

Promising outlook for SA's tourism industry in 2014

South Africa and its key tourist attractions have witnessed record festive season growth figures due to an increase in international and local tourism.



According to Matthew Cornall, GM of Pepperclub Hotel & Spa, a Cape Town based hotel, this increase is as a result of recovering global economies and a strong drive by tourism players to promote South Africa as a world class destination amongst international travellers.

Cornall says that the hotel recorded a noticeable uptake in travellers during the December and January period to date. "The 2013/2014 festive season saw the hotel running at maximum occupancy, which illustrates the growing trend of international tourists visiting South Africa, and in particular Cape Town, during the summer months."

Record number of visitors

Recent City of Cape Town statistics also revealed that several of the city's attractions reached a [record number of visitors during December 2013](#). The Table Mountain Cable Car, Cape Point and the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens reported an increase of 2%, 4.25% and 9.08% respectively when compared to December 2012.

Cornall says that while the markets visiting the hotel over the past season haven't drastically shifted in profile in comparison to the same period during 2012, they have noticed an increase from certain markets. "This season we have noticed more African and American travellers, as well as European travellers, particularly from the United Kingdom and Italy."

He attributes the increase of these travellers to improving global economies, as well as the weakening rand. "Global economies, such as Europe and the USA, are slowly improving and this has led to a renewed optimism amongst citizens, who as a result, are beginning to travel and spend again."

"The country has become a high quality and value for money travel destination when compared to other similar destinations due to the attractive exchange rate, especially for the euro, pound and dollar. This has strongly increased the numbers of arrivals in South Africa towards the end of 2013, and will continue to do so during 2014."

He adds that it is particularly encouraging to see more American travellers visiting the country. "Americans are no longer

choosing to visit their traditional holiday destinations, such as the Caribbean, and are instead opting to visit 'long-haul' destinations, such as Cape Town, which is extremely positive for the country."

Cornall says that there has also been continued increase in arrivals from the Brazilian market. "We have noticed drastic growth in the number of visitors from Brazil, which could be attributed to the country's booming economy, as well as the good relationship established during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. This is sustainable growth and a market which we hope will continue to grow in the coming year."

Exposure from SA Tourism's continuous efforts to profile the country, as well as Cape Town's numerous accolades, the most recent being New York Times' naming the city as the top destination to visit in 2014, will only continue to grow the country's tourism industry, says Cornall.

Potential in the film industry

He adds that there is still however much potential for the tourism and hospitality sector in the film industry. "The film industry provides much revenue for the tourism industry and while the country has noticed an increase of international film makers and brands choosing South Africa as a location to shoot, there is still room for much growth here due to the country ideally lending itself to the industry in terms of lighting, cost and diverse backdrops."

He adds that the hotel is optimistic that 2014 will yield even greater results for the tourism sector compared to the past year. "With many large events already scheduled to take place this year - the most prominent being the range of World Design Capital 2014 events - the country will continue to remain top of mind for visitors. Improving global economic outlook, coupled with the weak rand, will also continue to support growth for the travel and tourism sector during 2014," concludes Cornall.

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