

## Cape Town wins global Responsible Tourism Award

The City of Cape Town is pleased to announce that Cape Town has won the 2009 Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Award in the Best Destination category.

The award was presented to the City at an ceremony on World Responsible Tourism Day at the World Travel Market in London.

Executive Deputy Mayor, Alderman Ian Neilson, accepted the award on behalf of the City and said: "It was a great honour for me to receive this award on behalf of the people of Cape Town and its tourism industry. It means that it is not only our city's splendid natural beauty that makes Cape Town a great tourist destination, but also the fact that we have a leading tourism and hospitality industry. Cape Town is ready to greet the world during 2010."



"My congratulations to Cape Town Tourism, Fedhasa, Satsa, SAACI, their members and all players in our tourism industry. Thank you for working together with the City to put our Responsible Tourism Charter in place. This award is yours," Neilson added.

Executive Deputy Mayor Neilson and Mansoor Mohamed, the City's Executive Director for Economic, Social Development and Tourism attended the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards and are also in Europe to conduct other City business.

Mohamed said: "Responsible Tourism makes sound economic sense. A significant and growing number of tourists are looking for a 'different' travel experience and a higher quality product. They want to get closer to the people of the destination they visit and experience the city's natural and cultural heritage, with a good conscience and the knowledge that they are doing so in a responsible way without having any adverse effect on the destination. Cape Town has recently won major international tourism awards, including Africa's Leading Destination Award two years in a row, and this can to some extent be attributed to the efforts already made in making Cape Town a leading responsible tourism destination.



"The City of Cape Town, the only municipality nominated, took the laurels among 35 other nominations in the destination category. Responsible Tourism is a key policy principle of Cape Town's Tourism Development Framework. Central to Cape Town's Responsible Tourism Policy and Action Plan is the measurement of destination performance against destination priorities – water and energy savings, reducing solid waste, and empowering local people and tourism businesses through procurement, skills development and enterprise development. A Code of Conduct is available to support more responsible behaviour among visitors, and the City has established Community Tourism Forums in disadvantaged areas to raise tourism awareness. The City of Cape Town has invested some R15 million in the development of tourism infrastructure in previously disadvantaged areas, and in the past two years, supported 200 tourism businesses," said Mohamed.

"The City's role is to create an enabling environment encouraging the industry to work towards a more sustainable destination. The City's Responsible Tourism strategy is intrinsically linked to a range of other sector policies, programmes and initiatives aimed at the development of a sustainable, attractive and successful city. They include initiatives such as the City Events Policy, State of the Environment Reporting, Biodiversity Network Strategy, Smart Living Hand Book, Cape Town International Jazz Festival, Cape Town Design Indaba, Water and Waste Management By-laws, Draft Green Building Guidelines, 2010 Green Goal Programme, Solar Water Heater By-law and many others," said Nombulelo Mkefa, the City's Director of Tourism.

The next steps for Destination Cape Town are to facilitate the wide-spread implementation of responsible tourism practices in tourism businesses, to promote awareness of responsible tourism among residents, visitors and stakeholders, and to report on progress in the identified priority areas.

#### **Judges Reason**

"The City of Cape Town has taken responsibility for identifying and prioritising local issues from a responsible tourism perspective. The City's Tourism Department has worked in conjunction with its colleagues in the city administration and the industry to develop a Responsible Tourism Charter which commits both the industry and the city government to address the local priorities and to report on progress. Signatories have committed to define measurable goals and to monitor and report publicly on progress."

#### **About the Responsible Tourism Awards**

The Awards were founded in 2004 by [responsibletravel.com](http://www.responsibletravel.com), which runs the Awards in partnership with The Daily Telegraph, Geographical Magazine - the magazine of The Royal Geographical Society, and World Travel Market (read more about our partners by clicking here <http://www.responsibletravel.com/> ). Virgin Holidays became headline sponsors of the Awards in 2007 and has continued to support it since then.

The central tenet of the awards is that all types of tourism – from niche to mainstream – can and should be operated in a way that respects and benefits destinations and local people. The awards recognise individuals, companies and organisations in the travel industry that are making a significant commitment to the culture and economies of local communities and are providing a positive contribution to biodiversity conservation.

#### **About World Travel Market**

Staged annually in London, this global event for the travel industry is a four day business-to-business event presenting a diverse range of destinations and industry sectors to UK and international travel professionals. It is where global travel trade representatives meet, network, negotiate and conduct business under one roof. By attending World Travel Market, participants stay abreast with the latest developments in the travel industry.

Martin Pollack

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