

SA's got tourism talent

By [Sindy Peters](#)

29 Aug 2019

Minister of Tourism Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane recently took to the majestic slopes of the Drakensberg in KwaZulu-Natal to officially launch Tourism Month 2019, held annually in September. Working towards an ambitious target of 21 million international visitors by 2030, the minister shared her department's strategy in enticing more guests to our southern shores.



Dignitaries at the 2019 Tourism Month launch event were welcomed with traditional flair in the Drakensberg.

It's a task easier said than done when you're competing with the likes of Botswana's Okavango Delta, Zambia/Zim's Vic Falls, Namibia's Etosha National Park, and Mozambique's Bazaruto Archipelago, never mind East Africa's gems like Mount Kili, the Serengeti, and Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Lucky for us, we have plenty to boast about back home, and boast we should said the minister as we tend to outcompete our African neighbours on a number of fronts when it comes to our tourism offering.

Fly direct

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Nomusa Dube-Ncube, also present at the launch at the Drakensberg Sun, highlighted that five international airlines now touch down at King Shaka International Airport, including Air Namibia, Turkish Airlines, Qatar and, most recently, British Airways which offers a direct flight from London to Durban.



Minister of Tourism Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane and KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Nomusa Dube-Ncube. Image source: [TourismKZN](https://www.tourismkzn.co.za)

Being Africa's biggest and busiest airport means OR Tambo still receives the lion's share of direct flights, but Cape Town's getting in on the aviation action too as United Airlines will soon be preparing for final approach in the Mother City direct [from Newark Liberty International Airport in the US](#). Kubayi-Ngubane also reiterated the department's plans to engage with various airlines to develop a direct air transport link with Mumbai, India.



SA eyes air transport link to India

11 Jul 2019



Ok, so easy enough to get here, but what about getting around?

Advanced transport, road infrastructure

Accessibility can prove to be a bit of a struggle in some African countries with transport and road infrastructure somewhat lacking. In South Africa, however, it's pretty much possible to get to anywhere worth visiting by plane, train, bus, minibus, uber, even by road-tripping in a tiny little hatchback - no off-road 4X4 necessary.

"A lot of tourists from Europe and the US like to drive, and they get to experience the drive here because our roads are beautiful, they're accessible, and that's unique to South Africa - you can't find that anywhere in the African continent," said Dube-Ncube.

We're also home to the continent's first modern, rapid rail system, the Gautrain, which links Johannesburg to Tshwane and

Sandton to OR Tambo.

Easy enough to get around, but what's so special about South Africa? Well, a lot actually.



Cape Town, NYC renews tourism marketing partnership

28 Aug 2019



Endless variety

Apart from our extensive 2,850km-coastline, making South Africa a dream holiday destination for your average beach bum, the range of biodiversity found here gives some of the best nature-based destinations in the world a run for their money.



Image source: Gallo/Getty

The Cape Floral Kingdom, spanning from the Western to Eastern Cape, hosts almost 20% of all flora on the continent, with the Cape Peninsula alone home to almost half that. Travelling further east along the Garden Route, just 20km away from the coastline is the Addo Elephant National Park where visitors can get up close with the Big Five. Journey on up to KZN and the spectacular slopes and plateaus of the Drakensberg Mountain Range will leave you breathless - especially if you decide to hike yourself up 3,482 metres above sea level.

A little further north and you're in the Midlands where you can slowly meander your way around all the greenery, opt to get your adventure sports on, or partake in the local cuisine. A stone's throw away is our pièce de résistance - stretching from Mpumalanga to Limpopo, the Kruger National Park offers an extraordinary wildlife experience that is truly unforgettable.

But you're not done yet. Further inland is Gauteng, home to South Africa's biggest city and economic hub - Johannesburg, which offers a smorgasbord of things to do. All are welcome here, hipsters and heritage enthusiasts alike.



Image source: Gallo/Getty

The tourism minister also made sure to point out that South Africa has something that no other country in the world has - Madiba magic. As a globally recognised icon, the life of Nelson Mandela and his role in the country's "long walk to freedom" forms an integral part of our heritage tourism offering. Acknowledging the importance of our recent history as a major drawcard to South Africa, this year's World Tourism Day, 27 September, will be hosted at the Mandela Capture Site in Howick.



Boutique glamping at Africamps at Pat Busch

Ruth Cooper 21 Aug 2019



If you've got it, flaunt it

We clearly have plenty to shout about from the rooftops as South Africa has a stellar tourism lineup on offer that caters to just about any type of traveller. Minister Kubayi-Ngubane, however, lamented that we can be too critical of ourselves: "We are naturally people who are humble because of our upbringing," she said, "but that doesn't work in marketing and sales. When we are marketing, when we are selling, we need to put our humility aside and put it in other things. That's where we are missing the point of selling ourselves and boasting about what South Africa has."



Image source: [TourismKZN](#)

"I call on all South Africans to be ambassadors of their country, to travel and experience its length and breadth," she said.

Ready to take a sho't left yet? The [Sho't Left Travel Week](#) will be held between 23 and 29 September and will see participating airlines, hotel groups, tour operators and tourist attractions offering substantial discounts.

View the gallery from the launch event [here](#).

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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