Seychelles named top island destination in Africa and Middle East

For the second consecutive year, Seychelles has been named the top island destination in Africa and the Middle East in the Travel + Leisure's 2017 World's Best Awards - a survey held every year during which readers are asked to weigh in on travel experiences around the globe and share their opinions on the top hotels, resorts, cities, islands, cruise lines, spas, and airlines among others.

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Islands are rated on the following characteristics: natural attractions/beaches, activities/sights, restaurants/food, people/friendliness, value, and as optional criteria, its romantic appeal. For each characteristic, respondents are asked to rate a candidate on a five-point scale of excellence.

Seychelles, an archipelago in the western Indian Ocean, came out on top of the readers' list.

Seychelles Tourism Board, Director for Africa and the Americas, David Germain says, "Achieving the distinction of top island in Africa and the Middle East for the second year in a row is a tremendous honour for the Seychelles, recognising that the region has much to offer in terms of world-class island experiences." He adds that Seychelles is a unique group of islands with outstanding natural beauty and unique attractions, a destination with a committed approach to sustainable tourism, providing an example of best practice for other destinations around the world.

Visitor arrivals from South Africa to the Seychelles increased by 19 percent from January to June. To date, the total number of holidaymakers that have disembarked in Seychelles stands at 159 659, representing a 21 percent increase compared to the same time last year, already positioning the island nation to record a tourism upswing in 2017.