

# Cape Town says goodbye to tourism CEO

Mariëtte du Toit-Helmbold steps down as Cape Town Tourism's CEO on 31 July 2013, after nine years at the helm.



Mariëtte du Toit-Helmbold

Becoming CEO at the tender age of 28, Du Toit-Helmbold has seen both tremendous growth and change in the tourism sector during its post-apartheid boom years and tougher times in the recent recession period. Under her leadership, Cape Town's tourism and destination sector has remained globally recognised and aspired to, as attested to by a string of awards.

As an organisation, Cape Town Tourism has won critical acclaim and was formally recognised by the UN World Tourism Organisation in 2012 as a "world best-practice tourism organisational model" with "innovative initiatives in destination marketing".

In particular, the organisation's digital marketing strategy and programmes have made an international impact. In 2011, Cape Town Tourism was named as one of the World's Top 20 and Africa's most influential tourist boards and DMO's online (rated by [influencersintravel.com](http://influencersintravel.com)) and was included in the World Travel Market White Paper for Best Practice in Digital Marketing in 2012.

Most recently (2013), Cape Town Tourism, took home a SMITTY Award (Social Media in Travel + Tourism Awards - in the category Best Overall Use of Social Media, CVB, Global) and a Cannes Golden Lion for Cape Town Tourism's Take Your Facebook Profile to Cape Town social media campaign - two international accolades that honour the impact of Cape Town Tourism's dynamic digital marketing work.

## A unified tourism body

Other highlights in Du Toit-Helmbold's career at Cape Town Tourism include the establishment of Cape Town Tourism as a unified tourism body for the Greater Cape Town Metropole (2004) - before which the sector was fraught with fragmentation - the FIFA World Cup of 2010 and the recent placement of Table Mountain as one of the New7Wonders of the World.

Known for her optimism, warm confidence, megawatt smile and strong focus on emerging trends, innovative customer-centred marketing and responsible tourism, Du Toit-Helmbold will not be straying far from tourism in the future. Her new venture, Destinate, is a tourism strategy and destination marketing agency that will launch in August 2013.

"It feels bittersweet leaving Cape Town Tourism. It's so much a part of me after all of this time, but the time is right to create something new that will address the gap in destination and tourism marketing and allow me the opportunity to make an impact beyond Cape Town. I am going to miss my team terribly; they are extraordinary, passionate, committed people and I know that under the steady, open leadership style of Enver Duminy, the new CEO, they are going to continue to grow and shine. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our board members past and present as well as to the city leadership and those tireless champions of the tourism industry who put in so many hours and so much energy to ensure Cape Town remains a destination of a lifetime."

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