

A survival guide to the five most expensive cities for South African business travellers

Taking the average cost for four-star hotel accommodation, meals, drinks, laundry, transport, other essentials as well as general demand, Corporate Traveller has named the five most expensive cities for South African business travellers.



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Says Oz Desai, Corporate Traveller South Africa GM: “When we travel for business, our choice of destination has little to do with how expensive it is to visit that city. Rather, we travel to cities where we have business interests even if it costs a great deal to fly there, stay in a hotel and buy a meal.

“The bulk of the daily spend will usually be the cost of a hotel room, but other business expenses like taxis, food and drink and even the cost of Wi-Fi quickly add up when you’re travelling for business.”

Here's a list of handy rand-savers in five popular South African business haunts.

1. New York

Number one at R10,375 a day.

Accommodation prices in New York are subject to extreme fluctuations depending on the season and whether there’s a large-scale event in town. Plan your business travel so that it takes place at off-peak times. Rule of thumb is that from mid-January to mid-March is a good time to visit New York for business even though it’s winter. Also look for hotels uptown or downtown instead of staying midtown. Public transport is excellent in New York so provided you’ve clustered your meetings smartly you will have no issue getting down to business speedily.

2. Hong Kong

Number one in Asia at R6,065 a day.

Hong Kong is the most expensive location for business travellers, overtaking Tokyo which drops to second in the rankings. If you want to eat cheap in Hong Kong, consider taking a foodie tour after hours where you’ll be introduced to some of the lively local hotspots and indulge in dim sum, noodle soups and barbecued meat. If you don’t have time to go on a foodie

tour, take a trip to Hong Kong Island and find Dim Sum Square, or be adventurous and visit one of the night markets which always serves up an array of delectable street food.

3 and 4. Switzerland - Zurich and Geneva

Number one and two in Europe at R9,408 and R8,728 respectively.

An easy way to save money in Geneva is to grab a free transport pass when you arrive at the airport. The pass is good for 80 minutes and covers trains, buses and trams for Zone 10, which is pretty much anywhere in Geneva you'd want to go. Throughout Geneva, there's free Wi-Fi. Simply look out for a network called "(o) Ville de Geneve." Unfortunately, affordable eateries are difficult to find in Geneva but don't despair. Just hop on the 12 tram to the end of the line and walk across the border to the French town of Gaillard for some great restaurants.

For Zurich, it's a good idea to purchase a city card, which will offer free public transportation as well as discounts or free admission to local attractions. If you like to eat out, it might be worth considering the Easy Dining app. It costs 95 francs (R1,210) per year but the app claims to cut your bill by half with its discounts at restaurants across the canton.

5. Luanda

Number one in Africa.

As Angola's largest city, Luanda takes the No. 4 spot on the global list - in part because of security factors. Travelling executives end up staying in pricey tourist areas, rather than more competitively-priced business areas.

Although it's tempting to explore the upper-end restaurants on Ilha do Cabo, if budget is a concern, rather head to Luanda's central neighbourhoods with their backyard restaurants (quintais) where you'll be able to eat fantastic local specialities at a fraction of the price.

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