

Natural Selection Hoanib Elephant Camp

A solar-powered desert retreat with private plunge pools—and a penchant for arid-adapted wildlife



ROOMS

10

Reviewed by **SAMANTHA FALEWÉE**

Best for: A safari stop deep in the [Namibian](#) desert that's ideal for adventurous couples; inquisitive, nature-centric family groups; and travelers who already have a classic safari under their belts and are ready for more.

Location: Northwest Namibia, in the Sesfontein Conservancy of the arid Hoanib Valley.



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Can't-miss feature: The remote dreamscape of sand-and-gravel plains, rippled hummock dunes, and metamorphic mountains, all washed in soft colors like lilac, ochre, and dun-brown.

In a nutshell: This new arrival brings a fresh level of luxury to Namibia's Hoanib Valley, made famous by its desert-adapted elephants and other wildlife. As you leave your suite each morning in search of game, the streamlined architecture looks, in the rising sun, like something out of a scene in *Dune*—minimal, intriguing, and ahead of its time.

Rooms

The 10 stand-alone suites (including two family units) are made of insulated canvas, with air conditioning, deeply comfortable king-size beds, and ensuite bathrooms. When you first enter, walk through to the floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors out onto your private veranda and plunge pool, facing a swath of desert where elephants sometimes stroll by.



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Food and drink

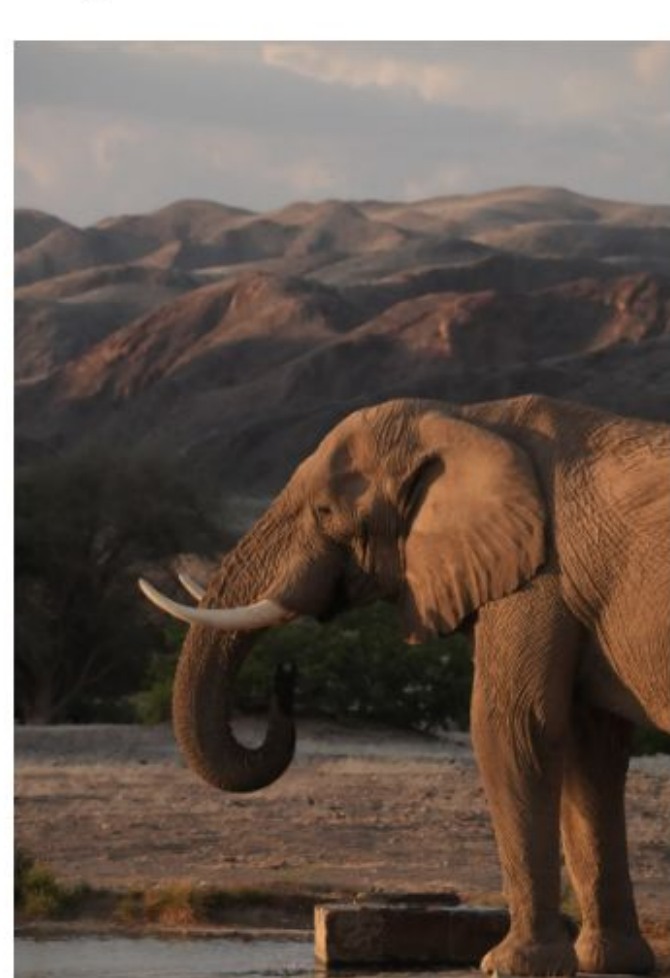
Each day, a selection of à la carte menu items are scrawled on a blackboard, including amuse-bouches and fresh starters like tomato tartar. A vegetarian option is always presented.

"Everything we make here is handmade," chef Tyiesha Urion said as I devoured an elegant plate of filet mignon, with mashed potatoes wrapped in paper-thin phyllo dough. Dessert always follows, but I preferred to greet the evening chill with an Amarula-spiked hot chocolate, snuggled on a couch surrounded by flickering candles.

Amenities and experiences

Guests head out on game drives, nature walks, and morning excursions with Herero and Himba communities, returning back to cocktails next to the pool in the main lounge area. Here in the 618,000-acre Sesfontein Conservancy roam three desert-adapted herds of elephants, southern giraffes, black rhinos, baboons, and tiny steenboks. Sometimes lions will range into the area from their primary turf along the Skeleton Coast, causing much excitement amongst humans and animals alike.

Considering the remote location, the camp's range of wellness treatments is impressive, from rose-clay exfoliation wraps to full manis and pedis to massages with Namibian calabash gourds. Treatments can be done in your suite or in the spa room located just off the main lounge area.



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The backstory

Part of the Natural Selection safari collection, this camp in the Sesfontein Conservancy follows in the footsteps of its nearby sister property Hoanib Valley Camp—albeit in a more upscale style.

This conservancy, and the camp's involvement there, is perhaps most visionary in its community-led format, in which surrounding communities opt to support the lodges, protecting wildlife and striving for peaceful coexistence. At Hoanib Elephant Camp, 97% of the team grew up in the Sesfontein village, a point of pride amongst the staff I spoke with.

If you meet General Manager Petty Daniels, count yourself lucky—this leader rose through the ranks and leads a team as warm and accommodating as anywhere I've ever been.

Insider tip

When Natural Selection opened the neighboring Hoanib Valley Camp back in 2018, it did so in part to support the work of the [Giraffe Conservation Foundation](#) in its efforts to protect wild giraffes. Now, with the debut of this camp in 2026, the pachyderms get their turn.

Guests are able to work with their guide to contribute photographs of the elephants they see to a citizen-science tracking program facilitated through EarthRanger, a real-time conservation tool that gathers data on species movement. "We want to open guests' minds and show them, if they're curious, how these animals live," says conservation coordinator Katie Ahl.

Final considerations

Family friendly: Yes. Two of the 10 suites are built specifically for families.

Accessibility: From the time you step out of the game-viewing vehicle to the time you enter your suite, all of the camp is located on one level. The main lounge and dining area, suites, and pathways sit on raised decks for sand-free movement around camp.

Eco efforts: The camp runs on solar power (with a backup generator at the ready).

Loyalty group: Natural Selection