

# Tourism trends for 2020: Africa to dominate the landscape

When it comes to growth relating to where travellers want to spend their holidays in 2020 and beyond, Africa will remain the world's top performer.

 By [Guy Stehlik](#) 27 Jan 2020

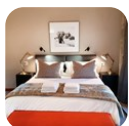


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The global tourism industry has been growing in leaps and bounds, accounting for 1.4 billion travellers in 2018, the 2019 [International Tourism Highlights report](#) by the United Nations' World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reveals. Of all regions, Africa showed the highest growth. In 2018, the continent drew almost 67 million visitors from around the world. That is 7% more compared to the previous year.

## Suiting all tastes and budgets

I predict a similar, if not better, performance for 2020 and the years after. Africa offers holiday options for types of travellers, suiting any budget. Whether you are after an ultra-luxurious tropical island beach holiday, a 4-by-4 off-road adventure in the Namibian desert or an exciting safari expedition in the Kruger National Park, Africa has it all and travellers know it.



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Traditional destinations such as Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Botswana, and Namibia, other countries are opening up. Ethiopia, for instance. Between 2017 and 2018, the size of the Ethiopian tourism sector grew 48.6%. According to the [World Travel & Tourism Council's \(WTTC\) 2019 review](#), this makes it the fastest-growing tourism market in the world. The data adds that travel and tourism activities poured \$7.4bn into Ethiopia's economy in 2018, an increase of \$2.2bn (42%) since 2017.

## Minimal visa stress

Besides a plethora of attractions that suit all tastes and budgets, the ease of cross-border travel in Africa is

major draw-card, amongst African Union citizens in particular. Travelling to Europe and the United States is great but getting a tourist visa is expensive and time-consuming, requiring one to jump through many administrative hoops.

As a result, more and more African travellers opt for holiday destinations closer to home. Namibia and Botswana are popular choices amongst South Africans, and so is Reunion Island. For neither of these do one need a visa, adding that Nigeria is also gaining in popularity.



TOURISM & TRAVEL

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Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari has pledged visas on arrival for all African visitors. This is expected to happen this year and, if it does, it will help grow their tourism sector, too. The country has plenty to offer from various national parks and game reserves to a range of intriguing world heritage and historical sites.

Buhari made his promise not long after South Africa and Ethiopia signed a memorandum to ease the movement of officials travelling between the two countries. Eventually, this will likely have positive results for travellers too, allowing even more people to visit the birthplace of coffee.

## Hotel sector growing strong

In terms of hospitality trends in Africa, the demand for hotels will remain robust. [A recent hospitality outlook by PwC](#) shows a 3.4% increase in the number of four-star hotel rooms built across Africa between 2017 and 2018.

This is driven by a strong demand: despite the availability of various alternative accommodation options, many travellers continue to prefer to stay in hotels.

## ABOUT GUY STEHLIK

Guy Stehlik is the CEO and founder of BON Hotels and Director of BON Hotels International West Africa. Having vast experience in all aspects of Hotel Management as well as having owned his own hotels, Guy created BON Hotels as an "owner-staff-community-guest" centric company to herald in and define an exciting new era in hotel management. [View my profile and articles...](#)

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