

Africa's Night of Tourism Triumph



World Travel Awards Honor the Best

South Africa's swept the board at the World Travel Awards Africa & Indian Ocean Gala Ceremony in Johannesburg on Wednesday 7 July, attended by 1200 senior industry leaders.

It was a night of elation – and some disappointment – as the travel and tourism industry's 'great and good' watched South Africa take the spotlight, winning many of the region's overall categories.

There were awards too for travel companies, organisations and destinations in Botswana, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The biggest applause of the night though was saved for Dr. Aupindi Tobie Aupindi, Managing Director of the fast-expanding Namibia Wildlife Resorts, named Africa's prestigious Tourism Personality of the Year.

Dr Aupindi, currently gearing up to celebrate the Etosha National Park Centenary, a significant milestone in conservation, has been described as "inspiring the next generation of Namibian Leaders".

CEO's, directors of leading travel companies, Government Ministers, heads of tourism departments and destinations, industry association leaders and celebrities gathered for Africa's most important industry evening.

VIP's included: Hon. Tokozile Xasa, South Africa's Deputy Minister of Tourism; Senator Tokunbo Afikuyomi, the Hon. Commissioner, Lagos State Delegation; Mr. Kenneth Racombo, First Secretary at the Seychelles High Commission; Mr. Mansoor Mohamed, Executive Director of the City of Cape Town; and Ms. Mariette du Toit-Helmbold, CEO of Cape Town Tourism.

South African Airways was voted Africa's Leading Airline and 1Time Airline, the budget carrier from Johannesburg, operating low cost flights to airports within South Africa and Zanzibar took the titles of both Africa's Leading Low-Cost Airline and Africa's Leading Online Tour Operator.

The Hilton Durban took Africa's Leading Business Hotel; the elegant five-star decadence of The Palazzo Montecasino in Johannesburg won the title Africa's Leading Casino Resort; and Cape Town walked off with Africa's Leading Destination.

The internationally renowned Sun City Resort, South Africa won Africa's Leading Family Resort while Starwood Hotels & Resorts took the title of Africa's Leading Hotel Group. Arabella Western Cape Hotel & Spa at Hermanus, South Africa, took Africa's Leading Luxury Hotel and The Westin Grand Cape Town Arabella Quays, South Africa, triumphed as Africa's Leading Meetings & Conference Hotel; Sandton Sun, one of Johannesburg's top landmarks was Africa's Leading

Convention Hotel.

Kenya's luxury getaway resort of Diani Reef Beach & Spa in Mombasa was Africa's Leading Beach Resort and Egypt's Sharm El Sheikh beat the competition as Africa's Leading Beach Destination. The Sheraton Miramar Resort El Gouna in Egypt took Africa's Leading Beach Hotel. Morocco's Palmeraie Golf Palace was voted Africa's Leading Golf Resort.

Thousands Voted

The winners were selected with the help of thousands of industry professionals worldwide who have been voting online.

Graham E. Cooke, Founder and President of World Travel Awards said that in addition to the prestige for their respective companies and destinations, the winners gain considerable commercial benefit from their deserved success.

"Because of their global reach and reputation, World Travel Awards are unique and regularly referred to as the 'Oscars' of travel and tourism", said Cooke.

"This means that consumers are increasingly using our portfolio of winners as a reliable and independent guide when booking their vacation."

The awards, established 17 years ago, are committed to raising the standards of customer service and overall business performance throughout the international industry.

"Customer care and professionalism of African tourism has come a long way in the years since the World Travel Awards was first started", added Cooke.

"What is so encouraging for Africa is that unlike much of the world, the region has determinedly bucked the trend, notably with the sub-Saharan destinations which are doing particularly well."

Winners of the regional ceremony will now go on to compete in World Travel Awards 2010 final in London, immediately before World Travel Market on Sunday 7 November.

The world acclaimed theatre production AFRICA UMOJA and Kewela Tebza provided spectacular entertainment at the ceremony and the instrumental pop super group Sterling EQ were the stage band.

Log on to worldtravelawards.com for a complete list of winners for the Indian Ocean region.

About World Travel Awards

The World Travel Awards was launched in 1993 to acknowledge and recognise excellence in the world's travel and tourism industry. Now celebrating its 17th Anniversary, the awards is regarded as the very highest achievement that a travel product could ever hope to receive. Votes are cast by 183,000 travel professionals which include travel agencies, tour and transport companies and tourism organizations in over 160 countries across the globe.

Votes are cast globally by fellow industry professionals in over 1, 000 different categories.

Attended by senior executives from major travel companies, operators and destinations, WTA events

are universally respected as providing established, top level networking opportunities, regionally and globally.

The World Travel Award's official list of worldwide media partners includes: BBC World News, eTurboNews, Breaking Travel News, CNBC Arabiya, Khaleej Times, Trav Talk, Trade Arabia, TTN, Travel Daily News International, Focus on Travel News, New Focus Travel Magazine, Tourism Review, JAX FAX, Travel & Leisure, Travel & Leisure Golf, Xenios & Xenios World.

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