INDABA Daily News

SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

Issue 2 | 8 May 2016

SATravelTrade | @SATravelTrade | #INDABA2016

A wave of African tourism

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom officially opened INDABA 2016 yesterday morning.

South Africa is intrinsically linked to the continent and if tourism succeeds then the continent succeeds.

These were the words of the South African Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, when he officially opened the INDABA yesterday.

Following a ribbon cutting ceremony, the Minister gave his official welcome together with the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal Michael Mabuyakhulu and the Mayor of Durban, James Nxumalo.

Last year, the Travel and Tourism Competitive Report, presented by the World Economic Forum, confirmed that tourism constitutes nine percent of Africa's overall economy and that some African nations were well-positioned to benefit from the projected 4.9 percent growth in the continent's travel and tourism business. Tourism arrivals to the continent are projected to reach 130 million travellers by 2030, over double the current 50 million arrivals.

Hanekom urged members of the tourism industry across the continent to harness the rich potential of the sector by working together. "We are united in our common aspiration to brand Africa," he said. "We are bound by our common past and our future is intertwined.

"INDABA gives us a sense of belonging. It is where we can come together to share knowledge and create partnerships," he said. "The world's tourists want what we have, authentic meaningful experiences and a taste of local communities. This gives more indigenous people the opportunity to become part of our tourism industry.

"At the same time, the packaging of our diverse tourism products, which reflect Africa's travel experiences such as rich cultural and historical heritage as well as the continent's exceptional natural wealth, should be tailor-made to suit tourists who are keen to move from our country to the others within the region."

Continuing with the theme of tourism as key contributor to South Africa's economy and job creator Mabuyakhulu told the audience that 4.5 percent of people in the country are employed by the sector.

He noted that while the leaders in tourism on the continent - South Africa, Botswana, Mauritius, Seychelles, Namibia, Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya - had in place essential policies for sustainable growth, all African countries needed to invest adequately in skills development and infrastructure.

"There are many examples of how tourism has grown emerging economies and while the INDABA will continue to bolster Africa's image as a preferred destination, it is up to us as Africans to market ourselves to the rest of the world," he said.

"In this regard it is critical that we integrate policies that will reflect positively on what our continent can offer. There needs to be investment into infrastructure, such as transport and hotel networks as well a balance between security and ease of movement. Africa also needs to tailor-make its products to suit tourists."

Nxumalo said the City of Durban was honoured to host the biggest tourism event on the continent. "The INDABA helps us to be competitive and a major player in the tourism sector, bringing in a R60 million in direct revenue and R260 million over the longer term."

Hanekom announced that negotiations to secure a partner for INDABA were at an advanced stage but he could not divulge any further details at this stage. He also shied away from the thorny issue of whether Durban would continue host the trade show, simply saying: "Indaba is here, stronger than ever!"

Tourism statistics – 15 percent year-on-year growth

EThekwini Mayor James Nxumalo says Indaba enables Durban to make a mark and be competitive in the global tourism industry.

Speaking at the official opening of Indaba yesterday, Nxumalo said the event enables Durban to position itself not only as a gateway to the African continent, but also as a major player in the tourism and hospitality sector.

"Durban welcomed the challenge by Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan who in his budget speech listed the tourism sector as one of the low hanging fruits needed to be capitalised to sustain the South African economy. We are confident that we will meet our target of a local economic injection to the tune of R260 million and an immediate direct injection of no less than R60 million to the economy of eThekwini," Nxumalo said.

"There is a firm focus on the small, medium and micro enterprises. The 'Hidden Gems Zone' showcases products and services from over 70 South African SMMEs. It provides facilitated workshops for knowledge sharing, skills transfer, access to markets which will ultimately provide opportunities to grow businesses," said Nxumalo.

Doing global tourism business – Durban, the warmest place to be.

Durban is renowned for its all year round warm weather and beautiful beaches. But the focus has shifted from only promoting these unique selling points to the growing market of community-empowering township tourism. Visitors will be able to 'wet' their feet in the warm Indian Ocean with the unique design of the Durban stand with the realistic imprint of the ocean on the stand floor.

However, the main focus is the community tourism organisations' individual kiosks where operators are on hand to provide insight into their tours.

"eThekwini was one of the first municipalities to implement community tourism organisations," says Perry Moodley, Project Executive at Durban Tourism.

"Each of the nine organisations present a key project at Indaba, so visitors will experience something new and unique each day. It is a great opportunity to identify products in townships that need exposure and have the ability to grow."

For more information visit stand DEC1A37

Not to be missed - all about the Kigali collection

Inspired by the people of Rwanda, Sam Mensah will enligthen INDABA delegates about the Kigali dress collection in Meeting Room 22 at Tech talk, room 22 between 16:00 and 17:00 today.

The Kigali collection takes its inspiration from the people and natural landscape of Rwanda – from the cool colours of the Nyungwe Forest to the cold blues of Lake Kivu, one of Africa's great lakes. The contemporary ready-to-wear pieces are made and inspired by Africa and its people.

PROGRAMME FOR TODAY, 8 MAY 2016

09:00 - 10:00 **TRADE TALK - SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM**
Aneshree Rambally, Trade Relations Manager, SA Tourism.
The Welcome Campaign. | Meeting Room 21 ABC
All INDABA Delegates

10:00 - 11:00 **TRADE TALK - GREENSTUFF**
How to go green - Lorraine Jenks, Greenstuff | Meeting Room 21 ABC
All INDABA Delegates

11:00 - 12:00 **TRADE TALK - SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM**
Debbie Damant, Country Manager, SA Tourism
Melanie Leloup, Trade Relations Manager SA Tourism
How to maximise the domestic travel market
Meeting Room 21 ABC
All INDABA Delegates

12:00 - 13:00 **TRADE TALK - DURBAN TOURISM & DEPT OF SPORTS & RECREATION**
Phllip Sithole, Durban Tourism
Dr Musa Gumede, Dept of Sports & Recreation
Where are we in 2022 Commonweath Games planning, and what opportunities are there for the industy?
Meeting Room 21 ABC | **All INDABA Delegates**

13:00 - 14:00 **TECH TALK - WAYN**
Jerome Touze, WAYN
How to measure Return on Investment in Digital Marketing
Meeting Room 21 ABC | **All INDABA Delegates**

14:00 - 15:00 **TECH TALK - TGCSA**
Thekiso Rakojane, TGCSA
Online guest reviews and hotel classification systems
Meeting Room 21 ABC | **All INDABA Delegates**

15:00 - 16:00 **TECH TALK - AIR BNB**
Velma Corcoran, Air BnB
How Airbnb is working with destinations to empower people and places
Meeting Room 21 ABC | **All INDABA Delegates**

16:00 - 17:00 **TECH TALK - KISUA**
Sam Mensah will enligthen INDABA delegates about the Kigali dress collection
Meeting Room 22 | **All INDABA Delegates**

Indaba Daily News

The Indaba Daily News, official newspaper of Indaba, is published by Junxion Communications.

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Consultation will grow tourism in Africa

Open skies, interdepartmental collaboration and trust between government and industry were some of the topics discussed at the Ministerial Media Talk, which followed the official opening of INDABA yesterday.

The event was facilitated by New York-based news anchor Richard Quest. Apart from Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, the high level the panel included Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, Mmatšatši Ramawela, CEO of the Tourism Business Council of SA and Gillian Saunders of Grant Thornton.

The panel addressed the strategic economic importance of tourism and the threats and opportunities associated with it, such as job creation, foreign direct spend and social development.

A key part of the discussion was the need for collaboration and engagement by other government departments with the National Department of Tourism when taking decisions on issues that have far reaching consequences. This was highlighted by the recent announcement of the South African Minister of Sport revoking the privilege of four of South Africa's biggest sporting associations to host future events because of their failure to reach their agreed upon transformation numbers.

The Minister acknowledged that consultation is needed in such instances in order to balance doing the right thing for the country, without negatively affecting tourism. "It is our job to promote tourism. So we will engage with the Sports minister," the minister said.

The panel agreed that there is an opportunity to learn best practices from the continent and the world, a sentiment especially emphasised by Ramawela.

In his characteristic provocative style, Quest challenged the panel on the veracity of tourism growth figures for South Africa. He suggested that the quoted figure of 15 percent was misleading as it was based on growth off a low base after South Africa had "shot itself in the foot," in relation to the visa and birth certificate regulations.

Minister Hanekom attempted to downplay the impact of the regulations saying that the effect of the Ebola outbreak on tourist arrivals could not be underestimated.

Taking a two-year view, arrivals growth was three percent according to Grant Thornton's Gillian Saunders, which is below the global average of four percent.

She noted, however, that the industry was significantly rescued by the depreciation of the rand despite the fact that studies could not find a direct correlation between currency depreciation and tourist arrivals.

Quest deftly pointed out that South African Airways (SAA) had seven CEO's in four years, an issue of serious concern for the industry.

"You must concede that SAA has become a political football and this has to stop," he said.

CNN's Richard Quest facilitated the Ministerial media talk at Indaba yesterday, with (from left) Gillian Saunders of Grant Thornton, Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom, TBCSA CEO Mmatšatši Ramawela and Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa.

Though they differed on a number of issues, panel members seemed to agree on the relevance and importance of a national carrier. They also agreed that trust between government and the private sector was essential to the growth and development of the tourism industry.

Speed Marketing – World Heritage Sites & Culture

Looking back at the first Speed Marketing session of Indaba 2016

No other initiative gives South African travel and tourism exhibitors the most lucrative platform to sell their products and services to buyers from across the world than the Tourism INDABA's speed marketing sessions.

The World Heritage & Culture session of Saturday was no different as it gave exhibitors the opportunity to grow their businesses with the support of great partners, such as the Moja Heritage Collection which catalogues South Africa's cultural attractions and places of historical interest, beautifully packaged in print and on an easy-to-use app.

According to the World Tourism Organisation, cultural tourism accounts for 37 percent of global tourism and is a growing trend which encourages local communities to share their heritage and history, as well as an effective way to boost visitors to some lesser known places.

In just five minutes exhibitors demonstrated to between 170 and 200 global buyers that as entrepreneurs they understand how to operate, market and package their offerings in line with local and global trends.

Don't miss today's speed marketing session on Safari at 08:30 in the ICC Room 22.

Tomorrow's session is on Adventure - same time, same place.

Digital trends in travel

Now more than ever, travellers are finding inspiration for their travels on the internet. According to Google, this trend is reflected in both leisure and business travellers. Research shows that 65 percent of leisure travellers use web search early in their travel journey compared to 69 percent of business travellers.

Internet search is the second largest source for travel information after word of mouth, and the number one source used in planning holidays and business trips. Based on usage trends, Google has developed the Traveller's Road to Decision, a framework for travel decision-making which includes Dreaming, Researching, Booking, Experiencing and Sharing stages. On average the journey from dreaming to experiencing spans two to four months, and in that time, a traveller is likely to view 5 videos, conduct 34 searches and visit 380 web pages.

Amongst its seven online brands, Google lists YouTube as its top source of traffic for online search. Over 7.2 million unique users in South Africa view videos on YouTube per month. This represents a 53 percent increase in the number of viewers, year-on-year and a 70 percent growth in time spent watching videos.

Dilka Bloem of Google shows industry players how they can reach global traveller's through online marketing.

Tourism operators can take advantage of the numerous advertising options offered on various Google platforms to maximise their brand presence, regardless of the size of their business.

"Option range from light box adverts that give travellers the ability to interact with content without leaving the web page or Google my business, an offering from Google Street view," said Dikla Blum of Google International.

"Businesses can invest as little as R200 in search, which Google will treble, to give their brands an online presence," said Tumi Chaka of Google South Africa. "And with a wide array of paid options, there's no excuse for tourism businesses not to take advantage of the platform online offers."

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Mass wedding - Knysna celebrates diversity

Africa celebrated its first mass same-sex wedding when 16 couples tied the knot during Knysna's 16th Pink Loerie Mardi Gras earlier this year.

"It was a special celebration for the people involved, but it was also a special celebration for Knysna, which is committed to diversity in all its festivals and events," said Greg Vogt, CEO of Knysna & Partners.

"When you include events and festivals into your itineraries, you offer visitors unique opportunities to meet local people and to enjoy authentic, unusual experiences the way that locals do."

Greg said that the town's biggest event is its annual Oyster Festival - now in its 33rd year - which will feature more than 100 different activities when it gets under way on 1 July - with everything from oyster cooking competitions to cycle races and a marathon.

"But we've also got many other events that attract focused markets."

This includes a Timber Festival in October, the Knysna Celtic Festival and the Knysna Literary Festival in March, the Jaguar Simola Hill Climb in May, annual sporting events like September's Karoo-to-Coast Mountain Bike Challenge, and weekly crafts and farmers markets.

"We'd love to speak to STOs about incorporating our events into their itineraries - because they always add an exciting dimension to any visit to the Garden Route," said Greg.

For more information visit stand DEC1D26.

Travel and tourism a driver of peace

With terror and security scares against tourists filling many headlines in the past few months, the World Travel & Tourism Council launched a new research report quantifying for the first time the links between tourism and peace. While travel and tourism has often been recognised for its ability to drive peace, security, and understanding, there has been little empirical evidence to support this link.

The report, Tourism as a Driver for Peace, conducted with the Institute of Economics and Peace, the world's pre-eminent think tank measuring peace, shows how important an open and sustainable tourism sector can be for the levels of peace in a country. Countries with more open and sustainable tourism sectors have higher levels of peace and lower levels of conflict and violence. Increases in tourism sustainability can lead to improvements in the functioning of governments.

As governments respond to tourism demand and create a welcoming environment for further tourism expansion, this ultimately increases future peace, the report states.

Over the last decade the world has become increasingly unequal in terms of its levels of peacefulness. With the most peaceful countries enjoying increasing levels of peace and prosperity, the least peaceful countries are facing greater levels of violence and conflict. The research shows that the more sustainable and open a country's tourism sector, the less peace levels have declined. Even in conflict affected countries, all of which saw their levels of peace drop between 2008 and 2015, those that had more open and sustainable tourism saw a significantly lower drop in peace than countries with less sustainable tourism sectors.

David Scowsill, President and Chief Executive Officer of the World Travel & Tourism Council says travel and tourism's economic impact is now well established and widely recognised.

"Governments around the world are increasingly looking to the sector to provide livelihoods and jobs, and drive economic development. However, the benefits of tourism as a force for good, its ability to bring peace, security and understanding have been harder to quantify. Travel and tourism does have a strong link to creating peaceful societies. In a world of increasing risk and security concerns, this is compelling evidence of why governments should continue to focus on tourism development for the good of their people. Governments should also make policy decisions that balance the safety of their citizens with the continued facilitation of travel for business and leisure purposes."

Steve Killelea, Founder and Executive Chairman of the Institute of Economics and Peace says the data shows how tourism and peace can support each other and increase societal resilience, prosperity and peace in the long term.

"This also shows how the tourism sector is one of the key areas in which the private sector can play a positive and tangible role in contributing to global peace."

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Jozi woos Chinese market

Joburg Tourism has teamed up with Union Pay, the world's largest card payment company, in a move to attract millions of Chinese tourists to the City of Gold and other parts of South Africa - and the rest of the continent.

Represented by Union Pay International representative Xing Gan and Joburg Tourism's Head, Nabintu Petsana, the two entities will promote the acceptance of Union Pay cards, optimise the card-using environment and provide more convenient services to cardholders visiting Johannesburg. They will also conduct joint marketing activities to increase the popularity of Johannesburg's tourism services and products among Chinese tourists.

With more than 5 billion cards in issue and a presence in 150 countries, Union Pay is larger than Visa and MasterCard combined. More than 100 000 of these cards have been issued in 48 African countries. Two South African banking institutions – First National Bank and Standard Bank – are already in partnership with Union Pay. Absa, which entered the scheme in January, will start processing payments in June this year. The move is expected to create several thousands of jobs in the local tourism industry and boost Johannesburg and South Africa's economy.

Every month, more than 14 000 Chinese tourists, most of whom are Union Pay card-carrying members, visit South Africa.

China has become South Africa's fourth largest overseas resources market. Statistics from the China Tourism Academy also show that China surpassed Germany and the US as the biggest market for outbound tourism in 2012. China will have more than 400 million outbound tourists in the next five years - on average a Chinese tourist spends $6 200 (nearly R100 000) on a ten-day trip. As Chinese tourists travel in groups and have high spending power, they are a sought-after tourism market sector.

Joburg Tourism is working with local tourism industry players, encouraging them to embrace the Union Pay partnership, which will also be promoted when the marketing team participates in international Asian tradeshows.

Visit stand DEC1D 31.

Endangered species update

The Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre has upgraded its website to fully reflect all its programmes, projects and donation options. Besides breeding endangered species, the centre provides a rehabilitation facility for animals orphaned or maimed due to poaching. To read more about the centre and the ten rhinos there go to www.hesc.co.za, or visit stand ICCM20.

Safari Tart blog re-launched

Safari Tart, the world's first and only authoritative safari review blog - online since January 2008 - has been re-launched at Indaba 2016, with a sleek new look and mobile functionality.

Safari Tart's new business model offers landing page sponsorship opportunities reaching a dedicated niched audience of international safari travellers. Six cost-effective content sponsorship zones and discounted packages are available with the first three months at no cost.

Safari Tart is a well-known name in safari journalism, originated by Carrie Hampton who gained the cheeky accolade after clocking up visits to over 200 safari lodges in southern and east Africa in the course of writing books, magazines and online articles.

If you want valuable exposure of your lodge or safari product, Indaba is the right time and place time to meet Carrie. And if anyone can exceed visits to 200 individual safari lodges, Carrie is dying to meet you.

Contact her on carrieh@iafrica.com, 082 976 5905, www.safaritart.com

Carrie Hampton is the original safari tart.

International flights to Africa rebound

International arrivals to Africa are up, with Namibia, Kenya and South Africa leading the growth.

International flight bookings to Africa for the European summer season are currently almost 6 percent ahead of where they were at this time last year, according to the latest data from ForwardKeys, which analyses reservation transactions daily.

The figures show a 5.9 percent increase in forward bookings from May to October compared with 2015, with robust growth in arrivals from across the globe as well as from within the continent.

The data shows forward bookings from Europe - which at 57 percent has the biggest market share - are up 6.0 percent. Travel within Africa is also increasing and at a faster rate, up 6.2 percent. The Americas, with a market share of 15 percent, are up 12.3 percent.

Bookings made for the beginning of May onwards show that nearly all the top African destinations are seeing an increase in international arrivals. Namibia tops the list, up 31.2 percent on the previous year, with Kenya in second place, up 27.7 percent, followed by South Africa, up 21.6 percent.

Southern African Tourism Update

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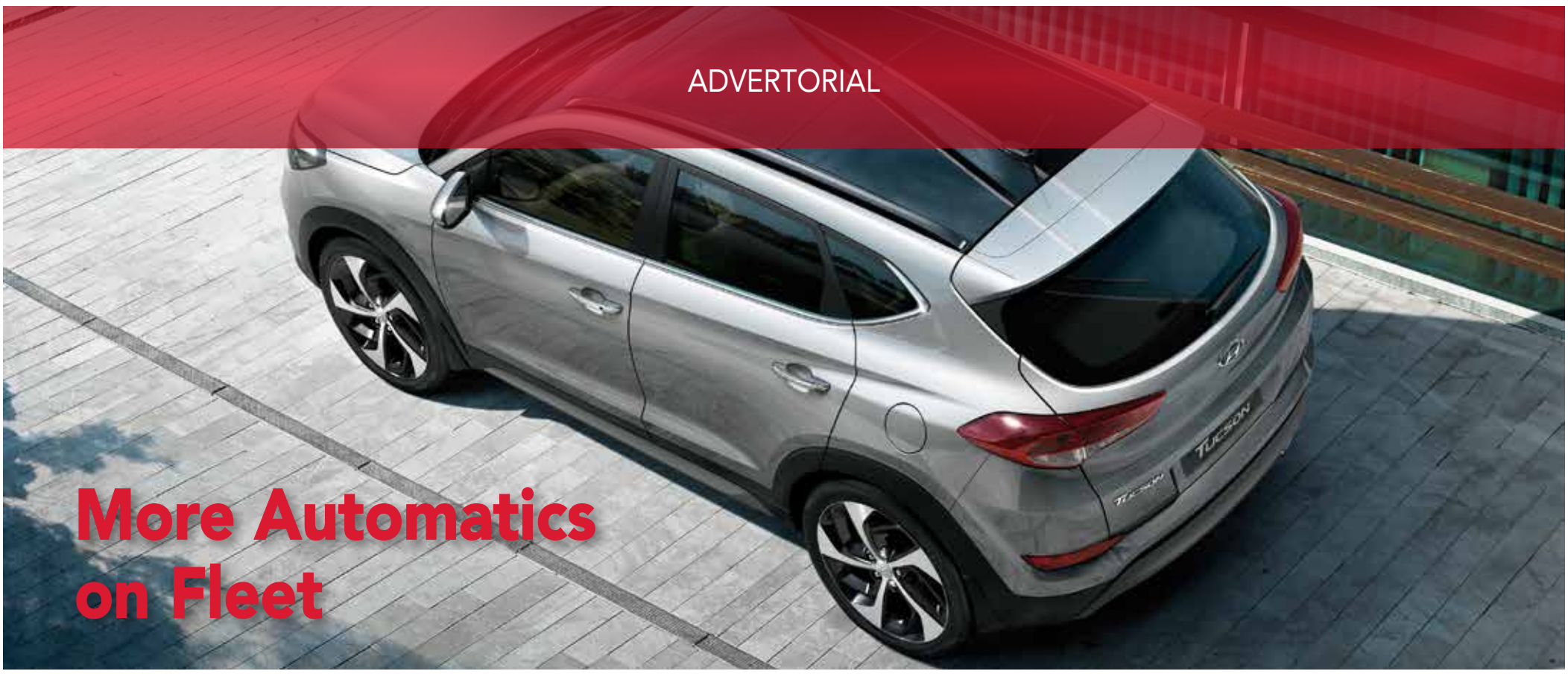

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Our customers' needs are always changing. What is needed or wanted today is not the same for tomorrow. Our diverse and flexible fleet allows us to cope with the ever changing requirements, particularly from our international customers. We are equally confident that these upgrades will support our ongoing commitment of delivering best rental vehicles at great value, which our customers have come to appreciate.

AVIS

Enhancing the visitor experience – Tourism department

Improving visitor experiences in South Africa is an important goal for the Department of Tourism, which has allocated a large portion of its budget to the task. Initiatives in this regard include guide training, enhancing attractions and maintaining the country's beaches.

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom told Tourism Update around R800 million was left after allocations had been made to SA Tourism.

"A large chunk of that is spent on social responsibility programmes and small business support while it also goes into running the department. This included salary and office costs and offices abroad.

"While we don't have a massive department we do have regulatory responsibilities and that budget has to do that.

"There were no magic split for the budget and no easy answer to whether less money should be spent on the department and more on marketing the country internationally. We simply cannot put our entire budget into marketing campaigns. There are costs to running the department. We do believe, however, that by spending the budget more wisely to improve visitor experiences, we will automatically be marketing the country more."

He said it was important that improvements were continuously being made to improve the product and to allow travellers a better experience while in South Africa.

With this in mind the department is increasing language courses for guides.

"Having guides that speak the language of visitors is of increasing importance. It allows for a more profound experience and as a department we have earmarked language courses for guides as a priority. Two language-training courses were on track for this year, which would see guides trained to speak Russian and Mandarin.

"At the same time we are not packaging our cultural diversity well enough. This is an area where we want to see more budget being spent on. Cultural villages have to be extended and expanded to allow for real experiences that wow visitors.

Hanekom said one area that would receive immediate attention was the Cradle of Humankind in Maropeng, where the department was funding enhancements.

"While there are many places in the country where little needs to be done to create an experience that blows visitors away, there are many attractions including the likes of Robben Island that need work. We have to enhance what is on offer to allow for more profound and captivating experiences.

"At Robben Island visitor information services would be enhanced in the next few months while the department was also in the process of training guides. Crucial information about the island is also being digitised which means that this legacy will be preserved for future generations.

"Sites such as the Nelson Mandela capture site in KwaZulu-Natal would be improved.

"This will see signage and information improved not only at this site but several other iconic national heritage sites that symbolise the life of Nelson Mandela such as the statues of Madiba at the Union Buildings and Freedom Park in Gauteng and the Drakenstein Correctional Facility in the Western Cape."

Hanekom said making the South African experience more memorable was a priority for the 'Working for Tourism' programme set to be launched in the next few months.

"This programme will kick off in this financial year with the employment of 200 young people who will assist in retaining the blue flag status of our beaches. This all ensures South Africa is marketed," he said.

"After spending time on one of our beaches people go home and they market the country further."

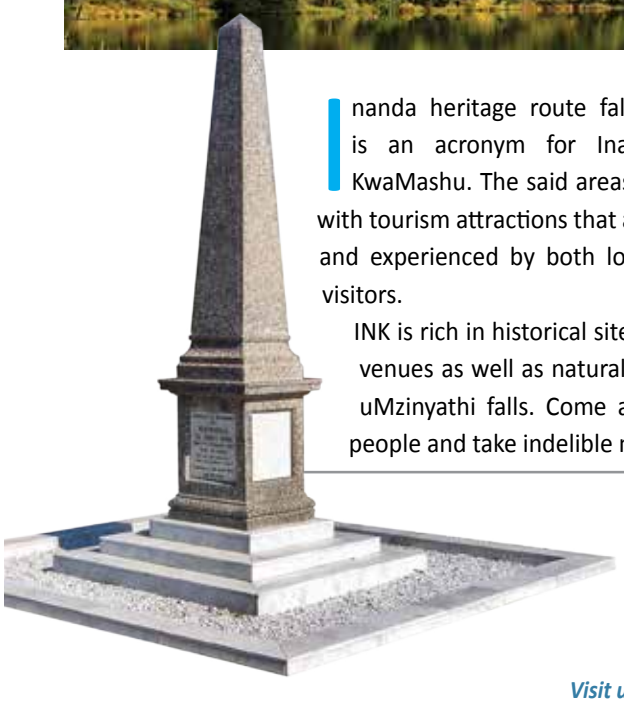
Hanekom admitted that the budget had constraints in that it could never possibly pay for everything that needed to be done which was why the department was reviewing not only the budget of SA Tourism to ensure money was spent well but also that of the department itself.

"Some projects we have invested in have been very successful and some not so much. We are currently relooking at the model that we use for this process so that it becomes more sustainable and that we see more success," he said.

"It remains difficult to find the right balance between how much money should be spent on marketing the country and how much for the department.

"We believe if we use the budget that we do have left after allocating funds to SA Tourism well, we can, without any additional marketing, bring higher numbers of people to South Africa."

Southern African Tourism Update



Inanda heritage route falls within INK, which is an acronym for Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu. The said areas boosted themselves with tourism attractions that are yet to be explored and experienced by both local and international visitors.

INK is rich in historical sites, educational facilities and entertainment venues as well as natural attractions, for example, Inanda Dam and uMzinyathi falls. Come and explore the INK area, meet the local people and take indelible memories home.

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