



## **MINISTRY: TOURISM REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

### **SA Tourism on the High Ahead of the Festive Season**

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South Africa is entering the peak summer season on a high note, as the tourism numbers continue to show unparalleled growth in both domestic numbers and international arrivals.

“We are upbeat as all indications are that our tourism sector is on a fast highway to recovery,” said Tourism Minister Lindiwe Sisulu.

Sisulu spoke during the launch of South African Tourism’s Summer season “Give Me Summer That” campaign in Sandton, Johannesburg.

The Minister said that the 2022 summer is the first one since the pandemic, without COVID-19 restrictions. As a country, she said: “we are poised for the best summer holidays since 2019.”

This summer is billed, she continued, “to be the biggest and boldest summer period yet after the two-year hiatus occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic’s lockdowns, restrictions and travel bans.”

“This is therefore, the ideal time to get outside and explore our country again to visit friends, family and relatives, be on holiday in the bush or get sand under our toes by the sea. We have massive tourism offerings to cater for all discerning travellers, local and international,” she boasted.

Encouraging South Africans to explore their country, she said: “We are the best ambassadors of the tourism industry, which contributes significantly to economic growth, jobs and happiness, is within us to make a difference. Let’s travel to all corners of our homeland.”

She stressed that we must appreciate that although travel and tourism is leisure business, but it multiplies the country’s overall success, reducing inequality and improving economic growth prospects.

In 2022, tourism’s contributions to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stands at 3,7%. This is more than agriculture, utilities and construction.

She assured travellers that as part of law enforcement’s massive deployment to deliver an incident-free holiday period, tourism service providers, locals, and visitors can be at ease.

For instance, she revealed that all 182,126 police officers will be on active duty as all leave has been cancelled for the duration of the summer period.

“Our security forces are on the ground and on high alert throughout the festive season to ensure the safety of locals and tourists alike.”

Sisulu added: “We urge visitors to visit more than just a province but explore the vastness of our country’s landscapes and treasures.

Sisulu said the upward trajectory for both domestic numbers and international arrivals has been sustained since the cabinet rescinded all COVID-19 restrictions.

“I am pleased to announce that the cumulative arrivals from January to October have amounted to 4,5 million in 2022. This is 47% below 2019 levels, but the 2022 levels have improved significantly since 2021,” she said.

Sisulu added: “In 2022, Africa Land arrivals accounted for the most significant number of arrivals (3,2 million), followed by Europe (671k) and the Americas (256k).”

She remarked that the Africa Air markets had a healthy increase of 132%.

“The January to October 2022 numbers show the sector recovered at 43% of pre-pandemic 2019 levels. Arrivals from the African continent were 40% lower than in 2019,” she revealed.

On the domestic front, she said, we are cruising.

According to the Minister, “Domestic overnight trips from January to September 2022 reached 23.9 million trips, 138.6% over the same period in 2021.”

Sisulu believes that “domestic tourism consumption follows the ‘revenge travel’ phenomenon showing that South Africans are travelling to compensate for the lost time.”

It also emerged that the spending patterns are on the increase.

The Minister said, “The total domestic expenditure was R65.9 billion, a 150.7% increase over 2021, and was driven by holiday trips having accounted for 43.3% of total expenditure.”

Impressively, “domestic day trips recorded a 169.4% increase or 131.0 million,” she said.

According to Sisulu, day trip spending also showed a phenomenal increase of 163.3% to reach 122.1 billion and was primarily driven by trips taken for shopping and attending social events.

She added, “Total Foreign Direct Spend increased in January – September 2022 by 188,6%, reaching R37,0 billion over the same period in 2021.”

According to the October tourism performance figures, the future looks even brighter.

Overall, South Africa forward bookings for the next six months are expected to reach a staggering 208% increase in arrivals compared to the previous year.

“The top forward bookings are from Europe and the Americas. There is an 88% increase in bookings for the next six months (22 September to Feb 2023) from the USA alone,” she concluded.

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