

Meetings Africa 'on the map' as a business tourism event

INDUSTRY feedback indicates that Meetings Africa has already established itself as the continent's top business tourism exhibition.

Thebe Exhibitions and Events group managing director Carol Weaving says the response from both exhibitors and visitors has been overwhelmingly positive.

"We are definitely on the right track. Business tourism in South Africa has found a home and now we have to build on the foundation."

Meetings Africa was held for the second time at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg.

The event attracted 150 business tourism companies, and 2510 visitors, including 82 hosted international buyers.

Meetings Africa was run in conjunction with the Gauteng Tourism Authority supporters including the Johannesburg Convention Bureau, the Department of Trade and Industry and South African Tourism.

Weaving added: "We fully realise that business tourism is a niche market, very competitive and difficult to sustain if service delivery is not constantly enhanced.

"Johannesburg and Meetings Africa is now without a doubt the capital of the business tourism industry in South Africa, as Durban and the annual tourism Indaba is seen as the capital of the leisure tourism industry."

Meetings Africa also served as the launch platform for a comprehensive research project on the business tourism industry by Grant Thornton and Prodigy Business Services.

Weaving said the industry was



looking forward to the results of the research, as it would help to fine-tune the business tourism industry's focus.

"We fully realise that niche marketing is essential for success and the research is aimed at determining the exact extent of this niche market.

"The fact that this year's Meetings Africa marketing was much more niche market focused, is clearly paying off handsomely," Weaving added.

Department of Trade and Industry director of tourism Kate Rivett-Carnac, said the research investigates how to better understand high growth niche tourism segments, opportunities and current supply of product in South Africa.

"Also of importance are the trends, challenges, size and potential of business tourism in South Africa and how

other countries have managed to substantially grow their business tourism segments as well as export potential.

"Furthermore, the annual number of domestic and foreign business tourists in South Africa will be determined, as will the money they spend and their expenditure patterns as well as what motivates their consumption pattern."

As the highest earner of foreign currency, tourism has become South Africa's new gold and the country has a unique business tourism offering, said Rivett-Carnac.

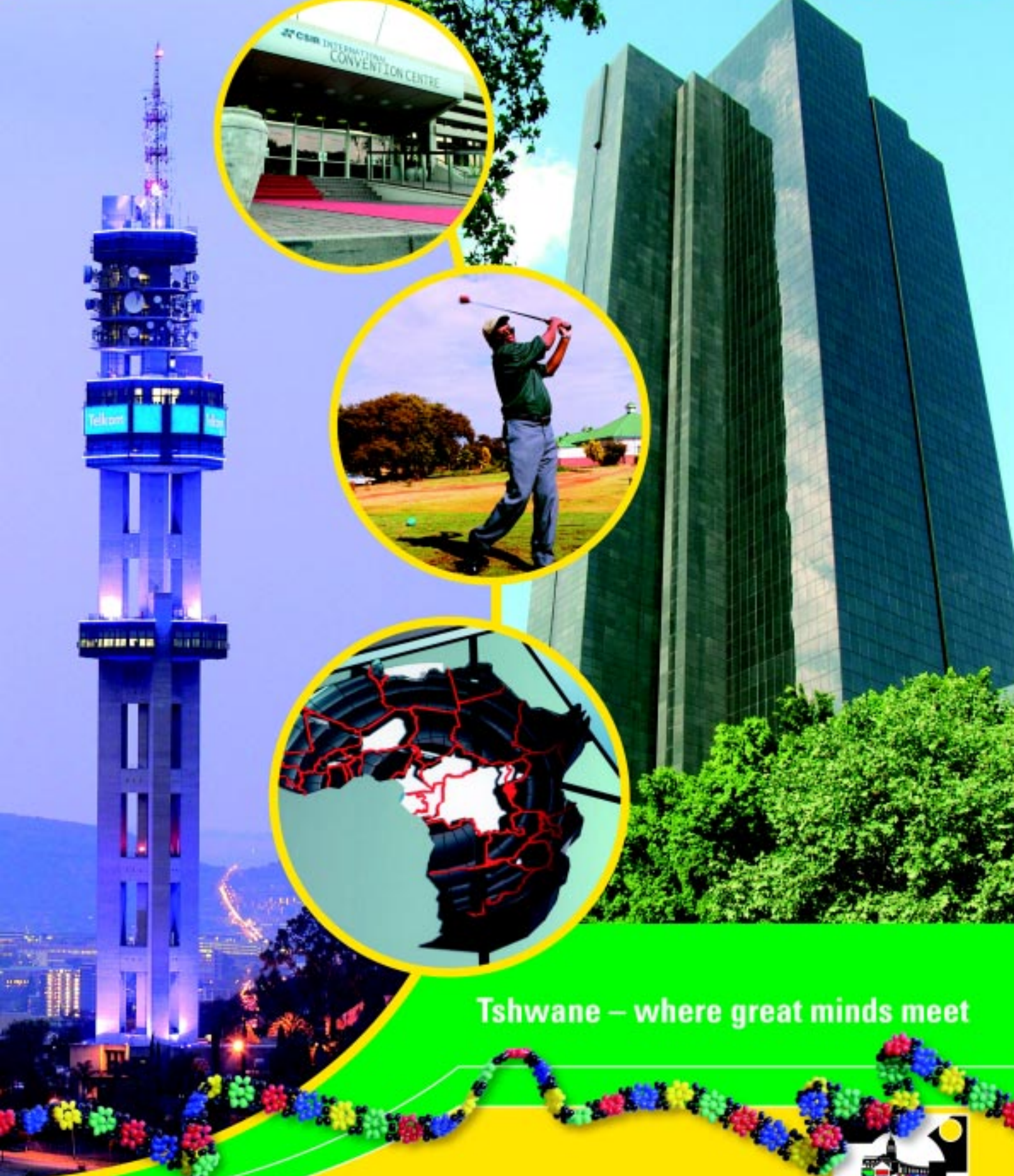
As a preferred business tourism destination, the International Congress and Convention Association currently ranks South Africa in 27th place worldwide, accounting for more than 63 per cent of all conference activities in Africa.

According to the research, conducted between April and June this year, Johannesburg hosted 38 per cent of events as compared to 26 per cent in Cape Town and 17 per cent in Durban.

Rivett-Carnac said South Africa had a unique business tourism offering.

"We have acknowledged the importance of diversity and are beginning to understand its value in an economic sense. Some examples are the indigenous knowledge of medicinal treatments, craft, music and art."





Tshwane – where great minds meet

The City of Tshwane boasts more than 400 conference venues ranging from state-of-the-art convention centres suitable for hosting large conferences to personal meeting rooms for smaller events. Located in a variety of settings, some are right in the heart of the city, while others are on the outskirts of Tshwane with nature as their backdrop.

A new facility, the Tshwane International Convention and Entertainment Centre, designed in the shape of the African continent, is scheduled to open in 2007. The city is already being regarded as a global player in the conference market and its track record of hosting major events with great success is a testimony to this.

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Flagship steams ahead in Gauteng

MONTECASINO, the flagship gaming complex of Tsogo Sun Holdings in Johannesburg, has begun an extensive expansion program in Gauteng.

The development will include an outdoor Italian-style piazza capable of hosting 4000 people, a 1900-seat lyric theatre, a 180-room hotel, a 1400sqm function facility, five new restaurants and an expansive paved area for large-scale productions, as well as additional parking.

The new development brings Tsogo Sun Gaming's total investment in Gauteng to over R2 billion and creates the most diverse entertainment destination in the province.

The expansion project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2006.

Ron Stringfellow, chief executive, Tsogo Sun Group, says that the Montecasino complex has exceeded expectations and is attracting about eight million visitors a year, making it the most visited entertainment destination in the province.

The new development includes:

Montecasino Piazza

Lined with restaurants and the SunSquare hotel, the rugby field-sized Montecasino Piazza is designed to be the ideal venue for a wide variety of outdoor activities and events, including festivals, boxing, tennis, fashion shows, exhibitions, open air banquets, and product launches.

SunSquare Hotel

The new R96 million hotel at Montecasino represents the launch of Southern Sun's new hotel brand - SunSquare - targeted at the business traveller. Bordering on the Piazza, the hotel will feature Italian theming in its public areas.



Montecasino Teatro

The 1900-seat Montecasino Teatro will host world-class live shows. The Teatro, which features a Tuscan theme on the outside and a minimalist, contemporary style inside, will be 7700sqm and was designed under the direction of president of the Society of London Theatres and international theatre consultant Martin McCallum.

Function Room

The new 1400sqm function room is designed to complement Montecasino's highly popular conference and corporate events facilities, both on the property and at the Sandton Convention Centre, also owned by Tsogo Sun.

Restaurants

Five new restaurants will line the Piazza to offer al fresco dining facilities in keeping with the outdoor experience.

Tshwane's Gateway will cater for 2000 delegates

SOUTH Africa will add to its meetings infrastructure with the R1.5 million Tshwane International Convention Centre, due for completion in June 2008 in Centurion.

Situated between Pretoria and Johannesburg, and named the African Gateway Precinct, the multi-purpose convention centre will host up to 2000 delegates, with 20 breakout rooms catering for between 20 and 200 people.

There will be two hotels on the 14-hectare site, offering 500 rooms in total. One will be a five-star linked directly to the centre, the other a four-star property.

New venues planned for 2010 soccer World Cup

SOUTH Africa has named the 10 stadiums that will host the 2010 World Cup soccer tournament, an event that will provide a huge boost to the tourism sector.

Five current stadiums - including Ellis Park in Johannesburg and Cape Town's Green Point Stadium - will be upgraded and five new venues will be built.

The South African Football Association (Safa) has released a list of names as possible coaches for the national team. No decision is expected until after the World Cup in Germany in June.

Prominent among the list of possibilities are Italy's Luiz Felipe Scolari, Carlos Alberto Parreira, captain of Brazil's brilliant team of 1970 and Sven Goran Eriksson, who will step down as coach of England after the World Cup.





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Sun International links its top four

SUN International Hotels and Resorts' 'Route of the African Sun' links four sub-Saharan award winning hotels: the Zimbali Lodge; Palace of the Lost City at Sun City; the elegant Table Bay Hotel in Cape Town and the majestic Royal Livingstone Hotel in Zambia.

The four properties, which can be packaged, also link the four key attractions for international visitors to Southern Africa: Victoria Falls, the 'Big 5', Anglo Boer War relics and the stunning city of Cape Town.

The Palace of the Lost City, with its echoes of African heritage and tribal motifs, is set in the Pilanesberg region of the North West Province. Surrounded by mountains and the African bushveld, it is close to the Pilanesberg National Park where the 'Big 5' roam freely through their natural habitat.

The Palace has 338 rooms and suites, topped off with the superbly appointed King's Suite.

Surrounding the hotel is a 25 hectare botanical jungle that includes an ornamental forest with palms and exotic fruit trees, a wet tropical forest, a dry indigenous forest, and a royal palm forest around the swimming pool.

Within The Palace are three meeting rooms opening onto the Elephant Atrium. The Royal Chamber can accommodate 90 for a banquet and 120 in conference style seating. At the far end of the Elephant Atrium are two conference rooms, the Orchid and the Protea. Each is 7m by 6, 5m, accommodating 60 people combined.

For golfers, the Gary Player Country club boasts what is claimed to be the finest course in South Africa.

The Royal Livingstone Hotel, moments away from the mighty Zambezi River and the Victoria Falls, provides a touch of a bygone colonial era in a World Heritage site in Zambia.

Zimbali Lodge is South Africa's most exclusive hideaway. It has 76 rooms situated in individual lodges (two lodges of eight rooms and six lodges of 10 rooms), located away from the main Lodge and set in subtropical gardens

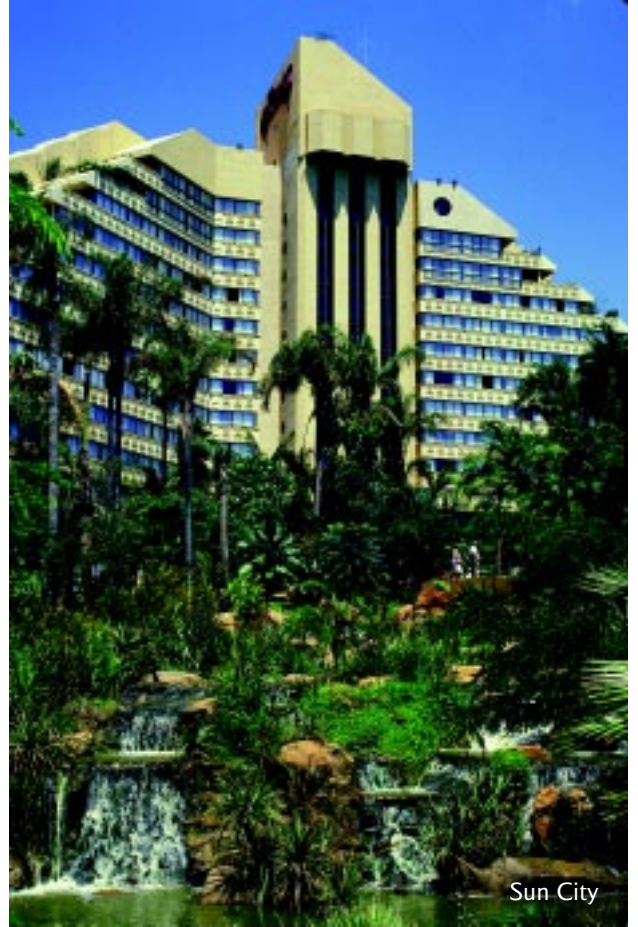
The Forest Suites have been built adjacent to the 18th Hole of the existing golf course, close to a new conference facility which has a separate boardroom for 12 people, a pre-assembly area, a reception area and kitchen facilities. The function room can accommodate 90 guests cinema style and 70 guests for dinner.

The Zimbali chapel is the perfect wedding venue, while the 72-hole Zimbali Country Club Golf Course — designed by former British and South African Open champion, Tom Weiskopf — offers one of the most breathtaking, scenic golf experiences in the world.

Zimbali Health & Beauty offers holistic therapies include massage, body wraps, hydrotherapy, laser treatment, waxing, spa skin treatments and spa beauty treatments.

Cape Town's 329-room Table Bay Hotel on the V & A Waterfront has recently undergone an extensive refurbishment program. The work included upgrading all the guest rooms including the executive suites.

The Table Bay offers an exclusive, city gym and health spa with a spectacular view of Robben Island. There are five treatment rooms



Sun City



The Palace of the Lost City

and two specialised rooms for Vichy Shower and Aromatherapy tub.

The Table Bay hotel is a leading conference and incentive destination offering conference facilities for groups of up to 350.

The 195sqm Victorian-style Pavilion is an ideal venue for banquets and receptions accommodating up to 120 people at a cocktail function or 60 seated at individual tables.

The Ballroom may be divided into two separate private areas, each 150sqm. Undivided, it will seat 200 for dinner.

Jo'burg MICE bids are 'at 2013 and beyond'

JOHANNESBURG Tourism Company's recently appointed chief executive Eddy Khosa, has set a fast pace in an effort to draw the best out of the city's potential for business and leisure tourism.

Johannesburg Tourism Company (JTC) is a public/private sector partnership and Khosa was acting CEO prior to his appointment.

"Our focus since our launch in July 2003 has been to promote Johannesburg as a dynamic business tourism destination as well as on information dissemination," said Khosa.

Spearheading the business tourism marketing strategy was the establishment of a convention bureau that, in its first year of operation, exceeded its target of 10 new events.

The bureau's target is to win one mega or citywide event for Johannesburg every year and attract another 12 international events. Bids are currently being prepared for 2013 and beyond.

Johannesburg has the facilities to host the largest conferences. The United Nations staged its biggest conference, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, here in 2002

There are four major conference centres: the Sandton Convention Centre, Gallagher Estate, the Coca-Cola Dome and the Expo Centre

Enjoy another day in Johannesburg will be a prominent theme in marketing leisure activities to both domestic and foreign tourists. "We want to make Johannesburg more than just a gateway to the rest of South Africa and Africa - we want it to be a primary leisure destination for tourists in its own right," said Khosa.

Khosa has been studying a proposal to develop themed Tour Routes, such as a Mines Tour, and market packages to tour operators. Other tour routes could include places such as Soweto's historical Vilakazi Street.

Meeting venues in Johannesburg

THE SANDTON Convention Centre was the venue of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. The centre is close to many of the city's top hotels and is within a block or two of the Sandton City and Nelson Mandela Square shopping malls, which are considered the best in Africa. They contain banks, travel agencies, shops and restaurants. The suburb also hosts the headquarters of many of the city's top businesses.

There are two exhibition areas — of more than 5500sqm each — and 15 meeting rooms.

Address: Maude Street, Sandown _PO Box 782 553, Sandton, 2146. Email: info@saconvention.co.za
Website: www.saconvention.co.za



Johannesburg is aware that it does not enjoy a good reputation for security and public safety, and concedes that this has impeded the development of business tourism.

Corrective measures have been taken by the city, including the launch of the Metro Police; the use of CCTV cameras, and stricter enforcement of by-laws, reinforced by a zero-tolerance approach.

More information: www.joburgtourism.com
(www.joburg.org.za)

http://www.joburg.org.za/business/doing_business.stm

Cape Town's wedding bliss

CAPE Town is emerging as a popular destination for couples seeking an overseas wedding

Last year there were 8000 weddings in Cape Town from September to March, and more than half were for foreign couples, according to Pam Black, author of *Under African Skies*, a guide to getting married in South Africa.

Couples can choose between ceremonies on Cape Town's white-sand beaches, in the vineyards of the wineries or even on top of Table Mountain.

"A really lovely, lavish wedding in South Africa can be had for about R75 000 - R100 000, including things such as a string quartet during the ceremony, flowers, limousine, food and wine for 100 guests, band and wedding dress," Black told the UK's *Sunday Times*.



South Africa: Your questions answered:

Who lives in South Africa?

South Africa is a nation of over 46-million people of diverse origins, cultures, languages and beliefs. Around 79 per cent are black (or African), 9 per cent white, 9 per cent "coloured" - the local label for people of mixed African, Asian and white descent - and 2.5 per cent Indian/Asian. Just over half the population live in the cities.

Two-thirds of South Africans are Christian, the largest church being the indigenous Zion Christian Church, followed by the Dutch Reformed and Catholic churches. Many churches combine Christian and traditional African beliefs,

What languages do people speak?

There are 11 officially recognised languages, most of them indigenous to South Africa. Around 40 per cent of the population speaks either isiZulu or isiXhosa.

English is the language of the cities, of commerce and banking, of government, of road signs and official documents.

Another major language is Afrikaans, a derivative of Dutch.

Is South Africa a democracy?

South Africa is a vigorous multi-party democracy with an independent judiciary and a free and diverse press.

What about apartheid?

Up until 1994, South Africa was known for apartheid or white-minority rule. Post-apartheid South Africa has a government comprising all races, and is often referred to as the "rainbow nation", a phrase coined by Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu.

Is foreign business welcome?

The open for business signs are up. The country offers an investor-friendly environment in which 100 per cent foreign ownership is allowed. Repatriation of profits is liberal. The exchange rate is favourable.

What's the weather like?

In Johannesburg, the country's

commercial capital, the weather is mild all year round, but can get cool at night. Durban, the biggest port, is hot and sometimes humid. And in Cape Town, the weather is usually warm, though temperamental.

What are the big cities?

South Africa has two capitals. Cape Town, the oldest city, is the legislative capital, where Parliament sits. Pretoria, 1500 kilometres to the north, is the executive capital, where the government administration is housed. Next door to Pretoria, and close enough that the outer suburbs merge, is the commercial centre of Johannesburg, once the world's greatest gold mining centre, now increasingly dominated by modern financial and service sectors

I'll be able to phone home?



With a network that is 99 per cent digital and includes the latest in fixed-line, wireless and satellite communication, South Africa has the most developed telecommunications network in Africa. The country's three cellular operators provide telephony to over 20-million subscribers, covering nearly half the population.

Source: www.SouthAfrica.info. The all-in-one official guide and web portal to South Africa.

Gallagher Estate

THE country estate lies between Pretoria and Johannesburg and has 19 multi-purpose venues and secure parking for 5000 vehicles. There is a wide choice of hotels nearby.

Gallagher Estate can host up to 8000 convention delegates. Among the major venues is the auditorium, which provides raked seating for up to 414 people, and the ballroom, which can accommodate 500 people for a dinner-dance or 1500 people for a seated convention.

There are five large exhibition halls — for exhibitions, concerts and trade shows — as well as other smaller areas.

Address: Richards Drive, Midrand PO Box 3915, Midrand, 1685

Email: www.gallagher.co.za

The Coca-Cola Dome

THE COCA-COLA dome is a multi-purpose indoor entertainment arena. It can host consumer and trade exhibitions, international and local concerts, corporate banquets and launches and large conventions, as well as indoor sporting events.

The large main arena covers 11049sqm of uninterrupted space; the mezzanine level offers an additional 2500sqm.

The Coca-Cola Dome is a 35-minute drive from the Johannesburg International Airport and a 15-minute trip from Lanseria International Airport. There is a choice of accommodation nearby.

Address: Corner Olienhout Avenue and Northumberland Road, North Riding, PO Box 540, North Riding, 2162 Email: info@coca-coladome.co.za

Website: www.coca-coladome.co.za

GAUTENG TOURISM AUTHORITY

South Africa is known for its beautiful cities and diverse destinations — so why should you choose Gauteng as your meetings venue? The answer is quite simple — as the country's business capital and gateway to the rest of the continent, no other province in South Africa can offer you quite as much.

Superb conference facilities, smoothly functioning conference facilities, exciting nightlife and interesting post-conference activities - Gauteng has them all. More importantly, though, as South Africa's buzzing nerve centre, the province has an energy and dynamism you won't find anywhere else.

Many international companies have recognised this fact, and have taken advantage by locating their South African representatives in Gauteng. In fact, the province is widely acknowledged as headquarters for such industries as mining, banking, insurance, information and communications technologies, automotives and film. What's more, 55 per cent of South Africa's professional associations have made Gauteng their home. This gives conference and exhibition organizers access to quality delegates and attendees, making Gauteng a great place to conference.

Gauteng's proud status as South Africa's business hub is probably created by its accessibility. Fed by a number of major highways and roads, Gauteng is also the main centre of South Africa's rail network. It also boasts the biggest, busiest airport on the Africa continent, Johannesburg International Airport, which is serviced by several direct flights from Europe and the United States. More connections are provided by African airlines, with domestic airlines providing useful internal connections.

This proves that Gauteng is well established as a business destination. A number of other features provide additional support: the

province boasts several accommodation facilities, ranging from five star international chains to conveniently located bed and breakfasts. Most of these establishments are well equipped to suit the needs of any businessperson, providing business centres complete with Internet access and other essential services.

Of course, Gauteng is a place where pleasure is just as important as business. The province is a shopper's delight, offering some of the biggest shopping centres in the southern hemisphere. These supermalls are crammed with designer labels and exciting local goods, all at prices that make a spree irresistible. You'll make more exotic options at the many craft markets, which sell interesting items like African curios.

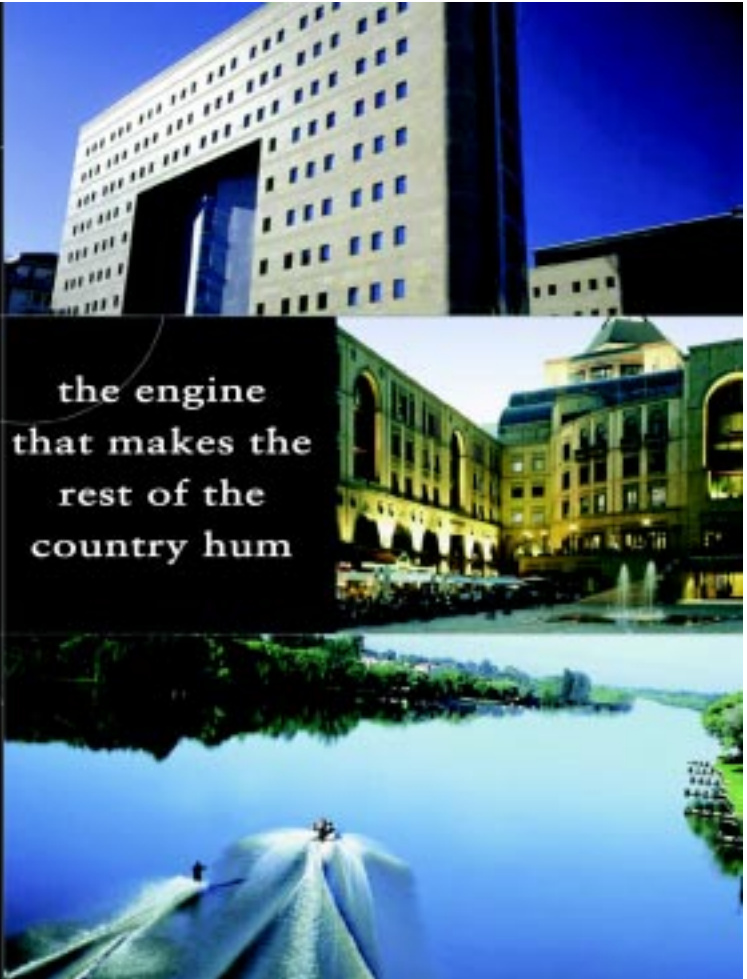
Then there are the museums showcasing various facets of life in Gauteng. Or, for culture of a different variety, visit one of the many theatres highlighting exciting local talent. Fabulous restaurants also feature on Gauteng's menu, as do vibrant nightspots.

That's just a taste of Gauteng's diversity — what makes the province truly unique is the huge variety of cityscapes it offers, from Johannesburg's bustling metropolis to Pretoria's heritage-steeped tranquility, and the pulsating African rhythms of Soweto and Alexandra.

But, of course, it's the venues themselves that hold the most interest for business travellers in Gauteng. And what venues they are - from the slick professionalism that made the Sandton Convention Centre famous during the World Summit on Sustainable Development to the more relaxed, country atmosphere of Gallagher Estate, Gauteng has venues to please all tastes and requirements.

Indeed, if South Africa is a rainbow nation, Gauteng is one very big pot of gold!

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the engine
that makes the
rest of the
country hum

Blue IQ aims to refocus Gauteng

THE BLUE IQ Initiative is a project of the Gauteng provincial government that aims to shift the province's manufacturing sector away from traditional heavy industry to focus on higher value sectors, including business tourism.

Meetings infrastructure, including the Cape Town International Convention Centre, have already benefited from the Blue IQ project.

The city of Tshwane, which includes Pretoria and Centurion, is strategically located, accessible and offers a wide range of conference and convention facilities and accommodation.

As the hub for science and technology, knowledge and industry, the city receives a high number of national and international delegations and hosts various conferences and conventions related to these sectors.

The presence of various government departments, embassies, foreign missions, trade delegations, consulates and international bodies such as the Red Cross, also add to Tshwane's appeal as a meetings location.

Plans are currently underway to erect an International Convention Centre in Centurion. The complex will be built in the design of the African continent and is scheduled to open before 2010.

Among Blue IQ projects that are lifting South Africa's status as a leading MICE destination is the Gautrain Rapid Rail Link between two of South Africa's major cities, Johannesburg and Pretoria. The Gautrain will also serve Johannesburg International Airport.



Cape Town International Convention Centre

The Cradle of Humankind, a world heritage site, is internationally famous for the light it has thrown on the origins of mankind. This area includes game reserves, a 2200 million-year-old show cave, the first gold mine on the Witwatersrand, and numerous conference centres and upmarket lodges.

On the South African Astronomical Observatory site in Sutherland in the Northern Cape Province, South Africa — with overseas partners — has built the largest single telescope in the southern hemisphere, with a hexagonal mirror array 11 metres across.

The Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) is able to record distant stars, galaxies and quasars a billion times too faint to be seen with the unaided eye.

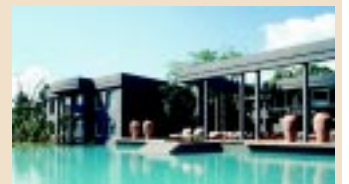
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South Africa wins big at London's Travel Awards

SOUTH Africa made a big impression at the 2005 World Travel Awards ceremony in London.

Big winners were the Saxon Hotel in Johannesburg; Shamwari and Bushman Sands game reserves in the Eastern Cape and Rovos Rail. Each was voted the best in the world in their categories.

For the second year in a row the Saxon was voted World's Leading Boutique Hotel, beating Le Soleil Hotel and Suites in Vancouver, the Sunset Marquis Hotel and Villas in California, Australia's Royce Hotel, the Metropolitan of London and the Delano in Miami.



Shamwari Game Reserve came out tops in the awards for the eighth consecutive year, winning two global awards: the world's leading conservation company and the world's leading safari and game reserve. The reserve was also voted Africa's leading safari.

The world's leading responsible tourism project went to Bushman Sands in the Eastern Cape, while South Africa's Rovos Rail company was voted the world's leading luxury train and Africa's leading safari train.

In the Africa section, both South African Airways and the Sun City complex in North West province won three awards. Other African winners were the Mount Nelson Hotel, Protea Hotels, and Fancourt Hotel and Country Club. The Pezula Resort Hotel and spa was voted the leading spa resort and Durban took the award for leading conference centre.

Self-sufficient Nasrec set to boost MICE business

SOUTHWEST of Johannesburg — near the Gold Reef City Casino, the Apartheid Museum and Soweto — is Nasrec's Expo Centre.

The massive exhibition facilities offer 42,000sqm of space. The centre is also quite self-sufficient: it has its own banks, post office, telecommunication services and secure parking for up to 25000 vehicles.

The main arena can accommodate an impressive 20,000 people. Another venue, the Black Eagle, can be divided into three sections. The Bateleur, which is slightly larger, divides into two. It can seat 1000 delegates cinema-style.

The Expo Centre is within easy reach of restaurants and fast-food outlets.

The centre hosts a number of huge events annually —including the largest consumer exhibition in the southern hemisphere, the Rand Show.

Address: Private Bag X07, Bertsham, 2013:
Email: info@expocentre.co.za Web: www.expocentre.co.za

Four of the leading venues under the Sun



The Palace of the Lost City at Sun City is one of the most enticing travellers' destinations in the world, a tribute to man's imagination and revered for its art and architecture. Fabled to be the royal residence of an ancient king, it is truly one of the 'Worlds Leading Hotels'. The Palace lavishes its guests with 5-star service, and is luxurious in every facet of its fabulous architecture and décor.



Surrounding the hotel is a 25 hectare botanical jungle. The jungle is threaded with meandering paths, cascades, lakes and pools and a variety of water-borne adventure rides. The Palace has 338 rooms inclusive of four deluxe suites.

Architecturally, the buildings take their cue from African resonances.

The Royal Livingstone Hotel, stretches luxuriously along the banks of the Zambezi River. The Hotel consists of a series of 17 colonial-style buildings, with deep verandas, set amidst indigenous trees and plants. The main hotel is a sequence of thatch-roofed buildings, most African in their influence, and incorporates the lounge, restaurant and bar.

A classic swimming pool visually links the waters of the river with the terraces of the hotel, with a sweeping timber deck planted in the swirling water of the Zambezi.



The Table Bay hotel is a premier conference centre and unequalled as an incentive destination for global achievers. Its status as a Leading Hotel of the World and its position at the hub of South Africa's vibrant tourist and retail mall, the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, perfectly positions the Table Bay Hotel as an event venue for international corporations. Catering for the business traveller the hotel offers conference facilities for groups of up to 300.



The conference facilities are flexible enough to allow for numerous functions and comprise the Ballroom, the Pavilion, Boardroom and International Business Centre. All Audio-Visual equipment is hired in from a preferred supplier".

Zimballi Lodge specialises in personalised conference arrangements for small to large groups. The Conference Centre is beautifully appointed and ideally situated for superb views of the Zimballi Estate and Country Club Golf Course. The imposing Imbiso Room is the focal point of the conference facilities and can accommodate a maximum of 90 delegates in cinema-style seating, 30 delegates in u-shape, 30 in boardroom style or 60 in a schoolroom configuration.

The Tugela Room, is an executive boardroom with an ocean view the perfect venue for the smaller conference. The Umgeni Room is an intimate venue and can accommodate a maximum of 20 delegates in various seating configurations.



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