

# Mango expects passenger increase in December season

Mango airline has upward-adjusted its year-end season traffic forecast by 7% with current demand showing a marked increase over the first three quarters of last year. The airline expects to carry in excess of 200 000 travellers between December and mid-January with fuel prices expected to remain relatively stable until then.



"Based on a positive upturn in volumes until now, we expect to enjoy a bumper holiday season this year," says CEO at Mango, Nico Bezuidenhout. While numbers proved stable for the two years prior, growth was stifled due to the continued economic challenges. "I expect our current growth emanates from two areas, namely a slight upturn in the total number of South Africans travelling as a switch from other airlines." Mango this year increased its overall domestic market share to 20% on routes that it operates and aims to claw-in greater gains next year.

## Fuel increase should be minimal

Bezuidenhout expects the cost of fuel to remain relatively stable until early next year. "At this point we do not expect major increases in the cost of petrol bar possible adjustments due to exchange rate fluctuations. Upward movement, if at all, should be minimal." This could be good news for South Africans who now pay almost 92% more for petrol than at the time of Mango's launch in November 2006 when unleaded 95 octane fuel retailed for under R6,50 on the Highveld. Good news for airlines, too, as energy amounts up to 35% of operational costs.

"Consumers have been hit hard by dramatic increases in fuel prices over the past few years, impacting disposable income and forcing holiday periods into shorter getaways. We have noticed that travel times have become shorter, with an average of between two and four days cut from leisure travel periods since 2008," says Bezuidenhout. He estimates that the time South Africans spend on an average holiday in December now stretches between ten days up to maximum of a fortnight.

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