



TOURISM TUESDAYS

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

#TourismTuesdays

APRIL 2026 EDITION



Inspiring new ways

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As we move deeper into the Africa's Travel Indaba season, the energy across the tourism sector is steadily building. The recent webinar on 22 April set a strong and purposeful tone, bringing together partners to align on readiness, shared expectations, and the growing opportunities that Africa's Travel Indaba continues to unlock for the continent.

At the heart of this build up is our destination promise, *South Africa Awaits; Come Find Your Joy*. It is a call that goes beyond inspiration, reflecting the real experiences, connections and economic opportunities that platforms like Africa's Travel Indaba create. This is not only a showcase of Africa's diverse tourism offering, it is a catalyst for growth. It connects businesses to global markets, drives future travel demand, and contributes meaningfully to jobs, enterprise development and the broader tourism economy.

We are also pleased to share that the online diary system for Africa's Travel Indaba is now live. Exhibitors and buyers can begin scheduling meetings and shaping their engagements ahead of the show. This critical step ensures that every interaction is purposeful, driving value and reinforcing Indaba's role as a results driven marketplace for the continent.

There is something uniquely powerful about going on a road trip. In this edition, we share a curated road trip itinerary from Johannesburg to Indaba's host city, Durban. This offers a richer and more immersive encounter with South Africa's landscapes, cultures and communities. It is through these journeys that the essence of finding your joy truly comes to life, reminding us that the destination story often begins long before arrival.

As we approach May, Africa's Travel Indaba also becomes a natural bridge into Africa Month. This is a time to celebrate the unity, resilience and vast potential of our continent. In this context, Africa's Travel Indaba stands as more than a trade show. It is a

Pan African platform that amplifies Africa's voice, strengthens partnerships across borders, and positions the continent as a competitive force in global tourism.

In this issue, we also reflect on a significant national milestone as South Africa marks 31 years of freedom and democracy. It is a moment to recognise how our history has contributed to shaping a modern national identity, contributing to tourism allowing us to share our story with the world as we continue to welcome travellers from across the globe.

In this edition, we also continue to spotlight graded establishments, with a focus on benchmark properties that consistently deliver quality and service excellence. Through the work of the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa, visitors are assured of quality experiences across the country, from iconic destinations to hidden gems in smaller towns and communities. This consistency enables travellers to explore with confidence, knowing that wherever they go, the promise of *South Africa Awaits; Come Find Your Joy* is not only an invitation, but a lived and trusted experience.

As these stories come together from Africa's Travel Indaba readiness and economic impact to experiential travel, continental celebration and national reflection it is clear that South Africa's tourism narrative is both dynamic and deeply connected.

Regards,
Tourism Tuesdays Team

13

DAYS TO GO



AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA

SEE YOU THERE





13 Days to Africa's Travel Indaba

With just 13 days to go until Africa's Travel Indaba, excitement is building across the tourism sector. Our recent webinar brought together partners and stakeholders for a final check-in ahead of the event, sharing key updates, expectations, and the opportunity Indaba presents to showcase Africa to the world.

AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA

AT A GLANCE



22

AFRICAN
COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED



927

BUYERS



1 121

EXHIBITORS



191

INDEPENDENT
SMMES
PARTICIPATING

Online Diary in Now Available

Online Diary officially went live on 20 April 2026. Shaped by your valuable post-show feedback, this year's platform has been thoughtfully enhanced to deliver a more seamless, intuitive experience, making it easier than ever to plan, connect, and maximise your participation.

The upgraded Online Diary introduces a range of powerful features, including single log-in access across all platforms, in-platform meeting ratings, instant no-show alerts with concierge support, and smarter matchmaking filters. Users can also delegate diary management, explore a fully searchable exhibitor directory, export contacts with ease, and track profile engagement through integrated analytics, ensuring every interaction is both efficient and impactful.

BONDay Returns: A Dynamic Platform for Industry Connection and Growth

Taking place on 11 May 2026, ahead of the main exhibition, BONDay returns as a dedicated industry day designed to deliver meaningful engagement and valuable insights.

This year's programme is built around three core pillars:

- **Connect** – Facilitating impactful networking opportunities between exhibitors, buyers, and industry leaders.
- **Discover** – Showcasing emerging trends, innovations, and new market opportunities shaping the tourism landscape.
- **Growth** – Providing practical tools and strategic insights to support long-term business success.

Together, these pillars position BONDay as a powerful platform for knowledge exchange and industry alignment ahead of the exhibition. The full programme will be released on the official website once finalised.

Global Buyer Interest Signals Strong Business Potential

participation for Africa's Travel Indaba 2026 continues to show impressive growth, with over 700 confirmed and approved buyers across both hosted and non-hosted categories.

The hosted buyer programme reflects a diverse international mix, led by India, the United States, and Japan, alongside strong representation from key European markets including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Germany. Australia and Brazil further contribute to a well-balanced global footprint.

The non-hosted buyer segment is driven largely by the domestic market, with South African buyers accounting for nearly 50% of approved participants. This is followed by the United States and the United Kingdom, with additional representation from Germany, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Switzerland, Namibia, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, and Botswana.

This breadth of buyer diversity reinforces the significant commercial opportunities available to exhibitors, positioning Africa's Travel Indaba 2026 as a critical platform for trade, networking, and business growth.





Road Trippin' to Durban: The Scenic Detour You Didn't Know You Needed A Journey to Africa's Travel Indaba

There are road trips... and then there are South African road trips the kind where every few hours feels like a new country, a new culture, and a new reason to pull over “just quickly” (which is never quick).

As the continent gears up for Africa’s Travel Indaba, one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar this journey to Durban becomes more than just a drive. It becomes a living showcase of what makes South Africa a world-class, diverse, and deeply immersive destination.

Instead of taking the fastest route to KwaZulu-Natal, why not take in the sights and tastes of a roadtrip from Johannesburg to KwaZulu-Natal?

Day 1: Trading Highways for Highlands

Leaving Johannesburg at sunrise hits differently. The city fades, the traffic thins, and suddenly it’s just you, the open road, and a playlist that somehow feels more profound than usual.

By mid-morning, you roll into Clarens, affectionately known as the “Jewel of the Free State.” Think art galleries, mountain backdrops, and the kind of crisp air that makes you question all your life choices in the

best way.

Lunch is unhurried, the streets are lined with creativity, and a little adrenaline at Clarens Xtreme whether it’s quad biking or ziplining sets the tone for what this trip really is: a curated experience of South Africa’s hidden gems.

By dinner, you’re no longer just “on a trip.” You’re in it.

Day 2: Culture, Dinosaurs & the Wild Side

The next leg leans into discovery.

First stop: the Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre. Yes dinosaurs. Because apparently this road trip needed more personality.





Then it's on to the Basotho Cultural Village, where history isn't behind glass it's alive, immersive, and proudly told. It's here that you begin to understand the depth of South Africa's cultural offering a key narrative that platforms like Africa's Travel Indaba bring to the global stage.

Crossing into KwaZulu-Natal, the landscape shifts again and so does the pace. Arrival at Nambiti Game Reserve introduces the wild side of the journey: golden-hour game drives, open landscapes, and a boma dinner under the stars.

Not bad for a "detour."

Day 3: Mountains, Wine & a Little Luxury

An early morning game drive reminds you why South Africa remains one of the most sought-after safari destinations in the world.

From there, the journey climbs into the Drakensberg dramatic, expansive, and unforgettable. This is the kind of scenery that sells destinations without saying a word.

A stop for wine tasting at Cathedral Peak Wine Estate adds a layer of indulgence, before checking into the Drakensberg Sun Resort, where the pace softens completely. Spa treatments, horseback rides, or simply doing nothing at all this is slow travel at its best.

And it's exactly this diversity from adventure to luxury that Africa's Travel Indaba positions to international markets year after year.

Day 4: Stories, Craft & the Road to the Coast

The final stretch to Durban is intentionally slow.

The Midlands Meander offers a tapestry of artisanal

experiences, weaving studios, craft shops, and countryside cafés that reflect the richness of local enterprise and creativity. It's a powerful reminder that tourism is not just about places, but about people and livelihoods.

A stop at the Nelson Mandela Capture Site brings reflection. It grounds the journey in history, legacy, and the stories that continue to shape South Africa's identity.

Then, almost imperceptibly, the air changes.

Warmer. Coastal. Alive.

Durban awaits.

Durban: Where the Road Meets Opportunity

Arriving in Durban, the energy shifts once more.

The Indian Ocean stretches endlessly, the city hums with culture, and the atmosphere is unmistakably global. Checking into the beachfront feels like a reward, but it's also the beginning of something bigger.

Because this is where Africa's Travel Indaba comes to life.

For buyers, media, and exhibitors, Indaba is where connections are made, deals are signed, and Africa's tourism future is shaped. For South Africa, it is a moment to showcase not just a destination, but an entire ecosystem from township experiences and heritage routes to luxury safaris and coastal escapes.

And for those who chose the scenic route to get here, the message is clear:

The destination matters. But the journey? That's where the real story lives.





South Africa Heads to IMEX Frankfurt

From 19 - 21 May, South Africa will be showcasing its offering on a national pavillion at IMEX Frankfurt.

Team South Africa will be strongly represented at IMEX Frankfurt, taking place from 19 to 21 May 2026 in Frankfurt, Germany. This key global platform brings together the world's meetings, incentives, conferences, and events (MICE) industry under one roof.

South Africa will showcase its offering through a national pavillion featuring 17 exhibitors, highlighting the country's diverse capabilities across business events, incentive travel, and destination experiences.

Recognised as one of the most important trade shows of its kind in Europe, IMEX Frankfurt is where the global business events community connects, collaborates, and builds long-term partnerships. Each year, it attracts more than 4,500 meeting planners and 3,100 suppliers from across the world, creating a powerful marketplace for ideas, innovation, and opportunity.

The event offers a unique experience where the global industry truly comes together. Attendees can explore destinations, discover the latest trends

shaping the sector, and engage directly with partners from every corner of the world, all in a single space.

For South Africa, IMEX Frankfurt is more than a trade show. It is a strategic opportunity to position the country as a leading global business events destination, one that combines world-class infrastructure with rich cultural experiences and unforgettable incentive travel options.





Revitalised Cape Agulhas Precinct Sets New Benchmark for Heritage Tourism

The Needles Restaurant, offering sweeping views of the Indian Ocean, is one of the notable new additions at the Cape Agulhas Lighthouse Precinct, set to provide tourists with a memorable dining experience when visiting the southernmost tip of Africa.

While Agulhas is predominantly known for its treacherous winter storms and, historically, numerous shipwrecks, it offers visitors a phenomenal experience, allowing tourists to see the official meeting point of the warm Indian and cold Atlantic Oceans. Located along the stretch of the Overberg coast, it offers visitors a scenic coastline, where tourists can explore the lighthouse, walk to the southern tip and visit the shipwreck.

Facilities

The Agulhas National Park recently went through a major refurbishment with new added facilities including a 60-seater restaurant, interpretation

centre, new access stairways and wheelchair ramp structure, visitor parking for cars and buses. Some of the additional facilities such as the park's reception and admin office, seminar room, curio shop, vendor stalls and ablution blocks ensure seamless and comfortable visitor experience.

The Minister of the Department of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, handed over the Agulhas Precinct development, which reflects the government's continued commitment to developing tourism infrastructure that enhances destination competitiveness on 14 April 2026.

Collaboration

The nearly R82 million infrastructure project which spans over two years is a collaboration between the Department of Tourism, South African National Parks (SANParks), provincial and local government partners, the private sector and civil society.

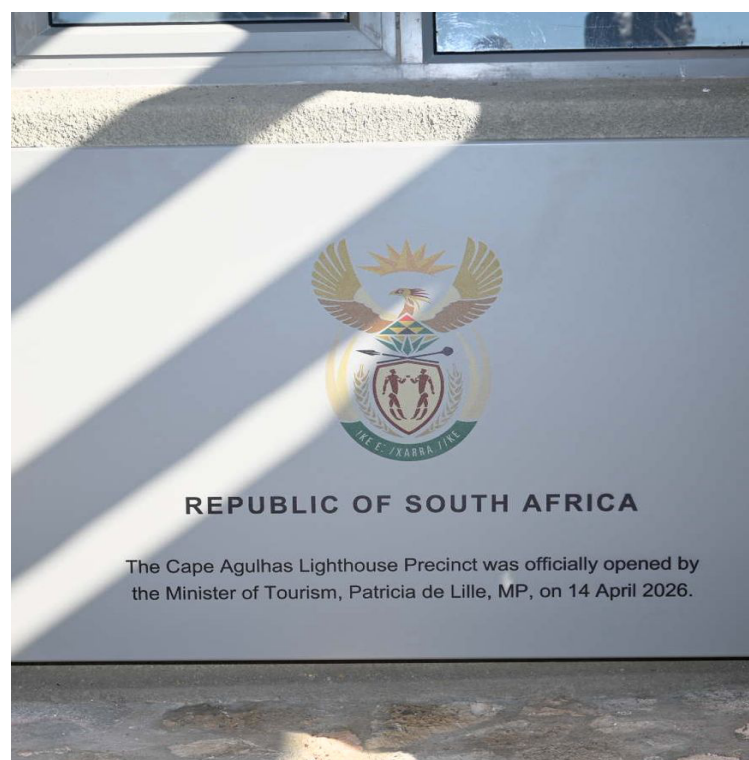
The improvements are set to position the Lighthouse precinct as a world-class heritage tourism attraction that not only boosts the local economy but also provides a welcoming and accessible gateway to the southernmost point of the African continent. Minister de Lille described the precinct as a place of profound meaning where two oceans meet and where history, nature and identity converge. The minister expressed her sincere gratitude to all the partners involved in the project that created 117 local employment opportunities and supported 9 local SMMEs.

“A clear demonstration of how tourism infrastructure contributes directly to job creation and enterprise development. This is what is possible through collaboration. Whether it is partnerships between government and the private sector, or cooperation across government,” she said.

The Lighthouse Precinct followed another successful partnership between SANParks and the Department of Tourism with the launch of the Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre last year in the Free state province.

The launch of the precinct demonstrated that government-led investment is in full swing, but investment is not only about bricks and mortar, it is also about maintenance and recovery when disaster strikes.

“Standing here today, at the southernmost tip of Africa, we are reminded that South Africa is more than just a destination; it is an experience. With a 60-seater restaurant, an interpretation centre, visitor facilities, improved access infrastructure and essential services, we are building a destination that is



accessible, inclusive and ready to welcome more visitors from across South Africa and the world,” Minister de Lille stated

She highlighted that the project is a direct expression of the Cabinet-approved Tourism Growth Partnership Plan (TGPP), particularly with a focus on tourism product development, job creation and coordinated destination marketing.

Minister de Lille encouraged tourists to add the Agulhas Lighthouse Precinct to their bucket list. “Cape Agulhas is not just a national asset with unique biodiversity and cultural heritage, but it is also a global landmark. Behind us stands the 178-year-old Cape Agulhas Lighthouse, the second-oldest working lighthouse in South Africa,” she said.

With improved infrastructure, growing visitor numbers, and a strong government backing, the precinct is well-positioned to present a compelling opportunity for investors beyond its appeal as a tourist attraction.



“*Standing here today, at the southernmost tip of Africa, we are reminded that South Africa is more than just a destination; it is an experience. With a 60-seater restaurant, an interpretation centre, visitor facilities, improved access infrastructure and essential services, we are building a destination that is accessible, inclusive and ready to welcome more visitors from across South Africa and the world,*”

-Hon. Patricia de Lille, Minister of Tourism



All Roads Lead to the Karoo for the Journey to Jazz Festival

The Journey to Jazz festival, held by the Prince Albert Community Trust (PACT), is a yearly celebration of music and community upliftment. Set in the Karoo, the fest is a celebration of live performances, music masterclasses, local cuisine and stargazing. South Africa concluded a successful participation at ITB Berlin 2026, held from 3 to 5 March, using the global platform to strengthen its position as a competitive and high-demand destination.

The Journey to Jazz Festival 2026 takes place in Prince Albert, South Africa, from 30 April - 04 May

2026, offering four days of performances across multiple venues. Organized by the Prince Albert Community Trust (PACT), the festival features a mix of local and international artists, including a unique collaboration between Kyle Shepherd and William Kentridge.

The Prince Albert Community Trust empowers over 2,000 young people in Prince Albert, Leeu Gamka, and Klaarstom. And through the festival, celebrates their year-long dedication to personal growth and skills development.





31 Years of Freedom: Celebrating South Africa's Democratic Journey

As of 27 April 2026, Freedom Day marks a powerful milestone, 31 years of freedom and democracy in South Africa. This annual public holiday commemorates the country's first non-racial democratic elections held on 27 April 1994, a historic turning point that brought an end to apartheid and ushered in a new era of unity, equality, and hope.

The significance of this day is deeply rooted in the moment when millions of South Africans, voting together for the first time regardless of race, shaped the nation's future at the ballot box. That election led to Nelson Mandela becoming the country's first democratically elected president, an event that resonated across the world as a symbol of reconciliation and possibility.

First celebrated in 1995, Freedom Day has since become a time not only for reflection, but also for celebration of how far the nation has come.

For the tourism sector, this milestone offers a meaningful opportunity to share South Africa's story with the world. Visitors are drawn not only to the country's breathtaking landscapes and vibrant cultures, but also to its rich history and enduring spirit. From iconic heritage sites to living cultural experiences, South Africa continues to inspire as a destination where the past is remembered, and the future is being actively shaped.

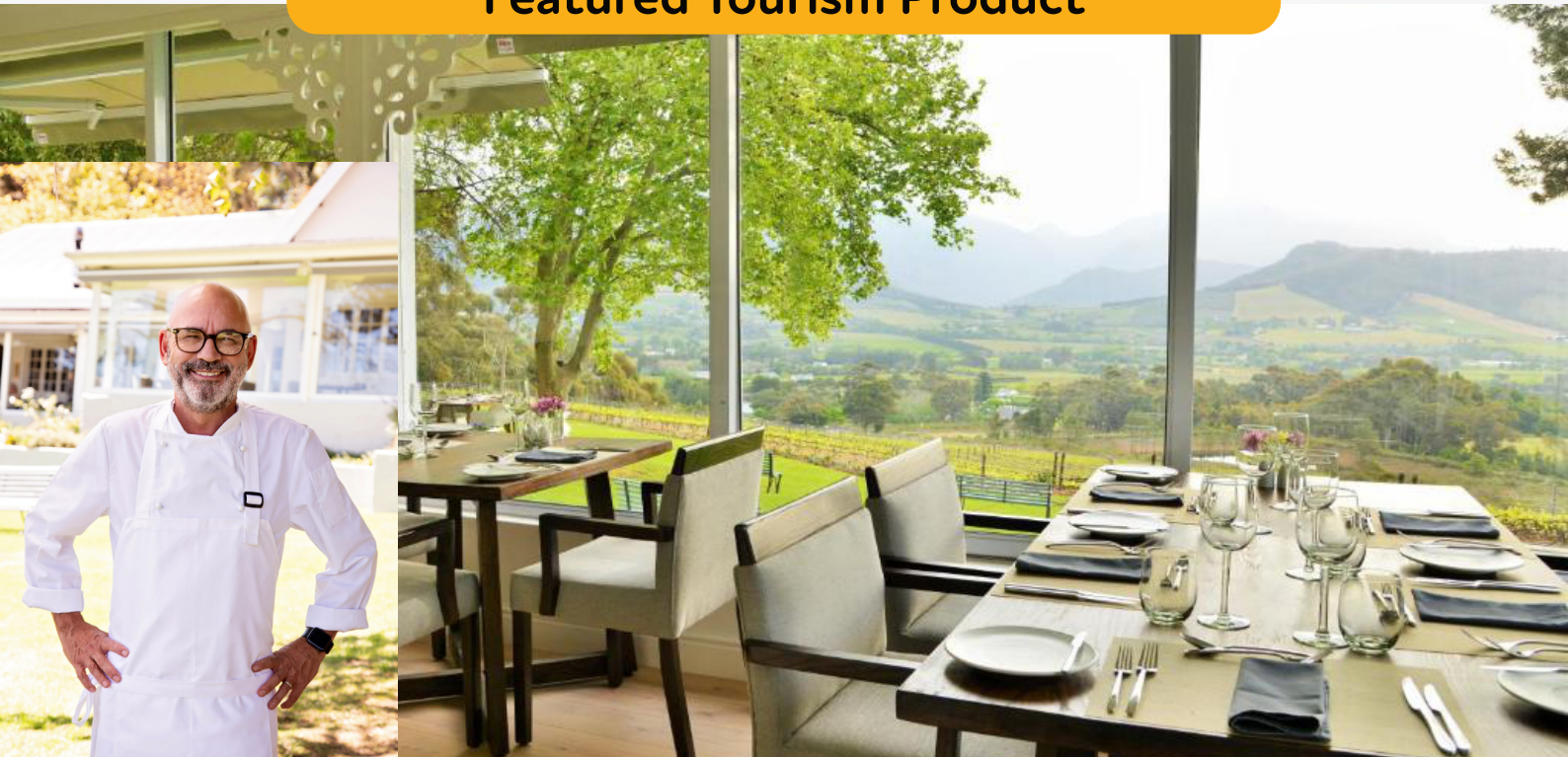
As the nation celebrates three decades of democracy, Freedom Day stands as a reminder of resilience, transformation, and the collective power of its people, an enduring story that continues to captivate travellers from around the globe.



TOURISM GRADING COUNCIL SA

TGCSA CORNER

Featured Tourism Product



WESTERN CAPE

La Petite Ferme Welcomes Awards Winning Chef Richard Carstens

La Petite Ferme, the beloved 5-star luxury boutique hotel, restaurant and wine estate perched above the Franschoek Valley, is proud to announce the appointment of Chef Richard Carstens as its new Head Chef. One of the most decorated culinary figures in South Africa, Carstens joined La Petite Ferme in March 2026, bringing with him a lifetime of fine dining mastery, a philosophy rooted in modern French cuisine and an unwavering commitment to the finest locally sourced ingredients

Carstens comes to La Petite Ferme from his celebrated role as Chef Patron at Arkeste on the Chamonix Wine Estate in Franschoek, where he earned two Eat Out Stars in 2022 followed by the coveted Three Stars, the highest accolade in South African dining, in 2023. His track record before that speaks for itself: eight distinguished years as Executive Chef at Tokara Restaurant in Stellenbosch, alongside executive chef and patron roles at some of South Africa's finest establishments, including Lynton Hall, Le Provençal, Bijoux and NOVA.

He describes his culinary philosophy as an evolution, a marriage of classic French technique and modernist influences expressed through the prism of locally sourced, seasonal ingredients. The result is a clean,

uncluttered style that honours classical foundations while stripping away heaviness in favour of precision, creativity and a deep expression of place.

"La Petite Ferme has a soul," he reflects. "This is a place that has been crafted with love over four decades and I am deeply honoured to be the custodian of its kitchen at this exciting chapter in its story."

Founded in 1984, La Petite Ferme has grown into one of the Winelands' most distinguished destinations, recognised at the Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards for Best Scenic Environment Hotel, Best Country Hotel in Africa and Best Culinary Experience in Africa, with three further awards from the World Luxury Hotel Awards.

Chef Carstens launches his inaugural menu on Thursday, 9 April 2026. Each dish will be thoughtfully paired with La Petite Ferme's own estate wines, creating an experience that is wholly, unmistakably of this place. Reservations are now being accepted.

For bookings and enquiries, email reception@lapetiteferme.co.za or visit lapetiteferme.co.za.

APRIL 2026

Benchmark Properties

An array of outstanding properties that make every visit a pleasure.

Benchmark properties are handpicked by the TGCSA Property Approvals Committee for their outstanding offerings, regardless of category or grading. They are referred to South African Tourism's Brand Experience team to support inclusive growth and geographic diversity.

Vredenburg Manor House

Location: Somerset West, Western Cape

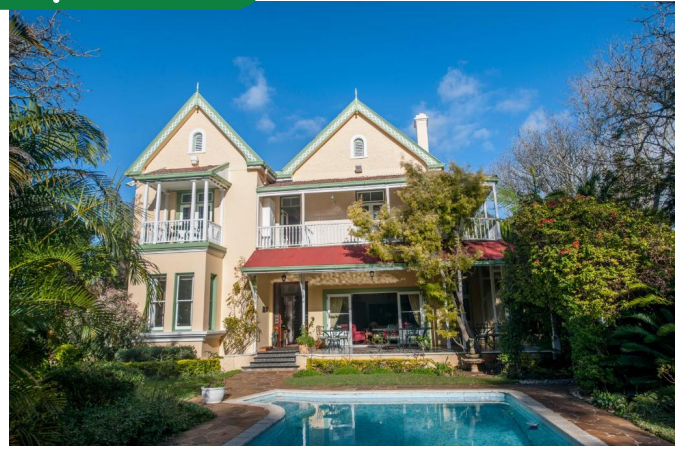
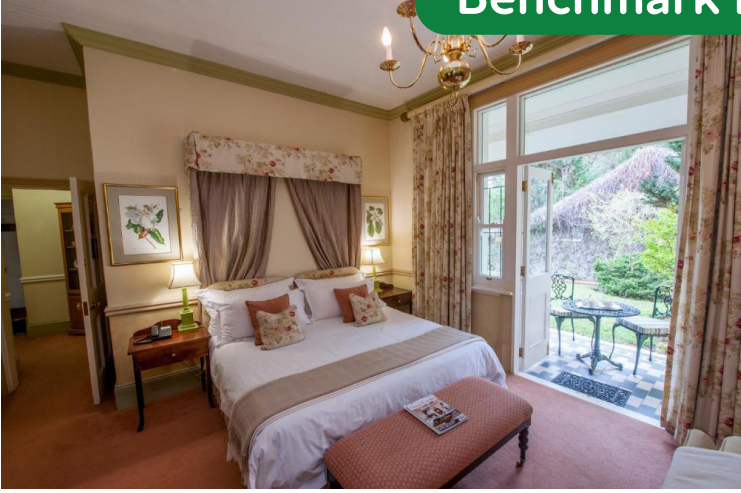


Dating from the 1800s and ideally placed between Stellenbosch and Somerset West in the heart of the Cape Winelands, this Cape-Dutch styled guest house offers five elegantly styled bedrooms in the manor house, six luxurious garden suites and two fully furnished self-catering cottages. Set across two hectares of exotic gardens with an outdoor pool overlooking the Hottentots Holland mountain range.

Contact: Email: info@vredenburgmanor.co.za, call: +27 21 842 3264, or visit: vredenburgmanor.com.



Benchmark Properties



Hacklewood Hill Country House

Location: Gqeberha, Eastern Cape

Tucked into the leafy suburb of Walmer, this Victorian manor house built in 1898 offers a refined blend of heritage charm and modern luxury across eight en-suite rooms, each individually decorated in rich period palettes. Private balconies open onto an established English garden with a swimming pool and tennis court, while the elegant restaurant serves fine cordon bleu cuisine alongside an impressive collection of vintage South African wines.

Contact: Email: reservations@pehg.co.za, call: +27 41 502 3050, or visit: hacklewood.co.za.

Benchmark Properties



Azamare Guest House

Location: Cape Town, Western Cape

Perched on the clifftops of Camps Bay with uninterrupted views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Twelve Apostles, this intimate guest house offers seven spacious rooms and suites with floor-to-ceiling windows, private balconies and a sun-soaked terrace featuring an outdoor pool and Jacuzzi. Guests enjoy a full English breakfast each morning and complimentary wine and canapés every evening, just a short walk from Camps Bay's restaurants and beach.

Contact: Email: info@azamare.com, call: +27 21 438 0682, or visit: azamare.com.

Upcoming Events

EVENT NAME	DATES	LOCATION
Journey to Jazz Festival	30 April - 04 May 2026	Prince Albert, Western Cape
Africa's Travel Indaba	11 - 14 May 2026	Durban ICC, KwaZulu-Natal
IMEX Frankfurt	19 - 21 May 2026	Messe Frankfurt, Germany