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ABOUT THE COVER

The cover epitomises the beginning of a new season and new possibilities, in anticipation of a joyful ride within the tourism sector. It also speaks volumes about the possible growth of the sector both on the international and domestic fronts. More importantly though, the cover symbolises success, good health and many other good deeds for role players in the sector. It encourages residents of South Africa to Do Tourism responsibly so that our country can be experienced by tourists for generations to come.

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As we pull up our socks in preparing ourselves for greater challenges ahead, we do so with aching hearts, having lost to eternal mortality, some personalities and prominent proponents of brand South Africa. Specifically, our own editorial team member, Mr Charles Mnisi who was a staunch contributor to this magazine, a loyal fellow and a great member of the Communication team that I lead at the Department. He passed away after a short illness on

Elmola

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO ONE OF OUR OWN

CHARLES MNISI

11/04/1972 TO 19/12/2018

On December 19 2018, the Department woke up to the sad news of the passing of one of its finest assets; an individual with a mature approach and an excellent thinker whose contributions changed the face of the Communications Unit and the industry, albeit for a brief period.



Charles Thulani Mnisi, your passing left an enormous void, both in our hearts and in our lives. Forever smiling, you only knew one thing:

PEACE. Your recipe for life was to take its challenges by the horns and tackle them as they come, and you did this until your very last day. You were the type who knew how to win an argument with not so many words, if not none at all.

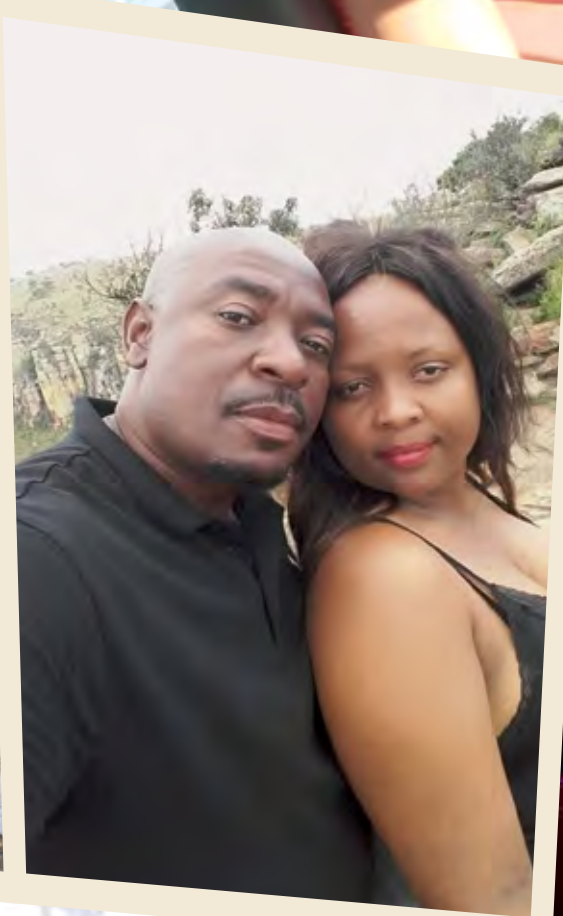


Thulani, you were one of the Department's greatest talents. Your writing skills were second to none, while your ability to think on your feet always came through during strategic meetings and the like. You would always find a way of doing things differently and better, which made you stand above the rest. You were the greatest team player, a trusted colleague, whose attitude became an example to all and sundry.



As we prepare for a life without you Thulani, we do so, wondering if we will ever get close to emulating you.

Farewell.



Our memories will linger on
long after our footprints
in the sand are gone



MESSAGE BY TOURISM MINISTER: DEREK HANEKOM

Dear tourism friends,

The beginning of 2019 – the 25th anniversary of the achievement of our democracy – is an opportune time to reflect on the sector's achievements and challenges, and for us to shape what lies ahead.

In 1993, South Africa received 3,4 million international visitors and tourism contributed 4,6% to GDP. Growth to 10,29 million arrivals, 9% contribution to GDP and 1,6 million people employed across the tourism value chain is no small achievement.

Despite the tough economic conditions, tourism continued to grow in 2018, albeit at a slower rate than we were all hoping for. January to September 2018, saw international arrivals grow by 2,2%, compared to the same period in 2017 (which was an impressive growth year) driven mainly by growth from the African markets. Our overseas markets saw a decline of more than 1% in the same period, with the Cape Town drought scare as the main – although not only – contributing factor. The safety of tourists was, and continues to be, a matter that warrants attention.

Happily, dams in Cape Town are now 65% full, but the take away lesson is that we must emphasise responsible tourism and general responsible use of scarce resources.

We are seeing daily successes of the South African Police Services (SAPS) in fighting crime and there are special plans in place for tourism areas, including the deployment of 1450 'Working for Tourism' safety monitors. We are determined to make it safe for tourists – domestic and international – to visit our beaches, to hike, and to visit our spectacular attractions around the country.

On the matter of land reform and expropriation of land, the take away message is that President Cyril Ramaphosa has strongly affirmed that there will be no arbitrary land grabs, and has called on all South Africans to help solve this historical injustice.

Tourism growth must be the desire of every patriotic South African. It translates into economic growth, jobs and opportunities for many. In 2017, tourism supported 31 752 new jobs. In 2019 the collaboration between the public and private sector must be strengthened to further grow and drive the industry to reach even greater heights. It is the one industry that can readily deliver the jobs and economic growth that our country so urgently needs.

I am pleased to report that, together with my colleague Minister Siyabonga Cwele [Minister of Home Affairs], we will intensify our efforts to make it easier for people to visit South Africa through an improved visa regime. The revised regulations making it easier for foreign children to visit our country have been gazetted. The Department of Home Affairs has committed itself to piloting the new electronic visa system in New Zealand. The intention is to start rolling out e-visas to other visa-requiring countries in the course of 2019.

Despite the challenges we faced during 2018, the start of the new year offers us an opportunity to move forward positively and decisively. Let us make 2019 a magnificently successful year – a year in which we lay a solid foundation for even greater successes in future years.

Let me take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to our whole vibrant tourism community who continue – with passion – to invest in, innovate and enhance our tourism offering, provide excellent services, and deliver memorable experiences to all our international and domestic visitors. ■

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, AN ADDED IMPULSE TO TOURISM GROWTH



The 2018 United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNWTO) theme speaks volumes on tourism growth, while making it easy for tourism players in South Africa (big and small) to leverage on various new measures on offer. The theme: **Inclusive and Quality Growth of the Tourism Sector Through Digital Transformation**, opens up a world of opportunity for tourism to blossom, right in the palm of one's hand.

The theme also aims to encourage travellers to explore the country, whilst fostering an awareness of the socio-economic benefits of technological advances in creating opportunities to improve inclusiveness, community empowerment and efficient resource management in the sector.

The emergence of digitisation in the industry calls for players to consider using multiple social media avenues at their disposal in order to lure more customers. This further sheds new light on destinations while breaking down traditional barriers. With this emergence, today's travellers are spoilt for choice. They can easily browse through various social media platforms to compare images, read reviews and acquire all the information they need, prior to making that important booking. Therefore, if used smartly, social media can attract a huge following which in turn, could add to tourism numbers. It is one powerful tool that can expand a small establishment within a limited time.

People like to see themselves being part of their favourite establishment. This makes them feel validated as regular customers, but most importantly, it makes them feel great to be part of the history of that place. As a result, when establishments such as Eyadini take pictures of patrons from their entrance and throughout their stay, it is considered one of the great marketing tools. This is attested

by **Jabulani Zama**, Owner and Founder of Eyadini Lounge, who says, "On Instagram alone we're sitting at over 200 000 followers, and have over 120 000 Facebook likes – these are quite significant numbers, considering that it's only my photographer and I that handle the social media marketing."

According to **Collin Thaver**, Managing Director of Southern Africa 360, social media is a powerful tool that can be used to reach a targeted audience. "It also has the reach to create awareness amongst a specific interest group and has the ability to sway a traveller's buying and travel patterns based on the message, image or comments."

Today's travellers rely heavily on social media for various reasons, one of which is the ability and speed at which they can either praise or criticise the service they have received from a particular establishment. This also puts establishments under pressure to pursue excellence as they know that the whole world could know about the kind of service they offer, with a few strokes on a keyboard.

However, tourism establishments should understand that not all social media platforms are equal. Although Facebook is still the biggest used platform of all, many businesses, especially those within the sector, still have some reservations about it. The only platform that has seen growth in numbers by this sector is Instagram.

This could be the case since the platform offers more than just images. Travellers form part of the high active groups on Instagram and are twice as likely to watch video contents on the social site compared with other users. This extends an olive branch to establishments as they can upload as much video and images as possible, for free.

■ **Johannes Mokou**



INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES SHOW CONFIDENCE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MARKET

*June Crawford, CEO, Board of Airline
Representatives of South Africa (BARSA)*

Major international airlines are investing in South Africa continually despite the sluggish economy and the lower than expected 2018 tourist arrival numbers recorded year to date.

African and International carriers operating into South Africa have throughout 2018 been establishing new routes into the country's three main international gateway airports, with some existing operators increasing their seat capacity in order to grow their passenger volumes and expand their overall presence in the market.

This is good news for the country given the concerted recovery plans aimed at lifting the economy out of the protracted period of recession. As the Board of Airline Representatives of South Africa (BARSA), we believe that the investment by airlines bodes well for tourism, investment and trade.

The 2,2% GDP growth recorded in the 3rd quarter of 2018, is reassuring for African and International airlines and confirms that their investments are sound and that

they have a critical contribution to make in enabling economic growth.

Connecting South Africa and the region to key European and Asian markets will pave the way for many new trade and business opportunities. Our airlines have shown commitment in this market, and top carriers such as Lufthansa, Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines, Air Mauritius, Rwandair, Kenya Airways have all been leading the charge.

It is possible that these airlines are taking a cue from what is seen to be a worldwide trend, taking advantage of the growing demand for air travel across the globe. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) recently announced that worldwide annual air passenger numbers exceeded four billion for the first time in 2017, supported by a broad-based improvement in global economic conditions and lower average airfares. The demand for air travel is set to continue through 2019.

Airlines are connecting a record number of cities worldwide. The increases in direct services improve efficiency by cutting costs and saving time for both travellers and carriers alike. Flying has never been more accessible, which applies to Africa and more so to South Africa.

Many new routes were introduced in 2018, with some carriers expanding their seat capacity, with the country's three major cities taking full advantage of this. The Mother City has leveraged this to recover from the negative perceptions created by the water crisis. New entrants in the Durban route are lifting the profile of KwaZulu Natal which has seen healthy arrivals over the past year. Gauteng Tourism Authority are now working closely with key aviation stakeholders to turn the region's fortunes around.

These investments by airlines have further given the three international gateways airports reasons to work even harder to create efficiencies and expand their passenger handling capacity.

Without a doubt, the airline industry and especially international carriers, have a crucial role to play in maximising the country's fortunes, in the face of a tough economic climate. As the representative association of African and International airlines, BARSa is committed to supporting its members and collaborating with other key stakeholders in further developing new routes and expanding existing ones, in order to promote tourism, trade and growing the country's economy.

We must therefore all work together to create opportunities for growth, conditions that inspire business and the airline industry in particular to invest continuously in order to make South Africa even more attractive for tourism, trade and investment.

However, South Africa must do more to accelerate the removal of barriers to economic growth. Tourism continues to suffer, we doubt if the recently gazetted amendments to the immigration regulations will change the tourist arrival patterns seen year to date. A fundamental shift must

happen, especially in respect of how we treat the issue of minor traveller documentation requirements.

The cosmetic changes that were introduced on 1 December 2018, in respect of both foreign and South African minors still means that those travellers unable to prove parental consent can still be denied boarding. This matter has to be dealt with conclusively, and we still await further engagements between Government and social partners on this as was agreed at the Jobs Summit in early October 2018.

African and International airlines have persistently called on the authorities to increase the capacity and improve the efficiencies associated with licensing of commercial air services, so as to allow for shorter turn-around times in respect of the processing of Foreign Operator Permits.

There is a huge frustration on the part of operators who legitimately think that the process is marred with inconsistencies and unnecessary red tape. All over the world a FOP application takes no more than 7 days to process, yet in our case it takes 120 days by law.

Since making his maiden State of the Nation Address in February, President Ramaphosa continues to speak about the incredible opportunities that tourism provides for our country. With support from the major airlines, we could be on our way to meeting the President's stated goal of doubling the industry in size.

Collaboration remains key if we are to make considerable strides towards unlocking growth opportunities. As BARSa, we want to see more jobs being created. We want to see more young people, especially women, entering the aviation industry.

We must therefore all work together to create opportunities for growth, conditions that inspire business and the airline industry in particular to invest continuously in order to make South Africa even more attractive for tourism, trade and investment. ■ *June Crawford, CEO, BARSa*



KRUGER PARK REVIVES ITS HISTORY WITH TRAIN HOTEL

Afro-chic hotel to launch on a stationary train

The Kruger National Park (KNP) is set to launch a new tourism concept rooted in its history, during the course of 2019.

The Kruger Shalati Train On A Bridge will be a stationary train permanently positioned on the Selati Bridge – a recreation of how the first visitors to KNP entered the park by train.

“Not many people realise that this is where tourism to Kruger started,” says **Judiet Barnes**, General Manager for Kruger Shalati: Train On A Bridge, and Marketing Manager for Thebe Tourism Group. “In the early 1920s, the only way to visit Kruger was by rail; the train would stop in this exact spot, the guests welcomed by Lt Stevenson-Hamilton (the Park’s first warden) and storytelling with a prepared feast would amuse the guests before they would get back on the train where it would be stationed on the bridge for the night before departing the next day.”



The train will have the feeling of an Afro-chic-styled boutique hotel. “From one’s room on the train, you’ll be able to look down to the Sabie River running underneath, a breath-taking view that may have you seeing the Big Five from a very different perspective, as they visit the river 30 or 40 metres below the train. This is likely to become a favourite experience for both international and local tourists,” says Barnes.

The Selati platform, a few metres from the train, will serve as the reception to the hotel as well as offer unique dining spaces for both hotel guests and visitors to Skukuza.

Should visitors not stay over, they can still enjoy the experience from the new Kruger Station food concept with storytelling and a food theatre – which is expected to launch mid-2019. ■ *Tourism Update*





CHINA MARKET INSIGHT AT SA TOURISM WORKSHOP



SA Tourism, in collaboration with Wesgro, V&A Waterfront and The Table Bay Hotel, hosted a China Ready Workshop in Cape Town in December. The gathering was aimed at sharing valuable insights with the local tourism trade on the China outbound tourism market.

“The workshop has been designed to give South Africa’s tourism trade vital information on how to enter the lucrative Chinese outbound travel market,” said **Mansoor Mohamed**, SA Tourism’s Hub Head for the Asia Pacific region who is based in Beijing.

“China is currently the world’s biggest outbound travel market and SA Tourism’s Asia Pacific team is working very hard and smart to gain market share,” he continued.

The workshop covered a detailed overview of the media and marketing landscape in China, and offered advice to delegates on how to enhance the visitor experience for the Chinese traveller.

CEO of Wesgro, **Tim Harris**, commented that the workshop was perfectly timed with Cathay Pacific launching a direct flight between Hong Kong and Cape Town last month, connecting China directly to the Cape for the first time. “More work needs to be done in attracting Chinese tourists,” continued Harris, “but there are already positive signs with spend and length of stay increasing in 2017 compared to that of 2016”.

China remains South Africa’s foremost tourism market, with year-on-year growth recorded at 38% last year. This has been consistent over the years and received the added impulse by their improvements of visa application processes.

Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, expressed that South Africa can build on this and attract even more tourists from China and other countries. He mentioned this after Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) released figures which showed a sharp increase in tourist arrivals, especially those from China.

SA Tourism further presented its 2019 Asia Pacific Roadshow to the delegates, planned for June and July 2019.

Six key China outbound travel insights shared were:

- China is expected to grow from an estimated 140 million travellers in 2018 to 250 million in 2025.
- SA will receive an estimated 100 000 of these travellers in 2018, with an average stay of nine days, and an estimated impact of R1,4bn (€90,36m) for the six months ending June 2018.
- While packaged tours are still popular for Chinese travellers to SA, travel habits are changing and they are moving towards FIT tours.
- The number of repeat travellers from China to SA is over 50%, indicating that first time travellers are seeing SA as safe, secure and a value-adding destination.
- Chinese travellers primarily visit Chinese-language websites to book their travel, so it is advisable for SA businesses to establish good relationships with local tourism players in China.
- The number of smartphone users in China is estimated at 750 million users – more than three times the size of the United States; with the average Chinese person spending an average of four hours on his/her mobile device daily.

“It is important for tourism businesses in SA to realise the benefits of becoming China ready. There are risks and rewards associated with doing business in China; more informed decisions can be made if one understands these risks,” said Mohamed. ■ *Tourism Update*



SA TOURISM CEO REFLECTS ON 2018

SA Tourism CEO, Sisa Ntshona

The year 2018 was a mixed year for South Africa's tourism sector, with many challenges to growth and development, as well as some progress and achievements, according to SA Tourism CEO, **Sisa Ntshona**, when he reflected on the year that was.

Three major tourism events took place during the course of the year:

- **Derek Hanekom** made a welcome comeback to the tourism Ministry.
- The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) received a new CEO – **Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa** – along with a new board.
- The country, along with the world, celebrated the 100th birthday of **Nelson Mandela**, with the launch of 100 destinations he had visited during his lifetime and which tourists could visit in his memory.

In terms of performance, SA's 5-in-5 plan reached the end of its second year, with arrivals growing by 2% by October 2018 – slower growth than was hoped and expected.

"It's not what we had hoped; we can do more," said Ntshona. He said such low growth was very concerning for the country, in light of the deep drop in arrivals from China and India, countered by the growth of arrivals in North America – such tight growth in SA arrivals meant that more tourists were going elsewhere.

Threats

The 'Big Four' threats to tourism in the country, said Ntshona, were water, wildlife, safety and security, and land expropriation. Visas, too, remain a challenge to tourism, with the trade questioning how the visa-exempt countries were selected. Unabridged birth certificates (UBCs)

continued to prove a thorn in tourism's side, making the country less and less attractive.

Looking ahead

Looking to 2019, Ntshona said emphasis would be placed on making ports of entry and border posts more welcoming – from airports to road border posts.

Feedback from the World Travel Market, which took place in London recently, was that big data, information sharing, and insights were becoming key to tourism cohesion. As such, SA Tourism will launch a data dashboard as well as a tourism app, giving multi-level information access and real-time data updates to both tourists visiting the country, as well as tourism product and service providers.

The Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) sector is being placed in the spotlight, with a Bulk Acquisition Strategy looking at growing the sector under the theme: 'Meet here, grow anywhere'.

Ntshona touched on the grading of establishments and its importance for all establishments, in particular SMMEs, who could springboard off the accolade when marketing to potential travellers.

He also noted the importance of technology as an enabler, opening up innovative new channels for tourism players.

Collaborative thinking

Ntshona spoke highly of how the private sector was coming through for tourism, and how the various branches of tourism were coming together to work for the good of tourism to the country. He urged tourism stakeholders to come forward with ideas and solutions to contribute to the tourism generation engine. ■ **SA Tourism**

LILIZELA AWARDS RECOGNISE EXCELLENCE IN THE INDUSTRY

The annual National Lilizela Tourism Awards were held on Saturday, November 17, where tourism players who have served the country's tourism sector over the past year for excellence, were celebrated and awarded.

At this sixth edition, hosted by SA Tourism at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, 800 guests from Government, the tourism industry, and the media, gathered to support and honour the finalists and winners.

Over 500 finalists, selected nationwide from more than 1 365 entries, were present – those who had won the provincial round and were named to compete in the national finals.

The categories across which they were judged were:

- Service Excellence Awards Winner
- MESE Category Winner
- Tourist Guide Category Winner
- Visitor Experience Category Winner
- Tour Operator Category Winner
- Sustainable Development – Universal Accessibility Winner
- ETEYA Award

A new category was introduced this year: the 'I Do Tourism' Award, which looked to recognise people or businesses who were not necessarily in the tourism sector but had a passion for tourism and had played a notable role in tourism.

Tourism Minister **Derek Hanekom**, together with Deputy Minister of Tourism, **Elizabeth Thabete**, handed out the awards to each of the winners, who also received individual art pieces from local artists.

In his welcome speech, Hanekom spoke about the diverse tourism offering that South Africa brings to the global market. "A variety of wildlife and nature-based experiences to satisfy every desire and every pocket; just about every



Minister and Deputy Minister of Tourism at the 2018 Lilizela Awards

adventure experience you can possibly imagine; a range of heritage and cultural experiences, the best of food and wine, song, dance, theatre, hiking and cycling trails, and breath-taking scenic beauty wherever you go," highlighting that it was the local tourism industry "who makes it possible for the tourist to experience all of this, and to feel at home and welcomed and pampered".

He further spoke about the progress made, challenges faced, and opportunities presented during the course of the year, to break down barriers to tourism and grow the industry. "We saw the dramatic increase in tourist numbers following the visa waivers for countries such as Angola and Russia. But we have also felt the negative effect of the ill-considered imposition of visa requirements on visitors from New Zealand. The opportunities for new, small businesses to gain a foothold in this growing sector are huge. Opportunities for our hidden gems to expose their products have been created at events such as Africa's Travel Indaba, Meetings Africa and various international trade and travel shows."

The Minister further spoke about the amendments to the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) regulations; the drive for increased SME participation through its Tourism Incentive Programme and the Tourism Transformation Fund; and the transition of travel from being destination-driven to experience-based.

CEO of SA Tourism, **Sisa Ntshona**, concluded that "a thriving South African tourism sector contributes to the economy, to employment, to the culture, the quality of life and the prosperity of our beautiful country. Tonight we were reminded of the diversity South Africa has and how privileged we are to have such amazing experiences to offer global visitors." ■ **SA Tourism**



THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANISATIONS IN OPTIMISING TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

From the dawn of democracy in South Africa, we've had the pleasure of welcoming swathes of visitors from across the globe. Some came to see the remarkable country that Nelson Mandela did so much to promote, some came simply as part of curiosity and the travel bug biting them. In almost 25 years, the tourism industry here has experienced a period of rapid evolution, and it's time to examine just how effective our role is in encouraging tourism growth.

The digitally-inclined visitor

No matter what your reasons are for travelling, be they business or leisure, chances are you are joining the majority of visitors who research, plan, pay for and enjoy visits to destinations with the use of a device. This accelerated shift to digital has had an impact on the way hospitality professionals do business, from their marketing efforts to their social media channels. Naturally, this affects how Destination Marketing Organisations tailor their efforts in enhancing opportunities in travel. Cape Town Tourism, for example, produced the first mobile-first website on the continent with a view to addressing this need. The

Industrial Revolution 4.0 means more than just an updated website, though; it means that every aspect of how we do business needs to come under the microscope to see if we're reinventing to remain relevant.

Gone are the days of brochure-based tourism and paper-heavy marketing campaigns – it makes sense to capitalise on the cost-effectiveness of digital marketing and communications for the benefit of visitors and move to a paperless environment.

Shifting to become a DxO

Destination Marketing Organisations, also known as DMOs, reside in a constantly changing landscape. Whether it's keeping up with new marketing channels and trends or balancing the promotion of tourism with the concerns of the local community, the role and priorities of DMOs is in a constant state of flux. Looking forward into 2019 and beyond, we will endeavour to stay aligned with the ever changing demands placed on us, by transforming our role from a DMO to what we term a DxO, where the 'x' will be defined by whatever the future demands of us.

Becoming a DxO isn't merely about technology, it's a recognition that the tourism industry has irrevocably changed. Nothing is as it used to be, except that people still want to travel. Perhaps there will come a time when tourists will conduct their visits virtually, but, for now, we're dealing with real humans who want to enjoy seamless, immersive experiences in a destination.

Gone are the days of brochure-based tourism and paper-heavy marketing campaigns – it makes sense to capitalise on the cost-effectiveness of digital marketing and communications for the benefit of visitors and move to a paperless environment

A DxO is better-equipped to manage disruptive business methodologies, to pivot when it comes to times of change and to be agile in the face of challenges. For example, A DMO in a time of water shortages cannot simply sit back and continue to market a destination as if oblivious to the challenge faced by locals and, ultimately, visitors. A DxO tackles the challenge head on, collaborating with relevant bodies in the private and public sector to drive tangible change, having a positive impact on the very environment in which tourism takes place.

Engaging with society

The DxO is more integrated with society, and that's part of the mandate we all have to practise sustainable tourism. We must engage with communities, seek ways to boost the economy, encourage strategies that lead to job creation and retention and protect the environment and resources on which tourism depends. While a DMO's capabilities in this respect are limited, being pigeonholed into a 'just tourism' space, the DxO's input into a holistic, inclusive environment are welcomed and needed.

That way, we can have an impact on job creation, enhance the ways in which the boost to the economy translates to the betterment of our communities and drive innovative measures to attract visitors and retain them. Our task is to work with everyone, from large operators to SMEs and

entrepreneurs to bring out their best and create a cohesive tourism environment.

Becoming a DxO means seeking ways to be less reliant on funding from local or national government; to achieve self-reliance that translates to job security and the freedom to strike out on uncharted territory with new ideas.

Are we there yet?

One thing's for certain, our shift to becoming a DxO is on the learning curve, but as we collaborate with other international organisations with similar intentions, we are learning from each other how best to apply this fresh thinking. There are some tourism geniuses across the world whose thinking is innovative; it makes sense to listen to what they're saying – overwhelmingly, it's a parallel to developments in our own thinking, almost a natural progression that's taking place.



Enver Duminy, CEO Cape Town Tourism

More than being 'digital first', we must become 'society-first' in our strategies. Our capacity to effect change will be increased, and the impact we generate will attain a wider reach. It's no simple journey from being a DMO to becoming a DxO, but the challenge is invigorating – we're getting closer to where we need to be: a tourism sector that's relevant, growing and looking to the future.

■ **Enver Duminy, CEO Cape Town Tourism**

AFRICA'S LARGEST SUSPENSION BRIDGE CONNECTS KWAZULU-NATAL AND MOZAMBIQUE



Africa's longest suspension bridge, connecting KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique, officially opened on 10 November 2018, after facing several delays. The Maputo-Catembe Bridge will reduce travel time significantly between Maputo and Kosi Bay, KwaZulu-Natal's east coast border post, from six hours to 90 minutes.

Christiaan Steyn, Marketing Manager at Drifters Adventours says: "The new bridge will definitely make it easier for us to enter the City (Maputo) and cut down on driving time. At the moment our 16-day Southern Highlights Tour spends a night in Maputo exploring this unique city."

The new bridge will benefit all travellers to the area, as they can easily access Maputo instead of having to use the old route, which, in comparison, takes much longer, according to Steyn.

"It's all about accessibility in good time. Linking the capital of Mozambique to the Kosi Bay border in just 90 minutes is unbelievable for those who might have travelled the tedious road before," adds Sales and Marketing Manager for White Pearl Resorts, **Trish Lawrence**. "For White Pearl, this places us in pole position in the bush luxury resort category, as accessibility is now an easy road transfer; no costlier helicopter flights required."

Lawrence explains that, in the past, travel time ranged anywhere from three to six hours, depending on weather conditions. "As part of White Pearl's contribution to the celebration of the opening of the Maputo-Catembe Bridge, our management team took to the road this weekend to test the travel time, resulting in 90 minutes to and from White Pearl Resorts' front door. We continue to celebrate our much-anticipated bridge opening."

Over the years, Mozambique has seen an increase in international tourism to the country, but more so as an airport arrival destination with an immediate connection to

travellers' preferred hotel/resort. However, Lawrence says White Pearls anticipates more confidence in those opting for self-drive, willing to explore Mozambique at their own pace. "Regardless if they use Maputo as their primary stay option and travel out of town for the day; it is now possible with the new bridge and road."

Lawrence says that the bridge is not only Africa's longest suspension bridge, but in its own right, a great attraction for Mozambique.

Li Gang, Deputy GM of China Road and Bridge Corporation, the company responsible for the construction, said the bridge, the first in Africa of its kind, had become a landmark in Mozambique, and further highlighted the country's economic development.

According to **Filipe Nyusi**, President of Mozambique, who inaugurated the bridge, prior to completion he was thinking about its potential to leverage the Mozambican economy, and its contribution to the integration of the Southern African Development Community as well as the country's tourism potential. Prior to the completion of the bridge, travellers had to use a ferry, often proving unreliable, to cross from Catembe district to Maputo and vice versa.

The toll rates applied to the Maputo-Catembe Bridge vary from 160 to 1 200 meticaïs (€2,34-€17,50). Class One vehicles, such as motorcycles and light cars will pay 160 meticaïs, while for Class Two vehicles with an average load of up to two axles, a tariff of 320 meticaïs applies. Heavy-duty trucks with three or four axles, classified as Class Three will pay 750 meticaïs, and Class Four vehicles with a heavy load of more than five axles a tariff of 1 200 meticaïs applies.

For buses and minibuses used for passenger transport, tolls are reduced by 75%; therefore, minibuses will only have to pay 40 meticaïs, while buses will pay 80 meticaïs.

■ **Tourism Update**

LAUNCH OF THE BUSHBUCKRIDGE CULTURAL MARULA ROUTE



The Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA), together with Bushbuckridge Local Municipality and the Bushbuckridge Local Tourism Organisation, launched the Bushbuckridge Marula Cultural Route late in 2018.

The launch showcased all the tourism offerings available on the route, and further encouraged participation of local communities in the area towards tourism development.

There is a growing need to ensure that locals in the area, whether they own a tourism business or not, participate and benefit from the tourism sector, and with Bushbuckridge being rich in natural and cultural activities, the route is aligned to help fill the gap. A number of communities surrounding the Kruger National Park (KNP) have the potential to showcase the region's cultural activities as well as develop their own accommodation establishments by offering homestay experiences to both local and international tourists.

FACT SHEET

In 2010, Amarula was ranked sixth in a top 10 Hot Liqueur poll by a respected global publication, *Drink International*. It is a South African flagship brand, which consists of a tasty blend of cream and extract of marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*), known locally as the elephant or marriage tree. Marula trees are components of the vegetation type known as 'Bushveld' or Savannah, which are mixed vegetation type covering the lower slopes of the plateau and the Lowveld of Mpumalanga, including much of the Kruger National Park.



The first phase of the route includes village tours to Justicia, Huntington and Lilydale, all of which are close to the borders of KNP and Sabi Sands. According to MTPA, international tourists visiting these reserves tend to have a keen interest in visiting local villages to experience the culture and rural life.

Kholofelo Nkambule, Senior Manager Communications and PR at MTPA, says: "When there are festivals or events, a tour/itinerary can include other villages that are outside the three villages." The route focuses on communities close to KNP, such as Kruger Gate, Newington Gate and Shaw's Gate."

The Marula Cultural Route recently launched in Mpumalanga, ensuring local communities benefit from the tourism industry.

According to Nkambule, the route includes cultural performances, traditional food/African cuisine restaurants, traditional healers, visits to chiefs, craft centres, educational centres, orphanages and old-age homes. The aim of the project is to create opportunities and access to the market, as there are key challenges facing Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMMEs), especially business owners in rural areas, such as travel, tours, accommodation and related businesses. Government has prioritised the growth and development of SMMEs, which have been identified as key drivers of economic growth and development, and therefore there is a need to intensify support to enhance sustainable SMME development.

A key purpose of the Marula Cultural Route is to formalise the offerings available in these areas so that tour operators can easily put together affordable packages for clients.

The project will expand further to nearby game reserves, as they tend to receive high volumes of tourists who pass through to KNP without any revenue being spent to benefit the communities of Bushbuckridge. ■ MTPA

MARULA CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2019

The 14th edition of the **Limpopo Marula festival** will take place on 23 February and 2 March 2019 respectively, with the Dance Movement taking place first, followed by the Jazz and Gospel Movement on March 2. This is a sequel to many others since its inception in 2006. The festival has grown in leaps and bounds since then and draws a wider audience which include those from SADC countries. It takes place in Phalaborwa, one of South Africa's smallest towns, which is known to attract more travellers due to its adjacency to the world renowned Kruger National Park. One of the biggest heritage phenomena, 'Ku LumaNguva'/'Go Loma Morula' continually makes the festival stay above the rest. It is a ritual that is performed by traditional leaders at the beginning of the marula season. This is a heritage practice that precludes any drinking of the marula beverage before traditional leaders have blessed the season.



TRENDS IN LOCAL TRAVEL

South Africans are increasingly exploring their own country, which offers a diverse range of destinations and activities just a few hours' drive, or short flight, away.

Local travel trends

Trends in the local travel scene over 2019 are much of an extension of the previous year, with a few major trends to note.

1. Bush, beach and berg

Sthembiso Dlamini, SA Tourism's Chief Operating Officer, says, "South Africans want bush, beach and berg experiences wherever they go, with beach leading the way. KwaZulu-Natal beaches remain very popular with domestic travellers, who also love social activities including spending time with other people, 'whether it be a braai (barbecue) at home with friends, or a picnic while out and about.'"



2. Solo travel

An increasing number of travellers are electing to travel alone; a trend that is driven significantly by the millennial generation. Millennials are independent and adventurous, and expect instant gratification in their travel needs and expectations of a destination or experience.

The advancement of mobile apps and enhanced online search and bookings capabilities, are making finding places to visit alone (or in small groups), and completing accommodation and experience bookings, quick and easy. This increases the attractiveness of local travel for millennials, who then post and share information about their travels on social media platforms – which are followed by their peers, and seen as first-hand 'reviews' and 'recommendations'.



3. "Bleisure" and extended travel

Extending a business trip by a few days to see the local sights while in a different part of the country allows domestic travellers to see more of their own country. Often, a traveller will complete the business portion of a trip, then either extend the trip on their own to see the local sights, or be joined by their families. This is practical in the sense of capitalising on flights already in place for the business trip.

4. Experiential travel, and responsible tourism

Travel is becoming more about the full experience of the journey as opposed to the destination.

Travellers are seeking experiences that have meaning and create memories, from cultural and heritage experiences that speak of the traditions and history of a destination, to adventure activities or travel with a purpose where tourists can get involved in local conservation efforts and contribute to a greater cause while travelling.



5. Adventure travel

“Adventure experiences are very popular. There has been an increase in the number of people wanting to experience more of Mpumalanga, for example, as the province provides both bush and berg experiences and has a number of adventure spots,” Dlamini continues.



South Africa has a wide range of adventure experiences, including safaris, canopy tours, quad biking and hot air ballooning.

6. Off the beaten track

Travellers are no longer content with visiting well-travelled destinations, but rather want to enjoy new and authentic travel experiences. “In all the nine provinces, there is an array of hidden gems that add to the country’s variety and colourful experience,” says Dlamini.

She shares some of the hidden gems that travellers can explore:

- Makgabeng Farm Lodge in Limpopo
- Vomba Tours and Transfers in Mpumalanga
- Zimasa Travel in the North West
- Workshop Ko Kasi in the Northern Cape

‘Hidden gems’ can also come in the form of experiences, and Dlamini suggests a few:

- Horse riding with Leratong Tourism
- Hole In The Wall in Eastern Cape and Drifters Raceway in East London
- Potluck Boskombuis in Graskop, Mpumalanga

7. Technology and tailored experiences

Technology and mobile apps are bringing control of the travel experience into the traveller’s hands. Purchasing behaviour is being influenced by websites aggregating the best deals and prices from thousands of booking websites, and tailoring options based on a traveller’s search history and preferences. This has made travellers more price conscious, allowing destinations that offer the best value for money to benefit.

Top 10 attractions and experiences for SA travellers

SA Tourism suggests that the following are popular for SA travellers:

- Visiting and swimming at the Durban beachfront in KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape.
- Going shopping in various malls with Gauteng malls being top of the list.
- Visiting entertainment centres and casinos.
- Going on a game drive at the Kruger National Park.
- Whale-watching in the Western Cape.
- Visiting Sun City resort.
- Visiting the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town.
- Lifestyle events related e.g. concerts and festivals.

Packaging is key

Products and experiences are being packaged to promote value for money and meet travellers’ evolving needs, to encourage them to travel and explore their own country, says Dlamini. One of the projects that SA Tourism and its partners are working on is the Sho’t Left campaign, which includes examples of packages being put together.

SA ticks all the boxes in terms of affordability, conservation tourism experiences, uniquely South African culinary scene, culture and heritage, and excellent adventure offerings. ■ *Tourism Update*



WTM LONDON: SA'S TOURISM MINISTER ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND OVERTOURISM

World Responsible Tourism Day (7 November) fell on the third day of World Travel Market (WTM) London 2018, where Minister of Tourism, **Derek Hanekom**, gave a keynote speech on responsible tourism, addressing climate change and overtourism.

"WTM is such a celebration and testimony to our worldwide tourism industry vibrancy and multiculturalism," said Hanekom, adding: "It's up to all of us to spread the responsible tourism message loudly, clearly and far and wide."

The deeper message Hanekom shared is a matter of urgency, as he explained that there were two topics the industry has to address – climate change and overtourism. "Without massively changed behaviour the world stands to destroy itself. Long before then the growth in tourism stands to come to an end. We are perilously close to the point where carbon emissions will irreversibly change the symbiotic life systems that sustain life. If we don't do this, we will remain on the tragic path of being the architects of our own destruction."

He called on the industry to become change agents, mentioning that through actions, the industry can send the right message to guests. "If tourists see responsible practices away from home, they are much more likely to adopt them when they get back," said Hanekom.

On the subject of overtourism, Hanekom was just as clear, saying: "The key issue is host communities feeling excluded

and crowded out by tourists. It is becoming a major problem." He went on to explain that responsible tourism requires communities to be consulted, to benefit from tourism, and integrated into tourism development in their neighbourhoods.

"Tourists don't want to be viewed as unwelcome visitors or destroy lifestyle, habitat and the environment. They want to feel embraced and welcomed, and feel that they are making a positive difference to the places they visit," he added.

Focusing on South Africa's own experience, in particular the Cape Town water crisis which has received a significant amount of global media attention, Hanekom saw the country's response as providing a template proving it possible to radically and rapidly transition to more sustainable ways of operating. He explained that having implemented a host of water-saving measures, the city has reduced consumption by more than 50% in just three years. "From adversity, the city has become a global leader in best water practice."

In concluding his keynote address, Hanekom called on the industry to be true leaders in developing a sustainable future, saying: "Let us be the industry that leads the world towards sustainable practices. If we do this we will ensure there is a world, and one with people living in harmony with nature and each other, and enjoying fulfilling, sustainable tourism experiences." ■ *Tourism Update*

UNIFIED VOICE FOR SA TOURIST GUIDES



Tourist Guides hard at work in pursuit of legal guiding

The National Federation of Tourist Guides and Affiliates (NFTGA) was announced earlier in December by the Department of Tourism, hailing the emergence of a united body and voice to represent tourist guides across the country.

The initiative is being spearheaded by the Tourist Guiding unit within the Department. Its main aim is to create a single point of contact for tourist guides across the country – and have inclusive representation of Registered Tourist Guides – to champion their causes within the greater tourism industry.

The association will only officially launch later this year. While this is the case, a steering committee has been put in place to set up the initiation and operating structure of the body. Members of the steering committee were drawn from industry stakeholders across the full spectrum of tourism service providers, including tour operators, guide trainers, specialist and regional guide associations, industry bodies such as the Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (Satsa), and parastatals such as SANParks, to ensure an all-inclusive representation. These include:

- **Alisha Belo Kirk** (tourist guide) – representing the industry (from Tourvest Destination Management)
- **Bernice Kelly** – representing nature guides/assessors (from the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa)
- **Francois Gilbert Collin** (tourist guide) – representing culture/nature/foreign language guides (French, Spanish and Portuguese)
- **Hannelie du Toit** – representing the broader interests of the tourism industry (Satsa)
- **Javier Garcia** – representing the industry (from Kobo Safaris)
- **Jeremy Energy Howard** (tourist guide) – representing guides (Cape Tourist Guides Association Vice Chairman)

- **Joep Stevens** – representing the industry (from SANParks)
- **Joleen Du Plessis** (tourist guide) – representing foreign language guides (German) and the industry (Accredited Guide Training Service Providers, Western Cape)
- **Julien Paul Gregory Janssen** – representing the industry (from Cullinan Holdings)
- **Kanya Kali** (tourist guide) – representing guides (legal representative on the steering committee and a practising lawyer)
- **Maria Louise Kruger** (tourist guide) – representing guides and the industry (Accredited Guide Training Service Providers, Gauteng)
- **Maura Ronchietto** (tourist guide) – representing foreign language guides (from GIGA)
- **Zania Collin** (tourist guide) – representing culture/nature guides and the industry (training providers and tour directors)

“The NFTGA is about inclusivity, upliftment, empowerment and, most importantly, access to key decision-makers in Government and parastatals, so that we, as guides, can be recognised as an important part of the tourism SA family, and not an afterthought to it,” says Francois Collin.

“For the steering committee, we have looked at associations and groups that are the most active and visible in negotiating benefits and representing their members,” continues Collin. “This does not restrict or place a limit on who will be represented by the NFTGA; but by bringing the people that we have on board, we are convinced that we will have a dedicated committee that will look after the broader interests of the whole guiding community, and not only that of small groups.” ■ *Tourism Update*

DEPUTY MINISTER URGES YOUTH TO VENTURE INTO TOURISM



In line with South Africa's National Imbizo Focus Week, Deputy Minister of Tourism, **Elizabeth Thabethe**, interacted with the community of Mabopane in Gauteng, at the Mabopane Indoor Sports Hall on Monday (November 12 2018). Thabethe called on the youth of South Africa who are interested in the tourism sector to approach her Department for more information and for assistance in establishing their own businesses.

Addressing the local community of Mabopane, north of Tshwane, on the first day of National Imbizo Fortnight of Activism, Thabethe said tourism played a crucial role in job creation.

"South Africa is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. People all over the world want to come to South Africa for many reasons. During the World Cup, we showed the world who we are and people loved our country," said the Deputy Minister.

"In tourism, we always want to get people to visit South Africa. People love our country, they love our wines and they love our food," she said.

Thabethe called on young people to come up with programmes that spoke to other young people in terms of job creation.

She said Government cared about young people. "As Government, we listen. Whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability and encourage other young people to get involved in the tourism sector."

She expressed concern about young people who go to tertiary institutions or universities to study in courses where there are few job opportunities. "Our country needs young people who have the relevant, scarce skills. Chefs are scarce and the Department is always willing to assist young people who want to venture into tourism or to become chefs," she said.

The National Imbizo Focus Week, also known as the Fortnight of Activism as pronounced by Cabinet on October 24, took place from November 12 to 25, focusing on issues of national importance and public priority. The week seeks

to ignite social partnerships and contribute positively to Government endeavours, including initiatives aimed at good governance, improved internal staff, and external and stakeholder morale, as well as public confidence in efforts aimed at reigniting the economy, creating jobs and building a prosperous society that all can benefit from.

At the backdrop of the National Imbizo Focus Week are the centenary celebrations of struggle stalwarts, **Albertina Sisulu** and former President, **Nelson Mandela**. In his welcoming remarks, the MMC for Economic Development, **Randall Williams**, reiterated the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) sentiments on tourism being one of the world's largest generators of jobs and a powerful driver of the socio-economic growth and sustainable development.

"In an effort to ensure that tourism yields the benefits it has the potential to deliver, we as the city are recognising our Tourism Division to focus on the sectors we believe can yield more positive results. We will be focusing our efforts on domestic tourism, business tourism and sports and events tourism," said Williams.

In her address, the Deputy Minister encouraged those in attendance to take up the opportunities put in place by Government in assisting communities to develop economically.

"As the Department of Tourism, we have numerous programmes that seek to empower our people, mainly women and the youth in developing and sustaining their businesses. Our Department is also passionate about providing skills to unemployed youth, as a measure of addressing the scourge of unemployment in our country," commented Thabethe.

The week also focuses on tourism and its value chain, targeting a total of 500 participants that include youth and women in tourism, entrepreneurs and aspiring tourism practitioners. The programme also saw officials from the Department making presentations on the various programmes that are currently in place and how citizens can access them. These included enterprise development, skills development as well as the Tourism Incentive Programme. ■ **Charles Mnisi**



SA TOURISM PARTNERS WITH THE VOICE OF HOLLAND

SA Tourism's Northern Europe Hub team has entered into an innovative partnership with the popular international variety TV show, *The Voice of Holland*, to increase awareness of South Africa as a desired destination for Dutch tourists.

The first episode, which screened on November 9, 2018, attracted over two million viewers across The Netherlands. Viewers were all shown beautiful televised landscapes from South Africa during the episode.

"We are so pleased, as this really shows the value of strategic media partnerships," said the team's Chief Operating Officer, **Sthembiso Dlamini**. "Through this partnership we know that many potential Dutch travellers will get to hear, feel and taste South Africa and will ultimately come and visit our country. It really is about increasing positivity, especially for such an important market. It is even more special that South Africa is the first long-haul destination to be working with *The Voice of Holland*, and we're very excited and proud to be partnering with such a large show, which will help us attract many more Dutch tourists to South Africa. This fits perfectly with our organisational strategic 5-in-5 goal of adding five million more tourists visiting South Africa by 2021."

The partnership was supported by a 360-degree campaign that included sharing more detailed information

about South Africa using images and videos to showcase the country as more than just a safari destination, but one that has it all – from tropical beaches and vibrant city life, to rich culture and heritage, exceptional weather most of the year, and a colourful culinary offering.

The diversity of South Africa's offering was featured in all *The Voice of Holland*'s promotions, which has run for 17 weeks, with the final episode giving glimpses of some of the locations and experiences. ■ **SA Tourism**

ABOUT THE VOICE OF HOLLAND

The Voice of Holland, also known as **TVOH**, is a Dutch reality television competition. Since its first season launch in 2010, it has been a force to be reckoned with, having attracted viewers from all over Holland, neighbouring countries and those from others far flung countries.

One of the important premises of the show is the quality of the singing talent. Four coaches, themselves popular performing artists, train the talents in their group and occasionally perform with them. Talents are selected in blind auditions, where the coaches cannot see, but only hear the auditioner.



PRACTISING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Ramesh Jeenarain, Managing Director of World Leisure Holidays South Africa, shares his thoughts on what sustainable travel means for travellers and the travel industry at large.

Sustainable travel has come a long way in recent years and not only from a resort and business perspective but also from a traveller perspective. We know that the tourism sector has grown by 69% globally, coupled with the fact that tourists have become a lot stricter about the type of location they visit, how 'green' the location is, what experience the resort offers as well as what they are willing to pay for all of this, it's important for the travel industry to sit up and take notice of these tourist 'demands'.

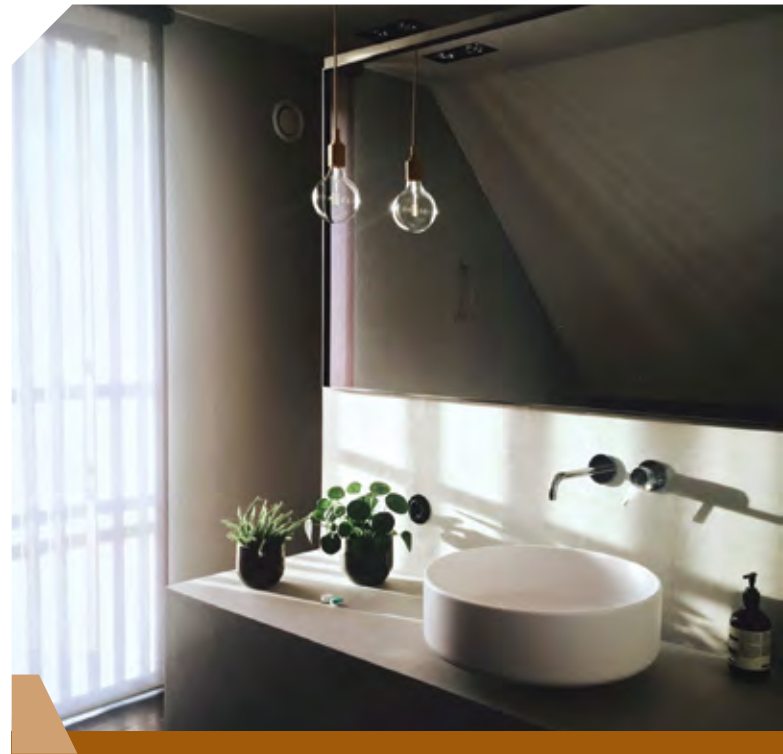
Millennials are gaining more spending power but are also more conscious about their impact on the world. As such, these travellers are demanding sustainable travel options and are willing to pay more to ensure that they are staying at an eco-friendly resort.

What does sustainable travel mean exactly?

It isn't just about the environment, and focuses on two more pillars, economic and social factors. From an economic perspective, social impact travel ensures that money spent on a trip or tour remains within the community, that every effort has a positive impact on the environment and that the culture of the country and community aren't compromised.

Millennials are gaining more spending power but are also more conscious about their impact on the world. As such, these travellers are demanding sustainable travel options and

are willing to pay more to ensure that they are staying at an eco-friendly resort. This type of holidaying, termed 'barefoot luxury', is growing in popularity among holiday-makers and resorts, and holiday accommodation that doesn't include sustainable travel choices will be doing themselves (and their environment, culture and economy) a huge injustice.



How can the travel industry ensure that it is practising sustainable travel?

By reducing the environmental impact, such as offering paperless check-in and check-out. Offering refillable soap, shampoo and shower gel dispensers for example, reduces the amount of plastic and waste that goes through the accommodation on a daily basis. Donating leftover food to underprivileged communities in the area instead of throwing it away also shows the resort's commitment to sustainable travel.

Preserving natural sites, lifestyles and the uniqueness of the destination not only attracts tourists but shows local pride and responsibility

Offer locally relevant experiences to tourists, allowing them to really get to know the location they are visiting, this promotes good choices and healthy activities across the locals and the tourists.

Preserving natural sites, lifestyles and the uniqueness of the destination not only attracts tourists but shows local pride and responsibility. Inspiring farm-to-table dining far supersedes imported, endangered cuisine. And actively showing respect for and treating staff, locals and children well can have a huge impact on the type of visitors to the resort.

How can tourists tell whether a resort practises sustainable travel?

Resorts need to ensure that if they are practising sustainable tourism, their offering clearly states that they offer a unique experience which is (if possible) certified eco-friendly accommodation. There are many authentic

international certificates that resorts can receive. The Travelife Certification, for example, acknowledges protecting the environment, respecting and treating employees fairly, respecting the local economy, protecting local culture, heritage and wildlife of the destination as well as supporting the local economy and businesses.

The trend towards greener experiences over traditional hotels among travellers continues to grow. Resorts that can show that they are consciously reducing their carbon footprint through their accommodation and activity often rank far higher than sky-scraping establishments.

Sun Resorts is proud to have been recognised by some of the most famous groups in the hospitality industry. This is an accolade that not only pushes up the popularity of the resorts but also makes them more desirable to those looking to 'invest' their vacation time and money into a sustainable establishment.

A final word of advice for sustainable travel in 2019

By managing and communicating their sustainable travel efforts, resorts are able to stay top of mind when holidaymakers are deciding on where to book their next holiday as well as when recommending sustainable tourism to others. ■ *World Leisure Holidays South Africa*

GREEN TOURISM INCENTIVE PROGRAMME (GTIP)

The Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP) is a resource efficiency incentive offered by the Department in collaboration with the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), with the objective to encourage private sector tourism enterprises to move towards the sustainable management of water and energy resources.

Through grant funding, the programme assists private sector tourism enterprises in reducing the cost of investing in more energy and water efficient operations, while increasing their competitiveness and profitability in the long term.

The GTIP broadly offers the following to qualifying tourism enterprises:

- 90% of the cost for a new resource-efficiency audit or the full cost for reviewing an existing resource efficiency audit; and

- grant funding to qualifying small and micro enterprises on a sliding scale from 30% to 90% of the total cost of implementing qualifying resource efficiency interventions, which is capped at R 1 million.

The programme is administered by the IDC on behalf of the Department and all applications and approvals are managed by the IDC.

All interested tourism enterprises are encouraged to take up the opportunity and apply during the next application window for the GTIP which will start on 1 April 2019 for a three-month period.

For more information visit www.idc.co.za or www.tourism.gov.za

All GTIP enquiries should be sent to gtip@idc.co.za





KRUGER PARK'S NEW VEHICLES FOR MOBILITY-CHALLENGED VISITORS

Kruger National Park highlights universal accessibility with the unveiling of new vehicles for tourists with mobility challenges.

Kruger National Park (KNP) has earlier in December unveiled four activity vehicles to be used to transport tourists with mobility challenges, for game drives. The formal unveiling ceremony was headed by **Lucy Nhlapo**, General Manager for Marula Region, on behalf of KNP management.

The 14-seat vehicles form part of the KNP Visitor Management Plan, and can carry a weight of up to 250 kg. This is the KNP's attempt to reduce the mobility challenges faced by people with disabilities, while also answering a call made by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) during its 2016 World Tourism Day theme: "Universal Accessibility."

Universal access refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity and access to a service or product from which they can benefit, regardless of their social class, ethnicity, ancestry or physical disabilities.

On the international front, Universal Accessibility has taken centre stage. South Africa has followed suit and the tourism industry is slowly but surely adapting to the international trend by ensuring Universal Accessibility to this important sector of the market. In order to conform to Universal Accessibility standards, travelling packages and tourism products should be designed to meet and exceed the needs of people with disabilities, senior citizens and families travelling with children.

Nhlapo said, "KNP aims to enhance the recognition for and appreciation of people with disabilities, including our tourists. We would like to ensure that the Park promotes access whilst creating an inclusive environment that provides a wildlife experience for all."

During the launch, Nhlapo said visitors with disabilities, similar to able-bodied people also used and enjoyed the Park, and

therefore this was an important segment of the market that should not be excluded from interacting with nature.

"We believe that the launch of the activity vehicles for people with mobility challenges will increase awareness and understanding as well as improving access to the tourists with disabilities; in particular wheelchair users, for their benefit and enjoyment. We place commitment on equity and diversity and these we can only achieve if we give access to everybody in our tourism offerings, regardless of their physical, intellectual or sensory capabilities," Nhlapo added.

Tourism products are designed with the sole purpose of being enjoyed by all tourists i.e. young, elderly and people with disabilities. Statistics from the United Nations Social and Economic Council (UNESCAP) indicate that the potential global market for Universal Accessible Tourism (UAT) is 650 million people with differing disabilities and 600 million elderly people.

According to UNESCAP, revenue generated by this market is a staggering \$13,6 billion in the United States alone. Many elderly people, families and people with disabilities are keen to travel, but considerable variation in the level of access within destinations, combined with poor information and negative experiences, discourage potential customers. In South Africa, the potential market for UAT represent around 30% of the population and a portion of the 30% has adequate disposable income to travel which represent an untapped segment of the market.

Some of the places in KNP that provide universal access include:

- The Rhino Museum at Berg en Dal.
- The Indigenous Nursery in Skukuza.
- The Trail at Berg en Dal Camp
- The Elephant Interpretive Centre at Letaba Camp.

■ *Tourism Update*

INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER NUMBERS UP 9,6% AT CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



In 2018, 2,6 million international passengers were recorded by Cape Town International Airport (CTIA), representing a 9,6% growth from 2017, despite the drought and other challenges experienced by the region. This growth came from long-haul carriers from outside the Southern African region.

Overall passenger numbers grew from 10 693 063 in 2017 to 10 777 524 in 2018, equating to an increase of 84 000 additional passengers passing through the airport, a growth rate of 0,8%. There was a slight decline of 1,4% in domestic passengers for the year. In December, international passenger numbers grew by 3,7%, while domestic passenger numbers declined by 0,8% year-on-year. These numbers comprise all traffic through the domestic and international terminals (arrivals and departures) and may include repeat travellers throughout the year.

“The City of Cape Town is delighted at the growth in international passenger numbers for 2018. Busy peak season and tourism growth to the region are encouraging in terms of sustainability, especially following what has been a challenging time for the tourism sector. More visitors mean increased benefits for the city and its residents,” said the City’s newly appointed Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Opportunities and Asset Management, Alderman **James Vos**.

Western Cape Minister of Economic Opportunities, **Beverley Schäfer**, added, “It’s no secret that the tourism industry was hard hit by the drought last year, but reports from many of our tourist offices have been largely positive and we look forward to working with the industry this year to ensure that this sector continues to grow as it is an important creator of jobs in the province.

“The growth in international traffic at CTIA, despite the drought factor, is testament to the good work of the Air Access partnership. International traffic numbers at CTIA for the whole of 2018 reflect solid growth, which can be attributed to the launch of several new routes throughout the year, and our sustained focus on ensuring growth in our tourism industry,” continued Schäfer.

“CTIA is experiencing a busy peak season and it’s been good to have the seasonal carriers back. Although busy, the airport value chain is continuously playing its part to ensure that a memorable experience is created for

visitors,” said **Deon Cloete**, General Manager of Cape Town International Airport.

“Cape Town is a must-visit destination that is a key feature on the global travel itinerary. Our goal is to ensure seamless, inclusive travel through the airport and other modes of arrival that provide positive visitor experiences,” remarked **Enver Duminy**, CEO of Cape Town Tourism.

Wesgro CEO, **Tim Harris** added, “The Cape Town Air Access initiative, a partnership between the City of Cape Town, the Western Cape Government, Airports Company South Africa, Wesgro, Cape Town Tourism, South African Tourism, and the private sector, has helped land 13 new routes to CTIA, adding over 1,5 million two-way seats to our destination. This has resulted in a R6 billion (€374 m) boost to our economy since 2015.”

According to Schäfer, events such as the Rugby Sevens held in Cape Town in December and the Queen’s Plate in January helped to stimulate the city’s tourism and hospitality sector. The city also hosted the SunMet event in December, which draws large crowds each year, and has several major conferences lined up in the coming months, including the YPO leadership conference which will see around 2 500 delegates from around the world descending on the city in March.

“Together with our partners, we need to build on our tourism success as a city to ensure this translates into investments in programmes and projects that drive demand and make business sense. My new portfolio has the potential to ensure that we continue to be the go-to city on the African continent and globally for business, trade and tourism. We have a diverse economy that is creating jobs and keeping unemployment low,” Alderman Vos said.

For the 17th year the city was voted the Number One Favourite City in Africa and Middle East for 2018, in Travel + Leisure’s 2018 readers’ poll, and scooped the award for the City with the Best Growth Potential. In 2018, CTIA, once again, won the award for Africa’s Leading Airport.

“These awards, among a host of other accolades, acknowledge our efforts and signify a turn for tourism in Cape Town,” concluded Alderman Vos, “Going forward, the city will drive increased international, domestic and regional tourism growth, especially via the air routes.” ■ **Tourism Update**



PROFILING THE SOUTH AMERICAN TRAVELLER

South America is rapidly emerging as a key source market for the region, with *Statistics SA* reporting a 9% increase in year-to-date arrivals for August 2018, compared to 2017.

In South Africa, the key South American source countries are Brazil and Argentina with Chile growing. These markets have shown considerable growth over the last three years, with South Africa welcoming just over 100 000 visitors last year and already by August this year, welcoming 76 000.

With this growing demand, the trade is examining ways of leveraging this market to help grow the industry. Tourism Update spoke to a number of industry experts, examining the South American traveller profile, to assist the industry in packaging for the market.

According to **Dinky Malikane**, Regional General Manager: Americas at South African Tourism (SA Tourism), there is a large demand amongst families, solo travellers and couples (often honeymooners). According to **Sonia Fernandez Carralero**, Key Account Sales Manager – Latin America, Southern Europe, Scandinavia and Australasia, at Thompsons Africa: “They like child-friendly places, since this is a market

that travels in big families, including three generations at times.” She says a large portion of the market is family travellers, particularly during school holidays, which fall into South Africa’s high season (December to March).

André Laget, MD at Akilanga DMC and Events says they operate in all segments, including group tours and regular scheduled tours.

Malikane adds that a growing number of first-time travellers are choosing South Africa as their first international destination. “In the recent past, Brazilians went to South Africa only after visiting Europe and the United States, and now they are choosing South Africa as their first international trip.” This is due in part to the attractive prices of air travel to South Africa, and in part to an increasing awareness of the destination.

SA Tourism also notes that there is a growing market of ‘Afro-descendants’, who are travelling with an interest in ‘coming back home’. “SA Tourism has noticed this new demand, and we are already planning some actions to better reach this market,” further adding that South African operators would benefit from learning how to package and sell to Afro-descendants, “and also be ready to meet their expectations when they arrive in South Africa”.

In terms of budget, the South American market appears to vary. **Julia Louw**, General Manager for Southern Africa at Kobo Safaris, says: “The average South American budget is in the middle of the spending scale.” However, she adds that there is also a sizable portion of luxury travellers, with Fernandez Carralero saying: “There are two types of budgets: the very tight budget which always looks out for the cheapest price, and those who are not at all price conscious.” She says that in her experience, Chileans, Mexicans, Colombians and Peruvians are more interested in high-end travelling, although she adds that this does not always mean they buy exclusively five-star products.

Louw further notes that she has seen a 60/40 split between middle-range and high-end travellers.

Laget notes that the luxury market is smaller, with the average spend from Brazilian visitors being around US\$2 150, and US\$980 from Argentinians. However, he believes that this will vary according to the South American tour operator organising the trip.

Victoria Rodenacker, Market Manager for South America, Spain and Portugal at Tourvest DMC further

notes that with rugby gaining popularity across South America, trips to South Africa in the three and four-star bracket are growing as more fans travel to the region to enjoy a rugby-focused package.

Malikane says that as the dollar has strengthened, South American travellers are looking for destinations where the Brazilian Real is favourable. Sitting at around R4 (\$0.28) to one Real, South Africa can therefore price itself competitively.

In terms of itineraries, it appears that the market does well when combining a trip to South Africa with an Indian Ocean Island. Rodenacker says: “Usually they will combine their stay in Southern Africa with a visit to Mauritius or Seychelles.” Louw and Fernandez Carralero also highlight Mauritius and Seychelles as popular combination destinations, with Fernandez Carralero noting that Madagascar is growing. She further notes that European tourists can often get good deals to Mauritius via Mauritian DMCs, giving local DMCs only the Southern Africa portion of the itinerary. “However, the South American market would still book through a ground handler in South Africa who can do all the destinations.” ■ *Catherine Bower*





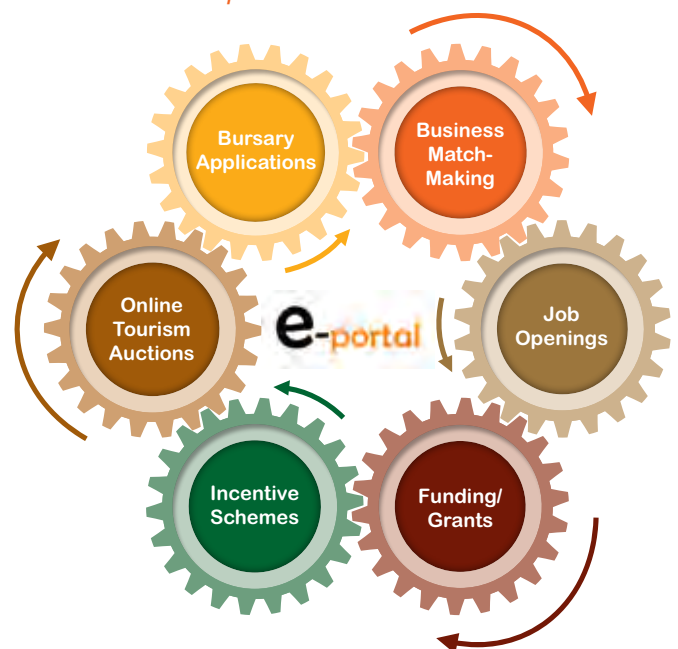
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM LOOKS INTO EMAIL CONCEPT

The Department of Tourism is noting the influence of new technologies on the tourism sector and how this can help grow the business on a larger scale.

One of the ideas relating to the use of technology which is earmarked for 2019 and beyond, is the idea of an eMall. This platform would be a resource where Government provides information on its services for the public and corporates to access. For tourism, the Department has indicated that various functionalities in the eMall could include, but not be limited to, datasets and establishing real-time transactional capabilities for tourism stakeholders. Additional functionality and information could include the recruitment of graduate chefs, online tours of graded establishments, bursary applications, job openings, incentives schemes applications, funding/grants, events calendars, online tourism auctions (which would include offers for sponsorships rights, bidding of major events), and business match-making.

"We believe that there are untapped opportunities in creating an online portal where a variety of tourism services and goods can be pooled and then sold/offered,"

says **Blessing Manale**, Chief Director of Communications in the Department. "The project is led by the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, and our Department is in the initial stages of identifying Pilot 'Stalls'." ■ *Staff Reporter*





AFRICA'S TRAVEL TRENDS FOR 2019

Travel is an ever-shifting industry; how visitors adapt in their preferences is a challenge for any tourism and hospitality professional to identify in order to meet these requirements and stay relevant. These trends differ from continent to continent, so it's necessary to maintain a global perspective when marketing to different source markets.

According to the Euromonitor Megatrends Report 2019, global inbound international arrivals are expected to grow by 5% to 1,4 billion trips in 2018. This amounts to total travel sales that are expected to fall just short of US\$2,5 trillion for the year. We must utilise all our resources in tapping into the immense potential this represents.

The same report lists what it terms 'Megatrends', i.e. trends that are more than mere fads, that have an impact on how people travel and how they approach in-destination experiences.

Seamless experiences

One such trend is for visitors to be able to have an entirely seamless visitor experience from start to finish. This extends to points of entry and departure from a country. This has been an ongoing struggle of ours in tourism, since unwieldy processes hinder access for visitors, although we are assured by Tourism Minister, **Derek Hanekom**, that this challenge is being addressed. For us, it's more than a trend, it's a critical point that speaks to sustainability in tourism for the country – after all, if it's easier to access a country, then why would potential visitors rather go to a country that's tricky to enter?

Aspects relating to seamlessness include biometric entry point measures, facial recognition cameras in hotels, online check-in, keyless entry, holistic mobility solutions and other

smart city initiatives, as well as frictionless payment facilities. The digital traveller has increasingly come to expect such solutions, and we are steadily rising to meet their expectations.

For example, SnapScan's development in Africa allows travellers to benefit from a mobile, cashless and cardless payment product; while the continent is coming online at a faster rate than any other continent on the planet, there are many parts of Africa and South Africa that need such solutions, since infrastructural challenges may impede payment processes. It's simple: travellers don't necessarily want to carry around large amounts of currency, so this solution addresses the challenge well.

Trading down

Another trend addressed in the report is that of 'trading down'. The author compared world travel markets in this sense: for developed countries, the middle class is battling to maintain an economic status quo enjoyed for decades, but in developing regions such as Africa and Asia, there is a booming growth of the middle-class market, translating into a greater desire to travel for leisure purposes, as well as boosting business travel.

While the tourism industry in Africa has historically catered to the wealthy international traveller, resulting in a strong focus on inter-regional flight networks and high-end lodging, there's room for diversification. Opportunities to meet the demand for low-cost carrier flights and more segmented accommodation exist to cater for this growing market.

These trends are just a few of those moving the bar for the tourism sector, but it's a bar that must move to ensure that we act on our future-forward strategies for tourism growth and sustainability. ■ *Enver Dumuny, CEO Cape Town Tourism*



*Some of the the local travellers
on their short left drive*

SHO'T LEFT CAMPAIGNS SHOW PROMISING SIGNS

SA Tourism's continued campaign to urge residents to travel locally is showing good signs. This stems from a campaign which coincided with Tourism Month in 2018, where SA Tourism launched Sho't Left Travel Week. The organisation partnered with various number of trade partners, airlines, hotel groups and tour operators offering discounts during the week of September 24 - 30, 2018.

"Sho't Left" is derived from everyday South African "taxi lingo". A commuter wanting a ride to a destination close by will say "Sho't left, driva", meaning, "I want to jump off just around the corner".

SA Tourism's Chief Operating Officer, **Sthembiso Dlamini**, says, "There are so many experiences for South Africans to enjoy that are just a Sho't Left away, whether by road or flights – these experiences are easily accessible."

More than 234 local tourism businesses from across the country registered to participate, bringing some of the best local travel experiences and deals to tourists.

Dlamini explains, "Through the special Sho't Left deals, available on www.shotleft.co.za, we want to show that these experiences are affordable, easy, and fun to travel in and around our country. Through our various partnership with graded tourism establishments and other partners, we have put together special package deals and discounts exclusively for South African travellers, running throughout the year and not just December, as South Africa is wonderful all year round."

"These deals range from day activities and weekend trips to longer packaged holidays; from budget self-catering stays to upmarket hotels. There's something for everyone. A lot of these deals include great extras, like accommodation plus adventure activities, transport and meals," she elaborates.

The tourism industry continues to play an important role in the South African economy. While this is the case, domestic tourism is the bread and butter of every tourism industry around the world and in most cases, international arrivals contribute a much smaller share of tourism revenue than domestic travellers. Domestic tourism is great for the economy.

In September 2018, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) released a report looking at the benefits of domestic tourism. Out of these benefits include the fact that through domestic tourism, expenditure accelerated in recent years compared to 2014 and 2015. The report indicates that the rise was a result of expenditure on domestic overnight stays.

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Some of the activities available through the Sho't Left campaign, include:

- Boat cruises
- Game drives
- Self-catering breaks
- Self-drive wildlife experiences in game parks
- Yoga safaris
- Champagne breakfast in the sky
- Horseback safaris
- City walking tours
- Heritage and museum tours
- Adventure packages – kayaking, hiking, canopy tours, bungee jumping

A recent partnership of the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) with global navigation app Waze, makes travelling to Sho't Left destinations – and to destinations and activities around them – simple and easy. Through the system, travellers are alerted to TGCSA-graded establishments in the area in real time.

Other initiatives that SA Tourism has put in place to make domestic travel easier and more accessible to travellers include the following:

- Stokvel initiative: In collaboration with Flight Centre, SA Tourism is encouraging South Africans to save towards a holiday in South Africa through a stokvel account. Groups are encouraged to come together, open a savings account with R500, and commit to payments for a certain period of time until they are ready to enjoy destinations throughout the country. SA Tourism will activate the initiative in different areas around the country, encouraging South Africans to save for travel around South Africa.
- Lay-buy travel: a number of companies have realised that paying for a trip in one go can be expensive, so they are giving South Africans an opportunity to pay for their trips in instalments.
- Buying travel in retailers: Computicket travel has led this offering by allowing customers to book and pay for their travel within Shoprite Checkers, making travel more accessible to all South Africans. TravelStart is following suit, by also introducing travel bookings within Pick 'n Pay and Pep stores.
- Banks selling travel: a number of banks are also partnering with travel companies to promote and sell travel, for example Capitec and TravelStart, FNB through eBucks, Standard Bank through uCount, and ABSA through its rewards programme.

Sho't Left Travel Week will be an annual drive, with travellers being able to take advantage of deals throughout the year, dependent on the travel partners' terms and conditions.

■ *Tourism Update*



Sho't left at its best. A leisurely moment in the mountains of Mpumalanga



BIG EVENTS AND DOMESTIC TOURISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is home to a massive number of diverse cultural groups whose differing philosophies and views makes it the most scattered country in the world. While this is the case, there is one thing that has over the years, managed to bring us together: song and dance.

This emanates from big and small events which, when well organised, manage to bring people from far flung places who would converge in an identified venue, to be serenaded, no matter how far such an event could be from their homes.

While this is seen as merely an entertainment drive, it is also an important element that keeps the domestic tourism wheel rolling. With events such as The Grahamstown Arts Festival, InniBos Kunstefees, Durban July, Maphungubwe Arts Festival, Marula Arts Festival and the like, the tourism numbers are set to skyrocket. Entertainment lovers would flock from as far afield as Durban, Kimberly and Johannesburg to attend these events. In addition to this, events such as the recently organised Global Citizen, also manage to pull crowds from across the country.

Such attempts can easily be scorned from a distance. But the truth of the matter is that they are more than they appear. During these events, patrons, some of whom would have flown from various provinces, may be in need of transport, food and places to stay. This in turn contributes to the economy of the host province and by extension, that of the country.

Events tourism has outstripped many other subsections within the industry in terms of attracting tourism numbers, especially on the domestic tourism front. One of these subsections is sports tourism, which, while consistently contributing greatly to the country's GDP, has succumbed to events tourism.

Besides its mere ability to attract domestic travellers, events tourism also has a substantial impact on jobs and income, as local producers stand a chance to showcase their produce, thereby earning a penny or two. Like any other subsection in the sector, big events make a variety of input purchases that translate into flow of funds throughout

the local economy. Its indirect and induced effects work through numerous other sectors within the local economy and contributes immensely to the economic growth and development of the host city and the province at large.

One example that showcases the power of events tourism in the country is Marula Festival, which is held in Phalaborwa every year. Confirmed by Limpopo Provincial Spokesperson, **Phuti Seloba**, Marula Festival remains the province's flagship project, which exposes local produce to the outside world in a matter of days. "Firstly, we are looking at sustainable tourism or increasing tourism because most people who are coming for Marula Festival definitely come back or share their experiences with others, either through social media or word of mouth. Through this initiative, we get more people visiting our province," Seloba says.

Although events tourism appears to be doing its bit to increase tourism numbers in the country, some industry experts still believe that there is more that needs to be done holistically for domestic tourism to expand. According to **Lee Anne Bac**, Director for Business Services and Advisory at BDO South Africa, "The domestic tourism sector has provided strong support for the national industry, but it is still only focused on a limited portion of the market by offering the same 'traditional' products to the same type of tourists that have dominated expenditure in this area for the past 50 years."

Lee Anne Bac believes that the industry has been static for a very long time for domestic tourists, with no innovation in sight, resulting in travellers being exposed to the same old experiences over and over again.

She laments that service providers within the sector assume that their existing products will also appeal to new entrants in the discretionary spending economy, when, in fact, they have very different needs. Bac remarked that these travellers are not defined by racial demographics, but are rather differentiated by their demand for new and different tourism experiences which are not covered by the current product set. ■ **Johannes Mokou**



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love

SUCCESS

good

luck

prosperity

FRIENDSHIP

looking

forward

2019 good

HEALTH

good fortune

LOVE

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new beginning

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SUCCESS

good

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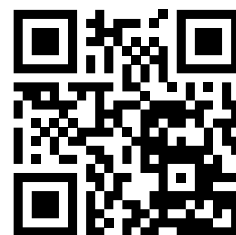
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