

PRESS RELEASE

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MPUMALANGA TOURISM PROVIDERS TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT THE LILIZELA TOURISM PROVINCIAL AWARDS

The Mpumalanga Province announced the names of the provincial winners of the 2017 Lilizela Tourism Awards. The announcement was made at an awards ceremony held on 8 September 2017 at Casambo Exclusive Guest Lodge where all the province's finalists were publically honoured for their contribution to service excellence and quality assurance in the tourism industry.

Billed to recognise only the best in the South African tourism industry, the Lilizela Tourism Awards aim to recognise and reward the highest levels of excellence in tourism value chain. They are the ultimate reward for entrepreneurial and service excellence that sets global benchmark standards.

"We would like to congratulate all the Mpumalanga Provincial finalists and winners. Each year, we are encouraged by the quality of products and services that enter the Lilizela Tourism Awards. These awards are our way of recognising our dedicated travel industry for their hard work in setting the bar high and helping to make South Africa such a highly regarded must-visit destination, for local and international tourists alike. We would also like to thank all those tourism and hospitality businesses that took the time to enter the Lilizela Tourism Awards, and particularly to our provincial partners for ensuring that a cross-section of South Africa's diverse experiences is represented," says Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa

The Lilizela Tourism Awards are an opportunity to celebrate professionalism, creativity and innovation in the industry. The provincial awards are being held in the month of September – which is also the time that South Africa and the tourism industry at large celebrate Tourism Month.

"We are delighted with the standard of entries and remain committed to growing the number of entries to ensure our province is well represented next year. This has been a long journey following a rigorous judging process leading to the announcement and we are proud to have come out with good quality products that represent Mpumalanga in the area of service excellence", said Mr. Johannes Nobunga, CEO of MTPA.

"Mpumalanga received a total of 170 entries compared to 79 received in 2016. The ceremony tonight will see 96 finalists being awarded certificates, with 32 of them proceeding to represent Mpumalanga in the national awards ceremony to be held in Gauteng on 29 October 2016", commented Nobunga.

"We wish to congratulate our provincial winners for their achievements and all their hard work as well as the effort they have put into positioning their products and especially the province. We believe that this

achievement will enable others to learn from this outstanding work that is being delivered and further motivate others to participate” concluded Nobunga.

The Mpumalanga provincial winners as selected by independent judges are:

ACCOMMODATION AWARDS		
Name of Establishment	Star Grading	Category
Matumi Golf Lodge	5	Bed and Breakfast
Blue Jay Lodge	4	Bed and Breakfast
La Picasso Guesthouse	3	Bed and Breakfast
Blyde Canyon A Forever Resort Caravan Park	3	Caravan & Camping
Umsisi House	5	Country House
Kaapschehoop Gastehuis cc	3	Country House
Jock Safari Lodge	5	Game Lodge
Elephant Plains Game Lodge	4	Game Lodge
Leaves Lodge & Spa	5	Guest House
Turaco Lodge	4	Guest House
McBest Guest House	3	Guest House
Schneider's Boutique Hotel	5	Hotel
Southern Sun Emnotweni	4	Hotel
Graskop Hotel	3	Hotel
Town Lodge Mbombela	2	Hotel
Road Lodge Mbombela	1	Hotel
Needles Safari Lodge	4	Lodge
Hamilton Parks Country Lodge	3	Lodge
Valbonne Villa at Tomjachu Bush Retreat	5	Self -Catering Exclusive
The Cycad Lodge & Chalets	4	Self -Catering Exclusive
Thaba Tsweni Lodge & Safaris	3	Self -Catering Exclusive
Kruger Park Lodge	4	Self-catering Shared Vacation
Jackalberry Ridge	3	Self-catering Shared Vacation

MESE AWARDS

Name of Establishment	Star Grading	Category
Emnotweni Arena	5	Meetings, Exhibitions and Special Events (MESE)
Badplaas A Forever Resort Conference	3	Meetings, Exhibitions and Special Events (MESE)

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Name of Establishment	Category
Lowveld Extreme Adventures	Action and Adventure
Potluck Bos kombius	Culture & Lifestyle
Matsamo Cultural Village	Roots & Culture
Blyde River Canyon	Scenic Beauty
Inyati Game Lodge	Wildlife Encounters

TOURIST GUIDE

Name	Category
Jaco Buys	Nature

EMERGING TOURISM ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD (ETEYA)

Name
Lowveld Extreme Adventures

The National Winners will be announced at the Sandton Convention Centre on 29th of October 2017.

To view the full list of finalists and winners visit www.lilizela.co.za

ENDS

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