

DECEMBER 17, 2024

TOURISM TUESDAYS




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Holiday Message to Tourism Sector Stakeholders



The festive season is here!

Our country boasts an incredible variety of quality-assured accommodation, pristine beaches, beautiful landscapes and a wide range of unforgettable tourism experiences. Thank you for your dedication and hard work in ensuring that we are ready to welcome visitors and provide them with high service excellence and exceptional experiences this festive season.

With our warm, welcoming people and an extensive array of tourism offerings, we have all it takes to cater for travellers with different preferences. Whether you are an accommodation establishment, a hotel owner, an adventure experience service provider or a tour operator or an officer at a port of entry, enhancing all our travellers' experience is key. Let us also remain focused on welcoming all travellers both from South Africa and other parts of the world to our various establishments.

This year, we overcame challenges together, forging stronger collaborations across the public and private sectors. These partnerships have been instrumental to our progress, and they remain the foundation for our future growth.

While we've accomplished much, there is still potential to showcase more of South Africa's rich beauty and vibrant culture to travellers across the globe.

As we close the chapter on 2024 and reflect on how far we've come and look forward to the exciting journey that lies ahead, let us take pride in our achievements. I urge you to use this holiday season to rest, recharge, and spend quality time with loved ones.

The year 2025 is a big one for South Africa as our country will host the G20 summit – the first one to be held on the African continent. Let us return with renewed energy and innovative solutions and take bold actions that will grow our tourism sector while positively contributing to inclusive economic growth.

Thank you for your commitment and contributions this year. I look forward to all we will accomplish in the year to come and thank you in advance for the work we will continue doing together.

Wishing you and your families a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year. Stay safe, enjoy the holidays.

Warm Regards,
Patricia de Lille
Minister of Tourism
Republic of South Africa

A Festive Message from Deputy Minister of Tourism



Dear Tourism Stakeholders and Travellers,

As we approach the close of 2024, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering commitment to South Africa's tourism sector. Since taking office in June, I have been warmly welcomed by stakeholders, colleagues, and Minister Patricia de Lille, and I deeply appreciate your support as we work together to strengthen this vital industry.

This festive season, may you find moments of joy, reflection, and inspiration.

Whether you're exploring our beautiful country or hosting visitors, let's continue showcasing the best of South Africa to the world.

Wishing you a safe and happy festive season!

Warm Regards,

Makhotsa Magdeline Sotyu

Deputy Minister of Tourism

Republic of South Africa

Ekse Mzansi! Take a Sho'tLeft this Festive Season



The weeks are flying by, one moment we're making resolutions to explore Mzansi and the next thing you know, KE DECEMBER.

The sun's out making it perfect for your next adventure. What's that one activity you've always wanted to try with friends and family, whether it's relaxation, adventure or nomayini.

Just swipe right this summer and book on: www.shotleft.co.za

[#GimmeSummerShotLeft](https://www.instagram.com/GimmeSummerShotLeft)

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South Africa is A Nation of Winners. Chew On That!



**Video Courtesy of CoolStoryBru_ on TikTok*

"We seriously need to take it easy on the rest of the world; we're just too good," jokes a social media user in a video posted on TikTok by @coolstorybru_.

While the playful comment might sound cheeky, there's no denying the truth that South Africa is crushing it on multiple fronts. From sporting victories to culinary excellence, we cannot stop winning, and the world is taking notice.

Recently, South Africa was recognised as the Best Culinary Destination in Africa at the World Culinary Awards. At the same time, Cape Town earned the prestigious title of Best Food City in the World in the 2024 Condé Nast Traveller Readers' Choice Awards.

With 575,048 reader votes in its favour, Cape Town outshone renowned culinary cities like Milan in Italy and Valencia in Spain, ranked second and third, respectively. These culinary come as no surprise to anyone who has tasted South Africa's diverse and sumptuous dishes.

On the sports field, the nation's sporting success shows no signs of slowing down. Pieter-Steph du Toit, a key player in the Springbok squad, was recently named Men's Rugby Player of the Year for 2024. Alongside him, six of his teammates earned spots in the World Rugby Men's 15s Dream Team for 2024.

Adding to the excitement, the national soccer team Bafana Bafana has secured their spot in the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations after an impressive performance in the qualifying stages.

Even in more niche sports like surfing, South Africans are making waves — literally and figuratively. John-Paul Veaudry, an amputee and surfing sensation, proved that our talent knows no bounds when he recently brought home a gold medal from the 2024 World Para Surfing Championship in California.



**Image Courtesy of Jean-Paul Veaudry // Instagram*



**Image Courtesy of Black Coffee // Instagram*

It also seems the world can't stop dancing to the South African beat, Black Coffee's recent accolade as World's Best DJ for 2024 at the Ninth Golden Moon Awards is the ultimate proof of this.

And let's not forget about our good looks! Last month, Samuel Chauke made it to the top five Beauty with a Purpose charity segment of the 2024 Mr World Competition.

With all these accolades, it's no wonder that South Africa is quickly becoming the must-visit, must-explore destination for both domestic and international travellers.

From thrilling safaris and stunning landscapes to vibrant cities and rich cultural encounters, South Africa offers diverse adventures at a price that suits all travellers definitely making it a winning summer destination with diverse award-winning tourism experiences and attractions.

Home to world-class beaches, remarkable wildlife, and the warm spirit of the Rainbow Nation, South Africa is the perfect destination for adventurers, history enthusiasts, nature lovers, and anyone seeking unforgettable moments. With a solid commitment to conservation, excellent infrastructure, and countless hidden gems waiting to be discovered, South Africa guarantees an exceptional travel experience. Discover why this nation continues to win the hearts of visitors worldwide.

Visit www.southafrica.net to discover a winning journey.

We are just too lekker!

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Tang: A Proudly South African Culinary Brand Shines on the Global Stage



**Image Supplied // Nicky van der Walt*

From the bustling streets of Johannesburg to the picturesque coastlines of Cape Town, Tang has established itself as a premier dining destination in South Africa. Now, with its bold expansion into Dubai, this proudly South African brand is not just growing its footprint but redefining global perceptions of the country's culinary excellence.

Under the visionary leadership of Nicky van der Walt, Tang has quickly risen to prominence, offering a sophisticated blend of Asian-inspired flavours with a uniquely African touch. With locations in both Johannesburg's Nelson Mandela Square and the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, Tang is setting a new standard for luxury dining, both locally and internationally.

A Culinary Empire Expands

The decision to open a third location at the

Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) is a natural progression for the brand. Dubai, a city synonymous with luxury, innovation, and multiculturalism, offers Tang the perfect stage to showcase its signature blend of Japanese, Chinese, and Southeast Asian flavours.

Tang brings with it a South African spirit—an ethos of hospitality, bold design, and culinary innovation that sets it apart from competitors.

Tang's rapid rise to fame has been accompanied by numerous accolades, solidifying its reputation as one of South Africa's finest dining establishments. It has received recognition from leading hospitality and culinary institutions, including awards for:

- ✈ Best Fine Dining Restaurant in Johannesburg
- ✈ Top 10 Luxury Restaurants in South Africa
- ✈ Excellence in Culinary Innovation



**Image Courtesy of What's on in Cape Town*

The 2024 Edition of the “Live South Africa” Campaign Launches and Opens Photo Exhibition in Amsterdam



**Image Supplied*

South African Tourism launched the 2024 edition of its 'Live South Africa' campaign during a well-attended event at the Braai restaurant in Amsterdam last month, where a photo exhibition was opened as part of the campaign with special portraits of locals who share the beauty of their country and culture.

“Live South Africa” campaign aims to attract travellers from the Netherlands, Belgium, and Sweden to South Africa by showcasing local tourism entrepreneurs who share their unique stories and reflect the destination through the lens of South African tourism businesses.

At the event, the Marketing & Promotions Manager for SA Tourism North Europe hub, Abby Jacobs explained: “Since 2022, we have been putting the South African locals

at the heart of all our marketing and communication initiatives. South African Tourism has launched this 2024 edition of the “Live South Africa” campaign with the aim of reflecting our destination through the 'lens' of South African locals.

They tell their own story with the country, nature and their culture in the background. With the images, interviews and video stories, we want to attract travellers from the Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden to South Africa. We know that travellers from these countries want to experience destinations in the most authentic way possible and with this campaign we show the 'real', authentic and hospitable travel destination that South Africa is.”

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South African Tourism to Participate at Vakantiebeurs 2025



**Image Supplied*

South African Tourism will take 19 South African travel industry representatives to Vakantiebeurs, the leading Dutch consumer travel exhibition in Utrecht, from January 9 to 12, 2025. This includes ten small enterprises backed by the Department of Tourism's Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP). Vakantiebeurs is a yearly travel exhibition in the Netherlands where travel agencies and cultural organisations from around the globe converge in one location to showcase their nations and promote their travel services.

The Netherlands continues to be South Africa's fourth largest international source market, making strategic interactions of this kind crucial for maintaining and expanding tourism between the two countries.

For professionals in the travel trade industry, the Vakantiebeurs serves as an essential platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and discovering the latest trends. This year's edition of the show drew an impressive crowd of over 71,000 visitors, marking a 9% increase from 2023.

South African Tourism's involvement in Vakantiebeurs will include a prominent South African pavilion displaying local products and provincial representations.

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TGCSA Launches New Website and Rolls Out Basic Quality Verification for Gauteng



**Image Courtesy of Gauteng Tourism*

The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) has launched Gauteng Basic Quality Verification Programme and the Basic Quality Verification website. The initiative aims to support small businesses in rural communities, including small towns, villages, and dorpias. This platform allows local businesses, particularly those in the tourism and service sectors, to request a formal quality verification that can bolster customer confidence and provide a recognised standard of service.

The Basic Quality Verification programme will offer accessible evaluations that small businesses can proudly showcase, enhancing their credibility and appeal to visitors. Through this streamlined process, businesses will be assessed on several basic quality criteria, providing a stamp of quality that ensures customers can expect a certain level of service.

Supporting Local Talent and Job Creation

A unique aspect of this programme is its commitment to empowering youth in rural areas, small towns, and dorpias. Through the recently launched website, young unemployed graduates in tourism and hospitality are invited to apply as Basic Quality Evaluators. The graduates will receive training to become certified evaluators, building a skilled workforce to conduct quality assessments across South Africa.

How It Works

Through the new website, businesses can request verification, and potential evaluators can apply to join the program, which includes training and certification in basic quality verification. Evaluators will work directly within their communities to assess service quality, offering small businesses an affordable and straightforward verification process.

The Basic Quality Verification Website reflects TGCSA's commitment to sustainable local development, workforce creation, and maintaining a high standard of quality for all customers and visitors.

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Observing International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024



**Image Courtesy of CSUN News & Events*

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed annually on the 3rd of December. This year's theme was **"Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future."** This theme emphasises the critical role that individuals with disabilities play in fostering inclusivity and sustainability across various sectors, particularly in decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), 1.3 billion people - about 16% of the global population - experience significant disability.

<https://www.unwto.org/accessibility>

It is vital to recognise and celebrate the importance of universal accessibility in tourism, which not only enhances the travel experience for persons with disabilities but also benefits society. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities serves as a reminder of the tourism industry's collective responsibility to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their abilities, can participate fully in tourism experiences. Accessible tourism allows everyone, including older adults and families with young children, to enjoy travel without barriers.



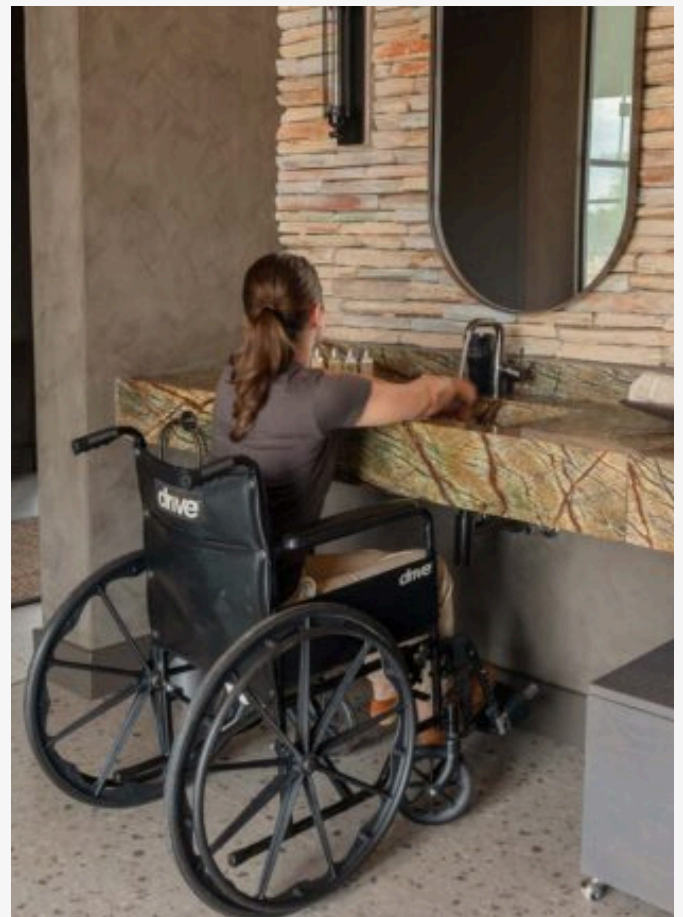
**Image Courtesy of Ximuwu Safari Lodge*

Working with the **Tourism Grading Council of South Africa** (TGCSA), many establishments in South Africa are adopting universal accessibility (UA), and by doing so, South Africa is creating environments that are welcoming and accommodating for all, fostering inclusivity and social integration.

“By observing this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we reaffirm our commitment to creating an inclusive tourism environment. Inclusivity is about integrating universal access without making it appear separate or different. There is a need for properties to cater for universal access in the design phase rather than retrofits after construction. It is also critical that staff be trained to serve guests with different disabilities,” says Bronwen Auret, Chief Quality Assurance Officer.

TGCSA currently has 140 properties that are UA compliant, and the team looks forward to growing this number. Recently, the TGCSA team held a series of workshops where they also addressed universal design and accessibility. Stakeholders, including organisations, focused on disability and advocacy, shared insights on creating tourism products that cater to people with varying abilities and suggested what should be included in the criteria.

“As we celebrate this important day, let us remember that promoting universal accessibility in tourism is not just a legal obligation but a moral imperative. By working together to break down barriers, we can create a world where everyone can explore, experience, and enjoy all that tourism has to offer,” concludes Auret.



**Image Courtesy of Ximuwu Safari Lodge*

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FORUM (BIAF)

in collaboration with South Africa Tourism



**Image Courtesy of BIAF*

Earlier this month, South Africa National Convention Bureau (SANCB), a business unit of South African Tourism was announced as a destination partner representing the African continent through a collaboration with ASSOCIATIONWORLD at the Brussels International Association Forum (BIAF) that took place on 2-3 December 2024 at the Cardo Brussels Hotel.

SANCB participated in the fourth edition BIAF, and benefitted from professional learning and development sessions, workshops, engaged in peer-to-peer exchange and knowledge transfer and built meaningful professional relationships!

Gathering representatives of International and European Associations, Non-Profits, Federations, Foundations, Societies, NGOs, AMC's and Association Meeting Planners, BIAF has established itself as an international leading event and knowledge sharing platform and in one of the world's flagship host destinations for professional associations and non-profit organizations, Brussels.

The boutique forum brings together association leaders and executives in a motivating, inspiring, open and supportive environment in a relaxed atmosphere.

For association and non-profit leaders interested in understanding and gaining insights about trends and developments that are relevant to International and European associations, BIAF has become an unmissable event for association executives and leadership.

Speaking at the forum, Kai Troll, President of ASSOCIATIONWORLD, said: We are delighted to collaborate with SANCB as the very first destination to partner with us from Africa. It is great step towards diversifying our partnership and collaboration with a leading convention bureau representing the African continent. The upcoming Meetings Africa show in February 2025 is one of the highlights in the MICE industry in Africa. We are looking forward to meeting other international association representative there as well.'

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**Image Supplied*



TGCSA CORNER

TOURISM GRADING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

PREMIUM PROPERTIES

The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa's 5-star premium classification denotes the apex of luxury accommodation within South Africa. This designation, conceived to differentiate truly remarkable establishments from conventional 5-star offerings, is bestowed solely upon venues that offer unrivalled quality, bespoke service, and indelible guest experiences.

These properties surpass expectations in every facet, from superlative furnishings and state-of-the-art amenities to world-class cuisine and intuitive hospitality.

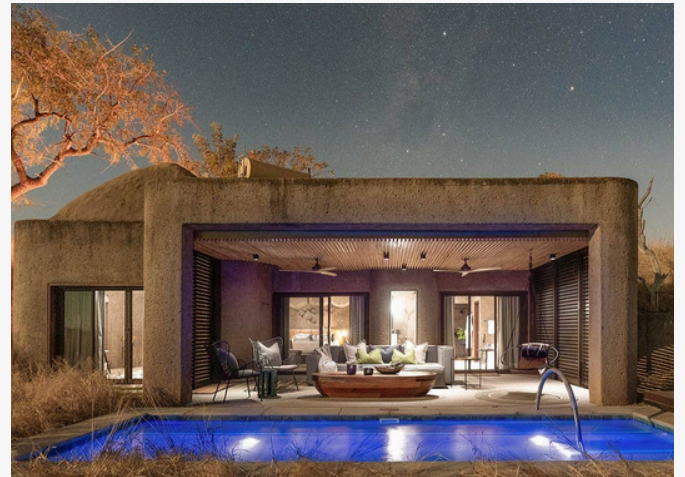
The following properties have been awarded with a 5-Star Premium Award:

1. Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve - Earth Lodge

Location: Sabie Game Reserve, Mpumalanga Province

Exquisitely sculpted into a hillside, almost invisible in the surrounding landscape, the superlative Sabi Sabi Earth Lodge is known as one of Africa's most environmentally sensitive lodges. This lodge is located in the Sabie Game Reserve in the South-West section of the Greater Kruger National Park.

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**Courtesy of Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve*

2. Monwana Lodge



**Courtesy of MORE Family Collection*

Location: Thornybush Private Game Reserve, Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province

This luxurious and intimate safari experience at Monwana has been built with a deep respect for nature - the architecture planned accordingly around a well-established large old leadwood tree. Nestled along the seasonal Monwana River, their lodge is privileged to witness frequent wildlife encounters, elevating the excitement of your stay.

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PREMIUM PROPERTIES

3. Morukuru Family

Location: De Hoop Nature Reserve,
Western Cape Province | Johannesburg,
Gauteng Province

Morukuru Family's three exclusive-use houses in De Hoop Nature Reserve and Johannesburg, each offer the 'Morukuru Freedom Concept'.

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**Courtesy of Morukuru*

4. Lion Sands Ivory Lodge



**Courtesy of MORE Family Collection*

Location: Sabie Sands Game Reserve,
Mpumalanga Province

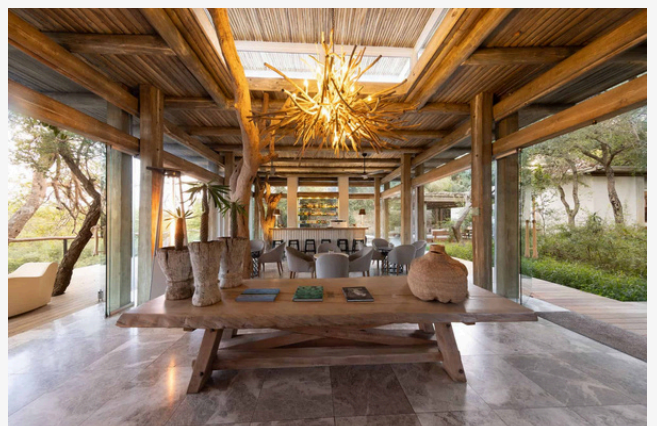
Ivory Lodge blends harmoniously with the serene river views and untamed surroundings, views that can be appreciated from every turn – a great start to a luxury African safari.

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5. Kapama Karula

Location: Kapama Private Game Reserve,
Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province

With its light, airy, open spaces and views from every angle, Karula is truly the pride of Kapama Private Game Reserve as their flagship lodge. This luxury safari accommodation lodge near the Kruger National Park is every discerning traveller's perfect escape.



**Courtesy of Kapama Private Game Resrve*

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BENCHMARK PROPERTIES

Benchmark properties are those recommended by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa, 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 Tourism 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:



**Courtesy of Phumlani Lodge*

1. Phumlani Lodge

Location: Vryheid, KwaZulu-Natal Province

Phumlani Lodge is situated in Vryheid in the Abaqulusi Municipality, a town in the heart of the historic Battlefields of KwaZulu-Natal. The lodge is a convenient place to rest after having driven many kilometres to the coast on Domania Route from Mpumalanga and Gauteng. The area is rich with historical sites and culture that can be seen in the town's historical monuments and architecture.



**Courtesy of Phumlani Lodge*

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BENCHMARK PROPERTIES



**Image Courtesy of Fifty-Five Mjejane*

2. Fifty-Five Mjejane

Location: Mjejane Game Reserve, Malelane, Mpumalanga Province

Fifty-Five Mjejane offers luxury, five-star accommodation in the Mjejane Game Reserve, on the banks of the Crocodile River. The reserve is part of the Greater Kruger and wildlife roams freely between Mjejane and the Kruger Park.

Guests are served an unparalleled opulent experience with magnificent Big Five game viewing, and so much more.



**Image Courtesy of Fifty-Five Mjejane*

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NEW TOURISM EXPERIENCES



**Image Courtesy of The Forum Hyde Park*

The Forum Hyde Park

Location: Hyde Park, Gauteng Province

Contact: 011 575 3888 |
info@theforum.co.za

An elegant, versatile venue located on the 7th floor of Hyde Park Shopping Centre in Johannesburg, just steps away from The Southern Sun Hyde Park Hotel, Sandton. With stunning panoramic views and soaring 10-meter ceilings, this space offers endless creative potential, sure to captivate your audience. The Forum Hyde Park benefits from its prime location next to the Southern Sun Hyde Park Hotel, Sandton, which is set to undergo a refurbishment aimed at achieving five-star status.

Hyslop envisions the venue seamlessly complementing the hotel's offerings, creating a synergy that isn't available at their Bryanston property.

Additionally, a new "First Sundays" brunch concept will soon be available, with reservations required in advance.



**Image Courtesy of The Forum Hyde Park*

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ESTABLISHMENT REFURBISHMENT



**Image Courtesy of aha Makalali Private Game Lodge*

aha Makalali Private Game Lodge

Location: Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province

Contact: 010 442 5888 |

resmakalali@ahalodges.co.za

The renowned South African hotel group, aha Hotels & Lodges, has completed a stunning refurbishment of its five-star Makalali River Lodge, nestled in the Greater Makalali Private Game Reserve just outside Hoedspruit, Limpopo, known as the safari capital. Set along the scenic Makhutswi River, the lodge is divided into three exclusive camps, each featuring six luxurious suites and a unique design. The newly revamped camps are tailored to offer a personalized, intimate experience, complete with private main areas, pools, and bomas. The lodge's fresh interiors and new finishes beautifully reflect the natural allure of the surrounding bushveld.

Each thatched suite, including the family suite, boasts a raised viewing deck overlooking the river, a cozy fireplace, and a luxurious en-suite bathroom with both indoor and outdoor showers, as well as a bath.



**Image Courtesy of aha Makalali Private Game Lodge*

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ESTABLISHMENT REFURBISHMENT



**Image Courtesy of Mabula Game Lodge*

Mabula Game Lodge

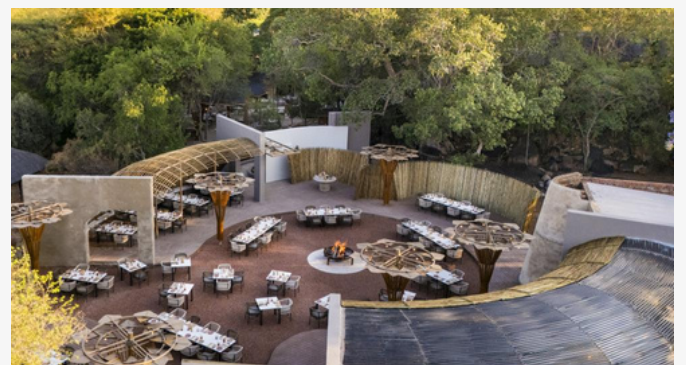
Location: Cape Town, Western Cape Province

Contact: 011 516 4367 | res@extraordinary.co.za

Mabula Game Lodge in Limpopo has completed its final phase of refurbishment, unveiling a stunning new boma, terrace, and revamped public areas. The boma, designed to reflect the African bush, features tree sculptures, organic shapes, and bronze columns surrounding a central fire pit, offering an enchanting dining experience for up to 160 guests. Connected to the terrace by an elegant bridge, the space flows seamlessly and includes a new water feature with cascading waterfalls and a pond with water lilies.

The lodge's extensive recreational facilities have also been upgraded, highlighting its

status as one of South Africa's premier "safari resorts." The tennis court has been fully renovated, and the swimming pool area now boasts stylish Bedouin shade structures in place of traditional umbrellas.



**Image Courtesy of Mabula Game Lodge*

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE TOURISM TUESDAYS TEAM!



As we wrap up the year, we bring you the final edition of Tourism Tuesdays for 2024. We'll return in 2025, refreshed and ready to bring you more exciting updates from the world of tourism.

To all our readers, we wish you a joyful holiday season and a happy New Year! May this time be filled with relaxation, laughter, and cherished moments with loved ones. While you're at it, why not take a Sho't Left? Explore and celebrate the beauty of your own backyard—After all, It's Your Country. Enjoy it, 'cause nothing is more fun than a Sho't Left!

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to connecting with you again next year.

Kind Regards,
The Tourism Tuesdays Team

WANT TO FEATURE YOUR STORY?

Send your submissions to mediaq@southafrica.net.

