

Cape Town named number one city in Africa, Middle East

For the 17th year, the Travel + Leisure reader's poll has named Cape Town as the number one favoured city in Africa and the Middle East. The publication's poll commended the city for its favourable exchange rate, first-rate hotels, and ongoing business and leisure travel success.



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In light of the region's challenges, including water shortages, the city's tourism officials are thrilled about this year's achievements. "We've maintained an 'open for business' approach throughout our efforts in driving sustainable tourism, and this accolade reveals that this strategy has worked; we remain an unparalleled destination on the continent, and one whose multiple initiatives in saving water has ensured that we can continue to attract visitors. We're honoured that so many travellers remain confident in our ability to offer fantastic attractions and experiences," said Enver Duminy, Cape Town Tourism CEO.

According to South African Tourism's CEO, Sisa Ntshona: "This accolade is a testament to South Africa's rich and varied travel offering for travellers from the continent and the Middle East and an affirmation of our five-in-five goal of attracting five million more tourists by 2021.

Sustainable and responsible tourism

"The water shortages as experienced in Cape Town and other parts of the country have certainly placed us at the forefront of leading the drive towards sustainable and responsible tourism in a meaningful way. Through the country's #WaterWiseTourism drive in action, Travel + Leisure readers have given a stamp of approval that South Africa remains very much open for tourism, with responsible tourism practices becoming entrenched as the 'new normal'."

"South Africa has become a benchmark for how world-class cities respond to future climate threats associated with water, it is our responsibility to share our learnings and encourage others around the world to help adapt to the new normal," concludes Ntshona.

The city's efforts in reducing water usage include bringing alternative water supplies on board, as well as locals reducing household water use. In the tourism sector, hotels and the big attractions have rolled out varied strategies that reduce water usage while minimising the impact on visitor experience.

It was recently announced that these efforts, coupled with healthy winter rainfall, have contributed to a great recovery in the water crisis, although resident visitors are encouraged to carry on, in the same way, to ensure that this recovery can be completed.

Additional accolades for 2018 include:

- Kalk Bay in Cape Town is voted number one in the [12 coolest suburbs](#) in the world list (Forbes)
- South Africa has been ranked as one of the ten most [Muslim-friendly travel destinations](#) for 2018 among non-Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries in the annual Mastercard-Crescent Rating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI)
- Cape Town was once again crowned as the number one city in Africa for [business tourism events](#) by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA).
- Cape Town listed in Surfer Magazine's [Top Ten Surf Cities](#) in the World List - March 2018.
- Cape Town comes in at number five in the UK Post Office Travel Report's "Best Value for Travel" rankings in 2018.

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