

An African experience with a cultural twist in Swaziland

 By [Cari Coetzee](#)

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Swaziland Tourism recently exhibited at WTM Africa 2017, showing that this small, landlocked country in Southern Africa has big aspirations for its tourism industry. We asked Swaziland Tourism Marketing Manager, Bongani Dlamini, to tell give us some insight on what this kingdom has to offer.



©Felix Lipov via [123RF](#) - Sunset in Mlilwane Game Reserve with a traditional Swazi hut

■ Tell us about Swaziland's tourism offering and why it's a royal experience

Swaziland offers the adventurous traveller an African experience with a cultural twist. With a variety of accommodation available, you can either backpack and rough it in the wilderness, or enjoy true luxury at one of the many safari lodges. The Kingdom of Swaziland is known for its beautiful and pristine landscapes and presents visitors with the opportunity to explore and discover wonders such as the big five and other spectacular wildlife. With a diverse ecosystem, Swaziland boasts a variety of fauna and flora indigenous to the region and promises remarkable sightings throughout your adventures.

The Kingdom of Swaziland is one of the few remaining executive monarchies in Africa and has a rich cultural heritage, which is still preserved within the daily lives of Swazis. These cultural traditions have given life to a variety of local delicacies that can be enjoyed during your stay. The authentic African cuisine, colourful culture and breath-taking landscapes, are what make Swaziland the perfect safari destination for those looking for the true royal African experience.

■ What might travellers and travel trade not know about Swaziland?

Swaziland forms part of the Responsible Travel initiative, which is an approach to tourism that maximises the benefits to local communities, minimises negative social and environmental impact and helps people conserve fragile cultures and habitats found within the region.

This initiative has assisted in the development of communities within Swaziland and supports efforts to maintain the pristine natural environment Swaziland is known for. Along with conservation benefits, Responsible Travel has also helped to introduce trade markets within Swaziland and provides a steady income for locals who create beautiful crafts and traditional arts for the visiting traveller. These arts and crafts can be purchased during your travels and serve not only as a "support local" initiative but also make lovely mementos of your ventures on this African gem.

■ How does Swaziland plan to grow its tourism industry and attract more inbound travel from Africa? What is the strategy?

Swaziland is currently looking at investing more time and efforts into “cross platform” advertising and publicity, to grow awareness regarding attractions and destinations located within the region. We are closely working with tour operators as well other industry partners, as a means to ensure that we offer travellers the best experiences at the best rates according to travel and tourism standards.

We are also heavily vested in showcasing our destination amongst the best of the best in the world at trade shows such as the World Travel Market Africa, which we hope will aid growth and tourism trade within the kingdom over the next few years.

■ What did you hope to achieve by participating in World Travel Market Africa 2017? What was the response from buyers and fellow exhibitors like?

The Swaziland Tourism Authority have participated at the World Travel Market Africa for a few years and it has always been a huge success for us and our stand partners as we promote the Kingdom of Swaziland together. It is encouraging to see the interest grow year-on-year, and we look forward to being part of this prestigious event again next year.

Swaziland looks to further our investment within the tourism trade markets and to substantially grow our partnership with the tourism industry by introducing the consumer and travel trade, to our wonderful destination at hosted events such as the World Travel Market Africa.

■ What is the lasting impression you wanted to leave delegates with about Swaziland?

Swaziland may be small, but it has a lot to offer its visitors. What it lacks in size it certainly makes up for with heart, soul and boasts phenomenal business etiquette. Swaziland offers a kaleidoscope of travel opportunities, business ventures, world class accommodation and is certainly a one of a kind African safari destination.

ABOUT CARI COETZEE

Cari Coetzee is a contributor to Bizcommunity Tourism, Agriculture and Lifestyle.

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