

Protea to open 11 new hotels in Africa

The Protea Hospitality Group says it's forging ahead with expansion plans in Africa this year, with the first Protea Hotel soon to be built in a yet-to-be-disclosed location and 10 other properties in the pipeline for Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia.



The total value of this investment by Protea Hotels and its property owner partners is R1 billion.

This will bring to nine the number of African countries in which Protea Hotels is represented and the company is expected to make a separate announcement soon in this regard.

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"As political stability and business opportunities increase, they create a greater need for the hotels and we're leading the charge," said Gillis. "There are a number of countries such as Nigeria, Zambia, Uganda and Angola that are flying in the face of the global economic trend as far as hospitality is concerned. Africa's traditional trading partners have been changing rapidly in recent years, and this is spurring unprecedented growth in regions that have previously not seen the numbers."

According to an African outlook document co-authored by the African Development Bank, the OECD Development Centre, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the continent is becoming increasingly integrated in the global economy and in 2009 China became Africa's main trading partner.

"Hospitality groups would be foolish not to be wondering where their opportunities lie and researching which areas of the continent are drawing the largest percentage of commercial travel," Gillis said.

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