

Fastjet making moves to help open skies, drive tourism

Fastjet's reinstatement of its route between Johannesburg and Victoria Falls has seen significant positive movement in bookings. The route was temporarily suspended during the carrier's [stabilisation plan implementation](#) period but relaunched at the end of July. Demand for more affordable travel has increased substantially as Fastjet's South African traffic continues to grow along with international connecting travel.



According to reports published in Zimbabwe, tourism to the resort town has seen 21% year-on-year growth, with increased with increased air traffic coupled with last year's \$150m airport upgrade counted as significant contributing factors.

Travel to Victoria Falls sees positive jump

"Interest by South Africans in visiting Victoria Falls has also seen a positive jump. While reports show a decline in inbound tourism from the region, anecdotal evidence and trade feedback suggests that the Falls now rank amongst the top three future African destinations for South Africans, keeping company with Zanzibar," says Fastjet spokesperson Hein Kaiser.

Weekend getaway travel also continues to grow as more affordable accommodation options become available in the resort town. International traffic to Victoria Falls is also up with Zimbabwean media reporting growth from American, German, French, Australian and Japanese inbound markets.

"Beyond its natural wonder, Victoria Falls is a gateway to adventure holidays and near incredible wildlife destinations. Our focus is on growing connecting traffic into the Falls as well as growing the South African outbound market to Victoria Falls," adds Kaiser.

Supporting Zimbabwe opening its skies

Fastjet has welcomed Zimbabwe's Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Patrick Chinamasa's announcement that Zimbabwe is opening its skies to "any airline that wants to fly as many times as possible."

“This is very good news for Zimbabwe,” says Fastjet Zimbabwe spokesperson Faith Chaitezvi, “and Fastjet intends to grow its network over time to enable affordable inbound and domestic travel for everyone.” She adds that flights between Bulawayo and Harare are at the top of Fastjet’s agenda along with plans to fly to other areas of the country as the airline’s fleet grows. The carrier plans to engage with authorities as soon as this week to shape plans. “Fastjet intends to serve both inbound connecting traffic as well as promote domestic travel as our destinations in Zimbabwe grow.”

In support of Zimbabwe, Fastjet intends to play a growing role in promoting tourism into Zimbabwe as well as regional and domestic affordable travel. The airline is presently running a campaign in South Africa to further promote regional tourism to Zimbabwe and recently implemented an interline agreement with Emirates whereby connecting traffic from Harare should increase onward travel to new and existing Fastjet destinations. “Fastjet will work with all role players to build positively on the significant impact that open skies hold for the Zimbabwean economy.”

In other markets where open skies have been implemented, economic benefits have included substantial growth in tourism, economic activity and job creation.

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