

# South African travel tales thrill Japanese media

In an effort to raise awareness of destination South Africa in Japan, South African Tourism is hosting senior journalists from leading travel trade and mainstream publications to a 10-day tour of South Africa.

"We know that newspapers and magazines are in the top three information sources for travellers seeking information about South Africa and therefore getting South Africa covered by respected publications is of major importance," says Bradley Brouwer, South African Tourism country manager in Japan.

Represented on the tour were no less than Higashi-Aichi and Kobe Newspapers in addition to numerous key Japanese trade publications.

Japan is a significant and highly lucrative tourism market for South Africa. Last year, South Africa welcomed 17.2% more Japanese trav-

ellers, making it the second fastest-growing source market in the Australasia region, after India.

Commenting on these positive results Brouwer says: "While these figures are encouraging, our aim, in line with our tourism growth strategy is to actively and aggressively invest in growing markets, in order to attract even more arrivals from Japan and the rest of the rapidly-growing Australasia region.

"It is therefore hugely important that the entire country, and not just the tourism industry, is represented in a positive light. To this end, we were able to arrange meetings with well respected and influential South Africans, including Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Marthinus van Schalkwyk and Mpumalanga MEC Economic Development and Planning Craig Paday-

achee, in addition to one of South Africa's leading travel trade media houses."

Brouwer adds: "Apart from all the fun we have had, what has been particularly gratifying is the flurry of stories hitting the front pages of key Japanese travel publications each day."

The Japanese travel media delegation has had a "Panoramic tour of Mpumalanga, a thrill-filled tour of Durban and felt the urban pulse of Gauteng - which has blown them away."

Brouwer concludes: "It doesn't stop with this trip. Tomorrow the entire sales team of Thai Airways in Japan arrives in South Africa. This is also a major coup for the country. This group is accompanied by key consumer media from Japan and we are hoping for similar coverage."

