

18.2.2021 Goanikontes Oasis

Our Unimog needs to get the salt washed off, before we leave the coast. The salt in the air here is very aggressive. As the saying goes, even glass will corrode in Swakopmund.



We don't want to travel far today, only about 50km to Goanikontes. Not far inland of Swakopmund the temperatures are rising again and it feels like being back in Africa. With the cool weather at the coast and the colonial buildings, one forgets being in Africa.

The name 'Goanikontes' originates from the local Nama language meaning "The place where the coats were taken off". Already in the past, travelers coming upcountry had the same experience as we just had. When reaching Goanikontes the temperature rise and everyone takes off their coats. In the past Goanikontes was a popular grazing and watering site on the road from Windhoek to the coast. Fresh water springs existed, so travelers could stop here to water their animals and refill their water tanks. In the 19th century, the first family settled and traded cattle. From 1911 to 1979 farmers farmed vegetables and provided all the fresh produce for the coastal cities. Since 2018 Goanikontes with its rest camp and nice beer garden is privately owned and a popular outing spot.





19.2.2021 Goanikontes

The landscape around Goanikontes, with its dry and unpopulated gorges resembles the landscape on the moon. Therefore this valley is called the „Moon Valley“. In this area as well as some other locations around the coast, scenes of the movie „Mad Max: Fury Road“ were produced. One can imagine why they choose this location.





20.2.2021 Flintstone Cave

We want to visit the „Flintstone Caves“, the names makes us curious. It is an interesting drive through this unique landscape and we stop every few kilometers to take photos...





There is so much to see ! One rock looks like a petrofied elephant showing us his backside.





After a few breaks and exploring the surroundings quite well, we arrive at the Flintstone Cave. Who might have lived here in the past and how? Well, tonight we make the caves our home.



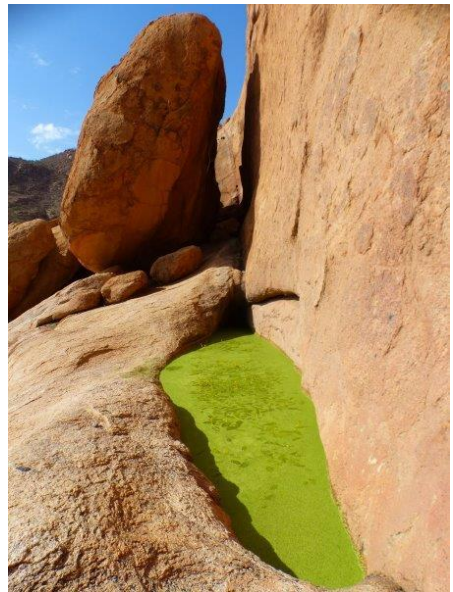
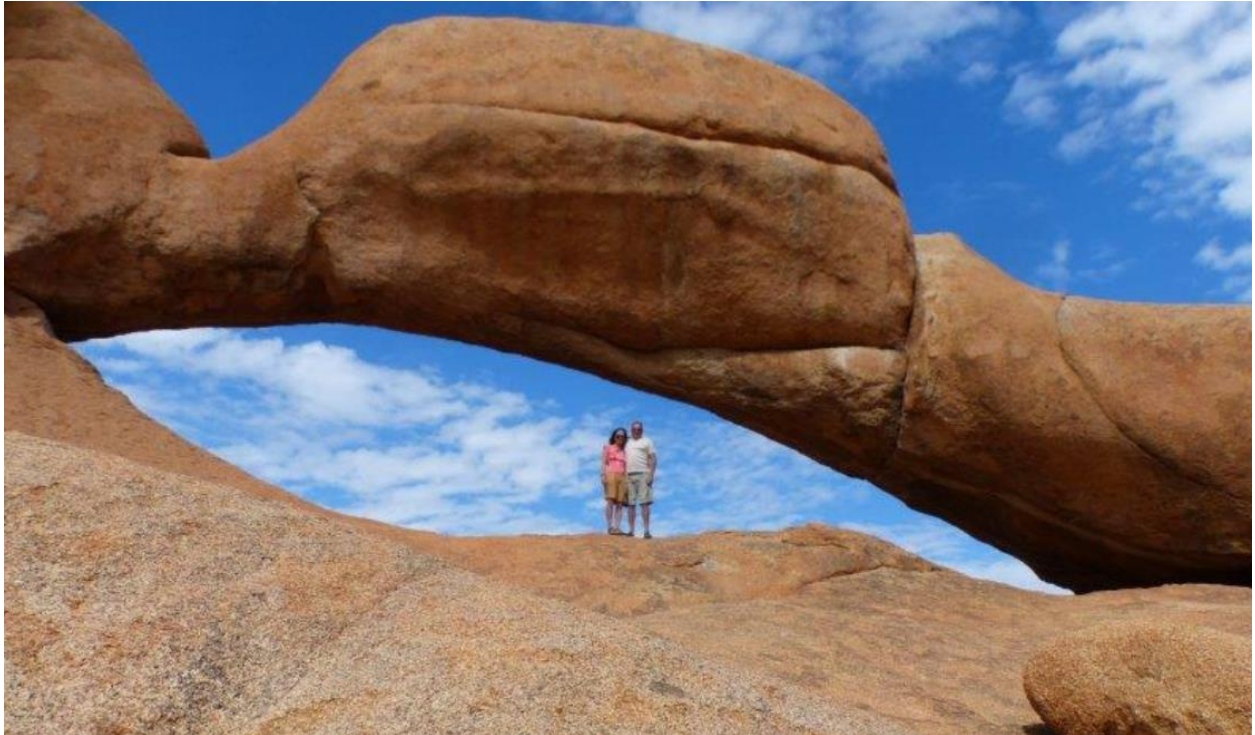
21.2.2021 Spitzkoppe

The trip to the Flintstone Caves was well worth it. But now another highlight is awaiting us – the Spitzkoppe mountain. 15 years ago we visited this place last. This year all is different, due to Corona there are less visitors in the country and visiting a tourism hotspot like Spitzkoppe is possible without having to book well in advance.

The former Community Camp was taken over by a private investor, the entry gate still looks very much the same, but now they even have showers here.



The „Grosse Spitzkoppe“ has an elevation of 1730m, the „Kleine Spitzkoppe“ is 1580m above sea level. Rain water accumulates inbetween the rocks and stays there for quite some time. This is the reason why the San Bushmen have settled here. Plenty of rock paintings bear witness of these first settlers. It is possible to view the rock paintings with a guide. We explore the Spitzkoppe area and climb up a few rocks, but finally we have to decide which campsite to take.





22.2.2021 Spitzkoppe

Today we continue exploring the other parts of this area and visit the rock paintings with a guide. The guides are resting in the shade and wait patiently for a tourist to show up. The „Small Bushman Paradise“ is in a natural cave. Amongst the rockpaintings a rhino, a lion and some hunters are clearly visible. We learn that the San rock paintings are usually made with red paint and mainly show animals.





On the way to the rock paintings of the “Bushman Paradise” one passes old graves, but who in fact is buried here remains a mystery.



It is not easy to reach the cave of the Bushman Paradise. You first have to climb a fairly steep rock along a crevice, which in some places has been worn down by the many visitors and has become quite smooth.





But the slippery climb is worth it. One can imagine that the indigenous people felt safe in the large cave on the rock; white and red rock paintings are clearly visible.



In the afternoon, we continue exploring Spitzkoppe checking out all the available campsites. We choose another one for the night. As there's no one else here we have free choice.



23.2.2021 Henties Bay

It's time to say goodbye to Spitzkoppe and we head back toward the coast. One of the travelers is looking forward to fishing, another to cooler temperatures.



24.2.2021 Canopy, Hooringbaai, Predikants Gat

The fishing bays along the coast all have names. We first drive to Canopy, then to Hooringbaai and Predikants Gat. As the day progresses, more and more cars arrive; it's absolutely insane. In the morning, we count 40 cars, and by early afternoon, there are even more. Where do all the fishermen suddenly come from? We find out, that WhatsApp groups are used to communicate where the schools of fish are, with the result, that every fisherman is driving there. Modern times! But we found the fish even without the WhatsApp group.



The South Africans we meet here are more interested in catching the Galjoen fish than the Silver Kob (Kabeljou), claiming it tastes better and is easier to grill. In the end, Werner decides to catch a Galjoen as well – and is succesful.

We end up "drowning" in fish, are able to freeze some, and later prepare all kinds of fish dishes: fried or grilled, as Thai curry, Ceviche, Mediterranean style or as sashimi. At first, we were unsure whether we can eat the Kob raw, but our first try doesn't have any consequences, so we tuck in. All-you-can-eat sashimi, a dream comes true!



27.2.2021 Henties Bay

The fishing season was successful, the fridge is full, and it's time to say goodbye to the beach. We will be back. But first, we drive to Hentiesbay, where our Unimog gets a much-needed shower. Not only can you get your car washed there, but you can also have your fresh catch gutted against a fee, while enjoying a cold drink. Of course, you'll also (over)hear the latest news about what was caught, where and how much.



It is already late when we leave Hentiesbay and look for a place to stay for the night.

