

President Obama's visit to Africa: big hopes for tourism?

As U.S. President Barack Obama wraps up his trip to Senegal and gets ready for the second leg of his African tour with a visit to South Africa, followed by Tanzania, Africa's tourism stakeholders in government and in the private sector, are viewing the trip as an important opportunity to market Destination Africa to American tourists and investors.

The timing of President Obama's trip couldn't be any better, especially with Africa becoming a more accessible tourism market for Americans.

According to sources at the Department of Commerce's Office of Travel & Tourism Industries, Europe is still the number one destination of choice, followed by the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. But the outlook for both business and leisure travel to Africa is bright. While the number of U.S. visitors to the African continent has been down in recent years, spending by U.S. travelers has increased every year, up 150% from 2003.

This is especially good news for Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania, countries that will not only host the President and his family, but also large delegations of American economic officials, business executives and journalists.

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