

IMPRESSION

THE POWER OF SISTERHOOD

How women thrive together – whether in the desert or in boardrooms.

BY SONJA PIONTEK

In the heart of the world's oldest desert lies a story of resilience, transformation, and boundless beauty. Last year for the second time, a group of extraordinary women embarked on an unparalleled adventure – the Namib Desert Expedition. This was not just a journey; it was a statement of courage, ambition, and the desire to redefine life's possibilities.



Dr. Roma Patel, UK dentist, explains. "I wanted to do something just for me. I've been a mother, a wife, a daughter, and a daughter-in-law for the last 26 years and I've never done anything for me. I had my doubts if I could do it, but I have achieved a lot more than I had ever thought. It has really made me grow as a person."

Over five unforgettable days, the group of international women traversed 120 kilometers on foot, braving the harsh African sun, the emotional intensity of introspection, and the physical challenge of long daily treks. Each step tested their limits and revealed their incredible inner strength.

A Journey of Transformation

What sets the Namib Desert Expedition apart is its transformative essence. It's not just about crossing the desert; it's about stepping into a new realm of possibilities – particularly as a woman. This expedition is a powerful act of self-discovery. Women emerge transformed – stronger, more empowered, and clearer than ever before.



The Call of the Desert

The Namib Desert is a masterpiece of raw nature. Its impressive dunes, infinite horizons, and mesmerizing silence create a canvas untouched by time. For the participants, however, the allure wasn't just its beauty but the possibility to stand up for themselves.



"Walking through the Namib strips away pretense and forces you to focus on what really matters," shares Martina Manich, Austrian CEO and 2024 participant. "There are no distractions – only sand, sun, and your thoughts... and even those fade at times. It's in this stillness that you find clarity."

A Route Like No Other

Carefully curated by Sonja Piontek and Namibia's leading expedition experts, the route led deep into the heart of the untouched Namib, across impressive fields of dunes, infinite salt flats, and surreal wilderness. The journey reached its conclusion where the vast desert meets the roaring Atlantic – a striking symbol of both nature's raw power and the incredible achievement of the women.

"I honestly thought I wasn't going to make it. But now I know that I can achieve anything in life," reflects Ivy Russell, Singapore-based investor, as she stands at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, eyes brimming with emotion.





The Journey Beyond the Desert

This expedition is more than just a desert crossing – it's a deep dive into Africa's heart and soul. From the luxury of a safari lodge and a breathtaking game drive to an intimate evening with the female chief of the local Topnar community, every moment fosters connection across cultures.

After the trek, a thrilling 4x4 drive leads back to civilisation, followed by a restorative stay in the coastal town of Swakopmund.

The journey ends in a profoundly moving way at Penduka, a women-led initiative in Namibia's largest township. Here, participants meet inspiring women whose resilience redefines perspectives, ensuring that the impact of this journey extends far beyond the desert.



The Namib Desert Expedition isn't for everyone – it's for those who dare to push boundaries and who see challenges as opportunities to grow. As Martina puts it: "This is not just a journey through the desert; it's a journey to a new, stronger self. If you're ready to embrace the extraordinary, this experience will change your life. As it has certainly changed mine."

Beyond the Desert: Women Elevating Women in Business

The Namib Desert is just one example of what happens when women unite, challenge themselves, and rise together. The same principles apply in the corporate world, in entrepreneurship, and in leadership.

Throughout my international career, I've been deeply involved in female-driven networks, including BMW's Global Network for Female Leaders. I've seen how spaces designed by women for women create something extraordinary: Trust, openness, and the ability to step into one's full power.

As an executive coach, I often work with senior female executives and entrepreneurs who despite their success still hesitate to take up their deserved space. They excel to a certain level, but hold back way before they fully embracing the power that lies buried deep within. But when they step into all-female environments – whether it's an exclusive mastermind, a high-level leadership circle, or even a trek across the Namib – they shift. They stop shrinking. They start owning their voice and their space at the table.

Women thrive when they surround themselves with others who push them to be bold, to take risks, and to challenge limiting beliefs. They thrive when they are part of a network that celebrates ambition rather than discourages it.

Why Women-Only Spaces Matter

There's something uniquely powerful about spaces created exclusively for women. It's not about exclusion – it's about amplification. In a room (or a desert) full of women, there's an unspoken understanding. There's freedom to be real, to share without judgment, to push beyond limitations without fear of failure.

Research has shown that female-only environments often lead to greater risk-taking, stronger collaborations, and deeper personal breakthroughs. That's exactly what I see, both in the desert and in high-level business circles.

A Call to Action: Find Your Tribe, Elevate Your Potential

The Namib Desert Expedition is proof of what's possible when women come together – not just in extreme environments, but in every aspect of life. Whether you are climbing dunes or climbing the corporate ladder, the principle is the same: You don't have to do it alone.

Surround yourself with women who challenge you, support you, and refuse to let you settle for less than your potential. Find the spaces that push you to be stronger, bolder, and clearer in your purpose. And if you're ready for something extraordinary, the next desert expedition is waiting. [P](#)

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Destination – Namibia

Namib Desert – The Namib is the world's oldest desert, over 55 million years in age. Its unspoiled dunes, dramatic rock formations, and the striking contrast of golden sands against the Atlantic coastline make it one of the planet's most awe-inspiring landscapes. Wild, untamed, and majestic, the Namib challenges every sense and captivates every soul.

Airport – Windhoek Hosea Kutako International Airport

The Expedition – *Duration:* 10 days in total, including 6 days in the desert (5 trekking on foot)

Route: A 120-kilometer trek through the Namib Desert from Homeb to the legendary wreck of the Eduard Bohlen on the Atlantic Ocean.

Daily Distance: Approximately 25 kilometers per day, split into three sections.

Unique Highlights: Explore untouched landscapes, bond with like-minded women, and experience profound personal transformation.

The organiser – *Sonja Piontek:* A name synonymous with inspiration, excellence, and transformation.

A SPIEGEL bestselling author and internationally celebrated entrepreneur, Sonja is the former BMW Asia Marketing Director and the founder of the award winning Singapore based boutique travel agency Sonnenkind Pte Ltd. Known for her bold approach to life, Sonja empowers high-performing individuals to embrace change and achieve extraordinary results.

Her unique Namib Desert Expedition blends her passion for adventure with her unparalleled ability to curate transformative experiences. As an award-winning keynote speaker and executive coach, Sonja has inspired audiences in 49 countries and guided executives and entrepreneurs toward clarity, courage, and success.

Expedition 2025 – *Now Open for Booking:* Get on an evaluation call to see if you qualify for this exclusive experience.

Limited Availability: Only a select number of international ladies will be part of this life-changing journey.

Details & Booking: Visit www.sonjapiontek.com/namib2025 or www.sonnenkind.com.sg or contact sonja@sonnenkind.com.sg