

Steady increase in tourist interest in SA

South Africa is carving out a name for itself as a competitive global travel destination, and interest levels in the country amongst international markets, such as the US, the UK and Germany, are steadily increasing.



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This is according to Bruce Deneys, Sales and Marketing Director of the Pepperclub Hotel & Spa, who said that the number of international tourists returning to South Africa after their first visit is steadily increasing. "As a result of the exchange rate to the euro and dollar being particular strong, holidaying in South Africa has effectively become 10% to 20% cheaper in the last few months."

Deneys, who recently returned from the 2015 ITB - a global travel trade show held in Berlin earlier in March, said that the German market is showing increased interest in South Africa. "There was a buzz at the South African stand at the trade show, with many agents looking to book group reservations, a significant increase in comparison to previous years."

Having also travelled to the US and the UK during his trip to meet industry players, Deneys said that the US is definitely one of the more buoyant markets interested in South Africa, and that the UK is showing an increased interest. "Although South Africa was a popular travel destination for UK travellers last year, we are already noticing an uptick in the number of UK tourists visiting during the first few months of 2015."

Cape Town number 10

Deneys' views are supported by the recently announced TripAdvisor Traveller's Choice 25 Best Destinations List for 2015, which named Cape Town number 10, beating 469 other travel destinations worldwide and renowned cities, such as New York, Sydney, Dubai, Bangkok and Barcelona. "The Mother City has moved up from 19th place in 2014, and is proof that South Africa and Cape Town are gaining popularity amongst international travellers," said Deneys.

He said that the favourable exchange rate in particular has aided in South Africa, especially Cape Town, become more of a hot travel destination amongst international markets, adding that the fact that Cape Town is seen as an international event destination has also supported the country's rising tourism figures.

SA Tourism recently announced that South Africa remains the top convention destination in Africa and the Middle East, and that there is potential for further growth within the conference market. One-hundred-and-eighteen meetings and conferences took place in South Africa during the 2013/14 year, and SA Tourism seeks to increase this figure to 134 by 2020.

"Cape Town has already seen major events, such as the Mining Indaba, take place in 2015, and the number will only increase going forward as a result of forthcoming planned events, including the Rugby Sevens, which has moved from its original location of Port Elizabeth to Cape Town.

"The city is continually gaining international and local recognition as an events and conference destination, and with the growing attention and favourable exchange rate for international markets, this interest is only set to grow in coming months and years," concluded Deneys.

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