

IBTM World 2023: SA elevates global presence in business events

In a strategic move to bolster its global standing in the face of a swiftly changing industry landscape, South Africa's business events sector actively engaged in the renowned IBTM (Incentive, Business Travel, and Meetings) World held in Barcelona, Spain from 28 to 30 November 2023, IBTM World stands as the premier gathering in the worldwide business events sector, offering an exclusive stage for fostering engagement, connectivity, and meaningful business interactions.



Source: Supplied

Known for its networking opportunities, IBTM World events included educational sessions highlighting the latest trends and innovations in the industry. In addition to that, IBTM World is essential for professionals seeking insights and new contacts in the global business events market.

The Team South Africa delegation strongly represented various sectors, including provincial tourism authorities, destination management companies, tour operators, and accommodation providers. This ensured that South Africa's business events industry is showcased in its entirety and that focus is placed on the country's capacity to host world-class events.

Iconic conference centres and provincial convention bureaux such as the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (Durban ICC), Durban KwaZulu-Natal Convention Bureau, Gauteng Convention & Events Bureau, Sandton Treeway Centre / Hotel Sky, Vineyard Hotel, Century City Conference Centre and Hotels, Into Africa, and Radisson Hospitality South Africa are amongst the products.

South Africa's participation at IBTM World comes as the country prepares to host the Meetings Africa 2024 conference in February. Meetings Africa is a leading trade show in the conference, exhibition, and meetings sector on the African continent.



Source: Supplied

"As we cast our eyes to Meetings Africa in February next year, our presence at IBTM World underscores our dedication to positioning South Africa as a leading global destination for business events.

"We are not only using this opportunity to invite the global business events industry to come to South Africa and to share in our diverse offerings, our state-of-the-art conference venues and facilities, but we are also inviting them to come and experience our rich cultural heritage and stunning landscapes and to meet our warm, highly knowledgeable and welcoming South Africans," said Zinhle Nzama, acting chief convention bureau officer at South African Tourism, emphasising the strategic importance of this participation.



Meetings Africa 2024 registrations now open

3 Aug 2023



As a formidable business events destination, South Africa has a long history of hosting successful events, said Nzama, speaking at the IBTM World 2023.

"South Africa recently hosted significant international events, the 15th Brics Summit, which attracted over 30 heads of state, thus reinforcing our status as a global influencer."

She emphasised that in addition to South Africa's breathtaking landscapes and excellent conference venues and accommodation establishments, the warmth and welcoming nature of South Africans is the country's greatest asset.

"In every corner of our country, from the bustling streets of our vibrant cities to the serene safaris, you will find a common thread, and that is the open-heartedness and welcoming nature of South Africans. The warmth of the South African people is always at the forefront and is evident in all our international conferences and business events. Moreover, this warmth translates into an exceptional service ethos, particularly evident in our tourism and hospitality sector," Nzama added

At IBTM World, South African exhibitors engaged in pre-scheduled face-to-face meetings with targeted potential partners, associations, and other representatives interested in learning more about South Africa and fostering meaningful connections and business opportunities. Team South Africa sought to source high-quality business event leads, furthering ambitions to contribute to the country's economy.



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Nzama stated: "IBTM World is more than just an exhibition; it is a catalyst for growth and innovation in the business events industry. South African Tourism's involvement in this event forms part of a cohesive strategy to ensure a coordinated approach to industry representation at such global platforms, which is crucial for our success."

Since the start of the 2023/24 fiscal year, Nzama revealed that the SANCB has submitted 63 bids for international business events hosted in South Africa between 2023 and 2029. These bids, with a combined estimated economic impact of R1.2bn, "reflect our commitment to attracting significant business events that align with the National Government's development priorities, in which tourism plays a catalytic role".

South African Tourism's presence at IBTM World 2023 "is a testament to our unwavering commitment to promoting South Africa as a premier business events destination. We invite industry professionals and delegates to explore our offerings and engage with us as we continue to position South Africa as a leader in the global MICE market," Nzama concluded.

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