

# DOMESTIC TOURISM GROWS IN SOUTH AFRICA



South African tourism industry represented approximately 8.5 per cent of gross domestic product in 2008 and it employed some 1.04 million people. Domestic tourism is not as important as the international but it still plays a vital role for South Africans. Now in time of crisis many countries promote domestic tourism to balance the decreased demand from foreigners.

Domestic tourism is doing quite well in the SA. According to the SA Tourism Minister, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, there were approximately **one million more domestic tourists in 2008** than in 2007. According to the minister some **46 percent of adult South Africans traveled last year**, meaning there were some 14 million domestic tourists in 2008. The year before that (2007), there were only 13 million domestic tourists. Despite the crisis, the domestic tourism managed to earn €2.26 billion in 2008, which was 17 per cent more than in 2007.

Despite the good results SA however did not evade the crisis. Although the number of domestic travelers has increased, the number of actual trips has decreased by 8 per cent. There were 32.9 million trips undertaken in 2008 but 35.9 million in 2007.

**Among the most popular destinations with domestic tourist are the KwaZulu-Natal province and the Eastern Cape.** Gauteng province and the Western Cape are also luring domestic travelers. The biggest source markets of domestic tourists are Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape.

Domestic travel has now become more important for the SA tourism industry. In 2008, the majority (71.4 per cent) of domestic tourists traveled for the purpose of visiting their friends or family. Only 15.7 per cent of domestic travelers went on holiday within the country and 5.4 per cent of them were business tourists.

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