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Durban gets ready to welcome more than 6000 delegates from 80 countries for Africa's Travel Indaba 2018!

On Tuesday 8 May Africa's Travel Indaba 2018 gets underway, and Durban's tourism sector and its 3,8 million people are ready to welcome more than 6000 delegates to Africa's top travel trade show.

Hosts of Africa's Travel Indaba, South African Tourism, along with The City of eThekweni and Tourism KZN, have been hard at work behind the scenes driving even more inclusive economic growth opportunities from the show, including supporting 135 SMMEs (up from 90 in 2017) small businesses to be at the exhibition to promote their offerings as "Hidden Gems" on a global stage.

The annual event (which the city tendered for and won last year) will be held in Durban for the next five years and each year the benefits are more widely felt. "We are excited as KwaZulu-Natal to host Africa's Travel Indaba for the 27th consecutive year. This tourism showpiece has brought major spin-offs for the tourism industry and associated businesses, big and small, in KwaZulu-Natal. We expect this year's three-day show to inject to KwaZulu-Natal's GDP a whopping R89 million," says Sihle Zikalala, MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental affairs.

"One of the strategic thrusts for Africa's Travel Indaba going forward was to ensure that the platform drives more local jobs and opportunities and we know that this has been achieved with our committed partners and service providers," says Sisa Ntshona, CEO of South African Tourism.

To facilitate more inclusivity on the platform the new Africa's Travel Indaba brand was specifically designed to be used by hotels, restaurants and transport providers to profile and promote their services around the event. In addition, things to do and see around Durban have been promoted through direct marketing to delegates, including the top attractions, short tours, where to eat and theatre happenings in the city. "We expect the delegates to go out and explore more of the city, country and continent while they are here - and many do. The more they experience, the greater the shared economic benefits will be," adds Ntshona.

In addition to the direct economic benefits of the trade show, the experience of Africa's Travel Indaba visitors will reap future growth benefits for the region. "We know Durbanites are incredibly warm people and that the airport staff, hotels, accommodation, restaurants and taxi drivers are gearing up to welcome some really influential people to their city. We also know through our global research that it is the real authentic people of South Africa that sell our destination. For that reason, it's important to remember that every chance encounter with a visitor is an opportunity to drive tourism growth in the future. Currently Africa only has a 5% share of global traveller numbers which can easily be doubled with the right approach and every person has a role to play," says Ntshona

AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA

The theme for this year's show is about telling African success stories, and a big part of this will be celebrating the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth with the tourism delegates from all over the continent and the world. The show will also be used to launch the improved Mandela Journey App (available from app stores) which has been especially updated in celebration of the centenary year.

MEC Sihle Zikalala adds, "We call on our people to welcome our visitors with warmth so that when they go back to their respective countries, they become good KZN ambassadors."

Africa's Travel Indaba wish to thank all Durban residents in advance for their enthusiasm to "do tourism"¹, for their hospitality, patience and interest in Africa's biggest and longest running trade show which runs from Monday 7 to Thursday 10 May.

If you'd like to follow the happenings at Africa's Travel Indaba - log onto the Facebook site www.facebook.com/travelindaba or feel free to tweet us @travel_indaba or tag us on Instagram under travelindaba.



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Issued by South African Tourism

¹ The "I Do Tourism" campaign was launched last year at the show and was designed to make the South African public more aware of the importance of the tourism sector.

AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA

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Owned and managed by South African Tourism, Africa's Travel Indaba has established itself as the world's leading African tourism trade show. Africa's Travel Indaba attracts about 7 000 delegates from all over the world. In 2017 more than 1 000 exhibiting businesses from 18 African countries showcased an array of travel and tourism offerings to almost 1 500 local and international travel buyers and shared stories with over 700 media platforms. More than 20 000 business meetings were held over the three-day period, making this one of the most successful business platforms for African tourism.

The 2018, Africa's Tourism Indaba trade exhibition will be held from Tuesday 8 to Thursday 10 May in South Africa at the Durban Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre. Monday 7 May is BONDAY for exhibitor business networking and engagement.