

JAMMS addresses tourism seasonality in CT

At a recent Joint Association Members Meeting (JAMMS) hosted earlier this month, a panel discussion saw industry role players discuss the pertinent issue of seasonality in tourism in Cape Town and the Western Cape. The discussion addressed what has been done to combat seasonality as well as next steps in terms of moving forward.



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Aware of the negative impact that seasonality has on the tourism industry and on economic growth in Cape Town and the Western Cape, the Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) Cape region – the watchdog and lobbying body for the hospitality industry – has been working in collaboration with Cape Town Tourism, Wesgro and industry role players, in an effort to find a solution to combat seasonality.

According to Rob Kucera, chairman of FEDHASA Cape, “We must keep chipping away at the international markets but also, we have to be realistic – bearing in mind that we’re competing against destinations like Barcelona and London – for us it’s winter but, it’s summer in Europe. We need to provide more direct flights and packages that appeal to markets such as the UAE.” Kucera also said that it is essential that the industry strives towards togetherness.

During the panel discussion, the following key points were highlighted:

- Greater focus on UAE market
- Creating an environment for new markets during the winter season but, also to focus on understanding the market i.e. packages, more direct flights, etc.
- Safe and accessible public transport
- Aviation taxes
- A bigger focus on food and wine tourism as well as celebrated sporting events as niche markets
- More target driven marketing such as utilising current fruit and wine exports and placing planned and targeted messaging on export packaging
- A stronger focus on domestic travel making it more accessible and affordable for locals

With regards to forging a way forward, Wesgro has invited the industry to provide the official seasonality task team with input regarding new routes while the MEC has asked that industry specific skills shortages be communicated. The local organising committee (LOC) has also urged industry players to participate in a collaborative way forward.

Generating new business

Kucera also said that it is up to each pillar within the hospitality industry to generate new business. “I encourage both members and industry players alike, to collaborate and work together in generating new business and events for the province and region during the winter period. Our summer months fill up for themselves but, greater effort needs to be made to encourage new business such as events, conferences and incentive programmes to be moved into our winter months.”

Kucera shared a positive outcome from LOC deliberations where the idea of a shopping festival in alignment with the already successful Mercedes Benz Fashion Week was discussed. Additionally, the task team is also working on a golf tournament / festival week during the off-season, spreading it across the region at several different golf courses, accompanied by pre- and post-tours.

“FEDHASA Cape is rooting for the industry to acquire new business in order for everyone in the value chain to benefit,” concluded Kucera.

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