

SA TOURISM DOING WELL BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CRISIS



Financial crisis is causing damage all around the world. SA tourism is not that heavily affected by the crisis but it is not immune.

The financial crisis is omnipresent therefore it is also an issue for the **South African economy**. Tourism industry is one of the sectors that will be inevitably hit by the crisis. Nevertheless, according to the latest figures, foreign arrivals rose during the first 10 months of 2008. There was a **5.4 per cent growth in arrivals** January to October. The year before (2007) the numbers rose by 8.3 per cent and more than nine million foreigners visited the country. South Africa is a popular tourism destination and the tourism industry generates important revenue for its economy. The numbers of visitors coming from North America were stable compared to October 2007. There were even 6.3 per cent more visits from Australia and 5.9 per cent more from Middle East. However, visits from certain source markets were not as good as usually. There were 6.5 per cent less tourist from Europe and 4.6 per cent less visitors from Central and South America. South African Tourism Minister Marthinus Van Schalkwyk is well aware that his country is not immune to the international economic crisis. He is, however, still confident that they will reach the target of **10 million visitors in 2010**. He mentioned that South Africa offers a good value for money. Also a number of important events is going to take place here soon - e.g. the Confederations Cup and World Cup. Because of that, the minister believes that the South African tourism industry will retain its important role in the country's economic growth. SA experts are well aware of the tough times that are coming in 2009. Moeketsi Mosola, CEO of South African Tourism says their tourism industry needs to **intensify its marketing activities**. The CEO claims that the country has excellent meetings capacity and that there is also the favorable currency exchange. However, it is necessary to let the world know.

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