



SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

TOURISM TUESDAYS

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Dear industry stakeholder

This week's edition of Tourism Tuesdays, takes a look at the work that South African Tourism is doing in the various markets to promote the destination.

The South Africa National Convention Bureau team has just returned from IMEX America, in Las Vegas. This is the largest trade show in the US for the global meetings, events and incentive travel industry, so it was only fitting for us to use this platform to promote South Africa as a business events destination. Particularly, as the US is one of our fastest growing markets, post the pandemic.

We are also currently participating at the International Golf Travel Market show which is taking place in Rome. This show brings together golfing professionals from across the world who are looking for ways to grow their businesses. South Africa boasts some of the world's oldest and most celebrated golf courses and offers unique golfing experiences, and this platform offers us the opportunity to showcase that to the world.

We continue to seize all opportunities at our disposal to ensure we position South Africa both as a leisure and business events destination amongst all key audiences. We are also encouraged by the continued growth in the tourism arrival numbers, which signals that our efforts continue to yield the desired results, as the sector is still on its recovery trajectory.

South African Tourism also took part in the Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA) conference which brings together key aviation industry stakeholders.

Aviation is a critical enabler for the sector, so it is key for us to participate in platforms which bring together captains of industry and strategise on how we move the sector forward.

Last week we also participated in the Sanganai Tourism Expo in Zimbabwe. Look out for more details in next week's issue.

I would like to wish you all a productive week ahead.

Regards
Themba Khumalo



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Highlights from IMEX America 2022

South Africa's attendance at the 2022 IMEX America last week was a huge success, with over 500 meetings held at the South African Tourism stand, for potential business for the country.

IMEX America is the largest trade show in the US for the global meetings, events and incentive travel industry. The 2022 show was 45 per cent bigger than last year's, according to IMEX organisers, following the easing of travel bans and COVID-19 restrictions. The show took place from 11 to 13 October 2022, at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

According to Acting Chief Convention Bureau Officer, Zinhle Nzama, team South Africa meant business. "Our team darted from one meeting to the next with one key message: South Africa is open for business with no restrictions whatsoever, and our infrastructure for global meetings, events and incentive travel industry is world-class," she said.

She said South Africa's exhibitors were overwhelmed by walk-in clients over and above the scheduled meetings, which bodes well for our tourism industry rebound. Nzama also noted that one of the key take-outs from this year's IMEX is the shorter lead times for business with all business that is coming to South Africa either earmarked for this year either this year or next year.

"This is a clear indication of just how eager people are to host their conferences and to bring incentive trips to South Africa shortly. This is a shift from the pre-COVID-19 environment as lead times were much longer," she added. Nzama believes South African Tourism's relentless global marketing efforts are bearing fruit as buyers coming to the South Africa stand were more targeted.

"The buyers we interacted with were not coming to find out information about South Africa; they already knew about South Africa. They were simply coming to find the South African product that is best suited for them," she said.



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Highlights from IMEX America 2022 (cont...)

“The bookings for groups coming into South Africa are getting bigger compared to pre-pandemic bookings,” Nzama said. She revealed that beyond networking and scheduled meetings, team South Africa took the opportunity to invite the world to our beautiful country to attend the Meetings Africa.

Meetings Africa is South African Tourism’s Pan African strategic business events platform. It provides a platform for exhibitors to showcase their offerings to international and local buyers, African associations and corporate planners. ‘Meetings Africa is the most formidable platform on the continent for you to meet face-to-face with the most influential buyers in the world and to be part of Africa’s growth story,’ she said.

Meetings Africa trade show will be held at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa, from February 28 - March 1 2023. “We will use Meetings Africa to reposition South Africa as a rising leader in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) industry which is projected to grow faster than traditional travel and tourism,” she said.



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Tourism Grading Council of SA to facilitates assessor grading training in Seychelles

Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA), a business unit of South African Tourism, best known as the custodian of tourism quality assurance and service excellence, are headed to the Seychelles to conduct and facilitate assessor grading training for Seychelles Tourism.

Set to take place from 17 to 21 October in the Seychelles, the training aims to refine the skills and techniques of the Seychelles assessors and assist them to supplement their knowledge and experience to carry out grading assessments fairly, objectively, and consistently. The training also seeks to educate the Assessor on quality standards in the Hospitality industry so that they are familiar with different qualities when conducting the assessments.

The five-day training will cover 13 modules which include local and international Grading Systems, Trends and Designs, Linen and Upholstery, Quality in Tourism, as well as detailed training on the application of the Universal Accessibility module.

The training session will encompass the practical application of grading assessments of accommodation establishments by assessors, providing insights into managing the grading process. At the end of day four, assessors will conduct a mock assessment of the hotel offering and this will be concluded at the end of the training workshop with a theoretical examination.

The training will be conducted and facilitated by Nokukhanya Mbonambi and Karabo Moshote both Provincial Quality Assurance Specialists with TGCSA.

TGCSA is mandated to promote the star grading of establishments to ensure that South Africa remains a destination of choice that achieves the highest level of quality assurance, promotes optimal value for money and gives 'customer expectation' the focus it requires.

In accordance with the ETQA Regulation R1127 of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, number 58 of 1995 (SAQA Act No. 58 of 1995) Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa is accredited for the "Grade an Establishment" unit standard level 5 with CathSSeta.



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Vivari Hotel & Spa: A Boutique Hotel and Spa with a day hospital puts SA on the map as an international destination of choice

Officially opened by the Minister of Tourism, Ms Lindiwe Sisulu, the unique and ground-breaking Vivari Hotel & Spa by Mantis is now welcoming guests to its tranquil setting at Featherbrooke, close to the Cradle of Humankind, north of Johannesburg.

The hotel, which is 100% black and largely female-owned, offers an integrated approach to wellness incorporating five elements: holistic health, nutrition, fitness, spa, and aesthetic beauty. The brainchild of Dr. Anushka Reddy, a respected and award-winning female doctor in the specialty of aesthetic medicine, the hotel and its day hospital aim to put South Africa on the map as an international destination of choice for discerning patients who seek privacy for their medical procedures.

The Vivari Hotel & Spa by Mantis also has three modern, well-equipped conference rooms, each accommodating between 120 and 150 people as well as Jala, a glass-enclosed wedding venue on the banks of the Crocodile River for bespoke weddings and celebrations.

The cherry on top is Vivari Aesthetics Institute for Surgical Excellence, which boasts a modern, accredited hospital equipped with Vaser for body sculpting, liposuction, Renuvion for skin tightening. The facility primarily caters to cosmetic surgery with a well-known team of plastic surgeons. It is also the only facility in South Africa that offers the Weight Doctors sleeve, a German non-surgical treatment for obesity. To speed up the healing process, Vivari Aftercare provides hyperbaric oxygen therapy, IV nutritional therapy with high doses of vitamin C, and crucial lymphatic drainage massage.

Hotel guests also have the option to have non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as fillers and Botox with Dr. Anushka Reddy who has two decades' worth of experience in aesthetic medicine.



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South Africa's golfing events and experience on show at IGTM Rome 2022

Fresh from the successful exhibition at the IMEX America last week, South African Tourism (SAT) is now leading a South Africa delegation attending the 2022 edition of the International Golf Travel Market (IGTM), hosted at Roma Convention Center La Nuvola, Italy, from 17 - 20 October 2022. This is an all-out effort to position South Africa as a top golf tourism destination.

"We are using all global events and networking opportunities to accelerate tourism recovery and to boost job creation, and contribute to our economy. Participation at such trade events together with all the networking opportunities and events afford us the opportunity to invite investors to our country and of course business delegates and leisure travellers too, and ultimately increase the number of arrivals to South Africa," said Acting Chief Convention Bureau Officer, Zinhle Nzama.

IGTM is a community for golf travel professionals looking for highly focused and cost-effective ways to grow their business. Over 1,300 golf travel professionals attend IGTM.

"For us as a country, our participation at IGTM is informed by our strategy to continue to position South Africa as a golf tourism destination. South Africa offers the most unique golfing experiences. We have some of the finest and best-conditioned golf courses in the world. We are looking to attract more golfing enthusiasts, to come and explore South Africa's golf courses," said Acting Chief Convention Bureau Officer, Zinhle Nzama.

According to the organisers, pre-scheduled meetings are the heart of IGTM, which provide golf destinations, and products the opportunity to meet leading golf travel agents.

Thus, South African Tourism has recruited ten golf South African products to exhibit at the show in order to signal South Africa's strong ambitions to work with partners from across the world and to build on the interest in the country.

Nzama indicated that IGTM has a powerful hosted buyer programme, "thus, our trade is guaranteed meetings with key buyers that have been strongly vetted by the organisers of IGTM."

She said IGTM is a global golf trade show, and "it's a perfect platform for global trade partners to understand the SA Golf market and how the market operates."

SA Tourism is participating at IGTM as a returning exhibitor post the pandemic, the last participation was in 2019. In reinforcing the strategic intent of positioning South Africa as a golf tourism destination, last week South African Tourism participated at the BCX SuperSport Shootout, a uniquely South African golfing event that brings together business executives, sporting icons and government officials under one roof.



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South Africa's golfing events and experience on show at IGTM Rome 2022 (cont)

Thus, South African Tourism is sending a strong contingent of ten exhibitors to IGTM 2022 signaling South Africa's strong ambitions to work with partners from across the world and to build on the interest and convert it to arrivals.

Nzama indicated that IGTM has a powerful hosted buyer programme, "thus, our trade is guaranteed meetings with key buyers that have been strongly vetted by the organisers of IGTM." She said IGTM is a global golf trade show, and "it's a perfect platform for the trade to understand the SA Golf market and how the market operates."

SA Tourism will be exhibiting at IGTM for the third time, having participated in 2017 and 2018, working together with the Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (SATSA). "South Africa has some of the finest and best-conditioned golf courses in Africa. In all global platforms, our message is clear: South African Tourism has the best Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) in its class," she added.

The idea, Nzama said, "is to maximise our presence and increase our exhibitors and presence at the show and to claim our space as a leading exhibitor from Africa."

According to the latest Sentiment Study conducted by South African Tourism, golfing content is needed to positively impact the destination and these topics of interest offer an opportunity into drawing new consumers into understanding the destination. Using these topics to highlight the other positives of the destination such as golfing content showing the scenery and outdoors, seeding cues around safety, variety of experiences in and around the gold course.

She added that South Africa has many world-class golfing venues; hence golf presents the perfect opportunity to boost tourism and increase international arrivals to the country.



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Airlines Association of Southern Africa sets lofty ambitions

Emmanuel Martin Mutaizibwa

The rains beat a gentle rhythm at the well-manicured lawn at Arabella Hotel and Spa located in the heartland of the Kogelberg Biosphere, in the Western Cape. Chosen as the venue of for the Airlines Conference for Southern Conference, the industry captains perhaps sought the perfect blend of luxury and idyllic to set new ambitions, three years after the Covid-19 pandemic placed the Airlines industry in a chokehold.

Yet there is a glimmer of hope that the industry can recover from this slump and grow by leaps and bounds. As the CEO of Airlines Association of Southern Africa opined, “while some thought fortune favoured the bold, we have been reminded that actually, fortune favours those who are prepared, focused, responsive, agile, resilient and determined. These must be the new compass points by which we navigate a path to sustainability in its broadest and truest sense.”

With Southern African economies stuck in a tailspin as a result of high global fuel prices with no end in sight of the Ukraine conflict— the airlines industry must be cautiously optimistic that Africa can grow its passenger numbers beyond the paltry 1.9 percent of the global market share— which shrank after the Covid pandemic.

This requires grit and smart decisions anchored on government support to the vital airlines industry, which is a major cog of the tourism industry. The other players including the banking, the infrastructure and tourism sectors must work in silos to give the airlines industry the impetus to lift off into the skies without much turbulence.

To the decision makers, the three-day conference served as a retreat to engage in self-introspection and to fix the leakages across the Airlines industry.



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Experience of the week: The Gallery Self Catering, Franskraal, Western Cape

The Gallery Self Catering is a 4-star graded establishment situated in the beautiful Franskraal (next to Gansbaai) in the Western Cape. Owned by Patrys Laubscher, this guesthouse is unique in that it serves as luxury accommodation and an art gallery – showcasing the talents and cultures of African artists. Local artists also exhibit their art in the guesthouse where visiting guests are encouraged to buy it.

The décor theme of the guesthouse is Morocco with many fixtures imported from this African country. The copper taps and spouts and Moroccan basins offer a beautiful finishing touch.

The self-catering units are spacious and exceptionally well-equipped.

Patrys also goes out of her way to make guests feel at home and it is not strange to see her hugging guests by the time they say goodbye.

The Gallery is also an eco-conscious establishment with an owl house awaiting its first occupant and rainwater is harvested and re-used in the fynbos garden during the dry season. Guests can also enjoy fruit and vegetables directly from Patrys' garden. A boma offers the opportunity to “experience the fantastic starry skies of Franskraal”.

The Gallery is not only a place to overnight, it is an experience and part of the tourist's journey. Here, guests can truly relax in a “home away from home”



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