



tourism

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Young Chefs Graduate from Tourism's Training Programme

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The shortage of skilled young Chefs within the tourism sector may soon be a thing of the past as students graduate from the National Department of Tourism's (NDT) - National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP). One hundred and twenty young chefs were awarded the City and Guilds certificate in food preparation and cooking at a graduation ceremony held at the Clock Tower centre in Cape Town.

Chef skills are identified as a scarce skill in South Africa. In an effort to address this skills shortage, the Department of Tourism collaborated with the South African Chefs Association (SACA), and invested an amount of R112 million to present a three year chefs training programme to unemployed youth between the ages of 18 to 34 years.

At least 1 760 students have participated in the chefs training programme since its inception in 2011. The programme is being implemented through 27 registered culinary schools in nine provinces, offering theoretical and practical culinary training in the art of preparing world-class cuisine. "With the fast pace growth of the South Africa's hospitality industry, it was imperative for us to ensure that we have qualified and skilled chefs available to meet the needs of the industry. I am confident that through the NYCTP, we have produced chefs who will not only offer a world-class service, but will also be able to compete with the best in the world," said Minister of Tourism, Mr Derek Hanekom.

The National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) forms a part of the broader perspective of the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS), which speaks to job creation and growth of the economy as outlined in the New Growth Path of government. "More than 700 of our graduates have been employed in the industry, and I appeal to businesses in the sector to support this initiative. It is through private public partnerships that we can create an environment that provides employment opportunity for our youth, and ultimately improves their quality life," added Hanekom.

The qualification earned through the NYCTP programme is recognised domestically and internationally by all cookery or food-related sectors. Chef Tlali Masakala, a graduate of the NYCTP, is the only South African to be awarded the world-renowned 2014 City & Guilds Gold Medal for Excellence in the culinary arts. "The National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) has changed my life and enabled me to follow my passion. I am grateful to SACA and the NDT for the programme as it has exposed me to a new world and an exciting career path," said Tlali Masakala.

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