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Wishing all our clients a blessed Easter

NEWSFLASH – APRIL 2018

CAPE TOWN AIRPORT GOES SILENT

Cape Town International Airport has joined the global movement to 'silent airports'. Airports Company South Africa advise that passenger boarding calls will no longer be made in the domestic and international check-in areas and boarding gate areas. Only limited boarding calls will be made in front of international departures boarding gates. The announcement comes after OR Tambo International Airport advised passengers in November last year that microphones at the domestic terminal and gates would be switched off. For the majority of domestic flights standard operating procedures require passengers to start boarding 30 minutes prior the scheduled departure time and one hour for international flights.

BOTSWANA – TWO NEW AIRPORT LOUNGES OPEN

Nthula Airport Lounges has opened two lounges at Botswana's newly upgraded Kasane International Airport. The lounges are accessible for a fee to all passengers who have checked in for their flights regardless of airline and class of travel. The lounges are situated in the domestic and international departures halls and are only accessible to passengers who have checked in for their flights. Nthula Airport Lounges also operates a lounge at Sir Seretse Khama International Airport in Gaborone.

UK VISA PROCESS

From April travellers applying for a UK visa will benefit from digital improvements to the visa application process. Supporting documents will

be scanned whilst customers are at the visa application centre and then given back to them immediately. These digital documents will then be sent to UKVI with the passport and visa officers will then consider the application in the standard way. The new process allows customers to retain their important supporting documents during the application process.

NEW PROCESS TIME FOR SPANISH VISAS

The BLS Spanish Visa Application Centre in Pretoria has announced that Spanish visas now require a minimum of 15 working days. BLS will not consider any applications with less than 15 days processing time.

ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES

From the 2nd of June to the 27th of October Ethiopian Airlines will operate an additional three flights a week on its London Heathrow route, taking the total number of flights on the route to 10 a week.

THAILAND BEACHES

Thailand's government is planning to adopt drastic measures against increasing environmental damage caused by tourism on three popular islands in southern Thailand. From July the government will ban fishing, fish feeding, anchoring on coral reefs, construction on the beach and walking on the seabed on the islands. The islands include Koh Samui, Koh Tao and Koh Pha-ngan. People found violating the bans can face up to one year in prison and a fine of 100,000 baht. Smoking has already been banned on 24 beaches nationwide

since February due to huge amounts of cigarette butts.

BA ENHANCES BIOMETRIC BOARDING TECHNOLOGY

British Airways in partnership with Los Angeles International Airport has rolled out new biometric boarding technology for flights leaving the US. The technology by Vision-Box has resulted in self-service biometric boarding gates. Passengers will no longer have to present their boarding pass or passport at the gate only at check-in and security checks. Instead passengers will look into a camera and once their biometric data has been verified they can board the aircraft.

CEMAIR RESUMES CPT-JNB ROUTE

CemAir has resumed flights on its Cape Town-Johannesburg, Hoedspruit-Cape Town (via Johannesburg) and Johannesburg-Sishen routes.

AIR FRANCE STRIKE

Thousands of passengers are set to be affected by further strikes by Air France staff after, unions announced two more days of industrial action in April, more strikes were announced by the unions representing Air France in response to an ongoing dispute over wages. Staff will now strike on the 3rd of April and the 7th of April. Which looks likely to cause a major Easter headache for some travellers. In a recent strike the airline was forced to cancel a quarter of its flights which left just 70% of its long-haul flights and 80% of the airline's medium-haul flights in operation.

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