

HICA offers investor opportunities

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA), in partnership with Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, will promote hotel investment opportunities in the region during the 2011 Hotel Investment Conference Africa (HICA), taking place at Fairmount Zimbali Resort in KwaZulu-Natal, 5-6 May 2011.



Established as an annual event in 2007, it attracts hoteliers, hotel developers and owners, hotel management companies, financiers, investors, policy makers, architects and property developers. This year, it precedes the annual Indaba, the region's top tourism marketing exhibition, which will be held in Durban 7-10 May.

Themed 'taking stock', this year's conference will reflect on post-2010 FIFA World Cup developments, the effect of the global economic recession and take a realistic look at future prospects for the hospitality sector in the region.

Local and international hospitality experts will address delegates on thoroughly researched topics that will help guide investment decisions. Amongst others, topics relate to the speed of economic recovery, actual investment projects, investment risks and sustainability, demand, pricing and revenue management.

TBCSA CEO Mmatsatsi Marobe says there is a lack of information about investment options and southern Africa is no exception. "HICA fills this gap. It is the responsibility of the destination to reduce investors' exposure to risk, especially novice partners who are willing to invest."

She adds that the CEOs of South Africa's top hotel groups - Arthur Gillis, MD of Protea Hotels, Graham Wood, MD of Southern Sun Hotels and Clifford Ross, CEO of City Lodge Hotels - will share their views on the state of the hotel industry.

Bankers forum

"Equally important will be the bankers' forum, where delegates will hear what deals have been financed by lenders in 2010 and so far in 2011 - also what deals we can look forward to. They will assess the financial markets and explain what lenders are willing and able to finance," she says.

Panellists in this session will include Pieter de Bruin, head of tourism at FNB Commercial, Godfrey Tapela, senior investment officer at the International Finance Corporation and Christine Engelbrecht, head of tourism at the Industrial

Development Corporation.

According to Marobe, HICA will also answer questions related to critical matters such as dealing with distressed assets, excess stock and the matching of new brands with particular markets. "HICA will not only focus on South Africa, the powerhouse of the region, but on other African regions as well."

African perspectives

Other African speakers include Vivian Kayetesi of the Rwanda Development Board, Mario Sevene of the Mozambique Tourism Authority, Tendai Madziwanyika of African Sun Hotels Zimbabwe, Lars Hansen of Dreams Leisure in Angola and Jackie Asheeke of Namibian Wildlife Resorts.

The HICA Tourism Leadership Award will be made at the conference, selected from the finalists; Linda Pampallis of Thompsons Africa, Clifford Ross of City Lodge Hotels and Graham Wood of Southern Sun Hotels.

On 26-27 September 2011, in Casablanca, Morocco, HICA will focus on hotel investment in North, Central and West Africa.

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