



tourism

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Media statement by the Office of Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk, Minister of Tourism, on the occasion of the launch of "Madiba's Journey" - Mabiba-inspired tourist attractions, Drakenstein Prison House

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South Africa's Minister of Tourism, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, today launched "Madiba-inspired tourist attractions" – a travel map that encourages tourists from around the world to come to South Africa to walk in former president Nelson Mandela's footsteps.

"The passing of South Africa's first democratically elected president, Nelson Mandela, in December 2013 sparked a global outpouring of grief. The world paused as we collectively reflected on the life of this phenomenal man and celebrated what he had achieved, not only for South Africa, but for mankind. Most of the places associated with his life's journey teemed with visitors who dedicated private notes and flowers as tokens of respect and remembrance as South Africans and, indeed, the world tried to come to terms with the loss of the founding father of the nation," Minister Van Schalkwyk said.

He was speaking today at an event at Drakenstein Correctional Centre (formerly Victor Verster Prison) in Cape Town – the last place where Nelson Mandela was held captive before he took his first steps to freedom on 11 February 1990.

"To make it as easy as possible for people to personally experience Mandela's story, we have developed the 'Madiba-inspired tourist attractions' map, which encapsulates the key points on his life's journey," Van Schalkwyk said.

Developed by South African Tourism in partnership with the Nelson Mandela Foundation, the map highlights tourist sites as well as general places of interest in the four main provinces that defined Mandela's life. These include the Eastern Cape, where he was born, grew up and attended Fort Hare University; Gauteng, where he worked as a human-rights lawyer and became instrumental in South Africa's political struggle; KwaZulu-Natal, where he was captured, and the Western Cape, where he was imprisoned and ultimately freed.

Since Mandela's release from prison in February 1990, a number of world-class museums, monuments and precincts have been developed to bring his story to life and to cater for the demand to better understand South Africa's history.

The "Madiba-inspired tourist attractions" map includes well-known attractions such as the UNESCO world heritage site Robben Island, where Mandela was imprisoned, and Mandela's house on Vilakazi Street in Soweto, which is the only street in the world to have had two Nobel peace prize winners, Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, as residents. It also features some of the lesser-known attractions, such as the Kliptown open-air museum, also in Soweto, which marks the spot where the Freedom Charter was adopted by the Congress of the People, as well as the Nelson Mandela youth and heritage centre in Mandela's childhood home, Qunu, where he was of course buried as well.

"Mandela's integrity and spirit of hope, reconciliation and love have touched the lives of millions of people. This year, we celebrate 20 years of democracy and freedom, and we look

forward to welcoming many tourists from around the world to share the South African story and Mandela's legacy with us. Not only was Nelson Mandela an incredible man and leader, but he remains a truly global icon. Since 1994, visitors from all corners of the globe have come to South Africa to seek out the places that shaped his remarkable life. His name alone put South Africa on the map; today, we are returning the favour in a literal sense."

In 1993, the year before Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first democratically elected president, South Africa had 3,4 million international arrivals. In 2012, South Africa welcomed 13,5 million people to the country, of whom close to 9,2 million were tourists (people who spent one or more nights here).

"The numbers aside, though, what has perhaps been the greatest legacy for tourism is that Mandela has encouraged people from all corners of the globe to come and experience South Africa for themselves. It is thanks to his vision and principles that our tourism industry has grown as much as it has since our first democratic elections 20 years ago when he was elected president of South Africa," Van Schalkwyk added.

"It is also thanks to him that the world now knows South Africa for more than just our incredible wildlife, amazing scenic beauty and excellent value for money. Since 1994, the world has come to realise that what really sets this country apart is Mandela's people, whose warmth and hospitality leave all who visit us touched by the 'Madiba magic'," the Minister concluded.

The "Madiba-inspired tourist attractions" map has been made available to trade partners in South Africa and around the world to make it as easy as possible to package Madiba-inspired itineraries. The map is also available online at www.southafrica.net

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