

# THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF TOURISM IN CAPE TOWN YEAR 2025 (PUBLISHED 2026)

Presented to: Cape Town Tourism

Compiled by: I and M Futureneer Advisors Pty Ltd

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**Futureneer**  
→  
**Advisors**

*Cape  
Town*  
TOURISM



CITY OF CAPE TOWN  
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA  
STAD KAAPSTAD



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# KEY FINDINGS



**TOTAL DIRECT SPEND**  
**R24.5bn**  
 Flat year-on-year



**TOURISM GVA**  
**R23.0bn**  
 -11% from R25.8bn



**GVA SHARE**  
**6.3%**  
 of Cape Town's total GVA



**TOURISM JOBS**  
**106,358**  
 6.2% of CT employment



Cape Town's visitor economy generated **R24.5 billion** in direct tourism spend in 2025, contributing **R23.0 billion** to the city's gross value add (**6.3%** of total GVA) and supporting **106,358 jobs**.



Foreign tourist arrivals grew **9.3%** to **1.44 million**. Visitors stayed an average of **9.5 nights** and spent **R1,390 per day**, bringing the total foreign spend to **R19.0 billion**, a **12.4%** real increase on 2024. The **74%** recovery figure relative to 2019 is a modelled estimate based on SAT, Stats SA data and Cape Town-level disaggregation assumptions. It is not directly comparable to CTIA passenger numbers, which capture a broader set of movements including returning residents. The two indicators should be read together, not treated as equivalent.



Domestic overnight trips reached **1.42 million**, a recovery to **98%** of 2019 levels, but spend fell significantly. Average stay dropped from **5.2** to **4.4 nights** and average daily spend fell **38%** to **R882**, reducing total domestic spend from **R8.0 billion** to **R5.5 billion**. SAT data indicates VFR travel increased while discretionary holiday travel declined.



**FOREIGN TOURISTS**  
**1.44m**  
 74% of 2019 peak  
 ↑9.3% vs. 2024



**DOMESTIC TOURISTS**  
**1.42m**  
 98% of 2019  
 ↑32% vs. 2024



**TOTAL BED NIGHTS**  
**19.8m**  
 13.6m foreign  
 6.2m domestic



**FOREIGN TOURISTS**

Average stay  
**9.5 nights**

Average spend/day  
**R1,390**

Total spend  
**R19bn**



**DOMESTIC TOURISTS**

Average stay  
**4.4 nights**

Average spend/day  
**R882 (-38%)**

Total spend  
**R5.5bn**

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Cape Town Tourism has appointed I and M Futureneer Advisors Pty Ltd (Futureneer Advisors) to compile an update of the EVT for Cape Town for the 2025 calendar year. Care should be taken when comparing these projections to previous reports due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and data that was retrospectively revised by South African Tourism (SAT) and Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). Please note the Tourism Satellite Account was revised from 2020.

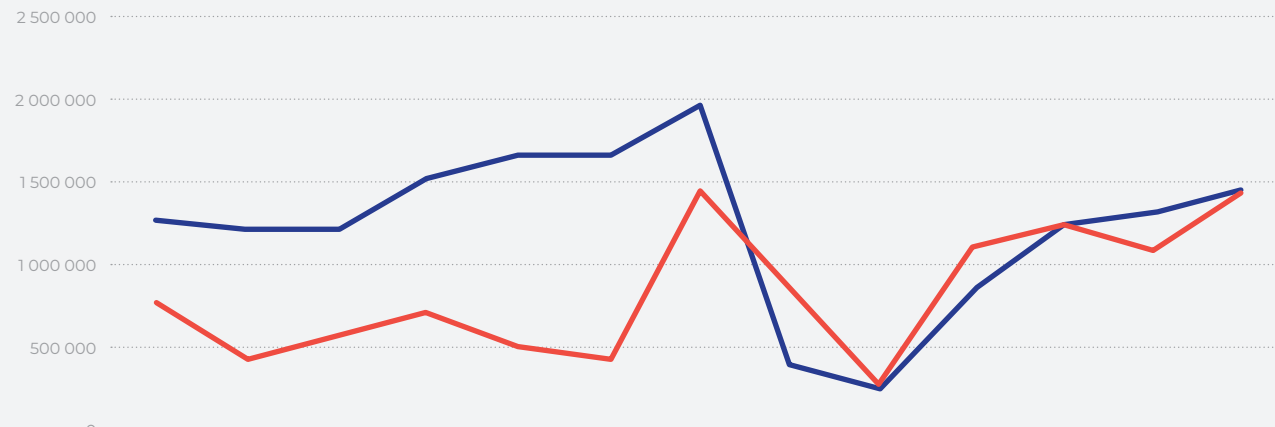
### Summary of Projections

	Number of Overnight Tourists		Average Length of Stay (Nights)		Bed Nights Sold		Average Spend per Day (R)		Total Direct Tourism Spend (R'billions)		
	Foreign Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Total
<b>2013</b>	1 260 002	775 500	9.2	6.7	11 570 401	5 203 860	806	186	9.3	1.0	10.3
<b>2014</b>	1 222 540	454 400	9.6	11.4	11 736 076	5 196 980	879	232	10.3	1.2	11.5
<b>2015</b>	1 214 774	533 975	9.1	6.7	11 015 651	3 575 880	952	245	10.5	0.9	11.4
<b>2016</b>	1 508 759	705 870	8.0	6.3	12 022 607	4 468 990	851	243	10.2	1.1	11.3
<b>2017</b>	1 655 341	507 840	10.1	4.8	16 776 214	2 413 031	670	290	11.2	0.7	11.9
<b>2018</b>	1 659 924	425 040	10.2	4.9	17 003 787	2 085 462	699	384	11.9	0.8	12.7
<b>2019</b>	1 944 942	1 447 506	9.5	5.0	18 572 533	7 240 483	942	461	17.5	3.3	20.8
<b>2020</b>	407 702	863 152	11.0	4.4	4 480 533	3 796 211	752	780	3.4	3.0	6.3
<b>2021</b>	266 320	289 290	13.0	11.4	3 468 800	3 302 400	762	892	2.6	2.9	5.6
<b>2022</b>	832 306	1 101 787	11.9	5.9	9 913 770	6 471 983	1 243	862	12.3	5.6	17.9
<b>2023</b>	1 238 567	1 242 851	9.5	4.3	11 794 680	5 332 000	1 454	1 194	17.1	6.4	23.5
<b>2024</b>	1 315 663	1 074 490	9.4	5.2	12 326 077	5 596 374	1 331	1 427	16.4	8.0	24.4
<b>2025</b>	1 437 773	1 423 271	9.5	4.4	13 645 218	6 192 000	1 390	882	19.0	5.5	24.5
<b>Annual Growth 2013 - 2025</b>	1.1%	5.2%	0.3%	-3.5%	1.4%	1.5%	4.6%	13.8%	6.1%	15.5%	7.5%

Source: SAT data and Futureneer Advisors Projections

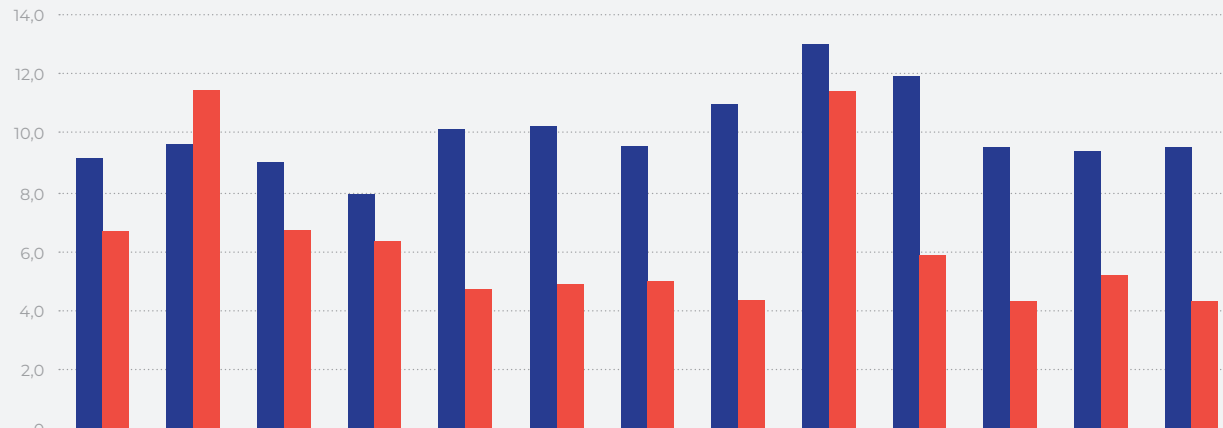
# Summary of Projections

## Number of Overnight Tourists to Cape Town

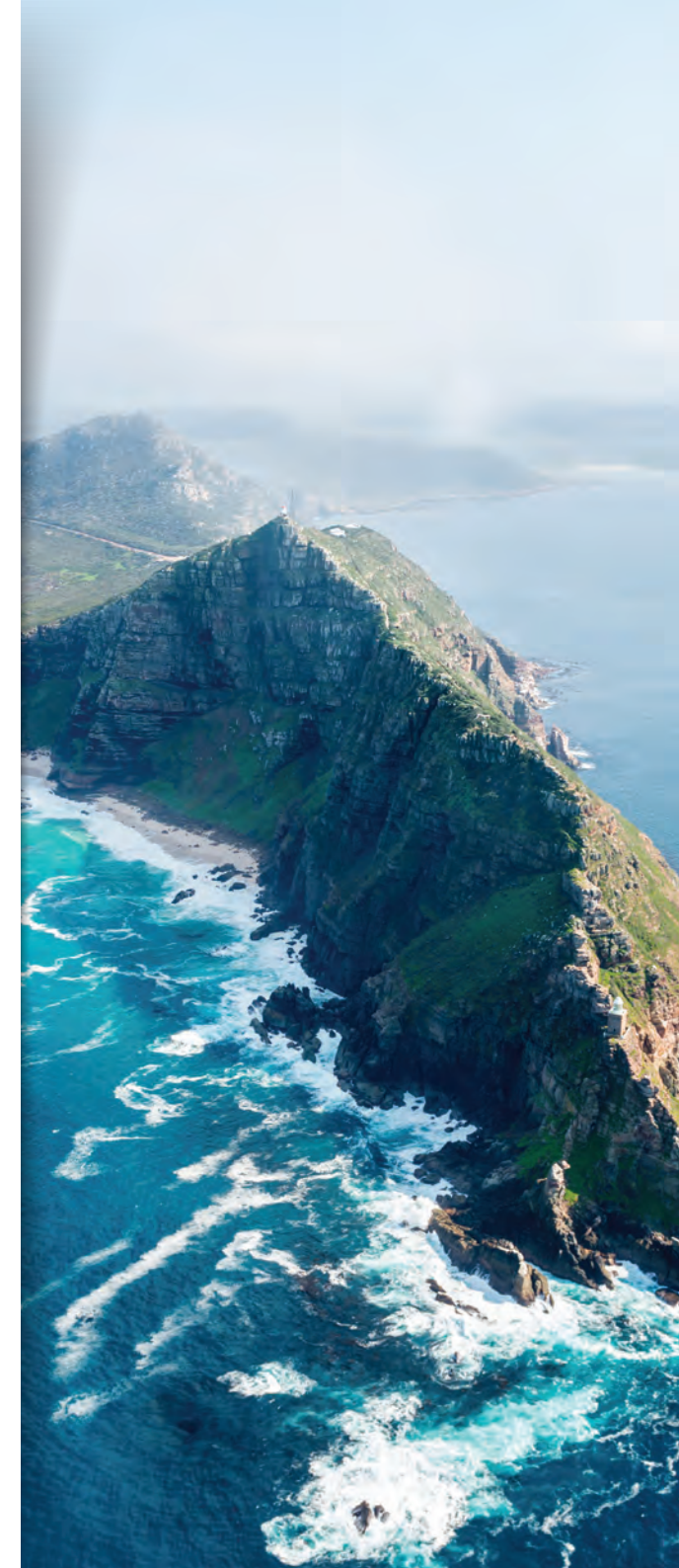


	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Foreign Tourist	1 260 002	1 222 540	1 214 774	1 508 759	1 655 341	1 659 924	1 944 942	407 702	266 320	832 306	1 238 567	1 315 663	1 437 773
Domestic Tourist	775 500	454 400	533 975	705 870	507 840	425 040	1 447 506	863 152	289 290	1 101 787	1 242 851	1 074 490	1 423 271

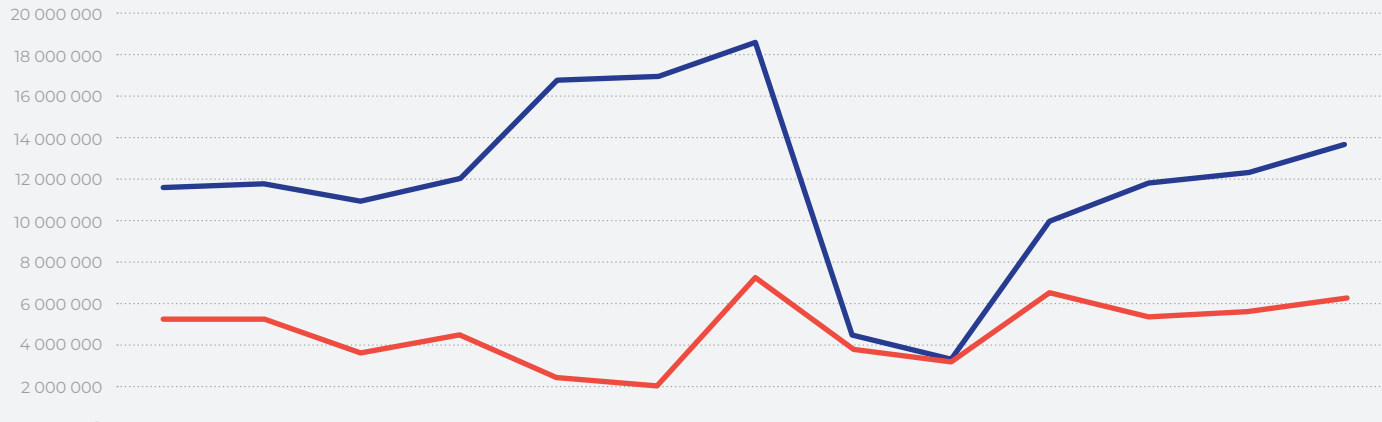
## Average Length of Stay (Nights) in Cape Town



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Foreign Tourist	9,2	9,6	9,1	8,0	10,1	10,2	9,5	11,0	13,0	11,9	9,5	9,4	9,5
Domestic Tourist	6,7	11,4	6,7	6,3	4,8	4,9	5,0	4,4	11,4	5,9	4,3	4,3	4,4

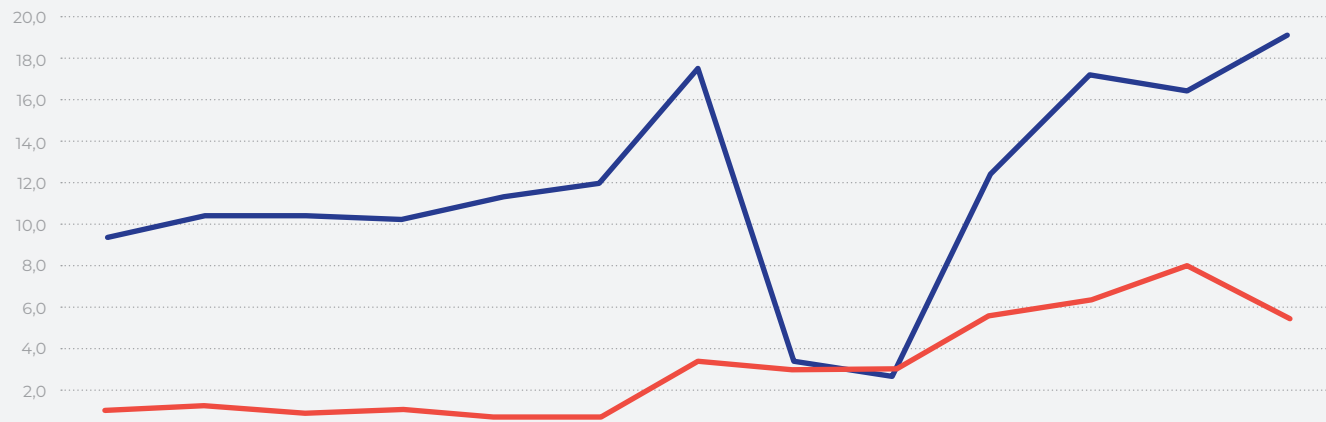


### Bed Nights Sold in Cape Town



Foreign Tourist	11 570 401	11 736 076	11 015 651	12 022 607	16 776 214	17 003 787	18 572 533	4 480 533	3 468 800	9 913 770	11 798 020	12 326 077	13 645 218
Domestic Tourist	5 203 860	5 196 980	3 575 880	4 468 990	2 413 031	2 085 462	7 240 483	3 796 211	3 302 400	6 471 983	5 351 503	5 596 374	6 192 000

### Total Direct Spend (R'Billion) in Cape Town



Foreign Tourist	9,3	10,3	10,5	10,2	11,2	11,9	17,5	3,4	2,6	12,3	17,2	16,4	19,0
Domestic Tourist	1,0	1,2	0,9	1,1	0,7	0,8	3,3	3,0	2,9	5,6	6,4	8,0	5,5

Source: SAT data and Futureener Advisors Projections



An analysis of number of foreign tourists to Cape Town indicates that Cape Town continues to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 travel restrictions. Foreign tourists to Cape Town recovered to 74% when compared to 2019. Foreign tourists to South African fully recovered in 2025 when compared to 2019. The reason for this discrepancy in performance between South Africa and Cape Town may be explained by:

- The recovery in foreign tourists to South Africa includes a variety of source markets and purpose of visit (including cross-border arrivals that mainly visit for shopping purposes) that can recover much quicker due to their proximity to South Africa. The source markets for foreign tourists to Cape Town include more tourists from long-haul destinations than cross-border arrivals;
- Data from SAT indicates that 2019 was a particularly good year for foreign tourists to Cape Town based on 19.6% of foreign tourists visiting the Western Cape compared to an average of 15.5% per annum between 2013 and 2018 and an average of 14.8% per annum between 2020 and 2025.

The increase in the number of foreign tourists to Cape Town was accompanied by a slight increase in the average length of stay to 9.5 nights and a 4.4% increase in the average spend per day to R1,390 per day. The resulting total spend by foreign tourists increased to R19 billion in 2025. This 15.6% nominal increase in 2025 is equivalent to a real growth rate of 12.4% given South Africa's inflation rate of 3.2% in 2025.

An analysis of the domestic overnight trips indicates that in 2019 the Western Cape received 15.6% of all domestic overnight trips, compared to an average of 7.7% per annum between 2013 and 2018 and an average of 9.8 per annum between 2020 and 2025. Despite this particularly good year for domestic tourists to Cape Town during 2019, the number of domestic overnight trips to Cape Town during 2025 has recovered to 98% of the 2019 total.

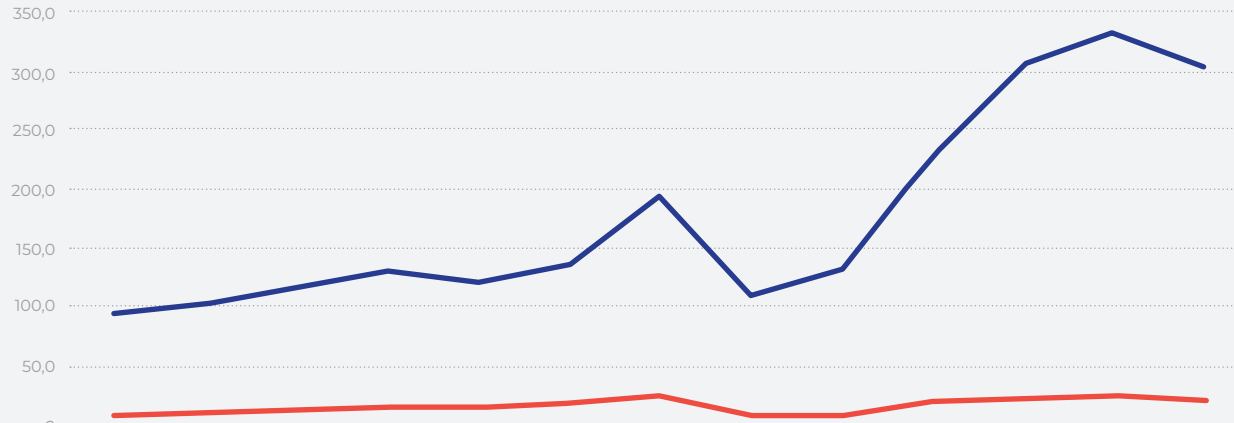
The economic pressures on South African households resulted in South Africans travelling more frequently, but for shorter durations and on tighter budgets. The increase in domestic overnight trips to Cape Town during 2025 was accompanied by a reduction in the average length of stay to 4.4 nights (from 5.2 nights in 2024) and a 38% decrease in the average spend per day to R882 per day.

The decline in direct spending by domestic tourists resulted in a decline in the estimated gross value add of R25.8 billion in 2024 to R23 billion in 2025. (6.3% of Cape Town's total gross value add in 2025).

The employment in Cape Town's tourism industry in 2025 reached 106,358 and represents 6.2% of total employment in Cape Town.

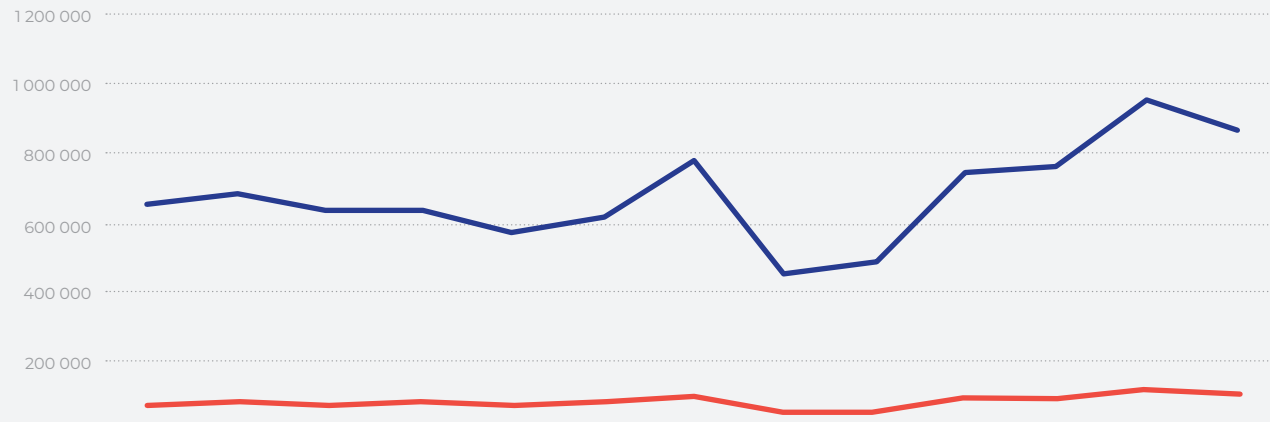


### Tourism Value Add (R' Billion)



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
South Africa	94,5	104,0	117,5	129,3	121,7	135,9	195,7	108,9	132,1	304,0	304,0	331,3	303,0
Cape Town	10,5	12,5	13,3	16,4	15,3	17,7	24,5	6,6	7,5	22,9	22,9	25,8	23,0

### Cape Town's Tourism Employment



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
South Africa	655 587	681 915	635 544	630 509	575 910	623 514	777 686	456 311	489 035	745 066	768 823	953 981	872 553
Cape Town	73 191	81 865	71 991	80 001	72 514	81 381	97 181	55 621	59 610	90 818	93 714	116 283	106 358

Source: \*Stats SA and \*\* Futureneer Advisor Projection



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The City of Cape Town (CoCT) started to monitor the economic value of tourism in Cape Town in 2008, and the responsibility was allocated to Cape Town Tourism in 2018. The main purpose of the monitoring was to create baseline data on the economic value of tourism (EVT).

Cape Town Tourism (the Client) has appointed I and M Futureneer Advisors Pty Ltd (Futureneer Advisors) to compile an update the EVT for Cape Town for 2025. At the time of writing this report, the key data available for the EVT included:

- Foreign tourists to South Africa:
  - The full 2025 calendar year data from Statistics South Africa with its monthly P0350 – International Tourism, December 2025 published on 27 January 2026.
  - The annual Report 03-51-02 – International Tourism 2025 published on 26 March 2026.
  - SAT data for 2025 obtained from the SAT tourism dashboard as the relevant reports have not been published yet at the time of writing this report.
- Domestic tourists to South Africa – SAT domestic tourism survey quarterly results for 2025;
- Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) for South Africa, final 2020, 2021 and provisional, 2022, 2023 and 2024 published on 26 March 2026.

## 1.2 Our Approach, Methodology, Deliverable and Timing

### 1.2.1 Approach

Our approach to this assignment was to utilise the same approach and methodology as for the previous EVT studies to conduct the projection for the 2025 calendar year. All data utilised in this report was as per the data available at the time of writing the report during April 2026.

All available data was reviewed to identify any revisions of historical data, and it was found that the TSA was revised for 2020 to 2024. In addition, data from ACSA on arrivals on international, regional, and domestic flights to Cape Town International Airport was utilised to identify growth trends for foreign and domestic tourism, where appropriate.

The data was then disaggregated to quantify the number of foreign and domestic arrivals to Cape Town, the number of bed nights and the total spend.

Data on the change in the economy of South Africa and the Western Cape was used to update the EVT for Cape Town i.e. the contribution to the economy and employment.

### 1.2.2 Methodology

During the compilation of the EVT for the 2025 year we have:

- Conducted an inception meeting with the Client to ensure that all parties agree on the proposed approach, deliverables, and timeframes;
- Obtained the relevant data from South Africa Tourism, Statistics South Africa, ACSA, and others;
- Analysed the data and formulated relevant assumptions for the disaggregation of the foreign and domestic tourists;
- Quantified the number of foreign and domestic arrivals to Cape Town, the number of bed nights and the total spend for the year 2025;
- Analysed the latest TSA and formulated relevant assumptions;
- Quantified the employment in Cape Town’s tourism industry and the contribution to gross value add for Cape Town for the year 2025; and
- Compiled a report detailing the approach, assumptions, and results of the process for the interim projections.

## 1.3 Terminology and Abbreviations

The following terminology and abbreviations were used in this report:

<b>ACSA</b>	Airports Company of South Africa
<b>Cape Town</b>	The geographical area represented by the municipal boundaries of the City of Cape Town
<b>CoCT</b>	City of Cape Town
<b>EVT</b>	Economic Value of Tourism
<b>GVA</b>	Gross value add
<b>SAT</b>	South African Tourism
<b>Stats SA</b>	Statistics South Africa
<b>The Client</b>	Cape Town Tourism
<b>TSA</b>	Tourism Satellite Account
<b>UN Tourism</b>	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
<b>WTTC</b>	World Tourism and Travel Council

## 2. Projected Direct Tourism Spend in Cape Town

### 2.1 Introduction

The projection of direct tourism spend in Cape Town between 2013 and 2025 was based on:

- Information included in the publications of SAT and the dashboard on SAT's website at [www.southafrica.net](http://www.southafrica.net);
- Information contained in the ACSA Cape Town International Airport Passenger Movement release; and
- Projections by Futureener Advisors regarding Cape Town's share of arrivals, bed nights and spend utilising data obtained directly from SAT during previous studies.

The data previously obtained directly from SAT and arrivals on international and domestic flights at Cape Town International Airport was utilised to benchmark and serve as proxy for the change in Cape Town's share where data was not available from SAT.

The timeframe of the COVID-19 pandemic and the various travel restrictions should be taken into account, particularly when comparing data between 2020, 2021 and 2022. It should be kept in mind that travel restrictions were not imposed until 26 March 2020, so the first three months of 2020 contributed positively to the annual results of 2020. Also, during 2021 the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> waves of the COVID-19 pandemic followed by the discovery of the omicron variant in December 2021 resulted in voluntary and involuntary travel restrictions in South Africa and its source markets.

### 2.2 Foreign Arrivals and Domestic Trips

Table 2.1 indicates the Foreign Arrivals to South Africa, the Western Cape and Cape Town. Total foreign arrivals to South Africa recovered fully to reach 2019 levels with 10.5 million foreign arrivals in 2025 (103% of the 2019 foreign arrivals).

An analysis of number of foreign tourists to Cape Town indicates that Cape Town continues to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 travel restrictions. Foreign tourists to Cape Town recovered to 74% of the number of foreign tourists to Cape Town in 2019. The reason for the discrepancy in the performance between South Africa and Cape Town may be explained by:

- The recovery in foreign tourists to South Africa includes a variety of source markets and purpose of visit (including cross-border arrivals that mainly visit for shopping purposes) that can recover much quicker due to their proximity to South Africa. The source markets for foreign tourists to Cape Town include more tourists from long-haul destinations than cross-border arrivals;
- Data from SAT indicates that 2019 was a particularly good year for foreign tourists to Cape Town based on 19.6% of foreign tourists visiting the Western Cape compared to an average of 15.5% per annum between 2013 and 2018 and an average of 14.8% per annum between 2020 and 2025.

The 74% recovery figure should be interpreted as a modelled estimate of foreign overnight tourists to Cape Town, based on SAT/Stats SA data and Cape Town-level disaggregation assumptions. It is not directly comparable to Cape Town International Airport passenger movements, which include arrivals and departures, returning South African residents, repeat movements, and other non-tourist passenger categories. CTIA's record 2025 performance confirms strong recovery in air access and passenger demand, while the EVT estimate reflects a narrower measure of foreign tourists attributed to Cape Town. The two indicators should therefore be read together, but not treated as equivalent.

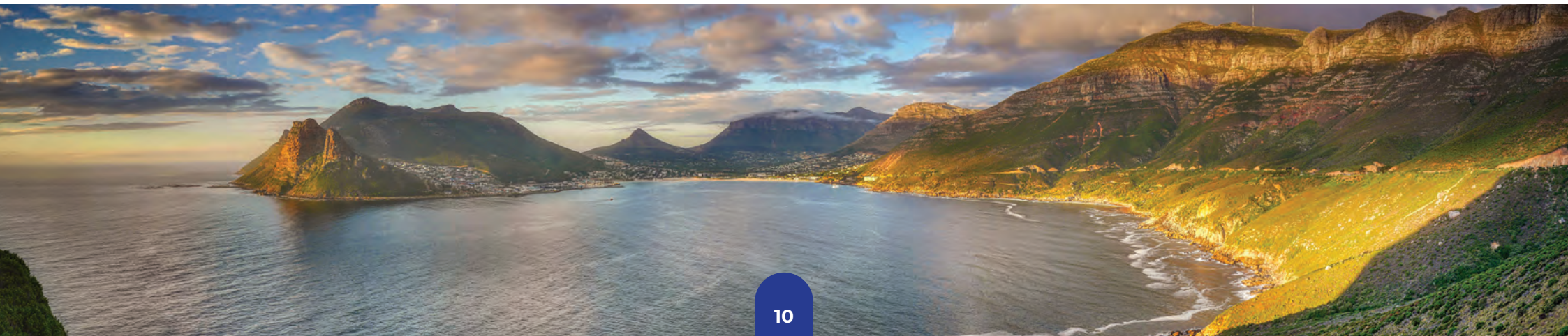


Table 2.1: Projected number of Foreign Arrivals to Cape Town

	Total Foreign Arrivals to South Africa*	Share of Foreign Arrivals to the Western Cape*	Number of Foreign Arrivals to the Western Cape*	Share of Foreign Arrivals to Cape Town**	Number of Foreign Arrivals to Cape Town**
2013	8 961 565	14.8%	1 330 520	94.7%	1 260 002
2014	9 549 236	14.5%	1 386 100	88.2%	1 222 540
2015	8 903 773	14.9%	1 323 283	91.8%	1 214 774
2016	10 044 163	15.6%	1 568 357	96.2%	1 508 759
2017	10 285 197	16.8%	1 727 913	95.8%	1 655 341
2018	10 472 105	16.5%	1 729 087	96.0%	1 659 924
2019	10 228 593	19.6%	2 005 095	97.0%	1 944 942
2020	2 802 320	15.3%	429 160	95.0%	407 702
2021	2 255 699	13.0%	292 659	91.0%	266 320
2022	5 698 062	15.5%	885 432	94.0%	832 306
2023	8 483 333	15.3%	1 296 308	95.5%	1 238 567
2024	8 919 370	15.5%	1 384 908	95.0%	1 315 663
2025	10 498 506	14.3%	1 497 680	96.0%	1 437 773

Source: \*SAT \*\*Futureener Advisors Projection

Table 2.2 indicates the Domestic Overnight Trips to South Africa, the Western Cape and Cape Town. During 2025 the total number of domestic overnight trips in South Africa increased to 44.7 million along with the number of domestic overnight trips to the Western Cape (4 million) and Cape Town (1.4 million).

Data from SAT indicates that the share of domestic trips taken to the Western Cape increased from 8.2% in 2024 to 9% in 2025. This resulted in an increase to 4 million domestic overnight trips, which is 90% of the number of domestic overnight trips during 2019. It is estimated that the 1.4 million domestic overnight trips to Cape Town during 2025 represents a recovery 98% of 2019.

The recovery should be seen against the SAT data that indicates that 2019 was a statistical anomaly compared to previous and future years. An analysis of the domestic overnight trips indicates that in 2019 the Western Cape received 15.6% of all domestic overnight trips, compared to an average of 7.7% per annum between 2013 and 2018 and an average of 9.8% per annum between 2020 and 2025. Despite this particularly good year for domestic tourists to Cape Town during 2019, the number of domestic overnight trips to Cape Town during 2025 has recovered to 98% of the 2019 total.

Analysis by SAT contained in their Domestic Tourism Performance reports indicates that the economic pressures on South African households resulted in South Africans travelling more frequently, but for shorter durations and on tighter budgets. Increasing the number of trips due to economic pressures may initially sound counter intuitive but the analysis indicates that the number of trips to visit friends and family have increased while the number of holiday trips has decreased.

A review of the 7.5% increase in the number of arrivals on domestic flights to Cape Town International Airport during the 2025/26 financial year, resulted in a revision of Cape Town's share of the domestic trips taken to the Western Cape from 32.6% to 35.6%.

Table 2.2: Projected number of Domestic Overnight Trips to Cape Town

	Total number of domestic trips taken in South Africa*	Share of domestic trips taken to the Western Cape*	Number of domestic trips taken to the Western Cape*	Share of domestic trips taken to Cape Town**	Number of domestic trips taken to Cape Town**
2013	25 175 080	9.3%	2 350 000	33.0%	775 500
2014	28 022 099	5.1%	1 420 000	32.0%	454 400
2015	24 450 804	6.7%	1 643 000	32.5%	533 975
2016	24 279 633	8.8%	2 139 000	33.0%	705 870
2017	17 168 428	9.2%	1 587 000	32.0%	507 840
2018	17 645 342	7.3%	1 288 000	33.0%	425 040
2019	28 456 033	15.6%	4 431 140	32.7%	1 447 506
2020	17 000 000	15.5%	2 642 302	32.7%	863 152
2021	14 800 000	6.0%	885 583	32.7%	289 290
2022	34 028 713	9.9%	3 379 716	32.6%	1 101 787
2023	37 886 187	10.1%	3 812 426	32.6%	1 242 851
2024	40 141 269	8.2%	3 295 982	32.6%	1 074 490
2025	44 700 000	9.0%	4 003 000	35.6%	1 423 271

Source: \*SAT \*\*Futureener Advisors Projection

## 2.3 Foreign and Domestic Bed Nights

Table 2.3 indicates the Foreign Bed Nights in South Africa, the Western Cape and Cape Town.

Based on data from SAT, the Western Cape received 12.3% of the foreign bed nights spent in South Africa. This translates to 18.7 million foreign bed nights in 2025. The data also indicates a slight increase in the average length of stay in the Western Cape from 12.3 nights in 2024 to 12.5 nights in 2025.

Based on the assumptions used it is projected that Cape Town increased the number of foreign bed nights from 12.3 million during 2024 to 13.6 million during 2025. For Cape Town, the data indicates a slight increase in the average length of stay from 9.4 nights in 2024 to 9.5 nights in 2025.

The difference between the average length of stay in the Western Cape and in Cape Town indicates that foreign tourists, on average, spend 3 nights in destinations, other than Cape Town, in the Western Cape.

Table 2.3: Projected number of Foreign Bed Nights in Cape Town

	Total Number of Bed Nights by Foreign Arrivals to SA*	Share of Foreign Bed Nights in the Western Cape*	Number of Bed Nights by Foreign Arrivals to the Western Cape*	Share of Foreign Bed Nights in Cape Town**	Number of Bed Nights by Foreign Arrivals in Cape Town**
<b>2013</b>	73 429 569	22.2%	16 296 340	71.0%	11 570 401
<b>2014</b>	78 852 721	20.9%	16 483 252	71.2%	11 736 076
<b>2015</b>	81 341 230	19.2%	15 625 036	70.5%	11 015 651
<b>2016</b>	88 819 067	18.9%	16 744 578	71.8%	12 022 607
<b>2017</b>	120 560 518	19.3%	23 300 297	72.0%	16 776 214
<b>2018</b>	118 100 000	19.7%	23 292 859	73.0%	17 003 787
<b>2019</b>	112 253 674	22.9%	25 700 000	72.3%	18 572 533
<b>2020</b>	34 900 000	17.8%	6 200 000	72.3%	4 480 533
<b>2021</b>	27 510 138	17.4%	4 800 000	72.3%	3 468 800
<b>2022</b>	69 467 626	19.7%	13 700 621	72.4%	9 913 770
<b>2023</b>	111 777 628	14.6%	16 300 000	72.4%	11 794 680
<b>2024</b>	114 622 600	14.9%	17 034 380	72.4%	12 326 077
<b>2025</b>	151 388 088	12.3%	18 660 974	73.1%	13 645 218

Source: \*SAT \*\*Futureener Advisors Projection

Table 2.4 indicates the Domestic Bed Nights in South Africa, the Western Cape and Cape Town.

Based on data from SAT, the Western Cape maintained its share of bed nights at 8.4% during both 2024 and 2025. With the increase in the total number of domestic bed nights, the number of domestic bed nights spent in the Western Cape increased from 12 million in 2024 to 14.4 million in 2025.

Similarly, the number of domestic bed nights in Cape Town increased from 6 million during 2024 to 6.2 million during 2025. This increase in the number of bed nights occurred due to an increase in the number of domestic overnight trips and despite a decline in the average length of stay from 5.2 nights in 2024 to 4.4 nights in 2025.

Table 2.4: Projected number of Domestic Bed Nights in Cape Town

	Total number of domestic bed nights in South Africa*	Share of domestic bed nights on trips taken to the Western Cape*	Number of domestic bed nights on trips taken to the Western Cape*	Share of domestic bed nights on trips to Cape Town**	Number of domestic bed nights on trips to Cape Town**
<b>2013</b>	111 215 716	10.9%	12 102 000	43.0%	5 203 860
<b>2014</b>	113 224 026	10.7%	12 086 000	43.0%	5 196 980
<b>2015</b>	102 486 081	8.1%	8 316 000	43.0%	3 575 880
<b>2016</b>	103 417 517	10.0%	10 393 000	43.0%	4 468 990
<b>2017</b>	70 146 253	8.0%	5 611 700	43.0%	2 413 031
<b>2018</b>	69 284 437	7.0%	4 849 911	43.0%	2 085 462
<b>2019</b>	94 144 447	17.9%	16 838 332	43.0%	7 240 483
<b>2020</b>	56 800 000	15.5%	8 828 397	43.0%	3 796 211
<b>2021</b>	51 200 000	15.0%	7 680 000	43.0%	3 302 400
<b>2022</b>	118 646 218	12.7%	15 051 124	43.0%	6 471 983
<b>2023</b>	132 979 175	9.4%	12 445 356	43.0%	5 351 503
<b>2024</b>	155 033 179	8.4%	13 014 824	43.0%	5 596 374
<b>2025</b>	171 000 000	8.4%	14 400 000	43.0%	6 192 000

Source: \*SAT \*\*Futureener Advisors Projection

## 2.4 Foreign and Domestic Direct Spend

Table 2.5 indicates the Foreign Direct Spend in South Africa, the Western Cape and Cape Town.

Using similar assumptions as for the number of foreign tourists and number of foreign bed nights, it was projected that the spend by foreign tourists in Cape Town increased from R16.4 billion in 2024 to R19 billion in 2025.

Based on the data from SAT the main reason for the 2025 increase in foreign spend is the increase in the number of foreign tourists to Cape Town. The data indicate that there was a 9.3% increase in the number of foreign tourists to Cape Town, resulting in a 10.7% increase in the number of foreign bed nights during 2025, with the assistance of a slight increase in the average length of stay to 9.5 nights. The increase in the average spend per day was 4%, which is closer to an inflationary increase than a real increase.

Table 2.5: Foreign Direct Spend in Cape Town (R'billion)

	Total Foreign Direct Spend in South Africa (R billion)*	Share of Foreign Direct Spend in the Western Cape*	Total Foreign Direct Spend in the Western Cape (R billion)*	Share of Foreign Direct Spend in Cape Town**	Total Foreign Direct Spend in Cape Town (R billion)**
2013	63.9	20.6%	13.1	71.0%	9.3
2014	64.2	22.6%	14.5	71.2%	10.3
2015	68.2	21.8%	14.9	70.5%	10.5
2016	75.5	18.9%	14.2	71.8%	10.2
2017	80.7	19.3%	15.6	72.0%	11.2
2018	82.5	19.7%	16.3	73.0%	11.9
2019	81.2	29.8%	24.2	72.3%	17.5
2020	22.3	20.9%	4.7	72.3%	3.4
2021	20.8	17.6%	3.7	72.3%	2.6
2022	59.6	28.5%	17.0	72.4%	12.3
2023	94.8	25.0%	23.7	72.4%	17.2
2024	91.6	24.8%	22.7	72.4%	16.4
2025	102.2	25.4%	25.9	73.1%	19.0

Source: \*SAT \*\*Futureneer Advisors Projection

Table 2.6 indicates the Domestic Direct Spend in South Africa, the Western Cape and Cape Town.

Using similar assumptions as for the number of domestic overnight tourists and number of domestic bed nights, it was projected that the spend by domestic tourists in Cape Town declined from R8 billion in 2024 to R5.5 billion in 2025.

Based on the data from SAT the reasons for the 2025 decline were that the economic pressures on South African households resulted in South Africans travelling more frequently, but for shorter durations and on tighter budgets. VFR travel increased while discretionary holiday travel declined, contributing to lower average spend per day. This behaviour also has an impact on average spend as holiday travelers typically spend more per day than VFR travelers.

The data and assumptions indicate that the increase in domestic overnight trips to Cape Town during 2025 was accompanied by a reduction in the average length of stay to 4.4 nights (from 5.2 nights in 2024) and a 38% decrease in the average spend per day to R882 per day, resulting in lower total direct spend of R5.5 billion in 2025.

Table 2.6: Domestic Direct Spend in Cape Town (R'billion)

	Total spend by domestic tourists in South Africa (R billion)*	Share of total domestic spend in the Western Cape*	Total spend by domestic tourists in the Western Cape (R billion)*	Share of domestic spend in Cape Town**	Total spend by domestic overnight tourists in Cape Town (R billion)**
2013	24.0	9.0%	2.3	43.0%	1.0
2014	26.9	10.0%	2.8	43.2%	1.2
2015	23.6	9.0%	2.0	43.2%	0.9
2016	26.5	10.0%	2.5	43.0%	1.1
2017	22.1	7.0%	1.6	43.4%	0.7
2018	26.4	7.0%	1.8	43.4%	0.8
2019	43.9	17.6%	7.7	43.2%	3.3
2020	53.1	12.9%	6.8	43.2%	3.0
2021	45.4	15.0%	6.8	43.2%	2.9
2022	99.1	13.0%	12.9	43.3%	5.6
2023	121.4	12.2%	14.8	43.0%	6.4
2024	136.4	13.6%	18.6	43.0%	8.0
2025	111.7	11.4%	12.7	43.0%	5.5

Source: \*SAT \*\*Futureneer Advisors Projection

# 3. Projected Tourism Gross Value Add in Cape Town

## 3.1 Introduction

The compilation of a tourism satellite account on a city or regional level to quantify the gross value add and employment of the tourism industry has various limitations and challenges. These include the ability to accurately measure the tourism economy of the city or region due to the lack of border posts where goods and services and the movement of tourists could be surveyed to allocate the flow of money through the economy.

For example, a scheduled tour of foreign tourists to South Africa may include overnight stays in Johannesburg, the Kruger National Park and Cape Town. When compiling a tourism satellite account for Cape Town, the total accommodation spend would need to be allocated between the various destinations. More problematic would be the allocation between the destinations of the transport costs and the commission earned by the tour operator.

Two approaches to regional tourism satellite accounts have been formulated to address these issues. Firstly, a regionalization approach can be adopted where the national tourism satellite account is apportioned on a regional basis using different indicators and methods. Secondly, a regional estimation approach can be followed where a tourism satellite account is calculated for a region on a similar basis as a national tourism satellite account. This approach requires sufficient data on a regional basis.

Given the lack of data on a city and regional level, a regionalization approach was adopted to quantify the economic contribution of tourism to the economy of Cape Town. The approach disaggregates the National Tourism Satellite Account produced by Stats SA to project the tourism gross value add in Cape Town.

## 3.2 Methodology

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) publish the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) for South Africa, final 2020, 2021 and provincial 2022, 2023 and 2024 on 26 March 2026. Given the availability of data relevant estimates for the TSA was compiled based on the change in direct expenditure by foreign and domestic tourists during 2024 and 2025 as indicated by data from SAT.

The national tourism satellite account quantifies the foreign, domestic, and outbound tourism expenditure for South Africa. The foreign and domestic direct tourism expenditure, as calculated utilising the disaggregation of national tourism data, was used to calculate a comparable figure for Cape Town. Unfortunately, the outbound tourism expenditure for Cape Town is not available and there is no reliable source available to estimate this figure.

The national tourism satellite account deducts the intermediate consumption from this tourism expenditure to calculate the gross value added by the tourism industry. The intermediate consumption relates to the expenses related to the tourism expenditure such as salaries of staff, consumables, etc.

The intermediate consumption for Cape Town was assumed to have the same ratio of tourism expenditure to intermediate consumption as South Africa. The national tourism satellite account utilises input-output tables to calculate the intermediate consumption but given the lack of detail on a Cape Town level it was assumed that Cape Town tourism enterprises would have intermediate consumption on a similar ratio than tourism enterprises in South Africa as a whole.

The national tourism satellite account also quantifies the number of persons directly engaged in producing goods and services purchased by visitors. It was assumed that Cape Town's share of the number of persons engaged would be the same as the ratio of Cape Town's gross value add for tourism to South Africa's gross value add for tourism.

It should be noted that the national tourism satellite account produced by Stats SA measures the direct contribution of tourism to the economy. The World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) approach measures the direct, indirect, and induced contribution of tourism to the economy. For example, the expenditure by a guest in an hotel (direct) result in expenditure by the hotel on food, (indirect) and expenditure by the hotel's employees in local shops (induced). The direct, indirect, and induced contribution is often used to compare to the contribution of other industries to the economy while this report quantifies the direct contribution.

The projection of the gross value add for Cape Town in this report utilises the foreign and domestic direct spend, disaggregated from the data published by SAT as a base and extrapolates it taking into account the conceptual and methodological differences as described below.

The Tourism Satellite Account for South Africa, final 2016 and provisional 2017 and 2018, published by Stats SA in November 2019 states that: “It is important to note that there are conceptual and methodological differences between the tourism foreign direct spend (TFDS) published by SAT, the BoP as compiled by the SARB, and consequently also the total inbound tourism expenditure in the TSA (Table 1 of the TSA).

TFDS includes all expenditure by foreigners in South Africa. From this total, SAT excludes capital expenditure and the shopping expenditure of traders (‘shuttle trade’) as this is already included elsewhere in BoP statistics. The BoP is inclusive of concepts such as ‘travel’ receipts and ‘international transportation’ receipts. ‘Travel’ receipts include the domestic spending of seasonal and non-resident workers. The total inbound tourism expenditure as reflected in Table 1 of the TSA therefore

includes the ‘travel’ receipts and ‘international transportation’ receipts from the BoP as provided by the SARB, but excludes the domestic spending of seasonal and non-resident workers.”

Table 3.1 indicates the difference between the foreign direct spend in South Africa as projected by SAT and the inbound tourism expenditure in South Africa as projected by Stats SA. On average, between 2013 and 2024, the Stats SA projection was 143% more than the SAT projection.

Table 3.1 also indicates the difference between the domestic direct spend in South Africa as projected by SAT and the domestic tourism expenditure in South Africa as projected by Stats SA. On average, between 2013 and 2024, the Stats SA projection was 174% more than the SAT projection.

**Table 3.1: Projections by SAT and Stats SA (R'million)**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Foreign direct spend in South Africa*</b>	63,937	64,171	68,162	75,546	80,725	82,500	81,187	22,336	20,810	59,641	94,756	91,600
<b>Inbound tourism expenditure in South Africa**</b>	94,183	106,728	108,760	121,400	120,979	120,037	121,512	35,855	25,177	73,872	101,482	113,907
<b>Difference</b>	147%	166%	160%	161%	150%	145%	150%	161%	121%	124%	107%	124%
<b>Domestic direct spend in South Africa*</b>	120,242	131,448	130,506	93,287	102,764	103,710	232,982	138,000	110,800	266,435	268,400	284,600
<b>Domestic tourism expenditure in South Africa**</b>	124,137	133,990	168,468	183,019	163,685	195,434	344,169	225,476	287,130	456,986	613,551	665,317
<b>Difference</b>	103%	102%	129%	196%	159%	188%	148%	163%	259%	172%	229%	234%

Source:  
\*SAT  
\*\* Stats SA

### 3.3 Projected Tourism Value Add and Employment

Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 indicates the tourism value add for Cape Town between 2013 and 2025 when the projected foreign direct spend in Cape Town is adjusted by the difference between the foreign direct spend in South Africa as per SAT and the inbound tourism expenditure in South Africa as per Stats SA.

Please note that the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) for South Africa, final 2020, 2021 and provincial 2022, 2023 and 2024 have revised the data from 2020 so care should be taken when comparing this report with previous reports.

Table 3.2: Projected Tourism Value Add (R'billion)

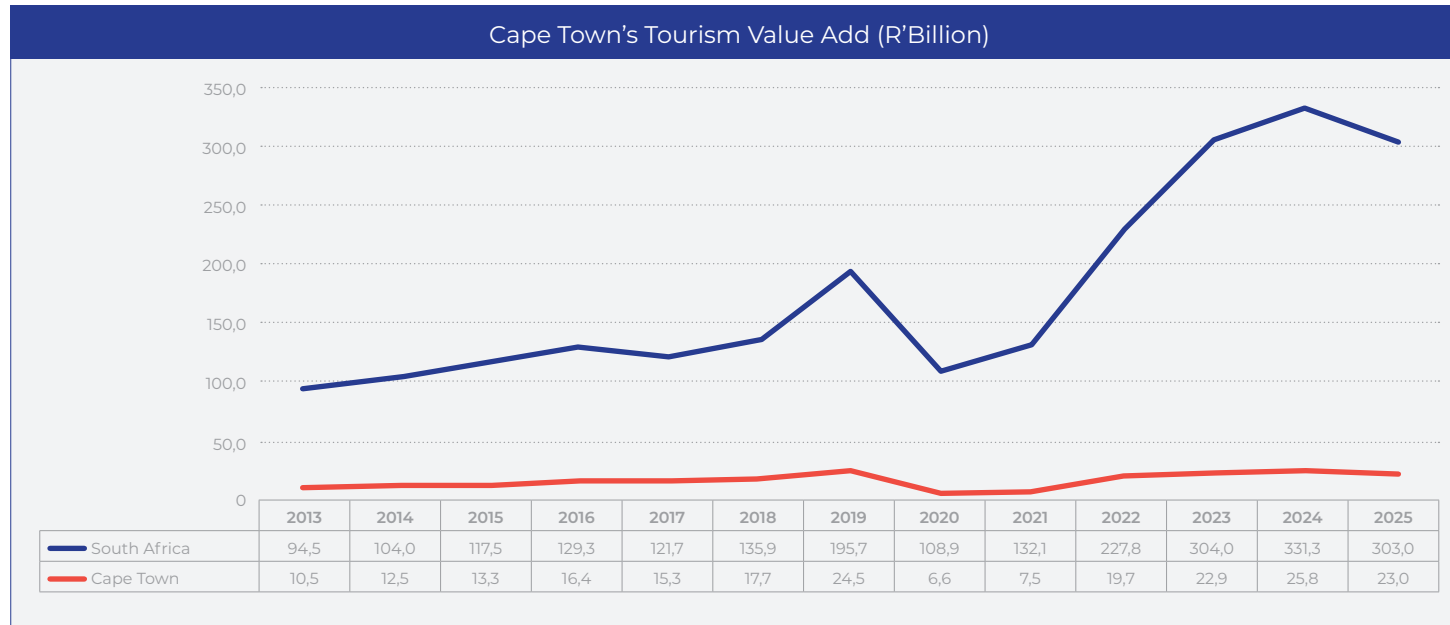
Year	Location	+ Foreign tourism expenditure	+ Domestic tourism expenditure	= Total output	- Total intermediate consumption	= Total gross value add	Tourism GVA as % of Total GVA
2013	South Africa*	94.2	124.1	218.3	123.8	94.5	3.0%
2013	Cape Town**	13.7	10.6	24.4	13.8	10.5	3.4%
2014	South Africa*	106.7	134.0	240.7	136.7	104.0	3.0%
2014	Cape Town**	17.2	11.7	28.9	16.4	12.5	3.9%
2015	South Africa*	108.8	168.5	277.2	159.8	117.5	2.9%
2015	Cape Town**	16.7	14.7	31.4	18.1	13.3	4.1%
2016	South Africa*	121.4	183.0	304.4	175.1	129.3	2.9%
2016	Cape Town**	16.4	22.2	38.6	22.2	16.4	5.0%
2017	South Africa*	121.0	163.7	284.7	163.0	121.7	2.6%
2017	Cape Town**	16.8	19.0	35.8	20.5	15.3	4.5%
2018	South Africa*	120.0	195.4	315.5	179.6	135.9	2.7%
2018	Cape Town**	17.3	23.9	41.2	23.4	17.7	5.2%
2019	South Africa*	121.5	334.2	455.7	259.9	195.7	3.7%
2019	Cape Town**	26.2	30.8	56.9	32.5	24.5	7.1%
2020 Rev	South Africa*	35.9	225.5	261.3	152.4	108.9	1.1%
2020 Rev	Cape Town**	5.4	10.3	15.7	9.2	6.6	2.0%
2021 Rev	South Africa*	25.2	287.1	312.3	180.2	132.1	1.2%
2021 Rev	Cape Town**	3.2	14.5	17.7	10.2	7.5	2.2%
2022 Rev	South Africa*	73.9	457.0	530.9	303.1	227.8	3.0%
2022 Rev	Cape Town**	15.3	30.7	46.0	26.2	19.7	5.7%
2023 Rev	South Africa*	101.5	613.6	715.0	411.1	304.0	3.4%
2023 Rev	Cape Town**	18.4	35.6	54.0	31.0	22.9	6.4%
2024 Rev	South Africa*	113.9	665.3	779.2	448.0	331.3	3.7%
2024 Rev	Cape Town**	20.4	40.2	60.6	34.9	25.8	7.0%
2025 Est	South Africa*	127.1	585.6	712.7	409.7	303.0	3.3%
2025 Est	Cape Town**	24.2	29.8	54.0	31.0	23.0	6.3%

Source: \*Stats SA and \*\*Futureneer Advisors Projection

Please note that the revision of the Tourism Satellite Account resulted in a revision of the gross value add for Cape Town between 2020 and 2024. The estimate for 2025 is R23 billion which represents 6.3% of Cape Town's total gross value add.

The gross value add for 2025 declined by 11% from 2024 due to the 32% decline in the spend by domestic tourists, countered by a 18% increase in the spend by foreign tourists. South Africa's gross value add is also estimated to have declined in 2025 over 2024.

**Graph 3.1: Tourism Value Add**



**Source:** Stats SA and Futureneer Advisors Projection

Please note that the revision of the Tourism Satellite Account resulted in a revision of the number of people employed in the tourism industry in Cape Town between 2020 and 2024. Employment in Cape Town's tourism industry was estimated at 106,358 in 2025, representing 6.2% of total employment in Cape Town.

Despite the decline in employment in 2025, the number of people employed in the Cape Town's tourism industry during 2025 is higher than the number of people employed in 2019. It is theorized that Cape Town's tourism industry has built back more cost effectively following the Covid 19 pandemic.



Table 3.3: Projected Tourism Employment

Year	Location	Employment	Tourism Employment as % of Total Employment
2013	South Africa*	655 587	4.4%
2013	Cape Town**	73 191	5.9%
2014	South Africa*	681 915	4.5%
2014	Cape Town**	81 865	6.5%
2015	South Africa*	635 544	4.0%
2015	Cape Town**	71 991	5.6%
2016	South Africa*	630 509	4.0%
2016	Cape Town**	80 001	6.1%
2017	South Africa*	575 910	3.6%
2017	Cape Town**	72 514	5.4%
2018	South Africa*	623 514	3.8%
2018	Cape Town**	81 381	6.0%
2019	South Africa*	777 686	4.8%
2019	Cape Town**	97 181	7.0%
2020 Rev	South Africa*	456,311	3.0%
2020 Rev	Cape Town**	55,621	4.4%
2021 Rev	South Africa*	489,035	3.3%
2021 Rev	Cape Town**	59,610	4.7%
2022 Rev	South Africa*	745,066	4.8%
2022 Rev	Cape Town**	90,818	6.2%
2023 Rev	South Africa*	768,823	4.7%
2023 Rev	Cape Town**	93,714	6.7%
2024 Rev	South Africa*	953,981	5.7%
2024 Rev	Cape Town**	116,283	6.9%
2025 Est	South Africa*	872,553	5.1%
2025 Est	Cape Town**	106,358	6.2%

Source: \*Stats SA and \*\*Futureneer Advisors Projection



Graph 3.2: Tourism Employment



Source: Stats SA and Futureneer Advisors Projection





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