

TOURISM TUESDAYS

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#TourismTuesdays

JULY 2026 EDITION

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As we wrap up Mandela Month and look ahead to Women's Month in August, followed by Tourism Month in September, we continue to celebrate the people, partnerships, and initiatives that make South Africa's tourism sector so dynamic and impactful.

The business events industry is currently gathered at the SAACI National Annual Conference in Durban, where industry leaders are discussing the future of the meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) sector under the theme *"Here and Now - This Industry. This Moment. No Waiting."*

In this edition, we bring you updates from across the tourism landscape, including the latest developments around the 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup preparations, which continue to highlight the opportunity to use major events as powerful platforms to showcase Southern Africa as a destination of choice. We also look at industry collaboration through the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA), TOMSA initiatives, the Trevor Noah 2.0, the Africa Tourism Leadership Forum, and strengthening international connectivity through partnerships such as LATAM Airlines.

As usual, we also bring you highlights from benchmark and 5-star premium properties, showcasing the exceptional hospitality experiences that continue to position South Africa as a world-class destination.

As we continue to tell the stories that shape our sector, we invite you, our industry partners,

stakeholders, and tourism champions, to share your milestones, achievements, events, and success stories with us. Your stories matter, and they deserve to be showcased. Submit your stories for consideration to media@southafrica.net and help us continue celebrating the people and experiences that make South African tourism extraordinary.

Thank you for continuing to be part of this journey. We look forward to celebrating more stories, partnerships, and successes with you in the months ahead.

Regards,
Tourism Tuesdays Team



South Africa Brings Madiba's Legacy to Life in London for Mandela Day 2026

South African Tourism commemorated Nelson Mandela Day by bringing the vibrant spirit of South Africa to London's iconic Trafalgar Square. The celebration marked both Mandela Day and 30 years of South Africa's Constitution, anchored by the global destination campaign, **South Africa Awaits. Come Find Your Joy.**

In partnership with Brand South Africa and the Department of Sport,

Arts and Culture, the event showcased the country's rich culture, music and creativity to thousands of potential travellers from one of South Africa's key international markets. Electrifying performances by Sjava, Jesse Clegg, Msaki, Sun El Musician, Thakzin and Sipho Mchunu turned the historic square into a vibrant celebration of South African heritage. Hosted at the very site where Nelson Mandela addressed thousands following his release from prison in 1990,

the event paid tribute to Madiba's enduring legacy while inspiring visitors to discover the beauty, culture and experiences that South Africa has to offer.

i Why it matters?

Culture is a powerful driver of travel. International events like these elevate South Africa's global profile, spark travel interest and help convert inspiration into future bookings.





Making Every Minute Count for Mandela Day

As part of the annual 67 Minutes for Mandela Day, South African Tourism's Global Trade team partnered with United Airlines and Rise Against Hunger, a non-profit global hunger relief organisation that works with communities and partners to provide nutritious meals and support sustainable solutions to

food insecurity.

Together, the partners packed meals for vulnerable communities, demonstrating how tourism partnerships can extend beyond travel to create meaningful social impact.

As United Airlines celebrates its 100th anniversary, the partnership also highlights the airline's growing

commitment to South Africa through its daily Johannesburg–Newark service and regular flights between Cape Town, Newark and Washington, D.C. Strengthening airline partnerships remains critical to improving accessibility, expanding international tourism and supporting South Africa's long-term tourism growth.



TBCSA and TOMSA Launch Second Trevor Noah Campaign to Drive International Tourism to South Africa

Building on success of the first campaign, The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) and Tourism Marketing South Africa (TOMSA) officially launched the second Tourism in South Africa with Trevor Noah campaign, *Don't Say We Didn't Tell You*, a campaign aimed at turning global attention into visitor arrivals.

Funded through TOMSA, the campaign reflects the tourism industry's collective commitment to growing demand for South Africa as a destination. By leveraging Trevor Noah's global appeal and authentic South African story, the campaign aims to showcase the country's people, wildlife, culture, cuisine, adventure and breathtaking landscapes to millions of potential travellers worldwide.

Speaking at the launch, TBCSA Chairman Jerry Mabena emphasised

that destination marketing is far more than advertising, it is an investment in economic growth. Every additional visitor supports tourism businesses, creates jobs and contributes to the livelihoods of communities across South Africa.

TOMSA Board Chairperson Franco Jordaan echoed this sentiment, highlighting the power of collective investment. He noted that no single tourism business can market South Africa to the world alone, making industry collaboration essential to driving international demand and delivering long-term value for the sector.

With the central message, *Don't Say We Didn't Tell You*, the campaign invites the world to experience South Africa firsthand, confident that visitors will discover why so many travellers return time and again.

The campaign can be [viewed here](#) on YouTube.

[Click here](#) for the full story.





Africa Tourism Leadership Forum 2026 Unveils First Speaker Line-Up

The countdown to one of Africa's leading tourism gatherings has begun, with the first lineup of speakers for the 8th Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) & Awards officially revealed.

Taking place from 2–4 September 2026 at Meropa Casino in Polokwane, Limpopo, the Forum will bring together tourism ministers, policymakers, hospitality leaders, investors and destination marketers from across the continent to explore the future of African tourism. As intra-African travel continues to evolve under the opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), this year's Forum will focus on unlocking regional tourism growth, strengthening investment opportunities,

leveraging artificial intelligence and driving innovation across Africa's travel and hospitality sectors.

The first group of keynote speakers includes an impressive lineup of industry leaders, among them Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa (CEO, TBCSA), Elcia Grandcourt (UN Tourism), June Chepkemei (CEO, Kenya Tourism Board), Bronwen Auret (Tourism Grading Council of South Africa), Joel 'Kachi' Benson, Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, and several other influential voices shaping the future of tourism across Africa and beyond.

Additional speakers contributing to the programme include Siyabonga Mthethwa (Chief Strategy Officer, South African Tourism) and Corné Koch

(Chief Convention Bureau Officer, South African Tourism), who will bring their expertise and industry perspectives to the discussions. Hosted in the heart of Limpopo, the Forum also provides delegates with an opportunity to experience one of South Africa's emerging business events and leisure destinations, showcasing the province's rich cultural heritage, biodiversity and growing MICE offering.

[Click here](#) to view the full programme and the complete list of speakers announced so far.



Cricket World Cup 2027: Beyond the Stadium, a Tourism Legacy Begins

The 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup is more than a world-class sporting event, it is a global invitation to discover the beauty, culture and unforgettable experiences of Southern Africa.

As South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia prepare to co-host one of the world's biggest sporting tournaments, millions of visitors are expected to travel to the region, creating an unprecedented opportunity to showcase world-class tourism experiences, breathtaking landscapes, vibrant cultures and warm hospitality.

But the story extends far beyond the stadium. The tournament presents a unique opportunity to encourage visitors to explore destinations

beyond the match venues, extending their stay and experiencing everything Southern Africa has to offer, from wildlife safaris and scenic coastlines to cultural heritage, gastronomy and adventure tourism. While cricket will bring the world together, tourism will ensure visitors leave with memories that last long after the final ball has been bowled.

As part of the countdown to the tournament, South African Tourism together with Cricket South Africa, Cricket Namibia and Cricket Zimbabwe will host the Destination Readiness Update, themed "Where Joy Meets the Game." The event will bring together media, tourism stakeholders, government representative and cricket partners to unveil how the 2027 ICC

Men's Cricket World Cup will be leveraged as a powerful destination marketing platform, driving travel, economic growth and a lasting tourism legacy for South Africa and the region.

The Destination Readiness Update comes ahead of the World Cup Local Organising Committee's (LOC) announcement of the host cities and provinces, marking an important milestone in preparations for the tournament and highlighting the opportunities it will create for tourism, business, and communities across Southern Africa.

Celebrating Cricket. Inspiring Travel. Growing South Africa through Tourism.



LATAM Launches Direct Cape Town to São Paulo Route

Latam Airlines launched its direct flight between Cape Town and São Paulo, marking a significant expansion of air connectivity between South Africa and Latin America. The route is expected to support tourism growth, facilitate trade and investment, and strengthen South Africa's position as a gateway to Africa.

This three-times-weekly service between Cape Town International Airport and São Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport is operated by a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner with 30 business class and 270 economy seats.

Speaking at the event, Tourism Minister Patricia de Lille said the new service reflected growing confidence in South Africa's tourism market and aligned with the Tourism Route Development Marketing Plan (TRDMP). The Chief Quality Assurance Officer, Bronwen Auret was proud to be part of the team in Cape Town that welcomed the inaugural flight.





Stakeholders Experience Johannesburg at 702 Walk the Talk

South African Tourism joined thousands of participants at this year's 702 Walk the Talk, using the occasion to engage with industry stakeholders while celebrating one of Johannesburg's most iconic community events.

The event provided an opportunity to experience the city's vibrant atmosphere, connect with partners, and showcase the diverse tourism experiences that make Johannesburg a destination worth exploring. From its

rich cultural heritage to its dynamic neighbourhoods and hospitality offering, the walk highlighted the value of experiencing the city beyond its well-known attractions.

As part of the programme, stakeholders enjoyed the hospitality of Disoufeng Pub & Restaurant, a 3-star Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) quality-assured establishment, offering an authentic township tourism experience that reflects the warmth, quality, and diversity of South Africa's

tourism sector.

Initiatives such as Walk the Talk demonstrate how tourism, community events, and industry collaboration can come together to strengthen stakeholder relationships, encourage local travel, and showcase the unique experiences that continue to position South Africa as a destination of choice.



SAACI Calls SA's Business Events Industry to the Here and Now

The South African business events industry is currently gathered at The Capital Zimballi in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, for the SAACI National Annual Conference 2026, taking place from 26–28 July under the theme “Here and Now – This Industry. This Moment. No Waiting.”

The conference is attended by leading voices from across the meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) sector to engage on the realities shaping the industry and explore the opportunities that lie ahead. From professional conference organisers and venues to destination marketing organisations, convention bureaux, suppliers, tourism leaders, and public sector stakeholders, the event is creating a platform for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and action.

This year’s theme: Here And Now – This Industry. This Moment. No Waiting. SAACI is challenging delegates to focus on what can be achieved now and to collectively shape the future of

business events.

The programme features influential voices from across business, tourism, and industry, with discussions focusing on leadership, competitiveness, destination growth, sustainability, and the changing needs of the global meetings market.

Beyond the formal sessions, delegates are experiencing opportunities to connect, network, and showcase KwaZulu-Natal as a leading business events destination through curated experiences and engagements designed to strengthen industry relationships. A highlight of the conference will be the Enkulu Awards, which will celebrate excellence and recognise the individuals and organisations making a significant contribution to South Africa’s business events sector.

The conference is supported by key industry partners, including the KZN Tourism and Film Authority,

Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, Southern Sun, Durban Tourism, Snapsight, Brand Burst, Barmotion, and Gearhouse SA, whose collaboration continues to strengthen the growth and resilience of the sector.

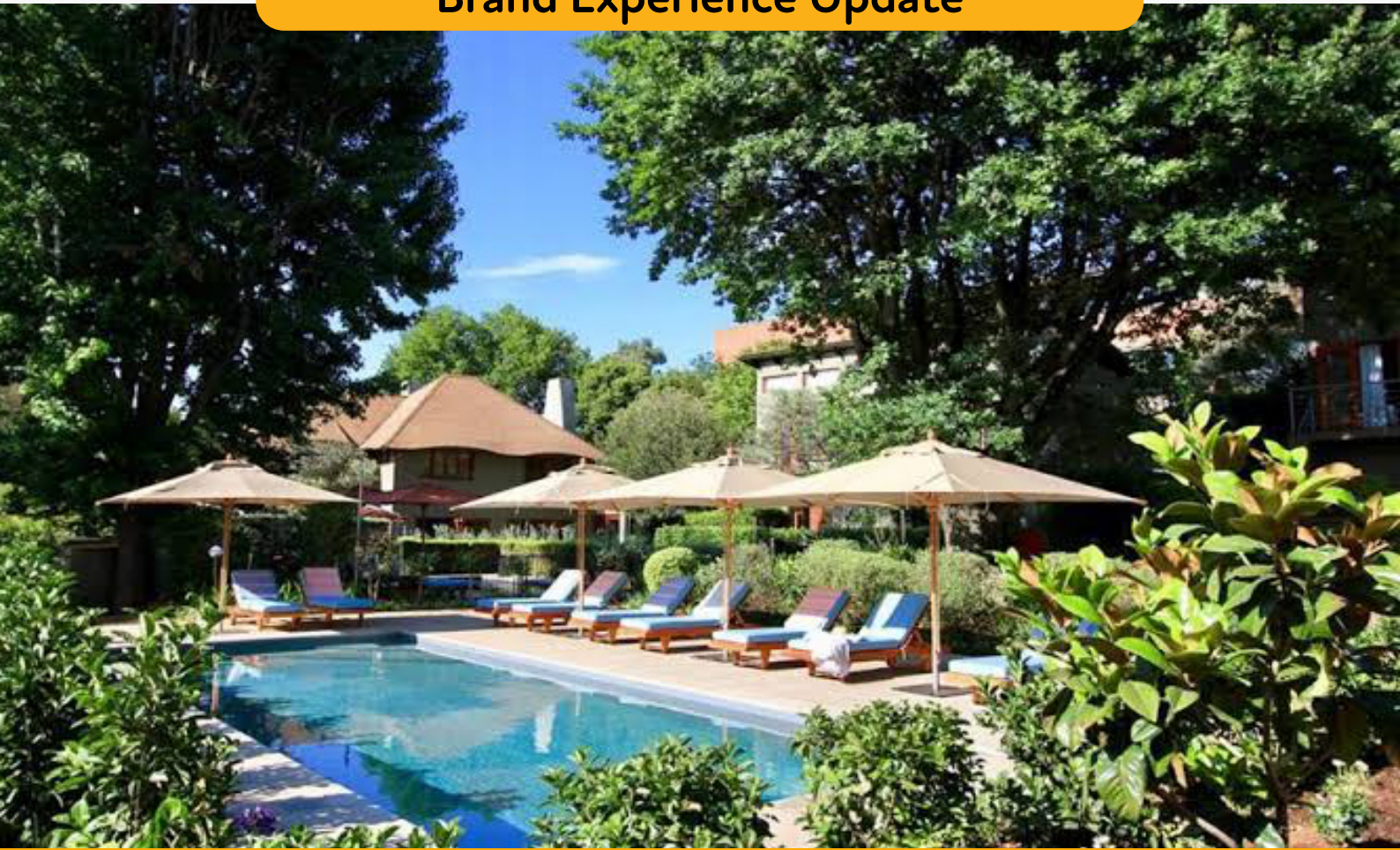
As conversations continue in Durban, one message is clear: the future of business events will not be shaped by waiting for the perfect moment. It will be shaped by the people who are present, engaged, and taking action here and now.





TOURISM GRADING COUNCIL SA

TGCSA CORNER



The Peech Boutique Hotel in Melrose, Johannesburg, Gauteng

Congratulations to the SA Tourism Team

Congratulations to Arlene Pienaar, leading South African Tourism, on receiving a Gold Award at the International Tourism Film Festival Africa (ITFFA) 2026.

South African Tourism was recognised by the festival's independent jury for its outstanding production “SAT Sustainability Story – The Peech”. The award celebrates excellence in tourism storytelling and highlights the power of authentic, purpose-driven content in showcasing South Africa's commitment to sustainable tourism.

Through the story of The Peech Hotel, the production demonstrates how South Africa's tourism establishments are translating sustainability principles into meaningful action.

The Peech Hotel describes its approach as one that seeks to “minimise our impact on the environment and maximise our positive impact on our local community.” Its vision combines contemporary design with what it calls “sustainable soul and family-led hospitality.”

This achievement reflects creativity, dedication and

commitment to telling meaningful stories that inspire travellers and strengthen South African Tourism's sustainability narrative.

[Click here](#) to view the winning video.



JULY 2026

Benchmark Properties

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

Benchmark Properties are accommodation establishments that have been specially selected by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) Property Approvals Committee because they offer an exceptional visitor experience. Selection is based on the overall quality and uniqueness of the property, rather than its star grading or type of establishment.



The Tin Roof

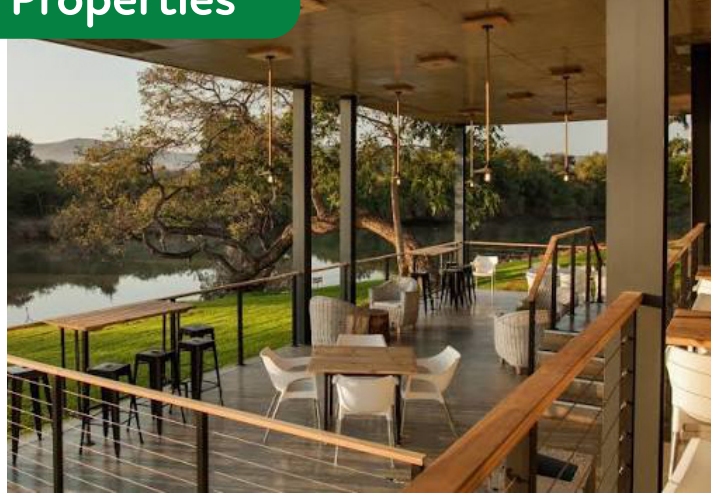
Location: Malmesbury, Western Cape

Originally built in the late 1800s and lovingly restored to capture the elegance and glamour of the 1920s, The Tin Roof is a heritage boutique guest house set within walking distance of the Riebeeck Kasteel village centre in the heart of the Riebeeck Valley. Each of its individually styled rooms draws inspiration from iconic historical figures, from Josephine Baker to Theodore and Eleanor Roosevelt, weaving Art Deco design, vintage detail and modern comfort into a stay steeped in South African character.

Contact: Email: manager@thetinroofriebeek.co.za, call: +27 82 559 6489, or visit: thetinroofriebeek.co.za.



Benchmark Properties



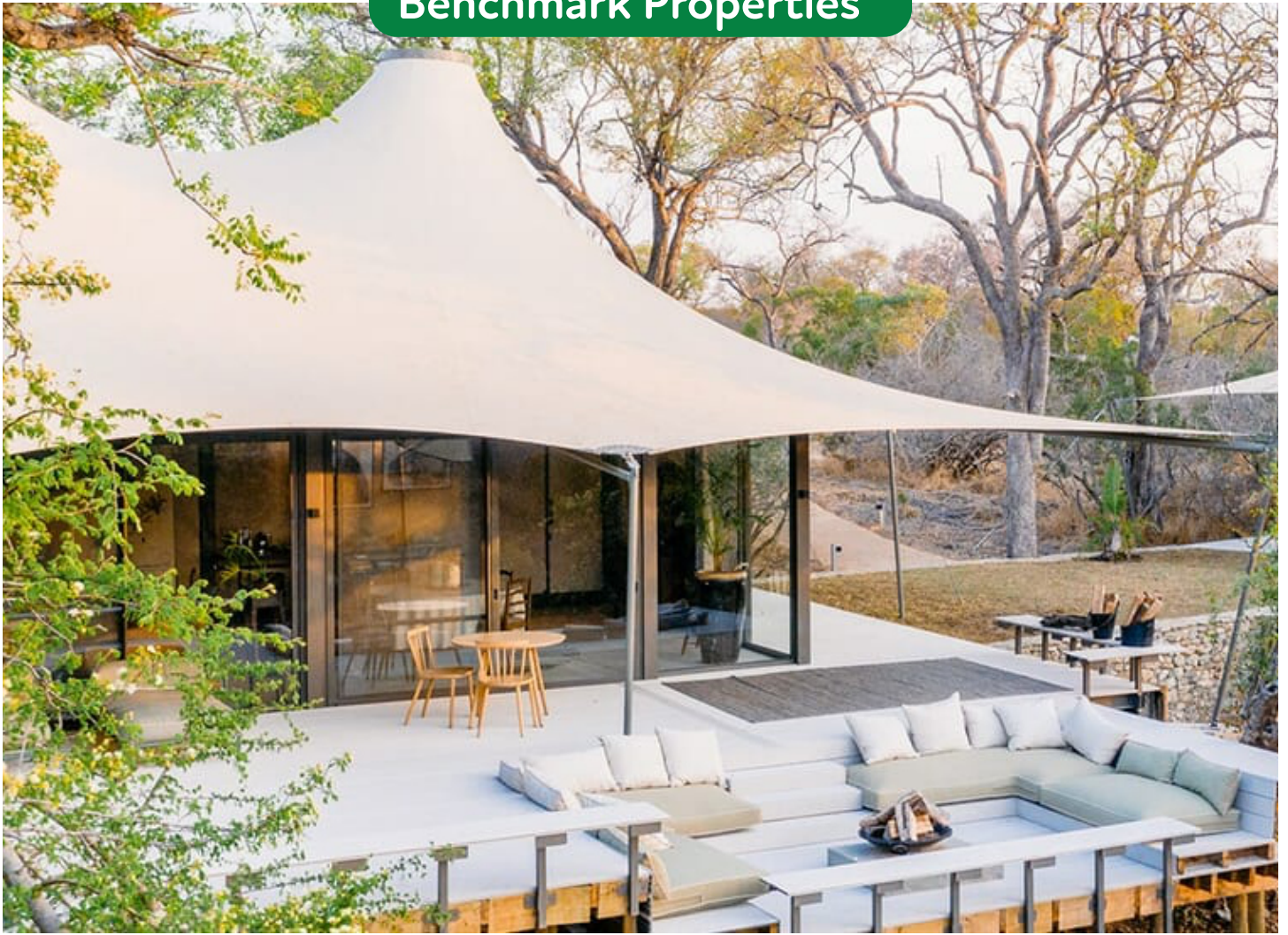
Letaba Junction

Location: Letsitele, Limpopo

First established as a Boereclub in 1954, Letaba Junction is a multi-level lodge and restaurant perched on the banks of the Letaba River in the Valley of the Olifants, where guests can watch hippos and crocodiles from the comfort of their private patios. The property offers a range of accommodation from standard rooms to luxury suites, complemented by an on-site restaurant, sports bar, tennis courts and conference facilities that make it equally well suited to business travellers, families and Limpopo road-trippers.

Contact: Email: alfieviljoen@live.com or christelviljoen@live.co.za, call: +27 15 004 0873, or visit: letabajunction.co.za.

Benchmark Properties



Thornybush Saseka Tented Camp

Location: Thornybush Game Reserve, Hoedspruit, Limpopo

The jewel of the Thornybush Collection, Saseka, meaning "beautiful" in Tsonga, is a five-star tented camp positioned along the seasonal Monwana riverbed within the Big Five Thornybush Nature Reserve adjacent to the Greater Kruger National Park. Eight luxurious tented suites, each with a private deck, plunge pool and outdoor shower, sit alongside Little Saseka, a two-bedroom villa for families or small groups, with twice-daily game drives, in-room spa treatments through Thornybush Amani Spa and bush breakfasts rounding out the immersive safari experience.

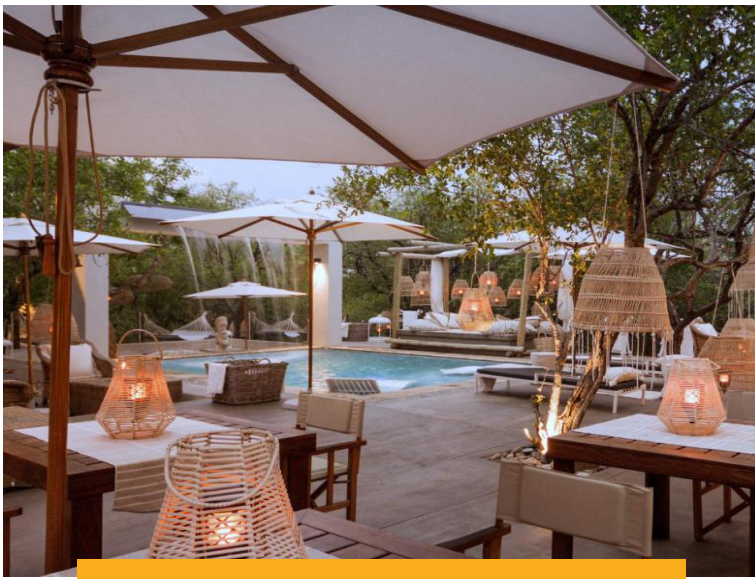
Contact: Email: enquire@thornybush.com, call: +27 11 253 6500, or visit: thornybush.com.

JULY 2026

Premium Properties

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

The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa's 5-star premium classification represents the highest level of luxury accommodation in the country. This special designation distinguishes exceptional establishments from standard 5-star venues, awarded only to places offering outstanding quality, personalised service, and memorable experiences.

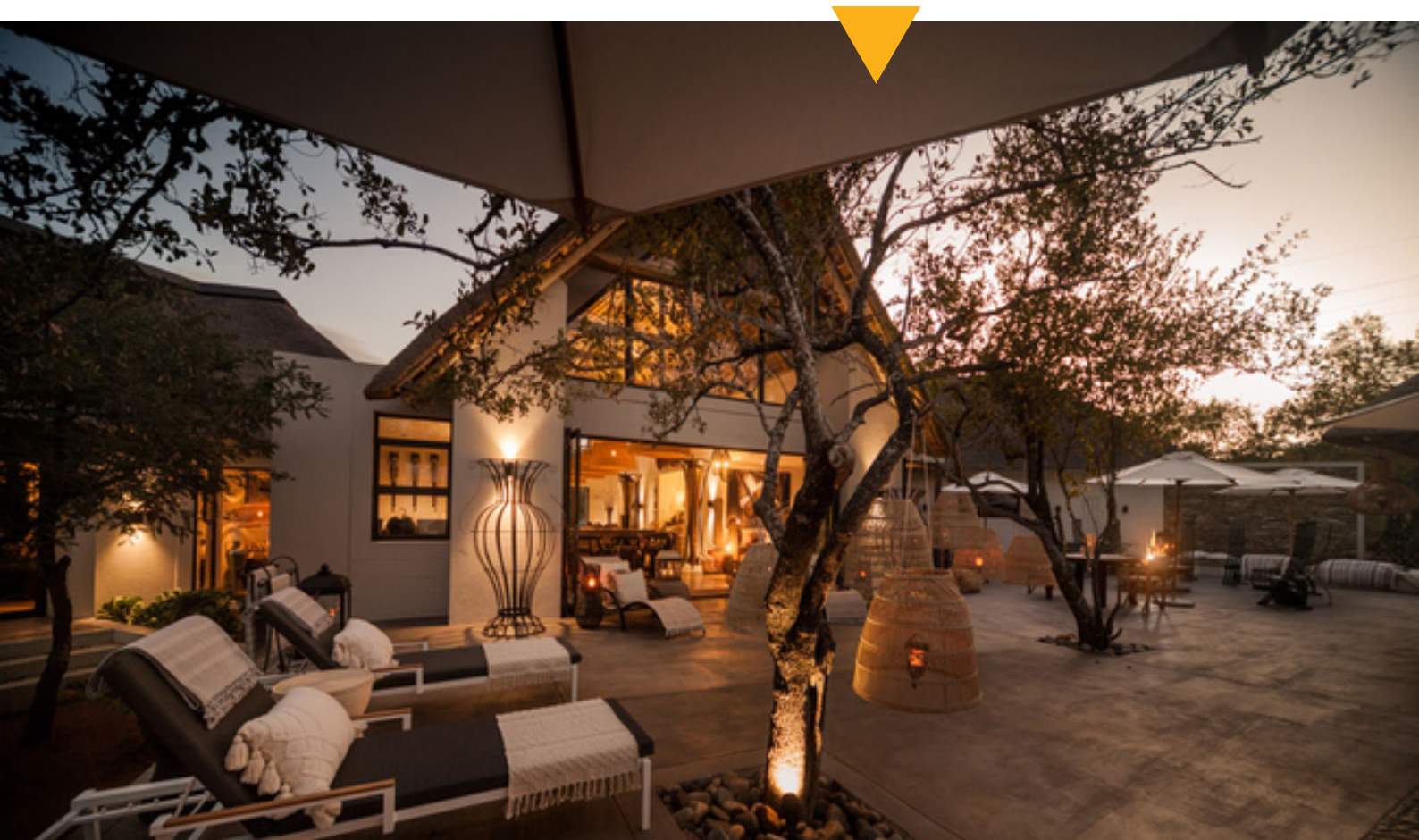


African Flair Boutique Safair Lodge

Location: Hoedspruit, Limpopo

Tucked into the bushveld outskirts of Hoedspruit, African Flair Boutique Safari Lodge offers a truly exclusive concept, welcoming just one couple per night and letting them enjoy the entire property in absolute privacy. Guests unwind in intimate, richly styled spaces complemented by an outdoor pool, on-site spa treatments, a wine tasting room and airport shuttle service, making it a bespoke base for honeymoons, romantic escapes and special celebrations within easy reach of the Blyde River Canyon and the Greater Kruger.

Contact: Email: reservations@africanflairsafarilodge.com, call: +27 82 878 6054, or visit: africanflairsafarilodge.com.



Upcoming Events



**Cricket World Cup
Destination
Readiness Update**
Date To Be Confirmed
Venue To Be Confirmed



Women's Day
9 August 2026
Nationwide



**Tourism Month
Media Launch**
14 August 2026
Venue To Be Confirmed



**Amplifying 32 Years of
Magic at SAMA32**
**South African Music
Awards (SAMAs)**
15 August 2026
Sun City Resort,
North West



**Tshwane Tourism
Awards 2026**
22 August 2026
Venue To Be Confirmed



**African Tourism
Leadership
Conference**
2 - 4 September 2026
Meropa Casino
Entertainment World,
Limpopo



Heritage Day
24 September 2026
Nationwide



World Tourism Day
27 September 2026
Global



TBCSA Conference
27 & 28 October 2026
Sun City Resort,
North West



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