



AWARDS

KIGALI 2024





WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Reader,

Cheers to the last Edition of our 2024 Newsletter!

As we enter 2025, we reflect on another busy and successful year for Rwanda's events sector. We have reached new heights as a MICE destination, officially becoming the second preferred country in Africa as per the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) ranking. The thousands of delegates who have attended events in Rwanda last year, can attest to our warm hospitality, vibrant culture and world-class facilities & infrastructure.

Hosting events as diverse as the 2024 FIA General Assembly & FIA Awards, the Africa CEO Forum and YouthConnekt Africa, demonstrates our country's ability to not only execute high-caliber international gatherings but also to be a convener of impactful conversations and a key player in advancing global issues through strategic collaborations.

This edition of our newsletter will also dive into industry trends that are shaping the future of MICE across the world, and here at home. From venues prioritizing green initiatives to other exciting developments in our local industry, we are proud to share insights that demonstrate Rwanda's commitment to sustainability and innovation.

We are excited for what 2025 has in store and the lineup of must-attend events already on the calendar.

On behalf of the entire team at the Rwanda Convention Bureau, we thank you—our partners and stakeholders - for being part of this incredible journey. Your contribution is the foundation of Rwanda's continued growth as a premier MICE destination.

Wishing you and your loved ones a marvelous New Year filled with meaningful connections and unforgettable experiences!

Warm regards,

Rwanda Convention Bureau Team.



KEY EVENTS HOSTED FROM OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2024

	<p>VIV Africa Date: 2 - 3 Oct Number of delegates: +500 Venue: KCC</p>		<p>Africa Cyber Defense Forum 2024 Date: 15 - 18 Oct Number of delegates: +150 Venue: KCC</p>
	<p>African Region 4 Golf Tournament Date: 3 - 6 Oct Number of delegates: +100 Venue: Kigali Golf Resorts</p>		<p>15th Africa Scrabble Championship Date: 23 - 27 Oct Number of delegates: +130 Venue: Olympic Hotel</p>
	<p>AFCFTA Biashara Africa (#BA2024) Date: 9 - 11 Oct Number of delegates: +500 Venue: KCEV</p>		<p>Africa HealthTech Summit Date: 29 - 31 Oct Number of delegates: +230 Venue: Kigali Serena Hotel</p>
	<p>Africa Tea Convention and Exhibition Date: 9 - 11 Oct Number of delegates: +300 Venue: KCEV</p>		<p>Africa Energy Expo - Informa Markets Date: 4 - 6 Nov Number of delegates: +200 Venue: KCC</p>
	<p>Association of Eastern and Southern Africa Travel Agents (AESATA) Date: 10 - 12 Oct Number of delegates: +90 Venue: Kigali Serena Hotel</p>		<p>Youth Connekt Africa Date: 8 - 10 Nov Number of delegates: +1,000 Venue: KCC</p>
	<p>PADEV 2024 Date: 12 - 15 Oct Number of delegates: +150 Venue: Ubumwe Grande Hotel</p>		<p>Hanga PitchFest Date: 10 - 10 Nov Number of delegates: +100 Venue: KCC</p>
	<p>The Global Engineering Conference (GECO) and the Executive Council Annual Meeting Date: 15 - 17 Oct Number of delegates: +100 Venue: KCC</p>		<p>Mojaloop Open Source Community Meeting Date: 11 - 15 Nov Number of delegates: +200 Venue: KCC</p>





African Foundation Learning Exchange Summit (FLEX)
Date: 11 - 13 Nov
Number of delegates: + 400
Venue: KCC



Africa Medical Exhibition and Conference
Date: 2 - 3 Dec
Number of delegates: +300
Venue: KCEV



African Public Procurement Network (APPN)
Date: 12 - 14 Nov
Number of delegates: +300
Venue: KCC



International Health Summit Rwanda 2024
Date: 4 - 6 Dec
Number of delegates: +300
Venue: Kigali Marriott Hotel




ACCESS - Music in Africa
Date: 14 - 16 Nov
Number of delegates: +600
Venue: KCC



FIA Annual General Assemblies & Awards 2024
Date: 9 - 14 Dec
Number of delegates: +900
Venue: KCC



Africa Human Resources Summit
Date: 20 - 21 Nov
Number of delegates: +400
Venue: KCC



24th Gastroenterology Conference
Date: 11 - 13 Dec
Number of delegates: +300
Venue: IRCAD



9es Universités FGF
Date: 27 - 29 Nov
Number of delegates: +90
Venue: Lemigo Hotel



Egypt & Middle East Expo
Date: 13- 31 Dec
Number of delegates: +40
Venue: KCEV



TMA Trade Development Forum/TDA
Date: 2 - 3 Dec
Number of delegates: +250
Venue: KCC



Africa Material Research Conference 2024
Date: 16 - 19 Dec
Number of delegates: +500
Venue: Lemigo Hotel



Africa Tax Administration Forum Annual meetings
Date: 2 - 6 Dec
Number of delegates: +200
Venue: KCC



US - Africa Nuclear Energy Conference
Date: 16 - 17 Dec
Number of delegates: +60
Venue: Kigali Marriott Hotel

Number of Delegates Q4: + 10,000

In summary, between October and December of 2024, Rwanda proudly welcomed over 10,000 international delegates, reinforcing its position as a premier destination for meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions in Africa.



BIDS WON

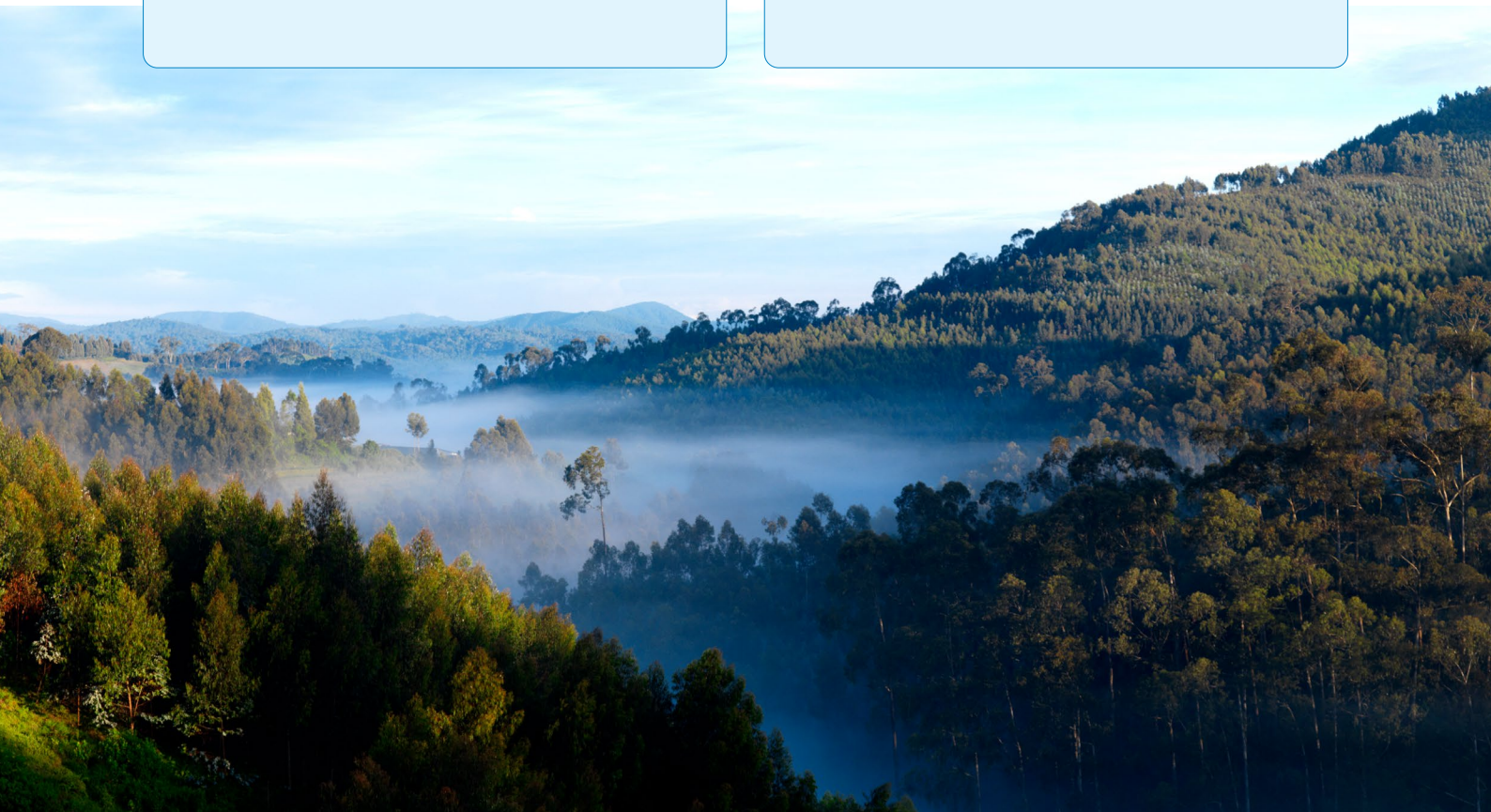
RCB, alongside private sector associations, continues to proactively seek out and bid for international events to bring them to Rwanda. In the fourth quarter of 2024, we are pleased to announce that the following events have been successfully secured and are scheduled to take place in Rwanda:

01 | **Africa's Agriculture and Agribusiness Conference - The African Youth Edition**
Date: November 2025

02 | **Africa Global Leadership Summit & Impact Award 2025**
Date: March 2025

03 | **The Africa Domain Name System (DNS) Forum 2025:**
Date: June 2025

04 | **The Africa Federation of Sign Language Interpreters**
Date: 2025



INDUSTRY TRENDS

Driving Sustainability: Radisson Blu Kigali Introduces Electric Vehicles

As proud holders of the Green Key Certificate, Radisson Blu Kigali continues to lead by example in sustainability with the addition of seven electric vehicles to its fleet. This initiative, launched in October 2024, reflects the hotel's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and aligns with Rwanda's ambitious goal of achieving a carbon-neutral economy.

The move addresses the growing demand from environmentally conscious clients and partners for

sustainable travel options. Alongside the electric vehicles, Radisson Blu Kigali has implemented additional green initiatives, including electric car charging stations, diverse vegan and vegetarian menus, energy-saving guest room controls, and a water treatment plant for recycling.

Radisson Blu Kigali is paving the way for sustainable hospitality in Rwanda, reinforcing its commitment to a greener future.



#MeetinRwanda



HOW RWANDA'S CULINARY SCENE IS EMPOWERING WOMEN AND SHAPING THE MICE SECTOR

As Rwanda's MICE sector continues to flourish, it brings along transformative opportunities across various industries, including the culinary arts. This dynamic growth not only drives job creation but also highlights the importance of mentorship and skill development in shaping future leaders.

In this edition, we had the privilege of speaking with Chef Billy McCormick, the visionary founder and Head Chef of Le Petit Chalet, Kigali Pizza Company, and the newly opened Lilly Fine Dining. Together with his protégée, Chef Mariam Umugwaneza, a rising star and one of Kigali's most promising young female chefs, they shared insights on mentorship, inclusivity in the culinary world, and the critical role of food in Rwanda's thriving MICE landscape.

From Waitress to Sous Chef: Mariam's Journey

Chef Mariam's inspiring culinary journey began during her time as a waitress at Choose Kigali, where she found herself captivated by Chef Billy's work in the kitchen. Her curiosity led her to ask Chef Billy for guidance.

"Considering it was a slow period due to the pandemic, I decided to teach her a few things," recalls Chef Billy. "She was a very fast learner, quickly surpassing the speed and skill level of other assistants."

Her dedication and passion eventually earned her a spot at Le Petit Chalet, where she honed her skills in cooking meats and mastering à la carte dishes. Her efforts paid off when she was promoted to Sous Chef—a role she now holds proudly at Lilly Fine Dining, a restaurant she describes as a creative playground for chefs.

Breaking Barriers for Women in the Culinary World

Chef Mariam is particularly proud of her current role, and her journey reflects a broader narrative of women breaking barriers in the professional culinary industry. While kitchens have historically been associated with women as nurturers, the professional culinary



landscape remains male-dominated and often demanding.

"Seeing is believing," Chef Billy emphasizes. "Chef Mariam's success inspires others to ask, 'If she can do it, why can't I?'"





“Technological advancements have made it easier to streamline processes for large events,” Chef Billy explains. “But success lies in balancing precision with artistry, ensuring every bite resonates with flavor and thought.”

This balance is particularly vital in MICE events, where the dining experience can leave a lasting impression on attendees. By elevating their craft, chefs contribute not only to the event’s success but also to Rwanda’s reputation as a global hub for world-class gatherings.

As Rwanda positions itself as a leader in the MICE sector, stories like Chef Mariam’s underscore the power of mentorship and skill-building in driving job growth and empowering individuals. Thanks to her determination and Chef Billy’s guidance, Mariam is carving a path for future leaders while adding depth to Rwanda’s vibrant culinary scene.

Her story is a testament to the resilience, confidence, and determination required to thrive in the industry. Women often bring unique emotional intelligence and attention to detail to the culinary arts, particularly in areas like pastries and cakes. Chef Billy adds, “A grandmother’s cooking feels unmatched because it’s more than food—it’s care, connection, and tradition.” As more women like Mariam rise to leadership roles, the culinary industry gains a richer and more diverse creative spectrum, transforming not just dining experiences but also perceptions of inclusivity in the field.

Innovating for the MICE Sector: Scaling Up and Standing Out

Large-scale conferences and events pose unique challenges for chefs, especially in the MICE sector. Feeding thousands of guests requires organization, precision, and innovation, with little room for error.

Chef Billy highlights two distinct types of chefs in such settings:

- The **“Sergeant Chef”** focuses on efficiency, overseeing teams to ensure seamless execution.
- The **“Artistic Chef”** approaches cooking as an expressive art form, prioritizing creativity and perfection in every dish.



MARKETING ACTIVITIES



63rd ICCA Congress 2024, Doha, Abu Dhabi

Rwanda Convention Bureau attended the 63rd ICCA Congress 2024, held from 18–24 October, the premier global event for the association meetings industry. This congress brought together thousands of industry professionals and association executives to exchange knowledge, foster business connections, and advance sustainable and inclusive practices within the sector. The event provided unique opportunities, including insights from world-class speakers, dynamic networking events, and business intelligence training. It also featured the Global Business Exchange, a platform for ICCA members to share sensitive meeting data and explore potential partnerships. The Bureau together with Radisson Blu and Rwanda Events, sponsored the association breakfast meeting, which included a destination presentation, allowing Rwanda to secure valuable association leads and further position itself as a leading MICE destination.



RCB Participates in the Africa Associations Summit 2024, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

RCB attended the Africa Associations Summit 2024, held on 29–30 October in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Participating as an exhibitor, the Bureau aimed to strengthen connections and generate new business opportunities. The summit proved successful, resulting in five promising leads that are currently being pursued. This initiative underscores RCB's proactive approach to attracting association events and solidifying Rwanda's reputation as a premier MICE destination in Africa.

#MeetinRwanda



MARKETING ACTIVITIES



RCB Participates in the 91st UFI Global Congress 2024, Cologne, Germany

Rwanda Convention Bureau is a proud member of UFI and participated in the 91st UFI Global Congress held from 20-23 November, in Cologne, Germany. The Congress is a strategic platform for the Exhibition Industry leaders to connect, share insights, and foster meaningful collaborations. RCB seized the opportunity to engage in valuable networking sessions, generating two promising leads that are expected to contribute to Rwanda's growing MICE sector. This participation underlines RCB's commitment to positioning Rwanda as a preferred destination for global business events.



#MeetinRwanda



MARKETING ACTIVITIES



ibtm[®] WORLD 2024, Barcelona, Spain



At the IBTM World convention, held from 19-21 November, the Rwanda Convention Bureau, along with industry partners such as conference venues, hotels, Professional Conference Organizers, and Destination Marketing Companies, celebrated a decade of remarkable achievements in Rwanda's MICE sector.

Over the past decade, the Bureau has successfully hosted an average of 160 events each year, generating significant revenue exceeding \$95 million in 2023. This impressive growth and rising interest in Rwanda as a destination highlight the Bureau's dedicated efforts. On the IBTM World Impact Stage, RCB CEO Janet Karemera shared insights into Rwanda's MICE journey to date and our ambitions for the 10 years ahead.

Celebrating a Decade at IBTM World

RCB marked 10 years of participation, reflecting on the growth of the industry from two partners to over 15, including top venues, hotels, PCOs, and DMCs. Claudia Hall, IBTM Exhibitions Director, joined us in this celebration, highlighting the significant growth of our destination over the past decade.

The milestone also showcased Rwanda's development, from the early days when Kigali Convention Centre was still under construction to now boasting venues like KCEV, BK Arena, Intare Conference Arena, Amahoro Stadium.

This growth has been accompanied by the development of state-of-the-art event infrastructure. Additionally, renowned hotel brands such as Serena Hotels, Marriot Hotel, Radisson Blu, One & Only, Four Points by Sheraton have graced Rwanda's hospitality scene, and the upcoming Movenpick, set to open in 2025, promises to further enhance the destination's offerings.



#MeetinRwanda



UPCOMING EVENTS

Kicking off the year is Rwanda's First Multi-Stage Marathon, Ultra X Rwanda taking place in Burera and Musanze Districts on Saturday, 25 and Sunday, 26 January 2025, where participants can tackle a 2-day, 110km route or a 50km race. In February, Kigali's iconic BK Arena will host Global Citizen's Move Afrika on 21 February 2025, promising an unforgettable experience for attendees.

Visit our website for more details on these events and explore a curated list of what Rwanda will host from January to March 2025—or simply read below for a quick preview!

International Conference on Neglected Tropical Disease Research in Africa

Date: 20-22 Jan

Venue: KCC

South to South Learning

Date: 10 - 14 Feb

Venue: KCC

4th Global NCD Alliance Forum

Date: 13 - 15 Feb

Venue: KCC

US_ Africa Volunteers of Science

Date: 16 - 19 Feb

Venue: Serena Hotel

2nd Edition of the Move Africa - Global Citizen

Date: 21 Feb

Venue: BK Arena

17th Tour du Rwanda

Date: 23 Feb - 3 Mar

Venue: Across the country

Inclusive Fintech Forum

Date: 24 - 26 Feb

Venue: KCC

Africa Health Agenda International Conference (AHAIC / AMREF)

Date: 3 - 6 Mar

Venue: KCC



For RCB's full calendar of events, [click here](#)

#MeetinRwanda



STAY IN TOUCH

Stay in touch with RCB for the next edition!
Follow us on all our social media platforms and [subscribe](#) to our quarterly newsletter for the latest updates and exciting insights on Rwanda's MICE industry

MEETING PLANNERS' GUIDE



INCENTIVE PLANNERS' GUIDE



To access our MPG and/or IPG, please scan the QR code for a digital copy.



#MeetinRwanda

