

How domestic travellers can support SA's tourism sector

By [Bianca Delpont](#)

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Having spent months in lockdown, there is no doubt that seasoned travellers will be itching to hit the road, especially with our international borders now open.

While it might be tempting to jump on a plane at the first possible opportunity, for many South Africans international travel will be just out of reach for the foreseeable future - as we tighten our belts thanks to Covid-19.



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Happily, South Africa is chock-full of local adventure.

Here are 4 ways you can help:

1. Speak up

One of the best approaches to playing your part in promoting local tourism is to speak up regarding one's travel experiences.

"Tourists can share joyful videos of themselves and their loved ones enjoying their getaway on social media, being sure to tag the relevant establishments and to make their posts shareable," comments Dr Nomvuselelo Songelwa , CEO of Jurni.

Too busy living in the moment to snap photographs or upload content onto TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook? "A simple, heartfelt review on a local establishment's social media page, website or Tripadvisor can be incredibly powerful," says Songelwa. "Often leading to interest and enquiries."

2. Adhere to the safety protocols

There is still plenty of stress and uncertainty surrounding Covid-19, and these concerns might impact on prospective travellers' willingness to venture out. It can be tremendously helpful for other tourists to speak openly about the various health and safety protocols in place at the local guesthouses, lodges and venues that they visited during their trip.

The more information that is available, the easier other travellers are able to find peace of mind. South Africa is travel ready, shout it from the rooftops.

Along with spreading the word of how South African travel suppliers are doing their bit to curb the spread of the virus, it is also vital for domestic travellers to follow the protocols.

"Take the time to listen to the details regarding the measures that have been put in place, ask questions if you are uncertain about anything, and do your best to adhere to the safety protocols without allowing frustration to impact your holiday," says Peter Dros, sales and marketing director of Fancourt.

"The new measures are there for everyone's safety – and actually they are not too burdensome at all. Beyond remembering your mask with your key card, they're pretty easy to follow."

3. Splurge on souvenirs

Make an effort to buy mementos, souvenirs, and local goods during your stay. Most of these items are produced by small businesses that could really do with a boost in income.

If you're looking to shop for gifts for friends and family back home, consider purchasing a beautiful, hand-woven tablecloth from a female entrepreneur at a roadside stall. Or head to a local café for your coffee fix. Be mindful when you're out and about – and support local.

4. Embrace sustainable experiences

Songelwa says that local communities often offer the most authentic and 'greenest' experiences for tourists. This is because they have a reason to make the sustainability of their local surroundings a top priority!

Dros agrees: "If you aren't sure where to go in search of these local, off-the-beaten track experiences, enquire at your lodge or hotel. At Fancourt, we pride ourselves on supporting local businesses and sustainable initiatives up and down the Garden Route, and often refer our guests to local operators – from hot air balloon safaris to paddling excursions – with sustainability at the core of their offerings."

The bottom line is that there will be plenty of time for South Africans to venture off to faraway lands in the future but, right now, our country needs all of the extra support that it can get. Small domestic tourism contributions make a world of difference, and all work to speed up the revival of this sector – and our economy.

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