

# Tax refunds made easy

**F**oreign visitors to Namibia will in future be able to claim the value-added tax on their holiday purchases before they leave the country. They will receive the refund in the form of a cheque made out in SA rand, which will be payable anywhere in the world.

In the past claims were processed by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and cheques with the claimed amount were posted to the visitor's country of origin. According to local businesses, this cumbersome process often resulted in lost deals, because tourists were not convinced that the VAT refund would eventually be paid out and even if they were convinced, it took months before the cheque would reach them.

With the new system, tourists will be refunded for purchases exceeding N\$250 when they leave Namibia via Hosea Kutako International Airport and at the border posts at Ariamsvlei and Noordoewer.

As is the case all over the world, non-

ports may reclaim VAT only when they take the purchases as personal luggage with them when they leave the country. To ensure that the goods do in fact leave the country, they have to be shown to the customs official before being checked in as luggage. The tax invoice will then be endorsed and payment will be processed by the Vat Refund Administrator.

Information on VAT refunds has been printed in five languages – English, German, Portuguese, French and Italian – and is available at shops, entry points and information offices.

**Please note:** to qualify for a tax refund the price of your purchase must exceed N\$250.00. You need the following with you to show the customs official:

- An original tax invoice from the retailer;
- The invoice must have the words "tax invoice" printed on it in a prominent place;
- The name, address and VAT registration number of the retailer must be

- The name of the purchaser must appear on the invoice;
- There must be a serial number and date of purchase on the invoice;
- The goods must be described on the invoice;
- The amount and volume must be noted; and
- The total VAT amount must be indicated on the invoice, as well as the total amount, including VAT.

**Vat on services rendered or goods consumed cannot be refunded.**

What you must do:

- Present purchases for inspection, as well as the above documentation with your passport and flight ticket at the customs official at the border posts and have the invoices endorsed, confirming proof of export.
- Present this claim at the VAT Refund Office. A refund receipt and a cheque will be issued. An administration fee of 1% of the VAT inclusive value will be deducted.

