



SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

Travel Innovation Trend Report

Insights Unit

Oct. – Dec. 2025 | Q3

Our Research Approach

This report explores how destinations are integrating local and cultural elements into tourism itineraries, and highlights opportunities for the South African tourism industry to capitalise on this growing trend.

Desktop research was used to identify current digital trends in tourism. The process followed a three-fold matrix to identify recent trends. The matrix assesses the popularity, activity, and freshness of each trend. Freshness relates to the relative newness of an article; Activity – the number of people interacting with an article, including social media postings; and Popularity – the scoring of appeal based on how many people choose an article when given other options in the same category or cluster.

The selection of key trends was based on a relative score of 4 and above, with a high relative freshness.

Source: Trend Hunter



Executive Summary

The travel and hospitality sector is shifting as travellers prioritise personalisation, cultural relevance, sustainability, and seamless service. Five key trends illustrate how brands are adapting to meet these evolving expectations.

- **Exclusive Stay** offerings highlight rising demand for adults-only spaces that provide quiet, premium, and wellness-focused experiences. Many travellers now value uninterrupted rest and privacy, prompting hotels and cruise lines to introduce dedicated luxury products.
- Hotels are also expanding **Eid Experience** programmes with curated Iftar menus, cultural décor, and religion-conscious service, meeting the needs of Muslim travellers who want to celebrate Ramadan and Eid comfortably while away from home.
- Through **BookTok Travel**, Gen Z is turning popular online book trends into real-world adventures. Travel brands are responding with literary-themed trips and retreats that blend digital culture, community-building, and experiential storytelling.
- The rise of **AI Concierge** technology reflects travellers' preference for smooth, contactless service. AI agents now assist with amenities, recommendations, and transactions, improving efficiency for guests and helping hotels streamline operations.
- **Eco Tourist** initiatives address the increasing demand for sustainable travel. Hotels and destinations are offering conservation-focused activities that allow guests to explore natural environments while supporting local ecosystems.

Together, these trends show travellers seeking tailored, meaningful, and values-driven experiences, pushing hospitality brands to innovate across culture, technology, and sustainability.

Opportunities for South African Tourism Industry

These trends align strongly with South Africa's natural strengths in culture, nature, hospitality, and innovation. By embracing inclusive cultural offerings, literary-led experiences, sustainability initiatives, and AI-enabled service models, and by intentionally showcasing off-the-beaten-track and rural destinations, South Africa can broaden its appeal to emerging traveller segments. This includes affluent adults seeking authenticity, Muslim travellers looking for inclusive and family-friendly environments, eco-conscious visitors drawn to conservation-focused regions, and Gen Z content creators searching for unique, under-explored locations. Together, these efforts can help South Africa stand out in an increasingly competitive global tourism market.

To fully leverage these opportunities, South Africa can:

- **Develop exclusive adults-only luxury retreats** across scenic regions such as the Winelands, the Drakensberg, and coastal belts to attract high-value travellers seeking tranquillity, privacy, and wellness-led experiences.
- **Introduce premium Ramadan and Eid travel packages** featuring halal-certified hotels, curated Iftar dining, prayer-friendly facilities, and cultural immersion options to position South Africa as a preferred destination for both local and international Muslim travellers.
- **Create BookTok-inspired literary tourism experiences** by partnering with authors, publishers, and influencers to design themed travel routes, immersive retreats, and content-friendly stays that resonate with Gen Z's appetite for storytelling and social sharing.
- **Implement AI concierge and smart-hospitality technologies** in hotels, guesthouses, and lodges to deliver seamless, contactless service while improving operational efficiency and enhancing South Africa's reputation for innovation.
- **Expand eco-tourism and conservation-based offerings** by developing community-led nature excursions, carbon-neutral safari packages, and biodiversity-focused activities that strengthen South Africa's position as a leading sustainable travel destination.

Consumer Insights

Exclusive Stay

Hotels and cruise ships launch exclusive adult-only stays with premium add-ons

Trend - Brands add adults-only hotels and cruise sailings offering premium amenities and curated programming. Properties feature quiet public spaces and elevated service. Packages bundle wellness dining and exclusive shore experiences to attract guests seeking undisturbed luxury.

Insight - Affluent travellers and experience-seekers increasingly value uninterrupted rest, privacy, and tailored service. Families traveling with children remain a major segment, yet many adults report travel fatigue from mixed-group dynamics and seek escapes that allow deeper relaxation. Health concerns, desire for quieter social settings, and willingness to pay for differentiated experiences amplify demand. Hospitality brands respond to competitive pressure by creating separate adult-only products.



Eco-Conscious Adult-Only Resorts

Secrets Bahia Mita Surf & Spa Resort Features Surfing Beaches



Luxe Adults-Only Mexican Hotels

La Casa de La Playa Offers a Refined 'Full Moon Night' Stay



Luxurious Mexican Wellness Resorts

Loreto's Mailena is an Elevated Adult-Only Resort



Adult-Only Cruise Partnerships

Air Canada Vacations Expands its Cruise Portfolio



Eco-Friendly Adult-Only Retreats

Mexico's Azulik Creates a Nature-Forward Stay

Eid Experience

Hotels craft luxurious experiences for consumers partaking in Ramadan festivities

Trend - Hotel chains are increasingly providing specially curated Iftar offerings designed to cater to guests observing Ramadan. Featuring cultural decor, traditional and international dishes, and special beverages, these menus allow guests to comfortably enjoy The Holy Month, even when away from home.

Insight - Many Muslim consumers seek to elevate their Ramadan and Eid celebrations through travel, but struggle to find premium accommodation that meets their religious and dietary needs. In response, many hotels are launching experiences that allow consumers to comfortably observe cultural holidays away from home. Understanding the importance of inclusivity, these businesses are tailoring their seasonal offerings to honor diverse traditions, creating a welcoming environment where every guest feels valued.



Ramadan-Themed Hotel Promotions
Four Seasons Hotel Abu Dhabi Launches a New Ramadan Experience



Religious Hotel-Backed Celebrations
Hotel Indonesia Kempinski Jakarta Debuts a New Ramadan Menu



Ramadan-Observing Hotel Menus
Padma Hotel Semarang is Launching its 'Iftar Moments' Program



Eco-Minded Ramadan Programs
Hilton Encourages a Sustainable Ramadan with Initiatives in Türkiye

BookTok Travel

Gen Z transforms digital reading discoveries into immersive literary adventures

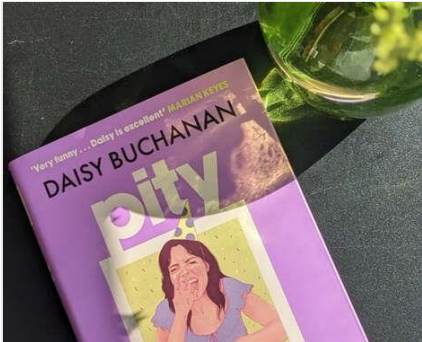
Trend - Gen Z travellers are driving growth in literary tourism through BookTok-inspired destinations, with tour brands launching guided trips themed around popular series like ACOTAR in the Swiss Alps, while hotels partner with book clubs for themed retreats and author-hosted getaways.

Insight - Gen Z grew up with book-to-screen adaptations and social media storytelling, creating a unique relationship with literature that extends beyond reading. They crave authentic experiences that connect their digital lives with physical spaces, using literary destinations as both personal exploration and social currency. Unlike previous generations who might quietly visit author homes, Gen Z turns these visits into content creation opportunities, sharing their literary journeys to build community and identity online.



BookTok Travel Experiences

EF Ultimate Break Launched Literature-Inspired Group Tours for Gen Z



Literary Wellness Retreats

Aweventurer Launches Reading-Focused Travel Experiences with Authors



Quiet Book-Inspired Getaways

Kimpton Vero Beach Hotel & Spa Offers a Reading Retreat Package



Literary Tourism Innovations

Jane Austen Festival Launches Character Trail Through Bath Streets

Brands incentivise visitors to adopt sustainable practices and travel activities

Trend - Companies are increasingly launching tourist initiatives to help preserve the local environment. This involves visiting natural areas such as forests, wildlife reserves, and coastal ecosystems to participate in activities that minimise environmental impact and maximise benefits for locals.

Insight - Eco-conscious travellers increasingly look for accommodations that reflect their values but often find it difficult to discover activities that support those same principles. In response, hotels and destinations are rolling out sustainable experiences, allowing guests to have fun while actively contributing to the preservation of local environments. These brands recognize that mindful travellers want a fulfilling vacation, not one that adds to the environmental pressures the region already faces.



Sustainable Tourism Initiatives
Thailand's Tourism Authority Prioritises Sustainability



Sustainable Tourism Initiatives
Fiji Unveils the 'Loloma Hour' Initiative for the Eco-Conscious



Resort-Based Conservation Efforts
Sandals Resorts Promotes Coral Restoration in the Caribbean



Slow Travel Initiatives
Tourism Ireland Launches 'Ireland Unrushed' to Inspire Travellers

AI Concierge

Hotels invest in artificial intelligence-powered agents to execute concierge tasks

- Trend** - Hotels are increasingly opting for AI-powered concierges to provide support and service for consumers staying at their facilities. These autonomous agents help guests refill amenities, make recommendations, answer questions, or even complete transactions, streamlining hotel operations.
- Insight** - Travelers often depend on hotels for accommodation, but increasingly prefer a smoother, contactless way to plan, restock essentials, and dine without visiting the front desk. To meet this demand, hotels are turning to AI to automate hotel and concierge services, giving guests control over every aspect of their stay without human intervention. Businesses that align with the demand for autonomous hospitality solutions can benefit from reduced operational costs and better resource allocation.



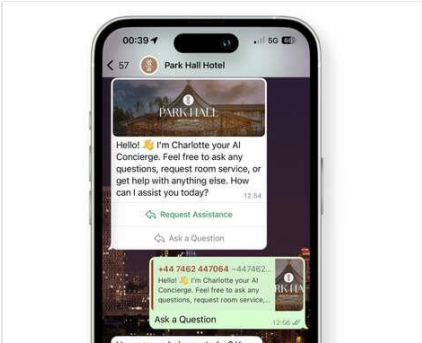
Hotel Linen Management Apps
SMARTLINEN's AI-Enhanced Solution Monitors Inventory Across Properties



Proactive Hospitality Platforms
JurnyOS 3.5 Learns Daily and Optimises Operations with AI



AI-Backed Hotel Complexes
Otonomus Hotel is a New Artificial Intelligence-Powered Property



AI Hotel Concierges
Lancashire's Park Hall Resort & Spa Introduced an AI Concierge System

Specific Examples

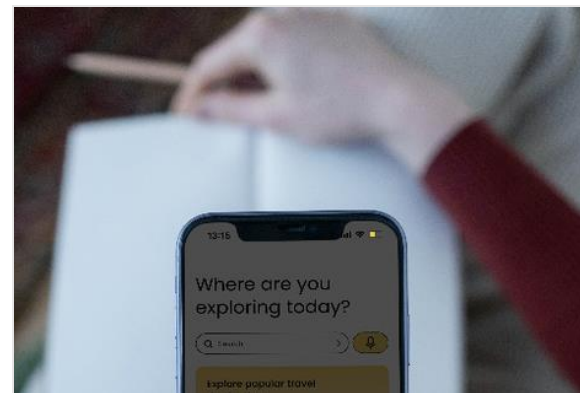
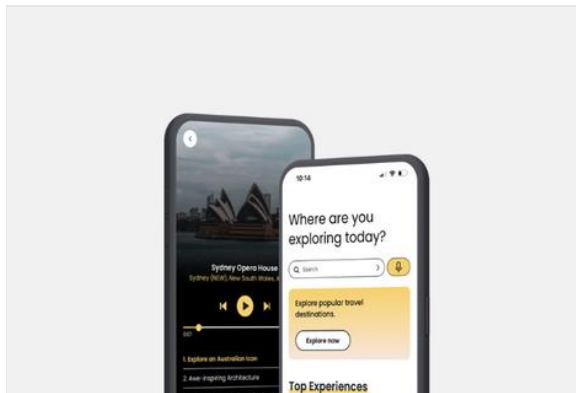
Travel-Focused Audio Guide Apps

Vacayit Offers an Extensive Catalogue of Audio Guides

Vacayit's digital platform provides a catalogue of audio guides for various Australian travel destinations and experiences, including brewery tours, festivals, and natural landscapes. The service functions primarily through a mobile application, which allows users to independently listen to narrated content about a location without the need for a live human guide.

Vacayit also emphasizes accessibility when designing its catalogue of audio guides. Its platform incorporates features such as voice search functionality, full transcripts, and compatibility with screen readers. The application is offered to users free of charge and includes several hundred guides, with search functionality that can be filtered by geography or activity type.

Vacayit's digital platform, thus, offers a high degree of flexibility and personalization for travellers, enabling them to explore a site at their own preferred pace and schedule.



Fully Automated Hotel Concepts

Vermilion Zhou Design Group Has Conceived an Economy Hotel Concept

Vermilion Zhou Design Group has presented a visually striking contemporary design for an economy hotel concept. Titled the 'Hi Inn Self-Service,' this business fundamentally restructures the guest experience around a fully automated operational model.

Vermilion Zhou Design Group's design philosophy prioritizes modular, prefabricated units for both public areas and guest rooms, which aim to streamline construction and enhance functional efficiency. A core principle of the economy hotel concept is the significant incorporation of recyclable materials throughout the building process. The visual and spatial strategy is intentionally restrained to create a self-guided environment that minimizes the need for staff interaction while maintaining a sense of comfort and reliability for cost-conscious travellers.

The primary appeal of this design project is the potential for a more affordable stay, as the reduced operational overhead from a self-service model could translate directly into lower room rates.



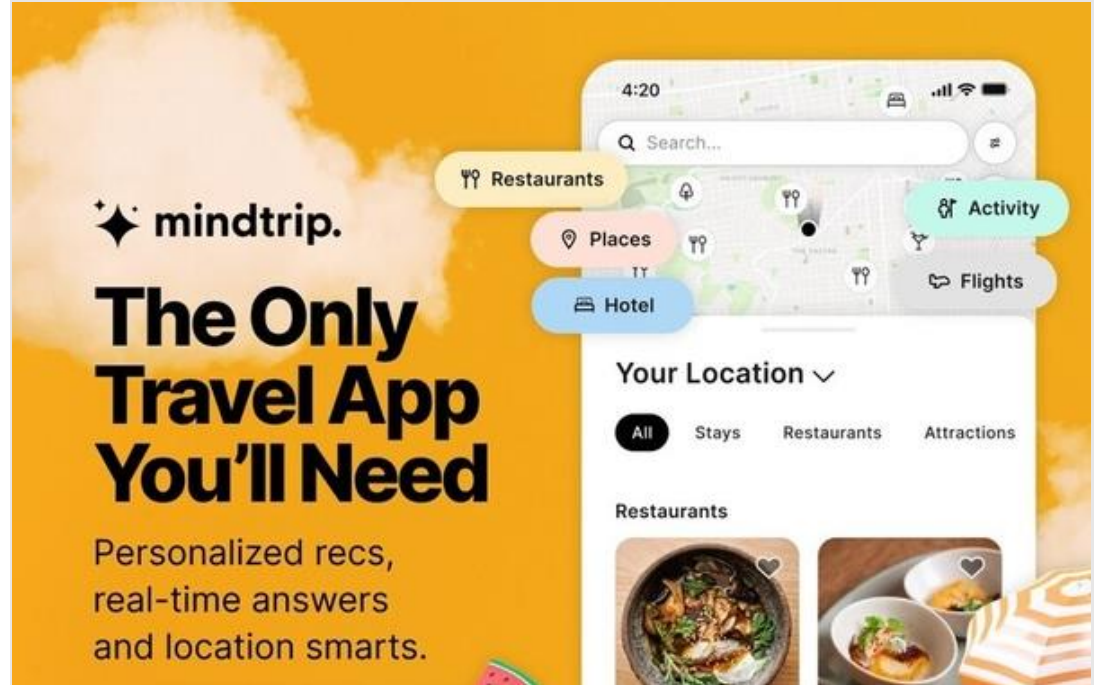
Personalised AI-Powered Travel Apps

Mindtrip is an AI-Powered App for Localised Recommendations

Personalized AI-powered travel takes a significant step forward with the launch of Mindtrip's new mobile app, designed to serve as a real-time companion for on-the-go travellers. Rooted in advanced artificial intelligence and location-based services, the app delivers tailored recommendations for nearby attractions, dining, and activities based on each user's unique travel preferences.

The experience begins with a brief questionnaire that identifies the user's travel style and current interests. From there, Mindtrip leverages real-time location data to surface curated suggestions—from major landmarks to hidden local gems—on an interactive map that adjusts as users move.

Beyond discovery, the app allows users to organize hotel bookings, tickets, and receipts in one place. It also includes a "magic camera" feature that uses multimodal AI to identify landmarks, translate menus or signs, and provide instant contextual information, enhancing spontaneity and convenience throughout the travel experience.



Missed Flight Lounges

The Cayman Club by Cayman Jack Helps to Turn Travel Chaos into Calm

Missed, delayed, and cancelled flights can disrupt travel plans and cause frustration, yet they can also offer unexpected opportunities for rest, reflection, or spontaneous adventure, as The Cayman Club by Cayman Jack proves. Historically, over two-thirds of major airports in the United States experience their worst delays between June and August, and Cayman Jack is stepping in to turn "missed flights into margaritas."

The Cayman Club is a signature in-person experience made for travellers who find themselves in less-than-favourable situations. The Cayman Club in the TWA Hotel at JFK is a first-of-its-kind Missed Flight Lounge where travellers can refresh with chilled Cayman Jack Margaritas, elevated bites and spa-style services.

Online, there's also a hub where travellers can share their travel troubles to get a Cayman Jack Margarita and enter to win travel-themed perks.



Otherworldly Airport Hotels

JFK Airport's TWA Hotel Boasts Retro-Futuristic Elements

JFK Airport's TWA Hotel stands as an enduring symbol of retro-futuristic elegance, merging the visionary architecture of the Jet Age with contemporary sophistication. Designed by Eero Saarinen in 1962, the former TWA Flight Center has been thoughtfully transformed into a luxury hotel that preserves the spirit of mid-century modernism while embracing the innovation and artistry of modern travel.

Its "sweeping concrete curves, red-carpeted flight tubes, and expansive glass walls evoke both nostalgia and anticipation—a celebration of an era when air travel embodied glamour and possibility." The hotel's cinematic atmosphere was recently showcased in the 'Eyes Closed' music video featuring Jisoo of BLACKPINK and Zayn, where its glowing interiors and fluid geometry created a dreamlike backdrop of timeless allure.

Today, JFK Airport's TWA Hotel continues to captivate visitors as an architectural and cultural landmark, offering a fusion of history and design.



Traveler-Focused Accessibility Resources

The Chicago Department of Aviation Emphasises Inclusion

The Chicago Department of Aviation has implemented a new suite of resources specifically designed to assist travellers with sensory sensitivities or neurodivergent conditions, such as autism.

These tools include detailed maps that identify areas within the airport with varying levels of sensory stimulation, such as noise and crowd density. Supplementary materials include instructional videos that offer a first-person perspective of the travel process and illustrated social narratives that outline each step of the airport journey. Additionally, kits containing items like noise-cancelling headphones and fidget tools are available for use within the terminals. These immediate intervention tools offer tangible relief if a situation becomes overwhelming.

The Chicago Department of Aviation's newly introduced accessibility tools aim to reduce anxiety and provide a more predictable and manageable travel environment for affected individuals.



Accessible Tourism-Focused Initiatives

Accessible Japan Celebrates a Decade of Fostering Inclusion

The dedicated organization Accessible Japan has completed a decade of working toward serving travellers with disabilities and building a more inclusive Japanese tourism. Founded by Josh Grisdale, a wheelchair user who personally experienced both the possibilities and limitations of navigating Japan with mobility challenges, the organization has evolved from a basic information resource to a comprehensive platform influencing industry standards and government policies.

Through meticulous documentation of barrier-free facilities, partnerships with tourism operators, and educational initiatives targeting businesses and policymakers, Accessible Japan has transformed how travellers with diverse needs plan and experience Japanese cultural sites, accommodations, and transportation networks. Grisdale's advocacy work, recognized through prestigious invitations like the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic torch relay and corporate speaking engagements, underscores the organization's credibility in bridging the gap between Japan's tourism industry and disability communities worldwide.



Accessible Tourism Training Programs

TravelAbility and VisitAble Boast Disability Inclusion

TravelAbility has formed a collaborative partnership with VisitAble to provide specialized educational programs that emphasize the importance of disability inclusion for the tourism sector. This initiative is a direct response to research indicating a significant demand within the industry for resources that improve service for travellers with disabilities.

The TravelAbility x VisitAble training curriculum is delivered through a series of self-paced online modules and addresses a comprehensive range of topics — from appropriate terminology for disability inclusion and effective interaction techniques to industry-specific protocols for accommodating various physical, cognitive, and mental health conditions. The program is structured with different completion timelines for managerial and frontline staff and is designed to be integrated around existing work schedules.

Early adopters from various destinations have reported positive outcomes regarding staff engagement and the practical application of the learned principles.



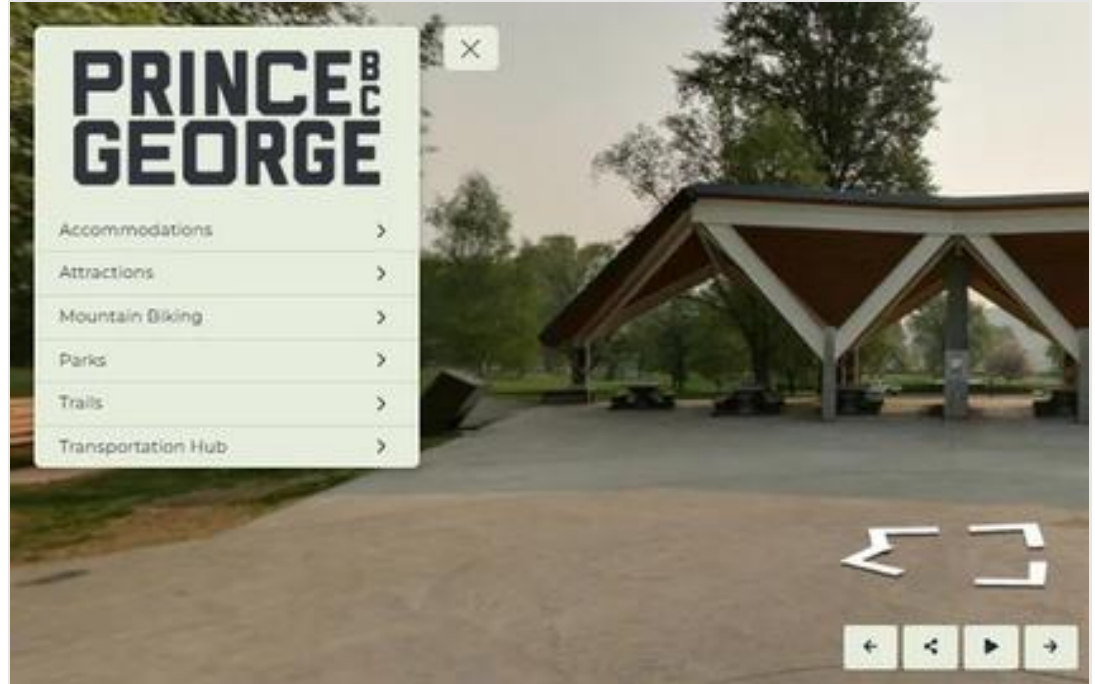
Accessibility Virtual Tour Maps

Tourism Prince George Collaborates on a 3D Accessibility Map

Tourism Prince George, in collaboration with advocacy organization Spinal Cord Injury BC and with federal funding from Pacific Economic Development Canada, has developed an interactive accessibility virtual tour map to put people with disabilities at ease.

Tourism Prince George's digital map online resource provides 360-degree panoramic imagery of various public spaces — including outdoor trails, accommodation providers, and transit facilities — and highlights the accessibility features of these local amenities. Intended for robust pre-visit planning, the 3D accessibility virtual tour map was guided by the input of individuals with direct personal experience with mobility challenges.

By launching this resource, Tourism Prince George and its collaborators reduce barriers for travellers and residents by offering a transparent visual preview of a location's physical environment, thereby assisting in identifying genuinely accessible destinations before an actual visit is undertaken.



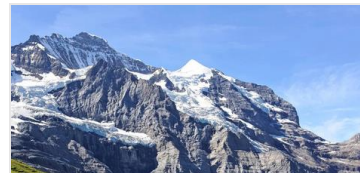
Romantasy-Inspired European Getaways

EF Ultimate Break Introduced an ACOTAR Switzerland Tour

The ACOTAR Switzerland tour by EF Ultimate Break invites travellers to experience the romance and grandeur of Switzerland through the lens of fantasy-inspired adventure. Drawing from the imaginative world of A Court of Thorns and Roses, the journey transforms the country's snow-dusted peaks, glacial valleys, and castle-lined villages into an enchanting realm reminiscent of literary lore.

Spanning seven nights, the itinerary features handpicked accommodations, guided excursions, and destinations such as "Glacier 3000, the Swiss Riviera, and Zermatt. Guests enjoy daily breakfasts, select dinners, and expert direction from dedicated tour leaders."

Merging narrative escapism with authentic cultural immersion, the fantasy-romance getaway, 'Highlights of Switzerland: Inspired by ACOTAR,' reinterprets Switzerland's natural beauty and historical charm as a living story—an experience designed for travellers who seek both adventure and imagination.



Stunning Sea Travel Experiences

Kauai Sea Tours Introduces the Lady Kailani Vessel

Kauai Sea Tours, a long-established, family-owned tour operator on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, welcomes a new vessel, referred to by the name of Lady Kailani.

The catamaran is a custom-built, 65-foot craft designed with a focus on passenger comfort and recreational amenities. Its notable features include multiple deck levels for viewing, aquatic activities facilitated by water slides and a dedicated swimming platform, and hospitality services such as a bar and full kitchen. The vessel is also equipped with modern conveniences like restrooms, freshwater showers, and audiovisual systems.

Kauai Sea Tours emphasizes that tours to the renowned Nā Pali Coast will maintain a passenger limit well below the Lady Kailani boat's maximum capacity to ensure a less crowded experience. The company's broader service portfolio includes various other tour types utilizing different boats, with all excursions led by certified captains.



Private Travel Networks

Cipher Lets You Share And Explore Travel Memories Within Your Circle

Cipher is a social networking platform focused specifically on travel experiences within personal networks. It allows users to document, organise, and share memories from trips with family and friends, creating a private, trusted space for travel-related content.

Users can upload photos, write notes, and tag locations, providing a centralised repository for their travel experiences. The platform also enables browsing of experiences shared by friends and extended networks, helping users discover destinations and activities recommended by people they trust. By limiting content visibility to social connections rather than the general public, Cipher emphasises privacy and curated engagement. For travel enthusiasts and socially-minded users, it provides a convenient way to capture memories, exchange insights, and explore new destinations based on personalised recommendations from trusted contacts.



Aussie-Style Hot Dog Trucks

Tourism Australia is Bringing a G'day Dogs Food Truck to NYC

New York City is famously associated with hot dogs, and on October 16th, Tourism Australia is sending a G'day Dogs food truck across the streets of Manhattan and Brooklyn, inviting New Yorkers to try a menu of five distinct Aussie-style hot dogs. The Classic provides an elevated take on an Aussie favourite, while The Melbourne Muse infuses Southeast Asian flavours into a pork sausage, and the Sydney Surf 'n Turf matches a beef snag with chopped prawns.

Each menu item, inspired by real Australian destinations and dishes, will only be available for a limited time, while supplies last. Foodies with an interest in getting a taste of the Aussie-style hot dogs will need to keep an eye on the @australia Instagram account to see the locations and service times for the G'day Dog food trucks.



EIDFEST, Johannesburg

A paradise for shopaholics and a delight for food lovers, where flavours, spices, and imagination come together. A lively gathering spot for friends and families, and a dynamic platform for businesses and products. The 14th Eid Shopping Festival is a must-visit event, taking place on February 5–8, 2026.

EidFest welcomes exhibitors and visitors from around the world to explore a vast array of offerings, including trending fashion, modest wear, jewellery, accessories, shoes, spices, sauces, food, drinks, homeware, décor, investment opportunities, business ventures, entertainment, and much more—all under one roof.

Every year, new exhibitors and product launches from South Africa and abroad provide a stage for both established and emerging brands to showcase their latest innovations, products, and masterpieces, boosting brand awareness on a global scale.

<https://eidshoppingfestival.co.za/>



Cultural Tourism in Historic Muslim Neighbourhoods

Heritage tours, mosque visits, halal dining and culture, SA

While not a single organised event, Bo-Kaap in Cape Town offers a rich cultural experience for visitors during the Eid season. Famous for its brightly coloured houses and cobbled streets, the neighbourhood is full of history and local character. Tourists can visit the Bo-Kaap Museum to learn about the Cape Malay community, the history of Islam in the area, and the culture that shaped this unique part of Cape Town.

A stop at the Auwal Mosque, South Africa's oldest mosque, gives visitors a chance to see traditional prayers and connect with the spiritual side of Eid. The area is also a food lover's paradise, with Cape Malay cuisine on offer — from curries and sweet treats to spicy festive dishes that are especially popular during Eid.

Together, these experiences offer a complete travel experience, combining history, culture, faith, and food. For travellers visiting during Eid, Bo-Kaap is a great place to see local traditions, enjoy the festive spirit, and experience a community that has proudly preserved its heritage over generations.



Underrated Travel Locations

Intrepid Travel Has Released Its Annual Not Hot List

Intrepid Travel has released its annual curated list of destinations — the Not Hot List. It identifies ten geographical locations that currently receive a relatively small number of international visitors but are deemed prepared for increased tourism due to recent infrastructure developments or cultural initiatives.

A valuable travel resource, the selection process for the Intrepid Travel Not Hot List involves internal regional specialists and external trend analysis, with criteria focusing on a destination's low visitor numbers, improved readiness for tourism, and specific relevance for the upcoming year.

In order to capitalise on the momentum of the Not Hot List, Intrepid Travel also announced the launch of new guided tours to several of the featured places, including Sierra Leone, Kyrgyzstan, and Romania.



Branded Travel Series

Travel South Dakota Partners with Jeep® and Matador Network

Travel South Dakota has launched an innovative digital series titled 'Unexpected South Dakota.' This launch was made possible through a collaboration with Jeep® and Matador Network. The purpose of the series is to showcase the state's lesser-known cultural, culinary, and natural wonders.

Hosted by biologist and adventurer Forrest Galante, the three-episode series takes viewers beyond typical tourist attractions. 'Unexpected South Dakota,' instead, emphasizes conservation, Indigenous traditions, and sustainable exploration. The series is sure to inspire road trips by highlighting unique experiences — such as foraging for Indigenous ingredients with James Beard-nominated chef Marcela Salas, fly-fishing in the Black Hills, and horseback riding with Lakota horseman Cat Clifford.

Each episode blends adventure with education, offering a fresh perspective on South Dakota's heritage while aligning with Jeep's rugged brand ethos and Matador Network's.



On-Arrival Driving License Services

Sri Lanka Grants Tourists Temporary Driving Licenses

Sri Lanka has introduced a streamlined process for foreign tourists to obtain temporary driving licenses directly at Bandaranaike International Airport. This move eliminates the previous requirement to visit the Department of Motor Traffic in Werahera.

Sri Lanka's decision to grant travellers temporary driving licenses at the airport aims to improve convenience for visitors renting motorcycles or light vehicles for travel across the country, though it excludes heavy vehicles and three-wheelers. Applicants must present a full, valid driving license from their home country — with certified translation if not in English — along with their passport and visa. The foreign license must have at least one year of remaining validity, and any restrictions like corrective lenses or automatic transmission will carry over to the temporary permit. Issued for up to five months, the license costs LKR 2,000 per month of validity.



BookTok Travel Experiences

EF Ultimate Break Launched Literature-Inspired Group Tours for Gen Z

EF Ultimate Break has introduced a collection of travel experiences designed around popular BookTok novels, targeting the platform's devoted readership of 18-35 year olds. The tour operator now offers trips inspired by beloved book series, including "A Court of Thorns and Roses" (Switzerland), Emily Henry's romance novels (Croatia), Percy Jackson (Rome, Athens & Cairo), and Harry Potter (London & Scotland). Each itinerary connects literary themes with real-world destinations, allowing participants to experience settings that mirror their favourite fictional worlds while traveling alongside fellow book enthusiasts.

The program represents a strategic pivot toward experience-based travel that capitalises on social media-driven literary communities. Rather than traditional sightseeing, these tours emphasise shared cultural touchstones and fandom connections, with participants bonding over plot discussions and character analysis throughout their journeys. EF Ultimate Break's approach transforms passive reading communities into active travel cohorts, demonstrating how digital book culture can translate into tangible tourism revenue.



Fantasy Book Vacation Tours

EF Ultimate Break Launches a Fourth Wing-Inspired European Adventure

EF Ultimate Break introduces a new Fourth Wing-inspired European itinerary, blending fantasy-inspired storytelling with real-world exploration across Scotland and Ireland. Designed for travellers seeking immersive experiences rooted in myth and adventure, the journey traverses Scotland's atmospheric Highlands—where historic castles overlook rugged landscapes—and continues through Ireland's lush countryside, evoking the spirit and grandeur of legendary realms.

The nine-day tour includes "eight nights of handpicked accommodations, eight breakfasts and two dinners, and guidance from an expert Tour Director alongside local city tours in select destinations." Highlights include entrance to Edinburgh Castle, the Titanic Museum, and the Book of Kells exhibition.

Participants can expect interactive cultural moments, such as learning traditional bagpipes, hiking through the Highlands, exploring the Giant's Causeway, and crafting the perfect pint.



Literary Tourism Innovations

Jane Austen Festival Launches Character Trail Through Bath Streets

The Jane Austen Festival has introduced an interactive character trail that transforms Bath into a literary treasure hunt. Twenty-six character portraits featuring quotes from Austen's novels are strategically placed in business windows throughout the city, encouraging visitors to explore beyond traditional tourist routes while engaging with the author's work in a novel way.

Participants collect booklets from designated locations and follow a map to discover characters hidden throughout Bath's streets. The trail runs from June through September, allowing both festival attendees and regular visitors to participate at their own pace. This approach demonstrates how cultural organizations are reimagining literary engagement by blending physical exploration with intellectual discovery. The initiative also benefits local businesses by driving foot traffic and creating partnerships between tourism operators and retail establishments, showing how literary heritage can generate economic activity while deepening cultural connections.

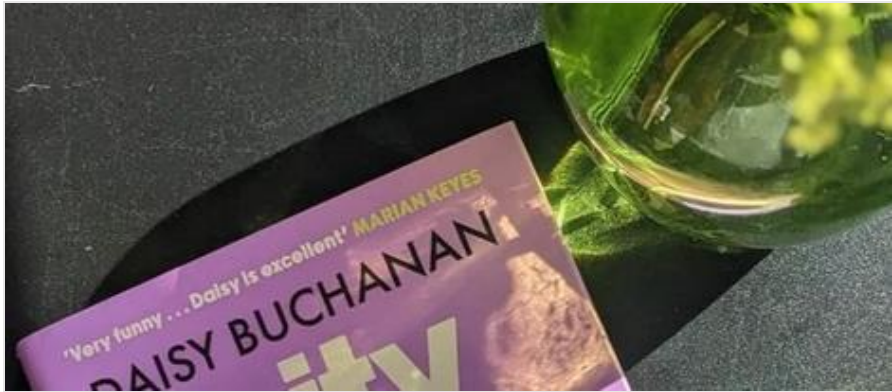


Literary Wellness Retreats

Aweventurer Launches Reading-Focused Travel Experiences with Authors

Aweventurer has introduced a series of literary retreats that combine wellness travel with immersive reading experiences, hosted by prominent authors. The company's inaugural "Read Yourself Happy" retreat in Zakynthos, Greece, features bestselling author Daisy Buchanan leading workshops on reading for creativity and confidence alongside traditional vacation activities like yacht excursions and Greek cooking classes.

The seven-day program structures literary engagement around luxury accommodation in private Greek villas, with participants receiving personalized book recommendations and signed copies of the host author's work. Aweventurer positions these retreats as transformative experiences that blend solo reading time with group discussions, targeting book enthusiasts seeking both personal development and literary community. The company's approach reflects growing consumer interest in experience-based travel that offers substantive personal enrichment beyond standard vacation activities.



Luxurious Scottish Whisky Hotels

The Craigellachie Hotel is a Restorative and Historical Retreat

Nestled in the heart of Speyside, Scotland's most celebrated whisky region, The Craigellachie Hotel offers a refined escape that thoughtfully blends heritage, comfort, and Highland character. With a rich history and welcoming atmosphere, it stands as both a cultural touchstone and a luxurious retreat for travellers seeking authenticity and tranquility.

Featuring 26 elegantly appointed bedrooms, the hotel provides a peaceful base from which to explore the region's world-renowned distilleries and scenic landscapes. Central to the experience is The Spey Inn, Speyside's oldest pub, established in 1703, where guests can enjoy rustic charm and locally inspired cuisine in a truly historic setting. Just steps away, the renowned Quaich Bar offers over 700 single-malt whiskies, alongside a selection of expertly crafted cocktails.

Dog-friendly and deeply rooted in its surroundings, The Craigellachie delivers more than just accommodation.



Wellness Hospitality Series

The 'Luxury Wellbeing Series 2025' will Span Across Asian Cities

Marriott International's Luxury Group will launch the 'Luxury Wellbeing Series 2025' this August, a transformative hospitality initiative set across prominent Asian destinations.

Designed to meet the growing demand for immersive wellness travel, the series "moves beyond traditional pampering to embrace a holistic approach centered on three core pillars: Sleep, Nutrition, and Physical & Mental Well-being." The experience unfolds across a trio of culturally rich and naturally serene locations—Bali, the Maldives, and Goa—with participating properties including Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands, and The St. Regis Goa Resort.

Each resort will offer a bespoke wellness program tailored to its environment, combining expert-led sessions, locally inspired therapies, and curated rituals. This series reimagines luxury travel as a meaningful path toward personal renewal, aligning physical vitality and mental clarity with regional authenticity. Overall, the initiative underscores Asia's prominence as a wellness destination and Marriott's continued leadership in luxury hospitality innovation.



Kid-Designed Travel Itineraries

Visit Anaheim Launched 'Imaginagency' with Tia Mowry

Visit Anaheim, the official destination marketing organization for Anaheim, California, has unveiled 'Imaginagency,' a first-of-its-kind travel initiative created in collaboration with actress and entrepreneur Tia Mowry. Designed to reimagine the family vacation experience, this innovative campaign places children at the helm of planning, offering itineraries crafted entirely by young minds.

Spearheading the initiative are six “Imaginagents,” including Mowry’s own children, Cree and Cairo Mowry-Hardrict. Together, they have curated six unique, bookable Anaheim experiences that reflect the creativity, wonder, and curiosity of kids; from theme park adventures to hands-on explorations, each itinerary captures Anaheim through a child’s perspective.

By inviting children to shape the travel experience, Imaginagency fosters a more inclusive and imaginative approach to family trips—one that values youthful perspectives.



Women-Only Travel Adventures

Intrepid Travel Offers Expeditions for All-Women Groups

Expeditions for all-women groups have become increasingly popular, and in response, Intrepid Travel has expanded its offerings. Specifically designed for female travellers, these 'Women's Expeditions' feature a variety of adventure trips, such as backcountry hiking in the U.S. and exploring remote regions in Morocco. To further meet this demand, Intrepid has partnered with Wildland Trekking, adding 10 new Women's Adventure trips for 2025, all led by local female guides.

Moreover, these expeditions focus on creating deeper, culturally immersive experiences. As participants explore off-the-beaten-path destinations, they engage with local communities and support women's employment by working with women-owned businesses. In addition, the tours provide local women with leadership roles as guides, enhancing the connection between travellers and their surroundings.

Through these initiatives, Intrepid Travel supports the rising trend of women-only travel, while promoting sustainable and responsible tourism that empowers women in the process.



Box-Office-Themed Travel Pop-Ups

Intrepid x TIFF Host an Experiential Travel Activation

Intrepid x TIFF is presenting an experiential travel activation at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) this year, with Intrepid Travel sponsoring the 'Midnight Madness Program.'

From September 5th to 8th, Intrepid Travel will host the 'Intrepid Travel Box Office,' an interactive pop-up installation on King Street as part of the TIFF Street Festival. Visitors can "engage with travel-themed movie posters and enter for a chance to win a trip for two to destinations such as Japan, Italy, Peru, or India, which are among the most popular destinations for North American travellers in 2025; additional prizes include TIFF movie tickets and other travel-related rewards."

Intrepid Travel is also extending its promotional efforts with "four sponsorship activations for The Moth in New York City and Los Angeles over the next two months," collaborating with organizations that align with its values to highlight its brand, people, and travellers.



Branded Content Creator Residencies

Matador Network is Launching the Matador House Initiative

The prominent travel media company, Matador Network, has initiated a novel program titled 'Matador House,' which functions as a temporary residential initiative for eight selected content creators in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. This project was developed in collaboration with the local tourism authority, and participants may range in creative fields such as comedy, filmmaking, music, or visual arts.

Matador House will welcome creators on a beachfront property for one month, where they will have the chance to engage in both individual and collaborative creative projects. Through this activation, Matador Network aims to foster a mutually inspiring environment while generating promotional material that highlights the destination's diverse attractions — from its culinary offerings to its artistic community and extensive coastline. As such, the content creators will be tasked with producing work inspired by the local culture and environment, with the collective output scheduled for a public reveal at the residency's conclusion.



Seoul Tourism Campaigns

The Absolutely in Seoul Spotlights the City Through BLACKPINK's Jennie

The Absolutely in Seoul campaign appointed BLACKPINK's Jennie as Seoul's Honorary Tourism Ambassador for 2025. The campaign unfolds through cinematic short films, like "Daltokki," set among Gyeongbokgung Palace, Nodeul Island, and Seongsu-dong, and a second video titled "Seoul City," which features Jennie's solo track from her debut album. This blend of music and imagery reframes the city's charm as both dynamic and emotionally resonant.

The promotional rollout includes globally displayed teasers on digital billboards and social platforms, immersive expos, and online interviews. Visuals spotlight Seoul's historic architecture, vibrant nightlife, food culture, and fashion-forward neighbourhoods, all narrated through Jennie's personal connection to her home city. With her global cultural status, Jennie brings compelling energy to Seoul's identity, setting new travel ambitions rooted in style, creativity, and heartfelt storytelling.



Film-Inspired Travel Campaigns

Tourism Fiji Introduces 'Wilson's Happily Ever After'

Tourism Fiji has unveiled a new global marketing initiative titled 'Wilson's Happily Ever After,' commemorating the 25th anniversary of the acclaimed film *Cast Away*. The campaign revives the film's iconic character, Wilson, through a thoughtfully produced 90-second short film that reimagines his narrative—from isolation to joyful belonging—set against the stunning backdrop of Fiji's islands.

Produced by Special PR and directed by James Anderson, with on-location filming by Radlab, the campaign centers on Wilson's symbolic return to Fiji. The story begins as he is discovered on the white-sand shores of Serenity Island Resort by a young Fijian girl named Lani. She embraces Wilson with a sense of wonder, inviting him into a series of memorable, culturally rich experiences. These include "cycling along historic sugar cane rail tracks with Eco Trax, kayaking in crystal-clear waters, partaking in a traditional Kava ceremony, and engaging in a spirited game of volleyball."

This film-inspired campaign blends cinematic nostalgia with authentic Fijian hospitality, highlighting the destination's enduring appeal and reinforcing Fiji's position as a welcoming, adventure-filled.





THANK YOU

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SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM