

# Being a responsible traveller will safeguard our tourism industry

 ByDi Brown

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As a result of my article titled [The Tourism Dilemma](#) published on Bizcommunity on 20 July 2020, Gillian Saunders, who has been advising the The Tourism Business Council of South Africa, got in touch with me - and Ryan Enslin and I had a very productive and informative conversation with her.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

**My sentiments were that while the tourism industry was ready, the country was not.**

To appreciate the thoroughness of the safety measures implemented by the tourism industry you can read the Covid-19 Tourism Protocols [here](#). Added to this, every owner, or manager ready to open has signed a Covid-19 Protocols Pledge committing to fully adhering to all the requirements laid out in the document.

**The industry has played their part, now as South Africans and the driving force behind restoring our tourism industry, we must play ours.**

Tourism needs us to visit and support local businesses. Let's activate our "local is lekker" vibe and do it by tapping into our rainbow nation stamina that has successfully seen us through so much before.

But we must do it responsibly.

### **What is our role as a tourist?**

As President Cyril Ramaphosa said: "Now it is about each of us taking personal responsibility, wherever we are and whoever we are, for curbing the spread of the disease."

- Before we travel, it is imperative that we undertake a personal risk assessment to accurately evaluate our health status.
- We must know and agree to adhere to all the changes and safety protocols at the destination we are visiting.

### **What to expect when we travel.**

#### **Disclosure of personal and medical information.**

- A questionnaire must be completed before travel or on arrival. The information requested includes the usual personal details as well as age, fitness and general health, comorbidities, smoker status, physical impairments, and travel history.
- Disclosure of information designed to assess your Covid-19 risk, if you have had a possible contact, or are awaiting a test result.
- It is mandatory to agree with your information being shared with public health authorities should you become ill with Covid-19. Failure to agree to this means you will not be allowed to proceed with your booking or check in.
- All visitors must comply with daily temperature checks, having your information recorded on a Track and Trace Document, wearing a mask unless you are in your room, eating or drinking, in a private vehicle or outside and socially distanced.
- You are required to inform the establishment post check out if you become Covid-19 positive within 14 days of departure.

#### **The visitor experience.**

- Expect contactless transactions and minimal contact with staff.
- Your room might look a little minimalistic as the décor will be paired down to reduce risk. Excess cushions, throws, blankets, magazines and ornaments will have been removed. Vanity items and mini bar contents will be minimized or eliminated. All these items can be made available on request.
- There will be no turn down service. Room cleaning and linen changing will be less frequent to reduce contamination risks.
- Bedroom ventilation via air con or open windows is required.
- On site gift shops and spas may be closed or have limited offerings and time slots available.
- Buffets will probably not be available; dining menus may be reduced or only in room dining available. Enquire at the venue when booking as this will differ depending on each establishment's unique situation.

These are some of the changes to expect. Basically, agree to comply without argument to whatever the establishment asks, they are doing it for the safety of our country.

Much of what is required is no different to how we are living at home, but it is best to know what to expect in advance.

The best way for us to show our support for the tourism industry of South Africa is to support them as soon and as often as

we can, and to travel with integrity and make sure we can say with confidence #IamSafe2Travel.

## ABOUT DI BROWN

Di Brown is a freelance travel writer based in Cape Town. Part of the tourism industry for the last 20 years, Di is a supporter of responsible tourism, advocates for animal rights in tourism and is a keen amateur photographer.

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