

Experience the Magic of the Kalahari

Upington & Kalahari

Encounter the Wild: A Thrill for Nature Lovers

The region offers abundant opportunities for unforgettable wildlife encounters, with diverse species roaming freely across the vast landscapes. From imposing predators to graceful antelope, visitors have the chance to witness nature in its purest form.



A Thriving Wine Industry in an Arid Land

Despite its semi-arid climate, Upington has emerged as a key player in South Africa's wine industry. The fertile banks of the Orange River provide the necessary irrigation for high-quality grape farming, supporting both table grape exports and wine production. The region is particularly famous for its sweet dessert wines, such as Muscadell and Hanepoot, as well as high-quality dry wines. The Orange River Cellars, one of the largest wine cooperatives in South Africa, produces a wide variety of wines that have gained recognition both locally and internationally, showcasing the agricultural potential and economic importance of the wine industry.

Wine Route & Cellar Experience

Visitors to the region can enjoy wine-tasting experiences at Orange River Cellars, where expert winemakers guide you through a selection of award-winning wines. Learn about the unique terroir that makes these wines so distinctive, and discover how the arid climate and abundant sunshine contribute to concentrated flavors and exceptional wine varieties.



A Biodiversity Hotspot in the Desert

The Kalahari is home to an incredible array of wildlife, remarkably adapted to the harsh desert environment. Some species such as the black-maned Kalahari lion, cheetahs, leopards, and spotted hyenas adapt to survive in extremely arid conditions. The desert also supports large herds of antelope, including springbok, gemsbok, and red hartebeest, providing plentiful prey for carnivores, with over 200 species recorded, including the striking sociable weaver bird, and wildlife diversity. Many species are permanent residents yet the desert wildlife changes seasonally due to migrations.

Kalahari Safari

Experience the magic of the Kalahari with a guided safari. From the iconic black-maned lions to vast herds of springbok and other wildlife, every moment promises unforgettable encounters.

Best Viewing Times

May through September offers the best wildlife viewing opportunities, as animals gather around waterholes and are more active during the cool morning and late afternoon hours, providing optimal game-viewing conditions.



The Lifeline of the Orange River

The Orange River, South Africa's longest river, plays a crucial role in transforming Upington into an agricultural oasis.

Without this mighty waterway, the region would be unable to support its thriving wine industry and agricultural production. The river enables the flourishing of vineyards, citrus orchards, and vegetable farms, making Upington one of the country's key agricultural centers. Beyond agriculture, the river offers recreational activities, including boating, river rafting, and sunset boat cruises, allowing visitors to experience the contrast between the lush riverbanks and the surrounding desert landscape.

River Activities

- Canoeing and canoeing adventures
- Sunset cruises with fine wine tasting
- Fishing excursions for yellowfish and catfish
- Riverside hiking trails with spectacular views
- Photography workshops along the river banks



The Cultural Heritage of the San People

The Kalahari has been home to the San people (also known as Bushmen) for thousands of years. These indigenous hunter-gatherers have developed a deep understanding of the arid environment, using their knowledge of plants, animals, and tracking skills to survive in one of the world's most challenging environments. Visitors to the region can engage with San communities to learn traditional survival techniques, experience authentic cultural demonstrations, and gain insights into their sustainable relationship with nature. The iconic "click" language of the San are another fascinating aspect of their rich heritage.

Cultural Experiences

Engage with local San communities through respectful cultural encounters. Learn about traditional bush medicines, tracking techniques, traditional hunting methods, and water-finding skills passed down through generations.

Many San communities also offer guided walks and educational programs that provide deeper insights into their culture, while supporting sustainable tourism initiatives that benefit local people.

About Upington: The Gateway to the Kalahari

Upington is the gateway to the vast Kalahari Desert and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. Located on the banks of the Orange River, the oasis town offers modern amenities amid the arid landscape.

The town serves as a hub for regional tourism and agriculture, famous for its award-winning wines, sultanas, and table grape exports to the global market.

Self-Drive Adventures in the Kalahari

For the independent traveler, self-drive expeditions offer the freedom to explore the rugged beauty of the Kalahari at the freedom of your own vehicle. Whether you're seeking the tranquil solitude of luxury tented camps or the adventure of camping under Africa's endless skies, the Kalahari promises smooth adventure.

A Town Built on History

Upington's origins date back to 1884, when it was established as a mission station. The town was named after Sir Thomas Upington, who played a strategic role in the expansion and religious practice to the indigenous people of the region. Over time, the settlement grew into a bustling town, combining colonial architecture with modern development. Today, visitors can explore the Orange River Museum, remnants of the early history and the significance of the Kalahari's Orange Museum, which feature exhibits from the town's interesting past of survival and prosperity.

The Kalahari Experience: A Land of Contrast

It is said that in arid lands in the Kalahari are the reason. The secluded and beautiful arid climate and the land of the red sands provide a place where they experienced tranquility and the beauty of the desert. Watching the sunrise from a mountaintop different than the thunderclouds.

Red-earth horizons provide spectacular photographic opportunities through a semi-desert landscape. The region offers a wide range of wildlife, ranging from large herbivores like gemsbok and springbok to predators including the distinctive gemsbok and, and cultural experiences centered around the magnificent red sand dunes of the world's most challenging environments.

Kalahari Sunrises: Life Close with Wildlife

Discover the landscape and the animals from the mountains of the Kalahari with a guided safari. From the iconic black maned lions to vast herds of springbok and other wildlife, every moment promises unforgettable encounters with Africa's most impressive wildlife.

The Mystique of the Red Dunes

One of the Kalahari's most striking features is its towering red sand dunes, colored by iron oxide that gives the landscape its distinctive russet hue. The rhythmic flow comes from iron oxide in the sand, which intensifies under the harsh sunlight, creating a mesmerizing tapestry of colors that shift throughout the day. These towering formations serve as both a natural spectacle to its ecosystem, providing shelter and breeding grounds for many desert-adapted species.

Seasonal Transformations of the Kalahari

Although the Kalahari is often thought of as dry and desolate year-round, its landscape undergoes dramatic changes throughout the year.

Summer rains transform the barren landscape into green, lush grasslands and seasonal flowers bloom across the desert floor. This transformation attracts additional groups, attracting herbivores and their predators. Temperatures can rise above 45°C, making sun conditions quite adventurous but the best times.

Winter (April - September): The dry season is marked by cool nights and pleasant daytime temperatures. Wildlife congregates around available water sources, making this the best time for game viewing. Clear skies make it an prime time for stargazing, as the air is clear and dust levels are lower.

Autumn & Spring: These transitional seasons bring a mix of cool and warm weather, with moderate temperatures ideal for outdoor activities.

Whether you visit during hot summer months or the crisp, dry winter, the Kalahari's ever-changing moods ensure that no two experiences are ever the same.