

Grab your smartphone - anyone can contribute to Google's Mzansi Experience

 By [Jarred Manasse](#)

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It's estimated that there are [23 million smartphone users in South Africa](#). If you're one of them, there's a good chance that you can contribute to Google's Mzansi experience.

[The Mzansi Experience – Discover South Africa](#) on Google Maps gives local and international tourists the opportunity to explore some of South Africa's most beautiful locations with 360-degree imagery from the comfort of their armchair.

Some of the [Google Street View locations featured the Mzansi Experience](#) include the Kruger National Park, Table Mountain, and the Cape of Good Hope.



Explore the Kruger National Park with Google's [Mzansi Experience](#)

How to contribute to Google Street View using a smartphone

Users of Google's Street View app can create and publish photo spheres which are 360-degree images.

Android and Apple users can download the latest version of the Street View app here:

- [Android](#)
- [iOS](#)

Once you've downloaded the app, the process of creating and publishing a photo sphere can be done in seven easy steps:

1. Open the Street View app.
2. In the bottom right corner of your phone, tap the orange menu and touch the camera icon.
3. Point the camera at the dot.
4. Continue to centre the orange dots in the provided circle.
5. Once of you've centred all the orange dots, tap the green tick at the bottom of the screen
6. Google's Street View app will process the image and find your current location.
7. Once processing is completed, you can publish the photo sphere.

Other ways to contribute to Google Street View

It's also possible to create a photo sphere by using a spherical camera. Google recommends using these cameras which work with Street View:

- [Ricoh Theta S](#)
- [Iris360](#)

Andre Van Kets, co-founder and digital director of online travel company [Discover Africa Safaris](#), used the Ricoh Theta S at the launch of Mzansi Experience in the Cape Point Nature Reserve earlier this week.

#360selfie in the Cape Point funicular with members of the Google Nigeria team and other media attending the Google Maps event at Cape Point Nature Reserve.

View from Cape Point upper lighthouse in 360

Clementine Mbatha (SANPARKs), Paddy Gordon (TMNP), Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom, Luke McKend (Google South Africa), Sven Tresp (Google Streetview), Mich Atagana (Google South Africa) address the media after the #ExploreMzansi launch. 360-Photo by Andre Van Kets (Discover Africa Safaris)

360 Cameras becoming more accessible

360 cameras like the Ricoh Theta S are retailing for between \$200 and \$400 dollars. This may seem pricey now, but expect the prices to drop as more competitors enter the market this year.

The photo spheres you see here were taken using Ricoh's first generation camera, the Theta M15. It is a consumer-level camera, retailing at ±\$250. Their latest model, the "Theta S" has many enhanced features and currently retails for ±\$350. Whilst \$300+ might seem a lot for the average traveller or snapshot photographer, we can definitely expect prices of these cameras to drop over the next few months." said Van Kets.

Manufacturers like Samsung, GoPro and others are expected to enter the market in 2016.

ABOUT JARRED MANASSE

Manasse is the owner of Write For You, offering freelance copywriting services in Cape Town. He is also the content manager for Encounters Travel, a UK-based travel agency who offers adventure tours and small group holidays all over the globe.

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