

ANGOLA INDIGENOUS TRIBAL ENCOUNTERS

June 03 - June 14, 2025
Led by Tour Lecturer, Michel Behar

Can be combined with Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique tour (May 25 - June 02, 2025) **AND** Cabinda extension (June 14 - June 16, 2025)

Angola is the seventh largest country in Africa, home to some of the last enduring traditional and remote tribes on earth. Ethnic groups, including the Mumhuila, Himba, Hakaona, and Dimba, still maintain their ancient cultural traits, dress, traditions, and languages to varying degrees. In the cities, a mixed culture has emerged since colonial times. Since its foundation in the 16th century, the Portuguese heritage has become more and more dominant in this urban society. However, African roots are evident in music and dance and mold how Portuguese is spoken. In addition, Angola is rich in many natural wonders and geological formations, including the Pedras Negras (Black Rocks), a plateau of massive rocks that can be seen for miles. See the spectacular lunar landscape of Miradouro da Lua (Moon Viewpoint), shaped by years of rain and erosion. Explore the stunning pink and orange sand dunes of the great Namib Desert, said to be the oldest on earth. There are a few nights of rustic camping, but this is the best way to venture off the beaten trail and immerse yourself fully in the last remaining traditional tribal cultures left on earth.

Ihab Zaki
Managing Director

Tuesday, June 03

Arrive in Luanda (ANGOLA) 

Upon arrival in **Luanda**, the capital of Angola, meet the guide and transfer to *Thomson Art House* or similar for check-in and overnight.

*Note: For those arriving early, we will stop at the **Palácio de Ferro (Iron Palace)**, a historical building thought to have been designed by **Gustave Eiffel**, creator of the world-famous **Eiffel Tower** and **Statue of Liberty**. Also, drive by the charming **Igreja da Nossa Senhora da Nazare**, an old colonial church built during the late 17th century.*

Wednesday, June 04

Luanda (Miradouro da Lua & City Tour)  

After breakfast, begin the drive to **Miradouro da Lua (Moon Viewpoint)** site, approx 35 miles south of Luanda. The site is a spectacular landscape shaped by years of rain and erosion, causing it to look like the moon's surface. Upon returning to Luanda, visit the **National Museum of Slavery**, which highlights the rich history of slavery in the country, as well as the **arts and crafts market**. Board a **boat** for a ride on the **Kwanza River** and enjoy the natural jungle surroundings. In the afternoon, spend time wandering around the **Kifika Market** for a peek into the lives of the locals that come to buy and sell their goods. Also, visit the **Coin Museum and National Bank** to learn about historical coins and banknotes of Angola. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Thursday, June 05

Luanda - Malanje 

Begin the day with a visit to **Ndalatando Botanical Gardens**, the only one of its kind in Angola. The garden has an impressive collection of flora, including a bamboo forest, rubber plants, and fruit trees. After lunch at a hotel near the gardens, continue to **Malanje**, passing through **Cacuso**, a small community near **Kalandula Falls**, one of Africa's largest waterfalls by volume in Africa. Transfer to *Pousada de Calandula Hotel or similar*, a more basic hotel with stunning views overlooking the falls for check-in. If time permits, tour the falls, and admire the grandeur of the colorful rocks and foliage that embellish the


waterfalls at the top. Enjoy dinner with the thunderous roar of the falls in the background, then return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Friday, June 06

Malanje - Pedras Negras de Pungo - Luanda 

After a very early breakfast, begin the drive to **Pedras Negras de Pungo Andongo** "Black Rocks," a truly stunning geological formation. Towering above the surrounding savanna, this plateau of monolithic rocks appears to take on various animal shapes. Drive back to Luanda and transfer to *Thomson Art House* or similar for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Saturday, June 07

Luanda - Lubango  

Transfer to the airport for our morning flight to **Lubango**, capital of the Huíla Province in southern Angola and considered one of the most beautiful cities in the country. Set in a lush valley guarded by the Statue of Christ, Lubango is rich in colonial heritage mixed with the vibrancy of the local culture. Upon arrival, transfer to *Pululukwa Lodge or similar* for check-in, and then head out to get a closer look at the **Statue of Christ**, inspired by the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro. Also visit **Nossa Sra do Monte Chapel** (Chapel of our Lady of the Mount), an important sanctuary and pilgrimage site for the Catholic community. From the chapel there are excellent views overlooking the city below. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Sunday, June 08

Lubango - Chibia (Mumhuila Tribes) 

The day is dedicated to the **Mumhuila Tribe**, the "Muila," a semi-nomadic tribe that earns a living from agriculture and cattle breeding. The women of this clan coat their hair with oncula, a red paste made of crushed red stones mixed with oil and cow dung, then decorate their hairstyle with beads and cauri shells. They also wear large necklaces adorned with mollusks and beads that indicate their marital and social status. There will be encounters with two different Mumhuila tribes - the **Plain Mumhuila**, a Bantu-speaking agro-livestock tribe, and the **Mountain Mumhuila**, a sub-group of the Plain

Mumhuila that migrated to the mountain areas to preserve their culture from Portuguese colonization. Enjoy lunch, and then visit the **market**, where it is possible to purchase wooden headrests, traditional dolls, and fabrics. Transfer to *Obama Lodge* in the small Mountain Mumhuila community of **Chibia** for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Monday, June 09

Chibia - Oncocua



Begin the day with a long, scenic drive to the small town of **Oncocua**, settled by the Portuguese in 1940. Stop en route at a local **village** and **market** to watch the nearby tribal groups gather to buy and sell food items and self-brewed alcohol. *Tents* will be set up for the night. **(B,L,D)**

Note: Accommodation is in basic tents, with a pillow & sleeping bag included and a separate toilet tent.

Tuesday, June 10

Oncocua (Tribal Encounters) - Lubango



Spend the morning immersed in local Angolan tribal culture and mingle with the **Himba**, **Hakaona**, known as the "Black Himba," and **Dimba** indigenous groups. These semi-nomadic cattle herders grow crops such as maize and millet and wear traditional clothing suitable for the hot, semi-arid desert, such as calfskin skirts. They are best known for the colorful, heavy jewelry they adorn themselves with. Each group has its distinctive hairstyle, often covered in otjize, a combination of butterfat and ochre pigment, or a combination of manure, fat, and herbs, depending on the tribe. The Himba tend to cover themselves with otjize paste, which adds an orange tint to their hair and bodies and protects them from heat and insect bites. The **Tua** are another group, but they are considered a lower caste by the other tribes since they do not own land or animals. Instead, they are hunters and gatherers. Transfer to *Pululukwa Lodge* or similar for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Wednesday, June 11

Lubango - Garganta - Lubango



Begin the day with a drive towards the **Leba Mountains** to **Garganta Hamlet** to meet the **Nguendelengo** tribe, one of the most isolated tribes in Angola. This minority ethnic group of herders, hunters, and semi-nomadic farmers inhabit the forested mountains of **Serrada Chela** and are the last speakers of the rare Nhaneca dialect. They tend to live in unique dwellings hoisted on tree trunks with straw-covered roofs. As with many Angolan tribes, the young women of this group will show off their more simplistic but, nevertheless, beautiful hairstyles. The Nguendelengo are superb woodworkers, creating unique ceremonial totems from logs while the women decorate them with fur, leather ribbons, and colorful beads. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Thursday, June 12

Lubango - Virei (Mucubal Tribe)



After an early breakfast, head to **Virei** to meet a local guide who will seek out a nomadic settlement of Mucubal herders. Spending time with this whole community will be a special treat. Specializing in cattle breeding, agriculture, and coal mining, this tribe tends to live in the most remote areas of Angola, thus retaining their traditional ways of life away from Western influences. The girls grind their front teeth and remove their lower ones while the women wear large, colorful square headdresses. *Tents* will be set up for the night. **(B,L,D)**

Note: Accommodation is in basic tents, with a pillow & sleeping bag included and a separate toilet tent.

Friday, June 13

Virei - Namibe - Luanda



Begin the day with an early morning scenic drive to **Namibe** through the Namib Desert, considered the oldest desert in the world. It stretches over 1,200 miles along the Atlantic Coast and is home to various endemic plant species, including the welwitschia plant, which only grows in the Namib Desert and can live for over 1,000 years. Wildlife, such as meerkats, desert zebra, and oryx (antelope), occasionally roam the land. Along the way, enjoy a picnic lunch and stop at a **Mucubal cemetery** to see how they decorate their graves with cattle horns. Upon arrival in **Namibe**, transfer to the airport for our late afternoon flight back to **Luanda** and upon arrival, transfer to *Thomson Art House* or similar for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Saturday, June 14

Luanda - USA

OR Continue to the Cabinda Extension



After breakfast, begin the city tour visiting the **Mausoleum** of Angola's first president, Antonio Agostinho Neto. Also, visit **Fortaleza de Sao Miguel Museum**, a 16th century Portuguese fortress that was once used as a major outlet in the slave trade. See the beautiful 17th century **Our Lady of Nazareth Church** (Nossa Senhora da Nazare), the first Anglican Church in Angola. Drive past the **Monument to the Unknown Soldier**, a unique metal structure built to honor the unknown soldiers and people who died during the war. Enjoy lunch at a restaurant located on the city's peninsula for a delicious Angolan style meal. Spend time exploring the **Area Governmental** section of the city to admire the colonial style structures. Return to the *Hotel* to freshen up, relax and then transfer to the airport for your flight back to the US. **(B,L)**

OR continue the journey to the **CABINDA EXTENSION**.

"We reserve the right to change the order of activities/visits or sites due to unexpected events such as flight cancellations or changes of schedule, or any other reasons beyond our control. We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes when/if needed to meet the needs of our clients.

Tour Cost (Land Only):

6-8 travelers \$9,495.00

9-14 travelers \$7,995.00

Per person sharing in double occupancy

Single Supplement: \$495.00

Price based on group size minimum of 6 participants and maximum of 14 participants

Trip Grade: III Lodging Level: *_***

universities, and other institutions. He has traveled extensively throughout the world and visited all 21 Arab countries and for the last 20 years has turned his passion for photography into a second career. In addition, he has dabbled in journalism and has done freelance work for travel guides. Michel is also an expert in Sahara led tours such as Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Horn of Africa, and West, Central, and Southern Africa. His tour leading skills are the perfect mix that allows him to share this special tour with you.

About your Lecturer, Michel Behar... boasts an impressive list of credentials that will pique your interest and want to share the road with him. A Dutch citizen, after his studies of Russian and Arabic in the Netherlands he took a course of advanced Arabic at the University of Khartoum in Sudan. Fluent in 12 languages including Farsi, English, Turkish, and Hebrew, he has an understanding of seven others. He has been a tour manager since 1987 leading groups for US, Dutch, Swiss, German, and British companies. Michel has accompanied custom tours as a leader/photographer for many prestigious museums,



Tour Includes:

- Airport/Hotel/Airport transfers.
- Luanda - Lubango - Luanda flights.
- Accommodation in standard lodges or boutique hotels (3-4*) or similar & 2 nights tent camping as mentioned.
- Camping equipment in the Oncocua region in basic tents, equipped with mattresses or cots, sleeping bags and pillows. Dry toilets will be separate from the tents.
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Transportation in 4x4 vehicles or A/C minibus.
- Bottled water while on tours.
- Snacks in the vehicles on long drive days.
- All park fees, entrance fees to places mentioned in the program including museums and sites.
- English-speaking local guides.
- Escort of a lecturer (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, rangers, etc. (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).

Trip Grade

III Challenging: Parts of the trip will be physically challenging, involving walking in a hot climate and presence of insects. There will be long drives over rough roads. You will be camping and sleeping on thin mattresses. Lunches may be simple, cold picnic lunches. Expect primitive or no bathroom facilities along the road and remoteness from modern towns or cities.

Lodging Level:

*** Simple:** One or more properties on the trip are very basic, rustic, primitive, with shared bathroom facilities (1 or 2 stars).

***** Superior:** Lodges and hotels with additional amenities, refined service, and comfort level acceptable to the western standards (3 or 4 stars).

Tour does not include:

- International air USA - Luanda - USA.
- **Angola Visa** (not required for US citizens - subject to change).
- Vaccinations and required immunizations – **Yellow Fever vaccine is required for entry.**
- Beverages and alcoholic drinks with or without meals.
- Items of a personal nature (camera fees, laundry, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules or misconnections.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Gratuity to your tour manager (optional).
- Travel insurance (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED).

