

APRIL 30, 2024

TOURISM TUESDAYS



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#TourismTuesdays





From the editor

Dear Industry Partner,

Welcome to the first monthly edition of the Tourism Tuesday newsletter. We're thrilled to continue our journey of sharing industry insights and stories with you, and we're committed to ensuring that we include various industry voices and views, your participation and contributions are vital to the success.

As part of our updates, you'll notice that we've undergone a makeover to make our newsletter more user-friendly and accessible. We hope this new look enhances your reading experience and makes it easier for you to engage with the content.

This month, as we countdown to one of the biggest global tourism events, Africa's Travel Indaba, we put the spotlight on the province of KwaZulu-Natal and we highlight what delegates can expect at this year's edition of the trade show. We explore the myriad of networking opportunities at this Pan African trade show which will take place from the 13th to the 16th of May.

During the month of April, South Africa celebrated and observed Freedom Month. In this issue we reflect on the remarkable journey of the past 30 years. Freedom Day, commemorated on April 27th, holds significant importance in our nation's history as it marks the first democratic elections held in 1994.

Additionally, we invite you to discover, visit, and explore some of the incredible tourism experiences that our diverse country has to offer. From breathtaking natural wonders to rich cultural heritage sites, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

We look forward to your continued support and engagement as we journey together through the ever-evolving landscape of the tourism industry.

Thank you for being part of the Tourism Tuesdays community, and we trust you will enjoy this edition of our newsletter.

Tourism Regards,

Tourism Tuesdays Team

Minister of Tourism in South Africa, Honourable Patricia de Lille, Reflecting on 30 Years of Freedom



Honourable Ms. Patricia de Lille
Minister of Tourism, South Africa

In his State of the Nation Address (SONA) last month, President Cyril Ramaphosa, reflected on the last 30 years stating that “the past enables us to better understand the present and it inspires the actions we must take to build the future”.

From a tourism perspective, over the past 30 years of freedom, new terms have found their way into the lexicon of this sector. Township tourism, rural tourism and many others are sub-sectors in a sector that is the mirror which projects the beautiful diversity of destination South Africa’s heritage, scenery, culture and her people.

Not only has the decisive action benefitted the consumers of South Africa’s tourism offerings, it has also introduced new players into the sector. New, innovative and

This year, South Africa celebrates 30 years of freedom providing a great opportunity for reflection. The tourism landscape in South Africa has transformed immensely since the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

Not only has transformation, spearheaded by government through deliberate policy and programmatic interventions, opened up new vistas for the sector, it has ensured that the sector is opened up and truly reflects the demographics of South Africa.

Premised on the National Development Plan (NDP) and the review of the Tourism Sector Master Plan, the transformation of the sector is not only the statement of a policy position, but a lived experience for many previously excluded tourism businesses.

exciting business concepts have also yielded great results. While there is still a lot of work to be done, the reshaping of the racial and gender dynamics within the tourism sector has indeed borne fruit.

There is a story of transformation nestled in the verdant expanses of Pilanesberg and led by Bernard Marobe, a seasoned field guide with over three decades of experience, Kgabo Safari embodies the evolving landscape of tourism.



He isn't just a witness to the sector's transformation; he's an active contributor, living proof of the change legislation strives to achieve.

Marobe is a direct beneficiary of visionary and ambitious legislation like the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act of 2003, which led to the formation of the Tourism B-BBEE Charter in 2005. This initiative aimed to weave previously marginalised individuals into the fabric of the mainstream tourism sector.

Last year Cabinet approved the Tourism Sector Master Plan which guides government and the private sector on the actions we are amplifying to stimulate demand through various actions including investment in new tourism products and infrastructure, removing obstacles to exponentially grow tourism numbers and the sector's contribution to the country's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

To support growth of the tourism sector, the Department of Tourism has a number of incentive programmes to support businesses to thrive such as the Tourism Equity Fund, the Green Tourism Incentive Programme and the Market Access Support Programme for tourism SMEs. Other opportunities to provide training opportunities, especially to enable young people to break into the sector, includes annual training programmes such as hospitality, chef, food and beverage and sommelier-accredited training.

Another great tourism story from the last 30 years, is that of Sakhumzi. In the vibrant heart of Soweto, Sakhumzi Maqubela's Sakhumzi Restaurant stands as testament to South Africa's rich culinary heritage.



Located on the historic Vilakazi Street in Orlando West since 2001, a street home to two Nobel Peace Prize laureates, Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sakhumzi offers more than just delectable traditional South African fare. It embodies community and resilience.

Last but not least is the pioneering success story of Zandile Dhlamini, a tale of determination and innovation in the tourism industry. With 17 years of experience, she insists on the importance of creating an immersive experience for her guests.

She recalls an "Aahaah moment" when she saw tourists on a bus parked Soweto's by the famous Vilakazi Street. They never disembarked from their bus - they simply took pictures and left. Then, in 2006, when South Africa won the bid to host the 2010 FIFA 2010, Dhlamini knew her time had arrived. By 2007, she had founded Aahaah Shuttle & Tours and was ready to take tourists on an unforgettable journey.

Tourism is about authenticity, sustainability and inclusivity and freedom is at the heart of this sector. For South Africa to reap the rewards of a sustainable and buoyant tourism industry, we must continue to exercise and enjoy our freedom as we connect with each other and with visitors from various parts of the world. A true embodiment of the spirit of 30 years of freedom is when we explore our country and also open our hearts and doors to welcome visitors from all over the world.

High Value for All Delegates at this Year's Africa's Travel Indaba



AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA

Set against the backdrop of one of the continent's most-loved cities, this year's Africa Travel Indaba, will take place under the theme "Unlimited Africa". Happening from the 13th to the 16th of May, this well-entrenched event is owned by South African Tourism and is hosted in partnership with the KwaZulu-Natal Province and the city of Durban.

From new and authentic proudly African experiences to established tourism products, this year's Africa's Travel Indaba promises a dynamic event filled with networking opportunities combined with a celebration of Africa's warm and welcoming people.

With only two weeks to go, here's what delegates can look forward to at Africa's Travel Indaba:

The Best Location: City of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Africa's Travel Indaba takes place in the picturesque province of KwaZulu-Natal, known for its world heritage sites, wildlife and adventure, rich culture, history, wide open spaces and rolling hills. KwaZulu-Natal also boasts 600kms coastline. Beyond the corridors of the fully capacitated and award-winning iconic Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre (ICC Durban), Indaba delegates can look forward to the lively city of Durban, with its historic buildings, and museums as well as a vibrant township experience before venturing into exploring the rest of the province.

For more information:

<https://visitdurban.travel>

<https://zulu.org.za/>



Business Opportunities Day (BONDay)

Poised for advancing Africa's excellence, Africa's Travel Indaba is preceded by a dedicated Business Opportunity Networking Day (BONDay) which is developed in close collaboration with the greater tourism industry. This will take place on the 13th of May and aims to provide a platform for driving thought leadership, exploration of topical global tourism insights under the four identified streams - unlimited, discover, connect and grow - whilst advancing knowledge sharing.

High Quality Buyers

Dedicated to matching high-quality buyers with exceptional African products and creating valuable opportunities for everyone involved, Africa's Travel Indaba attracts buyers from around the world, who are specifically interested in destination Africa. The show's online diary and matchmaking system is globally benchmarked and encompasses technology and innovation that is superior.

Large Number of Exhibitors - Wide Variety

With a fully sold-out floor space, Africa's Travel Indaba showcases the diverse leisure tourism products that the continent has to offer. More than 1100 exhibitors from across Africa promote their offerings to international and local buyers further fostering connections and collaborations that shape the future of the African tourism sector.

Speed Marketing Sessions

South African Tourism through the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) provides a platform for both new and existing tourism products to shine. Speed Marketing sessions are a key feature of Africa's Travel Indaba and serve as a pivotal market access platform. Not only does this platform facilitate product showcasing, but it also stimulates fruitful discussions and negotiations essential for business growth.

At this year's trade show, exhibitors will seize the invaluable opportunity to promote their offerings under three distinct themes, 1) Kasi Flavour: focusing on township and culture/heritage products. 2) Wet Adrenaline, focusing on active adventure and coastal beaches products,





and 3) Visit the Wild, focusing on Safari and camping products.

Networking Connections for Business Growth

There is value for all delegates at Africa's Travel Indaba including impactful networking and engagement sessions to drive business. The show's official welcome networking event seeks to immerse delegates in an authentic Durban experience and will take place on the 14th of May.

Unique Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs)

Africa's Travel Indaba continues to put a firm focus on Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). Under the banner of, Hidden Gems Zone, these enterprises representing authentic and unique products and experiences, will participate through the Tourism Market Access

Programme by the Department of Tourism. This is aimed at stimulating the growth, development and transformation of the South African Tourism sector. This in turn contributes to stimulating enterprise growth and to contribute to job creation, revenue growth and an enhanced visitor experience.

Economic Impact and Growth

Africa's Travel Indaba is not only a celebration of Africa's tourism industry but also an impactful economic driver. The trade show plays a significant role in the city and the province's growth and economy. Last year, Africa's Travel Indaba contributed more than R1 billion to the national fiscus. The 2023 trade show also created and sustained 2 295 jobs. Projections indicate that the 2024 event is also expected to inject a substantial amount into South Africa's economy, highlighting the crucial role tourism plays in boosting the economy.

Enlightening Editorial Sessions

Through the various editorial sessions taking place at the show's media centre, members of the media can attend the illuminating discussions exploring the multifaceted impact of tourism and generate content relevant for their audiences. Whether it is venturing into the impact of digital technology on the tourism sector or discussing the importance of culture and history or engaging with the continent's young minds, these insightful sessions elevate the significance of tourism as a catalyst for positive change in our interconnected world.

Proudly Pan African

Over and above the fact that the trade show features a wide selection of African tourism products and offerings, highlighting the continent's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, Africa's Travel Indaba also takes place during Africa month and is testament to the resilience and vibrancy of the continent's tourism industry.



Technology and Innovation

Through digital influence and innovation, Africa's Travel Indaba promises to enhance the delegates' experience at the show. The show will be equipped with new technologies to elevate the user journey, including the upgraded mobile app which has a newly integrated indoor navigation feature for ease of movement around the trade floor.

Conclusion

Whether it is compelling editorial sessions or exciting networking events; or rich cultural exchanges and much-needed economic benefits, Africa's Travel Indaba is set to deliver an array of valuable experiences for all delegates.



South Africa Illuminates Times Square in Celebration of Freedom Day!



In celebration of 30 Years of Freedom Day, South Africa illuminated New York's Times Square on the NASDAQ Tower, symbolising the nation's journey and unity on a global platform.

On April 23rd, South Africa took center stage in the heart of New York City with a dazzling display of pride and unity. An advertisement commemorating Freedom Day and "30 Years of Democracy" graced the iconic NASDAQ Tower in Times Square, one of the world's most prominent billboards.

At 6pm in South Africa (12pm in New York), images showcasing the beauty of the country appeared on the screens of Times Square, captivating both locals and tourists and garnering attention from news channels worldwide.

The NASDAQ billboard, also known as the "NASDAQ Market Site Tower," spans an

impressive 929 square meters and stands at 36.6 meters tall (10,000 square feet and 120 feet tall). For that special moment, South Africa's narrative unfolded across this colossal screen, encapsulating the essence of the nation's journey over the past 30 years.

This remarkable campaign is the result of collaboration between the South African Consulate General in New York City and various partners.

Article published in: goodthingsguy.com



Invitation to Speed Marketing Sessions at Africa's Travel Indaba



The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA), a business unit of South African Tourism, cordially invites tourism businesses to participate in the highly anticipated Speed Marketing Sessions at Africa's Travel Indaba, scheduled from May 14-16. These sessions will kick off at 08:30 and conclude at 10:00, taking place in Meetings Room 21 at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre (DICC).



Exhibitors at the Speed Marketing Sessions will seize the opportunity to showcase their offerings under three distinct themes: Kasi Flavour (focusing on township and culture/heritage products, Wet adrenaline (focusing on active adventure and coastal beaches products), and Visit the Wild(focusing on Safari and camping products).

Speed Marketing is a pivotal market access platform, fostering interaction and collaboration between tourism businesses and buyers, including tour operators and destination management companies (DMCs). Not only does this platform facilitate product showcasing, but it also stimulates fruitful discussions and negotiations essential for business growth.

South African Tourism is dedicated to providing a platform for both new and existing tourism products to shine. Through these Speed Marketing sessions, exhibitors can forge connections with local and international tour operators, fostering meaningful relationships and enriching the overall visitor experience.



To register to present at speed marketing sessions, contact Thabo Mpotu via email at thabomp@tourismgrading.co.za by tomorrow, Friday, 3 May 2024. Don't miss out on this opportunity

SAA Joburg to Perth Route



South African Tourism (SAT) congratulates South African Airways' return to Perth, Australia, marking a significant milestone for both countries. The inaugural flight departed from Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport on the evening of Sunday, 28 April 2024, and touched down at Perth Airport on Monday, 29 April 2024, around midday, Australian Western Standard Time.

With a flying time of approximately 10 hours, SAA's direct route offers the most convenient and affordable connection between the two countries, catering to the travellers who seek to explore South Africa for leisure or business.

This achievement builds upon the success of our recent launch of the São Paulo intercontinental route six months ago," remarks SAA's interim CEO, Professor John Lamola. "The reintroduction of flights to Perth is a significant milestone for both SAA

and South Africa, reflecting the enduring popularity of Perth as a destination among South African travelers. Approximately 80% of our target market regularly travels to Perth to visit family and friends."

The launch of this new route will contribute to boosting visitor numbers to South Africa.

SAA will operate a three-times-a-week service between Johannesburg and Perth, with flight schedules tailored for passengers' convenience. Departures from each city are timed to occur late in the evening, ensuring arrivals in Johannesburg in the early morning and around midday to Perth.

In the first 2 months of 2024, South Africa welcomed 12 513 tourists from Australia, representing a 2.3% increase when compared to the first 2 months of 2023.

“Boosting Tourism Growth” : Sedibeng Stakeholder Engagement Highlights Importance of Graded Establishment



In a collaborative effort spearheaded by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA), alongside the Gauteng Tourism Authority (GTA) and Sedibeng District Municipality, the recent Sedibeng Stakeholder Engagement Session illuminated the path toward enhanced tourism development. Held on April 18, 2024, at the prestigious Kgalala Palace within the Sedibeng District, the event served as a pivotal platform for industry stakeholders to converge and explore avenues for advancement.

At its core, the workshop aimed to disseminate vital information to tourism stakeholders, spanning an array of pertinent topics. These discussions delved into the manifold benefits of grading, market access opportunities, avenues for funding, tourism incentive programmes, and avenues for skill development within the sector.

Situated within the Gauteng Province, Sedibeng has long been identified as a region ripe for tourism expansion. Despite its inherent potential, it remains relatively underexplored compared to its counterparts. Positioned within what is deemed Villages, Small Towns, and Dorpies (VTSDs) region, Sedibeng grapples with infrastructural limitations and resource constraints, necessitating intentional efforts to bolster the growth trajectory of tourism businesses within its bounds.

The event drew an enthusiastic and diverse audience, indicative of the collective resolve to propel Sedibeng's tourism sector forward. Accommodation and conference venue managers, tour operator proprietors, representatives from tourism attractions, and various tourism associations converged to participate in these discussions.



Central to the proceedings were presentations delivered by esteemed stakeholders, including representatives from the TGCSA, TBCSA (Tourism Business Council of South Africa), Department of Tourism, Gauteng Tourism Authority, Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation, and the Sedibeng District Municipality.

Their insights and directives underscored the imperative of fostering a culture of quality and excellence through grading initiatives, thereby laying a robust foundation for sustainable tourism growth.

As Sedibeng continues its journey towards becoming a tourism hotspot, initiatives such as the Stakeholder Engagement Session serve as catalysts for progress, heralding a future defined by inclusivity, innovation, and prosperity within the tourism landscape.



Tourism Grading Council

Premium Awards:

For the month of April, the prestigious Premium status has again been awarded to The Mount Nelson Hotel. This esteemed recognition highlights the exceptional quality and service standards upheld by the property. We extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to our dedicated assessor, Mark Goveia, whose unwavering commitment and guidance have been instrumental in ensuring the excellence of our members.

The Premium certificates for the awarded properties will be handed over in the upcoming month.



NEW PRODUCTS



GweGwe Beach Lodge

Location: Mkambati Nature Reserve,
Eastern Cape Province

Website:

<https://naturalselection.travel/camps/gwegwe-beach-lodge/>

The Wild Coast, a rugged expanse of coastline along the Indian Ocean, beckons adventurers in search of untouched beauty and seclusion. Formerly hosting rustic rondavels, GweGwe at Mkambati has undergone a remarkable transformation into a luxurious beach lodge, scheduled to welcome guests at the end of March 2024. Seamlessly blending with its natural surroundings, the lodge offers a fusion of relaxed luxury and locally inspired design.

Featuring nine en-suite rooms, including seven twin deluxe suites and two family

suites, each accommodation boasts double vanities, bathtubs, indoor and outdoor showers, fireplaces, lounge areas, small gardens, private decks, and a 6-meter pool affording stunning ocean vistas. Mkambathi caters to families, couples, and those seeking an unspoiled coastal retreat away from the crowds.



Guests can indulge in a plethora of activities, including mountain biking along scenic trails (eBikes available at an additional cost), hiking amidst pristine nature, discovering hidden rock pools and waterfalls, birdwatching, guided 4x4 nature drives, kayaking, canoeing, or stand-up paddleboarding on the sea, lagoon, or river. Marine and botany walks, shore-based whale watching (June, July, and October), snorkeling, and observing the sardine run (mid-June to mid-July) offer further adventure opportunities.

Fishing excursions with guides, visiting Cape Vulture colonies, enjoying picnics in

sunlit spots, exercising in the gym with panoramic views, and indulging in spa treatments (additional cost) provide relaxation options. Meanwhile, children can have fun at the kiddies corner under the care of child minders.

Engaging with the Pondo locals allows guests to immerse themselves in the warmth and cultural richness of the community, making Mkambati more than just a destination—it's a heartfelt embrace from the local community.



NEW PRODUCTS



The Cave House

Location: Montagu, Western Cape Province

Website:

<https://www.abrikooskloof.co.za/rooms/the-cave-house/>

The architecture of The Cave House integrates seamlessly with the natural landscape, utilising raw materials such as natural stone and dark brick veneer to harmonize with the surroundings.

Expansive steel profiles and sturdy meranti timber doors and windows showcase breathtaking views, blurring the lines between indoor and outdoor spaces.

Featuring six distinct curated accommodations, including The Cave House and five designer cabins, each with its unique architectural style and character.

Every stay is crafted to foster self-reflection, rejuvenation, and genuine connections with the environment.

The experiences offered on the property include: renting a 4x4, leisurely walk through the hills and indulge your taste buds with the exquisite culinary experience on offer.



NEW EXPERIENCES



Umzumbe River Trails

Location: Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal Province

Website: <https://www.getaway.co.za/travel-news/umzumbe-river-trail-launched-on-kzn-south-coast/>

A fascinating and unique addition to the tourism landscape is the recently unveiled Umzumbe River Trails, promising an immersive cultural experience deeply rooted in Zulu tradition. Led by expert local guides possessing intimate knowledge of the region and its inhabitants, visitors embark on an adventure along the extensive 70km "Green Flag Trail." With six distinct trails to choose from, guests can traverse the terrain by walking, hiking, trail running, mountain biking, or horse riding, ensuring a customizable and memorable journey. encounters with eight Zulu clans living along the Umzumbe and Mhlabatshane rivers offer insight into their

their traditional way of life and rich cultural heritage. The trails offer panoramic views of the breathtaking landscape, dotted with captivating attractions.

One such highlight is the Isivivane seNkosi uShaka, a symbolic pile of stones erected by Zulu warriors to honour their ancestors. Dating back to 1828, when King Shaka himself passed through the area, leaving behind an isivivane, visitors now have the opportunity to partake in this cultural ritual, leaving their mark on the KZN South Coast for posterity.

At the Ntelezi Msani Heritage Centre, guests delve into the cultural tapestry of the Zulu people and explore the area's historical significance. Offering insights into the "Poll Tax System" and the ensuing local uprising, the center also showcases traditional activities such as stick fighting, beadwork, and reed weaving.

NEW EXPERIENCES



Sass Cafe

Location: Bedfordview, Gauteng Province

Website: <https://sasscafe.co.za/>

Sass Cafe's journey commenced in Johannesburg, driven by a profound love for food, people, and community. From the outset, the founders harboured a firm commitment: to establish environments that foster unity among individuals from diverse backgrounds, whether they be friends, families, colleagues, or new acquaintances. Infused with their Mediterranean roots, the founders' discerning palates are tuned to savoury, exquisitely balanced dishes, and they've spared no effort in infusing Sass Cafe with this delightful essence.

Whether it is a lively evening out with friends on the weekend or a leisurely afternoon with it children revellers are looking for, Sass Cafe caters to all occasions.

It's a destination for enjoyable family lunches under the open sky or intimate date nights. Sass Cafe offers guests the option to dine indoors or outdoors, with views overlooking enchanting gardens. It's a venue where parents can savour their meals while their children play.



