

FEWER TOURISTS ARE EXPECTED TO TURN UP FOR THE WORLD CUP



Many South African hotel and hostel owners have stepped up their preparations for this summer's World Cup. However, they may end up being disappointed as it has recently been predicted that around half of the originally expected arrivals will take place.

South African hotel owners, restaurateurs and tourist officials must have been licking their lips and stroking their wallets when their country was chosen to host the 2010 football World Cup. It must have come as a huge bonus to the country, which has endured an array of problems with poverty, crime and political tension in the past. Investment plans were made to prepare for the June event and hotels underwent refurbishment. **Nevertheless, it now appears that the invested rands are unlikely to come back with interest.**

It has now been predicted that 220,000 non-South African tourists will come to the World Cup: just over half the original figure. A further problem is imposed by the fact that it appears that many of the tourists will come from outside of Europe and North America. In other words, they will be budget tourists from African or South American countries. It appears that less money will be spent and the profits will be much lower than expected.

The economic climate in Europe is still fragile and football fans may be tempted to save their Pounds and Euros by watching the event at home. After all, South Africa is hardly just around the corner. They may simply invest in a bigger TV and appease the family with a shorter break somewhere else. South Africa should, however, concentrate on enhancing its reputation despite the bad news about visitors. The real benefit of the World Cup is a long-term one, not just a short-term quick win for caterers and hotel managers.

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