Leading community-focused tourism group becomes Fair Trade Tourism certified

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Transfrontier Parks Destinations (TFPD) certified by Fair Trade Tourism

Transfrontier Parks Destinations (TFPD), South Africa’s leading group focused on promoting community-based tourism, has become Fair Trade Tourism certified.

The group, which is headquartered in Cape Town, launched in 2004 with a mission to manage community-owned properties in transfrontier parks and adjacent conservation areas. Since inception, responsible tourism and conservation has been at the heart of its operating ethic.

Today TFPD’s South African portfolio includes 12 community-owned lodges and camps, situated in geographically disparate and ecologically diverse locations. The group only manages one privately-owned property – a boutique guest-house outside Cape Town.
The group’s four lodges in South Africa include:

- The four-star !Xaus Lodge in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, which is owned by the Mier and Khomani San communities. !Xaus won a silver award for Poverty Reduction at last year’s World Responsible Tourism Awards.

- Awelani Lodge, situated close to Kruger’s Pafuri gate in a 1,700 hectare nature reserve, which is owned by the local Mutele community.

- Nahakwe Lodge in central Limpopo, which is owned by the Mamaila Kolobetona community.

- Witsieshoek Mountain Lodge in the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation Area, which is owned by the Batlokoa community of QwaQwa.

Eight rustic camps in Limpopo form part of the African Ivory Route, aimed at the adventurous responsible traveler. Also owned by local communities, they are spread through Limpopo, with the majority located along the Western side of Kruger National Park. Four safari and adventure camps include:

- Mtomeni in Letaba Ranch and Mutale Falls in Makuya Park, both unfenced from Kruger National Park.

- Nthubu in the Masebe Reserve, which contains plains game.

The remote Mafefe camp above the Lekgalameetse reserve.

Four cultural camps, closely associated with local traditional communities who provide an insight into their lives and crafts, include:

- Modjajdi, near Tzaneen,

- Baleni at the Sautini Natural Hot Spring near Giyani;

- Fundudzi near the inland lake of Fundudzi;
- **Blouberg** at the foot of the Blouberg Mountains north of the Waterberg

- **Moonglow Guest House**, the group’s only privately owned property, is located in Simonstown in the Western Cape.

TFPD CEO Glynn O’Leary said local communities were custodians of many of the country’s most remarkable natural and cultural assets. “These have the potential to become enduring tourism attractions if managed and marketed with a responsible ethos,” he said.

“We’ve been partnering with local communities to manage and market their properties for more than a decade, driven by the desire to see sustainable jobs created and for these communities to have the opportunity to participate fairly in the tourism economy,” he said.

“*Fair Trade Tourism* certification enables us to ensure we are doing the right things for our communities, while the brand recognition helps us persuade responsible travelers that our properties are great places to truly experience South Africa’s culture, wildlife and wilderness areas.”

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About Fair Trade Tourism

Fair Trade Tourism is a non-profit organisation promoting best-practice responsible tourism in Africa. It grows awareness about responsible tourism in Africa and assists tourism businesses to operate more sustainably through its certification programme.

It currently certifies tourism businesses in South Africa, Madagascar and Mozambique and has formal recognition agreements with equivalently benchmarked certification programmes in Namibia, Seychelles, Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania.

The Fair Trade Tourism certification label represents best-practice responsible tourism – defined by fair wages and working conditions, fair purchasing and operations.

Fair Trade Tourism website: www.fairtrade.travel

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