



S1 - 20. NAMIBIA, CELESTIAL SAFARI

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Namibia is famous for its immense deserts, its savannah and its magnificent wildlife. And high above this earthly paradise, is one of the most beautiful skies that can be found in the world. Like most amateur and professional astronomers, Serge Brunier has been dreaming of coming here for years in order to watch nebulae, stars, galaxies and entire regions of the Milky Way that are invisible from the northern hemisphere. But the Namibian sky could well reveal other secrets.

On the Gamsberg plateau, we discover the five branches of the international HESS observatory, which tracks the most impressive turbulences and violent outbursts of the universe. One could call this an astronomy of the invisible, which monitors outbreaks of gamma rays that constantly bombard our planet and that is the signature of energetic phenomena such as supernovae explosions.

Here, astrophysicists are reaching the limits of physics and cosmology. They are confronted with phenomena of such extreme energy that it is beyond imagination, flirting with science fiction. Every night, when they point their telescopes towards a sky apparently so calm, they open a new window to the unknown.

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