

Nigeria's demand for luxury gives rise to the expansion of African Pride Hotels

As Nigeria's economy continues to grow off the back of non-oil and gas resources and more money pours into the country, the demand for luxury is growing steadily and Africa's largest hospitality group is well placed to move into the country with deluxe African Pride Hotels.



Lagos Island and part of Lagos Harbour, taken from close to Victoria Island, looking north-west. (Image: Benji Robertson, via Wikimedia Commons)

That was the word this week from Protea Hospitality Group CEO Arthur Gillis, discussing why the company decided to move the African Pride Hotels brand into Africa's second largest economy (after South Africa).

Nigeria's debut African Pride Hotel is currently under construction in Ikeja, Lagos, and will be called African Pride Avalon Hotel and Spa. It is due to open in the latter part of next year and is one of 5 new Protea Hospitality Group hotels that will be opening in the country between now and the end of 2013.

The increasingly competitive continent

Gillis said Africa was becoming a very competitive playing field for international hotel groups, many of which had in recent years opened sub-Saharan office for the first time.

"Africa is being called the last frontier of global hospitality and in the past 5 years many international hotel groups have tried to grow infrastructure on the continent, but because of Africa's unique challenges success has been limited.

"Hotels are a very good barometer of a region's rate of economic development or decline, because hotels start going up when there's travel to sustain it - and most of that travel in Nigeria right now is corporate," Gillis said.

"PHG is the largest hotel group in Africa by a substantial margin and we have the greatest experience in the hospitality business on the continent because we've been at it for some 30 years.

"We've had a presence in Nigeria for years with Protea Hotels, but as the telecommunications, construction, wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing and agriculture sectors continue to grow, the time is right to open our first African Pride Hotel there."

A growing economy

Quoting *African Economic Outlook*, Gillis said Nigeria's growth is projected at 6.9% and 6.6% in 2012 and 2013, respectively and the government is expected to reach its target of getting inflation under 10% in 2013.



"There isn't a better time to be moving into Nigeria a brand that so perfectly denotes luxury," Gillis said.

African Pride Hotels is the continent's signature luxury brand incorporating designer city hotels, elegant country houses, and bush lodges that meet the needs of discerning travellers whether it be for business or leisure.

Gillis said: "Nigeria is an African powerhouse economy and it is well on its way to achieving its Millennium Development Goals. We'll be there as a partner in hospitality, growing with this incredible country in years to come."

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