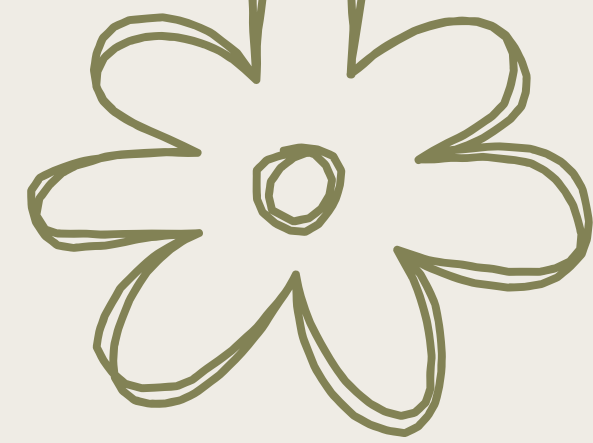


**SELF DRIVE TOURS
BOTSWANA
POST TOUR PACKAGE**



Kalahari

CAMPING

A 10 night self drive safari in a 4x4
with a rooftop tent



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SELF DRIVE SAFARI

The Central Kalahari is not somewhere we will be taking the farm tour. We can't. The bus would never make it. But it is a wonderful place to visit.

Self Drive Tours Botswana has organised this self drive package especially for any keen 4x4 campers who would like to go and explore the Kalahari for themselves. The section from Letlhakane to Serowe will be familiar as we will have already traversed the A14 highway in the bus. But the rest of the route will be new territory.

Price: NZ\$ 5470 for two

The pricing is for a couple, and it includes a fully equipped 4x4 Hilux with a rooftop tent and all the equipment you will need, along with all the accommodations; a satellite phone, a GPS, printed maps and a detailed guidebook.

The price excludes the national park entrance fees, which you pay at the gate. These will amount to approximately NZ\$300.



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We all dream of an Africa of rolling grasslands, umbrella-like acacia trees, and teeming with wild animals. The classic savannah landscape beloved of artists like Muhammad Bilal. The picture below is nowhere in particular – he painted from his imagination.

You can find real life scenes like this in the Kalahari Desert.

The jewels in the Kalahari crown are the Khutse and the Central Kalahari Game Reserves. The Khutse Game Reserve is seldom visited by tourists, but is well known and popular amongst Batswana. The Central Kalahari Game Reserve is huge – five times bigger than Fiordland National Park – and the only roads are 4 wheel drive tracks. Tourists come here for the scenery, the wildlife and the solitude. You can drive all day without encountering another vehicle.

The Central Kalahari is a magical place, but you needn't take our word for it. Here's what the Botswana Tourism Organisation has to say...

Nothing can prepare a visitor for the sheer size and immensity of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR), nor its wild, mysterious beauty. There is the immediate impression of unending space, which gives the impression of having the entire reserve to yourself.

Waist-high golden grasses stretch to the horizon, punctuated by dwarfed trees and scrub bushes. Wide and empty pans appear as vast white stretches of pancake-flat earth, meeting a soft, blue-white sky. At night the stars are genuinely awe-inspiring, utterly dominating the land with their brilliance and immediacy.

The CKGR is the largest, most remotely situated reserve in Southern Africa and the second largest wildlife reserve in the world, encompassing 52,800 sq. km.

During and shortly after good summer rains, the flat grasslands of the reserve's northern reaches teem with wildlife, which gathers at the best grazing areas. These include large herds of springbok and gemsbok and wildebeest, hartebeest, eland and giraffe. Silver Terminalia sand veldt, Kalahari sand acacias, and Kalahari apple leaf dominate the landscape, interspersed with grasslands and dotted with occasional dunes, pans and shallow fossil river valleys.

Initially established in 1961 to serve as a sanctuary for the San people in the heart of the Kalahari (and Botswana), the CKGR provides space for traditional lifeways, without intrusion or influence from the outside world. Following 30 years of closure, the 1980s and 1990s saw limited self-drive and organised tours.

From

BOTSWANA

**TOURISM
ORGANIZATION**

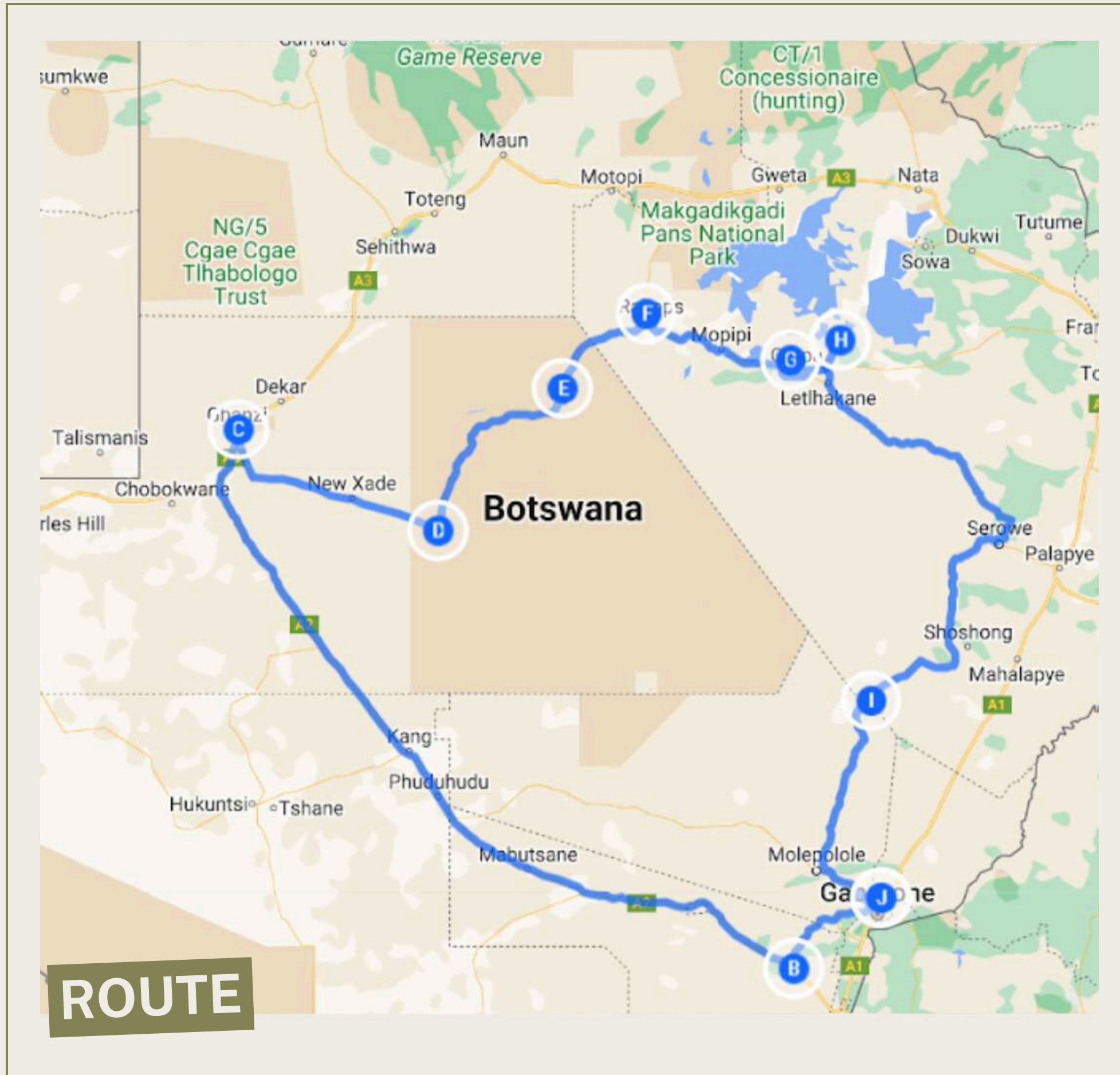


And Africa Geographic have produced a beautifully illustrated article which you'll find at the link below.

www.africageographic.com/stories/central-kalahari-game-reserve/



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ITINERARY



Monday 26 May 2025: Gaborone to Jwaneng: 180 km, 2 ½ hours

Collect your vehicle from the airport in Gaborone. We have priced in a Toyota Hilux 4x4 camping vehicle with a rooftop tent; a set of recovery gear; a Garmin GPS pre-loaded with 'Tracks4Africa' and a satellite phone. (It would be possible to upgrade to a Toyota Landcruiser 79 if you wish).. Then stock up with food and other essentials for the trip before heading west to Jwaneng along the A10 highway.

Accommodation tonight will be the campsite at Green Zest Farm, a horticulture farm that grows chilli peppers and raises poultry.

Tuesday 27 May 2025: Jwaneng to Ghanzi 508 km, 5.5 hrs

It's a good tarred road all the way to Ghanzi. There are not so many points of interest along the Jwaneng to Ghanzi section, and very sparse traffic. The open road speed limit is 120 km/h so you can make good time.

Ghanzi itself is a dusty outpost in the middle of nowhere. It's not so long ago that the historic Kalahari Arms Hotel in the middle of town removed the fence erected to stop lions wandering into their beer garden. There is an international airport, but the last scheduled flight landed more than 80 years ago. But Ghanzi is not without charm, and it is a very handy jumping off point for the Central Kalahari Game Reserve.

Just beyond Ghanzi you come to D'Kar, a Naro Bushman Village famed for its arts centre. The bushmen have always produced outstanding rock art. The artists of D'Kar have switched to painting their traditional designs on canvas. If you make an early start there will be time to visit their studio, and they are always delighted to welcome New Zealand visitors. The National Museum has an outpost in D'Kar as well, showcasing Naro material culture.

Tonight's campsite is at a private game farm. This features a unique 'vulture restaurant' which enables you to get up close views of the vultures feeding from an underground bunker.



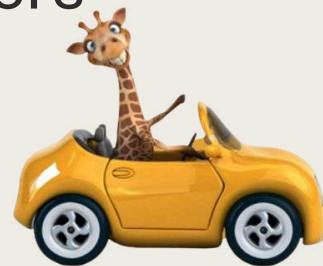
Itinerary



Springbok and gemsbok at Pipers Pan in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve

Wednesday 28 May 2025: Ghanzi to Xade, 170 km, 4 hrs

It's time to head into the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. But also time to stock up on fuel, provisions, firewood and water, because all will be unobtainable for the next few days. The government campsite at the park entrance has the luxury of running water, showers and flush toilets – the last you will see for a while.



Thursday 29 May to Saturday 31 May : - Explore the CKGR

Enjoy the wilderness ! Between them the Khutse and Central Kalahari Game Reserves offer several thousand km of 4 wheel drive tracks and 74 campsites.

Some of the campsites have pit latrines and bucket showers. For these the park provides the bucket and you provide your own water. Water is scarce here, so don't be surprised to find small animals like mongoose and genet joining you in the shower for a free drink. Other campsites are even more rustic and you need to bring your own bucket.

All the campsites have been sited either for their great views, or for their proximity to waterholes or pans. Most you will have entirely to yourself. At some your closest human neighbours will be 50 to 70 km away. None are fenced, so your animal neighbours will come and go. There has been no hunting in these reserves for many decades, so the animals are completely unafraid.

Itinerary

Monday June 2: Rakops to Kubu Island 3 ½ hours

The giant Sua Pan is a blinding and seemingly endless expanse of white salt crust. It's a harsh, sparse landscape, offering an isolation as complete as anywhere in southern Africa. The southern end of the pan has an ancient shoreline of wave cut islets and bays. Kubu Island is one of the islets. There are few animals here – people come and camp here for the scenery, the sunset and the sunrise. A community trust maintains a basic campsite.

Sunday June 1: Exit the CKGR for Rakops

Time to enjoy one last Kalahari sunrise (this one is at Sunday Pan in Deception Valley) and a slow drive to the exit. You need to be heading out of the Matswere Gate by 2 p.m. to leave enough daylight to reach Rakops, the nearest outpost of civilisation. Rakops is another dusty outback village where one half expects tumbleweeds rolling down the street. But the Rakops River Lodge has a nice campsite with hot showers; a swimming pool and a bar; and there is a petrol station not far away.



Itinerary

Tuesday June 3: Kubu Island to Lephephe Wells 470 km 6 ½ hrs

A long way to go so an early start is needed to make the most of the day. You'll be traveling down the 'missionary road' – a route pioneered by David Livingstone in the 1840's. It was the main north/south road through Bechuanaland until the completion of the railway in 1896. The road passes through picturesque hills and occasional historic villages, and it's worth taking all day over the journey.

Tonight's campsite is 'Kalahari Vultures' on a working cattle ranch about 30 minutes from the tiny village of Lephephe Wells. Owners Wynand and Marietta just like vultures, and they have created an artificial waterhole with a bird hide so you can watch them come to drink. Of course the other birds of the Kalahari also like water, so this is something of a birdwatcher's paradise. A good place to see leopards too – they are inclined to come and prey on Wynand's calves. He has a box trap, and any leopard trapped is relocated to the Khutse Game Reserve by the Wildlife Department. But they usually return after a couple of weeks.

A great spot for your last night of camping, with a genial farmer as your host.



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Itinerary

Wednesday June 4: Lephephe Wells to Gaborone 217 km 3 hrs

Vultures are late risers: they need thermals to get up into the sky. There's not so far to go today, so a leisurely start is in order. The missionary road takes you further south through remote and historic villages with exotic names like Sojwe, Boatname, and Hatsalatladi. The people here are mostly either Kalahari Bushmen or Bakgalagadi, and Setswana is definitely a second or third language hereabouts. All are part of the government's 'remote area dweller programme', aimed at maintaining services in remote districts and preventing rural depopulation.

Plenty of places of interest to stop along the way, so make a day of the journey.

Accommodation tonight is the Gabz Airport Inn, the closest accommodation to the airport. A chance to empty out the vehicle and get packed ready for departure in the morning.

Thursday June 5: Departure

Time to return the vehicle and begin the journey home.



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