



DUMMETT & CO

INNER CITY TOURISM GROWING IN POPULARITY AND DEMAND

Popular brands appealing to the tourism market are reaping the rewards of a growing world phenomenon – inner city tourism.

Located in the historic heart of Cape Town, on the thriving pedestrian precinct of St George's Mall, Taj Cape Town is perfectly positioned to meet the needs of a growing number of travelers who want to experience an emotional connection with the historical and cultural core of a city. To a growing number of local and international travelers, a successful trip is by definition 'experience based' whether for business or pleasure. By virtue of its unique location and world-class amenities, Taj Cape Town is meeting a need for luxury accommodation in the inner city.

As opposed to hotels in more commercial parts of Cape Town, city hotels connect guests directly with the vibrancy and unique character of street life. Visitors are thrust into the real Cape Town, a melting pot of cultures, races and creeds that is unique, inspiring and highly spirited. Traditionally defined by five-star comforts and services, luxury is almost a given for today's sophisticated tourists jetting into urban hot spots such as Cape Town. Increasingly, travelers want to tap into the 'heart and soul' of the city, accessing and admiring much more than just the natural beauty of its beaches, mountains and vineyards.

According to Cape Town Tourism CEO, Mariette Du Toit-Helmbold, *"The United World Tourism Organisation's research shows that up to 80 percent of international tourists are in search of urban tourism – exploring the richness of local cultures and experiencing a country from the vantage point of cities. In a world where cities, rather than countries, are the true players in a competitive, global economy, culture is extensively being recognised as a facilitator of economic and urban progress."*

As such, cities have become the brand leaders for countries. Cape Town's richly layered heritage and turbulent history has stood the test of time, while its future as World Design Capital for 2014 promises dynamic development and renewal both now and in the long term.

Launched with a view to developing, promoting and managing Cape Town's city centre, the Central City Improvement District (CCID) has begun to yield significant international and public interest in Cape Town's inner city tourism offerings, from designer retail hubs to world-class nightlife. The CCID is helping to keep the city safe, secure and clean. The gradual renaissance of Cape Town's inner city, supported by the CCID, has led to the regeneration of many key historic precincts, not least St George's Mall. In describing St George's Mall, Rob Kane, chairperson of the CCID, says: *"The mall's mood can switch from banking to busking and it's the diversity of the buzz and chatter of Cape*

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Town street life which is drawing an even more discerning traveler and guest, both locally and internationally, than previous.”

A wealth of heritage sites, museums, galleries, street markets, restaurants, bars and retail stores are all within walking distance of Taj Cape Town, as are the city’s legal and business districts and parliament. Long Street, ideal for browsing fashion emporia by day and partying by night, is a few minutes’ walk away. Government Avenue and the historic Company Gardens are just across the street. Every Thursday, an Earth Fair food market is set up in St George’s Mall providing a window into the city’s exploding gourmet culture. Guests at Taj Cape Town have easy access to Footsteps to Freedom city walking tours, which depart daily from the hotel lobby. A company tour guide, specialising in subjects as diverse as art, wine or Cape Dutch architecture, is also on duty in the hotel lobby to impart advice or make suggestions for exploring the city.

Taj Hotels, Resorts and Palaces has a 100-year-old reputation for restoring historic landmarks, so it's entirely fitting that in Cape Town this meant incorporating the beautifully restored South African Reserve Bank and the adjacent Temple Chambers (later the Board of Executors bank building), both national monuments, into the design of the 176-roomed hotel.

“Taj Cape Town meets the growing demand amongst both leisure and business travelers for a secure, central five-star base in a city that has taken exciting strides forward in art, design, fashion and food while still honouring its history and heritage. Many of Cape Town’s best attractions are within easy walking distance of the hotel, allowing our guests to immerse themselves completely in a historical and cultural experience,” concludes Michael Pownall, Taj Cape Town’s General Manager.

