

Tourists Flock up Table Mountain

Table Mountain Aerial Cableway experienced a record number of tourists during December 2011, with a total of 116,000 visitors riding the cable cars during the festive season, with almost 80% of those making the trip being domestic visitors.



Interest in Table Mountain has also been helped by extensive media exposure to both domestic and foreign markets after it made it to the provisional list as one of the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" in November, following a worldwide voting campaign.

"Table Mountain's campaign to be included in the New 7 Wonders of Nature has raised awareness of our natural icon, and it seemed that many South Africans wanted to see the icon for themselves," Table Mountain Cableway CEO Sabine Lehmann said in a statement.

The previous record was in December 2006, when 112,000 visitors ascended the mountain. When the Cableway first opened 82 years ago, in December 1929, only 6,000 people reached the top of Table Mountain via the cable cars.

According to research Grant Thornton conducted in November on behalf of the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway, South Africa will gain an additional 108,000 international tourists a year due to the increased exposure of Table Mountain as one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature.



"The growth in tourism, particularly in the Western Cape, will be boosted despite the fragile global economy," said Grand Thornton's Jansen van Vuuren. "As a result of its increased popularity, Table Mountain will be a major drawcard and a key deciding factor in people's decisions to come to South Africa."

The value of this tourism increase is estimated to be approximately R1.4-billion per year for the first five years following the inclusion.

Cape Town's sunny weather also meant that the Cableway could operate 72% of the time – as opposed to December 2010, when strong winds and unpleasant weather allowed the cable cars to run for only 56% of the time. The good weather conditions, and effective online ticket sales, meant that thousands of people could experience a trip up Table Mountain during December 2011.



"Our online ticketing system worked very well and meant that our queues were more manageable than in the past," said Table Mountain Cableway marketing manager Collette van Aswegen.

Date: 2012-01-30

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-south-africa-table-mountain-attracts-more-tourists-article1742>