Responsible Tourism in Cape Town: HOW-TO GUIDE

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY
RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN CAPE TOWN: HOW-TO GUIDE
Practical guidelines for implementing responsible practices in the tourism industry

SUPPORTED BY:
SATSA Western Cape
SAACI
FEDHASA Cape
Cape Town Tourism
The Big Six

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CAPE TOWN, ALDERMAN PATRICIA DE LILLE

Cape Town is one of the great destinations of the world. Nearly four million people visit its shores every year. They enjoy the city, the mountain, the sea, and the spirit of the local residents. But there are costs too. For local people and the environment.

Several years ago, Cape Town began a journey to become a responsible tourism destination. Responsible tourism is tourism that “creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit”, a phrase coined in Cape Town in 2002 and now widely used around the world.

Cape Town was honoured as the “Best Destination” in the 2009 Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards. However, we still have a lot of work to do before we are truly living by the principles of responsible tourism and helping all visitors enjoy our destination as responsible travellers.

CAPE TOWN WAS HONOURED AS THE “BEST DESTINATION” IN THE 2009 VIRGIN HOLIDAYS RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS

In 2009, five organisations drafted a Responsible Tourism Charter that would guide them through the next stage of the journey. These partners represent a broad range of tourism stakeholders:

- The City of Cape Town
- Cape Town Tourism
- FEDHASA Cape - Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa, Cape Region
- SATSA - Southern Africa Tourism Services Association
- SAACI - Southern African Association for the Conference Industry

Now, all tourism product owners in destination Cape Town are encouraged to join the journey.

This How-To Guide shares information on how the tourism industry can participate in helping to make our city and its tourism facilities, services and products more responsible. It is also important to ensure that our tourism sector keeps pace with international trends in responsible business practice – and gains market advantage in doing so.

We encourage tourism operators to use this guide to make a difference to Cape Town’s future.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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• Coffeebeans Routes
• FEDHASA
• Hotel Verde
• Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens
• MyCiti
• Ocean View House
• Robben Island Museum
• Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Company
• The Backpack
• Two Oceans Aquarium
• Uthando South Africa
• Victoria & Alfred Waterfront
• Vineyard Hotel

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• Lisa Scriven
• Ocean View House
• South African Tourism
• Travel with Rene
• Vineyard Hotel

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WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been published by the City of Cape Town to encourage and motivate tourism businesses throughout the city to manage their operations and market themselves more responsibly. It is designed to be a straightforward guide for implementing responsible tourism at an operational level with additional helpful resources provided for further support.
By using this guide, tourism businesses will learn how to:

- save money by reducing operating costs;
- increase their attractiveness to customers;
- increase social and economic benefits in their local area;
- reduce their overall environmental impacts;
- improve business relationships; and
- monitor, assess, and demonstrate progress.

This guide differs from others in several important respects:

- It is focused on local issues and solutions, drawing on case studies of best practice examples in Cape Town.
- It covers both the implementation of responsible tourism operations as well as the marketing of responsible tourism products and experiences.

It is designed for use by a range of tourism stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- hospitality sector businesses, including accommodation (hotels, B&B’s, guesthouses, backpackers, etc.), restaurants, and conference venues and organisers
- travel and tourism services including activities, attractions, tour and transport providers
- marketing associations
- trade and professional associations
- local and provincial tourism authorities
- event organisers, e.g. festivals and exhibitions
- suppliers to the tourism industry, including crafters, fresh produce, beverages, cleaning materials, stand builders, and professional services, cleaning materials and other services

We encourage tourism associations to distribute the guide to their members.
This guide is intended to be user-friendly and easy to navigate. You can read it from start to finish or navigate to specific sections using the links on the Contents page. Each section also has links to tools and resources that will provide more details and will likely serve as excellent resources throughout your responsible tourism journey.

You should also check the Tools section of the Responsible Cape Town website (www.responsiblecapetown.co.za) for updates and further information including news, events, and opportunities. The website also provides case studies, images, and other information you may find of interest.

And if you have your own ideas regarding good practices for implementing responsible tourism or examples that inspire you, we invite you to share them via the website or Facebook page, and tweet them @respCPT. Just add #RTCapeTown to your pics and posts... The more you spread the word, the better the chances are of you inspiring other to join in!
With the release of the Tourism White Paper in 1996, South Africa became the first country to include responsible tourism in its official national policy. In 2002, the City of Cape Town hosted a side event to the World Summit on Sustainable Development that further advanced the principles of responsible tourism.

The result was the Cape Town Declaration, which is recognised globally for defining responsible tourism as tourism “that creates better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit.” It is tourism that:

- minimises negative economic, environmental and social impacts;
- generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities;
- improves working conditions and access to the industry;
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances;
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage;
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through meaningful connections with local people and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues;
- provides access for people with disabilities and the disadvantaged; and
- is culturally sensitive, encourages respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.
But it doesn’t stop there… Cape Town has continued to demonstrate its commitment to the responsible tourism journey in so many ways. The highlights of steps taken during this journey are depicted below, and you can access more detailed information in the Tools section of the website.
2002

Cape Town hosted the 1st International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations, a parallel event of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. To this day, the resulting Cape Town Declaration is a key reference for destination sustainability.

2004

Responsible tourism was included as a founding principle of Cape Town’s Tourism Development Framework.

2008

The City of Cape Town and the major tourism trade associations, namely FEDHASA, SATSA, SAACI and Cape Town Tourism, gathered around the table to deliberate a more sustainable tourism future for Cape Town. They chose water and energy efficiency, waste management, skills development, preferential procurement, social development and enterprise development as crucial for responsible tourism.

2009

The City of Cape Town adopted the Responsible Tourism Policy and Action Plan, which was subsequently adopted by the City Council.

On World Responsible Tourism Day the City and five industry associations signed the Cape Town Responsible Tourism Charter, sealing a destination partnership and commitment to the seven destination priorities.

International recognition as a front runner in responsible tourism followed in late 2009, when Cape Town was recognised as “Best Destination” in the 2009 World Responsible Tourism Awards.
2010

Information about responsible tourism for citizens, tourism businesses and visitors was central to Cape Town’s Green Goal programme during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Industry workshops, a dedicated website, a hands-on ‘how-to guide’, videos, case studies and tips for travellers helped to spread the word.

2011

Implementation workshops for tourism businesses, a conference and a Responsible Tourism in Cities pavilion at Indaba 2011, the launch of the annual Responsible Tourism Week, and information sessions for association members were some of the actions taken in 2011.

In a bid to raise awareness through action and help gauge the progress made on the road to being responsible, a pilot project involving a range of tourism businesses with responsible practices was launched late in 2011. All participating members were required to sign the Responsible Tourism Charter, pledging to embed responsible tourism in their operations. The pilot project helped to better understand the barriers to the uptake of responsible tourism and allowed businesses to share experiences and information in a supportive learning network. The City also developed a Responsible Tourism Communication Strategy and launched a dedicated Responsible Tourism website.
2012

The city hosted the annual Responsible Tourism Week and FEDHASA included sustainability in its strategic plan. The 10 year commemoration of the Cape Town Declaration was hosted at South Africa House in London with the Deputy Minister of Tourism in attendance.

2013

In May, delegates and speakers from different corners of the world discussed “Sustainable Energy and Tourism” at the Responsible Tourism in Cities at Indaba seminar. To mark World Tourism Day, Cape Town’s Big Six attractions – Robben Island, Table Mountain Aerial Cableway, Kirstenbosch, V&A Waterfront, Groot Constantia and Cape Point – signed the Cape Town Responsible Tourism Charter on 27 November 2013. Stakeholders from Cape Town and elsewhere took stock of what has been achieved, what challenges remain, and what should be done to mainstream responsible tourism at the Responsible Tourism in Cities Dialogue hosted by the City of Cape Town in November 2013.

2014

As World Design Capital, Cape Town hosted over 460 transformative design projects under the central theme “Live Design. Transform Life”. WDC2014 is part of a broader vision to transform Cape Town through design into a sustainable and productive African city, bridging historic divides and building social and economic inclusion. Responsible tourism is tourism DESIGNED to create better places to live in, and better places to visit.

At the 11th World Responsible Tourism Awards at World Travel Market in London, Cape Town's Hotel Verde and the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront won category awards for Best City Hotel and Best Destination. Design, inclusive tourism and responsible tourism in marketing were key themes at the national Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations, hosted by the City of Cape Town in November 2014.
WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE TOURISM?

Responsible tourism is an approach to the management of tourism that aims to achieve the triple-bottom line outcomes of sustainable development, i.e. economic growth, environmental integrity, and social justice while simultaneously minimising costs to destinations. The distinguishing characteristic of this particular approach is that the various role-players in the tourism sector and destinations in general take responsibility for achieving sustainable tourism development.

The ultimate goal is to provide high-quality experiences for visitors, strengthen host communities and their heritage, and develop tourism-related livelihoods while preserving local environments. This is what we aspire to for tourism in Cape Town, for the benefit of the industry, Capetonians, and our visitors alike.
Convinced that successfully implementing responsible tourism across the sector would hinge on local industry and destination stakeholders jointly crafting a strategy, the City of Cape Town worked closely with other city departments and the local tourism industry to develop a Responsible Tourism Plan for Cape Town that focuses on local needs – our people, our environment, our resources, our culture and heritage, and our economy.

CAPE TOWN’S SEVEN RESPONSIBLE TOURISM PRIORITY AREAS

Low-carbon transport provider
After extensive multi-year consultations, seven priority areas were identified as a starting point for Cape Town. These are grouped under the three pillars of sustainability:
Economic Principles

Buying Responsibly:

- Procure products and services that have a reduced negative effect and enhanced positive impact on human well-being and the natural, social, cultural, and local economic environment when compared to other products and services that serve the same purpose.
- Aim to source a targeted proportion of goods and services from locally-owned, historically disadvantaged groups and/or individuals.

Supporting Enterprise Development:

- Encourage and facilitate a culture of developing other businesses through mentoring, coaching, and incubation.

Environmental Principles

Conserving Water:

- Measure water consumption, adopt quantitative goals and measures to decrease overall consumption, and improve the reuse of wastewater.

Using Energy Efficiently:

- Measure energy consumption, indicating all energy sources as a percentage of overall consumption, and adopt quantitative goals and measures to decrease overall consumption.

Reducing & Managing Waste:

- Implement a waste management plan, addressing both solid and liquid waste, with quantitative goals to reduce, re-use, and recycle waste.

Social Principles

Developing Skills:

- Advance the skills of employees and offer on-the-job skills training, capacity building, and mentoring.

Building Communities:

- Support initiatives for social and community development through discussions with community members and a plan of action.
BENEFITS OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Within the priority areas identified by the destination partners, responsible tourism aims to improve the social fabric of our area while maintaining its vibrancy as a world-class tourism destination. The benefits associated with this approach are too numerous to capture here, but some of the main ones are mentioned below.
BENEFITS OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Operational advantage

Creating better working environments results in happier, more loyal staff who, in turn, tend to be more effective in their day-to-day jobs and contribute to the creation of a better overall visitor experience. These quality employment opportunities, likewise, create a stronger base for local economic development and career versatility throughout the sector (and even associated sectors).

Using resources more efficiently has a direct cost-savings impact; reducing resource consumption equates to financial savings for your business. It also lightens the sector’s demand on these limited resources, thereby making Cape Town a more sustainable place to live and visit.

Businesses that can identify others that are also on the responsible tourism journey can network to find solutions to common challenges. For example, with new and efficient technology being continuously developed, businesses can exchange their experiences and recommend the best options for various contexts.

Market demand

Increasing consumer preference is being given to businesses that demonstrate their commitment to a healthier planet and respect for local people; in fact, some research suggests that this is becoming the norm rather than the exception. Businesses who can demonstrate this commitment will, therefore, have a competitive advantage over others.

There is also a growing consumer demand for travel experiences that are more representative of the local culture, customs, and environments of the destination. Responsible tourism’s focus on reflecting local culture and generating local benefits has this result, thereby attracting this market segment, whether these travellers know they are buying a ‘responsible’ holiday or not. This focus on ‘local’ also creates superior visitor experiences by reflecting local life more accurately and providing a better understanding of our city’s (and our country’s) challenges and successes, including the social and environmental issues it faces.

Ensuring that tourism products are accessible to locals (i.e. are affordable) creates opportunities for local families to enjoy our city, thereby growing new markets and filling the gaps in tourism supply. This potential for improved leisure access for Capetonians has a general benefit to society, along with the creation of communal recreational spaces and the protection of local natural and cultural environments. Tourism businesses with improved accessibility appeal to a wider range of visitors. It’s not just disabled visitors who benefit; it’s families, older people, practically all of your visitors in one way or another. Making your business an accessible tourism business is simply a smart business move.

In addition, the tourism sector itself can generate demand for more sustainably produced goods and services through its procurement strategy. By focusing on ‘greener’ and ‘fairer’ purchasing, tourism businesses can encourage their supply chain to modify their operating practices, thereby generating even more benefits through their strategic business choices.