

# RwandAir launch of direct route to Cape Town expected to boost tourism, trade and investment

The Cape Town Air Access initiative has welcomed the announcement made by RwandAir that it will launch a direct route to Cape Town. As of 16 May 2018, the Rwandan national carrier will fly directly from Kigali to Cape Town International Airport, with a stop-over in Harare, four times a week.



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In a RwandAir press release, CEO Chance Ndagano said: “This is yet another big milestone for RwandAir as we continue to expand our network. Our aim is to provide to our customers seamless and better connections on the continent and beyond. Abuja and Cape Town come in as a boost to the different economies in terms of tourism and trade on one hand, and enhance the bilateral partnership between our countries on the other hand.”

## Boosting tourism, trade and investment

The Cape Town Air Access initiative agrees that this will greatly assist in boosting tourism, trade and investment between the Cape and Rwanda. It will also help link the Western Cape with Zimbabwe, with a stop-over in the country’s capital. This is in addition to the Kenya Airways route to Cape Town, via Victoria Falls.

Between 2016 and 2017, there was a 16% growth in two-way passengers between Zimbabwe and Cape Town. This was largely due to a 36% increase in two-way passengers from Victoria Falls. Harare, however, only increased by 1%. This new stop-over in the capital will, therefore, assist in boosting travel between Zimbabwe and the Cape significantly.

According to Wesgro's IQ unit, the five top Western Cape exports to Rwanda in 2016 included:

- Refined petroleum at R13.7m
- Wine at R11m, recording a 100% growth
- Insecticides, R6.6m
- Engine parts, R3.8m
- Undenatured ethyl alcohol at R1.8m

In addition, there were a total of eight **foreign direct investments** (FDI) projected from South Africa to Rwanda, valued at \$32.1m, and a total of three foreign direct investments from Rwanda into South Africa, valued at \$37.3m. All of the investments, however, took place were in Gauteng. Wesgro CEO, Tim Harris said that this was an exciting move that will help grow trade further and assist land FDI from Rwanda's growing economy into the Western Cape.

"Cape Town and the Western Cape are not only open for business, but through better linkages, are also becoming the gateway to the rest of Africa. Improved Air Access with the continent, will not only boost tourism, but also help bring more investors to our respective countries, and help facilitate business-to-business engagements that result in important trade deals. We are extremely grateful for the confidence that RwandAir has shown in us, and our team is ready to provide support to them so that this route maintains itself well into the future," said Harris.

Western Cape minister of economic opportunities, Alan Winde said: "We are excited to welcome Rwanda Air and all its passengers to Cape Town International Airport. With four flights a week, there is tremendous potential to grow trade and tourism between Cape Town and Kigali, which in turn will help us to achieve the growth and jobs goals we've set ourselves through Project Khulisa. This announcement is a testament to the hard work being done by the joint Air Access team, who've already grown direct two-way seats to Cape Town by almost a million."

Executive mayor of the City of Cape Town, Patricia De Lille welcomed increased flights from the rest of Africa: "This news is a major boost for Cape Town and demonstrates that our efforts to position Cape Town as a globally competitive business destination are paying off. The increase in the number of flights will mean that more tourists and business people can travel to and from Cape Town with much more ease. This is indeed good news in terms of our mission to increase trade and investment between Cape Town businesses and businesses in cities across Africa."

## Increased direct flights to Cape Town

Airports Company South Africa: Cape Town International Airport general manager, Deon Cloete added: "The airport has seen exceptional international growth in the last number of months and at this rate, Cape Town International Airport is set to pass the 11 million passenger milestone, following closely on the heels of surpassing the 10 million passenger mark just over a year ago. We're aware of our responsibility to ensure that our infrastructure capacity meets demand."

We're especially pleased that we've been granted approval to proceed with the realignment of our runway which enables the airport to handle more aircraft. We're also going to be reconfiguring our domestic arrivals terminal and well as the international terminal.

"The success of the Air Access initiative is critical to ensuring the continuous growth not only of our airport and the ACSA network of airports, but our region as a whole. We look forward to welcoming RwandAir" concluded Cloete.

Last week, Kenya Airways announced that they would launch a direct route between Nairobi and Cape Town from 6 June

2018. This route will operate three times a week – Kenya Airways currently flies three times a week from Nairobi to Cape Town via Victoria Falls. It also operates a flight to Cape Town via Livingstone, and this route will be increased from three flights to four flights per week from 25 March 2018.

TAAG has also announced that it will increase capacity from Luanda to Cape Town from three flights per week to four on a Boeing 777-300 from 25 March 2018. Air Mauritius has also announced a capacity increase on its route to Cape Town, introducing a widebody A340-300 from 28 March.

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