

Report finds promising growth in spending by tourists to Cape Town

World Tourism Day will be marked today after a round of positive news for the sector. The City of Cape Town's tourism department recently released the findings of its Grant Thornton research, which revealed that Cape Town's tourism sector represents 34,500 permanent and 15,000 temporary jobs, many of them in the semi-skilled or unskilled category. The report also revealed promising growth in direct spending by tourists; between 2009 and 2012.

Speaking at the Parliamentary Tourism Summit in Cape Town (17 and 18 September), Tourism Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk said that, nationally, direct employment in the tourism sector, as a percentage of overall employment in the country, is around 4.5%.

A key factor in the growth of the sector is the relatively low barrier to access and diverse opportunity across many streams and sub-sectors of tourism.

Another element supporting the good growth of tourism is the widespread assistance available to both those within the sector and those wishing to develop their current businesses towards greater efficiency, social impact and profitability.

Cape Town Tourism assists its members in driving their tourism businesses through a dedicated business manager and, as such, receives an average of 100 enquiries a month. Together with the City of Cape Town's Tourism Department and TEP (Tourism Enterprises Partnership), the organisation also offers regular Tourism Business Networking Sessions to support tourism businesses and entrepreneurs through advice, a forum in which to ask questions and network, as well as in a series of presentations that assist the industry in gaining skills and information.

Enormous potential

Said Cape Town Tourism CEO, Enver Duminy: "The potential for tourism is still enormous in Cape Town, but it has to grow inclusively if it's to be sustainable. We are fortunate to be in a position in this sector where we can initiate change from the most basic one-person, one-employee level to the most complex corporate level - through guidance with training, empowerment, partnership and so on.

There is excellent support across numerous public and private sector programmes. We invest our time and resources in assisting small to medium tourism businesses and we want to continue work with more focus on educating members - and the broader industry - about the possibilities around entering tourism and growing a successful business."

Councillor Grant Pascoe, the City's Mayoral Committee Member for Tourism, Events and Marketing said: "The fact that

direct spending on tourism in Cape Town has grown at 5.6% per annum between 2009 and 2012 is great news for the City of Cape Town. The research conducted by Grant Thornton shows that the city's tourism industry generated R14.6 billion in 2012, up from R12.4 billion in 2009.

The results prove that tourists are not only coming to the city to experience the natural beauty, but also to spend, providing a much-needed boost to the local economy. We will continue to use our resources to encourage tourism and the subsequent investment into our city, thereby creating work opportunities for the people that live in our city."

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