

MARCH 25, 2025

TOURISM TUESDAYS



# TOURISM TUESDAYS

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

#TourismTuesdays





# From the editor

Dear Industry Partner,

As we continue to drive collaboration and build excitement within the tourism sector, we are pleased to welcome you to this edition of Tourism Tuesdays Newsletter. South African Tourism remains committed to working together with industry stakeholders to promote and market our beautiful country and the rest of the African continent as an attractive travel destination.

With just 48 Days to go, the countdown to Africa's Travel Indaba has begun, and we are hard at work in partnership with the greater tourism sector, to deliver a world-class show in Durban this May.

In this edition, we are excited to share key updates and milestones:

✈ **Minister de Lille Leads Ghana Outreach to Strengthen Tourism Partnerships.** Our Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, is in Ghana this week, building critical relationships and unlocking opportunities for tourism growth between South Africa and West Africa.

✈ **South Africa Showcases Vibrant Tourism Offerings at ITB Berlin 2025.** Earlier this month, South Africa was proudly represented on the global stage in Berlin, showcasing our diverse experiences to international buyers and media.

✈ **Basic Quality Verification Training Expands to Gauteng.** The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa continues its commitment to raising hospitality standards through the rollout of the BQV programme in Gauteng.

✈ **Explore Mzansi This Easter – A Lekker Local Getaway Guide.** We invite you to explore local hidden gems, support small businesses, and create unforgettable memories with your loved ones this Easter.

At South African Tourism, we are inspired by the resilience, innovation, and collaboration that define our industry. We congratulate everyone who continues to contribute to strengthening tourism and promoting South Africa to the world. Thank you for walking this journey with us.

Let's continue working together to drive growth, tell our shared stories, and make South Africa and Africa the destination of choice for travellers worldwide.

Enjoy the read!

Tourism Regards,

*Tourism Tuesdays Team*



# South African Tourism on Track to Deliver a World-Class Africa's Travel Indaba 2025



## AFRICA TRAVEL INDABA 2025

48

DAYS TO GO

REGISTRATIONS ARE OPEN



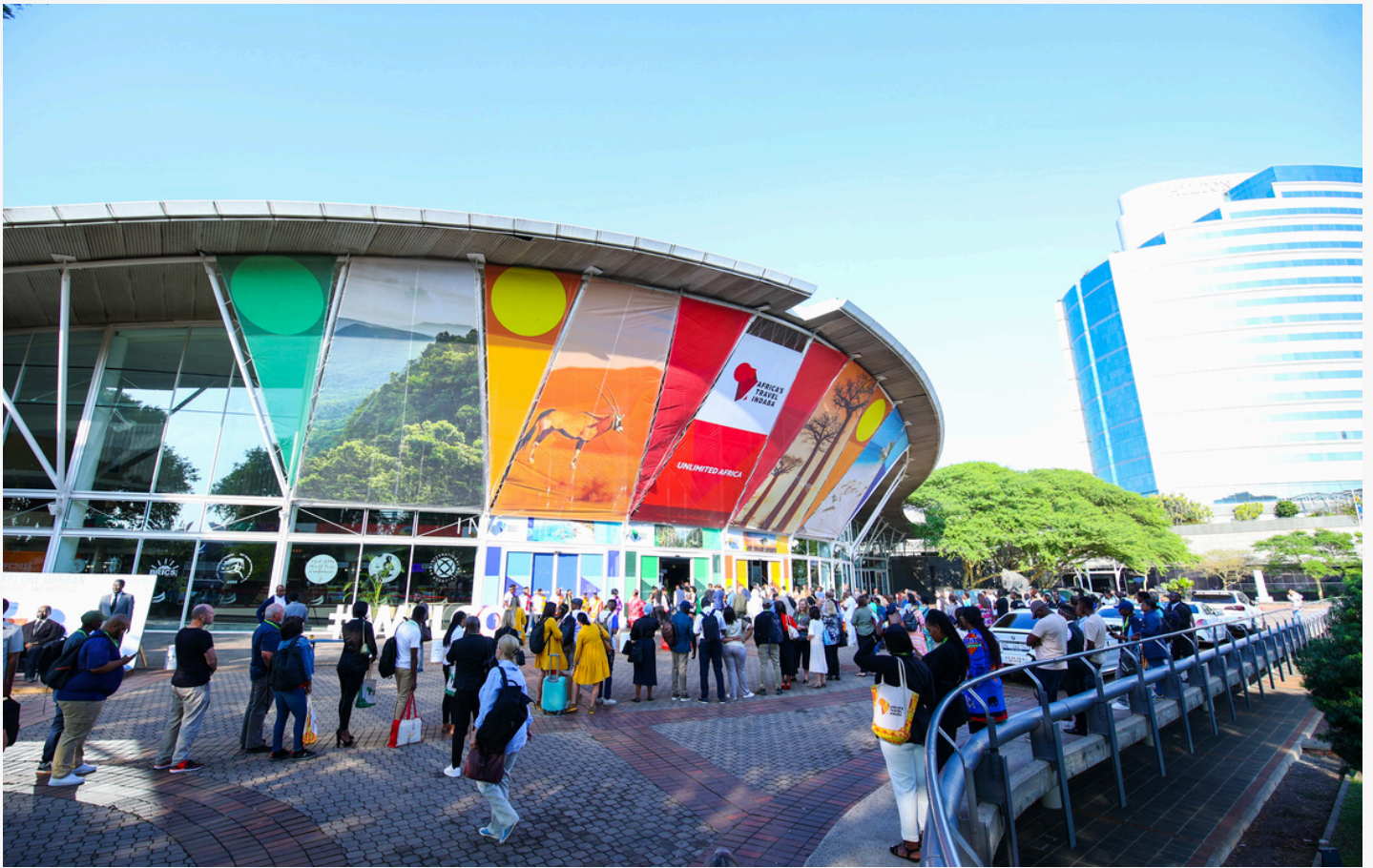
*\*Image Supplied*

The countdown is on, and with just 48 days to go until Africa's Travel Indaba 2025, solid plans are underway for what promises to be another successful show!

From 13–15 May, with BOND Day kicking off on 12 May, the city of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal province will welcome delegates from all over the world to an unforgettable showcase of Africa's rich tourism offerings.

South African Tourism is fully committed to delivering a world-class event that not only highlights Africa's diverse travel experiences but also serves as a powerful platform for forging meaningful partnerships and driving business opportunities.

South African Tourism has established an industry-led Advisory Committee



*\*Image Supplied*

reinforcing commitment to partnership and collaboration and ensuring the seamless execution of this global travel trade event.

While there have been some early challenges in the planning, the team has doubled its efforts, working tirelessly to ensure that this year's show not only meets but surpasses expectations.

Since registrations for Africa's Travel Indaba opened in February, the response so far has been positive — with over 500 exhibitors from 19 African countries already registered and more than 650 hosted and non-hosted buyer applications received from across the globe. This impressive response sets the stage for an exceptional trade floor, brimming with opportunities to connect, collaborate, and celebrate Africa's tourism story.

Applications are still open for hosted and non-hosted buyers, and we also extend a special invite domestic and regional buyers to apply.

In the year of South Africa's G20 Presidency, we're proud to show the world our country's capability in hosting leading global events. Africa's Travel Indaba is more than a trade show — it's a celebration of our continent's vibrancy, resilience, and unmatched travel experiences.

South African Tourism thanks all partners and stakeholders for being part of this journey and we look forward to welcoming all delegates to Durban, KwaZulu-Natal in May!

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



# South African Tourism Minister to Visit Ghana to Strengthen Bilateral Tourism Relations



*\*Image Suuplied*

Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille has embarked on a special outreach programme to Ghana from 26 – 28 March, aiming to strengthen tourism partnerships and promote cultural exchange between the two nations.

As part of the outreach programme, Minister de Lille will engage the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts of Ghana, Honourable, Abla-Dzifa Gomashie, the South Africa-Ghana Chamber of Commerce, tourism trade, key media and tourism stakeholders to showcase South Africa as an attractive leisure and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) destination.

The easing of visa regulations between the two countries in November 2023, was a progressive step that contributed to unlocking significant tourism potential.

It also marked a new chapter in strengthening tourism and trade, creating a seamless journey for Ghanaians to experience the beauty and diversity South Africa has to offer. This also opened doors for increased business, leisure, and cultural exchange.

“Ghana and the broader African continent are incredibly important markets for South Africa’s tourism sector. This visit reaffirms our dedication to deepening partnerships and unlocking growth opportunities through meaningful collaboration. Ghana has emerged as a standout performer, recording an exceptional 149.0% increase in tourist arrivals to South Africa in 2024 when compared to 2023. The number of Ghanaian visitors surged to 36,656, largely due to the introduction of a visa waiver in November 2023 coupled with the consistent marketing by South African Tourism, allowing citizens of both countries to travel to each other’s country visa-free for up to 90 days within a year” Minister de Lille said.

Minister de Lille’s visit holds added significance as it takes place in a year when South Africa proudly hosts the G20 Summit — a momentous occasion that highlights South Africa’s growing influence on the global stage and its commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships across the African continent.

“We recognise the immense potential of intra-African travel to drive economic development, cultural exchange, and shared prosperity. It is for this reason that we are conducting this outreach mission to strengthen relations and partnerships with our counterparts in Ghana,” Minister de Lille added.

The outreach programme will also enable senior officials from both countries to engage further on tourism bilateral issues and enhance relations.

# Explore Mzansi This Easter – A Lekker Local Getaway Guide



*\*Image Supplied*

The Easter long weekend is the perfect excuse to skrrr away from the usual couch-and-TV vibes and make some core memories with your fam. While a lekker staycation is always a safe bet, why not switch things up in 2025? South Africa is teeming with hidden gems, from dorpie delights to cultural hotspots, and this is your sign to go explore!

Forget the same-old, same-old – take the road less travelled and pull up to some of Mzansi's lesser-known but seriously vibey spots. Whether it's a colourful township, a historic village, or a remote Karoo hideaway, these places are where SA's real heart beats. Plus, by visiting, you're putting your rands straight into the pockets of small biz owners, artists, and communities that make these places special. Now that's a win-win!

So, where should you go this Easter? Here are a few gems that'll have the whole fam saying, "Yoh, why didn't we do this sooner?"

## **1. African Stonehenge, Mpumalanga Province**

If you're keen on a little history-meets-mystery adventure, this one's for you. Tucked away near eNtokozweni (aka Machadodorp), the African Stonehenge—also called Adam's Calendar—is a prehistoric rock formation believed to be a sun calendar. And get this: it's thought to be over 75,000 years old! Whether you're there for the history, the conspiracy theories, or just the insane views, it's a must-see spot.





*\*Image Supplied*

## **2. The Big Pineapple, Eastern Cape Province**

Listen, if you don't take a pic with this 16m-tall fibreglass pineapple, did you even go? Sitting pretty in Bathurst, this quirky attraction is a fun stop, especially if you're rolling with little ones. Learn all about Mzansi's pineapple industry, snap a few Insta-worthy shots, and if you're around on a Sunday, swing by the farmers' market for a taste of local goodies.

## **3. Bo-Kaap, Cape Town Western Cape Province**

If your Easter isn't complete without a feast, then Bo-Kaap is calling your name. This colourful neighbourhood isn't just an Insta-dream; it's home to the Cape Malay community and some of the best food in SA. While you soak up the vibrant atmosphere, treat yourself to the ultimate

Cape Town Easter combo – pickled fish and freshly baked hot cross buns. Trust, your taste buds will thank you.

## **4. Central Karoo, Western Cape Province**



*\*Image Supplied*

Looking to really escape the city chaos? The Karoo is where it's at. Think endless horizons, wild open spaces, and some of the best stargazing in the country – you can even peep Jupiter through a telescope! Take your pick from quaint dorpiess like Prince Albert, Beaufort West, and Matjiesfontein. And if you're feeling brave, book a night at the Lord Milner Hotel in Matjiesfontein – legend has it, there's a ghost named Katie who still roams the halls. Spooky, right?

Now, let's talk food. Easter in the Karoo has to include a proper Karoo lamb roast – slow-cooked, fall-off-the-bone deliciousness. Pop into Karoo Kombuis in Prince Albert or hit up the Lord Milner's restaurant. And before you head back home, grab some Karoo biltong from Laingsburg – it's the real deal!

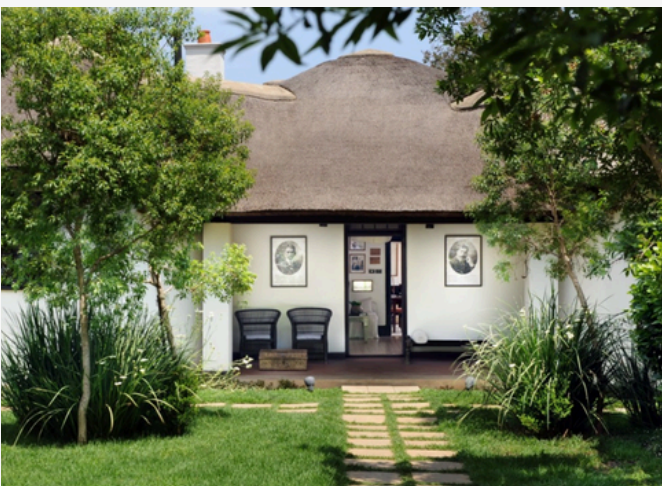
## 5. Parys, Free State Province



*\*Image Courtesy of ilovesouthafrica.com*

Just an hour's drive from Jozi, Parys is the ultimate small-town escape. It sits right in the middle of the Vredefort Dome (aka the world's biggest meteorite impact site), which makes for some pretty epic scenery. Whether you're into skydiving, river rafting, or just chilling at cute coffee shops, this place has it all. Bonus: the town is packed with cool little boutiques and antique stores, so you can channel your inner "vintage aesthetic" while browsing the streets.

## 6. Satyagraha House, Johannesburg, Gauteng Province



*\*Image Courtesy of Satyagraha House*

If you're a history buff (or just love a good throwback), check out Satyagraha House, better known as Gandhi House. This museum in Jozi gives a rare look into Mahatma Gandhi's time in SA over 100 years ago. Surrounded by lush gardens and peaceful vibes, it's the kind of place that makes you slow down and appreciate the past.

## How to Hack the Easter Break: Take 4, Get 11

Who doesn't love a sneaky extra holiday? If you play your leave days right, you can turn Easter into an 11-day getaway without maxing out your leave balance. Here's how:

- ✈ Take 4 days off: Tuesday, 22 April – Friday, 25 April
- ✈ Combine it with the built-in public holidays, and BOOM – you're off from 18 April (Friday) to 28 April (Monday).

That's almost two weeks to go full tourist mode in your own country.

So, whether you're looking for adventure, a history fix, or just a chilled Easter getaway, these spots are guaranteed to deliver. Here's to making new memories, discovering hidden gems, and falling even more in love with the beauty of SA.

Now, go pack that road trip playlist and vasbyt, adventure awaits! After all it's your country, enjoy it, because nothings more fun than a Sho't Left.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



# South Africa is Making Headlines for All The Right Reasons



\*Image Courtesy of Tyla

First up, let's talk about kindness. According to the UK's Express, **South Africa has officially been named the friendliest country in the world**. Out of 27 countries ranked by digital financial services company Remitly for "agreeableness," South Africa took the top spot. The world is finally catching on to what we've always known: South Africans are warm, welcoming, and just downright lekker! In fact, Good Things Guy called the article a love letter to South Africa — inviting tourists to come and experience that kindness first-hand.

And while visitors are here, they'll be sipping on some of the best wine in the world. The Independent recently told its readers: **"It's time to stop underestimating South African wine."** Our winemakers have long known that our terroir — that magic mix of soil, climate, and elevation — is as good as any in Burgundy or Bordeaux. From the bold reds of Stellenbosch to the sparkling wines of Robertson, and the world-famous Vin de Constance from Klein Constantia, our wines are world-class, and the world is finally saying cheers to that.

But that's not all. South African global superstar Tyla is making history. Just days ago, at the iHeartRadio Music Awards in Los Angeles, Tyla was crowned *World Artist of the Year*, becoming the first South African artist to win this award. At just 22, she's already a Grammy winner, the youngest African artist to do so, and her hit song *Water* has made waves across the world — even charting on the US Billboard Hot 100. She's rewriting the history books with every award and making South Africa proud with every note.



\*Image Courtesy of Cameron Spencer // Getty Images

On the track, our athletes are running their way into record books. Prudence Sekgodiso became the first South African woman to win gold at the World Indoor Championships, dominating the 800m event in Nanjing, China. And back home, sprint sensation Bayanda Walaza made headlines by smashing the South African U20 100m record, clocking a blistering 9.99 seconds! He's not just fast — he's joining the ranks of the fastest junior sprinters in the world.

So whether it's through kindness, world-class wines, chart-topping music, or record-breaking athletic performances — South Africa is showing the world what excellence looks like. And we're just getting started.

# SA Tourism Brings Africa Together for a Successful Meetings Africa 2025



*\*Image Supplied*

Once again, South African Tourism has proudly delivered a world-class showcase of African excellence with Meetings Africa 2025. The Sandton Convention Centre became the heartbeat of the continent's business events sector, welcoming 416 African exhibitors — including first-time participants from Morocco, Madagascar, Guinea, and Chad. Their presence speaks volumes about the growing global interest in Africa's potential as a business events destination.

This year's show was bigger and bolder than ever before. More than 320 international buyers from over sixty countries gathered to connect and collaborate, alongside 219 members of the media. In total, over 7,225 confirmed meetings took place — each one a conversation with the power to unlock new opportunities for Africa.

An important highlight was the participation of 98 small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs), giving emerging businesses a platform to shine on the global stage. And proudly, all nine of South Africa's provinces were represented, showing the full spectrum of what our country has to offer.

The event kicked off with BOND Day — Business Opportunities Networking Day — where industry thought leaders and change-makers discussed how to position Africa as a continent ready for innovation, growth, and investment.

Meetings Africa 2025 wasn't just an event — it was a powerful reminder of Africa's strength, unity, and readiness to do business with the world. South African Tourism has once again shown what's possible when the continent comes together under one roof.



# South Africa Showcases Vibrant Tourism Offerings at ITB Berlin 2025



*\*Image Supplied*

South African Tourism proudly participated in ITB Berlin 2025, the world's leading travel trade show, held from 4 to 6 March in Germany. The South African delegation, led by Tourism Minister Patricia de Lille and supported by Chief Executive Officer of SA Tourism, Nombulelo Guliwe, showcased the country's diverse and vibrant tourism offerings to global buyers, trade partners, and media.

With over 63 South African exhibitors, including small businesses and key industry players, the platform provided an opportunity to strengthen partnerships, grow international arrivals, and position South Africa as a must-visit destination. The focus was on promoting South Africa's rich culture, natural beauty, business events potential, and unique travel experiences.

ITB Berlin continues to be an important platform for South African Tourism to drive global awareness and encourage travel to South Africa.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



*\*Image Supplied*



# **TGCSA CORNER**

**TOURISM GRADING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA**



# Basic Quality Verification Training Expands to Gauteng: Elevating South Africa's Hospitality Standards



*\*Image Courtesy of Gauteng Tourism Authority*

The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) has broadened its reach by launching the Basic Quality Verification (BQV) training program in Gauteng. This exciting milestone was celebrated with an extensive compulsory training session held from 11-13 February 2025, at South African Tourism's head office in Sandton.

The BQV programme plays a vital role in TGCSA's commitment to ensuring that guest accommodation facilities, even those not meeting full grading criteria, still deliver quality and offer a welcoming experience for guests. Specifically designed for properties like homestays, guesthouses, bed and breakfasts (B&Bs), BQV ensures that these establishments are quality-assured, ready to host both local and international visitors with confidence.

Fifteen new evaluators took part in the training, gaining a deep understanding of the BQV standards and TGCSA's mission. The session was led by skilled trainers, including Ms. Trudy Lebepe, Gauteng's own assessor and co-trainer, who was instrumental in motivating and guiding the group. Her expertise helped trainees fully grasp the importance of maintaining high standards within the hospitality industry.

The culmination of the training involved a hands-on mock assessment at two premier locations: Black Brick and Hampton by Hilton hotels. This practical exercise allowed participants to apply their newfound knowledge in real-world scenarios, refining essential skills in housekeeping, technical evaluation, and service assessment.

This expansion of BQV into Gauteng marks an important step in advancing the overall quality of South Africa's accommodation industry. With the newly trained evaluators now ready to put their skills into action, the programme will help more properties meet key quality requirements, enriching the experience for visitors across the country.

As TGCSA continues to elevate hospitality standards nationwide, the successful roll-out of the BQV program in Gauteng is a promising sign of growth and development within South Africa's tourism sector, setting the stage for even greater improvements in the years ahead.

# BENCHMARK PROPERTIES

Benchmark properties are those recommended by the TGCSA, 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.

The following properties have been identified as Benchmark Properties:



*\*Courtesy of Ufumene African Safari*

## 1. Killian's Rest

**Location:** Gqeberha, Eastern Cape Province

Nestled adjacent to the Ufumene Game Lodge, is Killian's Rest. This exclusive villa boasts luxury complete with a private chef. Built with exceptional attention to detail and high-end finishes, the light-filled villa has three large en suite King rooms and original art. The villa is off-grid and uses solar panels and borehole water.



*\*Courtesy of Ufumene African Safari*

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