

# TNW



## TRAVEL NEWS WEEKLY

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# Asata tackles transparency

NATASHA SCHMIDT

ASATA has reviewed its terms of reference, amending the requirement of members to submit audited or chartered accountant reports instead of annual financial statements that now include special purpose audits, with the aim of addressing the issue of transparent pricing.

The amendment was voted in at Asata's 2015 AGM.

**"This amendment does not only address an industry issue; it is to ensure our members comply with the law."**

The special purpose audit should include verification that there are no mark-ups on third-party taxes; that the booking class charged to the customer matches the booking made; and that the invoice issued to the customer is a valid tax invoice in terms of the criteria required by SARS.

Consideration was also being given to the issue of "possible tender fraud" as it related to TMCs that discount service

fees, hiding these charges elsewhere in the ticket, in order to win corporate and government accounts, said Asata ceo, **Otto de Vries**.

"This amendment does not only address an industry issue; it is to ensure our members comply with the law. Legal opinion was sought from two senior counsels about the degree of transparency required by travel agents with regard to pricing. Marking up of surcharges, including taxes, airport taxes and other fees imposed on airlines by government authorities, is in direct conflict with the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act."

Otto added that, should Asata find irregularities in audited reports, the association will engage with the agency, offering it the opportunity to correct the issue within a reasonable time frame. If, after review, the association finds that the agency has not complied, Asata will take disciplinary action and the agency runs the risk of being expelled.

"We are taking this matter very seriously as it's about promoting professionalism in the travel industry," he said. ■



## Magical Myanmar!

Trafalgar has added Myanmar to its 2016 Guided Holiday programme. "We are delighted to be offering Myanmar – a destination that is on many travellers' bucket lists," says **Theresa Szejwallo**, Trafalgar md. The operator now offers 14 itineraries to Asia, including Japan, China, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong and Singapore. Getting excited about the new destination are (from left): **Bavisha Devchand** (Trafalgar, direct reservations consultant) and **Bronwyn Strydom** (Trafalgar marketing manager). Photo: Shannon Van Zyl

## Opinion: DHA kills tourism super cycle

DAVE MARSH

SOUTH Africa, which missed out on the commodities super cycle, is now also missing the tourism super cycle.

Calculations by Grant Thornton in its report for TBCSA on the cost of

the regulations did not include the tourism jobs windfall, which South Africa should have experienced as a consequence of the depreciated rand.

Since the end of June last year, tourists from Europe find their battered euro still goes 9% further

when buying rands. Yet the latest stats from Statistics South Africa show numbers from Germany dropped 12% in June compared with the previous year.

UK tourists today find the rand 19% more competitive than in June last

year yet their visitor numbers are down 8% this year.

Tourists from the USA today can buy 32% more rands with their dollar than 15 months ago. Based on the elasticity of price and demand,

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# Fastjet delays Zambia and Zimbabwe launches

DORINE REINSTEIN

**F**ASTJET has delayed the start of operations in Zimbabwe and Zambia to mid-November and early December respectively, as the airline has downgraded its financial forecast for the year 2015. The airline had hoped to launch operations earlier this year.

“The nett effect of the delays in the opening of new routes has resulted in all of the start-up costs for Zimbabwe and Zambia plus the costs of doubling the fastjet fleet being incurred in 2015, with little of the

corresponding income now expected to flow before 2016,” said ceo, **Ed Winter**.

Weak African currencies are also expected to impact on Fastjet’s results. The Tanzanian shilling exchange rate has deteriorated against the US dollar, with a sharp decline starting in April.

“Although this did not initially have a significant effect on our revenues, a combination of this and a tightening in government spending in the months ahead of the elections scheduled for October 25 have caused a significant downturn in our revenue

per passenger,” Ed said.

Fastjet’s interim results for the six months ended June 30 showed significant improvements, including revenues that were up for the first six months of the year from US\$19 million (R262,37m) to US\$31,5m (R435m), as passenger numbers grew by 56%.

However weak African currencies and the delay of route development resulted in the board downgrading its forecast for the full year 2015.

However, it is confident the airline will meet its expectations for 2016. ■

## Rubes® By Leigh Rubin



## BA reduces CPT flights for winter 2016

BRITISH Airways will cancel two of its weekly services between London Heathrow and Cape Town International Airport from March 27 for the duration of the South African winter season.

Flight BAO45 LHR-CPT has been cancelled on Thursdays and Saturdays, while return flight BA044 has been cancelled on Fridays and Sundays.

The new flight schedule will see BA0058 depart Cape Town at 19h30 from Sunday to Friday to arrive in London at 06h15. On Saturdays, BAO058 will depart Cape Town at 20h20 to arrive in London Heathrow at 07h15 next day, and BA0042 will depart Cape Town at 21h50 to arrive in London at 08h30 next day.

A BA representative said the frequency reduction followed extensive analysis which revealed the level of demand for the Cape Town to London schedule.

“We frequently make seasonal adjustments to our routes to reflect the level of demand on destinations depending on the time of year,” the representative said. ■

## 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)  
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Address: Now Media Centre,  
32 Fricker Road, Illovo Boulevard,  
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PO Box 55251, Northlands,  
2116, South Africa.



Audit Bureau of Circulations  
of South Africa  
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## Gina Richter selects the top specials from Travelinfo

- **Club Med.** Early-booking bonus – book by October 15 and save up to 10% per person. Offer is valid for travel between November 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016.
- **Legacy Hotels & Resorts.** Centurion Lake Hotel agent special – R680 per single room and R870 per double room per night. Special includes breakfast and is valid until December 31. Applicable to Asata- and SATSA-registered agents only.
- **Condor.** Special W-class return fare ex-CPT to Frankfurt from R8 580,72, fully inclusive. Offer is saleable until December 31 and also available to 20 destinations in Europe and beyond.
- **Azure Travel.** Five-day ‘Taste of Turkey’ packages are available from R9 255pp sharing. Price includes accommodation, tours and transportation. International flights are not included. Tour visits Istanbul and Cappadocia. Special is valid for travel until November 9.
- **Just Holidays.** Spend ten days enjoying Namibia’s best landscapes from R12 399pp sharing. Rate includes visits to Sossusvlei, the Fish River Canyon and Swakopmund, 10 days’ car rental with unlimited mileage, post-tour accommodation in Windhoek and breakfast daily. Special valid for travel until October 31.



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# Sha'p Sha'p!

Local is lekker! City Lodge Hotels has 52 hotels across all SA provinces. Here is the latest news in domestic tourism.



**Sha'p-sha'p:** (Sharp-sharp) (a)  
A South African term used to express  
our good health and well being.

## Cooking round the campfire at Kwandwe

**K**WANDWE Private Game Reserve in Grahamstown has launched a three-day campfire cooking experience, where guests learn to cook authentic South African braai dishes.

Kwandwe's head chefs will teach guests how to prepare and make a three-course meal by the campfire, using impala, kudu, ostrich, warthog and gemsbok meat. Guests will also learn how to make boerewors.

A new tarred 2,1km runway on the reserve allows short-range aircraft to land at the reserve, reducing travelling time for guests.

Kwandwe has nine Main lodge suites, six Ecce lodge suites, a three-bedroom villa and a swimming pool.



Guests learn to cook an authentic braai.

Photo: Kwandwe Private Game Reserve

## Sodwana Bay to be redeveloped

THE Sodwana Bay section of iSimangaliso Wetland Park in KwaZulu Natal will be redeveloped over the next 24 months.

The upgrades, which will cost R72 million, include a new visitor reception and gate complex and new parking, craft markets and recreational areas for day visitors. The redevelopment programme will also remove all alien plants

and promote the recovery and growth of indigenous vegetation.

iSimangaliso's business director, **Terri Castis**, said: "We have a responsibility to conserve this unique and important park for the global community and, as such, we are managing this world-renowned icon, not only for the benefit of this generation but for our children and our children's children."

## Slide the City!

SLIDE the City, in partnership with *Huisgenoot*, *YOU*, *DRUM* and Nedbank, is bringing a 304m slide to South African cities for the summer months.

The slide has three lanes, has a decline of between 12m and 45m and takes almost a minute to slide down.

The slide will be in Port Elizabeth on December 12-13 on Baakens Street; in Knysna on December 16 on Vigilance Drive; in Cape Town on December 19-20 and February 6-7; in KwaZulu Natal on January 9-10 in Ballito/Stanger; in Pretoria on January 16-17; in Johannesburg on January



23-24 on William Nicol Drive and in Bloemfontein on January 30-31.

The locations for Cape Town, Pretoria and Bloemfontein are still to be confirmed. ■

## uShaka Marine World launches new adventure

USHAKA Marine World has launched a new Rope Adventure.

The course consists of a series of rope bridges, obstacle courses, climbing nets, zip lines and crossings that are suitable for all ages.

The trail starts from the Village Walk and travels over the scenic Sea World and uShaka's signature phantom

ship. There are two courses – a less adventurous one suitable for children and a second for thrill seekers. Both courses take 45 minutes to complete. The children's course consists of 18 elements, including two short zip lines over the rocky reef and turtle enclosure tanks. The second course includes 17 elements

that are more challenging, including a double zip line over the top deck of the ship and over the snorkel lagoon to the end point at Village Walk. Each participant wears a full-body climbing harness and is attached to a safety cable.

Trained guides are on hand to instruct on the use of the equipment and to monitor and assist participants.



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# MEET ISTANBUL

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## JOHANNESBURG

FLT NBR	START	END	DAYS	DEP	ARR
TK 042	26.10.2015	27.03.2016	1234567	IST 00:50	10:40 JNB
TK 043		26.03.2016	1234567	JNB 19:45	05:20 IST +1

# Australian visas – prepare for bottleneck

THE Australian High Commission in South Africa is warning agents of a bottleneck of visa applications over the next few months, leading up to the festive season.

“We receive 50% more visa applications in October and November. It is a very challenging time for us, with a much bigger volume of visa applications than normal. We have outlined a number of requests that will help to make visa processing as easy as possible in the next few months,” the High Commission said in a statement.

Agents are advised to avoid these common reasons for delays:

- Lodge the visitor visa application well in advance of your date of travel. The visa office is currently at approximately one month for processing visa applications. During the peak period, it is likely that this time may be extended further.
- Please ensure that visitor visa applications are lodged complete, with all required supporting documentation. You can find checklists for visitor visa applications here: <https://au.tlscontact.com/za/>

JNB/page.php?pid=visa\_info

- If you are lodging the visitor visa application online, you must upload the supporting documents at the time of visa application. “This particular issue is causing us a significant amount of extra work in having to request additional information, instead of being able to finalise the visa on the spot,” the Commission said.
- If the client is under the age of 18 years, ensure the required additional documents are submitted. All children under the age of 18 require an unabridged birth certificate. If they are travelling with one parent or without parents, a signed and completed 1229 form and certificated copies of identification documents for both parents are required. The form is available here: <https://www.border.gov.au/Forms/Documents/1229.pdf>
- If a medical examination is required in order to be granted a visitor visa, please arrange to do this before you lodge the visa application. For detailed information, visit [Travelinfo](http://Travelinfo). ■



## In the spotlight

The Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) hosted its first South African road show last month. The travel trade were treated to a unique event, showcasing all the flavours of Abu Dhabi and its diversity as a stopover, cruising, cultural, sports, family, wellness, shopping and halal tourism destination. Pictured at the Johannesburg event, held at The Maslow, are: **Johnathan Hollard** (Trade and MICE sales executive); **Jackie Adami** (Development Promotions); **Jean Martins** (Country manager TCA Abu Dhabi South Africa); **Jane Davidson** (Development Promotions); and **Hamad Al Hosani** (Promotions executive – MEA Unit). Photo: Natasha Schmidt

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TN7/2019



## Lufthansa to launch high-speed WiFi in flight

LUFTHANSA will offer broadband WiFi on its short- and medium-haul flights from next year.

“Having equipped all planes in the Lufthansa intercontinental fleet with our successful FlyNet system, we are the first airline in Europe to offer guests an Internet surfing experience boasting the same quality and speed as they are used to at home,” says **Carsten Spohr**, chairman of the executive board of Deutsche Lufthansa AG. The service will enable

passengers to make the most of broadband Internet access on their own mobile devices. They will not only be able to use simple email services but also superior applications, even streaming. Passengers will also be able to use their mobile phones to send and receive text messages and for the transfer of data based on their own mobile phone contract. Telephone calls on board, however, will still not be allowed due to customer preference. ■

## New conference centre opens at Lesedi

**L**ESEDI Cultural Village in Lanseria has launched its new conference facility, which can accommodate up to 450 delegates. The facility can also be divided into five breakaway rooms that can accommodate 20 to 30 people each.

“Moringa can accommodate multiple styles of conferencing, including standard conferencing needs and unique cultural conferencing,” says aha md, **Neil Bald**. He adds that the new facility offers traditional cuisine to enhance the unique experience of guests. “We like to celebrate local people and we support small ventures and farmers in the area by letting them supply us with produce,” says Neil. Some of the unique cultural entertainment offerings at Lesedi include Zulu drumming, gumbboot dancing, local beer making and other team-building activities.

Lesedi features another existing conference venue that seats 100 people. A variety of accommodation options is also available,



Travel trade professionals were recently invited to attend the launch of Moringa – a new conference centre at Lesedi. Pictured here (from left): **Xolani Ntomebla** from Tourvest and **Stacey-Lee Louters** from African Chapter. Photo: Shannon Van Zyl.

with a total of 38 en-suite rooms in five different cultural villages, each depicting a particular culture in a unique way. The cultures depicted are Zulu,

Xhosa, Pedi, Basotho, and Ndebele. Delegates can also make use of the many features on offer, including an open-air boma, a theatre, a shebeen and a bar. ■

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 DAY 7 Xi'an - Full day sightseeing  
 DAY 8 Xi'an - Shanghai  
 DAY 9 Shanghai - Full day sightseeing  
 DAY 10 Shanghai - Day at leisure  
 DAY 11 Shanghai depart  
 DAY 12 Johannesburg arrive

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 04 Jan - R13 990, 11 Jan - R12 990, Single room supplement - R2 490

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# Budget



# travel

As price wars rage on, travellers are benefiting from added value and lower fares. Darise Foster reports.

## Low fares drive domestic travel up

**E**ARLIER this year, Travelstart released results of a study indicating that new entrants to the domestic aviation market, FlySafair and Skywise, had driven down the cost of air tickets on the routes they operate. According to the study, there was also a significant increase in the number of people flying domestically since these airlines took off in October 2014 and March 2015 respectively.

"We have found the demand for air travel has definitely increased and this is largely because it is much cheaper to fly now," says Travelstart head of communications, **Russell Jarvis**. On the Johannesburg-Durban route, for instance, in the period January-June 2015, capacity has increased by 49% compared with January-June 2014.

"When we started a year ago, we had two aircraft. We have now added a fifth," FlySafair ceo, **Elmar Conradie**, told *TNW* at a recent briefing. "In addition, with the introduction of our new Cape Town-Durban, Cape Town-East London, Johannesburg-Durban



"The competitive airfares are allowing corporates to save on their direct costs within their travel programme at the point of sale."

Kim Parker

and Johannesburg-East London routes, we will be connecting all the dots on the domestic grid. What we hope is that the introduction of these new destinations will drive the fares down on those destinations where we

haven't been flying," he says.

However, another Travelstart study has questioned whether airlines would be able to sustain the low fares currently being enjoyed by passengers. Russell argues that these low fares could be detrimental to the growth of the commercial aviation industry.

"When you consider that most airlines need to be selling a seat for at least R900 to R1 000 one way and achieve a load factor of 70% to 80% on each flight that takes off just to make a marginal return, it stands to reason that the low ticket prices available at the moment will soon be a thing of the past," says Russell.

Meanwhile, **Lance Smith**, Avis executive director of sales, told *TNW* that loyalty programmes such as Discovery Vitality and FNB eBucks had also contributed to the recent increase in domestic travel numbers, largely because many members of these programmes chose to redeem their points for travel. A good example of this is the partnership



"Loyalty programmes such as Discovery Vitality and FNB eBucks have also contributed to the recent increase in domestic travel numbers."

Lance Smith

between kulula.com and FNB's eBucks, which offers discounts on kulula flights.

Corporates have also found reason to make more regular use of LCCs. **Kim Parker**, Wings Travel Management head of business development –

corporate: Sub-Saharan Africa, says the TMC has seen a definite increase in the number of corporates choosing low-cost carriers, specifically for domestic travel. "The number-one reason for this is the cost-saving factor of domestic low-fare airlines," she says. "The competitive airfares are allowing corporates to save on their direct costs within their travel programme at the point of sale."

While flying low cost comes with certain restrictions – such as penalties with regard to date and name changes, infrequent flight schedules and the limited routes within the low-cost carrier network – both Kim and Russell believe that the cost-saving factor outweighs these challenges. "Some clients, who are not as cost conscious, will not use low-cost carriers for this reason, however in our experience at Wings, flying on a low-cost carrier results in significant savings and, as such, corporates will deal with the penalties for changes as they occur," says Kim.

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## Demand for more value

WHILE airlines continue to break price boundaries to edge one another out in the race for passengers, they have also been forced to increase the value of their offering. FlySafair and Skywise start their fares at R499 one way between Johannesburg and Cape Town, while the average domestic fare on a kulula.com or Mango flight could easily cost roughly half of that of their parent airlines.

Mango spokesperson, **Hein Kaiser**, says LCCs can remain competitive by offering product differentiators that drive additional brand and customer equity while still keeping fares down.

"LCCs like Mango compete beyond price through product differentiation – on-time performance and leg-room – and ancillary products and services such as on-board WiFi and pre-seating options, as well as the introduction of innovative technology

such as our mobi-site," says Hein. He adds that Mango is the only airline to offer mobile booking and payment as well as check-in across all major mobile platforms.

"We recognise that being a low-cost airline does not mean we can offer an inferior product and not spend on aircraft. In fact, we want to offer our own superior product," agrees **Elmar Conradie**. He notes that FlySafair will add three new Boeing 737-800 aircraft to its fleet before the end of November. The airline will also replace its seats with new slim-line seats that will offer more leg-room.

Meanwhile, **Shaun Pozyn**, head of marketing for kulula.com, says the airline currently has the newest and most fuel-efficient fleet in the country, significantly enhancing its 'on-time' proposition. "We can certainly claim that in terms of a fuel efficiency per seat basis we are the



FlySafair will add three new B737-800s by November.

'greenest'," he says. "New planes require much less maintenance and are, as a result, much more reliable. The knock-on effect is a huge improvement in on-time efficiency."

The airline also places significant emphasis on knowing what travellers want and providing them with greater choice through a wide variety of destinations. Shaun says kulula provides an offering that speaks to both leisure and corporate travellers. "The majority of corporate travellers prefer to fly early

in the morning and then return in the evening after their meetings, therefore we have numerous flights operating during these periods."

South Africa's newest budget carrier, Skywise, has also realised that, to compete, airlines must offer more than just a low fare. "We offer value-added services like free coffee, VIP check-in and we will soon be launching our free shuttle service to and from the airports on our Wise Fare," says Skywise co-chairperson, **J. Malik**.

## Book it!

Unlock your share of 1 000 Club Red Roses when you book discretionary rates with Avis Van Rental during October and November. You could also stand a chance of winning the R5 000 grand prize adventure voucher. Agents are reminded they can redeem their Club Red Roses for eBucks and online vouchers and spend them on whatever they want.

## Did you know?

Kulula.com was rated the top low-cost South African airline according to a recent industry report by the South African Customer Satisfaction Index. More than 1 200 customers were surveyed to evaluate their satisfaction with the domestic airline industry and kulula emerged as the top carrier, with a score of 71,5 out of 100.

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## Travellers wary of regional LCC options

WITH Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia growing in popularity for business, travellers are increasingly investigating ways to save costs on medium-haul travel. However, while they might warm to the idea of flying on low-cost airlines for domestic travel, they are still sceptical about the LCC offering when it comes to regional travel.

**Russell Jarvis** points out that, while most travellers are price conscious, the low-cost model is still a fairly new concept for South Africans.

**Shaun Pozyn** echoes this sentiment. He says the South African aviation industry does not have a good record when it comes to the longer term sustainability of carriers, and therefore it would be expected that travellers would want these low-fare airlines to prove their staying power before shifting their loyalty from the legacy carriers. "Since 1991, there have been nine airlines that started operating flights within SA and have since failed, resulting in stranded customers who ended up losing their money," he says. "The industry also suffers huge reputational damage."

There are an increasing number of low-cost offerings available for medium-haul travel. Mango flies to Zanzibar, while kulula flies to Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya and Mauritius. Skywise has also revealed that it will launch regional operations before the end of the year. Zimbabwe's flyafrica.com and Tanzania's fastjet also make it possible to fly low cost into Africa.

While these airlines have made it possible for travellers to fly at lower fares to more destinations on the continent,



**Shaun Pozyn**

**Kim Parker** says flying into Africa requires closer scrutiny of safety standards for corporates in particular. "The travel manager would need to be assured that the standard safety and security regulations of the aircraft are up to scratch and the additional regulations for air travel into Africa are 100% accurate – such as landing rights and the like," she says.

Fastjet chief commercial officer, **Richard Bodin**, points out that the reputation of the African aviation industry overshadows its carriers. "South Africa is very fortunate to have the most developed aviation industry on the continent, but when it comes to the rest of Africa I think there are still real challenges from a corporate travel perspective with regard to reliability, connectivity and, of course, safety. Africa is responsible for 3% of the world's aviation but 11% of the world's safety-related incidents – suggesting that standards across Africa are by no means uniform."



## Different strokes for different folks

MORE travellers are making the shift to the sharing economy. Airbnb has seen immense growth since its launch in 2008, having become a household name with services available in over 190 countries. The platform offers travellers the opportunity to live as a local, either renting a room in the home of a local citizen in the country they are visiting, or renting an entire property, villa, yacht, treehouse or castle for rates much cheaper than those of a hotel room.

**Nicola D'Elia**, Airbnb gm for Middle East and Africa, told TNW that Airbnb's success lay in its ability to appeal to a diverse audience. "Five years ago, in the summer of 2010, roughly 47 000 people stayed with Airbnb hosts. This summer, nearly 17 million guests stayed with Airbnb hosts," he says. "That means that in the last five years, summer travel with Airbnb has grown 353 times over."

With regard to assumptions that Airbnb may offer a lower quality of accommodation because of its affordability, Nicola maintains that the



"[Airbnb] might be your scene, it might not. It is like staying in a B&B – you either love or hate it."

**Peter Schoeman**

opposite is proved by the numbers. He points out that Airbnb has achieved sharp growth that would not have been possible if users were being exposed to a lower quality experience. "While Airbnb is often a more affordable way to travel, we are also seeing strong growth in the luxury segment of the

market," he says.

He does not believe that Airbnb's arrival on the hospitality scene will negatively impact the hotel space. "For us to win, nobody has to lose," says Nicola. "Hotel occupancy rates are higher than ever and we strongly believe we are helping more people travel – which is good news for everyone in the industry."

**Peter Schoeman**, City Lodge Hotel Group divisional director of sales and marketing, says Airbnb will definitely be a contender in the budget market, should it stand the test of time. "Different strokes for different folks," he says. "It might be your scene, it might not. It is like staying in a B&B – you either love or hate it."

He argues, however, that traditional budget brands such as Road Lodge and Town Lodge can continue to compete with new market entrants by constantly reinventing themselves and proving consistent. "The big thing in the travel market – especially corporate travel – is consistency of product and service delivery," he says. "Reliability is vital."



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## 7 great deals for tight budgets!



Kulula holidays offers affordable stays at The Kingdom, Victoria Falls.

1. Kulula holidays is offering a special for travellers wanting to visit Victoria Falls – for R5 759pps visitors can enjoy 'three nights' accommodation at The Kingdom at Victoria Falls, breakfast daily, return flights Johannesburg-Livingstone, all pre-payable airport taxes and fuel levies and return airport-hotel cross-border transfers. The offer is valid from September 17-October 12 and October 23-November 30.
2. Africa Stay has a range of products on offer for travellers visiting Zanzibar on a budget. Stay at Paradise Beach for four nights from R8 975pps or seven nights from R12 540pps – all inclusive. Travellers can also stay at Doubletree by Hilton for four nights from R11 550pps or for seven nights from R15 270pps all inclusive. Both offers are valid until December 22 and include return flights ex-JNB on Mango, return airport transfers and meals on an all-inclusive basis.

3. World Leisure Holidays has introduced a special offer for Shangri-La's five-star Le Touessrok Resort and Spa in Mauritius. The offer is valid between November 1 and December 8 and guests can stay in a deluxe ocean-view room on a half-board basis for R25 490pp for seven nights ex-Johannesburg; R26 280pp ex-Durban; and R26 755pp ex-Cape Town. The package includes return direct flights to Mauritius on Air Mauritius, return coach transfers, breakfast and dinner daily, all land and non-motorised water sports as per brochure and daily entertainment.

4. Kulula holidays is offering a special budget package for travellers to Thailand. For R9 150pps, travellers can stay in the three-star Ibis Phuket Patong Hotel for eight nights – including breakfast. The offer, which is valid until October 31, includes return flights on Qatar Airways from Johannesburg to Phuket, all pre-payable airport taxes and fuel levies and return airport-hotel transfers and daily entertainment.

5. Virgin Atlantic is offering specials to London and New York. Travel in economy class from Johannesburg to London from R9 500, or from Johannesburg to New York for R11 500 including taxes and surcharges. The special is valid for departures between October 4 and December 20 and between January 18 and March 16, 2016. The special is not subject to travel on a particular day of the week and flight changes will cost R1 300 at any time. The fare is published in the GDS. Sales and ticketing until October 10.

6. Checkout Tours has launched December specials to Phuket. Stay at the three-star AIM Patong Resort from R14 070pps, or at the three-star Deevana Patong Resort and Spa from R14 505pps. Also on offer are four-star specials, including the four-star Old Phuket Beach Resort from R15 590pps and the four-star Merlin Beach from R15 915pps. All offers are valid between December 1 and December 19 and include return flights ex-Johannesburg, taxes, seven nights' accommodation with breakfast daily and return airport transfers.

7. Thompsons Holidays is offering a special for travellers visiting Mozambique. Stay at the Lighthouse Resort for seven nights from R9 624pps ex-JNB, R11 641pps ex-Durban and R11 924pps ex-Cape Town. The offer is valid until December 5 and includes discounts on all meals for an introductory special. Guests can opt for a meal voucher per person per day or pay for their meals and receive a discount. This applies to food only – not drinks. If a guest does not use the value of a meal voucher, it will not accumulate towards the following day's meal.

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### Did you know?

Fastjet is in the process of increasing its fleet in a bid to offer a wider service to travellers flying low-cost into Africa. The Tanzanian airline recently signed a letter of intent to purchase an Airbus A319 which, once operational, will bring the airline's fleet size to six aircraft. ■

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## Going for Gold!

Having started her business five years ago, Kimberley-based Jeanne Thirion has become the latest Travel Counsellor to be awarded 'Gold' status by the company. In order to achieve Gold status, TCs have to achieve in excess of R1 million in commissions over a 12-month period.

## Appointments

■ **Michelle Bregger** has been appointed new gm of Tsogo Sun Riverside Sun. She was previously assistant gm of the Midgard Country Estate and gm of the Mokuti Etosha Lodge, both in Namibia. She holds a diploma in hospitality from the American Hotel and Motel Association.



was hospitality manager at Montecasino prior to that. He holds a diploma in hotel management from the Witwatersrand Technikon.

■ **Derik Jacobsz** has been appointed new gm of Protea Hotel Wanderers following four years as gm of Protea Hotel Ikeja, Lagos. He holds a Cape Technikon diploma in hospitality management and completed a hotel management qualification at the Cape Hotel School in Granger Bay, where he was awarded management graduate of the year in 2000. Derik was also awarded a Protea Hotels Profitable Standards Award in 2014.



■ **Mike Uphof** has been appointed operations director for the eastern northern region for Tsogo Sun. Mike was previously director of operations for the inland region at Tsogo Sun, and



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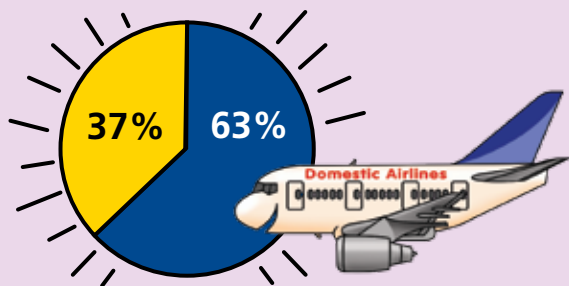
Budget Southern Africa has added the VW Move Up – a three-door, four-seater vehicle – to its Group A category. The vehicles will be available at all Budget Rent a Car Cape Town branches from this month, followed by a national roll-out in November.

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**Lower airfares boost domestic travel**

Is the price war between local carriers getting more people to fly around South Africa?

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**Familiar faces**

Asata members have elected the board for 2015/2016, with no changes. **Vanya Lessing** (Sure Travel) has reprised her role as president, as has **Johanna Mukoki** (Travel With Flair) as vice president. **James Sedgwick** (Sure Travel Fish Hoek) has been appointed treasurer. Additional board members are: **Bronwyn Philipps** (HRG Rennie's Travel) and **Claude Vankeirsbilck** (Tourvest Travel Services), **Johann Strydom** (World Leisure Holidays) and **Lance Smith** (Avis). Pictured here at Asata's AGM are (from left): **Claude, Johanna, Bronwyn, Vanya, Johann, Otto de Vries** (Asata ceo), **Lance and James**. Photo: Natasha Schmidt

**Court rules against Winelands tolls**

**T**HE Western Cape High Court has ruled in favour of the City of Cape Town by setting aside the approvals that would enable Sanral to toll sections of the N1 and N2 freeways in Cape Town. As a result, Sanral cannot go ahead with the Winelands Tolling Project. "The court

found that Sanral would have to start all over again with a proper public participation process, should they want to do so," the City of Cape Town said in a statement. Sanral's plan could have resulted in the tolling of a 180km stretch of highway in the Winelands. In its review application, the City

of Cape Town argued that the decision to declare the highways would have a damaging impact on Cape Town and its regional economy. It also argued that the people of the Western Cape were never properly consulted and that the tolls would have been unconstitutional. ■

**DHA kills tourism super cycle**

**From page 1** new jobs should be in abundance as visitor numbers increase by more than that percentage. Instead, US arrivals dropped 9%. India's rupee has appreciated 20% while visitor numbers in June dropped

25%, an accelerating trend as the year-to-date figure for the first six months is 15%. China's currency buys 28% more rands but the number of Chinese declined by 28%. Many of the visitors in these two source markets are affected both by the

unabridged birth certificate regulations for minors as well as the new biometric visa requirement – the equipment for which, ironically, Home Affairs has admitted to TNW is yet to be installed in the South African missions in China, India and Russia. ■

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