

South Africans urged to travel their own country

South Africa's Tourism Minister, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, called on South Africans to be tourists in their own country and to experience what millions of international tourists are drawn to annually - the sheer beauty of their land, its rich culture and heritage, and the warmth and hospitality of their fellow citizens.

Van Schalkwyk launched the new Domestic Tourism Growth Strategy, which includes South African Tourism's new domestic marketing campaign under the tagline "whatever you are looking for, it's right here in South Africa". He said domestic tourism contributed 76% of South Africa's total tourism volume in 2011, and contributed R20 billion to the country's economy, which made a substantial contribution to creating and sustaining much-needed jobs.

Tourism's contribution to GDP

The new Domestic Tourism Growth Strategy is in further response to the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) announced last year, which has set clear targets in terms of domestic and foreign arrivals and projected contributions to the country's gross domestic product (GDP). In terms of the NTSS, the department aims to reach 54 million domestic trips by 2020 as well as to ensure that domestic tourism contributes 60% of tourism's overall contribution to GDP.

"The strategy aims to increase domestic tourism revenue, expand domestic tourism volume, enhance efforts to address seasonality and equitable geographic spread of domestic travel, and entrench a culture of tourism among South Africans. It centres on innovation, stakeholder participation, and the offering of authentic, affordable experiences and packages that meet the needs of all potential local travellers," Van Schalkwyk said.

Invest in yourself and family

"The central message, and key driver, of the new domestic tourism campaign is to invest in yourself and your relationship with family, friends and loved ones, and take advantage of all the destinations South Africa offers. In South Africa, you are able to experience one of the most beautiful, capable, friendly and desirable destinations in the world - it's right here," he said.

The new domestic tourism campaign roll-out will include a series of television, radio and outdoor advertisements addressing the five key market segments with a focus on the country's nine provinces, including special offers, stories about exciting things to do, and recommendations from South Africans about where to go, how to get there and what to look out for on the way. The new strategy will also see closer working relations with trade, including the continuation of partnerships with airlines, agents and hotel groups.

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