

# Corporate travel news

June 2019

Virtual Payment Solutions from  
American Express

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TRAVEL WITH  
ATTITUDE

### British Airways' new World Traveller Plus amenities



British Airways is changing some of the amenities it offers to World Traveller Plus passengers.

From July 1, 2019 the premium economy service will have new amenity kits made from recycled plastic bottles.

The kits will contain an eyemask, socks, a pen, toothbrush, toothpaste and lip balm from Scaramouche and Fandango.

A new quilt and cushion will feature the herringbone design also found in First cabins and on the new amenity kits.

In February the airline introduced a revamped dining menu into premium economy, including a third meal option, a “more substantial” second

hot meal during the flight, and new dishes.

It also launched a new World Traveller Plus seat last year, which is being fitted to selected B777 aircraft operating from Gatwick.

The seat has a 50 per cent larger IFE screen and a six-way adjustable leg, foot and headrest.

The seat will be on BA's new A350s when they are delivered from July.

The aircraft will also feature BA's new business class product.

For more information, simply visit [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)



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## Amex Launches vPayment in South Africa



American Express has launched vPayment in the South African market, offering travellers and travel agents a safe, simple and reliable way to pay for their travel bookings. vPayment controls and streamlines the payment and reconciliation process by assigning a unique American Express virtual account number and user-defined expense information to each transaction. A bespoke transaction value and date range can be specified and associated with each virtual account number.

Key data elements such as employee ID, cost centre and all relevant booking references can also be associated with the account number. Added controls minimise the opportunity for fraud, whilst enhanced data helps to streamline the reconciliation process.

## Mango adds Lanseria-Zanzibar flight



Starting this month, Mango Airlines will operate a Lanseria-Zanzibar flight, which will more than likely be scheduled according to seasonality, depending on the uptake. This is in addition to the airline's flights currently being operated from O.R. Tambo International Airport. The Lanseria departure will allow for internal connections from Durban and Cape Town.

The estimated departure time from Lanseria International Airport is 09h50, which would allow for Durban and Cape Town connections, and arrives in Zanzibar at 14h15. The return flight will depart the island at 15h05 and arrive at Lanseria at 18h05.

The aircraft is a Boeing Next Generation 737-800 from the Mango fleet that is currently being fitted with the Split Scimitar Winglet technology.



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## New scanners at Heathrow will allow laptops and liquids to stay in your bag



Heathrow is rolling out new security scanners that will allow passengers to keep liquids and laptops in their bags. The airport said it would spend £50 million on the security equipment, which will be rolled out over the next few years. Once fully operational, the machines will mean passengers will not need to put liquids into a separate plastic bag or place electronics in a separate tray. Heathrow expects to complete the roll-out by 2022 and says it will cut queue times. It notes that the technology will not be available at all terminals and security lanes immediately, and that there may still be instances when additional bag checks will be required. The airport has been trialling the technology with the UK's Department for Transport since 2017. It is important to note however that the ban on liquids over 100ml will remain unchanged.

## Unbundled business class fares from Emirates



Unbundled economy class tickets are a common place with most airlines around the world, but Emirates Airlines has now announced that it will start selling unbundled business class fares.

An unbundled fare simply means the airline provides a lower-priced ticket without some of the amenities one would normally receive.

The cheaper fares would reduce some of the benefits of the higher fares which include flexibility on changes and cancellations, baggage allowance, frequent flyer miles on offer, chauffeur service, lounge access, seat selection and other benefits.

Ensure you read the full terms and conditions of the fare you are purchasing.



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### Delta expands African offering

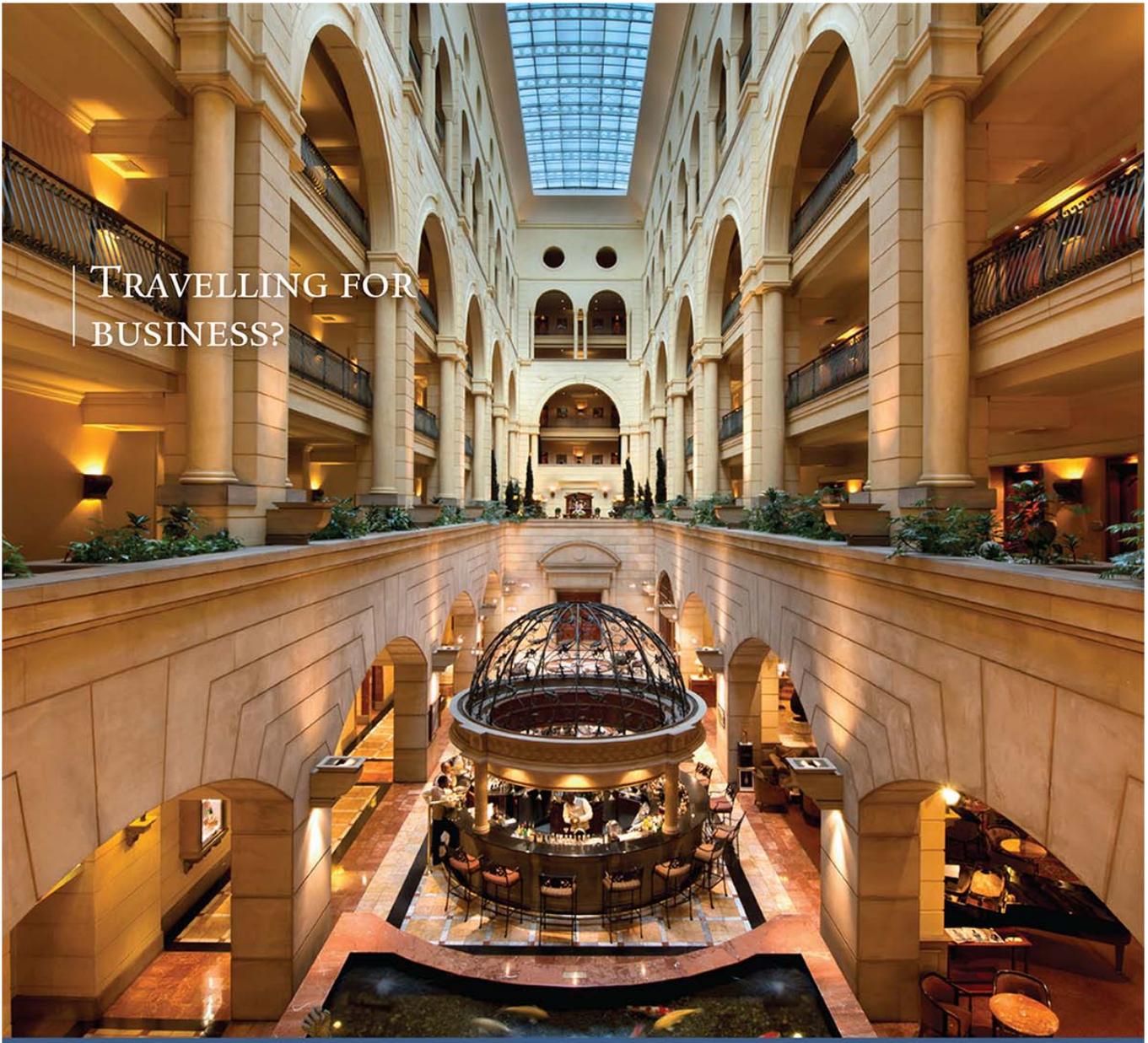


Delta Air Lines has expanded its offering in Africa through interline and codeshare agreements, providing one-stop connections to the US from Johannesburg, says Jimmy Eichelgruen. “Our interline agreement with kulula means customers flying on Delta’s Johannesburg-Atlanta route can connect on to kulula-operated flights to/ from key South African cities, including Cape Town, Durban, East London and George.

The new agreement is in addition to existing interline partnerships with Comair and SAA that offer flights to/from destinations including Port Elizabeth, Harare, Victoria Falls, Livingstone and Windhoek,” he says. Elsewhere in Africa, Delta has

codeshares with Kenya Airways on flights between Nairobi, Amsterdam, Paris and London, offering greater connectivity and more onestop travel options to the US.

Delta passengers can also travel from South Africa and other cities across Africa via Paris and Amsterdam on Delta codeshares with Air France and KLM. Jimmy says Delta offers same-airline connections to more than 200 destinations via Atlanta. “Our Johannesburg flight is timed to make connecting extremely easy and convenient via Atlanta, with customers able to reach cities like Los Angeles and Dallas in time for lunch the next day.



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Marriott's Bonvoy loyalty programme has launched a global points promotion offering members 1,500 bonus points for each stay.

The bonus is valid for stays of two nights or more completed between July 2 and September 16 – members must register for the promotion by September 2 to be eligible for the bonus points.

There is no limit to the number of bonus points members can earn during the "Endless Earning" promotion, but only one room per hotel will count towards a member's nights or stays.

Redemption nights will not be eligible for the bonus, and stays at Homes and Villas by Marriott International, ExecuStay, Marriott Executive Apartments and Marriott Vacation Club owner-occupied weeks are not eligible for the promotion.

Members who elect to earn miles instead of points for their stays will not earn the bonus, but note that a separate Marriott Bonvoy promotion is also running for stays at European properties, offering up to 1,500 bonus Avios. The Marriott Bonvoy programme was launched earlier this year, following the merger of the group's Marriott Rewards, The Ritz-Carlton Rewards and Starwood Preferred Guest schemes.

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## Travel Snippets

**US visa delays.** According to the US Embassy in South Africa, there has been heavy demand for US visas, which has led to longer waiting times than usual. They are encouraging potential travellers to apply for their visas at least three months before the planned travel date.

**Ethiopian Airlines**, in partnership with ASKY Airlines, has announced the launch of new direct flight routes from Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo International Airport to various African destinations.

This is aimed at enhancing Ethiopian Airlines' route network with ASKY Airlines. The carrier service will provide a direct service through Johannesburg to cities such as Libreville in Gabon, Douala in Cameroon, Lagos in Nigeria, and Lomé in Togo.

These new routes will cater for a spectrum of travellers including business and corporate travellers. Previously, travellers had to connect through Addis Ababa in order to reach their destinations.

**Air Mauritius** will commence operations to Seychelles effective 2 July.

The flights will be operated twice weekly by an Airbus A319, offering 16 business and 108 economy class seats. Flight schedules for the Mauritius-Seychelles service have been designed to optimize connecting possibilities for passengers through the Mauritius hub. The flight will depart Mauritius at 08h30 on Tuesdays and land in the Seychelles at 11h10. The return flight leaves at 12h00 and arrives back in Mauritius at 14h40. On Fridays, the flight will depart Mauritius at 22h30 and touch down in the Seychelles at 01h10 on Saturday mornings. The return flight will take off from the Seychelles at 02h20 and land in Mauritius at 05h00.

**British Airways** has closed its Galleries First and Club lounge at Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo International Airport for refurbishment. Eligible customers will be temporarily redirected to either the SLOW Lounge or the Aspire Lounge at the airport. No re-opening date has been given, although it is expected later this year. BA is gradually revamping its lounges under a new design direction, which is moving away from the Galleries-style concept. The temporary closure coincides with BA reducing its frequency between London and Johannesburg from 4 June, with capacity being moved across to the carrier's Heathrow-Mumbai service.



## LEAVE YOUR TRAVEL INSURANCE COVER TO THE EXPERTS

Whether you're travelling to Thailand on a holiday or Ghana on a business trip, you must have adequate travel insurance. When 42-year-old John\* arranged a trip to China, he had not even considered the need for travel insurance until his travel agent recommended that he purchase a comprehensive travel insurance policy. And it was certainly a good call - he suffered a cerebral haemorrhage in Shanghai and his medical bills amounted to R3.6-million.

The same can be said for Dawn\* who, while on holiday on the sunny shores of Malaga in Spain, slipped on the steps outside the apartment where she was staying and fell, breaking her ankle in two places. Her medical expenses amounted to almost R500 000. Laura\* had a similar expense when she broke her back in a boating accident on the way to the Phi Phi Islands in Thailand.

Many travellers don't recognise the need for a travel insurance policy or even understand what it covers them for. While some travellers may buy travel insurance mainly for protection against trip cancellations, it's the risk of potentially ruinous medical expenses that travellers should bear in mind when they book a trip overseas.

Due to the increasing exchange rate of the Rand against many foreign currencies, travelling without travel insurance has the potential to leave you financially crippled. For example: A routine visit to a GP in the United Kingdom will cost you £150 to £200. Hospital costs for a serious injury have the potential to run into millions of Rands. Travel insurance products offer you the affordability of purchasing your policy in Rands, while ensuring that your medical costs will be covered in the foreign currency you require.

### WHAT DOES A TRAVEL INSURANCE POLICY COVER?

The most important benefit on your travel insurance policy is your emergency medical cover. This covers your medical costs in the event of injury or illness when you are travelling outside the borders of South Africa. A comprehensive policy will also include cover for:

- Losses incurred due to unforeseen cancellation/curtailment of your trip
- Death and disability cover
- Personal liability cover
- Luggage cover
- Various other inconvenience benefits

The majority of travel insurance claims are related to medical costs, cancellation expenses and luggage loss. When you compare policies and benefits, it is important that you ensure that you have cover for all three risks.

Most banks provide some complimentary travel cover if you have purchased your ticket using your credit card. This is usually limited to some medical cover, accidental death and disability cover. Make sure that you check exactly what is covered before travelling, to make arrangements to boost your cover

### IS SKIING COVERED?

Yes, leisure skiing is covered on most good policies as long as the traveller isn't participating in a competition.

### HOW ARE OVERSEAS MEDICAL COSTS PAID?

Participation in sport for leisure purposes, including snow skiing, water-skiing and scuba diving, is covered. All sport that is deemed risky and sport which is undertaken competitively or professionally will require a sport extension.

### ARE PREGNANT TRAVELLERS COVERED?

Yes, up to the first day of the 26th week. A child born on the journey is not covered.

### ARE INJURIES COVERED IF YOU PERFORM MANUAL LABOUR ON A TRIP?

Costs incurred for manual labour-related injuries are excluded on standard cover. However, most comprehensive business travel products have various options for adequate cover in this regard.

**VIRGIN** Atlantic will launch a new daily flight between London Heathrow and Mumbai from October. The service will complement the existing route between London and Delhi. Flights are on sale, with the first service commencing on October 27.

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**TURKISH** Airlines will increase flights from Istanbul to Hanoi, Vietnam, from six a week to daily flights from March 30, 2020. Flight TK164 will depart Istanbul at 02h40, arriving in Hanoi at 16h25.

Return flight TK165 will depart Hanoi at 21h35 and arrive in Istanbul at 04h15 the next day. The service will start on March 30 and end on October 25, 2020.

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**TOWN** Lodge Umhlanga is scheduled to open in July. The 154-room

property is on the corner of Umhlanga Ridge Boulevard and Meridian Drive, and is near the beach, Gateway Theatre of Shopping, and Durban, and a 15-minute drive from King Shaka International Airport. Facilities include rooms for disabled guests, two boardrooms, a swimming pool and parking bays for 110 cars.

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**DOHA'S** Hamad International Airport has launched the second phase of its Smart Airport programme, which will introduce biometric systems across the entire passenger journey.

Facial recognition technology will be used at bagdrop, security and boarding. Biometric information will be registered during check-in at a kiosk or via an app and will combine the passenger's flight, passport and facial

biometric information in a single electronic record.

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**ETHIOPIAN** Airlines has launched three weekly flights to New York JFK via Abidjan from June 17. The new flights, along with the carrier's four weekly services to Newark via Lomé, bring the New York schedule to a daily service.

Flight ET 0512 operates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, departing Addis Ababa at 09h00 and arriving in Abidjan at 12h15. It departs Abidjan at 13h15 to arrive in New York at 20h00.

Return flight ET 0513 operates on the same days, departing New York at 22h00 and arriving in Abidjan at 12h04 the following day. Flight ET 0513 then departs Abidjan at 13h05 arriving in Addis Ababa at 22h20

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