

ISSUE 179
FEBRUARY 2007

**SOUTHERN
AFRICAN**

TOURISM UPDATE

FOR ORGANISERS OF TOURS

**A MELTING POT
OF FREE STATE
FLAVOUR**

Expos – Worth it?

7 Elephant Coast
safaris

BUMPER ITB 2007 EDITION



Yanks yearn for South Africa

South Africa should brace itself for a veritable explosion of travellers from the United States. Natalia Thomson explains...

WITH THE upward trend in US tourist arrivals, the massive increase in American citizens 'rushing' to apply for passports and the addition of new Delta and South African Airways services, (see story alongside) South Africa's prospects from the US appear to be growing.

Arrivals from the US grew 11 per cent in 2004, some 12,13 per cent in 2005 and thus far, 2006 numbers are up eight per cent. Good news for South Africa, which has seen fairly stagnant numbers out of its traditional European source markets like the UK, Germany and France.

South African Tourism believes Americans are beginning to realise there is a world outside the US and that the country is currently "in vogue" among Americans.

Getting the word out

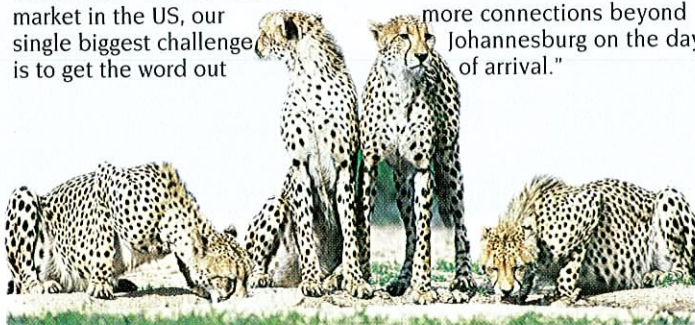
SAA Vice President in the US, Marc Cavaliere, agrees: "Our challenge is to ensure that we are aggressively promoting the destination. For the leisure market in the US, our single biggest challenge is to get the word out

and to provide packages that are attractive," says Cavaliere.

Marketing, says SA Tourism New York President, Dr Felicia Mabuza-Suttle, helps create enough noise to build top-of-mind awareness, eradicating the perception that South Africa is too far, too expensive and a "jungle".

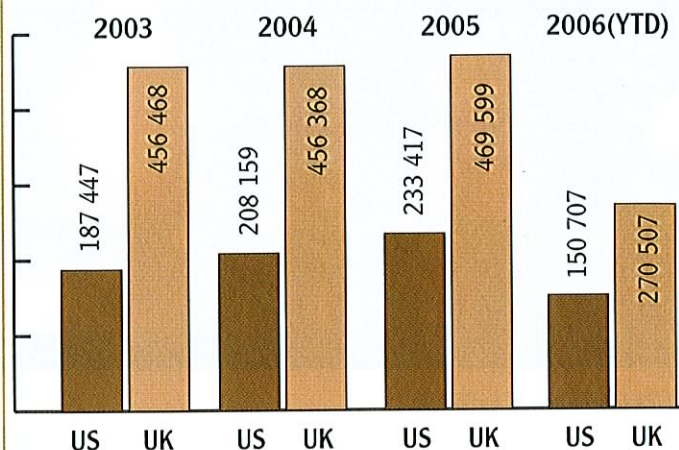
"I believe in guerrilla marketing; capitalising on big activities like the Imax launch, Freedom Day, the US Open. We are using bold tactics to showcase South Africa as first world with an authentic African experience," says Mabuza-Suttle.

American travellers, says Cavaliere, want to go somewhere "new and exciting". He believes the new SAA service from Chicago will help by providing more airlift and easier connections from more origin points in the US and Canada. "Additionally, the new SAA non-stop service from both Washington and New York will get travellers to SA faster and allow for even more connections beyond Johannesburg on the day of arrival."



South Africa offers American travellers an African experience coupled with the luxury and comfort of a first-world setting.

TOURISM ARRIVALS FROM THE US AND UK 2003 - 2006



SOURCE: STATISTICS SA

Whilst UK arrivals into South Africa remain relatively stagnant, arrivals from the US continue to grow year-on-year.

SA TOURISM WELCOMES DELTA TO SOUTH AFRICA

SATOURISM has pledged to work closely with Delta to ensure that the airline's new Johannesburg service is sustainable and profitable.

Moeketsi Mosola, SATourism CEO, says he is committed to the US market and is determined to grow inbound arrivals. He added that the presence of a US legacy carrier on the route would help grow US arrivals.

"It is encouraging that the fastest-growing international carrier in the US has shown confidence in promoting travel between our countries. From a tourism perspective the US has always been an important source market for SA – a fact

clearly highlighted by this year's (2006) arrival figures, which have exceeded expectations and shattered previous records. Between January and July, 147 730 American travellers landed in SA, representing a 9,3 per cent increase in arrivals over the same period last year."

Delta is operating a B767-300ER aircraft to Johannesburg, configured to carry 214 passengers with 35 seats in BusinessElite. The flight will stop for refuelling in Dakar, Senegal. It is codesharing with Nationwide to DBN and CPT but the airlines could expand this to other destinations, particularly Livingstone, Zambia in the future.

Kate Nathan

ETA Travelmax
Luxury Travel

Tel +27 11 884 8527
Fax +27 11 884 9073
Email info@etatravelmax.co.za
www.etatravelmax.co.za

Charters to game lodges and islands – breakaway packages

TU4542
*Barra Resorts