

# Angola Aims to Attract Tourists



Angola boasts some of the most astonishing beauty of the continent. From deep gorges to high mountains, sun-baked long sandy beaches to cooler rainforests, Angola has it all. Just outside the country's capital Luanda is Kissama, one of the world's largest natural parks. However, 30 years of civil war had a severe negative effect on Angola's growth in the tourist industry and damaged its infrastructure. Since the end of the war in 2002, attempts have been made to improve Angola's facilities and increase numbers of foreign visitors.

Indeed, 2005 saw 200,000 foreign tourists visit Angola and there has been a general 80% increase in international arrivals. Nevertheless, most of these tourists are business tourists rather than traditional tourists as Angola still fails to accommodate for a large influx of holiday-makers from overseas. From 105 hotels in the country, just half are active and there is said to be a shortage of around 3,000 hotel rooms in Luanda. The complicated bureaucracy and visa system is also off-putting for potential tourists.

Eduardo Chingurgi, The Angolan minister of tourism, has stated that the next 3 years of vital for the development in his country. He added that all tourists shall soon be able to visit on the basis of an automatic 30-day visa. Fishing lodges, casinos and new hotels were on the horizon. Indeed, a 36-floor hotel in Luanda is set to be built by the state insurance company. There are plans to build airports and new roads, improve electricity and water supplies and modernise the country's health services as Angola attempts to place itself firmly on the map of tourism and make up for decades of civil war.

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