

More South Africans choose home

By [Tshepiso Seopa](#)

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About a million more South Africans toured SA in 2008 compared to the previous year, said tourism minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk. The minister of tourism was speaking in Sandton, Johannesburg, yesterday 22 July 2009 at the release of the South African tourism domestic travel statistics for 2008.

The revenue generated from domestic tourism was approximately R25, 8bn, 2008 also saw an increase in the number of domestic travellers from LSM 9 and 10.

Van Schalkwyk said that the domestic market was a vital foundation on which to build the tourism industry, and SA could not rely solely on the international market. "The latest figures showed healthy growth, especially given that it was achieved under difficult market conditions, said Van Schalkwyk.

He also said that the industry needs to market itself harder during the hard economic times, and that Tourism South Africa has started a brand alignment project to work in the marketing of South Africa.

We have the beds - but how will you get to them?

The minister emphasised that South Africa does not have any accommodation problem but have transport challenges as was reported during the Confederations Cup.

KwaZulu-Natal continues to be a preferred destination for local travellers while Gauteng has maintained to be the largest source province.

"About 46% of the adult South African population travelled in 2008, which represents a figure of about 14 million domestic tourists," said acting CEO for South African Tourism, Didi Moyle.

"This was compared to about 13 million domestic tourists in 2007. Despite facing tough economic conditions, the South African tourism industry has remained relatively buoyant," said Moyle.

Domestic tourism had returned revenue of R25.8bn in 2008, a 17% increase compared to the previous year.

The average spends per trip increased from R550 in 2007 to R780 in 2008 in nominal terms.

Domestic trips decreased by 8%, with 32,9 million trips being undertaken in comparison to 35,9 million in 2007. "We have

to face these realities, but now that we can quantify the effects of the financial downturn on our tourism industry, we can plan and market better," said Moyle.

"The JSE is showing signs of optimism, the car and housing markets appear to be recovering. These are all positive indicators for tourism, even if the recovery is still some way off," added the CEO.

ABOUT TSHEPISO SEOPA

Tshepiso Seopa was a junior journalist at Bizcommunity.com
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