



tourism

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Minister Hanekom wants 18 million South Africans to travel in 2014. Here's how to be one of them...

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September is Tourism Month in South Africa, and this year the **Department of Tourism** has placed a special emphasis on encouraging South Africans to 'get out and explore this unique, beautiful and diverse country of ours'.

Domestic tourism is crucial to the long term growth and sustainability of South Africa's tourism industry and we are committed to ensuring that the wonders we boast and the unique heritage we have been endowed with are shared by an ever-growing number of South Africans," said Derek Hanekom, the Minister of Tourism, at the launch of Tourism Month recently.

According to Stats SA, South Africans spent R6.4 billion travelling around South Africa in the 12 months leading up to the end of March 2014. However, 43% of South Africans simply did not travel around the country, because they said that they could not afford it – which is 6% more than those who couldn't travel during 2013 for that reason.

Minister Hanekom wants 18 million South Africans to travel the country each year, by 2020. So, how do we find the money to travel within our borders? The answer is simple: we make use of the loyalty and rewards programmes offered by retailers and financial institutions.

Most loyalty programmes offer savings on the various elements of travel, including flights, accommodation and car hire, with deals depending on members' rewards tier.

For example, Multiply, the wellness and rewards programme offered by Momentum, offers its members savings of up to 50% on up to 12 flights on Mango per year, and once those 12 flights have been used, a flat saving of 7.5% applies to all members. In fact, the programme has saved more than R18 million for its members who booked flights on Mango from July 2013 to June 2014.

"Mango services most of South Africa's major centres, all well within range of some of the country's most spectacular tourist attractions and activities," says Hein Kaiser from Mango. "The airline encourages domestic tourism on a continuous basis through its relationships with partners like Multiply, advertising campaigns and social media platforms. For us, September being Tourism Month is a particularly great reason to remind South Africans that local is indeed lekker."

Many programmes also offer the little extras that take the chore out of travel, such as access to airport lounges while waiting for flights. They also cater for budget travellers, who can enjoy savings of up to 10% on national bus services by shopping around carefully. When it comes to car hire, most rewards programmes offer savings on car hire from at least one car rental company, with savings of up to 40% structured according to the members' tier.

Once you've kept your travel costs under control, you need to look out for great accommodation deals too. Many rewards programmes have partnered with a specific hotel group to offer savings on accommodation to their members, while others partner with online

travel agents to find good deals. Multiply offers up to a 45% discount at the African Pride group of hotels, City Lodge Hotels, and Protea Hotels, giving its members a wide selection of hotels in diverse locations across the country to choose from – and the ability to find accommodation that suits their style, their pocket, and their holiday plans.

“Travel offers its own reward, as it is time spent away relaxing and rejuvenating with family and friends,” says Jaco Oosthuizen, the CEO of Multiply. “Smart South Africans are using travel rewards to stretch their budgets, so that they can enjoy travelling more often to more places in South Africa, while investing in their overall wellness by taking some time out to de-stress. We’re delighted that we can help make that happen, and that our members in turn are spending the money that they have saved through our programme at tourism destinations across the country, boosting the local economy and supporting South African tourism businesses.

Case study:

Travelling more often, saving more money

Bruce Davidson, a Johannesburg businessman, saves approximately R800 on each leisure trip he makes to Durban, and approximately R1400 on each trip to Cape Town. He is a member of Multiply, the wellness and rewards programme offered by Momentum, and he uses his Silver status in the programme to enjoy savings on flights and car hire when he travels around South Africa on holiday with his family.

“In today’s challenging economic climate, you have to be smart in working your rewards programme benefits into your regular spending patterns. If a rewards programme like Multiply offers special rates, you should take the time to use the system to save you money on expenses that you would incur anyway. There are good rewards programmes and bad ones – but I have been impressed with Multiply’s travel benefits, which are so easy to use,” he says.

“I’ve spent some time investigating the best rewards programmes in South Africa, and Multiply has not only proved the best for my needs and my family’s needs, it has consistently delivered excellent service, efficiency, and savings.”

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