

Online marketplace Thola Africa shines a light on local artisans

New online marketplace [Tholafrica.com](https://tholafrica.com) is making it easier to shop African artisanal wares, with its selection of bespoke fashion and décor crafted by local creatives and designers.



Galago footwear

The marketplace has been launched by not-for-profit organisation Thola Africa with the goal of providing a platform to small local producers, allowing them a chance to showcase their work, and make it conveniently available to a global audience.

Guided by its motto 'Discover Africa at your fingertips', Thola Africa partners exclusively with small local brands and entrepreneurs, making it easier to find and support Africa's talent.



Leather Zulu leathergoods

Recently, the organisation invited five tastemakers to tour the production facilities of five of tholafrica.com's partner

brands.

Lerato Kgamanyane, PR maven and fashion trendsetter, was hosted by Galago Shoes, a female-owned and run business which creates unique, hand-crafted sandals, sustainably and ethically. While Kwena Baloyi, renowned stylist and culture curator, explored the work of Sibahle Collection, whose diverse range of dolls bring inclusion and representation to playtime for African children.



Kwena Baloyi with a Sibahle Collection doll.

Photographer and director Anthony Bila visited Leather Zulu to see how this brand handcrafts its fine leather goods. “The experience was incredible, I was so excited to see a female, black-owned company producing world-class goods, with quality that can compete with products from Italy, or anywhere else in the world,” said Bila.

Naledi Sibisi, editor-in-chief of *The Throne* online magazine, discovered the passion, ingenuity and talent that goes into each piece crafted by Tshwane Hub of Arts, a collective that is helping to up-skill and empower local creatives and craftsmen to bolster the power of the arts in their community.



Tshwane Hub of Arts

Editor, CEO and fashion icon Zoe Msutwana was invited to discover the world of Lashongwe Jewellery, where traditional African elements meet contemporary aesthetics. “It was a fascinating visit, I learned some of the issues that face a small business like Lashongwe, particularly in the realm of distribution,” said Msutwana.

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