

Cape Town tourism shows steady performance for December

Figures released by Cape Town International Airport and STR's Destination Report shows Cape Town's tourism figures steady; with the second half of the year showing recovery in terms of tourism stabilising, despite poor performance in the early part of 2018.



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The challenges faced by the tourism industry

Cape Town Tourism has identified numerous factors that influenced travel choices in 2018, including a third-quarter recession and the drought as primary factors. December performance was impacted by shortened school holidays, negatively affecting the leisure market but resulting in earlier bookings of corporate events and bookings.

Many locals opted to 'staycation' and visited local attractions and experiences. Attractions specifically commented on the increase of local footfall.

The details

Robben Island showed the highest increase year-on-year for December at 28% more visitors, mostly attributed to improved operations since the same period last year. This was after a year of challenges that saw the attraction 10% down for the whole of 2018.

The Table Mountain Aerial Cableway also reported an increase year-on-year for December of 6%, a notable recovery after ending the year 3% down for the whole of 2018.

The V&A Waterfront, Africa's most-visited attraction reported visitor figures for December that were 2% lower than in the same period in 2017, as did the Two Oceans Aquarium and Cape Point.

Chapmans Peak Drive was static at 0%, while Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens was at 5% lower in December but 2% higher over the whole of 2018.

Groot Constantia reported a December that was at 23% lower for December but at only 6% lower for the whole of 2018.

International passengers at Cape Town International Airport, according to Airports Company South Africa were recorded as being up by 4% in December (year-on-year) and by over 9% in total for 2018, at 2.4 million passengers.

December occupancy at hotels in Cape Town according to the STR Destination Report was reported up 2% and the average daily rate was reportedly down 4% year-on-year.

"Tourism, in general, is in a period of slow recovery following the drought and recession, and the figures reported bear this out. The recovery of water supplies in the latter part of 2018 following healthy rainfall and the implementation of additional water supplies came a little too late to counteract bookings to the city, although December, in general, offered an indication that tourism is on track to becoming a more stable economic environment once again," said Enver Duminy, Cape Town Tourism CEO.

"It has been a mammoth task on the part of stakeholders to work towards sustainability within the tourism sector throughout 2018, and the figures for December offer some reassurance that this is paying off. Cape Town is a world-class destination, and we are committed to seeing that all opportunities represented are embraced to reach our goals, so that employment is secure and that more tourism-preneurs can be created to grow the economy throughout the entire city. I will make it my priority to work with the industry to invest in programmes and projects that drive demand and make business sense," said Alderman James Vos, the mayoral committee member for economic opportunities and asset management.

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