

Frequently Asked Questions

It is very important to read through the FAQ's to understand our operation better and to be more informed.



Orange River Rafters offers two base camps.

A. Base Camp 1 (Oewerbos River Camp):

Used for **open and private groups** who would like to upgrade their accommodation on the first and/or last night from camping to a chalet, safari or glamping tent.

1. Where is Oewerbos River Camp / Orange River Rafters located?

- We are located in Vioolsdrift/Kotzeshoop on the South African side of the Vioolsdrift/Noordoewer border (border between SA and NAM). At Vioolsdrift take the turn-off to Kotzeshoop (on the left just before the border post gate). Follow the gravel road along the river for approximately 10km via Kotzeshoop and then turn right at the Oewerbos River Camp turn-off and follow the road for another 1km to the camps gate.
- Please follow the Google Maps link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/cEMqykxCwfzraZX59>

B. Base Camp 2 (Richtersveld Wilderness Camp):

Used for **private and student groups** who prefers camping on the first and last night with no upgrades to their accommodation.

2. Where is The Richtersveld Wilderness Camp / Orange River Rafters located?

- We are located in Vioolsdrift in the Richtersveld on the South African side of the Vioolsdrift/Noordoewer border (border between SA and NAM). At Vioolsdrift take the turn-off to Kotzeshoop (on the left just before the border post gate). Follow the gravel road along the river for approximately 20km via Kotzeshoop and over Geelkrans pass to the Richtersveld Wilderness Camp. The entrance will be on your right.
- Please follow the Google Maps link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/S8efQtVcGzRzhxLVA>

3. What are the distances to us from?

- Cape Town: 690km
- Bloemfontein: 1067km
- Pretoria: 1327km
- Johannesburg: 1294km
- Durban: 1696km
- Potchefstroom: 1169km
- Polokwane: 1580km
- Nelspruit: 1633km

4. Do you offer a bus service for large groups?

- For your convenience we have partnered with two bus companies to handle our logistics from anywhere in South Africa.
- Groups are responsible for their own bookings.
- We will handle the driver's accommodation and meals for the duration of the adventure/expedition (this charge will be added to your invoice).
- Please ask for a quote by clicking on one of the following links:
- **A. Gauteng region:** <https://pbier.co.za/> **B. Western Cape region:** <https://www.avoorange.com/>

5. Do you have recommended places to stay on our way to you?

- For your convenience we have partnered with a few lodges and campsites on your way to us.
- Please follow this link for recommended places to stay: <https://orangeriverrafters.co.za/accommodation/>

6. When and at what time do we need to stamp in and out at the border when doing an Aussenkehr or Sjambok adventure?

- On the day of arrival at the latest 16h00 (for border procedures, please follow this link): <https://orangeriverrafters.co.za/cross-border-nambia/>

7. What time should we be at base camp?

- At the latest 17h00, because we start our briefing at 18h00.

8. Are both base camps on the South African side of the river?

- Yes, both base camps are on the South African side of the river.

9. Is camping fees at both base camps included in all multi-day adventure & expeditions on the first and last night?

- Yes it is included in all multi-day adventures & expeditions.

10. Can we upgrade our accommodation at both base camps?

- Accommodation upgrades are only available at Oewerbos River Camp, refer back to the booking form for accommodation options (90% of groups upgrade their accommodation).

11. Is there a restaurant and a bar at both base camps?

- A restaurant and bar is only available at Oewerbos River Camp.

12. Is there mobile phone coverage?

- Vodacom is the main service provider that works best out here.
- On ½ day and full day trips you will have limited to no coverage.
- On 3 – 8 day adventures/expeditions, there will be no mobile phone coverage once we launch from base camp.
- MTN, Cell C and Telkom have very limited coverage.

At both base camps:

- Limited to no mobile phone coverage
- Limited free Wi-Fi
- Make use of Wi-Fi calling

13. What kind of boats do we use?

- We make use of 2-man inflatable boats called crocs.

14. How many people per croc?

- Two people per croc.

15. What is the best time of the year to do a rafting adventure or expedition by taking the following into consideration?

Weather wise:

- January = Hot
- February = Very hot
- March = Hot
- April = Moderate
- May = Moderate – Cool
- June & July = Cool
- August = Cool – Moderate
- September & October = Moderate
- November = Moderate – Hot
- December = Hot

Level of the river:

- April – November = Low
- December – March = High

This also depends on if you would like to do a river trip/adventure/expedition in-season (high river traffic) or out-of-season (low river traffic).

16. Do we still offer rafting trips/adventures/expeditions in flood time?

- Yes, we still operate up to a flow of 4500m³ (because of previous experiences, flood trips/adventures/expeditions are the best experiences).

17. What is considered “in-season” and “out-of-season”?

- **In-season** = during private & public school holidays, public holidays and scheduled dates.
- **Out-of-season** = every other day of the year and between **01st May – 31st August (school holidays included)**.

18. What is considered as an open group?

- An open group is open to the public (make new friends) and mostly on our scheduled dates.

19. What are the minimum bookings for an open Aussenkehr adventure for the advertised rates?

- In-season: 1 Participant (T's & C's apply).

20. What is considered as a private or closed group?

- Only you, your friends and/or family are on the trip/adventure/expedition.

21. What is the minimum group size for a private Aussenkehr and/or Henkries adventure for the advertised rates?

- Refer to the information you have received for your adventure.

22. What is the minimum group size for a private Sjambok adventure for the advertised rates?

- Refer to the information you have received for your adventure.

23. What is the minimum and maximum group size for a private Sendelingsdrift expedition for the advertised rates?

- Out-of-season only: minimum 12 and maximum 22 participants (no children under the age of 18).

24. Can we book a smaller group below the minimum size?

- Yes, but the rates will be adjusted on a sliding scale.

25. What is the minimum and maximum age for multi-day adventures?

- Recommended minimum age: 6 – 7 (differs between children).
- Recommended maximum age: none, as long as you are medically fit.

26. What is the maximum weight?

- There is no weight limit.

27. Do you offer a self-catering option?

- Yes, we offer a self-catering option and it is only applicable to private & student groups with the minimum booking requirement.

28. What meals are included on a multi-day adventure & expedition?

A. Catered option-

- All meals from dinner on the day of arrival to breakfast on the day of departure.

B. Self-catered option-

- Own meals from arrival to departure.

When booked at Oewerbos River Camp, you can also make use of the restaurant which has the best pizzas, hamburgers and steaks.

29. What do I need to know when choosing the self-catering option?

- Please provide us with your menu (feel free to ask us for a recommended menu) so we can pack the correct braai/cooking equipment.
- The guides will cook for the group as long as it is **one** menu.
- The company will provide meals for the guides.

30. What does the self-catering option include over and above what is included in the package.

- Recommended drinking water and ice on the river.
- 3-4 50L Cooler boxes for food as well.
- Cooking and braai equipment on the river.
- Wood can be bought at both base camps for use at base camp, we will supply all wood on the river.
- We will also supply two tables and a wash station.

31. Can I request the menu?

- Yes, you can request the menu, but please be advised that the menu can change without prior notice.

32. Is the river water safe for consumption?

- Yes, but only when boiled.

33. Do you cater for special dietary requirements?

- Yes, we do at an additional cost:
- 3Day/4Night Adventure = R350pp
- 4Day/5Night Adventure = R500pp
- 8Day/9Night Expedition = R1000pp

Participants with special dietary requirements may cater for themselves without any compensation.

34. How do the ablutions work on the riverbanks?

- **Bathing:** in the river with biodegradable soaps which we also offer in our online shop where you can buy or order them before you arrive.
- **Toilet:** we make use of a camping toilet and spade.

35. Are there any hippos or crocodiles in the river?

- No, there are no hippos or crocodiles in the Orange River.

36. Where do we camp during a multi-day adventure or expedition?

- **First and last night:** we camp at one of the base camps.
- **Nights on the river:** we camp on the South African and/or Namibian riverbanks (depends on water levels and availability of campsites).

37. What entertainment will there be for our children and us on an adventure?

- As we do understand that parents and their children want to enjoy their holiday and make every second count, we have asked the guides to include things like, **nappy runs, rock jumping, cricket, rugby, hiking, crystal hunting, scorpion hunting (with our ultraviolet light), swimming, fishing, bird watching, quality family/friend time and stories around the camp fire etc.**

38. What kind of wildlife can we expect?

- A variety of bird- and fish species, wild horses, water monitors, baboons, Klipspringers and you may come across a leopard, caracal or kudu as well as a variety of small animals like meerkats and rock dassies etc.

39. What class (size) rapids can we expect?

- Depending on the time of the year and the level of the river, you can expect class 1–3.
- Class I rapids - moving water over shallow riverbed.
- Class II rapids - waves that make fun splashes.
- Class III rapids - fun waves with thrill factor, requiring some technical skill.

40. Average distance we paddle each day on a multi-day adventure or expedition?

- Between 15 and 20 km per day (T's & C's apply).

41. During what time of the day do we normally paddle on a multi-day adventure or expedition?

- Between 09h00 and 16h00 (T's & C's apply).

42. What happens in case of a medical emergency?

- We make use of a satellite device to communicate and act accordingly.

43. Can we bring beverages in glass bottles?

- No, rather make use of plastic containers and tins.

44. Can we buy camping gear from you?

- We have an online shop (still under construction) that stocks the necessary camping gear and useful gadgets which you can buy (we also have a gadget shop at base camp which you can also make use of).

45. Can we hire camping gear from you?

- Yes, you can but depending on availability (please refer back to the booking form for options).

46. Do we need a tent or can we sleep under the stars?

- Some people prefer to sleep on a ground sheet and camping mattress under the stars during the summer months while others prefer to sleep in a tent.
- In the winter months it is advisable to sleep in a tent.

47. What are the differences and similarities on an Aussenkehr and Henkries adventure?

- Passports are required on an Aussenkehr Adventure.
- Passports are **not** required on a Henkries Adventure when traveling within South Africa.
- Both have the same rates.
- Both have similar distances.
- The Aussenkehr Adventure launches from base camp.
- The Henkries Adventure launches 115km from Vioolsdrift.
- Both have pristine scenery, great bird- and fish species, wildlife, and similar rapid sizes.
- The Aussenkehr Adventure is available for open and private group bookings.
- The Henkries Adventure is only for **private** group bookings.
- The Aussenkehr Adventures starts in South Africa and ends in **Namibia**.
- The Henkries Adventures starts and ends in South Africa.

48. What are the differences and similarities between a Sjambok and an Aussenkehr Adventure?

- The Sjambok Adventure is a 3day/4night adventure.
- The Aussenkehr Adventure is a 4day/5night adventure.
- The Sjambok Adventure covers a distance of 35km.
- The Aussenkehr Adventure covers a distance of 65km.
- The Sjambok Adventure is only available for **private** group bookings.
- The Aussenkehr Adventure is available for open and private group bookings.
- Both have pristine scenery, great bird- and fish species, wildlife, and similar rapid sizes.
- Both starts in South Africa and ends in **Namibia**.
- Both require passports.

49. What payment options do you offer?

- Instant EFT, credit card and instalment payments (refer back to the T's & C's) – no cash payments allowed.

50. Do we need travel insurance?

- We **highly** recommend travel insurance cover as it is affordable and makes life easier when you have to cancel or postpone your holiday with us.

For your convenience we have partnered with TIC and you can use this special link:

<https://www.tic.co.za/buy/travel-insurance.aspx?Ref=426> to get your cover (**please select “worldwide excluding USA” and select Namibia as your destination when taking out your cover**).

51. Do we need medical aid?

- We highly recommend it (please bear in mind that we might camp on both the South African and Namibian side when taking out your cover).

52. Will I be able to do an adventure or expedition while I am pregnant?

- Yes, up to 6 months pregnant (T's & C's apply).

53. May I bring my dog onto an adventure or expedition?

- Yes, small breed dogs that are tame and have the necessary border documentation may join us on an adventure or expedition when arranged with management at an additional cost of R250 per dog.

54. Is there fuel available in Vioolsdrift?

- Vioolsdrift does **not** have fuel available, you will need to make provision and fill up accordingly.

55. Where is the closest garage?

- Springbok and Steinkopf.

56. Where is the closest supermarket?

- There is a Spar, Tops, Shoprite, Checkers, Checkers Liquor and OK grocery in Springbok.

57. Where is the closest airport and/or airfield to Vioolsdrift?

- Airfield: There is Springbok airfield for privately owned aircrafts only (we can arrange collection at an additional cost).
- Airport: Upington airport.

58. Where can I hire a vehicle?

- For your convenience we have partnered with Berg 4x4 rentals and you can click on the following link for bookings: <https://berg4x4.flowsheet.co.za/public/checklists/view/4/1>

59. Will I be searched at the border?

- There may be a possibility that we will be searched.
- The company will not be held accountable if illicit substances, poached plants, wood, etc. be found on any participant during transport or at the border post.

60. Do we offer a safe to lock up our firearm?

- Yes, we have a safe where we can lock up your firearm (please arrange this in advance).

61. How much can we tip the guides?

- This is all up to you, but most people tip between 5 – 15% the amount of their trip/adventure/expedition rates (please note this is only a guideline).

62. What other activities are offered in and around Vioolsdrift within a radius of 150km that are worthwhile visiting?

- Namaqua 4x4 Eco route through the Boesmanland and into the Richtersveld (we offer this as well).
- Ai-Ais in Namibia that has a natural hot spring.
- Fish River Canyon hiking trails.
- Fishing along the river.
- Hiking and cycling into the Richtersveld.
- Dirt biking through the Boesmanland and into the Richtersveld.

63. Will I be able to review Orange River Rafters afterwards?

- Yes please, we will highly appreciate it. Please follow this link: <https://g.page/r/ceesgcsfdk7sebm/review>

Please feel free to ask any other questions about something you still not sure of that is not on the FAQ's.