

NEWSFLASH - FEB 2016**ZIKA VIRUS SPREADS**

The Zika Virus, is a new virus the areas affected are: Barbados, Bolivia Brazil, Colombia Dominican, Republic Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guian, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana Haiti, Honduras Martinique, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Saint Martin, Suriname, U.S. Virgin Islands, Venezuela, Samoa, Cape Verde. Zika virus is spread to people through mosquito bites. The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease is fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting from several days to a week. There is no vaccine or medications that are available to prevent or treat Zika infections. The outbreak in Brazil led to reports of Guillain-Barre syndrome and pregnant women giving birth to babies with birth defects and poor pregnancy outcomes.

BRITISH AIRWAYS OPERATED BY COMAIRE

Amended closure time for departing flights as of the 1 March 2016, all British Airways domestic and regional flights will close 45 minutes prior to departure and no longer 30 minutes as was previously the case. Customers are encouraged to check their flights status prior to travelling, as the closing time of their flight may be earlier than previously published.

DIRECT ABUJA ROUTE TAKES OFF

SAA's inaugural flight from Johannesburg to Nigeria's capital, Abuja, took off on Tuesday. The national carrier already operates to Lagos. The non-stop flight will operate three times a week between Johannesburg and Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja (ABV).

CHINESE CURRENCY TO BE INTRODUCED

The Chinese currency the Yuan is to be introduced into Zimbabwe. Allowing it to be used as public transactions in the country. The use of the Yuan will reportedly help the country to pay off its debt to China which stands at \$40-million.

SAA MULLS ADDITIONAL SECURITY FOLLOWING THEFT INCIDENTS

After three confirmed incidents of pilferage and theft on board flights between Johannesburg and Hong Kong, SAA cannot rule out the possibility of introducing additional measures and procedures in order to counteract the reoccurrence of such incidents. The incidents occurred within a short space of time on one route has therefore raised suspicion that a syndicate could be involved.

NEW CHANGES TO USA VISA RULES TAKE EFFECT

The US implemented tighter travel rules in a bid to keep out potential terrorists. The new rules require certain travellers who normally do not require a visa to now obtain the

document. The changes to the US visa waiver programme will require passport holders of the 38 visa waiver countries to get a visa to travel to the United States if they have been to Iran, Iraq, Sudan or Syria in the last five years or if they are dual-citizens of those countries and a visa waiver country. The new rules do not apply to diplomats or members of the military and US officials can offer waivers to some travellers who visited Iraq, Iran, Syria or Sudan because they work for aid groups as journalists or have other legitimate business travel. Please contact Grayston Travel to enquire about the 38 Countries.

NEW ELECTRONIC PASSES FOR PORT ELIZABETH'S ATTRACTIONS

Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism is now offering an electronic NMB Pass to further enhance Port Elizabeth's offerings with travellers at a more affordable rate. The Nelson Mandela Bay Pass is a smart card access card, which provides travellers with free and discounted admission to a large number of attractions and activities in Port Elizabeth. Attractions include museums, game reserves, scuba diving etc. Please contact Grayston Travel for further Information.

Read on our next page an interesting casefile from Travel Insurance Consultants on why it is extremely important to take out travel insurance when you travel.



CASEFILE



ATTACKED IN NAIROBI - R980 000

Tourists and business travellers often become victims of crime simply because they stand out from the locals and can be seen as easy targets. TIC has recently processed two gun shot wound cases which highlight the danger of travelling to certain African countries. Gary Rattray was violently mugged while walking through an industrial area in Nairobi. His medical and repatriation expenses have reached a total of R980 000. Sharon Webster* was shot in a terrorist attack in North Africa and fortunately survived. Her medical and repatriation expenses have come to R1,4 million. Before you travel abroad, TIC recommends that you keep up to date with official travel advisories and the news so that you are aware of the nature of the crime in the countries you intend to visit, and take due precautions. However, sometimes you can just be in the wrong place at the wrong time as Gary Rattray's story reveals.

He says, "I was walking along a road between the two Pembe milling factories in Nairobi when a man started shouting at me. He grabbed my laptop bag and tried to pull it away. I was resisting him when he fired a gun at my groin at point blank range. He then got me onto the ground and kicked me in my face. People started to come down the road so he fired two shots in the air and ran off.

"A passerby came to my assistance and helped me up. Within a matter of minutes my work colleagues and my driver arrived on the scene and they took me to the hospital where I was sent for a scan. It showed the bullet had entered on my left groin, then turned left across my



Gary Rattray

lower stomach and lodged in the ball joint of my right leg.

"I was rushed into theatre where they opened my stomach to repair the damage done to my lower intestine and upper bladder. They had to remove three litres of blood and I was sent to the ICU ward for recovery.

"My injuries were reported to our main office in Johannesburg. I was informed that my medical expenses were covered by my travel insurance and that TIC had been notified. The TIC representative was in daily contact with the doctors at the hospital and with my brother, who had travelled from South Africa to assist me. I was in hospital for a total of six weeks and underwent surgery on my hip.

"The service provided by the assistance company was of a high quality. We were kept informed on a daily basis and the cover of the expenses for family assistance was an absolute blessing. After this experience I will make sure that I have travel insurance on all future trips. I can't even imagine the disaster I would have now been facing if I wasn't covered. Besides the financial cover there are many other advantages to having travel insurance. The fact that TIC has representatives in foreign countries is a major help in understanding how other hospital systems work. Language can also be another huge problem that can be resolved with a representative. I definitely recommend that anyone travelling abroad should have travel insurance; anything can happen at any time.

"I would like to say thank you to everyone at TIC. Both my brother and I were very impressed with their service. We found them very efficient and always first class with communication. I personally would recommend them to anyone travelling."

*Name has been changed.

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BED & BREAKFAST



AVAILABLE DATES (SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY)

FEB 2016

FR R17,999PP

MAR 2016

FR R18,999PP

APR 2016

FR R20,999PP

All prices quoted are subject to change without prior notice, due to airfare increases and / or currency fluctuations and subject to availability.

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