

FREE STATE PROVINCE TO HOST THE NATIONAL 2021 WORLD TOURISM DAY CELEBRATIONS

27 August 2021

The Province of the Free State will host this year's edition of the World Tourism Day celebrations for South Africa on the 27th of September 2021.

The announcement was made today by the Director General of the Department of Tourism Mr Victor Tharage at the Golden Gate National Park outside of Clarens as the province launched its Tourism Month Campaign and began its 30-day countdown to the annual spectacle.

World Tourism Day is a United Nations designed day celebrated annually across the world to focus and advocate for the centrality and contribution of the tourism sector towards the attainment of the global development goals for sustainable development and the fight against poverty.

Speaking at the announcement of the Free State as the feature province for the 2021 national celebrations, the Director General stated that the choice of the Free State was well aligned with the adopted global theme of "tourism for inclusive growth".

"We could not have chosen a better host than this province as we navigate the economic and social wrath of the pandemic and importantly as we begin our voyage to recovery and rebuilding our sector to its acclaimed glory and development impact.

"The theme for this year is about tourism for all. And by all, it is about the rural women and the innovative youth, it is for the villages, towns and the less visited part of our country.

"This theme is about the cultural diversity of our offerings and travel tastes of the millennials. Importantly, growth is about the broad-based benefits and support for small enterprises that continue to bear the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic" said Tharage.

Accepting the offer to host, Free State MEC for Economic Development, Small Business Development, Environment and Tourism, MEC Makale Mohale said that the province was honoured to host the celebration in 2021 in the aftermath of the pandemic.

"We have put together a programme for the month which will reflect the beauty and offerings of our province, but it is this programme that should make everyone want to visit our province," said Mohale.

"This is an opportunity to once again take an unwavering shot at radical transformation of the tourism sector. In the midst of adversity, we must ensure that our small businesses are

resilient and agile where possible and start thinking of disruptive approaches in the SMME sector,” added Mohale.

Today’s announcement also included the unveiling of the 2021 Sho’t Left Travel Week.

Travel week is a domestic campaign aimed at promoting cheaper and affordable travel, while providing product owners and tourism trade an opportunity to re-attract South Africans back into the culture of traveling.

“Through Sho’t Left Travel Week, which will commence from 06 to 12 September, we call upon South Africans to book these massively discounted packages, and use them for the next year, “said Ms Sthembiso Dlamini, Acting CEO of South African Tourism.

“It is a practical response to the challenge of affordability by many South Africans and an opportunity for travel operators and product owners to promote their offerings through our various platforms,” added Dlamini.

As the country begins to open up, the appetite for domestic travel must be re-ignited and South Africans should be encouraged to travel their country - The month of September is known as Tourism Month, alongside Heritage Month and Public Service Month, in South Africa.

RELEASE ENDS

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