

Cape Town chefs educated on Halal gourmet cuisine to meet needs of Muslim travellers

Muslim travellers are becoming a significant segment in the global travel and tourism sector. By approximately 26% of the world's population will be Muslim and, given the growth of the Muslim middle class and younger population with increased disposable income, Cape Town Tourism has been seeking ways to develop awareness around Muslim travellers' needs.

In a survey published in the [Muslim Travel Shopping Index \(MTSI\) 2015](#), more than 80% of the respondents mentioned that the availability of Halal food options is “very important” when choosing a holiday destination – this information has prompted the creation of the Chef Exchange Programme, which culminated at a function showcasing gourmet Halal cuisine.

Educating Cape Town chefs on Halal gourmet cuisine

Cape Town Tourism, in partnership with CrescentRating, brought Muhammad Kamal and Javed Ahamed, two accomplished chefs from Singapore to train 37 Cape Town chefs. Both chefs are active in training and educating chefs on Halal gourmet cuisine.



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The programme included the following:

A workshop with a Halal gourmet chef training introductory course that provided an introduction to Halal and Islamic

principles, integration of Islamic principles with Halal food, identification and recognition of Halal ingredients, an introduction to healthy Halal eating and, finally, an online assessment to achieve certification.

In addition, there was a practical cooking demonstration based on the online assessment, with the 20 chefs who scored the highest on the online assessment, selected to participate.



Cape Town chefs toast Halal tourism

Terry Levin 9 Oct 2017



Two chefs, Dion Vengatass from Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel and Tamsyn Wells from African Pride 15 on Orange Hotel, won a trip to Singapore where they will learn more about gourmet Halal cuisine. The winners were selected on the basis of their skills, presentation and ability to innovate under pressure, which was illustrated by the three-course menu they presented as part of the cooking demonstration.



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Laying the foundations for attracting Muslim travellers to Cape Town

Enver Duminy, CEO, Cape Town Tourism elaborates: “Cape Town has great potential as a destination for the Muslim traveller, so we’re laying the foundations for growth in this market by driving awareness around this market’s needs, with a view to seeing more travel and hospitality businesses adapting what they have on offer so that we can be truly welcoming. This will attract more visitors and boost the tourism economy.”

Executive Mayor, City of Cape Town, Patricia de Lille comments: “Cape Town is a diverse, cosmopolitan city with a rich history embracing many cultures and religions. The city is a place with many global connections and influences with layers of history evident in the cuisine, fashion and language. We have a strong local Muslim community and it is the City of Cape Town’s hope that we can continue to strengthen ties with international Muslim communities and welcome more visitors to our city. As an inclusive and opportunity city, we look forward to working with partners to grow this market to boost our tourism numbers all year round.”

[View the gallery here.](#)

Halal food the most important service that a Muslim traveller looks for

Six faith-based needs – Halal food, Salaah (Prayer), ablution facilities, Ramadhan services, no non-halal activities, and

separate recreational facilities for males and females – are important factors when choosing holiday destinations. Halal food is by far the most important service that a Muslim traveller is looking for when travelling. Acceptability of the different levels of Halal food assurance varies among Muslims.

An online survey was conducted by Cape Town Tourism in partnership with CrescentRating to get direct feedback from the travel and tourism stakeholders regarding their interest in and understanding of the Muslim travel market. Most of the respondents agree that attracting Muslim tourists will help Cape Town as a destination as well as their own businesses. However, it is apparent most only have a very basic understanding of Halal concepts. There is major confusion about different terminology used to define certain aspects of Halal. The most obvious is the uncertainty about the use of the term “Halal friendly or Muslim friendly food”.

Crescent Rating’s report shows that restaurants are pivotal to and a huge development area for Cape Town as a Muslim-friendly city. The objective of this program is to engage directly with the restaurant and hotel industries and create awareness of the potential of this market segment, training chefs on Halal cuisine and the basic adjustments required to meet standards.

The purpose of the campaign is to create awareness and educate the industry on Halal concepts and the potential of the Muslim market. Participating chefs will gain the knowledge to align themselves to cater for this market as well as their current clients. The Muslim market travels predominantly over our winter season and could contribute significantly to [eradicating seasonality](#).

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