

Turning **Moments** into *Memories* in Buffalo City



BC TOURISM MARKETS UNIQUE DIVERSITY AT INDABA



Buffalo City Tourism is happy to report that Indaba 2015 more than lived up to its reputation as the biggest tourism expo and trade show on the Africa continent.

By the end of the three-day international showcase, 1 000 exhibitors and well over 2000 buyers from the world's tourism source markets had registered attendance, with at least 8 000 formal meetings between buyers and product representatives taking place.

Equally importantly, close to 800 journalists, bloggers and media producers converged at Durban's Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre from 9-11 May, ensuring South Africa and its nine provinces received widespread national and international media coverage.

And the news coming out of Indaba 2015 was overwhelmingly positive.

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom told a large international audience that SA's tourism industry was growing at between 3% and 5%, and had come to contribute over 9% of South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

"International arrivals in Africa increased to 56 million tourists last year, with tourism now supporting more than 1.5 million jobs throughout the country," he said.

"More and more people are venturing out to discover new places..."

Therefore we have everything going to increase our share of the expected growth in international tourism and travel. That while some of the world's unique tourism offerings are found right across our continent."

'WE MUST BE BRAVE'

"For us in the tourism sector, the uncertainty, volatility and constant change in our industry require us to be brave," Hanekom said. "We must be brave enough to leave behind the shores of yesterday and boldly confront the challenges of tomorrow.

"Technological innovation, disruptive business models and changing consumer preferences challenge our ingenuity and agility every single day. I can confidently say that we are responding to these challenges by differentiating and repackaging our offerings to compete with the best in the world."

Buffalo City Tourism capitalised on the excellent exposure and networking opportunities of Indaba 2015 by welcoming visitors to a newly designed expo stand, where the entity's latest promotional booklet, 50 Fabulous Reasons (to include Buffalo City on your next holiday or travel itinerary) was launched.

The handy, pocket-sized guide captures some of Buffalo City most alluring attractions whilst showcasing our region's unique diversity in both the products and experiences we are able to offer our visitors.

"Indaba brings together some of the most influential stakeholders in the tourism industry, and Buffalo City made full use of this wonderful networking and marketing platform to elevate the national and international profile of our city, and indeed the wider region," said Buffalo City Tourism Manager Phindile Mbonwa.

"Our aim this year was to really showcase the rich variety of attractions that is unique to Buffalo City, as well as the variety of experiences that can be enjoyed by using Buffalo City as a springboard to the region.

"This is a very compelling message to international tour operators and buyers, and all our efforts at Indaba were geared to driving home this message," she said.

With more than 1000 exhibitors, including 300 exhibitors from 20 African countries, and about 2000 buyers from the world's tourism source markets, INDABA 2015 was a resounding success. The support that we enjoyed from countries across the continent reinforced the spirit of Africa Month as a celebration of unity.

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom

AFRICA: OPEN FOR BUSINESS



One of the key messages of Indaba 2015 was the vital role tourism is playing in driving growth and development on the African continent.

“On the African continent, tourism directly and indirectly supports 20.5 million jobs and represents 8.1 percent of Africa’s gross domestic product,” SA Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom said.

“In some countries, more than 50 percent of their gross domestic product comes from tourism. International arrivals in Africa increased to 56 million tourists last year, and are expected to grow by between three and five percent in 2015.

“This will probably exceed the projected growth in global arrivals, which is between three and four percent.”

Hanekom hosted the 2nd annual African Tourism Ministers Summit a day before the official start of Indaba 2015 to discuss strategies for the growth and development of the tourism industry throughout the continent.

The summit, themed Africa: Open for Business, was attended by 13 African tourism ministers, who advocated strongly for cooperation and unity for the continent to overcome its challenges and achieve tourism growth.

The session resolved that the African Union should include tourism on its agenda to elevate tourism as the economic driver on the continent. It was also proposed that the next African ministerial session should consider putting systems in place to advance uni-visa on the continent.

“Africa must work with Africa to advance tourism on the continent,” said Elcia Grandcourt, Regional Director for Africa at the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. “Cultural and historical resources in Africa are not being adequately harnessed to lure tourists to Africa. To show our commitment, we will host our first image and branding conference in Accra, Ghana with the view to impart skills on the continent, so it can better profile itself.”

She noted that Africa was fast establishing itself as one of the most promising regions for tourism. “Africa will receive 85 million international tourist arrivals by 2020, and 134 million in 2030, representing respectively 6.3% and 7.4% of international tourist arrivals, worldwide.”

SA AMONG MOST TOURIST-FRIENDLY

South Africa has been named among the top 50 most tourist-friendly countries in the world, in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum.

The index is a measurement of the factors that make it attractive to develop business in the travel and tourism industry of individual countries, rather than a measure of a country’s attractiveness as a tourist destination.

This year’s report analysed 141 countries across the globe and saw South Africa take the 48th position.

According to the report, South Africa’s ranking in the top 50 is driven by “its rich natural... and cultural... resources, a positive business environment... characterized by little red tape and modest administrative burden and relatively good infrastructure compared to neighboring countries”.

Other positive factors mentioned include the beneficial legacy of the 2010 World Cup, leaving the country with a host of world class stadiums for big events and gatherings, abundance of wildlife, several World Heritage sites and biodiversity.

The top 10 most tourist-friendly countries are:

1. Spain
2. France
3. Germany
4. United States
5. United Kingdom
6. Switzerland
7. Australia
8. Italy
9. Japan
10. Canada



SA TOURISM A 'SPECTACULAR SUCCESS STORY'



Tourism in South Africa was a “spectacular success story which is making an impressive contribution to our country’s economic growth”.

This was the message to international tourism writers and journalists at Indaba 2015, following the release of new statistics pointing to the industry’s increasing importance with regard to economic growth and job creation.

According to the figures, tourist receipts grew by 6.6% in 2014 and outperformed other sectors of the economy while growth in South African tourist arrivals surpassed global tourism sector growth.

“Our marketing efforts are paying off,” said South African Tourism Chief Executive Officer, Thulani Nzima. “While South Africa is justifiably world-famous as a premier safari destination, the heritage and culture attractions of our destination are now compelling reasons to visit South Africa, too. Most importantly, South Africans are warm, friendly and welcoming people. It’s the South African people, as much as the destination, that make for an unforgettable travel experience.”

'How can you love a country you don't know?'

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom appealed to South Africans to enjoy the beautiful destination they call home. “How can you love a country you don't know? You have to experience it and get excited about our country. The tourism industry needs to get more South Africans to travel South Africa, to experience this fantastic destination and to become our biggest brand ambassadors,” he said.

The future of South Africa’s tourism industry lies in educating and supporting small and medium business enterprises, Hanekom said. “A sizeable focus of his mandate was to encourage small tourism businesses to grow, create jobs and attract foreign direct spend.

This would cement the sector’s contribution to the achievement goals set out in the National Development Plan.”

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HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY SET TO GROW

South Africa’s hospitality industry is prepared to grow further in the next five years, according to a new report released by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

“Although South Africa’s economy has weakened, the hotel industry in 2014 has benefited from an increase in foreign visitors and rising room rates,” said Nikki Forster, the hospitality industry leader for PwC Southern Africa.

PwC’s fifth edition of its report, Hospitality Outlook: 2015-2019, projects that by 2019, the overall occupancy rate across all sectors in South Africa will continue to increase, rising to an estimated 58.3% from 54.4% in 2014.

“The hotel occupancy rate reached its highest level in 2014 of 59% since 2008. The hotel occupancy rate is expected to increase to 62% by 2019 but still remain lower than the 68.4% achieved in 2008,” Forster said.



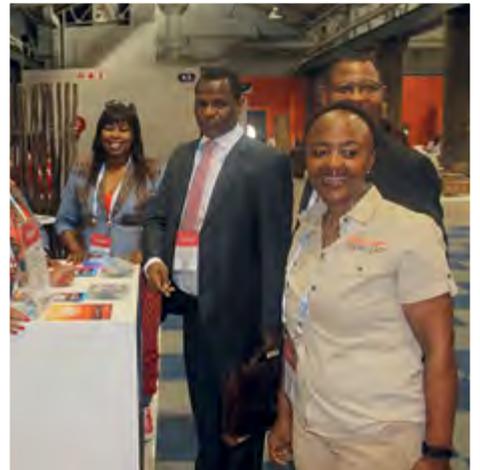
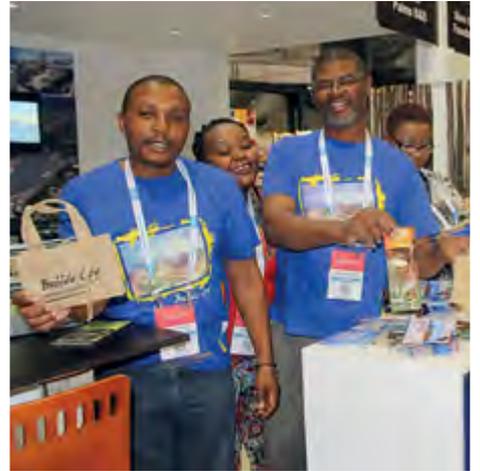
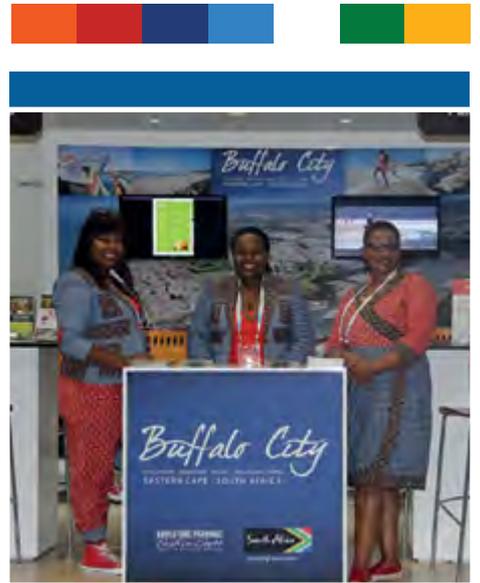
Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom

BC TOURISM AT INDABA 2015



Buffalo City Tourism was well represented at Indaba 2015, utilising this increasingly global platform to market and promote the city to the more than 2 000 buyers and product representatives in attendance. In addition to launching the city's latest promotional booklet, 50 Fabulous Reasons, BC Tourism further capitalised on the excellent networking opportunities afforded by Indaba by hosting scores of national and international visitors at the our new expo stand, and sharing information about Buffalo City's unique diversity as a travel and holiday destination.

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- 📍 East London Airport ☎ 043 736 3019
- 📍 LED Department, Fleet Street ☎ 043 705 2111
- 📍 27 Taylor Street, King William's Town ☎ 043 642 1215
- 📍 Wall of Fame, Main Road, Dimbaza ☎ 040 656 2062

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