

AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA 2023: TOWARDS AFRICA'S TOURISM SECTOR GROWTH!

DURBAN, Wednesday 29th March: A new look Africa's Travel Indaba is set to re-energise delegates from across the world when the show takes place in Durban from the 8th to the 11th of May.

Yesterday, new Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille; tourism role players and members of the media gathered at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in the city of Durban, to officially start the countdown to Africa's Travel Indaba 2023.

With about six weeks to go before Africa's Travel Indaba 2023 doors open, the trade show will not only have a new look but also promises a packed schedule with an even stronger emphasis on networking for optimising business opportunities for both exhibitors and buyers alike. Also joined by some virtual participants during the launch event, Minister de Lille highlighted the role Africa's Travel Indaba plays in contributing to Africa's tourism sector recovery and growth post the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Now it is up to each and every one of us to play our part to re-ignite the AFRICAN economy. **We win, when we ALL win!** Africa's Travel Indaba presents us with an opportunity to continue with the efforts we started last year when the sector met in person for the first time post the COVID-19 pandemic," said Minister de Lille.

This year's installment of Africa's Travel Indaba will see the return of some iconic events while also introducing new additions. Africa's Travel Indaba will once again host SMMEs from various provinces in South Africa. They will showcase their products and experiences to the thousands of delegates that will attend this year's edition. Adding to this variety of product offering will be the more established businesses from across the African continent who will be exhibiting throughout the three-day show.

Some delegates who will attend Africa's Travel Indaba will be hosted on pre and post tours to familiarise them with the province's tourism offerings. This is set to bring much needed economic injection into the city of Durban and the KZN province at large as international

"Our projections indicate that Africa's Travel Indaba for 2023 will contribute over R130 million to the city's GDP and create over 250 job opportunities. We anticipate a hotel occupancy rate of 90% which will be a major boost for the hospitality sector, said Councillor Phili Mbatha-Ndlovu; EThekweni Deputy Chairperson for Economic Development and Planning Committee. She added that the City is ready to roll-out a red carpet for all the delegates attending Indaba".

Commenting on the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) state of readiness to host the Africa's Travel Indaba 2023, Acting CEO of Tourism KZN, Mr Nhlanhla Khumalo said that "KwaZulu-Natal has more than 20 years' experience in hosting Africa's Travel Indaba together with a number of world class events and we are confident that this year will be no different. The province has adequate accommodation establishments within a reasonable travel distance to the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre. With a number of airlines that fly directly to King Shaka International Airport (KSIA), domestic and international delegates should travel with ease to the province."

He also reiterated that Tourism KZN is working very closely with law enforcement agencies to ensure that delegates who will be attending Africa's Travel Indaba will be safe in the province.

During the launch event, there was a panel discussion focusing on the contribution of Africa's Travel Indaba to the tourism sector recovery. Various industry representatives highlighted the value of Indaba and extended an invite to both buyers and delegates to come to South Africa. The panel included:

- Mr. Themba Khumalo - Acting Chief Executive Officer: South African Tourism
- Mr. David Frost - Chief Executive Officer: Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (SATSA)
- Mr. Aaron Munetsi - Chief Executive Officer - Airlines Association of Southern Africa
- Ms. Sonto Mbonambi - Chief Executive Officer for the Small Tourism Enterprise Association which is commonly known as STEA
- Mr. Chris Mears - Executive Director of African Travel and Tourism Association (ATTA)

South African Tourism's Acting Chief Executive Officer, Themba Khumalo, highlighted that Africa's Travel Indaba is an African trade show specifically tailored to advancing the continent's tourism sector needs, with a clear outlook towards recovery.

At the last edition of Africa's Travel Indaba in 2022, the show attracted more than 5 500 delegates from all over the world, with 634 exhibiting businesses from 19 countries on the continent, showcasing an array of travel and tourism offerings to regional and international buyers.

Visit the official Africa's Travel Indaba <http://www.indaba-southafrica.co.za/> for more information. You can follow Africa's Travel Indaba on the following platforms with the hashtag #ATI2023 #TravelIndaba2023:

- Facebook: SA Travel Trade
- Twitter: SA Travel Trade
- LinkedIn: SA Travel Trade

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