

# Top African hotel group plans expansion

With a focus on achieving significant expansion and development by 2010, southern Africa's Meikles Africa Hotels hospitality group has unveiled plans for an investment programme involving the refashioning of its current stable of three hotels in the region and the development of a new wildlife-based luxury operation.

Roy Meiring, chief executive of Meikles Africa Hotels, said that confidence in the long-term future of the southern African tourism sector had resulted in the formation of a Vision 2010 Plan, which would guide accelerated development.

"Key to this will be considerable development of the world-famous Victoria Falls Hotel, which is run as a partnership, and the award-winning Cape Grace on Cape Town's renowned V&A Waterfront, as well as the five-star Meikles Hotel in Harare," he said.

In addition, the group will undertake a substantial investment in wildlife-based eco-tourism with the development of a new establishment in an area poised to benefit from the planned creation of a trans-national conservation project.

At Cape Grace, a refashioning project for all 121 rooms and suites is now in progress, and will be completed by the end of 2008. This follows on from the recent refurbishing of public areas such as the reception, library and conservatory. Consistently voted as one of the world's top hotels, Cape Grace is a member of The Leading Small Hotels of the World. Expenditure at this hotel for the refashioning will top US\$3 million.

At The Victoria Falls Hotel, plans are being discussed between the partners - which include Zimsun Leisure Group and the railways authorities of Zimbabwe and Zambia - for the construction of a new hotel wing, an international-standard spa, an innovative viewing platform overlooking the gorges below the Victoria Falls and general renovations. Together these developments - worth more than US\$50 million - will enhance the hotel's status as a member of the Leading Hotels of the World grouping and optimise use of the site on which the hotel stands.

Meikles Hotel in Harare will undergo a complete refashioning of its club floors, as well as a range of other developments, all of which will also be in keeping with its status as a member of The Leading Hotels of The World. Expenditure on this project will be approximately US\$2 million.

The multi-million-dollar creation of a new wildlife-based operation is in initial planning stages and will, when complete, see the establishment of a hospitality venue that will both enhance and benefit from the planned Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area embracing more than 35 national parks, game reserves, sanctuaries and game management areas in Angola, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and Zambia.

Meikles Africa Hotels is a division of Meikles Africa Limited, which is involved in a number of strategic initiatives that will

raise equity funding to finance these substantial enhancement programmes and new initiatives. A restructuring exercise is at present taking place and the investment in this exercise will follow inclusion of new partners in the company and various related developments. Meikles Africa Limited is currently listed on the Harare and London Stock Exchanges.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>