

Trade Release

SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

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Japanese agents explore "new" areas of South Africa

Representatives of Japan's most influential travel trade group, the Japanese Association of Travel Agents, have been immersed in South Africa this week. Ten delegates representing travel agencies and tour operating operations landed on November 21 and departed on December 1, 2007 having experienced some of the best of South Africa tourism offerings.

The familiarization trip is hosted by South African Tourism in support of the South African Tourism Working Group, a group constituted to promote South Africa in Japan.

The trip is a part of the Working Group's action plan which covers four core themes, there are:

- To improve South Africa's image
- Tour products
- Security & safety
- Airports

The Group was set to meet with ACSA to request enhancement of the airport security system. In addition, the group visited the cream of South Africa's tourism offerings, in-line South African Tourism's drive to get a more provincial spread across the country. The group had the opportunity to explore Mpumalanga, new on Japanese itineraries.

"Through this trip, the Group intends to cultivate new tourism offerings, and create new itineraries," comments Bradley Brouwer, Country Manager for South African Tourism in Japan.

"During the trip, delegates enjoyed game drives, the splendid panorama route, local cuisine and traditional cultural experiences - in Johannesburg, the Kruger National Park, Blyde River Canyon and Cape Town. The group also visited Victoria Falls to contribute to the Working Group's recognition that it is still important to package SA with other destinations.

SA Tourism Japan has succeeded in building up strong trade relationships by hosting a luncheon at the JATA World Travel Congress 2005 and inviting the JATA Board to South Africa at the end of 2006. In an extension of the co-operation between Japan and South Africa, JATA aims to exploit the "Japan-Africa Exchange Year 2008" which will see the "South African Tourism Working Group" roll out a programme of promotions.

Ends

Editor's notes

Members of the Group include representatives from MLIT (The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport), MOFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), South African Tourism Japan, travel agencies, operators and South African Airways Japan.

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South African Tourism Internet Site can be found at: www.southafrica.net