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TOURISM TUESDAYS

South Africa

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From the editor

Dear Industry Partner,

As we bid farewell to the month of May, known as Africa Month, South Africa celebrated the month under the theme **“Celebrating 30 Years of Freedom: Building a Better Africa and a Better World”**.

Africa Day is celebrated annually to commemorate the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963.

Amongst others, Africa Month is aimed at promoting the African Agenda 2063: – a continent free from Gender Based Violence (GBV), racism, crime, conflicts and poverty, and based on seven aspirations or pillars, as well as the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, and strengthening the African Union (AU) institutions and policies. Africa Month acknowledges the work done by the African Union, celebrates Pan-Africanism and unlocks economic opportunities in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area, Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA).

As we turn the page to June, referred to as Youth Month in South Africa, paying homage to the historical 16th June 1976 events, we shine the spotlight on the remarkable contributions of our youth. At Africa's Travel Indaba, recently held in Durban from May 14th to 16th (with BOND Day preceding on the 13th), the majority of

the on-the-ground staff were young people, exemplifying the spirit of empowerment and inclusivity.

South Africa also celebrates the outstanding achievement of Hlolohelo Zwane, a student from Tshwane North College, who recently clinched victory at the prestigious IMEX Future Leaders Forum (FLF) competition in Frankfurt. Zwane's triumph in the IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum International University Challenge is a testament to the talent and potential of South Africa's youth on the global stage.

We invite you to explore South Africa with all its vibrancy and dynamism. There's lots of fun to be had in South Africa for both young and old.

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Tourism Regards,

Tourism Tuesdays Team



South Africa Shines Bright: Highlights from a Busy May!



In the busy month of May, South Africa took centre stage on the global tourism map, showcasing its allure to the world while promoting the country as an attractive and capable leisure and business events destination. From hosting the proudly Pan-African Africa's Travel Indaba in Durban to making waves at international platforms, here are some standout moments:

Arabian Travel Market: From May 6th to 9th, South Africa made its mark at the prestigious Arabian Travel Market, reinforcing its position as a must-visit destination for travellers from the Middle East and beyond. SA Tourism partnered with 25 tourism industry partners and over the four days of the show, the exhibitors reported a total of 2243 meetings including 788 leads.

Africa's Travel Indaba: From May 14th to





This global gathering of meetings, events, and incentive travel professionals provided a platform to showcase South Africa's world-class venues and hospitality.

Through these events, South African Tourism remains steadfast in its commitment to positioning South Africa as a premier destination for both leisure and business travel. With its diverse landscapes, rich culture, and warm hospitality, South Africa as the ideal destination for both leisure and business travel. The country continues to captivate the hearts and minds of travellers worldwide.

South Africa stands ready to welcome visitors with open arms, inviting them to experience the magic and beauty of this extraordinary land.



16th, Africa's Travel Indaba transformed Durban into a hub of excitement and networking opportunities. With the inspiring BONDay kicking off festivities on May 13th, the event brought together industry leaders, innovators, and enthusiasts to celebrate the best of African tourism. Africa's Travel Indaba hosted 9280 registered delegates marking an incredible 7% increase compared to 2023. No less than 24 00 meetings were held between exhibitors and buyers. Additionally, the event featured over 1200 exhibitors who displayed an impressive array of African tourism products and experiences.

IMEX in Frankfurt: Simultaneously, the South African National Convention Bureau team flew the nation's flag high at IMEX in Frankfurt, Germany, from May 14th to 16th.



South Africa Emerges Victorious at IMEX Future Leaders Forum, Frankfurt



Hlolohelo Zwane, a student from Tshwane North College, recently achieved a momentous victory at the global and highly acclaimed IMEX Future Leaders Forum (FLF) competition in Frankfurt. Zwane secured first place in the IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum International University Challenge, triumphing over competitors from around the world.

Her journey to success began earlier this year when she emerged victorious in the South Africa university challenge hosted at Meetings Africa, South Africa's owned strategic business events trade show held annually in February. There she competed against four other finalists in a unique opportunity facilitated by South African Tourism's South African National Convention Bureau (SANCB) and Tourism Educators of South Africa (TESA).

Established in 2009, the IMEX-MPI International University Challenge provides a platform for students to showcase their innovative ideas and talents through a simulated brief. The International University Challenge was held at five Future Leaders Forums around the world during 2023 and 2024. The finals saw the five regional winners come together to compete for the grand prize which is a sponsored trip to either MPI's World Education Congress or the MPI European Meetings and Events Conference, as well as international publicity from the IMEX and MPI PR teams.

Prof. Nellie Swart, TESA Chairperson said "TESA congratulates Ms Zwane and Tshwane North College on this remarkable achievement. She is a proud ambassador for South Africa and the education provided by our Institutions of Higher Learning. Her achievement is a confirmation of the important role of formal qualifications in tourism and hospitality towards the professionalisation of our industry. We also wish to express our gratitude to the City of Tshwane and Mrs. Nonhlanhla Seoe for their invaluable mentorship during Ms. Zwane's internship. This collaboration underscores the significance of industry-academic partnerships in equipping our students with the required skills and knowledge as they prepare for the world of work."

Hlolohelo Zwane expressed her joy, saying, "I am absolutely thrilled and deeply honoured to have won the IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum International University Challenge. This achievement

reflects my hard work and the unwavering support of my friends, family, and mentors. Competing at such a high level pushed me to grow in ways I never imagined, and it has inspired me to continue pursuing excellence in business tourism. This award is a testament to perseverance and collaboration, and I am excited to see where this journey will take me next."

"I extend huge congratulations to Hlolohelo for her remarkable success. This underscores the exceptional talent and creativity fostered within South Africa's academic institutions. For us in South Africa, youth play an important part because they create unique and innovative offerings, and this is what travellers are looking for. Empowering youth also plays a crucial role to alleviate poverty. We are proud to have been part of Hlolohelo's journey and to celebrate this achievement with her. This win on such a great global platform shines a spotlight on South Africa and highlights the fact that our country boasts a great deal of innovation. Hlolohelo's win confirms that we really are a unique destination for meetings and business events," said South African Tourism, Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Nombulelo Guliwe.

The SANCB has an established partnership with IMEX-MPI International and The Future Leaders Forum has long been a cornerstone of Meetings Africa, with South Africa celebrating previous triumphs in the International University Challenge. Anzelle Vorstman from the Northwest University clinched victory in 2015, followed by Kazzandra Grove, also from the Northwest University, who secured the title in 2017. Both Vorstman and Grove were honoured with the MPI Foundation Student Scholarship Award for their exceptional



achievements. Hlolohelo Zwane's remarkable success this year continues to underscore the exceptional talent and creativity fostered within South Africa's academic institutions. Her achievement not only brings honour to herself and Tshwane North College but also shines a spotlight on the nation's capability on the global stage.

Through partnering in initiatives such as the IMEX Future Leaders Forum (FLF), South African Tourism is committed to inspiring and providing more access for young people to enter the business events industry. These are the exceptional people who contribute to showcasing South Africa's uniqueness, innovation, and attractiveness to both business events and leisure travellers inviting them to come explore the country's vibrant landscapes.

Africa's Travel Indaba Empowers Youth: A Catalyst for Positive Change



Africa's Travel Indaba, has once again underscored its commitment to youth empowerment, leaving an indelible mark on the city of Durban. In collaboration with Tourism KwaZulu, Durban Tourism, Durban ICC and other local stakeholders, Africa's Travel Indaba has employed close to 100 youth from in and around the city of Durban, catalysing economic growth and fostering skills development.

The impact of Africa's Travel Indaba extends far beyond the Durban ICC, resonating deeply within the urban community. This year, the event embraced the vibrant energy of young talent with youth playing pivotal roles in various facets of the event. A dynamic content agency, primarily staffed by local youth, partnered with SA Tourism in developing all photography and videography content for the show. From capturing memorable moments to showcasing the essence of the

event, these young professionals not only demonstrated their prowess but they also elevated the overall experience of Africa's Travel Indaba. From staffing registration desks to providing essential support in catering services, young people showcased their dedication and enthusiasm, making invaluable contributions to the success of Africa's Travel Indaba.

South Africa's commitment to youth empowerment goes hand in hand with the vision of fostering sustainable tourism development. By providing meaningful employment opportunities and nurturing local talent, South Africa not only contributed to enriching individual lives but also contributes to the socio-economic fabric of the city and the greater province of KwaZulu-Natal.

"Being part of Africa's Travel Indaba has been an incredible opportunity for us,"





expressed Mngobi Mthethwa, who led the team of young content developers. "It's not just about the work; it's about the chance to learn, grow, and be part of something bigger than ourselves. Indaba has opened doors for us and inspired us to pursue our dreams."

Africa's Travel Indaba stands as a beacon of hope and empowerment, igniting the aspirations of youth in the city of Durban. Through collaborative efforts and a shared commitment to excellence, the event continues to leave an enduring legacy, shaping the future of the tourism industry while empowering the next generation of leaders.



South Africa Climbs the Meetings Rankings



South Africa has improved its global ranking as a business event destination, moving up five spots in the 2023 International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) Global Ranking Report. The country remains the number one meeting and conference destination in Africa and the Middle East, according to the 2023 ICCA ranking report.

In 2023, South Africa hosted 98 association meetings and conferences that met the criteria set by the International Congress and Conventions Association (ICCA). These meetings contributed significantly to the South African economy, with a total estimated economic impact of just over R2 billion.

ICCA uses strict criteria for its global rankings, including the requirement that only association conferences are recognised, excluding corporate or governmental meetings and conferences. These conferences must be attended by at least 50 international delegates, last at least two days, and rotate through at least three countries.

South African Tourism CEO, Nombulelo Guliwe, emphasised the significance of the ranking accolade in enhancing South Africa's global standing as a prime destination for meetings. This recognition also highlights the country's progress beyond its pre-COVID performance, showcasing its resilience and growth in the tourism sector.



"South Africa's ICCA ranking performance illustrates the resilience of the South African business events industry, which was among the first to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and one of the last to reopen. This performance showcases the efforts of the South African National Convention Bureau (SANCB) and the





This is great news for foreign direct investment, export opportunities, and knowledge management and sharing added Guliwe.

Business events significantly boost our country's economic development and growth by generating direct spending and creating jobs, fostering industry innovation and networking, and expanding market opportunities through international exposure. They enhance tourism by attracting delegates from across the globe and improving infrastructure while also strengthening the country's global image and cultural exchange. These business events offer professional development for South Africans attending these international conferences, including youth

greater South African industry during the lockdown period to rebuild a pipeline of secure conferences for the country. Numerous international and regional conferences were called off or rescheduled due to the pandemic. Collaboration is vital for bidding on international meetings as it brings together the resources and expertise of various stakeholders, ensuring a comprehensive and competitive value proposition. It demonstrates strong local support and commitment, enhancing the attractiveness of the bid," said Guliwe.

She mentioned that the SANCB collaborates with different provinces and other stakeholders to bid for hosting various meetings on behalf of the country.

"All business events hosted in our country are crucial because they not only contribute to our arrival numbers and our economy, but they also showcase our expertise in the various economic sectors.





and women from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, fostering future business leaders. Overall, business events are crucial for stimulating economic activity, driving innovation, and promoting long-term economic sustainability.

“For the 2023 / 2024 Financial Year, the SANCB has sourced and submitted 95 bids for international business events to be hosted in South Africa between 2024 and 2032. The 95 bid submissions have a combined estimated economic value of just over R1.5 billion and can potentially attract 60,040 international and regional delegates to South Africa between 2024 and 2032.

Thus far, South Africa has won 19 bids, with an estimated economic impact of R85 million and a total of 3,055 delegates. The SANCB has committed R5.7 million through its Bid Support Programme for these secured conferences, which will also contribute to the regional spread of business events and will be hosted in Johannesburg, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Cape Town, Sun City, Parys, Skukuza, and Potchefstroom,” Guliwe said.

Some of the meetings secured for 2024 include the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics World Congress of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, the 32 General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Global Telecommunications Conference and the World One Health Congress.

The ICCA Statistics Report is published every year early in May. Results are tabulated through the reports of ICCA member countries who submit the number of international and regional meetings that they hosted during the preceding calendar year to ICCA.



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FEATURED TOURISM EXPERIENCE



Adventure Freaks

Location: Hartbeespoort, North West Province

In celebrating youth month, this month we feature Adventure Freaks, a unique adventure park focusing on providing serious fun and memories for the entire family, and groups. They offer activities such as Drift trike, go kart rides as well as archery, paintball and human foosball games, to name a few. In addition to Family fun they also cater for unique functions like kiddies, teenager, bachelor and teambuilding.

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TGCSA CORNER

TOURISM GRADING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

BENCHMARK PROPERTIES

Benchmark properties are those recommended by the Property Approvals Committee during pre-screening and viewing due to their exceptional product offerings, regardless of category or star grading level. These properties are escalated to South African Tourism's Brand Experience team, tasked with sourcing new

products for the South African Tourism's hosting needs. This team facilitates inclusive growth by incorporating emerging or transformed businesses, promoting geographic diversity across the country, and dispelling misperceptions linked to seasonal travel.

The following properties have been identified as Benchmark Properties:



1. Founders Lodge

Location: Gqeberha, Eastern Cape Province

Founders Lodge is a celebration of essential beginnings in sustainable tourism, culture, conservation, and community inclusion. This lodge is a monument to conservation history, and it offers soul-reviving safaris in the place where Adrian Gardiner pioneered private game reserves and eco-tourism in the Eastern Cape. Guests enjoy intimate nature-inspired experiences focused on the smaller lesser known wildlife and ecology, as well as big five viewing on 4x4 guided game drives on 25000ha of game reserve.



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BENCHMARK PROPERTIES



2. The Residences at Evertsdal

Location: Cape Town, Western Cape Province

The Evertsdal Guest House is situated in the northern suburbs of Cape Town close to Durbanville and Tygervalley. Durbanville is most famous for its wine route boasting many well-known wineries and restaurants along the outskirts of the village. Tygervalley is popular for its shopping experience with many world-class stores offering the visitor all the latest in consumer trends at reasonable prices.



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BENCHMARK PROPERTIES



3. Leopard Sands Kruger Park

Location: Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province

Unleash your safari adventure on the banks of the Sabie River, Kruger National Park. The luxurious lodge offers 18 opulent suites, each with a private splash pool, indoor and outdoor showers, and a bathtub with sweeping views of the Sabie River and Kruger Park. Witness majestic animals and bird sights from your suite. Enjoy carefully curated packages, from riverside dining to thrilling game drives.

Rates include all meals, coffee on the go, non-alcoholic beverages, Boma dinner with African traditional entertainment on property, Sundowners - weather permitting, two shared game drives per day Inc. of refreshments, binoculars will be available

at the restaurant overlooking the Sabie River and on our game vehicles. Wi-Fi throughout the Lodge, laundry services, and Kruger National Park entrance fees. Relax by the riverside restaurants' infinity pool for moments of serene contemplation.



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Send your submissions to lesegom@southafrica.net.



