

PRESS RELEASE : Visit Knysna returns from SAT Nordics roadshow

For immediate release

Visit Knysna (- the promotion and information office of the Greater Knysna area) General Manager, Colleen Durant, has just returned from a promotional education tour to travel trade in the Nordic countries of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. This is a fairly new market being promoted by South African Tourism (SAT), this being their 3rd annual roadshow to this area. "A number of our local products previously participated in these roadshows and our involvement this year was to continue in the promotion of the Greater Knysna area to the industry there" said Colleen.

As stated by Abby Swartz, SAT's marketing and promotions manager for the Nordic region, "the objective of this roadshow is to contribute to the growing number of arrivals from this region by convincing the travel trade that currently sell South Africa that there is still ample opportunity, especially on differentiated product and package offerings".

In the application to participate in this roadshow, Visit Knysna submitted 3 package proposals, focusing on offerings for golf / active mature couple, the young and adventurous traveller as well as a package for a young family with teenage children. These were aligned to the key experience pillars identified by SAT's research that define the requirements for this market, including active adventure, coastal beach, cultural roots and scenic outdoors – where our *natural* environment was promoted.

As a local product included in these offerings, Ella Mahlulo, one of the owners/directors of Emzini Tours, also represented the Greater Knysna area on this roadshow. "Not only did I promote my product here, but proudly promoted my community too. I have learned that when on these overseas travel promotion trips, you cannot only sell your product – as no one will come to South Africa just for your product – you first have to promote your country, then the Garden Route region, then your town and then only your product. It is a collective chain for a full package experience", said Ella. Penny Mainwaring, Emzini Tours owner/director partner with Ella, confirmed that they have already received a number of enquiries for tours since the roadshow.

The roadshow took in 7 towns in the Nordic region. The presentations were two-fold : afternoon sessions were focused on training the industry of further offerings, beyond the obvious, so participating products had to put together packaged travel routes. "With Emzini Tours, we were paired with a product in Cape Town and one in Gansbaai", said Colleen. "This worked really well, as there was a group specifically focusing on the Cape Town area and another on the Eastern Cape. We were there to offer the travel options in between and this formed an ideal travel route, especially as most of the operators state that their market are independent travelers (known in travel terms as "F.I.T's"). Evening sessions were one-on-one presentations to the travel industry representatives. Here, one could engage with and answer questions on your product offerings.

Visit Knysna will continue to work with our local products, SAT and the Nordic travel industry to promote the Greater Knysna area to this market. "Their travel needs requirements are exactly what

we naturally offer here” says Colleen. “As per SAT’s research, they want to experience local food and culture in a safe environment, whilst having opportunity to be close to nature. This market is the second highest spend traveller across all markets when travelling in South Africa.”

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