

TOURISM TUESDAYS

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#TourismTuesdays

OCTOBER 2026 EDITION

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Tourism Tuesdays is a publication of South African Tourism



South Africa

Inspiring new ways



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the
October edition of the
Tourism Tuesdays Newsletter.

South Africa's arts, culture and cuisine remain powerful destination assets, showcasing the creativity, heritage and experiences that make our country unique.

In this edition, we celebrate the 2026 Gastronomy Tourism Awards, reflect on the Loeries Awards and the What We Know Red Bull series in partnership with South African Tourism, and explore how creativity and storytelling inspire travel and shape destination perceptions.

We also highlight South African Tourism's participation in the Magical Kenya Travel Expo 2026, strengthening regional partnerships, expanding market access and creating opportunities for South African tourism businesses across Africa.

Turning destination appeal into sustainable growth requires investment. The South African Tourism Infrastructure Investment Summit showcased 15 bankable projects valued at R3.5 billion. Spanning accommodation, conference facilities and major destination developments, these projects demonstrate tourism's ability to attract capital, create employment, expand the country's tourism offering and stimulate economic activity.

As the summer season approaches, we highlight efforts to strengthen the visitor experience through warm and welcoming service, environmental stewardship, inclusive tourism and destination preparedness.

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa's Leadership Conference recently took place in Sun City in the North-West Province. This event gathered various industry stakeholders driving

the importance of collaboration in creating a competitive, responsible and visitor-ready destination geared for growth.

This edition also features the Bidding Impact Report, showcasing how the South African National Convention Bureau helps secure business events that contribute to the economy, support jobs and bring international delegates to our shores.

Looking ahead to February 2027, Meetings Africa enters a new chapter following its 20th-anniversary celebrations earlier this year. Under the positioning *Unlocking Growth That Transforms Africa*, the platform will continue to champion African businesses, strengthen partnerships and connect the continent to the global business events industry. With registration now open, exhibitors, buyers, visitors and media professionals are invited to help shape its next chapter.

We close with our regular Tourism Grading Council of South Africa Corner, featuring Benchmark Properties and the Five-Star Premium Awards recognising the people, establishments and experiences that continue to raise the standard of South African tourism.

As we prepare to welcome travellers over the summer season, may these stories inspire the tourism trade to create exceptional experiences and the media to continue sharing the richness, energy and possibility of South Africa with the world.

Happy reading and here's to a vibrant and successful summer season.

The Tourism Tuesday Editorial Team



Meetings Africa

Unlocking Growth That Transforms Africa:

Applications are now open for Meetings Africa 2027, inviting exhibitors, buyers, visitors and media professionals to be part of the next chapter.



Meetings Africa 2027 will take place at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, with BONDday on 22 February, followed by the trade show on 23 and 24 February 2027.

As the countdown begins, the invitation is clear: be part of the connections, collaborations and opportunities that will help shape the future of Africa's business events industry.



[Click here](#) to register or apply.





Tourism leaders call for closer collaboration between sport and tourism.

South Africa's tourism and sport sectors must plan, bid and market together if the country is to win more major events and the visitors who follow them. That was the shared view of tourism leaders at Sport Business Forum 2026, speaking on the panel Host, Attract, Grow: Can sport become one of Africa's great tourism engines? in Johannesburg on 14 October.

Panellists argued that events are too often treated as stand-alone projects

rather than as part of a national destination strategy. There is greater need for a stronger collaboration between tourism and sport to fully maximise the sport tourism opportunity, tells Sithembile Ndaba, Chief Marketing Officer of South Africa Tourism.

This perspective was echoed by Jerry Mabena, Chair of Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA). Mabena had a word of advice for the sports: Your impact and influence will be significantly enhanced by a formation

of a united singular industry body that speaks and represents all sport's ecosystem stakeholders, he told the forum. The panel also discussed how major events can lengthen visitor stays, spread spending beyond host cities and showcase South Africa to new markets. "Every major event is a tourism campaign in disguise," said Sgwili Gumede, Convenor of Sport Business Forum 2026. "When sport and tourism plan together — from the bid to the fan's flight home — South Africa wins more events and keeps more of the value they create."



Patricia De Lille: Minister of Tourism

South African Tourism Infrastructure Investment Summit drives investment in Tourism Infrastructure.

By Phathu Luvhengo

The natural arch in the Eastern Cape located at the mouth of the Mpako River, reachable by foot just off the beach has a huge investment opportunity of R315 million. The Hole-in-the-Wall Resort near Coffee is a development that includes a 4-star hotel with 100 rooms, day visitor facilities, which include indoor dining facilities, bar area, boma and swimming pool, a 500-seater conference facility including a restaurant, lounge, health spa and fitness centre.

This is one of 15 bankable projects that were showcased during this year's South African Tourism Infrastructure Investment Summit (SATIS) under the theme: "Invest in Tourism Infrastructure. Invest in Growth."

Officially opened by Minister of the Department of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, the stakeholders engaged in robust discussions about investing in tourism in the country.

The summit brought together government, project owners, investors

and financiers to mobilise capital for investment ready projects and accelerate implementation.

"We started with eight bankable projects valued at R1 billion and the pipeline has now grown to 15 projects valued at R3,5 billion, three projects already secured funding commitments," said Minister De Lille.

She said the Department of Tourism has established a Tourism Infrastructure Facilitation Unit specifically to help remove barriers faced by investors and to assist in moving priority projects



towards implementation.

The Department further strengthened this capacity through a three-year Memorandum of Agreement with Infrastructure South Africa and improved access to finance through institutions such as the Industrial Development Corporation.

“We are already seeing what investor confidence can produce. The recently

opened Club Med Beach & Safari Resort in KwaZulu-Natal represents an investment of more than R2 billion, adding significant tourism capacity while demonstrating confidence in the long-term prospects of the South African visitor economy,” she said. The construction of the R1,5 billion Oceans Umhlanga North Tower is at an advanced stage while in the Western Cape, the V&A Waterfront is investing R24 billion into the expansion of

Granger Bay with the R8 billion Cape Winelands Airport development taking shape.

Investment in tourism infrastructure offers investors numerous returns as this is a growing sector in a country with endless experiences and a strong enabling environment for investment.

Tourism infrastructure investment has the potential to drive economic growth, create jobs and expand opportunities across the country. By connecting bankable projects with investors and financiers, the Department aims to accelerate project implementation and strengthen the tourism sector. **TT**



Makhotsa Sotyu: Deputy Minister of Tourism



SCAN QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION

on the 15 bankable tourism infrastructure projects showcased at the Summit.





South African Tourism strengthens East African partnerships at Magical Kenya Travel Expo 2026

South African Tourism strengthened its presence in the East African market through its participation in the 16th Magical Kenya Travel Expo (MKTE), held in Nairobi from 6 to 8 October 2026, leading a delegation of 20 South African tourism businesses to showcase the country's diverse tourism offerings and unlock new opportunities for trade and collaboration.

The participation comes amid positive growth in travel from Kenya to South Africa. Between January and August 2026, South Africa welcomed 36,497 Kenyan visitors, representing a 7.7% increase compared with the same period in 2025. This growth reinforces Kenya's importance as a source market and highlights the potential to further strengthen travel between the two countries.

In partnership with the South African National Convention Bureau (SANCB), South African Tourism used the platform to promote the country's leisure tourism experiences and business events offering, while strengthening relationships with travel trade partners and buyers who influence travel decisions across East Africa.

A key focus of this year's participation was transformation through market access. Of the 20 South African tourism businesses represented at the expo, 14 were micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), accounting for 70% of the delegation. This represented a 40% increase in MSME participation by number compared with 2025, demonstrating South African Tourism's commitment to creating opportunities for smaller and emerging businesses to access regional markets.

"The expo provided an important opportunity to translate growing interest in South Africa into tangible commercial opportunities for the tourism industry", said Evelyn Mahlaba, Regional General Manager: Africa at South African Tourism.

"Kenya is showing positive year-to-date growth, and that creates a real opportunity for our tourism businesses. Our goal is to convert interest in South Africa into stronger distribution, more bookable tourism products and sustainable business opportunities for tourism businesses across our country," said Mahlaba. 



Click here to read the full article.



South Africa's Culinary Stars Shine at the 2026 gastronomy Tourism Awards



Best in Gastronomy Tourism: Fine & Casual Dining. Winner: Kruger Shalati, led by Executive Chef Vusi Mbatha.

Left to Right: Lance Gibbons (Gastronomy Africa CEO), Chef Vusi Mbatha (Exec Chef, Kruger Shalati), Sithembile Ndaba (SA Tourism CMO), Ismail Dockrat (SA Tourism ACEO)

South Africa's rich food culture is strengthening its appeal as a tourism destination, with the 2026 Gastronomy Tourism Awards celebrating five winners showcasing the country's culinary creativity, heritage and sustainability.

Presented by Gastronomy Africa and South African Tourism, the awards were announced on 19 October at Breakers Resort in uMhlanga, KwaZulu-Natal, during the Gastronomy Africa Conference & Expo 2026.

Commenting on the award, the Kruger Shalati team remarked:

"This award is a wonderful recognition of Chef Vusi's talent and dedication, as well as the hard work and heart that our entire culinary team brings to the table each day. Congratulations Chef Vusi, and to our wonderful kitchen team. This is a moment to celebrate together."



The awards highlight how gastronomy tourism connects visitors with South Africa's people, traditions and destinations while creating opportunities for local producers, chefs, farmers and hospitality businesses.

South African Tourism's Chief Marketing Officer, Sithembile Ndaba, emphasised food's role in sharing the country's cultural identity and encouraging international visitors to explore its diverse culinary offering. From traditional food markets and

Stephen Maritz of the Qambathi Mountain Lodge who won the Sustainability award said:

"We believe that luxury and sustainability should go hand in hand, and that thoughtful hospitality should leave a positive impact on the place we call home. A huge thank you to our wonderful team"



Best in Gastronomy Tourism: Sustainability. Winner: Nadia and Stephen Maritz, Qambathi Mountain Lodge.
Left to Right: Lance Gibbons (Gastronomy Africa CEO), Stephen Maritz (Owner, Qambathi Mountain Lodge), Sithembile Ndaba (SA Tourism CMO), Ismail Dockrat (SA Tourism ACEO)

MEET THE 2026 WINNERS:

- **FINE AND CASUAL DINING:** Kruger Shalati, led by Executive Chef Vusi Mbatha, for its distinctive dining experience in the Kruger National Park.
- **IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES:** Executive Chef Gregory Henderson and de Tafel at Palm House Boutique Hotel & Spa, for connecting diners with the Cape's indigenous flora through foraging and storytelling.
- **CULTURAL DINING:** Chef Xolani Zibane (Chef Lani), founder of Ibhodwe Shandis, for reimagining South African culinary traditions.
- **SUSTAINABILITY:** Nadia and Stephen Maritz of Qambathi Mountain Lodge, for local sourcing and community development in KwaZulu-Natal's Kamberg Valley.
- **WINE BRAND:** The Chocolate Block by Boekenhouts-kloof Winery, for showcasing South African winemaking to international audiences.

township eateries to fine-dining restaurants and wine estates, South Africa's culinary experiences complement its established tourism attractions, encouraging visitors to explore more destinations and support local economies.

Through gastronomy tourism, South Africa invites the world to discover its culture, heritage and hospitality, one plate at a time. 



Thandiwe Mathibela GM: Global PR & Comms and Stakeholder Relations, SA Tourism

Culture Is the New Gold:

South African Tourism Partners with the Loeries to Showcase the Country's Creative Soul

In a country as culturally rich and diverse as South Africa, tourism is about more than landscapes, wildlife and iconic landmarks. It is also about the sounds, flavours, fashion, people and creative expressions that bring destinations to life.

Recognising the power of these cultural

assets, South African Tourism partnered with the 2026 Loeries Awards, using the platform to explore how creativity can unlock new opportunities for destination marketing and showcase the country in all its diversity.

At the heart of the partnership was the South African Tourism MasterClass, themed "Culture Is the New Gold".

The session challenged the traditional ways of thinking about destination promotion, highlighting the value of the creative arts in telling more compelling, authentic and contemporary South African stories.

From the global influence of South African music to the evolution of local fashion, the energy of its nightlife, the



On the left: Bheki Dube, founder and CEO of CURIOCITY.

On the right: Thandiwe Mathibela GM: Global PR & Comms and Stakeholder Relations, SA Tourism

richness of its gastronomy and the vibrancy of its artistic communities, the country offers a wealth of experiences that can inspire travellers to look beyond the familiar. These cultural touchpoints are not simply entertainment; they are powerful invitations to discover the places, communities and experiences that make South Africa unique.

Music, for example, has become an international ambassador for South African culture, carrying the sounds of amapiano and other homegrown genres across borders. Fashion and design reflect the country's layered identities, heritage and innovation, while its food scene offers a journey through regional traditions, contemporary culinary creativity and the stories

behind every plate. From bustling urban neighbourhoods and celebrated cultural districts to small towns, villages and lesser-known destinations, creativity provides a way to connect these experiences to the places where they originate.

South African Tourism is using this opportunity to broaden destination storytelling and inspire travellers through the things that move them emotionally and culturally. By working with artists, musicians, designers, chefs, filmmakers and other creative practitioners, tourism marketing can become more immersive, relevant and reflective of the country's lived experiences.

The partnership with the Loeries

also created a meeting point between destination marketing and the creative industry, encouraging collaboration with the people who understand how to turn ideas, identities and experiences into influential stories. It reinforced the importance of thinking beyond conventional tourism advertising and embracing creative approaches that resonate with contemporary audiences.

Through its partnership with the Loeries, South African Tourism is championing a vision of destination marketing in which creativity is not an accessory to tourism, but a strategic asset. By placing South Africa's cultural expression at the centre of its storytelling, the country is strengthening its global appeal, create new pathways for collaboration and inspire travellers to come find their joy. TT



TBCSA TOURISM LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

27-28 OCTOBER 2026

SUN CITY, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

TBCSA Tourism Leadership Conference 2026

30 Years On Tourism Still Matters

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) is hosting its 2026 Tourism Leadership Conference from 27 to 28 October at Sun City, North West, bringing together more than 400 leaders from government, business and the tourism industry.

Held under the theme “30 Years On: Tourism Still Matters”, the conference marks three decades of TBCSA's contribution to South Africa's tourism sector, while examining the opportunities, challenges and partnerships needed to drive future growth.

The programme will feature leading local and international voices, with discussions spanning tourism investment, economic growth, infrastructure, destination competitiveness and the role of public-private partnerships in building a more inclusive tourism economy.

SA Tourism is participating in the conference today, 27 October, with Chief Strategy Officer Siyabonga Mthethwa sharing insights into global leisure travel trends, evolving source markets and South Africa's competitive position as a tourism destination.

SA Tourism Chief Marketing Officer Sithembile Ndaba is also speaking today, focusing on South Africa's destination brand and international perceptions, and exploring how market intelligence can inform strategies to strengthen the country's global appeal.

The conference will also create opportunities for emerging tourism entrepreneurs and youth-owned businesses to engage with industry leaders, reinforcing the importance of transformation and sustainable growth. IT

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON THE EVENT:**



[Click here](#) to register or apply.



Strengthening South Africa's Visitor Experience Through Welcome, Quality and Inclusive Tourism

From nature reserves and coastal attractions to major tourism precincts, South Africa's visitor experience depends on making every visitor feel welcome, safe and valued. In October, South African Tourism's Visitor Experience team strengthened its Welcome Programme through partnerships focused on destination readiness, service excellence and inclusivity ahead of the festive season.

Strengthening Frontline Service Through CapeNature Partnership

Cape Nature, which manages 112 nature reserves across 31 reserve complexes in the Western Cape, plays an important role in biodiversity conservation and the province's tourism offering. In October 2026, South African Tourism's Visitor Experience team partnered with CapeNature for the first time to strengthen visitor service ahead of the festive season. Welcome Programme training was delivered to frontline staff at Stony Point Nature Reserve in Betty's Bay on 5 October, followed by training for CapeNature contact centre staff on 6 October. This collaboration supports CapeNature's seasonal readiness and reinforces a welcoming, quality visitor experience.



V&A Waterfront Collaboration Strengthens Festive Season Readiness

As one of South Africa's leading visitor attractions, the V&A Waterfront plays a key role in welcoming travellers during the peak summer season. The 123-hectare precinct attracts up to 100,000 visitors daily during peak summer, with more than three million visitors over the broader December holiday period.

On 7 October 2026, South African Tourism's Visitor Experience team partnered with the V&A Waterfront on a seasonal readiness initiative to prepare for the busy festive period. The collaboration included Welcome Programme training for 35 staff from the precinct's attractions, tourism experiences and frontline teams, strengthening their capacity to deliver a warm, welcoming and quality experience for visitors.



Improving Coastal Accessibility Through The Living Coast

On 6 October 2026, the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), in collaboration with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), Blind South Africa, CapeNature, Overstrand Municipality, UNICEF and the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD), launched *The Living Coast* prototype signage.

Designed to make the coastline more accessible and inclusive, the signs incorporate Braille, audio and digital guides featuring subtitles, environmental information and citizen science content in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. This initiative supports South Africa's broader destination readiness efforts by helping visitors with different accessibility needs engage with and experience the country's coastal attractions more independently.

Promoting Quality Coastal Experiences Through Blue Flag and Green Coast

On 8 October 2026, South African Tourism's Visitor Experience team participated in the annual Blue Flag and Green Coast Awards adjudication in collaboration with the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA). This year marked 25 years of the Blue Flag programme in South Africa, with Grotto Beach achieving the milestone of 25 consecutive years in the programme.

The awards recognised 50 full Blue Flag beaches, 20 pilot beach sites, seven tourism boats, five marinas and 19 WESSA Green Coast sites.

These programmes promote environmental management, safety, accessibility, education and continuous improvement across coastal destinations. The collaboration supports South Africa's positioning as a quality-assured tourism destination, while

encouraging sustainable practices and positive visitor experiences along the country's coastline.

CapeNature also achieved Green Coast Status for Walker Bay Nature Reserve and won the annual WESSA Corporate Award, which recognises the entity's outstanding and sustained contribution to biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism, community development, and environmental education.

SA world champion

Thomas van Tonder takes on over 600 monkey bars beneath Africa's highest bridge

Thomas van Tonder completes a 600-bar crossing beneath Africa's highest bridge in 47 minutes and 37 seconds, showcasing the extraordinary experiences waiting for visitors in South Africa.

South African obstacle course racing world champion Thomas van Tonder has made history by becoming the first person to cross the arch of Bloukrans Bridge using a suspended monkey-bar course, completing the extraordinary 280-metre crossing in 47 minutes and 37 seconds.

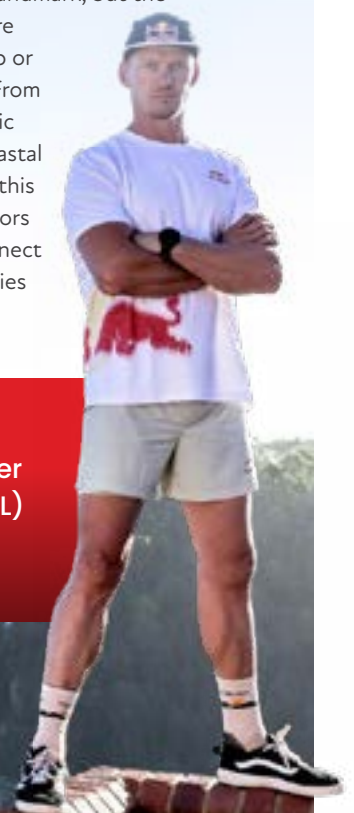
The feat, achieved on 26 October, saw van Tonder navigate more than 600 monkey bars suspended beneath the bridge, climbing its steep 45-degree incline, traversing the crown of the arch and descending the other side using only his hands.

While the achievement marks a remarkable moment in South African sporting and adventure history, it also puts the dramatic landscapes of Tsitsikamma and the Garden Route before a global audience, reinforcing South Africa's appeal as a destination for extraordinary experiences, adventure and natural beauty.

South African Tourism collaborated on Red Bull Bridge Bars as part of its ongoing efforts to showcase the country's diverse tourism offering and inspire travellers to discover South Africa beyond its well-known attractions.

"South Africa has extraordinary stories to tell, and this achievement is a powerful example of how our people, places and experiences can capture the world's imagination," says Sithembile Ndaba, Chief Marketing Officer at South African Tourism.

"Bloukrans Bridge is an iconic landmark, but the destination offers so much more than the adrenaline of the jump or the spectacle of this crossing. From the ancient forests and dramatic gorges of Tsitsikamma to its coastal trails and outdoor adventures, this part of the country invites visitors to slow down, explore and connect with the people and communities who make it special." 



READ THE FULL ARTICLE:

SA world champion Thomas van Tonder takes on over 600 monkey bars beneath Africa's highest bridge (GL)



[Click here](#) to read the full article.



TOURISM GRADING COUNCIL SA

TGCSA CORNER

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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.



Altissimo Symphony Guest House

Location: Bloemfontein, Free State

On the outskirts of Bloemfontein, overlooking the tranquil Lilyvale Valley, Altissimo (Italian for the highest notes in music) is a four-star guest house with rooms inspired by great composers. Guests can enjoy an on-site art gallery, spa services, braai facilities and a cosy coffee shop. Bram Fischer International Airport, the Free State National Botanical Garden and Bloemfontein's cultural attractions are all within easy reach.

Contact details

✉ info@altissimo.co.za ☎ +27 51 001 0046

🌐 facebook.com/AltissimoGuesthouse



Benchmark Properties



4Aces Safari Outfitters

Location: Kimberly, Northern Cape

Located on 50,000 acres of privately owned land, around 30 kilometres from Kimberley, 4Aces Safari Outfitters is a family-run lodge in the heart of the Northern Cape. Guests can enjoy world-class rifle and bow hunting, fine dining and warm hospitality. The main lodge includes an infinity pool, bar, waterhole patio and silver-service dining. It is also home to Spitskop Day Spa, the Northern Cape's only luxury wellness retreat, offering professional aesthetic therapies.

Contact details

✉ manager@4acesoutfitters.com ☎ +27 63 330 6084, 🌐 4acesoutfitters.com



17 On Cedar Guesthouse

Location: Durbanville, Western Cape

Nestled in the leafy Durbanville Hills, 17 on Cedar is a refined four-star boutique guesthouse that brings together timeless elegance, thoughtful design, and warm hospitality. It offers a peaceful retreat for business and leisure travellers, with the Durbanville Wine Valley and Cape Town's Northern Suburbs nearby, and convenient access to Cape Town International Airport, the city centre, and the wider attractions of the Cape.

Contact details

✉ info@17oncedar.co.za ☎ +27 76 028 1720
🌐 17oncedar.co.za

Benchmark Properties



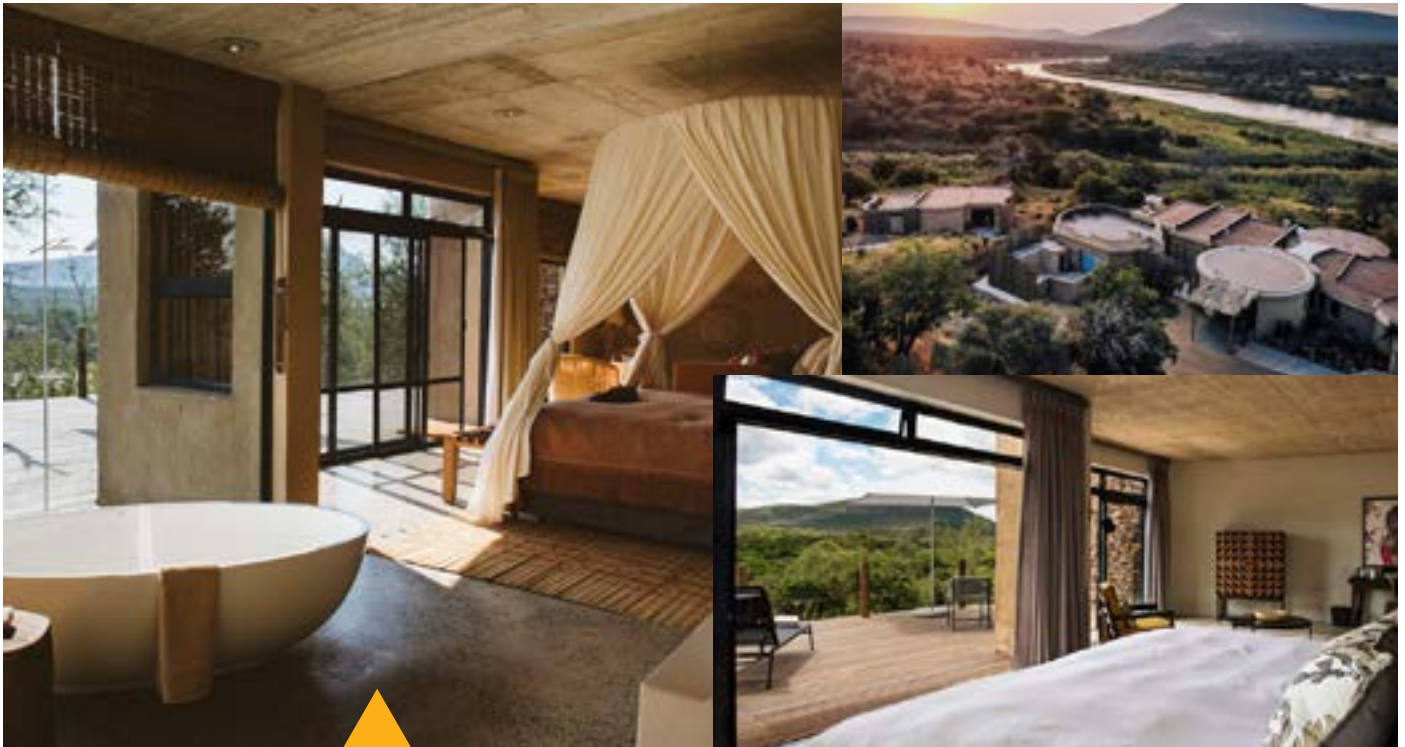
Mavela Game Lodge

Location: Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal

Located in Zululand's 23,000-hectare Big Five Manyoni Private Game Reserve, family-owned Mavela Game Lodge is an all-inclusive, five-star tented camp with views over a secluded valley in the Mkuze Valley Lowveld. Its seven luxury safari tents are arranged around a thatched, two-storey main lodge, with an upstairs bar, infinity pool, and dining deck. Professional guides lead game drives and walking safaris twice daily.

Contact details

✉ reservations@mavela.co.za ☎ +27 35 940 0996
🌐 mavela.co.za



Mthembu Lodge

Location: Hluhluwe, KwaZulu-Natal

Nestled on the embankment of the White iMfolozi River in the mFulaWozi Wilderness, bordering Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park, Mthembu Lodge is an off-grid Big Five retreat, built stone by stone by members of the Mthembu clan. It offers seven one-bedroom Luxury Suites and two two-bedroom Family Suites, arranged in a circular design that symbolises unity with the land. Guests can also enjoy a spa, pool, and viewing deck, while the lodge maintains a strong focus on conservation and community upliftment.

Contact details

✉ reservations@mfulawozi.com ☎ +27 87 057 5966 🌐 mfulawoziwilderness.com/mthembu-lodge

Benchmark Properties



Asara Wine Estate & Hotel,

Location: Stellenbosch, Western Cape

Set across 180 hectares, Asara Wine Estate & Hotel is among the Cape's largest wine farms. Just outside Stellenbosch on Polkadraai Road, it's about 25 minutes from Cape Town International Airport. This lifestyle estate offers 40 five-star rooms, suites, and self-catering studios set amid vineyards and peaceful gardens. Guests can also enjoy two restaurants, a stylish wine bar, an art gallery, a cigar lounge, and a spa with panoramic views of the surrounding mountains.

Contact details

✉ reservations@ASARA-Hotels.com ☎ +27 21 888 8000, 🌐 asara.co.za



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Premium Awards

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.



La Residence Hotel and Villas

Location: Franschhoek, Western Cape

La Residence, The Royal Portfolio's flagship property and a member of The Leading Hotels of the World, is set on a private 30-acre estate in the Franschhoek Valley, surrounded by vineyards and mountains. The hotel has eleven Hotel Suites and five Vineyard Suites; each individually designed in Liz Biden's signature theatrical style. It also offers Franschhoek House, a six-bedroom villa for exclusive use that opened in late 2024, providing families and small groups with complete seclusion.

Contact details

✉ reservations@trp.travel ☎ +27 21 671 5502

🌐 theroyalportfolio.com/la-residence



Premium Properties



Oyster Box Hotel,

Location: Umhlanga Rocks, KwaZulu-Natal

Standing majestically on Umhlanga's prestigious beachfront, opposite the iconic Umhlanga Lighthouse, The Oyster Box is a beloved five-star property in the Red Carnation Hotel Collection. Its 86 colonial-inspired rooms and suites offer sweeping Indian Ocean views. Guests can enjoy the hotel's famous curry buffet, award-winning High Tea, two outdoor pools, direct beach access, a 24-seat cinema, and an award-winning spa featuring a Turkish Hammam, all just 15 minutes from King Shaka International Airport.

Contact details

✉ reservations@oysterbox.co.za ☎ +27 31 514 5000,
🌐 oysterboxhotel.com



Sala Beach House

Location: Kwadukuza, KwaZulu-Natal

Recently awarded five-star Premium status by the TGCSA, Sala Beach House is a boutique hotel on KwaZulu-Natal's Dolphin Coast and is certified by Fair Trade Tourism. Overlooking Thompson's Bay in Ballito, it offers discreet access to a private beach. The hotel features seven elegantly appointed rooms and suites, as well as an exclusive-use three-bedroom villa. Amenities include two outdoor pools, a sun deck, Sala Beach Spa, and a restaurant serving African, Indian, European, and Mauritian French cuisine.

Contact details

✉ stay@salabeach.co.za ☎ +27 31 569 9226
🌐 salabeach.co.za

UPCOMING EVENTS



**Standard Bank
WineX 2026**

28–30 October 2026
Sandton International
Convention Centre,
Johannesburg



**Your Touch-Up
Fest**

6–7 November 2026
Constitution Hill
Human Rights Precinct,
Johannesburg



**Tembisa Kota
Festival**

7 November 2026
Esselen Park, Tembisa



**Telkom PGA
Championship
(Sunshine Tour)**

5 - 8 November 2026
Country Club Johannesburg



**Sunset Music
Series**

7 November 2026
Walter Sisulu National
Botanical Garden,
Johannesburg



**Department of
Tourism Hackathon**

14–15 November 2026
University of Cape Town



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