

# Top 5 domestic, international air routes on the rise for South Africans

Several Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) Airports, including O.R. Tambo International Airport, Cape Town International Airport, King Shaka International Airport and more have been ranked as the most in-demand domestic and international air routes for 2018.



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## The top five international destinations for 2018 include

1. Harare (Zimbabwe)
2. London (UK)
3. Windhoek (Namibia)
4. Mauritius
5. New York City (U.S.A.)

For the first time, Harare tops the list of most popular international destinations for flights originating in South Africa in 2018.

While top spots were held by London (2014 and 2017) and Windhoek (2015 and 2016), Harare's 2018 growth may be a result of the changing political climate in Zimbabwe.

London remains an important tourism and business air route for South Africans and has seen increased capacity with British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and SAA offering direct flights between Heathrow Airport and South Africa. From October 2018, British Airways will launch direct flights between Durban and London marking the first time three of South Africa's largest airports are served with non-stop connections to Heathrow at the same time.

Despite being a long-haul destination (16 hours one way from Johannesburg), New York City has become a top five contender for the first time in 2018 moving past Dubai which is operated by Emirates direct from Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban daily.

## The top five domestic destinations for 2018 include:

1. Cape Town
2. Johannesburg (O.R. Tambo Airport)
3. Durban
4. Johannesburg (Lanseria Airport)
5. Port Elizabeth

Since 2014, there has been little movement in the domestic category with Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban maintaining their first, second and third place rankings respectively for the past four years. In 2017, George Airport (GRJ) exited the top 10 domestic destinations list after appearing consecutively in 2015 and 2016.

Lanseria, South Africa's fourth-largest airport by passenger numbers, has moved up the rankings in the past two years owing to increased capacity and a runway upgrade in 2013. South Africa's dominant low-cost carriers, Mango Airlines, Kulula and FlySafair, operate flights to Lanseria. Kulula initiated its Lanseria operations in 2006, Mango followed in 2010 and FlySafair in 2016. In May, Lanseria announced plans to double its passenger numbers to more than 4 million within the next six years.

## Increase in regional, international routes

Flights to London Heathrow from Johannesburg increased by 88% between 2014 and 2017 and regional destinations such as Windhoek and Harare increased by 51% and 118% respectively.

International **routes between Cape Town and the UK and Namibia have seen noticeable increases** since 2014:

**Cape Town – London Heathrow** bookings increased by 62% between 2014 and 2017

**Cape Town – Windhoek** bookings increased by 107% between 2014 and 2017

**Cape Town – Walvis Bay** bookings increased by 219% between 2014 and 2017

As Durban's King Shaka Airport has attracted more international carriers, outbound passenger numbers have increased with Dubai (+273%) and London (+118%) showing the most growth between 2014 and 2017.

*The rankings are based on an analysis of more than 800,000 individual trips booked on Travelstart since the start of 2017.*