

Chinese tourist numbers rise

Tourism Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk embarked on a media roadshow in Beijing on Wednesday, 23 January 2013, to celebrate the growth in tourism between China and South Africa.



Image: GCIS

South Africa was visited by 59,187 Chinese tourists between January and September 2011, and by 96,747 during the same period in 2012. This year more than 100,000 tourists from China are expected in South Africa.

Van Schalkwyk attributed the growth to stronger trade relations between the two countries since South Africa took its place in Brics - the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa group of countries - in 2011.

"We have witnessed an increase in trade relations between China and South Africa, with considerable Chinese investment in South Africa and an increase in interest, awareness and understanding between our two countries," said Van Schalkwyk.

He said that China had become South Africa's fourth biggest source market for tourists.

"We are confident of continuing our exciting growth in a market set to become one of the world's most important tourism markets in the future," he said.

Van Schalkwyk travelled to China with senior officials from his department, along with diplomats and a contingent from SA Tourism.

He is expected to use the trip to thank the Chinese media for its continued support in marketing South Africa as a holiday and business event destination.

He said that South Africa intended to increase its digital marketing efforts to better communicate with Chinese consumers

through online platforms.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge

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