



## **Cape Town prepares for a bumper year in tourism / Mother City scoops top travel awards**

*With approximately 4 million international tourists in 2013, Cape Town enjoys the title as the most visited tourist destination in Africa, and the City's popularity looks set to soar in light of the recent achievements and awards from the world's leading travel publications.*

Cape Town's profile as a premier destination choice is basking in the international spotlight, explains CEO of Cape Town Tourism, Enver Duminy, when discussing the recent flurry of high profile awards and accolades which the Mother City is garnering on the world stage.

"From top city in Africa to third top city in the World, Cape Town has plenty to celebrate in 2014," remarks Duminy as the accolades keep rolling in. Aside from Cape Town being crowned as the World Design Capital 2014 (WDC 2014), The Lonely Planet Guide has named the City among the top three destinations to visit in 2014, and the recent World Travel Awards held in Kenya awarded Cape Town the title of Africa's Leading Destination and also as Africa's Leading Meetings and Conference Destination.

Being recognised as one of the world's most desirable destinations may not come as a big surprise to many Capetonians, who only need to look out their window for validation of an abundance of natural splendour. "However, it is the scale and international scope of recent achievements that will translate into an increase in revenue and the creation of job opportunities as more visitors put Cape Town on the top of their travel itinerary," comments General Manager of the Taj Cape Town, Michael Pownall when he accepted the award for Africa's Leading Hotel Residence from the World Travel Awards Ceremony held recently in Kenya.

On October 31 2013, Cape Town's Executive Mayor Alderman, Patricia de Lille, announced the official programme for the WDC 2014. The project will showcase approximately 450 urban design projects in and around Cape Town, and entrench the City's position as the design and creative hub of the continent.

Pownall believes that Cape Town's tenure as the World Design Capital in 2014 will be a major draw card for tourists in the coming year. "This is a high profile branding opportunity for the City of Cape Town who went against the likes of Dublin in Ireland and Bilbao in Spain for the 2014 honours.

Cape Town's status as the World design Capital in 2014 was one of the key factors in securing Lonely Planet's top three destination rating. "In light of all the City's recent accolades, the Taj Cape Town has enjoyed a marked upswing in the number of reservations for 2014 compared to last year," comments Pownall.

"Our hotel is blessed with a unique location which connects our guests to the heart of our cosmopolitan City. Aside from the opulent luxury and amenities that are synonymous with all Taj Hotels, it's our City's vibrant culture which attracts the highest calibre of international guests time and time again. And it is the community and local businesses that often benefit the most from our guests' extended stays," Pownall adds.

#### **About Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces**

Established in 1903, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces is one of Asia's largest and finest group of hotels, comprising 95 hotels in 54 locations across India with an additional 16 international hotels in the Maldives, Malaysia, Australia, UK, USA, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Africa and the Middle East. From world-renowned landmarks to modern business hotels, idyllic beach resorts to authentic Grand Palaces, each Taj hotel offers an unrivalled fusion of warm Indian hospitality, world-class service and modern luxury. For over a century The Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai, the iconic flagship, has set a benchmark for fine living with exquisite refinement, inventiveness and warmth. Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces is part of the Tata Group, India's premier business house.

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