Newmark plans expansion into Africa

Newmark hotels, reserves and lodges aim to grow its footprint on the African content and a key strategic intervention for group's expansion is the establishment of the first office outside South Africa in Lusaka as well as the creation of the Kaufela Collection in Zambia.

Neil Markovitz

Kaufela, which means ‘together’ in Lozi, brings together lodges of a certain quality standard under one management brand. The Kaufela Collection has already signed three independent lodges (100 rooms) and plans to add another 400 rooms by the end of the year. Newmark is currently taking on a new property in Zanzibar and a further 170-room business hotel in Lusaka.

Newmark’s director for Africa, Dr Hans Heuer, who is based in Newmark’s new Lusaka office says that the Kaufela Collection meets a critical need in Zambia. “There are literally hundreds of independently owned lodges in Zambia that do not have the resource to market and sell their properties effectively. The Kaufela Collection is a solution that allows these lodges to retain their independence and individuality while benefiting not only from Newmark’s management, sales, marketing and reservations infrastructure but also its two representation offices in London and New York.”

The collection will be competitively priced for tourism and business groups and the Newmark name and reputation will promote confidence, assurance, and awareness. “This is also a major intervention for Zambian tourism”, adds Heuer. “It meets a business need for the lodge owners while helping visitors who often do not know what to expect when they make bookings.”

Developing new territories

The Lusaka office will also focus on other COMESA countries in Africa, such as Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Zanzibar. Heuer continues: “The Lusaka office is mandated to develop new territories for Newmark – under either the Kaufela Collection or the Newmark brand, depending upon the standard or size of the property.”

Newmark's portfolio is managed and, in some cases, invested in by Newmark. The group, which was established in 2007, attributes much of its success to the fact that the brands in its portfolio retain their individuality. Newmark CEO, Neil Markovitz says: "We allow iconic products to flourish and we do not dilute the offering. We are not swamped or cramped by a global brand mindset. The hotels are their own brands and this is why our properties constantly out-perform the market."

On the expansion plans, Markovitz is quick to emphasize that Newmark's offering will not be compromised. "We turn down more properties than we take on – we're very specific about the product portfolio."

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