

Southern Africa Tourism Industry: Recent Trends and Future Prospects International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems

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Abstract

The past four decades saw the Southern Africa being the fastest growing tourism region in the world according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). This study reviews the development and growth of the tourism industry in Southern Africa informed by the UNWTOs latest tourism statistical data affirming that Africa has had above average growth in tourism. The tourism sector is one of the most significant industries in numerous Southern African countries. This study confirmed that the compelling need for economic diversity, employment creation, generation of foreign currency, and the general improvement in peoples living standards are the variables at the epicentre of the unprecedented growth of tourism in Southern Africa sub-region. Results further identified commissioning of regional tourism assets, hosting of high profile global events, and use of superior tourism marketing campaigns as linchpins in the resurgence of tourism within the region. The study recommends randisation of the region, speed conclusion of the envisaged customs union and expediting the much vaunted universal-visa system as precursors to scaling up regional tourism into unprecedented heights. The study's conclusion points to a promising future with the region tipped to lead by the measure of market share and aggregate arrivals.

Keywords: Southern Africa, Tourism Industry, Trends, Prospects