

Stellar times ahead as Stellenbosch heads to Berlin

Stellenbosch, South Africa's food and wine capital, is heading for Berlin, Germany to display its wealth of wine tourism offerings and the 'Gemütlichkeit' that awaits visitors to the City of Oaks this upcoming winter season.



ITB Berlin, the world's largest tourism convention that takes place from 4-8 March, is the leading travel trade show globally. It serves as a perfect international platform for the town's destination marketing campaign, Stellenbosch Experience, to share with top international trade and media the depth of the region's unparalleled offerings, which reaches far beyond just quality wine.

Stellenbosch Experience, which launched in 2014 and made its international debut last year at ITB Berlin, is a global marketing campaign by the Stellenbosch Wine Routes and the town's tourism outfit, Stellenbosch 360, to promote the region as a benchmark for excellence in the field of wine tourism. It encourages the growing number of local and international travellers wanting to engage in experiential wine, food and lifestyle encounters to appreciate Stellenbosch as a 'forever young', multifaceted destination that offers more than just a day visit for a wine tasting.

"We are excited to return to ITB this year, to follow up and engage with the contacts we have made last year, whilst also attracting even more travellers to our beautiful region during winter. Almost 25% of all our visitors come from Germany, so this is an important market for us," says Annareth Bolton, CEO of the Stellenbosch Wine Routes.

"With the world becoming more aware of the town's engaging assets and creative urban culture and with our enhanced digital presence across all social media networks, our global audience is growing exponentially - an audience that is a lot more mobile and social. Stellenbosch is imbued with near limitless potential and our wine tourism can only grow from strength to strength in 2015."

Besides its five sub-wine routes producing world-acclaimed wines, Stellenbosch is also synonymous with award winning restaurants, beautiful scenery, rich Cape Dutch heritage, a unique cultural mix, modern architecture and outdoor activities. It features a bustling town centre, brimming with students, sidewalk cafes and public art displays.

Winter in the Winelands

As part of Stellenbosch Experience's 'Winter in the Winelands' campaign, the spotlight will focus on the town as a desirable, family-friendly and great value for money destination for all seasons and ages. 2015 ITB Berlin will see the international launch of the town's winter programme, which encourages enthusiasts to swap their winter hibernation for an extended stay in Stellenbosch and to immerse themselves in ultimate bucket-list encounters, which are on offer through value-added Stay & Play packages.

"ITB is an opportune platform for Stellenbosch to market itself as the most inspiring and innovative town in Africa, all year round. Our biggest treasure is the richly diverse cultural heritage of our people and we invite visitors to come and dine with the locals, enjoy homemade cuisine, savour stories of yesteryear and share in the relaxed lifestyle that a Mediterranean climate and scenic beauty rouses. Try your hand at Jimmy the potter's wheel, do a township walkabout and meet our local artists and crafters," adds Annemarie Ferns, CEO of Stellenbosch 360.

"As a showcase of Stellenbosch's warm hospitality, even when days are grey and cold, and in an effort to make it possible for everyone to come and discover our winter wonders we have put together different tiers of value-added packages which range from budget-friendly to top end luxury experiences."

Media drive

Another core focus on the 2015 Stellenbosch Experience agenda is to increase and expand Stellenbosch's relations and interactions with international media and trade.

"We believe that nothing sells Stellenbosch better than Stellenbosch itself. Last year we hosted a number of high profile national and international media and trade, putting together close to 40 individual unique bucket-list itineraries," adds Bolton.

During the 4-day ITB Berlin convention, Stellenbosch Experience will engage with top travel trade at an exclusive party hosted by Tripadvisor, the world's largest travel site, and attend key travel trend seminars to get up close with the latest global tourism trends. Stellenbosch Experience will also host a number of targeted online media and top travel trade for a 'Stellenbosch' evening at one of Berlin's hippest venues.

For more information, go to <http://blog.wineroute.co.za>, www.wineroute.co.za or www.stellenbosch.travel.

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