



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Tourism awards keep world focus on SA

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TOURISM in South Africa is maintaining its winning streak, as the country continues to attract international awards and welcome tourists from around the world in growing numbers.

In the latest accolade bestowed on South Africa, the entire country, its cities and tourism attractions featured prominently in the Condé Nast Traveller's Readers' Travel Awards for 2016.

South Africa was ranked fourth on Condé Nast's list of the Top 20 countries in the world to visit, ahead of destinations like France, Spain, Thailand, Morocco and Australia, which have been favoured by the world's tourists in the past.

Minister of Tourism Derek Hanekom said all South Africans should be proud of this achievement, considering the stiff competition we faced.

"It takes a huge collaborative effort by the public and private sector to provide a great experience for tourists, and it cannot be done without the support of host communities and the people of South Africa," he said.

"These awards prove that we are succeeding in keeping our country globally competitive.

"The number of international arrivals are growing remarkably. These awards reinforce our position as a very attractive global destination. Tourism is well-placed to continue playing a meaningful role in the economy and in the lives of our people. The sector is striving to do even better in the future, so that we make full use of every opportunity presented by tourism," said Minister Hanekom.

South Africa also featured several times in the Condé Nast list for "The Ultimate Travel Top 60", which identifies the best of the best tourism attractions and facilities around the world.

Cape Town was named the culinary capital of the world. The Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve & Wellness Retreat was placed 20th on the list, with South Africa as a country destination at number 21, Cape Town at 53 and Singita Sabi Sands at 54.

The Readers' Travel Awards also named South Africa as a fantastic destination when it comes to value for money, putting it among the most affordable destinations in the world.

The Awards focused individually on Franschhoek, Johannesburg, the Kruger National Park, Londolozi private game reserve, Plettenberg Bay, the Garden Route and the Great Karoo as key attractions.

At its recent Travel Week conference in Las Vegas, Virtuoso recognized & Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal for Sustainable Tourism Leadership at its annual Best of the Best Awards. Phinda was hailed as a conservation leader that is now one of the world's most successful ecotourism projects.

At this year's African Responsible Tourism Awards, Shark Spotters was a Gold Winner in Innovation for its pioneering work in keeping swimmers at Cape Town's beaches safe, while protecting sharks and creating employment. The Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve won a Gold Award for conserving

over 130 unique San rock art sites. Sani Lodge Backpackers and Drakensberg Adventures were awarded for their contribution to local livelihoods and poverty reduction.

The National Department of Tourism won the Best Public Policy award, for recognising that tourism has a responsibility to make a significant contribution to making South Africa a better place to live in.

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