

SA inspires at Africa Tourism Leadership Forum



Team South Africa at the first Africa Tourism Leadership Forum.

At the first Africa Tourism Leadership Forum held in Accra, Ghana recently, key tourism stakeholders from across the continent shared insights and helped devise strategies for intra-Africa travel and tourism growth.

'Destination Africa' was the focus of discussion, placing the spotlight on tourism as a major economic pillar for diversifying African economies.

SAACI CEO Rudi van der Vyver, who was a speaker at the forum, says it is truly encouraging that at least

70 percent of discussions revolved around business tourism. "There was general agreement that, with an increased focus on business events in Africa, leisure will follow. Many continent-wide initiatives will follow from this forum, with tourism in all corners of Africa set to benefit. Each panel will report back on at least one concrete project next year."

The inaugural Africa Travel and Tourism Innovation awards, held during the event, highlighted and

recognised game-changing initiatives across the sector, with South African companies and organisations receiving huge accolades.

South Africa was named the most innovative business tourism destination in Africa, with the Western Cape and Cape Town the second-runner up in the category. Sabi-Sabi Game Reserve was the winner in the category for the most outstanding accommodation facilities, with &Beyond the second runner-up.

South African Airways was the first runner-up in the category for outstanding tourism transportation, after Ethiopian Airlines. FlySafair was the second runner-up. The Nelson Mandela Foundation was the first runner-up in the 'Destination Africa - Lifetime Award' category.

"SAACI congratulates all these winners and finalists," says Rudi. "So much outstanding work is being done to make South Africa a top business events destination. Keep up the good work!"

Congress 2018 – it's a (green) wrap!

The recent 2018 SAACI congress now enjoys 'Certified Green Event' status.

Audited by Heritage Eco-Events, the congress achieved the prescribed standards for a Green Event (silver class) by achieving a total performance score of 82 percent.

According to Heritage, the organisers considered and implemented sound environmentally responsible practices and decisions from the very start of the process, and this is reflected in the performance achievements that have been noted. "We are pleased to see the levels of commitment that were provided to a greener event by the organising committee and we believe this had a positive effect on the overall outcome."

Congress winners

Delegates who were the most active on social media during the congress were Thandeka Ngubane of aha Hotels & Lodges, Lisa Jade Merven of Ginger Biscuit, Leigh-Anne Luus of Peermont Hotels, Casinos & Resorts and Deidre Caine-Van Staden of the Sandton Convention Centre.

Following the post-congress survey, the prize winners are Samuel Regnier of XO Africa who won a full website, including domain, e-mail and hosting for one year (courtesy of Ultimate Data Sciences) and Charmaine Avery of Rhodes University, who won a business video advert for social media advertising (courtesy of Bonde Corporate Marketing Communications).

Focus on the youth – how cool is that?

The Business Events Future Focus Youth Conference, organised by SAACI Western Cape, was held at Spier recently.

Specifically aimed at students in event management at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), this annual conference gives delegates practical insight into the various aspects of events including budgeting, event planning and management, sponsorships, design and décor.

"In this way we invest in the future of our industry," says Chairperson Jaques Fouché, "making sure that we grow the SAACI village. We thank the organising committee for their dedication, in particular Esti Venske and Zimkitha Bavuma of the CPUT."

SAACIMatters gathers that a similar event may be held in Johannesburg next year.

SAACI snippets

- SAACI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Exhibition Logistics Association (IELA), which will see the organisations exchanging information about membership benefits, as well as cross-promotion.
- SAACI has signed an agreement with the National Accommodation Association SA (NAA-SA) to actively promote collaboration within the business tourism and events industry. For example, the SAACI Online Academy is now open to NAA-SA members.
- Members will soon receive feedback on the recent survey around rates and taxes. Based on the outcome, SAACI will address problem areas with the relevant authorities on behalf of members.
- Watch out for a survey around SAACI membership tiers this month, as agreed upon at the 2018 congress. This relates to the correlation between membership fees and the size of a company. Depending on the outcome of the survey, an online voting process will take place in November.
- SAACI members can now make use of a special offer from UltimateWebsites. For a website of only R149 per month, call 011 463 6300, e-mail signup@ultimatewebsites.co.za or visit www.ultimatewebsites.co.za.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| <p>► 57th ICCA Congress 11 – 14 November 2018 Dubai, United Arab Emirates www.iccaworld.org</p> | <p>► Meetings Africa 2019 25 – 27 February 2019 Sandton Convention Centre www.meetingsafrica.co.za</p> | <p>► SAACI Annual Congress 28 – 30 July 2019 Durban, KwaZulu-Natal</p> |
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