



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Speech by Minister Derek Hanekom at the Launch of the Madiba App**

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Colleagues in Tourism,

It is very apt that we have come together in this revered venue, a place of liberation, to honour one of our greatest liberation heroes, our beloved Madiba.

It is also fitting that we are launching the Madiba App in a very important month in our country, a month when we celebrate freedom and democracy.

Madiba is still very much with us in spirit, and he will live in our memory forever. He continues to inspire us, and today's event demonstrates how his legacy continues to take our country and our people forward.

Those of us who have enjoyed the privilege and honour of working with Madiba, and many other people who have met him, even if only once, have been struck by a remarkable trait in his character. When you were in Madiba's presence, you felt a sense of his greatness. But more than that, he made you feel the greatness within yourself.

This is what makes me really excited about the launch of this Madiba App. It will allow everyone who uses it to follow in the footsteps of greatness, as they visit the iconic sites that tell the inspiring story of Mandela's life, his values, and his actions. As our citizens and our international tourists take these steps, and engage with the story of Mandela and the story of South Africa, they will re-discover and re-ignite the greatness within them.

In this way, we will make our social history accessible to the world, and use it to make the world a better place.

Just as Mandela brought out the greatness within us, this app will help us to continue building a tourism sector that is great, and that brings out the greatness in South Africa.

Through the creation of the Madiba inspired tourist attractions Map last year, which is now complemented with this App, all of us can walk in Madiba's footsteps.

A great nation is one that honours its heroes, understands the struggles fought, and works hard to preserve its history and legacy.

This is the only way we can guarantee that future generations, and those living outside our borders, can learn and appreciate what makes us so resilient as a nation.

This innovation is also exciting because it uses the communication platform of the future: the mobile device. Tourists are relying more and more on their mobile devices for information. This includes getting marketing information about destinations, making bookings and transacting, and commenting on the places they visit.

Tourists now have the world at their fingertips.

In South Africa we have an incredible range of tourist attractions: leisure and lifestyle offerings; beach and bush activities; shopping, and wine and dine experiences.

But the tourist of today wants more than the beach and the bush.

They want to experience the place they are visiting through the people they meet. They want to immerse themselves in the culture of the people, and try to understand their world. This app will help tourists to become fully immersed in the iconic sites they visit by providing meaningful information and images that tell the story.

For the Madiba-inspired attractions, one is taken on a journey through Gauteng, the cosmopolitan economic hub of the country; the rolling green escarpments of the Eastern Cape; the lush region of majestic mountains and farmlands set in valleys in the Western Cape; to the garden province of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal.

The Department of Tourism is putting a lot of emphasis on enhancing the experience of our tourists, and making their visits unforgettable. We are doing this by improving the signage and infrastructure at some of our most attractive, iconic destinations, through training for service excellence, and through quality assurance by encouraging establishments to be graded and tourist guides to be registered. This app is a virtual tourist guide, and it will take the experience of tourists who use it to a whole new level.

Ladies and gentlemen, the legend that is Madiba illustrates that the brave never die. Their courage is what continues to drive us, even beyond their existence on this earth.

Tourism plays a massive role in preserving our history and helping us to achieve the ideals that our heroes such as Madiba lived for. It helps us to bring meaning to our communities, create jobs and contribute to the economy.

It is difficult to go anywhere in the country and not meet someone who has a story to tell about how far we have come, and the hope we have for our future. What is heartening is that these stories are not only cherished and shared by fellow South Africans, but by citizens of the world, who have been touched by the history of our country and our icons.

One such person is Pablo Coral Vega, a National Geographic photographer. Through his lens, he came to explore South Africa by following the journey of Madiba, from Johannesburg to Qunu to Robben Island. In a moment we will watch a vignette showing the compassion that Pablo uses to tell his story about South Africa.

Technological advancements have given us opportunities to keep our stories and our heroes alive. I hope all of you will download the App, visit the Madiba inspired tourist attractions, and immerse yourselves in the richness of who we are.

Please join me in watching the emotional journey Pablo underwent as he explored our beautiful South Africa.

Thank you.

[Download the app here](#)