



ZANNIER HOTELS  
SONOP

## ZANNIER HOTELS SONOP DESIGN

Comprising ten luxury tents, Zannier Hotels Sonop has been cleverly constructed atop a group of boulders, affording spectacular 360° views of the Southern Namib desert. Arnaud Zannier's inspiration for the hotel's design was conceived during his very first trip to the site and first view from the top of the boulders. Arnaud recognised that he had been fortunate enough to discover somewhere very special, likening the feeling to an old explorer discovering a destination for the first time - hence the property was designed to resemble a 20<sup>th</sup> Century tented camp for explorers.

The construction process was challenging due to the hotel's remote location and protected surroundings. All building materials and interiors were manually transported up the huge boulders, by expert craftsmen from Namibia. Zannier Hotels only used a limited number of existing roads to the site, to ensure the human impact on the fragile flora was minimal. In addition, each piece of furniture, including twelve 30kg handcrafted four-poster beds, had to be carried by hand over the rocks and boulders thereby avoiding the use of disruptive machinery.

Built entirely on stilts connected through sturdy elevated wooden decks, Zannier Hotels Sonop's tents are covered by an elegant canvas, designed to harmonise perfectly with the surrounding environment. Shaped in an oval formation facing out towards the spectacular landscape, the tents offer comfort to cater for today's discerning travellers whilst also avoiding soil erosion and ensuring the preservation of the insects, fauna and flora that make up the Namibian desert dune ecosystem. Each tent has been devised to invite guests to live the life of intrepid explorers from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, whilst the materials and colour palette have been selected to complement the surrounding desert and blend into the boulders. Zannier Hotels Interior team only worked with natural textures and materials including dead wood, rocks, mud and thatch to ensure that nature remained at the forefront of the design. Not to mention, the spa that has been designed to resemble the rich traditions of the Owambo tribes in terms of its interiors, its construction and the materials used. The Owambo are admired for their respectful attitude towards nature – values that Zannier Hotels maintain.

All tents feature a large bedroom, living room area and a separate bathroom with a large bathtub and rain shower. Furnishings include dressing tables with ornate objects, such as tiny flasks and antique combs. Moreover, the ceiling to floor windows (roll-out canvas) allow guests to experience a taste of living in complete isolation, immersed in the surrounding landscape. The bedrooms feature handcrafted king size four-poster beds, an airy living area with comfortable armchairs, and a telescope to look out into the distant surroundings or gaze into Namibia's dark sky reserve. All tents have private terraces that extend out across large wooden decks, offering magnificent views of the desert. Rather than buying new furniture, Zannier Hotels endeavoured to reuse as much as possible – preference was always given to antiques. Zannier Hotels sourced more than 550 antiques for Zannier Hotels Sonop, including binoculars, maps, mirrors, magnifying glasses, bedside tables, carpets, trunks, armchairs and picture frames, as well as unique ornaments such as gramophones, 19<sup>th</sup> Century explorer boots, vintage walking sticks and historical Pith helmets. Any new furniture was specifically made from Namibian materials by local architects, carpenters and construction suppliers, native to Namibia.

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