

ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

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SOUTH AFRICA

September 2024

GENERAL UPDATES

Singapore Airlines will increase the frequency of flights between Johannesburg and Singapore in December. The airline will add a three-times weekly service to its already daily schedule, bringing the total frequency up to 10 flights a week for the period 11 December – 10 January 2025, and from 02 April 2025 – 24 October 2025. The flights will be operated by an Airbus A350-900.

South African low-cost airline, **FlySafair**, has announced another regional route to its line-up – Cape Town to Windhoek. It's the airline's first regional route out of the Mother City, and the twice-weekly flights commence on 22 October 2024. They will run on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Federal Airlines is excited to announce the addition of its first Pilatus PC-12NG to their fleet, enhancing their private charter network. This eight-seater aircraft offers fast, pressurised service for small groups, high-end leisure clients, corporate travellers, and individuals visiting South Africa's luxury safari lodges and other destinations. The PC-12NG's versatility and performance make it ideal for both domestic and regional travel across Africa, featuring a modern interior and onboard lavatory for added comfort.

Federal Air – Fastjet's leisure product flies between Vic Falls (VFA) and Johannesburg (JNB), twice and sometimes three times per day.

2025 VFA and Kruger (MQP) Schedule:

- Jan – March 2025 will only operate if they have groups booked
- April – May x3 per week: Mon, Wed, Fri
- June – x4 per week: Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun
- Jul – September: daily
- October – x4 per week: Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun
- Nov – December x3 per week: Mon, Wed, Fri

Radisson Blu Hotel Waterfront's current renovations have been delayed and the new completion date is 31 October 2024 (was end September). Work is undertaken between 10am and 4pm during weekdays only, with minimal disruptions during this process.

Camissa House in Cape Town has advised that the rooftop bar has permanently closed in anticipation of an exciting new project. While there will be no construction taking place during this period, we look forward to sharing more details with you as the development progresses. In the meantime, guests can still enjoy breathtaking views of the Mother City from the pool deck and terrace.

One&Only Cape Town has officially opened ROOI restaurant to all inhouse guests for breakfast. Filled with new favourites and old classics, from free-flowing oysters and mimosas, extensive and vegan offerings, individual

olive, jam and honey bars, a fresh-focused a la carte menu, and a beautiful setting, there is no better start to the day.

Blackheath Lodge in Sea Point has 2 beautifully renovated villas, Villa Gareloch with 3 bedrooms, and Villa Lauren with 2 bedrooms, both perfect for longer stays and family travel, and represent good value for money; with its modernised Victorian style, this makes for an authentic Cape stay.

AtholPlace Hotel & Villa in Sandton has been reimagined and refreshed, opening its doors on 1 August 2024. For those of you who remember the pre-pandemic days, this marks a return to the property's roots as a luxurious 9-roomed boutique hotel, ready to welcome back guests with open arms and a reinvigorated spirit.

54 on Bath in Rosebank, Johannesburg, is undergoing renovations. The project took a bit longer than expected due to some unforeseen work, but they are working hard to minimise any impact. Originally planned for 5 weeks, renovations are now expected to be completed by the end of September 2024.

The Residence Hotel in Johannesburg recently completed an extensive renovation and upgrades, and is looking stunning.

Makakatana Bay Lodge in St Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal has completed an extensive renovation over an intense but rewarding eight weeks. Enhancements were made across the lodge, with the main building beautifully refreshed. Guests are now greeted by a new entrance and stunning landscaping. The boma and rooms have been enhanced with tasteful interior décor improvements, and the pool area decking has been meticulously redone, with the surrounding area redesigned to provide a serene and reinvigorated environment.

Rhino Sands Safari Camp welcomes their fifth tent to the family, bringing the capacity up to 10 people. The area is currently feeling very optimistic as KwaZulu-Natal continues to recover its tourism numbers.

The Oyster Box Hotel (Umhlanga) – The Chef's Table Experience is an immersion in culinary artistry at The Oyster Box Hotel. Begin your evening with pre-dinner drinks, then enjoy a fascinating tour of the kitchens. As you take your front-row seat, savour champagne and an amuse bouche while the Executive Chef and his talented team craft a five-course feast showcasing their signature dishes. This extraordinary dining journey is designed for small groups of 6-10 passionate food lovers, available for dinner from Monday to Sunday.

Serondella is excited to share the official unveiling of its new spa, Matlakusa, meaning "to raise". Equipped to deliver a variety of massage techniques, body wraps, mineralised skin therapies, and refreshing facials, guests will find the spa menu encapsulates both detoxifying and boosting treatments, right from the heart of nature. Pair a spa therapy of choice with a soak in the riverbed hot tub, which is their equally-as-healing wood-fired warm bath under the stars.

Makumu Private Game Lodge has won multiple Haute Grandeur Global awards!

Rovos Rail passengers have the unique opportunity to visit the private station at Capital Park, Pretoria, the heart of Rovos Rail. Once a vibrant steam locomotive hub, it features an expanding railway museum with an impressive collection of train memorabilia. The museum aims to be the world's premier working train museum, complete with carriage and locomotive sheds for meticulous maintenance. The facility boasts a 10,000m² workshop covering 15 railway lines, modern laundries, kitchens, and storerooms, showcasing world-class efficiency and attention to detail. Rail enthusiasts will enjoy the extensive maintenance operations and state-of-the-art provisions that keep the trains running smoothly.

SPECIALS

The Residence Hotel offers a Rovos Rail complimentary shared transfer when you book 1 night pre or post your Rovos Rail journey, to or from the Rovos Rail Station. Valid until 31 December 2025.

Book and stay within 7 days at the Residence hotel and receive an additional 10% discount, valid until 31 December 2024. Offers cannot be combined with packages.

Thonga Beach Lodge and **Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge** have a Stay 4 Pay 3 (3 nights of the 4 must fall within the month that the special is valid for; Stay-Pay specials may be doubled up, e.g. Stay 8 Pay 6, provided the dates fall within the valid months). Please note that no specials or discounts can be combined; all specials exclude park fees and Isibindi Foundation levy.

Bushmans Kloof has launched a Stay 4 Pay 3 offer for Koro Lodge (in addition to a reduced rate), for stays between 1 September and 19 December 2024.

Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa is offering a Stay 4 Pay 3 deal for mountain-facing room bookings, valid until 19 December 2024. As part of this offer, guests receive one 3-course select set dinner in either Azure Restaurant or Café Grill during their stay (exclusive of beverages and gratuities).

Tanda Tula has these additional value adds and promotions:

No single supplements apply, and Stay-Pay specials will be valid for all new bookings during this period. Stay 4 Pay 3 and Stay 3 Pay 2.

Validity period is from now until the end of March 2025 (excluding 15 December 2024 to 09 January 2025).

La Petite Ferme has introduced a Stay 3 Pay 2 Special during the winter season 1 May – 31 August 2025. The renovated Vineyard, Manor and Winery Suites are looking absolutely exquisite after all the refurbishments.

The Oyster Box has advised that when you book a classic sea-facing room on its Stay 4 Pay 3 offer you will receive:

One complimentary Curry Buffet in the Ocean Terrace during your stay (exclusive of beverages and gratuities). Valid from 12 January – 12 December 2025. Not applicable or combinable with other promotions, packages or specially negotiated rates. Offer must be booked over 4 or more consecutive nights, block out dates apply.

The Oyster Box Suite Deal includes a minimum 3-night stay in a deluxe sea-facing suite, luxury sea-facing suite, or superior garden villa. Guests receive the following value-adds: 1 x Curry Buffet per person and complimentary laundry for the stay. This special is not combinable with any other existing value adds but is valid for the Stay 3 Pay 2 offer.

The minimum 4-night stay value-adds include: 1 x Curry Buffet per person, complimentary laundry and 1 x cocktail per person. Valid from 12 January – 12 December 2025.

Qwabi (Letamo and Babohi) in the Waterberg, is offering an early bird promotion: get 10% off the rates if you book before 18 October 2024, for stays 1 December 2024 to 28 February 2025 (excluding 23 December – 4 January). Applicable to all room types. This reduced rate can be applied in conjunction with the Stay 3 Pay 2 Special.

FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

Destination:	Erinvale Estate & Hotel (Somerset West, Cape Winelands)
Participants:	Alex Rautenbach, Ashleigh Stolk, Andrea van Huffel, Chantel Kolbe, Dominique Sassman, Edna Steyn, and Pulane Moleli
Suits which type of traveller:	Great for groups, couples and especially golfers as Erinvale Golf Estate is right next door. Also ideal for repeat travellers wanting to experience a new Winelands region.
Recommended activities:	Erinvale is surrounded by lovely estates: Morgenster (award winning olive oils), Vergelegen (vast beautiful gardens, famous camphor trees, various restaurants, pristine manor house), Lourensford (great family destination, restaurants, market, boutique shops, archery, axe-throwing, arts & crafts studio)
Cuisine:	Oak Terrace Restaurant – relaxed all day restaurant Stefan's – fine-dining dinner restaurant
Highlights during visit/stay:	Hotel has recently undergone extensive renovations and refurbishments (they are still finishing off the final touches this month). Everything is looking new, modern and fresh. Big parking area at the back for larger coaches. The location is lovely, surrounded by many beautiful estates and scenery.
Caveats:	At times corporate groups / conferencing / weddings might not be a good mix for our high-end travellers seeking a more exclusive stay.



Destination:	Jamala Madikwe, Last Word Madikwe, Mateya Safari Lodge (Madikwe Game Reserve, North-West Province)
Participants:	Nelly Bambi; Mandisa Dalamba; Mechelle De Jager and Thabiseng Mgeyane
Suits which type of traveller:	<p>Jamala Madikwe offers a blend of casual elegance and immersive safari experiences. Highly recommended for discerning travellers who value exceptional beauty and service. Consider combining it with Marataba Safari or Mountain Lodge for a complete bush experience.</p> <p>The Last Word Madikwe is perfect for those who cherish tailored service and sophisticated comfort. Ideal for couples and families, with expansive, child-friendly villas that provide a cosy, intimate safari.</p> <p>Mateya Safari Lodge seamlessly blends its historic grandeur with modern furnishings and stunning views; perfect for honeymooners and couples seeking a romantic safari getaway.</p>
Recommended activities:	<p>Jamala Madikwe Head Chef Jacques gave a kitchen tour, shared some of his homemade sauces as gifts, and presented us with a <i>Chef Nico</i> cookbook.</p> <p>The Last Word Madikwe's main attraction is wildlife watching, whether from a comfortable seating area just metres from a waterhole, at an underground photography and viewing blind, or on a game drive.</p> <p>Mateya Safari Lodge encourages guests to experience the environment on foot with a knowledgeable guide, and enjoy guided tours in a safari vehicle to observe the wildlife.</p>
Cuisine:	Food was amazing throughout. Mateya's private dinner was on the deck around the fire. The menu was hand-crafted, which was so impressive.
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>Enjoyed the outstanding, hands-on service provided by the managers at Jamala Madikwe, ensuring a personalised and attentive experience.</p> <p>Relished the stunning views of the waterhole in front of the lodge at Last Word, where you can spot wildlife while relaxing and sipping on a refreshing gin & tonic.</p> <p>Benefited from the incredible expertise and attention to detail of the guide at Mateya. He had a deep interest in conservation and focused on the fascinating small details of animal behaviour.</p>
Caveats:	Mateya: It is important to advise guests about the considerable number of steps they will need to navigate. Lodge is situated on the hillside of the Gabbro Hills.



Destination:	Makumu (Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Limpopo)
Participants:	Naseemah Isaacs
Suits which type of traveller:	Guests looking to interact with other travellers. Photographers and families (children 8 years and older welcome).
Recommended activities:	Included activities: Game drives, guided safari walks and bird watching. Activities on offer at an additional cost: Photographic Bunker, Bush Cinema Experience, Wine Tasting and Eco Children visit.
Cuisine:	It was like stepping into a family kitchen. The food was wholesome and flavourful. The staff were attentive to my specific dietary needs.
Highlights during visit/stay:	From the moment you arrive at Makumu, you're enveloped in a warm and inviting atmosphere. You understand why their tagline is Endless View, as they are positioned on a hill overlooking the Klaserie – absolutely breath-taking. They have a strong management team who are very attentive and join guests at meal times. Communal dining is the standard offering, but private dining can be arranged for guests who prefer a more intimate setting. By night, the lodge is softly lit with candles and lanterns, enhancing the authentic safari ambience they aim to create. The game viewing was excellent, thanks in large part to the guide and tracker, who are exceptionally knowledgeable. I visited the Photographic Bunker where you could easily spend hours viewing the animals coming for a drink at the waterhole. Not only do they have stools but a comfortable couch and drinks, and tea- and coffee-making facilities. They've recently built a space where guests can now book massages.
Caveats:	There are a number of activities at an additional cost. The King Suites and Impi Suites are linked by a shared entrance, making them ideal for families. However, it's worth noting this when booking for couples.



Destination:	Klaserie Drift Misava Safari Camp (Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Limpopo)
Participants:	Naseemah Isaacs
Suits which type of traveller:	A great choice for families (children over the age of 6 years welcome), couples and honeymooners seeking a modern safari experience.
Recommended activities:	Included activities: Game drives and walking safaris. There are board games available in the main area, a library, and a Kidz Club to keep the little ones entertained. Specialised Photographic Safaris and Birding Safaris can be arranged with the booking of a private vehicle.
Cuisine:	Contemporary light meals are served at breakfast and lunch with views of the Klaserie River (when flowing), in a private dining setting. I also had the opportunity to enjoy a boma dinner evening, where the relaxed atmosphere made it easy to socialise with other guests.
Highlights during visit/stay:	The lodge offers a sleek, modern vibe, with rooms designed for ultimate comfort. It features a stunning water-wise garden that attracts a variety of birds. The lodge provides reusable water bottles and eco-friendly amenities, reflecting its commitment to minimising environmental impact. They traverse the same land with 6 or 7 other vehicles, but you rarely, if ever, encounter them during your game drives. The game drives are only conducted by guide and not accompanied by a tracker but our guide made the experience interactive and was excellent with kids.
Caveats:	Guests with walking difficulties or those in wheelchairs may find it challenging to access the pool area and the dining area overlooking the Klaserie River.

