

Here's what R100 will buy you around the world right now



South Africans have had a difficult start to 2026, dealing with one of the world's most volatile currencies, high petrol prices, and a rising cost of living.

The South African rand opened 2026 at its strongest level since 2022, buoyed by positive domestic trends, including ongoing economic reforms and rising metals prices, according to a Bloomberg report.

In early January, the currency strengthened by as much as 0.6% to R16.50 against the US dollar, outperforming many of its emerging-market peers.

The rand had gained 14% during 2025, marking its best annual performance since 2009.

Investor sentiment was boosted by signs that government reforms aimed at boosting economic growth were gaining traction.

South Africa's economy has averaged growth of less than 1% over the past decade, but optimism around reforms, combined with higher commodity prices, helped support the local unit.

The South African Reserve Bank's commitment to its 3% inflation target also helped anchor inflation expectations and improve confidence in the country's monetary policy.

However, much of that momentum was undone after tensions escalated in the Middle East in February following a wave of preemptive airstrikes launched by the United States and Israel.

The resulting Iran war triggered a sharp rise in global oil prices and pushed investors away from riskier emerging-market assets.

By May, the rand and local financial markets were trading weaker than at the start of the year, amid concerns about higher inflation and the broader economic fallout from the conflict.

Although the currency has avoided the extreme volatility seen during previous global risk-off events, its trading range has shifted weaker over recent months.

Investec Chief Economist Annabel Bishop said the rand's trading range had moved to between R16.45/\$ and R17.05/\$, with the currency starting the week near R16.70 to the dollar.

By 20 May, the rand was trading at R16.59 against the dollar, R22.21 against the pound, and R19.33 against the euro.

"Markets continue to show risk aversion towards the oil price shock, negatively affecting the rand," Bishop said.

She added that while the local currency had experienced less volatility than during past global shocks, it still ranked among the weaker-performing emerging-market currencies since the outbreak of the war, reflecting a significant sell-off in local assets.



What R100 will buy you around the world

Given the rand's volatility, BusinessTech looked at some of the most popular travel destinations, cities, and what R100 can buy you around the world right now.

As of 3 January 2020, R100 will buy you:

- **UK:** £4.51
- **USA:** \$6.05
- **Australia:** AU\$8.47
- **Germany:** €5.22
- **Brazil:** R\$ 30.38
- **China:** 41.13 Yuan
- **Dubai:** 22.20 dirham
- **Canada:** C\$ 8.33
- **Indonesia:** Rp 107,033
- **Thailand:** 197.79 Baht

| Country | McDonald's meal (or equivalent) | Cappuccino | Soft drink (330ml) | Beer in pub (500 ml) | 1 Movie Ticket | Petrol (1 litre) |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| London/UK | £8.23 <i>R182.54</i> | £4.10 <i>R90.69</i> | £2.24 <i>R49.78</i> | £6.98 <i>R154.88</i> | £14.90 <i>R331.89</i> | £1.47 <i>R32.71</i> |
| New York/US | \$13.19 <i>R218.16</i> | \$5.90 <i>R97.55</i> | \$3.49 <i>R57.67</i> | \$7.96 <i>R131.72</i> | \$22.90 <i>R378.69</i> | \$0.99 <i>R16.34</i> |
| Sydney/Australia | AU\$15.49 <i>R182.60</i> | AU\$5.52 <i>R65.08</i> | AU\$3.74 <i>R44.13</i> | AU\$9.99 <i>R117.81</i> | AU\$24.99 <i>R294.52</i> | AU\$1.94 <i>R22.85</i> |
| Berlin/Germany | €11.98 <i>R229.68</i> | €3.98 <i>R76.33</i> | €3.18 <i>R61.04</i> | €4.49 <i>R86.13</i> | €12.98 <i>R248.82</i> | €1.81 <i>R34.70</i> |
| Shanghai/China | 34.84元 <i>R84.73</i> | 21.75元 <i>R52.90</i> | 3.80元 <i>R9.24</i> | 7.96元 <i>R19.37</i> | 59.73元 <i>R145.25</i> | 8.21元 <i>R19.96</i> |
| Dubai/UAE | d 34.85 <i>R156.92</i> | d 22.36 <i>R100.68</i> | d 5.55 <i>R25.01</i> | d 49.79 <i>R224.17</i> | d 54.76 <i>R246.58</i> | d 3.03 <i>R13.66</i> |
| Montreal/Canada | C\$14.99 <i>R179.69</i> | C\$5.43 <i>R65.14</i> | C\$2.77 <i>R33.20</i> | C\$8.99 <i>R107.81</i> | C\$16.71 <i>R200.35</i> | C\$1.73 <i>R20.77</i> |
| Bangkok/Thailand | 249.98 ฿ <i>R126.38</i> | 93.06 ฿ <i>R47.05</i> | 23.62 ฿ <i>R11.94</i> | 99.99 ฿ <i>R50.55</i> | 249.98 ฿ <i>R126.38</i> | 43.60 ฿ <i>R22.04</i> |
| Rio de Janeiro/Brazil | R\$37.93 <i>R124.80</i> | R\$12.29 <i>R40.44</i> | R\$7.52 <i>R24.73</i> | R\$11.98 <i>R39.41</i> | R\$39.92 <i>R131.37</i> | R\$6.21 <i>R20.43</i> |
| Bali/Indonesia | Rp 69,772 <i>R65.24</i> | Rp 39,335 <i>R36.78</i> | Rp 23,026 <i>R21.53</i> | Rp 37,378 <i>R34.95</i> | Rp 64,788 <i>R60.58</i> | Rp 12,523 <i>R11.71</i> |
| Johannesburg/South Africa | R100 | R39.41 | R19.69 | R40 | R140 | R26.52 |

The prices below are not meant to demonstrate purchasing power parity and do not serve as an equal-weighted price comparison—it is simply a guide on how South African travellers should budget, should they want to engage in 'leisure' activities while touring.

The data was sourced from Numbio.