

Hilton commits \$50m to Africa Growth Initiative for conversion of 100 hotels

To support the continued expansion of its sub-Saharan African portfolio, Hilton has committed \$50m over the next five years towards the Hilton Africa Growth Initiative. The funds are intended for the conversion of around 100 hotels into Hilton branded properties - flagship Hilton Hotels & Resorts brand, the upscale DoubleTree by Hilton and the recently launched Curio Collection by Hilton - in multiple African markets.



DoubleTree by Hilton Kigali City Centre (Image Supplied)

Patrick Fitzgibbon, Senior Vice President, Development, Europe, Middle East and Africa, Hilton said: "Hilton remains committed to growth in Africa, having been present on the continent for more than 50 years. The model of converting existing hotels into Hilton branded properties have proved highly successful in a variety of markets and we expect to see great opportunities to convert hotels to Hilton brands through this initiative.

"It enables us to rapidly grow our portfolio and delivers returns for owners by increasing exposure of their business to more international, inter-regional and domestic travellers, and specifically to our 65 million-plus Hilton Honors members, who look to stay with us in our suite of industry-leading brands. We see huge potential here in key cities and airports, as well as allowing us to develop our offering in resorts and safari lodges."

These hotels will receive all the benefits associated with Hilton's industry-leading brand proposition and world-class commercial platforms. Guests will also be able to take advantage of Hilton's innovative technology platforms such as online check-in and the ability to choose individual rooms when booking via the Hilton Honors App.

Fitzgibbon added: "The range of brands we have at our disposal allows owners the flexibility to pick the right fit for their property. We have already deployed this initiative in the signing of two hotels: our first DoubleTree by Hilton property in Kenya, and our first hotel in Rwanda, and expect to be able to announce further additions before the end of this year."

DoubleTree by Hilton Nairobi Hurlingham

The first hotel to benefit from this initiative is the 109 guest room Amber Hotel on Nairobi's Ngong Road, which will relaunch under the upscale DoubleTree by Hilton brand. The hotel, which opened in 2016, is currently undergoing a series of renovations and will join the brand by the end of the year. Following the refurbishment, the hotel will be known as DoubleTree by Hilton Nairobi Hurlingham and will continue to be operated by the owner under a franchise agreement through the leadership of its current general manager, Elisha Katam.



DoubleTree by Hilton Nairobi Hurlingham reception (Image Supplied)

DoubleTree by Hilton Kigali City Centre

The 153 room Ubumwe Grande Hotel in the Kigali central business district will trade under the upscale DoubleTree by Hilton brand when it fully converts in 2018. This franchised property – with 134 guest rooms and 19 apartments – opened in September 2016. The hotel will undergo some changes in order to rebrand and will be Hilton's first property in Rwanda. Once rebranded, the hotel will trade as the DoubleTree by Hilton Kigali City Centre.

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