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### TRAVEL NEWS WEEKLY

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# Another LCC take-off planned for 2015

DORINE REINSTEIN

**L**ONG-AWAITED new LCC, Skywise, plans to launch domestic flights as early as the beginning of next year, but under new ownership.

Pak Africa Aviation announced at the end of October it was in the process of purchasing the Air Service Licence (ASL) of Skywise,

which has been struggling to launch flights since mid-2012. The airline was dealt a heavy blow when the Department of Transport cancelled its ASL in April this year because the airline failed to operate before the licence expiry date. An extension of the licence was eventually obtained.

Pak Africa Aviation ceo, **Tabassum Qadir**, told TNW

1time Holdings, which it is still in the process of purchasing, would be the JSE-listed holding company but the LCC would operate under the name of Skywise.

Tabassum said Skywise would begin operating domestic routes in the beginning of 2015, deploying one B737-300 and two A320s. She would not divulge

which routes were being considered but added that regional operations were also on the cards for the end of 2015. Tabassum added that the airline would be a true low-fare carrier but she could not disclose yet what prices to expect on the new routes.

She said Skywise would both retain its name and its original management team. However,

whether the original Skywise management team, consisting of ex-1time founders, **Rodney James**, **Glenn Orsmond**, **Michael Kaminski**, and **Johan Borstlap**, would stay in place, remained to be seen. **Wayne Duvenage**, who also forms part of the current management team, told TNW: "The original management

**To page 2**

## Cathsseta put under administration

DORINE REINSTEIN

THE Department for Higher Education and Training has appointed an administrator to take charge of the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (Cathsseta) administration for the next 12 months and has suspended the original Cathsseta accounting authority.

The decision comes after the Department of Education allegedly commissioned an internal audit draft report by Grant Thornton. The report allegedly contains damning accusations of power abuse and nepotism against Cathsseta ceo, **Mike Tsotetsi**. *City Press* and *South African Labour News* reported on the Grant Thornton investigation earlier this year, saying the report contained evidence

of unofficial payments for school trips to Italy and university fees for Cathsseta board members' children. An unspecified Africa Cup of Nations project that Cathsseta was involved in allegedly led to the disappearance of R10m, the report claims.

A *Government Gazette* last month said the administrator's role would be, among others, to review the terms and conditions of employment of the Cathsseta ceo, cfo and other employees and establish a joint working committee with sector specialist for the good governance of Cathsseta.

A further statement will be released shortly by the administrator to update valuable stakeholders with the way forward.

Cathsseta authorities could not be reached for comment. ■

**Get online this summer**

African Hotels and Adventures (AHA) has unveiled its new website just in time for summer. Not only does the new site now provide agents with far more detailed content – each property is featured on its own page – but it also showcases the group's funky new brand. Visit the site to find out more about the various facilities and services on offer and to take advantage of a range of specials now featured on the site's home page. Showing off their brand new look and feel are **Ruzandri Stoltz**, (marketing manager) and **Graeme Edmond** (national sales manager). Photo: Shannon Van Zyl





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# Investment to take Travel Counsellors to ‘another level’

NATASHA SCHMIDT

**T**RAVEL Counsellors in the UK has sold a stake of the global company to Equistone Partners Europe, a mid-market private equity firm, which is expected “to take the company to another level and accelerate [its] growth”.

Travel Counsellors said in a statement that it envisaged the investment from Equistone to facilitate the management buyout of the business, which will enable the company to further boost the support it offers to its global family of agents and bolster its global buying

power and potential for further overseas expansion.

Founded in 1994 by **David Speakman**, Travel Counsellors has seen 60% growth over the past five years with forecast global sales for the financial year end October 31, 2014 of £424m (R7,5bn).

The business will maintain its existing management team, including md, **Steve Byrne**. David will remain in his role as chairman.

“This is recognition from a superior investment company that it has confidence in the Travel Counsellors business model, what we do and how we do

it,” says gm for South Africa, **Mladen Lukic**. “There will be no significant changes to operations; current management will stay in place, but fresh blood will be introduced into the company.”

As part of the deal, Equistone partner, **Steve O’Hare**, will join the board of the company as a non-executive director. “The additional funding will be used to develop its support to [Travel Counsellors] agents and market-leading software, which is crucial to ensure high levels of service to its growing customer base,” said Steve. ■

# Wilderness sells Malawi stake

**WILDERNESS** Safaris has sold its stake in Wilderness Safaris Malawi to long-time partners **Chris and Pam Badger**, who are now the sole owners.

The new company has been rebranded Central African Wilderness Safaris. Other than the shareholding, no other changes are foreseen.

“Wilderness Safaris remains a major supporter and supplier of this new company and continues to

work jointly with the Badgers in implementing Children in the Wilderness programmes across the country.

Likewise, the Wilderness Wildlife Trust remains a committed supporter of rhino conservation and other work being done under the umbrella of CAWS and we wish the Badgers every success in their next Malawi chapter,” says **Keith Vincent**, Wilderness Safaris ceo.

The Badgers joined Wilderness Safaris in

Botswana in 1986. After several years running expeditions across the Okavango and Chobe ecosystems, they expanded the Wilderness model further to Malawi. In the last 20 years they have created a collection of lodges in Malawi’s most magnificent areas, from the Shire River lowlands of Liwonde National Park to the shores of Lake Malawi and the Nyika Plateau in the north of the country. ■



**TNW**  
TRAVEL NEWS WEEKLY

www.etnw.co.za

Published by  
Travel & Trade Publishing (Pty) Ltd  
Printed by Juka Printing (Pty) Ltd

Phone: (011) 327-4062  
Fax: (011) 327-4094  
E-mail: [tnw@nowmedia.co.za](mailto:tnw@nowmedia.co.za)  
Web: [www.nowmedia.co.za](http://www.nowmedia.co.za)  
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## To the point

**Air New Zealand and Singapore Airlines have confirmed the launch date for their alliance, with codeshare flights going on sale on both airlines’ services between New Zealand and Singapore from September 25 next year. The alliance will see the Star Alliance carriers operating one return service each per day on the Auckland-Singapore route and Singapore Airlines operating a daily return service between Christchurch and Singapore.**

## Another LCC take-off planned

**From page 1**  
team will not participate in the operation of Skywise with Pak Africa. Pak will appoint its own management team.”

According to Wayne, the purchase of Skywise from the original shareholders includes the ASL and

brand as well as the IT developments. He added, however, that the full ownership transfer from the original shareholders to Pak Africa was only partly concluded, and until the conditions from both parties were met, he was unable to comment on the extent

of final ownership of the Skywise brand.

Wayne said the original Skywise model and business plan were right for the South African market but that the airline had failed to take to the skies as a result of an about-turn by one of the funders. ■



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# Cape Town tackles seasonality

WINTER tourism figures reveal that Cape Town is becoming a popular year-round destination. Although visitor numbers were somewhat down for May, the overall average is growing.

According to data from Cape Town Tourism's monthly survey, the city has continued to attract domestic, regional and international visitors during the winter season, April to August 2014. Year-to-date numbers reveal that regional (Africa) visitor arrivals are up by 7,1%,

and international arrivals by 6,6% for the five-month period.

Total arrivals at Cape Town International Airport for April 2014 increased by 8,5%. The airport reported its highest number of visitors for April at 366 205, while August saw 334 274 visitors. May 2014 was the only month in which total arrivals decreased by 2,9% year-on-year, due to a 3,9% drop in domestic arrivals.

In August, domestic arrivals reflected a year-on-year growth of 2,5% and international arrivals,

a 14,1% growth.

The monthly Accommodation Performance Review and Forecast Reports issued by Horwath HTL showed that the highest occupancy level achieved was in April at 67,9%. In terms of Revenue Per Available Room (RevPar) May was the only month with a marginal decrease in occupancy figures, with a 0,5% drop year-on-year. The biggest increase in RevPar was in August 2014, at 24,7%.

According to STR Global's South Africa Hotel Review Report, Cape Town's

average occupancy rate is up 7,5% and the average room rate is up 11,5%. The best performing accommodation types over the winter season in terms of occupancy figures were backpackers and self-catering establishments.

Over the five-month period, domestic visitors made up 49% of the accommodation sector's patrons on average; visitors from Africa, 8%, staying in formal accommodation; and international visitors made up the remaining 43%.

Cape Town Tourism, in its market selection for

2014 to 2017, identified South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Nigeria, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates as key tactical markets to address the issue of seasonality.

The top-five tourist attractions in Cape Town – Cape Point, the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, Robben Island, the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway and the V&A Waterfront – all reported positive performance, with an increase in visitor numbers during the winter season. ■

## Travelport signs agreement with SA regional carrier

TRAVELPORT has announced a full-content agreement with South Africa's commuter and regional carrier, CemAir, effective immediately.

The multi-year agreement provides

Travelport-connected agents access to CemAir's full content, including its web fares.

**Miles van der Molen**, ceo of CemAir, said: "Travelport's extensive, world-wide travel agency

network complements our ambitious growth plans, making it a valued partner and an important distribution channel. We look forward to building a close working relationship with Travelport as we take

our business activities to the next level."

CemAir is the owner and operator of 21 aircraft across Africa and Middle East. As a regional and commuter airline based at OR Tambo International

Airport, CemAir operates a scheduled airline service from OR Tambo to Margate, Plettenberg Bay and Cape Town, as well as regular flights to Kathu (Sishen) in the Northern Cape. ■

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# Rwanda introduces visa fees for SA travellers

FROM November 1, South African passport holders entering Rwanda will be required to pay for a visitor pass not exceeding 30 days.

"Nationals of South Africa, USA, UK, Germany, and Sweden who had been waived entry and tourist visa fees shall get the mentioned visas on payment of the prescribed

visa fee," the directorate general of Immigration and Emigration of the Republic of Rwanda said in a statement.

These nationals can still acquire a visa on arrival but will now have to pay a US\$30 (R325) fee. This can be paid at the immigration desk on entry at Kigali International Airport or at land borders.

Alternatively, visas can be applied for prior to travel at the High Commission in Pretoria.

Also available is the common East African tourist visa at a cost of US\$100 (R1 087), which covers Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya and is valid for up to 90 days for foreign tourists.

For more information, see Travelinfo. ■

# Trafalgar unveils 2015 CostSaver brochure

TRAFALGAR has unveiled its new CostSaver 2015 brochure, featuring 37 guided-tour itineraries that save clients up to 30%.

Trips are from R1 180 per day and include accommodation in quality hotels, a 'Travel Director' or guide, chauffeur-driven coach transportation, breakfast daily, selected dinners and sightseeing.

"Incredible savings, quality hotels, included meals, included must-see sights plus free time and a name clients can trust are what travellers can expect from Trafalgar's 2015 CostSaver programme," says **Theresa Szejwallo**, md of Trafalgar South Africa.

New itineraries include 'Wonders of Turkey,' priced from R13 050pps. The 11-day trip begins and ends in Istanbul, where travellers

visit the Topkapi Palace Museum, Hippodrome, the Blue Mosque and the Grand Bazaar.

In Ankara, there are visits to museums and in Cappadocia to the underground city of Sarhatli, the Pasabagi and the red valley. Clients will spend one night each in Konya, Pamukkale, Izmir and Canakkale.

With 'Regional, Discovery and City Breaks' holidays, travellers explore Europe and Britain through travel styles of their choice. The Spanish Experience, priced from R13 500pps, takes in Madrid, Toledo, Puerto Lapice, Seville, Granada, Valencia, Peniscola and Barcelona on a nine-day trip.

The 'Glimpse of Europe', from R15 000, is a Discovery trip style, starting

and ending in London and visiting the White Cliffs of Dover, Amsterdam, the Rhine Valley, Heidelberg, the Black Forest, Schaffhausen, Lucerne and Paris.

City Break, priced from R8 900pps, spends a week in London and includes accommodation, certain sightseeing and free off-peak travel on central London buses and the Underground for three days.

Trafalgar's early payment discount offers savings of up to R11 150 per couple on 2015 CostSaver guided holidays. The early payment discount will be ending soon, so to qualify for the savings agents must book and pay a R1 000 deposit within seven days of booking with the balance due by January 30, 2015. ■

# AirHeads



A snapshot of the week's airline news

## Air France KLM revises commission

AIR France KLM has revised its commission structure for the travel trade, effective December 1. The airline will reduce commission paid to the trade from 1,01% to 0,01% in South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana.

The airline said in a statement on Travelinfo: "Air France KLM will make no adjustments to the current fare structures as a result of the structural commission changes. The carrier will continue to charge a service fee on direct offline distribution channels."

## Flydubai launches East-African flights

DUBAI-BASED flydubai has expanded in East Africa with flights to Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. Flydubai entered the market in 2009 with flights to Djibouti and in 2011 Addis Ababa became its second East African destination. In 2014, the carrier added six new routes in Africa with flights to Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and three destinations in Tanzania. Flydubai started operating its new Boeing 737-800 fleet on its Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar flights from October 16.

## Virgin Australia adds domestic routes

VIRGIN Australia, an SAA codeshare partner, will introduce three services a week between Darwin and Alice Springs, using a B737, from the end of March. The timing coincides with the opening of the new Virgin Australia lounge in Darwin, which will feature luxury seating, gourmet food and beverage options and views across the airport.

## For the record



IN LAST week's issue of *TNW* (November 5) the article 'Conman targets agents' misleadingly said "the recruiter brought candidates to Cape Town from their home towns". *TNW* would like to clarify that by 'recruiter' the article is not referring to the recruitment company, Quantex Executive Recruitment, but rather the employer. Quantex was in no way involved in the recruitment of agents for the Cape Town company. Rather, they assisted consultants who had fallen victim to the scam by helping them find new and reliable employment. *TNW* apologises for any misunderstanding.

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# The future is Africa – study

**T**HIS is a golden decade for travel, with a great opportunity for travel players to provide more personalised services.

That was one of the conclusions of a thought leadership study on factors shaping the future of travel by Oxford Economics, commissioned by Amadeus.

The bright future of the travel industry in Africa was also the message local gm, **Peter Long**, put to finalists and winners at the technology company's gala awards evening in Sandton last week.

Personalisation was the future, he said. In the Oxford Economics report the conclusion was that the use of

mobile devices by travellers was growing exponentially. Personalisation was key and apps could be tailored to reflect individual contexts such as preferences during certain times of the day or at certain locations.

Peter also showed how the research indicated that travel in the Middle East and Africa was expected to grow at rates that dwarfed developed countries. It was the aviation sector that could be expected to grow the fastest, he said.

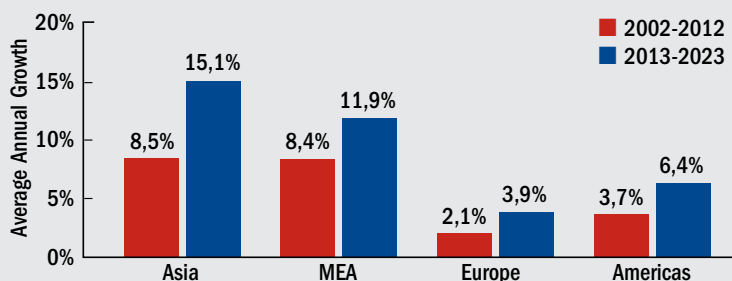
Peter added that while Amadeus was engaged in 48 countries in Africa, South Africa was still clearly the springboard for sub-Saharan Africa. ■

## Winners



The Shape Awards recognise the achievements of business partners in the trade. For the first time, a significant number of the winners were from other countries in Southern Africa. Among the winners were **Morne du Plessis** (Tourvest Travel Services) for IT Innovation and **Pieter du Plooy** of Trip Travel (right) who won the Legend Award for his positive presence in the industry. **Peter Long** is centre.

### Growth in overnight visitor flows by region



Source: Oxford Economics

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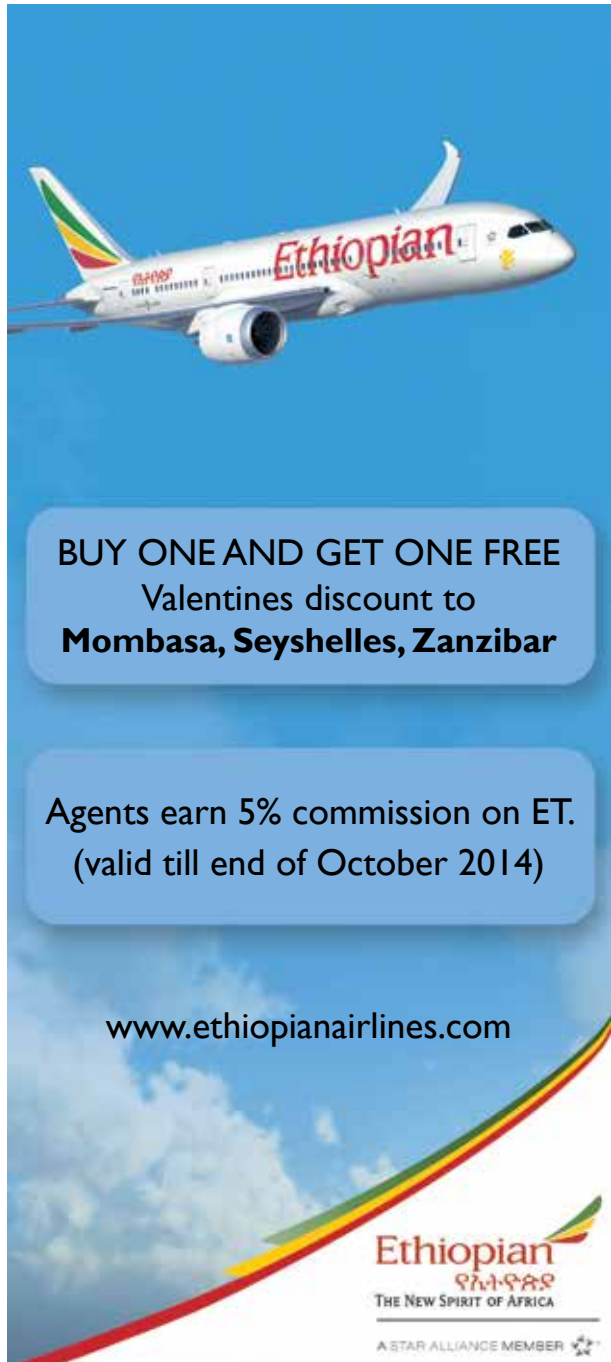
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**Showing support**

Executives from United Airlines recently visited South Africa to acknowledge growing support from local travel agents. "Interest in the US has grown considerably over the past year or so and travel via Europe is on the increase," says Jackie Adami, md of Development Promotions, which represents United Airlines in SA. United has US mainland hubs in Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, New York/Newark, San Francisco and Washington DC and is taking delivery of 35 new Boeing aircraft, including the B787-9, and 32 new Embraer 175 aircraft for United Express. From left: Jackie and Jane Davidson (Development Promotions) welcome United Airlines' Marcel Fuchs (md Europe & offline sales) and Paula Gill-Soper (regional sales manager Middle East & Africa), with Shelley Phillips (Development Promotions).

**Botswana properties face Internet access regulations**

CARO MALHERBE

**B**OTSWANA accommodation providers are under pressure by the Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) to offer Internet access across all properties by August next year.

BOCRA's new guidelines apply to guesthouses, lodges, campsites, motels and hotels and prescribe minimum Internet bandwidth requirements, based on a facility's grading and number of rooms.

BOCRA is consulting with the Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO) to create a standard where non-compliance with the guidelines will affect the hospitality ranking of a property. However, implementation is at the discretion of the BTO. The guidelines prescribe the minimum bandwidth, network security and monitoring measures, maintenance and

upgrading of networks, the availability of IT staff and universal Internet coverage in the facilities.

BOCRA says the hospitality industry can benefit by meeting the needs of guests, whose demand for fast and reliable Internet is growing exponentially.

Founder of World Wide Worx, **Arthur Goldstuck**, said: "The availability of WiFi is going to be a big attraction. People don't mind switching off but they are terrified of being out of touch, especially if they are business decision makers."

However, an accommodation provider in Botswana told *TNW* that, although they already offered free WiFi, they didn't comply with BOCRA's guidelines. "From an industry perspective, the guidelines are good and for the most part practical. They encompass the majority of service areas. However the commercial viability of providing free, universal access in all areas

for the larger hotels could be challenged."

Some tour operators believe the destination will lose its charm of being 'cut-off' from the rest of the world.

**Billy Hare** of Rhino Africa Safaris said: "It's very rare that people will find it acceptable that there is a lodge or hotel anywhere in the world that doesn't have WiFi or Internet connection. Around 80% of our clients are from America, so it is something they expect but, ironically, it is the thing that sets these properties apart and that counts in their favour."

**Chris Roche**, chief marketing officer of Wilderness Safaris, agrees: "We do not, as a general rule, provide Internet access to guests in our camps. We believe that it is a genuine unique selling point to be able to disconnect from the modern world and reconnect with nature, yourself and your family." He added that Internet access was available to guests who requested it. ■

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# SELL MORE ... Victoria Falls



## The Naked Agent

**T**HIS month our mystery shopper contacted travel agents in Bloemfontein with an enquiry for two couples to travel to Victoria

Falls for four days over New Year. Both couples are young, like to have lots of fun and seek a great festive season adventure.

### Sales tip of the month

The winning agent stood out because she shared the customer's holiday interests. She researched the Victoria Falls Carnival to the extent that she could share the customer's excitement. She got to know the customer's needs in

more detail than any of the other agents, providing advice, showing genuine interest and excitement. Remember, if your service does nothing more than an Internet search engine, then a customer will not book with you.

# WINNER

80%

### Chirese Cohn Flight Centre, Mimosa Mall, Bloemfontein

I said that we were looking to go to the Victoria Falls Carnival over New Year and was surprised that the agent didn't hook into this. Her questions remained transactional until I mentioned that we were considering driving, at which point she said it would be a long drive for us. I said we had planned to make it a fun road trip and would share the driving. She responded by saying she would provide two quotes – one with and one without flights. When she asked if we had any hotels in mind, I mentioned that the Kingdom Hotel was featured on the Carnival's website. She encouraged us to use this hotel and explained about visas and yellow fever if we were travelling into Zambia. A quote was promised the same day. When it didn't arrive, I contacted the agent again and she said she had handed my request to a colleague as she had gone home sick. Further, Flight Centre was having problems with gmail accounts, which was why I hadn't received



Chirese Cohn

the request for further information from the new agent, **Chirese Cohn**, who was far more consultative and went over our needs again. She talked at length about the carnival, asking what we knew about it and sharing what she had found. We had a great conversation about the group's likes and dislikes; she asked if we liked adrenalin thrills and chatted

about all the excursions. She offered to send through a list of activities that could be pre-booked, and encouraged us to do as many things as possible during our visit. She then quoted by phone and did a great job. I advised her that the other couple were also making enquiries with Johannesburg-based agents. She said this was not a problem but that she would love to do the booking for me. I was completely hooked into her service. What started as transaction from one agent was saved by another. Without a doubt I would book with this agent.

### STA Travel, Mimosa Mall, Bloemfontein

A friendly agent with a lovely sense of humour took my enquiry and our basic needs were discussed. I mentioned the Victoria Falls Carnival and that the website named the Kingdom Hotel. The agent replied that this was a very popular hotel and a good choice as it was on the Zimbabwe side of the Falls, so we wouldn't need any yellow fever vaccinations. She gave a quick recap and promised a quote the same day. I

was disappointed that I had mentioned a key reason for my visit but that it wasn't probed any further. As promised, I received a quote that day, but there was no phone call or selling of the holiday. No additional, optional excursions were offered, generating little excitement.

40%

### Sure Travel, Milner Road, Baysvillage, Bloemfontein

While the agent was extremely polite and friendly, the consultation lasted no longer than two minutes, with the basic transactional questions being asked. I was excited when she asked if there were any specifications for the area or the hotel and so I mentioned the Victoria Falls Carnival. However, she didn't take the bait to discuss this further and advised that she would email a quote within 24 hours. When I had not received anything in

the promised time frame, I called her. Within five minutes I received a quote and a further one before the close of the business day. Although it included an attachment for excursions in Victoria Falls, there was no selling or bringing to life of the holiday. I did not experience any genuine excitement or interest in my holiday plans.

25%

### Take note!

The purpose of the Naked Agent in this series of 'Sell more...' features is to assess the experience from only a sales skills perspective and not the effectiveness of the travel agency. TNW believes that sales skills are increasingly important to travel agents and, in many cases, improvement in selling skills is the easiest way to increase the prosperity of the agency and its consultants. The Naked Agent is designed to raise awareness of the opportunity and build awareness of the need.

### Our selling-orientated criteria:

10%	Engage the customer by making an excellent first impression – be interested, excited and enthusiastic.
20%	Profile the customer, getting to know their needs in full, their likes, dislikes and prior travels. Use consultative sales techniques, not transactional questions only, and provide advice about the destination.
10%	Hook the customer, preventing their further shopping around, by sounding like an expert.
10%	Match the enquiry to the quote, providing two or three options, ideally within the same day of enquiry.
20%	Sell the holiday ideas and bring them to life. Don't just attach a quote.
5%	Close the sale when you spot buying signals.
15%	Convert the sale by creating a sense of urgency and asking for the booking.
10%	Persist if customers provide a reason why they can't book – attempt to overcome objections.
<b>100%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Agents are scored up to the maximum of the weighted percentages above.	

## Tips for travellers

**1** Keep it short, do it in style. Be brave and try out all the activities. Combine it with a luxury river boat on the Zambezi or a few nights in Chobe. Full board is a bonus as food and drink are expensive.

**Michelle De Gasperi**, Travel Counsellors, Durban

**2** When you visit Victoria Falls during a full moon, the light of the moon through the spray from the Falls produces a lunar rainbow, also called a moonbow.

**Cecilia Roux**, Rustenburg Travel, Rustenburg

**3** To avoid disappointment and to ensure availability, book excursions in advance, especially the elephant-back safari. The sundowner cruise on the Zambezi is a must. If staying on the Zimbabwe side, high tea at the Victoria Falls Hotel is a memorable experience. Pack a raincoat and comfortable walking shoes. In Zambia credit cards are not always widely accepted and high commissions are charged, thus it is advisable to travel with US dollars in cash. In Zimbabwe, cash is king so make sure you can cover your costs during your visit as withdrawing cash from an ATM or bank is not something you can rely on. Traveller's cheques and credit/debit cards are not widely accepted and often incur hefty fees. Bring small denomination notes – small change is rarely available in Zimbabwe.

**Anne Wille**, Flight Specials, Welkom

**4** Definitely make effort to see the Falls from both sides or take a microlight flight over the Falls.

**Karen Hoard**, Sure Giltedge Travel, Bishops College

**5** Try the new red hop-on, hop-off bus. It is quite an experience with an amazing guide.

**Reena Laloo**, Fast Link Travel, Johannesburg

**6** Take old clothes and shoes to trade for curios. Often traders would rather take amenities and clothing over money, as some items are either very expensive to buy in Victoria Falls, or hard to get. Lunch at the Victoria Falls Hotel is always an awesome experience. The gorge swing on the Zimbabwe side is definitely better than the one on the Zambian side. A good open-jaw routing is to fly into Kasane and out of Vic Falls (or vice versa) and combine these two awesome destinations. Sunset cruises on the Chobe River, which teems with wildlife, is an unforgettable experience. Also, if flights into Vic Falls are full, look at flying into Kasane and transferring to Vic Falls.

**Gareth Tiedt**, Tourvest Travel Services, Rivonia

**7** Be prepared for border control formalities – ensure that you have the correct inoculations. Check that your passport is in fact yours once you have completed immigration.

**Anonymous**

**8** The Falls offers a great experience from both sides. Zambia offers the rainforest type of walk down to the Falls and down to the boiling pot with the walk over the bridge. The Zimbabwe side offers a wide open view. Both are not to be missed. Personal tips include remembering a plastic bag for your camera, especially in full flood months and a peaked cap to keep the 'rain' off your glasses.

**Doris Glasspool**, Bedrock Africa Birding, Lusaka

**9** Know the difference between the official and unofficial exchange rates.

**Sharleen Ramcharan**, Uniglobe Travel Pursuit, Greenstone Hill

**10** Malaria precautions – consult your doctor, pharmacist or travel clinic. Make sure you have adequate travel insurance. Don't drink the water – buy bottled water.

**Sonia Van Niekerk**, Travel to Live (in association with eTravel), Port Elizabeth

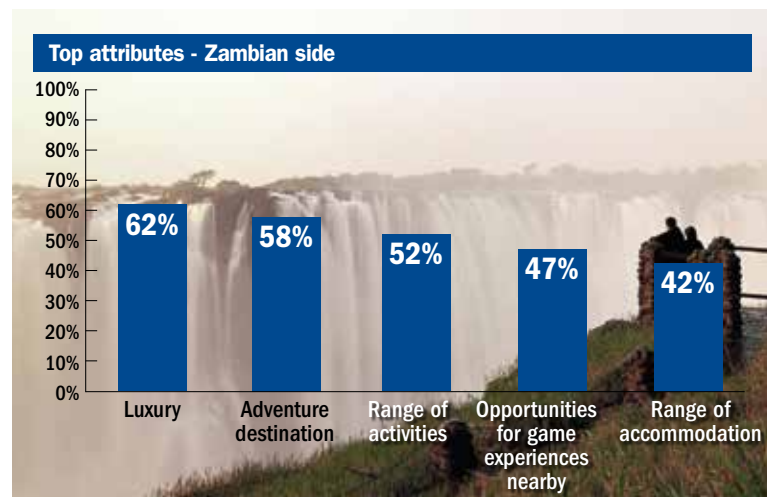
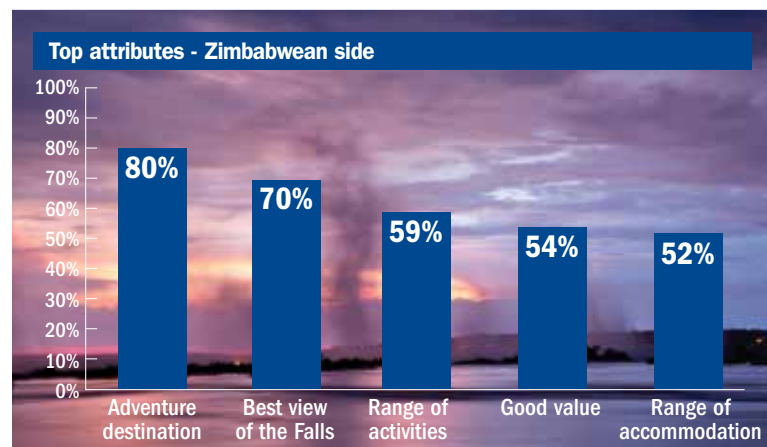
## Two sides to selling the Falls

A SURVEY on selling Victoria Falls to South Africans conducted by eTNW among retail travel agents and wholesale tour operators, revealed differences in selling features of the destination from both the Zambian and Zimbabwean side, as well as a wide opportunity to sell more by combining it with other destinations. The survey was completed by 360 travel agents and tour operators in Southern Africa.

We asked respondents to choose the top five attributes of the Falls from both the Zimbabwean and Zambian sides. In both cases, 'range of activities', 'range of accommodation' and 'adventure

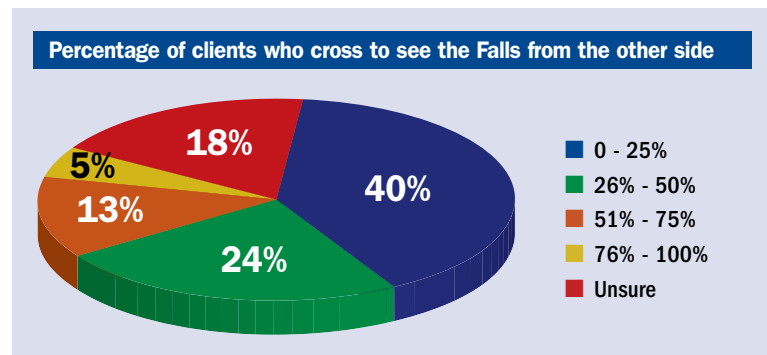
destination' ranked in the top five attributes.

Seventy per cent of respondents ranked Zimbabwe as having the best view of the Falls and 54% rated it as being good value for money. Zambia's strength was indicated in the holidaymakers' experience of luxury, with 62% listing it as an attribute. In addition, the opportunity for game experiences in Zambia was ranked higher than in Zimbabwe. 'Night life' and 'food (restaurants nearby)' were the lowest ranked attributes in both places. 'Security' appeared in the lowest ratings for Zimbabwe, while 'shopping' emerged as a small drawcard for Zambia.

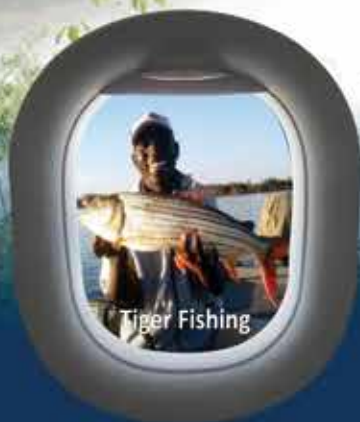


The research indicates that very few clients cross over to see the Falls from the other side (not the side they are staying on). Only 18% of respondents said that more than 50% of their clients took this opportunity, and 18% of respondents were unsure how many of their

clients did. This raises the question of how many clients are actually aware that they can. Cost may be a determining factor, however there is only a charge on the Zimbabwean side. There is no additional charge to see the Falls from the Zambian side.



# HELLO KARIBA.....



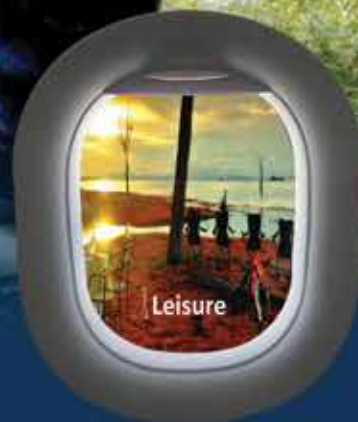
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With effect from the 1st of August, 2014 Air Zimbabwe will be flying to Kariba 3 times a week, as follows:

	FLIGHT NUMBER	DEPART		ARRIVE	
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Wed/Fri/Sun	UM226	Harare	- 0930	Kariba	- 1020
<b>KARIBA/ VICTORIA FALLS</b>					
Wed/Fri/Sun	UM226	Kariba	- 1050	Victoria Falls-	1210
<b>VICTORIA FALLS/ KARIBA</b>					
Wed/Fri/Sun	UM227	Victoria Falls-	1400	Kariba	- 1520
<b>KARIBA/ HARARE</b>					
Wed/Fri/Sun	UM227	Kariba	- 1550	Harare	- 1640

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Victoria Falls office: +263 13 44316/7

or **YOUR TRAVEL AGENT**



\*Terms and Conditions Apply.



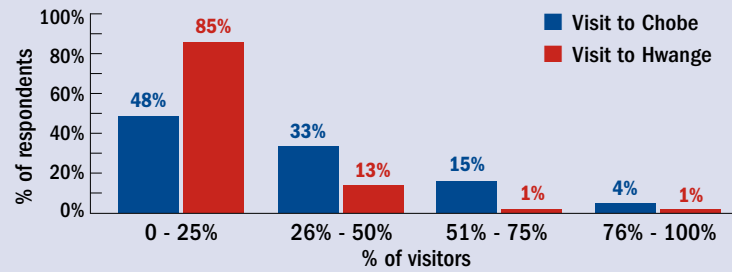
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# SELL MORE VICTORIA FALLS

## Two sides to selling the Falls cont.

### Visitors who combine a trip to the Falls with Chobe and Hwange



Chobe National Park. Photo: Ian Johnson, Abercrombie & Kent

The findings also show that it is very rare for clients to combine their trip to Victoria Falls with a visit to Chobe or Hwange. Only 2% of respondents said more than 50% visited Hwange in combination with the Falls. Chobe emerged as the more popular choice for a combination holiday, with 19% of respondents indicating that over

50% of their clients added it on to a Falls trip. However, the results support the idea that the majority of clients visit the Falls only. This would imply that there is large scope for agents to market combination trips in the area. It is possible that the majority of clients aren't aware or do not think about opportunities beyond seeing the Falls.

## Reference Guide



### Tour operators

#### Sun International Dreams:

- All Dreams consultants have visited the properties in Livingstone and can give a first-hand account and advice.
- All guests staying at the Royal Livingstone or Zambezi Sun have free, unlimited access to the Victoria Falls.
- Dreams pays commission to agents for activities they have pre-booked and pre-paid for their clients.

comprehensive understanding of the destination and its offerings.

- Victoria Falls is an 'adventure capital'. As such, Holiday Tours has a wide offering of activities to suit all tastes.

#### Thompsons Holidays:

- Thompsons Holidays has a satellite office in Victoria Falls.
- In case of emergencies, the 24/7 traveller's care line offers clients peace of mind while travelling.
- As a leading SA provider of quality holidays at competitive prices, Thompsons Holidays has knowledgeable and professional travel specialists to assist with bookings.

#### Holiday Tours:

- Offers live availability at selected properties with special SADC rates. The system lets agents quote, confirm and pay for a booking online without keeping clients waiting.
- Holiday Tours staff have a



Cresta Sprayview Pool by night. Photo: Cresta Hotels

## Accommodation

#### African Sun

- Owns three properties in Victoria Falls – The Victoria Falls Hotel, Elephant Hills Resort and The Kingdom at Victoria Falls.
- The Victoria Falls Hotel, popularly known as 'the grand old lady', is a member of exclusive Leading Hotels of the World and is one of three ISO-accredited hotels in Zimbabwe.
- A combination holiday with Hwange National Park is a possibility, with Hwange Safari Lodge an hour's drive from the Falls.

#### Cresta Hotels and Resorts

- Cresta Sprayview – Victoria Falls is 1,4km from the Victoria Falls Rain Forest entrance and 20 minutes from the airport.
- Set on three hectares, it has 60 standard rooms, three suites and two family rooms. Alfresco dining and the large swimming pool make the hotel a relaxing retreat for families.
- Amenities such as satellite TV, room service, conference facilities, a business centre and WiFi in public areas are available.

## Airlines:

#### SAA:

- SAA offers seamless connections with its international, regional and domestic networks. SAA is the only airline operating to Victoria Falls that allows passengers to check their baggage through to all SAA connections, the Star Alliance network and interline carriers.

to JNB and last in from JNB on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

- Generous baggage allowances of 40kg in economy class and 50kg in business class.
- Offices at Victoria Falls airport and in town.
- 24-hour contact line.

#### Flyafrika:

- Flyafrika.com is the only low-fare airline operating to Victoria Falls, operating four weekly flights between Johannesburg and Victoria Falls.
- Offers the lowest fares in the market – from R399 (one way). There are no fuel surcharges. Airport charges of around US\$50 (R550) are not included in the fare.

#### Air Zimbabwe:

- Daily flights to Victoria Falls from Harare; three flights a week linking Harare-Kariba-Victoria Falls return; flies JNB-VFA direct on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays; flies Bulawayo-Victoria Falls every Saturday and Victoria Falls-Bulawayo (Saturdays and Sundays).
- Operates the first flight from VFA

## Be part of the fun at the Vic Falls Carnival

THOMPSONS Holidays, the only tour operator in Johannesburg working with the organisers of Victoria Falls Carnival, is offering a special package for travellers. Priced from R38 103, the package includes return flights to Livingstone from Johannesburg on British Airways; return airport-hotel transfers; four nights at the three-

star The Kingdom or Elephant Hills at Victoria Falls with breakfast daily.

Also included is a two-day pass to the Jameson Vic Falls Carnival, including after parties on December 30 and New Year's Festival on December 31.

The offer is valid for travel from December 28 to January 1.

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## SELL MORE VICTORIA FALLS

# New airport will boost tourism

CHANA BOUCHER

TRAVEL to Victoria Falls is on an upswing, say local tour operators and suppliers, and the investment in developing the country's tourism offering is going to help.

According to Air Zimbabwe's pr manager, **Shingai Dhlwayo**, Victoria Falls Airport Terminal project is expected to be complete by July, and will result in VFA taking a central role in tourism in the region. "The airport will be able to cater for wide-bodied aircraft and will offer 24-hour operations."

She adds that Victoria Falls offers tourists a rich itinerary, including not just the Falls but also the opportunity to get close to the Big Five.

**Tiali Tiali**, spokesperson for SAA, says the new terminal at Victoria Falls airport will be used for international flights from December. With the expansion, which was initiated by the Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe in February 2013, the airport will be able to handle some 1,5m passengers a year in five years' time.

"SAA and other airlines will now be able to increase capacity to Victoria Falls as the airport will be able



**Caren Parkinson**

to accommodate aircraft such as Airbus A340s, Boeing 777s and Boeing 747s. The next few years will confirm Victoria Falls as the hub of regional tourism, with remarkable tourism experiences and locations surrounding it. The new airport will also create many jobs and will do so further as arrivals grow, hotel occupancies increase and the local and national economies benefit," says Tiali.

According to **Zahedah Bhorat**, product manager at Holiday Tours, Victoria Falls has changed over the years. "From being a hot spot to resembling a ghost town within a decade, things are looking up again. Bookings are coming in and the destination is reverting to its old glory," she adds.

Zahedah predicts that the destination will continue to get busier as it caters for any budget, taste and adrenaline level. She adds that people living in the area are optimistic and their friendliness and eagerness for tourists will ensure the growth in the long term.

**Angela Wood**, gm – marketing, Thompsons Holidays, agrees, and says good numbers of visitors are travelling to Victoria Falls.

"We believe that in the next five years Zimbabwe tourism and the destination will rapidly turn a corner and become one of the positive growth destinations in Africa."

The continued growth and development expected in the area, says **Stacey Barnett**, sales and marketing manager for Sun International Dreams, will continue to ensure that Victoria Falls remains an attractive and competitive option for MICE, corporate and leisure travel.

"With the opening of the new Victoria Falls airport next year, Zimbabwe's increased focus on tourism and our low-fare model, we will see Victoria Falls becoming a hot destination," says **Caren Parkinson**, marketing manager of flyafrica.com.

## New restaurant at Vic Falls jump site

WILD Horizons is to open a new restaurant at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. The Bistro On The Edge is located at the current Wild Horizons 'Lookout' jump site, on the edge of the Batoka Gorge, overlooking the Victoria Falls Bridge.

The restaurant is expected to open on December 31 and will offer breakfast, lunch and a cocktail menu.

The Wild Horizons highwire activities, such as the Gorge Swing and Vic Falls Canopy Tour, will continue to operate from the same

location, enabling jumpers and their travel companions to enjoy modern, Mediterranean cuisine and drinks while watching the activities.

Groups, individuals and locals can make use of the new restaurant and, unlike in the past, self-drive customers will also be welcome and their vehicles accommodated in the newly built car park at the facility.

There will be free WiFi and regular live acoustic musicians to entertain guests and jumpers.

### Did you know?

Air Zimbabwe was recently voted the Best Regional Airline by

Association of Zimbabwe Travel Agents (AZTA). The award comes at a time when Air Zimbabwe is in competition with British Airways Comair, South African Airways, South African Express and other players who are plying regional routes.

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The Royal Livingstone. Photo: Sun International

## Book Dreams packages!

SUN International Dreams' specials for Royal Livingstone and Zambezi Sun are only valid until November 30, so book them before they expire.

The packages include return flights between Johannesburg and Livingstone; return airport transfers to the property; four nights' accommodation with breakfast daily; travel insurance; Dreams travel bag; free and unlimited access to the Victoria Falls; park fees and more.

Royal Livingstone is on offer from R10 765pps, and Zambezi Sun from R8 320pps. Both prices exclude airport taxes of around R3 195 per person.

accommodation with breakfast daily; travel insurance; Dreams travel bag; free and unlimited access to the Victoria Falls; park fees and more.

## Special offer from Holiday Tours

HOLIDAY Tours is offering a special Victoria Falls package, valid from now until February 28.

It includes return flights from Johannesburg to Livingstone on British Airways; approximate airport

taxes; return airport-hotel cross-border transfers and three nights' accommodation at The Kingdom or Elephant Hills in a standard room with breakfast daily; the package is from R7 259 per person sharing.



## Visit the Falls, take a friend!

Grab a friend and take advantage of flyafrika's special companion fares for travel agents. The airline is inviting the trade to experience its product first hand while enjoying a trip to either Vic Falls or Harare. Fares for both the traveller and their companion start from R330 one-way (excluding taxes) and will run indefinitely. Sharing the spellbinding African scenery are flyafrika's **Adrian Hamilton-Manns** (ceo) and **Nellita Scholtz** (sales manager).

Photo: Shannon Van Zyl.

## Discounts and gifts at Cresta Sprayview

CRESTA Sprayview – Victoria Falls is offering a 15% discount on accommodation from now until December 20. In addition, children under 12 sharing with their parents stay free, paying only for meals.

December also comes with some

gift-giving. Kids under 12 will have a local gift surprise this December, as will senior citizens. Members of the travel industry can take advantage of a complimentary bottle of wine (remember to advise at the time of reservation). ■



## The Kingdom Hotel

Includes:

Return airfare to Livingstone ex Johannesburg. Return cross border airport hotel transfers. 3 nights' accommodation in a standard room including breakfast. Approximate airport taxes of R 3409.

Valid 12 November to 23 December 2014

Block out 27 November 2014

ex JHB from **R7 329** pps for 3 nights

ex DUR from **R8 829** pps for 3 nights

ex CPT from **R9 169** pps for 3 nights

**Pay 2 nights, Stay 3 nights**

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Births, deaths, marriages, promotions – we want to know! Please fax or e-mail TNW's Debbie Badham, at debbieb@nowmedia.co.za or (011) 327 4094.



On October 29, The Holiday Factory celebrated the opening of its stylish and colourful new premises at 345 Rivonia Rd, Rivonia, with a cocktail function and the glitterati of local travel were there in force and in a festive mood! Pictured here from The Holiday Factory are (from left): **Adrian Hollis** (financial director); **Jackie Turnbull** (md); and **Matthew Fubbs** (sales director). Photo:

**Open for business!**



Club Travel recently organised an educational to Turkey, with visits to Ephesus, Aya Sofya and the Blue Mosque to name a few. Taking in the ruins at the Acropolis of Pergamum are (from left) **Sanet Goosen** (Club Travel Zoolake); **Janitha Van Der Watt** (Travelshop); **Zannette Boom** (Centurion Travel); **Hanri Van Lill** (Indaba Travel); and **Stacey-Lee Stewart** (Club Travel).

**Travels in Turkey**



## Over the Rainbow

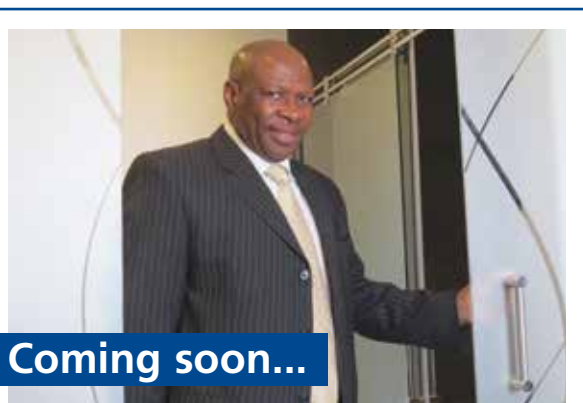
TRAVEL consultant, **Lee-Ann Baines** recently published her first novel, *Over the Rainbow*. If you would like to access a copy of the novel, please contact Lee-Ann directly at lee-ann.baines@renniestravel.com.

## Appointments

■ **Kate Selwood** has been appointed legal officer at the City Lodge Hotel Group.



■ Victoria Falls Safari Club has appointed new manager, **Augustine Maungwe**. Augustine recently moved back to Zimbabwe from Pietermaritzburg where he was front of house guest relations manager at the exclusive seven-star Karkloof Safari Spa.



**Coming soon...**

A roof-wetting celebration was held by contractors for the 149-room City Lodge Hotel Waterfall City on October 29. The hotel will soon be handed over to City Lodge Hotels for the furniture and fittings to be installed. It is expected to open its first rooms in mid-December with the rest coming on stream early in 2015. The new hotel becomes the first City Lodge to have been developed with a choice between rooms with baths and showers, and rooms with showers only. City Lodge Hotel Group chairman, **Bulelani Ngcuka**, checks out a brand-new en-suite bathroom at the soon-to-be-opened City Lodge Hotel Waterfall City.

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**Top jobs in Gauteng this week:**

**Payroll Manager**  
North. Strong, reliable team player sought by highly rated TMC! Management skills & relevant qual a must! Sal to R35 000 ctc.

**Sales Manager**  
North. Sales hunter sought by est T/O with excellent b2b sales in the wholesale travel industry! Must be a deal closer! Sal to R30 000 ctc.

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## Pick of the week

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### Holiday Development Manager - Kampala, Uganda

**Quantex Recruitment Group**  
Well-established, award-winning company looking for 7+ years corporate & leisure consulting experience. Prior team management & sales experience essential. RNeg.  
Email: lee@quantex.co.za

### Tours Team Leader - CPT: Southern Suburbs

**Quantex Recruitment Group**  
Independent & strategic thinker needed to lead successful Sales & Marketing teams. Prior travel industry & team management experience essential. R25000.  
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### Corporate Travel Consultants (Intermediate & Senior) - Pretoria

**Professional Career Services**  
Matric, travel qualification, MS Office and Galileo efficient. Must have Corp exp. Salary: Neg based on experience.  
Email: candicecv@pcs-sa.co.za

### Junior Inbound consultant - Non AA - Sandton

**Professional Career Services**  
Ticketing, Costing sheets. FIT's and groups. 2-3 years' experience in tour operations. Attention to detail. Afrikaans & English. R8000-R10000ctc neg.  
Email: nonocv@pcs-sa.co.za

### Roving Consultant - Cape Town

**Lee Botti & Associates**  
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### Front of House Supervisor - Durban

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### Corporate Travel Manager - Cape Town

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### Call Centre Agent - Tygervalley

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Virgin welcomes Carla

Virgin Atlantic has announced that **Carla da Silva** will be joining the airline as country manager, South Africa from January 2015. Carla has a wealth of experience, most recently as regional manager Southern Africa and Latin America for Air Mauritius. She was previously head of global sales and distribution at SAA.

# Lack of manpower ruins CPT cruise call

CARO MALHERBE

**P**ASSENGERS arriving at Table Bay Harbour, Cape Town, on October 28 aboard MSC Cruises' *MSC Opera*, were delayed for hours because there were not enough customs officials on duty when a cruise ship docked.

"As far as I know it was an issue of manpower," Western Cape Minister of Economic Opportunities, **Alan Winde**, told TNW. "It's not as if these ships are arriving out of the blue. There is a plan; we know when they've booked, when they are docking and, quite frankly, we need to actually know how many people want to come ashore beforehand."

The ship was travelling from Southampton to Cape Town and carried international and SA passengers.

Alan said many cruise lines took care of Home Affairs documentation on board before arriving at a destination. "If you know you're going to be going on shore at some port, even the day before, you've put your name down, you do it on board

before you even leave."

**Allan Foggitt**, MSC Cruises SA director, confirmed that there were four officials with computers to process documentation and that it became evident after the vessel had arrived that more officials would be needed. "They managed to find an additional 10 [officials] to assist manually but by then the damage was done. There is no doubt that the four computers processed passengers very quickly and efficiently but with the volume of passengers disembarking and embarking, there was never a chance of coping."

Allan said that last season calls had been handled satisfactorily by 10 to 14 officials. "The problem is largely related to the manpower assigned to the task. There are 2 100 passengers arriving and 2 100 passengers departing in a period of maximum eight hours so taking into account the requirements for customs and immigration clearance, sufficient manpower must be assigned to the task or it won't matter if we had the

best facility in the world – it would still gridlock."

"It is really unacceptable that we don't have sufficient manpower to deal with 2 000 passengers wanting to visit us, spend their money in our country and go on tours that they've booked, and they can't get through the process. We can't afford that," commented Alan.

"Hopefully this was an isolated incident because of the lack of thought given to the task but if more manpower is not assigned for future calls we will definitely have a repeat of the problem, which reflects very poorly on Cape Town and also on the shipping company involved," said Allan.

The Western Cape Department of Economic Opportunities has called for a meeting with the Waterfront, Cape Town Tourism, the ports authorities and with Home Affairs to discuss the issue.

TNW had contacted the Department of Home Affairs for comment on numerous occasions since Wednesday morning but had not received a response by the time of publication. ■

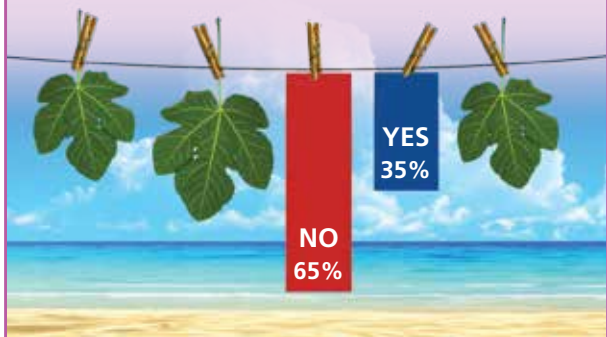
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The naked truth

KwaZulu Natal has officially approved the application for a nudist-friendly beach at Mpenjati, near the Blue Flag Trafalgar Beach.

Do you think South Africa should have more nudist-friendly beaches?



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## Voyager to upgrade system, services unavailable

ON NOVEMBER 22 and 23 Voyager will be deploying an upgraded version of its loyalty management system.

As a result, during this period, no SAA Voyager transactional and administrative services will be available at any touch

points, including the service centre, town offices, online and the airports.

Voyager has asked that members finalise all Voyager-related transactions and travel arrangements prior to the system enhancement period in order to avoid disruptions.

Voyager members planning to take an award flight during this period, or the week thereafter, are advised to have their awards and tickets issued by November 21.

Normal services will resume on November 24. ■

## Asata disappointed at AF KLM commission cut

ASATA ceo, **Otto de Vries**, says while it is not Asata's mandate to get involved in commercial agreements between travel agents and airlines, Asata has noted with disappointment the decision by Air France KLM to revise its SA trade commission structure from 1,01% to 0,01% on December 1.

"In a market where travel agents deliver around 80% of all airline sales, it is astounding that airlines still do not appreciate and reward this effective distribution channel. In no other industry are the

biggest sales channels shown this level of disdain for their efforts," said Otto.

"To add insult to injury, this announcement comes off the back of a massive strike action in which the same travel agents stepped in to assist thousands of affected Air France passengers, at no cost to the airline." He added that, as the industry representative body, Asata would have appreciated the courtesy of engagement with AF KLM prior to the airline choosing to implement a change of

policy of this nature.

Otto added that Asata would be looking specifically at the impact of actions like these on its members and assessing future scenarios to equip members to review their current business models and prepare for changes in the industry.

Air France KLM said the airline acknowledged that the decision would be "a process of change" and the airline would ensure the transition be "managed in the most efficient way possible". ■